

# **Individuality and the Anarchist Group**

Gerasimos Tsakalos (C.C.F)

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## Instead of a Prologue

About the subject of “Individuality and the anarchist group”, one could say that it’s a timeless issue within the anarchist milieu... Is an anarchist individuality subjugated or liberated within a group? How does the individual encounter the collective? Can disagreements between comrades of the same collective be creative or do they inevitably lead to disputes, rivalries, intrigues, competitions and end up in rupture?

How are friendships and cliques able to bring about a cancellation of an anarchist group?

What is the relationship of an anarchist organization to the expulsions of members who participate? How can informal hierarchies and their members-followers survive in an anarchist project?

These are some of the issues that arise from the explosive relationship between individuals who try to coexist in anarchist groups.

The pamphlet “Individuality and the anarchist group” is an experimental testimony of political experiences from the interior of anarchist illegal infrastructures of revolutionary violence. The relationships that are formed in such cores are acrobatic at the sharp end because they are tested in extreme concentrated conditions and options.

The price of inconsistency or of defiance of the basic principles and values of an urban guerrilla organization could lead to many years in prison or even death.

Thus, someone could think that this specific pamphlet is aimed at more “familiar” comrades...

But this is not the case...

Since nothing is born unto itself we all know very well that the guerrilla groups are born and raised from the movement and that they are the armed expression of it.

The experiences and the relationships presented in this text are extensions of the experiences and the relationships that we meet in anarchist meetings, squats, haunts or in self-organized projects. Within these projects arise the most intense moments but also the production of the deformation of anarchy.

The style of this pamphlet might be a little strange for the comrades who will read it because the poetic, playful and rebellious content of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire is missing.

This text is more “inelegant” and “rough” but some things are better to be clear-cut. Many times in the following pages the thoughts vacillate between the psychological side of politics and the personal experience. A balance that keeps alive the way of writing and invites the reader to influence and imbue it with his or her

own experience. Whoever has participated in groups, haunts and anarchist meetings, will definitely find a small or big piece of himself/herself in the text below.

*Continue on well...*

*From reading... To complicity...*

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## **Introduction**

Within the continuous development of a more comprehensive anarchist perception, thoughts and reflections that promote a better understanding of the issue regarding the relationship between an individual and a team are always useful. The organizational model of clustering and the emergence of random pathogens within relationships isn't something limited to the theoretical level. It is also a practical issue that has an impact on the overall development of a team's action and also on those who're moving in that team's circles.

A review is limited to mentioning, through pessimistic view, the problems that arise in groups, like failures of substance and effectiveness. Only by setting a prospect of overcoming these problems with thoughts and suggestions for process and experimentation, can we discuss about promotional contribution. Of course, it will never be possible, just because you communicate and share your own conclusions of them, for your personal experiences to be fully exploited by another person. The experience cannot be appropriated as such by someone else, but if you communicate it, it could provide a valuable stimulus for thinking or it can be used as a heritage. Therefore, this text is an attempt in this direction.

We will try to expose conclusions and considerations from situations that we meet in the course of the creation and development of an anarchist urban guerrilla group. These thoughts are not set rules in the sense of right or wrong, but should be thought of as the beginning of a genuine dialogue among comrades. We think a major hub-point of analysis considering the behaviors, choices and ultimately the same world we participate in, is the effort to understand the values and the motivations that push each person to specific acts. It's about trying to understand why someone chooses to do something and someone else remains indifferent and passive.

In the first part of the text, we choose to simplify the complexity of the nature of power and of the majority of the behavior of its followers, so as to end up with some

general conclusions. This is so because the objective of this text is not the analysis of the system's domination but it is necessary to establish the basic perception that affects our view concerning the terms of organization of clusters and the behavior among comrades and because, depending on how we perceive and interpret the conditions we are experiencing, thus we determine our choices.

## **Basic thoughts of understanding the existent**

In an effort to illuminate the foundation stone upon which is based the existing system, we realize that everything is structured in a way that continually reinforces the necessity of power's existence. The basis of the system, the nature of power itself and its rules, are thus diffused into a complexity of relationships that form society, with the main element of power being the enforcement of power against the individual. It's not limited only to the obvious aspects that are easily perceived, as with more direct power expressed and solidified within the existence of rules, state institutions (government, judges, police, army etc.) and the dictatorship of the economy over society. As a result, and regardless of any economic model of management society (whether capitalism or communism), the nature of power itself remains constant and real. The understanding of the strategies and tactics applied by institutions and economic factors, that help, of course, to maintain order and to increase profit either at a national or international level, is a useful analytical tool. Definitely, it is not unique and, certainly, it is not self-sufficient. The perception of the complexity by which power diffuses throughout the community is necessary for the development of an individual's consciousness.

At the core of any decision of power no one is an outsider. Even the individual who depends on their silence or their anger affects the social machine. Each person is a separate entity with their own responsibilities within this mechanism. The system is structured in a way that would like to abolish the personality of each individual and transform them into a passive citizen. The automated structure of it creates the feeling that no one could be considered as an irreplaceable part of the system. A new gear will always be available to replace the old one, contributing in this way to strengthening a sense of worthlessness and a lack of meaning in an individual's resistance. ... On the one hand, the system itself is seeking its perpetual survival through the permanent, relentless and increasing exploitation of any treaty in order to produce profit, suppressing any diversion in its smooth operation that cannot be digested. On the other hand, it advertises the following illusion to its citizens – a life with advancement opportunities and improvements in their position, offering a world that promises safety, order, material goods and the fulfillment of artificially-created desires. A vicious circle of maintaining the author-

itarian pyramid based on citizens' hopes which fool them to obvious inequalities affecting them. So even though at the base of the system, the majority of society is never satisfied with what it is provided, it continues to move subserviently within it.

The question that arises so effortlessly now is, if the outcome of the operation of the system is known by society, then why is there no use of this knowledge against it but instead practical support of the system by a society that consciously chooses submission? Why does the majority of society remain indifferent to any challenge of perspective? Why, even when revolutions happened, did they finally end up maintaining and creating similar relationships of power with those they were fighting against?

Mass psychology, we could say, that stems from the basic instincts and motivations of the individual. In this way, realizing the individual roots of allegiance, we lead ourselves towards an understanding of the attitude of society. The fear of risking losing. Even the minimum the system allows you to possess becomes the connective link of the chains of subordination. There is also a diffuse condition of social cannibalism that feeds itself continuously with an alienated competition among citizens. As we mentioned, hopes of social advancement and enrichment within the system are created.

This competition, in its attack, walks over dead bodies and, in its defense, it is covered by the thought that someone else is always worse than you. ... The favourite phrase of apathy always says: "What will you manage by yourself, changing the world?"

In this circle of defeatist thoughts and of inhibitory excuses of questioning the existent, consumerist desires manage the citizens through the spectacle that as a result has to strengthen those desires.

The spectacle is a tool of construction and enforcement of "common sense" that establishes stereotypes simply by establishing the view of them as the only acceptable behavioural standards in a vicious circle of interdependency with the citizens. Through the spectacle the citizen will be convinced of the vanity of any thought of rupture and when the system reaches a level that temporarily is unable to cover even their basic material needs, then the spectacle will direct the social anger into forms of wild protest it can assimilate. A protest that will always move in the direction of the supposed improvement of the system (silent protests, peaceful gatherings, etc.) and never in the direction of its destruction.

Through this summary labeling of central elements concerning justification and support of the system, we understand that the obstacle we will meet for its destruction is not only the logistical suppressive abilities of the authoritarian oligarchy but also the faith in the necessity of the system by its own citizens. In the end, those that will defend, beyond any complaint towards a government, the logic itself of

the existence of power, are the citizens of this system. The majority of society believes that the existent structure of the system is the only way.

This society, as it is formed, even if institutional domination collapsed, would be the last obstacle on the way to individual and collective freedom. It would be the last rearguard for the conservation of power against those who doubt it. This belief in the necessity of the system we seek to strike. The question is who, and on what basis, will be organized for that eventuality, and what relations will we develop in this course?

## Dispute and the choice to attack

As we identified some of the causes that shape the acceptance of the system in the consciousness of the nations' masses, thus briefly we will try to identify the reasons that lead some people to the paths of dispute with their predetermined roles and to a conscious denial of national identity.

**The formation of the conscience of the individual is a result of many factors. From the social-family environment in which they were raised, to the events and circumstances which the person experiences along with the ideas, the discussions and the thoughts with which they come into contact.** All these things create a reservoir of stimuli that will shape and develop the individual's conscience. **There is never a single reason that pushes someone into a decision.** It is a result of several factors. Also, when searching for a person's incentives, and maybe seemingly with a simplified representation of reality, we stop identifying the most obvious for reasons for the lack of thought. Namely, we focus on what we think has played a decisive role and stimulated the person to a choice. But there are always extra motivations which stay unnoticeable. The question is which of these the individual selects to attach importance to, and that will affect the final decision.

Likewise, the choice of refusal doesn't need to be taken only by people who were out of society beforehand (due to economic exclusion, etc.), but also by people who are included in the community but choose a total break with their defined role. The issue is which principles, values and desires someone chooses to follow. **A rebel is one who wishes to be.** In the early years of a person's life, rebellion and the reaction are almost implied stages in his/her development. As the person grows up, the exploitation increases: salaried slavery, the sense of dissatisfaction of empty social relations, the regularity, the default norms of behaviors of society and the realization of the overall ugliness of the system, all these can stimulate some individuals from juvenile rebelling to more mature political awareness. We

are all alienated from this system, in different degrees, but it is our own choice to take the decision to attack the source of this alienation, power.

The first contact with the ideas of anarchy has a nodal role in this development, so even if we haven't felt totally yet the oppression of this world, the thought of creating a free society with authentic relationships between the people, free from power structures, nonetheless fills us. With the increase of experiences within the existing system, it is understood that the model of the "evil" state and capitalism that oppresses the "pure" society is a superficial analysis which doesn't correspond to what we experience. As we mentioned before, power is a complicated relationship with its body being, at times, almost everyone. So as long as we understand that the state and the society create a complexity of relationships between masters and obedient people, we face a difficult bet. **This is about the balance between what we'd like and what we do in real life.** Obviously, we realise that it isn't possible to behave in an anarchist way in each condition you face in this society. We end up making contracts and we also enter into a period of cleansing which is decisive in the life of each person. It is the time that each person takes their choices. What will you risk and where are you willing to reach for in your desire to attack a system that determines our lives, giving us the role of the gear and demanding our total obedience to it?

At this point, depending on the thoughts, experiences and triggers that form the individual's conscience, the options which the person has open up in front of them. These we could outline in two basic options for a person who is aware of the role of power and wants to refuse it. Of course, this is happening in the limits of simplification, in order to come to some basic conclusions and it doesn't mean that there aren't various shades in the range of these two directions.

Some, facing the fear of repression and of the consequences of action, choose to move to the legitimate limits of protest that the system sets so as to implement a pressure valve for every potential dispute it accepts. **Defining their actions according to the criminal code and rejecting anything that would have serious legal implications, this is one individual's choice.** Here we will observe that a few of them recognize fear as the cause of their choice and are able to clarify it to their comrades. This is a respectable position because it becomes clear and it is honest. Nevertheless, the majority of people who reject the action because they fear the consequences will try to justify their choice, converting their fear to theories. They reach the point of criticising the people who act and instead of the embarrassment of admitting their fear, they will use a political mantle to coat the truth. **With superficial arguments they will try to conceal this simple truth as it is an expected reaction of every person to defend with artificial excuses** when they feel that their ego is diminished. This defense turns into an ideology. This behavior is not exclusive of a particular anarchist tendency, it's simply

displayed with different “ideological” lies. **The other choice stems from the core of the anarchist perspective that there is no action without revolutionary violence.**

Avoiding misunderstandings, action is also the diverse movements of propaganda (demonstrations, posters, microphones etc.) and projects (meetings, squats, radio stations, websites of anti – system information etc.) that don’t involve direct violence. These movements and these arguments are necessary for the diffusion of our positions and they play an important role in the organization of anarchists. **However, these projects must not become an end in themselves, but promote the intensification of hostilities.** Our goal will always be violent actions towards the system’s overthrow and this is what drives the organization and propaganda of our struggle. When these things do not promote revolutionary violence, then they are not an implement for our purpose, but reformist projects of the former direction and choice. Our aim is the destruction of power through direct violent action and all our other tools are designed to help our desire, including this text itself. As we have said, there are people who choose the attack here and now for the realization of their desires and anger against the system. The starting point, usually, exists in occasional involvement with attacks during demonstrations or even outside universities where it’s easy for someone to engage in conflicts in the street. In these cases, there are several potential prospects.

One of them is for someone to remain attached to occasional clashes, ignoring more organized infrastructure for direct action that gives new margins for development and sharpening of the struggle against the system. The other perspective is to utilize these first experiences of conflict and to begin to define for himself where and when the attack will be realized, striking unexpectedly and creating the conjectures themselves. This option is difficult and full of pitfalls, among them prison or even death, but it will offer experiences, situations, emotions and comrades ... However, this option has to be done when there are strong bases of perception and not just impulsively.

Otherwise, if the circumstances are fine, the person continues to act, but building on shaky foundations. On successful offensive actions, all appear at the first battle line. But, when difficult situations arise (repression, arrests, etc.) these will usually fail with the person, too.

**Even historically studying some cases of urban guerrillas, we see people whose behavior after arrest isn’t equivalent or is even more treacherous in relation to their previous action.** We have, constantly, to retest our choices through the key events that we experience in the course of our evolution. This review of what we take for granted strengthens the foundations with which we ourselves have supported our perception.

So, personal experiences of a first arrest or a first disappointment by people who, until yesterday, are thought related, should be utilized as they are a living process even for the strengths of our own self. Even events of wider social range are equally useful tools for understanding ourselves, our choices, and the circumstances around us, too. As for example in Greece, December of 2008 [police murder of Alexis Grigoropoulos] prompted several people to act aggressively and it accelerated procedures inside the anarchist space. Nevertheless and unfortunately, as we all experienced, this development didn't have strong bases as regards perceptions. Additionally, in relation to a repressive attack of dominance in September of 2009 (case of 'Halandri', CCF) it became clear that many of those who were radicalized due to the uprising reviewed their choices in the light of fear and returned to the "legitimate struggle" or they completely distanced themselves from everything that is associated with anarchy. So, we understand with various examples, over time, the difference between a casual conjecture and a conscious attitude of life. Surely it would be funny to think that there is a specific course of development for each person which will lead him or her to the conscious choice of attack. **Individuals with completely different origins end up in the same selection.** There are dozens of different life paths that can lead someone to the anarchist urban guerrilla. But the common point of all is the basic concept as to the use of violence as a means of action for the destruction of power.

## **First thoughts about groups**

As the person comes into contact with social ventures of anarchist concepts, relations are created with other persons with comparable notions. These first fermentations pose in a realistic basis the prospect of creating a conspiratorial direct action group. Public processes are inherently open in nature and they have limited capacities in the area of illegal action. There cannot be the secrecy that should be imposed in the planning of attacks with all the means. Their contribution is very important not only for propaganda actions, but also for the relationships which are formed during the fermentation of these processes. These can be the base for the creation of a conspiratorial group.

Besides, our goal is the possibility of further development of the design and realization of attacks by all means for the destruction of power. This is something that's achieved only by organized substructures of direct action. Of course the person can act by alone, but acting in a group means the person communicates and shares their thoughts, plus develops partnerships that constitute the first cell of anarchist life. Also within a team the capacities of partners are combined, thus they enhance the effect and abilities of guerrilla action. Also the formation of a grouping

covers a person's basic desires on an emotional and psychological level. The person within an anarchist group is tested and experiences situations and behaviors that add meaning to terms such as companionship and solidarity. The feeling that you share common beliefs and desires as you know that you have people next to you who will not retreat in difficult situations and that together you will experience, gives you strength and fills you as a person. This situation releases an enormous dynamic to the person which is to become a collective individual in the limits of a conspiratorial cluster of direct action as well as the group itself. This effort of people to collaborate is an enduring project of relationship experimentation. Not on a theoretical level, but in constant motion in real conditions. In this experiment the terms have an important role on which it is conducted and evolve. In this it is possible for different people to communicate their perceptions, forming something collective in the heart of a society that alienates relations.

## Conditions of joining a fellowship

The human psycho-synthesis formed in the hostile environment of power has different aspects that often result in contradictions. When a group is being formed, the bet that comes into force is the development of a constant, collective evolution which is correlative with the growth of each person who forms a part of it. **Someone could liken this project to society's miniature structured in contrast to the existent on our own anarchist terms.** We can feel moments of anarchy in the relationships which are developed within the group indeed. To share behaviors that have the ability to dig up the most beautiful features which an individual has inside him or her. This aspect of the project is one of the most important that makes it worthy to be tested. The issue is that we are all offspring of this world power and are grafted with all kinds of authoritarian behaviors which are aspects of our character. But when we understand and deal honestly with these aspects, it becomes possible to limit and strike them, under our conceptions of anarchy.

Surely we speak about a distorted picture that wants to show the anarchists as "non-violent, pure idealists". That's why we don't deny the violence of our force during a clash in an expropriation, an attack on a fascist or an executive of power. **Likewise, we manage the violence instrumentally and we ensure that it will not become a permanent part of our psycho-synthesis which will be expressed in all our relationships.** The question then is to discover new ways of behavior in relating to our partners, freeing creative and original aspects of ourselves. Now, being part of a grouping, this effort goes beyond the individual and progresses as a collective process that affects its interior. Generally, in a radical zone, there are different organizational models for direct action groups, depending

on the political views of their members. If we tried to discern these into categories we will identify two basics of them.

The first is an operational model that recognizes the existence of hierarchy inside itself. This is personified in one leader-chief or in a central committee. This usually occurs in left-communist organizations. The second one, and it is this one that suits our anarchist values and perceptions, is a model of a collaborative configuration and a determination through the same process with a prospect to prescribe agreed upon by all. In some cases of the collaborative figuration, the anarchist consensus is promoted, but this doesn't mean some compromise in the name of the majority. It is more like a mutual position reaching between comrades, on matters that do not affect our interpretation of values. **The most difficult part is to create the appropriate conditions that will make the decision's process reach a result expressing the wishes of all the members.** The first model of organization doesn't allow an individual to evolve. Instead it maintains his or her negative characteristics by reproducing authoritarian concepts (hierarchy, assignment, predefined roles). It is an oxymoron to have the desire to attack a hierarchical system of power management, which treats you as a subject, and then put yourself back into a position of vassal under someone else's guidance. As we perceive as foreign the transformation of power by a "revolutionary way" that removes us from the destruction of the existing system, just so we perceive as foreign a "revolutionary" organization with a hierarchical mode of operation. The existence and acceptance of hierarchy is the logic of assignment to which we will refer later.

**The individual who accepts his/her position as inferior in a relationship is compatible with problematic self-esteem, a lack of confidence and alienation, which while it is sometimes combined with an effort of individual agitation nonetheless means that they consciously renounces their individual responsibility.** When any of the above occurs, the person themselves puts a brake on the individual, and hence, the collective progress of the entire group. This model carries the acceptance of defeat and the resignation of one's initiative, which is alien and hostile to the anarchist concept. It is a model of organizing that doesn't elevate the individual's possibilities, just manages them. Certainly, hierarchy, whether institutional or informal, exists in almost all interpersonal relations. It is expressed in both friendly and amatory relationships as well as inside political groupings. Even subconscious efforts of enforcement exist from person to person. It is a product of this world or, maybe, an instinct of humans. It is an aspect of our psyche that exists in everyone. **So even in our own model of anarchist organization, manifestations of informal hierarchy will exist.** This is one of the first questions which the individual and the organization have to manage. From the beginning, we should establish the anarchist terms upon which the group will evolve in order to avoid unpleasant situations in the future. With self-control

and the preservation of collective procedures inside the group we can confront the remnants of our authoritarian aspects. We can transform our personal competitive ambitions into productive competition between comrades for the promotion of our cause, for collective and individual liberation. Even the tensions whose causes originate from the world of power, we can manage so as to be limited in moments and not result in a permanent conditions.

Through the collective communication we seek, any comrade who expresses such attitudes undertakes the task of fighting them and improving themselves or we will be led to a rupture with them. The acceptance of authoritarian residues is not an option because in the long term they will lead to the establishment of such within us. Therefore, the immediate resolution of the issue at the moment that it occurs will relieve us from future problems in cohesion, operation and comradeship. In the relation to these considerations for the internal conditions regarding the cluster's evolution and the issue of individual determination and initiative, both are put within the entire collectivity. Being anarcho-individualists we turn against the system of diffuse domination that seeks our submission, by defining our desires and specifying the frames in which we can move. From a certain point of view, someone could also perceive the grouping in which we participate as another limiting condition of our desires inside it's terms. Here, the importance of confirmation and constant review of the values and group's relations becomes clear. **When some persons decide to go along in the war against power, in fact, they voluntarily share their desires and a piece of themselves.** This is something inevitable during the fermentation of the decisions and the joint strategy as it is not always feasible to exist constantly in the same world-view. Different rationales will bring the first disagreements slowly. Obviously, not breaks in issues of the code of values, but in some choices and therefore desires and peculiarities in non crucial issues.

Evidently, we don't all have the same possibilities of political estimation of parameters and practical results just because we have common perceptions. We are different and we have different abilities. **Here, the key of good management of such issues is small concessions from both sides and an allergy to specialization.** When there are healthy and honest relations of comradeship, the different abilities in consistency have only positive results, if they are kept away from permanent roles and pundits. Besides, even a consensus that "affects" our egoism, can be completely covered later, seeing another comrade capitulate at another time in a future issue which will arise in the limits of reciprocity. Not as an exchange, but as a recognition of our own capacity in a sector in which we are able to offer more than the others. That means that during collective figuration, some may give 100% of themselves while others give less. The desires are common, but each of us has their own hue, and during the collective figuration and composition, some

hues will be absorbed more than others. In real relations of comradeship, selfishness must keep its creative aspect and contribute both to the individual and to the collective level of the team. Concessions and an anarchist consensus can happen when we are sure that the other comrade, also, would do the same to a standard that we insist, always in the limits of dialectics. In order to administrate our selfishness, an important process is the understanding by ourselves of the incentives of the other comrade who insists on something. If we consider this insistence to be the result of a more complete political analysis than our own, then obviously we acquiesce and acknowledge our mistake. If it is of a low importance (e.g. a word in a communique of aesthetic value and not of politics, which is not to everyone's taste), without coming into conflict with our conscience, then this small concession is worth it. **But, when we realize the incentives are not in line with our code of values, such as cowardice or emotions of betrayal of our common desires, then the issue gets out of hand and represents a generally problematic situation which has to be cleared up immediately.** Through communication and our perceptual capacity, if we are led to such findings of a person of the group then a rupture with this person must be realized by their removal. So, issues not crucial for the team's decisions and development can be bypassed with mutual concessions for the sake of the functionality of the group. **But, when the issue is one of values, the upshot cannot be the imposition of one's personal will on the group or vice versa.** The comrade who does something without their absolute willingness, if they are finally pressed to do it, by the circumstances or emotionally, they don't do it well. As anarchists, there is a common principle of not pushing one another to take a decision or a choice that one doesn't feel in oneself.

The whole team, even if it takes hours of discussions, must shape its decisions. There is a difference between the use of dialectical methods and of arguments amongst comrades with, typically, persuasion as a method of extorting decisions. The first is functional and healthy while the second is the use of authoritative, technical persuasion with long-term negative effects.

We must maintain the healthy basis of the internal process away from games of politics and hostile behaviors between comrades. In the rare case that even after attempts of fermentation, we end up standing still due to an unacceptable decision, we must give space to the individual's initiative. **When unanimity is not reached and the incentives of the two different views are part of the common code of values, then without meaning the general breakdown of the group, we operate by our own account in this specific issue.** It is the time that the person's willingness overcomes the framework of the team. We must respect this desire and it has to exist in the space for such initiatives, when it's needed because of the conditions. Regarding the issue of the delimitation of a person's

egoism inside a group, we get some main conclusions. In sub-topics without great importance, with each minor concession, we put as a priority the group's function. In crucial issues which arise, we seek to reach into a mutually acceptable and unanimous decision through the fermentation of an exchange of views and arguments. In rare cases where this is not achieved, space is given to the initiative of the individual in the specific issue. All these above exist only if we ensure that the motives of the person who has a different view fall within the limits of our common code of values.

## Objectives

The creation of a direct action group involves, besides the relationship of political views, a base on which to build our collective desires. A team based on specific agreements that highlight whether the objectives of each comrade contains the collectivity and if the collective targets contain the individual. We cannot rely only on the superficial impression that we have of a comrade in choosing to go along with them. We should as far as possible try to understand the political motives that drive their desire for collaboration.

It is the careful choice of the comrades who participate in the group that facilitates the overall evolution of the entire project. Our own desires within a collectivity is the total denial and destruction of this system through direct illegal action by all means to promote anarchy. But there are individuals whose main motive in joining an illegal grouping is limited to some extent by the efforts to resolve their issue of self-financing. With a few words they seek only the cooperation in and the earnings from the expropriation of the banks. While other people may well wish to realize actions, but with the condition of always lowering the bar of the means that we will use in our attacks and only do symbolic actions. The examples of different approaches to the issue of operation and evolution of affinity groups are many. The problem occurs when the desires of the members are different or restrict each other, then in the process of the group problems will be created and splits will happen because of this. The priorities must be shared among the members because when there is differed targeting then the collective direction is lost. A deformity of the anarchist movement is that there are a lot more people who are willing to upgrade their actions in the direction of self-financing, but not in the direction of the anarchist urban guerrilla.

If anarchists who chose armed robberies were making with the same frequency also armed actions, then the presence of the guerrilla would be much more noticeable. It is unfortunately only a minority of anarchist robbers that start from the choice of armed expropriation and then upgrade their actions into purely po-

litical actions were there are no livelihood benefits. The question is why someone chooses to take up arms to get into a bank, ready to kill or be killed in a gunfight, but doesn't use the same weapons to target and shoot the enemies that dominate us. This question has as many excuses as answers. Apparently the main reason is fear. The cops chase a simple expropriation with less attention than they treat the purely political actions.

To be clear, the choice of robbing a bank is something not just acceptable for us, but it is a necessary and integral part of the operation of a guerrilla group. There are operating expenses that must be met for the design and realization of actions but also for the welfare of the members. Of course we are not satisfying our desire for comprehensive action, we are only avoiding wage slavery which is a basic tool of allegiance to the system.

The refusal of work when not combined with participation in the anarchist urban guerrilla is just another "job" and simply an illegal way of enrichment, which by itself does not threaten the system. We want to save time to give ourselves totally to the cause of revolution. Our desire is not limited to alternative livelihood proposals, but met only through multifaceted attack on the system as a whole. Certainly now in Greece because of increasing security in banks, the choice of robbery became difficult, causing many to give up and lose even that little contact with the underground, a sign of their particular choice.

Examples of different incentives that someone has who wants to be involved with armed groups are reported here only to demonstrate the importance of common goals throughout the team. If somebody who has a more comprehensive desire for attack forms a group with someone who only cares for robbery, then automatically they will hit a limit in the operational capabilities. If two people share the desire for action, but each defines the limit of methods, for example *only the use of incendiary devices*, it thus automatically reduces the activity of the comrade who wants to apply the practice of political executions. It makes no sense to build an infrastructure that from the outset is limited to a low range. Of course, because absoluteness suits theories and not real life, we do not consider that one must simply wait and postpone action until it meets the perfect heaven-sent comrades. By postponing it is better to utilize various collaborations with comrades even if they have different priorities from ours. Furthermore there is always the probability by friction and shared experiences to enrich people's choices.

Although, without being pessimistic, people do tend towards easy solutions and surety, avoiding the difficult path of realization of their ideas as anarchists. Their whole problem is thus to find excuses to postpone action until they obtain the perfect group and conditions. Instead, we talk about anarchy here and now. But we want to focus on the idea that says that it is better to choose to build a relationship with the prospect of development with a more inexperienced comrade, than to

choose an opportunistic structure limited from the beginning even if in practice it seems more experienced. It is worth investing in something that we identify with rather than something we have little in common with. So we must try to be clear from the beginning about our targets so that each comrade can make his/her choice. For us the goal is to create a grouping that integrates all modes of attack in action and is the tool for realization of our overall desire to reject this world through action. Beginning with this common base we will continue focusing on some of the issues that may arise in the further development of clustering.

## **Assignment**

Another interesting issue that arises particularly in multi-member groupings is the distribution of roles within them. The process of assignment and role specialization is permanent when a person undertakes to carry out specific “work.” This specialization -if not broken- can become problematic over time. It is assumed that members of a group are not the same person, so it makes sense that someone has greater abilities in something specific than others. The logic of the aftermath is that he or she who does something better and undertakes to do it, increases the chances of a better result. Of course, because -beyond the result- our goal is self-improvement within the group, there is a delicate issue in this case.

The same person taking on a specific “job” on permanent basis precludes the development of the rest of the group in this particular area. So on one hand we have greater efficiency and on the other hand the issue of the development of each member of the group individually. Overcoming this dilemma is achieved through the proper management and operation of the group. When someone ends up an “expert” on a subject within the group that can be the beginning of alienated selfish behavior on his or her part that will lead to forms of informal hierarchy.

The consequence of a poor conscience, conviction of our superiority over other members due to a knowledge or ability that we possess, only leads to behaviors that are conditioned from the alienation of such a system.

This feeds the negative aspect of our egoism and consequently results in entrenched roles respectively creating separated relationships within the group. Something that contradicts the very logic of the creation of the group and causes a rift in the partnership between it’s members.

Of course, as every coin has two sides, acceptance of someone else’s expertise is also acceptance of a resignation from our side on the issue of evolution. It is a form of defeatism and lack of faith in ourselves.

It can of course be even worse when this acceptance comes from an effort of individual delegation. To get rid of group tasks by “loading” them on to someone

else either out of fear for their implementation, due to risk, or either of laziness is something that when understood, should be immediately combated and by even coming into conflict with the member who develops such an attitude.

What will help us to avoid these pitfalls of egos and tiny hierarchies is promoting the diffusion of knowledge and development of skills as the basis of the group.

The person who possesses the knowledge and skill in something must be the one to transmit it to the other members. There can be no question of selfishness from one side or apathy on the other.

Knowledge must not remain someone's possession. Only through communication will we feed the evolution of each member and therefore of the total group.

Throughout this process there may be a specific gravity to the view of the lead individual who knows something more, but without them working as if infallible or as a pundit. We should base the team's progress on consistent and ongoing learning consistent on the experimentation of all members in new fields of knowledge.

Let us transform ourselves in a competition with noble emulation between comrades that will be an extra motivation for evolution. Moreover we live in the digital age where information is everywhere around us.

What is missing is the desire to build on this knowledge. When a person has a real interest in the anarchist guerrilla, he must broaden his knowledge, utilize technology – turning it against its owners – and upgrade her or his activities by all means.

It is absurd to get caught up in thinking of keeping a low bar of anarchist violence with the pretext of it being easily assimilable and it being appropriable use of means by all. Because finally the thing that we will keep low is the potential for improvement of the individual and hence the group.

All means of attack may become accessible with appropriate attention. The attempt by some theorization of choosing low-impact means of attack is not the solution to the issue of specialization.

Usually it is just an excuse because of legal consequences and fear of repression covered with a theoretical cloak. It is not a practical issue which by using only symbolic means it will solve. It is political issue and requires individual and collective consciousness and a desire to sharpen the anarchist attack against the state and its structures.

All this will have a practical relevance beyond better relationships between comrades, as each comrade separately develops their skills and broadens their capabilities. In the course of our action it is possible that any one of our comrades may be arrested or killed.

If you were the only one who possessed a key capability for the operation of the group and the rest remained just spectators in this process, they would now find themselves in a very difficult situation. For example, if in a group only one person

knows how to steal vehicles or to manufacture bombs, the blow if they were lost would be enormous and there would be an issue of the continuation of action by other members.

In contrast, when we all reclaim knowledge and we practice our skills, the ability of the team increases in managing difficult situations.

So our aim is not to limit the development of means, but it is the constant effort of all members to experiment with using them and increasing their skills. Only in this way is the opportunity and possibility feasible for anyone from the group to have the knowledge and skills necessary to all aspects of the organization.

## **The chemistry of relations and their practical use**

The desire and choice for our participation in an organization is not only to be a part of a tool that makes attacks against the authoritarian system. Through the creation of an anarchist group we desire to create partnerships based on our anarchist values and common experience of action. These are the essential core of the organization and the basis of further practical procedures. During this partnership different relationships obviously develop between each individual and the other members of the group.

The efforts to shape a common ground, the fermentation that occurs from this process and the friction that develops through common experiences and action, together with the special features of each individual, create different “chemistries” in every relationship. It is a fact that everyone does not match all the same. Between some people a better understanding in relating and a closer appreciation and perception of conditions than with others can be created.

Common references, similar ages and experiences can be some of the dozens of parameters that lead to this result. All this is something independent of mutual appreciation and companionship between all persons involved in the project and which are basic conditions of group existence. The chemistry of a partnership that is the result of a cooperation between individuals is something that has its own separate color and cannot be determined rationally.

It doesn't have any meaning to force situations trying to achieve an ideal condition where all individuals of the organization have exactly the same relationships between each other. Some things, such as the best bond between comrades who are also friends, we have to recognize and be more focused on managing them in the best possible way, so that this friendship does not get to invade and justify situations which after some time will alter the characteristics of the group.

Everything we say here is more applicable to multi-member teams than to cells of two or three people where things are simpler and clearer. As with any issue that

arises, also in this case we utilize concepts we formed from our conclusions from that which we have lived and sought the best way to avoid future problems and resolve existing ones.

It is understood that the existence of different chemistries between individuals may eventually affect the result in the course of our action and there is the whole issue. The practical relevance of such a situation is, for example, the attempt to carry out an action with two members of the group between whom the chemistry is not very good.

In this case, the lack of “good chemistry” between them can lead to the weakening of their potential as a result of the difficulty of cooperation. This reduces the success rate of this energy making it vulnerable to unforeseen factors. Each plan, as detailed and prepared as it can be, always contains uncertainties that cannot be predicted in their entirety. This gap is covered on the move because of the initiatives and reactions of people who perform the specific action. The core of the direct reflexes and quick initiatives based on good cooperation when there are intense and unpredictable situations is the moment that the chemistry between the partners plays a decisive role. If lacking in this element there is likely to be a problematic combination of different initiatives that will lead to failure. There are fractions of a second in which the partners must act as one mind and synchronize their movements on the basis of a common strategy to cope and to succeed.

We must understand that the chemistry between comrades is not determined by a simple “adding” of each of the skills required for an action. The friction between them and the experience and knowledge of everyone’s peculiarities are some of the important factors for their cooperation that will increase the success rate.

The process of development of the partnerships is achieved over time and is based on the use of knowledge and our acquaintance with our comrades. We cannot force the process to be accelerated. All you can do is to create those conditions that will help in this development.

This entire conclusion leads us to a careful treatment of the issue of forming the sub-group that will realize an action. We should count as another factor the chemistry between comrades who will undertake to carry out the operation.

It is likely that people who themselves have the skills that are necessary for realization of an specific energy, in a sub-group with someone else the same persons can not do it because of poor cooperation between them. We can promote the creation of individual informal sub-groups within the basic organization, based on the best chemistry of people who participate in them.

This is not disruptive when there is the above mentioned joint basis of mutual partnership among all members. In maintaining the common direction of the organization through collective procedures and decisions then we prevent informal hierarchy aspects that do not affect the team’s consistency. Such operating group

models offer the possibility of relatively autonomous “columns” which support the entire process and have learned to work collaboratively.

Thus developing even stronger links between partners and avoid frictions, to some extent, by the forced collaboration of team members who are not having exactly ideal interpersonal relationships between them.

One important thing that needs special attention is to safeguard that this model does not create distances between comrades. It makes no sense to resolve in this way problematic relations between comrades. These should be handled differently. This is simply a model with the aim of utilizing in the best possible way everyone’s opportunities based on the chemistry that develops with other partners and not only on his/her own abilities. So the person themselves will find a more fertile ground in all areas of development. Of course, it is not reasonable to create different cores that will have a two-speed group concentrating on the one hand with those with the best potential and on the other hand with people who may not have much experience.

We are talking about the creation of an equivalent cell which respects the basic principle of the organization, the possibility of individual development through the action of each member. All this to ensure everything is moving under joint decision between all comrades to defuse disruptive trends.

In conclusion, our goal is the effort to improve each relationship separately within the group as a prerequisite for a collective evolution.

## **Management of relations and ruptures**

In the evolution of the group we come closer to our comrades due to the friction that develops from shared experiences. We learn about each other better and during this process we even build stronger relationships. Certainly in this path it is sure that we will discover aspects of their personality or even of our own that we did not notice earlier. The person in difficult conditions reveals the truest part of him or herself. In experiencing intense moments a person’s reactions shows everyone what he or she truly is. It cancels out the easy excuses and mitigation often fueling a perception of “slackness” which has clear results in the depoliticisation of a group.

We should not count on someone’s sympathy or in single instances of behavior to lead to an overall conclusion. It would be more effective to shape our view of someone from their attitude in difficult conditions. When a person does something once they are very likely to repeat it, especially when it comes to something negative. Moreover, the best estimate of the future behavior of someone is the study and understanding of their past. In any case, our positive or negative evaluation of

someone must be the result of their overall progress and not limited to the assessment of individual moments. Negative characteristics, products of alienation from society that we live and evolve, are in the temperament of us all. Behaviors that are driven by the propensity towards self-interest combined with a lack of interest in those close to us and selfishness generally, are elements that can still appear across and within the group. The only open horizon in the evolution of such behavior is consciousness and the individual and collective code of values. So we try -through an understanding of ourselves and our comrades- to limit and eliminate alienating behaviors and motivations.

We must not fall into the trap of justification. The understanding of why someone does something is not the justification of what they do, but a basis for trying to change it. We should not blame the conditions, the bad moment or generally anything else apart from the person themselves. Consistency is a key feature of affinity groups and their informal networking. It is something that we seek and should be based on honesty and acceptance of a common code of values. When we understand problematic behaviors of comrades, we should not -under a false sense of unity- try to over-ride them by putting them under illusions, trying not to disturb the climate between us and pretending that everything is all right. This is a shortsighted approach that will create future problems in the team's base. It is important to separate the real problematic behaviors from the lack of chemistry or special rapport between comrades. Each character is different and we all have traits that someone else may perceive as whims. The real problem arises when we realize that some behavior stems from incentives that are against our conscience and our value code.

We cannot overlook the issue arising because this would undermine the comprehensive project which is based on honest relations within it. Our management of this must be clear and direct. The first thing we do when we perceive something is the immediate and direct communication with the person that we consider has the problematic behavior as well as with all other comrades of the group. Perhaps with this effort from our side an opportunity will be given to the person to identify and correct the mistake. At the same time this process will help us to confirm whether our estimation was correct, watching the behavior they show when we communicate our opinion about them and tell them what we believed. The reaction will be decisive for clarifying the situation. It may lead the person to overcome the error through effective perception of it and finally the result will be the correction of the problematic behavior. Perhaps we realize that we made a mistake and we were exaggerated in our conclusions. Finally it may be our efforts are crowned with failure and lead to the next stage, that of immediate rupture with them.

In this latter scenario, the break must be a collective decision of the team. The organization is based on consistency and has no room for choice of middle way

or patience. When it is understood that a person has a substantial problem with another member of the organization then it is the responsibility of each member individually to take a firm stand. About such things lukewarm feelings do not fit. Everything must be clear. Otherwise negativity, inhibitions and prejudice are grafted on to relations which must be based on honesty.

Yet, we must realize that sometimes when people who are close to each other are in conflict, they cannot mutate the previous partnership they had into an indifferent relationship. Usually what is created is a hostile climate that stems from dissatisfaction and frustration that bring the sharpened requirements that we had for a person who we thought was a close comrade to the fore. Therefore with a clear manner, each member must be aware of the amount of personal responsibility he or she has in a collective decision because the future is unknown.

This awareness, together with full honesty, is the basis for resolving internal issues after problematic behavior of one or some members of the organization. In conclusion, we realize that only when we strictly judge ourselves and the people who form the organization do we lay strong foundations for evolution and avoid future problems in parallel. We need a constant confirmation of incentives through actions and we should never be complacent by earlier findings. Finally when the problems that arise are affecting our value code, then through sincere communication we should directly solve them at all costs.

## **The misunderstanding of the obvious**

An issue that can occur in a fixed grouping over time and it is, to some extent, a deformity of this model of organization is the misunderstanding of the self-evident. It is sensible to “lock” your conclusions about your comrades when you share common experiences and instants of tension. **At some stage in the course of your common path, you automate the views that you have for your close comrades.** We neither question their motives nor investigate their way of thinking. We feel, and to some extent it’s applicable, that we have been led to safe conclusions for each comrade separately. This is reasonable and useful because a condition where everyday you would be looking for affirmation of the basic values from your comrades that link you would be tedious and certainly not functional.

Here, however, the problem that we mentioned arises.

Each person is unique and she or he has their own accounts, desires and ways of thinking. But they are influenced by different conditions which they experience. The result of this influence is translated in each person differently. Even when we experience the same conditions with someone close to us, it doesn’t mean that we will end up at the same conclusions. So the fact that we considered it obvious, a

shared view at one time, where the circumstances were different, doesn't mean that in other circumstances, all will remain in the same common light.

**It is the time when, maybe, the biggest frustrations are created, when a close comrade treats the circumstances not in accordance with our criteria that, mistakenly, we thought we had in common.** We can try to avoid this question with proper group management within the relationships, preventing such situations. The avoidance of these situations applies at two time stages. The first is related to the period of our integration into or the creation of the organization. It is then, as we have already mentioned, when the aspirations, motives and desires of each person must be clearly set. It is the moment when we realize if there is a common basis between the comrades upon which we will build our collective operation. Despite purely theoretical questions it is equally important to set any practical extensions for our entire action.

**The attitude which we consider that is correct is that we all agree to stick collectively towards key issues that may arise.** One of them is our behavior in case of arrest and assuming political responsibility for our action. This is something that we should have agreed upon at an earlier time for the purpose of defining a common stance, depending on possible circumstances in which an arrest may occur. Of course, we should not restrict the issue of agreements only for this part of the consequences of our action.

There are many unexpected situations we may have to deal with such as the choice of illegality after an arrest warrant or engagement etc... Such discussions between comrades of the group on potential scenarios are very necessary. They prepare us and put us in a thought process that is done in neutral time and not under the regime of the pressure of circumstances. So we can come to calm and conscious decisions, acting definitively better when an event actually occurs, than deciding in the moment it happens and under the weight of pressure. **Also, through these discussions we will understand more about our close comrades, which either will increase the cohesion of the group or, at least, it will defined what those who are beside us think.** No longer will assumptions hover over us that may generate incorrect self-evidence, but clear agreements will be reached through communication which brings to bear a value system and by each person individually. The second time stage where there may be a misunderstanding between what is considered self-evident and what is the reality occurs after the long-time friction, fermentation and coexistence of comrades.

Normally, from the previous stage that is the beginning of the group, we should have clarified our views on crucial issues. But over time the priorities, the aspirations even and someone's way of thinking who is influenced by possible new conditions, may change. So what was evident based on a rational continuity of thought which relied on prior agreements, for a team member may have changed.

Relying on the existence of a common basis which was formed when the circumstances were different can lead us to be trapped in the wrong conclusions. It is important to be able to understand the changes of our comrades and prevent any misunderstandings, posing directly our concerns as for their change of direction from the common course we had charted. We should, periodically, restore the discussion in regard to key issues for the reconfirmation of common reasoning. This is not only for keeping alive the thought of organization away from dogmatism, but also for remembering our common commitment to this. But when someone has really changed to the point that we consider it problematic, it is better to be at rupture with them in a dead time and not during intense moments such as an arrest etc. Obviously it would be logical for the individual who has retreated and thinks differently to interpose the issue themselves into the collective process as it is not the responsibility of individuals who remain consistent and support their joint agreements. Because, however, we don't care about what is typically right, but the result and the essential prevention of such problems, we cannot wait for another's initiative but protect the group and ourselves when we take the initiative and start such conversations within it. In conclusion we must realize that we cannot rely on self-evident estimates because sooner or later we will experience strong frustrations.

When we detect signs of change in comrades we communicate with them directly and collectively to avoid issues that may arise in the future. Do not be trapped by the routine because we will not have the ability to assess on the basis of new parameters. We affirm our agreements and we make them part of the core of our team.

## **The structure of the organization**

Another issue of a technical nature whose handling involves purely political features is the structural model of the organization in relation to functionality, the perspectives of diffusion and compliance to rules relating to conspiracy. **To begin with, the proposal which we believe has the best chance to bring out all the possibilities of conformation and a fertile ground for the development of conscious people is the existence of an organized stable structure.** This is a consistent basis that creates conditions of fermentation between comrades and poses prospects for an effective realization of our anarchist beliefs within it. Therein will develop relations driven by honesty, comradeship and the common passion for action. All this is reinforced by means of the duration of the project developed gradually and with a real opportunity to progress – unlike an occasional forming that restricts our longer prospects. An appointed expiration date for an

informal cluster after the end of the action for which it was created leaves abortive experiences and a sense of dissatisfaction to the comrades that compose it. **Such a perspective that promotes opportunistic encounters on the prospect of a specific theme or limited to single-issue logic and puts self-disbandment as an obvious procedure is troubled from several points of view.** It doesn't give the opportunity for a collective employment of experiences and experiences of participants with prospect towards the development of the project, exceeding the mistakes and issues that it encountered in its duration. It leads to overall life choices to attack becoming a hobby, an act or a kind of work. **It promotes disposable relationships as opposed to something authentic which timing and duration can create.** It is as if you only partially perceive and so underestimate the overall anarchist idea, where you don't have depth and sabotage the effort to create meaningful thoughts for the comrades. Usually, such a conception is not even a product of thoughts upon existing self-examinations that are being created in the course of the evolution of a stable enterprise (hierarchies, assignment etc.). It is the result of a culture full of fear in which anarchist circles are steeped. A stable structure, precisely because it increases the potential for a situation's development, is always high on the priorities of repression. But fear cannot lead us to reject models of organization with prospectives, it cannot lead us to promote lighter versions of ourselves in order to prevent becoming the cops' target.

Our treatment by repression must prompt us to increase the safety conditions of clusters of cells and the conspiracy, not rejecting the intensification and trying to put brakes on our capabilities.

We believe that every anarchist guerrilla group is an experiment of relations forged in the field of action. Each experiment can fail for several reasons. There is not some sort of ideal recipe.

Despite this, we try in parallel to evolve by learning from others' previous experiences, as well as from our own. **Any failure we are experiencing should not lead us to negate the logic of the organization and the creation of guerrilla groupings. In every new effort we fix what we believe led to the failure of the previous one.** If a group finally ends up being an occasional venture for some reasons, it will not be the same as the one which keeps to a low bar of action, as we have defined it. Therein lies the difference of essential criticism motivated by development and negative criticism driven by fear of political overlay. So yes, our goal is to promote the creation of stable attack structures. **The natural evolution of this thought is the existence of a stable name for this structure which we evolve.** Just as they make groupings that assume political operations such as the issue of a magazine, the operation of a radio station or a squat, so too our project has a specific name. It is the expression of the need for self-definition and of our diversity in a society that tries to assimilate and determine us with cri-

teria that serves the dominant lifestyle. We are not satisfied with a general “label” that will flatten our individuality and our specificity. **No, neither are we “Some anarchists” nor are we defined only by the buzzword “The struggle continues” or whatever some people choose to put as a signature in their actions instead.**

So, we choose the continuation of our perspective, as the actions do not “speak” for themselves. The assumptions of responsibility for any action we realize is the determining element that connects theory and practice. An action alone does not produce messages through symbolism of choosing the purpose, timing, etc. The problem is that they can be so differentiated from the understanding of the perpetrator that the transfer is incomplete or can lead to distorted conclusions about his or her motives. **Only when the perpetrator themselves expresses by their unchanged words, the reasoning that led him or her to act, can it become communicative.** The action is the result of our desires and our choices. Power always tries to misrepresent news for serving the interests of itself. It estranges direct action from the motivations of the perpetrators when it considers that these can transmit the spark of rebellion that it is trying to hide. It aims to show the actions by means of media in the way power alone wants e.t.c. But behind every act hides individuals who risked their lives and freedom for its realization. Through this we aim to disseminate our ideas. All these will be achieved defending it with our words that will express what we want. **We look for comrades in this war. Neither spineless applauders nor a superficial aura of acceptance.** We address those who are open to listen. In this case, also, there are perspectives that suggest the silencing of the speech of the perpetrators of direct actions. Such beliefs from “our” camp stem from the fear of repression that we mentioned formerly. Indeed it is one of the arguments of “anarchists” who do not promote direct action as an integral part of their practice. They are afraid that anarchist organizations with their action and their words will sharpen the repression towards the whole anarchist scene where power considers that the perpetrators reside. So, the official anarchists separate theory from practice and they feel aggrieved that despite the wrong choice made by power, they fail to avoid repression.

**But we don’t have to determine our desires and choices based on the fear of the reformists. Our speech and our practice are inextricably linked.**

**With these we are trying to bring about that chaotic factor and sabotage the equation of power. To bring about cracks in the established way of thinking by opening the sack of probabilities. This is one of the basic objectives of our action.** The effort to sabotage the smooth flow of society’s thinking, that may lead some individuals closer to consciousness in order to diffuse the anarchist war and the destruction of power. Reverting to our main topic, we should be able to combine the existence of a stable structure and means of diffusion that we

desire. This diffusion is performed on two levels. Firstly, through claims of responsibility and our actions, our speech and our concepts travel and reach to unknown persons and they create stimuli for thought. This may even be an additional reason for an individual to make the upgrade of means after stimuli for thought which is given by our practice. The other level of diffusion is that there is direct contact and personal relationship with people who wish to act. So the question arises, how do we properly manage the enlargement of our organization with the accession of new comrades who want to. Here, beyond the desire to come closer and collaborate with new comrades, there is also the issue of security and necessary secrecy.

The existence of a stable structure should not be misunderstood and taken to mean centralization.

We don't believe that there should be only one organization that just increases the numbers of its membership. This would create a problem both on a practical level, as it will inevitably violate safety rules, and on an operational level it would evolve into an unwieldy shape unable to cope with speed when warranted by circumstances. It would ultimately adopt more bureaucratic methods because of the number of members, which may open the backdoor to behaviors that could become hostile to our anarchist beliefs.

Our opinion is that small flexible cells and groups can work better than a centralized organization. As we have already mentioned, even when the conditions or the circumstances lead to our team consisting of more operational people than we consider we can withstand, for reasons of consistency and efficiency, we can create a new infrastructure of smaller cells internally within the group. This increases the efficiency of the whole group as all members work simultaneously, simply divided into 2 or 3 smaller cells that will each take on something different.

*For example:* one cell plan a robbery to finance the organization while another cell launches a political act in accordance with the mutual agreement of the group. Of course, in such a model of organization where a group has multiple cells, alongside their autonomy in the planning of actions there should be maintained a process like an assembly among all the comrades where they can discuss all the issues and finally agree the common strategy of the organization. This model will also facilitate the staffing and the creation of new cells of people who want to join the anarchist urban guerrilla and who want to cooperate with us. So when a new comrade comes into contact with us it will be better to be part of a trial period in a cell of 3-4 persons which through friction and action both they and the other comrades can clarify if there is a common desire for collaboration. In this way we maintain some safety bulkhead as the new comrade will only be located with some of the group and not the whole. Thus through this provisional stage we ensure we do not expose the whole of our structure and if we choose not to advance the cooperation with a new comrade we will have fewer security holes as possible.

These trial cells, which will obviously have a different name than the basic organization, is a relatively safe way for the gradual accession of new comrades into the anarchist urban guerrilla. Moreover the whole project of the basic organization and the trial cells is part of the umbrella of the Informal Anarchist Federation network and our overall fight for the destruction of power. But this issue we will not analyze in this text.

With this model of trial cells we solved the problem of the safe insertion of people into the organization, but also there are additional prospects of possibilities. So if beyond a person who wants to join, there is also a parallel disposition from other comrades then this test cell may be transformed into something eventually fixed. So this "cycle" will not need to close, but in fact it will create a new independent cell inside the basic organization that is fully equivalent to the others. But here we must emphasize that it does not work if we try to multiply ourselves. It makes no sense to maintain such a cell if it has not substantial prospects by itself and is based solely on the individuals of the basic organization. Because these individuals will run simultaneously in two procedures and this is laborious and time consuming and in the long term will lead to problems in security. So we must decide if there is a prospect to leave some people from the group and establish an autonomous cell or whether to absorb some of the people of this cell into the basic organization.

This process raises a delicate issue created by the contradiction between perception and realism.

The effect of the fragmentation among comrades inevitably creates divisions depending on their level of knowledge regarding illegality. A fact which distinguishes comrades in "categories" depending on what they know. This is something that probably leaves ground for the manifestation of hierarchical behavior that we are trying to avoid. But such a treaty for security reasons is imperative, in the management of knowledge of illegal issues. The choice of direct action requires secrecy and tight fitting safety. The question now lies in the management of this treaty individually and collectively in order to act appropriately. Through its own organizational processes and the self-control of the comrades we will ensure that secrecy will not feed problematic behaviors within the group.

In conclusion, we realize that together with our anarchist conceptions we also promote in parallel a proposal of how to organize a direct action cell.

We find through consciousness and our anarchist values the balance between secrecy, functionality and pathologies arising within these ventures. There is no right or wrong prescription nor is something prescribed. It is a perpetual experiment of how we organize our desires and of the denaturing of a way of thinking in practice. We take risks and evolve trying to learn from our experiences.

## Epilogue

Concluding this brief capture of thoughts and reflections on the question of the individual and the group we would like to clarify some things that perhaps were misunderstood when reading the text.

We tried to contribute to the ongoing dialogue of the development of the anarchist conception and putting our own perspective on issues, which to some extent are taboo within the movement.

This text is nothing else but a stimulator for the continuity and development of this dialogue. It is charting, scattered to some extent, thoughts that are the result of experiences or assessments. We believe that there is not only one way to achieve something. History has shown that people with completely different starting points and routes, in different conditions, finally met on the common desire for action against authority. Each person carves his and her own path.

The question arises simply on whether we can utilize these experiences in order to avoid problematic situations in the path we choose. In this text at some points we raised issues very briefly which may lead to misinterpretation of our views. This was done because we believe that there is a near enough basis of perception with the persons whom we are addressing and so some issues we have considered self-explanatory. In any case we hope that this text will be an occasion for thought. Let it be viewed as a frank conversation between comrades and in this context we hope that the dialogue can continue from others always in the evolution of the anarchist conception.

**Gerasimos Tsakalos**

**Conspiracy of Cells of Fire**

December 2015

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Gerasimos Tsakalos (C.C.F)  
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