

A Theory of Shattered Fragments



**Some individuals
from the former "Club für sich"
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Introduktion to the english version

Berlin is a city which is inhabited by a considerable number of people who want to abolish capitalism and the state. There is a complex and confusing scene of political groupings, bars, bookshops, ex-squats etc. During the last years, there has been a constant influx of new activists from smaller cities in Germany as well as from radicals from other European countries. They have been attracted by the subculture and by still relatively low flat rents compared to other major European cities. The latter is changing rapidly at the moment as the well-known process of gentrification is finally hitting Berlin, too. But there are still newcomers to the anarchist and communist circles in Berlin from the southern European countries, as the economic crisis there is getting more severe.

Given these circumstances, one could expect Berlin to be a hotbed of subversion, a lively melting pot, where negative spirits of different origins came together and exchanged their various experiences in order to form a social force which was capable of finally shaking the false social peace which has given Germany the long lasting appearance of what Adorno once called a „classless class society“. But, alas, it is not like that. Instead, the scene remains in a lifeless condition, which is maintained by false and sterile separations of the various sub-scenes, groupings and individuals as well as by equally false associations. The following text, „A Theory of Shattered Fragments“ analyses this misery in more detail and makes at least some rudimentary suggestions how it could be remedied.

Although we are dealing mainly with the radical milieu of Berlin and, to a lesser extend, of the German speaking countries in general, this critique may be of interest for people from other countries, too. Certainly, some of the problems we mention are relevant for other scenes, too, as the absence of a revolutionary movement which deserves its name seems to be a general phenomenon. The thoughts we present in the text arose out of discussions around the *club für sich*, an informal fortnightly pub meeting which for a couple of years tried to bring together some radicals who were fed up with the „official“ scene or couldn't find a place for themselves in the existing political groups.

The english version can be found online here: <http://www.revoltagainstplenty.com/index.php/recent/1-recent/202-club-fur-sich-.html>

The original version of the text can be found here: <http://magazinredaktion.tk/Scherbentheorie.php>; the authors can be contacted under the e-mail-adress: magazin_redaktion@gmx.net.

A Theory of Shattered Fragments

I. The coming revolution will oppose bourgeois totality with a communist totality.

During the transition from the feudal to the bourgeois epoch, not only the structure of ownership was involved but, in the course of this process, all aspects of life of former societies changed. The bourgeois revolutionaries did not win by criticizing this or that aspect of the *Ancien Régime*, but by developing a new bourgeois philosophy of the state, a bourgeois morality, a bourgeois art, a bourgeois science, a bourgeois ideal of love, a bourgeois family, in short: an entire *bourgeois world*.

Current society is not only marked by capitalism, but *colonised down to its smallest details* by the capitalist order. Therefore, the task of communist or anarchist revolutionaries will be no less total. From child education to urban planning, from the production of knowledge to agriculture, from language to sexuality, new communist ideas must be developed and anarchistic practices experimented with; otherwise the state, wage labour, money etc. won't be abolished. The task of today's revolutionaries is even more extensive than their bourgeois predecessors', as the latter, regardless of all their innovations, only replaced one form of domination and exploitation by another,



while the former strive to end *all* forms of oppression of humans by humans.

Furthermore, the emerging bourgeoisie had the advantage of already having gradually accumulated considerable economic power in the womb of the old order, so they could already begin the eventual conquest of political power from a firm foundation. The protagonists of the coming revolution don't have such a power base within the old society. They will take over the means of production only in the process of the great cataclysm and only from that moment on, can they begin the *real* transformation of the world according to their ideas. While it is absolutely necessary that a revolutionary movement in the process of formation has to begin to shape a communist totality in the *here and now*, it must never be forgotten that the actual revolution itself will mark a qualitative turning point in this process. Any individual reform of daily life can at the most only bring a *foretaste* of liberated life, as long as the current relations of ownership and power remain throughout the whole of society. Realistically, these are only more or less successful attempts to solve some problems of the immediate present and therefore even a possible foretaste must be seen on a more idealistic level – for example in the sense of a partial connectivity that arises when you celebrate or eat together, share certain negative assumptions, where you gather at some points or mutually assist in situations of danger. The content of immediate counter-tendencies or rather modifications

of the current forms of everyday life will be completely replaced through a comprehensive revolutionizing of the society. Nevertheless, experimentation with new forms of behaviour and relationships is absolutely essential, because in order to overthrow the prevailing conditions in their entirety, it requires the free association of people who want to liberate themselves and who have to start somewhere.

Current critics of the existing order have not got very far with this. The social body which was once pathetically called “the party“, or, in a somewhat laxer mode, “the movement“ and which today is called at most, an “association“, disintegrated into a thousand fragments which are completely unable to associate. To speak of people who liberate themselves is also only possible in exceptional cases, for even those who claim to want a free world restrict themselves to forms of political groupings or, *the scene* and therefore let their potential wither; a potentiality that often remains slumbering in individuals as independently thinking and acting human beings. Of course these defects don't relate exclusively to radical critics of the society; neither are they the result of their personal failure. We assume as known that the inability to associate, the lack of individuality etc. have cogent reasons to be searched for in the general social forms of the epoch. In this essay, however, we won't care much about these reasons – firstly, because this is not our intent, and secondly, because the reference to such social causes is often used as an ex-

cuse, when people don't want to change themselves.

During recent years, we have tried – together with some others – to change course trying out new forms of discussion and association beyond factions and group pressures in *club für sich*. This has failed. A summary of this tiny experiment you can read about elsewhere. In this text, we want to present some thoughts which evolved in the context of this attempt, concerning the misery of the radical milieu. And we want here to at least rudimentarily sketch out some ideas about how this could be remedied. It should be noted, that despite coming from a practical movement, in the last decade we've mostly hung around in theoretical circles. If therefore, in the following, discussion meetings or magazine projects are mentioned but not, for example, organizing demonstrations or acts of sabotage, this does not mean that we are privileging certain forms of action over others, but that we are writing about the things we know best, mainly meaning the radical scene in Germany and Austria. In other countries the problems might be partly different, especially in countries where a profound disturbance of power is heralded with impressive outbursts, as in Spain or Greece.

II. There are moments of a communist totality existing today, but in a fragmented form.

The last revolutionary wave that began in the 1960s found its strength in developing – or at least proclaim-

ing – a *total* critique of capitalist relations. But the subversive current of that time soon disintegrated into numerous isolated moments. That was at the origin of the women, gays, youth, apprentices, ecology movements plus some others, which, through restricting themselves to their own respective spheres, lost all dangerous intent. Therefore, they could not only be integrated easily into the old world, but also contributed to its modernization.

The various factions of contemporary European and US-American left radicals all have their roots in the revolutionary wave of the late sixties. They preserve some aspects of the negation of existing conditions and, in some cases, even develop them further – but each aspect is separated within itself, neglecting unification into a totality. The *theoretical Marxists* know that without enlightenment through consciousness there can be no emancipation and try patiently by schooling in seminars and summer camps to mill all the prejudices about the state, nation, wage labour, capital, family, democracy and all the other categories of the bourgeois world through the grinder of dialectical critique. On the other hand, for the *hippies* in their caravans, squats and communes, it is clear, that a purely head-related change is extremely one-sided. Therefore, they experiment with various life style changes attempting to free the passions from the straitjacket of bourgeois forms of the family, relationships and every day life directing them towards more harmonious and more open paths. The

left communists hold onto the truth, that liberation can only be reached by the conscious action of the producers themselves, whose life situations and behaviours they therefore study attentively, trying to promote their implicit negativity through cavalier interventions. The *insurrectional anarchists* have recognized that social revolution will not happen without radical minorities. That's why they try to carry out occasional courageous pinpoint sharp actions in order to make the vulnerability of the established order visible, bringing to the fore the responsibility of everyone in maintaining it. The *Anti-Germans* mention that the ruled are not just passive victims of bad conditions but that they often make these conditions even more unbearable by committing barbaric acts. The *Anti-Imperialists* enunciate that, despite the integration of everybody and everything into the existing system, it makes a big difference whether you have to spend your life say in Sweden or in Gaza. They argue that to attempt global liberation necessarily includes a struggle against the domination of the Great Powers and their military apparatuses over the rest of the world. The *feminist post-structuralists* point to the possibility of going beyond bigoted gender duality, of overcoming the ruling heterosexual, monogamous structures of desire. They formulate the idea of a world in which one could begin to speak of individuality seriously, because no longer linked to a particular identity, humans will form their nature individually. The *subcul-*

tures, which can be found mainly in the autonomous centres in the form of punk and hard core, make it possible to act out repressed sexual, or aggressive desires and drives in a more or less protected framework continually reminding us of the fact that the promises of the culture industry such as sexual liberation, rebellion against authorities without penalties as well as the satisfaction of needs without wage labour are still something which awaits its truth.

As each different faction only negates a particular aspect of totality, they are *a priori* unable to become a serious subversive force. Moreover, the one-sided insights, pointed out above as factional partial truths, are revealed on closer inspection to be false. The texts of the theoretical Marxists are often written in the same, well-oiled jargon and therefore so predictable that one wonders if they were written by a living person or generated by a computer program; the reformists of everyday life entrap themselves in the most awkward contradictions, often forming their own scene morality which in terms of repressiveness doesn't need to fear comparison with the bourgeois one; the left communists oscillate between contemplation without any consequences and a (sub) trade union activism which is without consequences, too. The insurrectionists either sooner or later end up in prison or have to spend most of their time and energy on solidarity work for their imprisoned fellows; the Anti-Germans and the Anti-Imperialists degenerate

into ridiculous caricatures that more or less openly try to tender themselves as imaginary auxiliary troops of certain factions of the ruling powers. Not accepting the concept of the social totality, the post-structuralists reveal themselves to be civil rights activists, not questioning the social base of (re) production but only their discriminatory effect on certain groups of society. Whereupon at the very most they have an uneasy sense that the abrogation of the discrimination of one group only leads to the discrimination of the next. The subcultures marginalize women and by acting out repressed impulses, sexual assaults become a necessary part of the scene. But even in the feminist variants emerging out of this situation it's often all about keeping the subculture pure from mainstream influences, cultivating the subculture with their precarious self-referential lifestyle. Poor but sexy.

For sure, we have forgotten one or another splinter group in this list, but we leave it at that as it should be clear what we want to say.

The current state of organization: the group

A rather undogmatic left wing person, who wants to organize herself, will become a member of a group. Groups usually relate to one of the shattered fragments mentioned above and there are for example groups of left communists, anarchists, post-structuralists, Anti-Germans, Anti-Imperialists etc. Compared to 'the party', which today

has a reputation for authoritarianism and is suspected of being Stalinist inclined, the group is considered to be more unconstrained and democratic in a grass-roots way. But the groups too, possess some authoritarian traits, so they are not only an inadequate form for overcoming the current state of misery, but on the contrary, often further intensify it. There are particularly the following *counter-revolutionary moments* to be named, which are intrinsic to current revolutionary groups in a more or less pronounced way.

The partial aspect becomes the whole

Perhaps the essential lack within groups consists in the fact, that in most cases they are not aware of their particularity and one-sidedness. Usually their particular fragment is taken to be the essence of the matter; the groups believe that their respective thoughts and actions are already the totality of a revolutionary project or at least its only possible successful preliminary. What one is doing is seen as the real thing: "*If only everybody would diligently support Israel / deconstruct the heterosexual matrix as we do*" etc. In the case of groups with a practical orientation, this often leads to getting lost in so called single issue political movements: Struggles which perhaps originally even had some potential to transcend their particularity are continued in the form of a campaign, so that the activity subsequently loses itself in ludicrous reformism. The in-

involved activists constantly talk about a possible radicalization of these movements which are centred around one particular grievance, a radicalization, which, alas, never happens. In the case of theoretical orientated groups that claim to be the exclusive representation of subversion often leads to the belief of having found the universal key to understand the world through a certain intellectual approach. These groups start, as once Eugen Dühring did, to create a whole system of science, reproducing every conceivable aspect in their jargon. Sometimes these groups form schools finding followers in different cities. An example is the group *Exit!* with its theorem of value and value detachment or also the *Gegegenstandspunkt*. – It is obvious that the refusal of the groups to accept themselves as fragmented shards among others makes them unable from the outset to perceive and overcome their own blind spots.

The pursuit of purity

Far from seeing their one-sidedness as a distinct lack and counteracting it through a bit of a punch-up with other forces, contemporary groups or currents mostly strive to remain pure. Newspapers, books, internet pages, summer camps and conferences do not serve as a means to converse with other people but to promote a line. If there is no recognizable line, at least as many people as possible should be mobilized, even though nobody knows for what purpose. And here although

everybody is implicitly very critical of everybody else, no explicit criticism is desired and therefore there is no conflict. The people on the podium, too, are not allowed to criticize the organizers, because the invited speaker has to be thankful for his invitation. Speakers are sometimes considered 'external' and thus like foreigners, have less rights. At best the audience likes a well performed polemic because after all this brings them out of their shells. As an argument against words of real critique, the hard work the organizers have to put into these respective 'events' is often mentioned. But wouldn't it be easy to redistribute these tasks, not only diverse political content but also organizational work? Discussions in newspapers or magazines representing more than one current are usually not taking place, or at least not very often; so it's censorship rather than confrontation. The reason for this attitude is obviously a deep-seated insecurity about positions, because if one is sure about the cause, there is no need to be afraid of criticism.

One's own organization as an end in itself

Due to the lack of real practice, and one which is difficult to develop when facing up to the lack of an actual revolutionary situation, the group is often fetishistically charged. Thus the success of the group in competition with other groups becomes more important than the question whether an action contributes to the cause. Rather

than understanding the group as a tool for a broader purpose, the increase in membership and prestige or even simply the continuation of your own organization becomes the essential point to hand. This often leads to the fact that their own practice is exaggerated via self advertising and manipulation. If one meets for example someone in Athens belonging to a small splinter group, one is directly “organizing with international activists”. Outwardly, no action must be loudly criticized. Nothing ever is allowed to fail. For example, it is good enough, if many people are turning up to an event or if the call of one’s own organization is read by people from different spectra. The content of the whole thing or whether some people in the assembly have started to concoct together something else is deemed less important.

Inwardly, group exaggeration has the function of satisfying the narcissism of the individual. The ego is flattered by the feeling of participation in something of relevance; the leftist superego, which constantly asks: “And what do *you* do for the revolution”, is placated by the reply: “Well, at least I’m in group xy.” This, however, at the price that even sitting around in a plenary session is stylistically presented as practice. May be one reason – beyond all group dynamics – why in groups often only one *maker and shaker* can be found and where there are less female *makers and shakers* and many more passive members which leads up to the eternal lament about the group’s low liability as well as frustration with the

authoritarian bell weathers. At the end it is unclear whether the alpha animals or papa Smurfs abrogate all authority and responsibilities to themselves, just because they do a lot or because they suppress others independence so that the latter quickly get tired. Group psychology certainly knows how to say a few more things on that topic.

Preventing individuality

The flip side of organizational mystification is the prevention of the individual potentiality of its members. In any case surly people are pretty standard fare in general and anyway there wouldn’t be much individuality with or without political groups. Yet one experiences again and again the notion that young people still appear somehow unconventional although they have much nonsense in their heads. But then they join a group, and they soon become reified officials using a reified language. From then on, they do not know ‘people’ anymore, but only ‘the proletarianized’ and they only use phrases which sometimes are trotted out by rote like for example something “is not an argument“. Now there’s a popular running gag as long as it doesn’t relate to oneself!

It’s fitting that in some circles it’s quite fashionable to sign texts only with the name of the group. Surely the discussion preceding the publication of such texts ideally contributes to the conceptual clarification to the benefit of all involved. But usually differing positions and individualistic expressions are

air-brushed out of the frame. The consent of the group can hardly withstand fluctuations in this or that direction.

Finally, except the *makers and shakers*, only those stay in groups who think that being there is everything, firmly believing in the organization, those who have no opinion or those who are somehow indifferent but have found a niche for themselves. If not everything, at least a lot is subordinated to the preservation or defence of the group. Already we have in formation the party soldier, who seems to be concerned much more about being member of an important group than about what the group actually does. Substantive similarities and real friendships are at some point considered to be less important than the group membership. For sure, some also try to infiltrate groups submerging like a submarine to help move them on towards greater openness. They will not be thanked. Quickly, they are classified as tragic figures.

The individual is nothing, the group is all. The result is that even those who do not want to join any group see themselves only relative to the existing groups – sometimes to the effect that they consider themselves as nothing. If you ask somebody if she does something politically, you get to hear either the name of the group or some excuses for not being in a group at the moment. Exceptions are at most well known writers, bloggers and musicians.

Such or similar criticisms of groups are mostly nonchalantly wiped away by the groups themselves. Yes, yes, much of it could be true, but at least one is

doing *something*. That strongly sounds like a defence mechanism, but nevertheless they are right insofar as without these groups, the radical left movement and the idea of communism or the liberated society would be noticed even less than now. Like there is also something true in the remark, that the eternal critics often become arrogant whiners not having any alternative and sooner or later opt for the private life.

The current state of the debate: discussion meetings

Today, discussion meetings are the preferred place where representatives of various prickly factions come together and enter into conversation with each other – or at least claim to do so. But the current events are not indicative of a serious interest in conversation. It seems more likely that the purpose of such events is to allow a speaker time to present his ego. One is then supposed to follow a more or less interesting series of thoughts exposed in there full glory. Yet after the third sentence one would like to make a comment but only after forty-five minutes is one allowed to ask a question querying what does all this mean? But then asking the guy what he means by terms like “society”, “capitalism” or “penis envy” might not be seen as accurate anyway.

You hold out for a long time, enduring the boredom, hoping that at least something might yet happen, and then finally it comes: the discussion! But what happens: Instead of a lively debate there’s just a tiresome

question and answer game. Strict care is taken that there is no counter presentation. Lists of speakers suspend every spontaneous discussion because there can't be any interplay between each other as you are supposed to indicate that you want to say something by a hand signal – and then have to wait ten minutes before you're actually allowed to speak. Sometimes the questions are collected together in advance and discussion is made impossible. This format, which aims at structuring the discussion, has the result of strengthening the central position of the speaker, so even those who are not intimidated or scared of the situation in advance are now more than ever scared or intimidated.

It is also popular to delegate discussion around a podium. Here any fool who doesn't feel ashamed by such activity can open up a proxy dispute in place of audience intervention whereupon the latter remains sunk in complete passivity. This is neither about knowledge nor about people coming together to talk but perhaps rather a kind of a spectacle. One really doesn't know exactly what to think of events like these.

In response to the shortcomings of this speaker-centered formation of events, in the meantime some procedural methods taken from pedagogy (cluster graphs, card drawings, fish bowls etc.) are used in political events, too, in order to achieve the goal of greater audience participation. Normally this obtains little: on the one hand this creates at most only a bogus self-activity but done only under su-

pervision. This gives the impression of not being taken seriously and treated like a child. On the other hand, even the most sophisticated methods of communication can't conjure up any relevant exchange where no common concern or internal need exists.

Despite the current boredom of daily events one mustn't forget that sometimes great preachers – in some cases even female preachers – appear, captivating and stirring everybody up forcing them out of their lethargy. Rudi Dutschke for example is considered to have been someone like this, well at least until the assassination attempt which virtually destroyed him as a sentient human being. We are not absolutely condemning the lecture form rather, even in the best case, such agitation by charismatic personalities suits only the beginning of a movement: Should there be an intensification, it is necessary that many men and women find their own voices setting their interlocutors in motion around hundreds of kitchen tables and bars.

It should be pointed out finally that events, even if the speeches and official discussions are completely useless themselves, have at least the benefit of bringing different people together which sometimes result in quite stimulating conversations afterwards in the pub.

Relationship of the fragments to each other

With the topic of discussion meetings, the question was already touched

upon, how individual factions deal with their fragmentation and how they react to other factions. This will now be considered in more detail. There are at first the ways of acting *which do not question the state of fragmentation*.

This includes firstly *mutual ignorance*: respective factions are self-sufficient and don't care about what other subversives do or think. This attitude is, for individuals as well as for groups or whole tendencies, a later phenomenon: After a time of searching, disputes and splits, one thinks to have "found the right way" to which one now stubbornly clings to. Due to this, one avoids the risk of becoming challenged, an attitude that leads to stagnation and goes with the ossification of thought, language and manners.

A second, widespread way of dealing with each other is *mutual proselytizing*. This formally recognizes the state of fragmentation by stating that there are other radical lefties who do or say *something different* to oneself. But because they consider themselves as an already completed totality, one thinks that you only have to develop quantitatively by convincing the other factions of the leftist milieu as well as the rest of the population to join one's own practice and to do exactly the same as what one is already doing. Through *our* essence the world will coalesce. Unlike in the case of mutual ignorance, a dispute takes place to a certain degree, although not a very productive one, since the challenge occurs only on the terrain of the proselytizing object; the weapons of criticism

are only directed against the opponent though not against the protagonists' own position.

The third relationship to be named in this context is the *fight tooth and nail* between different factions: Here a particular position is deemed so wrong and dangerous that its representatives are not even considered fit to be proselytizing objects. These people are then expelled from the radical left family through denunciation, isolation and throwing them out of meeting places or sometimes by beating them up. Thereby it is mostly the case that a position about an isolated problem is inflated to a question of "all or nothing", which should alone decide if somebody is "right" or "wrong", "belongs to" or not – regardless of all other expressions regarding the life of the person or group. Recently, such isolated phenomena were for example around the re-evaluation of the state of Israel, the assessment of this or that military conflict, or whether you consider a specific incident a rape or not. The consequences of such an approach are obvious: Black and white thinking, reduction of perception, the mirror-inverted one-sidedness of the counter-parties. These annihilation campaigns aren't successful: Neither has the exclusion of real or alleged rapists banished sexism from the autonomous scene, nor have the campaigns against anti-Germans and anti-imperialists cleansed the left of perceived or real warmongers and anti-Semites. The shortcoming of these attempts is that here objective contradictions are

trivialized as subjective failings of individuals or groups. A *personification of social contradictions* is practiced, which saves one from dealing with both general and self-relevant problems.

Attempting to repeal fragmentation whilst remaining on the terrain of fragmentation

In addition to the quite unconscious ways of dealing with fragmentation mentioned above, the need to achieve a higher form of organization is sometimes formulated in and among the fractions. The most popular form of current efforts to associate beyond the group is the alliance. It exists in two versions: firstly, as a permanent gathering of groups with very similar characteristics who agree on a conceptual and/or practical line. The groups are often from different cities or countries. This is preferred to working together with people from the same city who aren't members of the same current. – This highlights once again the tendency of ghettoisation and purification of one's own milieu. One's own particularity is not acknowledged as such, but instead, one tries to become some kind of a giant fragment by joining forces with similar shattered fragments. Incidentally, the same rules apply here as with the group.

In the other variant the alliance consists of various shard-like fragments. The splintering remains intact, but gathers together temporarily, e.g. for a campaign or for a joint action.

To mobilize for these actions, a shared call is formulated that is so generic that everyone can live with it and which is therefore worse than every single group acting for themselves alone. Again, the fragmentation is not really overcome, since the contradictions are not challenged but swept under the table in favour of a formal, meaningless unity.

III. What is to be done to overcome the current misery?

The disintegration of the movement into fragments need not be a disaster, if the respective fragments recognize the submerged parts of their beings and make an effort to re-integrate. The goal should be to form a subversive force which conjoins and supersedes all fragmented shards within itself, completely metamorphosing them in the process. It is the opposite of general acceptance and tolerance as it implies confrontation. This metamorphosis is not about leftist pluralism that welcomes everybody, and which is already satisfied when all factions talk to each other a bit more frequently, but, on the contrary, is the recognition that all fragments are equally miserable and that, if they only would understand each other better, this wouldn't help much. Entrenched formations can only be broken by questioning one's own self and certainties again and again, otherwise no change is possible. However, it seems that few aspire to such metamorphosis, because even if people are not so tightly attached to existing social relations, they nonetheless are caught up in existing

groups and particularly in the ideology of one's own group. In rare cases this revocation will be done by the protagonists of existing fractions themselves, though perhaps it is more likely that a third protagonist will appear who won't accept the pseudo-contradictions of the last political generation from the outset. Nevertheless, in this process, individuals could partially keep up with new developments. Therefore, the people most likely to bring about a change seem to be those who are not satisfied with current groups and desire new forms of cooperation. Or even better: people who previously did not want to squeeze themselves into any group but who sympathize with certain general ideas, but have a problem with the often authoritarian structures together with the necessity to identify with a particular ideology and to maintain a certain line.

Recognizing one's own particularity

The first step for the better would simply be to recognize or to admit that one's own personage is nothing more than a fragmented self, for then, the arrogance towards others could be cast off, as well as all defences countering self-criticism. Contradictions – for example between revolution and reform or anti-fascism and communism – could be recognized as residing within the subject itself and would no longer be dismissed as the mistakes opponents make. Only on the basis of this self-awareness, could experimentation with other forms begin.

Talking, eating and living together

For a start one must begin in a small way, because even initial contact is not the easiest task. Places must be established to enable encounters of negative spirits of various persuasions. These could be for example pubs and cafés, which are not considered as hangouts of a particular tendency from the outset. In the absence of such meeting points, the sojourn in the bar after the "official" events are concluded can be used to establish or deepen contacts; also parties and dinner invites shouldn't be underestimated. Especially since something has to be created beyond the realms of theoretical knowledge and this normally occurs in overlapping and interweaving daily life contexts, from bedrooms to kitchens, from living rooms to parties and bars. Such relationships are always necessarily the conditions where determined practical uprisings begin.

The common form that speeches and discussions take has proved to be largely inadequate. Instead of inviting a star speaker because he "pulls in" audiences and thereby merely attracts a passive mass of spectators, it's preferable if someone from a circle of acquaintances formulates some provisional hypotheses about some topic. Moreover, there are enough people around who know something about this or that or have just visited a place worth talking about.

Because of the prevailing rules structuring discussion today any meaningful debate is nipped in the bud. Sure, man is a wolf to man and rules are signs of civilization. But

might it not be possible to move onto higher spheres in this respect? The self-producing male being may possibly also be brought into the frame, with everybody paying a little attention to their manner of speaking and a moderator only intervenes if someone is not recognized and / or others push themselves too much to the fore.

Within the confines of contemporary publications, one would already be gay if the censorship was somewhat more permeable and not everything had to be published according to an official line. Rather publish an opposing view in a magazine than censor a submitted article. In the long run, it would be important to create publications that allow an open discussion between the boundaries of various tendencies or better yet, to go beyond them.

Comprehensive discussion and incipient experimentation

Discussion should be comprehensive. It should not only concern the theory of society but also questions of life-style, form, content and tactics, because every sphere requires complete metamorphosis. It is about getting money, work, love and raising children, about friendships and living together. How might a new concrete solidarity look like, one which doesn't put too much strain on anybody? How can we experiment with forms of life in a way which doesn't become programmatic? Nobody needs to have it all clearly worked out so we can live "liberated" lives immediately, as merely to talk about these

questions or undertake some tentative steps is essential. At this point there mustn't be any norm, for example, that wage labour should be avoided as much as possible. Of course work is like the family, a big means of integration into the machine, but then the precarious life based on state benefits and dumpster diving can also be very grueling. It is important to reflect about what the particular conditions of life do to us and to what extent one allows these conditions to determine one's being. For it is not only the time factor, which leaves one demoralized and pooped from work but above all the need to identify with the job which often has nothing to do with the ideals of an anarchist. It can certainly be useful to talk to people working in a similar profession about finding a way of dealing with this.

This directly leads to another problem concerning the question of revolutionary transition. It isn't anymore simply a matter of taking over the means of production like the old labour movement wanted to do, but rather the means of production themselves have turned out to be completely inappropriate and require total transformation. In banks and insurance companies maybe only the computers will be of any use and the current form of energy supply merely results in making the world uninhabitable for human beings. And that's why those who are dealing with alternatives here are also a necessary fragment which will contribute to a future revolutionary totality – even if they aren't aware of this yet.

Organize

After so much criticism of the organizational structure of the group has been practiced, the question begs itself what would a cooperation which makes more sense look like? More important than formal organizations is the need for real bonding between individuals to spring into existence. As long as they share a certain common spirit it's neither necessary nor desirable that cooperating individuals think or do the same thing in all respects. Rather than breaking your head on weekly assemblies about what the group could do next it seems more desirable for us to gather only for a temporary project and to meet if it is necessary. It is better to thoroughly explore by means of a common practice with whom one can collaborate, than argue about a theoretical basic program for months on end. But also in this case no dogmas should be set up and as with everything else, real solutions are yet to be found.

The next step

Despite their woeful actual condition, we do not consider it impossible that people from the current radical splinter groups will find each other overcoming their fragmented inflexibility and recreate the totality of a real revolutionary project. It's however more likely; that, similar to the revolution itself, not the mere act of voluntarism will force the fragments to recompose themselves but that an impulse

from the outside will be necessary. Be it the appearance of a new revolutionary force or a historical event, which one cannot and does not want to run away from. One mustn't forget that the radical scene is only one fragment in relation to the whole society and that all the other sectors must come into motion too, if a real revolution should occur. The issues raised here are more concrete in Barcelona or Athens since the radicals there have suddenly faced a general pulsating societal body because, and due to the crisis, broad sectors of society are in confused uproar. But it becomes equally clear here too, that the groups, currents or scenes, which are still arising out of an ebb tide, aren't at all able to keep up with the flames of social unrest.

So it's very likely that today's groups will be caught sleeping through such a situation, because they are too busy maintaining their own status quo. But those who let themselves get carried away and who throw overboard all current safety outlets could contribute to something better. In the heat of conflict it may sometimes be advantageous to have already dealt with emerging issues and antagonisms. Ultimately, it is not so much a matter of our numbers, but a lot more, so that something new, something powerful emerges, that will be able to tear a few holes in the old order so that libertarian alternatives can become visible to all.

*Some individuals
from the former "Club für sich"
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