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PHILOSOPHY/POLITICS

Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas Volume Three: The New Anarchism 1974–2012

ROBERT GRAHAM, EDITOR

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Volume Three (1974–2012)

ROBERT GRAHAM



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Anarchism

A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas

Volume 3

The New Anarchism (1974 - 2012)

Robert Graham
Editor

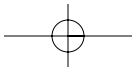
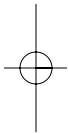
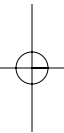
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ANARCHISM

A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas



Anarchism
A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas
Robert Graham

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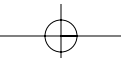
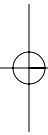
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of Libertarian Ideas

Volume Three
The New Anarchism
1974-2012

ROBERT GRAHAM



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Preface

This is the third volume of my anthology of anarchist writings from ancient China to the present day. Volume One, subtitled *From Anarchy to Anarchism (300CE-1939)*, begins with an ancient Daoist text, “Neither Lord Nor Subject” (300CE), and ends with the positive accomplishments and defeat of the Spanish anarchists in the Spanish Revolution and Civil War (1936-1939). Volume Two, subtitled *The Emergence of the New Anarchism (1939-1977)*, deals with the remarkable resurgence of anarchist ideas and movements following the Second World War, particularly during the 1960s. This final volume canvasses the many different currents in anarchist thought from the 1970s to the present day and another remarkable resurgence in anarchist ideas and action within the context of global justice movements against neoliberalism.

These movements against neoliberalism are commonly grouped under the rubric of anti-globalization, an inaccurate description for the reasons set forth by David Graeber in Selection 1. While anarchists and assorted left libertarians oppose the global dominance of corporate capitalism, they remain committed internationalists, seeking justice, freedom and equality for all. Anarchists have always been critics of capitalist exploitation and continue to emphasize the interconnections between capitalism, the state, imperialism and domination (Selections 2, 17, 19, 69 and Chapter 9).

Anarchists have been at the forefront of transnational and transclass liberation movements (Chapter 11), seeking to develop new and imaginative ways of achieving social liberation, from creating “temporary autonomous zones” (Selection 11) to antiauthoritarian forms of direct democracy (Selections 5, 10 and Chapter 2). Anarchists have continued to champion various forms of direct action as means of self-empowerment (Chapter 3), adapting anarchist tactics to a variety of situations and circumstances around the globe (Chapter 11).

Anarchists have sought to uncover the origins of domination, in patriarchal societies and incipient state forms with self-reinforcing and interlocking hierarchies of power (Selections 17 & 32), exploring the interrelationships between

the state and the subjection of women (Chapter 7), technology, power and capitalism (Chapter 5), and the human subjugation of nature (Selection 26). At the same time, anarchists have continued to present positive alternatives to the status quo, such as human scale technology (Selection 24), community and worker's self-management (Selection 5 and Chapter 10) and bioregionalism (Selection 28), culminating in a vision of an ecological society where people live in harmony with nature and each other (Selections 26, 29 & 30).

Rejecting the authoritarian hierarchical relationships of exploitation and domination inherent to capitalist economic forms, anarchists have presented a number of libertarian economic proposals, such as directly democratic control through community assemblies (Selection 46), consumer and producer cooperatives (Selection 47), and the elimination of the wage system (Selection 48). As Luciano Lanza argues in Selection 49, in the context of his critique of proposals that emphasize the need for a planned economy, anarchist economic proposals have always sought to maximize individual freedom within the context of a radical egalitarianism.

The idea of anarchy as a counter-cultural current and alternative aesthetic sensibility is explored by Richard Sonn and Max Blechman in Chapter 8. Ba Jin, the renowned Chinese anarchist (Volume One, Selection 101) reflects on the negative relationship between authority and creativity (Selection 37). Edward Herman, Noam Chomsky's long time collaborator, defends their analysis of the corporate media as one of the primary means of manufacturing consent to state policies and capitalist economic relations (Selection 40). Anarchy as a form of social transgression and personal liberation is discussed by Jeff Farrell in his piece on anarchist criminology (Selection 20). Similar ideas have been developed within the context of the anti-psychiatry movement (Selection 31).

Notions of personal and social identity as both constraints on autonomy and as a basis for oppressed groups to further their own liberation, whether psychiatric patients, women, nonheterosexuals or people of colour, are discussed by Alan Mandell (Selection 31), Jamie Heckert (Selection 36), and Ashanti Alston (Selection 63). Richard Day explores recent attempts to go beyond "identity politics," utilizing post-modernist concepts of groundless solidarity and infinite responsibility (Selection 71).

In the concluding chapter, Todd May and Saul Newman set forth the case for a post-structuralist anarchism (Selections 65 & 66). Jesse Cohn challenges the accuracy and fairness of the post-structuralist critique of anarchism (Selection 67), while Daniel Colson extends that critique by showing the connections between post-modernist approaches to anarchism and the "classical" anarchism of Proudhon and Bakunin (Selection 70). Mark Leier discusses the relevance of Bakunin's anarchism today in the context of his critique of the "post-structuralists" of his

own day (Selection 68), while Michael Schmidt and Lucien Van Der Walt argue for the continuing relevance of the Platformist current in anarchist thought (Selection 69).

In the Afterword, I discuss the continuity and change in anarchist thought documented in the three volumes of this anthology. Throughout these volumes, I have tried to present the anarchists in their own words, but within their historical context. I believe that they are more than capable of speaking for themselves and that readers can form their own judgments without the editor trying to impose a predetermined conceptual framework. While I have included material on a wide variety of topics, I have focused on anarchist writings that emphasize anarchism as an alternative kind of politics, whether on the personal, social or international level, eschewing more simplistic approaches which conceive of anarchism as simply an “anti-politics” with little or no positive content of any lasting value. I agree with Kropotkin that various anarchist currents can be perceived as running throughout human history, representing anti-authoritarian approaches to social change and alternative forms of organization in opposition to the hierarchies of power, control, domination and exploitation characteristic of so-called “civilization.” I hope that the readers of these volumes will come to appreciate the variety and richness of anarchist ideas, and will continue to be inspired by them. Additional material can be found at my blog, robert-graham.wordpress.com, for those interested in continuing their exploration of anarchist ideas.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks, as always, to Paul Sharkey for his many excellent translations. I would also like to thank all of the contributors to this volume and Dimitri Rousopoulos at Black Rose Books who originated the idea of this anthology. Financial assistance provided by the Institute for Anarchist Studies is gratefully acknowledged. I would like to dedicate this volume to Colin Ward and John Crump, both of whom were very helpful and generous to me when I was preparing this anthology. They will continue to be an inspiration to us all.

Chapter 1

Toward an Anarchist Politics

1. David Graeber: The New Anarchists (2002)

In the 1960s, the world witnessed a remarkable and largely unexpected resurgence in anarchist ideas and actions (see Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume Two: The Emergence of the New Anarchism, Chapter 6). Anarchist ideas continued to find expression in a variety of social movements in the 1970s, such as the ecology movement and the women's movement, despite popular media stereotypes that the 1970s represented a sharp retreat from the radicalism of the 1960s. Anarchist alternatives to the nation state still enjoyed some currency in the 1980s, particularly in the context of the anti-nuclear and peace movements. However, it is fair to say that by the 1990s anarchist ideas had again begun to fade from public consciousness until yet another remarkable resurgence in public protest, the anti-World Trade Organization demonstrations, most impressively exemplified by the 1999 "Battle in Seattle." What again surprised many was the degree to which this new global justice movement against neo-liberalism (misnamed the "anti-globalization movement") was infused by anarchist ideas and practices. David Graeber is an anarchist and anthropologist involved in this movement against neoliberalism, and therefore speaks firsthand about anarchist influences within it. He is the author of several essays and books on anarchism and anthropology, including Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004) and Direct Action: An Ethnography (San Francisco: AK Press, 2009). The following excerpts are taken from his essay, "The New Anarchists," originally published in the New Left Review, and republished here with his kind permission.

Many of those who would like to see revolutionary change might not feel entirely happy about having to accept that most of the creative energy for radical politics is now coming from anarchism—a tradition that they have hitherto

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mostly dismissed—and that taking this movement [against neoliberalism] seriously will necessarily also mean a respectful engagement with it...

The very notion of direct action, with its rejection of a politics which appeals to governments to modify their behaviour, in favour of physical intervention against state power in a form that itself prefigures an alternative—all of this emerges directly from the libertarian tradition. Anarchism is the heart of the movement, its soul; the source of most of what's new and hopeful about it. In what follows... I will try to clear up what seem to be the three most common misconceptions about the movement—our supposed opposition to something called “globalization,” our supposed “violence,” and our supposed lack of a coherent ideology—and then suggest how radical intellectuals might think about reimagining their own theoretical practice in the light of all of this.

A GLOBALIZATION MOVEMENT?

The phrase “anti-globalization movement” is a coinage of the US media and activists have never felt comfortable with it. Insofar as this is a movement against anything, it's against neoliberalism, which can be defined as a kind of market fundamentalism—or, better, market Stalinism—that holds there is only one possible direction for human historical development. The map is held by an elite of economists and corporate flacks, to whom must be ceded all power once held by institutions with any shred of democratic accountability; from now on it will be wielded largely through unelected treaty organizations like the IMF, WTO or NAFTA. In Argentina, or Estonia, or Taiwan, it would be possible to say this straight out: “We are a movement against neoliberalism.” But in the US language is always a problem. The corporate media here is probably the most politically monolithic on the planet: neoliberalism is all there is to see—the background reality; as a result, the word itself cannot be used. The issues involved can only be addressed using propaganda terms like “free trade” or “the free market.” So American activists find themselves in a quandary: if one suggests putting “the N word” (as it's often called) in a pamphlet or press release, alarm bells immediately go off: one is being exclusionary, playing only to an educated elite. There have been all sorts of attempts to frame alternative expressions—we're a “global justice movement,” we're a movement “against corporate globalization.” None are especially elegant or quite satisfying and, as a result, it is common in meetings to hear the speakers using “globalization movement” and “anti-globalization movement” pretty much interchangeably.

The phrase “globalization movement,” though, is really quite apropos. If one takes globalization to mean the effacement of borders and the free movement of people, possessions and ideas, then it's pretty clear that not only is the movement

itself a product of globalization, but the majority of groups involved in it—the most radical ones in particular—are far more supportive of globalization in general than are the IMF or WTO. It was an international network called People’s Global Action, for example, that put out the first summons for planet-wide days of action such as J18 and N30—the latter the original call for protest against the 1999 WTO meetings in Seattle. And PGA in turn owes its origins to the famous International Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism, which took place knee-deep in the jungle mud of rainy-season Chiapas, in August 1996; and was itself initiated, as Subcomandante Marcos put it, “by all the rebels around the world.” People from over 50 countries came streaming into the Zapatista-held village of La Realidad. The vision for an “intercontinental network of resistance” was laid out in the Second Declaration of La Realidad: “We declare that we will make a collective network of all our particular struggles and resistances, an intercontinental network of resistance against neoliberalism, an intercontinental network of resistance for humanity:

Let it be a network of voices that resist the war Power wages on them.

A network of voices that not only speak, but also struggle and resist for humanity and against neoliberalism.

A network that covers the five continents and helps to resist the death that Power promises us.”

This, the Declaration made clear, was not an “organizing structure; it has no central command or hierarchies. We are the network, all of us who resist”...

More and more, activists have been trying to draw attention to the fact that the neoliberal vision of “globalization” is pretty much limited to the movement of capital and commodities, and actually increases barriers against the free flow of people, information and ideas—the size of the US border guard has almost tripled since the signing of NAFTA. Hardly surprising: if it were not possible to effectively imprison the majority of people in the world in impoverished enclaves, there would be no incentive for Nike or The Gap to move production there to begin with. Given a free movement of people, the whole neoliberal project would collapse. This is another thing to bear in mind when people talk about the decline of “sovereignty” in the contemporary world: the main achievement of the nation-state in the last century has been the establishment of a uniform grid of heavily policed barriers across the world, halting and controlling the free movement of peoples. It is precisely this international system of control that we are fighting against in the name of genuine globalization.

These connections—and the broader links between neoliberal policies and mechanisms of state coercion (police, prisons, militarism)—have played a more

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and more salient role in our analyses as we ourselves have confronted escalating levels of state repression. Borders became a major issue in Europe during the IMF meetings at Prague, and later EU meetings in Nice. At the FTAA summit in Quebec City... invisible lines that had previously been treated as if they didn't exist (at least for white people) were converted overnight into fortifications against the movement of would-be global citizens, demanding the right to petition their rulers. The three-kilometre "wall" constructed through the center of Quebec City, to shield the heads of state junketing inside from any contact with the populace, became the perfect symbol for what neoliberalism actually means in human terms. The spectacle of the Black Bloc, armed with wire cutters and grappling hooks, joined by everyone from Steelworkers to Mohawk warriors to tear down the wall, became—for that very reason—one of the most powerful moments in the movement's history.

There is one striking contrast between this and earlier internationalisms, however. The former usually ended up exporting Western organizational models to the rest of the world; in this, the flow has if anything been the other way around. Many, perhaps most, of the movement's signature techniques—including mass nonviolent civil disobedience itself—were first developed in the global South. In the long run, this may well prove the single most radical thing about it.

BILLIONAIRES AND CLOWNS

In the corporate media, the word "violent" is invoked as a kind of mantra—invariably, repeatedly—whenever a large action takes place: "violent protests," "violent clashes," "police raid headquarters of violent protesters," even "violent riots" (there are other kinds?). Such expressions are typically invoked when a simple, plain-English description of what took place (people throwing paint-bombs, breaking windows of empty storefronts, holding hands as they blockaded intersections, cops beating them with sticks) might give the impression that the only truly violent parties were the police. The US media is probably the biggest offender here—and this despite the fact that, after two years of increasingly militant direct action, it is still impossible to produce a single example of anyone to whom a US activist has caused physical injury. I would say that what really disturbs the powers-that-be is not the "violence" of the movement but its relative lack of it; governments simply do not know how to deal with an overtly revolutionary movement that refuses to fall into familiar patterns of armed resistance.

The effort to destroy existing paradigms is usually quite self-conscious. Where once it seemed that the only alternatives to marching along with signs were either Gandhian non-violent civil disobedience or outright insurrection, groups

like the Direct Action Network, Reclaim the Streets, Black Blocs or Tuti Bianci have all, in their own ways, been trying to map out a completely new territory in between. They're attempting to invent what many call a "new language" of civil disobedience, combining elements of street theatre, festival and what can only be called non-violent warfare—non-violent in the sense adopted by, say, Black Bloc anarchists, in that it eschews any direct physical harm to human beings. Ya Basta! for example is famous for its *tuti bianci* or white-overalls tactics: men and women dressed in elaborate forms of padding, ranging from foam armour to inner tubes to rubber ducky flotation devices, helmets and chemical-proof white jumpsuits (their British cousins are well-clad Wombles). As this mock army pushes its way through police barricades, all the while protecting each other against injury or arrest, the ridiculous gear seems to reduce human beings to cartoon characters—misshapen, ungainly, foolish, largely indestructible. The effect is only increased when lines of costumed figures attack police with balloons and water pistols or, like the "Pink Bloc" at Prague and elsewhere, dress as fairies and tickle them with feather dusters.

At the American Party Conventions, Billionaires for Bush (or Gore) dressed in high-camp tuxedos and evening gowns and tried to press wads of fake money into the cops' pockets, thanking them for repressing the dissent. None were even slightly hurt—perhaps police are given aversion therapy against hitting anyone in a tuxedo. The Revolutionary Anarchist Clown Bloc, with their high bicycles, rainbow wigs and squeaky mallets, confused the cops by attacking each other (or the billionaires). They had all the best chants: "Democracy? Ha Ha Ha!", "The pizza united can never be defeated," "Hey ho, hey ho—ha ha, hee hee!", as well as meta-chants like "Call! Response! Call! Response!" and—everyone's favourite—"Three Word Chant! Three Word Chant!"

In Quebec City, a giant catapult built along mediaeval lines (with help from the left caucus of the Society for Creative Anachronism) lobbed soft toys at the FTAA. Ancient-warfare techniques have been studied to adopt for non-violent but very militant forms of confrontation: there were peltasts and hoplites... and research continues into Roman-style shield walls, "turtles" and similar formations. Blockading has become an art form: if you make a huge web of coloured strands of yarn across an intersection it's actually impossible to cross; motorcycle cops get trapped like flies. The Liberation Puppet with its arms fully extended can block a four-lane highway, while snake-dances can be a form of mobile blockade... But even the most militant of the militant—eco-saboteurs like the Earth Liberation Front—scrupulously avoid doing anything that would cause harm to human beings (or animals, for that matter). It's this scrambling of conventional categories that so throws the forces of order and makes them desperate to bring things back to familiar territory (simple violence): even to the point, as in Genoa,

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of encouraging fascist hooligans to run riot as an excuse to use overwhelming force against everybody else.

One could trace these forms of action back to the stunts and guerrilla theater of the Yippies or Italian “metropolitan Indians” in the sixties, the squatter battles in Germany or Italy in the seventies and eighties, even the peasant resistance to the expansion of Tokyo airport. But it seems to me that here, too, the really crucial origins lie with the Zapatistas, and other movements in the global South. In many ways, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) represents an attempt by people who have always been denied the right to non-violent, civil resistance to seize it; essentially, to call the bluff of neoliberalism and its pretenses to democratization and yielding power to “civil society.” It is, as its commanders say, an army which aspires not to be an army anymore (it something of an open secret that, for the last five years at least, they have not even been carrying real guns). As Marcos explains their conversion from standard tactics of guerrilla war:

We thought the people would either not pay attention to us, or come together with us to fight. But they did not react in either of these two ways. It turned out that all these people, who were thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, did not want to rise up with us but neither did they want us to be annihilated. They wanted us to dialogue. This completely broke our scheme and ended up defining *zapatismo*, the *neo-zapatismo*.

Now the EZLN is the sort of army that organizes “invasions” of Mexican military bases in which hundreds of rebels sweep in entirely unarmed to yell at and try to shame the resident soldiers. Similarly, mass actions by the Landless Workers’ Movement gain an enormous moral authority in Brazil by reoccupying unused lands entirely non-violently. In either case, it pretty clear that if the same people had tried the same thing ten years ago, they would simply have been shot.

ANARCHY AND PEACE

However you choose to trace their origins, these new tactics are perfectly in accord with the general anarchistic inspiration of the movement, which is less about seizing state power than about exposing, delegitimizing and dismantling mechanisms of rule while winning ever-larger spaces of autonomy from it. The critical thing, though, is that all this is only possible in a general atmosphere of peace. In fact, it seems to me that these are the ultimate stakes of struggle at the moment: one that may well determine the overall direction of the twenty-first century. We should remember that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century,

when most Marxist parties were rapidly becoming reformist social democrats, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism were the centre of the revolutionary left. The situation only really changed with World War I and the Russian Revolution. It was the Bolsheviks' success, we are usually told, that led to the decline of anarchism—with the glorious exception of Spain—and catapulted Communism to the fore. But it seems to me one could look at this another way.

In the late nineteenth century most people honestly believed that war between industrialized powers was becoming obsolete; colonial adventures were a constant, but a war between France and England, on French or English soil, seemed as unthinkable as it would today. By 1900, even the use of passports was considered an antiquated barbarism. The “short twentieth century” (which appears to have begun in 1914 and ended sometime around 1989 or '91) was, by contrast, probably the most violent in human history, almost entirely preoccupied with either waging world wars or preparing for them. Hardly surprising, then, that anarchism quickly came to seem unrealistic, if the ultimate measure of political effectiveness became the ability to maintain huge mechanized killing machines. This is one thing that anarchists, by definition, can never be very good at. Neither is it surprising that Marxist parties—who have been only too good at it—seemed eminently practical and realistic in comparison. Whereas the moment the Cold War ended, and war between industrialized powers once again seemed unthinkable, anarchism reappeared just where it had been at the end of the nineteenth century, as an international movement at the very centre of the revolutionary left.

If this is right, it becomes clearer what the ultimate stakes of the current “anti-terrorist” mobilization are. In the short run, things do look very frightening. Governments who were desperately scrambling for some way to convince the public we were terrorists even before September 11 now feel they've been given *carte blanche*; there is little doubt that a lot of good people are about to suffer terrible repression. But in the long run, a return to twentieth-century levels of violence is simply impossible. The September 11 attacks were clearly something of a fluke (the first wildly ambitious terrorist scheme in history that actually worked); the spread of nuclear weapons is ensuring that larger and larger portions of the globe will be for all practical purposes off-limits to conventional warfare. And if war is the health of the state, the prospects for anarchist-style organizing can only be improving.

PRACTICING DIRECT DEMOCRACY

A constant complaint about the globalization movement in the progressive press is that, while tactically brilliant, it lacks any central theme or coherent ideology.

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(This seems to be the left equivalent of the corporate media's claims that we are a bunch of dumb kids touting a bundle of completely unrelated causes—free Mumia, dump the debt, save the old-growth forests.) Another line of attack is that the movement is plagued by a generic opposition to all forms of structure or organization. It's distressing that, two years after Seattle, I should have to write this, but someone obviously should: in North America especially, this is a movement about reinventing democracy. It is not opposed to organization. It is about creating new forms of organization. It is not lacking in ideology. Those new forms of organization *are* its ideology. It is about creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-down structures like states, parties or corporations; networks based on principles of decentralized, non-hierarchical consensus democracy. Ultimately, it aspires to be much more than that, because ultimately it aspires to reinvent daily life as whole. But unlike many other forms of radicalism, it has first organized itself in the political sphere—mainly because this was a territory that the powers that be (who have shifted all their heavy artillery into the economic) have largely abandoned.

Over the past decade, activists in North America have been putting enormous creative energy into reinventing their groups' own internal processes, to create viable models of what functioning direct democracy could actually look like. In this we've drawn particularly, as I've noted, on examples from outside the Western tradition, which almost invariably rely on some process of consensus finding, rather than majority vote. The result is a rich and growing panoply of organizational instruments—spokescouncils, affinity groups, facilitation tools, break outs, fishbowls, blocking concerns, vibe-watchers and so on—all aimed at creating forms of democratic process that allow initiatives to rise from below and attain maximum effective solidarity; without stifling dissenting voices, creating leadership positions or compelling anyone to do anything which they have not freely agreed to do.

The basic idea of consensus process is that, rather than voting, you try to come up with proposals acceptable to everyone—or at least, not highly objectionable to anyone: first state the proposal, then ask for “concerns” and try to address them. Often, at this point, people in the group will propose “friendly amendments” to add to the original proposal, or otherwise alter it, to ensure concerns are addressed. Then, finally, when you call for consensus, you ask if anyone wishes to “block” or “stand aside.” Standing aside is just saying “I would not myself be willing to take part in this action, but I wouldn't stop anyone else from doing it.” Blocking is a way of saying “I think this violates the fundamental principles or purposes of being in the group.” It functions as a veto: any one person can kill a proposal completely by blocking it—although there are ways to challenge whether a block is genuinely principled.

There are different sorts of groups. Spokescouncils, for example, are large assemblies that coordinate between smaller “affinity groups.” They are most often held before, and during, large-scale direct actions like Seattle or Quebec. Each affinity group (which might have between 4 and 20 people) selects a “spoke,” who is empowered to speak for them in the larger group. Only the spokes can take part in the actual process of finding consensus at the council, but before major decisions they break out into affinity groups again and each group comes to consensus on what position they want their spoke to take (not as unwieldy as it might sound). Break-outs, on the other hand, are when a large meeting temporarily splits up into smaller ones that will focus on making decisions or generating proposals, which can then be presented for approval before the whole group when it reassembles. Facilitation tools are used to resolve problems or move things along if they seem to be bogging down. You can ask for a brainstorming session, in which people are only allowed to present ideas but not to criticize other people’s; or for a non-binding straw poll, where people raise their hands just to see how everyone feels about a proposal, rather than to make a decision. A fishbowl would only be used if there is a profound difference of opinion; you can take two representatives for each side—one man and one woman—and have the four of them sit in the middle, everyone else surrounding them silently and see if the four can’t work out a synthesis or compromise together, which they can then present as a proposal to the whole group.

PREFIGURATIVE POLITICS

This is very much a work in progress, and creating a culture of democracy among people who have little experience of such things is necessarily a painful and uneven business, full of all sorts of stumblings and false starts, but—as almost any police chief who has faced us on the streets can attest—direct democracy of this sort can be astoundingly effective. And it is difficult to find anyone who has fully participated in such an action whose sense of human possibilities has not been profoundly transformed as a result. It’s one thing to say, “Another world is possible.” It’s another to experience it, however momentarily. Perhaps the best way to start thinking about these organizations—the Direct Action Network, for example (or more explicitly anarchist versions of the same thing, such as the Anti-Capitalist Convergences)—is to see them as the direct opposite of the sectarian Marxist groups; or, for that matter of the sectarian Anarchist groups. Where the democratic-centralist party puts its emphasis on achieving a complete and correct theoretical analysis, demands ideological uniformity and tends to juxtapose the vision of an egalitarian future with extremely authoritarian forms of organization in the present, these openly seek diversity. Debate always focuses on particular

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courses of action; it's taken for granted that no one will ever convert anyone else entirely to their point of view. The motto might be, "If you are willing to act like an anarchist now, your long-term vision is pretty much your own business." Which seems only sensible; none of us know how far these principles can actually take us, or what a complex society based on them would end up looking like. Their ideology, then, is immanent in the anti-authoritarian principles that underlie their practice, and one of their more explicit principles is that things should stay this way.

Finally, I'd like to tease out some of the questions the direct action networks raise about alienation, and its broader implications for political practice. For example: why is it that, even when there is next to no other constituency for revolutionary politics in a capitalist society, the one group most likely to be sympathetic to its project consists of artists, musicians, writers, and others involved in some form of non-alienated production? Surely there must be a link between the actual experience of first imagining things and then bringing them into being, individually or collectively, and the ability to envision social alternatives—particularly, the possibility of a society itself premised on less alienated forms of creativity? One might even suggest that revolutionary coalitions always tend to rely on a kind of alliance between a society's least alienated and its most oppressed; actual revolutions, one could then say, have tended to happen when these two categories most broadly overlap.

This would, at least help explain why it almost always seems to be peasants and craftsmen—or even more, newly proletarianized former peasants and craftsmen—who actually overthrow capitalist regimes and not those inured to generations of wage labour. It would also help explain the extraordinary importance of indigenous people's struggles in the new movement: such people tend to be simultaneously the very least alienated and most oppressed people on earth. Now that new communication technologies have made it possible to include them in global revolutionary alliances, as well as local resistance and revolt, it is well-nigh inevitable that they should play a profoundly inspirational role.

Might it be possible to reimagine the very notion of human rights starting from this notion of non-alienated experience—particularly, from forms of directly democratic practice? ...If one starts from the assumption that fundamental human rights consist, say, in the right to full political participation in the affairs of one's community—or for that matter, to freedom of creative self-expression, or to freedom of sexual expression—then it becomes obvious that such rights cannot be exercised in the absence of a certain baseline life security—since one cannot meaningfully participate in the democratic life of one's community if paralyzed by fear of homelessness, or death squads, or engage in free sexual ex-

pression if one has to sell one's body to get food. Most of what are usually seen as fundamental rights... could then be seen as already entailed by these more primary ones: one might even think of them as something in the nature of infra-rights. Direct action groups, or directly democratic community groups, could then be reimagined as groups whose political engagement with the world is aimed at addressing those forms of oppression which prevent the full realization of those principles and forms of experience already immanent in their own organization.

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2. Madrid Declaration: For a New Libertarianism (2001)

In 2001, several anarchist and syndicalist organizations from Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, including the Spanish CGT, the Swedish SAC, the French CNT, the Uruguay Anarchist Federation (FAU), the Brazilian Gaucho Anarchist Federation (FAG—see Selection 3 below), the CIPO-RFM or Consejo Indígena Popular de Oaxaca—“Ricardo Flores Magón” (“Ricardo Flores Magón” Native People’s Council of Oaxaca—see Selection 59 below) and groups from Argentina, Greece, Lebanon, Switzerland and the Czech Republic, met in Madrid to discuss new libertarian approaches for the 21st century. The following excerpts are taken from their declaration of principles.

The men and women from different parts of the world who have come here to Madrid... in order to think about, propose and defend a society in which freedom, justice, equality and solidarity allow us to live in peace with other human beings and with the Earth, would like to make public our conviction that it is possible to build a different type of world, and different worlds. We call on all libertarian men and women in the world to organize, to intertwine an international network which will foment social antagonism against capitalist globalization, to braid resistance, to link those thousands of subversive threads which give form to the resplendent tapestry of social revolution.

By *libertarian* we mean:

Direct action as a model and method in labour and social conflicts so that the people affected decide and take responsibility for their struggles.

A clear declaration in favour of anticapitalism, antiauthoritarianism and the fight against all types of domination (patriarchy, fascism...) in all day-by-day social and cultural aspects.

Applying self-management in internal and external organizational work, understanding this as promoting the rotation of posts, training people in posts, re-

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call, transparency, the responsibility and capacity of all to decide in a structure which is both horizontal and federalist, anti-hierarchical and without vanguards which accumulate and monopolize power.

Supporting the revolution is not limited to fighting for desirable radical changes, but rather daring to effectively prepare a means of breaking away from the capitalist system. For those who do not wish to limit their actions to mere propaganda deeds, planting the need to revolutionize this world implies determining the conditions from which we can build sufficient strength to make revolutionary processes thinkable and politically and strategically possible. Putting the revolution on our agenda means building a process of political work, a relation of strength, giving a strategic dimension to social antagonism, forging alliances and becoming capable of being a guiding force in the process of social struggles.

In the face of a full frontal neo-liberal offensive, defending revolutions in these present times might seem unreal, especially in a historical context such as the present one: marked by a lengthy resistance to globalization which has lasted more than a quarter of a century. Nevertheless, neither are the reformist proposals defended by the left in general realistic or plausible. Social Democracy has turned into Social Liberalism. Between reality and desire there is only one path open. To follow it we need a strategy created through critical thinking, reflection and action, the libertarian will of millions of people to live in dignity, with autonomy inside their community, being the protagonists when decisions need to be made. Cooking up the strategy, encouraging subversive acts, bringing reality closer to wishes, dreams and needs, are all tasks which call for libertarian coordination and organization.

In this new millennium, aiming at the heart of the State, storming the Winter Palace, or setting an exact date for the revolution is not possible. The 20th century has given us tragic proof of how many mistakes and barbarities can be committed in the name of the Revolution... [But] despite what some interested parties might think and publish, history is not already decided: history is wrought by human beings... we reject the idea that nothing can be done, that the forces that steer social change are out of reach of human hands. Lastly, we affirm that we are not willing to delegate to anybody the role of protagonist of the exploited and the oppressed, the majority of society, in the flow of history.

If the century we have just left has taught us anything, it is to reject naive optimism and blind faith in the progress of humanity. Everything can get worse; there is nothing that can completely guarantee a favourable result in the evolution of society. The imposition of social structures based even more on inequality and social exclusion is possible. From this perspective, distant from any type

of historical determinism, revolution becomes a vital necessity, and it must be built day by day in many spheres of freedom.

As libertarians we all drink from the same revolutionary spring: direct action, self-management, federalism, mutual aid and internationalism. Nevertheless, the different flavours and currents of this spring have caused on too many occasions factionalism, divergency and separation. We do not wish to see who has got the clearest or purest water, we believe that they are all right and wrong, pure and impure. Wise winemakers mix different types of grapes to produce the best wines, each type of grape provides something. We propose that we do the same and propose a toast for what unites us: the vital need for a libertarian revolution.

The myth of development is a painful inheritance that the 20th century has bequeathed us. An ideological construction of those in power to prolong in their benefit all the mythology built around Progress, which served capitalist interests so well, from the beginning of the first industrial revolution until WWII. The continuation of this myth through “development” has inevitably led to the globalization of the economy, a process which has already caused thousands of traumatic shiftings of production centres throughout the world and, in consequence, has established enormous areas where workers are hyper-exploited in indescribable working and environmental conditions.

Human development, considered as the overall increase of its wellbeing, is not compatible with the capitalist set-up of society and production. Despite what worldwide capitalist rulers try to convince us, this development relies neither compulsorily nor solely on the replacement of traditional production processes by technological ones. Scientific progress must no longer be useful to capitalist development alone, which means to the benefit of a handful of people. On the contrary it must now be useful to everyone. It should ensure independence and autonomy of all peoples, and overall solidarity.

To ensure the acceptance of the development policies, both the capitalist as well as the so-called socialist block had the brightness of the new myth at their disposal, reflected in the American-way-of-life on the one hand, and through the exaltation of productivity as a liberating force in the so-called Socialist countries. This was helped by the enthusiastic collaboration of governments and national financial elites, which acted as local agencies, facilitating in their respective territories the programs developed by international institutions and large transnational corporations. These had reserved for themselves the right to impose whatever modifications (prices of raw material and other goods, tariff barriers, commerce regulations, cutbacks of all types, etc.) to favour the spread of these new forms of production, making traditional ones futile. The era of development spread throughout the world in the 50s and 60s, dividing the world into under-

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developed, developing and developed countries, and creating a hierarchy under the orders of the new myths, rejecting those which did not accept these changes.

The oil crisis (a natural resource in decline), the collapse of the model of productive and technological competition, and the drop in profits due to the social struggles and progressive extenuation of the “third-world countries” caused by the continual plunder they face, indicate that, after decades of application, development is unmasked as a statue with clay feet. The desire for general wellbeing, the levelling of differences between countries are just dreams which hide the painful inheritance of development.

The myth of shared development, spread at large by all capitalist media, allows capitalists to make a large number of people accept their rules, at least passively. But the economical and ecological crisis makes this lie crumble apart. Against capitalist development we propose social development, in equality, shared world-wide, lasting and compliant with the ecological balance. We support the overall increase in production insofar as it aims to cover the real needs and requirements of people from the south or the north, but not in its claims to increase the profits of the shareholders. Setting up such a production process requires collective control over decision making. Economic, social and cultural development is only a tragic lie if no self-managed and federalist democracy comes with it. True development is a hoax if not everyone can take part in collective decisions.

The age of development caused a cruel widening of the inequalities between the inhabitants and peoples of the world, to extremes never before known in history. Development has shown its manifest inability to spread wealth throughout the world and is unable to even cover the minimal requirements of the majority of the population. The problems of housing, access to drinking water, basic requirements of energy sources are no more worrying than the lack of food. Advances in health and education have come to a standstill and half of the world population is piled up in slums around unsustainable metropolises and megacities, living in total dependence on external vital provisions which neither the remaining stocks of natural resources nor the global economic system can sustain. The process of resettling the population in cities strengthens, fanned by the destruction of local cultures, by wars and conflicts and by the increasing abandonment faced by the peasant population.

The response of the power holders to the failure of development started in the 80s with a new international organization and division of labour, and with the introduction of new technologies in the productive system to renew competitiveness, and the increase of monetary regulation of human activities. Privatization and liberalization were the answers: globalization of the economy and the pre-eminence of this over politics, culture, ecology and social issues.

Development and its continuity in the form of economic globalization have, over the last two decades, brought us an increase in social duality and the planet-wide ecological crisis. All of this increases the banal consumerism of the majority of the population of the North while, in the so-called South, scarcity and hunger take hold of its inhabitants and mortgages the future of generations to come.

We support local action. We support what the community can master, following an intergenerational ethic able to ensure an inhabitable world for our children. We reject productivism whose consequences deny the possibility of a future, because it is focused on the immediate profits of the capitalist rulers. The struggles of social ecology must inspire our actions in order to synchronize social struggles and lasting development. However we think local autonomy is not enough. In order to ensure a fair world where everyone stands together, regardless of place of birth or residence, we must link local autonomy and worldwide coordination, through the principles of self-managed federalism.

Globalization of the economy, free trade areas and world government are the three pillars that the so-called information society or era is strongly built upon. The globalization of the economy is based on a new international division and organization of labour, in the development and application of information technologies in order to make worldwide production decentralized, flexible and less local. At the same time it is building a spider web of business networks, interconnected and related to each other while simultaneously breaking the working class into thousands of small pieces, hyper-exploiting the new generations of workers: young workers, women, immigrants, children. This is not an apparition of the past, of the 19th century, but rather a real nightmare from the 21st century.

Globalized exploitation is particularly aimed at immigrants. With their rights taken away, and without identity roots, this group is easily exploited and is used to divide workers, creating a fictitious group of competitors generated and created by racism.

The *sans papiers* are a docile and compliant workforce for the bosses. Separating the rights of nationality from freedom of circulation and residence is a way of checkmating capitalism.

Fascism is becoming an ever faster growing reality. Its influence in politics (and in our minds) is a real danger for the values that we defend.

Both private and State capitalism need an increasingly stricter control over the population in order to maintain and increase their benefits. To this end they are establishing a penal State influenced by the extreme right and adopted by Social Democracy (when its interests are in danger).

The most worshiped idol in the economic temple is the Free Trade area, which has legions of fanatical economists erecting it as the fundamentalist totem of eco-

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conomic globalization. However, the use of competition as a way of regulating the economy is marked by a series of depredatory conduct, backed up with the use of arms. Competition in international markets is complemented by greater productivity, and this is increased by mastering and directing the technological innovations, endangering workers' lives. This is how it has been over the last twenty years and this is the present and future policy of capital. What we can expect from Free Trade areas and international competition is an even further concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the transnational corporations and the governments that support them.

World capitalism has its institutions to favour the spread of globalization: the IMF, World Bank, WTO, G8, etc. At the same rate as the social, ecological and economic consequences of globalization advance, there are more and more voices that call out in favour of more control, in favour of a worldwide government. Encouraging any type of world government, arising from the current political situation, will only lead to legitimizing the driving forces of capitalism, accelerating the consolidation of political structures which are totally out of the control of the inhabitants and peoples of the world. The use of force, the wars fought by UN peace-keeping troops, coupled with the direct subsidies by transnational companies to the UN reveals the plot of the tragedy: a world government using NATO armed forces as gendarmes, while dressing them up as humanitarian forces, with soldiers paid by the UN with funds from transnational corporations.

Neither a State nor a world government—the only government acceptable is the self-management of society from local collectives coordinated regionally and worldwide, a libertarian community or municipality, in which decisions are made from the bottom up and in which federalism is the formula for cooperation. No to competition and free trade areas. Yes to mutual aid and solidarity among peoples; we reject globalization and dependence in favour of autonomy in order to put fate in our own hands. These are not brushstrokes of a pretty picture of the society we hold in our hearts: ends and means are one and the same in the libertarian strategy. These are shovelfuls to the site we are building day by day through social resistance: at the same time as we fight against and pull down the power of capital we must also construct the libertarian alternative, step by step, minute by minute.

Throughout history, the other types of exploitation have been based on patriarchy and the exploitation of women. Insofar as it is a social system of male domination, patriarchy assures the double discrimination of women: in the workplace and at home. Capitalism uses the patriarchal form of organizing families to its advantage by establishing a strict separation between what is private and what is public; to be precise, between “reproductive” labour (by women) and “productive” paid labour (largely by men). This hierarchy of social relations is a re-

sult of male domination: since social relations between men and women are unequal their domestic and professional activities are not given the same economic or social value.

Nowadays, within the context of privatization, and monetary regularization of all social activities, housework is considered to be a “local service” which was and still is a woman’s affair. Capitalism has discovered a real goldmine through which it can continue to increase its benefits thanks to the exploitation of young women and immigrant women.

Even when women are able to obtain paid employment, mostly in the so-called industrialized countries, it is restricted to part-time jobs and is paid less than work done by men. This is the answer to the needs that capitalism has of flexibility and allows the continuation of exploitation of women in their households.

One of the replies of libertarians to patriarchal domination is obtaining a shorter and equal work week and salaries for men and women: this is essential in order to create a fair distribution of labour, including housework.

The equality achieved in the greater part of the so-called industrialized countries has not suppressed nor diminished patriarchal domination. The forms of this have changed, above all due to the different type of family models. But women are still victims of daily violence, in their families or raped and abused during wars...

For libertarians, the consequences of patriarchal domination do not stop there. We men and women demand freedom of reproduction, the “ownership” of our own bodies, the freedom to choose different ways of living together and the right to different forms of sexuality (homosexuality, bisexuality, transexuality, etc.), the right to difference. We propose the self-management of our identity. This will allow us to solve the frequent tension between individuals and the group, allowing the development of solidarity and community. We want to break the male domination inside our organizations and in society.

Direct action, propaganda by the deed, is a defining characteristic of libertarianism that has its roots in the beginnings of revolutionary syndicalism. Today direct action is part of the strategy of the redistribution of wealth through social reappropriation. Making demands is no longer enough; we must socially reappropriate the wealth that has been stolen by the powerful. Direct action must be self-managed by the people who carry it out. We oppose authoritarian so-called revolutionary activists, we claim no messianic role over oppressed peoples, and we encourage and support self-management of struggles. Anarchists are themselves involved in these struggles, but we are not the only ones.

The wealth generated by a society is not only the fruit of capitalist entrepreneurs (who take the largest slice) and of their payroll of workers (who get the

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smallest slice). Wealth is generated socially and counts on the participation of unpaid workers who, through their jobs of reproduction, training or simply lowering of labour costs (women, students, the unemployed...) get, in the best of cases, the crumbs: dependence on a husband or parents or the pittance of an unemployment benefit or, at worst, empty hands.

From each according to his ability and to each according to his need: this is the communist and libertarian sharing of wealth that we have historically defended and fought for [see Volume One, Chapter 8]. A sufficient social income for all people who lack income or patrimony could be a main calling point around which we can unite and join forces in this battle of social antagonism for a fairer sharing of wealth. But until we manage to implant a social salary or income, people still have real needs to meet and must fight for survival.

Direct action in the form of social reappropriation of wealth is carried out by squatting houses, by participating in collective meals with food that has been obtained for free, by assuring your health through associating and cooperating towards healthy eating, avoiding mad cows, chickens with dioxins, vegetables with toxins and transgenic foodstuffs. Direct action as a libertarian strategy and practice allows us to immediately satisfy our needs, builds alternatives to capitalist domination and the best propaganda by the deed mobilizes the majority of society to fight for and achieve a real sharing of wealth.

In the libertarian tradition, revolutionary syndicalism has been important (with its roots in the First International) in the fight against capital in Europe and America [Volume One, Chapters 6 & 12]. From the onset of the 20th century until the beginning of the Second World War, revolutionary syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism have been the central point of the major organizational initiatives of anarchist groups and organizations. Organizing workers into unions—autonomous from political parties, owners and the State, ideologically independent, but with a firm belief in social revolution—was the first major task of anarchism in the first decades of the last century.

Although we cannot talk of one single type of anarchism, as the varieties of anarchism were and are numerous, revolutionary syndicalism was the workers' masterpiece that allowed millions of workers through the world, from France and Spain to Sweden and Mexico, to join and fight for their emancipation. Coinciding with the second industrial revolution and new workplace organization, anarcho-syndicalism headed the struggle and aspirations of a new proletariat reacting to new forms of production and in the process of professional specialization.

After the Second World War, the hidden social pact that the implementation of the welfare state implied (with its social security, collective bargaining laws, unemployment benefits) helped institutional trade unions—mostly Social Democ-

rats—to push revolutionary syndicalism into a corner and almost completely wipe it out in all countries. The capitalist crisis of the 70s and the resulting new organization of work, as well as the drift towards globalization of the economy and the social changes which took place in the first few decades of the information era, up until the new century in which we have entered, have not had to count with the presence of organized revolutionary syndicalism. Its presence is generally marginal in almost all parts of the planet.

But the same has not occurred with anarchist ideas. All the new social movements relaunched from the 60s onwards, ecology, feminism, anti-militarism, etc. have been a reblooming of libertarian flowers. Social antagonism against domination through sex, race, sexual inclinations and so on, has used direct action, calling it civil or military disobedience; federalism and affinity groups to organize; and mutual aid, calling it cooperation and solidarity. It is for that reason that the groups and organizations that identify themselves as anarchist or libertarian have, over the last few decades, dedicated their efforts to participate in the social struggle of these movements, undertaken in cities and urban areas.

Class struggle still exists. It is an essential part of the fight for the emancipation of humanity. It is important to bear in mind that the relations between the owners of the means of production/capital and the workers are unchanged. Although class struggle in daily life and the identity and conscience of the workers are no longer looked upon as the leading struggle, the domination of capitalism over society and the exploitation of human labour are major determinants of oppression, but they are not the only targets of the anarchist fight. We will work to make class struggle converge with other struggles against alienation, patriarchal and moral order, racism, nationalism or religious integralism. Nowadays struggles have several identities, several shapes. They rely on various ways to organize. There cannot be any domination of one way over another in the struggles.

On the other hand, syndicalism has not been able to renew and reorganize itself to meet the new organization of the workforce that has been imposed over the last few decades. What's more, the general tendency has been towards a greater fragmenting of the working class broken up into fixed, precarious, sub-merged employment, self-employment, part-time, unemployment, etc. This and the reduction of the field of action of labour rights and laws in favour of commercial rights and laws, plus ever-increasing tendency towards individual negotiation to the detriment of collective bargaining, limit and reduce the role of syndicalism. In this situation it must urgently change its strategies and organizational structures or be destined to disappear, limiting itself to the institutional role assigned to it by companies and governments.

Libertarianism should currently strive towards encouraging convergence, the interaction of social movements—including the workers' movement—in a solid

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social movement antagonistic to capital and its present true face: economic globalization and all other types of domination. This antagonistic social movement does not have, and nor should it have, a single organizational expression. It is pluralistic, based on current reality, coming and acting together in the same territory, recreating a common territorial identity, composed of many identities.

Local territorial organization is the 21st century's equivalent to what revolutionary syndicalism was in the first part of the 20th century. Economic globalization is a flux of information and capital flowing at the same rate, with no reference to local concerns. Needs and social struggles are locally rooted in the neighbourhood or town. This is where we must work to challenge capitalist domination and exploitation by building libertarian alternatives outside of official local institutions. In this way, different identities can work together because we are supporting a common territorial identity under direct democracy interconnected through networks with other towns.

In a world where social resistance strengthens our libertarian ideas, anarchist groups and organizations have got a lot to learn and a lot to give. The libertarian strategy should be that of strengthening the antagonistic social movement through interaction with social movements, the workers' movement, the unemployed, the excluded, indigenous movements, discriminated groups, ecologists and feminists, promoting direct action as a way towards social reappropriation of wealth and as a form of propaganda by the deed, as an exercise in direct democracy, participatory and federalist, without delegations or intermediaries, building on a community level in each territory and as an alternative to *authoritarian* institutions.

Madrid, March 31 and April 1, 2001. Participating groups: Al Abdil (Lebanon), AL (France), CGT (Spain), CIP de Oaxaca "Ricardo Flores Magón" (Mexico), CNT (France), FAG (Brazil), FAU (Uruguay), Marmitag (Greece), No Pasaran (France), ORA-S (Czech Republic), OSL (Argentina), OSL (Switzerland), SAC (Sweden).

3. The Gaucho Anarchist Federation: Especificismo (2000)

The Gaucho Anarchist Federation (FAG) is a Brazilian anarchist group that identifies itself with the Platformist tradition in anarchist theory and practice (Volume One, Selection 115; and this Volume, Selection 69). The FAG advocates a political practice that has come to be known as "especificismo," the idea that anarchists should work within popular organizations not only in order to become part of popular struggles but to encourage the self-organization of the people into their own autonomous organizations. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from the Federation's Statement of Principles.

Anarchism's legitimacy resides in its participation in the struggle and organization of the oppressed classes and its ability to contribute towards the deepening of these. Which is why anarchist organization should not at all be a sectarian club for the pure-of-thought or some centre for abstract philosophical reflection, but rather a tool serving the needs of a revolutionary process that places popular organizations at the heart of its ventures. To this day-to-day effort we contribute grassroots work that prizes the independence of the class and its organized expressions—be they trade unions, associations, campaign committees, self-managing cooperatives, etc.—over any partisan line...

That anarchism should make an impact through organized political practice is one of the central priorities of the FAG [Gaicho Anarchist Federation]. As we see it, there is no "struggle for the people" and no "struggle through the people": either we fight alongside the people, as militants pursuing a class option and having some profile among the people, or else no libertarian struggle is possible. This is because nothing can take the place of the organized people. Only the self-organized people can create people's power, increasing the level and intensity of the struggle as the political awareness spreads that revolution is feasible and necessary. In the meantime, within the popular struggle the social revolution is incubated and propagated as an alternative, holding out the prospect of a worthwhile, free existence...

Our approach is not geared merely to furtherance of the development of the FAG and its particular political line, but makes anarchist political organization a means of overseeing the sustained spread of popular struggles, successfully providing a forum for discussion and action in which these struggles, and that "province," can overcome their own shortcomings. Overcoming means, say, a social struggle based upon a specific demand becoming sensible of the need to involve itself in matters outside its purview and to coordinate with other experiments and struggles in progress, eventually discovering that their own particular conflict is yet another facet of their class status and awakening to the need to endow their specific struggle with a more global character.

We feel that the level at which workers' movements and popular bodies organize and operate should not be dictated by politico-ideological outlook, nor manipulated by schemes devised in quarters far removed from the sharp end of those struggles. The independence of the class and of its social organizations is a prerequisite for the sort of political practice that is crucial to breaking with the old elitist model of vanguards.

The wedding of the political with the social lies at the heart of what we understand by people's power, a process that amalgamates the two approaches into a single corpus, built upon a strategy that looks to invest the social with a structure so organized and alert that it lays the groundwork for the ground-up devel-

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opment of a capacity that looks beyond the limits on participation laid down by state-employer hegemony, shatters their dominion and lays down markers for the development of society's new life.

In Latin America, there are lots of revolutionary organizations and popular movements which will fight and do fight for liberation... an idea and a goal also covered by our own anarchist revolutionary plans. It is our understanding that the liberation of our class is only going to be possible through organized popular struggle and the building of a long term revolutionary process. In this continent-wide struggle, the best contribution we can make is to go out every day and plant the seeds of the fruits we hope to harvest. Which means that we do not believe that a new social system founded upon equality, justice and freedom can be conjured out of the natural evolutionary trends of the capitalist system and by means of a peaceful transition. Instead, the capitalist system has furnished plentiful proof of its ability to adapt to a number of historical phases so as to keep its underlying structures of domination intact. According to the anarchist view, if there is going to be a break with the capitalist system and a start is to be made on the building of people's power, the tools devised by the system itself must be discarded, having clearly been devised to keep that system in place rather than to hold out the prospect of it being destroyed.

Then again, it is obvious that mere determination alone is not enough to trigger a revolutionary process. Previous revolutionary experiences must be put critically to use but without claiming to import recipes from previous ages and countries not our own. We need to take note of the peculiarities of the present point in time and space in which we are living. We need to see how these are reflected in our class, in its organizations and in its imagination. The times in which we are living today are very different from what they were thirty years ago. We need to devise strategies that take these peculiarities into account.

We see the breakthrough as being triggered by the people, which implies the widest possible participation by the people through its own organizations, with the confrontation with the ruling class being organized along direct action lines throughout...

The construction of a genuinely socialist and libertarian society is effected by means of the socialization of the economy—which is not the same as mere State take-over of the means of production—as well as by comprehensive socialization of decision-making powers.

Such socialization will have to be implemented by the grassroots organizations of the workers and the people and ought to include the means of production, distribution, credit and exchange, political power, education, the administration of justice, defence organizations, and knowledge and information

sources. All of which presupposes the elimination of any ruling class and private ownership.

Taking as axiomatic the eradication of all forms of repression, our aims include the eradication of oppression on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, etc. Oppression can be found at the politico-economic level as well as the cultural. And obviously they cannot be decreed out of existence, any more than the entire apparatus of domination can, but must be abolished through a thoroughgoing process of destruction and construction of other modes of organization and new values.

As we see it, the social revolution only comes about when the people hold central stage. Otherwise, the domination of one class over another is going to persist. Such centrality calls for a strategy for the building of people's power. But that power must not be confused with government.

Faced with a strategy from the established authorities designed to perpetuate government, we must counter with a strategy from the oppressed classes destined to build up people's power. The achievement of people's power requires the preparation of class organizations called upon to wield it and the strengthening of such organizations with the assignment of appropriate tasks to them, so the building of people's power does not mean that the constituent parts of power are hijacked by a new ruling class supposedly representative of workers' interests. Historical experience would seem to rule out that authoritarian option. It is not a question of hanging the label "people's power" on familiar old models of political action and representation that exclude the people from every level of basic decision-making. However, it is not merely a matter of wresting the current, centralized political power from the ruling classes either: it is a matter of diffusing it and devolving it to popular agencies and turning it into something quite different... a new socio-political structure.

Taking power means taking power in the factories, fields, mines, offices, schools, hospitals, power stations, media and universities, and power belongs to the workers and the people when there are comprehensively democratic, participatory bodies controlled by them that take over the supervisory functions performed by the State. Which is why a people's power strategy should have the building of such bodies as its essential premise and central political task which, even now, is playing a primary role in determining whether the future revolution is going to be socialist and libertarian or will not take place at all. So the defeat of the capitalist, authoritarian order and the construction of genuine people's power is proceeding on a daily basis, depending on how our political and social efforts are directed and implemented.

Creating or re-creating, strengthening and consolidating workers' and people's

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organizations and championing their centrality amounts to a step-by-step nurturing of the only feasible socialism: a socialism with freedom, where all of the advances familiar to us today are placed in the service of an improved, more humane operation of society that brings benefits to... the people as a whole...

As we understand it, the class struggle may have economic, political, ideological, cultural or other motives: it can be spearheaded by a wide range of oppressed persons—farm-workers and urban workers, the unemployed, students; it may assume the profile of a gender, ethnic, ecological struggle and so on. Which means that we do not think that there is any specific social group historically predestined to make the revolution, as certain strands of the left believe, especially in relation to the working class.

In order to assist our analysis of reality, we need to look upon a wide spectrum of the oppressed (prompted by different motives into combating the machinery of domination) as protagonists of class struggle.

If we are to make progress in the direction of people's power, we need to unite and marshal these struggles through ties of solidarity and organizational links...

Thus, for every specific struggle, the largest possible number of grassroots bodies should be brought together. For instance, we should try to ensure that the demands of the workers in public schools and of the students are converted in the medium term into a struggle for popular education. The class would be represented by those two sectors, as well as local communities, the mothers and fathers of pupils not just squabbling over grants, but also about the community-school council, curriculum content and teaching methods. And the same goes for all concrete struggles such as housing, employment, health, hygiene, the land, black liberation, women and other sectors.

The umbrella groups of the people's organizations and movements should make a contribution here. But, as has been stated already, there is not going to be any protagonism as long as such coordination is vested in political parties and political organizations, and dependent upon whether their politics are class-based or not, or conciliatory or not. Unless we have the people waking up to its own experience... we will have some party line handed down for as long as the members of the oppressed class are not cast in the leading role...

Destruction of the State (taking the State to be the current legal-political form of class society and current social relationships) is not a single act but a persistent, ongoing process of destruction and at the same time of construction of a new social relationship, rather than a necessarily uniform and linear process...

[I]t is inconceivable that anarchists are going to make the revolution all on their own. Likewise, it is unthinkable that we will carry out the reconstruction on our own. For that would suggest a form of dictatorship that would not allow the expression of dissent or alternative suggestions. Even were we to find our-

selves in the majority, we would be facing competition and coming to accommodations. This is the basic law of politics. A society with just one ideological doctrine and a single political organization is far from what we have in mind. The valid doctrine of freedom is closely connected with whatever a given society can achieve along these lines.

There is no guessing who and how the principal actors in times of revolution will turn out to be. But we must concede that we are unlikely to be the majority element. In which case, and this depends on our political development, we may still end up being a force to be reckoned with in some revolutionary process. Which implies our being clear about everything we need to challenge and agree on...

A society wherein every stratum is free to pursue its interests, with participation by all, would have no need of a separate political agency. But what is expected of a comprehensively libertarian society is also carried over into the present and into the period of transition... Anarchism needs to demonstrate that a libertarian society can dispense with the over-arching agency in the form of the politician.

4. Alfredo Errandonea: Anarchism in the 21st Century (2001)

Alfredo Errandonea (1935-2001) was involved in the Uruguayan student movement in the 1950s and belonged to the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation, the FAU. He later became a university lecturer and researcher in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, depending on the political situation at the time, having to find temporary havens from various dictatorships. His publications include Sociologia de la Dominacion (Buenos Aires: TUPAC-ediciones, 1988). The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are from his posthumously published essay, "Anarchism for the 21st Century."

If it is at all possible, it strikes me that the present time is an opportunity for us to debate how to readdress anarchism... we must return to the sources and try to look for an expression of our aims in our underlying theoretical foundations and, on that basis, work out the approach that these times require. Which, once achieved, cannot offer anything other than a general guideline which allows us to pick out the specific course to follow in any given situation...

I think that if we are to do this we simply have to start from broader theoretical considerations...

Domination—which is power made flesh and institutionalized—manifests itself in the forcing of one's will upon another person (or on other persons) and excessive decision-making powers that reach beyond the person who exercises them. The power to make decisions regarding one's own person—the very same

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power which is restricted by domination by another (or others)—“power over oneself” —is partnership. As we can see, domination is at once the extension of “partnership” beyond the self and is a counterweight to that because the precise extent of the one crowds out the other. To put this another way: the greater the partnership, the lesser the subjection to domination...

If the purpose and justification of social organization is service to all, the wherewithal for achieving this and the essential demands made by everyone tend to grow in scale and complexity. The more developed a society, the more of its aspects and activities will fall under... the wider purview of “the public” and the more all-embracing the pertinent logic. So it is generally assumed that, in broad terms, the firmly guaranteed public sphere has been expanding throughout history from a nebulosity where everything was indistinguishable from the patrimony of the powerful, of the ruling class. The secularizing exercise of shifting the public from the private preserve of him that administers it, in whatever capacity, was, *de facto*, a whole emancipating historical process: the construction of “modernity.” And this differentiation between the “public domain” and the preserve of the ruler represents one of the guarantees of a forward-looking effective collective existence with real and equal access to its surroundings for every member of society, an access that cannot be refused to some on the whim of the rest.

Meaning that the more effective the occupancy of the social space, and if it is guaranteed by its public status, the more egalitarian the society... because the province susceptible to privilege is precisely the private space... And the more aspects, activities and objects there are that are placed beyond reach of the private capacity to render them inaccessible, the more social objects (be they material or otherwise) there are actually within reach of everybody; not only is society more egalitarian... but the more authentically free are its members insofar as they have in effect an increased range of accesses from which to select. And of course, for that very reason, the inclusion within the public space of the actual contents of the thing constitutes one of the main cruxes of the current ideological debate between left and right.

From this angle, the idea of resolving public space affairs by hiving off as many segments of them as possible to the private sector (which is what “privatize” means) is quite simply one of the steps whereby the liberation of human destiny is abdicated. Quite apart from any subjective characterization of this, we are dealing here, in objective terms, with a genuinely backward-looking policy hell bent on returning to the days of “unbridled capitalism”...

The state as a political organization designed to look after the upkeep and administration of the system of domination has always been condemned by anarchists. It gobbled up the municipal and university autonomies that predated it by a long way. And it hijacked the public education and health institutions de-

signed to cater to the general population, as well as other public services in many countries. It took over the monopolies over natural resources and other large-scale productive ventures and employed a considerable fraction of the active population.

The fact is that, as this expansion proceeded, the state came to be used for the most effective maintenance of domination in terms of its political enforcement, the most explicit justification of its bureaucratic existence, political parasitism, “clientelism” and corruption. But equally, there came an expansion in the “public space” element, in the legitimacy of the existence of collective social services and assets meant for all, even if their operation was inefficient and running at a loss.

This is the “public space” of which neo-liberalism’s new rampaging capitalism wishes to be rid; responsibility for which it aims to jettison; and it seeks to do this by turning it all into “private property,” handing over the management of it to firms that can then market them as commodities. Not caring about the vast social marginalization from “the public sector” of those who are denied access to it...

[T]he modern state is in crisis... in all likelihood, mainly as a result of the growing intrinsic contradiction between the administrative functionality of the class rule required of its governmental epicentre and [its role as] standing guarantor for the growing public sector in terms of social services and entitlements for the general population. But with this significant ingredient: a perverse logic that specifically sustains the political class, leading increasingly to lost efficiency and elephantine bureaucratic growth, since there is no correlation with the much needed function of service demanded by its immense public sector. Meanwhile, of course, the regime’s economic system resents having to fund this.

In what is presented as “reform of the state,” the aim is precisely to dismantle a public sector that has been inflated by the expansion of the corresponding public space in order to effect a brazen reversion to the “judge and gendarme” functions of unbridled capitalism. Whereas from the private sector there emerges the provision that corrupts politicians in order to take over sections of the public sector by means of buy-outs of state ventures sold off at bargain basement prices, supposedly to relieve the public purse of “loss-makers.”

Besides the spuriousness of the “political class” using the state to take over “the public” for its own benefit, we anarchists cannot passively countenance a return to a comprehensive denial of people’s rights to goods and services that have been acknowledged as “social,” even if that acknowledgment was secured via the state. Let us think of them all as “public sector,” as the space to which society collectively should lay claim. Obviously the way to do this is not “privatization,” which purely and simply signifies its being returned to capitalist ownership.

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The most anarchist way to achieve this is through the granting of autonomy and decentralization: handing the management of them back to the interested parties, to those who operate these resources and those who avail them: to their “producers” and their “consumers.”

In fact, it does not matter whether the label hung on them alludes to their being “state” ventures or some other abstraction; what counts is that the actual running of them be in the hands of the people. It does not matter if they are turned into cooperatives, community bodies or public ventures, just as long as the management of them is handled by the interested parties completely independently of the political class, the bourgeois class, the bureaucratic class or any other.

To which end, in every instance, this should assume the most accessible form for achieving that purpose and be achieved through direct exercise of input by those for whom they are intended. So we anarchists should be pressing for partnership as a means of breaking down domination, by whatever means and pressures there may be and as much as we can. The fight is a fight for effective partnership.

Against the general backdrop of reduced social and political partnership which these days is felt throughout the life of society, and which affects all of the tendencies and organizations operating from the left in equal measure, there is also a loss of clout in the global social conflict on the part of those organizations and social movements that offer opportunities for partnership, be they traditional or new, including of course the classical trade union movement, once the arena best suited to anarchist activity. This is a trend resolutely to be resisted: it is as if we were harking back to the days when our constructive efforts first began. And it is a struggle that should entail elaboration, organization or reorganization; as well as our being embedded in the social and political life of society, in the handling of activities, decision-making and social and public interests... wresting the initiative away from the private sector where popular collective activity can feasibly be introduced into any facet of social life. In actual fact, there is no alternative as far as any form of militant action goes.

In that... struggle... we are not going to be on our own. Nor would it be good for us to be so. Given our current marginality, our lonely presence would represent certain marginalization that would exacerbate our isolation, save for the likelihood of exceptional opportunities in very short-lived situations during which we might seize the initiative. In any event, our stance and outlook should be to favour the greatest possible opening-up, free of discrimination and with an eye to integration; and we should radically lobby for this when others deny it. Which is to say that our activity within the people’s organization ought above all else to highlight its pluralism.

Our presence and action should be geared towards collective, constructive

acknowledgment of responsibilities and decision-making and towards those organizations making their presence felt in social life and fellowship. And our conception of this participation should be directed at an intelligent marriage of decentralization and partnership that can do away with “delegation of powers”, with its loss of primacy generally, and with the formation of elites or leadership cadres. Teasing partnership and commitment out of others, out of the generality, is an essential goal that takes complete priority in one of the contexts posited as a unit of the social organization of the future, and naturally for the pursuit of these forms of direct democracy in the overall organization of the life of society. This sort of approach and the fight against the derailing of it ought to be the ideological keynotes of what we do.

...[T]he notion of the Social Revolution as an abrupt, apocalyptic act of insurrection is merely a romantic image drawn from 19th century history. The 21st century revolution is going to be a complex process, one that will assume multiple forms, accomplished over disparate time scales. There may or may not be instances of insurrectionary violence: that will depend on the resistance that the system puts up in different circumstances to the transfer of decision-making capacities and responsibilities. But in any event they are going to have to be the culminations of highly consensual processes that sweep aside apparent obstacles in the path of their natural development...

Given the trends in the world today, it is inevitable that opportunities for such revolutionary activity will present themselves in the widest variety of locations and in the most widely varying circumstances, especially where and when popular movement-based participatory processes manage to secure a foothold and engage a wider public, as well as building up the maturity that naturally leads to them. In which case our presence and an uttermost root-and-branch defence of the pluralism and direct democratic partnership implicit in the principles set out earlier are going to prove crucial.

Historically, there were periods when anarchism as a movement had a telling presence within the popular movement in many societies. Broadly speaking, there was then such a pre-eminence that the popular movement that it represented blended into the specific movement to make up a well-defined ideological organization: or it coexisted alongside a specific organization for those who defined themselves ideologically as such, as well as exercising a leading and generally telling presence within more broadly-based popular organizations. In which cases, the specific organization and the more broadly-based popular movement tended to have strong mutual ties to each other; up to and including organizational ties amounting to a quasi-amalgamation (as in the case of the Spanish CNT-FAI). This fact had a considerable impact upon the existence of divided social movements (almost always trade unions) existing alongside other popular

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organizations in which different ideologies prevailed. This had a negative impact to the extent that the balance of power between the ideological strands within the popular movement began to operate in our disfavour...

Something that ought to emerge very clearly from any self-critical analysis is that the popular organizations (especially trade unions), wherein anarchism set its face against pluralism, finished up petering out as such. Not just because of the paucity of anarchist militants and those strongly in sympathy with them, but also because the social circumstances of popular activism are very inimical to the classical requirements of ideological definition and because a pluralist, all-embracing approach is a must for any popular organization, even those within which some political party ostensibly enjoys hegemony. This fact in itself represents a powerful reason militating against it and stigmatizing it as sectarian; and ultimately it explains why anarchism has been stymied in terms of a popular organization. Besides, this is a good thing if what we want is to set up popular organizations capable of taking over the running of society in the most libertarian society possible. Because it is unthinkable that such all-embracing organizations should be under the sway of social segmentation in any form, and that includes us as an ideological current. That all-embracing popular organizations should be ideologically classifiable is something that we can discard once and for all when deciding upon our approach to organizing any popular movement that anarchists wish to influence.

Of course, by definition, this does not apply to the specific organizations which, like the political parties, organize themselves with an eye to better administering the identifiably anarchist lobby. In which case the question that needs asking is whether there is any need for organizations of that sort to exist.

If the aim is to invest anarchism with some dynamic thrust, if we want to grapple with the issue of its being brought up to date, if we feel the need to update and deepen the analysis of where it stands vis-à-vis the present times and in different locations, if we feel it is important to coordinate the activity of its militants within a variety of popular organizations, if we feel the need to engage in reflection and collective collaboration... if the understanding is that all of this activity requires organizing and financing, then we must of necessity answer in the affirmative...

[L]est we take the wrong turn of ghettoization, and in order to sample life in a social reality wherein we aim to re-establish our presence, and because, ultimately, this is the arena in which we have to engage in our activity, it is also important that we begin to increase our much weakened foothold in the broadly-based popular movement. Even though this requires that we start from scratch.

To put it simply: we must shoulder the responsibility for that presence wherever and however we fit into society. And let us make a start by boosting, through

such participation, our ability to reproduce our membership and to recruit and socialize those who have any predisposition to share in our ideological sensibilities.

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5. Dimitri Roussopoulos: The Politics of Neo-Anarchism (2012)

Dimitri Roussopoulos has been active in the nuclear disarmament and anti-war movement since the late 1950s and founded during the 1960s several left-libertarian publishing projects, including the quarterly journal, Our Generation, the journal Noir et Rouge, the newspaper, La Nuit, Black Rose Books, and co-founded Les Editions Ecosociete. He in effect introduced contemporary anarchism into Quebec. He also as a community organizer worked in co-operative housing for low-income persons and helped establish the largest urban land trust wherein private property of land and buildings has been removed from the marketplace. An active pioneer in the urban ecology movement, he organised several major projects locally and internationally, the most recent being the founding of the Transnational Institute of Social Ecology, based in Europe.

Anarchism is a spring fed stream that is ever present especially in social movements and in opportunities afforded in a variety of political cultures. As a tradition of freedom that renews itself it is ever ready to surge forward by transforming its philosophy into a river of social transformation.

With the collapse of Marxism-Leninism as a movement in history, and with the discrediting of most of social democracy and liberalism, new horizons abound for a transformative political philosophy that promotes a democratic society without a centralizing political authority, that is a State, and in this day and age, without a fixation on a Nation-State. As a philosophy that is not neatly defined since by its very nature it is anti-dogma, it is thus not canonized in the form of sacred texts, endlessly interpreted through the ages. Its influential thinkers are, to be sure, important points of reference, but anarchism is not a creation of a single, dominating philosopher. As with most philosophies it contains several major schools of thought which offer different, sometimes complementary directions towards a free society.

Determined to create a society wherein both domination and exploitation are removed, root and branch, anarchism results into a complex and subtle philosophy. In a perpetual quest for freedom and ever vigilant against hierarchy, it emphasizes process, and in this is dialectical in its analysis of history and society, as well as in its view of Nature. Thus it is unique, even in its 19th century origins, as having an appreciation of the subjective, which informs its understanding both

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of human nature and social history. In its advocacy of a classless and stateless society, anarchism is socialist, but not all socialists are anarchists.

Where some fundamental differences arise is in answer to the basic question, 'is social revolution possible today, as it was once envisaged, especially in our type of society?' This question is posed in highly industrial societies, with advanced technologies, centralized State power with huge armed forces, and economies that are dominated by multi-national corporations. To be sure social revolts are not only possible but do erupt from time to time. Such mass actions can shift State policies to the Left, and can modify predatory market capitalism into temporary withdrawals. In highly authoritarian societies, political revolutions are still possible. But can an alternative society be brought about by social revolution in the 21st century, as anarchists have envisaged it, wherein an entire political culture is radicalized based on new social relations, where political power is radically decentralized, with an economy based on self-managed techno-industrial units in harmony with communities which are themselves in harmony and balanced with Nature? Let us refresh our thinking.

Anarchists today are caught amidst the thorns of a number of contradictions. There are the classical anarchists, who are preoccupied with researching and recounting history, especially that which is lost or ignored. These efforts are often followed by attempts to re-establish classical forms of organizations, which young militants and intellectuals find of marginal interest. There are the young street anarchists who, having released their anti-authoritarian fury to the full, consider street protests and painting the circled "A" everywhere and anywhere as a preparatory militancy that may spark social revolt, if not revolution.

There are those who are essentially merchants, focusing all their energies in maintaining bookshops and book fairs, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers and book publishers, all in the name of education but most are unconnected with larger radical organizations or social movements. This kind of groundwork is promoted as educational work, preparing a new consciousness, but has limited consequences as it tends to be unconnected to organization or movement building. Thus a great many of the consumers of this production are those who seek ongoing affirmation as a way of life. Not to be ignored are the entertainers, who sincerely try to create a cultural anarchism, writing plays, verse, music, theater and even visual art.

All of this activity is of some consequence to be sure, and not to be dismissed; however in the end it is devoid of political force, which is the result of an absence of concerted concentration and discussion on the major social and historical forces affecting and transforming society today. As a result it represents fundamentally a critique of the status quo, a negation without a substantial vision of what is possible or desirable or a road map of a radical social

reconstruction. When the new, post-Franco anarchists emerged in Spain from the dark days of dictatorship, they had a slogan, “We have a new world in our hearts.” To renew anarchism, what is required is visibility and relevance to people’s daily needs, on the ground realizations, practical, concrete examples of how anarchist principles can work in practice. Neo-anarchism must be present not only on various fronts defending social justice writ large, but in all social movements, wherever civil society congregates. Its values opposing exploitation and domination should be programmatically articulated. Nothing is gained by being marginal for its own sake.

CONSTRUCTIVE ANARCHISM

For anarchism to become a river of social transformation again, what needs to become a wider priority is *constructive anarchism*. Looking at the face of history, what is needed is a geopolitical sense of social change, actively taking on every opportunity, entering the public realm and engaging in public debate by building on the concrete aspirations of the people.

This approach requires a two-pronged socio-political intervention. One focused on building a conscious base of social construction, such as cooperatives of various kinds. Housing cooperatives in particular have the potential of giving people both security and a directly democratic experience. Credit unions can also give people an additional sense of security with the potential of democratic control. Parallel institution building is a complementary activity, such as libraries and documentation centers with study and educational circles, a practice at which anarchists have been exemplary from the beginning. The other focus requires being ever attentive to the street and public places as venues of mass protests and the congregation of community. An evident departure from the past is that these realizations require a context and focus in the 21st century, as never before, which leads to the question: what constitutes the *politics* of such a neo-anarchism?

POLITICS VS. STATECRAFT

There is a paradox in the fact that anarchists, celebrated for being against the State, have not paid enough attention through study, research or publications to the origins of the State and the historical evolution of the Nation-State. There is not only an irony in this fact; it also has serious negative consequences. To be sure there are some important writings and insights, here and there, such as Peter Kropotkin’s and Harold Barclay’s contributions [Selection 17], which are without doubt important. But on the whole a radical re-writing and re-interpretation of the conventional texts on the rise and domination of the Nation-State, from

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an anarchist perspective, has been missing. Hence a convincing perspective on the possible future shape of a radically transformed society is missing.

This important field of study has been left to liberals and Marxists of various schools to embroider upon, thus dominating the outcome. The result of such ideologies 'educating' generations of students and the citizenry at large with their standard history of the Nation-State has created a public acceptance based on an inadequate definition and practice of politics, political theory and political philosophy, all with unfortunate consequences for radical social change. This largely unchallenged ideological hegemony prevailing in educational institutions and in public discourse has not only seriously distorted radical analysis but also any radical perspective of what it means to fundamentally transform society. This situation also compromises an outline of what a new society could look like. Another side effect of the current ideological hegemony is that it seriously distorts contemporary anarchist views of how to change society.

The following example illustrates this point. During the decade of the 1960s, the new generation of activists had a common cry—participatory democracy. Liberal democracy was not only challenged in theory and practice, but the floodgates opened wide beyond electoralism, parliamentary democracy and representation. The practice of participatory democracy by the New Left in the sixties also opened the floodgates of anti-authoritarian and libertarian practices. While some anarchist were present and influential during that decade, as a classical body of thought and movement, anarchism as such was not really present in the discourse on democracy. When the Iron Curtain collapsed, and the western Left discovered the relevance of democracy, the anarchists were on the sidelines of this opening because most were still objectors to the prevailing definition of democracy, namely liberal democracy with all its limitations. But this was not the only definition of democracy, as the sixties demonstrated.

Since the 1960s, and again in the 1980s through the 1990s and into the 21st century, there have been powerful surges of libertarian, anti-authoritarian and anarchist consciousness. However all of this has not witnessed a visibly important anarchist presence on the stage of history as a philosophy or the emergence of an important anarchist movement active and federated with various affinity groups. There is no engaged movement across the map in the long term, active in communities, in the work place, locally or internationally.

THE RISE OF THE STATE

There is in the work of Murray Bookchin a solid outline of the rise of the State, specifically the Nation-State, and an outline upon which future research and theoretical work can be developed. In his chapter, "The Social Ecology of Urban-

ization”, Bookchin writes: ‘From the sixteenth century onward, Europe was the stage for a drama unique in history: the development of nation-states and national cultures in which populations tended to identify with what we, today, accept as a commonplace—a sense of personal nationality. Even the notion of citizenships, long-rooted in loyalty to a city and the public body that occupied it, began to shift toward a large territorial entity, the ‘nation,’ and to its ‘capital’ city. Politics, too, began to acquire a new definition. *It increasingly denoted the professionalization of power with roots in the state and its institutions.*’ (My emphasis). Carefully argued and documented, this large chapter 7, presents the most powerful intellectual articulation on the rise of the State to date.

Most important is the key distinction made between the State and politics. The chapter in *Urbanisation without Cities* is titled “The Creation of Politics” and is one of the most important in the realm of political history and political theory. Space limitations here do not permit a significance review of this major contribution. However for our purposes attention has to be drawn to Bookchin’s distinction between the State as such and local administration or municipal government. It is on this distinction that social ecology is based, and the politics that follow.

In the chapter, “From Politics to Statecraft,” we read:

‘A close study of the state shows that there are and have been various degrees of statehood, not simply the emergence of a finished phenomenon called ‘*the state.*’ Indeed, the universal use of such words as ‘state’ can impede a clear understanding of the extent to which ‘the state’ exists at various levels of societal development—not only historically, but also today in modern society. Conceived in a processual way with due regard to the degrees of statism that have existed historically and functionally, I should emphasize very decidedly that ‘the state’ can be less pronounced as a constellation of institutions at the municipal level, more pronounced at the provincial or regional level, and more pronounced at the national level. These are not trifling distinctions. We cannot ignore them without grossly simplifying politics. Differences in degrees of statification can have major practical consequences for politically concerned individuals and communities.’

It is important to note that this line of thinking on the city is not foreign to anarchism. Although Bookchin’s intellectual and practical construction is original as it is set in contemporary society, there is a lineage that goes back to Michael Bakunin, no less. We evoke this lineage deliberately to upset certain anarchists and engage them in debate.

In *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*¹ we note the following passage under the heading “Municipal Elections are nearer to the People”:

‘The people, owing to the economic situation in which they still find themselves, are inevitably ignorant and indifferent, and know only those things which closely affect them. They well understand their daily interests, the affairs of daily life. But over and above these there begins for them the unknown, the uncertain, and the danger of political mystification. Since the people possess a good deal of practical instinct, they rarely let themselves be deceived in municipal elections. They know more or less the affairs of their municipality, they take a great deal of interest in those matters, and they know how to choose from their midst men who are the most capable of conducting those affairs. In these matters control by the people is quite possible, for they take place under the very eyes of the electors and touch upon the most intimate interests of their daily existence. That is why municipal elections are always and everywhere the best, conforming in a more real manner of the feelings, interest and will of the people.’

Maximoff was the teacher of Sam Dolgoff, who also wrote in his *Bakunin on Anarchism*, ‘...They have a healthy, practical common sense when it comes to communal affairs. They are fairly well informed and know how to select from their midst the capable official. Under such circumstances, effective control is quite possible, because the public business is conducted under the watchful eyes of the citizens and vitally and directly concerns their daily lives. This is why municipal elections always best reflect the real attitude and will of the people...’²²

For much of the contemporary era, most anarchists have either been ignorant of, or choose to ignore, the insights articulated in these sources and others. To be a force for fundamental change anarchism must evolve intellectually and politically, especially in North America and Europe, beyond street protests, book and periodical publishing, book fairs, seminars and the like. Admittedly all these activities are important. A *constructive anarchism* however requires, in addition, the on the ground placing of building blocks, namely applied politics, and a connection to the larger public realm of the neighbourhood and the city, recognizing these as strategic political terrains. The premise for such a neo-anarchist politics is that anarchists should consciously choose to be deeply based in their neighbourhoods and communities. And/or deeply based in their workplaces while seeking to embrace community concerns. Depending on the circumstances, they should be identified for who they are and where they stand. In neighbourhoods, every effort could be made to know one’s neighbours and thus to promote new social relations, new forms of civic action, more self-determination. This can take many different forms. It is a fact, that in many cities, elementary notions of participatory democracy are sought by every day citizens, often instinctively ad-

vanced or advocated. In such rich soil where some sense of community exists or can be cultivated, the implementation of constructive anarchism in various new forms of association are promising.

THE GEOPOLITICAL CENTRALITY OF THE CITY TODAY

Looking at reality objectively we see around us growing evidence of the environmental crisis. We can also recognize the role and importance of cities in social revolts.

Over half of humanity—3.5 billion people—live in cities today. By 2055 an estimated 75 per cent of the world's population will live in urban areas. Cities today occupy just 2 per cent of the Earth's land, but account for over 70 per cent of both energy consumption and carbon emissions. Cities have a disproportionately large effect on climate change contributing as much as 70 per cent to global greenhouse gas emissions.

Cities are, and will continue to be, at the nexus of global crises related to economic recessions, energy insecurity, water scarcity or flooding, high food prices, vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. All this and more while at the same time we are also experiencing the greatest migration in history from rural to urban areas.

Cities, consistently undermined by national governments, have been underfunded and underrepresented in the upper circles of the power elite that determine 'national priorities.' The result is cities, big and small, have serious problems of political legitimacy; weakened, they face large-scale disinterest by citizens, without the will to transform themselves into democratic arenas for citizen participation in decision-making. The sense of community is being hollowed out of neighbourhoods as cities experience large-scale urbanization.

Urban management, collapsing infrastructure, inefficient public transit, waste management, overflowing landfills, water and air pollution, and the impact of climate change are all issues, with serious effects on public health. Capitalist urbanization, whether State sponsored or corporate driven, simply cannot handle the urban crisis, which in turn substantially aggravates the environmental crisis. Cities appear locked into unsustainable models of urbanization.

The other side of the economic coin is that the cities of the world's emerging economies are becoming the drivers of the world economy while the planet's resources are rapidly being depleted. So the large cities of the southern hemisphere suffering from urban sprawl, the degradation of the environment and the proliferation of slums add to the environmental cannibalism of the large cities of the north.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CITIES

Jane Jacobs was almost the first to research and demonstrate that it is urban areas that drive and in fact dominate national economies. She showed that ‘national economies’ are largely mythical constructions, and that more regional economies, urban based, represent the real economic driving forces in society. Saskia Sassen has taken this thesis even further with her research which demonstrates that today, ‘global cities’ are in fact the dominant conduits through which transnational corporations determine the rise and decline of the world economy. David Harvey (an urban geographer) in his numerous books places the city at the heart of capital accumulation and class struggles. Cities are central to struggles over capital and the frontline for strategies seeking to control access to urban resources which dictate the quality and organization of daily life. Harvey notes: ‘Conventional economics routinely treats investment in the built environment in general, and in housing in particular, along with urbanization, as some side-bar to the more important affairs in some fictional entity called ‘the national economy.’ The sub-field of ‘urban economics’ is thus the area where inferior economists go while the big guns ply their macroeconomics trading skills elsewhere.’³

In his new book, *Rebel Cities – From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*, Harvey, covers the ‘The Right to the City’ thesis and movement, historically, from Henri Lefebvre, to political economy, and this from a libertarian Marxist perspective. He then singles out ‘Rebel Cities’ by detailing and reclaiming the city for anti-capitalist struggle, and notes: ‘The history of urban-based class struggles is stunning. The successive revolutionary movements in Paris from 1789 through 1830 and 1848 to the Commune of 1871 constitute the most obvious nineteenth century example. Later events include the Petrograd Soviet, the Shanghai’s Communes of 1927 and 1967, the Seattle General Strike of 1918, the role of Barcelona in the Spanish Civil War, the uprising in Cordoba in 1969, and the more general urban uprisings in the United States in the 1960s, the urban-based movements of 1968 (Paris, Chicago, Mexico City, Bangkok, and others, including the so-called ‘Prague Spring,’ and the rise of neighbourhood associations in Madrid that fronted the anti-Franco movement in Spain around the same time). ... More recently we have seen mass protests in Tahrir Square in Cairo, in Madison, Wisconsin, in the Plaza del Sol in Madrid and Catalunya in Barcelona, and in Syntagma Square in Athens as well as revolutionary movements and rebellions in Oaxaca in Mexico, in Cochabamba (2000 and 2007) and EL Alto (2033 and 2005) in Bolivia...’. Throughout the book, it should be noted, Harvey acknowledges sympathetically, the analysis and insights of Murray Bookchin.

The ‘Global Index,’ an important analytical tool in economic analysis, lists 66 cities as global cities which drive the world economy. The paucity of actions to

deal with the world-wide environmental crisis shown by national governments at the recent Rio +20 summit forced even UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, to state that “our struggle for global sustainability will be won or lost in cities.”

Sadly the political implications of the analysis outlined above is side-tracked by established Left orthodoxy. The city as a geopolitical terrain for the challenging of global capitalism and the State seems to have passed by most of the Left, including the anarchist Left. This Left is invited to consider this reflection of urban sociologist Robert Park on the city as “Man’s most consistent and on the whole, his most successful, attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart’s desire. But, if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself.”⁴

THE CASE FOR SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND CONSTRUCTIVE ANARCHISM

It is a truism to note that the new anarchist current emerged in the mid to late 1960s in North America. It arose interspersed with community organizing and the notions of participatory democracy advocated and practiced by the New Left. In Montreal, the practice of community organizing arose with the self-organization of the poor and underclass as a means to empower the powerless in society. These efforts dovetailed with a similar movement among francophones. Thus there was much political work done to build tenant rights organizations, social housing campaigns (decent housing was advocated as a right), and anti-poverty coalition building, all with an anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian edge. This daily work was done alongside radical student groups involved in anti-war work on the one hand while practicing student syndicalism on the other. The trade union movement was also turned on its head when one of the major federations began to advocate a ‘second front,’ that is, a front which advocated the establishment of a terrain on which unionized workers and others acted beyond the workplace, placing themselves in their neighbourhoods alongside other community active citizens. This organizing turbulence took place in a society where self-recognition through cultural and political nationalism also played a role.

For over a decade and a half the political culture of Montreal was seeded with the most radical ideas with which thousands identified. These were also days of nationalist terrorism when the FLQ was banned and the central government in Ottawa declared a military ‘state of emergency’ in October 1970. Some one thousand persons were arrested and jailed by police and military forces, an act of State suppression without precedent in Canadian history. No sooner did the chill of this repression subside, then the movement for self-organization in various urban struggles began again.

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The anarchists of Montreal in the later 1960s brought in Paul Goodman and Murray Bookchin as public speakers and focused on educational work, but also in organizing numerous active affinity groups that worked in concert. They established the first anarchist, women and gay liberation bookstore. They focused their political work in the Montreal Citizens Movement (a municipal political party/movement with a left-libertarian tendency) and in one particular downtown neighbourhood, Milton-Park. The neighbourhood gave rise to the biggest cooperative housing project in North America based on a community land trust. From 1968 onwards a broad based and militant urban struggle began which lasted some 11 years, and ranged from door to door work to demonstrations, petitions, occupations and squatting, civil disobedience and sit-ins, arrests, jail, trials. The result of this base-building and much other organizing work that followed was the establishment of the largest non-profit social housing project in Canada, for low-income citizens. Imagine an entire neighbourhood where the buying and selling of property is not permitted (the community land trust denied market capitalism a prime six city block area from all land speculation). This process of social reconstruction resulted in a federation of some 22 self-managed non-profit housing co-ops and non-profit housing associations beginning in the late 1970s into the 1980s, which continues to exist today. A community based project which practices democratic self-management in various degrees is the fruit of anarchist inspired and led organization.

Once established the community based libertarians established the first social ecology institution, the Urban Ecology Center of Montreal, in 1996. Its mandate was to focus on all the major issues of the urban question through the lens of social ecology. It is today a major social actor in the larger Montreal region, having organized five citizen summits, each one larger in numbers than the preceding one. The last citizens summit brought together over 1,000 persons. The networking involved hundreds of citizens in a variety of social actions across the city. Everywhere possible participatory democracy is practiced, and the social reconstruction of society is advocated.

This project was preceded by the first Green municipal political party, Ecology Montreal, which put forward a programme based on social ecology. It sought to promote the kind of 'new municipal agenda' that the anarchist Murray Bookchin advocated in the 1970s and 1980s. It is this programme which first put forward the thesis that an ecological city was not possible without it also being a democratic city, and *visa versa*.

Other neighbourhoods also continued the practice of the sixties' politics of community organization, so that Montreal has a very important civil society of all colours, which undertakes important defensive campaigns against urban deterioration with a pronounced commitment to democracy. The anarchists of

Pointe St.Charles/St.Henri are another recent pole of grassroots activity and movement building.

Since the beginning of the 21st century all this community based organization and activity has had an impact on the municipal government. A number of democratic reforms have resulted, leaving openings which have been critically occupied in part by civil society. The 'Right to the City' discourse of the urban left in many cities, and 'Take over the City' have been popularized. A fundamental re-definition of citizenship has resulted with many citizens considering themselves first and foremost citizens of Montreal, more than citizens of a nation. The envelope of democracy is constantly made larger, with citizens initiating public policy instead of simply lobbying politicians. The whole idea of political intermediaries is challenged, as the seeds of direct democracy start sprouting. When more than 29,000 citizens recently signed a petition demanding participation in decision-making on urban agriculture, and that politicians change course on this or that given topic, a political electric current was visibly transmitted. The public desire to have citizens involved in economic decision-making, and participatory budgeting, are movements toward economic democracy added to the popular mix. People's impatience with the status quo and the political and economic establishment is evident. This deep desire for fundamental change burst forth with the massive student strike of 2012.

FROM STUDENT STRIKE TO SOCIAL REVOLT

It has been six months now (September 2012) since the student strike began in Quebec, largely based in Montreal. The strike involved some 170,000 university and college students. It came to a temporary end when the provincial government called a general election.

On March 22, 2012, some 150,000 students marched through the streets of Montreal against a proposed State increase in tuition fees. One April 22nd, Earth Day, 200,000 youth and others marched again for a variety of environmental and social demands, including a tuition freeze. On May 22nd, more than 250,000 people from all walks of life, young, old, all colours and political stripes, left-nationalists, anarchists, trade unions, community organizations, ecologists, marched together for a broad list of social demands. They also marched against a new repressive law, Bill 78 (now Law 12) imposed by the provincial government, a significant imposition on civil liberties. During this march a huge number of marchers turned left instead of right at an intersection, committing what was now a massive act of civil disobedience. On 22 June, July, August, and September, mass marches again took place.

Parallel to these mass marches a social revolt began to emerge in scores of

neighbourhoods throughout the city. A symbolic reflection of this social revolt was a pot banging cacophony every night from 8 pm onwards by thousands of citizens in their neighbourhoods marching along their local streets, as many other thousands marched all over central Montreal and Quebec City and in other towns, expressing great anger and frustration against the 1 percent of the superrich, the State and the police. Some 2,700 people were arrested by the police on the street and in their homes during these public events, but did not dampen the revolt. In a rare instance of solidarity, meetings and demonstrations took place in New York, Chicago, Paris, and several Canadian cities. The Occupy Montreal movement and the anger it expressed was integrated in the new social revolt, re-emerging with a bang on the streets and neighbourhoods of Montreal.

A June 2012 opinion poll had a well-known pollster comment that the sentiment of Canadians had shifted to the left because of "...the changing nature of the country and the fact that student protests in Quebec represent a broader unease with the economic policies of those in power. Quebec has become ground zero for whatever the progressive movement is going to be in the country. And they're finding allies around the country..."⁵

A strong reason for the emergence of this social revolt is that the deep roots of community organization and citizen committees sprouted again with the arrival of spring and the early rainfall of the student movement. It is important to note that this social revolt is anchored in a communalist sentiment, identity and radical syndicalism among the youth with very wide sympathy from other strata of society. For instance, during the mass demonstration in the streets of June 22nd a pamphlet was distributed in large numbers, 'Manifeste pour une Democratie directe', sub-titled 'behind representative democracy, there is an oligarchy hiding.' The pamphlet, authored by a number of anarchists affiliated to neighbourhood associations, states '...The solution to the current crisis is democracy, the only, true, real democracy: direct democracy—or self-management—in which citizens directly exercise power. We need to rebuild general assemblies, popular councils, participatory budgets, self-managed cooperatives, the use of referenda so that our society can orient itself horizontally from the base.' This communalist anarchism runs parallel to the classical anarchism that places the sovereign individual above all else.

The largest and the most radical student federation is the CLASSE, *Coalition Large de L'Association pour une Solidarite Syndicale Etudiante*. On July 12, 2012, CLASSE issued a remarkable manifesto, called *We are the future*:

'The soil of Quebec is shaking under the marching feet of thousands. A force once underground, in a frozen consensus, has now surged forward this spring. This force has involved students, parents, grandparents, children, workers

and the unemployed. What started out as a student strike has now become a popular struggle... we have touched a much deeper malaise, we have uncovered a deep political problem. It is a problem that affects all of society. It is thus important to speak to the root of the problem and to give substance to our vision.

Our vision is that of direct democracy, present at all moments. It is a democracy that is present in all assemblies: in school; in the workplace; and in the neighbourhoods. It is a vision that foresees the engagement of everybody in politics permanently at the base of society as its primary venue... Our democracy does not make promises, it acts. Their vision, their democracy, is called representative, and we ask who does it represent.'

What follows is not only a critique of liberal democracy, but a general analysis of the dimensions of social injustice, environmental degradation, and a social alternative including complete gender equality. The manifesto concludes:

'If we have chosen to strike, it is because we have chosen to fight for ideas, to create a social force... because together we can accomplish a great deal... Everywhere new democratic spaces are being created, which have to be used to create a new world... This is why we make an appeal for a social strike; this is why we choose the street...'⁶

Thus we witness the merging of direct action and direct democracy. The perspective of building parallel institutions is now being discussed widely. But the base of all this social action is rooted organizationally in the schools on the one hand and in the urban neighbourhoods on the other.

What the politics of neo-anarchism stresses is a politics that proposes and creates libertarian alternatives. Not the professional activity of those who hold office in the Nation-State, in centralized institutions of power. Rather, politics beginning with participatory democracy, a growing self-management of citizens freeing themselves from the established order, from the bottom up. A politics which seeks to create or recreate a vital public sphere based on cooperation and community. Such an approach, a constructive anarchism, gives us a variety of social organizations, be these housing co-operatives, democratically controlled credit unions, neighbourhood councils, in a word a number of public tools which can be used as levers for radical social change. And as Bookchin has argued, such politics does not exclude, and indeed requires, that citizens 'take over the city,' forming political movements out of which strictly mandated delegates can be elected to city council to begin a process of decentralization of political and economic decision-making to the community at neighbourhood levels.

This municipalist agenda has already begun in Montreal. This city is the most decentralized city in North America, divided into 19 boroughs, each with its own elected council, each with expandable decision-making powers, each with a budget. These borough councils are already open to the direct intervention of citizens, at each of their public meetings, as is the municipal city council itself. In addition, Montreal has a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities which clearly spells out what the city must do and what citizens can do to demand more. Finally, the Charter recognizes the right of citizens to initiate public policy demands through effective public consultations. No need to wait around for municipal elections, citizens can initiate changes now. And a citizen is defined as anyone who lives in Montreal, no need to be a Canadian citizen.

All these changes have taken years of community organizing, bringing citizens together in networking summits, writing up citizen agendas for basic change, and coalition building between civil society organizations. In a word, organization on the ground, at which many of Montreal's most active anarchists are always present, vigilant against the emergence of hierarchy and authoritarianism, and ever helping a horizontal decision-making process to prevail.

The current social revolt here and elsewhere will not lead to social revolution. The road to fundamental social change is not one coloured by the classical upheavals of the past. The urban revolution(s) envisaged today are transformative challenges to market capitalism and the State. The emphasis is on participatory and direct democracy, on economic democracy and decentralization of power to citizens and neighbourhoods in a framework of a communal confederation. Interestingly, some of these ideas were discussed during the September 2012 Urban Social Forum in Naples, which shadowed the UN's World Urban Forum in the same city.

These perspectives require a long march through local institutions, thus empowering a willing new citizenry, returning to an earlier definition of politics.

1 *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*. Ed. G.P. Maximoff (New York: Free Press, 1964), page 220.

2 On page 223, A.A. Knopf, New York, 1972, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2002.

3 David Harvey. 'The Urban Roots of Capitalist Crises,' in *Rebel Cities: From The Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso, 2012), pages 27-28.

4 Robert Park. *On Social Control and Collective Behavior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), page 3.

5 *Montreal Gazette*, page A14, June 23, 2012.

6 *Le Devoir*, page A7, 12 juillet 2012.

Chapter 2

Libertarian Democracy

6. David Graeber: Democracy and Consensus (2004)

In these excerpts, taken from David Graeber's Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004), Graeber argues that before majoritarian democracy developed many communities relied upon consensus-based decision making processes, as do contemporary anti-authoritarian and anarchist groups (Selection 1). Graeber suggests that such consensus based democracy is more compatible with non-hierarchical forms of organization. Reprinted with the kind permission of David Graeber and Prickly Paradigm Press.

We are usually told that democracy originated in ancient Athens—like science, or philosophy, it was a Greek invention. It's never entirely clear what this is supposed to mean. Are we supposed to believe that before the Athenians, it never really occurred to anyone, anywhere, to gather all the members of their community in order to make joint decisions in a way that gave everyone equal say? That would be ridiculous. Clearly there have been plenty of egalitarian societies in history—many far more egalitarian than Athens, many that must have existed before 500 BCE—and obviously, they must have had some kind of procedure for coming to decisions for matters of collective importance. Yet somehow, it is always assumed that these procedures, whatever they might have been, could not have been, properly speaking, “democratic.”

Even scholars with otherwise impeccable radical credentials, promoters of direct democracy, have been known to bend themselves into pretzels trying to justify this attitude. Non-Western egalitarian communities are “kin-based,” argues Murray Bookchin... “Some might speak of Iroquois or Berber democracy,” argued Cornelius Castoriadis, “but this is an abuse of the term. These are primitive societies which assume the social order is handed to them by gods or spirits, not self-constituted by the people themselves as in Athens.” (Really? In fact the

“League of the Iroquois” was a treaty organization, seen as a common agreement created in historical times, and subject to constant renegotiation.) The arguments never make sense. But they don’t really have to because we are not really dealing with arguments at all here, so much as with the brush of a hand.

The real reason for the unwillingness of most scholars to see a Sulawesi or Talensi village council as “democratic”—well, aside from simple racism, the reluctance to admit anyone Westerners slaughtered with such relative impunity were quite on the level as Pericles—is that they do not vote. Now, admittedly, this is an interesting fact. Why not? If we accept the idea that a show of hands, or having everyone who supports a proposition stand on one side of the plaza and everyone against stand on the other, are not really such incredibly sophisticated ideas that they never would have occurred to anyone until some ancient genius “invented” them, then why are they so rarely employed? Again, we seem to have an example of explicit rejection. Over and over, across the world, from Australia to Siberia, egalitarian communities have preferred some variation on consensus process. Why?

The explanation I would propose is this: it is much easier, in a face-to-face community, to figure out what most members of that community want to do, than to figure out how to convince those who do not to go along with it. Consensus decision-making is typical of societies where there would be no way to compel a minority to agree with a majority decision—either because there is no state with a monopoly of coercive force, or because the state has nothing to do with local decision-making. If there is no way to compel those who find a majority decision distasteful to go along with it, then the last thing one would want to do is to hold a vote: a public contest which someone will be seen to lose. Voting would be the most likely means to guarantee humiliations, resentments, hatreds, in the end, the destruction of communities. What is seen as an elaborate and difficult process of finding consensus is, in fact, a long process of making sure no one walks away feeling that their views have been totally ignored.

Majority democracy, we might say, can only emerge when two factors coincide:

1. a feeling that people should have equal say in making group decisions, and
2. a coercive apparatus capable of enforcing those decisions.

For most of human history it has been extremely unusual to have both at the same time. Where egalitarian societies exist, it is also usually considered wrong to impose systematic coercion. Where a machinery of coercion did exist, it did not even occur to those wielding it that they were enforcing any sort of popular will.

It is of obvious relevance that Ancient Greece was one of the most competi-

tive societies known to history. It was a society that tended to make everything into a public contest, from athletics to philosophy or tragic drama or just about anything else. So it might not seem entirely surprising that they made political decision-making into a public contest as well. Even more crucial though was the fact that decisions were made by a populace in arms. Aristotle, in his *Politics*, remarks that the constitution of a Greek city-state will normally depend on the chief arm of its military: if this is cavalry, it will be an aristocracy, since horses are expensive. If hoplite infantry, it will have an oligarchy, as all could not afford the armor and training. If its power was based in the navy or light infantry, one could expect a democracy, as anyone can row, or use a sling. In other words if a man is armed, then one pretty much has to take his opinions into account. One can see how this worked at its starkest in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, which tells the story of an army of Greek mercenaries who suddenly find themselves leaderless and lost in the middle of Persia. They elect new officers, and then hold a collective vote to decide what to do next. In a case like this, even if the vote was 60/40, everyone could see the balance of forces and what would happen if things actually came to blows. Every vote was, in a real sense, a conquest.

Roman legions could be similarly democratic; this was the main reason they were never allowed to enter the city of Rome. And when Machiavelli revived the notion of a democratic republic at the dawn of the "modern" era, he immediately reverted to the notion of a populace in arms.

This in turn might help explain the term "democracy" itself, which appears to have been coined as something of a slur by its elitist opponents: it literally means the "force" or even "violence" of the people. *Kratos*, not *archos*. The elitists who coined the term always considered democracy not too far from simple rioting or mob rule; though of course their solution was the permanent conquest of the people by someone else. And ironically, when they did manage to suppress democracy for this reason, which was usually, the result was that the only way the general populace's will was known was precisely through rioting, a practice that became quite institutionalized in, say, imperial Rome or eighteenth-century England.

All this is not to say that direct democracies—as practiced, for example, in medieval cities or New England town meetings—were not normally orderly and dignified procedures; though one suspects that here too, in actual practice, there was a certain baseline of consensus-seeking going on. Still, it was this military undertone which allowed the authors of the *Federalist Papers*, like almost all other literate men of their day, to take it for granted that what they called "democracy"—by which they meant, direct democracy—was in its nature the most unstable, tumultuous form of government, not to mention one which endangers the rights of minorities (the specific minority they had in mind in this

case being the rich). It was only once the term “democracy” could be almost completely transformed to incorporate the principle of representation—a term which itself has a very curious history, since as Cornelius Castoriadis notes, it originally referred to representatives of the people before the king, internal ambassadors in fact, rather than those who wielded power in any sense themselves—that it was rehabilitated, in the eyes of well-born political theorists, and took on the meaning it has today.

In a sense then anarchists think all those right wing political theorists who insist that “America is not a democracy; it’s a republic” are quite correct. The difference is that anarchists have a problem with that. They think it ought to be a democracy. Though increasing numbers have come to accept that the traditional elitist criticism of majoritarian direct democracy is not entirely baseless either.

I noted earlier that all social orders are in some sense at war with themselves. Those unwilling to establish an apparatus of violence for enforcing decisions necessarily have to develop an apparatus for creating and maintaining social consensus (at least in that minimal sense of ensuring malcontents can still feel they have freely chosen to go along with bad decisions); as an apparent result, the internal war ends up projected outwards into endless night battles and forms of spectral violence. Majoritarian direct democracy is constantly threatening to make those lines of force explicit. For this reason it does tend to be rather unstable: or more precisely, if it does last, it’s because its institutional forms (the medieval city, New England town council, for that matter Gallup polls, referendums...) are almost invariably ensconced within a larger framework of governance in which ruling elites use that very instability to justify their ultimate monopoly of the means of violence. Finally, the threat of this instability becomes an excuse for a form of “democracy” so minimal that it comes down to nothing more than insisting that ruling elites should occasionally consult with “the public”—in carefully staged contests, replete with rather meaningless jousts and tournaments—to reestablish their right to go on making their decisions for them.

It’s a trap. Bouncing back and forth between the two ensures it will remain extremely unlikely that one could ever imagine it would be possible for people to manage their own lives, without the help of “representatives.” It’s for this reason the new global movement has begun by reinventing the very meaning of democracy. To do so ultimately means, once again, coming to terms with the fact that “we”—whether as “the West” (whatever that means), as the “modern world,” or anything else—are not really as special as we like to think we are; that we’re not the only people ever to have practiced democracy; that in fact, rather than disseminating democracy around the world, “Western” governments have been spending at least as much time inserting themselves into the lives of people who

have been practicing democracy for thousands of years, and in one way or another, telling them to cut it out.

One of the most encouraging things about these new, anarchist-inspired movements is that they propose a new form of internationalism. Older, communist internationalism had some very beautiful ideals, but in organizational terms, everything basically flowed one way. It became a means for regimes outside Europe and its settler colonies to learn Western styles of organization: party structures, plenaries, purges, bureaucratic hierarchies, secret police... This time—the second wave of internationalism one could call it, or just, anarchist globalization—the movement of organizational forms has largely gone the other way. It's not just consensus process: the idea of mass non-violent direct action first developed in South Africa and India; the current network model was first proposed by rebels in Chiapas; even the notion of the affinity group came out of Spain and Latin America. The fruits of ethnography—and the techniques of ethnography—could be enormously helpful here if anthropologists can get past their—however understandable—hesitancy, owing to their own often squalid colonial history, and come to see what they are sitting on not as some guilty secret (which is nonetheless their guilty secret, and no one else's) but as the common property of humankind.

7. Eduardo Colombo: On Voting

Many anarchists have advocated abstention from voting in governmental elections, arguing that such elections, and participation in them, are primarily used as a means of legitimizing the authority of so-called "democratic" states (see, for example, Bakunin, "The Illusion of Universal Suffrage," Volume One, Selection 23). In the following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, Eduardo Colombo distinguishes between voting in voluntary groups and voting in state controlled elections.

VOTING. FIRST LET'S SEE WHAT VOTING MEANS.

I. Voting is a procedure whereby an opinion or decision can be made manifest. In the Latin derivation, *votum* is the past participle of the verb *vovere*, meaning to invoke (according to Littré), pledge, give or withhold a commitment. To vote is to speak up in the chapter (in ancient religious brotherhoods). There are different ways of voting, such as say, by order or by head. Suffrage, or the vote, is a method that customarily helps to produce a majority (be it a relative or simple or a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority, etc.). It is meaningless other than in instances where it may be thought that the existence of a majority view is of relevance to the issue.

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2. Voting therefore means expressing an opinion (in the broadest sense) on something or someone, generally for the purpose of constructing a majority. Casting one's vote can take place in some deliberation or election; in the latter case, it facilitates choice (the terms *electio* and *eligere* actually mean "choice" and "choose") between two or more individuals competing for some institutional office. It may also be used in the choosing of a strategy or indeed, to assert or rebut a point of view.

3. Voting helps to construct a majority, to be sure, but what is the point of a "majority"? It certainly offers no guarantee of being in the right. But wherever opinions differ on matters of timing or tactics, where arguments fail to convince—and yet again it is not a question of principle or values—such as, say, determining the date on which a strike is to be launched or finding out whether one is in agreement with issuing a special edition of some review, decision-making by majority vote becomes a useful recourse.

4. Consequently, anarchists should envisage voting in terms of belonging to a majority.

First: The law of majority rule (which is wide open to criticism and is criticized at the level of anarchism's political philosophy) proper to direct or indirect democracy is not a "law" by which anarchists are bound: all decision-making, all commitment should be freely consented to or agreed.

Second: Free consent rules out the formal majority obtained by means of a vote. Countless decisions, situations and circumstances are not susceptible to appeal to some majority. The "majority" of people, the majority at a meeting, knows nothing of the truth, nor can it claim to be in the right, for it is no better equipped to know what needs doing anymore than I or you do or we all do.

Third: In terms of values, "principles" and expertise, pressing for a "majority" decision to be made is nonsense.

I refuse to have any truck with a vote where we might have to decide if freedom is preferable to slavery, or whether the immunological theory behind "clone selection" is true.

But if we are dealing with group strategy games, if there are joint activities under consideration, if we have to come to some agreement on the choice of some course over some other—and as long as I, as an individual, am not minded to see the choice as infringing my values (principles)—I might very well embrace participation in majority decision-making as a useful thing to do.

Corollary: In an anarchist group or at some meeting, if we have decided as a body that we should look to a majority decision, and if I personally consent to take part in the vote, then I am bound by that majority decision (this being a rule of ethical responsibility).

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE

“If elections could change anything, they’d be illegal.”

“Anarchists do not vote!” The truth is that, where universal suffrage is concerned, anarchists preach revolutionary abstention. The anarchist refuses to resort to the ballot box to change something or to partake in the expression of the “people’s will” because he knows that these two mirages are colossal deceptions that are part and parcel of representative democracy. Decent folk ought to know this but they do not. A free spirit cannot but be astounded as he looks around himself and finds that, albeit constantly abused and periodically deceived, the voter’s trust will survive repeated let-downs and his own day-to-day griping.

“Legislature follows legislature, each one leaving the same disenchantment, the same grumbling in its wake” (Sébastien Faure).

And, like the pathetic Sisyphus, the voter carries on voting whenever the political authorities require him to do so. We know that we have a strong case, but argument is not enough. Habit and custom prevail, for the simple reason that the citizen finds them already embedded in the fabric of society, embraced them at birth and abides by the laws handed down by the powers-that-be.

“Now the laws”—Montaigne wrote—“retain their credibility, not because they are just, but because they are laws. Therein lies the mystical font of their authority: they have no other.”

The system of parliamentary representation deprives the people of its right to set or prescribe its own norms. Even during the Revolution, in the early days of the Republic, the Jacobin bourgeoisie was against the sections’ right to hold standing assemblies.

“If the primary assemblies”—Robespierre argued—“were summoned to pronounce upon matters of state, the Convention would be undone.”

These words were to draw this riposte from Proudhon:

“It is clear. If the people becomes the law-maker, what is the point of representatives? If it governs by itself, what is the point of ministers?”

But government is necessary, we are told, to maintain order within society and to ensure obedience to authority, even should that order and obedience consecrate “the subordination of the pauper to the rich, the commoner to the noble, the layman to the priest.” In short, statist order is social hierarchy, poverty for the greater number and affluence for the few.

Representative democracy, founded upon universal suffrage, cannot help but offer reassurance to that order. Bakunin figured that: “government despotism was never so formidable and so violent as when it relies upon alleged representation of the counterfeit will of the people.”

But how come universal suffrage can only express some counterfeit will? Because wrapped up in it there are three out and out “booby-traps”:

1. One person [citizen], one vote. The numerical equality of the collective institution that is universal suffrage builds up into several abstract units—majority, minority, abstentionists—on the basis of a serial order that separates and isolates actual flesh and blood individuals. These individuals are the agents of various social practices and make up social groups and are part of a network of affective and cognitive, working and leisure relations, and these groups involve tremendous inequality in terms of expertise, access to information and money. The abstract and artificially contrived unit that grows out of the ballot box serves only to break down (at less cost than out and out warfare) the different political and economic factions within the ruling class which fight for control of the government, the political parties, the mass media and the flow of capital. The “representative” oligarchies with which we in the industrialized world commonly referred to as “democratic regimes” are familiar rely upon that counterfeit will of the people—the product of the uniformity or equalization imposed through numerical abstraction by universal suffrage—in order to uphold social hierarchy and capitalist appropriation of collective toil.

2. In practice, the voter gets to choose between candidates chosen in advance by the political parties. Those candidates—except in municipal elections in small towns—have, thanks to the institutional requirements of those very parties, built up a long political career and have been screened in advance and it is hard to see anybody who is a rebel or a maverick getting beyond stage one of this exercise. It is the parties that choose the “representatives of the people” and it is they that canvass the votes of the electors. The people’s will, already reduced to a numerical unit—neither deliberates nor decides (it being its representatives who are to perform this task)—has, if it wishes to express itself, ultimately to choose between two or three politicians and chooses, as the saying has it, the least bad option. Logic dictates that choosing the least bad option means choosing badly. Are we supposed to believe that this is the will of the people?

3. The representation that emanates from universal suffrage is wholesale delegation of the elector’s power (decision-making capacity) to the person of the representative for the duration of his mandate. The hopes of the members of the Paris sections of 1789 who urged those elected to abide by the wishes of the primary assemblies are forgotten. The imperative or audited mandate is forgotten. The revocability of the mandate at a moment’s notice is forgotten.

The “primary assemblies” are now the preserve of the political parties (if we can go on employing the term for meetings summoned by “political bosses”). The people, looked upon as being in its minority [underage], enjoys the status of a ward. It has chosen its master. “The books are closed” until the next time the political authorities throw them open. Representative or indirect democracy is the term employed for this institution whereby the people’s will has been bamboozled thanks to the alchemy of universal suffrage.

The anarchist refuses to be party to this sham. He does not kow-tow to institutional authority. “Anarchists don’t vote!”

Refractions, No. 7

8. Amedeo Bertolo: Libertarian Democracy (1999)

Amedeo Bertolo is the author of numerous essays on anarchism and political theory. In this article, translated by April Retter, he sets forth a “political” conception of anarchism as a form of “libertarian democracy.” Originally published as “Democracy and Beyond,” in Democracy & Nature, Volume 5, Number 2, July 1999.

Francesco Saverio Merlino, who was an anarchist in the 1890s and later moved towards libertarian and then liberal socialism, wrote that “government by all = government by none.” Shortly before he died he made a note on a manuscript that “democracy = anarchy”...

Merlino’s two statements (which do seem to present a pair of clear affinities: government by all/democracy, government by none/anarchy) can act as a starting point for a more profound comparative analysis of democracy and anarchy...

Taking anarchy first, it can be (and indeed has been) understood in different ways, even by anarchists themselves. The particular interpretations which are of interest here are of a society without government, or without a state, or without power, (or better) without domination. These interpretations call for further clarification. What, for example, is meant by government? Anarchists often speak in positive terms of “self-government,” so that what they reject must be “government by others,” government imposed on one part of society by another, a division between the government and the governed, rather than government *per se*.

As far as the state is concerned, this is a particular historical form of legitimization and organization of political power. Its legitimacy is rational, bestowed by a real or supposed “popular will” rather than by the will of God or who knows what else. It still however lies within a hierarchical view of society, the

state being a *paradigm of power*, or better of domination. The state is an institution (or a sum of institutions), but above all something which provides the conceptual foundation of modern class domination.

When anarchists speak of power they virtually always mean that... hierarchical power which entails a relationship of command-obedience. In the case of political power (which is always seen as negative) this is not the normative function of society, nor the “collective political force,” but the usurpation of the political corpus of society with all its functions by a minority. In a society split between the rulers and the ruled, the power which anarchists reject is that which is constantly exercised by the former over the latter. Anarchy is not anomy (i.e. the absence of norms), but, with the necessary specifications, autonomy...

[S]ince anarchists claim to have a conception of society which rejects domination but not the collective functions of the organization of society (rejecting only the hierarchical forms and the implications of domination), it can perhaps be said that anarchists believe in a government/non-government, in a state/non-state, in a power/non-power. This only seems to be paradoxical since the first term in each pair refers to a neutral concept of the corresponding function, while the second refers to the actual function founded on a nonhierarchical principle.

For the state too it is necessary to be clear about what we really mean by this term. We do not mean the state in its historical configuration (which anarchists have rightfully shown to be an exemplary form of modern domination, a central hierarchical institution of reality and of the social imaginary of the post-Enlightenment), but rather the state in the sense of a “republic,” *res publica*, the public domain, a term which the classics of anarchism used more than once in a neutral sense [see for example Proudhon, *What is Property*, Volume One, Selection 8].

Words do of course carry a heavy emotional and ideological load, which is why anarchists prefer not to use in a neutral sense words like government, State and power, which have great historical significance. In the same way they reject the word “party” for their political organizations, even though these are undeniably forms of party/non-party. It is a party because it is a social group organized to pursue certain values and interests, but it is a non-party because it has no hierarchical structure and is not directed towards gaining power.

However much they may want to go “beyond politics” the anarchists have not entirely managed to avoid proposing, both in words and deeds, forms of political organization that are compatible (although not identical) with anarchism understood as the absence/negation of domination. In the same way in the economic field, while recognizing something “beyond” economics, they have always suggested economic forms which essentially boil down to what can be called self-management. The forms of government/non-government that the anarchists pro-

pose to take over the political functions of society can essentially be boiled down to what has been termed *direct democracy*. Whatever Merlino may have said, democracy, even in its direct form, is not anarchism (and nor is self-management). It is not true that the power of all is at the same time the power of none, or at least not entirely true. There is still some measure of coercive power, even if only through moral sanctions. It is power over someone, not over no one. So even the limited form of direct democracy, democracy that operates face-to-face and through unanimity (i.e. only through unanimous decisions), limited also by its limited area of practical functioning, is not necessarily anarchist in the fullest sense. It may perhaps be so in political terms, since theoretically when all norms are fixed and all decisions taken by all and particularly by every individual concerned, there is no domination...

If everyone consciously and freely joins in and at the same time respects (not “obeys”) deliberations, this is not the domination of one part of society, nor of “all” over the individual. There is the not insignificant theoretical problem of norms established in the past and still in force due to social inertia, norms which an individual has not always joined in setting or approving and which they cannot modify and which therefore represent a form of domination of the past over the present, but for the present we can leave this aside. So if everyone [freely joins in deliberations], sovereignty lies in both the individual and the collective. On a theoretical level direct democracy in its “purest” form can reconcile the apparently irreconcilable.

However this is a precise case: direct democracy which is unanimous and applied only in situations which do not lend themselves to a generalized application, i.e. on a small level and with an extreme homogeneity of values and interests. Beyond this smallest dimension delegation becomes essential. Without a strong homogeneity there must be a mechanism for decision-making over and above unanimity.

If decisions were always and only really unanimous, very few would ever be taken, even within groups with a high level of social and cultural homogeneity. It is true that when there is a certain level of homogeneity and where there are no opposing interests, unanimous decisions can often be reached without any great difficulty or exhausting discussions as an individual (or a minority) may well withdraw their opposition to the opinions and so the decisions of the majority. This could however surely be seen as a particular consensual form of majority decision.

When the collectivity making decisions (whether ten people or one hundred or one thousand) is heterogeneous in terms of values and interests, unanimous decisions, even in the limited form described above, become difficult, if not impossible. It is then that the democratic mechanism of the majority comes to seem the

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lesser evil among the possible decision-making criteria. A lesser evil that is from the anarchist point of view. The majorities may be simple, absolute, qualified, even highly qualified (two thirds, four fifths, nine tenths...), but they are majorities nonetheless...

Once we move beyond a certain numerical threshold (one hundred people? five hundred? a thousand?), direct democracy in the strict sense of face-to-face democratic meetings no longer works. It cannot work, because for face-to-face democracy to work those present at a meeting must know each other at least a little and have a certain degree of mutual trust. They must be able to talk in other situations as well and, last but not least, they must be able to contribute directly to the discussion leading up to a decision, as this is an integral part of the decision-making process.

Anyone with any experience of meetings knows that beyond a certain dimension they tend to move closer to demagoguery than to direct democracy, with the majority of the “participants” in fact merely being present. In this way the “public” changes from participants to spectators with varying degrees of interest and motivation, just like the audience at a theatre (or a cinema or concert) or a football match. They are transformed from the thing to its representation, even if emotionally involved. Direct democracy becomes representative democracy.

The first question is where this threshold lies? This depends on many factors: the complexity of the subjects in question; the “democratic maturity” of the participants; their knowledge of the subject; their psychological make-up; their willingness to be really involved in the decision-making process; and the relative homogeneity of their values and their real interests. But whatever the circumstances there is a threshold and it is not very high.

The long-lasting “utopian” experiment of the Israeli kibbutzim shows that the upper limit for a meeting to be considered direct democracy is somewhere around some hundred persons. It is certainly far from hundreds of thousands. To gather this number of persons together in a stadium does not mean they will discuss a question and reach an agreement, seeking an acceptable compromise. Even putting a decision to the hypothetical electronic vote of a million people means having to simplify the question and the possible options to a binary level of yes/no. In such a case, whoever simplifies the question has in a certain sense already partly decided the answer. Not even in the best possible scenario can this be considered direct democracy in the true sense.

So over and above face-to-face democracy there is inevitably a dimension of democracy which is in some way indirect, at least in fact. There are federal and confederal forms of “direct” democracy. As Bakunin said, “every organization must work from the bottom up, from the commune to the central organ, the State, by the route of federation.” Such federal and confederal forms must in-

evitably use some form of “representation” (the quotes are to distinguish it from the particular form of representation familiar from representative democracy).

The form which anarchists have given to such “federal” representation (in both theory and practice) is an “*authoritative and revocable*” mandate. This mandate can at any time be revoked by those who gave it, i.e. through direct democracy in the strict sense. It is difficult, but not impossible to imagine this immediacy even for second and third degree mandates (delegates elected by delegates and so on). The authority of the mandate comes because politics is also the art of mediation, of compromise, and the decision-making process (at all levels from the local meeting through all the different levels of delegation) is one of compromise between opinions and interests that need not be opposing (although they sometimes are) as much as diverse. How then is it possible to find an equilibrium on the base of authoritative, i.e. rigid, mandates? Only mandates that are reasonably flexible can produce a satisfactory compromise...

Democracy as it is generally understood, as vaunted by various self-styled liberal-democrats, is representative democracy and not democracy *per se*. Even the “people’s democracy” of the former so-called State socialists was representative democracy, on its own terms of course. Even Fascism was in its way a representative democracy. Its “political class” represented the Italian “demos,” it was just that the forms of representation were different to those of pluralist political systems. We should not overlook the fact that freedom of speech, of the press, of association, were limited. But then what belongs to the liberal ambit does not necessarily belong to the democratic one. It cannot be denied that on the eve of the Second World War, the fascist regime enjoyed the support, active or passive, of the majority of Italians, i.e. of the people. Nor that the Camera dei Fasci e delle Corporazioni (the Italian Fascist parliament) was an elected body representing the demos... Antonio Salazar’s regime [in Portugal] regularly held semi-democratic elections—and won them all. Even in the last one, shortly before the “revolution of carnations,” the regime won an, admittedly slight, majority.

I am not trying to place fascism and liberal democracy on the same level... I am simply trying to show that the term democracy covers a semantic space that stretches from *direct* democracy in the strict sense to authoritarian democracy, passing through forms of limited and controlled delegation, to forms of representation that are generically limited (true “limited partnerships”) and periodically renewed through the electoral process (in the dual sense of choice and selection), which unite the elements of agreement and co-opting in different measures.

If direct democracy in its “pure” form represents one pole of this continuum, the liberal version of representative democracy... i.e. liberal democracy, does not represent the opposite pole (which is authoritarian democracy) but is undoubtedly somewhat closer to that pole. It is no coincidence that in social crisis, when

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confronted by the risk not so much of revolution as of radical reform of economic power, liberal democracy has shown no great difficulty or reluctance in “letting itself be transformed” into its authoritarian counterpart (and on occasions into true dictatorship) for however long it may take to rebuild sufficient support on the part of the ruling/dominant class for a return to a more “liberal” form of democracy. It is only natural that representative liberal democracy should be closer to the authoritarian pole than to the libertarian one. It is in fact the “human face” of the “rational” division between the ruler and the ruled, the political counterpart of the division between dominant and dominated, of the class division of society and of its hierarchical structure...

Democracy is the government of the demos, of the people. The demos has been defined in various ways, on the basis of gender, of citizenship, of wealth, of age, and so on. In its most wide-reaching form (as, for example, in Italy today) it includes virtually all citizens over the age of 18 (which is not the same as all inhabitants), regardless of class, wealth, sex and race.

How then does this demos... exercise its “government,” its “power”? It does not exercise it in person; that would be self-government, direct democracy. Instead it delegates its declared right to an elected oligarchy which then exercises this power in its own name. And it is not as if the only choice was that between an unlikely anarchism and an electoral oligarchy (representative democracy)...

There is the alternative of direct democracy integrated in a system of federations and confederations, in the broadest sense, in a greatly decentralized political sphere in which the mandates of even the delegates of the basic social structures can be revoked and limited (albeit with relative room for manoeuvre) on specific decisions, and where the power delegated in a coordinated situation is always less than that which is not delegated. This would be a democracy in which a community of ten thousand inhabitants would primarily be governed by its own decisions and not by those of the province, let alone those of the region, etc., etc. in a federal succession. This would be a democracy in which “peripheral” political realities (city neighbourhoods, or towns or regions) would not be a partial devolution of a central power, but in which the “central” body would be a federal system of partial devolution of power stemming from the base [see Proudhon, *The Principle of Federation*, Volume One, Selection 18]...

Under representative democracy, on the other hand, the power to decide is delegated to a body of political professionals and the only “power” left with the demos is that to choose its representatives (under conditions in which there is some reason to doubt the real and conscious freedom of choice), and power grows rather than decreases as you move from the political “periphery” to the centre, from the local to the national. This is a different dimension of democracy. It is not the demos which governs itself, albeit with contradictions which

cannot be eliminated but can be controlled once their existence is recognized, but a demos in whose name someone governs, with some mechanisms for creating and/or simulating consent. There is a qualitative leap in the nature of the apparent continuum of the democratic forms.

A democracy that is compatible with the anarchist rejection of domination (and in political terms of the division between the rulers and the ruled) is necessarily a “direct” democracy in the above sense, i.e. strongly based in democratic meetings and with a necessary but controlled system of temporary political delegates. Delegates may be elected or chosen by lot (why not—it was the case with the magistrates of Athens) but would be truly representatives. Under no circumstances would there be a political class (whether one party or several makes no difference) cut off from the demos by the simple fact of being professional politicians... Direct democracy places much greater power in the hands of every individual making up the demos, by breaking up, decentralizing and diffusing political power.

Direct democracy is a discrete approximation of a political an-archy (absence of domination). And in fact in both theory (as with Proudhon and Bakunin) and practice (in the various revolutionary situations like Spain in 1936 [see Gaston Leval, “Libertarian Democracy,” Volume One, Selection 126] in which anarchists have played a decisive role) the political forms suggested and experimented with have been those of “direct democracy on a federal basis”.

This is a good approximation of political anarchism. It is nothing more but nor is it anything less than that. Political anarchism is certainly founded on a further “beyond,” but just as the Christian ideal is sainthood “in imitation of Christ” and yet all Christians including the saints settle for less, indeed for much less... so too do anarchists. There is another sense in which anarchism goes beyond democracy... As a philosophical, ethical and aesthetic principle it stretches beyond the political arena (which is that of democracy) and indeed rejects it. It moves beyond it because even the extreme model of direct democracy is not really enough.

A face-to-face meeting could pass unanimous decisions that are horribly incompatible with anarchism. The direct democracy of Athens could burn Pythagoras’ books or condemn Socrates to death, but nobody can make an anarchist accept the justice of a verdict which punishes heterodox ideas. Unanimity, and even less a majority, may be accepted by anarchists as the criteria for political decisions in specific contexts, but never as a way of deciding in absolute terms what is good and what is bad, what is beautiful and what is ugly...

There is yet another and perhaps even greater way in which anarchism goes beyond politics. Politics, like economics, is a dimension of society which has become visible and “autonomous” of the totality of social functions and a “fixed

point” of history. In this way it can be seen as a historical creation. Both the political function and the economic one have always existed in some form and degree in every society, but (apart from the Athenian “interlude”) it is only in recent centuries that they have been observed, described, prescribed, studied and practiced as independent social forms, starting with Machiavelli, Hobbes, etc., and increasingly after the Enlightenment with its disenchantment of the world and its “worldly” deconsecration and reconsecration of domination.

Like economics and almost at the same time, politics too has acquired an “autonomy” of the social magma in the imaginary and institutional representation. Economics has sought to apply its own categories to social phenomena (the “utopian” undertaking of capitalist ideology is in fact impossible) and to bend them to its own form of “reason.” Politics has been more modest although no less dangerous and has sought to explain itself “according to its own rules.” There have been attempts to shape society to it which have had considerable historical and ideological significance: Leninism, and those third-world forms more or less contaminated by it, as well as fascism: “everything for the State, nothing outside and against the State,” as Mussolini said.

But economic, political, legal, ideological-religious and other functions of society are precisely that, functions of a “social being” which is not economic, nor political... The realization that the overall physiology of the social being has various diverse functions is undoubtedly an important addition to our knowledge, knowledge necessary for a radical transformation of society as it is, but it is also important to recognize and understand the close links and interrelationships between the various organs and functions...

Anarchism is in fact a “holistic” conception of society and can only be *beyond* politics, economics, and so on (not an ingenuous and primitivist “before”). The social organism is not just a sum, a mechanical combination of politics, economics... but rather an organic interrelationship of political, economic and other functions. There can be no real democracy in the political sphere unless all those acting in it are socially equal (or if you prefer, equivalent). Thus it is not possible to have political democracy without economic democracy, which we may call self-management. And it is not possible to have self-management unless the people involved are equal, i.e. without the integration of manual and intellectual work [Volume One, Selections 34 & 64]. And so on it goes.

LIBERTARIAN DEMOCRACY (to employ a neologism which is more or less synonymous with possible, practical anarchism) is impossible unless the *ethos* of society and its fundamental values do not have at least a certain coherence with direct democracy and self-management, that is to say with equality, freedom, solidarity and diversity in the broadest sense. That is, more or less, anarchism.

9. Andrew Flood: Assemblies Are the Revolution (2011)

Inspired by the “Arab Spring” (Selection 16), the Occupy movement arose in September 2011, beginning with Occupy Wall Street in New York. The Occupiers have generally adopted an assembly form of decision-making, similar to that which has been advocated by various anarchists, such as Murray Bookchin and David Graeber (who was directly involved in the Occupy Wall Street movement). The Occupiers have tried to reclaim not only the streets but politics itself for the 99% of the world’s population exploited and dominated by the 1% who actually control the world economy and dominate its various political systems. In the following piece by Irish anarchist Andrew Flood, he emphasizes the revolutionary nature of assembly forms of organization.

A commonly heard criticism [of the Occupy movement] targets both the lack of clear demands and the related complex and often drawn out decision-making processes being used at Occupy General Assemblies. These criticisms however miss the point, against the traditional left with its package of pre-set answers (best before 1917) what makes Occupy different is that process of decision making through assembly. The assembly form is not just a way of making decisions but also a different form of doing politics. The Assembly is in embryo the different world we seek to create. I’m not arguing that the process is everything or especially the only thing that matters. Of course the questions asked and decisions reached will also determine the direction of the movement. A perfect process that led back to parliamentary politics, banks with a kinder face or the imposition of Brehon [old Irish] law would get us nowhere good.

But right now the successful development and expansion of the assembly process is what is transformative about Occupy with regards to the old left. For sure students of history will tell you these are old methods being re-discovered or reinvented but all the same it is exciting to see them being taken up by a new generation.

Occupy Wall Street started 17th September [2011] and in the month that followed copycat Occupy camps sprang up in more than 1100 cities across the globe. Solidarity demonstrations were held on all continents, even Antarctica. In London, England the state church was thrown into crisis as it debated evicting the camp on the door step of St. Paul’s and in Oakland, USA the violent police eviction of the camp there led to a mass assembly of 3,000 which called the Oakland General Strike of November 2nd.

What characterizes all the Occupys is that at the heart of the movement is an open assembly of everyone who identifies with it. Potentially open to all of the 99%—which is the appeal of the form to those who are used to having politicians

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and the 1% speak for them. At these assemblies proposals are put, concerns are debated and decisions are made. These decisions are seldom by a simple 51% majority but rather made using variations of consensus decision making, a process that makes it hard if not impossible for a majority to simply force a decision on a minority through numbers alone. This slows the process down but it also prevents premature splits arising from controversial decisions being forced through by narrow majorities.

Much of the conventional left in both its reformist and revolutionary forms is openly frustrated with that aspect of the Occupy movement. In Dublin as in other cities the approach that has all too often been made by the already organized left to the Occupy movement has a strong resemblance to the biblical legend of Moses coming down off the mountain with the 10 commandments. The approach is that the wise ones arrive with the pre-packaged answers and seek to find the quickest route to get the multitude below to adopt these answers as their own. People are lectured, browbeaten and even bullied into accepting the accumulated wisdom of decades, decades the left has actually spent wandering in circles.

This approach of the left is wrong for several reasons. The first one is that it is simply counter-productive, a return to an educational process that most resembles that in place when teachers were also allowed to beat the answers into students. It is not surprising that the 'we are here to tell you how things are' tends to elicit a strong negative response from those who are to be schooled...

I want to highlight the two strongest points of value in the assembly process.

The first is that to anyone paying attention in the last decade it is very clear that despite the deep crisis of capitalism the left does not have the answers. In fact it often appears that most left groups don't even have many of the questions that need to be asked. Sure there are some general broad answers we can claim to have but in particular those organizations and individuals who insist that all that is needed is the correct interpretation of scripture as laid down 130 years ago by Mistery Marx & Engels are profoundly unconvincing.

The old style pursuit of needed new answers (and questions) for the left would be to retreat to the British Library or some other Ivory Tower for a couple of decades to formulate some new set of answers. There has been some 'flash in the pan' attempts at this, some have even briefly seized the imagination, Hardt & Negri's *Empire* did so for a while back in 2000 as the summit protest movement peaked and now and again others have briefly done the same since. The truth is though that this process of relying on smart individuals to formulate answers is itself flawed. It is reflective of something that was perhaps possible back in the 14th century when a single person might have some hope of consuming the accumulated sum of formal human knowledge (in western Europe). Today when 48

hours of new content are uploaded to youtube every minute such a task is an impossible one for an individual or small group to even hope to approach.

The generation of questions, never mind answers can only be part of a collective process involving tens of thousands of people at a minimum, with a huge range of experiences, not just of bearded old white dudes in the British library. At one point people might have expected this process to emerge from the universities but even apart from the narrow range of experience they contain today they are increasingly designed as factories to reproduce the current system, even in those sections that imagine they exist to challenge it.

The internet and in particular Facebook & Twitter have been focused on as organizing tools by many analysts who are trying to understand the emerging movement. But actually they are much more than tools to call people to protests; the circulation of links and the discussions taking place under 10 million updates about Occupy are also a massive, if informal and unstated, collective educational process.

It is in the 1100 assemblies of the Occupy Movement scattered across the globe (and the earlier assemblies in Tahir, Barcelona and Syntagma) that this collective process of identifying the questions and in time the answers is starting to take form. For sure it is a process that is messy, slow and that at least on the local level often takes a one or two steps back for each 2 or 3 leaps forward. But it is a process that is discovering itself, that is essentially self-organizing, a path to knowledge that we are finding by walking...

The second reason the assembly model is not a barrier to be overcome, to be replaced with a more traditional committee of wise (mostly) men, is that the assemblies are the different way of doing 'politics' that we need. For a long time politics has mostly meant one particular model, the model where the politicians present us with their program and our role is simply to choose between these programs either with ballots or rifles (or even one in each hand). A methodology that inevitably replaces one hierarchy with another when one set of politicians successfully replaces another.

There is however another less visible model. That is the assembly, not as a way of controlling the politicians but of replacing them. And for politicians here we can also substitute employer or landlord because democracy in the streets means little without democracy in the workplace and in our housing. We don't want to change who the 1% are, who among the 1% rules us; we want to take the 99%, all of the 99% into power. Not some 1% selected to represent the 99% and make decisions for us but once more and forever the 99% directly deciding for ourselves how our world should be run.

The idea of a political process that has at its core decision making meetings where all of us can bring suggestions, make critiques and take part in the final de-

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cision is what makes Occupy revolutionary far more than whatever demands are formulated. It is the process itself that is potentially transformative, even in the most weak and dysfunctional assemblies. If the assembly can be the mechanism by which we organize a camp or organize a general strike then why can it not also be the mechanism by which we organize our workplace, our school or our neighbourhood? And when the assemblies spread and meet up where then is the room for the politicians who instead want to represent us?

This is not a new concept; the assembly is as old and almost certainly older than the politician. The two have in fact been in conflict with each other for many long years. It was the assemblies that liquidated the power of the Czar in Russia in 1917 only to be liquidated in turn by the Bolsheviks who formed the new government of politicians. In Chiapas in Southern Mexico hundreds of Zapatista communities have used the assembly as their root method of making decisions since (and before) they entered into rebellion in 1994 [Selection 58]... When Argentina went into crisis in 1999 and the people said of the politicians that ‘they all must go’ the assembly emerged in both workplace and neighbourhood as the way to keep society functioning as government after government fell [Selection 57].

The assembly and the politician will always be locked in a combat to the death, regardless if that politician is of the right, left or center. The two models are incompatible: either the people rule or the politicians rule and that applies as much at the small local level of an Occupy assembly as at the national or regional level. And let us be clear, the politician is not simply someone who embraces that term in some formal way. It is also the person who informally declares that they should have a special right in the making of decisions because of who they are or what they have done—because in other words they know better. The politician is the one that seeks to flatter those they think can be won to their side and to browbeat those they think cannot rather than engaging in open and honest debate. The politician hates the assembly process as constituting a barrier to ‘what is to be done’ and seeks to either abolish it or restrict just who is allowed to take part.

The Occupy assemblies are a long way from forming the new world in the shell of the old. Only a very few have had a major local impact, Occupy Oakland being the most obvious of the bunch. Most are small and isolated, a cluster of tents in the vast cities of the disinterested. In many places the General Assembly and the processes and dynamics it contains are quite dysfunctional—all too often as in Dublin due to the attempts by the old left to quickly push its answers through. But for all these problems this scattering of 1100 assemblies across the globe is a start, a start in the process that is not about reforming banking laws or tweaking constitutions but building a new world.

Chapter 3

Direct Action

10. Murray Bookchin: From Direct Action to Direct Democracy (1979-82)

*In the following excerpts, taken from “The Power to Create, the Power to Destroy” (1979), in *Toward an Ecological Society* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980), and from *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982), Murray Bookchin (1921-2006) argues that direct action is more than a tactic: it is a sensibility that finds its institutional expression in direct democracy.*

[D]irect action... forms a decisive step toward recovering the personal power over social life that the centralized, over-bearing bureaucracies have usurped from the people. By acting *directly* we not only gain a sense that we can control the course of social events again; we recover a new sense of selfhood and personality without which a truly free society, based on self-activity and self-management, is utterly impossible. We often speak of self-management and self-activity as our ideals for a future society without recognizing often enough that it is not only the “management” and “activity” that has to be democratized; it is also the “self” of each individual—as a unique, creative, and competent being—that has to be fully developed. Mass society, the real basis for hierarchy, domination, command and obedience, like class society, is the spawning ground for a society of homogenized spectators whose lives are guided by elites, “stars,” and “vanguards,” be they in the bureaucratic society of the United States or the totalitarian societies of the socialist world. A truly free society does not deny selfhood but rather supports it, liberates it, and actualizes it in the belief that everyone is competent to manage society, not merely an “elect” of experts and self-styled men of genius. Direct action is merely the free town meeting writ large. It is the means whereby each individual awakens to the hidden powers within herself and himself, to a new sense of self-confidence and self-competence; it is the means whereby individuals take control of society directly, without “representatives” who tend to usurp not only the power but the very personality of a passive, spectatorial “elec-

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torate” who live in the shadows of an “elect.” Direct action... is a moral principle, an ideal, indeed, a sensibility. It should imbue every aspect of our lives and behaviour and outlook...

[D]irect democracy is ultimately the most advanced form of direct action. There are doubtlessly many ways to express the claims of the individual and community to be autonomous, self-active, and self-managing—today as well as in a future ecological society. To exercise one’s powers of sovereignty—by sit-ins, strikes, nuclear-plant occupations—is not merely a “tactic” in bypassing authoritarian institutions. It is... a vision of citizenship and selfhood that assumes the free individual has the capacity to manage social affairs in a direct, ethical, and rational manner. This dimension of the self in self-management is a persistent call to personal sovereignty, to roundedness of ego and intellectual perception, which such conjoined terms like “management” and “activity” often overshadow. The continual exercise of this self—its very formation by one’s direct intervention in social issues—in asserting its moral claim and right to empowerment stands on a higher level conceptually than Marx’s image of self-identity through labour. For direct action is literally a form of ethical character-building in the most important social role that the individual can undertake: active citizenship. To reduce it to a mere means, a “strategy” that can be used or discarded for strictly functional purposes, is instrumentalism in its most insidious, often most cynical form. Direct action is at once the reclamation of the public sphere by the ego, its development toward self-empowerment, and its culmination as an active participant in society.

But direct action can also be degraded, on its own terms, by seeming to honour some of its most dubious characteristics: aggressiveness, arrogance, and terrorism. Inevitably, these characteristics rebound against the individual, and often lead to what Fourier called a malignant “counterpassion”—a spoiled, disappointed adherence to authority, delegated powers, and personal passivity. We are very familiar with the fulminating “anarchist” terrorist who turns into the most reverential supporter of authority, as Paul Brousse’s career revealed. Direct action finds its authentic expression in the painstaking work of citizenship—such as the building of libertarian forms of organization today and their conscientious administration in routine work with lasting ardour. This unassuming work is all too readily overlooked for dramatic actions and colourful projects.

The high degree of competence individuals have exhibited in managing society, their capacity to distinguish policy-making from administration... and their awareness of selfhood as a mode of social behaviour—all these traits will be heightened by a classless, nonhierarchical society. We have no reason to be disenchanted by history. As barbarous as its most warlike, cruel, exploitive, and authoritarian periods have been, humanity has soared to radiant heights in its great

periods of social reconstruction, thought, and art—despite the burdens of domination and egotism. Once these burdens are removed, we have every reason to hope for a degree of personal and social enlightenment for which there are no historical precedents. Through the mother-infant relationship, we regularly plant the seeds of a human nature that can be oriented toward selfless endearment, interdependence, and care. These are not trite words to describe the womb of human renewal, generation after generation, and the love each child receives in virtually every society. They become clichés only when we ignore the possibility that separation can yield an aggressive egotism and sense of rivalry, when material insecurity produces fear toward nature and humanity, and when we “mature” by following the pathways of hierarchical and class societies.

We must try to create a new culture, not merely another movement that attempts to remove the symptoms of our crises without affecting their sources. We must also try to extirpate the hierarchical orientation of our psyches, not merely remove the institutions that embody social domination. But the need for a new culture and new institutions must not be sacrificed to a hazy notion of personal redemption that makes us into lonely “saints” amidst masses of irredeemable “sinners.” Changes in culture and personality go hand in hand with our efforts to achieve a society that is ecological—a society based on usufruct, complementarity, and the irreducible minimum—but that also recognizes the existence of a universal humanity and the claims of individuality. Guided as we may be by the principle of the equality of unequals, we can ignore neither the personal arena nor the social, neither the domestic nor the public, in our project to achieve harmony in society and harmony with nature [see Selection 26]...

To create a society in which every individual is seen as capable of participating directly in the formulation of social policy is to instantly invalidate social hierarchy and domination. To accept this single concept means that we are committed to dissolving State power, authority, and sovereignty into an inviolate form of personal empowerment. That our commitment to a nonhierarchical society and personal empowerment is still a far cry from the full development of these ideals into a lived sensibility is obvious enough; hence our persistent need to confront the psychic problems of hierarchy as well as social problems of domination. There are already many tendencies that are likely to force this confrontation, even as we try to achieve institutional changes. I refer to radical forms of feminism that encompass the psychological dimensions of male domination, indeed, domination itself; to ecology conceived as a social outlook and personal sensibility; and to community as intimate, human-scaled forms of association and mutual aid. Although these tendencies may wane periodically and retreat for a time to the background of our concerns, they have penetrated deeply into the social substance and ideologies of our era.

11. Hakim Bey: Temporary Autonomous Zones (1985)

Hakim Bey (aka Peter Lamborn Wilson), an eclectic and controversial thinker, equally at home with mystical Sufism and post-Nietzschean anarchism, developed the concept of Temporary Autonomous Zones, a notion that was embraced and put into practice by various anarchist inspired groups in the 1980s and 90s. His concept of spontaneous uprising or insurrection is largely drawn from Max Stirner (Volume One, Selection 11), while the notion of the festival of revolt can be traced back even further, to groups such as the Brethren of the Free Spirit during the Middle Ages. Reprinted from T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism (New York: Autonomedia, 1985 & 1991).

HOW IS IT THAT “the world turned upside-down” always manages to *Right* itself? Why does reaction always follow revolution, like seasons in Hell?

Uprising, or the Latin form *insurrection*, are words used by historians to label *failed* revolutions—movements which do not match the expected curve, the consensus-approved trajectory: revolution, reaction, betrayal, the founding of a stronger and even more oppressive State—the turning of the wheel, the return of history again and again to its highest form: jackboot on the face of humanity forever.

By failing to follow this curve, the *up-rising* suggests the possibility of a movement outside and beyond the Hegelian spiral of that “progress” which is secretly nothing more than a vicious circle. *Surgo*—rise up, surge. *Insurgo*—rise up, raise oneself up. A bootstrap operation. A goodbye to that wretched parody of the karmic round, historical revolutionary futility. The slogan “Revolution!” has mutated from tocsin to toxin, a malign pseudo-Gnostic fate-trap, a nightmare where no matter how we struggle we never escape that evil Aeon, that incubus the State, one State after another, every “heaven” ruled by yet one more evil angel.

If History IS “Time,” as it claims to be, then the uprising is a moment that springs up and out of Time, violates the “law” of History. If the State IS History, as it claims to be, then the insurrection is the forbidden moment, an unforgivable denial of the dialectic—shimmying up the pole and out of the smokehole, a shaman’s maneuver carried out at an “impossible angle” to the universe. History says the Revolution attains “permanence,” or at least duration, while the uprising is “temporary.” In this sense an uprising is like a “peak experience” as opposed to the standard of “ordinary” consciousness and experience. Like festivals, uprisings cannot happen every day—otherwise they would not be “nonordinary.” But such moments of intensity give shape and meaning to the entirety of a life. The shaman returns—you can’t stay up on the roof forever—but things have changed, shifts and integrations have occurred—a *difference* is made.

You will argue that this is a counsel of despair. What of the anarchist dream, the Stateless state, the Commune, the autonomous zone with *duration*, a free society, a free *culture*? Are we to abandon that hope in return for some existentialist *acte gratuit*? The point is not to change consciousness but to change the world.

I accept this as a fair criticism. I'd make two rejoinders nevertheless; first, *revolution* has never yet resulted in achieving this dream. The vision comes to life in the moment of uprising—but as soon as “the Revolution” triumphs and the State returns, the dream and the ideal are *already* betrayed. I have not given up hope or even expectation of change—but I distrust the word *Revolution*. Second, even if we replace the revolutionary approach with a concept of *insurrection blossoming spontaneously into anarchist culture*, our own particular historical situation is not propitious for such a vast undertaking. Absolutely nothing but a futile martyrdom could possibly result now from a head-on collision with the terminal State, the megacorporate information State, the empire of Spectacle and Simulation. Its guns are all pointed at us, while our meager weaponry finds nothing to aim at but a hysteresis, a rigid vacuity, a Spook capable of smothering every spark in an ectoplasm of information, a society of capitulation ruled by the image of the Cop and the absorbant eye of the TV screen.

In short, we're not touting the TAZ as an exclusive end in itself, replacing all other forms of organization, tactics, and goals. We recommend it because it can provide the quality of enhancement associated with the uprising without necessarily leading to violence and martyrdom. The TAZ is like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, *before* the State can crush it. Because the State is concerned primarily with Simulation rather than substance, the TAZ can “occupy” these areas clandestinely and carry on its festal purposes for quite a while in relative peace. Perhaps certain small TAZs have lasted whole lifetimes because they went unnoticed, like hillbilly enclaves—because they never intersected with the Spectacle, never appeared outside that real life which is invisible to the agents of Simulation.

Babylon takes its abstractions for realities; precisely *within* this margin of error the TAZ can come into existence. Getting the TAZ started may involve tactics of violence and defence, but its greatest strength lies in its invisibility—the State cannot recognize it because History has no definition of it. As soon as the TAZ is named (represented, mediated), it must vanish, it *will* vanish, leaving behind it an empty husk, only to spring up again somewhere else, once again invisible because undefinable in terms of the Spectacle. The TAZ is thus a perfect tactic for an era in which the State is omnipresent and all-powerful and yet simultaneously riddled with cracks and vacancies. And because the TAZ is a mi-

crocosm of that “anarchist dream” of a free culture, I can think of no better tactic by which to work toward that goal while at the same time experiencing some of its benefits here and now.

In sum, realism demands not only that we give up *waiting* for “the Revolution” but also that we give up *wanting* it. “Uprising,” yes—as often as possible and even at the risk of violence. The *spasming* of the Simulated State will be “spectacular,” but in most cases the best and most radical tactic will be to refuse to engage in spectacular violence, to *withdraw* from the area of simulation, to disappear.

The TAZ is an encampment of guerilla ontologists: strike and run away. Keep moving the entire tribe, even if it’s only data in the Web. The TAZ must be capable of defence; but both the “strike” and the “defence” should, if possible, evade the violence of the State, which is no longer a *meaningful* violence. The strike is made at structures of control, essentially at ideas; the defence is “invisibility,” a *martial art*, and “invulnerability”—an “occult” art within the martial arts. The “nomadic war machine” conquers without being noticed and moves on before the map can be adjusted. As to the future—only the autonomous can *plan* autonomy, organize for it, create it. It’s a bootstrap operation. The first step is somewhat akin to *satori*—the realization that the TAZ begins with a simple act of realization.

Reaction alone cannot provide the energy needed to “manifest” a TAZ. An uprising must be *for* something as well.

1. First, we can speak of a natural anthropology of the TAZ. The nuclear family is the base unit of consensus society, but not of the TAZ. (“Families!—how I hate them! the misers of love!”—Gide). The nuclear family, with its attendant “oedipal miseries,” appears to have been a Neolithic invention, a response to the “agricultural revolution” with its imposed scarcity and its imposed hierarchy. The Paleolithic model is at once more primal and more radical: the *band*. The typical hunter/gatherer nomadic or semi-nomadic band consists of about 50 people. Within larger tribal societies the band-structure is fulfilled by clans within the tribe, or by sodalities such as initiatic or secret societies, hunt or war societies, gender societies, “children’s republics,” and so on. If the nuclear family is produced by scarcity (and results in miserliness), the band is produced by abundance—and results in prodigality. The family is *closed*, by genetics, by the male’s *possession* of women and children, by the hierarchic totality of agricultural/industrial society. The band is *open*—not to everyone, of course, but to the affinity group, the initiates sworn to a bond of love. The band is not part of a larger hierarchy, but rather part of a horizontal pattern of custom, extended kinship, contract and alliance, spiritual affinities, etc. (American Indian society preserves certain aspects of this structure even now.)

In our own post-Spectacular Society of Simulation many forces are working—largely invisibly—to phase out the nuclear family and bring back the band. Break-downs in the structure of Work resonate in the shattered “stability” of the unit-home and unit-family. One’s “band” nowadays includes friends, ex-spouses and lovers, people met at different jobs and pow-wows, affinity groups, special interest networks, mail networks, etc. The nuclear family becomes more and more obviously a *trap*, a cultural sinkhole, a neurotic secret implosion of split atoms—and the obvious counter-strategy emerges spontaneously in the almost unconscious rediscovery of the more archaic and yet more post-industrial possibility of the band.

2. The TAZ as *festival*. Stephen Pearl Andrews once offered, as an image of anarchist society, the *dinner party*, in which all structure of authority dissolves in conviviality and celebration... Here we might also invoke Fourier and his concept of the senses as the basis of social becoming—“touch-rut” and “gastroso-phy,” and his paean to the neglected implications of smell and taste. The ancient concepts of jubilee and saturnalia originate in an intuition that certain events lie outside the scope of “profane time,” the measuring-rod of the State and of History. These holidays literally occupied gaps in the calendar—*intercalary intervals*. By the Middle Ages, nearly a third of the year was given over to holidays. Perhaps the riots against calendar reform had less to do with the “eleven lost days” than with a sense that imperial science was conspiring to close up these gaps in the calendar where the people’s freedoms had accumulated—a coup d’état, a mapping of the year, a seizure of time itself, turning the organic cosmos into a clockwork universe. The death of the festival.

Participants in insurrection invariably note its festive aspects, even in the midst of armed struggle, danger, and risk. The uprising is like a saturnalia which has slipped loose (or been forced to vanish) from its intercalary interval and is now at liberty to pop up anywhere or when. Freed of time and place, it nevertheless possesses a nose for the ripeness of events, and an affinity for the *genius loci*; the science of psychotopology indicates “flows of forces” and “spots of power” (to borrow occultist metaphors) which localize the TAZ spatio-temporally, or at least help to define its relation to moment and locale.

The media invite us to “come celebrate the moments of your life” with the spurious unification of commodity and spectacle, the famous *non-event* of pure representation. In response to this obscenity we have, on the one hand, the spectrum of *refusal*... and on the other hand, the emergence of a *festal culture* removed and even hidden from the would-be managers of our leisure. “Fight for the right to party” is in fact not a parody of the radical struggle but a new manifestation of it, appropriate to an age which offers TVs and telephones as ways to “reach out and touch” other human beings, ways to “Be There!”

Pearl Andrews was right: the dinner party is already “the seed of the new society taking shape within the shell of the old” (IWW Preamble). The sixties-style “tribal gathering,” the forest conclave of eco-saboteurs, the idyllic Beltane of the neo-pagans, anarchist conferences, gay faery circles... Harlem rent parties of the twenties, nightclubs, banquets, old-time libertarian picnics—we should realize that all these are already “liberated zones” of a sort, or at least potential TAZs. Whether open only to a few friends, like a dinner party, or to thousands of celebrants, like a Be-In, the party is always “open” because it is not “ordered”; it may be planned, but unless it “*happens*” it’s a failure. The element of spontaneity is crucial.

The essence of the party: face-to-face, a group of humans synergize their efforts to realize mutual desires, whether for good food and cheer, dance, conversation, the arts of life; perhaps even for erotic pleasure, or to create a communal artwork, or to attain the very transport of bliss—in short, a “union of egoists” (as Stirner put it) in its simplest form—or else, in Kropotkin’s terms, a basic biological drive to “mutual aid.” (Here we should also mention Bataille’s “economy of excess” and his theory of potlatch culture.)

3. Vital in shaping TAZ reality is the concept of *psychic nomadism* (or as we jokingly call it, “rootless cosmopolitanism”). Aspects of this phenomenon have been discussed by Deleuze and Guattari in *Nomadology and the War Machine*, by Lyotard in *Driftworks* and by various authors in the “Oasis” issue of *Semiotext(e)*. We use the term “psychic nomadism” here rather than “urban nomadism,” “nomadology,” “driftwork,” etc., simply in order to garner all these concepts into a single loose complex, to be studied in light of the coming-into-being of the TAZ. “The death of God,” in some ways a de-centering of the entire “European” project, opened a multi-perspectived post-ideological worldview able to move “rootlessly” from philosophy to tribal myth, from natural science to Taoism—able to see for the first time through eyes like some golden insect’s, each facet giving a view of an entirely other world.

But this vision was attained at the expense of inhabiting an epoch where speed and “commodity fetishism” have created a tyrannical false unity which tends to blur all cultural diversity and individuality, so that “one place is as good as another.” This paradox creates “gypsies,” psychic travellers driven by desire or curiosity, wanderers with shallow loyalties (in fact disloyal to the “European Project” which has lost all its charm and vitality), not tied down to any particular time and place, in search of diversity and adventure... This description covers not only the X-class artists and intellectuals but also migrant laborers, refugees, the “homeless,” tourists, the RV and mobile-home culture—also people who “travel” via the Net, but may never leave their own rooms (or those like Thoreau who “have travelled much—in Concord”); and finally it includes

“everybody,” all of us, living through our automobiles, our vacations, our TVs, books, movies, telephones, changing jobs, changing “lifestyles,” religions, diets, etc., etc.

Psychic nomadism as a *tactic*, what Deleuze & Guattari metaphorically call “the war machine,” shifts the paradox from a passive to an active and perhaps even “violent” mode. “God’s” last throes and deathbed rattles have been going on for such a long time—in the form of Capitalism, Fascism, and Communism, for example—that there’s still a lot of “creative destruction” to be carried out by post-Bakuninist post-Nietzschean commandos or *apaches* (literally “enemies”) of the old Consensus. These nomads practice the *razzia*, they are corsairs, they are viruses; they have both need and desire for TAZs, camps of black tents under the desert stars, interzones, hidden fortified oases along secret caravan routes, “liberated” bits of jungle and bad-land, no-go areas, black markets, and underground bazaars.

These nomads chart their courses by strange stars, which might be luminous clusters of data in cyberspace, or perhaps hallucinations. Lay down a map of the land; over that, set a map of political change; over that, a map of the Net, especially the counter-Net with its emphasis on clandestine information-flow and logistics—and finally, over all, the 1:1 map of the creative imagination, aesthetics, values. The resultant grid comes to life, animated by unexpected eddies and surges of energy, coagulations of light, secret tunnels, surprises.

I believe, or would at least like to propose, that the only solution to the “suppression and realization” of Art lies in the emergence of the TAZ. I would strongly reject the criticism that the TAZ itself is “nothing but” a work of art, although it may have some of the trappings. I do suggest that the TAZ is the only possible “time” and “place” for art to happen for the sheer pleasure of creative play, and as an actual contribution to the forces which allow the TAZ to cohere and manifest.

Art in the World of Art has become a commodity; but deeper than that lies the problem of *re-presentation* itself, and the refusal of all *mediation*. In the TAZ art as a commodity will simply become impossible; it will instead be a condition of life. Mediation is harder to overcome, but the removal of all barriers between artists and “users” of art will tend toward a condition in which (as A.K. Coomaraswamy described it) “the artist is not a special sort of person, but every person is a special sort of artist.”

12. Luc Bonet: Beyond the Revolutionary Model (2005)

In the following excerpts from Luc Bonet’s article, “Anarcho-syndicalism: Drop the Obsolete Revolutionary Model,” Bonet argues that anarcho-syndicalists

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should abandon two of their core beliefs: (1) that capitalism necessarily leads to the immiseration of the working class; and (2) that, in response, the working class will unite to abolish capitalism. He refers to previous attempts by the Swedish syndicalist federation, the SAC, to develop a revised conception of syndicalism in the face of the welfare state in the late 1950s, but recognizes that the welfare state is itself now under attack. He suggests that anarcho-syndicalists focus on the question of democracy and the elimination of all forms of subordination. Translated by Paul Sharkey.

In essence, both revolutionary Marxism and anarcho-syndicalism subscribe to what we might call the classical revolutionary model which is built upon two distinct beliefs (depicted as objective circumstances) and on the hope of a dynamic between them that might culminate in a revolutionary social movement:

The capitalist system is unadulterated economic exploitation meaning equality of poverty wages.

The working or wage-earning class can be structured politically in one hegemonic organization (a party that represents it or a union that organizes it).

The political structures of the working or waged classes are constructed in an increasingly powerful and coherent fashion when exploitation endures or worsens until that structure itself (through party or union) renders a revolutionary upheaval a possibility. (In the Marxist view, on the one hand, capitalism can only slide into inevitable crisis (falling profit margins, etc.) which ensures a “scientific materialist” view of the revolution (given the inevitability of the final crisis, the capitalist economic mode of production demonstrates its limitations in respect to the historic tendency of the mode of production to progress beyond it); on the other hand, the working class is increasingly “united and centralized” by virtue of the capitalist mode of production and thereby finds itself equipped to seize power. In the anarcho-syndicalist outlook, it is the very power of the working class, increasingly and better organized within “its” trade union, that makes revolutionary conflict a possibility in the medium term, given that there is no reconciliation possible between class interests.)

This revolutionary model still... imbues the imagination of militant anarcho-syndicalism... However, whereas the dynamic between exploitation and the political structure of the working class remains the kernel of all revolutionary hope, we can no longer share the beliefs shaping the twin pillars of the classic revolutionary model, in that generalized wage-earning does not amount to widespread impoverishment and political pluralism is a fact that cannot be ignored. First hand experience by actual anarcho-syndicalist organizations (by which I mean ac-

tually existing trade unions, not propaganda groups that can still “theorize” in a void) has not prompted theoretical anarcho-syndicalism to break away from the classic revolutionary model.

Arguing on the basis of exceptional “circumstances” with which the Spanish CNT had had to grapple (and which would therefore not resurface), the anarcho-syndicalist movement opted not to question the class revolutionary model in the wake of the 1936-1939 experience; and when the SAC (the Swedish union), taking cognizance of the new economic and political circumstances, worked out, starting in the 1950s, an updated political outlook for anarcho-syndicalism—whereby “the task facing anarcho-syndicalism is to prosecute, complement, deepen and improve the evolution of democratic society”—that organization was vilified and marginalized within the anarcho-syndicalist movement.

No workers’ organization put up as much resistance to fascism as the Spanish CNT and no workers’ organization pushed the self-managerial experiment as far as the Spanish CNT did [Volume One, Chapter 23]. In the context of a European labour movement that proved impotent in the face of the rise of fascism and locked into authoritarian structures, anarcho-syndicalism demonstrated through the Spanish CNT that there was a real alternative. But the CNT experienced first hand the failure of the classic revolutionary model.

When the fascist putsch came, there were essentially three parties and two trade union organizations professing to speak for the working class: each organization had its political culture, devised its own strategy and none of them could purport to believe that they spoke for the wage-earning class as a whole.

The CNT’s clout accounts for how resistance to the fascist putsch assumed the dimensions of a syndicalist-style revolution and it is quite extraordinary that the CNT should be taken to task for not having seen that revolution through when it was opposed by the whole spectrum of the other trade union and political forces.

We can rehash history in drawing rooms or cafes, or, perhaps more usefully, criticize the tactical errors of the CNT’s “elite” or “bureaucracy,” but no rewriting of history can banish the dilemma faced by the CNT in 1936: physical elimination of its adversaries in the socialist camp (as the Bolsheviks opted for) or collaboration with them. The CNT’s failure lies not in its participation in government but in its earlier refusal to investigate a quite different tactical approach than the one foisted upon it by the class revolutionary model, and in its failure to learn the lessons of this simple reality: that there were political and social currents within the working class other than its own.

What the Spanish CNT learnt pragmatically from the flow of what was both war and revolution was that the working class was not susceptible to being structured within just one union, or, at the very least, within one social movement

that overrides political divisions... and that one just has to cope, that is, in labour's political context, choose between totalitarianism and democracy!

The Spanish CNT's experience should have made the anarcho-syndicalist movement ponder the falseness of the class revolutionary model and devise new positions, taking account of the fact that anti-statism is actually a project for a society and a new social order, rather than the mechanical outcome of a workers' revolution. Having more to do with determination than with the product of some blind mechanism, this social project has to earn its democratic credentials: we cannot side-step the issue of democracy on the pretext that this will all be sorted out automatically, when "the great day" comes...

Towards the end of the 1950s, Evert Arvidsson wrote the pamphlet *Liberarian Syndicalism and the Welfare State: The Swedish Experience*. This SAC militant offers an analysis therein of the modern tasks facing anarcho-syndicalism in the new economic and social circumstances of a capitalism governed by a "welfare state"...

"Pauperism is on its way out, the masses are attaining a level of security of which they are assured by various social insurance agencies. The welfare state has become a new reality, and in countries where populations are cognizant of this change, where security is assured from birth to old age, men stop listening to prophecies of revolution that entail the idea of barricade fighting and the complete destruction of the existing social system. To the extent that anarcho-syndicalists refuse to acknowledge these new realities, carry on with their traditional propaganda and pay no heed to new living conditions, their movement is destined for the museum of antiquities and will die an anonymous death, unnoticed by anybody."

Arvidsson's analysis is flawed on many counts, not least the impression it gives of the welfare state being the new canonical form of modern capitalism, but the phenomenon underpinning this analysis is plainly spelt out for the first time ever in the anarcho-syndicalist movement: under capitalist economic rule, wages are not necessarily synonymous with poverty, and since the evolution of capitalism has not brought in its wake the expected widespread pauperization, our critique of capitalism should dispense with an outmoded "philosophy of misery" [Proudhon, Volume One, Selection 9].

At the start of the 21st century, despite the past twenty years of neoliberalism's efforts to turn back the clock, and a return to poverty at the heart of the capitalist system, the point is still valid: so much so that the glorious thirty year period of economic growth allied with full employment, is still, in the final analysis, the touchstone for the trade union movement and, in social terms at any rate (social security, retirement, public services, full employment), that of contemporary anarcho-syndicalism as well.

So the purely economic argument, the dogma of “wages equals poverty,” which legitimizes the classic revolutionary model, no longer applies.

Reflecting upon this matter boiled down to breaking a taboo—the taboo of the class revolutionary model—and in the fossilized anarcho-sindicalist movement of the time, the SAC was to find itself shunned.

In the wake of the Bolshevik experience in 1917 and the ensuing establishment of communist totalitarian regimes, the class revolutionary model looked, in political terms (the notion that a class can be encompassed politically within one organization), like a fantasy by mere theoreticians. The Spanish experience was to demonstrate this a second time; and while the CNT can pride itself specifically upon its not having slid into totalitarianism, that organization’s commitment, come hell or high water, to the class revolutionary model is reminiscent of the out and out denial better suited to religious belief than to reason. When the economic and political conditions of the welfare state are established and it becomes plain that the spread of wage labour does not necessarily imply widespread impoverishment, the second pillar of the class revolutionary model (the economic legitimacy of social revolution) collapses...

Today, the position of the anarcho-sindicalist movement has largely changed. That movement is making a come-back onto the social stage, but the burden of the class revolutionary model oppresses our organization’s growth and we have to get rid of it. Which requires that we rethink anarcho-sindicalism, eschewing this model.

Economic considerations have obliterated social reflection upon the political issue, the question of democracy. Although it lies at the heart of the critique of capitalism—capitalist economics boil down to the exclusive rights of the owners of capital over the entire production process and revenues generated by production, the wage-earner being “subordinate” to the proprietor and his wages payment for services rendered—the issue of democracy has essentially been left out of socialist criticism.

True, every branch of socialism has genuflected towards democracy, but, with the exception of the anarchist tendency, they have done so as a means to an end: democracy as majority rule, allowing and legitimizing access to power by the toiling majority... through its representatives.

For anarchists, democracy made no sense except within a society organized along federalist lines, wherein every facet of collective life should—insofar as its specific competence is concerned—be governed by a democratic decision-making process, while these facets federate with one another at another level for matters beyond their competence, each federated level being associated with a democratic decision-making process. Anarchists, adopting society as their political reference point, rather than abstract notions such as the People or the Nation or indeed the

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Republic, denied the democratic state, the central agency of an authority supposed to stand for these abstractions, all legitimacy.

Today, the clamour for democracy is everywhere. It would be nonsense to see this only as an ideological construct, even if it is manipulated by interests that have nothing to do with democracy's interests. The advances made by the democratic idea at the end of the 20th century have intersected with anarchist reflection. The genuinely libertarian principle of debate, according to which "*rules of behaviour, on which all who are likely to be concerned in one way or another might reach agreement as partners in reasonable debates, are strictly valid*" (Habermas, *Droit et démocratie*), has become the basis for all deliberation upon modern democracy...

The invocation of democracy mirrors the modern circumstances of the wage-earning classes. The spread of wages no longer makes it possible for the working class to be thought of as a specific class with specific interests within society.

There is some class content to the invocation of democracy: the extent to which the principle of democracy is invoked at all levels and for every group in society reflects the spread of wage-earning through the population. To paraphrase the younger Marx: Capitalism has indeed given rise to one social class, the wage-earning class, a universal class with universal interests: interests that can only be governed by deliberative decision-making procedures that set their faces against any notion (or reality) whereby some members of society are "subordinated" to others.

This should not be construed in any way as illusions about democratic claims, the latter being carefully cultivated by the system's politicians and intellectuals alike. In their eyes, the onward march of the democratic idea should not upset the watertight dividing line between the political (party political power) and the economic (the power of capitalists or State-Capital partnership); they abide by this dividing line by offering a number of options, the shrinkage of which reflects the political spectrum of the modern left: from the "archaic" left that calls for a reversion to state-run public services to the liberal left that looks upon the state as merely a regulator of the private economy, the vocation of which is to cater to society's every need.

The role of modern anarcho-syndicalism is to expose this rift between the political and the economic and to champion the project of a federalist democratic society wherein the economic heals the rifts in society, which is conceived as a collective whole rather than as a conglomeration of social groups. That project can only thrive on the basis of organizations of wage-earners rather than "civic" organizations which, by their very nature, remain in the terrain of the distinction between the political and the economic.

In the advanced capitalist countries, the spread of wage labour and the ab-

sence of pauperization—with the latter considerably diminished—have taken the ground from beneath the feet of a workerist revolutionism that draws its legitimacy from poverty. The class struggle has seen every imaginable shade of this. Some (like the so-called “autonomist” current) have ventured further and further abroad in search of the “real” proletarians: from unskilled workers to immigrant labour alone, from the suburban unemployed to prisoners, etc. Intellectuals have theorized about retention of the orthodox Marxist model, calculating that the impoverished working class is growing world-wide (Immanuel Wallerstein), or devising Third-Worldist theories designed to explain away the “bourgeoisification” of the working classes of the “north” by means of the shameless exploitation of the working classes of the “South” which are themselves the bearers of fresh revolutionary hopes.

Others (such as the Situationists and some anarchists) have opted instead to centre their critique of capitalism on the alienation factor, initially an aesthetic critique, taken on board as such (Boltanski, Chiapello, *Le Nouveau esprit du capitalisme*).

But it was in the middle of those thirty glorious years, between the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s, and in the most advanced capitalist countries, that the greatest social upheavals took place. The biggest general strike that France has ever seen [May 1968] took place in a country where the unemployment rate was practically nil, when social security provision was most comprehensive, in short, at a time when the French working class (and, with it, the Italian working class and others, albeit with reduced levels of pugnaciousness) had no fear left... and clamoured for more [Volume Two, Selection 51].

It is senseless to measure the class struggle in terms of extreme conditions (material exploitation or alienation); on the contrary, it is the power accumulated that affords greater power. Class interests within capitalist societies have always been in opposition to one another, no matter what the degree of exploitation.

Anarcho-syndicalism is not the trade unionism of poverty, deriving its legitimacy from that: it is a social brand of trade unionism, an organizational format that should—in taking its stand on class terrain and looking to a democratic federalist structure—articulate the “political capacity of the working classes” [Proudhon, Volume One, Selection 18], until such time as that capacity ushers in a revolutionary trial of strength.

The resurgence of anarcho-syndicalism is not dependent on... a reversion to a 19th century capitalist model: it relies instead upon the failure of other options. The “shrinking scope for political decision-making” against the backdrop of globalization holds out few prospects for the governing political parties of mobilizing again on targets for social change... The class collaborationist trade

unions are running out of steam in the face of an all-conquering employer class that does not even need them, whereas unions or parties still mounting a challenge are running around preparing for a “political way out” that is not coming and cannot come...

Anarcho-syndicalism is much more than an option rendered possible by the default of other belligerent parties; it represents demands and a democratic methodology likely to equip it for the modern conditions of class struggle, even though it clings to what we have termed the class revolutionary model: a poverty-obsessed and economistic view of wage labour, when wage labour is primarily a means of political subordination; and a deluded craving for hegemony when we know that the “big event” that would resolve political pluralism does not exist. There is nothing but relentless endeavour to organize the wage-earning classes democratically with an eye to a radical transformation of society.

Les Temps maudits, No. 22, October 2005

13. Andrea Papi: Violence and Anti-Violence (2004)

Andrea Papi is a frequent contributor to the Italian anarchist press. In this article, Papi argues that while anarchism is anti-violence, being opposed to coercive power, it is not necessarily nonviolent. Nevertheless, Papi views the insurrectionary approach of the 19th century as having limited value today, suggesting that the way forward lies in the development of an anarchist counter-culture. The translation is by Paul Sharkey.

Everybody—including Bolsheviks, Islamists and fascists—has a tendency to react with violence in order to throw off whatever is oppressive. So recourse to violence is not, of itself, a distinguishing characteristic in ethical and political terms.

Violence is a noun derived from the verb “violate” and it suggests an action capable of making a significant alteration to the physical integrity of other beings, arrangements, things, etc. It goes without saying that in politics the term violence is closely bound up with bullying, imposition, coercion and prevarication. In this regard it is also closely bound up with the activities of those who wield power, who have always had recourse to the use of force, whether legitimately or otherwise in legal terms, in order to exercise their dominion. In the exercise of political power, recourse to violence is in fact systematically bound up with the need to enforce ruling values, which is one of the basic reasons why anarchists (who are anarchists on account of an aspiration to social or collective coexistence rooted in reciprocal freedom from which violence is therefore banished from the management of relationships and decision-making) think and act towards the

achievement of societies wherein centralized and hierarchical forms of political power no longer exist. A first glance at how things stand in the world and one inescapable fact slaps us in the face: the daily evolution in which we are all, willy-nilly, participants and (often much more than we might like) protagonists is, unquestionably, racked by violence, or, to be more precise, is riddled with violence. This is true of compulsory and compelling dealings with bureaucracy, dealings with the apparatuses and in the culture of power which, with dogged determination, define the quality and quantity of the imposition they signify and carry within themselves, in the organized armed force of the many varieties of militarism which excuse their activities by citing the excuse that they offer us security and guarantee the survival of democratic freedoms, in the systematic, murderous exploitation of millions of human beings assailed by the hunger and misery into which they are thrust, in the relative yearning for salvation and in the sacred heartfelt need for rebellion that so rarely manages to turn into the delights of rebellion. In words and pictures, the news bulletins daily confront us with the graveyards with which is strewn the entire planet where we humans live...

[T]he chief underlying issue that we must be able to understand is whether... the deliberate and planned use of violent forms of rebellion against the oppressive structures that we should like to demolish is functional, that is, whether it is in fact likely to produce an effect consistent with and appropriate to (not least in ethical terms) the ideal precepts that ought to prompt our actions and determine our choices...

The use of violence in fact springs from a determination to annihilate opposition, to neutralize it, punish it, subjugate it and put it out of commission. And what greater power is there beyond the potential and capacity to annihilate? In any event, no such option can be chosen lightly, casually or glibly, but needs to be well thought through and appropriately sifted...

[T]he main anarchist viewpoint presupposes above all else an unconditional repudiation of any sort of overblown power and any form of domination, and does so in the name of a *de facto* acknowledgment of a widespread social equality, ongoing practices of freedom and rejection of any recourse to violence in the implementation of decisions and of the collective will, which are carried into effect by means of horizontal, non-hierarchical and flexible structures.

What is the basic problem with the attainment of the... anarchist society to come? As I see it, it relates to the surmounting and levelling of barriers consolidated over time, structures of course but primarily cultural ones that keep the power mechanisms of the existing system of domination in place. In fact there are two sorts of justifications for the institutionalization of established authority which legitimize the necessity for hierarchical command and enforcement thereof by means of the use of established force: 1) the older, ancestral and religious-

style one, according to which belief in God or in a multiplicity of gods, from the moment confidence is lost in the human imperfection created by those gods from their position of superhuman power, forces humanity into obedience to a select few chosen by them to enforce the divine will as disclosed and generally enshrined in sacred scriptures; 2) the other, more secular view, the Hobbesian notion of *homo homini lupus* (dog eat dog), according to which, going as far back as the state of nature, every human being is hostile to all the rest and, if one is to live in safety and harmony, society needs to find somebody to take charge, somebody capable of imposing by force the order that is an essential condition for the co-existence that would be in jeopardy if differing views were held.

The mission of anarchists is to set themselves the target and act in order to show and persuade people that historically determined motives, ranging from God's will to the need for controls from above, are nothing more than human beliefs, imposed and legitimized over time through the dogged efforts of serving potentates. Not only are they not axiomatic, but they can easily be replaced by a vision rooted in freedom, through collective affairs being conducted other than through government from above and through horizontal forms of management. We can manage very well without being governed and can self-govern, replacing the force of the bully with reciprocity, solidarity and effective participation in decision-making, which need no longer be imposed through the force and lawful legitimacy of armed agencies charged with security and public order, which is to say, by those who execute the wishes of authoritarian institutions.

In short, the trend should be an anarchistic slide into things being determined and carried out through participation by all, in that they cannot and should not be imposed but rather consensually willed by all of the individuals involved or participating in the society in question. This is one of the founding principles that sets us anarchists apart. For this to be achieved, it is not enough and indeed is an absurd delusion to confine oneself to doing away with henchmen and those who command them. Above all else, we have to successfully do away with the internalized and *de facto* belief in the necessity of their function and presence. Which can only come about if the authoritarian violence of a central government, imposed under cover of its henchmen, gives way to the violence-free forms of libertarian self-government, whereby henchmen are superfluous...

Is there, then, as far as the achievement of anarchist political proposals are concerned, any point in using violent means and instruments in order to combat the oppression and bullying of states and exploiters? Is it worthwhile and is it consistent and coherent with our principles to jeopardize our own lives and those of others in the fight for freedom? At first sight, it might appear that the answer would be no and never. "Anarchists are against violence. This we know. The core idea of anarchism is the eradication of violence from the life of society: and the

organization of social relationships founded upon the free will of the individual, with no role for the gendarme” [Malatesta, *Umanita Nova*, 25 August 1921].

In actuality, the answer is neither simple nor automatic nor so pat, as is always the case when we are faced by highly complex issues, because anarchists see it as essential that due account is taken of the problem of resistance. Namely, given that it is immoral to suffer and not rebel, it is not just immoral but also damaging (in that it merely confirms the oppression and offers no possibility of release from it). Anarchists regard it as essential and vital that the violence of the establishment should be met with rejection and opposition, so that it can be defused and eliminated as an instrument of political regulation. “Violence is excusable only when necessary in the defence of self or of others against violence. Crime starts where necessity finishes... The slave is always engaged in legitimate self-defence, so violence by him against the master and oppressor is always morally justified and should be governed only by the criteria of usefulness and economy of human effort and human suffering” [Malatesta, *ibid*]...

[T]he chief reference point... is not in fact ethics but rather the greater purpose to be served, namely a society self-governing in accordance with the anarchist principles of social freedom, which then lays the foundations for a consistent ethic. Malatesta defines the meaning and ends of the use of violence in furtherance of the success of anarchism. Anarchism, being inimical to violence even though it is subjected to violence, has every right and justification for rebelling in a violent way in order to throw off this oppression. But, since the core aim is not the liberation from this or that version of oppression but rather from violence-based oppression *per se*, once the primary aim of freeing oneself of it has been fulfilled and achieved, further recourse to violence is ruled out. There having been no other means of liberation available, it was used only for the purposes of liberation, as an instrument of social relation, violence representing an instrument deployed solely as a defence against the ruling authorities and not as an instrument for managing or constructing a society. Anarchists look upon violence as being anti-social...

[I]f it is possible to sum up such a complicated issue in one neat effective formula, I think I can state that anarchists are anti-violence but not non-violent.

Like all declarations of principle, which by their very nature embrace very wide-ranging modes of thinking, this—if it is to be properly understood—needs to have its spirit and sense fully identified; otherwise the risk is that it may be manipulated, if not thoroughly mystified...

Insurrection is the risen people, the body of the exploited and rejected and marginalized and all of the victims of oppression who, once they have determined to endure no more, decide as a body to smash their bonds and overthrow their oppressors. A genuine popular struggle and, if need be, a peoples' war, with no

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hint of vanguardism, elitism or a conscious minority acting arbitrarily on its own behalf... the violence should stop as soon as the insurrection succeeds in rendering the oppressors and butchers *hors de combat*, the purpose being not to foster the sort of horrendous outbreaks of violence due to hatred and festering resentments which might be thrown up by the intoxication of victory...

According to the anarchist criteria under consideration, the violent subversive attacks paraded before our eyes day after day have no connection with the yearning for insurrection. Insofar as the Western world is concerned, these strike me as being, rather, the handiwork of militant elites trying to wage out-and-out warfare substantially cut off, separate from and extraneous to the masses of the peoples whom they would like to draw in. This is a personal war of their own, and above and beyond their intentions which are sometimes articulate and sometimes not, it carries the stench of a clash between contending authorities conducted over the heads of the famed "people" in the nineteenth century sense, which, instead of rising up alongside them, looks on in terror and looks for protection to strong men from existing institutions likely to be able to counter them...

As I see it, anarchy is characterized by a model of society and a self-managerial methodology rather than being primarily oppositional. Its opposition is in fact a direct consequence of its unequivocally offering itself as an alternative to domination and not the other way around... Which is not to say that I am against popular insurrections. These will always occur until such time as injustice, oppression and exploitation are no more... But my conscience suggests to me that this does not make [insurrection] the way to achieve a liberated and free society. History is all too replete with instances of victorious insurrections, in the wake of which terrifying totalitarian authorities have been set in place. So I know, or I think I know, that the insurrectionist avenue by itself is wholly inadequate as a genuine means of liberating and building up the alternative society to which every anarchist aspires.

Anarchy is characterized and distinguished by its approach to self-determination and the precept of self-management without any established higher authority capable of imposing its own wishes, rather than by the sort of revolt [anarchism] advocates. We are anarchists not just because we feel some need to rebel, but rather because we want to build something different that is redolent of potentially greater political, social and lifestyle freedom. Insurrections and various sorts of rebellion are not in any way peculiar to us and are not our distinguishing characteristics. Everybody, including Bolsheviks, Islamists and even fascists, if oppressed and denied the right to exist, have a tendency to rebel and to break free of whatever is oppressing them. But their rebellion and, should this be the case, their insurrection, are of quite a different hue than ours and indeed are in stark contrast with our own. Albeit operating on the basis of differing ide-

ological motives and ideals, they seek to install new and strong, absolutist, totalitarian or theocratic authorities. They rebel against established authority because they wish to replace them and rule the people in their place. Whenever we succeed in rising in rebellion, on the other hand, we are intent, not just upon overthrowing the established authorities but also domination under any other guise because we are intent upon building a society rooted in the absence of hierarchy and ruling authorities. We do not represent ourselves as primarily rebels and insurrectionists but as pre-eminently fanatical lovers of liberty, as much liberty as possible, and of self-governance and the determination not to be ruled from above and to live and coexist without the violence of imposition, in a context of solidarity, reciprocity and the most comprehensive consensual agreement.

We should not falter, but should be open-minded, while unbending in our consistency. Instead we ought to create spaces for libertarian experimentation where forms of social self-governance and solidarity can be acted out, not as some exclusive model but as models among a range of models. Polyvalent, polycentric and a-centric spaces freed of internal hierarchy and bureaucracy, capable of fostering innovation and cultural subversion, of being creative and open-minded, of furnishing an example of a new way of making and being society. Moments of collective self-organization, libertarian social centres, libertarian schools, grassroots libertarian municipalities and, for any so inclined, experimental communes and whatever else may spring to mind that represents and pilots the alternative society that we crave. In short, a society capable of subverting the existing models and social imagination. If this makes headway and spreads and comes under attack from the established authorities, then it will defend itself and will rise up to assert its rights to free choice, free thought, freedom to experiment. This is possible! And, take it from me, it is a lot more powerful and explosive than any gunshot or bomb, any war or any act of violence.

Rivista Anarchica, No. 296 (Year 34, No. 1), February 2004

14. Benjamin Franks: The Direct Action Ethic (2003)

Benjamin Franks is the author of Rebel Alliances: The Means and Ends of Contemporary British Anarchisms (San Francisco: AK Press, 2006). The following excerpts are taken from his essay, "The Direct Action Ethic," Anarchist Studies, Volume 11, No. 1 (2003). Franks distinguishes direct action from civil disobedience, illegalism and symbolic and constitutional action, emphasizing the prefigurative nature of direct action. Reprinted with the kind permission of Benjamin Franks and Anarchist Studies.

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“Direct action” is a term that has been carelessly applied to a plethora of activities. The High Court judge Sir Michael Davies, for instance, mistakes it for criminal activity. This is an error as certain forms of direct action, as discussed below, have been legal. Indeed many commentators, and even some activists, seemingly share the judge’s confusion, considering direct action to be identical either with civil disobedience or with politically inspired criminality...

Although the terms “civil disobedience” and “direct action” are often confused, they differ in a number of ways. The interpretation of “civil disobedience” comes from the American civil rights and British anti-nuclear movements, which regarded their actions to be marked by a commitment to non-violence. However, many activists find the pacifist claims to be highly questionable. Direct action, by contrast, makes no such assertion. It should be noted that there is a subdivision of direct action, which declares itself as non-violent, but the fact that there is such a sub-category is indicative that direct action per se is not pacific. Second, civil disobedience necessarily involves breaking the law, even if the law itself is an unconstitutional one. Direct action, by contrast, although frequently involving criminal activity, is not necessarily illegal. Industrial action, for instance, or squatting, may be forms of direct action that have previously not been contrary to the law. Third, and most importantly, direct action is prefigurative, the means have to be in accordance with the ends. Civil disobedience is not necessarily prefigurative, and it is frequently consequentialist: acts are justified in terms of civil disobedience towards reaching a given end. It is this rejection of consequentialism that particularly marks direct action out as especially anarchic.

The prefigurative element distinguishes direct action from symbolic and constitutional action. Symbolic actions are those acts that aim to raise awareness of an issue or injustice, but by themselves do not attempt to resolve it. They are acts that signify other acts. There are many forms of symbolic action: parades, vigils, fasts, slogans, songs, festivals, badges, flags and salutes. A possible criticism of the division between symbolic and direct action is that the latter too is symbolic. Direct action too presents a partial or temporary solution to a larger set of practices. It is here that the terminology of semiotics helps to provide a clearer basis for division. Direct action is *synecdochic*. A synecdoche is a symbol that contains a small part that represents a larger whole. For example, a half brick thrown during a riot is used to represent the whole insurrection. The term “symbolic action” is used for those events that are not in themselves attempts to resolve the problem at hand directly but are *metaphorical*.

Political metaphorical symbols would include the red rose of the Labour Party or the lit torch of the Conservatives. Metaphorical symbols have no direct connection to the phenomena they are signifying, and carry their meaning through

existing convention or social practice. Examples include a torchlit vigil outside a prison or detention centre. Some acts can be both symbolic (metaphorical) and direct action (synecdochic) depending on the circumstance and the reception. Yelling slogans, acts which are apparently simply symbolic, may be used to raise courage or frighten the enemy, for instance prior to breaking through a police line (direct action). Shouting at the police with no intention of contesting their power would not be direct action, and remains purely in the realm of the symbolic.

Some symbolic acts which appear to refer solely to the representative realm can alter the symbolic order, and inspire practical prefigurative action, thereby placing them closer to direct action. The political scientist David Apter identifies the way that symbolic actions affect the self-identification of those contesting and altering the meaning of symbols. The *détournement* of advertising hoardings and the manipulation of everyday language, such as the juxtaposition of previously unconnected words (“demand the impossible,” “senseless acts of beauty,” “irrational act of kindness”) demonstrate the ideological hold of the dominant culture and can also be classed as direct action. Symbolic action, in contrast to direct action, has a prescribed reference or its signification is prescribed by an elite group, and remains within these limits.

Purely symbolic acts have their meanings determined by those with greater social power... Not only do those in dominant hierarchical positions fix symbolic meanings, but also, in securing these interpretations, the signs reflect this restraint. For instance, the highly structured and passive marches through indifferent streets symbolize less resistance to oppressive power than the passivity of the crowd. The demonstration does not resolve the problem it sought to highlight, but accents the political power of those who manage the march, and the liberality of the state which allows opposition (albeit toothless) onto the streets. The organizers do not facilitate the desired social change, as this would end their role of leaders of the campaign. The end result is that they control opposition and profit from it—an attitude characterized by the phrase “Join the struggle buy the t-shirts.”

Direct action, such as squatting, by contrast, does seek through the act to resolve the problem of homelessness or inadequate accommodation. This also makes it differ from constitutional action. Proponents of this category of political behaviour regard the lobbying of parliament to raise the question of housing provision as the most appropriate form of action. Constitutional methods do not practically resolve the social problem, nor are the agents of change—parliamentarians—the ones directly affected. Direct action is prefigurative, what is desired must also be involved in the methods of reaching that aim. Direct action is, therefore, synecdochic: it contains elements of the object it is representing. It stands

both as a practical response to a given situation, but also as a symbol of the larger vision of societal change.

As the example of squatting versus lobbying illustrates, another key feature of direct action is connected to the identities of the people using it... for it to be properly “direct,” the act intends to affect the individuals carrying it out. For anti-hierarchical activists, this must be in the form of challenging practices that subjugate them, while for those that hold a vision of an enlightened future based on benign paternalism, direct action can be paternalistic, and by carrying out such tactics identifies them as the force for benevolent intervention.

Criticisms by libertarian activists have been advanced against sections of the anti-globalization movement that rather than being liberatory, that is the oppressed themselves resisting their oppression, it is primarily acting on behalf of others. The anti-imperialist sections of the Black Bloc in Seattle have been criticized not just for their “violence” in smashing up Starbucks and Nike outlets (which is a different debate). Sections of the Black Bloc justified their actions on the basis that they were carried out to support sweatshop workers, but without the involvement of this group. This section of the Black Bloc were acting as a vanguard, and therefore hierarchically. The spectacle of activists acting *on behalf of* others, becoming an elite through whom the oppressed expressed their grievances, replicates hierarchical relationships. The destruction of corporate property, such as the vandalism against the fast-food multinational McDonalds on May Day 2000, was not solely justified on paternalistic grounds. The supporters of such acts regarded their actions as benefiting themselves, through weakening the hold of oppressive capitalist property relations and building links of solidarity with other groups. Consequently, even if their methods were flawed, they were at least attempting to prefigure non-hierarchical social relations.

An act alters its classification of whether it is symbolic or direct action, and whether it is paternalistic or non-hierarchical, depending on the identities of the agents involved. [April] Carter provides plenty of examples of direct action: prisoners leading strikes, workers occupying factories as part of pay negotiations or to disrupt closure plans and black citizens boycotting companies that promote segregation. The central unifying feature in all these cases is that it is the subjects who will benefit from the act who are primarily in control of the tactic. Thus, a tactic used by one group might constitute direct action, but when used by another might be symbolic. For example when a politician appears at a picket line... this has a different set of meanings from when members of the workforce appear. There are distinctive interpretations of direct action, ones that reject paternalism and those that embrace it... but the latter would be inconsistent with anarchism...

Direct action, although carried out primarily to benefit the actor (in order to avoid paternalism), has a socialized concept of the self, and recognizes that iden-

tities alter through the practice of such methods, in the most simplistic form—from passive victim to active resister...

For consistent class struggle anarchists who promote anti-hierarchical social ambitions, direct action should primarily involve the oppressed overcoming, albeit perhaps only temporarily, their oppression. Direct action when successful, for the anarchists, is a form of liberation. Tactics of this form embody anti-hierarchical behaviour that prefigures the forms of social relationship that the actors wish to bring about. It is performed for their benefit, inferring that the action resists oppression or represents self-creative behaviour attempting to avoid reproducing hierarchical structures...

Consistent anarchists... consider all forms of non-hierarchical resistance to oppressive forces as potentially liberatory. They recognize a variety of oppressions and therefore different oppressed subjects. They therefore promote a wide variety of interventions that are tailored to the particular location and oppression. Direct action, for anarchists, highlights and attempts to overcome hierarchical practices, rendering them visible so that other groupings can contest power relations. These areas of contestation and zones of autonomous behaviour create nodes where prefigurative, supportive relations can be formed...

The rejection of a schema in which a final millennial event justifies all preceding actions means that tactics are assessed on how far they embody their objectives. This presents direct action as a pragmatic response to social problems, as exemplified by DiY protest movements that grew up around environmental and civil liberties issues throughout the 1990s...

Practicality is not the same as reformism. Reformism is rejected as it looks to hierarchical authorities, such as Parliament, to act. Although some reforms are welcomed which reduce oppressive practices, direct action provides an immediate practical alteration in power relations. Even if the act is not wholly successful, participants have benefited from the involvement...

Direct action can be best understood as a prefigurative action whose political or anti-political role can be identified and assessed through the ends it foreshadows and the identities of the agents undertaking it. It is particularly attractive to libertarians because of the shared commitment to prefiguration... it recognizes the primacy of oppressed subjects themselves overthrowing the forces of their subjugation. As such, anarchism seeks to avoid mediating forces.

As oppression is considered to be multiform and diverse, so too oppressed subjects and their forms of resistance are diverse... The vibrancy of liberatory movements depends on their ability to respond inventively to constraints as well as the new freedoms they create. The strengths and weaknesses of direct action movements can be assessed by how quickly they adjust, and the degree to which these new tactics correspond, to the prefigurative ethic.

15. A.G. Schwarz: The Revolt in Greece (2010)

In December 2008, a young Greek anarchist, Alexandros (“Alexis”) Grigoriopoulos, was murdered by the police, sparking a far-reaching revolt against the authorities in which anarchists played a prominent role. In the following excerpts, taken from We Are An Image From the Future: The Greek Revolt of December 2008 (San Francisco: AK Press, 2010), A.G. Schwarz discusses the significance of the revolt for anarchists elsewhere.

The masculinized, depersonalized, and bureaucratic politics of the Left have long succeeded in removing emotional concerns from our concept of revolution, but you cannot have a liberating revolution while ignoring the emotional half of human existence. All you can have are square-jawed calls for sacrifice issued by a manipulative leadership and a convenient confusion between freedom that exists on paper and freedom that exists in the heart. It is only through the recognition of this subjective, personal, and emotional revolution that people can fight for themselves and recognize the constant attempts to recuperate the struggle through appeals to a false common good. This is not to say that struggle must be individualistic, but that only individuals who are free to feel their needs and desires can participate in a liberated collective capable of overthrowing authority and creating free communities.

Many of the things that happen in Greece could technically be carried out by anarchists in other countries—we have the numbers, the materials, and the proficiency—except that we are afraid. A striking feature of the insurrection and the anarchist movement in Greece is the centrality of courage. But courage is largely a social phenomenon. There are always some people who have a little more of it, who are able to make the first strike, even if no one is behind them, but these people will never be a majority, nor should they be (how terrible the world would be with so many impetuous jackasses running about!). In general, humans being social animals, courage is fostered firstly by peer group support, and secondly by broader community sympathy. If you have enough comrades to act with you, or if you are an anonymous member of a like-minded crowd, you can perform superhuman acts you never would otherwise. And if you are in a group of fifty anarchists facing a hundred well-equipped riot police, you are much more likely to kick things off if you know that all the bystanders are cheering for you than if you think they would disapprove of your actions or tell the police which street you ran down after it’s all over. The mood on the streets provides another vital signal that directly affects the morale of the police and the morale of the comrades. Take the same fifty anarchists and the same hundred cops, and put them

on different streets with different moods, even if no bystanders actively intervene in the situation, and you end up with entirely different outcomes.

But courage is also a matter of practice. The first time you do something is always the scariest. And if you only do an illegal action after meticulous planning—not that planning isn't necessary in many scenarios—you will not learn how to act spontaneously, how to react to the immediate situation, which is a crucial skill for anarchists to have. The December revolts were not planned, they were not prepared by some assembly or vanguard party, but they were prepared for. The insurrection would never have flowered at that moment if the Greek anarchists had not readied themselves to react, and they did this by developing proactive affinity groups united by trust, common politics, and practical experience together; and by carrying out dangerous actions with varying levels of preparation, from spontaneous (reacting in the heat of the moment) to minimal (deciding to do something in just a few hours or the next day and just going and doing it) to meticulous (with intensive planning) This capacity among hundreds or even thousands of anarchists was built up in the years before December, and it allowed them to react immediately upon Alexis's death and define the character of the revolt in all the days to come. If they had needed to hold a meeting first, a long debate, do reconnaissance, weigh other options, and have the first counterattacks ready a week later, Alexis's murder never would have been avenged.

Additionally, because in the previous months and years Greek society was accustomed to seeing occasional attacks on police stations and banks carried out by anarchists, this form had entered the social consciousness and was ready and available for all the tens of thousands of high school students, immigrants, and others who needed some tool, some expression to their rage. If all they had seen in their worlds were peaceful protests in response to the aggressions and insults of State and capitalism, that is probably all they would have organized in response to the murder. There would have been a few scuffles with police to vent the worst of the rage, and the rest would have to be buried inside them, weighing them down even more and stealing more of their dignity, preparing them for adulthood, for integration, for retirement.

Now it should be clear how the spirit of December can spread internationally. The insurrection of the comrades in Greece can animate us and rejuvenate our hope. It can invite us to study their situation and identify what made it possible, so we can go on building the foundations in our own corners of the world. We can also use it as an opportunity to increase the internationalism of those around us, by holding protests and memorials so our neighbors can consider the possibility that what the police do in Greece is important to us too. But it is counter-revolutionary to pull out our hair, as so many comrades have done, to lash out

and insult our local movements for not being able to spread the insurrection, for misinterpreting the geographical limits of the insurrection as evidence of weakness or laziness in other parts. December is an opportunity to rejoice, to boost our morale. How terrible that some hotheads blogging endlessly on the Internet have used it as an opportunity to drain us of even more self-confidence. The opposite is needed.

The December insurrection arose from very specific local circumstances, and it was allowed to arise because people believed it could, within an anarchist movement that did not and does not consider itself special. The insurrection will arise where we are, and we can help it along in a number of ways.

- By understanding that insurrections are not controllable, and they do not follow ideological lines. They are an opportunity for all the oppressed and exploited to fight back in their own ways, but in this fight, many different people can meet one another, if they are willing.
- By understanding that insurrections usually do not topple governments, but if people do not base their hopes exclusively on the simple act of rioting, they will see that after people are physically exhausted and the fighting in the street stops, if the movement chooses to it can build off those experiences, lay deeper foundations, use the change in the social balance of power to open autonomous spaces and build the beginnings of an anarchist world, and move closer to stronger insurrections and to revolution.
- By organizing attacks against authority and developing a capacity for spontaneous reaction, so that anarchists prepare themselves for insurrection and make it more likely that an event blooms into an insurrection, and so that society itself is prepared to accept the reality of struggle and counterattack.
- By starting now to find whatever communal and antiauthoritarian traditions exist within our society and expanding on them to counteract the effects of capitalism on culture and to create a popular culture that supports violent resistance, distrusts authority, and cherishes communal values.
- By intervening now in ongoing social conflicts, working respectfully with other non-institutional actors in these conflicts even if they are not anticapitalists, and forcefully opening spaces or employing methods that transform the logic of the struggle from the mediating loop of conservatism vs. reform into one of authority vs. people.
- By building infrastructure and vital capacities (skills, habits, traditions) that reflect and cultivate the world that we want, not as alternatives but as beachheads, so that when we are able to force the police off the streets we will have something creative to move forward with, and so that in the meantime we can give substance to our dreams in a way that sustains hope and sustains us

in our struggle, which is hard and long and cannot be fought just for pie in the sky.

These are some of the ways that we can be ready to seize the event and help it expand to its natural shape, a swelling rage and creative collectivity that knows no boundaries and denies logics of control, an explosion that will start to burn away the old world and leave us open ground for the planting of the new one that we carry with us, if only we are courageous enough to seize the opportunity with both hands.

16. CrimethInc: The Egyptian Revolution (2012)

In the spring of 2011, popular uprisings against authoritarian governments spread across North Africa and the Middle East, starting in Tunisia. Although commonly referred to as the “Arab Spring,” many of these struggles continue, particularly in Syria and Egypt. The uprising in Egypt brought down the Mubarak regime, but the military was reluctant to relinquish its control. Various anarchist currents have emerged during the turmoil in Egypt, opposed to the military and the sham democracy being created under its auspices. The following report from Egypt, produced by the CrimethInc. Ex-Workers Collective (<http://crimethinc.com>), provides an overview of the Egyptian revolution from an anarchist perspective.

From the Circle As spray painted on the sides of government buildings to the explosion of independent and federated trade unions, anarchist currents can be seen throughout Egypt as its people scramble to win revolutionary change following their great revolutionary moment...

Unions played a key role in the success of the uprising of January 25 [2011]. Starting on February 7, a public transport strike across Greater Cairo, coupled with labour protests along the Suez Canal—along with other industrial actions across the country—helped bring down Mubarak on February 11.

The revolution also led to the birth of the first independent trade union federation in Egypt’s history. Since its founding on the fifth day of the revolution, over 100 independent trade unions, syndicates, and professional associations have been formed, including one for public transport. It has also spurred authorities into dissolving the board of the state-controlled Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF), which had monopolized the union movement—by law—since 1957.

But revolutions aren’t just confined to the workplace. While strikes and other industrial actions put economic pressure on the regime, the success Egyptians

had in liberating the streets from police control is largely due to another organized group. The “Ultras,” Egypt’s extreme football fans, were some of the most well-prepared and coordinated groups in the marches toward Tahrir. They became the front line in the battle with police to regain access to the square. Organizing via online message boards after one of their own was killed at Tahrir, they came out in force on the Day of Rage. They maintained a strong presence within the square during the occupation, especially at times when the occupiers were most threatened by state and para-state violence.

Before last January, “Ultras” were regarded as apolitical football hooligans who liked to cause trouble. However, they were one of the only social groups in Egypt with experience fighting police, and their central role in winning the streets has made their popularity skyrocket. Ultras groups have tens of thousands of members across the Egypt, many of whom identify as anarchists. Although Ultras organizations refuse to be officially placed on the political spectrum, their tactics and modes of organizing are extremely anti-authoritarian. They organize without leaders or hierarchies, refuse financial sponsorships, fight against the commercialization of sport, and live their lives in conflict with state security forces. “All Cops Are Bastards” is a central tenet of the Ultras, and through graffiti and chants they have popularized this slogan in Egyptian society.

The Ultras were the first to use graffiti to discuss police brutality and freedom of expression, and this attracted supporters and members in the years before the revolution. Today, ACAB is the most common graffiti tag in Cairo and is scrawled on walls in other cities across Egypt as well. The Ultras continue to be a powerful social force giving teeth to the movement, showing up to protests with fireworks, Molotov cocktails, flares, and songs of defiance that have been widely adopted.

The revolutionary movement born out of Tahrir also attracted many who were traditionally excluded from formal political organizing: the millions who survive through direct action and subsist on as little as a dollar a day. The street kids and slum-dwellers that made Tahrir their home stayed there once the party was over. The conditions that led them to revolt had not changed with the fall of a politician, so their occupation continued. Street youth as young as six continue to be some of the bravest and most dedicated fighters in this revolution, ripping out the paving stones and running to the front with makeshift shields, keffiyehs, and slings. Egyptian state media dismiss them as thrill-seekers without political motivations, or claim they’ve been paid or forced to fight. But seen dodging live rounds through clouds of tear gas, these young Egyptians bear a striking resemblance to the iconic rock-throwing Palestinian youth that many say inspire them.

In the sprawling expanse of informal neighbourhoods surrounding Cairo, self-organization is a means of daily survival. Those without homes build on

squatted land or occupy vacant structures. They seize water and electricity when the authorities turn them off, and clash with police when they raid neighbourhoods to evict or shut off essential services. Pockets of gated communities inhabited by Cairo's upper-class fence out the growing excluded class and make visible the intense stratification of wealth in Egyptian society today.

But some of Egypt's growing underclass, emboldened by the revolution, are going on the offensive. They have begun highly orchestrated waves of occupations targeting empty apartment buildings in more affluent areas. A coordinated takeover of over 2000 housing units in 6th of October City only a few months ago forced a major confrontation with the thousands of soldiers deployed to evict them. The squatters defended their new homes with firearms and Molotov cocktails. Others stormed apartment buildings in Sheikh Zeyad City, occupying flats and demanding permanent housing. These high profile actions are a testament to the growing strength of different communities that organize horizontally and act collectively.

And it's not only in the slums. Examining the construction of much of contemporary Cairo, you can tell that informal development has occurred with minimal intervention or assistance from the state, mostly through either the organization of neighbouring plot owners or just spontaneous development checked by the intervention and negotiations of neighbours. This has led to a fairly high functioning system of neighbourhoods, albeit with some common problems having to do with planning issues around green space, street widths, and building heights. Still, the outcomes have met a serious set of needs without any real action by government, and definitely display evidence of some planning and cooperation at the local level.

During the original occupation of Tahrir, neighbourhood self-governance again became a necessity. The already minimal functioning of government infrastructure ceased, and plainclothes police even took part in organized looting in attempts to terrify people. Popular neighbourhood committees appeared throughout the entire country within the matter of a night. People came down from their apartments to the streets in the midst of a mobile phone and internet blackout and set up checkpoints and communications systems to defend their neighbourhoods from police and other anti-social elements.

Within Tahrir, an autonomous community also emerged. Clinics and logistics tents met the needs of the protesters, while discussion groups, lectures, concerts, a library, a school, and even a regular "Cinema Tahrir" ensured that the square became a space for political education and the forging of deep relationships. Like the Occupy protests it inspired, these initiatives were supported by donations and self-organized by volunteers. Mutual aid and voluntary association became the norm, and the logic of capitalism and power relations faded. But the

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occupation didn't come without issues. Thieves and thugs were a persistent problem throughout Tahrir, one that led to the creation of jails and vigilante security and justice systems with varying degrees of respect for human rights. Still, many Egyptian anarchists rightly point out that the occupation of Tahrir and the subsequent Cabinet occupation were successful experiments in anarchy.

A year ago, the exploits of revolutionaries in Egypt turned Tahrir square into a household name. But a few blocks away another occupation shook the foundations of power more recently. People fed up with military rule and disenchanted with elections occupied the entrance to the cabinet building in order to prevent meetings from taking place there and to protest military rule. In the early hours of December 16, this occupation became the latest flashpoint of social war in Egypt. The military kidnapped and seriously beat an occupier, then burnt the entire occupation to the ground, kicking off five straight days of intense street battles. Unlike all the clashes that came before, the people were no longer facing off with the universally despised police forces, but with the army.

People woke up to the news that protesters were under attack and rushed to the scene where a once lively and blossoming tent city had been reduced to fires and rubble in the streets. Rocks were flying through the windows of the cabinet building at the soldiers who had retreated inside, and the numbers in the street continued to grow into the thousands. For the next five days, Tahrir became the convergence point and staging ground for a 24-hour-a-day battle with the military. First-aid clinics opened up and banks closed. Youth could be seen breaking ATMs and ripping marble off the walls and paving stones out of the ground to use as projectiles. The cabinet building was set on fire repeatedly with Molotov cocktails, while soldiers dropped huge chunks of concrete off the rooftop indiscriminately into the crowds, injuring dozens. At some points, the people seemed to be winning, at others the army looked as if it had the upper hand, but there was no mistaking this for a mere protest; this was full-scale conflict.

People were pushed back to Tahrir, but even though the military began using live ammunition and lethal force, their first attempt to clear the square failed. As rocks rained on them from every direction, they retreated back to the ruins of the cabinet building. To formalize the stalemate, a huge wall made of concrete slabs was erected, completely blocking the road between Tahrir square and the cabinet. But the fighting simply continued down a different street. The next day, the military succeeded in clearing Tahrir and burning occupation infrastructure to the ground. But new groups arrived to fight them and they were pushed back once again. While the State television was creating conspiracy theories about the protesters and showing child-protesters claiming that they were paid to fight in the streets, the independent media were documenting the abuses, the casualties, and the real reasons behind the conflict. The image of a woman being dragged and

beaten by police as they lifted off her niqab to reveal her blue bra eventually led to the end of the street battle. In response to that image and reports of sexual abuse in detention, a women's march of thousands gathered and decisively pushed back a humiliated army, ending the military confrontation in victory on its fifth day.

As has been the case for the last century, women have been on the front lines of this revolution leading marches and chants, writing and distributing leaflets, fighting police, doing independent media work, and serving in popular committees. Defying the culture of patriarchy that still exists in much of Egyptian society, women shattered sexist stereotypes with their actions and empowered themselves to push the revolution forward in all spheres of daily life.

Some women are now running for the highest levels of government. But like their male counterparts that abandoned the streets for the political process, they are about to realize the bitter truth about "democracy." As the elections wrap up, it is clear that the winners of Egypt's so-called "democratization" will be the once-outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. This isn't exclusively because so many revolutionaries decided to boycott the elections. The Muslim Brotherhood's "Freedom and Justice" party had the financial capacity to pay for the big campaign that bought them the votes of many Egyptians. In Egypt as in other capitalist democracies, the axiom *one dollar = one vote* rings truer than ever. Although economic conditions were a major spark for the uprising a year ago, the MB have the exact same economic policies as their predecessors. So many Egyptians who simply voted for the party with the deepest and longest-running conflict with their previous rulers will have to take it to the streets to topple their government yet again in the near future.

Alongside the widespread implicitly anti-authoritarian currents, explicitly anarchist organizing has also been growing throughout Egypt's ongoing revolutionary process. Individual anarchists have played key roles in the revolution from organizing protests and occupation logistics to doing independent media work. Meanwhile, anarchist conferences and assemblies are also being organized by a growing anarcho-syndicalist organization called the Libertarian Socialist Movement. With members in Cairo and Alexandria and connections to international anarchist networks, the LSM is starting to also attract enemies, entering into conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood and others.

As empowered protesters build organizations, coordinate direct actions, and become increasingly bold in demanding revolutionary change, institutionalized repression continues to rise. People drafted their own trade union law, while the military made laws criminalizing strikes; independent media have risen to new heights of popularity, while the state media have become more blatant in their lies against the protest movement; and people continue to fight authority in the

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streets, while 12,000 are locked up and denied due process in military tribunals. Egyptian society is experiencing diverging realities. On one hand, people are determined to finish the revolution that sparked a year ago; on the other, elections mask the continuation of state dominance and co-opt the potential of an emerging social order.

Chapter 4

The State

17. Harold Barclay: Anarchy and State Formation (2003)

Harold Barclay is an anthropologist who did field work in Egypt and the Sudan. He is also the author of People Without Government: An Anthropology of Anarchism (London: Kahn & Averill, 1982), in which he surveys the many stateless human societies that existed for millennia prior to the emergence of the State. Indeed, as he notes, not only was anarchy “the order of the day among hunter-gatherers... we can go further and say that since the egalitarian hunting-gathering society is the oldest type of human society and prevailed for the longest period of time—over thousands of decades—then anarchy must be the oldest and one of the most enduring kinds of polity. Ten thousand years ago everyone was an anarchist.” The following passages, reprinted with his kind permission, are taken from his essay, The State (London: Freedom Press, 2003), in which he identifies the various factors which led to the emergence of the State from out of this “primitive” anarchy.

Most of the theories of state origin... have sought to reduce the explanation of the state, and other institutions as well, to a single cause which means they have overlooked the significance of other things.

Ronald Cohen has written: “there is no clear cut or simple set of causal statements that explains the phenomenon of state formation... The formation of states is a funnel-like progression of interactions in which a variety of pre-state systems responding to different determinants of change are forced by otherwise unresolvable conflicts to choose additional and more complex levels of political hierarchy.” Once this is achieved there occurs a convergence of forms towards the early state. Pre-state systems are placed on the track towards the state if they have already an existent hierarchy and there are attempts by some elite to achieve and maintain power and domination. When an attempt is successful one has a state or, put another way, the state is born when an elite can claim for itself a

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monopoly on the use of violence and can institute legal sanctions... The hierarchy is built upon a number of factors. The significant elements in state development are, then:

1. Population
2. Sedentary settlement
3. Horticulture/agriculture
4. Redistribution
5. Military organization
6. Secondary significance of kinship
7. Trading
8. Specialized division of labour
9. Individual property and control of resources
10. Hierarchic social order
11. Ideology of superiority/inferiority

POPULATION

...Carniero has argued that population growth is a major impetus for state creation. A people may reside in an area exploiting its agricultural potential, resulting in population increase and demands or pressures for more arable lands. Eventually this provokes aggression and conquest of other areas and peoples and, in order to achieve success in such an enterprise, necessitates armies which are organized by states. Population and conquest are here seen as the two motivations for state creation. But they are in fact only two pieces of a much more complex puzzle. The state does not rise like a phoenix out of an enlarged and predatory population alone...

We may suppose that populations increased towards the end of the Paleolithic and that this was largely caused by a process in which new technology appeared, including the bow and arrow, more sophisticated stone tools, the domestication of the dog, and improved clothing and housing. These changes meant that the age of marriage could be lowered, spacing of children reduced, and abortion and infanticide decreased, culminating in further population increases and thus a search for improved sources of food.

Researchers believe that humans no doubt understood the process of plant and animal reproduction and growth thousands of years before actually domesticating such things as wheat, barley, pulses and sheep. As hunter-gatherers they were free of the more arduous tasks which would be associated with cultivation. But population increases would eventually challenge their sources of food. In ad-

dition climatic changes occurring at the end of the last Ice Age may have threatened traditionally exploited wild plants and game. Horticulture would have been a reasonable resolution of the situation. There is, however, no reason to believe that in every case there should soon arise an absolute limit to available arable land and a necessity to expand by military aggression. States in Egypt and Sumer did not arise because of pressure for arable land. Early horticultural societies would also still have no little dependence upon gathering and hunting to supplement their supplies. Finally, a sometimes fashionable explanation for the spread of inventions and peoples has been migration. Rather than conquest a people might merely move to a more profitable location: no need for conquest or the state.

SEDENTARISM

All states with few exceptions have arisen out of sedentary populations. This is clearly so with both the earliest states of the Old and the New World: Sumeria, Egypt, India, China, Mexico and Peru. The only exceptions to this rule have been those states created by pastoral nomads, such as the Huns and the Mongols and early Turks. These were all, however, secondary states created on the model of already existing states and in response to them... But as far as sedentarism is concerned it is necessary to point out that once these nomads adopted the state they became sedentary. In addition it must be borne in mind that the nomadism of pastoralists is not the nomadism of hunter-gatherers. No hunting gathering nomad group could ever produce a state, if only because it lacks the adequate resources and infrastructure. Pastoralists, on the other hand, possess great wealth in their herds and in their ancillary, often predatory, activities. They possess, as has been said, a walking larder...

Why is sedentarism fundamental to state development? States require some concentration of population wherein there is some specialization of labour; they require centres for administration and extensive horticulture or agriculture. (Pastoralists engage in a bit of indifferent cultivation, but nearly all of them are dependent upon sedentary farmers for part of their food.)

The most concentrated type of sedentary life is that of the city. As in almost all cases, where you find the city you will find the state. Polynesian states and the earliest Mayans do not seem to have had true cities, but cities seem to be integral elements of states and they are clear signs of civilization. Not only are they administrative centres, they are industrial and craft centres and the important sites for trade. Perhaps a majority of cities have arisen as market places; others have appeared as objects of religious pilgrimage or as capitals of states or military cen-

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tres. Perhaps sedentarism, and particularly urban life, is so universal in state development because it provides the sense of permanence and stability so important in the wielding of power...

HORTICULTURE/AGRICULTURE

...There are several reasons why a complex horticulture or agriculture is fundamental to state development. Early gardening was not much more productive or efficient than gathering and hunting, but as people became more dependent upon domesticated plants and animals, yields increased because of the effort in improving seed and agricultural techniques. Not only did this allow for much larger populations, but it also permitted a few individuals to become specialists in given tasks and not be engaged in the production of their food. What is more, it laid the groundwork for a tiny minority to become a leisure class of administrators and aristocrats.

The growing of crops and domesticated animals further gave some security to the food supply. With the creation of a variety of storage techniques there could ordinarily be sufficient food for a year until the next harvest. The dependence upon hunting wild game in the pre-agricultural condition was a much more risky business. On the other hand, horticulture and agriculture were not always that secure. Especially with the appearance of monoculture, in which large fields were devoted to a single crop, there was the periodic threat of that crop being totally destroyed by insect infestation or epidemic disease. The dependence upon artificial irrigation meant that there would be years in which the river did not supply a sufficient amount of water or others in which it produced too much. Any of these conditions could lead to food shortages and sometimes to massive famine.

A dependence upon domesticated plants and animals as well as irrigation greatly enhanced land and livestock values. Particularly once kinship was no longer the basis for having rights to land, some individuals were able to acquire more land than others. Some became Big Men through their ability to talk and manipulate others, through supernatural powers, through overt force or their ability to gather a body of clients in large part by making the less successful indebted to them. The Big Men became then the landlords; agriculture reinforced hierarchy.

Agriculture also produced peasants—the largest single segment of humanity for the last five thousand years. Although the peasant life is not totally black and depressing, everyone will agree that it has been characterized by poverty, disease and insecurity. Work as a pejorative was invented with peasantry. Not only does the peasant work long hours, but the labour is back breaking and mostly drudgery. The peasant is continually harassed by his lord. Thousands of years of sub-

servience have sought to train a body of duly obedient servants, necessary ingredients for any state. It has been hypothesized that the slave mentality is further maintained by the fact that the more intelligent and those who do not fully learn subservience in the peasant community are siphoned off by migration to the towns, where any rebellious spirit can be sublimated by other challenges.

REDISTRIBUTION

There are three different kinds of economic exchange: reciprocity, redistribution and the market. Reciprocity is universal in human societies and the oldest method of exchange. It is a kind of gift giving in which one provides a product or a service for another on the, usually implicit, understanding that there will be a return of something of equivalent value in the future by the recipient. Reciprocity may be immediate or delayed... Among other things reciprocity stresses that there are no free gifts. It is also a method of exchange between equals—one does not require some kind of hierarchical arrangement.

Redistribution does require hierarchy, at least in some minimal form. It requires several individuals to assemble some kind of wealth in one location and one person is assigned the responsibility for redistributing this wealth. Again, as with reciprocity, there is the appearance of gift giving, especially in its simplest expression.

The problem with the redistribution concept has been that it is somewhat of an umbrella term, covering a wide variety of activities. Thus, in New Guinea a Big Man loans out piglets to his neighbours and when they are grown he calls for contributions to a feast which he sponsors and acquires prestige as a result. Potlatching was a common celebration among the American Indians of the Northwest Coast. A Big Man's kinsmen were expected to supply food and other goods for a major feast or potlatch, the climax of which involved the distribution of "gifts" to the assembled guests by the Big Man. From this he not only earned prestige, but also acquired important titles and his prestige was especially enhanced if he could outdo a rival in "gift" giving—if he could "flatten" an opponent.

With the Near Eastern archaic states such as Egypt, the pattern of redistribution was more complex. Peasants were expected to deposit part of their crop in a local storehouse. In Egypt a great number of storehouses were created by the state throughout the country and what was not consumed in a locality was sent on to central depositories at the royal court. While in New Guinea and in the Northwest Coast the redistribution serviced a general populace, in the Near East it benefited primarily aristocrats, priests and the military, functioning as a means of collecting tribute for their benefit. There, as well, it was the chief type of economic exchange.

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For the past several hundred years it has declined in favour of market arrangements. Nevertheless, redistribution persists as the means by which the state acquires its operating funds, in the form of taxation. Modern states extract part of the wealth of every citizen and redistribute it. Part goes to support an enormous bureaucracy, part for a military establishment; another part provides subsidies to wealthy corporations, while, especially in the so-called welfare state, no small amount is diverted to health, welfare and education of the common folk. Thus, we have three different kinds of redistribution systems. One is essentially an elaborate feasting and is extremely close to reciprocity. A second provides for centralized storehouses and siphons the wealth off to a dominant minority, the wealth having been appropriated from the labour of the poor. In the third the state collects taxes from the rich and the poor and re-circulates the money to various groups. Until a century ago most of it went to the military and administrative branches of the government, including large sums to a royal family. In recent times more has been returned to the lower echelons, because, one might suggest, governments have learned that it is easier and less expensive in keeping the peace if one can ensure a few crumbs to the hoi polloi.

Today market arrangements dominate world economic exchange, but they were of little or no importance in ancient society. Goods circulated through reciprocity and redistribution and it is the elaboration of the latter that entails a major impetus to state formation. As has been noted, redistribution, requires a redistributing agent and, hence, at least a minimal hierarchy. Such a figure, then, has great power over the use of resources and can thereby extend his influence and eventually with the combination of other appropriate factors... is able to elevate himself into a position as ruler. This redistribution which is essentially an elaborate feasting device would, however, lack most of the attendant factors which would permit such a development. The appropriate redistribution system would only be a complex one based at a minimum upon horticulture, hierarchy, and a larger population.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

As was observed above Robert Carniero finds the origin of the state in population expansion and conquest. Others have singled out conquest alone as the source of the state. Oppenheimer saw in the expansion of one group to conquer another the creation of an apparatus aimed at maintaining domination. But the several examples he presents are of social entities which were already states when they commenced expansion. This cuts to the heart of the problem with this monocausal explanation...

Not only do individuals engage in hostilities in which there is a deliberate attempt to kill an opponent, but in every human society group endeavours of this kind occur as well. So it is argued warfare is a natural part of human behaviour.

I would argue that warfare is not a half dozen men taking off to raid or engage an equivalent group in another camp; inter-group hostilities are of varying kinds, such that feuding and small raids can hardly be placed in the same category with warfare. Warfare possesses distinct characteristics which make it qualitatively and quantitatively different from other types of lethal combat. It is different in terms of both the aims and organization.

A war aims at conquest, that is, a warring party seeks to capture and control the lands, wealth and people of another group. The feuding and raiding which constitute the group hostilities in most human societies lack such aims. The intentions of the feud or raid are much more modest—to even a score, to steal livestock, to abduct women, or, on rare occasions to acquire territory. There are no motives to subdue an opponent or absorb his group. In the feud once a member of one side has been killed or maimed a revenge attack can be expected in which a member of the guilty party will be killed or maimed. On the achievement of this mission the aggressors return home to await retaliation or a proposal for mediation.

The organization of warfare is vastly more complex than other forms of group hostility. Wars are fought with armies and similar military forces. There are large numbers of men organized according to a chain of command and a division of labour. There are no democratic armies, since there are always some individuals who give orders to others who are expected to obey without question. Occasionally, an army falls into disarray because those at the top cannot agree, but armies are clearly distinguished by the fact that not only do those at the bottom do all the dirty work and face all the danger, but they take all the orders and give none at all. In addition, in a military force the chain of command is quite explicit and obvious to everyone. It is never ambiguous.

In feuding and raiding groups there is invariably no chain of command or, if it does exist, it is a reflection of pre-established relations among the combatants. There may be deference to a senior kinsman or one who has a reputation as a great warrior. Fighting is often quite individualistic with participants each “doing his own thing.”

Not only are there commanders and the commanded in warfare, but some of the latter may be assigned to actual fighting, others to providing supplies to the fighters, some to repair materiel, yet others to gathering intelligence, to reconnaissance or to tending the wounded. And in each of these categories there is invariably a further refinement in the division of labour.

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Warfare requires at least a few semi or full professionals and, for those who are neither, some kind of minimal training is involved. Warfare depends as well on tactics, that is, the organization and plans for battle, the deployment of troops and the arrangement of the most efficient way in which to achieve a precise goal. Feuds and raids have no professionals and tactics are minimal.

Because warfare entails the mobilization of substantial numbers of men and supplies, it demands a complex and large organization which can mount and maintain it. War technology is very expensive even in ancient times where it took substantial wealth to maintain war horses and their gear or chariots and their teams. This is why it is that true warfare seems only to appear with the advent of the state—a substantial predatory structure with the power to command adequate resources. Further, as we have already said, an army is based on unquestioned obedience to command... Thus one may say that army discipline means that some kind of state structure has already been instituted...

Those who advocate a conquest or militarist explanation for state origin are not entirely wrong. Rather than saying warfare and conquest precede the state, I would suggest that the two work in tandem, both evolving together and feeding each other. One thing is certain, and that is in the game of statecraft and international politics no state can expect to achieve importance and prestige unless it does have a good army and pursues the road to dominance.

The seeds for an army and any consequent warfare are to be found in the body of clients some Big Man at the centre of a complex redistribution system can cajole, deceive and manipulate.

THE SECONDARY SIGNIFICANCE OF KINSHIP

The state is a very jealous god. It cannot tolerate competition. Before the appearance of the state the glue which held society together was kinship. The family and secondary kin groupings were paramount demanding prior obligations over all else. As the elements of state formation achieved increasing pre-eminence, the role of kinship was eclipsed. As Maine argued, with the state, place of residence overrode kinship ties.

Within a few millennia prior to the emergence of the state in the Near East, or at a time coterminous with that development, numerous fundamental innovations had occurred. Not only had there been the domestication of numerous plants and animals, but animals were employed for draught purposes; yoking and harnessing devices, copper and other metallurgies, pottery, irrigation, the plough, the looms, more sophisticated methods for measurement, writing, among other inventions, all appeared. Manufacturing and using such items required some training. This in turn provoked the rise of specialization in labour which

was also made possible because agriculture had become sufficiently efficient that it could support a minority of the population as non-food producers. Populations increased and there was a greater movement and mixing of different peoples. Consequently, there came to exist a rather heterogeneous population that was not related by kinship, residing in congested areas like cities. The different occupational specialists had their own interests: conflicts among groups arose which could not be settled by ordinary kinship mechanisms since so many of those involved were unrelated.

Into this situation the state appears to make residence the basis for control. Some Big Man, some pre-eminent, ranking person with adequate resources and clientele marches onto the scene...

One of the main arguments for the state has been an "integrative" one which largely follows the view that the state is necessary to maintain order in a highly heterogeneous, densely populated situation. But this theory overlooks at least two important points. It ignores the possibility of alternative approaches. For example, all kinds of voluntary organizations exist composed of a variety of different peoples and they all manage to avoid descending into chaos and violence. Even the inculcation of ethical standards acts as a strong restraining force. The vast majority of people do not kill and maim because of the presence of the police, but because they have been trained that killing is a "mortal sin."

The second problem with the integration theory is that it overlooks the ulterior motives of the would-be heads of state. Obviously there are many individuals who are members of parliaments, governors of states, etc., who honestly believe they have a genuine concern for the public welfare. They believe they can use the state to achieve the good life. Consequently some improvements may occur. But in the end their sincere, yet naive, efforts are overridden by obligations to defend the state and enforce the law. Other politicians are clearly more crass, believing that the welfare of General Motors is the public welfare or, like George W. Bush, that the welfare of the oil industry is the public welfare. Ultimately, for all, domination is the name of the game, and in dominating one can produce some degree of integration and order.

Deceptive tricks are important techniques by which the state is enabled to maintain control with a minimum of effort. In its attempt to draw the allegiance of its subjects, the state will try to make it appear that it is a family or larger kinship group to which all belong. Kinship terms are frequently applied to rulers: the king is the father or grandfather, the queen is the mother and fellow citizens are brethren. The state also assumes the traditional functions of the family and clan. In modern times it has taken over the education of the young, the welfare of the needy, the protection of the homestead; it determines the limits to disciplining family members and attempts to manage life in the bedroom. Once, not long ago,

the elderly and retired were supported by their kin group; now they depend upon old age pensions from the government. Increasingly the state has encroached upon and usurped the traditional role of the family and clan. In so doing it promotes a dependence upon the state. Indeed, the old dependence upon the family and other kin groups is transferred to the state. But the state is no loving mother. The more astute heads of state have calculated that it is cheaper in the long run to give the appearance of concern and direct some of the wealth to the common people and avoid otherwise discomfiting altercations and revolts.

In many Asian and African states today the kinship network remains a determined competitor to the state. It challenges the state's claim to a monopoly of the use of violence by carrying on blood feuds; those who break the clan's code of honour are killed. But all states are having increasing access to highly sophisticated surveillance devices, transportation and armaments and so seek to suppress such activities. They may, however, be able to employ the kin group as a proper instrument of the state. The state arises when the kin groups yield to it.

TRADING

...Trading does not occur purely for the purpose of acquiring some goods. It is also an opportunity for making marital arrangements, for establishing diplomatic ties, for mutual planning for war against another group or for consolidating peace. Above all, it is a time for the exchange of ideas. New tools, techniques, medicines, religions, and a host of other practices and ideas, are spread in the trading context. The merchant trader has been a major vehicle for the spread of Islam into the African interior.

Trading entails points of trade—locations where goods are traditionally brought for exchange. These may be redistribution centres under the control of a Big Man, so that as chief trader he is able to enhance his wealth and power. They may also be market centres which eventually come to replace the redistribution system. Trading activity in such situations provokes a mixing of different peoples. To simplify relations a *lingua franca* is introduced as is a common “currency” of some kind. The increasing complexity of trading activity and the greater the value of what is traded promote increasing hierarchical differences. Some individuals are already advantaged and in the competition of trade are able to garner to themselves further advantage so as to become bigger men standing at the threshold of state creation... stateless societies on the borders of giant states themselves engender... a state as a consequence of their proximity to those states and their trading activity with them...

In sum, trading is an important mechanism for expanding power and wealth and a major ingredient for state development.

SPECIALIZED DIVISION OF LABOUR

...A specialized division of labour creates a hierarchy of crafts and professions. Some carry considerable prestige and power while others are inferior; some are despicable. The so-called caste system in India gave priority to a rigid ranking of occupations according to their ritual purity. The priests were at the top while cleaners of latrines, streets and such were "untouchable." It was a system based upon the ideology of inequality and one which clearly placed power in the hands of the most prestigious occupational groups.

Ancient Egypt did not have a caste system, but like that system, it made occupations largely hereditary and elevated priests, warriors and scribes to highest status. Similar arrangements were to be found in the other early states and much evidence indicates that there was a differentiation into superior and inferior type occupations prior to the full blossoming of any state. Powerful religious specialists and warriors were already clearly established, as were landowners and smiths, all of whom added to the bubbling stew which was to become the state.

PROPERTY AND THE CONTROL OF RESOURCES

...The idea of property reaches far back into antiquity. There does not appear to have been any primitive communism as dreamed by Marxists, although some very basic items may have been thought of as the property of a group, such as land and water. In a hunting-gathering society the territory within which it moves in search of food might be seen as the collective property of the local band. Tools, animals, houses were all individually owned; even among some there was private property of songs or fishing sites.

The farming lands associated with a village as a collective property of individuals who have kinship relations with the villagers may still be found in parts of Africa and Asia. Usually in this situation the village elders divide the arable land amongst the adult males, assigning equal plots to all. Within a fixed number of years all the plots are reassigned to different users. In this way over time each farmer will presumably have access to both the best and the poorest land. But this system is breaking down in favour of individual private property and in most of the world where there is agricultural activity farms are privately owned, leading to wild differences in the size of the holdings.

That some become large landlords and others very small ones or persons driven into landlessness results from a competition in which all do not start out on an equal playing field. It has not been uncommon for individuals to lose their property by the use of overt force by another. Some own land which is less productive; others are less astute and crafty in their business dealings, as others are

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superior con men. Many a person has lost the homestead through indebtedness and such indebtedness did not arise through laziness or drunkenness as so many conservatives would have it. A few do lose out because of their personal inadequacies. Some landholders are able to ingratiate themselves, or otherwise find favour with those having greater wealth and power, and extend their holdings. After all, one of the features of the Big Man is the ability to extend largess to his friends and flunkies, thus reinforcing the ties and securing their future support.

In the above discussion I have concentrated upon land because this is the most valuable resource in any agrarian society. Property in other resources has also been important. European colonialism instilled in many peoples new conceptions of property. The North American fur trade taught countless Indians that their trap lines were valuable assets to be protected from outside intruders. Among pastoralists livestock is individual property with which one can amass a fortune or descend into abject poverty. Pure luck may determine whether one man is wiped out by epidemic disease while another is able to keep a healthy herd. One loses stock to rustlers, while another is unharmed—he may even be the rustler. Land holdings with copper, gold or timber reserves afford yet further devices for acquiring wealth and power. Clearly property is a most important road to power, possibly the most important road. It is crucial for the elaboration of a redistribution system. Marxist theory identifies property accumulation with the evolution of the state, but since a most central part of the theory concerns class conflict I will reserve discussion of it for the following section on hierarchy.

HIERARCHIC SOCIAL ORDER

Redistribution, the division of labour, trading and private property all produce social difference of a more fixed sort. Yet social differences are features of all societies. Australian Aboriginal society granted higher status to the elders of the band; women were inferior to men. A good hunter gained higher repute. Granted this is a simple kind of differentiation, but it lays the basis for more elaborate forms. The differences among Australians or most any hunter-gatherer people were considered so minimal that such societies were called egalitarian and compared to most other societies they appeared so.

Rank societies, according to Fried, are those “in which positions of valued status are somehow limited so that not all those of sufficient talent to occupy such statuses actually achieve them. Such a society may or may not be stratified. That is, a society may sharply limit positions of prestige without affecting the access of its entire membership to the basic resources upon which life depends.” In a classification based on different criteria, Elman Service describes “chiefdoms” as a type of society with close parallels to Fried’s rank societies. “Chiefdoms are *re-*

distributional societies with a permanent central agency of co-ordination.” The central agency acquires an economic, religious and political role. The redistributor of communal wealth is a person in an established position of influence, responsibility and wealth.

The political role of this redistributor varies considerably. At one pole we have the examples of the Yurok and Northwest Coast Indians who were subjected to diffuse and religious sanctions; their Big Men lacked authority to impose regulations. At the other extreme were some African and Polynesian redistributors who were petty kings, some with great authority... But it is important to bear in mind that it is primarily through the evolution of a redistribution system that a ranking system becomes established. The redistribution may begin as a feast and the guests eventually become clients or dependents of the host, obligated to him as a feast sponsor. These obligations are reciprocated by the provision of goods and services to the feasting enterprise, which then becomes larger and more elaborate. The Big Men invent titles for themselves, assume a central role as mediators of disputes, assert supernatural claims, and as a result of their influence and growing status become central figures in trading activities. They are the holders of rank in the community. The redistribution system shifts from elaborate feasting in which there was once an equal distribution of goods to one favouring those with rank. Now the society may be said to be at the threshold of a stratified state, that is, provided the other factors we have discussed above, along with ideology, have also moved to favour greater stratification as well.

For Fried a “stratified society is one in which members of the same sex and equivalent age status do not have equal access to the basic resources that sustain life”... [S]tratified societies with only the rarest exceptions would have a state structure... Once one has an aristocracy all the trappings of government are going to be established by that stratum in order to protect its position and interests. An aristocracy would already have an adequate infrastructure and sufficient resources well in place so that the creation of a state would be like placing the capping stone on a structure. As was noted above, a rank society may reach a position in which it is transformed into a stratified one... any society characterized by an elaborate redistribution system in which wealth is siphoned off to a dominant power elite would be a stratified state society.

IDEOLOGY

...An ideology is... any set of beliefs, explicit or implicit, which acts as a guide for daily living and an explanation of the world... a society, especially one which is highly specialized and multicultural, may have several, often competing, ideologies. The most popular one is that associated with the dominant group and it

will be the one which is preached in its schools, most of its religious edifices and elsewhere... Ideologies may be a congeries of sometimes conflicting or unrelated notions and there is usually a gulf between what is stated as ideal and what is reality or the existent fact. There is, of course, a fundamental problem in attempting to discern the ideology associated with the thousands of archaic cultures in the world... On occasion there appear such gems as this from ancient Egypt: "Bow thy back to thy superior, thy overseer from the palace. (Then) thy household will be firmly fixed in its property, and thy reward will be as it should be. Opposition to a superior is a difficulty, because one lives as long as he is mild." Or another, also from Egypt: "If thou art one of those sitting at the table of one greater than thyself, take (only) what he may give, when it is set before thy nose. Thou shouldst gaze at what is before thee; do not pierce him with many stares, (for such) an aggression against him is an abomination to the *ka*. Let thy face be cast down until he addresses thee, and thou shouldst speak (only) when he addresses thee. Laugh after he laughs, and it will be pleasing to his heart and what thou mayest do will be pleasing to the heart" (Wilson).

Essential to the existence of any state is an ideology of superiority/inferiority, of ruler and ruled; that it is only right and proper that persons holding certain offices should be above others and enjoy the legitimate right to compel others to obey them. In societies characterized by the presence of ranks this kind of ideology is not fully developed. There may be a recognition that some individuals are better or superior, but not sufficiently so to be a ruler commanding obedience. The appearance of a stratified elite system provides for a ruler, sustained by the kind of ideology expressed by the Egyptians above.

One of the reasons Christianity and Islam have been so successful is because their monotheism appeals to the rulers of states, since, the notion of one god reinforces that of a single supreme ruler.

Almost all ideologies are founded in religious belief if they are not complete religious systems themselves. Such beliefs are expressed and reaffirmed by ritual practices. A.M. Hocart stressed the role of ritual in state formation. He wrote: "This ritual organization is vastly older than government, for it exists where there is no government and where none is needed. When, however, society increases so much in complexity that a coordinating agency, a kind of nervous system, is required, that ritual organization will gradually take over this task." He goes on to say that to "our intellectuals only economic interests can create anything as solid as the state. Yet if they would only look about them they would everywhere see communities banded together by interest in a common ritual; they would even find that ritual enthusiasm builds more solidly than economic ambitions because

ritual involves a rule of life, whereas economics are a rule of gain, and so divide rather than unite.”

The history of early states clearly demonstrates the immense importance of religious ideology. Pharaoh was a god-king and the temple, the priests, the ritual and myth were integral to the maintenance of the entire state apparatus. Similarly in Sumer, and later Babylon, the temple and the priest provided the ideology identifying the state with divinity. Throughout history little has changed. Even in the United States, presumably a secular state which keeps the church allegedly divorced from the state, religious ideology is invoked to provide the underpinning for the whole structure. God is continually called upon in the halls of Congress; god and mammon are made one in the currency; god and nation are made one in a pledge of allegiance.

While the old Soviet Union and its Communist satellites did not invoke the name of god, they all gave a strong religious ritual bent to their so-called communism. Marx and Engels works were treated like Bibles; their enormous portraits like holy icons; their persons like prophets; there were hymns and grand processions. They did not have god, but they had the dialectic.

Everywhere it appears the state must justify itself by reliance upon some extra-human, superhuman power. The ideology gives legitimacy to the state.

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18. Alan Ritter: Anarchy, Law and Freedom (1980)

In Anarchism: A Theoretical Analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), Alan Ritter seeks to demonstrate that communal individuality, which he defines as “the greatest individual development with the greatest communal

unity,” is the ideal which animates anarchist theory and practice. In the following excerpts he argues that anarchy so conceived, despite assigning freedom a subordinate value, is freer than legal government. Reprinted with the kind permission of Cambridge University Press.

Anarchists favour untrammelled freedom. Yet to control behaviour in their good society they use the constraint of public censure, whose strictures interfere with the freedom they endorse. The conflict between their espousal of freedom and their resort to censure not only opens anarchists to being disparaged as inconsistent, it exposes them to the more onerous charge of supporting freedom as a pretence...

The view of anarchists as inconsistent for praising freedom while imposing censure rests on two premises: that freedom is their chief political value, and that it is curtailed severely by the censure they impose. This book argues for the consistency of the anarchists in praising freedom while imposing censure by refuting these premises. Freedom is exhibited in the following analysis as having subordinate worth for anarchists; their censure is shown to be a complex practice, whose effects on freedom are ambivalent. Once the censure of the anarchists is recognized as having ambivalent effects on a freedom that lacks supreme value in their eyes, their consistency in espousing it becomes obvious. Though their censure curtails freedom, they are warranted logically to espouse it, since it also supports freedom, and since they do not value freedom above all...

Anarchists are portrayed in the following analysis as seeking to combine the greatest individual development with the greatest communal unity. Their goal is a society of strongly separate persons who are strongly bound together in a group. In a full-fledged anarchy, individual and communal tendencies, now often contradictory, become mutually reinforcing and coalesce. By serving the anarchists as a goal and inspiration, this ideal of communal individuality, as it will here be called, does much to control the structure of their argument. It helps define the targets of their social criticism; it gives their strategy limits and direction; and it guides their description of an anarchist social order. It is by tracing out the implications for their theory of their commitment to communal individuality that the following analysis exhibits the strength of the anarchists' thought. Once the leading role played in their theory by communal individuality is appreciated, their argument is revealed as having altogether unsuspected coherence, originality and political appeal...

Individuality as conceived by anarchists consists of traits of character that mark a well-developed self. Anarchists disagree about the marks of individuality and on whether it is generic or unique. For Godwin and Proudhon individuality

is generically defined as traits of personality, such as rationality and emotional sensitivity, which are characteristic of all mankind. Bakunin shares this generic view of individuality, but he also sometimes sees it as personally defined, in a way more fully articulated by Kropotkin, who describes it as “the full expansion... of what is original” in men, “an infinite variety of capacities, temperaments and individual energies.” The disagreement among anarchists concerning the particular marks of individuality means they do not all aim for the same specific kind. But since they all believe that individuality, however specified, involves growth of personality, there is no reason why, understood as self-development, it cannot be their aim.

The conceptions of community advanced by anarchists are just as various as their conceptions of individuality. For Godwin the model of a community is a conversation. For Proudhon and Bakunin it is a productive enterprise. Kropotkin’s model of a community embraces not only productive enterprises, but every kind of cooperative association. The differences among these varied models of community are telling and cannot be ignored... But the differences in the anarchists’ conceptions of community must not obscure the similarities. Although the contexts in which anarchists see community as occurring are rather different, the relations they envisage among its members are much the same. Godwin describes the members of a community as engaged in a “free and unrestrained opening of the soul,” a “reading of each other’s minds.” Each member of a Proudhonian community “recognizes his own self in that of others.” I cannot participate in the community Bakunin seeks without finding “my personality reflected as if by numerous mirrors in the consciousness... of those who surround me.” And the member of Kropotkin’s community is immersed in “the perception of his oneness with each human being.” What these descriptions show about relations in an anarchist community is that they involve reciprocal awareness... Awareness in an anarchist community is reciprocal, because each understands his fellows as he understands himself. Just as the theme of self-development unifies the anarchists’ various conceptions of individuality, so does the theme of reciprocal awareness unify their conceptions of community. It is just as impossible to claim that anarchists all seek a particular form of community as that they all seek a particular form of individuality. But since they share the belief that community involves reciprocal awareness, community conceived as such awareness can be their common goal.

Individuality and community, understood as self-development and reciprocal awareness, are not merely possible goals of anarchism. They, and not freedom, are the goals anarchists really seek. The easiest way to show this is by tracing the normative relationship in anarchist theory between individuality, community,

and freedom. The warm praise that anarchists give freedom makes it seem their chief aim. But examination of their writings shows that they actually treat it as subordinate. Freedom is prized by anarchists more as a means to individuality and community than as a final end...

Since individuality and community take precedence over freedom as the final destination of the anarchists, they cannot be called libertarians in the usual sense of seeking freedom above all else. While freedom might be maximized in their good society, this cannot be because such maximization is their main intention. But before investigating whether anarchists, despite their non-libertarian intention, maximize liberty nonetheless, an issue of internal coherence in their thought must be faced. By committing themselves equally to individuality and community, anarchists raise doubts whether their chief aims are consistent. For, lacking a principle to adjudicate between individuality and community, how can they judge situations where the courses these norms prescribe conflict?

To meet this objection anarchists deny the possibility of conflict; they view each of their aims as dependent on the other for its full achievement. Bakunin, for example, thinks that "the infinite diversity of individuals is the very cause, the principal basis, of their solidarity" and that solidarity serves in turn as "the mother of individuality." The other anarchists all more or less explicitly agree. For all of them communal awareness springs from developed individuality, and developed individuality depends in turn on a close-knit common life. For all of them, community and individuality, as they develop, intensify each other and coalesce...

Once it is recognized that the anarchists' chief aim is communal individuality, the... issue whether anarchy or legal government is more liberating can be resolved. For the fact that anarchists aim for communal individuality does more than explain why their good society makes use of censure: it also suggests how to measure, more accurately than before, how much this censure curtails freedom. In a full-fledged anarchist society, where communal individuality is complete, the censure needed to prevent misbehaviour allows more freedom than legal government does, because individuality and community both reduce the need for censure that is coercive... [O]f the three ways in which anarchist censure controls behaviour, only its sanctions and internalization coerce. Now the censure imposed in an anarchist society, while working partially through sanctions and internalization, can work for the most part through the non-coercive giving of reasons, because the individuality and community that characterize such a society make control by rational censure unusually effective.

All the anarchists defend some version of the thesis that a developed individual is more amenable to reasoned argument, and more cooperative, than a person whose individuality is weak. Godwin, for whom individuality consists mainly in

“exercising the powers of... understanding,” must believe that it opens us to the sway of reason. What is less obvious is his belief that individuality fosters cooperation. A developed individual has “a generous consciousness of [his] independence” which, far from isolating him, leads him to identify with others. The later anarchists accept Godwin’s point about individuality being rational, but do not stress it, being more concerned to elaborate his hint that individuality stimulates cooperation. Proudhon, for instance, dwells on how a person’s concern for others deepens as he grows more individual. Individuality is a “feeling that overflows the self, and though intimate and immanent in our personality, seems to envelop it along with the personalities of all men.” Kropotkin only elaborates on Proudhon when he describes the strong individual as “overflowing with emotional and intellectual energy.” If your self is well developed, “you will spread your intelligence, your love, your energy of action broadcast among others.” Thus anarchist individuals, being unusually rational and cooperative, can be more readily controlled without coercion than persons whose individuality is weak.

The reciprocal awareness among the members of an anarchy, as well as their individuality, explains why reasoned argument so effectively controls their conduct. Where community is lacking, control must be more coercive because it is then more difficult to concert action voluntarily. Each person, unaware of others’ sentiments or of what they think of him, regards his neighbours with a distrust that provokes deception and kindles hatred. But where awareness is reciprocal, “hatred would perish from a failure in its principal ingredient, the duplicity and impenetrableness of human actions” [Godwin]. Reciprocity of consciousness elicits reciprocity of trust, which tends to develop into reciprocal benevolence. The confidence and kindness among members of an anarchist community encourage the same cooperative relations as their individuality. Being psychologically in touch with one another, participants in anarchy can regulate their conduct less with sanctions or internalization and more with reasons, than persons unconnected by communal ties.

Having examined the implications of the anarchists’ objectives for the amount and type of censure in their regime, we can settle the issue... of whether anarchy or legal government is more liberating. The conclusion of [the preceding] chapter was that anarchy is more liberating, if its censure is rational enough to compensate for the main sources of its greater coercion: the unpredictability of its sanctions and the interference of its internalization with thought. Now the burden of the analysis presented [here]... is that the communal individuality which pervades anarchy diminishes the need to control behaviour with unpredictable sanctions and internalized thought control. By engendering mutual trust, cooperative attitudes and susceptibility to arguments, it enables censure to achieve what little regulation of behaviour is required mainly by giving reasons. Thus

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the individualizing communality of anarchist society makes it markedly freer than legal government, whose remote officials coerce more harshly with general, permanent laws.

This conclusion might be contested on the ground that legal government is perfectly compatible with individuality and community. Since these are the attributes that make anarchy more libertarian, a legal government that has them must be just as free.

If communal individuality under legal government could be as great as under anarchy, the claim that anarchy is more liberating might be false. But legal government suffers from disabilities which arrest communal individuality's growth. For one thing, it uses physical sanctions which, so far as they arouse more hostility and resentment than the psychological sanctions used by anarchy, impede the development of communal individuality more. The characterizing traits of legal government compound the difficulty of developing communal individuality in its jurisdiction. The remoteness of its officials and the permanence and generality of its controls cause it to treat its subjects as abstract strangers. Such treatment is the very opposite of the personal friendly treatment under which communal individuality best grows.

But it would be unfair to rest the case for the greater freedom of an anarchy on a comparison between a fully developed anarchist society and a deficient legal government. If the anarchist is allowed an ideal setting in which to test the coerciveness of censure, then law must be put to the test in an equally well-developed legal society, where strong individuality, harmonious communality and great amenability to reason also reign. It is because communal individuality is so complete in an ideal anarchy that it can rely on reasoned argument to the near exclusion of coercive internalization and rebuke. Why could not the law, in a similarly ideal legal society, replace physical coercion with reasoned argument to a similar extent?

If the control exercised by legal government was not incurably remote, permanent and general, perhaps it could do this. Its remoteness can certainly be appreciably diminished by increasing the proportion of officials to subjects and by bringing both groups into close contact. But since even officials who are intimate with their subjects must, in a legal government, control with laws, they are simply unable to enter very far into particularized face-to-face discussion with their subjects concerning the merit of specific acts. Legal government, to the extent that it gives reasons for obedience, addresses them to the merit of following its fixed, general rules. It argues that its dissenting subject, even if he deems a particular legally prescribed act harmful, should do it nonetheless, because of the value derived from its general performance. Since legal government is prevented by the inescapable gen-

erality and permanence of its controls from taking as much advantage as anarchy can of the potential offered by communal individuality for diminishing coercion through the giving of specific reasons, we must conclude that even when the two are compared on equally ideal grounds, anarchist society must be deemed more free.

Though the standard interpretation of the anarchists as libertarians is mistaken, it properly calls attention to the importance of freedom in their model of a good society. Where this interpretation goes wrong is in explaining freedom's importance for the anarchists as arising from its status as their chief value. The analysis of anarchist theory presented in this chapter shows how to make viewing it as libertarian acceptable. Though anarchists provide more freedom in their good society than legal government (the most promising alternative) provides, they do not set out to do so. They provide it, not as a pre-eminent good but as a concomitant of the communal individuality that is their first concern. So long as freedom is recognized as being, for anarchists, a valued by-product of their search for communal individuality, there is no harm in describing them as libertarians. For their libertarianism then stands forth in its true light, as a libertarianism not of direct intention, but of oblique effect. Those who have followed William Proby in denouncing anarchists as freedom's secret enemies have been misguided, but not because freedom is the anarchists' most cherished good. Viewing anarchists as single-minded devotees of freedom is also erroneous. Anarchists are certainly not enemies of freedom, but their friendship is mediated and indirect.

19. Alan Carter: The Logic of State Power (2000)

Alan Carter is the author of numerous articles and books on political theory, including A Radical Green Political Theory (London: Routledge, 1999), The Philosophical Foundations of Property Rights (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester-Wheatsheaf 1989), and Marx: A Radical Critique (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1988). In the following excerpts from his article, "Analytical Anarchism," Political Theory, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 2000, he sets forth an anarchist alternative to G. A. Cohen's interpretation of Marx's theory of history, Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1978). Reprinted with the kind permission of Sage Publications.

As the ability to control effectively the economic forces rests, at least in modern societies, on both the accepted legality of the economic relations and, most important, on their preservation by the political forces, then any such ability is, at least in part, dependent on relations of power—in other words, political relations involving the following:

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1. the power to enact laws that are then viewed as legitimate,
2. the power to enforce such laws, and
3. the power to defend the community against external aggression.

Included within the set of political relations, constituting the political structure, are these power relations, essential for enabling and preserving the relations of control over production and exchange and that are embodied in the various legal and political institutions. The political institutions, specifically, are relations of, or presupposing, effective control of the defensive forces. In the modern state, these political forces—the forces of “defence” (which are more often offensive than genuinely defensive)—are coercive in nature. And such forces of coercion can comprise political labour-power (that capacity that, for example, agents of coercion supply—in other words, the work offered by soldiers, police, and so on for payment) and means of coercion (for example, weapons, prisons, even instruments of torture)...

One consequence of the development of the forces of production has been the generation of an extractable surplus that has facilitated the development of the political forces—especially coercive forces—to provide greater security. In other words, there has not just been a development of the productive forces but “defensive” development too. And this defensive development, along with the growth of nationalistic sentiments, has led to antagonistic nation-states.

Now, it is widely accepted that Marxist theory, because of its emphasis on the economic, has proved itself to be quite inadequate with regard to analyzing convincingly the phenomenon of nationalism. Cohen, for one, has come to doubt the ability of traditional Marxism to account for this important social feature... [T]wo main factors—rationality and scarcity—motivate his theory of history. To deal with phenomena such as nationalism, Cohen has, more recently, been led to specify a third important factor [factor (c), the need for self-definition within a community]... Perhaps by taking this additional factor into account, along with (a) rationality and (b) scarcity, Marxists might be in a position to explain the features of society that otherwise appear to fall outside the ambit of historical materialism (e.g., nationalism)...

A later introduction into Marxist theory of this additional factor is problematic because, with this factor in operation but ignored in the theory’s presentation, we no longer know that the [Marxist] theory of history can still be constructed in a convincing manner.

Cohen argues that it is rational to develop technology in a situation of scarcity. If only factors (a) and (b) are in play, the Development Thesis—that the productive forces tend to develop through history—can easily be supported. When individuals are faced with a situation of scarcity, it does appear rational

to develop the productive forces and increase production. But the significance of factor (c) is that different individuals identify with different groups. Individuals often define themselves in terms of exclusive communities. And it is within such different groupings that rational individuals face scarcity. Now that factor (c) has been introduced, we need to know whether it is always rational for individuals who identify with different and possibly conflicting groups to develop the productive forces.

Yet it seems that it is not always rational for them to do so. For example, on one hand, one's group might reduce undesirable toil and solve the problem of scarcity with less effort by plundering the produce of another group. On the other hand, if some external group has decided to plunder rather than produce, then an increase in one's own production capability might make one more likely to be plundered. In a situation in which some have chosen to plunder, it might be extremely unwise to make oneself a more attractive target by increasing production. When factor (c) is in play, then, it can no longer just be assumed that it is rational to develop the productive forces. Factor (c)—self-definition within a community—therefore interferes with the construction of Cohen's theory.

However, those who wish systematically to consume the surplus produced by others would benefit greatly from the development of political forces—in particular, forces of coercion. And forces of coercion can only be developed if the productive forces have reached a level of development that creates a surplus above mere subsistence. Once such a level has been attained and coercive forces have been developed by one grouping, it can systematically force another group to produce more and consume less than it might otherwise. The resulting surplus can then be extracted continually from the subordinate group. This could be viewed as exemplified in class-divided societies. But, in time, the individuals within such a society, through living together, might come to define themselves as members of one nation and, collectively, wish to oppress another. This would be rational, for oppressing a foreign group could reduce the need for coercion within the national community. It offers the prospect of increased wealth for all nationals as long as it can be extracted from foreigners. Exploiting foreigners also increases the overall surplus available to those in control of the political forces. As it is rational for such groupings to form and behave thus to meet scarcity, then factors (a) [rationality], (b) [scarcity], and (c) [self-definition within a community], combined together, contribute to an explanation of class-divided, imperialist nation-states. (In fact, such a process of expanding self-definition could continue further, for the peoples of oppressed nations, through living with their colonial administrators, could come to define themselves in their masters' terms, thus giving rise to a genuine empire or, later, a commonwealth.)

Furthermore, it is rational not only to oppress another group and impose on

it greater toil to reduce one's own but also to resist the imposition of greater toil. And to resist another nation seemingly determined to impose greater toil on one's own, it appears beneficial to develop the forces of coercion. Hence, such resistance equally seems to require the production of a surplus above subsistence requirements so that the coercive forces might be developed.

On both imperialist and defensive counts, then, it is quite understandable that within nations, some of the population have come to be expertly engaged in producing the society's wealth, part of which goes to others who have become expertly engaged in "defence" and who, in consequence, are themselves no longer employed directly in production. It is quite understandable that workers, fearing that their nation might be subjugated by another, should support those who are charged with their defence. And it is quite understandable that those who are in effective control of the productive forces (the dominant economic class) should support those exercising political control, when the latter choose to stabilize relations of production that simultaneously develop the productive forces and increase the private wealth of those in control of production. Moreover, it is quite understandable that those exercising political control should back economic relations that develop the productive forces that create the very surplus that is required for exercising political control.

In short, the development of the productive forces creates the surplus that is needed to finance a standing army and a police force, for weapons research and so on, and these forces of coercion are precisely what enable the state to enforce the relations of production that lead to the creation of the surplus that the state requires. Moreover, given its need for the development of such forces of coercion and given that, unlike other groups, it is not primarily engaged in production, the state could be expected to have its own interests vis-à-vis the rest of society. And being in control of the instruments of coercion, the state would be in a position both to protect and to further its own interests. What is significant about all this is that any account along these lines would certainly justify anarchist suspicions about the wisdom of employing any form of state as a means for bringing about political and economic equality...

Generally, according to the alternative theory now proposed, the political relations ordinarily select economic relations that develop or optimally employ the economic forces because that facilitates the development of the political forces, which usually empower the political relations. Moreover, the political forces stabilize the economic relations that are selected—relations that themselves support the development of the political forces by providing the surplus needed to finance it.

Put another way, in the modern era, except in special circumstances, the legal and political institutions enact and implement legislation that determines a specific economic structure because that structure is functional for those institutions

by encouraging the development of, or by optimally employing, the forces of production—principally productive skills and technologies—that are needed to produce the ever-growing surplus that is required for further development of the forces of defence, for it is precisely this defensive development that the power of the legal and political institutions ultimately seems to be premised on. When those individuals who, *de facto*, in direct control of the defensive forces are not those who are at the head of the legislative, it is normally in the interests of the former to empower the latter because the latter both confer legitimacy on the former (they might even be taken by the former to possess legitimacy!) and are responsible for managing the revenue that the state as a whole requires, including that which those in direct control of the defensive forces need for their development. In addition, it is this defensive development (usually in the form of expanding forces of coercion) that preserves the economic structure selected—an economic structure that is also functional for defensive development by providing it, through taxation, with the surplus it requires.

In short, according to the alternative theory proposed here, a structure of political relations ordinarily selects economic relations that are functional for it. And the political forces stabilize those economic relations that are simultaneously functional for the development of the political forces by producing the surplus their development requires...

As a theory of history, the State-Primacy Theory can briefly be stated as follows: certain economic relations, by furthering technological development, are, for a while, simultaneously functional for both the structure of legal and political institutions, on one hand, and the political forces, on the other. But at a certain point in time, they come to constrain any further technological development (or, perhaps in the case of motivating a transition to postcapitalism, they come to prevent the optimal use of the prevailing technology) and thus become dysfunctional. A revolution then occurs that involves the state ceasing to stabilize the current relations of production and choosing, instead, to stabilize new ones that are functional for it insofar as they further, beyond the present level, the development (or, perhaps, allow the optimal use) of technology. Moreover, the new economic relations are selected precisely because they are functional for the state by furthering technological development (or, perhaps, by allowing optimal use of the already developed technology). And with new economic relations, the legal and political institutions are free to alter their form to one that appears more appropriate...

But is there any reason for believing that there might be some truth in the State-Primacy Thesis [that the nature of a set of production relations in a society is (ultimately) explained by state interests]? Well, it can be supported by the following elaboration, which, in the process, supports the State-Primacy Theory:

state actors can only continue to enjoy their positions while the state remains secure. It is, therefore, ordinarily in the interests of state actors to ensure that their nation's economy is as productive as those of neighbouring states. If their economy were weaker than a neighbouring state's, then the state would not normally be able to fund the development of its defensive capability to the same degree as that neighbouring state could and, in the long-run at least, would be unable to defend itself. To retain power, therefore, state actors have an interest in selecting and stabilizing appropriate economic relations. Hence, ordinarily, it is rational for the state to select economic relations that it regards as appropriate to developing further the productive forces beyond the level of development they have so far reached because that is in its interests. And it is because the state contains within it very powerful political forces that it possesses the power to select economic relations that satisfy its interests by increasing that very power...

However, if such an elaboration is to be employed, the following question immediately arises: is it the state as a structure that selects economic relations that are in its interests, or is it state actors that act in their own interests? In other words, it appears as if the State-Primacy Theory could be interpreted in one of two mutually exclusive ways. For example, we could regard the structure of legal and political institutions literally as what selects the economic relations. This would provide us with the basis for a "structuralist anarchism." Alternatively, it could be claimed simply that political actors select an economic structure that is in their interests. This would provide the basis for a methodological individualist anarchism. But it is, in fact, possible to steer a middle course. Such a view would not view collectives as entities in themselves with causal effects on their members. Nor would it reduce social explanation to the psychology of unrelated individuals. Instead, it would attempt to explain social phenomena in terms of the rational choices taken by individuals who act within certain relationships to one another. The causal influences, in this case, are recognized to be from one individual or group of individuals to another and not from a collective entity to its parts, while individuals are recognized to be related within a structure, rather than all structures simply being reduced to mere collections of individuals.

My own preference is for this third approach, for it strikes me as the least problematic. And on this favoured approach, when it is claimed in the State-Primacy Theory that the legal and political institutions select economic relations, that claim should be construed as "the agents acting within the structure of legal and political institutions select for stabilization one set of economic relations in preference to another." Moreover, when it is simultaneously claimed that the forces of defence enforce economic relations, that claim should ordinarily be construed as "those agents who live by means of their coercive labour-power use the

means of coercion at their disposal to protect specific economic relations as opposed to others.”

However, this explication necessitates a further refinement. As the various state actors will occupy different positions within the state, then their choices will not all push in exactly the same direction. Furthermore, their respective decisions will be differently weighted according to their different locations within the state. Hence, what the state decides to select and enforce will be a vector of these variedly directional and weighted decisions. Such a vector will be what the “collective decision” of state actors actually signifies. In other words, we can regard “state interests” as a resultant “parallelogram of forces” resolving the numerous interests of state actors with their differing powers for promoting their interests. What enables us still to talk of “state interests” in this sense, as if they were the interests of the state conceived of as a collective entity, is that although the relevant individual interests push in slightly different directions (army personnel would prefer more state revenue allocated to them than to the police, for example), all state actors share a common interest in preserving the state. Nevertheless, although all state actors have interests pushing in that direction, there remains the possibility of fracturing within the state because of other interests taking diverging directions.

Now, the State-Primacy Theory claims that states ordinarily select economic relations that serve their interests by developing the technology that increases the surplus available to the state. As all state actors have an interest in preserving the state, does this mean that every agent of the state will necessarily be committed to selecting economic relations that are optimal for maximizing the state’s revenue? If this were the case, then at least part of the State-Primacy Theory could apparently be established a priori. Unfortunately for the theory, matters are not so simple. There is a debate within the theory of the firm that bears on this question. The debate concerns whether managers seek to maximize the profits of their companies or whether they are content with levels of profit that will be satisfactory to their shareholders—thus allowing the managers to keep their jobs. A parallel question could be raised concerning senior state actors. Are they maximizers or satisficers with respect to state revenue?

It might be thought that those nonelected state actors who are secure in their positions or who lack ambition will be content to behave as satisficers, whereas those seeking promotion will wish to impress by acting as maximizers. If such maximizers were the most successful at obtaining promotions, it might safely be assumed that they would be the ones who would come to occupy the most senior posts. Senior state actors have greater power with respect to the execution of their decisions than juniors. In other words, the decisions of the former carry

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greater weight. Hence, it might be concluded that the state will act so as to maximize its revenue, and it will do so because of how the hierarchical structure of its various internal institutions determines which personality-type of state actor rises highest within them.

However, “pushy” state actors seeking promotion by adopting a maximizing stance could, alternatively, be viewed as risky appointments who were likely to “rock the boat.” This might make them less likely to attain senior positions than “dependable” and “reliable” satisficers. Moreover, maximizers who obtained senior positions within the state would only have effective power to the extent that those below them in the chain of command complied with, rather than chose to frustrate, the execution of their decisions. Thus, the likelihood that maximizers would obtain senior positions or that, having attained them, they would be able to act effectively will depend on the particular culture of the state in question. Hence, whether the state decision-vector would always select optimal or satisfactory economic relations is an open question and cannot be decided a priori. This seems to vitiate, to some degree, the immediate plausibility of the State-Primacy Theory.

There is another feature of the process affecting promotion within the structure of legal and political institutions that might be thought to undermine the plausibility of the State-Primacy Theory. Eligibility for promotion is determined not by those seeking it but by those higher up the management chain. Those who occupy senior positions, and thereby determine the criteria by which an individual’s suitability for advancement within a state institution is to be judged, will already have risen within that structure and will thus tend to value the “older” approaches that they are familiar with. Moreover, they will display personalities and adopt approaches that met the approval of an earlier generation of state actors occupying senior positions. This means that there will tend to be a conservative bias at work in filtering out those deemed appropriate for promotion. The probable result is that those who come to be senior state actors will lean strongly toward traditional perceptions of and means for securing state interests. And that suggests that they might not be too inclined to select new economic relations...

All the above considerations notwithstanding, there is, nevertheless, a very powerful and overriding argument that can be deployed in support of the State-Primacy Theory. The desire to select economic relations optimal for providing the state with revenue could be expected with considerable certainty when the state finds itself in a situation of military competition with another state (precisely the situation that states usually find themselves in), for otherwise the state would simply not survive. And should the state behave irrationally by not attending to its defense requirements, it could expect its nation to be incorporated into the territory controlled by one of the more militarily successful states—in other words,

one that did attend to the economic requirements of an expanding military capacity. But then, the former territory of the defeated state would have economic relations imposed on it that served the interests of the militarily successful state. Clearly, the only way for even the most conservative of states to avoid what for them would be such a disastrous outcome is for them to select those economic relations that, at that time, are most suited to technological development. Thus, by a Darwinian mechanism, the states that survive will tend to be those that the State-Primacy Theory describes. In short, there is good reason to think that the State-Primacy Theory successfully describes the behaviour of existing states.

Given that I have been focusing on states and on agents acting within state institutions, one obvious question stands in need of an answer: what exactly is the state? This question could be answered intensionally or extensionally. The most famous intensional reply is that of Max Weber, who defines “the state” as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” Probably the most famous extensional reply is Ralph Miliband’s, who identifies the state as a system of institutions that comprise “the government, the administration, the military and the police, the judicial branch, sub-central government, parliamentary assemblies,” and so on. And it is precisely from within these various institutions that the differently weighted decisions coming from differently positioned agents with correspondingly different interests are taken and that form the state-decision vector—a vector that is directed ultimately toward the preservation of the state.

My aim has been to indicate how it might be possible for an analytical version of anarchism to evolve in opposition to analytical Marxism by providing the necessary conceptual groundwork for such an evolution. Central to any such project would be the development of a theory of history that supports anarchist, rather than Marxist, claims about the process of revolutionary change. By way of conclusion, having outlined the basic features of such a theory of history—the State-Primacy Theory—I indicate some of its more important implications—implications that do, indeed, support anarchism in preference to Marxism...

According to Cohen’s Marxist “Techno-Primacy Theory,” economic forces select economic relations that select political relations. But this is to leave out a vitally important category: the political forces. They can be fitted into a coherent theory of history by reversing its direction of explanation. This provides us with the State-Primacy Theory: political relations select economic relations that develop economic forces that enable the development of the political forces—these political forces stabilize economic relations that provide them with the surplus they require. And the State-Primacy Theory can be supported by the following purposive elaboration: to oppress another national group and meet scarcity or to resist another national group threatening to impose greater scarcity,

ordinarily the actors dominant within the state will collectively decide to stabilize specific economic relations that encourage the development of the productive forces and thus allow a surplus to be extracted that finances the development of the forces of coercion necessary for those state actors to protect or further their interests. In this alternative theory, using Marx's terminology, the "superstructure" selects a "base" that develops the productive forces and does so for its own politically motivated reasons...

Now, perhaps the most important political implication of Marx's theory, including Cohen's interpretation of it, is that if states are selected by inegalitarian economic relations to preserve them, then if there were no economic inequalities to be preserved, no state would be required. If egalitarian economic relations are attained, then the state will, to use Engels's famous phrase, "wither away." Unfortunately, the Russian Revolution, which did most to raise the standing of Marxism on the Left, does not corroborate this theory—but not because egalitarian relations failed to appear. In fact, egalitarian economic relations did arise. Factory committees, run by the workers themselves, emerged within Russian industry [Volume One, Selection 84]. But rather than this leading to the state withering away, the Bolshevik state replaced the factory committees with inegalitarian "one-man" management.

What is especially interesting is Lenin's justification for this. Within a year of coming to power, Lenin proclaimed, "All our efforts must be exerted to the utmost to... bring about an economic revival, without which a real increase in our country's defence potential is inconceivable." Ironically, then, the revolution in Russia, led by Marxists, not only contradicts Marx's theory of history, but it also corroborates the State-Primacy Theory, for rather than the economic relations determining the form of the state, the state determined the form of economic relations that came to preponderate—and the outcome was both highly authoritarian and extremely inegalitarian. And this is not surprising, given that egalitarian economic relations controlled by the producers themselves are unlikely to be perceived by the state as guaranteeing the productivity and the surplus that it requires to retain power. The state is likely to think that workers in control of their own production will either choose to work less arduously or to consume more of their own produce, thereby offering less of a surplus to the state. In a word, egalitarian economic relations are not in the state's interests. Hence, structures of inegalitarian political relations will only select structures of economic relations that are inegalitarian. As the Russian Revolution of 1917 clearly corroborates the State-Primacy Theory while contradicting Marxist theory, and as an implication of the State-Primacy Theory is that states will either not introduce or not retain egalitarian economic relations, then Marxist political practice would appear to be both seriously flawed and lacking in justification.

This leaves us with perhaps the major political implication of the State-Primacy Theory: given that, according to this theory, states select relations of production that are in their interests rather than egalitarian relations that are in the interests of the mass of the population, then a necessary (though not necessarily a sufficient) condition for human emancipation and equality must be the abolition of the state by the citizens themselves. This is the only practicable means by which the process perpetuating inegalitarian relationships, as identified by the State-Primacy Theory, can be terminated. In other words, the State-Primacy Theory not only exposes the utter inadequacy of Marxist revolutionary strategy, it also completely supports anarchist political practice.

In short, then, Marxists, by considering the use of state power or in advocating a revolutionary vanguard (which would eventually form a new state power) as acceptable means toward equality and freedom, advocate courses of action that, as the State-Primacy Theory reveals, would perpetuate the extensive inequalities Marxists ostensibly oppose. And they are uncritical of such courses of action because their theory overlooks the fundamental importance of the state and, especially, state power. The result of this is the promotion of a strategy that inadvertently perpetuates unfreedom and inequality. Consequently, the State-Primacy Theory indicates that anarchists are indeed correct to oppose all statist and vanguardist approaches to revolutionary change. In this respect, the State-Primacy Theory provides anarchism with the theory of historical transition it requires.

So, an anarchist theory of history can be developed that offers the promise of being at least as effective as Marxist theory in explaining technological, economic, and political developments but that has the added advantage, by drawing attention to the tremendous power that the state can exert, of predicting accurately the outcome of statist and vanguardist revolutions. This is in stark contrast with Marxist theory, which, through underemphasizing the power of the state because of an unbalanced stress on the economic, has created such a dangerous pitfall for the Left. By stressing the technological and the economic, Marxists have distracted attention from the state. This proved disastrous in the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, and numerous revolutions in the Third World and will do so time and time again until Marx's theory of history is eventually abandoned by the Left.

Once again, the flaws in Marxist theory are most clearly revealed from an anarchist perspective. And the perspective that most clearly reveals the inadequacies of analytical Marxism is that of analytical anarchism.

20. Jeff Ferrell: Against the Law: Anarchist Criminology (1998)

Jeff Ferrell is a criminologist who has written extensively on crime and criminal justice. His many publications include Tearing Down the Streets: Adventures in Urban Anarchy (London: Macmillan, 2002). The following excerpts from his "Against the Law: Anarchist Criminology," Social Anarchism, No. 25, 1998, are reprinted here with his kind permission.

Anarchist criminology... incorporates the sort of "visceral revolt" (Guérin 1970: 13) that characterizes anarchism itself, the passionate sense of "fuck authority," to quote the old anarchist slogan, that comes from being shoved around by police officers, judges, bosses, priests, and other authorities one time too many. Moreover, anarchists would agree with many feminist and post-modernist theorists that such visceral passions matter as methods of understanding and resistance outside the usual confines of rationality and respect (Ferrell 1997). But anarchist criminology also incorporates a relatively complex critique of state law and legality which begins to explain *why* we might benefit from defying authority, or standing "against the law."

Many contemporary critical criminologists agree that state law as practiced in the United States is so thoroughly lubricated by economic privilege, intertwined with patriarchal arrangements, and protected by racist procedures as to constitute a mailed fist regularly brought down on the heads of women, the poor, ethnic minorities, young people, and other outsiders to economic power or state authority. Anarchist criminologists agree as well, but go on to argue that the practice of centralized state law harms people, groups, and the social fabric which joins them even if not aimed directly at "the powerless." Put differently, the administration of centralized state authority and legality destroys community, worsens criminality, and expands the abusive power of the state throughout the contemporary social order—and then, through its discriminatory practices, doubles this harm for those pushed to the bottom of this system. Among the broad harms of state legality:

1. State legality operates as what Pepinsky and Jeslow (1984: 10) have called a "state-protection racket," extorting cash and conformity from those unlucky enough to be caught up in it. From speed traps to parking fines, from the plethora of licensing fees to the bureaucratized bungling of the IRS, the state operates as a vast revenue machine, an elaborate extortion device serving itself and those who operate it. And, as in any extortion operation or protection racket, state law provides for a host of state-sanctioned strong-arm tactics to enforce and enrich the fleece: impoundment, seizure, imprisonment,

death. Clearly, such a system exists to perpetuate itself and to protect the powerful in and around it; the ideology that all of this occurs “in the interest of the community” seems at best a sort of cruel joke, or, to paraphrase the Wobblies [IWW], a cheap cologne sprinkled on the dunghills of state extortion. If you think otherwise, if you believe that this gigantic machine functions for us all, you might ask a frustrated middle class car owner trying to protest a parking ticket, some kid bankrupted and imprisoned for marijuana possession—or damn near any homeboy walking an inner city street.

2. Like a tangle of poisonous weeds, the labyrinth of state legality grows in the absence of human community, and once in place, further chokes possibilities for fluid and engaged human interaction. In a social world increasingly fractured by alienated labor and economic inequality, privatized leisure, and the paranoia of the lonely crowd, police calls and civil suits proliferate—as does the sense that such disjointed, externalized tactics somehow constitute appropriate measures for solving disputes and achieving justice. But as parents file for (and are granted) restraining orders against three-year-old playground bullies, as suits and countersuits multiply, as the daily fear of crime is shadowed by a daily fear of legal intrusion, human communities continue to unravel. Ultimately, a reliance on state legality reinforces the power and authority of centralized control systems, disables the potential for human community and human justice outside their bounds, and increasingly reduces human interaction to a stale dichotomy of legality and illegality

3. As the interactionist/labeling tradition in criminology has taught us, the confinement of people and groups within state-administered categories of criminality, and within state-administered systems of punishment and retribution, promotes not rehabilitative humanity but rather a downward spiral of crime, criminalization and inhumanity. For the individuals and groups targeted by such a system, the spiral intertwines disassociation from non-criminal communities, constricted personal and professional identities, growing anger and resentment, and finally an amplification of criminality and criminal careers. For the larger society, this spiral interweaves state and media sponsored fears of crime, an ideology of state-sanctioned retaliation, and thus broad paroxysms of objectification, dehumanization, and legal retribution. In this way, a system of state law and state “justice” perpetuates, within individual lives and larger social relations, the very problems it claims, falsely, to solve.

4. Within this system, the “rule of law” continues to proliferate, to penetrate more and more corners of social and cultural life (Cohen 1979). As in a Weberian nightmare, state legality constitutes a sort of bureaucratic cancer that grows on itself, that produces an ever-expanding maze of legal control, and

that in turn generates an ever-expanding body of bureaucratic and legal sycophants employed to obfuscate and interpret it. In 1886, Kropotkin (1975: 30) documented “a race of law-makers legislating without knowing what their laws are about... legislating at random in all directions” [see also Volume One, Selection 52]; a century later, that race continues to spew forth legal regulation at a remarkable rate. As such legal controls grow in number and coverage, they of course constipate the conduct of social life, forcing all of us into ongoing contortions within and around them. More troubling, the proliferation of legal controls finally suspends what little protection law once may have afforded. When every facet of social and cultural life is defined by legal control, and thus by state definitions of legality and illegality we all remain continually vulnerable to the egregious exercise of state power. So, in a typical example, a recent series of highway drug busts in Arizona were predicated on a single traffic offence by drivers: “unsafe lane usage.” Finally, as state legality expands, we’re all guilty—if not of “unsafe lane usage,” then of another among the growing multitude of offences. And finally, as the modern state and its many subdivisions make more and more of social and cultural life against the law, we must choose to stand against the law as well.

Anarchist criminology’s profoundly radical critique of state law as a system of inherent inhumanity, and its sense of therefore standing “against the law,” leads to a criminology of crime and resistance as well. Labour historians and sociologists of work have long documented the pattern by which systems of authoritarian, alienating work generate among workers incidents of sabotage—of intentional rule-breaking and disruption— as a means of resisting these systems and regaining some sense of humanity and control. Anarchist criminologists suggest that this pattern may likewise be found in the interplay of state legal control and criminality. Rather than dismissing criminality as mindless misbehaviour, or worse, simply accepting the state’s construction of legality and illegality as definitive of good and bad human conduct, anarchist criminologists seek to explore the situated politics of crime and criminality. Put more simply, anarchist criminologists argue that the political (and politically inequitable) nature of state law and state criminalization means that acts of crime under such a system must also carry some degree of political meaning. And so, as with Foucault and Genet (Simon 1991: 31), anarchist criminologists seek to blur and explore the boundaries between crime and political resistance. This exploration neither assumes *a priori* that all crime constitutes resistance to state authority, nor ignores the often (but not always) negative consequences of criminality for people and communities. It does, though, call for paying careful attention to various criminal(ized) activities—graffiti writing, “obscene” art and music performances, pirate radio

broadcasts, illegal labour strikes, curfew violations, shoplifting, drug use, street cruising, gangbanging, computer hacking (Ferrell 1995, 1996; Ferrell and Sanders 1995)—as a means of investigating the variety of ways in which criminal or criminalized behaviors may incorporate repressed dimensions of human dignity and self-determination, and lived resistance to the authority of state law.

As implied in its critique of centralized state authority and its embracing of various alternatives to it, anarchist criminology calls for human communities which are decentralized, fluid, eclectic, and inclusive. Moreover, anarchist criminology proposes that this sense of inclusive, non-authoritarian community can benefit critical criminology itself. Clearly, anarchist criminology shares much with the epistemic uncertainty and situated politics of feminist criminology; with the decentered authority and textual deconstruction of postmodern and constitutive criminologies; with the critical pacifism of peacemaking criminology; and of course with the broader critique of legal injustice common to all critical criminologies. Even left realist criminology, though coming in some sense from a “direction polar opposite” (Einstadter and Henry 1995: a32) to that of anarchist criminology, shares with anarchist criminology a concern with identifying and exploring the situated consequences of crime and crime control. In the spirit of eclectic inclusivity, then, anarchist criminology argues against partitioning critical criminology into a series of small intellectual cubicles, and then closing one critical cubicle to the occupants of another (Pepinsky 1991). Instead, anarchist criminology calls for an ongoing critical conversation among perspectives, for a multi-faceted critique of legal injustice made all the more powerful by its openness to alternatives. Cohen (1988: 232) speaks of his “lack of commitment to any master plan (such as liberalism, left realism, or abolitionism), a failing, I would like to think, not of my own psyche but of the social world’s refusal to correspond to any one theory.” Anarchist criminology shares this lack of commitment to master plans—including its own—and embraces instead fluid communities of uncertainty and critique...

[A]s an approach which acknowledges no set boundaries, which claims no pedigreed intellectual heritage or exclusive scholarly turf, anarchist criminology may ultimately constitute no more than a defiant sensibility, an outlaw orientation and analysis, which floats around and against criminology (Cohen 1988). From an anarchist viewpoint, of course, so much the better; for anarchists, nothing succeeds like uncertainty, nothing fails like success. And from this viewpoint, an anarchist criminology which fails to reach full fruition, which fails (and refuses) to “win out” over other perspectives, remains for this very reason an important thread in the larger project of critical criminology. For in a criminal justice universe of centralized and constricting authority, in an academic universe still largely fouled by mythologized standards of truth and imposed hierarchies

of credibility (Becker 1967), anarchist criminology functions if nothing else as a useful corrective to encrusted certainty and the desire for domination. And in this way, it undermines the tendency to embrace our own intellectual authority, or the exterior authority of the state, as appropriate—or worse, inevitable—frameworks for social order and social change.

In the 1600s British poet John Milton, in his “Sonnet On His Blindness,” reminded us that “they also serve who only stand and wait.” Three hundred years later, the new wave of British film makers sharpened this notion’s anarchic edge. In the film *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, lead character Colin Smith has been packed off to the harsh controls of the reformatory, where the headmaster manipulates him into running an important race against a rival school. By the last few yards, Smith has the race won—and with it, approval of the headmaster, glory for the reformatory, and most importantly his own release from its confines. But just short of the finish line, Smith stops. While the rival school’s runner passes him to win the race, Smith stands, stares, and smiles straight at the headmaster. And in his stopping, in his willful failure, he undermines his own hope for freedom—but at the same time undermines the labyrinth of rules and regulations, the daily degradations of obsequiousness and obedience, the phony ideologies of competitive loyalty to the institution and the state, through which his freedom and that of others has long been bought and sold.

So it is with anarchist criminology. Complete or incomplete, as intellectual critique or failed moment of visceral defiance, anarchist criminology serves if only by standing outside the law, by stopping short of the seductive ideologies of obedience and conformity which undergird it. And in this stance, in this disavowal of legal authority and its destructive effects on social and cultural life, anarchist criminology serves to remind us that human relations and human diversity matter—and that, in every case, they matter more than the turgid authority of regulation and law.

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21. Uri Gordon: Israel, Palestine and Anarchist Dilemmas (2007)

Anarchists have been active in Israel, opposing the Israeli suppression of Palestinian autonomy, Israeli militarism and the construction of the physical wall separating Palestinians from Israeli territory. In this essay, Uri Gordon, an Israeli anarchist, discusses the dilemmas faced by anarchists who wish to practice solidarity with the Palestinians, when most of them want their own state, something which anarchists are supposed to be opposed to in principle. Gordon examines this issue in greater depth in his book, Anarchy Alive! Anti-Authoritarian Politics from Practice to Theory (London: Pluto Press, 2007). Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

The overwhelming majority of Palestinians want a state of their own alongside Israel. But how can anarchists who support the Palestinian struggle reconcile this with their anti-statist principles? How can they support the creation of yet another state in the name of "national liberation," which is the explicit or implicit agenda of almost all Palestinians? What is at work here is anarchists' critique that in their national liberation efforts, Palestinians are bowing to the idea that the state is a desirable institution, and lending themselves to nationalist illusions fostered by Palestinian elites, who will only become the source of their future oppression. This is the logic animating... the British syndicalists of the Solidarity Federation, who state that "we support the fight of the Palestinian people... [and] stand with those Israelis who protest against the racist government... What we cannot do is support the creation of yet another state in the name of 'national liberation'" ("Human Rights: Yes—State of Palestine: No," *Direct Action*, No. 23, 2002).

But there are two problems with such an attitude. First, it invites the charge of paternalism, whereby anarchists are pretending to be better than Palestinians at discerning their "real interests," while jettisoning the need for solidarity to happen on the terms articulated by the oppressed. Second, and more importantly,

it leaves anarchists with nothing but empty declarations to the effect that that “we stand with and support all those who are being oppressed by those who have the power to do so” (ibid); or that “it is not about forcing the Israeli state to respect the rights of Palestinians, nor supporting the formation of a new Palestinian state. Rather it is a question of starting to practice desertion, refusal, sabotage, attack, destruction against every constituted authority, all power, every state” (Friends of Al-Halladj, *Fawda*, 2002). Again, while such sentiments are certainly in tune with longer-term anarchist aspirations, they also consign anarchists to a position of irrelevance in the present tense. On the one hand, anarchists could certainly agree that the establishment of a capitalist Palestinian state through negotiations among existing and would-be governments would only mean the “submission of the Intifada to a comprador Palestinian leadership that will serve Israel,” and that neoliberal globalization, and initiatives for regional trade cooperation such as the Mediterranean free trade zone, are demarcating a capitalist trajectory for the region which will only increase economic hardship and social gaps, giving no solution to the refugee problem (Anarchist Communist Initiative, “Two States for Two Peoples—Two States Too Many,” *We are all Anarchists Against the Wall*, 2004). On the other hand, by disengaging from concrete Palestinian demands for a state, such anarchists are left with nothing to propose except “an entirely different way of life and equality for all the inhabitants of the region... a classless anarchist-communist society” (ibid). This is all well and good, but what happens in the meantime?

While anarchists surely can do something more specific in solidarity with Palestinians than just saying that “we need a revolution,” any such action would appear hopelessly contaminated with a statist agenda. The fact that anarchists nevertheless engage in on-the-ground actions of solidarity with Palestinian communities and groups requires us to grip this particular bull by its horns. Here, I believe there are at least four coherent ways in which anarchists can deal with the dilemma of support for a Palestinian state.

The first and most straightforward response is to acknowledge that there is indeed a contradiction here, but to insist that in a liminal, imperfect situation, solidarity is still worthwhile even if it comes at the price of inconsistency. Endorsement of Palestinian statehood by anarchists can be seen as a pragmatic position based on anti-imperialist commitments or even basic humanitarian concern. It does nobody any good to effectively say to the Palestinians, “sorry, we’ll let you remain non-citizens of a brutal occupation until after we’re done abolishing capitalism.” For this reason, one can see some kind of representative statehood for the Palestinians as the only short term solution, however imperfect, to their current oppression. This is attached to a view in which solidarity is “not about supporting those who share your precise politics. It’s about supporting

those who struggle against injustice—even if their assumptions, methods, politics, and goals differ from our own” (ISM Canada, “History, Structure & Philosophy,” 2004). With this type of response, anarchists recognize an unresolved tension in their politics, but they express a specific value judgment whereby one’s anti-imperialist or humanitarian commitments are seen to “trump” an otherwise fully uncompromising anti-statism.

A point to be emphasized here is that states are consistently hostile to stateless peoples (and nomads). The Jews in pre-Second World War Europe and the Palestinians are two among many examples of oppressed stateless peoples in the modern era. Note that while many Jews were citizens (often second-class citizens) of European countries at the beginning of the twentieth century, an important precondition for the Holocaust was the deprivation of Jews’ citizenships, rendering them stateless.

A second and separate response is to say that there is actually no contradiction at all in anarchists’ support for the establishment of a Palestinian state. This is for the simple reason that Palestinians are *already* living under a state—Israel—and that the formation of a new Palestinian state creates only a quantitative change, not a qualitative one. Anarchists object to the state as a general scheme of social relations—not to this or the other state, but to the principle behind them all. It is a misunderstanding to reduce this objection to quantitative terms; the number of states in the world adds or subtracts nothing from anarchists’ assessment of how closely the world corresponds to their ideals. Having one single world state, for example, would be as problematic for anarchists as the present situation (if not more so), although the process of creating it would have abolished some 190 states. So from a purely anti-statist anarchist perspective, for Palestinians to live under a Palestinian state rather than an Israeli state would be, at worst, just as objectionable. In such a situation, the pragmatic considerations mentioned in the first response above are no longer viewed as a trade-off, but as an entirely positive development. If the choice is between an Israeli or a Palestinian state controlling the West Bank and Gaza, while the basic objectionable social relations remain static, then clearly the latter option is surely preferable. A future Palestinian state, despite maintaining the basic scheme of statist and capitalist social relations, and no matter how corrupt or pseudo-democratic, would in any event be less brutal than the Israeli state currently is towards the Palestinian population. Control by a civilian authority, though far worse than anarchy, is still far better than military occupation with its relentless humiliation and control over every aspect of Palestinians’ everyday lives.

A third response... is to say that anarchists can support a Palestinian state as a strategic choice, a desirable stage in a longer-term struggle. No one can sincerely expect that the situation in Israel/Palestine will move from the present one

to anarchy in one abrupt step. Hence, the establishment of a Palestinian state through a peace treaty with the Israeli state, although far from a “solution,” may turn out to be a positive development on the way to more thoroughgoing social change. The reduction of everyday violence on both sides could do a great deal to open up more political space for economic, feminist and environmental social struggles, and would thus constitute a positive development from a strategic point of view. In the region at present, all liberatory agendas are marginalized by the ongoing conflict. While the fighting continues, it is very difficult to engage with people on other social issues since the conflict silences them out. Thus, the establishment of a Palestinian state would form a bridgehead towards the flowering of other myriad social struggles, in Israel and in whatever enclave-polity emerges under the Palestinian ruling elite. For anarchists, such a process could be a significant step forward in a longer-term strategy for the destruction of the Israeli, Palestinian, and all other states along with capitalism, patriarchy and so on.

A fourth response would be to alter the terms of discussion altogether, by arguing that whether or not anarchists support a Palestinian state is a moot point, and thus leads to a false debate. What exactly are anarchists supposed to do with their “support”? If the debate is to resolve itself in a meaningful direction, then the ultimate question is whether anarchists can and should *take action* in support of a Palestinian state. But what could such action possibly be, short of declarations, petitions, demonstrations, and other elements of the “politics of demand” that anarchists seek to transcend? One can hardly establish a state through anarchist direct action, and the politicians who actually get to decide whether or not a Palestinian state is finally established are not exactly asking anarchists their opinion. Seen in this light, debates about whether anarchists should give their short-term “support” to a Palestinian state sound increasingly ridiculous, since the only merit of such discussion would be to come up with a common platform.

From such a point of view, anarchists may take action in solidarity with Palestinians (as well as Tibetans, West Papuans and Sahrawis for that matter) without reference to the question of statehood. The everyday acts of resistance that anarchists join and defend in Palestine and Israel are immediate steps to help preserve people’s livelihoods and dignity, which are in no way necessarily connected to a statist project. It is doubtful whether the Palestinians whom anarchists join in removing a roadblock, or in harvesting their olives while threatened by settlers, are doing so while consciously seeing it as a step towards statehood. The point is that, once viewed from a longer-term strategic perspective, anarchists’ actions have worthwhile implications whether or not they are attached to a statist agenda of independence.

Chapter 5 *Technology and Power*

22. Campaign Against the Model West Germany: The Nuclear State (1979)

During the 1970s mass demonstrations and actions against nuclear power plants began in Western Europe and the United States. Many of these actions were organized along anarchist lines, using affinity group structures and consensus-based decision making. In West Germany, the state authorities used surveillance, registration of “violent disturbers,” police violence, fines and imprisonment to divide and suppress the anti-nuclear movement. Similar measures were adopted by other states with nuclear power industries. The following excerpts are taken from a pamphlet called “The Atomic State and the People Who Have to Live in It,” from the Campaign Against the Model West Germany (1979), reprinted in Open Road, No. 11, Summer 1980. The authors suggest that these repressive measures are the necessary result of the use of such inherently dangerous technology.

[A]n occupied [nuclear power plant] construction site is not only a meeting place for all those resident (and non-resident) in the area concerned about the atomic question and consequently the birth place of numerous activities directed against the atomic industry; an occupied construction site also symbolizes the necessity and the real possibility of unlawful, that is illegal resistance against the State’s politics.

The development of an oppositional power contesting the State’s power monopoly must be prevented at all costs; the president of the Federal Criminal Investigation Department... insists that, for this reason, it is necessary to crush all attempts symbolic of oppositional power right at their beginning before their influence can spread. A fence torn down around an atomic power plant site neither threatens construction nor endangers operation of the plant but expresses psychologically and politically that which many people feel, namely, that the construction of an atomic power plant is legal but not legitimate.

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The discrepancy between legality and legitimacy with respect to State politics thus becomes the key internal political problem. The State apparatus and institutions closely connected to the State can react to this problem in two ways: they can change the legality to fit the prevailing political situation; or, they can employ all the police and military force necessary in order to ensure that the State's legality is enforced. Every form of political activity which makes this discrepancy between legality and legitimacy evident is more than a minor legal offence; there is always the possibility that a movement could develop out of such activities that could start to question the fundamental structure of present society.

Secondly, the political concept behind the police strategy... was [to give] a sign of strength and of determination not to give in to compromise. It was *the* opportunity to register the hardcore opponents of the system. According to police logic, only the most determined enemies of the State could take to the streets to demonstrate in this time of emergency, after weeks of propaganda in the mass media against the demonstration.

This chance to get a complete survey of the opposition was fully exploited... One can be sure that the registration of participation in each of these cases can mean the first step towards *Berufsverbote* (professional job ban), union expulsion, firing, a court case, and even imprisonment.

Thirdly, such a police manoeuvre was to add to the systematic discrediting of the anti-nuclear movement. With the help of the mass media, the impression was created that if so many policemen are on duty, these anti-nuclear people must be dangerous and criminal persons. Such attempts to influence public opinion are usually quite successful since most (West) Germans are blindly devoted to their State.

Fourthly, such police manoeuvres are also aimed at splitting the movement itself. The non-violent participants are to be turned against the violent ones, the liberals against the communists, the women against the men, etc. The basic principle behind such police strategy is to attack the bodies and minds of the "weak," the less determined, the hangers-on at assemblies and demonstrations. In a special police report... it is stated, "Throwing tear gas bombs out of helicopters in fan form at peripheral disturbers is immensely important. This form of operation is to be further developed." The "peripheral disturbers" were in fact people who had nothing to do with tearing down the fence around the construction site and had begun to make their way home.

Para-military operations, careful controls and a climate of fear serve to terrorize and intimidate "peripheral disturbers" so that they either withdraw from demonstrations entirely or begin a permanent fight against the more militant, more offensive members of the anti-nuclear movement.

In addition, it is also always the political aim of such police manoeuvres to

make non-party bound, self-organized activities difficult or impossible. The channeling of political conflict and discussion in West Germany into parliamentary forms, the establishment of an institutionalized sphere in which “political things” can be taken care of (e.g. parties based on ecological or environmental interests), the principle of representative democracy, which restricts the political participation of the citizen to casting a vote, all make the person who acts independently and for his/her own interests appear as an enemy of the State. The largely uncontrollable activities of the citizens committees against atomic energy are consequently viewed with utmost distrust. Political parties are easier to regulate, to observe and to keep in line.

People who come together and form groups which don't want any financial support, which don't want to get into parliament, which don't have any official leadership, act outside the well-working relationship between the State and the State-supporting parties, breaking the unity between the governing party and the opposition.

It is not surprising that both the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party see the mere existence of citizens' committees as a “deviation from the principle of representative democracy.” Those who act independently in this society are considered enemies of the State. Police manoeuvres... are accompanied by urges to join the established parties in order to fight for the environment, to allow the courts to decide if atomic energy plants should be built and, if founding a separate organization is absolutely imperative, then at least to run candidates in the elections...

Registration and possible constant observation of the so-called “hard core” of the anti-nuclear movement is another police strategy.

In January 1979 it became known that the Federal Criminal Investigation Department had been collecting data about “violent disturbers” since June 1, 1977. In May 1977 it was decided, “all persons who take part in the preparation for and/or the carrying out of violent demonstrations, especially against the building or operation of atomic energy plants, be registered by the Federal Criminal Investigation Department”...

The criteria with which one is classified as a “violent disturber” depend of course upon the police interpretation of the word “violent.” One only needs to look at the various articles confiscated as “weapons” during the controls of those en route to the Kalkar demonstration to get an idea of what they have in mind; among the weapons confiscated were: hard hats, plastic rain coats, goggles, lemons, scarves, gloves, lipsticks, axes, trowels, wooden tent pegs, camping cookers, jacks, tools of all sorts, car-repair kits, first aid kits, coke bottles and hard boiled eggs. And, in the eyes of the police (and those who believe the press), those who carry “weapons” are, of course, “violent.”

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The registration of such “violent disturbers” in the Federal Criminal Investigation Department’s central computer makes constant observation of these people not only very easy but also, at least partly, automatic. For instance, each time a registered person is controlled by authorities at a border crossing, at an airport, during a traffic control, information about the place, time, persons accompanying the registered person, are fed into the computer and automatically added to the data already stored about this person. The fact that the “violent disturbers” are registered in the PIOS section of the central computer, which has mainly been developed to collect information about those connected with the “terrorist scene” and has at present about 130,000 persons registered, shows that the State’s definition of “terrorism” goes as far as to include practically all forms of radical political activity.

There is more to it all, however, than just simply observing and recording all sorts of facts about as many people as possible involved in the anti-nuclear movement. For certain individuals the information collected has severe personal consequences. These selected cases serve to teach others a lesson, to deter other people from giving voice to their protest against atomic energy...

After the demonstration in Grohnde in March 1977, the atomic State began to intensify the attack against its opponents by imprisoning them. In addition to prison terms, there are enormous fines. The approximately 200 residents of the “anti-atomic village Grohnde” (a camp set up by anti-nuclear opponents on the Grohnde construction site) are to pay a total of \$106,000 compensation for the extra police costs caused. That is more than \$500 per person.

There is more to the fines than just the amount of money demanded by the State. It is expected that the solidarity mechanism within the anti-nuclear movement will force the main financial and political efforts over a longer period of time towards raising money for the fines, that is toward paying the State. In addition, exactly those persons are to be made liable against whom the police actions are directed; thus, not only is the possibility of resistance made questionable from a legal and from a practical viewpoint, even the general political perspective of the right to resist is disputable...

Shortly before drilling was to begin in Gorleben, site of the planned uranium reprocessing plant, a daily newspaper carried the headline: “Cells are already available for Gorleben delinquents.” These seven words sum up the State’s view of the anti-nuclear movement. Those who carry out resistance are delinquents; in order to carry out the plans for a uranium reprocessing plant, it is necessary to put the “delinquents” behind bars... Resistance is criminal; the thought of resistance is either unconstitutional propaganda or agitation for violence...

The atomic State is not a temporary or reversible development. It is a symbiosis between the development of military strategy all over Western countries,

which increasingly consider and treat their own populations as the enemy, and the development of a destructive technology (atomic energy technology) that is to be put to use by the electricity concerns and the energy fetishists, regardless of the consequences that could follow. Atomic technology has developed out of a social system which has often proven that it will even risk genocide for the sake of economic progress. Criticizing atomic energy thus becomes a basic criticism of the way of production in this society. The atomic State is being mobilized against such criticism today.

The subversion-theoreticians do not differentiate between those who are already convinced that they want more than just to hinder the construction of atomic energy plants and those who are just beginning to wake up. They do not differentiate between the “non-violent” and the “violent” opponents. In their eyes, the population is not a group which decides its own future. The population is only a military-political power for them that can't be neglected with respect to “civil defence.” Publicity has nothing to do with the public. They instrumentalize the public media for their economic and political intentions and persecute the critical voices.

A discussion about the “atomic State” shouldn't end with a description of the power of the State and the atomic energy concerns causing the other side to give up in resignation or to retreat to parliamentary forms of action (e.g. voting in Federal elections, founding ecology parties). We, as atomic energy opponents, must learn to analyze the strategy employed by those insistent on carrying on with the atomic energy program.

This strategy has two clearly definable aims that will only be abandoned under extreme pressure: the first is to carry out the atomic energy program by employing *all* that is necessary to do so; and, the second is to split a unified oppositional movement against the atomic energy program, to paralyze the movement and eventually to destroy it. Attempts to accomplish these aims will not only involve direct attacks on the anti-nuclear movement, arrests, fines, and imprisonment, and other repressive practices; other elements of this strategy will involve generous integration offers, compromises and tactical acknowledgements of ecologically conscious sectors within the political parties (such as is now happening in the Social Democratic Party).

There is certainly no *one single* answer to the problem of fighting atomic energy plants, fast breeder reactors, uranium re-processing plants, atomic waste depots, the atomic industry, the atomic State. The very strength of the anti-nuclear movement lies in its political diversity, in the diversity of practical forms of action, and in the coming together of different social groups over these problems.

We must always keep in mind that the State regards all atomic energy opponents as subversive individuals, regardless of the different paths we choose to

take up in the struggle against atomic energy, and will continue to fight all forms of opposition to the atomic energy program. The fact that the State reacts differently to those who run for an ecology party than to those who tear down a fence around a construction site is merely a matter of tactics and an attempt to direct the energies of those active in the movement into controllable, integratable, institutional, parliamentary forms of expression.

23. David Watson: Nuclear Power (1979)

David Watson was long associated with the Fifth Estate, the influential anti-authoritarian news journal that was for many years published out of Detroit, to which Fredy and Lorraine Perlman, Bob Brubaker, John Zerzan and Peter Werbe, among others, also contributed. In the following excerpts, taken from Watson's article, "Six Theses on Nuclear Power," Watson deepens the preceding analysis regarding the inherently totalitarian nature of nuclear technology. Revised in 1994 and reprinted in David Watson, Against the Megamachine: Essays on Empire and Its Enemies (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1997).

SIX THESES ON NUCLEAR POWER

I. The nuclear power complex is inherently totalitarian.

The apparent controversy over nuclear power is not really a matter for debate, but rather reflects the underlying question of social power. Its history makes this clear. First developed as a weapon of war under the veil of military secrecy, and then in coordinated efforts with enormous corporate interests, it was never publicly debated before the whole society was heavily committed to it. At its inception, public opposition would have brought charges of treason, and nuclear technology and materials are still considered a matter of strict state security.

Instead of genuine public discussion, concerns about this dangerous technology have been marginalized by the monologue of advertising and enforced patriotism. To the nuclear power conspirators, talk is a smoke screen. It's not a matter of technics or simple procedural decisions, "cost-benefit" analyses, or "risk-assessment" to be conferred on by well-mannered experts and citizens. Life is one thing; sophistry, meaningless jargon and mystification in the service of naked domination are another. Over the last two decades, the extravagant claims of technological utopia and unlimited abundance have eroded. The dream of nuclear power has come to look more like a nightmare of terrifying accidents, dazzling cost overruns and the unending problem of nuclear waste. Yet public discussion remains little more than a tactical diversion as far as those who administer the nuclear industry are concerned, a manner of periodically changing the

Emperor's clothes to hypnotize the populace. They have no intention of giving up, whatever the costs.

The fact is that nuclear power is necessarily totalitarian. From the beginning, nuclear technocrats experimented on whole populations, like the mad doctors of Buchenwald. Countless innocent people were treated as secret experimental subjects; entire towns and cities like Los Angeles were purposefully dosed with fallout; native peoples were driven from their land so it could be obliterated in tests; and soldiers were marched into radioactive sites to test exposure results. These are only the experiments we know about and occurred not only in the dictatorships of the Eastern Bloc, but in the "democratic" West.

Nuclearism cannot exist except in a society based on class or caste division—whereby one group commands authority for itself, increasing its wealth and power at the expense of the rest. Nuclearism can only operate under some form of authoritarian rule using commissions and cops to enforce and regulate its power. Thus, "discussing" the merits or problems of nukes with utility companies and government bureaucrats is like debating the meaning of life with a murderer who has a knife to your throat.

The nuclear power question also exponentially complicates the question of social power. Even the dream of abolishing nuclearism contains the potential for authoritarianism and centralized control: the technology has created technological and social problems that simply may have no adequate solution. Not only the problem of dismantling nukes, but the more far-reaching dilemma of containing the already present nuclear and industrial wastes (and the wastes which are being produced today, as this is being written, and tomorrow, as it is being read) makes the need to halt it all as soon as possible ever greater.

2. Nuclear power is fundamentally a matter of psychology.

Nuclear power is at the center of a configuration of questions facing humanity today which can be posed in the words *life against death*. To "favour" nuclear power means desiring your own techno-bureaucratically administered annihilation. To fear and oppose nuclear power, whether out of scientific ("rational") or intuitive ("irrational") reasons, is to some degree to resist inertia, to glimpse life beyond the shroud of business-as-usual in a civilization listing toward self-destruction. Nuclearism is therefore more than a technology (a word that renders it deceptively innocuous). It is, rather, the materialization of the death-wish itself.

Nuclearism is the centerpiece of a system that, as its most far-seeing and thoughtful scientific minds now recognize, is undermining complex life on earth. Even the champions of this system can see many of its consequences—the Chernobyl disaster, for example—yet they continue. This suicidal compulsion compels us to consider nuclear power in terms of pathology: fascination with self-destruction and a reckless disregard for life, a diminishing capacity in the integrity

and autonomy of individuals, and the psychology of addiction and denial [see also Volume Two, Selection 37]. What else explains the continuing romance in some sectors with a technology capable of bringing about unspeakable disaster, and the general indifference and psychic numbing in others?

Even if more Chernobyl-like disasters were a remote possibility (they are in fact inevitable, given the aging apparatus and the corruption and incompetence of the social forces managing it), the risk of perhaps millions of illnesses and deaths, and the need to evacuate whole regions permanently would seem sufficient reason to abandon nuclearism. We are told “we” must have the energy—but for what? Are people really willing to trade their children’s future in order to run an industrial empire producing things they not only don’t need but in many cases would be better off without? Could we lead fulfilling lives and use dramatically less energy? Is it necessary to sacrifice the genetic integrity of future generations to keep shopping malls lit at night and televisions on? Why, given the horrors of Chernobyl, is no one except a radical fringe asking, *energy for what?*

This is mass denial. A mass circulation science magazine intones, “The prospect of nuclear war is fading. But nuclear weapons, radioactive waste, and poorly designed reactors are here to stay.” But with more fissionable material and nuclear technology around than ever, more nation states trying to get their hands on it, and an epidemic of plutonium smuggling from the former Soviet Union, why would anyone think nuclear war is less likely? The author of this typical article breezily reports on the calamities of Soviet nuclearism, but concludes, “Marxist technology was the culprit.”

How reassuring! Yet what exactly is “Marxist technology”? There once were marxists, like those Chinese pilots who claimed they could fly through storms by applying the wisdom of Mao Tse-tung Thought, who believed that a marxist science and technology were something more than a wish-fulfillment. But all that has been discredited. Every single nuclear military facility in the United States has been heavily contaminated; was that “Marxist technology”? Will we learn tragically after the fact that some containment structure designs in American reactors suffered the errors of marxism? Was the Union Carbide gas leak at Bhopal, India, from which people continue to die, marxist? The space shuttle disaster? Love Canal? Blaming the empire’s enemy ideology is a pathetic form of denial.

3. Technolatriy is a form of denial.

Technolatriy assures people that backup systems will work, alloys will not corrode or wear out prematurely, landfills will never leak, and technicians will make the correct decisions, pushing the right buttons in the right sequences, with the buttons functioning as intended, and the computers responding appropriately. All this, of course, is massive, utterly irrational denial—a denial weirdly coexisting with a pervasive, society-wide suspicion that nothing in this society works,

that all systems are failing and no expertise is very trustworthy or machinery reliable, that everything has been produced by the lowest bidder, a lowest bidder cutting corners to cut costs. And yet this vast, complex, and dangerous technology, we are assured by its operatives and paid publicists, will work just fine. In any event, we have no choice, they tell us; we simply cannot do without it.

Of course, only the most venal and desperate community would willingly site a nuclear plant or waste repository nearby. People recognize that no technical system is fail-safe, be it for nuclear production or storage (there being no such thing as “disposal”). In complex industrial systems, accidents are inevitable. Most landfills of any kind are already leaking, and all must eventually leak, since nature allows no container to remain intact forever. Geological and chemical phenomena are more complicated than was once thought, and recent research has increased scientists’ sense of uncertainty. Though there are some 400 nuclear reactors operating in the world, there is not one long-term waste storage program in place.

Yet the nuclear empire continues its march to oblivion. As of late 1993, some 50,000 people had died of illnesses resulting from the April 1986 nuclear explosion and fire at Chernobyl. People involved in the emergency response are dying in droves and the populations of Belarus and Ukraine are suffering pandemics of cancer, birth defects and other diseases. Nevertheless, in need of “energy independence,” Ukraine has decided to keep the remaining reactors running and to lift a moratorium on new plants. In the United States, the mentality is the same. Bureaucrats at Detroit Edison and other associated institutions have undoubtedly seen ample illustrations in the media of Chernobyl’s grim results, without wavering in their commitment to the exterminist system they manage. Why?

It was Wilhelm Reich who argued in his studies on the mass psychology of fascism that a large portion of the German people desired fascism even though it was not in their interest [Volume One, Selection 119]. I thought of mass psychology recently while at the Edison offices in downtown Detroit. A small group of us were crowded around a reception desk where one anti-nuclear activist was attempting to deliver a dead fish to a public relations clone at the utility headquarters. The office workers and executives coming in and out of the sterile concrete, glass and steel lobby barely noticed us. Those who did seemed to enjoy a passing smirk as they went to lunch before getting back to their desks and the routine of creating more Chernobyls, more genetic monsters, more thyroid cancers, more leukemia.

In the short term (until next payday, at least), people who blandly walked by are making money (and for most, not much money) unraveling life’s fragile web. In the longer term, however, they’ll see the same cancers, immune disorders and other illnesses in their own families as the rest of us, and face the same dismal ra-

dioactive cloud when the geiger counters spin out of control and the pointers hit jackpot. Denial maintains their addiction to the industrial bribe (the cars, boats and VCRs they cannot do without) and to power and prestige (their position in the necktie hierarchy). Denial and psychic numbing keep a suicidal system on automatic. And it isn't just at Edison; to one degree or another, we're all involved.

4. Nuclearism undermines human autonomy.

Of course, the defense of nuclear power routinely presents itself as a defence of the rights of individuals—the right of the power companies to turn a profit, the right of individuals to obtain the “good life” through unlimited access to energy. But industrial capitalism, based as it is on the looting of nature and humanity for capital accumulation and power, can only take place where human autonomy itself has been looted. This process began with violent coercion during the rise of industrial capitalism and is now culminating in rule by hypnotic suggestion.

The industrial system could not survive without the passive cooperation of human beings who trust and obey their leaders, have faith in the abstruse newspeak of experts, and accept at face value every step of technological progress unleashed upon them by government and corporate bureaucracies as quite naturally an enrichment of their impoverished lives. They seem barely capable of living autonomously, making decisions, or critically examining their lives and society. Having abdicated responsibility for themselves, they simply recite the litanies of their leaders and bosses.

At its inception capitalism proclaimed the primacy of the individual only to bring about, in its maturity, the suppression and disappearance of authentic individuality. Today the inmates sense what they have lost but cannot name. Anxiety is pervasive, along with rage. In its attempt to expand its artificial, depersonalized world while ameliorating the subsequent collapse of selfhood, capital mines and degrades the earth to produce a world of consumable objects, programmed entertainments and prefabricated “communities.”

The domesticated creatures who continue to repeat capital's rationalizations in the wake of dramatic accidents and the continuous reports of failed-technology events that might have broken through their conditioning... are reminiscent of the people who craved fascism... They are painful reminders that time really is running out. Without social and personal change as dramatic as the events that now demand it, life as it will soon come to be lived (if at all) may no longer be worth fighting for.

5. “No nukes” is not enough: industrial capitalism is the enemy.

According to the official view, the suits and skirts at Edison were, of course, normal and rational—we were fringe wackos. Just as nuclearism complicates power relations, it turns reason inside out. Unlike Captain Ahab in Melville's *Moby Dick*, nuclear power cannot claim that either its means or ends are sane—

both are mad. Nevertheless, it poses as the pinnacle of reason, as the normal, natural state of affairs. Its warped, crackpot realism serves to legitimate what is in reality only one component of a runaway industrial juggernaut bent on bringing about the compulsive and suicidal “conquest of nature” which is the core spiritual value of capitalism.

The conquest of nature, of course, has its revenge in the unintended consequences it produces; nature is not so easily conquered. The industrial system is causing an increasingly precarious, global destruction of diversity—cultural, biological and agricultural. It functions by undermining the natural world; obliterating peoples, places and species; recklessly poisoning the ecosphere with deadly pollutants; blindly degrading natural cycles; and accelerating and growing for the sake of growth itself. Operating under the guise of normalcy, it pulverizes wilderness, wreaks havoc on delicate ecological harmonies, fills the sacred earthy silence with the white noise of industrial civilization, and shreds human communities. Having already obliterated much of human memory, it works to obliterate the future by imposing increasingly rigid, brittle and dangerous technical and institutional systems on society and nature that are guaranteed to bring about unforeseen, catastrophic results.

A focus on nukes alone is therefore not enough; resistance against nuclear power must become a starting point in the critique of the system in its entirety. This means finding ways to resist capitalism’s reduction of the living world to production and commodities, to stop the plunder of seas, soils, forests and the gene pool, to reverse the reduction of culture to mass media noise—to take none of modern civilization’s propaganda for granted. It means turning the terrain of capital into a terrain of resistance, restoring and reinhabiting the earth in a manner consonant with the natural world and the possibilities of genuine human community and solidarity.

Those who might argue that we can maintain a “user friendly” urban industrial civilization without nuclear power don’t realize that the growth economy of mass production itself (fueled by any power whatsoever) devours the world to shit out toxic waste and toaster ovens. The addiction to profit, power and an ever-expanding megalopolis will continue to undermine life, with or without nuclear power.

The Persian Gulf War was one powerful example of capitalism’s addiction to energy having relatively little to do with nuclear power. As an anti-war demonstrator’s placard put it, “Oil is capitalism’s crack.” An anti-nuclear movement that does not begin to confront the industrial capitalist system as a whole—not just nukes but oil, production and markets, militarism, cybernetics, the media, genetic engineering—will confront only one of its hydra-heads, leaving the root intact. Such an approach is not only bound to fail, it could strengthen the forces that we most need to destroy if life is to prevail.

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6. Industrialism is an empire—life is the colony.

The nuclear power system grew out of war and cannot be separated from the accumulation of nuclear weapons by nation states and the unavoidable drift toward more war. Thus any resistance to nuclearism must of necessity confront not only nuclear arms but the military machine. To fail to see that the demand for nuclear disarmament logically leads to war against the imperial state itself is to defy reason. Again, one begins with a single, isolated aspect of the problem and ends with the totality of interconnections. Opposition to nuclearism must eventually become linked to the demand to abolish the armies, states and rival empires which control it.

The nuclear power system is not only a key component of military-industrial empires like the United States, France, Britain, Israel, etc., it fits the structural model of all empires, starting from the earliest slave states of the ancient middle east. Every empire demands a work hierarchy, military machine, sacrifice colonies and the wanton destruction of nature and human communities, and all have been pyramid schemes that exploited and wasted some areas and communities to enhance and enrich elites elsewhere. In the end, they all brought about massive destruction before collapsing under their own weight.

The nuclear power complex is no different, bringing to mind historian Gordon V. Childe's remark that the first imperial civilizations of Mesopotamia "probably did directly destroy more wealth than they indirectly created." Similarly, if one were to calculate the amount of energy the nuclear industry has produced against that expended in mining, processing, maintaining, and eventually mothballing nuclear materials and reactors, it would obviously represent a net loss in energy—an imperial shell game. The artifactual "wealth" that global urban industrialism creates is likewise a deficit to real social and natural plenitude.

To capital, a forest is worthless until it is shattered into lumber, just as people growing their own food and meeting their own needs are an economic loss. To life, on the other hand, the vast, toxic necropolis we are constructing represents an irreplaceable loss, an imponderable violence. If confronting nuclear power during its early days signified an act of treason against the state, today it means no less an act of treason, this time against the entire empire system—most specifically the religion of growth now bringing about the demise of complex life forms on earth.

The nuclear problem appears insurmountable; to challenge the industrial system may seem utterly out of reach. But we must begin to face this challenge; otherwise we surrender to a fatal inertia. If nothing else, let this sense of urgency sustain us.

24. C. George Benello: Putting the Reins on Technology (1982)

In this essay, originally presented at the Anarchos Institute Montreal conference in 1982, George Benello (1927-1987) argues that technology must be controlled by workers and consumers, and that such control can only be achieved through broader social reconstruction. Reprinted in From the Ground Up: Essays on Grassroots and Workplace Democracy (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1992).

It is important to understand any disease before proposing a cure. If the only problem confronting activists today was social inequality resulting from abstract historical forces or from the single-minded quest for profits, then counterposing to this a struggle for an egalitarian worker's state might have some meaning. But if the deeper problem is learning how to combat the thrust toward ever-greater technological power and organizational gigantism, then only participatory, decentralist solutions—embodying a humanized technology subject to broader social purposes—will do. Much of socialism has swallowed the reigning mythology of industrialism and technology. But anarchism has inherent reasons for allying itself instead with the new ecological consciousness. These reasons derive from an understanding of how the popular consciousness has been formed by the technological fix and of how extensive investment in technology leads to social domination as well.

The culture of industrialism has inevitably made work into a machine-like activity, subordinating the majority *as workers* to the technological dreams of grandeur of those who possess the means and knowledge to master the machines. But *as consumers*, this majority shares in the dream by possession of the products that result from technological mastery; oppression in the workplace is countered by participation in the technological marketplace. Thus although a majority of the workforce is now involved in service and maintenance functions—in government, education, social services, and the like—the dream is still there: The power and the glory belong to the instrumentalities of production since it is here that the magnification of human powers is experienced most directly. Note that this is also experienced by those who operate the state apparatus—and through identification by their underlings—through the extensive involvement of the state in weapons systems possessed of a power and destructive potential that are unique. The nuclear weapons, the jets, the missiles, the radar and communications, the tanks and battleships—all form part of a vast technological apparatus dedicated to destruction. This apparatus derives its rationale from the existence of similar systems of warfare technology possessed by other states.

Nowhere is the addictive character of technology seen more clearly than in the

setting up of systems of mutual destruction, to the detriment of living standards, security, and peaceful forms of human progress. The urge to power thus finds its most apt expression in the warfare state, which links state domination with the technology of warfare; Randolph Bourne's observation, "War is the health of the state," takes on a magnified meaning here. This meaning is clarified by the understanding of how technology contributes to the natural tendencies of the state toward self-aggrandizement at the expense of its people and at the same time makes these tendencies infinitely more lethal. The private corporation and the warfare state are the twin loci of the contemporary disease; the two are closely intertwined—on the material level by the urge to profits and on the cultural level by a shared investment in power through technology...

In the last ten years or so a powerful critique of the present thrust of technology has developed which is too important to be ignored. It steps outside of the prevailing assumptions regarding technology and critiques both its methods and its goals. An essay written in 1909 by C.R. Ashbee previsioned a number of central themes. Writing of Indian village communities, he questioned whether technological progress has improved the quality of life. The essay anticipated the contemporary critique of technology by investigating whether machines have not created social costs greater than their benefits. This issue was echoed in the writings of Ivan Illich, who pointed out that labour-saving devices usually do not save labour [Volume Two, Selection 73]. When production and maintenance time is factored into the overall life of a car, the average speed is reduced to around five miles an hour. Likewise, labour saving appliances, when the wage labour costs to consumers are figured in, end up substituting the labour required to earn them, for whatever labour time is saved.

This analysis is powerful, because it suggests the irrationality inherent in the present commitment to technology. We sacrifice freedom in work in order to be able to purchase appliances, vehicles—the accoutrements of technology—which supposedly add to our sense of power. But the Faustian bargain is that we sacrifice the power to determine how or when we work and for what purpose. We can thus see how intimately related are the critique of technology and the critique of the workplace, if we subject both to rational evaluation.

Technology and workplace democratization are closely related on several levels. As Harry Braverman has shown, technology has never been neutral when it comes to the workplace. The development of the technology of production owes far more to considerations of *efficiency of control* than it does to any abstract desire for efficiency as such. Work has become highly rationalized; mental work has been split off from manual work; jobs have become mechanized. All of this subjects workers to lower wage scales and makes them more replaceable through de-skilling, hence increasing managerial power over the workforce.

The development of technology has been fueled by the urge to dominate nature. The vision of vast extensions of human power and human perception has allied the quest for scientific knowledge with the quest for domination. And the result of this is a social order in which the control of technology and its magnification of human power have led naturally to the control of other human beings.

On the positive side, this means that freedom in work requires an appropriate technology, based on a human scale, where neither the technology nor the organization of work make workers into machine-tenders. Any efforts to create freedom in work must bring the present runaway technology under control. Moreover, the lack of concern for human beings as workers is of a piece with the manipulation of human beings as consumers: passive workers, following orders, and passive consumers, advertised into buying. Just as there should be worker control, so there should be consumer control, so that products last, are reasonably priced, and meet needs as defined by consumers, not by the producers. Technology in general, not simply its application in the workplace, needs to come under democratic control.

We live in a society which is fragmented and devoid of the stability, rootedness in place, localism and cultural institutions which together can provide emotional security. In this fragmenting society, people addictively turn to massive industrial technology to compensate for their lack of power and emotional security. It is hence not enough to combat this technology without also seeking to change the social and political landscape by returning power to the local level and in the process building community. *The answer to our runaway technology is social reconstruction.*

The primary focus for a social critique should thus be the extent to which the contemporary investment in technology has deformed both work and community life together. If this is true, there can be no real freedom in work without a freeing of the imagination from the dominance of and preoccupation with technological forms of power and mastery. Democratizing automobile assembly lines is not enough; the real question is whether cars themselves are necessary or should be replaced, and whether there are not priorities that are so much more pressing that cars—and jets and space shots and much else—should simply be abandoned in favour of projects that contribute more directly to human growth and human wisdom. Thus the *aims* of technology, and not simply the organizational methods which it uses, must be put into question. Its deformation of the social landscape, as well as its pillaging of the natural landscape must be challenged.

Again, if the simple motivational model obtained and technology served the profit of the masters only, then the workplace could easily be seen as the primary field of struggle. But humans are the willing consumers—and slaves—of the technological imperative. While the constraints of human nature, entropy, and orga-

nizational size are always with us, these constraints differ from that imposed by technology in that technology alone not only resists efforts to organize in a liberatory fashion but pulls in its own, and contrary, direction. The lure of the Megamachine, its power and its glory, captivates both by its logic and its magic. Its logic is that technology must be free to go where it will, and social forms must accommodate it. Its magic is linked with nationalism—another magic—and with corporate greed. But while greed is decried, and the current lethal form of nationalism is suspect, there is little general questioning of the general goals of technological advance. The ecology movement is a partial exception—partial in that it questions the impact of technology on the natural environment without fully enough exploring its impact on the social environment.

The challenge is to accord technology a place within a larger vision which consciously controls subordinate elements in the interests of human growth. But to accomplish this, a level of consciousness and planning is necessary which at present does not exist. The primary expression of such a consciousness should be in the organizing of communities and workplaces which are deliberately structured so as to be participatory, coherent, ecologically sound and continuously responsive to the needs of the inhabitants. The result would be a different social reality, a culture which would act back on its members so as to encourage different behaviour patterns and different norms.

As an ideology of reconstruction, anarchism must move beyond its current involvement with largely cultural and educational alternatives and develop a capacity to deal with the larger functions of formal organizations, including mainly those functions which address technological power. Thus it should concern itself with democratic work organization, especially in those new areas of communication and information technology which are most likely to become the carriers of the dominant technological thrust. Above all, it should be concerned to develop liberatory organizations in product and service areas which are close to the heart of the present technological thrust, demonstrating through this how it is possible to create both liberatory organizations and a liberatory technology.

Changing Work, No. 7, Winter 1988. Adapted from a paper given at the Anarchos Institute Conference, "Intellectuals and the State," Montreal, June 5 and 6, 1982.

25. Brian Tokar: Biotechnology (2003)

Brian Tokar has been active in the ecology movement since the 1970s. He is the author of The Green Alternative (1987, revised 1992), Earth for Sale (1997) and Gene Traders: Biotechnology, World Trade and the Globalization of Hunger (2004). The following excerpts are taken from his presentation, "Radicalizing

the debate,” from the Institute for Social Ecology, a revised version of his earlier article, “Biotechnology: Enlarging the debate,” Z Magazine, June 2001.

Evidence for the unique dangers of genetically engineered foods continues to mount. Even though research on the problems with these products can hardly keep up with 20 years and hundreds of millions of dollars devoted toward accelerating their commercialization, each new independent study appears to confirm what biotech critics have been saying all along. From the threat of increased food allergies, antibiotic resistance and more serious metabolic and developmental problems, to the widely-reported hazard to monarch butterflies and numerous varieties of agriculturally beneficial insects, the evidence increasingly supports the need for caution.

There is an emerging consensus that the burden of proof must be shifted onto the proponents of this radically disruptive new technology. But it is crucial that the debate continue to push beyond the limits of what can be documented scientifically, beyond what social ecologist Chaia Heller has described as the discourse of risk. The more that officials of the U.S. government, and of global institutions such as the WTO, insist that only known, quantifiable risks are legitimate areas for public policy, the more imperative it becomes for activists and other concerned citizens to insist upon raising the larger questions: What does this new technology mean for our society, for the exercise of political and economic power and for the possibilities of actualizing a genuinely free society? How can we fully comprehend all the disturbing social consequences of the new genetic technologies?

A meaningful discussion of the implications of the new biotechnologies needs to begin with the concept of commodification. In the 19th century, Marx introduced the notion of the commodity as an “external object,” a product of human labour that has been torn asunder from the ages-old means by which people work to satisfy their basic life needs. Capitalism creates “exchange values,” divorced from traditional, social “use-values,” and tied to the disciplines and strictures of the commercial marketplace. The commodification of basic needs, including the appropriation of land and human labour as principles of exchange, was a central development underlying the founding stages of capitalism. It is a main tenet of the long-range ideological project of dominating and controlling external nature.

In the latter half of the 20th century, the processes of commodification were extended to all spheres of social life, popular culture, and even the most intimate realms of personal experience. The Frankfurt School critiqued the fast-growing culture industry as an extension of the larger project of domination in society; for Horkheimer, Adorno and others, the domination of humanity and nature appeared to be a regrettable, albeit sometimes horrific, historical necessity, while so-

cial ecology casts ideas of “dominating nature” as a direct consequence of patterns of domination in society. Murray Bookchin, in *Re-enchanting Humanity*, described the all-pervasive qualities of commercial culture: “Today, the unbridled expansion of the market transforms nearly all traditional personal relationships into commodity ties, fostering a belief in the merits of consumption and a highly synthetic image of ‘the good life’.”

While the roots of organized persuasion and the creation of artificial needs can be traced back to precapitalist institutions, 20th century capitalism extended its reach far deeper into private life and everyday consciousness: “From the 1950s onward, the market economy has not only imperialized every aspect of conventional life, it has also dissolved the memory of the alternative lifeways that precede it” [Bookchin, *The Modern Crisis*].

The project of modern biotechnology takes this process of commodification many steps further, extending its reach to literally encompass all of organic life. It is perhaps the apex of the capitalist project of domination and control over human and non-human nature. Biotechnology literally seeks to bring all of life, down to the cellular and molecular levels, into the sphere of commercial products. From microorganisms that lie deep within the boiling geysers of Yellowstone National Park—found to be the subject of a secret agreement between the U.S. National Park Service and a San Diego-based biotechnology company—to the human DNA sequences being mapped by both public and private agencies, all of life on earth is being reduced to a set of objects and codes to be bought, sold and patented under the domain of the capitalist marketplace.

Furthermore, biotechnology seeks to alter the fundamental patterns of non-human nature so as to better satisfy the demands of the market. Wherever natural patterns are not well suited to continued exploitation, biotechnology raises the possibility of redesigning life forms to satisfy capitalist demands. Where soil fertility and plant health are undermined by monocropping and chemical fertilizers, biotechnologists make crops tolerant to herbicides so growers can use more noxious chemicals to destroy weeds, and also make them secrete bacterial toxins to attack various crop pests. Where industrial-scale irrigation lowers the water table and makes the soil saltier, they offer to make food crops more resistant to drought and to salt, perpetuating our society’s ability to ignore the underlying causes of these problems.

Where marketable fish species like salmon have difficulties surviving year round in far northern hatcheries, genetic engineers seek to splice in frost resistance from cold-water species such as flounder, and also make them grow dramatically faster. If naturally bred livestock cannot satisfy the demand for ever-increasing profit margins, commercial breeders aim to offer clones of their most productive animals. Timber companies want to raise plantations of genet-

ically engineered trees that grow faster, and have an altered biochemical makeup that may be more amenable to chemical processing for paper pulp. In each instance, biotechnology dramatically furthers the process of replacing the organic with the synthetic, perpetuating the myth that the inherent ecological limitations of a thoroughly nature-denying economic and social system can simply be engineered out of existence.

The biotechnology industry is also at the forefront of patenting living things, having mobilized the power of the World Trade Organization to impose regimes of life patenting on all the world's legal systems. At the same time, corporate "bioprospectors" (many call them "biopirates") are surveying the entire biosphere, from the arctic to the tropics, in search of plants, animals and DNA sequences—including millions of fragments of human DNA—to study, manipulate and patent. The ownership of life is proceeding on a macroscopic scale as well: For-profit fertility clinics purchase human eggs and sperm from willing "volunteers" and offer them for sale. Recent breakthroughs in animal cloning have suggested the very real possibility that an above-ground market in human cells, tissues and even laboratory-created organs may soon complement the shadowy but lucrative international trade in human organs for transplantation.

This unprecedented commodification of life has very real and immediate consequences. In economic terms, the biotechnology industry represents an unprecedented concentration of corporate power over our food and our health. The late 1990s saw a heretofore unimaginable wave of corporate mergers and acquisitions in virtually every economic sector, and now the three pivotal areas of seeds, pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals are increasingly dominated by a small handful of transnational giants, all centrally committed to the advancement of biotechnology. By 1999, five companies—Monsanto, AstraZeneca, DuPont (owner of Pioneer Hi-Bred, the world's largest seed company), Novartis and Aventis—controlled 60 percent of the global pesticide market, 23 percent of the commercial seed market and nearly all of the world's genetically modified seeds. Farmers face an increasingly monopolized seed market, along with increasing integration of the entire food industry; one recent *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece suggested that farmers will soon become "more like Detroit's auto parts makers," mere subcontractors to a tiny handful of global corporations.

When the food biotech sector began running into problems with investors in 1999, many of the "gene giants" began divesting their agricultural divisions into separate companies. The once seemingly-invincible Monsanto, for example, is now a much smaller, agriculturally-focused company 85% owned by the pharmaceutical giant Pharmacia. The financial links between these sectors, however, remain largely intact, and the project of creating a comprehensive, worldwide "life science" industry controlled by many of the world's largest chemical com-

panies continues, albeit in an institutionally weakened form. Commercial seed production worldwide is still increasingly dominated by companies that specialize in chemical production and biotechnology.

The leading institutions of global capitalism, particularly the WTO and the World Bank, along with the new Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, also play a central role in the proliferation of biotechnology, and are heavily supported by the biotech industry. Biotech companies played a key role in formulating the WTO's "TRIPs" (Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights) provisions, and TRIPs has become the main leverage for imposing life-patenting regimes on those countries where the opposition is the strongest. The WTO's "dispute settlement" mechanisms have been used by the U.S. government to try to compel European governments to accept imports of hormone-treated beef, Central American bananas and other unwanted products. Only the fear of political isolation in the face of massive public opposition has kept the biotech industry from utilizing the same direct pressure tactics. World Bank development loans are often tied to "capacity building" aimed at shifting recipient countries toward biotech agriculture, and U.S. food "aid" shipments to impoverished regions are often tainted with genetically engineered products, including the "Starlink" corn that is deemed unfit for human consumption in the United States.

A radical critique of biotechnology also needs to encompass the various new human genetic technologies that are most often described—often misleadingly—as breakthroughs in medical research. While some research using modern biotech methods has proved fruitful, and the sequencing of the human genome has in some ways broadened critical discourse on the genetic aspects of human identity, we are still in the midst of a massive diversion of scientific resources toward a narrow focus on genetics. Capitalist medicine prefers to remain largely ignorant of the underlying causes of disease, preferring to identify genetic correlates that can be tested for, and used to weed out those who may be most susceptible. The rhetoric of alleviating suffering is appropriated in the interest of isolating potential sufferers, so that the engines of capitalism can roll on unimpeded. Commentators on the right have been ahead of much of the left in labeling human cloning and steps toward "designer children" as harbingers of a new form of slavery, even as they wax enthusiastic about steps toward a new, largely market—rather than state—driven form of eugenics.

Finally, it is important to understand the ways biotechnology has become a centerpiece of today's information-centered capitalism. As the profitability of conventional industrial capitalism began to decline in the late twentieth century, investors sought out new forms of information-centered production as the basis for renewed economic expansion. In... *Redesigning Life?* Chaia Heller describes the central role of biotechnology in the consolidation of a new, postmodern form

of service-oriented, flexible, “organic” capitalism, in which dispersed, interchangeable and culturally-mediated forms of economic activity are largely supplanting conventional modes of industrial production and profit extraction. In this respect, biotechnology is essentially “the systematic conversion of biological nature into informational capital,” according to Heller, and all the gene sequencers and gene hunters (*i.e.*, “biopirates”) are merely “attempt[ing] to map out future colonial territories within the cells of human beings [as well as] within the biological nature of plants, animals and other organisms.”

If we believe that a free, ecological society is possible, then our activism against biotechnology needs to fully reflect that understanding. Many well-known and widely-supported organizations are focused entirely on getting genetically engineered foods labeled, or petitioning government agencies to require independent testing, and perhaps more comprehensive regulation, in place of today’s thoroughly dubious “consultations” between the US Food and Drug Administration and the biotech and agribusiness industries. Today’s non-regulations are founded on a myth of “substantial equivalence”—the transparently false notion that there is nothing qualitatively different about a genetically engineered variety of a given crop, no discernable health and environmental problems that are unique consequences of this technology. But exposing and overturning this myth, and even eliminating GE foods entirely, are only first steps toward a democratic society that can feed everyone fresh, healthy food in an ecologically sound manner.

Demanding justice from an inherently unjust system can be a step toward creating a free society, or it can merely perpetuate self-defeating attempts to reform the system strictly on its own terms. It depends on whether the movement is ready to view its immediate goals in the context of a broader reconstructive social and political vision. Is our goal merely the labeling of GE food—or even its abolition—or is it a truly ecological food system that abolishes the stranglehold of agribusiness megacorporations on our food supply and our lives? What kinds of strategies can serve to dismantle the unaccountable and life-denying power of these institutions and the system they serve? How can our opposition to genetic engineering be grounded in a political strategy aiming at genuine community empowerment and a society freed from the confines of the capitalist war of all against all? There have been important successes in the past few years; the hegemony of companies like Monsanto over our food, our health and our future has been seriously shaken, but we clearly have much further to go. We need to ground our opposition to biotechnology in our dreams of community empowerment, of the triumph of citizenship and human liberation over consumption and the stranglehold of the capitalist market...

Today’s biotechnology industry has flourished largely at the expense of more benign, ecological technologies, from sophisticated refinements of organic food

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raising and permaculture methods to holistic approaches to medical care that are grounded in both traditional knowledge and a non-mechanistic outlook on the inner ecology of the human organism. We have seen how research into alternative technologies has been systematically devalued and de-funded in recent years, even in our theoretically public land-grant universities; now we need to envision a society where these technologies can flourish.

Technologies are always a product of their social context, and powerful technologies serve to reinforce the social and political structures that produce them. Today's biotechnology is fundamentally about manipulation and control—that is what capitalism thrives upon. Future biological technologies, on the other hand, can aim to work with the patterns of nature and enhance human participation and harmony with the rest of the natural world. Genetics will likely play a role, as will a wealth of whole organism-centered approaches to scientific research that have been largely relegated to the margins of academia in recent decades. And, perhaps most important, communities of people will reclaim decision-making power around what kinds of technologies are most amenable to the creation of an ecological future. Communities can debate and decide how to allocate resources toward research and discovery in a free, open, and directly democratic forum, instead of corporate executives and government bureaucrats deciding largely in secret. As we continue to explore the wider implications of today's biotechnologies, social ecology will continue to look toward the development of a science—and a social and participatory political context for that science—that truly represents the full realization of human possibilities.

Chapter 6

Anarchy and Ecology

26. Murray Bookchin: Toward an Ecological Society (1974)

*In “Toward an Ecological Society,” Murray Bookchin summarizes much of the argument from his magnum opus, *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982). Bookchin’s then positive notion of the respiritization of the natural world, the concepts of the “irreducible minimum” and the “equality of unequals,” and his analysis of the nonhierarchical sensibilities of preliterate “organic” communities, in contrast to the hierarchical ordering of the universe common to so-called “civilizations,” are particularly noteworthy.*

Ecology... sees the balance and integrity of the biosphere as an end in itself. Natural diversity is to be cultivated not only because the more diversified the components that make up an ecosystem, the more stable the ecosystem, but [because] diversity is desirable for its own sake, a value to be cherished as part of a spirited notion of the living universe. Ecologists have already pointed out that the more simplified an ecosystem—as in arctic and desert biomes or in monocultural forms of food cultivation—the more fragile the ecosystem and more prone it is to instability, pest infestations, and possible catastrophes... Ecology, furthermore, advances the view that humanity must show a conscious respect for the spontaneity of the natural world, a world that is much too complex and variegated to be reduced to simple Gallilean physico-mechanical properties... The natural world must be allowed the considerable leeway of a spontaneous development—informed, to be sure, by human consciousness and management as nature rendered self-conscious and self-active—to unfold and actualize its wealth of potentialities. Finally, ecology recognizes no hierarchy on the level of the ecosystem. There are no “kings of the beasts” and no “lowly ants.” These notions are the projections of our own social attitudes and relationships on the natural world. Virtually all that lives as part of the floral and faunal variety of an ecosystem plays its coequal role in maintaining the balance and integrity of the whole.

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These concepts, brought together in a totality that could be expressed as unity in diversity, spontaneity, and complementarity... constitute an overall sensibility that we are slowly recovering from a distant archaic world and placing in a new social context. The notion that man is destined to dominate nature stems from the domination of man by man—and perhaps even earlier, by the domination of woman by man and the domination of the young by the old. The hierarchical mentality that arranges experience itself—in all its forms—along hierarchically pyramidal lines is a mode of perception and conceptualization into which we have been socialized by hierarchical society. This mentality tends to be tenuous or completely absent in non-hierarchical communities. So-called “primitive” societies that are based on a simple sexual division of labour, that lack states and hierarchical institutions, do not experience reality as we do through a filter that categorizes phenomena in terms of “superior” and “inferior” or “above” and “below.” In the absence of inequality, these truly organic communities do not even have a word for equality. As Dorothy Lee observes in her superb discussion of the “primitive” mind [in *Freedom and Culture*], “equality exists in the very nature of things, as a byproduct of the democratic structure of the culture itself, not as a principle to be applied. In such societies, there is no attempt to achieve the goal of equality, and in fact there is no concept of equality. Often there is no linguistic mechanism whatever for comparison. What we find is an absolute respect for man, for all individuals irrespective of age and sex.”

The absence of coercive and domineering values in these cultures is perhaps best illustrated by the syntax of the Wintu Indians of California... Terms commonly expressive of coercion in modern languages, [Lee] notes, are so arranged by the Wintu that they denote cooperative behaviour. A Wintu mother, for example, does not “take” her baby into the shade; she “goes” with it into the shade. A chief does not “rule” his people; he “stands” with them. In any case, he is never more than their advisor and lacks coercive power to enforce his views. The Wintu “never say, and in fact they cannot say, as we do, ‘I have a sister,’ or a ‘son,’ or ‘husband’,” Lee observes. “*To live with* is the usual way in which they express what we call possession, and they use this term for everything they respect, so that a man will be said to live with his bow and arrows.”

“To live with”—the phrase implies not only a deep sense of mutual respect and a high valuation of individual voluntarism; it also implies a profound sense of oneness between the individual and the group. The sense of unity within the group, in turn, extends by projection to the relationship of the community with the natural world. Psychologically, people in organic communities must believe that they exercise a greater influence on natural forces than is afforded by their relatively simple technology, an illusion they acquire by group rituals and magical procedures. Elaborate as these rituals and procedures may be, however, hu-

manity's sense of dependence on the natural world, indeed, on its immediate environment, never entirely disappears. If this sense of dependence may generate abject fear or an equally abject reverence, there is also a point in the development of organic society where it may generate a sense of symbiosis, more properly, of mutualistic interdependence and cooperation, that tends to transcend raw feelings of terror and awe. Here, humans not only propitiate powerful forces or try to manipulate them; their ceremonials help (as they see it) in a creative sense: to multiply food animals, to bring changes in season and weather, to promote the fertility of crops. The organic community always has a natural dimension to it, but now the community is conceived to be part of the balance of nature—a forest community or a soil community—in short, a truly ecological community or *eco-community* peculiar to its ecosystem, with an active sense of participation in the overall environment and the cycles of nature.

This outlook becomes evident enough when we turn to accounts of ceremonials among peoples in organic communities. Many ceremonials and rituals are characterized not only by social functions, such as initiation rites, but also by ecological functions. Among the Hopi, for example, the major agricultural ceremonies have the role of summoning forth the cycles of the cosmic order, of actualizing the solstices and the different stages in the growth of maize from germination to maturation. Although the order of the solstices and the stages in the growth of maize are known to be predetermined, human ceremonial involvement is integrally part of that predetermination. In contrast to strictly magical procedures, Hopi ceremonies assign a participatory rather than a manipulatory function to humans. People play a mutualistic role in natural cycles: they facilitate the workings of the cosmic order. Their ceremonies are part of a complex web of life which extends from the germination of maize to the arrival of the solstices. "Every aspect of nature, plants and rocks and animals, colours and cardinal directions and numbers and sex distinctions, the dead and the living, all have a cooperative share in the maintenance of the universal order," Lee observes. "Eventually, the effort of each individual, human or not, goes into this huge whole. And here, too, it is every aspect of a person which counts. The entire being of the Hopi individual affects the balance of nature; and as each individual develops his inner potential, so he enhances his participation, so does the entire universe become invigorated."

It is not difficult to see that this harmonized view of nature follows from the harmonized relations within the early human community. Just as medieval theology structured the Christian heaven on feudal lines, so people of all ages have projected their social structure onto the natural world. To the Algonkians of the North American forests, the beaver lived in clans and lodges of their own, wisely cooperating to promote the well-being of the community. Animals, too, had their

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“magic,” their totem ancestors, and were invigorated by the Manitou, whose spirit nourished the entire cosmos. Accordingly, animals had to be conciliated or else they might refuse to provide humans with skins and meat. The cooperative spirit that formed a precondition for the survival of the organic community thus entered completely into the outlook of preliterate people toward nature and the interplay between the natural world and the social.

The break-up of these unified organic communities, based on a sexual division of labour and kinship ties, into hierarchical and finally class societies gradually subverted the unity of society with the natural world. The division of clans and tribes into gerontocracies in which the old began to dominate the young; the emergence of the patriarchal family in which women were brought into universal subjugation to men; still further, the crystallization of hierarchies based on social status into economic classes based on systematic material exploitation; the emergence of the city, followed by the increasing supremacy of town over country and territorial over kinship ties; and finally, the emergence of the state, of a professional military, bureaucratic, and political apparatus exercising coercive supremacy over the remaining vestiges of community life—all of these divisions and contradictions that eventually fragmented and pulverized the archaic world yielded a resocialization of the human [experiential] apparatus along hierarchical lines. This resocialization served not only to divide the community internally, but brought dominated classes into complicity with their own domination, women into complicity with their own servitude. Indeed, the very psyche of the individual was divided against itself by establishing the supremacy of mind over body, of hierarchical rationality over sensuous experience. To the degree that the human subject became the object of social and finally self-manipulation according to hierarchical norms, so nature became objectified, despiritized, and reduced to a metaphysical entity in many respects no less contrived conceptually by a physico-mechanical notion of external reality than the animistic notions that prevailed in archaic society...

Even before the emergence of bourgeois society, Hellenistic rationalism validates the status of women as virtual chattels and Hebrew morality places in Abraham’s hands the power to kill Isaac. The reduction of humans to objects, whether as slaves, woman, or children, finds its precise parallel in Noah’s power to name the beasts and dominate them, to place the world of life in the servitude of man. Thus from the two mainstreams of western civilization, Hellenism and Judaism, the Promethean powers of the male are collected into an ideology of repressive rationality and hierarchical morality. Woman “became the embodiment of the biological function, the image of nature,” observe Horkheimer and Adorno [in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*], “the subjugation of which constituted that civilization’s title to fame. For millennia men dreamed of acquiring absolute mastery

over nature, of converting the cosmos into one immense hunting-ground. It was to this that the idea of man was geared in a male-dominated society. This was the significance of reason, his proudest boast. Woman was weaker and smaller. Between her and man there was a difference she could not bridge—a difference imposed by nature, the most humiliating that can exist in a male-dominated society. Where the mastery of nature is the true goal, biological inferiority remains a glaring stigma, the weakness imprinted by nature as a key stimulus to aggression.” It is not accidental that Horkheimer and Adorno group these remarks under the title of “Man and Animals,” for they provide a basic insight not only into man’s relationship with woman, but man’s relationship in hierarchical society with the natural world as a whole.

The notion of justice, as distinguished from the ideal of freedom, collects all of these values into a rule of equivalence that denies the entire content of archaic equality. In organic society, all human beings have a right to the means of life, irrespective of what they contribute to the social fund of labour. Paul Radin calls this the rule of the “irreducible minimum.” Archaic equality, here, recognizes the fact of inequality—the dependence of the weak upon the strong, of the infirm upon the healthy, of the young and old upon the mature. True freedom, in effect, is an equality of unequals that does not deny the right to life of those whose powers are failing or less developed than others. Ironically, in this materially undeveloped economy, humanity acknowledges the right of all to the scarce means of life even more emphatically—and in the spirit of tribal mutualism that makes all kin responsible for each other, more generously—than in a materially developing economy that yields growing surpluses and a concomitant scramble for privileges.

But this true freedom of an equality of unequals is degraded on its own terms. As material surpluses increase, they create the very social classes that glean from the labour of the many the privileges of the few. The gift which once symbolized an alliance between men akin to the blood tie is slowly turned into a means of barter and finally into a commodity, the germ of the modern bourgeois bargain. Justice emerges from the corpse of freedom to guard the exchange relationship—whether of goods or morality—as the exact principle of equality in all things. Now the weak are “equal” to the strong, the poor to the wealthy, the infirm to the healthy in all ways but their weakness, poverty, and infirmity. In essence, justice replaces freedom’s norm of an equality of unequals with an inequality of equals. As Horkheimer and Adorno observe: “Before, the fetishes were subject to the law of equivalence. Now equivalence itself has become a fetish. The blindfold over Justitia’s eyes does not only mean that there should be no assault upon justice, but that justice does not originate in freedom.”

Bourgeois society merely brings the rule of equivalence to its logical and historic extreme. All men are equal as buyers and sellers—all are sovereign egos in

the free market place. The corporate ties that once united humanity into bands, clans, tribes, the fraternity of the polis, and the vocational community of the guild, are totally dissolved. Monadic man replaces collective man; the exchange relationship replaces the kinship, fraternal, or vocational ties of the past. What unites humanity in the bourgeois market place is competition: the universal antagonism of each against all. Graduated to the level of competing capitals, of grasping and warring bourgeois enterprises, the market place dictates the ruthless maxim: "Grow or die"—he who does not expand his capital and devour his competitor will be devoured. In this constellation of ever-regressive asocial relationships, where even personality itself is reduced to an exchangeable object, society is ruled by production for the sake of production. Equivalence asserts itself as exchange value; through the mediation of money, every artistic work, indeed every moral qualm, is degraded to an exchangeable quantum. Gold or its paper symbol makes it possible to exchange the most treasured cathedral for so many match sticks. The manufacturer of shoelaces can transmute his wares into a Rembrandt painting, begging the talents of the most powerful alchemist.

In this quantitative domain of equivalences, where society is ruled by production for the sake of production and growth is the only antidote to death, the natural world is reduced to natural resources—the domain of wanton exploitation *par excellence*. Capitalism not only validates precapitalist notions of the domination of nature by man; it turns the plunder of nature into society's law of life. To quibble with this kind of system about its values, to try to frighten it with visions about the consequences of growth, is to quarrel with its very metabolism. One might more easily persuade a green plant to desist from photosynthesis than to ask the bourgeois economy to desist from capital accumulation. There is no one to talk to. Accumulation is determined not by the good or bad intentions of the individual bourgeois, but by the commodity relationship itself, by what Marx so aptly called the cellular unit of the bourgeois economy. It is not the perversity of the bourgeois that creates production for the sake of production, but the very market nexus over which he presides and to which he succumbs. To appeal to his human interests over his economic ones is to ignore the brute fact that his very authority is a function of his material being. He can only deny his economic interests by denying his own social reality, indeed, by denying that very authority which victimizes his humanity. It requires a grotesque self-deception, or worse, an act of ideological social deception, to foster the belief that this society can undo its very law of life in response to ethical arguments or intellectual persuasion.

Yet the even harsher fact must be faced that this system has to be undone and replaced by a society that will restore the balance between human society and nature—an ecological society that must first begin by removing the blindfold from Justitia's eyes, replacing the inequality of equals by the equality of unequals...

[M]y remarks up to now will mean nothing if we fail to recognize that the attempt to dominate nature stems from the domination of human by human; that to harmonize our relationship with the natural world presupposes the harmonization of the social world. Beyond the bare bones of a scientific discipline, natural ecology will have no meaning for us if we do not develop a social ecology that will be relevant to our time.

The alternatives we face in a society ruled by production for the sake of production are very stark indeed. More so than any society in the past, modern capitalism has brought the development of technical forces to their highest point, to a point, in fact, where we could finally eliminate toil as the basic condition of life for the great majority of humanity and abolish the ages-old curse of material scarcity and insecurity as the underlying feature of society. We live today on the threshold of a post-scarcity society in which the equality of unequals need no longer be the primordial rule of a small group of collective kin, but the universal condition of humanity as a whole, of the individual whose social affiliations are determined by free choice and personal affinities rather than the archaic blood oath. The Promethean personality, the patriarchal family, private property, repressive reason, the territorial city, and the state have done their historic work in ruthlessly mobilizing the labour of humanity, developing the productive forces, and transforming the world. Today, they are totally irrational as institutions and modes of consciousness... The ecological crisis of our time is testimony to the fact that the means of production developed by hierarchical society and particularly by capitalism have become too powerful to exist as means of domination.

On the other hand, if the present society persists indefinitely to do its work, the ecological problems we face are even more formidable than those which we gather under the rubric of "pollution." A society based on production for the sake of production is inherently anti-ecological and its consequences are a devoured natural world, one whose organic complexity has been degraded by technology into the inorganic stuff that flows from the end of the assembly line; literally, the simple matter that formed the metaphysical presuppositions of classical physics. As the cities continue to grow cancerously over the land, as complex materials are turned into simple materials, as diversity disappears in the maw of a synthetic environment composed of glass, bricks, mortar, metals, and machines, the complex food chains on which we depend for the health of our soil, for the integrity of our oceans and atmosphere, and for the physiological viability of our beings will become ever more simple. Literally, the system in its endless devouring of nature will reduce the entire biosphere to the fragile simplicity of our desert and arctic biomes. We will be reversing the process of organic evolution which has differentiated flora and fauna into increasingly complex forms and relationships, thereby creating a simpler and less stable world of life.

The consequences of this appalling regression are predictable enough in the long run—the biosphere will become so fragile that it will eventually collapse from the standpoint of human survival needs and remove the organic preconditions for human life. That this will eventuate from a society based on production for the sake of production is, in my view, merely a matter of time, although when it will occur is impossible to predict.

We must create an ecological society—not merely because such a society is desirable but because it is direly necessary. We must begin to live in order to survive. Such a society involves a fundamental reversal of all the trends that mark the historic development of capitalist technology and bourgeois society—the minute specialization of machines and labour, the concentration of resources and people in gigantic industrial enterprises and urban entities, the stratification and bureaucratization of life, the divorce of town from country, the objectification of nature and human beings. In my view, this sweeping reversal means that we must begin to decentralize our cities and establish entirely new ecocommunities that are artistically molded to the ecosystems in which they are located...

An ecocommunity would be supported by a new kind of technology—or ecotechnology—one composed of flexible, versatile machinery whose productive applications would emphasize durability and quality, not built-in obsolescence, an insensate quantitative output of shoddy goods, and a rapid circulation of expendable commodities... Such an ecotechnology would use the inexhaustible energy capacities of nature—the sun and wind, the tides and waterways, the temperature differentials of the earth and the abundance of hydrogen around us as fuels—to provide the ecocommunity with non-polluting materials or wastes that could be easily recycled. Indeed, decentralization would make it possible to avoid the concentrated solid waste problems created by our giant cities, wastes which can only be burned or dumped in massive quantities into our seas.

I would hope that ecocommunities and ecotechnologies, scaled to human dimensions, would open a new era in face-to-face relationships and direct democracy, providing the free time that would make it possible in Hellenic fashion for people to manage the affairs of society without the mediation of bureaucracies and professional political functionaries. The splits opened by hierarchical society ages ago would now be healed and transcended. The antagonistic division between sexes and age groups, town and country, administration and community, mind and body would be reconciled and harmonized in a more humanistic and ecological synthesis. Out of this transcendence would emerge a new relationship between humanity and the natural world in which society itself would be conceived as an ecosystem based on unity in diversity, spontaneity, and nonhierarchical relationships. Once again we would seek to achieve in our own minds the respiritization of the natural world—not, to be sure, by abjectly returning to the

myths of the archaic era, but by seeing in human consciousness a natural world rendered self-conscious and self-active, informed by a non-repressive rationality that seeks to foster the diversity and complexity of life. Out of this non-Promethean orientation would emerge a new sensibility, one that would yield in Marx's words the humanization of nature and the naturalization of humanity.

27. Noam Chomsky: Human Nature and Human Freedom (1975)

Noam Chomsky revolutionized linguistic theory by arguing that the human language faculty is innate and that the use of language cannot be explained simply in terms of environmental stimuli but presupposes the existence of specific cognitive structures in the human brain. His work therefore constituted a refutation of empiricist theories which conceive of the mind as a tabula rasa, or blank slate (Chomsky also refers to these perspectives as "radical environmentalism"). Various theorists who thought of themselves as radicals in a more political sense, including Marxists and post-structuralists, such as Michel Foucault (1926-1984), denounced Chomsky's theory of language as politically reactionary, denying that there can be anything like a fixed human nature. In this brief passage, taken from Chomsky's Reflections on Language (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), Chomsky argues that, to the contrary, theories that deny "human nature" can justify authoritarian manipulation and domination, while theories which recognize that innate structures of mind provide the basis for human creativity can provide a more plausible argument for human freedom. Reprinted with the kind permission of the New Press, which republished Reflections on Language with Language and Responsibility in a single volume in 1998.

The doctrine that the human mind is initially unstructured and plastic and that human nature is entirely a social product has often been associated with progressive and even revolutionary social thinking, while speculations with regard to human instinct have often had a conservative and pessimistic cast. One can easily see why reformers and revolutionaries should become radical environmentalists, and there is no doubt that concepts of immutable human nature can be and have been employed to erect barriers against social change and to defend established privilege.

But a deeper look will show that the concept of the "empty organism," plastic and unstructured, apart from being false, also serves naturally as the support for the most reactionary social doctrines. If people are, in fact, malleable and plastic beings with no essential psychological nature, then why should they not be controlled and coerced by those who claim authority, special knowledge, and a unique insight into what is best for those less enlightened? Empiricist doctrine

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can easily be molded into an ideology for the vanguard party that claims authority to lead the masses to a society that will be governed by the “red bureaucracy” of which Bakunin warned. And just as easily for the liberal technocrats or corporate managers who monopolize “vital decision-making” in the institutions of state capitalist democracy, beating the people with the people’s stick, in Bakunin’s trenchant phrase.

The principle that human nature, in its psychological aspects, is nothing more than a product of history and given social relations removes all barriers to coercion and manipulation by the powerful. This too, I think, may be a reason for its appeal to intellectual ideologists, of whatever political persuasion. I have discussed elsewhere [Volume Two, Selection 68] the striking similarity in the doctrines evolved by authoritarian socialists and ideologists of state capitalism, those who constitute “a secular priesthood claiming absolute authority, both spiritual and lay, in the name of unique scientific knowledge of the nature of men and things” (Isaiah Berlin, “The Bent Twig”), the “new class” of technical intelligentsia, who hope to bring about “the reign of *scientific intelligence*, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant and elitist of all regimes” [Bakunin]. The “empty organism” doctrine is a most natural one for them to adopt.

Creativity is predicated on a system of rules and forms, in part determined by intrinsic human capacities. Without such constraints, we have arbitrary and random behaviour, not creative acts. The constructions of common sense and scientific inquiry derive no less from principles grounded in the structure of the human mind. Correspondingly, it would be an error to think of human freedom solely in terms of absence of constraint. Bakunin once remarked that “the laws of our own nature... constitute the very basis of our being” and provide “the real condition and the effective cause of our liberty.” A libertarian social theory will try to determine these laws and to found upon them a concept of social change and its immediate and distant goals. If, indeed, human nature is governed by Bakunin’s “instinct for revolt” or the “species character” on which Marx based his critique of alienated labor, then there must be continual struggle against authoritarian social forms that impose restrictions beyond those set by “the laws of our own nature,” as has long been advocated by authentic revolutionary thinkers and activists.

It is reasonable to suppose that just as intrinsic structures of mind underlie the development of cognitive structures, so a “species character” provides the framework for the growth of moral consciousness, cultural achievement, and even participation in a free and just community. It is, to be sure, a great intellectual leap from observations on the basis for cognitive development to particular conclusions on the laws of our nature and the conditions for their fulfillment, say, to the conclusion that human needs and capacities will find their fullest expression in a

society of free and creative producers, working in a system of free association in which “social bonds” will replace “all fetters in human society” [Wilhelm von Humboldt, quoted in Volume Two, Selection 55]. There is an important intellectual tradition that stakes out some interesting claims in this regard. While this tradition draws from the empiricist commitment to progress and enlightenment, I think it finds still deeper roots in rationalist efforts to establish a theory of human freedom. To investigate, deepen, and if possible substantiate the ideas developed in this tradition by the methods of science is a fundamental task for libertarian social theory. Whether further investigation will reveal problems that can be addressed or mysteries that will confound us, only the future can tell.

If this endeavor succeeds, it will refute Bertrand Russell’s pessimistic speculation that man’s “passions and instincts” render him incapable of enjoying the benefits of the “scientific civilization” that reason can create (Russell, *Icarus, or the Future of Science*), at least if we understand “passions and instincts” (as Russell sometimes did) to include the “instincts” that provide the basis for the achievements of the creative intellect, as well as the “instinct of revolt” against imposed authority—in some measure, a common human attribute. Rather, success in this endeavor might reveal that these passions and instincts may yet succeed in bringing to a close what Marx called the “prehistory of human society.” No longer repressed and distorted by competitive and authoritarian social structures, these passions and instincts may set the stage for a new scientific civilization in which “animal nature” is transcended and human nature can truly flourish.

28. Graham Purchase: Anarchism and Bioregionalism (1997)

Graham Purchase is a philosopher who writes about anarchism, politics and the environment. His publications include Anarchism and Environmental Survival (Tucson: See Sharp Press, 1994) and Evolution & Revolution: An Introduction to the Life and Thought of Peter Kropotkin (Petersham: Jura Books, 1996). The following excerpts from his book, Anarchism and Ecology (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1997), set forth an anarchist conception of bioregionalism.

Bioregionalism represents an important and unique method of demarcating political space. Changes in (a) species distribution, (b) climate, (c) drainage and rainfall, and (d) physiography, supply us with the empirical data needed to produce a more or less scientific picture of natural or bioregional boundary. Let us, for example, take species distribution as a criterion of bioregional limit. Bioregionalists argue that the “biotic shift”—the percentage change in plant and animal composition from one place to another—would, when measured and

cross-referenced with other factors (climate, rainfall, physiography, etc.), provide us with a blurred but nonetheless usable map of bioregional variation. Bioregionalism thus suggests that in a new age of ecological radicalism and biological realism, political boundaries would be increasingly more sensitive to the natural and more or less scientifically quantifiable limits of the macrobiologically distinct entities that compose the planetary biosphere. Most bioregionalists of the present day stress the importance of watershed boundaries (the distribution of rivers) as the primary method of regional demarcation.

Bioregionalism begins by emphasizing and observing that the accumulated accidents of geology, compounded by the vagaries of spontaneous biological evolution, have created a living planet containing a plethora of unique ecological regions and subregions. It is further argued that the existence of regional biotic diversity is a vital component of world ecological stability. Inhabitants of distinct biotic regions must engage in modes of socio-ecological behaviour and interaction consistent with the preservation of such regions as life sustaining and self-renewing macrobiological entities.

The prime geographical unit according to the bioregionalist perspective, the natural or "ecocommunity," represents a matrix that, although astoundingly diverse, cannot be regarded as a closed integer. It is dependent on wider external determinants for its survival. The need for clean air and the intercontinental migration of bird and marine life, etc., not only show us that bioregional boundaries are extremely permeable but also illustrate their extreme interdependence on a global scale. Bioregions must be capable of existing in a dynamic ecological and federative harmony with other bioregions, both neighbouring and remote. Each bioregion must not only strive to ensure its own continuous happiness but must strive to take a responsible place in a delicately complex interregional, continental, intercontinental and global federation of environmental forces.

At the present time, one of the major causes of environmental destruction and mass pollution is large-scale concentrations of agricultural and industrial activity. The fact that large quantities of oil, coal or uranium lie well beneath the surface of the Earth has led to the development of large towns and cities in areas where, if only cultural and ecological factors were considered, large-scale human habitation would never, in all probability, have occurred. This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that many of these large-scale industrial processes are ecologically damaging in their own right. Industrial processes produce toxic substances which have been buried for millions of years and are only naturally found in very small amounts upon the surface; or more chillingly, the likes of which have never occurred in nature before. It is obvious to all that humankind's technological, industrial and economic experiments must undergo enormous changes and become much more integrated with the biology and ecology of our living planet.

Although environmental impact studies are now commonplace, in the past the suitability of the region for human cohabitation or the ecological damage that industrial activity might cause hardly entered calculations. Economic activity has been conducted on the basis of capital and State—money and profit before human welfare and nature...

Much of the world's land mass has been divided up into agro-industrial regions—one region being associated with uranium mining, another with large-scale wheat production. It is obvious that revolutionary change is imperative for the overly aggressive industrial culture of the last few centuries that has tended to divide the Earth into "economic regions." Basic energy, construction materials and food, rather than being simply extracted from those regions where they are abundant and thence scattered and disseminated to where they are needed, will have to be produced on a more local and ecologically-sensitive basis...

The idea of a totally self-reliant city is perhaps a utopian one. Differences in climate, physiography and natural vegetation etc. do, of themselves, often make for a very uneven distribution of scarce resources. It may not be possible to grow trees in a large number of ecological regions. Substitutes for wood... might be impracticable, thus supplies of timber would have to be brought in from elsewhere. Certain important minerals and substance are so rare, and found in so few places, it is inevitable that their regions should be associated with their extraction and processing. Anarchism... hopes that the international trade union movement will work cooperatively to ensure that such resources are distributed to where they are needed on an equitable and rational basis. On the whole however, the trend towards an individual city or region being dominated and dependent upon a single industry or resource is one that must be replaced by tendencies toward increasing local self-sufficiency where each individual city-region or federations thereof are able to grow, manufacture, distribute and recycle the majority of their basic agro-industrial necessities...

All of this does not however imply a situation where patterns of economic and cultural life are made to fit the limits of a crude biological determinism or a kind of ecoregional dictatorship. Bioregionalism in its purest theoretical formulation requires cultural and economic determinants to be organically tailored to a particular bioregion on a one to one basis. This kind of bioregional purism is usually associated with the viewpoint that the bioregion, when considered as an ecosystem, is a nearly all-embracing biological entity in which humans form only a small part and to which all forms of cultural and economic life should be completely subservient. Complete bioregional integrity will only come about when the culturally accepted political unit is that of the bioregion.

The political concept of [the] region is an enormously complex matrix of which bioregional determinants are one among many, albeit woefully neglected

at the present time. Unless we are looking into the very distant past or the very distant future, the realization of ecological regions is highly unlikely, except in very special circumstances (e.g., on small and isolated islands), to ever serve as the sole criterion for the demarcation of political and regional space. To declare that it could do so is merely to express a conservative and unchanging attitude to nature in which environmental change and development is regarded as something evil in itself. Nature is, however, always modifying itself. To deny this fact is to deny the very fact of evolutionary process. Moreover, all animals change and alter their environment through the very act of living and evolving.

Humankind, through its industrial and cultural practices over many centuries, has had a profound effect upon its surrounding environment, often changing or interrupting the ecology of whole regions and continents. Although much of this activity has been very destructive, change need not imply disaster and may indeed produce ecological success—enhancing and improving regional ecology or creating new and exciting environments. The British countryside, for example, is renowned for its beauty and diversity. Paradoxically, as the first country to industrialize, Britain's wilderness has not existed for several thousand years. Every inch of available land has been continuously and consciously moulded, shaped and changed in order to cater to the economic and cultural requirements of its inhabitants. Nonetheless, until the reckless expansionism of recent years, the British Isles has preserved much of its wildlife and adorned its country areas with grace and charm—the collective result of the artistic and constructive genius of countless generations of people the land over.

In some cases industrial activity accidentally enriches the surrounding environment. The hundreds of miles of canals that criss-cross the English countryside have become a haven for aquatic life. In a similar fashion the Norfolk Broads in England's East Anglia were originally formed when deep channels were dug in order to collect peat for fuel. These water-filled channels created a living Venice in which a great variety of life found a home in its complex maze of watercourses. In this sense, nature enhanced the industrial activities of our species.

Agricultural practices, although capable of doing great damage, have likewise provided new habitats in which indigenous regional plant and animal life might make a home. The dry stonewalls and hedgerows that form the characteristic patchwork of the British countryside provide new habitats for many species of wall fern, plants and bird life. In other instances, cooperation between agriculture and nature was more conscious (e.g., the old tradition of constructing barns with built-in nesting holes for barn owls in order for them to control the mouse population). On a more extensive scale, much of Holland's agricultural land has been formed through land reclamation by means of a complex system of drainage dykes or canals. Even the Australian aboriginals have had a profound effect upon

the ecology of the land. In order to encourage a plentiful supply of game dependent upon an abundance of fresh shoots, the aboriginals, over many thousands of years, developed an extensive pattern of controlled bush-burning. The activities of humankind in this instance, actually ensured the survival of many species. With the arrival of the European invaders, many species became extinct because the bush-burning upon which their survival depended was no longer being performed.

A bioregion is a dynamic, living and constantly evolving macrobiological entity that is not static and unchanging. It usually has a great number of social-ecological possibilities which may or may not involve varying degrees of human manipulation, and offers differing prospects for maintaining renewable and harmonious forms of biosocial existence. Social-ecological anarchism, in advocating the idea of the bioregion, does not ask us to subject all cultural and economic life to bioregional dictatorship. Social-ecological anarchism stresses rather the need for economic, cultural and biological balance or partnership where economic and cultural patterns are *integrated* rather than being *determined* by their surrounding ecological regions. Social-ecological anarchism accepts that a region may be significantly altered by a large range of cultural and economic practices but nonetheless holds to a *soft* determinist position, continuously underlining that socioeconomic practices must be sensitive to local ecological conditions and consistently capable of preserving the integrity of their surrounding bioregions.

Social-ecological anarchism stresses that hydrocephalic concentration, mass culture and centralized governmental or nonregional external power have resulted in imperialist and nonintegrated forms of industry and agriculture that are completely incapable of preserving the regional ecological integrity so vital for planetary biospheric survival. While acknowledging that transregional economic concerns are an important and unavoidable dimension of human life, social-ecological anarchism calls for the immediate and thorough-going application of appropriately rescaled agro-industrial practices and technologies which are intimately linked to regional needs and locally-available renewable and nonrenewable resources.

Similarly, while acknowledging the historical importance of transregional cultural affiliation, social-ecological anarchism nonetheless calls for a renewed and ecologically-informed sense of regional uniqueness in each community. There is a sense not only of generalized or global dependence but of dependence on a specific region with distinct ecological needs and qualities of its own.

Social-ecological anarchism presents us with a vision of human society where our species neither allows itself to dominate or be dominated by nature and the ecological region. Anarchism doesn't merely ask us to live in harmony with nature. Social-ecological anarchism hopes rather, that through the proper balanc-

ing of economic, cultural and ecological factors upon a regional basis, we can actively enhance and improve upon the beauty, generosity and creative potentiality of organic life and nature. Of all the biogeographers and great anarchist writers of the last century, Elisée Reclus most perfectly expresses [in *La Terre*, Volume II] the breadth and moral beauty of the social-ecological and anarchist world vision:

“Man’s great efforts to drain marshes and lakes, to overcome natural obstacles, to modify the distribution of plant and animal species is, in itself, a fact of decisive importance in the transformation of the planet. It can beautify the earth as well as make it ugly. Depending on the social awareness and customs of each people, nature is either degraded or elevated. Man moulds to his own image the country [each people] inhabit. The barbarian, after centuries of brutal exploitation, had given the earth a ferocious, brutal aspect, whereas the civilized person, by intelligent cultivation, can make it radiate with grace, so to speak, in such a manner that the stranger who passes feels gently accepted and relaxes with confidence on its bosom.”

29. Chaia Heller: Ecology and Desire (1999)

Chaia Heller is an anthropologist, social ecologist and feminist associated with the Institute for Social Ecology. The following excerpts are from her book, Ecology of Everyday Life: Rethinking the Desire for Nature (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1999).

We need to rethink desire in social, rather than romantic or individualistic terms. This is crucial because, while our society offers us a variety of ways to describe the many dimensions of romantic and individualistic desire, we are offered a paltry vocabulary with which to describe a social understanding of desire. We are saturated by consumerist rhetoric of “personal satisfaction” yet rarely do we hear eloquent discussion regarding the craving for a free and non-hierarchical society. Our society worships at the fountain of capitalism whose insatiable waters of material greed and sexual domination crowd out the opportunity to cultivate a desire to regenerate rather than deplete cooperative social and ecological relationships.

Ecology is as much about desire as it is about need. While activists take to the streets to fight genetically manipulated organisms that threaten environmental and health safety, they also take over the streets, creating a carnivalesque demand for community, pleasure, and meaning. Ecology speaks to two demands, then—

one quantitative, the other qualitative. Born out of the call for enough clean water, air, and land to survive, ecology is also the demand for a particular quality of life worth living.

The desire for an ecological way of life carries within it the nascent demand for an ecological society, a demand that has potentially revolutionary implications. For once we collectively translate this desire into political terms, we are able to challenge a global system that immiserates most of the world's inhabitants, forcing them to forgo their desires, lowering their ecological expectations to the level of mere sustenance or survival. Keeping a desire-focus within the ecology movement keeps our demand for satisfaction, vitality, and meaning alive, invigorating our ability to envision a socially and ecologically desirable society.

Yet the question is what kind of desire will inform ecological movements and what kind of "nature" will be the object of ecological desire? Will it be an individualistic desire for a pure "nature" that is understood to be outside of society? Or will it be a social desire, a yearning to be part of a greater collectivity that challenges the structure of society to create a cooperative and ecological world?

Yet while we need to rethink our understanding of desire, we also have to rethink our understanding of nature. "Nature" cannot be the "country home" of our desires—that place we run to in our dreams, longing to escape the pain and confusion of life at the beginning of a new century. By placing the idea of nature within society itself, we may transform society into a ground on which we may build, collectively, a new practice of both nature and community. An ecology of everyday life translates the desire for "nature" into a social desire to create a society that is whole, humane, and meaningful.

Nature is not a pure and abstract thing removed from the everyday lives of people living in cities, suburbs, and towns. By bringing the idea of "nature" down to earth, ecology becomes the very stuff of our everyday lives: the crowded street in our neighbourhood, the water with which we wash our clothes, both sky scraper and smoke-stack, as well as the plants, animals, and other creatures with whom we share this planet.

An ecology of everyday life transforms ecology from a lofty romantic venture into an ongoing everyday labour of love. Ecology is just as much about providing day-care for parents attending organizing meetings and fighting to save urban neighbourhoods from road building and gentrification as it is about protecting forests and green spaces.

Removing the idea of nature from its pristine and static display case, we may see nature for what it is: a dazzling and dynamic evolutionary process that continues to unfurl about us and within us. And in turn, we may see capitalism for what it is as well: a voracious fire burning through society and nature, reducing

all that is living to ash. By recognizing our minds, our hands, our bones, and our hearts as part of a collective natural history—as an evolutionary inheritance—we become outraged by this fire, breathing it into our lungs, transforming it into a moral outrage that is fuel for revolutionary action.

Once we are able to locate ourselves within this evolution, we can begin to measure our everyday lives as they are against what they could be if only we were free to actualize our potential for such evolutionary coups as cooperation, creativity, and community and self-development. Suddenly, the dull office job, the lonely neighbourhood, the poverty, or even the unsatisfying privilege—all take on new meaning.

Ecology provides a lens through which we may take a long and often excruciating look at our own lives, a chance to evaluate the quality of our relationships, both local and global. And if we are not heartened by what we see, we realize that we have an enormous challenge before us. For once we appreciate the interconnectedness of life, we understand that we cannot simply work to save a certain species of plant or animal—we realize that we must also transform society itself.

In turn, the demand for an ecological society cannot be reduced to an individual or personal quest for a better quality of life. It must be a social desire to fight for the quality of life for all, a desire that ultimately requires a dramatic restructuring of political, social, and economic institutions. It asks that we transform our love for nature into a revolutionary activist politics that strives to bring to society the best of what we long for when we talk about “nature.”

We need to rethink our desires to “simplify” our lives, or our desires to create autonomous zones in which we can find asylum from the deadening society that capitalism creates in its own image. In addition, we must begin to grapple with what I call “the complexity of complicity”: a recognition that, despite attempts to extricate ourselves from systems of injustice through personal choices about how we will live, because of the pervasiveness of overlapping systems of power, we will always remain embedded, and thus complicit within, such institutions as global capitalism, the State, racism, and sexism.

Yet instead of despising ourselves for privileges we may have, we may begin to redefine such guilt as “ineffective privilege.” By identifying privileges based on such factors as gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, education, class, ethnicity, or nationality—we may transform particular privileges into a potent substance to be used for social and political reconstruction. We can transform, for example, guilt associated with class, racial, or educational privilege into time, economic resources, and information useful to political struggles. Privilege within complex systems of hierarchy can be morphed from paralyzing guilt into an active process of thinking rationally and compassionately about how to utilize particular resources to dismantle systems of power and to rebuild a new society in its place.

This desire to rebuild represents a kind of “visionary freedom” that goes beyond the “protest freedom” that has become prominent within social movements. While we must express our freedom to protest against the inhumanity of our times, it is also vital that we actualize our potential to become fully human, our potential to create a compassionate, beautiful, and rational world.

If we are to express visionary freedom, then we have to begin to ask ourselves what kind of society should we begin to envision? To envision a new kind of ecological society, we need a new kind of passionate politics, a new idea of what it means to be politically engaged. We must demand a revolutionary democracy in which citizens are no longer dominated by the nation-State. We may re-create ourselves as state-less citizens empowered to directly manage our everyday lives.

We must develop a new understanding of citizenship that is not defined in relation to capital or to the nation-state but is instead defined in opposition to capital and the nation-state. We may become revolutionary citizens defined in relation to local communities that are part of a larger confederation of self-governing bodies. We may become “a community of communities” [Volume Two, Selection 16]...

If we do not find this deadening world desirable, then we must do more than protest: we must create the world we desire.

To fulfill its revolutionary potential, ecology must become the desire to infuse the objects, relationships, and practices of everyday life with the same quality of integrity, beauty, and meaning that people in industrial capitalist contexts commonly reserve for “nature.” It means recasting many of the values often associated with nature within social terms, seizing the power to create new political institutions that encourage, rather than obstruct, the expression of a social desire for a cooperative, pleasurable, and ecological society.

An ecology of everyday life is about reaching for this desirable society, reclaiming our humanity as we reclaim our abilities to reason, dream, and to make decisions about our own communities. It is about looking into the uncharted “wilderness” of direct-democracy itself, that delicious, empowering, and deeply social process through which we become a truly humane expression of that “nature” for which we have yearned all along.

30. Peter Marshall: Liberation Ecology (2007)

In the following excerpts, Peter Marshall sets forth his concept of “liberation ecology,” a perspective that incorporates various aspects of social ecology, deep ecology and eco-anarchism into a holistic and hopeful vision for the liberation of nature and humanity. A version of this essay appeared in Resurgence, No. 205, March-April 2007. Marshall develops more fully his philosophy of liberation

ecology in Riding the Wind: A New Philosophy for a New Era (1998). He is also the author of Nature's Web (1992) and Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism (1992; updated with a new epilogue, 2007). His website is at www.petermarshall.net. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

The relationship between humans and the rest of nature is organic and symbiotic and evolving. The emergence of mind with the development of the human species would seem to mark a crucial phase in evolution. But I do not think there is a difference in kind between humans and other animals; it is only one of degree. At some stage, natural evolution gave way to human evolution, and with that social and cultural change: from our first nature of biological life emerged the second nature of human consciousness. As a result, we are not simply the products of our circumstances: consciousness enables us to be free and to say no to our conditioning. It follows that the more aware we are, the freer we become. We can change our selves as well as our circumstances.

If this be the case, how should we treat the rest of nature? We can help by limiting our numbers and ceasing to be such an overwhelming burden. We do not have any God-given right to direct the course of evolution. Where we have intervened deeply in the past, there may be a need for some restoration work. But in general we should have faith in the ability of nature to follow its own beneficial and creative course.

Nature left alone knows what is best for itself and can heal itself. Nature knows how to manage itself: it is self-regulating, self-organizing and self-sustaining. A tree does not have to be told how to grow, any more than a mouse to hide or a child to enjoy herself. The more we humans intervene with the natural process of evolution, the more trouble there is. We have learned how to control, manipulate and conquer. Now is the time for letting go. So I say, "Hands off Nature, Let Nature Be!"

In the past we have acted as lords of creation. Many say that we should become custodians or stewards of nature. But even that implies a position of superiority, suggesting that we know best. It is time for human arrogance to give way to a sense of equality. We should no longer act as business managers of the cosmic process but as fellow voyagers in the grand and mysterious odyssey of evolution...

In order to go beyond our narrow self-interest and to see things from the perspective of the whole, we need to recognize the importance of the imagination and sensibility as reliable guides to truth and knowledge. Above all, I believe that first principles in religion, metaphysics and ethics are based on deep intuition. If we are sufficiently still and quiet and open, we can rely on the clear promptings of our inner voice to see us through the labyrinth of morality.

At the core of Liberation Ecology is a deeply-felt ethics. It has four fundamental principles based on deep intuition.

The first is that nature has value in itself. It is not simply a means to our ends, but an end-in-itself. And since it has intrinsic value, it deserves our respect. We should treat it well.

The second principle is that all life is sacred, it deserves our respect. We should treat it well.

The third principle is that we should cause minimum harm. If we cannot help others, at least we should try not to harm them. And if we wish to cause the least possible harm, we should have compassion for all beings. We should treat them well.

The fourth principle is that we should seek the well-being of the whole. Anything which contributes to the well-being of the whole is good, while anything which detracts from it is bad. We should treat it well.

Taken together, the import of these principles can be summed up in the idea of Reverence for Being.

Liberation Ecology not only offers a philosophy of nature and an environmental ethic, but it has radical implications for our social and economic arrangements.

Although they have often been confused, there is a crucial distinction between society and the State. There is a spontaneous order in society as there is in nature. We are all social beings as well as unique individuals and society normally brings out the best in us.

The State, with its coercive apparatus of laws, army, police, courts and prisons, is on the other hand a comparatively recent development in human history. Its origins lie in the institution of private property and in the emergence of hierarchy and domination in society. It is not the cure, as its defenders claim, but the principal cause of disorder and conflict. Far from preventing inequalities and injustices, it only aggravates and preserves them. It considers security more important than liberty. It is an octopus whose tentacles reach into the most intimate parts of our lives. It has developed surveillance to a fine science and art. Even its benign face of welfare creates dependence and undermines local initiative, mutual aid and self-help. It considers security more important than freedom. Its laws protect private property far more than hard-won civil liberties. It has always been used by those who control it to pursue mainly their own interests, whatever they might say.

In reality, the State is not only an evil but an unnecessary one. As Kropotkin, Reclus and Gandhi have long pointed out, the best form of society is an enlightened anarchy, not in the negative sense of disorder but in the positive sense of a decentralized society running its own affairs without the centralized State.

A free and ecological society is best organized on the twin pillars of decentralization and federation. A direct and participatory form of democracy can be achieved through local assemblies based on consensus as far as possible rather than majority rule. These local assemblies can then federate at district, regional and national level to co-ordinate production and distribution, resolve disagreements and organize defence. Ultimately, the Nation State would be replaced by a voluntary community of self-managing communities. Such a society would resemble a web rather than a pyramid as it does today.

Since the main cause of crime—the breaking of a law—is the unjust distribution of property, there would be fewer incidents in a freer, more equal and sustainable society. Any disputes and misdemeanours could be dealt with by popular juries which aim at restoring social harmony rather than imposing punishments.

There would no longer be any need for standing armies or police forces to protect the State and private property. Defence from foreign invasions could be organized through peace brigades trained in civil disobedience. It is better in defence to be a prickly hedgehog than a porcupine which throws its spears and then becomes vulnerable. Any foreign invader would find it difficult to rule and control a decentralized, self-governing and self-reliant society.

How can we organize the economy in such a free and ecological society? The Greek root of the word “economy” is the organization of the “oikos,” the household. As with ecology, its meaning should be extended to embrace the Earth Household.

I take the good things of the Earth to be a common treasury which are there to be shared with each other. I recommend the ancient principle of justice that we should give according to our ability and receive according to our needs. But no coercion is involved: individuals should be able to give freely and take freely from the common treasury in a fair and agreed manner. Surpluses from one region could be shared with other regions which may experience temporary shortages. With production and distribution kept as local as possible to meet the needs of all with a minimum impact on the environment, the vagaries of international markets and the machinations of predatory transnational companies would be checked and countered. In the long run, this kind of economy would lead to a form of voluntary communism. And we should be prepared to share our wealth created by nature’s abundance and our labour not only with people in other parts of the world but with other species, whether it be the birds in the bush, the deer on the hill, or the seals in the sea. What right do we have to all the grain in the world?

In place of the market, I propose an economy based on the gift relationship. The more we give, the more the flow of energy circulates around society and the world and the more we receive back. If some take a little more than others, it does

not matter, for there would be a guaranteed minimum for all to thrive in a free and ecological society; indeed its health might be judged by the number of inactive people it could support.

At the same time, we should dwell lightly on the Earth, developing soft and graceful pathways of energy and using delicate and appropriate technology. The fashionable notion of “sustainable development” is a contradiction in terms: the present form of development in advanced industrial societies is simply not sustainable, nor can it be exported to other societies without disastrous ecological consequences. The answer is not a “U” turn back to a hunter-gatherer society—even if that were possible—but to go off at a tangent and develop a society based on self-sufficiency and self-reliance while always being ready to share with others less well off. It involves acting locally, thinking globally and meditating cosmically.

In a free and ecological society we would live well but more simply. We are told that the more we consume and the more material possessions we have, the happier we will be. But the very opposite is true. Those who have experienced them know that material riches or power over others inevitably bring unhappiness, as night follows day. Real wealth is knowing when you have enough. “To be” is more meaningful than “to have.” What brings real and lasting contentment is living a purposeful and creative life in harmony with each other and the planet.

At present most people avoid work like the plague or experience it as drudgery because it alienates them from themselves, from each other and from nature. They live to work rather than work to live. Yet the more you are forced to work, the less you want to do it and the more unpleasant it becomes. Real work is undertaken voluntarily and fulfils rather than denies your nature. Real work helps you unfurl and realize your potential. Real work is done with effortless ease. Then nothing is done through coercion, and nothing is left undone. In this way, work is turned into meaningful play and *homo faber* (working humanity) becomes *homo ludens* (playful humanity).

A genuinely free and ecological society would escape the grey uniformity and clockwork regularity which at present spread across the world. It recognizes that the greater the diversity in society and nature, the more overall harmony there is. Such a society would therefore be tolerant, creative and life-enhancing. No doubt a form of “communal individuality” [Selection 18 above] would develop in which there would be the greatest amount of individuality compatible with social responsibility. The freedom of one would be the basis of the freedom of all.

No doubt many will say that all this is too idealistic and utopian. But to be utopian is not to engage in idle fantasy but to imagine another way of going about things. Those in power dismiss as ‘utopian’ something which they don’t want

or like because it might threaten their rule. But if we are to avoid the present ecological crisis and political impasse, if we are to affirm life rather than death, then it is now time to create what for long has been considered by the mainstream as impossible...

How then can we put the principles of Liberation Ecology into action? By contracting-out as far as possible from the centralized State, by undermining the need for its rule, by forming new relationships and associations so that when it finally crumbles a free society will have developed, already functioning within the shell of the old. Wherever people put freedom into action in their everyday lives they begin to create a free society.

I do not believe there is one class or particular social group which has an historic mission to change society. All can hinder or help in different ways. Nor do I look to one particular strategy. The long-term aim of Liberation Ecology is to establish an enlightened form of anarchy as the most ordered and creative form of society, but, in the short term, it supports any movement or tendency which seeks to expand freedom, decentralize power and create a freer and more equal society in harmony with nature.

We can start here and now. We can seek to end the tyrant within ourselves and transform our relationships with others. We can form affinity groups, voluntary associations and co-operatives. We can network with like-minded people in our communities, our regions and throughout the world. I can see no contradiction between changing lifestyles and working to change institutions. We can do-it-ourselves and do-it-together.

At the same time, I do not believe that a free and ecological society can be brought about through violence. Whether morally or practically, the ends cannot justify the means.

Indeed, means are ends-in-the-making: you cannot use violent means to bring about peaceful ends any more than you can be cruel to be kind. You cannot force people to be free. At the same time, non-violent direct action, strikes, demonstrations and symbolic acts can all challenge coercive authority, raise awareness and help bring about a more just, free and sustainable society. We create the future through how we think, act and live in the present...

Having realized that a meaningful life is more important than acquiring wealth or power, a growing number of people are choosing to live lightly on the Earth.

Local campaigns against specific abuses are on the increase, such as defending woods and wetlands, cleaning up beaches and protesting against roads. Organic and local food is now in huge demand. Permaculture is no longer an idle reverie. Barter schemes demonstrate that money is not the only way to exchange

goods, skills and services. The concern for animal rights and liberation shows how the moral community is being extended to include non-human beings.

As globalization deepens and transnational companies exert more economic and political power, there is a growing counter-movement which celebrates the regional, the local, the small and the autonomous. While the power of humanity to dominate and pollute the planet increases, more humans are celebrating and protecting the wild and the free. Even the ability of unfettered science and technology to bring about progress is under question, as the controversies over the genetic engineering of plants and animals vividly illustrate. And there is a growing awareness that reason needs to be warmed by the heart and fired by the imagination. Vision and science need not be antagonistic but can be mutually enhancing.

The elements of Liberation Ecology are already there, like seeds beneath the snow. A thaw is beginning to set in and new shoots are springing up everywhere. It is becoming realistic to demand what was long considered impossible. We can ride the winds of change and land safely in this century, exhilarated, joyful and free.

All of us have our own special skills and knowledge. We all know our own dwelling places where we can be most effective. Acting for ourselves we can act for others. We may sometimes seem like drops in the ocean, but combined together we can create clouds of life-giving rain to fertilize the deserts of this beautiful and troubled world.

Chapter 7

Personal Liberation

31. Alan Mandell: Anti-Psychiatry and the Search for Autonomy (1979)

Alan Mandell is the director of the Mentoring Institute at Empire State College in New York. He has written for many years about the philosophy and practice of adult, distance and student-centered learning. The following excerpts are from his article, "Anti-Psychiatry and the Search for Autonomy," originally published in Black Rose, No. 4 (1979).

One of the most significant aspects of the social and cultural movements of the 1960s in America, Europe, and across the world was to explode a rigid and narrow definition of the "political" which—due partially to a legacy of Marxian concepts—reduced it to a byproduct of economics. By seeing the need to understand and to respond not only to imperialism and to racism, but to the authoritarianism of our schools and factories and to the sexism that defined many of our most intimate relationships, the confining boundaries of what had constituted the political became more and more obviously inadequate. We could no longer only one-sidedly examine and criticize a world of structures and powers and inequalities that were external to us. Neither politics-as-voting-electing nor politics-as-simple-and-necessary-response-to-economics could move us to revise our scant attention to the quality of our daily existences.

Importantly, this "critique of everyday life" (as some came to refer to it) demanded that the world of the "personal" was, in itself, tied to the social world in intricate and critical ways: ways significant to the understanding of the social critic and the activist. Psychology could not purport to describe and claim to know a distinct arena of individual activity or unconscious feeling... R.D. Laing's *The Politics of Experience* (1967) brought to popular attention some of the concerns and orientations of those within the field of psychiatry regarding the interaction between "self and others." Laing's early works (*The Divided Self* was first

published in 1959; *Self and Others* in 1961) not only explored the need to locate “webs” and “networks” of interpersonal activity—to see the self within a context, as constituting and constituted by a social world. His works also offered a continuing criticism of the prevalence and distortions of behaviourism, the medical model, and the taken-for-granted dichotomies between health and sickness. Although his writings often dealt with the micro-world of our experience—especially our families, sometimes to the detriment of a fuller exploration of larger constellations of societal interaction; and sometimes confused important differences between social change and therapy (an argument powerfully introduced in Russell Jacoby’s *Social Amnesia*), Laing’s success in describing the textures of our experiences, the violence we do to others and they to us in our everyday conversations and lives together, and his efforts to examine the alienation (the loss) of our experience and our need to “recover the wholeness of being human” represents a clear and crucial step toward an understanding of freedom and domination on both an individual and social level.

Laing’s writings had reverberations beyond the level of theorizing. His work (and that of others in Britain and the United States) became one of the bases for an understanding of psychiatric labeling as a social and political process and of psychiatric institutionalization as another means to define possible experiences, control behaviour, and imprison those who stood outside of the “normal.” Illness could no longer be seen as having its roots within the individual; rather, it had to be understood as part of an interactional nexus constituted within the family. And David Cooper, an early co-worker of Laing’s in London, was quick to point to the parallels between the mental hospital itself and the family constellation:

“In the mental hospital, society has, with unerring skill, produced a social structure that in many respects reduplicates the maddening peculiarities of the patient’s family. In the mental hospital he finds psychiatrists, administrators, nurses, who are his veritable parents, brothers and sisters, who play an interpersonal game which only too often resembles in the intricacies of its rules the game he failed in at home. Once again, he is perfectly free to choose. He may decide to vegetate his days away in a chronic back ward or he may decide to oscillate between his family hell and the not dissimilar hell of conventional psychiatric admission ward—the latter course being the usual present-day idea of psychiatric progress.” (*To Free a Generation*, 1967)

Laing, Cooper, and others in England sought new forms of care where small communities could function without the imposition of staff-patient [hierarchies], and without clinical preconceptions and medical strategies. Cooper himself was

finally given permission in the middle 60s to convert a ward in a large London hospital (“Villa 21” described in his *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry*) into a unit where the issues of the meaning of care, of the differences between authentic and inauthentic authority, and of the needs of doctors, nurses, and patients to act toward each other in prescribed and stultifying ways were actively addressed through the on-going participation, discussion, and lived-experience of everyone in the unit. Laing and other Londoners interested in working with these kinds of issues formed the Philadelphia Association (from its origins as “brotherly love”) and continued the search for alternatives to hospital outside of mental health institutions. (Kingsley Hall and other households throughout London served as early and important experiments in establishing such alternatives. In its own brochure, Kingsley Hall was described as a place where “everyone’s actions could be challenged by anyone.”) By the late 1960s, Cooper had used his experiences within mental hospitals to develop a critical perspective:

“The mental hospital as a social system defines itself by certain limits within which change is possible, but beyond which one cannot venture without threatening the stability of the whole structure. This structure as it has developed historically has acquired institutional sclerosis.”

For Laing, Cooper, and a growing anti-psychiatry movement around the world, a new and more radical direction was clear: “a step forward means ultimately a step out of the mental hospital into the community.”

...Cooper’s *The Death of the Family* (1970), *The Grammar of Living* (1974), and his most recent *The Language of Madness* (1978)... have all sensitively and provocatively deepened the discussion of therapy, self-exploration and personal change to include issues of the family, the limits of community health programs (their frequency in duplicating the “logic” of the hospital in miniaturized and more subtle forms), the power of the state, corporate capitalism, and what he more generally describes as “a structuring that evades political truth in the interest of Permanent Mystification”...

[L]ocating a kind of language that can serve to “break through” the “banalizing chatter of everyday normality” (whether this discourse takes the form of family “conversations” around a dinner table, or the “dialogues” of academics at a national conference, or the “negotiations” among super-powers) is a recurring theme of Cooper’s analysis. Thus, the differences between the “romanticization” of madness (a dangerous and prevalent tendency in much of the writing—fantasizing—about “going crazy”) and the “politicization” of madness (its political nature and political implications) becomes critical to Cooper. “The language of madness,” he describes is nothing more nor less than the realization

of language: “Our words begin to touch the other and that’s where the danger of madness lies: when it tells the truth. One danger, the only danger of madness, is violent denormalization of trivial words and worlds of security” (1978).

The foundation of Cooper’s new politics is the reality of movements of people toward a living “autonomy.” These movements are denied, however, by the very forms and understandings of conventional psychoanalytic language and process—often perceived as the bastion of individual freedom and autonomy within an oppressive and self-denying social world. Instead of raising the question: what are the possibilities that the person ‘being analyzed’ has of reaffirming his/her self-perceptions, the analytic mold strives to defend and continually re-affirm “the analyst’s role as the trustworthy person who understands objectively, who fully knows, by virtue of his own training, his own feelings about himself and therefore about his feelings about you and ultimately your feelings about yourself.” According to Cooper, the “comforting abdication to the analyst’s perceiving—a sweet, warm, passive, penny-in-the slot acquiescence—” negates any true sense of self-realization and undercuts associations based upon desire and choice. Importantly, it is the refusal of patients to accept “the evasive response that their political consciousness is an intellectual defence against a ‘deeper problem’,” that raises the real possibility of both personal and social change. Psychoanalysis itself has become “yet another agency in the employ of the endlessly devious, repressive and repressively ‘tolerant’ bourgeois system. A sort of CIA of the individual psyche.” (1974)

When Cooper defines the term “*autogestion*” in *The Language of Madness*, he continues to more fully explore the goal of autonomy as a critical political category, one that seeks to resurrect and not to destroy the “absurd hopes, fears, joys of despair and despairs of joy of people who refuse containment by that system (capitalism)”:

“If autonomy is laying down the law for oneself—the original autonomy—then *autogestion* is taking over the power structure of one’s life and work, obviously not alone but with identifiable other people who work, kind of live, or live and work with oneself. It’s simply not a matter of ‘workers taking over factories’: *autogestion* applies to every aspect of life. If one’s personal needs conflict with those of the group of other people, that becomes tangible and frangible, we assume we can fight it out. The enemy of the *autogestion* movement is centralized state power. *Autogestion* does not mean autodigestion, eating up oneself, but means eating up our indigestible social system, chewing it, drying it out on our stomachs, vomiting it finally when we know its impossibility and flushing it down the toilet pan.” (1978)

Clearly for Cooper, there are no “personal problems”, only “political problems.” In a world where “personal” problems reign supreme, ideologies of personal salvation will only present strategies that depoliticize, and that “will exclude from the concrete field of action macropolitical reality and the repressive systems that mediate this reality to the individual.”

Judi Chamberlin’s *On Our Own: Patient Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System* (1978) not only vividly recounts her own experiences as a mental patient and those of others, but describes the on-going, exciting, and often successful struggles of many ex-patients in the United States and Canada today to create true alternatives to psychiatric ideology and institutionalization based upon an understanding of their own needs and through their own efforts. (As Cooper would write: “We don’t need a world like this that does violence to our every judgment. We need another world that we can alter by our altering.”) Chamberlin’s notion of a “true” alternative focuses upon the necessary realities of autonomy much as Cooper’s does:

“What I define as a true alternative is one in which all basic decision-making power is in the hands of those the facility exists to serve. Such places are rare, but where they do exist, they show clearly how well people can help one another in environments that have been set up to maximize the strengths and abilities of each participant.”

Chamberlin’s discussion of real and false alternatives and her description of the daily lives of those living in a variety of facilities are excellent in beginning to show that the claims of “participation” themselves can hide more subtle sources of control—can tempt us to accept forms of authority and organization that further twist and confuse the differences between mutual care and help and an externally imposed benevolence that perpetuates submission and passivity (just as we come to accept the false equation between de-institutionalization and care.) The final “right” listed in the handbook prepared by the Mental Patient’s Liberation Front in Massachusetts—“You have the right to patient-run facilities where the decisions that are made and work that is done are your responsibility and under your control”—becomes even more crucial when placed within the context of contemporary policies regarding hospitals, schools, and factories that use labels like autonomous decision-making, worker-participation, and student/patient/community control to buttress managerial propaganda and tactics for even greater control over peoples’ lives.

The issues of “helping” and of “caring” are significant to Chamberlin’s criticism of professionalization and her understanding of what a truly supportive and “progressive” patient’s association should be directed toward. The “admis-

sion of weakness” that seeking help with one’s problems denotes will remain a reality “until seeking help is seen as a normal aspect of human behavior and people give and get help and support freely from one another.” Within a “real” alternative to the institutions of mental health professionals, “having problems is seen as a normal component of living in a sometimes difficult and threatening world and not as part of an illness existing only in some unfortunate people.” (Here, Cooper’s thinking about a “natural” and “mutual” therapy is relevant. “All relationships are therapy or they are violence,” he writes. “If one person in confusion seeks another person, in whose experience she or he trusts, a disciplined ‘one-way’ relationship for a while may be necessary—but on the way to free mutuality of relating.”)

One element of Chamberlin’s model for a real alternative service for ex-patients includes the following:

“Help is provided by the clients of the service to one another and may also be provided by others selected by the clients. The ability to give help is seen as a human attribute and not as something acquired by education or professional degree.”

The distrust that patients are taught to feel toward one another (that has been described as “mentalism” which like racism and sexism “infects its victims with the belief in their own inferiority”), the problems that they too come to define as “symptoms” which demand professional intervention to “treat”, the practical dilemmas of finding work or a place to live which are handled by other experts (social workers) still within a larger psychiatrically ruled context are all barriers that many groups of ex-patients have sought to confront and break down. The world of the mental hospital and its de-institutionalized counterpart, that of the single-room-occupancy-dweller on the Upper-West side of New York who has few opportunities for any form of care, stands in stark contrast to the lives of individual members of a group like the Mental Patient’s Association in Vancouver, British Columbia. The MPA embodies the on-going struggle of active people who refuse to be passive victims of an irrational system, but instead seek to find in their lived-experiences the meaning of autonomy...

Because so many contemporary popularizations of “self-help” have in fact perpetuated the societal reduction of the person to an isolated monad concerned only with its own narcissistic delights, the efforts of many people to seek and define a new politics based upon a continuing attention to the interdependencies of self and society—to the significance of such goals as participation and autonomy—have remained in the background. The movement for patient’s rights and towards alternatives to psychiatry raises issues and problems concerning what

politics is, the quality of peoples' relations to one another, the meaning and the ends of social action, and the process of coming to understand and attain human freedom that are most significant for all of us to seriously face today.

32. Rossella Di Leo: On the Origins of Male Domination (1983)

Rossella Di Leo has been active in the Italian anarchist movement for many years and is the author of numerous articles on anarchist themes. The following excerpts are taken from her essay, "The Source of the Nile: A Search for the Origins of Male Domination," in which, drawing on the work of Pierre Clastres (Volume Two, Selection 64), she sets out to discover the sources of male domination. First published in Volontá, Vol. XXXVII 1983), No. 3, April Retter's English translation appeared in Our Generation, Volume 19, No. 1 (Fall/Winter 1987-88) and is reprinted in Radical Papers 2 (Montreal: Black Rose, 1989).

Patriarchal societies are... characterized by two intertwining divisions: that between the public sphere and men, and the domestic sphere and women. By the public sphere, I mean those institutions, activities, and forms of association that exist over and above the family unit and in which domination develops, providing a hierarchical model on which the entire society is then moulded. This is the area of male competence. By the domestic sphere, I mean those "minimal institutions" formed around the basic social unit (that of the family, extended or otherwise) completely determined by the public sphere. This is the area of female competence...

On the basis of this inegalitarian social ordering, we have antithetical images of the two prevailing sexual genders. On the one hand, there is Man: the central, determining element of society, thanks to his supposedly abstract, rational, active, assertive nature. All decision-making power is in his hands; it is he who... elaborates cultural values (including the very definition of women). It is he who occupies the most prestigious social positions, whatever these may be. Then there is woman, a peripheral, marginal element because of her practical, impulsive, passive, subordinate nature. She occupies positions of little or no prestige. While man, the actor, is defined in terms of his role, profiting from the plurality of choice offered him, woman, the object, is defined in terms of her relationship to a man; subjected to the only socially accepted role—marriage (the legal passage from parental authority to marital authority) and maternity.

There are points, however, that must be made concerning these images. First, we must reject the common conception of the social structure as a pyramid, in which the upper part is occupied by the masculine gender and the lower entirely feminine. The much more articulated asymmetrical relationship between the

sexes could be better illustrated by two semi-pyramids, split along the vertical median in such a way that the vertex and every successive level of the feminine semi-pyramid is lower than the vertex and each corresponding level of the masculine. Thus, *under otherwise "equal" conditions*, the social status of a woman is always inferior to that of a man. For this reason it is preferable to use the term "sexual asymmetry" to define this complex configuration of society and avoid the term "inequality," which brings to mind the abstract dichotomic vision of the single pyramid...

The first fact to consider in any reflection on sexual asymmetry is that its presence is so widespread as to give credence to the hypothesis of its *universality*. The great majority of anthropologists have already expressed such a belief. And this presumed universality does indeed seem to be confirmed on first analysis, as Michelle Rosaldo tells us, by both a synchronic investigation of existing societies and a diachronic investigation of known ones. While Rosaldo and a large number of anthropologists are aware of those myths and archaeological evidence which would seem to prove that it was woman who was of greater social importance in some prehistoric societies, they believe that on the basis of these myths and this evidence only highly speculative interpretations can be constructed. This prudence is further motivated by the fact that societies which seemed to have reversed the man/woman relationship on deeper analysis often reveal the "classic" asymmetry, delegating the ultimate power to a man of the mother's family rather than of the father's.

Thus the panorama of human culture is characterized by this homogeneous trait repeated over time and space in societies which are widely different. There are innumerable myths to explain the origins of sexual asymmetry, and they are amazingly similar, despite the thousands of years or miles separating the cultures which produced them. It does not therefore seem unjustified to proclaim that the universality of sexual asymmetry is a fact of human culture... It only remains for us to determine whether sexual asymmetry is constant, uniform, uncoded, and thus natural, or if it is diversified, not constant, coded, and thus cultural.

It seems clear that in no civilization is the social behaviour of the sexes left to chance but is the subject of meticulous social regulation. In fact, once certain biological determinations have been fixed, nature withdraws, leaving sexual behaviour unspecified. This open space is immediately invaded by culture, whose primordial role... in the words of Levi-Strauss, "is to ensure the group's existence as a group, and... to replace chance by organization" so that it is impossible for culture "not to introduce some sort of order where there is none." And we need only look at the incredible variety of sexual roles and forms of behaviour in different societies to see that it is indeed culture and not nature that is the determining element: while the sexual division of labour is found in all societies,

those roles and behaviour patterns considered female and those considered male vary greatly from one society to another. The social behaviour of the two sexes, therefore, is not based on instinctual factors which impose universal models, but rather on cultural elaborations which vary greatly. After all, not only is sexual asymmetry explained by myths (which implies the necessity of providing some justification for it) but every society punctiliously codifies the particular form it assumes in that cultural context...

The first great division between the interpretations of the origins of sexual symmetry is based on the binomial Nature/Culture. On one side we can classify those theories which see the human species as a principally cultural phenomenon and which place sexual asymmetry within the field of human choice. The second, which partly overlaps the first, is concerned with power, subdividing the field into those views that recognize a nexus of cause and effect, or at least a correlation between the two social phenomena, and those that do not see any such nexus. All the "naturalistic" hypotheses, which obviously do not recognize power as a determining factor, fall into the first group, while the second includes the "culturalistic" interpretations. The first group contains those theories (rapidly declining today) which see no origin for sexual asymmetry, holding it to be a fact of nature; which see in the passive and subordinate "nature" of woman a hierarchical order dictated, inexorably, by biological factors. Even if this crude instinctual determinism (socio-biology apart) seems to be losing credibility, it was the founding concept of sexual culture for thousands of years.

Patriarchal culture interprets the indisputable biological differences in an antagonistic light, reducing them to that fundamental pair of concepts around which the human species turns: Nature and Culture. Man appropriates for himself that which is human *par excellence*—culture—and relegates woman to the realm of nature, to an almost pre-human stage of the species. This assimilation is justified by the all-invasive presence of biology in the life of the female, whose cyclical existence seems to move to the same rhythm as the cycle of nature; while man considers himself immune to that biological determination so obvious in woman and elects himself sole representative of the species, capable of transcending nature and of embodying the peculiar trait of our species—the symbolic capacity. Taking for himself the role of elaborator of culture, man condemns woman to immanence. The social sphere, thanks to its intrinsically transcendent character, becomes the privileged zone of male activity. The female world is circumscribed by a domestic sphere which is determined and limited by biology. "Humanity is male," declares Simone de Beauvoir [in *The Second Sex*], "and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being... She is defined and differentiated with reference to man

and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other.”

Objectifying the woman and making her into the “Other,” man creates the terms of another inseparable pair. “Once the subject seeks to assert himself, the Other, who limits and denies him, is none the less a necessity to him: he attains himself only through that reality which he is not, which is something other than himself” [de Beauvoir]. Woman is therefore the object that allows man to define himself. The definition of woman handed down to us by the patriarchal culture is therefore of more use in understanding man.

The motive behind man’s beginning this process of the cultural spoliation of woman calls for deeper consideration. We can, in part, accept the not entirely satisfying thesis that this sense of revenge in man was born out of his envy of woman’s reproductive capacity. As Ida Magli affirms, man sees a power of life and death in this procreative capacity that must be controlled by culture. Man can assert his superiority over woman only by appropriating for himself the capacity of intellectual creativity, then going on to proclaim the superiority of Culture over Nature and thus of the One over the Other.

In fact, the widely proclaimed symbolic incapacity of woman is nothing but an invention of patriarchal culture. It is patriarchal culture that prevents woman from developing her capacity for abstraction, as Merlin Stone demonstrates in her book [*When God was a Woman*] on the predominantly female religious culture which reigned for thousands of years before patriarchal culture appeared—further confirmation that female “nature” had a definite date of birth.

Before we leave the field of “naturalistic” hypothesis, there is a second and more insidious current which suggests an interpretation more subtle than the biological one. Woman is no longer considered “naturally” inferior, but is the succuba of a “biological destiny” that constrains her to a marginal role. Maternity, the dependence of children, and her inferior physical strength all exclude woman from fundamental human activity (like the hunt) around which the species develops. Thus, although the source of woman’s social inferiority is no longer written in her “nature,” it is nonetheless biologically determined. In this case, the origins of society would coincide with the origins of sexual asymmetry.

This is an extremely ethnocentric reading of human evolution which results in an overvaluing of the male contribution to evolution. One work which casts some light onto this area is that of Sally Slocum, who demolishes the thesis by demonstrating how those evolutionary events associated solely with the hunt (that is, with men) are to be found in identical fashion in the sphere of female competence. Thus, the need for greater cooperation is to be found in both the male organization of the great hunt and female domestic organization. The sophistication of

language, which leads to the development of symbolic capacity, is equally indispensable to the hunt and to the socialization of children, which is allotted to women. The invention of new tools, which leads to the development of technological capacity, is required by both man for his weapons and woman for her domestic tools and the transport of food.

Even when the veils are stripped from this shamelessly androcentric vision of human evolution we must ask why woman's biological functions have forced her into a subordinate position. It is by no means obvious why the bearing, rearing, and socializing of children, a task essential to the survival of the species, or the management of the domestic sphere, which is essential to the survival of the community, should be inferior... And it is equally hard to understand why hunting should be socially superior... It is clear that it is not the intrinsic value of a particular role in society that determines its placing, but rather the gender that personifies it.

For Margaret Mead it is startling to see "the great work of fantasy that a human society can carry out to give a particular value to a pure and simple biological fact." In reality, the biological fact is, in itself, neutral, assuming a positive or negative value only in the framework of a culturally defined system of values. This is not to say that the importance of the biological factor should be denied. But while this does differentiate between the sexes, it does not decide their social behaviour. The culturalist interpretation of sexual asymmetry goes so far as to overturn the tie of cause and effect between cultural and biological factors. Indeed, with the concept of "cultural plasticity" this relationship is inverted: it is man's cultural capacity which elaborates the biological factors. A certain culture, writes Mead, "can force all individuals born within it to assume a pattern of behavior which is undifferentiated for elements of sex, age or particular attitudes." This strength of the cultural factor, which is capable of forcing most human beings into the suggested models over and above their individual temperaments, serves not only to explain the diffusion of "female" characteristics among women and of "male" characteristics among men, but also characteristics considered "female" in one culture become, in an equally diffuse and "natural" way, the "male" characteristics of another culture...

We have now reached the point where we must untangle the knot of power to come as close as possible to an explanation of sexual asymmetry. We have already seen how sexual differences have assumed asymmetric values under an inequalitarian culture such as that of hierarchical society, and how, due to a methodological approach tainted with ethnocentrism, this society, this culture, and this asymmetry have come to be seen as universal realities. We must turn to [Pierre] Clastres to subject this distorted vision to a critique which opens the door into an unknown universe: society without domination...

The absence of a formal, hierarchically articulated structure had always relegated savage societies to the limbo of apolitical societies, to a primitive stage in human evolution, which is seen as moving inexorably towards the appearance of the State, the symbol of the political maturity of the human species, of “civilization.”

Clastres pits himself against this arrogant conception of evolution, rejecting the apolitical nature of savage societies and showing that they in fact demonstrate a different way of conceiving politics. While the society of the State “shows this divided dimension unknown to the others,” in society without the State “*power is not separated from society*” [Volume Two, Selection 64]. Power, far from being absent, escapes the logic of coercion peculiar to divided society and resides in the social body. This analysis gives us a new political figure which Clastres paradoxically calls “the chief without power”—a chief who does not command, whose words do not have the force of law. If the social body is the arena of actual power, we must see him as the arena of potential power. He personifies social power without possessing it, while society as a whole keeps him under control, aware of the implicit threat that lies in domination and in the division it brings. The thirst for prestige, which is the moving force of the “chief with power,” is held in check by society through a series of obligations, the first of which is a generosity, close to economic self-spoliation, that represents the “debt” which the “chief without power” has to society for his particular function. The political significance of this new figure cannot therefore be understood as falling into the category of “domination” but rather into that “social prestige,” a concept to which we will return later.

Let us pause to consider the terms “power” and “domination”... The aim is to divide the “nebula-power” into its different and often contradictory meanings. [Amadeo] Bertolo proposes that the term “power” be reserved for the social regulatory function (a neutral function in itself). It signifies the totality of the processes through which society regulates itself, producing and applying norms and seeing that they are observed. This function is “necessary for the existence of society, of culture, and of man himself, but also for the exercising of freedom as choice between the determined possibilities with which we begin.” By domination, on the other hand, we can understand those hierarchical social relationships which are characterized by command/obedience and which distinguish the “social systems in which the regulating function is not exercised by the collectivity over itself but by one part of it (generally, but not necessarily, a small minority) over another (generally, the great majority); that is, by systems in which access to power is the monopoly of one fraction of society (individuals, groups, classes, etc.)”

If we apply this fundamental distinction to the historical and “savage” societies identified by Clastres, we can define the former as *societies of domination*, in which a part of the social body has ensured its monopoly of power—that is,

of the social regulatory function, expropriating it from the other part and dividing society. And we define the second group as societies of equality, in which power is spread throughout the entire social body. The former are hierarchical societies formed around the relationship of command/obedience; the latter are egalitarian societies formed around relationships of reciprocity.

It is implicit that the sexual asymmetry found in the society of domination is not a cultural trait of egalitarian society. In those societies that Bookchin defines [in *The Ecology of Freedom*] as “organic,” “notions such as ‘equality’ and ‘freedom’ do not exist” [see also Selection 26 above]. But they are implicit in their very outlook. Moreover, because they are not placed in juxtaposition to the concepts of “inequality” and “unfreedom,” these notions lack definability. The idea of difference exists but is not yet ordered along a vertical axis. “To such communities, individuals and things were not necessarily better or worse than each other; they were simply dissimilar.” While both kinds of societies carry out the most fundamentally human acts, thereby—to use Mead’s words— “giving meaning to the nudity of life,” one follows hierarchical lines, whereas the other values every person and every thing on the basis of its own nature...

What was implicit in Clastres becomes more detailed and articulated in Bookchin. His egalitarian society (which he cites in the historical epoch of transition from the nomadic conception of life, typical of the bands of hunters and gatherers, to the sedentary one of horticultural communities) is one bound together by the “blood oath,” a society based on absolute parity of individuals, sexes, and age groups; on usufruct and the principle of reciprocity; on the rejection of social relationships based on coercion; on the “irreducible minimum” (the right to receive that which will allow one to survive, whatever one’s own contribution to the life and wealth of the community may be); a society which develops, instead of the concept of *homo economicus* typical of our culture, the ideal of *homo collectivus*. “Home” and “World” are one and the same in organic society, which is devoid of that fatal split between the public and private spheres. Both sexes are sovereign, autonomous, and independent in their respective spheres of competence. This fundamental division reflects an economic complementarity and has neither positive nor negative meaning, since a role necessary for the survival of the community is attributed to both sexes.

This is a culture of sexual parity in which Bookchin, in fact, discerns a prevalence of the female element and contends that it is justifiable to define it as matricentric: “By using this term, I do not wish to imply that women exercised any form of institutional sovereignty over men or achieved a commanding status in the management of society. I merely mean that the community, in separating itself from a certain degree of dependence on game and migratory animals, began to shift its social imagery from the male hunter to the female food-gatherer, from

the predator to the procreator, from the camp fire to the domestic hearth, from the cultural traits associated with father to those associated with mother.”

Any form of social asymmetry is foreign, for the very reason that it is outside the principle of hierarchical order which remodels society in a pyramidal form, changing diversity into inequality...

There are at least four phenomena which have, over the course of millennia, caused continuing cracks in the unity-totality of egalitarian society, bringing it to the point of crumbling. All form part of the vast and tormented process of *social differentiation* within the undivided primaevial community, giving rise in the end to the concept of the individual as opposed to the collectivity. This process does not necessarily lead to the society of inequality, but, in combination with that accidental “cultural mutation” represented by the principle of hierarchical organization, it brought about that society of domination which still predominates today.

One of the four phenomena which threaten the character of egalitarian society is economic. Demographic growth and increase in productive capacity meant differing degrees of wealth among members of the community. The danger inherent in this accumulation of wealth on the part of individuals is very clear to egalitarian society, which consciously seeks to prevent it through the practice of usufruct, the gift and the principle of reciprocity (it is as part of this lucid consciousness that the “institutional generosity” of the chief without power must be understood).

...These primitive societies do not correspond to the anarchist ideal of an egalitarian society, nor do they represent a mythical golden age of anarchy to which we should return. It would, indeed, be unthinkable to propose in this day and age a single, undivided community in which the individual would disappear. Far from cancelling out the millennia of cultural evolution of the human species, the anarchist conception is an attempt at a harmonious synthesis of the two poles of the binomial individual/collectivity that has, throughout human history, always been unbalanced toward one or the other of these poles...

A second phenomenon is the progressive increase in the rigidity of social roles. Sex, age, and descent define the responsibilities of the individual towards the community and form part of the fundamental division of labour that seems to characterize all human society. The origins of this division are uncertain, but they do arise from the need for a rational organization of life and work in the community. We have already seen that the attribution of roles is entirely cultural (with well-known but debatable exceptions) and so varies enormously. Nevertheless, in every culture, the same division of roles over long periods finishes inexorably by fixing the two sexes in their respective spheres of competence. Thus, a process of differentiation between the sexes becomes institutionalized and handed down,

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thanks to differing socialization. This differentiation also affects the very character structure of the sexes, due to thousands of years of selection of those traits compatible with the assigned roles (without, however, arriving at a cultural cloning, as the persistence of social deviations shows). This crystallization of roles also brings about the permanent attribution of certain social conditions to one or the other of the sexes—as, for example, in the case of mobility—and these will, in later times, have a fundamental importance in determining the exclusive appropriation of social areas that were previously common.

A third phenomenon which corrodes the unity of egalitarian society is the emergence of a public sphere as distinct from the domestic. This is perhaps the most dramatic split that organic society was to undergo. The emergence of a public sphere does not imply that egalitarian society lacked a social dimension. The public sphere does not come about by parthenogenesis, but by splitting from the sphere that can only now be defined as “domestic.” As we have seen, in egalitarian society “home” and “world” are one and the same. With the process of differentiation the unity is broken into two spheres which slowly become estranged until they reach the point of antagonism and disequilibrium that characterizes them in the society of domination...

Why... was it men who appropriated to themselves the public sphere? One hypothesis is that primitive society's giving woman the greater share of domestic work and the raising of children left man free for social activity. Furthermore, conditions such as the greater mobility of men may have favoured extra-community relationships. But we are still far from a comprehensive and satisfying answer. And why did the women supinely accept a process that made them marginal, ultimately interiorizing a conception which under-valued them?

...When this process of social differentiation comes into contact with domination, it will absorb all those differences forming in egalitarian society into the hierarchical conception, transforming them into inequalities. When usufruct and reciprocity are replaced by exchange, when political relationships are set against natural ties, when undivided society is succeeded by one ordered around concepts of superior and inferior, organic society and its harmonious view of the world are dead. Not one, but hundreds, and even thousands of asymmetries will develop within the social body, some tied to biological factors. In short, the society of domination will slowly take shape, providing that ideological space in which we live and think today.

The last of the four phenomena contributing to social differentiation is important to an understanding of sexual asymmetry: social prestige. As Clastres affirms, this is a category which, being frequently confused with domination, inhibits the understanding of those societies that do not come within this logic: “Here we can see the confusion in the literature of ethnology between the con-

cepts of power and of prestige. What motivates the big-man? What plan? Not an end of command, which he may well desire but to which the people of the tribe will refuse to submit. His aim is prestige, which will allow him to see himself reflected in a community which extols the glory of a hard-working and generous chief.... In exchange for his generosity the *big-man* obtains not power but prestige.”

We can define prestige as a different, higher valuation that society attributes to certain individuals and/or roles. As such, it is a “positional good”—a privilege in its own right that in primitive societies is not connected with other social privileges (economic, political). Individual prestige is tied to certain personal abilities or gifts, while role prestige involves the possession of those abilities connected with the role itself. The fundamental trait allowing us to distinguish domination from social prestige is the relationship of command/obedience, which shapes the former but forms no part of the latter... While they are distinct and interact differently with the social body, individual prestige and role prestige are two successive moments in the same process of individualization. However, while the former, which is first chronologically, does not involve shattering the egalitarian social order, the other, which does not cause the absorption and disappearance of individual prestige, goes a step further, succeeding in shifting prestige from the person to the function and thus institutionalizing the difference.

Having defined the concept of social prestige very generally, we can now see its relationship to sexual asymmetry. But however convincing and acceptable the picture of egalitarian society outlined here may be, there is one fact which requires deeper examination: when individual prestige is transformed into role prestige, the high-prestige roles are all male. So two opposing hypotheses present themselves: either the exclusion of women from these roles implies *per se* the existence of domination, or else sexual asymmetry comes about in egalitarian society and precedes the rise of domination.

An analysis of egalitarian society reveals only too clearly how woman loses social prestige as man acquires it. From a single, undivided society in which prestige was equally divided among all members but in which the culture was of a predominantly female stamp, we arrive at a differentiated society with a predominantly male culture. While at the beginning the groups that “invented” a prestigious position for themselves, such as the oldest age groups of the shamans, are made up of men and women indifferently, over time the female element tends to disappear. There is no neat separation in this process, so that even today the social prestige of the old woman is still considerable in certain matricentric societies, just as woman shamans existed in many primitive societies. Nevertheless, in those societies that precede that of domination, women disappear from the most valued roles. The social figures that assert themselves—the chief without

power, the shaman, and the warrior—are all male; and when the hierarchical culture begins to assert itself, women are excluded from those roles which take possession of political, magic-religious, and military power. We could almost say that when prestige is individual, both men and women enjoy it, but when prestige is connected with roles and is formalized, it is exclusively male. Nonetheless (and with this we exclude the first of the two hypotheses), if we accept that fundamental difference which distinguishes domination from prestige—that is, the presence or absence of the command/obedience relationship—we must admit that the relationship between the sexes is not one of domination. But it is clear that we are not faced with a situation of perfect equality. Thus, the second hypothesis seems more reasonable... in a society without domination there are *social asymmetries of authority* which do not fall within the category of domination, but which, equally, contradict social equality. And the man/woman asymmetry of authority seems to be of this type.

33. Nicole Laurin-Frenette: The State Family/The Family State (1982)

Nicole Laurin-Frenette taught sociology at the University of Montreal, writing about feminism and theories of the state. The following excerpts from her essay, "The Women's Movement and the State," Our Generation, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Summer 1982), have been translated from the French by Nancy Cole.

For most of history, women were defined mainly by their place in domestic production, in other words as wives, mothers, housekeepers. Women are developed as social beings according to the model of femininity which, paradoxically, varies a great deal, depending on the period, the society and the social class, vis-à-vis feminine nature—"the eternal feminine" [Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*]. Notwithstanding these variations, femininity refers to the whole range of physical and psychological qualities, skills and dispositions which are associated with the performance of tasks and the exercise of women's domestic functions, taking into account the relationships of exploitation and domination they involve. Women's participation in the non-domestic sphere of production is not irreconcilable with femininity in this sense. Women have always participated in non-domestic production; at least they participated in it well before the advent of capitalism. Nor did this system invent what is called the double working day for women. Other modes of production have also taken advantage of femininity in non-domestic production, making it a pretext for various forms of discrimination and segregation. The development of capitalism has, however, produced a far higher number of women participants in non-domestic production. This exten-

sion of paid female labour first affected the peasant and working classes. Only later did paid work absorb some of the women from the privileged milieu of the bourgeoisie.

However, this increase in women's participation in non-domestic production is not the origin of the contradictions which, for women, are associated with the development of capitalism. These contradictions are mainly the result of changes that capitalist development has caused in the sphere of domestic production: an important decrease in domestic production, including procreation, and at the same time, a reorganization of the relations of subordination between the domestic and non-domestic spheres.

This double movement has modified the tasks and functions of the agents of domestic production and consequently the relations between these agents in their respective places. Institutions other than the family have gradually assumed the organization of a considerable part of production and regulation activity previously performed within the framework of the family, on the basis of sex-differentiation. Men and women are affected by this change, but for the latter, it seems like a paradox. Women are produced according to the model of femininity which applies to their place in the processes of domestic production. But these processes no longer involve the tasks and functions supported by this place. Moreover, the conditions of women's participation in non-domestic production and its regulation are negatively affected by femininity, that is, by women's place in the domestic sphere. And this is the case whatever the class to which they belong and whatever the place in the non-domestic processes to which they are assigned.

It is not surprising that during the last two centuries, an increasing number of women have considered their social condition absurd, alienating, and unfair, and demanded an improvement in this condition. It is surprising, however, that this demand has been satisfied without the contradictions that gave rise to it being solved or circumvented...

The term "private life" covers the whole range of conjugal and parental relationships within the nuclear family. Public life covers all extra-family relationships, in professional, political, civic and religious activities. A new ideological construct was built on this distinction between private and public life. It includes the model of marriage based on romantic love and the model of the parental tie also based on love, particularly on maternal love. It also involves new aesthetic and rational criteria with regard to architecture, town planning, housing; standards of physical hygiene and mental health; and moral rules mainly governing emotional and sexual relations. The bourgeois family became the centre of private life, an autonomous cell, isolated, protected against the outside world, emotionally self-sufficient and, in the case of the couple, exclusive as regards sexuality.

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Those excluded from the family either in practice or symbolically include servants, customers, distant relatives, neighbours, partners, colleagues, and companions, a situation which prevents osmosis between the family and its usual environment.

Paradoxically, it is the State which orchestrated this “privatizing” operation of the family. It is the author of laws and policies aimed principally at the family which are implemented by different bodies of public and para-public officialdom, by various private, secular and religious groups acting under the authority of the State: social workers, doctors, public health specialists, educationalists, teachers, clergy, religious communities, charitable and social reform societies. This swarm of family-oriented agents operates what Foucault and other historians have called the “normalization” of practices relating to the private domain. Wherever the Catholic Church holds an important place in the hierarchy of the control institutions (in France, Italy, Spain, Québec, for example), it assumes much of the responsibility for family services, for which it enjoys considerable autonomy from the State. In countries where the network of control is not centralized only in the State (in the U.S.A. and English Canada, for example), certain “normalizing” activities are spontaneously and freely organized by private groups and organizations of a religious, civic and political nature. The State (local, regional and central) nonetheless supplies these organizations with part of the necessary technical, legal and financial resources. The “normalization” strategies vary according to the class and milieu in which they are introduced; nevertheless, they unvaryingly impose this model of the bourgeois family, seen by the ruling classes as a guarantee of prosperity and social order.

The bourgeois-style family is thus constituted in and by the State. From a unit of economic production, it becomes a unit of social control; closely interconnected with the institutional control network of bourgeois society. Certain institutions perform policing and repressive functions; others organize the distribution of resources and services. The interconnection of the family with the central institutions of social control, however, weakens its own structure of domination. The absolute nature of domestic, marital, and paternal authority is considerably curbed by bourgeois law, in accordance with the principles of liberty and equality between individuals. The model of marriage and the family based on reciprocal love between individuals requires their, at least, relative liberty and equality. These new conditions entail the maintenance, and even the reinforcement, of masculine, paternal, and marital responsibility. In several societies, during the period of transition towards bourgeois society, women, especially married women, lose certain rights regarding property and the disposal of their possessions, frequently becoming minors in the eyes of the law. Masculine responsibil-

ity thereby constitutes the hinge between the family and the principal institutions of social control, which takes, in private life, the form of personal authority...

As the sphere of domestic production shrinks, while its functions are increasingly subject to extra-domestic control, the system of sex-differentiated places peculiar to the domestic processes becomes modified: changes occur in the respective tasks and functions of agents and relations between agents, in their places. Places allotted on the basis of sex still exist but the place of wife-mother-housekeeper is partly shorn of the functions it supports; and this equally applies to the place of husband-father-head of the family-master of the house.

The places and relations they involve—especially the exploitation and domination of women by men—tend to appear to the agents and particularly to the female agents as arbitrary. The force of the dominant party has been partly undermined; the consent of the dominated has been partially withdrawn. Women are “discovering” the gratuitous nature of domestic work. Children “no longer recognize” parental authority. Men are “losing” the sense of responsibility. In actual fact, it is neither possible nor profitable and therefore unacceptable, for a woman who has a paid job to assume all the household chores. For a man, it no longer pays and is therefore no longer desirable to support a woman financially during her entire adult life in exchange for domestic services. This is a luxury which few men can now afford; for women, it is a condition that is increasingly hard to endure when they do not (or no longer) have children of pre-school age. In the extra-domestic sphere, it is less and less reasonable, and consequently less and less acceptable, to give women a different education or lower remuneration than that of men, or to entrust them with less heavy professional or social responsibilities, on the pretext that their domestic career claims most of their time and energies, although it is often in the interests of employers, as women’s dual working-day is useful to their husbands.

Perhaps women are not so much divided, as is often stated, between the demands and obligations of their role of wife, mother and housekeeper on the one hand, and the contradictory roles of their professional, social, and political commitments on the other, as they are divided between femininity—the ideology which constitutes them as women—and practice in both the domestic and extra-domestic spheres. In both sectors, femininity is the source of feelings of disappointment, depreciation, alienation. The many contradictory forms between the model of femininity and women’s real existence foster feminist theory and practice. They also foster anti-feminist reaction, the work mainly of men but also of some women: turning back the clock and escaping into the future may seem tempting but is, of course, impossible. The contradiction is growing ever more serious, as past solutions exhaust their practical and symbolic effectiveness. The

bourgeois family of Victorian times has had its day. Its post-war version, the American-style middle-class suburban family, is at the end of its tether. We are already catapulted into the era of the State-controlled family.

The concept of a State family seems a contradiction in terms, and no more conceivable than the concept of a family State. Relations of a political nature and relations of a family nature are contradictory within the logic of the ideology which distinguishes and defines them. But sociologically, they are two sides of the entire control process. The transformation of the State and the family and the way in which these two structures interlock in present-day society describes a dual field of social control, divided by the line between private and public life, whose poles are the Family-State and State-Family. The State gradually takes over family functions, turning them into political ones. The family remains the only refuge and guardian of interpersonal relationships: the very basis of socio-political life now becomes poverty-stricken and converted into family functions.

This restructuring of social control is brought about through the State and State-related institutions. In some respects, it takes place in the name of feminist principles and, partly, with women's consent and participation. The progress of this operation differs from society to society and from State to State. It is based on the process which tends towards the elimination of the domestic sphere as the place for the production of goods and services integrated into the general process of production, and it encourages the transformation of this domestic sphere into a special place for the production of sensitivity, that is, of meaning and sentiment. The private sphere, the family, then, loses its specificity as the context of material needs: subsistence, procreation, health, security; and is recreated as the context of gratuitousness and spontaneity: identity, self-assertion and fulfillment in interpersonal exchange. In subjective form, it directs the private aspect of social relationships. Their public aspect is mainly organized within the State. Sensitivity is generated there in objective form, referring to the association in inter-individual interests and to the association of class interests: the "we" of the national entity—ethnic, territorial, political, economic, and cultural.

Relations between agents in the domestic sphere are still based on the sex-differentiated place system. However, the decline in the traditional functions of these domestic agents brings about a gradual lessening in the exploitation and domination of women and children by men and thus a relative *de facto* if not *de jure* domestic equality. For women, domestic equality is a gain. It is guaranteed by (even relative) financial self-sufficiency provided by a paid job and/or State allowances. It encourages a certain "deprivatizing" of women through professional activities, social or political commitments. For men, domestic equality is a loss of both power and other benefits. It implies a certain degree of "privatization", a form of "domestication", which can be felt as an affective gain in the

context of family relationships. In many respects, this new domestic equality is the final condition for satisfying the demands and expectations generated by the conjugal relationship model based on romantic love and the model of the parental tie based on maternal and paternal love, for these models presume the suppression of any utilitarian or instrumental interest likely to play a part in the affective (or erotic) choice. Serial monogamy is the most obvious consequence of this evolution, and has become the general form of conjugal practice. In fact, romantic love, purified of any utilitarian contamination, implies the couple and also that couple's instability over time.

Domestic equality also extends to the parent-child relationship which is gradually being stripped of all traditional instrumental motivations and attitudes. The procreation of children is hence regarded as a gratuitous act: a choice primarily guided by sentimental considerations. The nature of the contraceptive methods now in use make women objectively responsible for these subjective decisions. The target of the social control of fertility is no longer the couple; this control operates directly on women without recourse to marital authority and responsibility. It is the State which, through its demographic policies, has the power to control the distribution of contraceptives and the availability of abortion facilities. This power is exercised in collaboration with the doctors, hospital administrators, social services, etc.... It can just as well deny women fertility as impose it on them. As regards children, various elements of their existence are increasingly taken over by public or private institutions, subsidized or controlled by the State: pre-natal care, day-care services, different levels of schooling, physical and mental health care, detection and treatment of abnormalities and deviance, leisure, culture... This division between the private and public sphere begins at birth. The parental relationship only organizes the private elements of children's lives. It therefore takes on a friendly and spontaneous form, stripped of its authoritarian and coercive character. The single-parent family, the corollary of serial monogamy, accentuates these various tendencies in the evolution of the parental relationship. The heads of single-parent families are mostly women. Their situation highlights the gradual transfer to women of *de facto* if not *de jure* responsibility with regard to children: responsibility for their life and especially for their insertion in the institutional networks. The State is the apex of the family triangle based on the mother-child relationship, a figure from which the father is—actually or virtually—absent.

The State initiates, implants, orientates, regulates, and directly or indirectly supports the educational, welfare, health, day-care, recreational, and other policies, programs and services made available to women and their children. It is responsible for the various forms of assistance and support, financial and otherwise, to single-parent families and families in distress, and for social measures con-

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cerning pregnancy, contraception and abortion. The authorities responsible for the establishment, orientation and distribution of these services and resources thereby secure control over those who have recourse to them, especially women and children. Many of these services and resources are necessary to women; in many cases, they have fought to obtain them. But they nonetheless permit a more centralized and effective control of social agents, in and by the State.

In many respects, the new forms of “domesticity” and “conjuality” are also imposed by the central institutions of control. Done on the pretext of satisfying the needs and demands of women, it is this strategy which animates policies, laws and actions relating to marriage, divorce, the reciprocal rights, obligations and responsibilities of the couple, parents, and children. These measures implicitly or explicitly prescribe and reproduce the separation of the private and public spheres, as well as the new family model bounded by the private sphere. This model implies an extreme “privatization” of interpersonal relationships, confining meaning and affect within the family cell as compensation for the evacuation of public life. But the family cell divides and isolates the agents—those it does not unite—from all the others, women, men and children. The most common form of modern solitude is undoubtedly the couple, with or without children. The new “domesticity” brings about a certain weakening of traditionally work-related masculine solidarity. It also brings about the weakening of female solidarity, traditionally neighbour-related, even in an urban context. The special effect of the two family functions—compensation and confinement—is to increase the effectiveness of the control exercised over agents within the State and within the other institutions which organize their public life: their work, their leisure, their civic, political, and religious activities.

Other components of the new “domesticity” seem to reply more specifically to present and future needs of capitalist economic organization. The couple and the family, even State-controlled, remain the basic consumer unit in the economic system. They are also the main target of publicity; analysis of advertising shows that conjugal and family happiness is still what “sells” best... In the present economic situation, this consumer potential is maintained, and even increased, by women’s paid employment. It is also increased by the more egalitarian sharing of housework between husband and wife which requires a mechanized infra-structure and abundant use of commercial products and services. On the other hand, the relative independence of teenagers in relation to the family is connected with the organization of a specialized market which simultaneously creates and caters to the needs and tastes of the so-called teenage subculture.

The integration of women into the work force, helped along by State-developed conditions, meets the demand for labour at a rate forced on it by fluctuations in the economy. Although not new, this phenomenon has reached unprecedented

proportions over the last few decades. The reserve force, constituted for several centuries now of women “liberated” by the gradual reduction of domestic production, has provided the capitalist system with an efficient means of controlling the ebb and flow of manpower. However, women’s place in the sphere of domestic production has led to female workers’ experiencing, in extra-domestic production, far worse conditions on the whole than those to which their male counterparts are subjected. The modification in women’s domestic functions may improve some of these conditions, but recognition of women’s right to work, to equal pay for equal work, job security, paid maternity leave, unionization, is hard to obtain, the subject of relentless struggles. On a long-term basis, recognition of these rights is not dysfunctional for employers, and will in time be acquired. Predictably, the intervention of the State will be required to obtain and retain these rights, thereby giving it a hold over women and their movement, just as the State has imprisoned the trade union movement: legislation enables it to control the movement to the employer’s advantage while improving working conditions generally.

The sexual division of labour—and thus of tasks—in the processes of non-domestic production remains sheltered from legislative measures and even, in many cases, from feminist protest. Yet it is precisely this sexual division of tasks which, on both a short and long-term basis, is functional and advantageous for employers and for the capitalist economy as a whole. In all classes—exploiting and exploited, dominating and dominated—this division of labour creates women’s professions, trades and specialties which are typically inferior categories of employment, offering lower pay, less security and fewer opportunities for advancement. It also allows women of all classes, in all trades and professions, in all sectors of work and at all professional levels to be assigned tasks which are implicitly or explicitly defined and conceived as feminine. These tasks usually correspond to subordinate functions which entail unfavourable practical and symbolic conditions. The sexual division of extra-domestic work is an essential regulatory mechanism of the work force, inherent in the economic system, and made possible by the ideology of femininity. To a large extent, the voluntary decisions and choices of agents, involving their aspirations, orientations and personal preferences in the context of relations between the sexes, permit the reproduction of the situation created by this sexual division of labour which only a transformation of femininity can prevent. But femininity is rooted elsewhere, in the sex-differentiated places of the domestic processes.

The new forms of “conjuality” and “domesticity” support a new model of this femininity: that of the “liberated woman,” the kind of liberation which especially suits the capitalist economy and State policy. The principle of this femininity is equality in difference. On the one hand, women supposedly have the

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same rights, obligations and privileges as men in marriage, the family, work, and social and political life in general. On the other hand, their specific difference must supposedly be preserved and underscored, even enhanced. This specificity refers to a whole set of physical, intellectual and emotional traits regarded as characteristic of female nature. This definition of femininity never adequately describes women: rather it states and prescribes the norm imposed on women. Heterosexuality, passivity, narcissism, masochism and sentimentality are still the basic components of the model. But they are re-defined so as to fit in with the new characteristics also decreed by the model: individualism, autonomy, strength, self-control, rationality.

Notwithstanding its contradictions, this femininity makes psychologically possible the conjugal relationship and maternal tie as they are organized within the private family sphere of social relations. It also makes psychologically possible the sexual division of tasks in the public sphere of social relations.

In the political context, femininity is the subject of negotiation between the women's movement and the institutions which produce, disseminate, and inculcate ideology: the State, the media, the culture apparatus. The model of the "liberated woman" reflects the present state of the balance of power between the partners of this negotiation. Not only does the new femininity make possible "advanced" forms of oppression of "liberated" women. It is also the key factor in the reversibility of the women's liberation movement as it takes place within the State. The history of women is a series of retreats and advances. At certain periods, women have acquired formal and informal rights that they have subsequently lost; they have regained others, in different forms, in different contexts, and so on. Any important economic, social, and political change affects the conditions of women either positively or negatively. Improvement often comes only by mobilizing and using the dynamism of women which thrives on the contradictions of this change. The ideology of femininity reflects the time variations of this supposedly immutable essence: "the eternal feminine..." It is the background to this functional shift periodically imposed on women, the most recent phase of which they are now experiencing. The effectiveness of feminism, on a short and long-term basis, therefore depends on its ability to prevent the formation and institutionalization of new variations of the "eternal feminine," even though they may be presented as part of the liberation of women.

Women's dynamism can be mobilized and used for their liberation if the feminist movement takes a revolutionary path, in other words, seeks a change of the social order rather than change in the social order. Only anarchist forms of revolutionary organization and struggle permit the subversive potential of feminism to become a reality. At its source, feminism is a challenge to power in its elementary and basic form: interpersonal control through the interplay of force and

consent. The force of feminist protest can be turned against women if, in their struggle against domination, they ally themselves to the power-wielding authorities and the institutions of control: political parties, sects and churches of all sorts, the State... If, however, the women's struggle is not restricted and diverted, it can spread to other levels of domination and to other forms of power.

The State has appeared as the privileged interlocutor of the modern feminist movement ever since its beginning, and particularly at its present stage. Appealing to the State, the women's movement has formulated its main claims in the language of the State. Thus, women have demanded rights that the State can grant, reforms that the State can carry out, resources that the State can distribute. The State even shows itself able to guarantee changes that it cannot itself bring about in the private sphere: sexual and emotional relationships between men and women. Like the workers' movement in the past, especially its trade union wing, the feminist movement is constantly obliged to negotiate with the State, because it alone seems able to impose respect for the principles defended by feminism on women's direct and immediate opponents, namely men—husbands, fathers, fellow citizens, colleagues, employers, administrators, thinkers...

This interaction between the feminist movement and the State is consistent with the logic of the present social system. Indeed, the State's main function is to register and resolve the tensions and conflicts caused by the division between social agents, especially that of class and of sex. Any protest movement, at any level of its struggle, is necessarily referred back to the State and required to come to terms with it. In return, the State has the necessary resources at its disposal to control the protest. It can repress it with varying degrees of violence. It can also carry out and determine functional modifications of the social system which reduce its tensions without compromising its reproduction. The history of the labour movement, of the Black struggle in the U.S., student protest, offer abundant illustration of the State control mechanism in capitalist societies.

Thus, women have obtained, mainly from the State, recognition of certain rights and the improvement of various conditions. In most cases, these victories of women are also victories of the State; they have, to a certain extent, increased its ability to control women and their movement. Some of the institutions set up by the State in the last few years look very much like permanent mechanisms for the control of women and their organizations, as, for example, the various councils, offices, commissions whose mandate is to study women, to listen to their protests, to formulate solutions to their problems and even, in some cases, to fund feminist projects. These bodies proliferate in societies where the feminist movement has the greatest impact; they also have their counterparts at the regional and international levels. Women are associated with them, especially on a professional footing; certain feminist organizations are represented on them, and

sometimes even eminent figures in the movement. In spite of all this, relations between women and the State are not harmonious; nor have they ever been. For the State has not solved, and is not in the process of solving, the contradictions which foster women's revolt and resistance. It has, however, provided an audience for feminism and a channel for its dynamism, while blunting the movement's subversive potential: its power of liberation.

As its principle, the feminist movement has proclaimed that private life is political. The two-century old relationship between women and the State shows that this proposition is true in all respects. To what conclusion does this lead? That the private sphere must erupt into the limelight and the public sphere slip into the wings of the private? Nothing is more normal, predictable, controllable, as long as the division remains, in the ideology, between the two spheres: one, the locus of life and desire, the other that of order and constraint: constraint which is always called to the aid of desire, desire placed in the service of order. For it is a question here of that desire which order has programmed, and that constraint which desire has foreseen, and, in advance, respected. To subvert this system would be to break the imaginary line which constitutes the public and private spheres as the two facets of existence in the family-State and the State-family; to liberate the sense which, in these places of solitude and division, is the currency of control. Among other figures of sense to be liberated is the one I have denounced, femininity, by showing that it is power that produces it and women that it constrains.

34. Ariane Gransac: Women's Liberation (1984)

Ariane Gransac co-authored, with Octavio Alberola, El Anarquismo Español y la Accion Revolucionaria (1961-1974) (La Llevar: S.L. Virus Editorial, 2004). The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from her essay, "Women's 'Liberation'—From Ordinarity to Importance," in Aventures de la liberté (Lyon: Atelier de Creation Libertaire, 1985), originally presented at the 1984 international conference on contemporary anarchism in Venice.

I should like to concentrate on something which, it seems to me, has had a negative impact on the development of "feminism." I refer to the core feminist demand of our age: women's entitlement to equal significance in the social order which appears to have Equality as its goal but which, given the hard facts of existing society, incorporates them into a value system hitherto reserved for men only. Demanding equality in a system rooted in inequality and hierarchy is a contradiction: because, that being the case, even should the fight for "equality of the sexes" look just, it translates as acceptance of social class differences and indeed

bolsters the system through its insistence upon the entitlement of women to a place of significance within the hierarchy.

Now, by depicting that sort of validation as a “step forward” on the road to equality and liberation, the feminist movement has, knowingly or otherwise, helped provide women with yet another reason to conform to the prevailing value system and legitimized the Power that some men and women wield over others.

Specifically, as far as “women’s lib” goes, it is this insistence on claiming a right to equality with men that has opened my eyes to the contradiction implicit in the representation of this validation process as a liberation—even by the most radical women’s movements. For it seems to me self-evident that this is the same paradox into which all political movements fall when they seek to end man’s exploitation of his fellow man by first reinforcing such domination through the agency of the state, even though some may argue that they mean to see the state wither away and eventually vanish, especially since recent historical experience has shown that such illusions are crassly mistaken and the direst utopianism...

As I see it, it is vital that we analyze the mechanics by which we come to uncritically accept this as a “step forward,” for this would bring us to an understanding of the nature and persistence of the contradiction that riddles and shapes every “liberation” movement that is not driven by a radical questioning of the general architecture of domination.

In this regard, the phenomenon of “feminism” (as a liberation movement) is exemplary. Indeed, by raising the issue of “male” domination in the public and private spheres, it has struck at the very core of Power but, thanks to some deliberate or unwitting semantics, the measures proposed (or demanded) have contributed to recognition rather than annihilation of that Power. Meaning that while denouncing inequality of status, it demands to be prized more highly in accordance with a scale of values laid down by the system and thereby demands a share in Power (hence the famous call for “equal pay for equal work”).

Even among libertarian and anarchist feminists and in spite of the incessant claim that “what counts is the achievement of a free society for all, consonant with the libertarian project” and that “our ultimate aim is not merely womanhood but personhood in a universal sense, regardless of gender or sexual preference,” the contradiction between “validation” and “liberation” crops up in many writings about incidental demands, in frictions with male comrades over “machismo” and discrimination against women within the movement.

Even while it stresses the “double exploitation” visited upon a woman when she becomes a wage-earner, feminism has helped to peddle the notion that “women’s liberation” consisted largely of a refusal to be compartmentalized into the conventional domesticity “imposed by womanhood.”

But it occurs to us that we might need to look into the reasons behind that re-

fusal if we are to glimpse, if not grasp, the direction in which we are moving, before we start to talk about liberation.

Women, who were the organizers of family consumption, the sole agents ensuring the day-to-day reproduction of the family of labour force, have gradually stepped outside of that role, involving themselves in various economic activities and inserting themselves into the process whereby exchange values are reproduced. So, as women became implicated in the processes of commodification, gradually there emerged a tendency to separate productive pursuits from domestic ones. As commodification grew, so the greater the departure from domestic roles and reproduction of exchange values and, as a result, the more women were undervalued. But even though woman, through her work, successfully “colonized” a social space from which she had previously been totally excluded, this sociological shift, in which woman and commodity reproduction are the main factors, mirrored a capitalist process of social change. Indeed, by transforming one of its basic cells—the family (which, in addition to its traditional vocation is, by dint of women’s work, a production unit)—capitalism is acting pursuant to its own further development. Thus the family becomes a social unit for reproduction of the economic system, wherein woman is over-burdened with work, bolstering the notion of woman as victim and as the victim of man, a notion that has left a deep impression in the social imagination down through the centuries.

Indeed, this depiction of women as victims reinforces the protective attitude in men since, to the extent that woman rebels in order to denounce the injustice of her condition, she can make herself heard, but is consolidating men’s position of dominance. This confusion has beset feminist struggles throughout. The depiction of woman as victim is therefore an obstacle to authentic conscientiazaation, because if “woman is what man has wanted her to be, such dependency and inferiority absolve her of all responsibility for her own shortcomings.”

For a long time, woman was marooned in a passive acceptance mode which showed itself in an external and internal conformity, making her the mainstay of the system’s durability and thereby of her own predicament. But, oddly, the “decline of domestic production” has prompted women into asking questions—rather than the other way around—about her role in the home setting and, as a corollary, about her place in the world beyond the home. In a way, woman has accepted her subordinate status just as long as it cast her in a vital, essential role. Her role within the family being of the essence, her subordination awarded her power within the domestic context: she enjoyed the authority conferred by her role—an authority that she did not even have to seek, as it was an automatic consequence.

In fact, as far as woman was concerned, her reserved place was taken for granted. She had merely to show herself fit to occupy it. A sense of “worth” went with conforming to the “norm” and demonstrating a capacity to fill that function. That function being accessible to all and any woman. But as society evolved, there came a change in the division of labour within the family and woman’s role lost some of its value as it was no longer necessary and essential to have a woman versed in and dedicated to that function for life. Hence the sense of loss of identity and lack of recognition and of emptiness (comparable perhaps with how workers felt when machines replaced them in the production process).

Besides, since women were required to shift from one sphere to the other and to adapt to a life outside the home, this implied a further question for them to grapple with: what was woman’s role now? And what was her place?

In the domestic setting to which she was confined, woman existed without any need for any specific validation of self (as a unique being, different from all others). Instead, there was no requirement upon her to prove that she was as worthy as anybody else, but only that she was up to scratch, for she was defined in terms of her function, serving the larger interest. Now, since in the world outside the home such validation is generally the value set on subordinates, most women found themselves consigned to positions of no consequence. They were still subordinated, just as they had been in the domestic context, but they no longer had the consolation of performing a vital role and, as a result, were without “authority.”

Furthermore, since “integration” is a slow process, women have the time to adapt, because “according to the laws of psychic economy, once a habit is formed, other modes of behaviour emerge only if the individual can be persuaded that they are far superior to the old, or that there is no other feasible way of adapting.” Viewed in this light, the feminist movement has, consciously or otherwise, helped motivate women to integrate with the dominant value system. And this has led to feminists insisting that women should have access to leadership positions (i.e. the supposedly important roles). But in order to achieve that they have to embark upon a process of individually asserting their own worth and uniqueness and this, of course, in the context of a value system hitherto the preserve of the male.

It is my firm belief that we need to examine what it is that sets the valuation of women apart from that of men in terms of the evolution of society. It seems to me that by taking women’s present status as our starting-point, we might well gain an understanding of certain mechanisms that shape our behaviour. Indeed, whereas woman’s role has changed, her mentality has yet to adapt and she has retained arrangements whereby validation is in terms of the whole, or rather,

bound up with group survival strategies dating back to pre-state societies. This mind-set, which we might term “archaic,” is undergoing modification or vanishing before our very eyes since, with the exception of a few “privileged females,” women today find themselves in a subordinate position and denied any essential role, both domestically and beyond. Hence their frustration...

The search for significance as one way of rediscovering one’s value is also a case of a power questing after recognition. The assertion of the Self, of the individual Ego, therefore leads on to the reinforcement of the Norm and thus of the state. Because once the decision is made “to say of the Self, as of God, I AM, instead of a soul there is created that more perfect and seemingly more definite form of the Person and of Self-belief that comes to be known as the Ego, the pronoun turning from its former non-substantive status to the substantive. Now, in every particular, this emergence of Self tallies with the emergence of the state (in the proper meaning of the term) in the Modern Age.” In which case, feminist demands are telling... we have in mind the discovery and affirmation of “My Body,” “My right to choose when to give birth,” etc., as well as the drive to fill positions of importance and above all positions of command (“interesting” and “important” being conflated in a telling ambiguity).

The real meaning of this move is, for women as for men, a quest for power over others (women or men) rather than a quest for liberation and absence of restriction upon the “second sex” carrying out essential tasks vital to the lives of (all) human beings through free relationships.

Is there not a danger in presenting this move as “liberating”? As would-be libertarians and anti-authoritarians and advocates of anarchy, etc., should we not instead be denouncing it by carrying out a thoroughgoing study of the process of integration and looking for some other way of “being” that might, in this period of social change, and by dint of the particular circumstances of women, disorient and thwart the interests of the ruling system? For this “mirage” of liberation reinforces the system: for one thing, because without the “mirage of freedom” there is no way that the Norm is going to be accepted and so the quite phony character of the so-called liberation process merely holds out the promise of a better future for the established order. In fact, if validation through power makes for equality of the sexes, such equality can scarcely help but produce a more fulsome integration of women into the system of man’s/woman’s domination over his/her fellow-man/woman.

Besides it occurs to me that the particular position of women today—a period of transition symptomatic of a “shift” of function within the system—only highlights our prison bars and the panoply of deeds and words of which we imagine ourselves to be in control when in fact they have us hog-tied: such as the notion of Woman, which itself carries all manner of ideological connotations underpin-

ning and legitimizing her biological specificity as well as her social and cultural specificity within authoritarian society.

By my reckoning, the acquisition of that sort of consciousness represents “perhaps the only hope of dismantling and demolishing” the system’s intentions.

35. Carole Pateman: The Sexual Contract (1988)

Anarchist critics of marriage have often compared it to prostitution (for example, Emma Goldman, Volume One, Selection 70). In this excerpt from Carole Pateman’s The Sexual Contract (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), she argues that the prostitution contract between a man and a prostitute can be seen as the unintentional reductio ad absurdum of the contractarian ideal of reducing all personal relationships to temporary contractual relationships in which one party sells the property in her person to another, thereby assuming a subordinate status. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

The Left and Right, as well as some feminists, share the assumption that the prostitute’s work is of exactly the same kind as any other paid employment. The prostitute merely works in a different profession and offers a different service (form of labour power) from that of a miner or electrician, secretary or assembler of electronic goods. Not surprisingly, criticism of prostitution is then usually couched in economic terms. For example, the argument that prostitutes are forced by economic necessity to enter the trade has been heard for a very long time. The conditions of entry into the prostitution contract have received as much attention as entry into the employment or marriage contracts, and involuntary entry is often presented as the problem about prostitution. Thus, Alison Jaggar has stated that “it is the economic coercion underlying prostitution... that provides the basic feminist objection to prostitution.”

Another common argument, now made by the religious Right as well as by the Left, is that what is wrong with prostitution is that, once a woman has entered the trade, she is exploited and degraded like many other workers under capitalism. Once again, the question of subordination is ignored. In arguments about economic coercion and exploitation the comparison is often turned round; instead of prostitutes being seen as exploited workers, workers are held to be in the same position as prostitutes. Marxist critics of prostitution take their lead from Marx’s statement that “prostitution is only a *specific* expression of the *general* prostitution of the *labourer*.” Prostitution then represents the economic coercion, exploitation and alienation of wage labour. As one critic has stated, “prostitution is the incarnation of the degradation of the modern citizen as producer.” The prostitution contract is not merely one example of the employment

contract; rather, the employment contract becomes a contract of prostitution. The figure of the prostitute can, therefore, symbolize everything that is wrong with wage labour.

To see prostitutes as epitomizing exploitation under capitalism, and to represent the worker by the figure of the prostitute, is not without irony. The “worker” is masculine—yet his degradation is symbolized by a female emblem, and patriarchal capitalism is pictured as a system of universal prostitution. The fact that the prostitute seems to be such an obvious symbol of the degradation of wage labour, raises the suspicion that what she sells is not quite the same as the labour power contracted out by other workers. If prostitution is work in exactly the same sense as any other paid employment, then the present status of the prostitute can only be attributed, as contractarians insist, to legal prohibition, hypocrisy and outdated ideas about sex. The story of the sexual contract provides another explanation for the difference between prostitution and other paid employment in which women predominate. The prostitution contract is a contract with a woman and, therefore, cannot be the same as the employment contract, a contract between men. Even though the prostitution contract is sealed in the capitalist market, it still differs in some significant respects from the employment contract. For example, a worker always enters into an employment contract with a capitalist. If a prostitute were merely another worker the prostitution contract, too, would always involve a capitalist; yet very frequently the man who enters into the contract is a worker.

Supposing, the objection might be raised, that the prostitute works in a “massage parlour.” She will then be a paid employee and have entered into an employment contract. True; but the prostitution contract is not an employment contract. The prostitution contract is entered into with the male customer, not with an employer. The prostitute may or may not be a paid employee (worker); some prostitutes are “more adequately described as small-scale private entrepreneurs.” The difference is, however, irrelevant to the question of how prostitution is to be characterized; is it free work and a free exchange, or exploitation, or a specific kind of subordination? Whether the prostitute is a worker or petty entrepreneur she must be seen as contracting out labour power or services if the prostitution contract is also to be seen as an employment contract. From the standpoint of contract, the employment contract is infinitely elastic, stretching from the lifetime of the civil slave to the brief period of the prostitution contract in a brothel for troops or immigrant workers. No matter whether the prostitute is an exploited or free worker or a petty entrepreneur, labour power or services are assumed to be contracted out. As Ericsson asserts, a prostitute must necessarily sell “not her body or vagina, but sexual *services*. If she actually did sell herself she would no longer be a prostitute but a sexual slave.”

More accurately, she would resemble a slave in something of the same fashion that a worker, a wage slave, resembles a slave. Labour power is a political fiction. The capitalist does not and cannot contract to use the proletariat's services or labour power. The employment contract gives the employer right of command over the use of the worker's labour, that is to say, over the self, person and body of the worker during the period set down in the employment contract. Similarly, the services of the prostitute cannot be provided unless she is present; property in the person, unlike material property, cannot be separated from its owner. The "john," the "punter," the man who contracts to use the services of the prostitute, like the employer, gains command over the use of her person and body for the duration of the prostitution contract—but at this point the comparison between the wage slave and the prostitute, the employment contract and the prostitution contract, breaks down.

The capitalist has no intrinsic interest in the body and self of the worker, or, at least, not the same kind of interest as the man who enters into the prostitution contract. The employer is primarily interested in the commodities produced by the worker; that is to say, in profits. The peculiar character of the relation between the owner of labour power and his property means that the employer must organize (embodied) workers, and compel or induce them to labour, in order to produce commodities with his machinery and other means of production. But the employer can and often does replace the worker with machines or... robots and other computerized machines. Indeed, employers prefer machines to workers because machines are like absolutely faithful slaves; they cannot be insubordinate, resist the employer's commands or combine together in trades unions or revolutionary associations. On the other hand, if the employer replaces all his workers by machines, he becomes merely a proprietor. The employer has an interest in workers as selves in that, without them, he ceases to be a master and loses the enjoyment of command over subordinates.

In contrast to employers, the men who enter into the prostitution contract have only one interest: the prostitute and her body. A market exists for substitutes for women's bodies in the form of inflatable dolls, but, unlike the machines that replace the worker, the dolls are advertised as 'lifelike.' The dolls are a literal substitute for women, not a functional substitute like the machine installed instead of the worker. Even a plastic substitute for a woman can give a man the sensation of being a patriarchal master. In prostitution, the body of the woman, and sexual access to that body, is the subject of the contract. To have bodies for sale in the market, as bodies, looks very like slavery. To symbolize wage slavery by the figure of the prostitute rather than that of the masculine worker is thus not entirely inappropriate. But prostitution differs from wage slavery. No form of labour power can be separated from the body, but only through the prosti-

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tution contract does the buyer obtain unilateral right of direct sexual use of a woman's body.

A contractarian might respond at this point that far too much weight is being placed on the body. Even if reference is made to the body rather than (as it should be) to services, moral freedom can be retained when use of the body, or part of the body, is being contracted out. The self or person is not identical to the body, so that the self is not injured if property in the body is used...

[David] Richards claims that to argue against prostitution is arbitrarily to limit sexual freedom. The embodiment of the self places no constraints on an individual's moral autonomy. Richards' argument is based on a version of the disembodied, rational entities who inhabit (one aspect of) Kant's contract theory... Autonomy is merely "persons' self-critical capacities to assess their present wants and lives... Autonomy occurs in a certain body, occasioning a person self-critically to take into account that body and its capacities in deciding on the form of his or her life." In short, freedom is the unconstrained capacity of an owner (rational entity), externally related to property in its person (body), to judge how to contract out that property.

Human beings certainly possess the capacity for critical self-reflection—and that capacity can be understood as if it encompassed nothing more than individual rational calculation of how property can be used to the maximum advantage. If a complex, multifaceted capacity could not be reduced to this bleak, culturally and historically specific achievement, patriarchal civil society could not have developed...

Nor is this very partial and socially tangential (though in some circumstances, heroic) notion of moral—or spiritual—freedom at issue in prostitution or other forms of civil subordination. Civil subordination is a *political* problem not a matter of morality, although moral issues are involved. To try to answer the question of what is wrong with prostitution is to engage in argument about political right in the form of patriarchal right, or the law of male sex-right. Subordinates of all kinds exercise their capacity for critical self-reflection every day—that is why masters are thwarted, frustrated and, sometimes, overthrown. But unless masters are overthrown, unless subordinates engage in political action, no amount of critical reflection will end their subjection and bring them freedom.

To grant that human embodiment is of more than merely contingent or incidental significance for freedom and subordination, may not seem sufficient to distinguish the profession of prostitution from some other forms of work, or sufficient to establish that there is something wrong with prostitution that is not also wrong with wage labour. A prostitute's body is for sale in the market, but there are also other professions in which bodies are up for sale and in which employers have an intrinsic interest in their workers' bodies. For example, now that

sport is part of patriarchal capitalism, the bodies of professional sportsmen and sportswomen are also available to be contracted out. Orlando Patterson discusses the case of baseball in the United States where, until 1975, players could be bought and sold like any material property at the will and for the profit of the owners of their teams. Patterson emphasizes that the baseball players were not and are not slaves, they are juridically free citizens, and they now have some voice in their disposition—but their bodies are still bought and sold. Patterson comments that employers do not now demand that workers “stand naked on an auction block being prodded and inspected by the employers and their physicians. But when an employer requires a medical certificate from a worker or professional athlete before hiring him, he is not only soliciting the same kind of information as a slave master inspecting his latest cargo of bodies, he is betraying the inherent absurdity of the distinction between ‘raw bodies’ and the services produced by such bodies.”

However, there is a difference in the uses to which bodies are put when they are sold. Owners of baseball teams have command over the use of their players’ bodies, but the bodies are not directly used sexually by those who have contracted for them.

There is an integral relationship between the body and self. The body and the self are not identical, but selves are inseparable from bodies. The idea of property in the person has the merit of drawing attention to the importance of the body in social relations. Civil mastery, like the mastery of the slave-owner, is not exercised over mere biological entities that can be used like material (animal) property, nor exercised over purely rational entities. Masters are not interested in the disembodied fiction of labour power or services. They contract for the use of human embodied selves. Precisely because subordinates are embodied selves they can perform the required labour, be subject to discipline, give the recognition and offer the faithful service that makes a man a master. Human bodies and selves are also sexually differentiated, the self is a masculine or feminine self. One illustration of the integral connection between the body and the self is the widespread use of vulgar terms for women’s sexual organs to refer to women themselves, or the use of a slang term for the penis to make disparaging reference to men.

Masculinity and femininity are sexual identities; the self is not completely subsumed in its sexuality, but identity is inseparable from the sexual construction of the self. In modern patriarchy, sale of women’s bodies in the capitalist market involves sale of a self in a different manner, and in a more profound sense, than sale of the body of a male baseball player or sale of command over the use of the labour (body) of a wage slave. The story of the sexual contract reveals that the patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is

the political difference between freedom and subjection, and that sexual mastery is the major means through which men affirm their manhood. When a man enters into the prostitution contract he is not interested in sexually indifferent, disembodied services; he contracts to buy sexual use of a *woman* for a given period. Why else are men willing to enter the market and pay for “hand relief”? Of course, men can also affirm their masculinity in other ways, but, in relations between the sexes, unequivocal affirmation is obtained by engaging in “the sex act.” Womanhood, too, is confirmed in sexual activity, and when a prostitute contracts out use of her body she is thus selling *herself* in a very real sense. Women’s selves are involved in prostitution in a different manner from the involvement of the self in other occupations. Workers of all kinds may be more or less “bound up in their work,” but the integral connection between sexuality and sense of the self means that, for self-protection, a prostitute must distance herself from her sexual use.

Women engaged in the trade have developed a variety of distancing strategies, or a professional approach, in dealing with their clients. Such distancing creates a problem for men, a problem that can be seen as another variant on the contradiction of mastery and slavery. The prostitution contract enables men to constitute themselves as civil masters for a time, and, like other masters, they wish to obtain acknowledgment of their status. Eileen McLeod talked to clients as well as prostitutes in Birmingham and, noting that her findings are in keeping with similar investigations in Britain and the United States, she states that “nearly all the men I interviewed complained about the emotional coldness and mercenary approach of many prostitutes they had had contact with.” A master requires a service, but he also requires that the service is delivered by a person, a self, not merely a piece of (disembodied) property. John Stuart Mill remarked of the subordination of wives that, “their masters require something more from them than actual service. Men do not want solely the obedience of women, they want their sentiments. All men, except the most brutish, desire to have, not a forced slave but a willing one, not a slave merely, but a favourite.”

An employer or a husband can more easily obtain faithful service and acknowledgment of his mastery than a man who enters into the prostitution contract. The civil slave contract and employment and marriage contracts create long-term relationships of subordination. The prostitution contract is of short duration and the client is not concerned with daily problems of the extraction of labour power. The prostitution contract is, one might say, a contract of specific performance, rather than open-ended like the employment contract and, in some of its aspects, the marriage contract. There are also other differences between the employment and prostitution contracts. For example, the prostitute is always at a singular disadvantage in the “exchange.” The client makes direct use of the

prostitute's body and there are no "objective" criteria through which to judge whether the service has been satisfactorily performed. Trades unions bargain over pay and conditions for workers, and the products of their labours are "quality controlled." Prostitutes, in contrast, can always be refused payment by men who claim (and who can gainsay their subjective assessment?) that their demands have not been met.

The character of the employment contract also provides scope for mastery to be recognized in numerous subtle ways as well as in an open, direct fashion. The worker is masculine, and men must mutually acknowledge their civil equality and fraternity (or the social contract cannot be upheld) at the same time as they create relations of subordination. The brief duration of the prostitution contract gives less room for subtlety; but, then, perhaps it is not so necessary. There need be no such ambiguities in relations between men and women, least of all when a man has bought a woman's body for his use as if it were like any other commodity. In such a context, "the sex act" itself provides acknowledgment of patriarchal right. When women's bodies are on sale as commodities in the capitalist market, the terms of the original contract cannot be forgotten; the law of male sex-right is publicly affirmed, and men gain public acknowledgment as women's sexual masters—that is what is wrong with prostitution.

Another difference between the prostitution contract and the other contracts with which I am concerned is also worth noting. I have argued that contracts about property in persons take the form of an exchange of obedience for protection. A civil slave and wives (in principle) receive lifelong protection, the family wage includes protection and the organizational complexities of extracting labour power for use in capitalist production have led to provision of protection over and above the wage. But where is the protection in the prostitution contract? The pimp stands outside the contract between client and prostitute, just as the state stands outside, but regulates and enforces, the marriage and employment contracts. The short-term prostitution contract cannot include the protection available in long-term relations. In this respect, the prostitution contract mirrors the contractarian ideal. The individual as owner will never commit himself far into the future; to do so is to give himself up as hostage to the self-interest of other individuals. The individual will make simultaneous exchanges, an impossible exchange if use is to be made of property in persons. The exchange of money for use of a woman's body comes as close as is feasible in actual contracts to a simultaneous exchange. For Marx, prostitution was a metaphor for wage labour. The more appropriate analogy is also more amusing. The contractarian idea of universal sale of property (services) is a vision of unimpeded mutual use or universal prostitution.

35. Jamie Heckert: Erotic Anarchy (2006)

In this essay, Jamie Heckert develops an anarchist critique of sexual identity with specific reference to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) politics. An earlier version of this essay appeared in Changing anarchism: Anarchist theory and practice in a global age (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), ed. J. Purkis and J. Bowen. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

Sexuality is frequently viewed as essential—a natural, pre-social and irrational force. From this perspective, it is our human society that controls and contains our powerful sexual desires. Two opposing camps have adopted this understanding of sexuality. On one side, conservatives argue that society must regulate sexuality or else we will collapse into immoral, hedonistic “anarchy.” On the other side, liberationists argue that society has no right to control sexuality but that we should be free to express ourselves naturally. Although for supporters of anarchism, the second argument may be rather appealing, I argue that both are based on a misunderstanding of the “nature” of sexuality. Like any other aspect of social life, sexuality is organized and, therefore, could be organized very differently.

Of course, sexuality is natural in the sense that all human life is part of, and inseparable from, the rest of the natural world. However, as the feminist slogan pointed out, biology is not destiny. For example, heterosexuality is often argued to be natural (and homosexuality unnatural) because the continuation of human existence depends on procreation. How much heterosexual intercourse is required for reproduction? None, really, as many benefactors of “artificial” insemination can attest to. Even ruling out the use of turkey basters or other technologies, it really takes very little penis-vagina type sex to reproduce—sometimes once is enough!

Maybe sexual desire is as natural as hunger—it’s just part of life. However, just as different people(s) have different cultural ideas about eating, sometimes including what even constitutes food, so too are sex and sexuality produced differently through social relationships. Indeed, the very idea that people have a “sexuality” is a relatively recent phenomenon in Western history (Foucault, 1990). Across different cultures and historical periods, notions of bodies and desires, of what constitutes sex can vary radically. Even within cultures what counts as sex may be a matter of debate or of context. For those who hold an erect, vagina-penetrating penis at the centre of their understandings of “sex,” the possibility of two women having sex can cause confusion... Furthermore, what may be “sex” in one situation may not be in others. A finger inserted into a man’s rectum and touching his prostate gland may be a deeply pleasurable sexual act

in one context or a medical examination in another. Different people involved in the same act may also have very different understandings of whether or not it constituted sex. Thus, while sex is natural in some senses, it is not defined by nature, but is understood in particular ways by particular people in particular situations. Constructing sexuality as “natural” is oppressive because it closes down space for exploring sexual diversity, the potential fluidity of sexual desire and the political nature of sexuality.

Similarly, sexuality is frequently presented as a personal, private or an individual matter. This is expressed, among other places, in a popular language defending stigmatized sexual practices: “As long as it happens between consenting adults in private, why should anyone else be concerned?” For a start, notions of “consent,” “adult” and “private” are all political in various ways. Further, just as Marxist and anarchist inspired folk argue that unhappiness at work is part of wider political issues rather than merely a “personal problem,” so too anxieties, risks and pleasures around sexuality might also be understood as political (as well as personal). Doing otherwise may reinforce a hierarchical division between the “public sphere” of politics and the “private sphere” of home life long criticized by feminists for silencing discussion of crucial forms of oppression (e.g., domestic violence, the economic significance of housework, etc.). If anarchism is to successfully challenge all fixed hierarchies, then feminist critiques of a clear border between the public and private are invaluable.

A third binary division all too common in discussions of sexuality is that of us and them... This includes heterosexist efforts to clearly differentiate “gays from us normal people,” or more specifically from an individual deeply afraid of being perceived in any way as less or other than heterosexual. This formulation is turned around in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) politics in which the heterosexual (and/or traditionally gendered) are the “them” against which a “we” is defined. While this has obvious tactical applications within liberal politics, it simply reverses rather than challenges the initial heterosexist division. In this way, LGBT identity politics’ transgressive challenge may in some ways continue to produce borders of hetero/homo and us/them, thus reinforcing the status quo more than offering radical alternatives for sexuality and other social relationships that an anarchist politics would value...

In practice, do identity politics reinforce borders? Has LGBT politics become part of the production of a division between normal and minority sexualities? ...The pride march can be seen as a demonstration of difference by those who march for those who watch, thus serving as one example of utilizing transgressive and oppositional tactics to subvert identity categories and the hetero/homo division...

To maximize visibility, organizers of the Pride March aim for a route wind-

ing through the busiest and most public spaces in the city... [One participant named] Richard emphasized the local and oppositional nature of this demonstration of difference... “The March is the reclaiming [of] public space.... The thing that gets the adrenaline going for the March is that you are walking through the same street you might have walked down yesterday alone, but your with x-thousand other people and it’s your space. You’ve taken it over.” Many of the participants, then, seemed to agree with Lynda Johnston (1997) who argued that by such transgression (i.e., the breaking of rules in defiance of authority), Pride Marches disrupt the public/private division that maintains an invisibility of homosexuality and bisexuality in public spaces...

Some have suggested that the alternative is to make the Pride Marches more easily acceptable, more “straight,” by eliminating more transgressive elements such as drag queens, dykes on bikes or clearly sexualized bodies. This implies that there are only two options: follow the rules or break them. Besides, even were all the men to wear suits and the women dresses, as was done by early activists in the US homophile movement, presenting a united bloc of LGBT people may reinforce a border between queers who march and normal people who don’t.

My concern here is that tactics prioritizing transgression may ultimately produce the very (b)order they aim to breakdown. Elizabeth Wilson, writing on sexual politics, argues “just as the only true blasphemer is the individual who really believes in God, so transgression depends on, and may even reinforce, conventional understandings of what it is that is to be transgressed” (1993: 109). Do Pride Marches challenge the division of normal versus queer, or the separation of public and private? Or do they offer a “constitutive outside”?

The idea of constitutive externality stipulates that the “other” (that which is alien and outside) is a necessary condition of self-identity. This is because identity is both inessential and intrinsically relational. In order for an object to have identity it must be *in relation* to an “other,” to an outside. However, precisely because the object depends upon the other in order to be, the other also frustrates the fullness of the identity of the object.

In other words, heterosexual identity can only exist in relation to non-heterosexual identities, which are the other, the outside. Visibility in Pride Marches is a demonstration of this outside, and thus participates in the creation of heterosexual identity, albeit a frustrated identity. In rejecting homosexuality as outside, heterosexuality depends upon homosexual existence just like a nation-state depends on a border and the outside world for any sense of identity. Likewise, LGBT identity depends on normatively gendered heterosexuality as its outside...

Discrimination and queer-bashing are problems that exist because of identities, with their borders and their outsides, and the emotional impact of ac-

knowledging (or refusing to acknowledge) that those borders can never fully protect any identity from the impurity of the outside.

Alternatives to fetishizing transgression, and the borders it depends on, can be found in anarchist prefigurative ethics—that the ends and means are inseparable. Because history is a continuous process (or lots of continuous processes, really), the way things are done is what makes them the way they are. It's all about process because there is no end. Some people argue that the ends are more important, again imagining a border between ends and means. This is how the State works—with control and containment justified by claiming the necessity of “law and order.” It's also how capitalism works, with profit-extraction necessarily devaluing other desires/values (little things like health, happiness and ecological sustainability) to which capitalist organizations can only pay lip service. Contemporary anarchisms try to do things a bit differently. Bookchin notes: “it is plain that the goal of revolution today must be the liberation of daily life. ...there *can be no separation of the revolutionary process from the revolutionary goal*” (Bookchin 1974: 44-45, original emphasis; see also Selection 10 above). More recently, Cindy Milstein has argued that the contemporary anarchist “movement is quietly yet crucially supplying the outlines of a freer society where the means themselves are understood to also be the ends.” In other words, instead of attempting to achieve liberation through transgression, a prefigurative ethic involves imagining possible futures and attempting to put those ideas into practice as much as possible. While this will often involve breaking rules and challenging authority, that is not the aim as in transgressive politics but simply part of the process of developing new social relationships.

With their emphasis on transgression, Pride Marches depend on a border between ends and means. All the Pride organizers and participants I spoke with wanted a world where people were free to love and desire without the borders and hierarchies of a hetero/homo divide. At the same time, the means of the Pride March depend on and helped to produce that very border. This inconsistency was most explicit in Pride organizer Darryn's claim that “you've still got to have the gay message *rammed down* people's throats during the March until... it becomes more accepted” (my emphasis). The inconsistencies of means (ramming, taking over) and desired ends (sexual freedom, valuing of diversity) are blatant. Do people come to appreciate things that are rammed down their throats (certain sexual pleasures aside)? More often I imagine this is more likely to be perceived as an assault and to trigger fears of losing particular values or ways of life... Such fears are not inherent obstacles to change, but are likely to be so when empathy for those fears is primarily forthcoming from others who aim to keep heterosexuality in a naturalized position of privilege. A prefigurative ethic of mu-

tual aid might inspire tactics which undermine the privilege of heterosexuality (and the hetero/homo division upon which it depends), acknowledge the pain and death caused by heterosexism *and* empathize with the fears that maintain rigid heterosexual identities...

[F]eminist theory/practice... demonstrates how the ongoing construction of borders between the personal and the political (the public and the private) are used to normalize double standards (e.g., capitalist dependence on unpaid domestic labour) and to privatize the systematic effects of social relations (e.g., viewing rape as an individual crime rather than the product of a patriarchal culture). Likewise, feminist practices of autonomous healthcare, including emotional well-being and consciousness-raising, acknowledge that the political is personal. In other words, hierarchies (including gender, class, race and sexuality) have profound emotional impacts on individuals which cannot be healed through abstract theorization or demonstrations against State & Capital. The trouble is that feminist analysis is sidelined and the significance of the “personal” is continuously co-opted by a neoliberal individualism which transforms autonomous healthcare based on mutual aid into commodities advocating alienated practices of “self-help.” The need for politically engaged therapeutic practices becomes all the more important in this context.

In terms of sexual politics, a political emphasis on coming out is a key example of an individualistic interpretation of the relationship between the personal and political. LGBT identity and politics obviously depend upon individuals labelling themselves to others as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Coming out has often been promoted as politically beneficial and thus either encouraged (e.g., “National Coming Out Day” in the US) or enforced (e.g., “outing”). In what way are individual desires political? Why are only certain desires given political significance?

...[T]here is a clear tension in valuing free choice and proclaiming the political benefit of coming out. Those who might identify themselves as LGBT are not only encouraged to come out, it is only “we” who can do so. On the one hand, this fits with the anarchist tradition of the oppressed liberating themselves. On the other, it echoes the normalizing logic of medicalization in which bisexuality, transgenderism and homosexuality are conditions that are not only the truth of who people are, but that also require explanation in a way that heterosexuality rarely does. Indeed, the idea of heterosexuals coming out is hard to imagine in a heterosexist culture...

Critical of vanguards and offering instead the value of direct action by the oppressed for their own liberation is one of the most significant contributions of anarchist political theory (see e.g., Franks, Selection 14 above). In the politics of coming out, there may seem to be a contradiction between this and the anarchist

critique of representation. “Practices of telling people who they are and what they want erect a barrier between them and who (or what) they can create themselves to be” (May, 1994:131; see also Selection 65 below). This apparent contradiction may be dissolved by resisting a representational argument that entire categories of people share a standardized experience of oppression. Of course, there are similarities of experience among women, folk with same-sex desires or transgressive genders, or people of colour. There are also important differences, most obvious when multiple axes of power are involved: wealthy gay white men living in cities in the overdeveloped world are likely to have very different experiences of oppression than other LGBT people... [who] have long demanded an acknowledgement of class, “race” and gender, among other hierarchies, challenging a liberal version of LGBT politics. The standardization of LGBT people necessary for a representational politics also has other effects: the standardization of heterosexuality as a monolithic position of privilege.

Heterosexuality is also a terrain of oppression; heterosexual privilege, like any privilege granted by hierarchy, is tenuous and dependent on a conformity maintained through fear, shame and border policing. Mixed sex desires transgressing racial, generational or cultural borders are often stigmatized as are heterosexual intimacies which are non-monogamous, “kinky” or otherwise deviating from particular heteronormative standards (i.e., deviant heterosexualities). For example, heterosexual identified men who enjoy anal stimulation, either on their own or with female partners, may fear the association of their pleasures with homosexuality and keep them hidden while more freely sharing their desire for vaginal intercourse. Likewise, insults like dyke and frigid may be aimed at a woman who says no to a man, not necessarily because he believes she is lesbian or asexual, but because her behaviour is inconsistent with patriarchal expectations of women to be sexually available to men. Heteronormative ideals of what constitutes sex and the appropriate gender behaviour also contribute to unsatisfying sexual experiences, unwanted pregnancies and the transmission of sexual infections, especially among young people. Compulsory heterosexuality plays a significant role in the continuing existence of a patriarchal gender order, oppressive to women (Rich, 1999), men (New, 2001) and “the rest of us” (Bornstein, 1996). Queer-bashing victims do not necessarily have same-sex desires; anyone who does not conform is a potential target. Intimacies in same-sex friendships may be perceived as queer, while intimacies in mixed-sex friendships may be imagined as potentially romantic. Indeed, fears and fantasies of sexual desire in any relationship may inhibit intimacy and thus the possibility for desperately needed connections in an alienating culture. Furthermore, sexual desire is fluid and lifelong heterosexuality cannot be guaranteed; a profound acknowledgement of this potential loss of heterosexual privilege, in itself requiring support, may

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encourage solidarity and a more considered analysis of sexuality... Any pattern of relationships that inhibits the capacity to imagine other possibilities, other futures, other ways of living (anarchic, homoerotic, or otherwise)... is oppressive to all of us, whoever we may fancy.

Despite all of these examples, the complex and political construction of heterosexuality is rarely discussed... perhaps because such discussion necessarily calls into question heterosexuality's status as normal, natural and superior...

Heterosexuality is hypervisible to the extent that it becomes invisible. Heterosexual desires, identities and relationships are taken for granted, as long as they are imagined to conform to local standards of heterosexuality.

Participating in the construction of heterosexuality as apolitical or monolithically privileged has very real political consequences. The representation of normative heterosexuality as apolitical is part and parcel of the politicization and problematization of "sexual minorities." Consequently, it continues to place the impetus for social change on those "minorities," inhibiting the participation of heterosexual people (especially men) in the politics of gender and sexuality. This happens because heterosexual identified people are discouraged from recognizing and addressing the oppression they experience through the normalization of bodies, emotions, desires, practices and relationships which result from heteronormativity. A radical cultural shift is much more likely to occur the more people are encouraged to recognize that while the status quo may privilege them in some ways, any privilege comes at a continuously exacted price: conformity. Imagining that the "privileged" will never give up their positions is to fail to recognize this cost.

Prioritizing LGBT visibility as a political end, achieved through the means of Pride Marches and coming out, may ultimately close down discussion of the complexities of power, privilege and oppression, both in terms of gender and sexuality and more generally. By depending upon a border between LGBT and straight, LGBT identity politics resists a critique of the border itself...

Anarchist contributions are invaluable here as the very idea of "sexual orientation" is in many ways hierarchical. As a hierarchy of gendered desire, where privilege depends on conformity and resistance to conformity may be heavily punished (sometimes fatally), sexual orientation is a process whereby a diverse array of bodies, pleasures, desires, relationships and emotions are defined, controlled and judged...

Obvious places to look for anarchic alternatives to identity, as well as queering "straight" anarchist cultures and practices, are contemporary queer autonomous spaces (e.g., Queeruption), DIY queer activism (e.g., Gay Shame or Limp Fist), and the anti-authoritarian tendencies within queer theory... At the same time, I have reservations about tactics reclaiming a term that can never be

fully reclaimed (Butler, 1993)... and which has at its centre associations of (gendered and sexualized) transgression and, more specifically, homosexuality. I fear that queer activism may produce a new form of identity politics, albeit a more militant variety. Like in liberal gay politics, I see signs of reverse discourse in queer activism. The conservative differentiation between “responsible” and “dangerous” gays is inverted: “dangerous” queers are lauded and “responsible” gays are vilified (see e.g., HOMOCULT, 1992).

Another way of connecting anarchism and sexuality, sharing ground with queer, is the notion of the erotic. Audre Lorde’s essay, “The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” offers potential inspiration for explorations in erotic anarchy. Lorde’s articulation of the erotic includes, but is not limited to, sexual desire. Seeking the erotic in everyday life may well offer an antidote to hyper-sexual capitalist imagery and its implication that sex (and of course the commodities to which it is linked) is *the* source of pleasure. Lorde’s critique of capitalism, patriarchy and domination in general is that a profound sense of joy in all aspects of life, including work, is denied:

“The principal horror of any system which defines the good in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, or which defines human need to the exclusion of the psychic and emotional components of that need... is that it robs our work of its erotic value, its erotic power and life appeal and fulfillment. Such a system reduces work to a travesty of necessities, a duty by which we earn bread or oblivion for ourselves and those we love. But this is tantamount to blinding a painter and then telling her to improve her work, and to enjoy the act of painting. It is not only next to impossible, it is also profoundly cruel” (1984).

...I am not the first to turn to the erotic as inspiration for anarchism. Describing anarchic/erotic alternatives to the state, eco-feminist Chaia Heller argues that “an erotic democracy... decentralizes power and allows for direct, passionate participation in the decisions that determine our lives” (1993: 240; see also Selection 29 above). Likewise, I argue that unlike the politics of identity, erotic anarchy might be more prefigurative than transgressive, more compassionate than oppositional, more relational than individual, and involve more listening than declaring. Never is the erotic pure or perfect, nor are these divisions clear borders. Telling involves listening (Le Guin, 2004; Rosenberg, 2003); relationships involve individuals; compassion involves undermining hierarchy and prefiguration involves transgression. The erotic, then, offers not a new form of anarchism, but an invitation to remember the importance of bodies, desires, emotions and relationships in radical cultural transformations. These have all long

been and continue to be concerns of anarchists; my fear is that they are often made peripheral in contemporary anarchist politics. This is certain to be the case where activist identities involve hierarchical separations of the political over the personal, the “active” over the “passive,” the rational over the emotional, and the militant (read revolutionary) over the compassionate (read reformist). Here too are borders.

Ursula Le Guin’s anarchist classic *The Dispossessed* (1999) can be read as a cautionary tale, demonstrating that the revolution cannot be a singular event where borders are abolished but rather a process where they are continually questioned, challenged and dissolved. I can imagine this process quickening, spreading, diversifying, playing, perhaps to a point where domination is the exception rather than the rule. In the meantime, I find helpful the words of Gustav Landauer who insightfully argued: “The state is a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to one another; one destroys it by entering into other relationships, by behaving differently to one another...” [Volume One, Selection 49].

In behaving differently, erotically, the borders which depend on either/or logic are denied their rigid claims of truth/authority. Structure instead comes through the negotiation of boundaries, negotiations dependent on careful listening to both the self and the other (knowing that they are neither the same nor entirely separate). Boundaries, unlike borders, are acknowledged to be fluid and changing, moving as participants move or are moved (i.e., through passion). Imagined borders between nature and society or us and them are undermined through passionate storytelling and other practices which encourage connection. Imagined borders between the personal and political are dissolved in autonomous and queer and feminist interventions which recognize that sexuality and gender are intertwined with, and just as important as, state and capital. These borders are also dissolved in radical psychologies which acknowledge that the individual is intimately social/ecological and thus are valuable resources for resisting domination and instead developing erotic lives, relationships and cultures. Crucially, opening up to the pleasures of the erotic depends on being open to the pain of living, on listening both to that which lets us know that something is deeply wrong and to that which gives us a profound sense of joy. This is not only a pleasure to be anticipated after the revolution for the power the erotic can be in both the ends and means of cultural transformation. Everywhere I look, I see people struggling, myself included, to find different ways to relate to each other and to the wider world. When anarchism is offered, less as a demand for revolution and more as an invitation to an erotic dance, it can be one gift among many to those in struggle.

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Chapter 8

Anarchy and Culture

37. Ba Jin: Against the Powers that Be (1984)

Ba Jin (1904-2005) was the pseudonym of Li Pei Kan (or Li Fiegan), the Chinese novelist who in his youth was active in the Chinese anarchist movement, particularly during the 1920s when anarchists still played a significant role in the Chinese revolutionary movement (see Volume One, Chapter 20). Ba Jin drew his inspiration from “Western” anarchists such as Bakunin, Kropotkin and Emma Goldman (see “Anarchism and the Question of Practice” (1927), Volume One, Selection 101). After the Second World War and the Communist seizure of power in 1949, Ba Jin supported the new Communist regime. Anarchist references in his pre-1949 writings were deleted from new editions of his novels and he became subservient to the Communist Party. Nevertheless, he was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) and his wife, Xiao Shan, died in 1973 as a result of being denied access to proper medical care. After the death of Mao Zedong and the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976, Ba Jin was able to express himself more freely, publishing a series of articles reflecting on his life and times. He said that he wanted “to use these short essays to talk to my readers and to discuss my feelings and thoughts with them in absolute honesty; I see these jottings as a final account-taking as it were.” The following reflections on the harmful results of political control of literature are taken from Ba Jin’s article, “Opinions of the Powers That Be,” reprinted in Random Thoughts (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1984), translated by Geremie Barmé.

I have my own particular reasons for saying that I am merely “a person who writes,” the foremost of these being that I see myself as someone who just potters about with a pen. On the theoretical side I am completely lost when it comes to questions concerning creative writing, the principles behind literature, and all that... All I have ever attempted to do is to write about the world and people I am familiar with, and in doing so to express my feelings honestly. I do not have

the faintest idea whether my works belong to the school of realism, romanticism, socialist realism, critical realism, or whether they are a combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism, or the like. I leave such debates to my readers and the critics. However, as a reader in my own right, I feel quite justified to judge my own writing and the writings of others. Mind you, I would never be so blind as to think that my literary comments or opinions are the last word in criticism, but I do like to publish them once in a while, and even if they fail to coincide with the “correct opinion of the powers that be,” I do not change my mind.

Two years ago, some friends who used to be editors in the literary journals *Shanghai Literature* and *Harvest* told me that when Zhang Chunqiao [Communist Party bureaucrat] was still in Shanghai he had openly attacked me, as though this was some startling piece of news. At one of the numerous struggle meetings I went through, someone claimed that Zhang had severely reprimanded an editor of a magazine for using an article I had written. Naturally, at the time Zhang was regarded as being a leading member of the “revolutionary proletarian left,” and as such was a “goody”; since he had singled me out for criticism, I had to be a reactionary, “a baddy.” People like Zhang were able to manipulate art and literature for their own political ends, and no matter what type of ludicrous and cretinous statements they would come out with, there was always a crowd of sycophants ready at hand to greet their every pronouncement with enthusiasm, straining at the leash to put them into practice.

In 1975, our local “power that was,” Mr. Xu, suddenly had a brain-wave—he announced that publishers were thereafter to concentrate their efforts on “the training of people.” What inspired wisdom! Publishers were to stop wasting their time publishing books and get to work “training people.” Heaven knows what Mr. Xu thought the schools and universities should be doing. Nonetheless, he was the man in power, so everyone had to study his new concept earnestly. What had started out as sheer nonsense was hailed as a “startling new advance.” The “three emphases,” “three contrasts” and the legion of other conundrums that formed the artistic “Three Character Classic” of the “Gang of Four” had a similar history: a progression from rubbish to revelation [trans. note: The “three emphasis” theory demanded that writers “emphasize the positive over the negative characters in a story, emphasize the heroic characters over the mass of positive characters, and emphasize the main heroic character over the mass of heroic characters.” The Three Character Classic is a traditional Chinese children’s primer written in rhyming three character sentences]. An artist who invents or accepts senseless theories and strictures only makes it more difficult for himself to be creative.

One of Zhang Chunqiao’s “brilliant ideas” for the strait-jacketing of literary creativity was the directive to writers that they could only write about the thir-

teen-year period from 1949 to 1962. Rumour has it that he was livid when a few people in Beijing expressed doubts about the wisdom of this order. I know that if anyone in Shanghai had dared to be so outspoken Zhang would definitely have had a fit. Though lauded by all of the yes-people Zhang and those like him habitually surrounded themselves with, this directive merely narrowed the possibilities for literary and artistic creativity even further than they had been previously. There was an official, a staunch supporter of Zhang's dictate, who was once invited to preview a new play. His first question was, "Is it about the thirteen years? If it isn't then I won't go." As luck would have it, the action of the play went over the time limit by a couple of months, and the cadre, quite indignant at this breach of artistic etiquette, naturally refused to see it.

Although this may sound a little absurd, it is quite true; I was present when it happened. Both protagonists in this little comedy of errors have passed away, yet that dogmatic official who refused to go to the play to this day possesses a ghostly power that reaches beyond the grave and still terrorizes many people. This is because there are those who are far too willing to lobotomize themselves and accept the opinions of those in power without hesitation, hoping in order to be insured against all possible dangers and political pitfalls, happy to be relieved of the need to think for themselves. This is precisely the attitude that cleared the way for Zhang Chunqiao and [Gang of Four member] Yao Wenyuan's rise to power as theorists, and explains how that living antithesis of learning and culture, Mr. Xu, managed to become such a powerful "revolutionary authority" here in Shanghai for so many years. Perhaps I am simplifying things slightly, after all, Zhang and Yao attained a considerable notoriety for their earlier zealous participation in the various witch-hunt campaigns in Shanghai during the fifties. They were also given considerable help by the burgeoning body of mindless, follow-the-leader art critics whom they attracted.

Looking over the history of Chinese literature one is impressed by the great number of outstanding writers who have contributed to our vast literary tradition. However, I cannot think of one good poem, or a single piece of worthwhile writing that was penned in accordance with the opinion of some authority or other. Take Russian literature for example: which of the major writers or works of literature of the reign of Nicholas I was the product of an official decree? Yet here in my study I have a pile of novels written during the Cultural Revolution on the order of a Party bureaucrat, full of the prescribed literary techniques and all assembled by "three-in-one" writing groups. These groups consisted of three writers: one provided the raw material for the book; the second wrote it all up into novel form; and, the third scrutinized the manuscript to make sure the end-product was ideologically sound.

As with many other things of that period this sounds more than a little bit inane. But people sat down and honestly thought they could write literature in this way. The head of the last surviving publishing house in Shanghai said at a meeting in October 1975 that this method of “literary creation” should be widely encouraged. When he got to the end of his speech he singled me out for a tongue-lashing. We’d known each other for years, and though he’d been a little haughty when he was an official in the early days, after being purged at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, we had the pleasure of being struggled against at the same meeting. He was subsequently reinstated, and his previous attitude of polite indifference toward me quickly changed into active hostility. As the head of the Shanghai publishing industry he made strenuous efforts to make “three-in-one” groups the order of the day, and a large number of books were churned out as a result. If you wanted to be published you had to write the way they told you, and so “capitalist roaders,” political struggles, mass criticisms and the like swelled the pages of every novel. If an author’s work happened to lack any of these sure-fire themes, then the publisher would add them. Not surprisingly, the type and official ranking of the ubiquitous “capitalist roader” would vary according to political demand. If the “Gang of Four” had stayed in power much longer, I am afraid that publisher would probably have had to start looking for “capitalist roaders” in such ancient novels as *Chronicle of the Gods*.

These absurdities did not come to an end with the fall of the Gang. When the Cultural Revolution came to an end in 1976, publishers throughout the country had large backlogs of manuscripts that were brimming with “capitalist roaders.” Some fast-thinking editors dexterously replaced the words “capitalist roader” in all manuscripts with the now obligatory “the Gang of Four and their followers.” This *volte face* of persona meant that all of the anti-capitalist roader heroes whom we had supposedly been trying to emulate were in truth relentless opponents of the “Gang of Four.” The “powers that be” gave their nod of approval and an impressive batch of “post-Cultural Revolution” literature came rolling off the presses. It did not seem to concern anyone particularly that nobody wanted to buy or read any of this stuff, after all, the bookstores could make impressive displays of post-Gang literature by piling all of these books on their shelves to gather dust. I am probably not the only one who thinks that this is a true Chinese publishing first.

Although I admit I am a complete amateur in the field of literary history, it strikes me as rather odd that we had such an active and flourishing literary scene in Shanghai in the thirties when the repressive rule of the KMT [the Guomindang] was at its worst. Such outstanding writers as Lu Xun [1881-1936], Guo Moruo [1891-1978] and Mao Dun [1896-1981] wrote and published some of

their best works during those years. Yet when the “Gang of Four” was in power everyone admits that “only a solitary flower bloomed in the garden of the Chinese arts,” and even then it was made of plastic. The majority of artists and writers were forced to change jobs and stop their creative work, others were persecuted and hounded to death. How was it that such a tragic situation could come about? I think this is a question that merits sober reflection.

38. Richard Sonn: Culture and Anarchy (1994)

Richard Sonn is the author of Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1989), one of several books to explore the connections between anarchism and avant-garde art movements, such as Patricia Leighten's Reordering the Universe: Picasso and Anarchism, 1897-1914 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), Alan Weir's Anarchy and Culture: The Aesthetic Politics of Modernism (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1997), Explosive Acts: Toulouse-Lautrec, Oscar Wilde, Felix Fénéon, and the Art & Anarchy of the Fin de Siècle by David Sweetman (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), Alan Antliff's Anarchist Modernism: Art, Politics and the First American Avant-Garde (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2001), Robyn Roslak's Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), and Theresa Papanikolas' Anarchism and the Advent of Paris Dada (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010). The following excerpts are taken from Sonn's "Culture and Anarchy," in Drunken Boat: Art, Rebellion, Anarchy (New York: Autonomedia, 1994), ed. Max Blechman.

In his famous book *Culture and Anarchy*... [Matthew] Arnold found fault with all strata of English society, levels which he uncharitably distinguished as “barbarians, philistines, and populace.” England was anarchic not only among its unwashed masses but even among the middle classes, especially those Nonconformist successors of the Puritans who championed the *laissez-faire* principles of free trade and minimal government. Arnold, in his public capacity as an inspector of schools, wanted a larger role for government, but more importantly he championed the claims of higher culture against the dissolving forces of rampant individualism and mob democracy. He spoke for a higher reason, for culture as the perfection of the highest aspirations of humanity, for “sweetness and light.” It was indubitably clear to Matthew Arnold that culture as he knew it was threatened by all the forces of modern society...

There is a double irony in Matthew Arnold's fears for culture at the hands of anarchy. Anarchy was indeed emerging at precisely this moment, though not as he envisioned it. And anarchists would in the following decades embrace culture

as fundamental to their criticism of the status quo, though they also envisioned culture very differently from Arnold.

For the newly emerging anarchist movement, culture and anarchy became not opposing but symbiotic tendencies. Because anarchists rejected not simply the political power structure—the parliaments, judicial systems, police forces, and armies—but all forms of domination and hierarchy however manifested, their critique of contemporary society took on a broadly cultural dimension. They attacked the authority of bosses, of teachers and administrators, of the arbiters of taste in the Salons and Ecole des Beaux-Arts, of fathers in the patriarchal family (though this last was one area in which Proudhon admittedly fell short). Since they attacked authority at all levels from the most personal to the most public, their radical alternatives to the status quo necessarily involved a total cultural rethinking, and envisioned a utopian set of aspirations for personal and interpersonal liberation. Anarchists did not draw up plans for a future revolution while living contentedly by the bourgeois norms of the present; they embodied the revolution in their daily lives. In this sense, anarchists created a counter culture of free schools, free press, and free love that challenged existing social mores as surely as their bombs contested public centers of power...

Of all the political movements which have emerged since the early nineteenth century, anarchism has been the most comfortable with the continual impetus toward stylistic radicalism known as modernism. This is a remarkable phenomenon for several reasons. Firstly, there has long been a myth that the formal innovations made by avant-garde artists were purely aesthetic, with no social or political implications... Secondly, names such as Impressionism and Cubism are more familiar to the general public than is that of anarchism, and are certainly better understood. Restoring the place of anarchism in the genesis of modernism will help refurbish the image of anarchism so long tarnished by its exclusive association with terrorism and bombs. This historical restoration will also clarify the value and meaning of cultural politics that was so much a part of turn-of-the-century anarchism. It will offer another example of how art can signify social change besides that of the mostly unhappy marriage of art and leftist politics usually called Socialist Realism. And it may even help to identify how anarchism is unique among modern political ideologies.

If culture, in both its popular and avant-garde incarnations, really has played such an important role, this differentiates anarchism from all other political movements. Only anarchists can claim that not the state, not the military, not even the economy, but rather culture is central to it both as movement and as ideal. This is in part for negative reasons, since anarchists have eschewed other forms of organization, especially those linked to the state. The only major rivals would be the union for anarcho-syndicalists, and possibly the small terrorist cell

for conspiratorial types. In the long run, however, especially if we bring the history of anarchism up to date and include the counterculture of the 1960s and recent radical feminism and ecology... cultural change remains at center stage. In the May 1968 mini-revolution of Paris the unions were only a hindrance to spontaneous revolution, while terrorists who emerged in the 1960s and 1970s were socialist, nationalist, and anti-imperialist but never anarchist.

Anarchism has embraced culture for positive reasons as well, as fundamental to its humanist orientation. If states, armies, and factories all signify domination and dehumanization, culture stands for creativity, individuality, free expression. The artist more than the worker and certainly the professional revolutionary is the model of the kind of human being envisioned by anarchists. He or she operates by what the French leftist students called *autogestion*, self-management or self-direction. For Marx, humans only realize themselves through their labour, by acting on the world. This implies the need to dominate nature, transforming it, humanizing it through work, enlarging the human sphere by diminishing the Other. Anarchists are less other-directed and more inner-directed, more concerned with realizing their own potential as full human beings than with transforming the material world. The costs of such transformation are painfully evident in the ecological devastation rife in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; the fruits of creativity by contrast may be most evident in the non-purposeful realm of art (and perhaps in the equally non-purposeful realm of play).

There remains a problem in the above description of anarchist cultural politics, in the division between popular and avant-garde art. The latter has appealed primarily to educated cognoscenti while anarchism has found support among peasants, workers, artisans, and other less-than-privileged social groups. Avant-gardism, furthermore, has often exulted in the incomprehension of the masses, defining itself agonistically by the hostility of, to return to Matthew Arnold's terms, the philistines. Modernist artists have only thrived in bourgeois societies, living off their art while others provide the material basis for their existence. The solution to the dichotomies of popular/avant-garde, material/aesthetic, hand/brain, was suggested long ago by Kropotkin, as well as by William Morris and other advocates of craftsmanship. In the anarchist utopia the boundaries between manual and intellectual labour, between art and craft, dissolve [Volume One, Selections 34 & 64; Volume Two, Selections 19 & 21]. People are free to express themselves through their work. Artistry pervades life, rather than being restricted to museum walls and bohemian artist studios. All people have a right to artistic values of self-expression and self-development, and the more these values pervade their daily lives the less alienated they will be. This expressive union of art and life would, theoretically at least, obsolesce the avant-garde, since art

would no longer be marginalized, nor would artists assume a combative stance. Instead, the anarchist avant-garde that existed to *épater* the bourgeois would work to renew and to beautify society. The tension between individuality and community would be overcome; all would be at home. This utopian project is worth enunciating if it provides a basis for contrasting contemporary mass-based, consumerist passivity (Nutrasweetness and Lite?) with real human potential. Such a transformation would indeed constitute a cultural revolution of which even Matthew Arnold might have approved.

39. Max Blechman: Toward an Anarchist Aesthetic (1994)

Max Blechman is the editor of the Drunken Boat anthologies of anarchist writings on art and aesthetics. The following excerpts are taken from his article, "Towards an Anarchist Aesthetic," from Drunken Boat: Art, Rebellion, Anarchy (New York: Autonomedia, 1994).

"RUN COMRADE, THE OLD WORLD IS BEHIND YOU"

Paris Graffiti, May '68

Society stands uncertainly at the pinnacle of Progress. It is not the *bang* which haunts us as much as the continual *whimpering* of the human soul, not the sudden eclipsing of light but its gradual fading, not the fiery apocalypse of the Bible but the progressive decaying of all that is beautiful.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche describes the long period of "obedience in a certain direction," the "unfreedom of the spirit," the constraint imposed by the church and state, the harsh self-disciplining necessary for "cultivation," and how ultimately "an irreplaceable amount of strength and spirit had to be crushed, stifled, and ruined" for the development of civilization. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki announced the conclusion of modernity—and the forms of social control that Nietzsche invoked continue to reign on a throne embedded in the minds of a homogeneous society [Volume Two, Selection 13].

Power has become radically decentralized, by which is not meant community self-empowerment, but the dissemination of coercive relations in all spheres of life. The historical punitive structure has been internalized, the state reproduces and sustains itself within the collective unconscious. People build their own jails, forge their own chains, act as their own worst enemies. Capitalist exchange relations—far from creating the revolutionary proletarian solidarity envisioned by Marx (and the various authoritarian "isms" that have pontificated in his name)—have ultimately served as an efficient means for pacification and conservatism.

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The Hegelian self-becoming of the masses, that grand historical mission of the working class, turns out to have been a failed prophesy, a flawed crusade, a dialectical hoax.

Confronted by the ever-encroaching Iron Cage of Bureaucracy and the deception and hypocrisy of past revolutionary movements, a cynicism abounds, and for many, a certain emptiness and hopelessness as well. And yet the diffuse quality of contemporary oppression and the historical failure of authoritarian models of revolution may serve as the basis for a more radical critique of the process of social change and, therefore, a more fundamental rejection of the past. Because it is the individual's self-determination that has consistently been assaulted in the development of both capitalist society and authoritarian revolutions, self-determination must become the starting point and the end for any attempt to truly leave the twentieth century behind. Any teleology that differentiates the means from the end, be it communism through capitalism, egalitarianism through authoritarianism, or individual liberty through the oppression of individuals, fails to address the problem of domination per se. And if domination is not confronted as a problem in itself, then it is not addressed at all. Human emancipation must begin with itself as the only means and the realization of each person's individuality as a continuous end, not as an abstract aim but concretely in the here and now. Real liberation means immediate liberation. "Run comrade, the old world is behind you!"

THE ANARCHIST AESTHETIC

In combining anarchism (from *anarchos*: without ruler) and aesthetics (from *aesthetikos*: sensitive, which evolved from *aisthanesthai*: to perceive) a conception of art radically different from bourgeois and Marxist aesthetics may be gleaned. At the heart of the formulation is the belief that the creative process, as necessarily evolving from individual (but not isolated) experience exists to the extent that the individual is insubordinate to authority. The idea that insubordination to authority is integrally connected to the broadening and intensification of sense perception associated with art is by no means novel. The radical individualism of a James Joyce or an Oscar Wilde [Volume One, Selection 61] was consciously based on this belief, and... anarchism has played a significant role among art and literary movements generally.

Anarchist insubordination to authority, like the perpetual struggle to realize the self, is at best a never ending process. There is no final solution, no ultimate reconciliation between subject and object, no day after the revolution, no Eden that will ever grace all of human society. Yet, as Albert Camus has pointed out, to rebel against omnipresent forces of domination which suppress one's desires is not to

attempt their absolute destruction. Social structures can and will be negated at some point, but above all rebellion is an affirmation of one's own existence in the present. At the moment of rebellion one begins to experience what one is, for it is then that desire and love are acknowledged as realities that must be lived. Not only must they be lived, but they must be realized in the immediate moment, not postponed to a number on a calendar whose day will never come.

This is the impetus of art, for what is creativity other than the affirmation of one's unique individuality in the primacy of the moment? By living for the moment one is by proxy engaging in an act of rebellion against all those social forces which demand the sacrifice of the present time for the sake of some future reward. Rebellion constitutes the essence of life, each act of insubordination gives rise to an existential individualism and with it, the dynamic creativity with which every one is gifted. As such rebellion is at the same time a rejection of all that which inhibits and destroys one's creative capacity, and the process of discovering what a creative existence might mean...

THE FORMS OF THINGS UNKNOWN

It is said that an anarchist society is impossible. Artistic activity is the process of realizing the impossible. It extends the realm of the possible to that which has been considered impossible. To use the words of the English art critic, Herbert Read, art has the potential to "communicate those objective realities... which rule and convention have hitherto concealed." The realms of art can be considered forms of knowledge as yet alien to most human experience but always latent components of human consciousness that are ready to transform themselves into actuality. Artistic activity can be, when freely undertaken, the act of creating a form for that which does not yet exist. The cognitive and individualistic process of nurturing and exercising one's imaginative capabilities is a prerequisite to anarchic collective action. In order for the radical democracy of anarchy to facilitate free association and the flourishing of everyone's personality it must not become mob rule, and the only way mob rule and all other forms of authoritarianism can be avoided is if people develop confidence in their own creative capacity. Artistic activity allows for the growth of this confidence, and nurtures a form of questioning and exploration necessary to avoiding blind allegiance and fostering creative action.

The work of art has generally been considered worthy only so far as it presents a historically viable content on the one hand (Marxist aesthetics) or decoration and market value on the other (bourgeois aesthetics). In both cases the cognitive function of art is ignored, which is that process of imaginatively exploring subjective emotional content. By becoming aware of one's own

repression, and speaking the poetry that is found in the recesses of the imagination the individual posits a different experience. This is the task of art. The autonomy of art embodies the anarchic, self-determining consciousness without which emancipatory movements are doomed to repeat all the atrocities of previous revolutions.

A society based on domination creates a submissive, mechanized consciousness. In contrast, art arrests the wheels of mindless routine and submission in the act of creation. When painting a picture or writing a poem, the artist breaks away from established perceptions of reality and scrutinizes his/her own experience. Embedded in the creative process is the potential to construct forms for that which has been robbed from human experience and retrieve these forms back into the consciousness of the human mind. Modern art was largely the striving for this liberation of form, for the magic and wonder absent in social reality. At stake was ripping consensus reality, going into the darkness beyond it, and creating a form that was both a memory of things past and a vision for what remains possible. Creativity is that activity of the senses without which people's spirits die and float away. Art expresses the need for happiness, against which domination is always pitted. As Herbert Marcuse put it, if people lived in a free society, "then art would be the form and expression of their freedom."

Art acts as a reminder of the potential joy of life, and as an anarchic force against all that which usurps it. It functions as a perpetual reminder that all meaningful life involves a stretching of the limits of the possible, not toward an absolute, but away from absolutes and into the depths of imagination and the unknown. This creative adventure, at the bottom of all great art, is the power which, if universalized, would embody the driving force of social anarchy.

40. Edward S. Herman: The Propaganda Model—A Retrospective (2003)

In 1988, Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman published Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media (New York: Pantheon, 1988). In that work, Chomsky and Herman developed the "propaganda model" for analyzing the role of the media in capitalist societies, tracing "the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their message across to the public. The essential ingredients of our propaganda model, or set of news 'filters,' fall under the following headings: (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) 'flak' as a means

of disciplining the media; and (5) 'anticommunism' as a national religion and control mechanism. These elements interact with and reinforce one another. The raw material of news must pass through successive filters, leaving only the cleansed residue fit to print. They fix the premises of discourse and interpretation, and the definition of what is newsworthy in the first place, and they explain the basis and operations of what amount to propaganda campaigns." The following excerpts are taken from Herman's retrospective look at the propaganda model, in which he also responds to some of its many critics. While the focus of the analysis is on the media's news coverage, the propaganda model also helps to explain the cultural dominance of capitalist ideology, illustrating the difficulties faced by those who wish to develop a libertarian counter-culture and oppositional social movements.

What is the propaganda model and how does it work? Its crucial structural factors derive from the fact that the dominant media are firmly imbedded in the market system. They are profit-seeking businesses, owned by very wealthy people (or other companies); and they are funded largely by advertisers who are also profit-seeking entities, and who want their ads to appear in a supportive selling environment. The media also lean heavily on government and major business firms as information sources, and both efficiency and political considerations, and, frequently, overlapping interests, cause a certain degree of solidarity to prevail among the government, major media, and other corporate businesses. Government and large nonmedia business firms are also best positioned (and sufficiently wealthy) to be able to pressure the media with threats of withdrawal of advertising or TV licenses, libel suits, and other direct and indirect modes of attack. The media are also constrained by the dominant ideology, which heavily featured anticommunism before and during the Cold War era, and was mobilized often to induce the media to support (or refrain from criticizing) U.S. attacks on small states that were labeled communist.

These factors are linked together, reflecting the multileveled capability of government and powerful business entities and collectives (e.g., the Business Roundtable; the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; the vast number of well-heeled industry lobbies and front groups) to exert power over the flow of information. We noted that the five factors involved—ownership, advertising, sourcing, flak, and anti-communist ideology—work as “filters” through which information must pass, and that individually and often in additive fashion they greatly influence media choices. We stressed that the filters work mainly by the independent action of many individuals and organizations; and these frequently, but not always, have a common view of issues and similar interests. In short, the propaganda model describes a decentralized and nonconspiratorial market system of control and

processing, although at times the government or one or more private actors may take initiatives and mobilize coordinated elite handling of an issue.

Propaganda campaigns can occur only when they are consistent with the interests of those controlling and managing the filters. For example, these managers all accepted the view that the Polish government's crackdown on the Solidarity union in 1980 and 1981 was extremely newsworthy and deserved severe condemnation; whereas the same interests did not find the Turkish military government's equally brutal crackdown on trade unions in Turkey at about the same time to be newsworthy or reprehensible. In the latter case the U.S. government and business community liked the military government's anticommunist stance and open door economic policy; the crackdown on Turkish unions had the merit of weakening the left and keeping wages down. In the Polish case, propaganda points could be scored against a Soviet-supported government, and concern could be expressed for workers whose wages were not paid by Free World employers! The fit of this dichotomization to corporate interests and anticommunist ideology is obvious.

We used the concepts of "worthy" and "unworthy" victims to describe this dichotomization, with a trace of irony as the varying treatment was clearly related to political and economic advantage rather than anything like actual worth. In fact, the Polish trade unionists quickly ceased to be worthy when communism was overthrown and the workers were struggling against a western-oriented neoliberal regime. The travails of today's Polish workers, like those of Turkish workers, don't pass through the propaganda model filters. Both groups are unworthy victims at this point.

We never claimed that the propaganda model explained everything or that it shows media omnipotence and complete effectiveness in manufacturing consent. It is a model of media behavior and performance, not of media effects. We explicitly pointed to the existence of alternative media, grassroots information sources, and public skepticism about media truthfulness as important limits on media effectiveness in propaganda service, and we urged the support and more vigorous use of the existing alternatives. Both Chomsky and I have often pointed to the general public's persistent refusal to fall into line with the media and elite over the morality of the Vietnam War, the desirability of the assault on Nicaragua in the 1980s, and the merits of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the 1990s, among other matters. The power of the U.S. propaganda system lies in its ability to mobilize an elite consensus, to give the appearance of democratic consent, and to create enough confusion, misunderstanding and apathy in the general population to allow elite programs to go forward. We also emphasized the fact that there are often differences within the elite that open up space for some

debate and even occasional (but very rare) attacks on the intent as well as the tactical means of achieving elite ends.

Although the propaganda model was generally well received on the left, some complained of an allegedly pessimistic thrust and implication of hopeless odds to be overcome. A closely related objection concerned its applicability to local conflicts where the possibility of effective resistance was often greater than in the case of national issues. But the propaganda model does not suggest that local and even larger victories are impossible, especially where the elites are divided or have limited interest in an issue. For example, coverage of issues like gun control, school prayer, and abortion rights may well receive more varied treatment than, say, global trade, taxation, and economic policy. Moreover, well-organized campaigns by labour, human rights, or environmental organizations that are fighting against abusive local businesses can sometimes elicit positive media coverage. In fact, we would like to think that the propaganda model can help activists understand where they might best deploy their efforts to influence mainstream media coverage of issues.

The model does suggest that the mainstream media, as elite institutions, commonly frame news and allow debate only within the parameters of elite perspectives; and that when the elite is really concerned and unified, and/or when ordinary citizens are not aware of their own stake in an issue or are immobilized by effective propaganda, the media will serve elite interests uncompromisingly.

Many liberals and some academic media analysts of the left did not like the propaganda model. Some asked rhetorically where we got the information used to condemn the mainstream media if not from the media themselves (a tired apologetic point that we answered at length in our preface). Many of these critics found repugnant a wholesale condemnation of a system they believed to be basically sound, its inequalities of access regrettable but tolerable, its pluralism and competition effectively responding to consumer demands. In the postmodernist mode, global analyses and global solutions are rejected and derided, and individual struggles and small victories are stressed, even by nominally left thinkers...

Conspiracy theory: We explained in *Manufacturing Consent* that critical analyses like ours would inevitably elicit cries of conspiracy theory, and in a futile effort to prevent this we devoted several pages of the preface to an explicit rejection of conspiracy and an attempt to show that the propaganda model is best described as a "guided market system." Mainstream critics still made the charge, partly because they are too lazy to read a complex work, partly because they know that falsely accusing a radical critique of conspiracy theory won't cost them anything, and partly because of their superficial assumption that, as

the media comprise thousands of “independent” journalists and companies, any finding that they follow a “party line” that serves the state must rest on an assumed conspiracy. (In fact, it can result from a widespread gullible acceptance of official handouts, common internalized beliefs, common policies established from above within the organizations based on ideology and/or interests, and fear of reprisal for critical analyses from within the organization or from the outside.) The apologists can’t abide the notion that institutional factors can cause a “free” media to act like lemmings in jointly disseminating false and even silly propaganda; such a charge must assume a conspiracy... we went to great pains to show that our view is closer to a free market model; we argued that the media comprise numerous independent entities that operate on the basis of common outlooks, incentives, and pressures from the market, government, and internal organizational forces...

Failure to explain continued opposition and resistance: Both [Daniel] Hallin and historian Walter LaFeber in a review in the *New York Times* (LaFeber 1988) pointed to the continued opposition to Reagan’s Central America policy as somehow incompatible with the model. These critics failed to comprehend that the propaganda model is about how the media work, not how effective they are. Even the sophisticated and sympathetic Philip Schlesinger calls ours an “effects” model, that “assumes that dominant agendas are reproduced in public opinion,” but he immediately quotes our statement that the “system is not all powerful... Government and the elite domination of the media have not succeeded in overcoming the Vietnam syndrome” (Schlesinger 1989: 301). Nowhere does he cite us saying anything like his summary of our alleged views on effects. We also stated explicitly with regard to Central America that the elite was sufficiently divided over tactics to allow space and considerable debate. We did stress, however, that the parameters of debate did not extend to fundamental challenges to the U.S. intervention (Herman and Chomsky 1988: xii-xiii).

By the logic of this form of criticism of the propaganda model, the fact that many Soviet citizens did not swallow the lines put forward by Pravda demonstrates that Pravda was not serving a state propaganda function.

Propaganda model is too mechanical and functionalist, and ignores the existence of space, contestation, and interaction: This set of criticisms is at the heart of the negative reactions of the serious left-of-center media analysts such as Philip Schlesinger, James Curran, Peter Golding, Graham Murdock, and John Eldridge, as well as that of Daniel Hallin. Of these critics, only Schlesinger both summarizes the elements of our model and discusses our evidence. He acknowledges that the case studies make telling points, but in the end he finds ours “a highly deterministic vision of how the media operate coupled with a straightforward functionalist conception of ideology” (Schlesinger 1989: 297). Specifically, he

claims that we failed to explain the weights to be given our five filters; we did not allow for external influences, nor did we offer a “thoroughgoing analysis of the ways in which economic dynamics operate to structure both the range and form of press presentations” (quoting Graham Murdock); and although we put forward “a powerful effects model” we admit that the system is not all powerful, which calls into question our determinism.

The criticism of the propaganda model for being deterministic ignores several important considerations. Any model involves deterministic elements, so that this criticism is a straw person unless the critics also show that the system is not logically consistent, operates on false premises, or that the predictive power of the determining variables is poor. The critics often acknowledge that the case studies we present are powerful, but they don’t show where the alleged determinism leads to error nor do they offer or point to alternative models that would do a better job.

The propaganda model deals with extraordinarily complex sets of events, and only claims to offer a broad framework of analysis, a first approximation, that requires modification depending on local and special factors, and that may be entirely inapplicable in some cases. But if it offers insight in numerous important cases that have large effects and cumulative ideological force, it is arguably serviceable unless a better model is provided. Usually the critics stick to generalities and offer no critical detail or alternative model; when they do provide alternatives, the results are not impressive.

The criticism of the propaganda model for functionalism is also dubious, and the critics sometimes seem to call for more functionalism. The model does describe a system in which the media serve the elite, but by complex processes incorporated into the model that involve mechanisms and policies whereby the powerful protect their interests naturally and without overt conspiracy. This would seem one of the model’s merits; it shows a dynamic and self-protecting system in operation. The same corporate community that influences the media through its power as owner, dominant funder (advertising) and major news source also underwrites the efforts of Accuracy in Media and the American Enterprise Institute to influence the media through harassment and the provision of right-thinking experts...

Golding and Murdock criticize the model for its focus on “strategic interventions,” that allegedly cause us to “overlook the contradictions in the system. Owners, advertisers and key political personnel cannot always do as they wish.” Analyzing “the nature and sources of these limits” is a “key task” of critical political economy (Golding and Murdock 1991: 19). The Golding-Murdock claim that the propaganda model focuses on “strategic interventions” is a surprising misreading, as the model’s filters are built-in and operate mainly through the in-

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ternalized recognition and enforcement of constraints and choices based on the structure of power. Strategic interventions certainly occur, but are of distinctly secondary importance.

It is also untrue that the propaganda model implies no constraints on media owners and managers; we recognized and spelled out the circumstances under which the media will be relatively open—mainly, when there are elite disagreements and when other groups in society are interested in, informed about, and organized to fight about issues. But the propaganda model does start from the premise that a critical political economy will put front and center the analysis of the locus of media control and the mechanisms by which the powerful are able to dominate the flow of messages and limit the space of contesting parties. The limits on their power are certainly important, but why should these get first place, except as a means of minimizing the power of the dominant interests, inflating the elements of contestation, and pretending that the marginalized have more strength than they really possess?

ENHANCED RELEVANCE OF THE PROPAGANDA MODEL

The dramatic changes in the economy, the communications industries, and politics over the past dozen years have tended on balance to enhance the applicability of the propaganda model. The first two filters—ownership and advertising—have become ever more important. The decline of public broadcasting, the increase in corporate power and global reach, and the mergers and centralization of the media, have made bottom-line considerations more influential both in the United States and abroad. The competition for advertisers has become more intense and the boundaries between editorial and advertising departments have weakened further. Newsrooms have been more thoroughly incorporated into transnational corporate empires, with budget cuts and even less management enthusiasm for investigative journalism that would challenge the structure of power (Herman and McChesney, 1997). In short, the professional autonomy of journalists has been reduced.

Some argue that the Internet and the new communication technologies are breaking the corporate stranglehold on journalism and opening an unprecedented era of interactive democratic media. There is no evidence to support this view as regards journalism and mass communication. In fact, one could argue that the new technologies are exacerbating the problem. They permit media firms to shrink staff even as they achieve greater outputs, and they make possible global distribution systems that reduce the number of media entities. Although the new

technologies have great potential for democratic communication, there is little reason to expect the Internet to serve democratic ends if it is left to the market (Herman and McChesney 1997: 117-35).

The third and fourth filters—sourcing and flak—have also strengthened as mechanisms of elite influence. A reduction in the resources devoted to journalism means that those who subsidize the media by providing sources for copy gain greater leverage. Moreover, work by people like Alex Carey, John Stauber, and Sheldon Rampton has helped us see how the public relations industry has been able to manipulate press coverage of issues on behalf of corporate America (Carey 1995; Stauber and Rampton 1995). This industry understands how to utilize journalistic conventions to serve its own ends. Studies of news sources reveal that a significant proportion of news originates in public relations releases. There are, by one count, 20,000 more public relations agents working to doctor the news today than there are journalists writing it (Dowie 1995: 3-4).

The fifth filter—anticommunist ideology—is possibly weakened by the collapse of the Soviet Union and global socialism, but this is easily offset by the greater ideological force of the belief in the “miracle of the market” (Reagan). There is now an almost religious faith in the market, at least among the elite, so that regardless of evidence, markets are assumed to be benevolent and nonmarket mechanisms are suspect. When the Soviet economy stagnated in the 1980s, it was attributed to the absence of markets; the disintegration of capitalist Russia in the 1990s is blamed on politicians and workers failing to let markets work their magic. Journalism has internalized this ideology. Adding it to the fifth filter in a world where the global power of market institutions makes nonmarket options seem utopian gives us an ideological package of immense strength.

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Against All Reason, December 9, 2003

Chapter 9

Anti-capitalism

41. Brian Martin: Capitalism and Violence (2001)

Brian Martin is the author of many works on social justice and social change, including Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), Information Liberation (London: Freedom Press, 1998), Social Defence, Social Change (London: Freedom Press, 1993), Uprooting War (London: Freedom Press, 1984), and with Wendy Varney, Nonviolence Speaks: Communicating against Repression (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2003). In the following excerpts, taken from his pamphlet, Nonviolence versus Capitalism (London: War Resisters' International, 2001), Martin summarizes the case against capitalism and its connection with the institutionalized violence of the State.

At the core of capitalism is private control of the means of production, including land, factories and knowledge. This is backed up, ultimately, by the coercive power of the state. Generally speaking, the system of ownership and control encourages individuals and groups to put special interests above general interests. This is responsible for many of the problems with capitalism.

What is called capitalism can be many things. It is typically a system in which a small number of large corporations dominate in most sectors of the economy. This is commonly called “monopoly capitalism” though “oligopolistic capitalism” would be more accurate. Capitalism is never a pure or free-standing system but in practice is always intertwined with other systems of power, including the state, patriarchy and the domination of nature. Free-market libertarians advocate a totally free market, perhaps maintained by a “minimal” state, but such a system is, as yet, hypothetical...

The word “capitalism” is used because the system is based on private control of capital, namely the means of production. To call this a free market system is a misleading euphemism. Markets are quite possible without private ownership. The “free” in “free market” implies freedom from state control, but actually it

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is the state that protects the conditions that make capitalist markets possible. So the term “capitalism” is used here, with the understanding that this refers to “actually existing capitalism” of the kind involving large corporations and state support rather than some libertarian ideal market system.

Since problems with capitalism are well known, only a summary is given here...

Social inequality is fostered within and between societies: the rich become richer and the poor become poorer. There is nothing in systems of exchange that promotes equality, and in practice countries or individuals that amass wealth can use the wealth to gain advantages over others. One of the rationales for government is to control and compensate for the tendency of markets to generate inequality.

If a person has a serious disability, they may be unable to produce as much as an able-bodied worker, or perhaps unable to obtain a job at all. In a society built around people, the person with a disability would be given support and training to become a productive member of society. Capitalism has no process for achieving this. Similarly, a country that is much poorer in natural resources or skills cannot compete with richer countries. Rather than helping that country, international capitalism keeps it in a dependent position.

Work is unsatisfying. Under capitalism, work is a means to an end, namely to get money to purchase goods and services, rather than an end in itself.

Workers are alienated from the product of their labour. Because decisions about products and methods of work are mostly made by employers, workers essentially become cogs in the workplace, often with little personal connection with the ultimate outcome of their labour. This is especially the case when there is a fine division of labour, as when workers in Malaysia produce one component of a car that is assembled in Korea and sold in the U.S.

Those who cannot obtain jobs suffer poverty and boredom. Markets do not guarantee jobs for everyone, and employers benefit from a “reserve labour force” of unemployed people, the existence of which keeps those with jobs in line. Since work is one of the things that gives many people their sense of identity, those who are unemployed suffer boredom, greater health problems and loss of motivation as well as poverty.

Consumers buy goods as substitute gratification in place of satisfying work and community life. Companies make money by selling goods and services and collectively promote a “consumer society.” Advertisers prey on people’s fears and inadequacies to encourage purchases.

Opportunities for economic gain foster antisocial and dangerous practices, such as bribery, workplace hazards and legislation to protect monopolies. When profits and corporate survival become the prime concern, all sorts of abuses

occur. Corporations bribe government officials (legally or illegally) for special favours. To save money, unsafe working conditions are allowed to persist and injured workers fired and given as little compensation as possible. Lobbying and pay-offs are used to encourage politicians to pass legislation to benefit the most powerful corporations, by giving them trade concessions, preferential treatment, government contracts, and guaranteed monopolies.

Selfishness is encouraged and cooperation discouraged. Since wealth and income are acquired primarily by individuals, capitalism fosters individualism and encourages selfishness. Sharing of ideas and labour is discouraged when only a few reap the benefits.

Men use positions of economic power to maintain male domination. It is well known that most of the wealthiest owners and powerful executives are men. Capitalism obviously is quite compatible with patriarchy. Similarly, dominant ethnic groups can use economic power to maintain their domination.

Military and police systems, which are needed to protect the system of private property, are also used for war and repression...

The profit motive encourages production and promotion of products with consequences harmful to human health and the environment, such as cigarettes, pesticides and greenhouse gases. It is common for products such as pharmaceuticals to be sold even though they have not been adequately tested or are known to have dangerous side effects, and for efforts to be made to boost sales and avoid paying compensation to victims. Most environmental impacts are treated as “externalities”: their cost to society is not incorporated in the price. Consequently, there is no built-in market incentive to eliminate environmental impacts that are borne by others, and a strong profit incentive to oppose attempts by governments or others to incorporate these costs in prices of goods... In contrast, there is little or no profit incentive to promote certain options that are healthy and environmentally sound, such as walking to work or sharing goods...

[C]apitalism is founded on competition between firms and between workers, and discourages cooperation, except for the purposes of competition. It appeals to people’s worst impulses with the claim that pursuing self-interest serves the greater good...

[Under capitalism] allocation of the economic product is through jobs: people get rewarded for doing the work to keep society going. This is a sort of meritocracy. However, although jobs do some of the allocation, there’s far more to the story. What actually determines a large proportion of the allocation of goods and services are: ownership of capital (providing profits to owners); credentials (providing high salaries to those with the background and opportunities to obtain degrees and enter occupational areas with protection against those without credentials); executive salaries and perks (providing high return to managers with

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more power); state interventions (welfare, pensions); [and] unpaid work (housework, child rearing).

Within the framework of the regulated market, solutions to economic inequality include reducing working hours, increasing wages, reducing credential barriers, taxing wealth and paying for housework. However, none of these challenges the foundations of capitalism.

Philosophers who look at “just desert” find little justification for unequal rewards. Why should someone receive more simply because they have rich parents or high natural ability? [see Volume One, Chapter 8].

There is plenty of production in the world today to satisfy everyone’s needs but not, as the Gandhian saying goes, anyone’s greed. The problem is distribution...

Under capitalism.... [p]eople are expected to adapt to fill available jobs, rather than work being tailored to the needs of people. A job is typically regarded as an unpleasant activity that is necessary to obtain income for a good life.

Compared to a society that distributes goods to those who most need them, under capitalism there is a great deal of inappropriate production, wasted effort and pointless activity, including advertising, planned obsolescence, military production, provision of luxuries for the rich and unnecessary work and jobs that serve only to help justify receiving a share of society’s resources. In contrast, there is a great deal of work that is needed but for which there is little or no pay, including child rearing, provision of goods and services for the poor, environmental improvements, and friendship and support for people who are lonely or have disabilities...

[C]apitalism is founded on control by those with the most money and power. Participation by the people is fostered only to the extent that it helps firms compete or maintains managerial control (as in limited forms of industrial democracy).

[C]apitalism is founded on the state’s use of its police and military power to protect the system of ownership...

For most of the time, overt state violence is not required to defend capitalism, since most people go along with the way things are. If the challenge to capitalism is violent, such as by a revolutionary party that uses bombings or assaults, then police and military forces are used to crush the challengers. But sometimes there are serious nonviolent challenges, especially when workers organize. Troops are typically called out when workers in a key sector (such as electricity or transport) go on strike, when workers take over [the] running of a factory or business, or when there is a general strike. Spy agencies monitor and disrupt groups and movements that might be a threat to business or government [see Selection 22

above]. Police target groups that challenge property relations, such as workers and environmentalists taking direct action.

At the core of capitalism is private property. Military and police power is needed to maintain and extend the system of ownership, but this is hidden behind the routine operation of the legal and regulatory system, which is seldom perceived as founded on violence. If a person or corporation believes that their money or property has been taken illegally—for example through insider trading or patent violation—they can go to court to seek redress. The court decision, if not obeyed voluntarily, can be enforced by police, for example confiscation of goods or even imprisonment. For most of the time, property rights, as interpreted by the courts and various other government agencies, are accepted by everyone concerned. That goes for billion-dollar share transactions as well as everyday purchases of goods.

Petty theft, big-time swindles and organized crime are not major challenges to the property system, since they accept the legitimacy of property and are simply attempts to change ownership in an illegal manner. Criminals are seldom happy for anyone to steal from them. Principled challenges to property, such as squatting and workers' control, are far more threatening.

Many people, especially in the United States, believe that government and corporations are antagonistic, with opposite goals. When governments set up regulations to control product quality or pollution, some corporate leaders complain loudly about government interference. But beyond the superficial frictions, at a deeper level the state operates to provide the conditions for capitalism. The state has its own interests, to be sure, especially in maintaining state authority and a monopoly on what it considers legitimate violence, but it depends on capitalist enterprises for its own survival, notably through taxation. In capitalist societies, states and market economies depend on and mutually reinforce each other.

In recent decades there has been an enormous expansion of private policing. In the U.S, for example, there are now more security guards, private detectives and others privately paid to carry out policing duties than there are government-funded police. In the military arena, there are now private mercenary companies ready to intervene if the price is right. However, these developments do not change the basic point that capitalism is built on relationships between people, production and distribution ultimately protected by armed force.

As capitalism is increasingly globalized, international policing and military intervention become more important to protect and expand markets and market relationships. For example, economic blockades, backed by armed force, can be imposed on countries such as Cuba. Usually, though, the lure of the market for elites in weaker countries is more effective than military coercion. Investment

has done more to promote capitalism in Vietnam than decades of anticommunist warfare.

Although capitalism is backed up by violence, in day-to-day operation no coercion is required. Most people believe that the world works according to capitalist dynamics, and behave accordingly. Quite a few of them believe, in addition, that this is the way things *should* work, and exert pressure to bring nonconformists into line...

Beliefs do not arise out of nothing: they are an adaptation to the situations in which people find themselves, sometimes challenging these situations. There are three main ways in which beliefs supportive of capitalism develop and are maintained: daily life, schooling and mass media.

First, most people adjust their beliefs to be compatible with their daily life. This is a process of reducing “cognitive dissonance,” namely the difference between reality and thought. If daily life is filled with buying and selling, this makes market exchange seem more natural. If daily life involves working as an employee along with many others, this makes selling one’s labour power seem more natural. If daily life involves noticing that some people are very rich and some very poor, this makes great economic inequality seem more natural.

But just because something seems natural does not necessarily make it positive or desirable. There is, though, a general tendency for people to believe that the world is just. When someone is poor, this is a potential challenge to the assumption that the world is just. One way to cope is to believe that the poor person is to blame.

Of course, for wealthy and privileged people, it is tempting to believe that they deserve their wealth and privilege, and that others deserve their misfortune. Beliefs in the virtues of capitalism are commonly stronger among its greatest beneficiaries.

Part of day-to-day experience is interacting with other people. If others share certain beliefs, it can be hard to express contrary views, and easier to keep quiet or adapt one’s beliefs to standard ones.

A second source of beliefs is schooling. Children learn conventional views about society, learn that they are supposed to defer to authority and learn that they need to earn a living. Just as important as what is learned in the classroom is what is learned from the structure of the schooling experience: pupils are expected to follow the instructions of their teachers, a process that is good training for being an obedient employee [Volume One, Selection 65].

A third source of beliefs about capitalism is the mass media, especially the commercial media, which “sell” capitalism incessantly through advertisements, through pictures of the “good life” in Hollywood movies and television shows, and in plot lines in which good guys always win...

As well as the beliefs listed above, there are others commonly found in capitalist societies, but of course not everyone subscribes to every one of these beliefs. Nevertheless, the passionate commitment to certain core beliefs by some people (especially those with the most power) and general acceptance by many others makes it possible for capitalism to carry on most of the time without the overt use of force to repress challenges. This process is commonly called hegemony...

A key group involved in shaping belief systems is intellectuals. Although universities are attacked by right-wing commentators as havens for left-wing radicals, in practice most academics, journalists, teachers, policy analysts and other knowledge workers support or accept the basic parameters of the capitalist system. Through advertising, public relations, policy development and public commentary, intellectuals give legitimacy to beliefs supportive of capitalism [see Volume Two, Selection 68]. Many of the most vehement intellectual disputes, for example over employment, public ownership and taxation, are about how best to manage capitalism, not how to transcend it.

For the past several centuries, alternatives to capitalism have been systematically destroyed or coopted. Sometimes this is through the direct efforts of owners and managers and sometimes it is accomplished by the state.

The family-based “putting-out” system of production was replaced by the factory system. The new system was initially not any more efficient but gave owners the power to extract more surplus from workers.

Workers’ control initiatives have been smashed. Sometimes this is at the factory level. In revolutionary situations, such as Paris in 1871 [Volume One, Chapter 7] or Spain in 1936-1939 [Volume One, Chapter 23], it has been at a much wider scale.

Provision of welfare from the state, including pensions, unemployment payments, disability and veterans’ supports and child maintenance, undercuts community-based systems of collective welfare and mutual support. This helps to atomize the community, making state provision seem the only possibility.

Worker-controlled organizing is opposed. Trade unions are often tolerated or cultivated as a way of coopting worker discontent, so long as the unions focus on wages and conditions rather than control over production.

Left-wing governments have often acted to dampen direct action by workers.

Affluence and the promotion of satisfaction through consumption have bought off many dissidents, actual and potential.

Socialist governments, especially those that provide an inspiring example to others, have been attacked by political pressure, withdrawal of investment, blockades, destabilization and wars.

International agreements and agencies, including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization, are used to expand opportu-

nities for capitalism, especially through opening national economies to international investment.

The production and promotion of attractive new products and services make people want to join the consumer society. Many commodities appeal to people's wants, including junk food, television, stylish cars and trendy clothes, especially targeting people's worries about relative status. An orientation to commodities serves to displace achievement of human values that are possible without commodities, including friendship and work satisfaction.

Alternatives to capitalism can provide both a material and symbolic challenge. For example, socialist governments provide a material challenge by preventing capitalist investment and reducing markets. The symbolic challenge is that an alternative is possible, and this can be a more far-reaching threat. This is why even small countries such as Cuba and Nicaragua, with little impact on the global economy, may be seen as such a dire threat by elites in dominant capitalist countries. To reduce this symbolic challenge, such governments have been attacked militarily and economically and by sustained disinformation campaigns designed to reduce their credibility. One way to defend against such attacks is through a more authoritarian socialist government, which then serves to discredit the alternative...

Attacking and discrediting alternatives is one approach. Another is cooption, namely incorporating the alternative, or part of it, into the capitalist system, or winning over adherents of the alternative view. This happens frequently at the individual level. Vocal critics of capitalism may seek to rise in the system so as to be more effective in their challenge, only to become much more accepting of capitalism, and sometimes even advocates of it. Cooperatives that are set up as alternatives to commercial enterprises often gradually become more similar to them, with workers becoming employees and cooperative members becoming consumers. Some anti-establishment rock groups become commercial successes, with their iconoclastic fashions and angry lyrics a selling point.

Alternatives do not need to be "somewhere else," namely in another country. There are small islands of noncapitalist practice and belief in the middle of every capitalist society. Public parks and libraries are based on sharing resources rather than buying and selling. Taking care of a friend's children is cooperative rather than individualistic and competitive...

It is important to remember that capitalism is not the only system of domination, nor necessarily the one with greatest centrality or priority. Therefore anticapitalist strategies need to be developed in conjunction with strategies against other forms of domination.

42. Normand Baillargeon: Free Market Libertarianism (2001)

Normand Baillargeon is the author of L'Ordre moins le pouvoir: Histoire et actualité de l'anarchisme (Marseille/Montréal: Agone/Comeau & Nadeau, 2001) and many other publications. In the following excerpts from his essay, "The Libertarians, the 'Market' and Anarchism," in Les chiens ont soif: Critiques et propositions libertaires (Montréal: Lux Éditeur, 2001), translated by Paul Sharkey, he exposes the myth of the "free market" and the barbarism of laissez-faire capitalism.

The (big L) Libertarians—not to be confused with the (small l) libertarians a.k.a. anarchists—subscribe to a contemporary school of economic, political and philosophical thinking that also includes “anarcho-capitalists.” According to them, a stateless society (or one with a genuinely minimal state) is feasible and desirable as long as such a society is founded upon the extension of free, uninhibited market mechanisms into every human undertaking. In such a society, individuals are equal before the law and free to enter into contracts that ensure that their remuneration is in line with market forces....

In essence, Libertarians subscribe to economic liberalism and political liberalism. In economics, they subscribe particularly to the interpretation of the market offered by economists from the Austrian school. According to the masters of that school—Ludwig Von Mises and Friedrich Von Hayek—the market, undiluted and uninhibited by state interference, is a “catallaxy,” an abstract mode of data-handling that generates an optimal spontaneous order that no organization or planning could hope to achieve. In its abstract form, it presupposes recognition of everyone’s freedom and recognition of everyone’s rights: thus the market supposedly guarantees justice as well as freedom...

Libertarians and... anarcho-capitalists champion the notion that individuals have a natural right... over their own person and the products of their labour as well as over any natural resources that they may have discovered or transfigured. In their view, consideration given to other rights is redundant, indeed harmful. The right to life, say, is essentially a right not to be killed rather than any entitlement to receive the wherewithal to sustain well-being. The anarcho-capitalists and Libertarians therefore tend to be opposed to what they readily describe as the responsibility-undermining paternalism of state institutions, which they see as bullying and wholly inefficient.

Critique of the state makes up a very real part of this school of thought. Murray Rothbard, for instance, penned this, with which no libertarian would take issue: “Above all, statesmen have staked their claim to a violent monopoly over police and army services, over the law, over court determinations, over money

and the minting of money, over unused land ('the public domain'), over streets and roads, over rivers and territorial waters and over distribution of the mail." And again: "Tax is thievery, pure and simple, even if the theft is carried out on a colossal scale to which common criminals would not dare aspire. It is the violent confiscation by statesmen of the property of their subjects."

In the stateless society advocated by the Libertarians, contracts freely entered into by individuals equal before the law and paid in accordance with market forces will bring the yearned-for ideal within reach. As for the inequalities that inevitably flow from this, since these inequalities are, the argument goes, natural, they pose scarcely any problem for Libertarians: individual charity will—if it pleases—palliate their starkest excesses.

It is always a delicate business arguing about the market with a Libertarian: it is really hard to know what he is talking about. The market as analyzed and described in economics books? Or the one that exists in the real world? If it means the mechanism that is a construct of a certain economic science, then let's be honest and blunt: given some memorable findings such as the Arrow theorem, the Lipsey-Lancaster theorem or Nash's equilibrium theory, we have plentiful grounds for thinking that the market certainly is not possessed of the virtues with which Libertarians credit it. To put this simply: the market is *not* the optimal mechanism commended to us; it does *not* bring equilibrium, or, if it does, it does not offer the best solution.

But we are dealing here more with the mechanism that obtains in the real world in which we live and here again, economics... suggests that [the market] has plenty of flaws—some of them very serious—which need to be taken into consideration before we declare it, not even optimal, but merely effective. In fact, a significant portion of the economic literature about the real world deals precisely with the shortcomings of the market (market failures) which thwart the optimal allocation of resources: unequal and inefficient exchanges are commonplace (adverse selection), as are externalities (meaning that a transaction impacts upon entities other than the contracting parties: for instance, ELF creates the pollution but it is the whole of society that suffers the pollution and which, additionally, very often bears the costs of the clean-up); competition is imperfect and information asymmetrical; public and quasi-public assets constantly overlap. Finally, it happens that the market ends up fomenting that which is most often not regarded by normal human beings as wholesome, moral or defensible.

Some years ago, a director of the World Bank suggested, at the end of a learned "cost-benefit" analysis, that the West should export its pollution to the Third World, where life expectancy is lower in any case. This suggestion can be accused of being many things, but it surely cannot be accused of being inconsistent with the principles of the sacrosanct market.

But there is more: in the real world, the market that prevails tends broadly to be a negation of the “pure” market of theory. In fact, to a considerable extent, development in Europe, in the United States (particularly pronounced under Reagan, fraudulently represented as an apostle of the free market) and East Asia is attributable (and this is a truism) to a systematic departure in practical terms from the rules proffered by free market theory and doctrine. And, so far as I am aware, the only attempt to achieve a de-regulated market, after the model of 19th century England, resulted in an out and out social implosion, the catastrophe described by Karl Polanyi in *The Great Transformation*.

Not that one needs to be an economist to spot these substantial mismatches between the theory and the practice. Let’s be honest: is the market the transnational corporations that are the models of a planned economy? The controlled or intra-firm exchanges that they would have us believe constitute free trade? The deals concocted (often in secret) by states and by those very corporations? Is *that* the market, all these subsidized ventures, forever clinging to the skirts of the state that guarantees their rights, these regulations, these subsidies, these countless mechanisms for socializing the risks and costs which are typical of our economic order? We can scarcely hold off from laughing—or screaming.

Not only do we not know—or at any rate, I, and many others cannot fathom—what these Libertarians or hack ideologues are talking about when they invoke the mythic and miraculous market, but there is another queer aspect to their line of argument that stands out: everything that works well (or is presumed to be so doing) in the real world is chalked up to the market, whereas everything that is doing badly can be ascribed to the market’s being imperfectly realized. This line of argument is typical of Libertarians and Robert Kuthner captures it very well: “At the heart of the celebration of markets, one finds a tautology indefatigably reasserted. If we start from the assumption that all that is can be regarded as a market and that the market makes for optimal outcomes, then it is incumbent upon us to press for everything to be run like a market. In the event of some particular market not producing optimal outcomes, there is but one conclusion possible: that it does not conform closely enough to the market. Which is an infallible system for ensuring that the theory is well shielded from the facts. Moreover, should there be some human activity that does not fit in with an efficient market, that must of necessity be the fault of meddling which must be eliminated. But it never occurs to anybody that maybe the theory does not take sufficient account of human behaviour.”

...The market—and how could it be otherwise?—is a social, political construction with a history: if we can spare the time to look into it, it teaches us extremely important (if most often hidden) facts. For instance, that firms are largely indebted for their very existence, their growth, their power and their legitimacy

to the subsidizing state and to legal landmarks from the end of the last century that have accorded them “entitlements” as “immortal persons” (sic!). In light of all of the above, we should not be surprised that, while certain aspects of free market theory, such as rivalry and competition, genuinely do apply to reality and the real world, it is to the little people, the poor, the helpless, the voiceless and defenceless that they apply...

The prevailing position consists, more or less, of the argument that one has a natural entitlement to possession of whatever one has acquired within the context of the (natural?) market and that, on the basis of these entitlements, one can do with these whatever one may please. That argument has not convinced many people, notably because it leads to consequences that are hard to stomach.

Chomsky illustrates this with a short and punchy fictional example. Let us suppose, he says, that by chance or by means deemed legitimate under that theory, somebody attains control over one of life’s vital necessities. The rest have no option but to sell themselves to that person, willy-nilly, or to perish. According to the Libertarians’ notion of property rights and of rights per se, the society wherein this comes to pass would be deemed just. I contend, and the anarchists contend, that there has to be a problem with the premises of that line of reasoning. There are several. Major problems. To get a handle on this, let us consider for instance the fact that, thanks to the state, the police and the courts, and thanks also to agencies like the WTO, intellectual property rights over medical patents are today vested in private tyrannies (albeit largely subsidized by the public purse). Such patents are responsible for the suffering and sometimes indeed the deaths of millions, because they prevent reproduction of those medicines—which might sometimes cost only a few cents.

Property rights also add up to the looting of the Third World’s biological diversity and natural resources by trans-national corporations. And to the patenting of life itself. It also, and of this we can be sure, spells famine and death for millions. Plus the obligation upon most of us to sell ourselves temporarily in order to live. Adam Smith was aware of this: “Civil government”—he wrote—“to the extent that it has been established in order to ensure the safety of property, has in actuality been established for the protection of the rich man against the poor, of those who have against the have-nots.”

...Amartya Sen, the Nobel prize winner for economics in 1998, has devoted a number of significant and outstanding writings to famine. What he has shown is that, precisely “in many recent instances of famine wherein millions have perished, there was absolutely no discernible decline in food availability, but rather these famines occurred due to the transfer of property rights hitherto regarded as perfectly legitimate.” Sen then broaches the issue that we have to take seriously—remember, we are talking here about the deaths of millions—by discussing the im-

plications of Libertarian views, in this instance, the views of [Robert] Nozick: “The [property] system is construed as just [or unjust] by scrutinizing past history and not its consequences... Can famines happen in a system of rights deemed moral by various thought systems such as Nozick’s? I think beyond the shadow of a doubt that the answer is yes, since, for many people, the only asset they can legitimately own, their labour power, can prove unmarketable on the labour market and thus not afford the owner any entitlement to food... If famine is the outcome, should property distribution be regarded as morally acceptable in spite of such disastrous consequences? It is highly unlikely that the answer can be affirmative.”

To rephrase that: the Libertarian line, the line of the prevailing ideology, is, as I see it, that rich and poor alike are forbidden to sleep under bridges without paying their rightful owner—for there is always a rightful owner—and then only as long as the latter shows willingness to accept money in return for according them this privilege...

A company generously subsidized out of the public purse, well sheltered from risks... with its costs guaranteed by the state and protected by international agreements cooked up by its peers and by states complicit in the WTO... sets itself up in some foreign land—in Africa or in Indonesia. The location does not really matter. We are assured that we are to describe this as the free market.

That company sets up shop in the country and loots its natural resources and manpower, exploiting men, women and children with the connivance of some local elite kept in power by an army to which other firms sell arms on the equally free market. It maintains and increases its hold on the country and its population, abetted in this by the IMF’s structural adjustment programs and World Bank policies, accessories to those very same states and mouthpieces of those very same firms.

All to do with the free market, we are assured. And even a free market in manpower since this entire world held in slavery is free, yes, free to conclude the contracts by which they sell themselves to the company.

A local community is presently resisting being driven off its ancestral lands by the multi-national that craves the natural resources lurking there. The army steps in to drive the population off and on occasion will, if need be, kill them, but in certain instances it will be the company’s private army that will carry out the task.

Here we would have an instance of “legitimate” defence of natural property rights and of the very civilization that our bold ideologues assure us offers protection against barbarism.

43. Peter Marshall: Anarchism and Capitalism (1993)

Peter Marshall's anarchist related publications include William Godwin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), The Anarchist Writings of William Godwin (London: Freedom Press, 1986), and William Blake: Visionary Anarchist (London: Freedom Press, 1988). The following excerpts are taken from his history of anarchist ideas and movements, Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism (London: Harper Collins, 1992; revised edition, Harper Perennial, 2007) and are reprinted here with his kind permission. Marshall argues that so-called "anarcho-capitalism" is more properly regarded as a form of right wing libertarianism.

Anarcho-capitalism has recently had a considerable vogue in the West where it has helped put the role of the State back on the political agenda. It has become a major ideological challenge to the dominant liberalism which sees a role for government in the protection of property. The anarcho-capitalists would like to dismantle government and allow complete *laissez-faire* in the economy. Its adherents propose that all public services be turned over to private entrepreneurs, even public spaces like town halls, streets and parks. Free market capitalism, they insist, is hindered not enhanced by the State.

Anarcho-capitalists share Adam Smith's confidence that somehow private interest will translate itself into public good rather than public squalor. They are convinced that the "natural laws" of economics can do without the support of positive man-made laws. The "invisible hand" of the market will be enough to bring social order...

The phenomenon of anarcho-capitalism is not however new... The Jeffersonian liberal Albert Jay Nock reached anarchist conclusions in *Our Enemy The State* (1935) at the time of the New Deal. A conservative of the *laissez-faire* school, he foresaw "a steady progress in collectivism running into a military despotism of a severe type." It would involve steadily-increasing centralization, bureaucracy, and political control of the market. The resulting State-managed economy would be so inefficient and corrupt that it would need forced labour to keep it going.

Nock's warning did not go unheeded. Friedrich A. Hayek spelt out in *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) the dangers of collectivism. In his restatement of classic liberalism in *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960), he rejected the notion of social justice and argued that the market creates spontaneous social order. But while he wished to reduce coercion to a minimum, he accepted the need for the coercion of a minimal State to prohibit coercive acts by private parties through law enforcement. He also accepted taxation and compulsory military service. While

a harsh critic of egalitarianism and of government intervention in the economy, he was ready to countenance a degree of welfare provision which cannot be adequately provided by the market. His views have had an important influence on neo-Conservatives, especially those on the right wing of the Conservative Party in Britain.

Anarcho-capitalists like David Friedman and Murray Rothbard go much further. In some ways, their position appears to be a revival of the principles of the Old Right against the New Deal which sought government interference in the economy, but they are not only motivated by a nostalgia for a thoroughly free market but are aggressively anti-authoritarian. Where [Benjamin] Tucker called anarchism “consistent Manchesterism,” that is taking the nineteenth-century *laissez-faire* school of economists to their logical conclusion, anarcho-capitalists might be called consistent Lockians.

Following Locke, classic liberals argue that the principal task of government is to protect the natural rights to life, liberty and property because a “state of nature” where there is no common law the enjoyment of such rights would be uncertain and inconvenient. The anarcho-capitalists also ask, like Locke in his *Second Treatise*, “If Man in the state of Nature be so free as has been said, if he be absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest and subject to nobody, why will he part with his freedom?” Unlike Locke, however, the anarcho-capitalists do not find such a state of nature without a common judge inconvenient or uncertain. They maintain that even the minimal State is unnecessary since the defence of person and property can be carried out by private protection agencies.

David Friedman sees such agencies as both brokers of mini-social contracts and producers of “laws” which conform to the market demand for rules to regulate commerce. Each person would be free to subscribe to a protective association of his choice, since “Protection from coercion is an economic good.” Apart from adumbrating *The Machinery of Freedom* (1971), Friedman sees capitalism as the best antidote to the serfdom of collectivism and the State...

Amongst anarcho-capitalist apologists, the economist Murray Rothbard is probably most aware of the anarchist tradition. He was originally regarded as an extreme right-wing Republican, but went on to edit la Boetie’s libertarian classic *On Voluntary Servitude* [Volume One, Selection 2] and now calls himself an anarchist. “If you wish to know how the libertarians regard the State and any of its acts,” he wrote in *For A New Liberty: The Libertarian Manifesto* (1973), “simply think of the State as a criminal band, and all the libertarian attitudes will logically fall into place.” He reduces the libertarian creed to one central axiom, “that no man or group of men may aggress against the person or property of anyone else.” Neither the State nor any private party therefore can initiate or threaten the

use of force against any person for any purpose. Free individuals should regulate their affairs and dispose of their property only by voluntary agreement based on contractual obligation.

Rejecting the State as a “protection racket” with an illegitimate claim on the monopoly of force, Rothbard would like to see it dissolved, as would Friedman, into social and market arrangements. He proposes that disputes over violations of persons and property may be settled voluntarily by arbitration firms whose decisions are enforceable by private protection agencies.

Rothbard described an anarchist society where “there is no legal possibility for coercive aggression against the person or property of any individual.” But where Tucker recognized no inherent right to property, Rothbard insists on the need for a “basic libertarian code of the inviolate right of person and property.” In addition, for all his commitment to a Stateless society, Rothbard is willing to engage in conventional politics. He helped found the Libertarian Party in the USA which wants to abolish the entire federal regulatory apparatus as well as social security, welfare, public education, and taxation. Accepting [Randolph] Bourne’s view that war is the health of the State, the Party wants the United States to withdraw from the United Nations, end its foreign commitments, and reduce its military forces to those required for minimal defence.

Rothbard argued at the 1977 Libertarian Party Congress that to become a true libertarian it was necessary to be “born again,” not once but twice, in a baptism of reason as well as of will. Since in his view libertarianism is the only creed compatible with the nature of man and the world, he is convinced that it will win because it is true. Whatever the workers and bureaucrats might think or want, Statism will collapse of its own contradictions and the free market will prevail throughout the world.

However libertarian in appearance, there are some real difficulties in the anarcho-capitalists’ position. If laws and courts are replaced by arbitration firms, why should an individual accept their verdict? And since he “buys” justice, what assurances are there that the verdicts would be fair and impartial? If the verdicts are enforced by private protection agencies, it would seem likely, as Robert Nozick has pointed out [in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*], that a dominant protective agency (the one offering the most powerful and comprehensive protection) would eventually emerge through free competition. A *de facto* territorial monopoly would thus result from the competition among protection agencies which would then constitute a proto-State. The only difference between the “ultraminimal” State of a dominant protection agency and a minimal State would be that its services would be available only to those who buy them...

In the utopias of the anarcho-capitalists, there is little reason to believe that the rich and powerful will not continue to exploit and oppress the powerless and

poor as they do at present. It is difficult to imagine that protective services could impose their ideas of fair procedure without resorting to coercion. With the free market encouraging selfishness, there is no assurance that “public goods” like sanitation and clean water would be provided for all. Indeed, the anarcho-capitalists deny the very existence of collective interests and responsibilities. They reject the rich communitarian tradition of the ancient Greek *polis* in favour of the most limited form of possessive individualism. In their drive for self-interest, they have no conception of the general good or public interest. In his relationship with society, the anarcho-capitalist stands alone, an egoistic and calculating consumer; society is considered to be nothing more than a loose collection of autonomous individuals.

The anarcho-capitalist definition of freedom is entirely negative. It calls for the absence of coercion but cannot guarantee the positive freedom of individual autonomy and independence. Nor does it recognize the equal right of all to the means of subsistence. Hayek speaks on behalf of the anarcho-capitalist when he warns: “Above all we must recognize that we may be free and yet miserable.” Others go even further to insist that liberty and bread are not synonymous and that we have “the liberty to die of hunger” [Pierre Lemieux, *Du Liberalisme à l'anarcho-capitalisme*, 1983]. In the name of freedom, the anarcho-capitalists would like to turn public spaces into private property, but freedom does not flourish behind high fences protected by private companies but expands in the open air when it is enjoyed by all.

Anarcho-capitalists are against the State simply because they are capitalists first and foremost. Their critique of the State ultimately rests on a liberal interpretation of liberty as the inviolable rights to and of private property. They are not concerned with the social consequences of capitalism for the weak, powerless and ignorant. Their claim that all would benefit from a free exchange in the market is by no means certain; any unfettered market system would most likely sponsor a reversion to an unequal society with defence associations perpetuating exploitation and privilege. If anything, anarcho-capitalism is merely a free-for-all in which only the rich and cunning would benefit. It is tailor-made for “rugged individualists” who do not care about the damage to others or to the environment which they leave in their wake. The forces of the market cannot provide genuine conditions for freedom any more than the powers of the State. The victims of both are equally enslaved, alienated and oppressed.

As such, anarcho-capitalism overlooks the egalitarian implications of traditional individualist anarchists like [Lysander] Spooner and Tucker. In fact, few anarchists would accept “anarcho-capitalists” into the anarchist camp since they do not share a concern for economic equality and social justice. Their self-interested, calculating market men would be incapable of practicing voluntary co-operation

and mutual aid. Anarcho-capitalists, even if they do reject the State, might therefore best be called right-wing libertarians rather than anarchists.

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44. Interprofessional Workers' Union: Russian Capitalism (1999)

The following excerpts are taken from "Russian Capitalism and the Global Economy" published by the Interprofessional Workers' Union (MPST), the Moscow section of the Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists (KRAS-IAA), included in "Vozvrashcheniye proletariata": Karl-Heinz Roth et al (Moscow: MPST, 1999), a collection of writings on globalization and the theories of Karl-Heinz Roth. The authors argue that Soviet state socialism was really nothing more than a particularly brutal form of forced modernization which led not to communism, as Marxist ideologues claimed it would, but to capitalism. The difficulty now for Russian workers is to develop their own autonomous organizations to combat capitalism and the state after decades of repression. Translated by Will Firth with the assistance of the Institute for Anarchist Studies, June 2001.

The system sometimes referred to as "real existing socialism" had nothing to do with a real socialist economy in which production is oriented towards satisfying people's needs as determined by people themselves. Rather, it was a specific, underdeveloped form of commodity production in which the Soviet regime pursued its own variety of accelerated industrial-capitalist modernization.

"Highly developed commodity production in the West and stiff competition on the world market meant that any new attempt at modernization in an as yet underdeveloped part of the world was bound to result in particularly ruthless recuperative development, an attempt to catch up at all costs. But the statism characteristic of the early modern age was not simply repeated—it re-emerged in a purer and harsher form than in the Western originals of the past... The particularly brutal nature of Soviet bourgeois modernization can be explained by the fact that the events of a 200 year epoch were compressed into a short space of time: mercantilism, the French Revolution, industrialization, and the imperialist war economy all in one" [Robert Kurz, "Der Kollaps der Modernisierung", Frankfurt am Main, 1991].

In Russia the "forced industrialization" carried through by the Bolsheviks—Leninists and Stalinists—created the foundations for a capitalist industrial system. In historical terms they accomplished what Stolypin, that enemy of the peasant village commune, and weak Russian capital had been unable to. To achieve their

goal they made widespread use of mechanisms borrowed from the “war socialism” of the German Empire in World War I.

During World War I Germany introduced government control in almost all branches of industry—the state fixed prices, appropriated all produce, and not only controlled the distribution of raw materials needed by industry but also employed rationing to regulate the supply of foodstuffs to the population. The state encroached far into people’s private lives, replacing market mechanisms with centralized exchange between sectors of the economy and furthering the creation of huge industrial monopolies. Free trade was abolished and compulsory labour duty introduced. Lenin described the German war economy as state-monopoly capitalism and called it “*war-time penal servitude for the workers.*” At the same time he emphasized that state-monopoly capitalism created all the necessary material preconditions for socialism and stated that there were “*no intermediate stages*” between state-monopoly capitalism and socialism. The capitalist state simply needed to be replaced by a workers’ state. The conclusion was astonishingly simple: the transition to socialism in “*war-time penal servitude for the workers*” required just a change of government and a restructuring of the state! “War communism” was nothing but an original Russian version of German “war socialism” (i.e. war capitalism), albeit well packaged in leftist phraseology.

In 1918 the Russian economy was in tatters after several years of war. The Bolsheviks introduced their totalitarian “war communism” with its tightly state-controlled economy, analogous centralization in other areas of society, and grain requisitioning in the countryside. This was a feasible model of social development under the conditions dictated by the Civil War. But these measures met with determined resistance from sections of the working class and the millions of peasants in their village communes. In 1921 the Bolshevik dictatorship was almost swept away by a wave of peasant unrest and was forced to modify its policies. A breathing space ensued, but the next massive attack on urban and rural workers was not long in coming.

In the late 1920s the USSR was still a poorly developed, largely agrarian country. Almost 80 percent of the population lived in rural areas. Agriculture accounted for around two thirds of national economic production, industry for just one third. Industrial production was only just beginning to exceed pre-war levels. Ruling an enormous country and also controlling its economy, the Party *nomenklatura* found itself in a similar position to the Tsarist regime before it. No less than its predecessors it strove for imperial goals, but the material basis for achieving them was still exceedingly thin. Sweeping modernization of the country was required, including the development of large-scale modern heavy industry and munitions works. The new rulers hoped this would help resolve in-

ternal problems and also increase the independence and power of the state, upon which their own rule and privilege depended. The Party-state bureaucracy reasoned that “*the nationalization of land, industry, transport, banks and trade, and strict control of the economy [would] allow the accumulation of the means necessary to renew and develop heavy industry*” (Stalin).

In essence this was a specific form of state capitalism in which the state bureaucracy functioned as a collective capitalist and the country was like a capitalist factory in macrocosm. The gigantic corporation USSR was part of the world economy and sold natural resources abroad. In the 1930s it sold gold mined largely in the Gulag labour camps and grain pumped out of the villages by means of collectivization; exports were later extended to include oil, gas, timber, diamonds, even larger amounts of gold, etc. The export earnings were used to finance industrialization and also maintain the inner stability of the regime.

The main objective of Stalin’s industrialization was the creation of a powerful military-industrial complex. The most highly-skilled workers and best specialists were brought to work here. Furthermore, a large part of civilian industry worked for the “defence” industry, for example extracting the ore and making the steel that was then used to produce tanks and aircraft. But in the atomic age the politics of limitless expansion with the goal of seizing other states’ territory reached their limits, and after World War II the military-industrial complex “ran idle” to a significant extent, squandering resources without giving the country anything valuable in return. This inevitably led to the collapse of the Soviet economy. Even the civilian application of new technologies developed in the military-industrial complex ran into huge obstacles due to the regime’s obsession with secrecy which sometimes verged on the absurd. The Soviet economy continued to pour astronomical sums of money into the military-industrial complex and was kept alive in the 1960s-80s mainly by the export earnings from oil, gas and other natural resources. And it was mainly import-export operations that allowed the state to maintain a more or less tolerable standard of living for most of the Soviet population.

The communal village economy was almost completely destroyed during the Fordist modernization in the 1930s-1950s, a phase of ruthless capitalist industrialization. This resulted in an exodus from the country to the city as peasants sought to escape super-exploitation in the new collective farms (Kolkhozy) and State farms (Sovkhozy). It is difficult to give exact figures for the number of people who migrated in this way, but it could have been over 50 million. Soviet light industry was unwieldy and inflexible; its equipment was obsolete and it was not geared to meet the population’s demand for consumer goods.

The Soviet regime was able to close its eyes to this state of affairs under Stalin

where all visible resistance was suppressed by terror and mass purges. After Stalin's death, however, the situation gradually changed as Khrushchev ushered in the "thaw"—the tremendous imbalances in the Soviet economy and the real needs of the population could no longer be ignored. The regime's strict control over society loosened somewhat, allowing more overt expressions of discontent. There were open rebellions of exploited workers, e.g. in the Gulags, the 1962 strike in Novochoerkassk, etc. Although these were still put down with great brutality, the authorities could no longer simply turn a blind eye to popular dissatisfaction. At the same time the evasion of work became widespread. Workers systematically lowered the pace of work, took extended breaks, or reported sick.

This situation forced the regime to make considerable concessions to the workers in the 1960s and 1970s. This included raising wages and pensions, lengthening leave entitlements, and making Saturday a work-free day. The ruling elite entered a kind of tacit agreement with the working class: "*You pretend you're working, and we'll pretend we're paying you.*" This was the basis of the Soviet version of the welfare state. Many millions of Soviet citizens were released from the Gulags and rehabilitated, and they, like the rest of the population, increased the demand for consumer goods. This inevitably led to a further increase in economic imbalances and deficits.

In many regions of the USSR workers' standards of living were extremely low by comparison with Western or even Eastern Europe. In these regions wages scarcely covered nutritional needs—given the deficit of foodstuffs a large proportion of food had to be bought on the open market which was not state-subsidized. Furthermore, in some places the quality of free medical care and local services was primitive, to put it mildly.

Finally, one must not forget that attempted strikes were put down with arrests and sometimes even massacres (like in Novochoerkassk in 1962). Virtually nothing escaped the watchful eye of the secret services, and even attending a discussion on some topical issue could lead to arrest or admission to a psychiatric clinic, which as a rule is what happened to worker activists. Absenteeism took on such massive proportions precisely because Russian workers had no legal opportunity to fight for their rights.

High military expenditure and rising labour costs limited the revenue of the ruling pseudo-capitalist bureaucracy and the options open to it. Contradictions began to appear between individual factions when it came to dividing power and resources. Since the regime had repudiated terror and the repression of any prospective dangers to its monolithic unity, it was now forced to seek indirect solutions. Thus a system emerged where different roles and spheres of interest were allocated to different factions of the central administration and the regions,

to different sectors of the economy, ministries and agencies. This was based on a complex web of relations involving economic cooperation, clientage, and a system of checks and balances.

The main economic basis for reconciling contradictions between the different regions and sectors of the economy, and also for pursuing social policy, was at this time the export of oil and natural gas which accounted for over 50 percent of the USSR's export earnings... Rising oil prices in the early 1970s stabilized the regime for some time, but the drop in the oil price in the 1980s in turn contributed to the collapse of the Soviet economy (US strategic policy had a hand in this in the way it fostered the exploitation of new oil deposits in different parts of the world so as to reduce Soviet export earnings).

The worsening socio-economic situation in the USSR undermined the relationships of clientage which had developed over the decades in the multitiered Soviet bureaucracy. This in turn led to an aggravation of social contradictions and the breakdown of the tacit agreement in Soviet society. Contradictions intensified and fractures developed along various lines, particularly between the elites in the regions or Soviet republics on the one hand and the institutions of the central bureaucracy on the other. The former increasingly appealed to nationalist ideas to back up their claims to power. Very soon the Soviet *nomenklatura* realized that its old "red" ideology was no longer a suitable tool for carrying through the redivision of property and power it had contrived; nor was it of much use for pressuring the workers to "work more" and ask for less. The quick-change artists in power did their best to distance themselves from their predecessors and competitors while discarding their last concerns for public welfare. Party bosses at republic and regional level strove to become the sole masters of the territories they governed. The most opportune means of achieving this was to form a new state under their own control, and nationalist ideas provided the appropriate justification. In many republics the educated upper class, the "intelligentsia," competed with the bureaucrats in this struggle for power. It was accustomed to regard itself as the "salt of the earth," the "herald and guardian of national culture"; now it declared itself an alternative elite and laid claim to a slice of the cake. In Russia it initially advocated Western liberalism, but this ideology soon lost its flair. In other Soviet republics the cliques of the intelligentsia formed various "Popular Fronts" and demanded "national independence," i.e. power for themselves. But the "patriotic" writers, artists and scholars were outdone by their craftier and more experienced rivals from the *nomenklatura* and were ultimately reunited with them on the basis of nationalism.

Contradictions intensified between top-level groups in the Soviet bureaucracy and different branches of industry: first and foremost between the oil and gas sector, which brought the state-capitalist regime the bulk of its foreign currency

earnings and essentially guaranteed its socio-economic and political stability, and the military-industrial complex that had dominated Soviet manufacturing industry. The former was clearly interested in radically changing political and economic policy so as to jettison the ballast of manufacturing industry and the welfare state. The latter insisted on maintaining the existing economic and political system at all costs, although it admitted that significant modernization was required.

The Soviet state's ability to implement its comprehensive social policy and maintain a stable standard of living by importing foreign products and consumer articles was now limited, and this threatened the "unwritten contract" between the bureaucracy, which controlled production, and the working class. The technological gap between the USSR and developed countries widened, both in civil and military terms, which began to sap the USSR's political power at an international level. In the "speed-up" phase in the first period of perestroika the Soviet leadership attempted to implement structural changes in industry through the accelerated introduction of modern, capital-intensive technologies. The results were a failure. This was partially due to a lack of resources for the proper introduction of these technologies, and partially to the unwieldiness and inflexibility of the Soviet planned economy with its bloated ministerial bureaucracies and gigantic industrial conglomerates. Another cause was the silent sabotage by broad sections of the working class. A range of measures to maintain work discipline also failed (especially Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign).

The strain of these efforts had disastrous effects on the archaic Soviet state-capitalist economy. Working class activity flourished briefly around the time of the impressive 1989-1990 miners' strike and in various social movements (local citizens' action groups and self-management committees, etc.), but unfortunately working people lacked experience of self-organization and these initiatives soon forfeited their autonomy. Competing bureaucratic elites funneled their activity into parties such as "Democratic Russia" and so-called popular fronts which served their own aspirations to power.

Due to the intensifying contradictions the Soviet leadership was increasingly forced to rely on loans from international creditors, which naturally increased the USSR's political and economic dependence on these institutions. Power-brokering by different sectors of the economy and regional bureaucracies ultimately tore the Soviet state apart and pushed ahead a rapid and radical transformation along neo-liberal lines. International banks and creditors contributed to this significantly as they strove to break down the economic protectionism of the old USSR and fully integrate the Soviet economy into the world market.

It came as no surprise that a large proportion of the munitions factories that emerged from the command economy were uneconomical in a market system—

their products were unable to find civilian demand, and in today's political and economic situation the Russian state has neither the means nor the need to produce weapons on the same scale as before. Tanks and guns are no substitute for bread and butter.

Chernomyrdin, Vyakhrev and the other bosses of the oil and gas sector are no longer prepared to share their profits with the state and the military-industrial complex to the same extent as before. Their political and economic power is now such that they cannot be circumvented. Russian industry is in an extremely difficult situation because of its historical orientation towards the military-industrial complex and its requirements. When the borders were opened for foreign goods many Soviet firms proved incapable of withstanding the competition from Western producers. Of course there are also quite a number of factories and businesses in Russia today that are prospering, but these are to be found mainly in the sphere of extractive industry. A large part of manufacturing industry has given up the ghost. The result is hidden unemployment on a scale probably without parallel in human history, with the result that the wages of millions upon millions of people are practically no longer paid...

Capitalism is an increasingly global system based on constant expansion. Since the collapse of the state-capitalist system in the East and through agrarian-capitalist transformation in the "Third World" it has added vast new economic regions to its sphere of control. This expansion gives rise to the idea in Russia that "some time," "somehow" and "to some extent" international capital will also reach the underdeveloped and neglected areas that as yet are of no interest to it. Indeed, although much depends on the pace and extent of this process, the different regions of Russia will inevitably be integrated into the spheres of influence of different world powers. But the big question is when, how and to what extent. Capital will only invest in these zones when the economic costs and the social risk factor can be minimized, when labour is cheap and the situation stable. Can a region really be stable when the overwhelming majority of its population is destitute? In any case, the integration of these regions would demand a strict, dictatorial regime and the death by hunger, cold and disease of millions of people who have no opportunity of "fitting into the market"...

Currently there are several different types of "development." Firstly, there are a small number of economic zones that are more or less integrated into the world market, such as centres of the international service industry and speculation (e.g. Moscow), suppliers of natural resources (oil-producing regions), or "free-trade zones" producing for export. Secondly, there are regions located relatively close to the international economic centres whose location and relatively cheap labour may lead to the establishment of factories attuned to the logic of "just in time" production, i.e. supplying parts to production plants in the highly industrialized

countries. These zones will become “threshold regions,” occupying a peripheral or semi-peripheral place in the international capitalist division of labour. Kaliningrad and also the Russian Far East could potentially follow this course of development. Finally, it seems likely that many economic regions where the dominant structure has been Soviet agriculture or obsolete manufacturing industry (e.g. the non-chernozem farming regions, or Russia’s “red belt”) will remain without capital inflow in the longer term and will face total collapse...

A real solution to the economic and political problems facing the workers today can only be found and realized by the workers themselves. After all, we live on a vast land mass rich in natural resources. The problem is that these riches have been misappropriated by an exploitative upper class of former Party functionaries and criminal bureaucrats who cover up their acts of plunder with the fig-leaf of “national interests” and the “holy right to private property.” But the problem also lies in us ourselves. As long as we still nourish the hope that someone will solve our problems for us, nothing will change.

Unfortunately, the level of real resistance today lags far behind what the situation demands. This is due to the collapse of social relations in post-Soviet society, a destructive process which is already far advanced. People are extremely passive, atomized, and often prefer to seek solutions to their problems in isolation from others, or even at others’ expense. People’s ability and will to take collective action, to assert their interests in solidarity with others, have been reduced to a minimum.

At the beginning of the 20th century there were several social forces which together created the workers’ and peasants’ councils and factory committees at the time of the October Revolution: working farmers, an intermediate strata of workers employed as seasonal labour in towns and cities but still maintaining a farm in the village, and skilled trade workers (highly qualified, specialized workers whose work still involved a creative element). Two waves of “atomization” have since swept over the workers of the USSR and the CIS, each of them eroding the communal links and collectivist structures that existed in the minds and lives of the working population. The first wave accompanied the Bolsheviks’ industrial-capitalist modernization (industrialization and collectivization). The communal system of the villages was destroyed at both an economic and a psycho-cultural level. The ideals of equality and solidarity pervading the communal structures of mutual aid, thought and language were lost. At the same time the Fordist “mass worker” was taking shape in the cities. Fordist-Taylorist structures strongly influenced the social psychology and behaviour of the majority of workers. In particular the horizons of working life were narrowed substantially. Turning one and the same screw for one’s entire working life and only being acquainted with one restricted field of work came to distinguish the Fordist worker from the qual-

ified trades workers of the early 20th century—workers now had little understanding of the tasks and requirements of the production process as a whole and thus did not feel the same need to control it themselves. They felt it was completely natural for the overall tasks of managing production to be in the hands of competent managers. The idea emerged that there was a unity of interests between workers and managers, an idea that was also increasingly propagated from above. This phenomenon was termed “paternalism” or “corporatism.” Remnants of this mode of thought, which was typical of the Soviet variant of the Fordist worker, can still be encountered today, despite the fact that today managers are having private villas built for themselves while workers’ wages are not paid for months.

Decades of rigid, industrialization policy carried through by the centralized state have also left their mark. People in the ex-Soviet republics were brought to live in huge, labyrinthine cities, were subjected to strict orders and constantly competed with one other for the possession of scarce material goods. As a consequence today these people are unable to reach agreement on the most elementary of things, let alone agreeing on the need for social revolution. Another cause of this alienation is that for decades workers attempts at open resistance (strikes, public meetings, etc.) were clamped down on and activists locked away in concentration camps and psychiatric wards—even small groups of militant workers were dispersed too quickly for them to accumulate any experience of collective social action.

All these processes have led to the almost complete disappearance of traditions of resistance, self-organization, mutual aid, and social activism. In turn authoritarian structures have become firmly established not just in politics and the economy, but in people’s thought and language as well. The working class is no exception. These authoritarian attitudes seriously undermined the preparedness and ability of the Soviet working class to seek a self-managed alternative to the Communist Party regime in the late 1980s. The strikes of 1989-90 and the protests against the planned price reform showed that people were quite capable of fighting against the Gorbachev government’s attempts to solve the country’s crisis of development at their expense. But they did not succeed in conducting this struggle as an independent, self-conscious social force.

After the Party’s removal from power and the turn to neo-liberalism the working class was hit by a second wave of “atomization.” Life in the market economy and mass-media propaganda now drummed into them that “collectivism” was powerless, that in reality nothing could be changed by collective action, and that self-interest was the key (“look after number one”). The propaganda and politics of neo-liberalism were thus responsible to a significant extent for the spread of egoism, as well as nationalist and pro-fascist views in Russian society (anti-

Semitism, anti-Caucasian sentiment, etc.), including among the working classes. This is typical scapegoating—victims are sought to bear the blame for the social catastrophe; it is also a symptom of the lack of solidarity, an attempt to escape from the crisis at the expense of others. In other words: these are asocial, anti-social and pathological forms of behaviour.

But these unhealthy tendencies are not an iron necessity that renders workers' self-organization impossible forever. The experience of real workers' resistance such as the self-organized and self-managed struggle at the Yasnogorsk mechanical engineering works in 1998-99 shows that it is sufficient for workers to realize two simple truths. Firstly, that if nothing is done and no-one puts up a fight everyone will perish and die of hunger. The second truism is that if something is done it must be done independently—without leaders, parties and union bureaucrats...

Whatever the current level of social consciousness of the "lower classes," we do not believe any government will be able to solve the problems facing Russian society today. Only ordinary people themselves, the workers, can achieve this—if they have the will to. The working class will only have a chance of survival if it manages to become an actor in the historical process, if it formulates a social-revolutionary alternative to existing reality in the course of struggle...

We are convinced that the traditions of the old workers' movement, which is under the complete control of political and union functionaries, are impotent in the class struggle. The Russian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FNPR), the Independent Miners' Union (NPG), and parties such as the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) and the Russian Communist Workers' Party (RKRP) are centralized, bureaucratic structures with a vast apparatus of well-paid professional officials. By virtue of its position this apparatus has enormous power over the working class and has political and economic interests of its own. For organizations of this kind workers are merely bystanders, "cannon fodder" to be used by the functionaries in their struggle for power. Actions of civil disobedience such as symbolic strikes for a few hours and public protest meetings with speakers selected in advance are of no use. As long as the workers' movement sticks to the beaten track of simply vocalizing its dissatisfaction at rallies and symbolic strikes orchestrated by professional functionaries, workers will be unable to gather any experience of self-organization and will remain in their role in an old play written by others—to be used again and again as pawns in the power-struggles of leaders and officials...

Within the rules of the existing society and the prevailing system of administration there is no way out. The workers will only emerge victorious if they steer clear of struggles for interests that are not their own. Instead, they must set the rules of the game themselves. A new workers' movement is needed, one that

serves not the interests of politicians and the union bureaucracy but is a movement of workers for workers. It must be based on the principles of self-organization and self-management. There is no way of acquiring experience of self-organization and self-management other than in collective struggle for one's own social and human rights, regardless of what the union bosses and party bureaucrats say. Experience of this kind can only be gained when workers free themselves from the control of leaders (politicians and union officials) and begin to act independently, even if at first this may seem chaotic. That will be the beginning of a new workers' movement.

It is vital that the principle of absolute equality be respected from the very beginning... everyone involved in the movement has a right to be heard and must have equal rights in discussions. There can be no Party or union "vanguard" or "revolutionary leadership"—only the workshop or factory general assemblies of workers and their delegates have a right to make decisions. These delegates are fully controlled by their respective general assemblies—they act only in accordance with the decisions of these assemblies and are recallable at any moment. Structurally the new workers' movement must consist of the general assemblies of workers' collectives which then coordinate their activity through councils and federations of these councils, all fully under their control. There is no place for permanent paid functionaries who are basically no longer workers but have become professional administrators (managers, bourgeois) whose occupation and class position mean they have no interest in the growth of workers' self-organization. It is in these people's interest to accumulate as many administrative functions as possible in their own hands because their salary and leadership position depend on it. Consequently they have an interest in the repression of rank-and-file workers' assemblies and other forms of self-organization. If, on the other hand, workers' organizations have a cooperative, community orientation and are not divorced from production, they will have the same material basis as other workers. They will thus have an enormous, purely practical interest in developing a model of grass-roots, direct-democratic self-organization which will allow them to free themselves of a great deal of work. Even if initiatives, rank-and-file committees and revolutionary workers' unions at first unite only a minority of workers at their respective enterprises, they can already begin organizing and conducting general assemblies, involving as many workers as possible in the process of self-organization...

The Soviet industrial-capitalist system was based on a strict division of labour and narrow specialization. Workers were split into what amounted to castes that were often hostile to each other. Although the working class encompasses both blue-collar and non-managerial white-collar workers, the totalitarian regime followed the time-tested strategy of divide and rule and cultivated relations ac-

cordingly. Workers who did largely physical work were told that they were now the ruling class, a line reinforced by the regime's propaganda—the intelligentsia had a subordinate role and were untrustworthy. It was drummed into specialists, on the other hand, that the “mute and docile masses” were not to be trusted. Obviously the goal of social liberation is the self-organization and unification of workers of all categories so as to overcome both capitalist exploitation and the division of labour. It is therefore of great importance that attempts be made to win over to our side technical personnel—specialists who do not belong to management... Unfortunately, most technical staff today have a negative attitude towards independent workers' initiatives. Essentially this problem can only be overcome by involving them in the workers' movement as equal partners in struggle. After all, everyone who earns their living through their own work without exploiting the labour of others belongs to the working classes...

Millions of people are surviving thanks to their small garden plots. This is what is currently saving the country from famine. Since industry in the towns and cities is evidently unable to protect jobs and secure adequate wages, would it not be logical to try and squat the huge expanses of agricultural land lying fallow? Agricultural land is an almost unused means of production at present. At the beginning of the twentieth century the land fed more than a hundred million people. The “collectivization” enforced by Lenin's state using the most brutal of means was the death of the village, and the majority of peasants fled to the cities. The land remained, but today it is little used because the villages have practically been deserted. But there are examples of the successful settling of deserted land, for instance in the Volga region, and some of these new settlements have been able to achieve a relatively high standard of living by Russian standards. Obviously tasks of this kind cannot be solved at an individual level—they require far-reaching collectivism, beginning with offering resistance to the authorities (which will attempt to prevent occupations of this kind) and including the demanding task of setting up a collective farm. If workers can act collectively to blockade railways, then why shouldn't they also collectively occupy idle land and vacant houses in the villages? Currently this path is being taken by a part of the working class in Brazil. Thousands of workers sacked from their factory jobs are occupying land together with the rural poor and forming communes and farming cooperatives. This communitarian-socialist experiment could be of great significance because it demonstrates a way of solving the problems facing the population of many of the world's countries, including Russia.

Workers in the public and private sectors, in factories, offices and municipal services, people in their neighbourhoods, and members of farming collectives: everywhere ordinary people can begin to organize social life through grass-roots general assemblies and coordinate their activities with others through delegates'

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councils—this is the way to develop direct workers' control which in time will allow people to take their fate into their own hands. But self-organization cannot be pulled out of thin air. People must know their rights and needs and have a positive ideal of social change. "*Poverty and desperation are still not sufficient to generate the Social Revolution,*" Mikhail Bakunin said [in *Statism and Anarchy*]. "*They may be able to call forth intermittent local rebellions, but not great and widespread mass uprisings. To do this it is indispensable that the people be inspired by a universal ideal, historically developed from the instinctual depths of popular sentiments, amplified and clarified by a series of significant events and severe and bitter experiences. It is necessary that the populace have a general idea of their rights and a deep, passionate, quasi-religious belief in the validity of these rights. When this idea and this popular faith are joined to the kind of misery that leads to desperation, then the Social Revolution is near and inevitable, and no force on earth will be able to resist it.*"

Chapter 10

Libertarian Alternatives

45. Graham Purchase: Green Anarcho-Syndicalism (1995)

In the following article, published as “Anarcho-Syndicalism, Technology and Ecology” in Kick It Over, No. 35 (Summer 1995), Graham Purchase argues that anarcho-syndicalist trade unions have an important role to play in achieving and maintaining an ecological society. Also included in Anarchism and Environmental Survival (Tucson: See Sharp Press, 1994).

In an anarchist society, the absence of centralized state authority will permit a radically new integration of nature, labour and culture. As the social and ecological revolution progresses, national boundaries will become cartographical curiosities, and divisions based upon differences in geography, climate and species distribution will re-emerge. This essay addresses the question of what role unionism will play in these changes.

First, it seems obvious that telecommunications, transportation and postal networks all require organization which extends far beyond the individual ecological region, and that activities like road building between communities require cooperation beyond that of individual locales. Thus, a return to a community-based lifestyle need not and cannot imply a return to the isolation of the walled medieval city or peasant village.

Anarcho-syndicalists (that is, anarchist unionists) argue that the best way to address such needs is for the “workers of the world” to cease producing for capitalist elites and their political allies. Instead, they should organize to serve humanity by creating not only communication and transportation networks, but industrial, service, and agricultural networks as well, in order to ensure the continued production and distribution of goods and services.

Yet there are many people in anarchist and radical environmental circles who regard anarcho-syndicalism with distrust, as they mistakenly identify it with industrialism. They argue that global industrialism has been responsible for cen-

tralized organization and environmental destruction. They view industrialism as necessarily based upon mass production, and the factory as inevitably involving high energy use and dehumanizing working conditions. In short, critics believe that providing six billion people with toilet paper and building materials (let alone TVs, VCRs and automobiles) necessarily involves large-scale, mass production techniques ill-suited to ecological health—regardless of whether capitalist leeches or “free” workers are running the show. Industrialism, it is argued, is an environmental evil in and of itself; it is only made slightly more destructive by the narrow, short-term interests of capital and state. Such critics argue that technology has likewise outgrown its capitalistic origins, and has taken on a sinister and destructive life of its own... At this point, however, simply abandoning our cities and our technologies and hoping that our species will somehow return to a small-scale, pre-industrial existence appears both unlikely and reckless...

Although the local, small-scale production of manufactured items should be encouraged in every ecological region, it would be absurd to expect that every village, town or region would produce its own can openers, razor blades, nails and windmill blades. Even if it were possible for craftspeople in every community to produce these products and thousands like them, this would surely involve an enormous waste of time and energy. No one wants to suffer the noise and clamour of the factory and be a slave to the machine, but neither do most people want to make their own nails and rope by the methods traditionally employed by village blacksmiths and rope makers. The hellfire and brimstone of the factory floor on the one hand, and hours of tedious, mind-numbing weaving on the other, are not desirable alternatives to the wire cutter and the mechanical loom, respectively. There is simply no good reason to reject industrial workshops as a means for producing the wide variety of manufactured items that are required in our daily lives.

Only certain regions have the ores necessary to the production of iron, steel, copper and aluminum, and even if the manufacture of the many items made from such ores were carried out in each local region, it would still require a transport network to get the ores there in the first place. In adopting the eco-regionally self-sufficient community as the basis for a future anarchist society, we must not blind ourselves to its real limitations. In the absence of intercommunal worker associations for the provision of transport, communication, and basic articles of consumption, the anarchist vision is reduced to an absurd and unworkable utopia. Although we may justly assert that many items such as bread, food, energy, building materials *ad infinitum* should, and in many cases could, be produced by the inhabitants of each city-region, insisting upon a concept of total self-sufficiency, as anti-syndicalist anarchists are apt to do, is unrealistic and dogmatic.

No one wants to spend their whole life in the factory or workshop, but everyone needs nails, transportation, or rope at some time. It would only be fair that all people spend a few hours every week helping to provide these useful products in co-operation with their fellows. Machines do help us make these things more easily; people only become slaves to their machines because they are slaves to their bosses and to a wasteful, growth-oriented economy. If there were no useless bosses who collect the profits but do no work at the machines they own or oversee, and if production did not always have to be increased to fuel an ever-expanding, growth-oriented consumerism, then it is doubtful that any of us would have to work more than a few hours per week. Those who are by temperament “workaholics” could spend their time improving upon, and experimenting with, products or projects of their choice.

Looking back toward the Stone Age or forward toward some post-industrial techno-utopia is equally pointless. Primitivists long for a quick fix from a (largely imagined) glorious past, while technophiles long for the quick fix in an idealized future—when the way out of the present mess probably entails an imaginative mixture of Neolithic community and selected technologies. For example, the use of non-renewable oil and coal resources during the past two centuries is undoubtedly ill-suited to the ecology of our planet, but so would be the Neolithic firewood hearth were it to be used by Earth’s six billion people today. (In time, all non-renewable energy sources will of necessity be superseded by renewable ones such as wind and water)...

Industrialism is not inherently anti-ecological, and the strength of Green consumerism will almost certainly ensure that the resource base for many of the manufactured products that we consume must and will change for the better. But the individualistic mass consumer culture which has grown up around the industrial system is another matter. If people continue to insist upon having three cars and individually owning every conceivable appliance and convenience, then things are unlikely to get very much better.

No environmentalist wishes to see many millions of acres of land devoted to the monocultural production of maize or palm oil in order to provide bio-fuels for our cars. But neither syndicalism nor, indeed, industrialism, requires capitalism’s promotion of “growth” and individualistic over-consumption. For example, syndicalists are committed to providing extensive public transport networks and other basic utilities on a non-profit basis for the benefit of all; and the provision of utilities or public transport using manufactured industrial products in no way requires the destructive and profit-oriented consumer culture of the present day...

Capitalists are committed to growth-oriented consumerism; it does not matter much to them whether they are selling natural or artificial products so long

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as people keep buying and consuming more and more. As a consequence, more and more of the available land is being given over to producing more and more products for individual consumption. Syndicalists, on the other hand, understand the need for the communal consumption of industrial resources. They understand that a well-constructed trolley line might last 100 years and transport millions or even tens of millions of people in its lifetime. Once a railway or trolley line is built, there is no inherent requirement for growth. Chances are, one line from point A to point B will be all that will ever be needed; there probably will be no need to construct another, let alone 20 or 30 of them. The point is that syndicalists are not interested in growth or profit, and their concept of industrialism must not be confused with the profoundly destructive consumer culture of contemporary capitalism.

Only time will tell whether human technology and society can co-evolve successfully with nature... That we can simply dismantle the industrial and technological revolutions and return to small-scale tribal communities seems even more naive a proposal than some old-fashioned anarcho-syndicalists' view that workers self-management alone will bring about the "free society." The idea that a workers' paradise could simply be built upon the shoulders of global capitalism is simply preposterous. The large-scale, centralized, mass-production approach that developed with capitalism, idolized by many Marxists, was, unfortunately, never seriously challenged by either the union movement or by anarcho-syndicalists. The wider anarchist movement, however, has always distrusted large-scale, wasteful industrial practices and deplored the regimentation involved in work and the factory system, and has placed its faith in the self-governing, environmentally integrated community. Anarcho-syndicalists should review the intellectual insights of the broad anarchist movement to a much greater extent than they have. Otherwise, anarcho-syndicalism will become just another tired, 19th century socialist philosophy with an overly optimistic assessment of the liberatory potential of mass industrial culture.

Nevertheless, it is only through organizing our fellow wage-earners, who have the least to gain from the continued functioning of global capitalism, that we can build any lasting challenge to the state and its power elite. The traditional methods of syndicalism, such as the general strike, could bring the global megamachine to a complete standstill overnight. No other group can achieve this, because wage earners, and especially the growing army of service workers, represent the majority (at least 60%) of the adult population. Once the people wrest the industrial and service infrastructure from the hands of the elite, we can do what we will with it... [U]nless anarchists persuade their fellow workers to organize themselves to resist and eventually eliminate the current state and corporate coercive apparatus, this whole discussion is so much pie in the sky. This is the most com-

elling reason why an environmentally sensitive and rejuvenated anarcho-syndicalist movement represents one of the most practical methods of halting the destructive advance of the state and the mega-corporation...

It is true that we may ultimately discover that most technology, and even the industrial system itself, is inherently environmentally destructive. It is even possible that many of the new eco-technologies that seem to offer hope may turn out to have unforeseen side effects, and that humanity will be compelled to give up modern technology altogether. But, if this happens, it must be an organic process. Its starting point, one would hope, would not be simply to smash up the machines, dynamite the roads and abandon the cities, beginning again at “year zero”—as Pol Pot attempted to do in Cambodia. The only non-authoritarian way in which the “year zero” can come is for the people to decide unanimously to destroy their factories, stores, highways, and telephone systems themselves. If this happens, there would be nothing anyone could or should do to stop them. But starvation, dislocation, chaos and violence would almost certainly be the immediate result of such reckless actions, leading to dictatorship, horrendous suffering, and political and social passivity in the long run. (And even if primitivists would, by some miracle, convince a majority of our fellow citizens to discard science and technology, would that give them the right to force the rest of us to submit to their will?)

The everyday needs of humanity are enmeshed in the continued functioning of the industrial machine. One cannot simply smash up the life-support system and hope for the best. Instead, it must be carefully dismantled while new methods and practices are developed. If we are to achieve an eco-anarchist society, workers must wrest power from their employers, after which the goal should be production of socially necessary and environmentally benign goods. Once people are no longer forced to produce useless consumer goods and services, it is likely that every person will work only a very few hours per week—leaving people with much more time to devote to their own interests and to their communities. By eliminating the parasitic classes and reducing industrial activity to the production of basic necessities, a huge amount of human energy would be released. The reconstruction of the eco-regionally integrated human community from the corpse of the state could thus commence in an incremental way, ensuring that basic human needs would be effectively met while retaining the positive aspects of the industrial infrastructure...

If, in the face of sustained efforts to reduce its adverse effects and to integrate it with the local eco-region, the industrial system still proved to be an environmental menace, then humanity would, one hopes, have had the time to explore new ways of life suited to meeting its basic needs without industry as we know it. Industrial syndicalism is one relatively bloodless way of doing away with the

state/capitalist elite, and of allowing construction of an anarchist society; it may or may not have a place in the creation of an ecologically sound way of life, but it is a sure method of returning economic and industrial power into the hands of the people. Anarchists—be they industrial-syndicalist, technophile, or neo-primitivist—thus have no program other than to bluntly declare that it is the people who must decide their own social and environmental destiny.

Of course, the question remains of whether industrial syndicalism is the only, or most satisfactory, anarchist method of reorganizing the distribution of goods and services within communities. What we can be sure of is that the individualistic mass consumerism of the current state/capitalist system is quite ill-suited to the health and sustainability of life on Earth.

In order to have influence, anarchists, who have always believed that the individual and the collectivity are of equal value and can co-exist harmoniously, must clarify the alternatives to both capitalist and authoritarian “communist” economics. For example, nonprofit, community-based forms of individual skills exchange, such as barter-based networks, represent co-operative efforts which strengthen the autonomy of both individuals and communities. Local skills exchange systems use their own bartered “currency” and distribute goods, services and labour within the community; community infrastructures can thus develop according to the ideals of their members, without dependence upon government, capital or state.

The value that ordinary people place upon individual effort and exchange cannot be ignored by anarchists; there is simply no need to collectivize or industrialize those services that do not require elaborate structures. Further, the rise of the service sector (counseling, food services, daycare, etc.), together with the need to reduce the work week and to minimize consumption by producing only socially necessary goods, will mean that the social organization of work will be increasingly directed toward community-based and non-profit activities such as skills exchange networks.

But, unless the trains run and municipal water and energy supplies are assured, the social situation will quickly dissolve into chaos. The intercommunal postal and transport networks needed to deliver basic goods and services obviously cannot be supplied by community-based skills exchange networks.

Again, anarcho-syndicalists’ traditional approach to providing such services via worker-controlled organizations points to a solution: workers in non-profit industries would simply exchange their labour and products for credits in local skills exchange networks. Small-scale, non-industrial approaches and their integration with local exchange networks are thus viable steps toward an anarchist society. The realization of a federation of free communities requires a multifaceted attack upon the institutions of capital and state, involving elements of tra-

ditional syndicalism as well as more individually oriented yet essentially non-capitalist systems of production and consumption, systems that allow for adequate levels of consumer choice.

Village life is in decline everywhere and, even if it will eventually be necessary to return to a world composed of small villages, at present we face the problem of increasing millions of urban dwellers living on the outskirts of cities which long ago ceased to be discernible social entities. The social ills upon which modern life is based—mass alienation, consumerism and self-centered individualism—may prove fatal to our species, and should be democratically eradicated through education. Syndicalism, local skills exchange networks, and traditional co-operative ventures are ways of helping people to educate themselves about community and regionally-based ways of life. These possibilities are far superior to either the Stalinist “proletarianization” of the people through terror, or the state-capitalist robotification of the urban and rural masses by an endless media circus that lobotomizes people into insatiable consumerism, cynicism, and social apathy.

46. Murray Bookchin: Municipal Control (1986)

In the following excerpts from “Municipalization: Community Ownership of the Economy,” Green Perspectives, No. 2, February 1986, Murray Bookchin argues that directly democratic, trans-class municipal assemblies can provide for effective political control of the economy by all members of the community, in contrast to anarcho-syndicalist self-management which Bookchin claims would lead to a competitive market economy with collective decision making being effectively limited to workers’ councils or anarcho-syndicalist federations. However, he recognizes that similar concerns can be raised regarding municipal control, with could lead to competition and conflict between communities with much different economic resources. He suggests this can be avoided by adopting anarchist communism at the municipal level (“to each according to their needs”) and by means of federation between various communities. Anarcho-syndicalists would respond that they advocate similar measures in order to prevent worker self-management from recreating relationships of subordination, inequality and exploitation. Reprinted in the revised edition of Bookchin’s The Limits of the City (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986).

Whereas the syndicalist alternative re-privatizes the economy into “self-managed” collectives and opens the way to their degeneration into traditional forms of private property—whether “collectively” owned or not—libertarian municipalism politicizes the economy and dissolves it into the civic domain. Neither

factory or land appear as separate interests within the communal collective. Nor can workers, farmers, technicians, engineers, professionals, and the like perpetuate their vocational identities as separate interests that exist apart from the citizen body in face-to-face assemblies. “Property” is integrated into the commune as a material constituent of its libertarian institutional framework, indeed as a part of a larger whole that is controlled by the citizen body in assembly as citizens—not as vocationally oriented interest groups.

What is equally important, the “antithesis” between town and country, so crucial in radical theory and social history, is transcended by the “township,” a traditional New England jurisdiction, in which an urban entity is the nucleus of its agricultural and village environs—not as an urban entity that stands opposed to them. The township, in effect is a small region within still larger ones, such as the county and the “bioregion.”

So conceived, the municipalization of the economy must be distinguished from “nationalization” and “collectivization”—the former leading to bureaucratic and top-down control, the latter to the likely emergence of a privatized economy in a collectivized form and the perpetuation of class or caste identities. Municipalization, in effect, brings the economy from a private or separate sphere into the public sphere where economic policy is formulated by the entire community—notably, its citizens in face-to-face relationships working to achieve a general “interest” that surmounts separate, vocationally defined specific interests. The economy ceases to be merely an economy in the strict sense of the word—whether as “business,” “market,” capitalist, or “worker-controlled” enterprises. It becomes a truly political economy: the economy of the polis or the commune. In this sense, the economy is genuinely communized as well as politicized. The municipality, more precisely, the citizen body in face-to-face assembly, absorbs the economy as an aspect of public business, divesting it of an identity that can become privatized into a self-serving enterprise.

What can prevent the municipality from becoming a parochial city-state of the kind that appeared in the late Middle Ages? Anyone who is looking for “guaranteed” solutions to the problems raised here will not find them apart from the guiding role of consciousness and ethics in human affairs. But if we are looking for counter tendencies, there is an answer that can be advanced. The most important single factor that gave rise to the late medieval city-state was its stratification from within—not only as a result of differences in wealth but also in status positions, partly originating in lineage but also in vocational differentials. Indeed, to the extent that the city lost its sense of collective unity and divided its affairs into private and public business, public life itself became privatized and segmented into the “blue nails” or plebeians who dyed cloth in cities like Florence

and the more arrogant artisan strata, who produced quality goods. Wealth, too, factored heavily in a privatized economy where material differentials could expand and foster a variety of hierarchical differences.

The municipalization of the economy absorbs not only the vocational distinctions that could militate against a publicly controlled economy; it also absorbs the material means of life into communal forms of distribution. “From each according to his ability and to each according his needs” is institutionalized as part of the public sphere, not ideologically as a communal credo. It is not only a goal; it is a way of functioning politically—one that becomes structurally embodied by the municipality through its assemblies and agencies.

Moreover, no community can hope to achieve economic autarchy, nor should it try to do so unless it wishes to become self-enclosed and parochial, not only “self-sufficient.” Hence the confederation of communes—the Commune of communes—is reworked economically as well as politically into a shared universe of publicly managed resources. The management of the economy, precisely because it is a public activity, does not degenerate into privatized interactions between enterprises; rather it develops into confederalized interactions between municipalities. That is to say, the very elements of societal interaction are expanded from real or potential privatized components to institutionally real public components. Confederation becomes a public project by definition, not only because of shared needs and resources. If there is any way to avoid the emergence of the city-state, not to speak of self-serving bourgeois “cooperatives,” it is through a municipalization of political life that is so complete that politics embraces not only what we call the public sphere but material means of life as well.

It is not “utopian” to seek the municipalization of the economy. Quite to the contrary, it is practical and realizable if only we will think as freely in our minds as we try to achieve freedom in our lives. Our locality is not only the arena in which we live out our everyday lives; it is also the authentic economic arena in which we work and its natural environs are the authentic environmental arena that challenges us to live in harmony with nature. Here we can begin to evolve not only the ethical ties that will link us together in a genuine ecocommunity but also the material ties that can make us into competent, empowered, and self-sustaining—if not “self-sufficient”—human beings. To the extent that a municipality or a local confederation of municipalities is politically united, it is still a fairly fragile form of association. To the extent that it has control over its own material life, although not in a parochial sense that turns it into a privatized city-state, it has economic power, a decisive reinforcement of its political power.

47. Kevin Carson: Mutualism Reconsidered (2007)

Kevin Carson is a modern day mutualist, updating the arguments of Proudhon (Volume One, Selections 12 & 18) and Benjamin Tucker for a mixed economy utilizing market mechanisms meant to ensure the voluntary exchange of products between free and equal producers—exchange without exploitation. He suggests that the confederal forms of organization advocated by various anarchist currents, whether communist, syndicalist or municipalist, can turn into top down organizations, particularly in times of crisis, and therefore prefers to rely on market mechanisms which do not require a central coordinating agency which could become an incipient state. The following excerpts are taken from his online book, Studies in Mutualist Political Economy (<http://www.mutualist.org/id47.html>; print edition: BookSurge Publishing, 2007).

Government, in its essence, is a mechanism for externalizing costs. By externalizing costs, government enables the privileged to live at the expense of the non-privileged. But every such intervention leads to irrationality and social cost. For example:

Because labour does not keep its own product, and the disutility and the output of labour are not internalized by the same individual, there is a crisis of overproduction and under-consumption and a need for further state intervention to dispose of the surplus product.

Because labour does not own its means of production, the process of capital accumulation works against labour instead of for it. Instead of investment being the decision of a worker to consume less of his own product today in order to work less or consume more tomorrow, it is the decision of a boss to invest some of the worker's product today so he can receive even less of his product tomorrow. Instead of an improved standard of living for the worker-owner, increased productivity results in unearned wealth for the owner and unemployment for the worker.

Because large corporations do not pay the full cost of the factors they consume, they consume irrationally and inefficiently; because the inefficiency costs of large size are externalized on the taxpayer, they are able to grow beyond the point of maximum efficiency. At the same time that American goods are produced at many times the energy and transportation costs actually needed, the country faces chronic energy shortages and transportation bottlenecks.

It is only through the free market, organized on the basis of voluntary ex-

change, that the cost principle can be realized. The law of cost operates through the competitive mechanism, by which producers enter the market when price is less than cost and leave it in the opposite case. In a free market, the price of a good or service is a signal of the cost entailed in providing it. Because costs are on the table, reflected in price rather than hidden, people (including business firms) will only consume goods and services that they are willing to pay for...

[T]he cost principle and reciprocity in exchange depend on the observance of two other mutualist principles: voluntary cooperation and free association... the law of value works through competition and the free decision of market actors to shift purchasing power and resources among competing alternatives. It is only through such action that price is able to signal the amount of socially necessary labour embodied in goods and services.

Most anarcho-capitalists (with some honourable exceptions) automatically imagine a market society... as having the capitalist business firm as the dominant form of organization. But... there is no necessary reason for this. Mutualists prefer the workers' and consumers' cooperative, the mutual, the commons, and the voluntary collective to the capitalist corporation as a market actor...

Since Proudhon, mutualism has tended to be identified with a gradualist approach. Gradualism involves, at the same time, two kinds of action: 1) creating the institutional basis for a new society within the existing one; and 2) gradually rolling back the state through external pressure, and supplanting it with our alternative forms of organization, until it is entirely abolished...

Such a project requires self-organization at the grassroots level to build "alternative social infrastructure." It entails things like producers' and consumers' co-ops, LETS [local exchange trading] systems and mutual banks, syndicalist industrial unions, tenant associations and rent strikes, neighbourhood associations, (non-police affiliated) crime-watch and cop-watch programs, voluntary courts for civil arbitration, community-supported agriculture, etc. The "libertarian municipalist" project of devolving local government functions to the neighbourhood level and mutualizing social services also falls under this heading—but with services being mutualized rather than municipalized...

In other words, mutualism means building the kind of society we want here and now, based on grass-roots organization for voluntary cooperation and mutual aid—instead of waiting for the revolution...

In practice, regardless of semantic arguments over reformism versus revolution, most anarchists agree that our final goal is the abolition of the state, that it is unlikely to happen overnight, and that in the meantime we should do what we can to build a new society starting where we are now. We are therefore faced with the task of pushing the given system in the direction we want, and pushing until we reach our ultimate goal of abolishing the state altogether. That means...

1) educational work; 2) building counter-institutions; and 3) pressuring the state from outside to retreat from society and scale back its activities...

A gradualist approach to dismantling and replacing the state and replacing it with new forms of social organization does not mean that we equally welcome any particular reduction in state activity, regardless of its place in the overall strategy of the ruling class. The order in which the state is rolled back is just as important as rolling it back at all.

We must assess the strategic situation and act accordingly. Statism does not exist for its own sake. The state is a means to an end: exploitation. The state is the means by which privileged classes live off the wealth of others. The state and the parties that control it will reflect the interests of those privileged classes. Therefore, any policy proposal coming from the state apparatus and the mainstream political parties, regardless of how convincingly it co-opts libertarian rhetoric, will be intended to serve the interests of some faction of the ruling class, in some way enabling them to live off the labour of the producing classes...

The existing system is a class system, depending on the state for its survival. The policy of the ruling class, as a big picture, combines authoritarian and libertarian aspects, mixing elements of liberty into the overall authoritarian structure when they suit the overall purpose. It stands to reason, therefore, that we cannot evaluate each particular policy in terms of whether it reduces or increases the power of the state in regard to its limited purview alone, without regard to how it serves the overall agenda of power and exploitation... The state permits greater or lesser latitude in different areas, but only in accordance with an overall strategy aimed at benefiting the interests of the ruling class.

The central function of the state is to enable some people to live at others' expense, through coercion... So it stands to reason that, in a system defined by its state capitalist nature, every particular facet of tax or regulatory policy is aimed at furthering the interests of the state capitalist elites who enrich themselves by political means. And any particular reduction in taxes or regulations promoted by either party is intended, in the greater context of the state's policy as a whole, to further state capitalist interests...

Since all its functions are aimed, directly or indirectly, at furthering the political extraction of profits, it stands to reason that the most central, structural supports of subsidy and privilege on which state capitalism depends should be the first to go; those that make it marginally more bearable for the lower classes should be the last to go...

Most mutualist and individualist anarchists agree that the main purpose of the state's activities has been to serve the exploitative interests of the ruling class. Most also agree that "bleeding heart" policies like the welfare state have served primarily to moderate (at general taxpayer expense) the most destabilizing re-

sults of unequal exchange. The overall effect is to rob the vast majority of the working population, through unequal exchange in the consumer and labour markets, of much of their labour product, and then to spend a small portion of that ill-gotten gain to guarantee a minimum subsistence to those elements of the underclass most likely to cause a ruckus. (Of course, even in the case of the underclass, what they receive in welfare payments is probably not enough to offset what they have lost through the state's policies of reducing the bargaining power of labour and raising the threshold of subsistence)...

The state is not a neutral, free-standing force that is colonized fortuitously by random assortments of economic interests. It is by nature the *instrument* of the ruling class—or, as the Marxists say, its executive committee. In some class societies, like the bureaucratic collectivist societies of the old Soviet bloc, some portion of the state apparatus itself is the ruling class. In state capitalist societies like the United States, the ruling class is the plutocracy (along with subordinate New Class elements) [see Volume Two, Selections 27 & 67]. This is not in any way to assert that economic exploitation or class domination can arise outside of the state; only that the ruling class is the active party that acts through the state...

Not all reductions in state power are equally important, and it could be disastrous to dismantle state functions in the wrong order. The main purpose of every state activity, directly or indirectly, is to benefit the ruling class. The central or structural functions of the state are the subsidies and privileges by which the concentration of wealth and the power to exploit are maintained. The so-called “progressive” functions of the state... are created by the ruling class, acting through the government as their executive committee, to stabilize capitalism and clean up their own mess.

Therefore it is essential that the state should be dismantled in sequence, starting with the structural foundations of corporate power and privilege; after a genuine market is allowed to destroy the concentration of power and polarization of wealth, and remove the boot of exploitation from the neck of labour, the superfluous welfare state can next be dismantled...

The answer, then, is active engagement to dismantle the interventionist state, without which exploitation would be impossible—and to dismantle it in accordance with a strategic plan that identifies the class nature of the present system and explains how each specific reduction of state activity furthers our own vision of a successor society. This process of dismantling can be accomplished only through broad-based, ad hoc coalitions, formed on an issue-by-issue basis...

A voluntary producer cooperative, commune, or mutual aid society is a free market institution. A corporation functioning within the state capitalist system is emphatically not.

If anything, the form of genuinely private property formed by mutualizing

openly state-owned property is probably closer to the spirit of a free market than the nominally private corporation whose operating expenses and capital accumulation are subsidized by the state, whose output is guaranteed a market by the state, and which is protected from price competition by the state...

Unlike capitalists, we prefer occupancy-based property in land and cooperative forms of large-scale production. Unlike collectivists, we prefer market relations between firms to federative relations and planning. We prefer such forms of organization to both the capitalist and collectivist model because they tend to promote social values that, on reflection, capitalists and collectivists may find that they share to some extent...

The free market is made to order for the purpose of avoiding centralized organization and hierarchy. When firms and self-employed individuals deal with each other through market, rather than federal relations, there are no organizations superior to them. Rather than decisions being made by permanent organizations, which will inevitably serve as power bases for managers and "experts," decisions will be made by the invisible hand of the marketplace...

Production can never be undertaken solely with a view to use, without regard to exchange value. The reason goods have value today is that it requires effort or disutility to produce them. With or without formal market exchange, there will still be an implicit exchange involved, labour for consumption, in the production process. It implies a judgment, if a tacit one, that the use value of the good is worth the disutility to the worker who produces it. And fairness and unfairness will continue to exist, although concealed (along with the law of value) behind a "collective" planning process. Either the labour entailed in producing the goods consumed by a worker will equal the labour he expends in production, or they will not. If not, somebody is being exploited. The law of value is not simply a description of commodity exchange in a market society; it is a fundamental ethical principle...

Mutualists prefer a method of "privatizing" government functions that places them under social, as opposed to state, control. This means decentralizing them to the neighbourhood or the smallest local unit, and placing them under the direct control of their clientele. The final stage of this process should see the services funded entirely by voluntary user fees... A society organized on these principles would avoid most of the evils we associate with capitalism. Labour would keep most or all of what currently goes into interest, profit and rent. The increased bargaining power of labour would lead, not only to an increased wage, but to much greater control over working conditions.

Without subsidies to centralization and energy consumption, the labour currently wasted on distribution would be unnecessary to maintain the existing standard of living. Production would be on a much smaller, more efficient scale, and

closer to home. Population would be dispersed and less mobile, and the extended family and stable local community would be revived.

In addition, the economic cycle would be much less severe in a decentralized economy of production for local use. To see why, let's start at the smallest and most simple level. Imagine a truck farmer who lives next door to a cobbler. The two make an arrangement to exchange shoes for produce. Obviously, the farmer alone can't absorb enough of the cobbler's output to support him; and the cobbler can't eat enough to support the farmer. But the two are at least fairly secure in the knowledge that their future needs for both vegetables and shoes are provided for with a high degree of probability. And they have a fairly predictable market for that portion of their output that is consumed by the other person.

Taking it to the next step, imagine a community of a few dozen people of varying trades, using their own local currency (LETS, mutual banknotes, etc.) to exchange among themselves. Again, because of the limited number of participants, and the high degree of predictability of their future needs (barring any unusual circumstances), it is likely that (so long as each participant produces something needed by most people on a fairly steady basis) each participant will feel secure in his ability to obtain his minimum need of the commodities produced by each of the other participants; and each participant will likewise feel secure in a market for his output, at least to the extent of collective demand for it within the group.

So long as the producers and consumers of different commodities are known to each other in a community, future supply and demand is likely to be relatively stable, and not subject to abrupt or unexpected shocks. So major divergences of supply and demand, and resulting economic crises, are unlikely to occur.

But the further society departs from this decentralist model, and approaches large-scale, anonymous commodity markets serving a wide geographical area, the more unstable and unpredictable markets become.

48. Adam Buick and John Crump: The Alternative to Capitalism (1986)

John Crump (1944-2005) was a libertarian socialist involved with the Social Revolution group in England in the 1970s. He became interested in the history of the Japanese socialist and anarchist movements and lived in Japan for a time, which led to several publications, including The Origins of Socialist Thought in Japan (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1983), Hatta Shûzô and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan (New York: St. Martin's, 1993—see Volume One, Selection 106), and Nikkeiren and Japanese capitalism (Routledge Curzon, 2003). He co-edited, with Maximilien Rubel, Non-Market Socialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987). Adam Buick is a long time member of the

Socialist Party of Great Britain, which advocates the creation of global non-market socialism by democratic means. The following excerpts are taken from their book, State Capitalism: The Wages System under New Management (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986), which provides a modern restatement of the case for anarchist communism (Volume One, Chapter 8). Reprinted here with the kind permission of Taeko Midorikawa Crump and Adam Buick.

The basis of any society is the way its members are organized for the production of wealth. Where a section of society controls the use of the means of production, we can speak of a class society. Control of the means of production by a class implies the exclusion of the rest of society from such control, an exclusion which ultimately depends on the threatened or actual use of physical force. An institutionalized organ of coercion, or state, is thus a feature of all class societies and historically first made its appearance with the division of society into classes.

In all class societies, one section of the population controls the use of the means of production. Another way of putting this is that the members of this section or class “own” the means of production, since to be in a position to control the use of something is to own it, whether or not this is accompanied by some legal title deed.

It follows that a classless society is one in which the use of the means of production is controlled by all members of society on an equal basis, and not just by a section of them to the exclusion of the rest. As James Burnham put it:

“For society to be ‘classless’ would mean that within society there would be no group (with the exception, perhaps, of temporary delegate bodies, freely elected by the community and subject always to recall) which would exercise, as a group, any special degree of control over access to the instruments of production; and no group receiving, as a group, preferential treatment in distribution” (Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, 1945: 55; see also Volume Two, Selection 27).

In a classless society every member is in a position to take part, on equal terms with every other member, in deciding how the means of production should be used. Every member of society is socially equal, standing in exactly the same relationship to the means of production as every other member. Similarly, every member of society has access to the fruits of production on an equal basis.

Once the use of the means of production is under the democratic control of all members of society, class ownership has been abolished. The means of production can still be said to belong to those who control and benefit from their use, in this case to the whole population organized on a democratic basis, and so to be “commonly owned” by them. Common ownership can be defined as:

“a state of affairs in which no person is excluded from the *possibility* of controlling, using and managing the means of production, distribution and consumption. Each member of society can acquire the *capacity*, that is to say, has the opportunity to realize a variety of goals, for example, to consume what they want, to use means of production for the purposes of socially necessary or unnecessary work, to administer production and distribution, to plan to allocate resources, and to make decisions about short term and long term collective goals. Common ownership, then, refers to every individual’s potential ability to benefit from the wealth of society and to participate in its running” (Jean-Claude Bragard, “An Investigation of Marx’s Concept of Communism,” Ph.D. Thesis, Oxford, 1981: 255—emphases in original).

Even so, to use the word “ownership” can be misleading in that this does not fully bring out the fact that the transfer to all members of society of the power to control the production of wealth makes the very concept of property redundant. With common ownership no one is excluded from the possibility of controlling and benefiting from the use of the means of production, so that the concept of property in the sense of exclusive possession is meaningless: no one is excluded, there are no non-owners.

We could invent some new term such as no-ownership and talk about the classless alternative society to capitalism being a “no-ownership” society, but the same idea can be expressed without neologism if common ownership is understood as being a social relationship and not a form of property ownership. This social relationship—equality between human beings with regard to the control of the use of the means of production—can equally accurately be described by the terms “classless society” and “democratic control” as by “common ownership” since these three terms are only different ways of describing it from different angles. The use of the term “common ownership” to refer to the basic social relationship of the alternative society to capitalism is not to be taken to imply therefore that common ownership of the means of production could exist without democratic control. Common ownership *means* democratic control *means* a classless society.

When we refer to the society based on common ownership, generally we shall use the term “socialism,” though we have no objection to others using the term “communism” since for us these terms mean exactly the same and are interchangeable. If we have opted for the term “socialism” this is as a means of showing that we decisively reject the Leninist insertion of some sort of “transitional society,” wrongly called “socialism,” between capitalism and its classless alternative, generally called “communism.” For us socialism is communism,

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since both terms describe the society which immediately follows the abolition of capitalism.

Common ownership is not to be confused with state ownership, since an organ of coercion, or state, has no place in socialism. A class society is a society with a state because sectional control over the means of production and the exclusion of the rest of the population cannot be asserted without coercion, and hence without a special organ to exercise this coercion. On the other hand, a classless society is a stateless society because such an organ of coercion becomes unnecessary as soon as all members of society stand in the same relationship with regard to the control of the use of the means of production. The existence of a state as an instrument of class political control and coercion is quite incompatible with the existence of the social relationship of common ownership. State ownership is a form of exclusive property ownership which implies a social relationship which is totally different from socialism.

As we saw, common ownership is a social relationship of equality and democracy which makes the concept of property redundant because there are no longer any excluded non-owners. State ownership, on the other hand, presupposes the existence of a government machine, a legal system, armed forces and the other features of an institutionalized organ of coercion. State-owned means of production belong to an institution which confronts the members of society, coerces them and dominates them, both as individuals and as a collectivity. Under state ownership the answer to the question "who owns the means of production?" is not "everybody" or "nobody" as with common ownership; it is "the state." In other words, when a state owns the means of production, the members of society remain non-owners, excluded from control. Both legally and socially, the means of production belong not to them, but to the state, which stands as an independent power between them and the means of production.

The state, however, is not an abstraction floating above society and its members; it is a social institution, and, as such, a group of human beings, a section of society, organized in a particular way. This is why, strictly speaking, we should have written above that the state confronts *most* members of society and excludes *most* of them from control of the means of production. For wherever there is a state, there is always a group of human beings who stand in a different relationship to it from most members of society: not as the dominated, nor as the excluded, but as the dominators and the excluders. Under state ownership, this group controls the use of the means of production to the exclusion of the other members of society. In this sense, it owns the means of production, whether or not this is formally and legally recognized.

Another reason why state ownership and socialism are incompatible is that the state is a national institution which exercises political control over a limited

geographical area. Since capitalism is a world system, the complete state ownership of the means of production within a given political area cannot represent the abolition of capitalism, even within that area. What it does mean... is the establishment of some form of state capitalism whose internal mode of operation is conditioned by the fact that it has to compete in a world market context against other capitals.

Since today capitalism is worldwide, the society which replaces capitalism can only be worldwide. The only socialism possible today is world socialism. No more than capitalism can socialism exist in one country. So the common ownership of socialism is the common ownership of the world, of its natural and industrial resources, by the whole of humanity. Socialism can only be a universal society in which all that is in and on the earth has become the common heritage of all humankind, and in which the division of the world into states has given way to a world without frontiers but with a democratic world administration.

Socialism, being based on the common ownership of the means of production by all members of society, is not an exchange economy. Production would no longer be carried on for sale with a view to profit as under capitalism. In fact, production would not be carried on for sale at all. Production for sale would be a nonsense since common ownership of the means of production means that what is produced is commonly owned by society as soon as it is produced. The question of selling just cannot arise because, as an act of exchange, this could only take place between separate owners. Yet separate owners of parts of the social product are precisely what would not, and could not, exist in a society where the means of production were owned in common.

However, socialism is more than just not an exchange economy; it is not an "economy" at all, not even a "planned economy." Economics, or political economy as it was originally called, grew up as the study of the forces which came into operation when capitalism, as a system of generalized commodity production, began to become the predominant mode of producing and distributing wealth. The production of wealth under capitalism, instead of being a direct interaction between human beings and nature, in which humans change nature to provide themselves with the useful things they need to live, becomes a process of production of wealth in the form of exchange value. Under this system, production is governed by forces which operate independently of human will and which impose themselves as external, coercive laws when men and women make decisions about the production and distribution of wealth. In other words, the social process of the production and the distribution of wealth becomes under capitalism an *economy* governed by *economic* laws and studied by a special discipline, *economics*.

Socialism is not an economy, because, in reestablishing conscious human control over production, it would restore to the social process of wealth production

its original character of simply being a direct interaction between human beings and nature. Wealth in socialism would be produced directly as such, i.e. as useful articles needed for human survival and enjoyment; resources and labour would be allocated for this purpose by conscious decisions, not through the operation of economic laws acting with the same coercive force as laws of nature. Although their effect is similar, the economic laws which come into operation in an exchange economy such as capitalism are not natural laws, since they arise out of a specific set of social relationships existing between human beings. By changing these social relationships through bringing production under conscious human control, socialism would abolish these laws and so also “the economy” as the field of human activity governed by their operation. Hence socialism would make economics redundant.

What we are saying, in effect, is that the term “exchange economy” is a tautology in that an economy only comes into existence when wealth is produced for exchange. It is now clear why the term planned economy is unacceptable as a definition of socialism. Socialism is not the planned production of wealth as exchange value, nor the planned production of commodities, nor the planned accumulation of capital. That... is what state capitalism aims to be. Planning is indeed central to the idea of socialism, but socialism is the planned (consciously coordinated) production of useful things to satisfy human needs precisely instead of the production, planned or otherwise, of wealth as exchange value, commodities and capital. In socialism wealth would have simply a specific use value (which would be different under different conditions and for different individuals and groups of individuals) but it would not have any exchange, or economic, value.

Conventional academic economics in the West rejects the definition of economics as the study of the forces which come into operation when wealth is produced to be exchanged. But even on the alternative definition it offers—that economics is the study of the allocation of *scarce* resources to meet *some* human needs—socialism would not be an economy. For socialism presupposes that productive resources (materials, instruments of production, sources of energy) and technological knowledge are sufficient to allow the population of the world to produce enough food, clothing, shelter and other useful things, to satisfy all their material needs.

Conventional economics, while denying that the potential for such a state of abundance exists, nevertheless admits that if it did this would mean the end, not only of “the economy” as a system of allocating scarce resources but also of goods having an economic value and price; goods would simply become useful things produced for human beings to take and use, while economics as the study of the most rational way to employ scarce resources would give way to the study

of how best to use abundant resources to produce “free goods” in the amounts required to satisfy human needs. Significantly, the ideologists of state capitalism take up a basically similar position: if abundance existed, value, prices, money, markets and wages could be abolished but, since abundance does not yet exist and could not be brought into existence for some considerable time, all these categories of capitalism must continue.

As far as academic economics in the West is concerned, this question is not really one of fact but of definition. Scarcity is built into its theoretical system in that it regards a “factor of production” as being scarce so long as it is not available in unlimited supply. Thus for it “abundance” can only be a theoretical limiting case—a situation where land, capital and labour were all available, quite literally, for the taking—which could never exist in practice, so that by definition scarcity will always exist. But this is a quite unreasonable definition both of scarcity and of abundance. Abundance is not a situation where “an infinite amount of every good could be produced” (Paul Samuelson, *Economics: An Introductory Analysis*, 11th ed., 1980: 17). Similarly, scarcity is not the situation which exists in the absence of this impossible “total” or “sheer” abundance. Abundance is a situation where productive resources are sufficient to produce enough wealth to satisfy human needs, while scarcity is a situation where productive resources are insufficient for this purpose.

In any event, value and its categories do not arise from scarcity as a supposed natural condition; they arise... from the social fact that goods are produced as commodities. Similarly, socialism is not a mere “state of abundance”; it is a social rather than a physical or technical condition. It is the set of social relationships corresponding to a classless society, i.e. to a society in which every member stands in the same position with regard to controlling and benefiting from the use of the means of wealth production. The establishment of a classless society means an end to the wage labour/capital relationship which is the basic social relationship of capitalist society. The wage (or employment) relationship expresses the fact that control over the use of the means of production is exercised by a section only of society. It is a relationship between two social classes, presupposing a division of society into those who control access to the means of production and those who are excluded from such control and are obliged to live by selling their ability to work. Since the very existence of wage labour (employment) implies a class of owners and a class of non-owners of the means of production, no society in which the predominant form of productive activity continues to be wage labour can be regarded as being socialist.

In socialist society productive activity would take the form of freely chosen activity undertaken by human beings with a view to producing the things they

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needed to live and enjoy life. The necessary productive work of society would not be done by a class of hired wage workers but by all members of society, each according to their particular skills and abilities, cooperating to produce the things required to satisfy their needs both as individuals and as communities. Work in socialist society could only be voluntary since there would be no group or organ in a position to force people to work against their will.

Socialist production would be production solely for use. The products would be freely available to people, who would take them and use them to satisfy their needs. In socialism people would obtain the food, clothes and other articles they needed for their personal consumption by going into a distribution centre and taking what they needed without having to hand over either money or consumption vouchers. Houses and flats would be rent-free, with heating, lighting and water supplied free of charge. Transport, communications, health care, education, restaurants and laundries would be organized as free public services. There would be no admission charge to theatres, cinemas, museums, parks, libraries and other places of entertainment and recreation. The best term to describe this key social relationship of socialist society is *free access*, as it emphasizes the fact that in socialism it would be the individual who would decide what his or her individual needs were. As to collective needs (schools, hospitals, theatres, libraries and the like), these could be decided by the groups of individuals concerned, using the various democratic representative bodies which they would create at different levels in socialist society. Thus production in socialism would be the production of free goods to meet self-defined needs, both individual and collective...

With the replacement of exchange by common ownership what basically would happen is that wealth would cease to take the form of exchange value, so that all the expressions of this social relationship peculiar to an exchange economy, such as money and prices, would automatically disappear. In other words, goods would cease to have an economic value and would become simply physical objects which human beings could use to satisfy some want or other. This does not mean that goods would come to have no value in any sense; on the contrary, they would continue to have the physical capacity to satisfy human wants. The so-called economic value which goods acquire in an exchange economy has nothing to do with their real use value as a means of satisfying wants, since the value of a good to human beings, i.e. its capacity to satisfy some want, has never borne any relation to the time taken to produce it. In socialism goods would cease to be commodities but they would remain use values; indeed, with the shedding of their useless economic value their importance as use values would be enhanced, as this would be the sole reason why they were produced... the aim of production would cease to be to maximize the difference between the exchange

value of the goods used up in the process of production and the exchange value of the final product...

Under capitalism there is, in the end, only one criterion: monetary cost, which, as a measure of economic value, is ultimately a reflection of the average time taken to produce a good from start to finish. The managers of capitalist enterprises are obliged by the working of the market to choose the technical methods of production which are the cheapest, i.e. which minimize production time and therefore monetary cost. All other considerations are subordinate, in particular the health and welfare of the producers and the effects on the natural environment. Many commentators have long pointed out the harmful effects which production methods geared to minimizing production time have on the producers (speed-up, pain, stress, accidents, boredom, overwork, long hours, shiftwork, nightwork, etc., all of which harm their health and reduce their welfare), while more recently scientists have documented the damage such production methods cause to nature (pollution, destruction of the environment and wild life, exhaustion of non-renewable resources).

Socialism, as a society geared to producing only use values and not exchange value, would take these other considerations into account and subordinate the choice of production methods to the welfare of human beings and the protection of their natural environment. No doubt this would lead in many cases to the adoption of production methods which, by capitalist standards, would be “inefficient” and “irrational” in the sense that were they to be adopted under capitalism they would “cost” more and so be “unprofitable.” This is why such methods are not adopted under capitalism, where it is exchange value and not use value that counts, and why capitalism would have to be replaced by socialism if the original aim of production as a means to serve and enhance human welfare were to be restored...

We have already seen that a system in which the means of production are owned by a state is not a classless society where all members stand in the same relationship to the means of production, but a class society in which those who control the state stand in a privileged position with regard to the means of production, since they control their use to the exclusion of the rest of society... As long as a section of society is excluded from controlling the means of production, a class society exists, no matter how generous or well-meaning the ruling class is considered as being. This is one reason why a gradual evolution from state ownership (state capitalism) to common ownership (socialism) is impossible. Such a gradual evolution from a class society to a classless society is impossible because at some stage there would have to be a rupture which would deprive the state capitalist ruling class—be they well-meaning or, more likely, otherwise—of their exclusive control over the means of production. There would have to be, in other

words, a political and social revolution in which the power to control the use of the means of production would be consciously transferred by the excluded majority from the minority state capitalist class to all members of society.

An equally fundamental reason why a gradual evolution from state capitalism to socialism is impossible is the difference in the form which wealth takes in the two societies. In socialism wealth appears simply in its natural form (as various use values capable of satisfying human wants), while under state capitalism wealth takes the form of value (goods having acquired an exchange value in addition to their natural use value).

As the totality of wealth produced today is a single product produced by the whole workforce acting as a “collective labourer” (Marx, *Capital*, 1919 (Vol. 1): 383-4), some goods cannot be produced in the one form and some in the other. The social product that is wealth today can only be produced either wholly as value or wholly as simple use value. Certainly some goods can be directly distributed in kind while others remain obtainable only against payment in money, but this is not the same thing. In this case the goods produced for distribution in kind would still be “value” in that their production costs, i.e. the exchange value used up in producing them, would have to be paid for out of the surplus value realized in the priced goods sector. Profit-and-loss accounting in units of value would still be necessary. This is why all schemes... for a gradual withering away of commodity production insist on the need to retain some universal unit of account (whether this be monetary units as in the various schemes for “shadow prices” or units of labour-time as an attempt to measure economic value directly) in both the price and the “free goods” sectors.

The changeover from commodity production to production solely for use can only take place as a rupture, not as a gradual transition. Since “classless society” and “common ownership” are synonyms, and since commodity production is a nonsense on the basis of common ownership, this rupture (revolution) is in fact the same as the one needed to move from class society to classless society. Neither classes nor the state nor commodity production nor money can gradually wither away. It is no more reasonable to assume that state capitalism could change by degrees into socialism than was the assumption of the classical reformists that private capitalism could be so transformed.

The alternative to capitalism as a society already existing on a world scale is, to define it somewhat negatively, a frontierless, classless, stateless, wageless, moneyless world. Or, more positively:

“The new system must be world-wide. *It must be a world commonwealth.* The world must be regarded as one country and humanity as one people.

All the people will co-operate to produce and distribute all the goods and services which are needed by mankind, each person, willingly and freely, taking part in the way he feels he can do best.

All goods and services will be produced for use only, and having been produced, will be distributed, *free*, directly to the people so that each person's needs are fully satisfied.

The land, factories, machines, mines, roads, railways, ships, and all those things which mankind needs to carry on producing the means of life, will belong to the whole of the people" (Philoren, *Money Must Go*, 1943—emphases in original).

49. Luciano Lanza: Settling Accounts with Economics (2003)

Luciano Lanza has written extensively on anarchism and economic theory. In the following excerpts he develops an anarchist critique of Michael Albert's "parecon" theory of participatory economics, drawing on the ideas of Proudhon (Volume One, Selections 12 & 18), Kropotkin (Volume One, Selection 33) and Malatesta (Volume One, Selection 112).

"If market forces slip the leash, even if only in economical and financial terms, they will bring forth chaos." This contention comes, not from some "dangerous" subversive nor mere "timid" critic of the current economic and social set-up, but from a champion financial speculator, George Soros (*The Crisis of Global Capitalism*, Perseus Books, 1998) who some years back brought the lira and the pound sterling to their knees by moving around his investment funds. (To some extent) it defies belief that the market should come in for such harsh criticism from a man who makes his living and owes his fortune to market mechanisms. Let alone, needless to say, from somebody who is not opposed to a society founded upon inequality and exploitation. In short, the market is the *bête noire* of the left, of the new anti-globalization campaigners as well as the overwhelming majority of anarchists. And who could fault them? The market is the glue and constituent factor in capitalism, i.e. the approach to economics and society that sees unrestricted expansion of production and consumption as the sole vector of socialization.

But, discounting the market on the basis that it is the architect of inequalities, the other familiar economic format is planning. The latter has been the most significant historical attempt to look beyond market logic. An entirely political formula applied to making the disruptive forces of the economy's independence of society susceptible to human decision-making again. Which has led to the

creation of a massive bureaucratic-state apparatus for the making of the decisions that market operators used to take independently and individually, guided by the supply-and-demand dynamic. With what outcome? The consolidation of a class every bit as exploitative as the capitalist class (if not more so if we remember Mikhail Bakunin's prophetic words about the "red bureaucracy"), with essential goods in scarce supply and unwanted goods galore, and economic inequality.

And that is not all. Centralized planning has proved to be the instrument of totalitarian rule: with the leaders deciding what their subjects must consume and how much (always quite little). And indeed what were the theorists of the planned economy thinking? We need only borrow the words of one of them, the Pole Janusz Zielinsky: "*An operational plan should be complete. It being a composite thing made up of inter-dependent decisions, no factor, no sphere of activity likely to have a bearing on the decisions in question can be left out*" (*Lectures on the Theory of Socialist Planning*, Oxford University Press, 1968). Yet the political riposte to the capitalist market has been founded upon this illusion of omnipotence (an utter economic and social nonsense). And centralized planning has also been one of the reasons behind the shortcomings that led to the collapse (or rather, implosion) of the communist regimes. Which has given way to a capitalism even more rampant and cruel than the version long since ensconced in the West. Although the latter, to be sure, does reserve its most savage brutality for its dealings with the South.

This then is the question: what form of economics is best suited to a libertarian outlook on society?

Recently some proposals for a participatory economics (*parecon*=participatory economics) capable of moving beyond capitalism have been advanced. The hypothesis has been framed most comprehensively by Michael Albert... In his latest book *Parecon: Life After Capitalism* (Verso Books, London 2003), Albert explores a horizontal economic system rooted in equity, solidarity, diversity, self-management and social equilibrium. In practical terms we may define *parecon* as a radicalized libertarian edition of the democratic planning that so enlivened economic debate in the 1950s and 1960s. Here is a summary of Albert's suggestions:

- Every workplace should be equally owned by all the citizenry so as to prevent ownership being a source of privilege or boosted income.
- Workers and consumers express their preferences through democratic councils which are the locus of decision-making powers.
- Councils have a presence at many levels: from tiny or larger working groups through to entire industries, from individual consumers to districts and provinces, and so on.

- Voting could be based on simple majority, three quarters majority, two thirds majority or unanimity.
- The current division of labour is rejected and there is a balancing of the functions performed by each worker, whereby monopolized tasks conferring authority and menial or dangerously repetitive tasks are done away with. How tasks are to be balanced out is something for the workers themselves to sort out in their councils.
- Remuneration for work done reflects the effort expended, the time spent working and the sacrifices made, heedless of degree of skill or extent of technical competency or advancement.
- Producers and consumers liaise in order to tailor overall output to consumer demand and this is achieved through participatory planning. This arrangement is based on a cooperative communication of preferences by means of a series of principles and organizational/communicative tools: price indexing, assistance committees and phased introduction of fresh information and so on. As we can see, Parecon represents a structure fleshed out through councils and information exchange so as to arrive at flexible libertarian planning arrangements which are continually open to the changing conditions and the preferences of consumers and workers.

Parecon is therefore offered as a third option between the capitalist market and centralized planning. But is it really a third way? And how feasible is it? How effectively does it respond to the needs of a libertarian society? It is certainly an intriguing, pragmatic proposition. But how well suited is it to the values of a libertarian society? And here we run into the first big problem. The mother of all problems, indeed. Because anarchist and libertarian thought is very deficient when it comes to thinking about the economy; indeed, its concentration has been on political power. Perhaps quite rightly, since the line was that the economic was a by-product of the political...

Now let's look at the main economic ideas articulated within the anarchist camp.

In the anarchist canon up until the 1960s, the economy was not analyzed as a discreet and separate aspect of social existence, but was looked upon simply as the tool of the masters in their exploitation of the workers, the people. The simplicity of which argument expresses an undeniable fact, but it overlooks the more complex side of things. And that canon can be traced to the writings of the most influential anarchist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Errico Malatesta. Except that Malatesta, while he conceded that he had "*very little expertise*" in economics (cf. *L'Agitazione*, 14 October 1897) argues that what form the econ-

omy takes is not important and he zeroes in on the social and ethical backdrop against which the economic system operates.

It needs to be stressed here, and we can take Malatesta as our authority for this, that talk of anarchist theory and economics amounts to a description of an absence rather than of a presence. In the anarchist imagination, the social revolution was to sort out every economic problem: the new society would be economics-free, in that economics was the science of a society of domination. Malatesta the man and Malatesta the thinker had much to do with this outlook. But this was a Malatesta “revised and reinterpreted” by activists. Malatesta’s writings, simple enough in themselves (in that they were a distillation of knowledge and experience) were further simplified (which is to say, rendered banal) for propaganda purposes. True, it was conceded that Malatesta occupied an *an-economic* theoretical territory in that in his view social change was not dependent on the economic system and social structures not dependent on economics. In 1929 he could write: “*What forms will production and exchange assume? Will communism... carry the day, or collectivism... or individualism... or will some blend of individual interest and the social instinct have suggestions to make in the light of experience? In all likelihood, all of these... until practice has determined what the best arrangement or arrangements may be... But really, more than practical forms of economic organization... what matters, I say, is that these should be informed by the spirit of justice and the quest for the good of all and that they are always brought about freely and voluntarily*” (“Some Thoughts on the Post-Revolutionary Property System,” reprinted in *The Anarchist Revolution*, ed. V. Richards, Freedom Press, 1995).

With disarming simplicity (suggestive of a thorough familiarity with the problem, as far as social life was concerned at any rate), Malatesta hypothesizes about a spectrum of contemporaneous forms of economy. Here Malatesta heads everybody off at the pass and even anticipates the new millennium’s critique of “one-track thinking”: there will be, not “one” form of economics, but “a range” of forms, the motley nature of which inhibits any “all-embracing” solution (such as say, staking all on the market or on planning alone) and invests anarchist thinking about economics with a—so to speak—post-globalization dimension.

And Malatesta flanks this stance with other musings that contradict even his own “popularizing” disciples. In 1922 he wrote: “*Among us, usually the issue is disposed of simplistically by saying that money should be done away with... But the issue today is much more complicated. Money is a powerful weapon in the armoury of exploitation and oppression: but it is also the only means (besides the most tyrannical dictatorship or most blissful concord) thus far devised by the human intellect for automatically regulating production and distribution.*” (“The Revolution in Practice,” *Umanità Nova*, 7 October 1922). Although Malatesta

was a lot more outspoken on the matter of the economy than a certain anarchist tradition might have preferred, the fact remains that in him we see one of the clearest views that the economy was of no matter when it came to transforming society. And this when we are speaking of the anarchist thinker closest to our own times.

It was not always so. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, one of the first thinkers to employ the term “anarchy” in a positive sense, based many of his proposals for social change on economic structures as such. A society populated by free producers pursuing free agreements in a federal setting is, according to Proudhon, a first step towards the achievement of socialism and towards a marriage of socialism and the market and of the market and mutualism. Hence his dynamic vision of the economy: open competition as the engine of social growth, but let it be a competition with mutualism as a corrective preventing it from degenerating into monopoly. Proudhon introduces the market into the logic of a libertarian society because he contends that the law of value in both its expressions—use value and exchange value—cannot be gainsaid: “*Now, the notion that all products, be they natural or industrial, must help men survive, is categorized as use value: the line that they should be exchanged one for another is exchange value... So the distinction established in terms of value is based upon fact and has nothing of the arbitrary about it: being subject to this law, it falls to man to harness it for the furtherance of his own well-being and freedom.*” (*The System of Economic Contradictions, or, The Philosophy of Misery*, 1846).

With the question of value clarified, Proudhon turned to the factor underpinning the market: exchange. “*Supply and demand, sometimes represented as the only norm for value, are merely two ceremonial forms that serve to pit use value and exchange value against each other and bring about a reconciliation between them. These then are the two electric poles which, being brought into contact with each other, produce the phenomenon of economic affinity that goes by the name of exchange*” (ibid). In this light, the market becomes the place where “economic affinities” manifest themselves rather than clash with each other. But in order to ensure that the market has this dimension to it there has to be acknowledgment that “*it is labour and labour alone that generates all of the elements of wealth and which combines them, down to the tiniest molecules, in accordance with a law of variable, but certain, proportionality*” (ibid).

Here Proudhon is wrapped up in the theory of labour value and his is an ideological rather than a scientific stance: he is wedded to socialism which must vindicate labour as the sole (or chief) creator of social wealth. Besides, this was a stance also to be found within American anarchism which is often cited superficially as the liberal wing of anarchism. In this instance, this is wholly embraced today by Albert who, perhaps unwittingly, walks in the footsteps of the American

anarchist Josiah Warren. In Warren's view, the price of an item should be determined not by how useful it is but by its labour value. Meaning that it is the time expended on and difficulty involved in the production of the item that determines its price. A theory that Warren defined as "equal exchange based on cost as the determinant of price." In order to put his ideas into practice, Warren opened a small store, the Time Store, where all sorts of everyday goods were sold. At what price? A guide set out the number of hours it took to make the article and 4% was added to this figure to cover handling charges.

These might read like hare-brained ideas (like the bank established by Proudhon that made loans at 0% interest) but in some parts of the United States, these ideas are still in operation: we need only think of the circulation of hours worked vouchers which are used as "parallel currency" alongside the traditional dollar.

Those two thinkers (Proudhon and Warren) introduced into the early formulations of anarchism the (at first glance, liberal) notion of economic competition, but Proudhon above all (and after him, Warren's disciple Benjamin Tucker too) also managed to highlight the harm caused by competition: "*Competition is the death of competition,*" because "*monopoly is the inevitable culmination of competition which brings it about through its ongoing negation of itself...*" (*System of Economic Contradictions*).

Anarchist theory is multifarious and pluralist and so, alongside "liberal" thinkers we also find "communist" ones. In both instances those quotation marks are appropriate because, obviously, these terms are to be taken in only a very approximate sense. The champion of anarcho-communism is undoubtedly Peter Kropotkin. This great thinker, in one sense the founding father of anarchism's positivist strand, has an approach to economics that is not out of step with conventional reasoning: maximum return for minimum effort, albeit set in the context of a humanitarian outlook. The worker should expend as little of his energy as possible, but this in no way diminishes the fact that Kropotkin's positivism was, ultimately and essentially, in tune with the economists of his day and ours. Except that he was able to anticipate by some decades the studies connected to the theory of needs. Kropotkin wrote: "*Should the economy not be governed also by research into needs?*" (*The Conquest of Bread*, 1892, Volume One, Selection 33).

Here Kropotkin, though he may have been espousing an economic approach (albeit one very much his own), is turning the issue on its head: it is not the market that determines the quantity to be produced and exchanged, but the scale and consistency of the demand. *Homo economicus* gives way to man in and of himself: as a free subject freely expressing his preferences. And indeed: "*The moment we start to think of it [production] in these terms, political economy takes on a completely different look. It ceases to be a mere description of*

facts and becomes a science on a par with physiology: it can be described as the study of the needs of humanity and the means of meeting these through the least possible expenditure of human effort. It represents a science akin to the physiology of plants or animals which themselves amount to the study of the needs of plant or animal and of the best means of meeting them" (ibid). Kropotkin's organicist aspect here embraces the entirety of human knowledge as well as a "science" like economics (designed for quite different purposes) and is wrapped in a holistic vision.

And, following this "communism" through, Kropotkin even delves into the explanation and legitimation of the search for luxury: *"If we want revolution, it is certainly and primarily to ensure that there is bread for all and to transform this despicable society... But we look to the revolution for much more... and as all men cannot and should not be the same (the variety of tastes and needs being the chief guarantor of humanity's progress), there will always be—and it is desirable that there should always be—men and women whose needs will exceed the average in any given direction"* (ibid).

With the bypassing of economics through the physiology of society we have the whole picture "of the economy which does not exist" in anarchist thought. A thought fleshed out in the Proudhonist approach with the economy as a constituent part of a society of free producers and consumers competing with one another. Or the Kropotkinian bypassing of economics in a society governed by mutual aid and in hot pursuit of a harmony that dispenses with competition. And, finally, Malatesta's pragmatic approach with the economy subsumed entirely into the social.

Our examination of anarchist proposals *vis-à-vis* the economy has produced three answers then. But it would be a mistake to think of these as *alternative* solutions: as if one of them ruled out the others. Anarchism's pluralism and the pluralism of libertarian thought are also reflected in these three formulae. Which are, after all, also expressions of different stages of sociability. Here we may perhaps discover a more innovative clue from the three anarchist thinkers by placing them all in a single context. The issue is not so much exquisitely economic as social, having to do with social relationships and social engineering, not forgetting psycho-anthropological factors.

But there is an underlying question to be answered: does economics have a place in a libertarian society? Is it compatible with anarchy? By which I mean the values of equality, freedom and diversity. Which raises another question: how does an egalitarian society founded upon freedom regulate those of its relations linked to production and the allocation of material goods? Does it retain an autonomous area in the regulation of those relations or does it lump them in with other institutions it has?

Proudhon acknowledged that competition between free producers and consumers was valid, even though he was aware of the risks and the harm done by competition. But he has the antidote: “*It is not a question of killing off freedom of the individual but of socializing it*” (*System of Economic Contradictions*). The thinker from Besançon, to some extent therefore, joins the ranks of those who acknowledged that “medieval Italian businessmen” (Yves Renouard, *Les hommes d'affaires italiens au moyen age*, Librairie Armand Colin, 1968) had been midwives to a form of social relations capable of freeing man from feudal slavery. And he was also aware that they had thrust him into a new world characterized by profit and expanding production. Kropotkin rises above economics by including it in his holistic approach: society is above domination and is “naturally” harmonious and economic relations are all of a piece with the community. Looking to the future, Malatesta could rediscover situations typical of so-called “archaic” societies: economics had no further reason to exist because it had been supplanted by other social institutions and no longer had any life of its own.

(Rightly or wrongly) ignoring these three suggestions, Michael Albert opts for participatory economics, libertarian planning as the sole solution: “*What is there to be said about participatory planning, given that we are going to have to adopt it comprehensively, like it or not?*” (*Parecon*). This is by way of a response to potential critics who might think of slipping forms of market exchange into an economy which is, all in all, an economy of participatory planning. “A soupçon of the market in a parecon would be like having just a little dose of slavery in a democracy... The logic of markets is not compatible with that of participatory planning and with parecon as a whole, and is also imperialist: once its gains a toe-hold, it strives for ways of spreading out as much as it can” (*ibid*).

Albert’s critique of the market may be attractive, but it does not exhaust the subject.

What Albert seems to have overlooked is the market’s duality. There is the market as a social-historical creation of man, carrying over into his relations with others and the market which takes on a particular and extraordinary dimension capable of redefining the shape of society: the market society. The former is the market of the ancients, the latter the so-called self-regulating market, the one that presides over the severing of the economic from the social. By which I mean the underpinning of capitalism. And in fact capitalism is the market in its institutionalized form. And, as an institutionalized form, capitalism is the very negation of that which instituted it. It turns into something else, something completely different.

When the market is just *one* of the “loci” of society (the locus of exchange and competition, not the locus of freedom) it fulfils a purpose in human life, but it is in no position to mould society, whereas the moment the market becomes em-

blematic of society a revolution is underway that conjures up a market society proper. An epoch-making shift that witnesses intervention by dominant authority: “*The market is the product of deliberate and often violent intervention on the part of a government imposing market organization on society for purposes other than economic*” (Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, Rinehart, New York 1944). And finally once the market’s institutionalized form, capitalism, comes to espouse liberalism, there is a further level of domination: the economic comes to define and circumscribe modern rationality. Taking us to the current model of domination: the market of the transnationals, the global market...

Criticism of the market is entirely justified and has a legitimacy that only the advocates of exploitation and oppression would query. Not to mention the fact that the capitalist market defines every aspect of social coexistence.

So is it possible to step outside of this logic of the market? I would argue yes. Because, even though it might appear nonsensical after so many centuries, the market has not yet been explored in all its possible manifestations. Which seems absurd, right?

“*What is required is a fresh imaginative creation without any possible comparisons with the past, a creation that places at the core of human life different standards in terms of increased production and consumption, and offers different life targets that human beings might acknowledge as valid. Which would of course require a revamping of social institutions, working relationships and economic, political and social relationships. Now such an approach is very far removed from that which men today are thinking about and yearning for. Which is the immense problem that has to be faced up to. We need to develop a craving for a society wherein economic values have ceased being central (or singular) and where economics has been restored to its place as a mere auxiliary to human life rather than its ultimate purpose.*” (Cornelius Castoriadis, “The Rise of Meaninglessness,” *Les carrefours du labyrinthe IV*, Seuil, Paris 1996).

Though tainted by skepticism in that they were written before the Seattle uprising of 1999, Cornelius Castoriadis’s shrewd words point to a telling move: to work towards the reassignment of the economic to a specific context. A far from easy undertaking, obviously, but one that has light to shed on the approach we should adopt to economic matters.

I believe that the most pragmatic and at the same time most soundly ideological approach (the contradiction is merely superficial) to the issue of the economy is to break free of the single-minded rationale which is a typical dimension of the single-track thinking which all too often seems to pervade even well-meaning people like Michael Albert. This means that we should not counter the current singular format, the market, with some other singular solution, libertarian planning...

[P]lanning—even the most democratic, most libertarian planning imaginable—still has a very vulnerable spot: data interpretation. There is never an automatic equilibrium between preferences expressed and goods and services on offer. At which point the decision as to priorities (because there is no getting away from priorities) is an essentially political choice cloaked by a show of technical neutrality. In order to read the data effectively specific competencies are employed which are not those of the average consumer-producer. Libertarian planning too requires people who, *de facto*, perform a leadership function. A function which is legitimized thanks to their talent for coming up with efficient solutions. A culture from which a “libertarian bureaucracy,” or to borrow the language used in anarchist circles years ago, “new masters” [Volume Two, Selection 67], might emerge...

[T]he course of action that in theory looks more haphazard turns out to be socially more feasible and, above all, more productive. It is a matter of making explicit those elements which are already present in man’s sociability, harnessing in every conceivable possible manifestation the extreme poles of his sociability—competition and solidarity. In which circumstances the terms “market” and “planning” lose much of their meaning and melt into a new social imagery which tends (according to Castoriadis’s enlightening intuition) to cramp the style of economics. In fact the problem is how man thinks about himself and society.

Let us take these “heresies” a bit further. The ineluctable laws of economics are such only because we place economic rationality on the pedestal of social rationality. But the rationality of capitalism, for example (again I am borrowing freely from Castoriadis), is only a “historically victorious” form of modern reasoning. And not the only one. By engaging in a deconstruction of economics we can “rediscover” the market as a place of exchange, of competition. And—why not?—of challenges. True, competition gives rise to inequality and, as Proudhon cautioned, leads to monopoly. Yet solutions could be found to temper economic inequalities. Or is that just another assumption?

Many years ago I came up with one hypothesis that seems to me to have retained some of its validity (“Self-management and Economics,” *Interrogations*, No. 17-18, 1979). With each venture retaining its autonomy, an interlocking network of participation might be created: every firm would be 50% controlled and owned by its workforce while the remaining 50% would be held by other firms within a given territory. In short, every firm would also have a share in all the others. This would allow for a considerable reduction in inequalities while the workforce at each firm would retain nominal control.

Let us imagine, say, that there are ten firms with net profits per worker ranging from a factor of 1 up to a factor of 10. And then we share the profits around all of those firms. To put that in contemporary language, we redistribute the div-

idends around all firms and all share-holders. The outcome is... ? The profit factor per worker drops from a factor of ten to a factor of two, one being the minimum and two being the maximum. But this is only a commonplace example of how the market's unbalancing effect could be corrected without damaging competitiveness. A first step towards the exploration of forms of market capable of moving beyond the capitalist market, without resorting to primitive dreams of unearthing the market of the ancients. Or, to use a seemingly contradictory expression: exploring "mutualist competitiveness". But the pluralist process also ought to explore other directions and take other dimensions on board. For instance, agreements at the community level (or across some wider territory) regarding the construction of assets or the running of collective services. In short, a multiplicity of economic loci capable of embracing market and gift on an ever widening scale, thereby boosting all possible relationships and all possible interconnections between the players. In one sense: exasperating the economy in order to lower its social profile. Thereby bringing closer the "grand dream" of an economy working in the service of humanity rather than, as now, as its master.

Chapter 11

Beyond the Borders

In this Chapter I have included material from many different areas of the world where anarchist ideas and tactics have been adapted and applied in a wide variety of circumstances, sometimes in reference to the historic anarchist tradition, sometimes seemingly independent of it. The first selection by Sharif Gemie provides salutary warnings against trying to force these different anarchist currents into the mold of their better known Euro-American counterparts.

50. Sharif Gemie: Beyond the Borders (2003)

Our considerations of Third World anarchism... must be centred on something more substantial than the simple imitation of Euro-American philosophies or tactics.

Anarchist researchers looking for relevant examples from the Third World have often accepted this lesson, and have then made use of a different type of investigation. If one takes the Spanish CNT as a model for anarchist organization, then it is easy to conclude... that there is no Third World equivalent to Euro-American anarchism. Others, however, have argued that in order to identify Third World anarchism, one should not expect exact equivalents to Euro-American models, and so one must make use of different techniques. Often this has inspired a type of “anthropological turn” in research. Following this line of enquiry, anarchism is not identified as an ideology or as a militant organization, but more as a lifestyle. Sam Mbah and I. Igariwey identify a traditional African “communalism,” which encourages practices of self-government, consensus and participation [Selection 52]. Even researchers with no particular interest in anarchism seem to arrive at analogous conclusions, noting the relatively weak forms of authority and the high stress placed on certain types of democratic practice in tribal societies. In the absence of strong state structures, these tribal structures often construct their own ethical sensibilities: beginning with ideas of self-sufficiency

and self-regulation, they can create concepts of legality and justice which are often considerably more humane than those currently practiced in the West.

Such research is valuable and stimulating. It can provide us with a “critical-utopian” perspective by which to reconsider the dominant western forms of political practice, and to challenge a colonialist perspective which only sees Third World cultures as backward, primitive and brutal. On the other hand, interest in such cultures can result in the production of glamourized, romantic and exotic images of their nature. In the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries a series of sometimes quite challenging and dissident ideas were created by the form of literary and artistic thinking identified by Edward Said as “Orientalism.” While proclaiming their affection for the “native” forms, writers and artists fixed Third World cultures in a petrified, stratified, unchanging status, denying the possibility of development, let alone any interchange between cultures. Such types of thinking could be found across the political spectrum, from clerical conservatives to left-leaning reformers.

Arguably, some anarcho-primitivists are in danger of simply recycling this type of thinking. By inverting concepts of an advanced West and a primitive Third World, and thereby validating *all* Third World cultures over *all* features of western modernity, they are producing equally rigid and uncomprehending images of the Third World. One key error they make is their underestimation of the oppressive features within this “anthropological anarchism.” Most commentators acknowledge that many tribal lifestyles are explicitly patriarchal: they refuse women any formal involvement in decision-making. Many tribes also affirm the sanctity of rule by elders, thus rejecting the political potential of younger people. The most serious objection, however, is that few tribal cultures are *consciously* anarchist. Participatory or not, consensual or otherwise, they often value the rule of the chief, and this feature makes them open to manipulation by authoritarian groups.

Similar contradictory political features can be found in some backward-looking peasant movements in Europe: Chouans in the west of France, Carlists in northern Spain both upheld ideals of village autonomy and would—on occasion—criticize the rule of the state and the power of the rich. But both groups were intensely religious: they would violently persecute liberals, freethinkers and anti-clericals, and both sought to create a type of ideal monarchy. The appropriate reaction to such movements is not to fall for a simple binary response whereby they must be either affirmed or rejected, but to examine them, element-by-element, in their context, in order to understand the nature—and limitations—of their anti-statism and anti-authoritarianism.

Primitivism, instead, seeks to create uncomplicated contrasts based on inexact, often romanticized, images of a simplistically understood “primitive” con-

dition. Their debates on, for example, the oppression inherent in rational thought run directly counter to the often-demonstrated deep respect that most Third World peoples feel for the process of education. In other words, for all the primitivists' fascination with "primitive" cultures, primitivism can never be considered as an example of Third World anarchism because their political perspective is so clearly an expression of the social and cultural tensions of the advanced West.

This critique of primitivist perspectives, however, should be not taken as implying that "anthropological anarchism" can never become politically significant. The Zapatista revolt in Chiapas demonstrates the ability of tribal cultures to provide a critical ethical sense, solidarity and—above all—resilience in a long struggle against a powerful, well-armed modern state [Selection 58]. In this case, however, the revolutionary movement was clearly based on an interplay of different traditions: ethnic, tribal, but also religious and political. A radical form of liberation theology and a curiously dissident variant of Maoism were both essential parts of this movement.

Tribalism is a fascinating and provocative topic, and worthy of further consideration by anarchist researchers. But the limits of the form, its lack of a conscious *political* ethic, and its consequent frequent decline into authoritarian forms, mean that in itself tribalism cannot create a rival political philosophy to that propounded by the most celebrated of the Euro-American libertarian political philosophers: Godwin, Stirner, Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Bookchin and Chomsky.

[Jason] Adams makes the curious suggestion that we could consider elements of these seven thinkers' common political culture as non-western [in *Nonwestern Anarchisms*]. He argues that, for example, Bakunin was a Russian, an East European, and therefore that he presented an "Eastern' understanding of socialism." This is hard to accept: anyone reading Bakunin will quickly realize his debt to the basic conceptual building blocks provided by the Enlightenment. Rationality, modernity, and a faith in progress are shared in common by each of the seven thinkers identified above, and are usually explicitly, even proudly, acknowledged. Of course—in each case—they attempted a libertarian reinterpretation of the Enlightenment's basic concepts. Again, rather than debating their work in simplistic binary terms—were they for or against the Enlightenment?—we should note the degree of complexity with which anarchist political philosophers have debated the question. The most sensible response would probably be to note that while they accepted much of the Enlightenment legacy, they renegotiated its terms, asserting "another" modernity, distinctly different from the dominant Western model, based on egalitarian and libertarian communicative practices.

Western thinkers such as [Cornelius] Castoriadis argue that an autonomous Third World equivalent to one of our seven libertarian philosophers would be almost a contradiction in terms. Against such propositions, we can start by noting the cultural inequality: western political philosophers have far easier access to the instruments of the mass media, both printed and now electronic, than the native philosophers of the Third World. Western societies also guarantee a far more substantial level of freedom of speech and debate than most Third World countries. Would we ever hear the Algerian Bakunin or the Afghan Kropotkin? Aside from these almost physical issues of access, there is a yet more complex question of political philosophy: would we necessarily be able to recognize a Third World anarchist philosophy? The ease with which so many Euro-American anarchists just dismiss Daoism [Volume One, Selection 1] is one indication of this profound cultural gap. Bookchin, for example, refers to this philosophy as a “mystical virus” [*Re-enchanting Humanity*]. Again, here we return to a central dilemma. Must any anarchist philosophy necessarily draw from the central concepts of the European Enlightenment? Or—as I would argue—is it possible that Daoism, with its stress on flow, adaptation and organic ethics, represents a genuine alternative set of core libertarian values? The point I am making here is not simply whether Daoism is or is not anarchism: there is a far more awkward debate about how we decide what constitutes “true” anarchism...

Anarchism, however, is not a movement which is based on a particular political philosophy. Anarchism's historic strength has not been the depth or the clarity of anarchist thinking, but its grass-roots tactical abilities. In areas such as late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Andalusia, anarchists were able to inspire oppressed and impoverished peoples to form vast movements of empowerment and rebellion. In such cases, anarchists were working within a particular social framework which encouraged the formation of large, “majoritarian” movements, based on a keenly felt difference between “them” and “us.” In Catalonia, in the summer of 1936, this process went critical, and resulted in one of the most astonishing social revolutions in world history. Elsewhere, the anarchists' ideas of a popular seizure of power often functioned more as a “mobilizing myth,” in Sorel's terms, than a realistic political project.

In the Third World today there are many situations which resemble the sharply polarized conditions of nineteenth-century rural Andalusia. Here, anarchist methods often make immediate sense, even if the participants themselves rarely see the connection. In the 1987-94 Intifada, for example, the Palestinians' prime concern was to seize back control for the organization of their own communities. The well-publicized battles between stone-throwing youths and Israeli soldiers was but a small aspect of a larger process. Palestinians used boycotts to

undermine the Israelis' economic presence. The deliberate flouting of curfew rules, or the revival of rituals such as communal *dabka* dance, were all assertions of a Palestinian will to take back political and social control from the Israeli occupiers. This was accompanied by a type of social revolution: militant Palestinians demanded that the tiny Palestinian bourgeoisie, and the somewhat larger sub-bourgeoisie who ran shops and services, follow the directives of the United National Control and run their enterprises for the benefit of the entire Palestinian community. This first Intifada can be considered a success: after a few years, the Israelis decided that the Gaza Strip was ungovernable, and it was only at that point that their government began to take seriously the idea of accepting a degree of Palestinian autonomy.

With a few qualifications, this entire revolt could be termed an example of self-management. In their practices and their tactics, there is a close resemblance between this rebellion and the ideas asserted by the anarchist tradition. Yet few of these Palestinian rebels would have called themselves anarchists. Is this important? It could be argued that a more self-consciously anarchist ethic would have avoided the difficulties caused by the obvious corruption of the PLO elite who arrived in 1994. On the other hand, pulling political recipes out of a bag in this manner seems very clearly utopian. Rather than acting as missionaries, eager to spread the word, maybe we should work on the assumption that the Palestinians know what they're doing.

These types of stark "us and them" situations, however, are becoming more rare. This is one strong reason for the decline in classical, community-based nineteenth-century-style anarchism. Among other things, globalization means more fractured populations, divided by contradictory pulls: the nation-state, fundamentalist religion, western mass culture, tribal localism and ethnic identities all provide different directions to Third World peoples today. Moreover, migrations and diasporas are becoming more common: such experiences are often central in the formation of new political and/or religious ideas. For example, while fundamentalism is often seen as an expression of a primitive, traditional religious sentiment, its main recruiting ground is actually among people who have lived in the West. Even among those who are not migrant workers, refugees or virtual tourists in the web's "global culture of the hyperreal" [Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*], there is an increasing sense of displacement: people feeling *as if* they were strangers in their own countries, regions or towns.

The most common responses to such dilemmas are authoritarian. Some adopt "proxy identities," defining themselves according to imagined homelands in which they have never lived. As borders grow more porous, allowing the flow of ideas and commodities while still preventing the legal movement of labour, another common reaction is a demand for ever-stronger barriers to contamination

from the outside world. There are calls for stricter policing on the Eurostar trains that travel between Britain and France, tougher controls on refugees, magic satellites that will prevent an enemy missile from reaching the homeland, or—among Third World countries—proposals such as the Wahhabi demand for the Holy Land to be cleansed of all foreign influences, for a pure Islam, for a unified Arab-Muslim Algeria, for the expulsion of Jews, Gypsies, Hazara, kaffir and so on. All these conservative moves, in turn, involve rigorous efforts to control women's behaviour and appearance: in some places, the veil is made obligatory, in others it is banned; press reports on Afghanistan proclaim western dress as a sign of liberation; mullahs debate, in fetishistic detail, the precise amount of hair a woman is allowed to show. It is vital, when considering such points, to remember that western cultures are *not* inherently freer than the Muslim East. Today I have just seen a women's magazine that proclaims on its front cover that it can offer its readers the ability to look sexy "even on a Monday morning." Compulsory sexualization is no more liberating than compulsory modesty. None of these exclusionary demands contribute to the development of a libertarian sensibility and there is good reason to feel pessimistic about the fate of the anarchist tradition.

But all is not lost. Global cultures are shifting, developing radically fast, too fast for the fixed forms of the nation-state, authoritarian religion or corporate power to keep up. If the attacks of the 11 September proved anything, it was that impenetrable barriers against global tensions and forces cannot be created. "Don't ask where the frontierland is," writes Zygmunt Bauman, "it is all around you, in your town, on the streets you walk" ["Reconnaissance Wars on the Planetary Frontierland," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 19:4 (2002)]. Issues and dilemmas appear suddenly, from unexpected directions, taking those who hold power by surprise. Our task is not to *stop* the process of globalization, but to reprogram its direction towards what David Graeber has termed "genuine globalization" [Selection 1]. It is fixed hierarchic forms, such as the nation-state, or the aspiration to implement such forms, that have caused the worst massacres and tragedies in recent years. Significantly, in the past decade, there have been two unusual rebel movements which both suggest some original form of questioning of previous political wisdom.

The examples that concern me are the revolt in Chiapas and the long cycle of demonstrations, boycotts, socio-cultural assertions and outright rebellions in the Kabyle region of Algeria. (The second rebellion suffers from a virtual news blackout, imposed jointly by the Algerian state and the global mass media.) In both cases national governments have attempted to treat the rebels as mere regionalists, demanding various combinations of particularistic ethnic and linguistic privileges. In both cases, the rebel movements refused this approach, insisting that their movements were not regional in significance, but relevant to the totality of

the nation and, indeed, actually global. The movements' political demands are often no more than those listed in Tom Paine's primer: what makes these movements noteworthy is their combination of a regional identity and power base with a far wider sensibility. They have both shown an incredible resilience in the face of military oppression, a dogged commitment to libertarian forms of democracy, and a surprising ability to seize opportunities: often refusing head-on battles which would only result in (glorious?) defeat, but working to establish a lived culture of resistance. They both point to a different type of political culture, neither nationalist nor regionalist, neither particularistic nor universalistic... While there is an "unclassifiable" quality to their political cultures, they are far from the ethical and political aimlessness of post-modern philosophies: their movements concern real struggles and real people with real aspirations. This is something more than merely a clever tactic, it suggests a radically new sensibility.

My argument is that these movements may be sketches for a new form of global anarchism. They do not follow or imitate the increasingly libertarian concepts voiced by the western radicals of the anti-globalization movement—but what they are putting into practice is certainly compatible with the anti-globalists' ideas. They draw on—or resemble—the older Proudhonian concepts of federalism, with the important qualification that they suggest a rethinking of what federalism might mean. Not so much the linking of village to town to city, but a way of living within global cultural structures, within which tribal, regional, national and transnational cultures could co-exist in some form of harmony. Such anarchisms are far from unified class-based communities of the nineteenth-century pioneers of Euro-American anarchism. They often lack a clear sense of political identity: note how *subcomandante* Marcos repeatedly asserts the right to "non-definition"...

It seems unlikely that the classical forms of nineteenth-century anarchism will be imitated by Third World people, although often one can find resemblances and correspondences in forms of struggle. The political ideas of Third World thinkers, as yet, do not travel well: some of them never even seem to begin their journeys. Tribal lifestyles merit both study and respect but are unable, in themselves, to constitute political ideals. Something resembling anarchism, however, can be found in the particular tactics that have evolved in the course of specific struggles: particularly those which unfold in a consciously global setting.

51. An African Anarchist Manifesto (1981)

In June 1981 several Senegalese met in Goree (an island off Dakar) and decided to create an anarchist association, the "Anarchist Party for Individual Liberties in the Republic," since, in theory, the presidency of Abdou Diouf had introduced

political pluralism. They published their declaration in a satirical journal, Le Politicien. An edited version was published in the French anarchist magazine, Agora, No. 7, 1981; an English translation was published in Freedom and then in Open Road, No. 13, Spring 1982.

The anarchists of Senegal, after a rigorous analysis of the political, economic and social situation of our country, came to the following conclusions:

The existing economic and social structures block the social mechanisms and human progress of Senegal. The structures envisaged by the parties have every chance of simply replacing one group or class of exploiters by another.

The parties that compete with each other are weak before the common enemy: western imperialism and Soviet social imperialism.

Not one among the various parties is capable of promoting the kind of direct democracy where the broad masses and free workers would be in a position to have their claims and their just needs respected.

The anarchists of Senegal decided to pass from the stage where they were evolving like a fish in the tank of the Senegalese universe to the stage of organization.

The major preoccupation of the anarchists of Senegal is not to take power but to struggle persistently against all manifestations of power and against the private appropriation of the means of production. We are struggling for the establishment of a decentralized and federalist self-determining socialism, which has nothing to do with imported "socialisms". We are struggling for the advent of a society in which the means of production will be communally exploited by Senegalese workers organized in associations of direct democracy.

Our projection of society takes its inspiration from the organization of Lebous village federations and from the social formation of the Ballante people of Southern Senegal and Guinea Bissau. These social formations, which were by no means primitive, were organized in such a way that the societies concerned had neither dominant classes nor exploiter chiefs. There prevailed a direct type of democracy which was not imposed from above. This form of organization could be perfectly well adopted even with the current state of our productive forces, if only the exploiting classes could be unseated and if the possibility of the appearance of totalitarian leaders could be removed. This is a model where passivity and blind obedience to exploiting anti-democratic bosses would not figure.

To bring about our projection of society we, anarchists of Senegal and our sympathizers, whom we believe to be numerous, will centre our struggles against the following phenomena:

- the advent of a statist or bureaucratic society;
- obscurantism, fanaticism, pedantry;
- antagonism of rich and poor;
- chauvinist nationalism; and
- pseudo-democracy veiling an unjust economic organization.

52. Sam Mbah and I.E. Igariwey: African Anarchism (1997)

Sam Mbah and I.E. Igariwey are Nigerian anarchists associated with the Awareness League, a Nigerian anarchist organization that had an anarcho-syndicalist orientation. The following excerpts are taken from their book, African Anarchism: The History of a Movement (Tucson: See Sharp Press, 1997). Mbah and Igariwey relate the libertarian traditions of African communalism to anarchist conceptions of community and the critique of the nation-state, drawing on the work of European anarchists such as Bakunin and G.P. Maksimov.

To a greater or lesser extent... traditional African societies manifested “anarchic elements” which, upon close examination, lend credence to the historical truism that governments have not always existed. They are but a recent phenomenon and are, therefore, not inevitable in human society. While some “anarchic” features of traditional African societies existed largely in past stages of development, some of them persist and remain pronounced to this day.

What this means is that the ideals underlying anarchism may not be so new in the African context. What is new is the concept of anarchism as a social movement or ideology. Anarchy as an abstraction may indeed be remote to Africans, but it is not at all unknown as a way of life. This is not fully appreciated because there is not as yet a systematic body of anarchist thought that is peculiarly African in origin. It is our intention... to unravel the manner and extent to which “anarchic elements” are indigenous to Africa and Africans.

Traditional African societies were, for the most part, founded on *communalism*. The term is used here in two senses. First, it denotes a definite mode of production or social formation that comes generally, though not inevitably, after hunter-gatherer societies, and in turn precedes feudalism. If one accepts cultural evolution, one sees that most European and Asian societies passed through these stages of development.

Communalism is also used in a second, related sense to denote a way of life that is distinctly African. This way of life can be glimpsed in the collectivist structure of African societies in which: 1) different communities enjoy (near) unfettered independence from one another; 2) communities manage their own affairs and are for all practical purposes self-accounting and self-governing; and 3) every

individual without exception takes part, either directly or indirectly, in the running of community affairs at all levels.

In contrast to Europe and Asia, most of Africa never developed past the stage of communalism. Despite the indigenous development of feudalism and the later imposition of capitalism, communal features persist to this day—sometimes pervasively—in the majority of African societies that lie outside the big cities and townships. Essentially, much of Africa is communal in both the cultural (production/social formation) and descriptive (structural) senses.

Among the most important features of African communalism are the absence of classes, that is, social stratification; the absence of exploitative or antagonistic social relations; the existence of equal access to land and other elements of production; equality at the level of distribution of social produce; and the fact that strong family and kinship ties form(ed) the basis of social life in African communal societies. Within this framework, each household was able to meet its own basic needs. Under communalism, by virtue of being a member of a family or community, every African was (is) assured of sufficient land to meet his or her own needs.

Because in traditional African societies the economy was largely horticultural and subsistence based, as [Robert] Horton notes, “often small villages farmed, hunted, fished, etc., and looked after themselves independently with little reference to the rest of the continent.” Various communities produced surpluses of given commodities which they exchanged, through barter, for those items that they lacked. The situation was such that no one starved while others stuffed themselves and threw away the excess.

According to Walter Rodney, “in that way, the salt industry of one locality would be stimulated, while the iron industry would be encouraged in another. In a coastal, lake or riverine area, dried fish could become profitable, while yams and millet would be grown in abundance elsewhere to provide a basis of exchange...” Thus, in many parts of Africa a symbiosis arose between groups earning their living in different manners—they exchanged goods and coexisted to their mutual advantage.

Political organization under communalism was horizontal in structure, characterized by a high level of diffusion of functions and power. Political leadership, not authority, prevailed, and leadership was not founded on imposition, coercion, or centralization; it arose out of a common consensus or a mutually felt need.

Leadership developed on the basis of family and kinship ties woven around the elders; it was conferred only by age, a factor that... runs deep in communalism. In Africa, old age was—and still often is—equated with possession of wisdom and rational judgment. Elders presided at meetings and at the settlement of

disputes, but hardly in the sense of superiors; their position did not confer the far-reaching socio-political authority associated with the modern state system, or with feudal states.

There was a pronounced sense of equality among all members of the community. Leadership focused on the interests of the group rather than on authority over its members. Invariably, the elders shared work with the rest of the community and received more or less the same share or value of total social produce as everyone else, often through tribute/redistributive mechanisms.

The relationship between the co-ordinating segments of the community was characterized by equivalence and opposition, and this tended to hinder the emergence of role specialization, and thus the division of labour among individuals. Generally, elders presided over the administration of justice, the settlement of disputes, and the organization of communal activities, functions they necessarily shared with selected representatives of their communities, depending on the specific nature of the dispute or issue involved.

Such meetings and gatherings were not guided by any known written laws, for there were none. Instead, they were based on traditional belief systems, mutual respect, and indigenous principles of natural law and justice. Social sanctions existed for various kinds of transgressions—theft, witchcraft, adultery, homicide, rape, etc. When an individual committed an offence, often his entire household, his kinsmen, and his extended family suffered with him, and sometimes for him. This was because such offences were believed to bring shame not only upon the individual, but even more so upon his relatives.

In traditional societies, Africans reached major decisions through consensus, not by voting [see Selection 6 above]...

By the turn of the 15th century, several African societies were undergoing a transition from communalism to a class system. Social stratification formed the basis for the eventual rise of classes and the development of antagonistic social relationships, culminating in the establishment of empire states with centralized forms of government in some parts of Africa.

It must be emphasized that, on the whole, although slavery existed in different parts of Africa, especially in areas with the greatest erosion of communal equality, African society never really witnessed an epoch of slavery as a mode of production. Feudalism did exist in some places, but as Rodney has demonstrated, "in Africa, there is no doubt that the societies which eventually reached feudalism were extremely few." Consequently, some features of communalism continued to hold considerable sway in most African societies, as they do to this day under modern capitalist states. This demonstrates the ancient and tenacious roots of the communal way of life in Africa...

Despite the marked equality and egalitarianism generally associated with African communalism, there existed a degree of privilege and internal differentiation in some communities, made worse sometimes by the traditional caste system. In addition, the high degree of egalitarianism and freedom achieved under communalism was made possible in no small measure by low levels of production.

So, communalism was not an anarchist utopia. Nowhere is this more evident than in the generally low status of women in some forms of communalism. This was made worse, at least on the surface, by the practice of polygyny (one man married to several women, often sisters). In many African communities, however, tradition and custom accorded certain protections to females; most injuries to them—with the important exceptions of clitoridectomy and infibulations in some societies—were severely punished. And there were some matrifocal communal societies, famous for their tradition of women leaders...

Some historians and scholars have distinguished between two broad groups in pre-colonial Africa: communities that established empire states and those that did not. Anthropologist Paul Bohannan refers to Africa's stateless societies as "tribes without rulers," a form of "ordered anarchy."

Elsewhere, Rodney describes stateless communities as:

"Those peoples who had no machinery of government coercion and no concept of a political unit wider than the family or the village. After all, if there is no class stratification in a society, it follows that there is no state because the state arose as an instrument to be used by a particular class to control the rest of society in its own interests... One can consider the stateless societies as among the older forms of socio-political organization in Africa, while the large states represented an evolution away from communalism—sometimes to the point of feudalism"...

What is immediately prominent in our consideration of stateless societies is the absence of centralization and concentration of authority. For the most part it is difficult to point to any individual as the overall head or ruler of different communities. The exercise of leadership in the sense of full-time authority was similarly unknown. Whatever authority that existed often affected very limited aspects of the lives of individuals. At the same time, classes hardly existed in these traditional societies. It is indeed doubtful whether an equivalent for the word "class" exists in any indigenous African language—and language reflects the thoughts and values of those who speak it.

Increased productivity and specialization in the use of tools, together with increased trading activities between various communities on the one hand, and

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with outsiders on the other, gave rise to a steady growth of private property, internal differentiation/stratification, and semi-feudalism. Warfare, conquest, and voluntary borrowing were some of the other factors at work during the period of colonial transition...

The ultimate result of Africa's incorporation into the world capitalist economy was the destruction of the traditional pre-colonial communal mode of production. As the capitalist mode developed, it confronted the non-capitalist mode, violently transforming various communities, turning their lands, resources, and products into commodities. Countless thousands of able-bodied young men were uprooted from their homes to work in capitalist enterprises, and the remaining population was compelled to grow only those crops that possessed exchange value—cash crops.

The critical point here is that the destruction of the traditional economic system did not give rise to a fully capitalist economy; the end product was, rather, a distorted, unbalanced capitalist structure. This occurred because Africa's incorporation into the global system was peripheral. Complementarity and reciprocity between the various sectors of the economy were absent. Misarticulation was further characterized by a lack of vital linkages within the production process. That is, capitalist development in Africa was characterized by lack of integration. Under colonialism, businesses operated to serve external markets, and usually had little connection with each other; and businesses that would have served internal needs were often systematically discouraged in order to ensure markets for goods produced in the imperial countries. Africa is still suffering the effects of that distorted development pattern.

So, capitalist penetration and subsequent integration of African societies into the global system has generated a culture of dependence—a dependence of the periphery (Africa) on the centre (the advanced capitalist countries). Profits and surplus value are constantly being transferred from the periphery to the centre. Conversely, economic and social crises in the global capitalist chain are readily transmitted to its weakest links—the highly susceptible periphery. As for the “development” of Africa by the West, Leonard Goncharov notes: “Capital is being exported from the highly developed capitalist countries to the developing countries, not actually with the aim of providing aid to the latter, but with the express purpose of deriving the highest possible profit.”

Finally, Africa's participation in the global capitalist economy has led to the creation of a local privileged class that appropriates surplus social produce, because capitalism cannot function without the existence of an exploitative, nay parasitic, local class. However, since the indigenous privileged played only a minor role in laying the basic foundations of the post-colonial state, its interests

are subordinated to those of the foreign capitalists, primarily multinational corporations. As a result, a class alliance developed between the two, with the indigenous class assuming the role of agents for international capital. Its members live on the commissions they receive as middlemen. The dominance of this social class, coupled with the absence of autonomy in Africa's role in the world economy, has essentially transformed African states into fiefdoms...

The national question in African politics derives from Africa's colonial history and present-day neo-colonialism. The process of colonization in Africa in which ethnic groups were arbitrarily regrouped into artificial political bodies has resulted in increased ethnic tensions and social and economic discrimination. Onigu Otite has noted that unequal access to political and economic resources among the various ethnic groups inevitably transforms ethnic divisions into antagonisms. Capitalist competition over control of the machinery of government plays on ethnic sentiments and sets groups against each other. Thus issues are distorted and simplified as ethnic rather than class-based... According to [Inyang] Eteng, "the pernicious consequence of ethnic [consciousness] is to encourage communal hatred, corruption, violence, religious manipulation, interethnic conflict and to undermine the growth of class consciousness in favour of ethnic/state consciousness"...

The national question is of particular relevance to Africa given the heterogeneity inside its component states. Many civil conflicts on the continent have been blamed, directly or indirectly, on the absence of homogenous populations. The problem is accentuated by the solutions proffered by both capitalism and state socialism: the one offers individuals and groups liberty without equality; and the other offers equality without liberty.

Common to both systems, however, is a strident appeal to patriotism, a concept that Bakunin contemptuously dismissed as the united interest of the privileged class. Hiding behind patriotic appeals, the state in Africa imposes injustices and misery on its subjects, as, of course, it does everywhere else. And patriotism produces the false consciousness—in which individuals act directly *against* their own self-interest—that allows individuals to condone, indeed support, the injustice and misery caused by the state system. The state, in Bakunin's words, "restrains, it mutilates, it kills humanity in [its subjects], so that . . . they shall never raise themselves beyond the level of the citizen to the level of a man."

Capitalist democracy and state socialism have both achieved the highest degree of intensified racial and national oppression. Marxist support for the principle of national self-determination is as illusory as is capitalist support of individual freedom.

G.P. Maksimov elucidates:

“National rights are not a principle in themselves, but a result of the principle of freedom. No nation or nationality, as a natural association of individuals on the basis of common language, can find suitable conditions for its normal development within the confines of a capitalist environment and state organization. Stronger nations conquer the weaker ones and make every effort to dismember them by means of artificial assimilation. For that reason, national domination is a constant companion of the state and of capitalism.”

The national question in Africa, therefore, is only one component of the principal problem—namely, the attainment of true freedom and equality. The “national question” is thus peripheral to the real interests of Africa’s working class and peasants. As long as capitalism and the state system exist, “self-determination” of nationalities means little. Maksimov notes that without fundamental change, “The right of a nation to ‘self-determination’ and to independent sovereign existence is nothing but the right of the national bourgeoisie to the unlimited exploitation of its proletariat.”

Having said that, anarchism is not in any way opposed to the rights of oppressed nationalities or ethnic groups in Africa or elsewhere. But anarchism stands above the narrow and petty ambitions associated with the quest for national self-determination. Anarchists see freedom, equality, and justice as higher goals than national interests, and the struggle for these higher goals must necessarily be international. The point, of course, is that the state, every state—no matter how nationalist—is an enemy of these goals. Maksimov explains:

“Nations which achieve their right to self-determination and which become states, in their turn begin to deny national rights to their own subordinate minorities, to persecute their languages, their desires, and their right to be themselves. In this manner, ‘self-determination’ not only brings the nation concerned none of that internal freedom in which the proletariat is most interested, but also fails to solve the national problem. On the contrary, it becomes a threat to the world, since states must always aim to expand at the expense of their weaker neighbours.”

For that reason, anarchism repudiates any attempt to solve the national question within the context of the state system. Maksimov argues:

“A real and full solution will be possible only in conditions of Anarchy, in a communism emanating from the liberty of the individual and achieved by the free association of individuals in communes, of communes in regions, and re-

gions in nations—associations founded in liberty and equality and creating a natural unity in plurality.”

Anarchists demand the liberation of all existing colonies and support struggles for national independence in Africa and around the world as long as they express the will of the people in the nations concerned. However, anarchists also insist that the usefulness of “self-determination” will be very limited as long as the state system and capitalism—including Marxist state capitalism—are retained.

The implications of this for Africa are immediately obvious. A viable solution to the myriad of problems posed by the national question in Africa, such as internecine civil conflicts, is realizable only outside the context of the state system. This requires the destruction of the state system, and concerted international solidarity and revolutionary actions. The elimination of the state system is a long-term goal that will be difficult to achieve, but it is definitely preferable to the ongoing mechanistic approach as expressed in the creation of a multiplicity of unviable nation states across the continent.

The relevance of anarchism to human society has nowhere been more obvious than it is in Africa. Given the multitude of problems that stare the peoples of Africa in the face, the debilitating socioeconomic conditions under which a great majority of them live, and the overall economically deprived status of Africa vis-à-vis the other continents, anarchism is really the only liberating concept capable of turning “the dark continent” in a truly forward-looking direction.

Things have gone haywire for too long; only a drastic cure can satisfy an increasingly angry, bitter and restive population stretching from Cape Town to Cairo. Conditions include the seemingly endemic problem of ethnic conflicts across the continent; the continued political and economic marginalization of Africa at the global level; the unspeakable misery of about 90% of Africa’s population; and, indeed, the ongoing collapse of the nation state in many parts of Africa.

Given these problems, a return to the “anarchic elements” in African communalism is virtually inevitable. The goal of a self-managed society born out of the free will of its people and devoid of authoritarian control and regimentation is as attractive as it is feasible in the long run.

At the global level, human civilization is passing through a period of transition occasioned by the collapse of Marxist “socialism” and the evidently insuperable crisis of capitalism and the state system. So, where do we go from here? As we noted earlier, all advances in human history to this point have been made possible by humanity’s quest for both freedom and human solidarity. Since this craving seems a natural instinct and, as such, is not going to disappear anytime

soon, it follows that the continued evolution of society will be in the direction of freedom, equality, and community.

The process of anarchist transformation in Africa might prove comparatively easy, given that Africa lacks a strong capitalist foundation, well-developed class formations and relations of production, and a stable, entrenched state system. What is required for now is a long-term program of class consciousness building, relevant education, and increased individual participation in social struggles. Meanwhile, the crises and mutations in capitalism, Marxist socialism, and the state system, individually and collectively, cannot but accelerate. For Africa in particular, long-term development is possible only if there is a radical break with both capitalism and the state system—the principal instruments of our arrested development and stagnation. Anarchism is Africa's way out.

53. Mok Chiu Yu: An Anarchist in Hong Kong (2001)

Although anarchism as a significant movement virtually disappeared from China by the 1930s, anarchist ideas and anti-authoritarian movements have continued to manifest themselves in China during various social upheavals. During the so-called "Cultural Revolution" in the 1960s, some Red Guards took Mao Zedong's revolutionary pronouncements to heart, advocating the transformation of China into a "People's Commune" based on the revolutionary models of the 1871 Paris Commune and the 1917 Petrograd Soviets (see the "Whither China" manifesto of the Sheng-Wu-Lien group in China: The Revolution is Dead—Long Live the Revolution (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1977)). After the Communist authorities, with Mao's approval, suppressed these "ultra-leftist" deviations, some former Red Guards became interested in anarchist ideas. In 1976, the Hong Kong based libertarian communist group, the '70s, published their collection of ultra-left writings, China: The Revolution is Dead—Long Live the Revolution, in which Lee Yu See and Wu Che wrote that:

1. From the beginning, the Chinese Communist Party was a bourgeois organism. The party was structured along hierarchical lines. It was a miniature state. It assimilated all the forms, techniques and mentality of bureaucracy. Its membership was schooled in obedience and was taught to revere the leadership. The party's leadership, in turn, was schooled in habits born of command, authority, manipulation and egomania. At the same time, the party was the spineless follower of the Comintern directed by Moscow.
2. The rigid dogma adopted by the Chinese Communist Party was that of Leninism-Stalinism, an ideology which had led to the consolidation of a system of state capitalism in Russia. Not by deviating from but by following

Lenin's ideas, a new dominating and exploiting class came into power over the working masses.

3. China was an economically backward country in which the old ruling classes were incapable of carrying out industrialization. The young native bourgeoisie had neither the strength nor the courage to revolutionize the old social structure in the way that a genuine modernization would require. The "bourgeois tasks" were to be solved by a bureaucracy

4. In pursuing the strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside in its attempt to seize state power, the Chinese Communist Party built up a peasant army. But such an army, organized by a bourgeois party, became a tool of the party and therefore a capitalist machine.

5. The so-called 1949 revolution [had] nothing in common with a genuine socialist revolution. It was simply a violent takeover of the state by a bureaucracy better placed to manage the national capital than the old ruling clique.

6. Having won control of the state machine, the only way to move forward for the Maoist bureaucracy was to impose a regime of ruthless exploitation and austerity on the working masses.

The bureaucracy began to carry out the task of primitive accumulation. Because of the lack of capital-intensive industry, economic development depended on the most primitive methods of extraction of surplus value: in the countryside, mobilizing millions of peasants and semi-proletarians around the construction of public works and irrigation projects, built almost barehanded by the rural masses; in the cities, forcing the workers to work long hours for extremely low wages, banning strikes, putting restrictions on the choice of employment and so on.

7. The new bureaucratic capitalist class in China did not emerge because of the development of new modes of production. It was on the contrary, the bureaucracy which brought the new mode of production into existence. The Chinese bureaucracy did not originate from the industrialization of the country. Industrialization was the result of the bureaucracy's accession to power.

8. Soon after the accession to power of the Maoist bureaucracy, intra-party feuds occurred. Such feuds originated out of two different conceptions of how China was to modernize in agriculture, industry, science and technology.

9. The Maoist-radical faction (led... by Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan [the so-called "Gang of Four"]) advocated self-reliance, the active mobilization of the "popular masses" behind the state and the economy to promote production by ideological rather than material incentives, "redness" over "expertness," the "infallibility" of the thoughts of Mao Zedong, hostility towards the Soviet Union, "revolutionizing" arts and

literature to serve the single purpose of propagating the official ideology, the need for endless mass movements and struggle because “in the long historical period of socialism, the principal internal contradiction is the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie.”

The so-called capitalist roaders (Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, et al) favoured the retention of wage differentials and the extension of material incentives for increased productivity. They also stood for a more efficient technological apparatus, rapprochement with the Soviet “revisionists,” liberalization of policies in relation to the arts, rejection of the personal cult of Mao, the priority of national Construction over endless “class struggles.”

Both lines represented different strategies designed by the different factions of the bureaucratic capitalist class for attacking the working masses, for intensifying their exploitation.

The Maoist-radical road was leading to a “feudalistic social-fascist dictatorship.” The road of the “capitalist roaders” would bring a “destalinized Russian type of society” like today’s Russia.

Today it is clear that the “capitalist roaders” were ultimately victorious in the struggle for control of the Chinese Communist Party, economy and state after the death of Mao and the fall of the “Gang of Four” in 1976. By 1997, when China regained control of Hong Kong, state capitalism was firmly established in China. In the following passages, Mok Chiu Yu, a Hong Kong anarchist, describes the changes that have taken place since 1997, and the limited prospects for anarchism in Hong Kong and China today. Originally published in interview form in the Italian anarchist review, Libertaria, No. 3 (2001); translated by Paul Sharkey.

Since the reunification, the Chinese Communists—like the British before them—have favoured alliance with Hong Kong’s businessmen. Recently a sizable delegation of entrepreneurs visited Sinkiang and other northwestern regions of China: they were invited to take a hand in fast-tracking development in the area. Favourable conditions were promised.

Hong Kong businessmen are like businessmen the world over: what concerns them is profit. Ever since China opened up economically in the ’80s, lots of industries and entrepreneurs have relocated their investments to the Chinese interior. Workers in processing industries in Hong Kong have felt the negative impact of this exodus of capital investment to the SEZs (Special Economic Zones). Hong Kong’s economy has worsened since reunification even though the heaviest blows came from the Asian financial crisis. Besides, with the information technology revolution many trades (say, translation or the like) have been relocating to mainland China.

In addition, many smaller firms have relocated to Shenzhen (a city just over the border from the ex-colony) and its environs and, broadly speaking, the revenue of the middle class has diminished. The real estate market is in crisis but today those in a position to invest do not feel that the situation is worrisome. Businessmen play a prominent role in the running of the economy and, thanks to support from the PRC (People's Republic of China) the problems generated by the Asian financial crisis have been overcome and have left less lasting damage than elsewhere in eastern Asia. Those strata of society which have been hit hardest (workers and employees in the relocated factories or offices) have found their earning ability diminished and survive thanks to support from the Chinese "extended" family. In recent decades, however the extended family as a feature of society has been eroded; broadly speaking, there are usually only two children and the core nucleus is more and more frequently mono-nuclear (partly because homes are tiny and expensive)...

In our view the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Shenzhen represents the worst of both worlds: people are wide open to the exploitation of the capitalist mode of production (extreme working conditions, longer hours, inhuman living conditions and so on) as well as to the totalitarian controls of a corrupt "Communist" regime! But now that the whole of China is open to capitalist practices, the arrangements adopted in Shenzhen are spreading everywhere. The workers in these Special Economic Zones earn an average of 100 dollars a month and are a very amenable workforce. The cost of living in Shenzhen is lower than in Hong Kong and citizens of the ex-colony have developed the habit of venturing beyond its borders on shopping trips.

Virtually every consumer good can be found there at lower cost: there are also lots of counterfeit or contracted goods, especially Italian brands. People also venture out in search of entertainment. All of which has eroded the Hong Kong domestic market and caused an ongoing shrinkage in business sectors, with the resultant impact one might expect on employment. On the other hand, we have the phenomenon of house buying in Guangdong by Hong Kong citizens. Economic reforms in China have furnished the already highly corrupt party leaders and officials with superb opportunities for capturing key positions and, in some instances, amassing extraordinary wealth. That wealth is indicated by the spectacular consumption of luxury products and motor vehicles. In a number of instances workers have been asked to become shareholders in the company for which they work, but management remains under the control of persons backed by the party or drawn from the party itself.

It is not unusual for payment of wages to be delayed or indeed to go unpaid, while the trade union officers are utterly useless. There have been attempts to set up unofficial unions but these have been snuffed out immediately. The urge, how-

ever, is a strong one because living and working conditions are very oppressive. The system was corrupt and economic reforms have only inflated this. Chinese pragmatism is evident in business strategies and contract models. After the comparative isolation of China in the wake of the Tiananmen incidents [in 1989], Chinese leaders agreed to sign contracts to launch companies with 51% of the capital coming from abroad: now that they are in a stronger position, they are renegotiating the contracts for the purpose of winning back a majority shareholding.

The head of the Hong Kong executive who was appointed by an indirect, 800-strong electoral college was a businessman operating “in tune” with Beijing’s chosen policy line.

With a chief executive who was “on side,” political control became simpler. [When] Jiang Zemin, the PRC president, visited Hong Kong... the local government deployed upwards of three thousand police to counter the few demonstrators and some of the latter were very brutally handled. In fact, there are political changes under way but they are taking place very slowly. Shortly before leaving the colony, the British gave approval to a range of democratic measures (for which they had shown no appetite during their 150 year long stay, however) that were not to the liking of the Chinese rulers. In practical terms only half of the deputies are returned by direct democratic election whereas other representatives are indirectly chosen by a variety of corporations and associations. Thus the majority of the deputies support the government and are openly pro-China. According to traditional Chinese custom, the ruling class displays clear signs of self-censorship and caution and strives not to come into conflict with the Beijing authorities and indeed tries to anticipate their wishes. Potential dissenting voices are progressively “corralled” (like the leader of the democracy party) or are shunned or victimized.

The daily newspaper *Apple Daily* was very critical of Beijing and so its owner came under severe pressure in the form of impediments placed in the way of his economic activities until he was forced into selling some of these off in order to liquidate some of his assets. In social and political terms there is more control over demonstrations of any sort and in some instances there can be heavy repression. The Falun Gong sect, banned and harshly repressed in China, is legal in Hong Kong but its most recent public demonstration was limited to just 25 participants. The crackdown on the Falun Gong within China is probably the result of a mistaken assessment of the threat that it poses, but the repression is the result of the fact that even some party cadres (lots of them, it would appear) are followers of the sect. In Hong Kong today, there are tighter controls on immigration and emigration and these areas (reuniting families, residence permits, etc.) have thrown up the starkest clashes “of principle”...

Powers are being centralized in government hands, with decentralized municipal councils being abolished and in fact this program of “integration” is worrying as far as the prospects for Hong Kong’s independence are concerned...

Before reunification, there were a lot of worries about freedom and artists were keen to demonstrate their concerns. In fact we now find ourselves in the paradoxical situation where we can speak freely about what we want because artists are not regarded as posing any danger, in social terms. Hong Kong has no organized anarchist movement, but whenever I think about Artivist, say, I contend that it can be counted as an anarchist organization, albeit on a rather small scale. Since 1990, Artivist has been organizing a yearly concert to commemorate 4 June [1989], which is to say, the date of the crushing of the democracy movement in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. We are quite embedded and influential within artistic circles, as individual anarchists, and not just anarchists. Personally, I contend that I engage in political work by involving myself in cultural improvement efforts. I do this, for instance, through my theatre work, while other comrades are involved in young children’s theatre... The older generation of artists operates on an individual basis, but they have a common objective, promoting libertarian positions. Often the model imitated is that of the Living Theatre and the teachings of Julian Beck and Judith Malina [Volume Two, Selections 24 & 25]; and artists from the Philippines and Japan occupy the same terrain. We operate through theatre work and self-improvement workshops: it is out of these that the conquest of autonomy and real democracy spring.

54. Mihara Yoko: Anarchism in Japan (1993)

The Japanese anarchist movement was crushed by the late 1930s, when Japan embarked on its quest for imperial domination of Asia. After the Second World War, Japanese anarchists attempted to regroup, with some becoming involved in “ban the bomb” movements, a particularly important issue in Japan, where Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain the only cities to have been subjected to atomic bombing. In the following excerpts, Mihara Yoko surveys Japanese anarchism since the war and suggests that anarchists should become more involved in popular social movements that evince an anarchist sensibility. Translated by John Crump.

“Ecology” has been an important preoccupation of the members of the [post-war Japanese] Anarchist Federation. What stands out is their attitude towards the current situation in Japan, where a superficial type of ecology is fashionable. This so-called “ecology” tolerates satiated people buying commodities which, in the words of the advertising jingles, are “kind to nature.” The members of the An-

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archist Federation are critical of this approach and instead seek to have ecology understood as a philosophy of social change. Other issues of debate have been the reasons why anarchists form organizations, the character of such organizations, and also ethnic questions...

Recently meetings and demonstrations against the dispatch of troops overseas and against the observances connected with the Emperor's accession to the throne have been taking place. In various parts of Japan one finds ordinary townspeople, labour unions and groups from the buraku liberation movement taking part in these. Identified by their black helmets and black flags, anarchist groups too have involved themselves in these protests...

Buraku are particular hamlets or neighbourhoods and the people whom live in them, or originate from them, are known as burakumin (people of the buraku). Racially indistinguishable from other Japanese, the burakumin are an out-cast stratum numbering perhaps 2 million in all. Although their origins go back to pre-modern times, when many were engaged in work such as leather-tanning which was considered "unclean" from a Buddhist standpoint, they have subsequently proved useful to the capitalist state, both by functioning as a reservoir for cheap labour power and by serving as a scapegoat when necessary...

[I]n my opinion, irrespective of whether the term "anarchism" is employed or not, we should also take into consideration movements and ideas whose essence shows a tendency towards anarchism...

[O]ver the last twenty years or so, townspeople's movements have grown and it seems to me that their character has undergone considerable change compared to how they once were. Campaigns against nuclear power, against the construction of golf courses, against the dispatch of troops abroad, against the Emperor system and to do with local government elections are the kind of movements I have in mind...

The biggest break with the past is that such campaigns are no longer fought under the leadership provided by a rigid organization with either the parliamentary parties or the extra-parliamentary parties and left-wing sects at its head. There has been a marked tendency to adopt a method or style of struggle with which everyone individually is happy, since it proceeds from their dislike of such leadership and grows out of the anxieties and doubts which they harbour as individuals. When the anti-nuclear movement was flourishing several years ago, people who felt uneasy about the high risks of nuclear energy started to act autonomously and in their own way, without any reference to the aims of pre-existing organizations. As a result, many people had their consciousness of the problems of nuclear energy raised. Even when the mood prevailing in the movement is one of stagnation, one could still say that there is a marked tendency to play down the importance of organization. However, the difficulty of keeping

the movement going due to the absence of a permanent organization is a problem which should not be overlooked either.

It is important to explain how ecology became a major issue. From the latter half of the 1960s there was growing concern in Japan about air and water pollution. Realizing that compensation for pollution was expensive, the government and commercial companies took steps to move the offending factories overseas and put much effort into the development of devices for preventing pollution. As a result, the problem of pollution within Japan subsided to a certain extent. In due course, however, reports of environmental problems on a global scale started to appear from all sides, so that by now "ecology" is a word which crops up even in supermarkets. Ecology has become an issue not merely for those who have long been involved in campaigns to ban synthetic cleaning agents or against nuclear energy, but has necessarily also caught the interest of those who struggle against the state. So much so that nowadays, when one sketches a picture of what the ideal society might look like, it could be said to be essential to give careful thought to how to achieve cooperative living in harmony with nature.

Another important change that has taken place is that self-assertion of groups which have been discriminated against has become widely recognized (although it still remains difficult to know what people are really thinking in their heart of hearts. It is easy, after all, to become aware of the injury that one has suffered, but much more difficult to be conscious of the injury that one inflicts on others.) Popular movements in Japan have at long last not merely become conscious that they are discriminated against, but have come to recognize that virulent discrimination exists towards those of buraku origin, foreigners resident in Japan, women, the handicapped and so on. They have been helped to this realization partly on the basis of the seventy years' historical experience of the buraku liberation movement in Japan and also as a result of the stimulating effects of reports of movements of blacks, women and native peoples abroad. Hence the point has been reached where these movements have shown signs of making a real effort to get rid of discrimination. One consequence of this course of events is that nowadays it is probably fair to say that the idea that a guiding theory suitable for the mass of the people can be hammered out in the brains of an elite handful of male intellectuals has become self-evident nonsense.

In view of the above, is it not reasonable to see a connection between contemporary movements and long-standing "anarchist" thought? Both share the attitude of disliking leadership exercised by an organization and prefer to struggle jointly with companions in such a way that the ideas of each individual are treated with respect. Similarly, both aim at living cooperatively with people of many different standpoints and with nature too. Moreover, these common points arise inevitably on the basis of two further characteristics which they share. One

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is that they object to the present state of affairs in society (they are against the system) and the second is that they are movements which do not resort to Marxist theory.

Of course, even if what I have written here is valid, this is not to deny that most of those connected with contemporary movements have never thought that the word "anarchism" bears any relation to the ideas behind their activities. This is because for them "anarchism" is a word which conjures up images of terrorism and bombs. Its image has been decided by the many "incidents" which have occurred in the past. Nevertheless, it seems to me that in the present circumstances it would be to the advantage of both sides to recognize the points which they have in common. On the anarchist side, anarchists should stop regarding the townspeople's movements disdainfully as campaigns which have no connection with the term "anarchism" and are devoid of the spirit of rebellion. They should draw out the theoretical and practical lessons to be learned from them, and realize their usefulness for anarchism's own development. On the townspeople's movements' side, in view of the fact that they still have a short history and little accumulated experience, there are probably lessons which they could learn from the "anarchist" movement, given the latter's relatively long history. This is probably particularly so with regard to the opportunities and dangers which confront them.

The depth of unpopularity to which Marxism has fallen is obvious. Hence now is probably an opportune time for anarchism to break away from the situation where it has been oppositional thought of an anti-Marxist character and to orient itself independently. Bearing in mind the situation of anarchism in Japan as I have described it, I should like to put forward a personal point of view on the direction that we should take. Our goal should be a society where throughout the world people of various standpoints can live cooperatively in such a way that individuals relate to one another with equal and mutual respect so that everyone's sensibilities and ideas can be treated as important. In order to realize such a society we must struggle, but the target of our rebellious activity should not be an abstract entity called "the state," but the system which denies respect to each individual and which does not allow us to live cooperatively with nature and with other people. In denouncing "the system," we should conceive of this as encompassing a wide range of tangible relationships, extending from the economic structure and system to acts of everyday life. The economic structure and system need to be overthrown if they encourage the destruction of nature and trample on the human rights of the weak and minorities, while everyday life needs changing to the extent that it incorporates the authoritarian attitudes of parents towards children and men towards women or the combination of selfish luxury and indifference to others.

55. The Cuban Libertarian Syndicalist Association: Anarchism and the Cuban Revolution (1960/2003)

The Cuban anarchist movement can be traced back to the 1860s, when Proudhon's mutualist ideas (Volume One, Selections 12 & 18) were popularized in Cuba by Saturnine Martinez. A variety of mutualist workers' and mutual aid associations were formed. From these a trade union movement began to develop. By the 1880s, anarchists influenced by the libertarian socialism of the anti-authoritarian sections of the First International (see Volume One, Chapter 6) and the Workers' Federation of the Spanish Region (Volume One, Selection 36) had taken an active role in the Cuban trade union movement, thanks largely to the work of the weekly anarchist paper, El Productor, edited by Enrique Roig de San Martin (1843-1889). The proto-syndicalist Cuban Workers' Alliance, inspired by Bakunin's International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, regarded unions as revolutionary organs of the working class that would seek to abolish capitalism independent of any political party. Anarchists were also involved in the fight against racial discrimination, a significant problem in Cuba as slavery was only officially abolished in 1886. The anarchists supported the struggle for independence from Spain, seeking to push it forward towards social revolution. After the Spanish-American War, through which the U.S. replaced Spain as the de facto colonial power over Cuba, the anarchists continued their work within the trade union movement, participating in numerous strikes, helped organize sugar plantation workers and other Cuban campesinos, and were very active in the Cuban cooperative movement. The Havana Federation of Labour and, later, the National Labour Confederation of Cuba (CNOC), adopted revolutionary syndicalist programs. Cuban authorities persecuted the more militant anarchists, imprisoning them, deporting them, and executing others. The dictatorship of General Gerardo Machado sought to suppress the anarcho-syndicalist unions in the 1920s, helping a compliant Communist Party assume control of the trade union movement. In exchange for legal recognition of the Communist Party, the Communists supported the Machado dictatorship during the 1933 general strike to overthrow the regime. Nevertheless, General Machado was forced to flee Cuba, only to be replaced by another dictator, Fulgencio Batista y Zaldivar. The Communists initially supported the Batista regime, enabling them to maintain control of the government sponsored labour federation (renamed the Cuban Confederation of Labour). Batista lost the 1944 presidential election, going into exile in Florida, but returned to power in 1952 in a coup d'état. Meanwhile, the anarchists tried to combat the Communist domination of the labour movement and to maintain independent revolutionary trade unions. At the Third National Libertarian Congress of Cuban anarchists in March 1950, the following resolutions were adopted:

To fight against the control of the labour movement by bureaucrats, political parties, religious sects, and class collaborationists;

To extend the influence of the libertarians by actively participating in the daily struggles of the urban and rural workers for better wages and working conditions;

To encourage workers to prepare themselves culturally and professionally not only to better their present working conditions, but also to take over the technical operation and administration of the whole economy in the new libertarian society;

To educate the workers to understand the true meaning of syndicalism, which must be apolitical, revolutionary and federalist, which will help prevent authoritarian elements from instituting a tyrannical type of unionism, becoming a *de facto* agency of the state. (*Quoted in Sam Dolgoff, The Cuban Revolution: A Critical Perspective (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1976)*).

The anarchist Libertarian Association of Cuba (ALC) continued to oppose the Batista dictatorship and participated in the Cuban revolutionary movement. Anarchists were involved in the attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953 (led by future dictator, Fidel Castro), and were frequently imprisoned and sometimes executed for their activities. By January 1959, Batista had lost all support and again fled Cuba. Despite the broad based nature of the Cuban revolutionary movement, Castro proceeded to centralize power in his own hands, ultimately turning Cuba into a one party socialist state modeled along Soviet lines. Prior to Castro's definitive consolidation of power, the Libertarian Syndicalist Association of Cuba issued the following declaration of principles in June 1960 (translated by Paul Sharkey; alternate translation in Sam Dolgoff, The Cuban Revolution, pp. 135-140). The Cuban Communist Party denounced the declaration as "counter-revolutionary" because it undermined the authority of the new revolutionary regime using "leftist" phraseology. In 1961, the Castro regime shut down the anarchist press in Cuba, and over the years has imprisoned many anarchists, as well as forcing many others into exile.

AGAINST THE STATE IN ALL ITS GUISES

The members of the Libertarian Syndicalist Association deem it their imperious duty to declare, in this time of revolutionary achievements by our people, that we stand in opposition not only to certain forms of the State, but to its very existence as a body steering society and a springboard for all politics designed to create statist hypertrophy, boosting the powers of the State or endowing it with a totalitarian and dictatorial character.

Like their comrades abroad, libertarian syndicalist militants are of the view that a genuine social revolution is not feasible unless we also proceed with the demolition of the State as a political and administrative agency, replacing it with revolutionary grassroots bodies such as labour unions, free municipalities, agricultural and industrial cooperatives of factories and farmers, free from all authoritarian meddling.

The politically superstitious believe that humanitarian society is a consequence of the State, whereas the facts demonstrate that the State is merely the ghastliest expression of the degeneracy of a society divided into classes: the culmination of this degeneracy being the brutal inequalities, injustices and antagonisms of the capitalist regime.

In short, the State is a parasitical growth produced by the class system dependent upon private ownership of the means of production and a start to its final banishment must be made during the period of revolutionary change from bourgeois society to socialist society.

THE UNIONS ARE THE REVOLUTION'S ECONOMIC AGENCIES

Libertarian syndicalists assert that there is no more natural representative of the working class than the trade unions and that, as a result, they are tailor-made to effect the economic transformation of society by substituting, as the old socialist watchword has it, "the administration of things for the government of men."

The unions and industrial federations, overhauled along rational lines, contain within themselves all of the technical and human resources needed to fully devise collective industrialization plans.

With regard to the upstarts of revolutionary politics and the revanchists of reactionary politics bent upon snatching back public power, our stance is as follows: not only should the trade unions not disappear come the social revolution, but instead, right now, with the reorganizing of society in full swing, the trade union bodies that had switched from being instruments for pressing claims to being instruments of economic oversight and coordination must perform their most important and telling role.

In which context, even though we may be in a revolutionary phase and perhaps for that very reason, the subordination of the trade unions to State policy is treason against the working class, a sordid ploy that must be thwarted at a time in history when [the working class] should be performing its most important mission from a socialist point of view—administering the means of production and assuming responsibility for organizing the distribution to the people of essential consumer goods at the lowest and fairest prices.

THE LAND TO WHO WORKS IT

The men and women of the Libertarian Syndicalist Association abide today more than ever by the old revolutionary watchword: "The land to him who works it." It is our belief that the classic cry of peasants the world over, "Land and Liberty," is the fairest expression of the short-term aspirations of Cuba's peasants. Land that they might work it and make it productive; liberty to see to the organization and administration of products through their effort and care, in accordance with the preferences of the interested parties: through individual or family farming or in certain cases collective farms, should that be possible; but in accordance throughout with the free will of the peasants and not according to the dictates of the representatives of the State who may be very competent people in terms of expertise, but who, in most instances, know nothing of the material facts of agriculture or of the feelings, worries and spiritual aspirations of rural folk.

Our lengthy experience of revolutionary struggles among the peasants has persuaded us that planned exploitation of the soil, a matter of vital importance to our people, cannot be construed as a mere technical process: indeed while there are inert factors such as the soil or machinery, it is the human element, the peasants, that is decisive. Which is why we come out in favour of collective and cooperative working arrangements on an essentially voluntary basis, with technical and cultural assistance being provided as one way—the best way, doubtless—of persuading the peasants of the tremendous advantages offered by collective farming as against individual or family farms.

To do the opposite and use constraint and force would ultimately lay the groundwork for a complete failure of agrarian change, which is to say, failure of the revolution itself in its most important aspect.

COMBATING NATIONALISM

As revolutionary toilers, we are internationalists, ardent advocates of coexistence between all peoples regardless of all geographical, linguistic, racial, political and religious borders. We are deeply enamoured of our native soil; just as [people from] other countries are of theirs. On which basis we are the enemies of nationalism, whatever mantle it may dress itself up in; resolutely opposed to militarism and a war-mongering mentality; opposed to all war; advocates of the vast sums being spent today on armaments being redeployed to assuage the hunger and need of the unfortunate, turning the instruments of death churned out in frightening quantities by the great powers into mechanisms for the production of well-being for all the people of the earth.

We are resolute in our opposition to militaristic education of the young, to the creation of a professional army and the organization of military apparatuses for adolescents and children. We see nationalism and militarism as being synonymous with Nazism. Unwaveringly we shall fight on to ensure that there are fewer soldiers than there are teachers, fewer weapons than there are tools, fewer guns and more bread for us all.

Libertarian syndicalists are against every manifestation of an obsolete imperialism; against the economic domination of peoples which is so much in vogue in the Americas; against the military pressure that brings people to their knees and forces them to embrace political systems that are alien to their national character and social ideology, like the system in force in parts of Europe and Asia. It is our view that, in the community of nations, small nations are the equals of large ones and, just as we are opposed to nation-states on the basis that they hold their own peoples in thrall, so we are also—and, if possible, even more so—inimical to super-States that flex their political, economic and military muscle across their borders in order to foist their systems of exploitation and piracy upon weaker countries. Faced with all such imperialist methods, we stand for revolutionary internationalism, for the creation of great confederations of free peoples bound by shared interests, common aspirations, solidarity and mutual aid.

We support an active, militant pacifism that shuns the dialectical nuances of “just wars” and “unjust wars”: a pacifism that requires an end to professional armies and a rejection of all sorts of weaponry, starting with nuclear weapons.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM VS. FEDERALISM

We are by nature the enemies of any form of political, economic and social organization displaying centralizing characteristics and tendencies. Our thinking is that the organization of human society has to shift from the simple to the complex, from the ground up, which is to say, must start in the grassroots organization: municipalities, trade unions, cooperatives, cultural centres, peasant associations, etc., until they are knit into larger national and international organizations on the basis of a federal compact between equals entering into free association for the purpose of accomplishing common tasks, without injury to any of the contracting parties who will at all times remain free to cut their ties with the rest should this suit their interests. We think of social organization—nationally as well as internationally—in terms and in the form of great trade union, peasant, cultural and municipal confederations that will act as representatives of all, but without any executive powers other than those entrusted to them in each instance by the federated grassroots bodies. The free spirits of peoples cannot find full expression other than in a federalist type organization that

sets the boundaries of everyone's freedom. Experience has shown us that political and economic centralization leads to the creation of monstrous super-totalitarian States, to aggression and to war between peoples, to exploitation and wretchedness for the great masses of the peoples of the world.

WITHOUT FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL NO COLLECTIVE FREEDOM

Libertarian syndicalists are supporters of the rights of the individual. There can be no freedom for the whole if one of the parts is enslaved. There can be no collective freedom where Man as an individual is the victim of oppression. We say that human rights—which is to say, freedom of expression, the right to work and to a decent living, freedom of religion, the inviolability of the home, the right to be tried before impartial, fair-minded people, the right to education and to health, etc.—require urgent guarantees, in the absence of which there is no possibility of civilized, human coexistence.

We are opposed to racial discrimination, political persecution, religious intolerance and economic and social injustice. We support freedom and justice for all, even for the very enemies of freedom and justice.

THE REVOLUTION BELONGS TO ALL

The Libertarian Syndicalist Association renews its vow to support the fight for the complete liberation of our people and affirms that the revolution is no one's private property, belonging instead to the people generally. As we have done thus far, we will support all revolutionary means designed to cure the ancient ills by which we are afflicted, but we shall also struggle relentlessly and without respite against the authoritarian tendencies stirring within the revolution's own ranks.

We have opposed the barbarism and corruption of the past; we shall combat all deviations seeking to curtail our revolution by invoking the super-authoritarian models crushing human dignity elsewhere.

No matter what its rightwing or leftwing admirers may say, the State is also something more than a parasitical growth on the back of a class-riven society: it is a generator of economic and political privileges and thus of new privileged classes.

The old reactionary classes trying desperately to win back their abolished privileges find us arrayed against them. The new exploiter and oppressor classes already looming on the revolutionary horizon will also [find us arrayed against them.] We stand with justice, socialism and freedom.

Our struggle is for the well-being of all men, of whatever origin, religion or

race. Workers, peasants, student men and women of Cuba, we shall abide by this policy to the end. For the sake of these principles, we shall gamble our freedom and, if need be, our lives.

Havana, June 1960

In 2003, the Cuban libertarian movement, now in exile, updated its statement of principles, declaring that:

1. The Cuban crisis is our most urgent priority.
2. As internationalists, we have a duty to support our anarchist comrades of whatever gender elsewhere in the world and those of our class brothers and sisters of like-minded ideological persuasions who cry out for our solidarity.
3. We are against all states and their representatives, against all governments or empires trying to globalize, centralize or lord it over the rest of Humanity.
4. We are not interested in the struggle for political power but we shall never fail to oppose any fascist, capitalist or class enemy, now or in times to come. Consistent with the notion that the roots of all political government lie in religion, we denounce all religions and churches as well as philosophical and ideological outlooks that hinder human beings' critical development.
5. We aspire to the complete emancipation of the working class, making the Cuban proletariat the focus of our interest and main attention, due to the obvious socio-political straits in which it finds itself...
6. We shall extend our fraternal solidarity to any group, sector and/or movement anywhere in the world that espouses freedom and social justice among its own people as its principle and goal. Internationalism has always begun with the nearest theatre of the struggle. We support the struggle of all oppressed and exploited peoples for liberation from imperialist or home-grown rule. We celebrate the beauty of human diversity and acknowledge the social and cultural contributions made by the different communities that share this planet. We shall maintain all manner of fraternal, libertarian relations with such sectors, anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist, outside of and within Cuba.
7. We are the enemies of capitalism and consumerism. Let us support all forms of resistance against current capitalist exploitation, a resistance that takes the form of strikes, sabotage and workplace struggles, in the seizure of properties (squatting), rent strikes and campaigns for community control of assets. We seek the abolition of wage labour and of the system of production; consequently, we are against the recuperation of Capital and retention of the system of production by any means, including the imposition of state capitalism.

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Our understanding is that if production lies at the root of the exploitation perpetuated by Capital, changing the forms of production means tinkering with the forms of exploitation, not eradicating it.

8. We are against the state in all its forms. We are opposed to all states regardless of ideology and we campaign for their abolition. The purpose of the state is to uphold and regulate all forms of domination. The state holds a monopoly on violence, machinery for the delivery of “justice” and organized terror: the police, the army and the prison system.

8.1. We are opposed to the prison and “social rehabilitation” systems, recognizing these as the means the state uses to perpetuate the privileges of the ruling class.

8.2. We are against immigration controls and favour the free movement of peoples across our fictitious state borders.

8.3. We are against the approach of the authoritarian left that seeks to “transform” the state, clinging to its structures in order to hang on to power through some supposed “proletarian state,” as well as the current discourse of the democratic left that concludes that there is a “need to democratize the state” and deduces that “a strategy attuned to the times should culminate in the occupation of the state” instead of the older proposition that it should be “conquered.” The logic of this approach of expecting everything from the state and within the state is a postponement of the social struggle and persistence of the democratic game with “everybody” being offered the opportunity to “participate” in the electoral farce.

8.4. We are opposed to the backward-looking ambitions of the conservative reaction (be it classist, clerical, fascist, etc.) which yearns for a return to an ignominious, corrupt past.

9. We campaign for a society based upon equity and equality between individuals, regardless of gender. We are in favour of the liberation and self-determination of women; so we are opposed to the patriarchal, male-centred system of domination.

10. We fight against racism. We favour the creation of a society founded upon cultural diversity. We acknowledge that, historically, Afro-Cuban men and women have faced discrimination, from the days of slavery right up until the present and we reaffirm our struggle for self-determination for blacks. Likewise, we recognize the historic oppression visited upon the original peoples of the Americas and we identify with their libertarian struggles for autonomy, control of their resources, justice and dignity.

11. We reject the compulsory heterosexuality imposed by patriarchal culture

and acknowledge sexual diversity in human relationships. We support self-determination for lesbians, homosexuals and bisexuals.

12. We are against the capitalist industrial system which is built on exploitation of the planet and its inhabitants. Likewise, we oppose the Castro dictatorship's rampant destruction of the Cuban eco-system. We support the struggle of resistance movements against ongoing ecological destruction. We recognize the need for a revolutionary overhaul of our relationship with the planet and the species that inhabit it.

13. We shall fight in every trench to re-establish within the proletariat the anarcho-sindicalist ideas... uprooted by the Castroist system. Socialism must always go hand in hand with freedom...

We are in a period when the libertarian ideal is blooming, where there is a discernible upsurge in contestation worldwide and today, more than ever, the sun is rising on freedom and we—whether comrades on the island or anarchists elsewhere around the world—are sensible of the need to close ranks against the totalitarian despotism by which Cuba is afflicted.

We call upon all revolutionary libertarian groups to coordinate their efforts with ours in the fight for a libertarian socialist society. It is not a matter of totting up our ideological points of agreement: it is a matter of marshalling our efforts in a consistent revolutionary practice, in a genuine confrontation at every level and in every realm, in the face of attacks from neo-colonialism, globalization and Capital. The social revolution that we need to carry out springs from the concrete needs of the oppressed, from the actual movement of the exploited as they assert their yearning to live in a free, humane society that will sever all connections once and for all with any deathly ideology rooted in exploitation and oppression in the name of progress. Comrades, let us remember who we really are and for what we are struggling and let us embrace the consistent, revolutionary practice of anarchism.

Mexico, Autumn 2003

56. Ruben G. Prieto: Anarchism in Uruguay (2001)

Ruben G. Prieto has been active in the Comunidad del Sur group in Uruguay since its inception in the 1950s, including a lengthy exile in Sweden during the years of military dictatorship that began in the 1970s. Comunidad del Sur has sought to create on-going libertarian social relationships and alternative institu-

tions within existing society (Volume Two, Selection 60). In the following excerpts, taken mainly from an interview between Massimo Anibale Rossi and Prieto, originally published in Rivista Anarchica, Anno 31, No. 271, April 2001, Prieto describes the experiences and philosophy of the Comunidad del Sur movement. Translated by Paul Sharkey.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, libertarian movements had a great following in Uruguay. The anarchists had influence within the non-aligned trade unions that looked to revolutionary syndicalism as opposed to the reformists. It was a matter of pride to us that we were active outside of party politics, in student, labour or barrio affairs. Our organizations took an independent line which led to our developing a new culture, a search centering on different forms of association. Hence the emergence of people's ateneos [cultural centres], free schools and the people's university... There were courses of every sort. And all of this hinted at tremendous energy involving young people who were just starting to be active as I was. I began to flirt with the world of the theatre, the plastic arts and to make the contacts that paved the way for my entry into the School of Fine Arts. It was at that point that I caught on to the connection between artistic creativity and social creativity. The possibility of making life itself a work of art. It wasn't a matter of becoming a member, but of doing one's bit. We had it clear in our heads that there were no models to go by: like a painting, a sculpture or a piece of music, so social creativity too called for new avenues to be discovered. We had to get past the repetition of tired institutional forms...

The watershed event as far as subsequent developments were concerned was the Cuban Revolution. In actuality [Ché] Guevaraism stood for the very opposite of what we believed in. Cuba represented not so much a revolution driven by popular movements and not so much the self-managerial approach as the myth of the band of heroes. The uprising turned into worship of exceptional figures... the "founding fathers of the nation," "the founding fathers of the Revolution," the "founding fathers of socialism." On the other hand the last thing we wanted was fathers; we wanted to be self-made men. Even though it deserved our support as a backlash against a bloody dictatorship, the Cuban Revolution polarized opinions. The over-riding notion was that change had to come about as the result of the armed action of the few who had supposedly taken to the Sierra Maestra and liberated the people. This interpretation which denied the heroism of everyday life became very powerful and was the inspiration for the Latin American guerrilla campaigns. In the case of Uruguay it was the inspiration behind the Tupamaros [urban guerrillas] whom we still looked upon with sympathy and with whom we, to some extent, cooperated. Its logic also led to the weakening

of instances of autonomy within the social fabric and a focus upon strategically more effective military formulae. They were convinced that they and they alone were the only ones who could effect change. And so we finished up in a situation from which there were few escape routes: if our luck was out, we would be defeated; if we were lucky enough to win, that too would represent a defeat for us. This outlook sprang from our realization that we were facing processes that would culminate in new power structures...

Despite their embracing the notion of participatory democracy, many comrades were caught up in the value system of "pastoral authority." From that point of view, society is seen as a flock to be led along the righteous path by the wise who have some grasp of the meaning of history and ethics. In the Christian imagination, negative perception of the self is a major factor: "I am poor because I am a sinner and in order to be redeemed I need someone to help me get to know myself, to assign me penance and set me free." This inner rationale leads to a particular approach to relationships. The Cuban Revolution was construed as the arrival of apostles who had supposedly redeemed humanity. Some anarchists thought that the time had come to side with them, and they identified with the shepherds. The idea of dividing up the led and the leaders gives rise to a fundamental mistake. Without acting for themselves, people were on the look-out for someone to improve their conditions and the Cuban Revolution, like the Russian Revolution before it, looked like just the ticket: "Anarchist ideas are interesting, yes, but we have to hurry history along; this is a train we must not miss." In the Spanish Revolution, the train had to be speeded up and history made at the same time. But actually history is made by the people and by the trade unions taking over the factories and fields and collectivization. In Spain too this all happened by means of the taking of power. This dynamic posed the libertarians's dilemma: should he stick to a coherent anti-authoritarian line and brave the dangers inherent in this, or opt for the logic of compromise.

We of the Anarchist Federation [FAU] who had armed in 1955 were at the heart of the conflict. We split into those who thought that we had to follow the shepherd policy and those of us who were convinced that self-management cannot be introduced by decree. A few began to think that armed insurrection by the vanguard was a crucial element of the process. The shift was gradual and the idea of a structured leadership prospered under the Guevaraist influence. The Federation, in contradiction of its federalist soul, would have had to centralize, which would destroy everything.

Our conviction was that we needed to embark upon processes rooted in an ethical outlook and graft these on to a living movement in an attempt to contaminate society. Out of these assumptions came the Comunidad del Sur. Our

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objective was to flesh out our ideals of equality and sociability in a free space. Somewhere where we could try out the ideas that are our inspiration to this very day when we talk about anarchism...

I know now that it is impossible to maintain such levels of radicalism over time and in a sea of authoritarianism. Then the tension between direct management and the structure of domination became more acute. As Luigi Fabbri would have it, "the tension between revolutionary action and counter-revolutionary action grew." Military dictatorship was one expression of this tension. The notion of taking power in order to be able to achieve a free society and the notion of upholding authority by violence share a common instrument. What is overlooked is the process of social creativity. A process that I contend no guerrilla group can foster in that their methodology and conditions are tied to domination and direction from above. And revolution lies elsewhere. The revolution consists of changing social relationships.

In its heyday the Comunidad represented a place where we could achieve the best that we could be, together. The outcome was uncertain because there are no guarantees with self-management. We do not need 20 or 1,500 or 7,000 Guevaras: what we need is a different breed of person. We are talking about a different construction process. Take art: Picasso was unique. Even though African art has produced no Picassos, people need to feel a pretty object in their hands and that is enough for the creative urge to kick in. Until such time as there is a change of culture, no community or trade union is going to be able to establish a liberated and liberating space. And this is the case because anarchist creations, big or small, are born out of time. They are born prematurely, bucking the trend and bereft of the antibodies that would guarantee them survival. They grow in a contaminated environment that creates an ongoing risk of destruction. The community is a workshop for the revolution where things are created, fail and are rebuilt. Ideas and experiments are born but experiments degenerate and they require regeneration. The self-managerial process needs to be constantly tailored to the situation surrounding it; I think the key words are "autonomy" and "permanent creativity"...

[T]he community, like any other construction, is torn between the possibility of the new and the persistence of the old. There is conflict inside the group, just as there is inside every individual and in the setting where the experiment is under way. One of our basic ideas refers to a society where ownership has been sorted out. Talking about collective ownership is a contradiction; natural assets should be within everybody's reach and distributed in accordance with collectively devised organizational methods. We are proud to have kept access to life's essentials open to all. You took whatever food you needed. You were master of the machinery of production and the means of educating your children. Inside the com-

munity there was no form of individual ownership: neither politically nor economically. I have lived out this situation and sampled for myself how property is a hindrance to free human relationships. Something else that strikes me as meaningful is what we term shared parenthood. In this respect the Comunidad represented a very rich and profound experiment that changed character several times over the years. We were looking to create an alternative insofar as it seemed to us that, especially as regards the nuclear family, it is an instrument for passing on domination. The Comunidad favoured unhindered development of the child's personality through its educational methods and moving beyond the set tasks of parenthood...

I sense a reluctance to accept the discourse about property because onlookers want to be property-owners. They want to retreat into their own families and have no particular interest in alternative education: the deepest resistance to change relates to who owns their own children and the holy family. This is a reluctance we also encounter in our own ranks. This discourse has to do with belief in free love and the issues that raises. Whether [personal] unions are based on mutual love or maybe on property rights, commitments and children. Property undermines people's potential relationships, adding to the risk of their staying together out of material necessity or because children are looked upon as extensions of ourselves. These are dynamics that fall apart in the day to day practice of community living...

I think there is a chance that a couple with very special characteristics can create a libertarian space between them. Generally, passionate love is short-lived. When it occurred to us to embark upon an alternative we were thinking not so much about personal pleasure as about bequeathing a culture to younger generations. Creating a culture having solidarity and autonomy as its underlying values.

These days the family is the place where the mechanisms of domination are perpetuated. Its structure is incompatible with the need to open up to wider social functions with balanced development of the child's personality. At present, broadly speaking, the family is a haven of violence...

The Comunidad represented an attempt to create a space alternative to the family. But people are not used to somebody breaking with convention, nor to handling the resultant contradictions. We came in for some very harsh criticism and even within our own ranks a strong resistance emerged. Even though the atmosphere at meetings was strained, even though we rubbed one another the wrong way, in the end we worked together because we had to guarantee our survival. In reality society only welcomes trial and error in respect of matters scientific and technical. When a group decides to get itself organized and to educate its children in an alternative way, a heap of difficulties crop up. As far as the issue

of “What is to be done?” goes, unanimous responses are not as important as the actual quest. If everybody poses the question to himself, a thousand different forms and devices can be devised and a huge range of solutions will emerge. As we see it, the family represents a cramped structure. As compared with the community, it has only a few models to offer: one father, one mother with whom to muddle along. Besides the mechanism seems these days to be hobbled: the family is under strain. Younger people have no reference points, no models to imitate or reject, so they cling to the standards peddled by the media. We were always of a mind that the conditions for the full development of human potential needed to be guaranteed. The community can offer a spectrum of models from which children could take their pick in building their own personalities...

Historically, the family model has demonstrated its potential and its limitations. Which cannot be said of the community. Then again, the fact that some hippie couple spent 5, 6 or 11 years living with others is no proof that they created a genuine community life. These are only tiny experiments, small slices of people's lives. As far as differences go, I think the example of the children of separated parents is interesting. In our Comunidad, if the biological parents' relationship was broken the child was sustained by the wealth of connections and relationships involved in communal living. The overall structure was uncompromised and the child could remain in its own niche with the same values and security as before. Whereas in a nuclear family the break-up would have turned into a tragedy. But a process of socialization requires enough time to ripen. The theorists with whom we have had conversation stress that only after a third generation can we really speak of the children of a self-managerial experience.

Shared parenthood has always been around. My own parents who came from a little village in Spain had many values in common with the ones we are consciously trying to implement in our community. The priority in the sort of relations that obtain in a society on a human scale is not suited to life in large, anonymous cities. We used to wonder what shape and sort of foundations might suit a self-managerial social experiment. The scale of the barrio or village appears to offer concrete opportunities. Metropolises are better suited to the fascist world view because they generate violence and thus favour the emergence of vertical and military institutions. If we want something different, we have to come up with ways of living that make self-management a realistic prospect. The Comunidad del Sur, being a tiny group, can scarcely be the model. The model must be a community of communities [Volume Two, Selection 16].

57. Marina Sitrin: Horizontalidad in Argentina (2004)

In Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina (San Francisco: AK Press, 2006), Marina Sitrin has collated interviews with a broad cross section of participants in the “horizontalidad” movement in Argentina, a movement which arose spontaneously in December 2001 as the Argentine government and much of the economy effectively collapsed (if only temporarily) in the face of widespread protests. People from all walks of life, including the unemployed, workers, the middle class, women, the elderly and gays and bisexuals, created their own non-hierarchical (“horizontal”) neighbourhood, community and workplace organizations without any formal leadership, independent of the government, the political parties and the trade unions, in which decisions were made by consensus or through directly democratic assemblies in which each person had an equal voice. As one of the interviewed participants, Toto, notes, “This is nothing new for anarchism... For the new movements however, this is something new, this idea that change passes from one side to another and not through taking power.” The use of directly democratic neighbourhood assemblies for people to take control of their own affairs was something Murray Bookchin had been advocating since the early 1960s, and before that the assembly form had been used throughout the anarcho-syndicalist movement for years. But not since the Spanish Revolution had such non-hierarchical forms of organization become so widespread. As another participant, Emilio, says, “Horizontalidad is a new construction in Argentina that appeared practically overnight. For me, the theories that have validity, those that last and really matter, are those that come from necessity and are brought into practice. For example, the concepts of horizontalidad, autogestion, and direct democracy, are in no way new. They existed a long time before the uprising of the 19th and 20th [of December 2001]. Anarchism has been talking about these ideas for many years. Indigenous communities have always brought these ideas into practice in their lives and philosophies. What is new in Argentina is that just as rapidly as groups formed, they formed with horizontal practices.” Another participant, Nicolas, believes “that the form of relating in many assemblies, without it being a conscious choice, is an anarchist one.” As another participant, Toty notes, horizontalidad above all constitutes a rejection of hierarchical organization: “The characteristic of these social movements in the past years, and especially with regard to the question of organization, which is deeply connected with democracy, collective decision making, direct democracy, and horizontalidad, is that we are against hierarchy. It has to do with the fact that these social movements are developing from a place where there is not an answer from traditional institutions. There is no answer from the unions, for example, precisely because of the vertical nature of these organizations. There is not either an answer from

political parties, not only the ones in power and who make these programs that have nothing to do with workers, or other social sectors, but also those that say they are workers, but really are the formal left reproducing in their structure the same hierarchical organizational forms that exist in society. The new creation in the social movements is precisely against this form of organization. The first question has to do with not wanting this type of organizational form, and then looking for other ways of relating differently. It is here where the discussion of participation and horizontalidad come into play. What we understand, at the most fundamental level, is that participation has to be developed at the base and it cannot be coercive in any way.” The following excerpts are taken from Marina Sitrin’s introduction to Horizontalism, and are reprinted here with her kind permission. The problem facing the horizontalidad movement is that the Argentine government has since been revived, as was the Republican government in Spain during the Civil War (Volume One, Selections 127 & 128), giving rise to the question whether a “post-modern” politics working outside of conventional institutions can avoid a direct confrontation with state power without itself being rendered powerless.

Over the past ten years the world has been witnessing an upsurge in prefigurative revolutionary movements, movements, that is, that create the future in the present. These new movements are not creating party platforms or programs. They do not look to one leader, but make space for all to be leaders. They place more importance on asking the right questions than on providing the correct answers. They resolutely reject dogma and hierarchy in favor of direct democracy and consensus. They are movements based in trust and love.

Where are these movements? They are everywhere. They are in the autonomous Zapatista communities of Chiapas Mexico, where indigenous communities organize autonomously from the State, working to meet their basic necessities while using consensus based decision-making to create themselves anew [see Selection 58 below]. They are in the massive organizations in rural Brazil, where the landless movement (MST) has been claiming expanses of unused land for those without, reflecting their future in their daily actions and interactions. They are in the shanty-towns of South Africa, where women and men use direct action and direct democracy to take back electricity, housing, and other things stolen by corporations and government. They are in India, where many thousands of people are coming together to protect the environment and prevent the construction of dams, using mass direct action and participatory decision-making. They are with those in the mass democracy movements in Georgia and the Ukraine, who take to the streets without parties or dogmas. They are the indigenous groups in Ecuador and Bolivia, stopping privatization and preventing

the destruction of the earth through mass blockades and mass democracy. They are in the social centers in Italy, providing direct services as well as space to gather for those involved in direct democracy projects. They are in the many direct action groups in Europe, organizing against borders on the principal that no person can be illegal. They are in the autonomous groupings around the US, groups that begin with the assumption of consensus decision-making, anti-hierarchy, and anti-capitalism. ... The new movements are everywhere.

The autonomous social movements in Argentina are only one part of these many movements. Within Argentina the movement is also a movement of movements. There are working class people taking over factories and running them collectively; middle class urban dwellers, many recently declassed, working in solidarity with those around them; the unemployed, like so many unemployed around the globe, facing the prospect of never encountering regular work; and autonomous indigenous communities struggling to liberate stolen land. All of these active movements are now relating to one another, and thus constructing a new type of confederation that rejects the hierarchical template bequeathed to them by established politics. A part of this rejection includes a break with the concept of “power-over”; people are attempting to organize on a flatter plane, with the goal of creating “power with” one another. Embedded in these efforts is a commitment to value both the individual and the collective. Separately and together these groups are organizing in the direction of real freedom, using the tools of direct democracy and direct action. Together, I believe, they are constructing popular power.

The particular movements may be new, but some of their methods/goals have appeared throughout history. While we are in a period where their spread, diversity and popularity seems to be on the rise, perhaps the more significant innovation is that they are aware of each other and are interrelated, and that we as a larger world can also be more in touch with them.

The autonomous social movements in Argentina, over the past five years specifically, have begun to articulate a new and revolutionary politics. This politics is seen in various new practices, and in the expressions they use to describe these practices. Some say that they are not political, or that they are anti-political. For me they are engaged in the politics of everyday life...

People see themselves as creating the future in their present, through new directly democratic relationships. They reject hierarchy, bosses, managers, or people with power over others. They organize themselves in every setting—(*autogestio-nandose*)—in communities, neighbourhoods, workplaces, schools and universities. What is the name of this revolutionary process: horizontalidad? autogestion? socialism? anarchism? autonomy? politica afectiva? none of these? all of them? I believe it is a process that does not have one name. It is a process of continu-

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ous creation, constant growth and the development of new relations, with ideas flowing from these changing practices.

The people of Argentina have endured a long history of domination of their communities and neighbourhoods by those who claim to represent them, while making a huge profit from this alleged representation. Perhaps this concept of “representation” was seen most notably under Peronism, particularly with its reliance on “punteros,” local neighbourhood Party bureaucrats, or brokers. This system resulted in a politics of “clientelism” where, particularly in poor neighbourhoods, nothing could be accomplished without the mediation of the punteros, in which people exchanged their autonomy for basic necessities. The new “autonomous” social movements are a conscious break with this form of politics. The movements reject the hierarchy inherent in the puntero system and replace it with direct democracy in which public gatherings discuss alternative plans and decide openly and collectively what to do...

Olivia, a woman in her eighties living in Ledesma, Jujuy, in the far north of the country, explained to me how things are different now from the way they were for most of her life. She spoke with tremendous pride of being a part of an unemployed workers organization (or *piquetero* group) in her neighbourhood, one of the 33 in Ledesma. As a part of the piqueteros she participates in all decisions that affect her life, as well as the life of her community. One of the ways this is done is through weekly neighbourhood assemblies that use direct democracy and synthesis as a means of making decisions. Decisions are made on a town-wide basis once a week when over three thousand people come together in a mass assembly, where all have a voice. Discussions range from direct action plans to the coordination of bakeries, childcare centers and beauty salons, all *autogestionado* by the neighbourhood movements.

The creation of directly democratic organizations, such as those in Ledesma, are clear rejections of, and decisive ruptures with, past vertical organizational structures of clientelism, as well as the old concepts of “representation.”

Such ruptures with the old political ways began to arise publicly in the North and the South of the country in the 1990s when unemployed workers movements as well as broader based popular movements organized against local governments and corporations. Generally led by women, unemployed workers in the provinces of Salta, Jujuy, and Neuquen took to the streets by the thousands, blocking major transportation arteries to demand subsidies from the government. In a decisive break with the past this organizing was not done by or through elected leaders, but directly by those in the streets, deciding day-by-day and moment-to-moment what to do next.

Similarly, in the early nineties, because of the growing economic crisis, thousands took to the streets in the northern town of Santiago del Estero. This re-

bellion looms large in the imagination of millions of Argentines. There were protests against government as well as libratory spaces where people together began to feel their collective power. The result of these rebellions was the destruction of government buildings and government officials' homes, as well as the expulsion of many "representatives."

The definitive rupture with past practice occurred in the popular rebellion of the 19th and 20th of December of 2001. Millions spontaneously took to the streets and, without leaders or hierarchies, expelled the government. As with the previous experiences in the North and South, the experience of those in and around Buenos Aires was one of direct democracy and direct action. The government in place at the time declared a state of emergency, ordering citizens to stay at home. In response to the subsequent repression—experienced by the protesters and witnessed on television by a multitude of others—hundreds of thousands poured onto the streets of Buenos Aires, not demanding something new, but creating it. It was a rebellion of workers and unemployed, of the middle class, and of those recently de-classed. It was a rebellion without leadership, either from established parties or from a newly emerged elite. Its strength was reflected by the fall of four consecutive national governments. It precipitated the birth of hundreds of neighbourhood assemblies involving tens of thousands of active participants. The unemployed workers movements grew to the many tens of thousands, and matured theoretically. The dozens of occupied factories that existed at the start of the rebellion grew in only two years to include hundreds, taken over and run directly by workers without bosses.

Horizontalidad is a word that has come to embody the new social arrangements and principles of organization. As its name suggests, it implies a flat plane upon which to communicate. It entails the use of direct democracy and involves non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian creation rather than reaction. It is a break with vertical ways of organizing and relating.

Horizontalidad is a living word, reflecting an ever-changing experience. Months after the popular rebellion, many movement participants began to speak of their relationships as horizontal, as a way of describing the new forms of decision-making. Two years after the rebellion, those continuing to build new movements speak of horizontalidad as a goal as well as a tool. It is a goal in the sense that as much as we all want to be horizontal, we are still not there. A clearer understanding exists, through new practices, that all of our relationships are still deeply affected by capitalism, and thus by the sorts of power dynamics it promotes in all of our collectives and creative spaces, especially in how we relate to one another in terms of gender and race, information, and experience. Horizontalism is a goal because we are not all yet able to relate to one another horizontally, but we desire this relationship. It is a tool because we use the concepts and

practices to try and achieve this equality, this goal of horizontalidad. It is also a tool in the sense that a danger has become more evident that language may become the politics, rather than a reflection of a living process. For example some might speak of being more horizontal than others. Over the course of a few years many have had the advantage of time in realizing that desiring a relationship is not enough to make it so. Thus horizontalidad is desired, and is a goal, but it is also the means, the tool, *for* achieving this end...

Horizontalidad and direct democracy are the key means for the creation of a new society. One base for this new society is the creation of a loving and trusting space. From this space of trust and love, using the tools of *horizontalidad*, a new person, who is a protagonist in her or his own life, begins to be created. This is not a chance creation, it is a process of social creation... The role of women has been affected in particular... Based in this new individual protagonist, a new collective protagonism also arises, which then changes the sense of the individual and from there the collective. From this relationship arises the need for new ways of speaking.

58. Andrew Flood: What is Different About the Zapatistas (2001)

In the following excerpts from the Workers' Solidarity Movement publication, Chiapas Revealed (Ireland, 2001), Andrew Flood, a WSM member who spent some time in Chiapas, describes the Zapatista movement in Mexico. In contrast to the horizontalidad movement in Argentina, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional—EZLN) has always been very conscious of the need to resist, and sometimes directly confront, state power in order to create and maintain “autonomous zones” within Mexico. The trick is knowing how to do this without provoking a full scale military conflict or civil war.

On January 1, 1994 we woke from our hangovers to find that a new rebel army had emerged, seemingly from nowhere, in southern Mexico and seized a number of provincial towns. This army, the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army), distributed a paper called *The Mexican Awakener* [*El Despertador Mexicano*]. It contained their declaration of war, a number of revolutionary laws and orders for their army. They said they were fighting for “work, land, shelter, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace”...

The Mexican Awakener, rather than talking of the EZLN seizing power as a new revolutionary government, outlined the military objectives of the rising as: “Advance to the capital of the country, overcoming the Mexican federal army, protecting in our advance the civilian population and permitting the people in the

liberated area the right to freely and democratically elect their own administrative authorities.”

Unusually for any revolutionary organization these laws then defined a right of the people to resist any unjust actions of the EZLN. They defined a right of the people to: “demand that the revolutionary armed forces not intervene in matters of civil order or the disposition of capital relating to agriculture, commerce, finances, and industry, as these are the exclusive domain of the civil authorities, elected freely and democratically.” And said that the people should “acquire and possess arms to defend their persons, families and property... against the armed attacks committed by the revolutionary forces or those of the government.”

These sections and other things done and said by the EZLN at the time suggested that there was something in this rebellion that broke with what had become the standard model for revolutionary organization. The traditional model was for the revolutionary organization to mobilize whatever forces were available to overthrow the existing government and then to form a new government itself. Fundamental to this model, from the Russian revolution of 1917 to the Nicaraguan one of 1979 was the (flawed) assumption that the interests of “the people” or “the workers” were identical to the interests of the new government.

In all cases this led to the situation where the new government used its monopoly of armed force against sections of the working class that disagreed with it. In Russia by 1921 this had led not only to the destruction of the factory committees and their replacement with one man management but also to the crushing of all opposition through the closure of individual soviets, the suppression of strikes and the banning, jailing and even execution of members of other left organizations.

Once upon a time left activists could fool themselves that this suppression of democracy had at least delivered a society that was fairer in economic terms and that was some sort of (perhaps flawed) “workers state.” The EZLN emerged in a period when such illusions could no longer be held due to the overthrow of the majority of the old “Communist” states. So they found a ready audience internationally of activists who had not given up on the project of transforming society but saw the need for a new model for doing so.

The main spokesperson for the Zapatistas, subcommandante Marcos, referred to this attraction in 1995 saying “...It is perhaps for this reason—the lack of interest in power—that the word of the Zapatistas has been well received in other countries across the globe, above all in Europe. It has not just been because it is new or novel, but rather because it is proposing... to separate the political problem from the problem of taking power, and take it to another terrain.

Our work is going to end, if it ends, in the construction of this space for new

political relationships. What follows is going to be a product of the efforts of other people, with another way of thinking and acting...

We do not want others, more or less of the right, center or left, to decide for us. We want to participate directly in the decisions which concern us, to control those who govern us, without regard to their political affiliation, and oblige them to 'rule by obeying.' We do not struggle to take power, we struggle for democracy, liberty, and justice... It is not our arms which make us radical; it is the new political practice which we propose and in which we are immersed with thousands of men and women in Mexico and the world: the construction of a political practice which does not seek the taking of power but the organization of society..."

In a EZLN communiqué... the EZLN wrote: "What we seek, what we need and want is that all those people without a party and organization make agreements about what they want and do not want and become organized in order to achieve it (preferably through civil and peaceful means), not to take power, but to exercise it. I know you will say this is utopian and unorthodox, but this is the way of the Zapatistas..."

In 1996 the Zapatistas organized an international encounter in Chiapas attended by some 3,000 activists from over 40 countries (including the author). The Encounter ended with the 2nd declaration of La Realidad... which asked, what next, what is it that we were seeking do to do?

"...we will make a collective network of all our particular struggles and resistances. An intercontinental network of resistance against neoliberalism, an intercontinental network of resistance for humanity.

This intercontinental network of resistance, recognizing differences and acknowledging similarities, will search to find itself with other resistances around the world. This intercontinental network of resistance will be the medium in which distinct resistances may support one another. This intercontinental network of resistance is not an organizing structure; it doesn't have a central head or decision maker; it has no central command or hierarchies. We are the network, all of us who resist"...

One of the immediate gains of the Zapatista rising was the creation of a partially liberated zone of thousands of square kilometers. Within this zone thousands of Zapatista communities have carried out a long running experiment in self-management. Sometimes this has been on land they have occupied since the rising but more often it is on new land cleared from the Lacanodon jungle in the decades before 1994.

I don't want to overstate the liberated nature of this area. For one year to February 1995 it was under the more or less uncontested control of the Zapatistas. Then the army launched an offensive which was halted only by massive

demonstrations in Mexico city. The years since have seen a Low Intensity War where up to 70,000 soldiers have been installed in army bases throughout the Zapatista area and dozens of paramilitary groups have been armed and encouraged to attack Zapatista communities. In addition, the selective distribution of government aid and religious sectarianism have both been used to divide individual communities and areas into pro and anti-government groups...

Prior to the rebellion many communities did not have sufficient fertile land to produce enough food. Typically ranchers (who boasted they were of pure “Spanish blood”) had seized the fertile land at the bottom of the canyons leaving the less fertile mountainside to the indigenous people. As well as getting the most fertile land this also effectively forced the local indigenous people to work for them, virtually as serfs. Stories of physical punishment of those they considered not to be working hard enough and assassinations of those who sought to organize against them were all too common. With the rebellion the landowners fled and in many cases their abandoned land was taken over and sometimes used to establish new communities...

Diez de Abril is situated between the towns of Altamirano and Comitán in the highlands of Chiapas. About 100 families lived there in 1997... As elsewhere in Chiapas, living conditions are difficult due to poverty, poor education (typically only one year of formal education), a lot of ill health and a high death rate (particularly of children and old people). There is no sanitation in the community, except the latrines they constructed themselves, no access to clean water and only a single “unofficial” electricity cable.

The ranch Diez is on was occupied on 10th April 1995. Those who moved onto the land had worked in atrocious conditions for the rancher before the rebellion. In the months before the takeover they met in assembly on the land to decide how to divide up the land. One decision was the name of the new community “Diez de Abril,” after the day (10th April 1919) when [Emiliano] Zapata was assassinated. As a community delegate explained: “we had to move onto the ranchers’ land because we were living like animals in the hills. The land there was very bad, and difficult to harvest... The majority of the community voted to call the village Diez de Abril. They chose that name because it honoured Zapata who was killed on that date. He was a *companero*, fighting against the government... We used to meet where the church is now, and there decided where to put the houses, and to give a house to the international observers. We measured the land and divided it up among the people. Each family has a plot of land of their own and then there are also collective [plots].”

The church in Diez is the main assembly point for the community. All the people of the community meet there once a week—after mass on Sunday morning. These village assemblies, at which everyone may speak and everyone over 12

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has a vote (although votes are very rare, most decisions being made by consensus), decide all questions that face the community, from whether to buy a lorry or a tractor to how the repair of the fences or the bridge will be done.

Sometimes it is necessary for more than one assembly in a week, particularly at times of high tension. In addition there are several subassemblies of the people that work on particular projects in the community. Two examples are the cattle collective and the sewing collective. Each collective has a coordinator, a secretary and a treasurer. The coordinator is changed at least once a year.

The main assembly may also appoint delegates to coordinate particular tasks. These delegates form a council that meets between assemblies and organizes the day-to-day work. These “responsibles” coordinate work in particular areas. They serve a limited term (one to two years) and are subject to recall within this time if it’s felt they are not “leading by obeying” (the Zapatista slogan for following the mandate given to them).

The collectives that carry out particular tasks are set up by and answerable to the assembly but are otherwise autonomous. Collectives in Diez include ones for coffee, cattle, honey, horticulture, baking, sewing and chicken rearing. Some of the production of each collective goes to its members; the surplus goes into a central community fund controlled by the assembly...

Activists who have visited other communities report a similar decision making mechanism. There is a lot of variation from community to community but the basic model of the assembly remains the same; its origins lie in indigenous tradition, a tradition common to many other indigenous groups throughout the Americas.

There are problems with the traditional indigenous structure, especially the fact that traditionally women had no voice except in some cases where widows were allowed to speak (because they had become responsible for family land). Another problem was that the assemblies were often controlled by a group of “elders” rather than recallable delegates. In the past the Spanish invaders and later the landlords were able to make use of this by buying individuals off as part of the *cacique* system.

The assemblies in the Zapatista area are struggling against these elements. Women now have the right to speak and vote—although what extent they actually do so varies from community to community. In Diez the elders now only have automatic power in questions of tradition. In 1997 they were resisting a demand from the younger people that the system of paying dowries as part of marriage should be abolished.

This description of how the Zapatistas make decisions on the basis of a single community confirms the reality behind the “decision making from below” language of the interviews and *communiqués*. But it is obvious that such a structure cannot easily be scaled up to accommodate more people and larger geo-

graphical areas. An assembly of 10,000 or 100,000 people could not be a good decision making mechanism because very few people can speak at such a gathering. And of course we don't want to spend our whole lives at (or getting to) such meetings.

This has led some to conclude that the decision making structures used in the small villages of Chiapas have little relevance for those of us in large cities... But even in Chiapas decisions have to be made that affect tens and even hundreds of thousands of people. One of the strengths of the Zapatista movement is that they have a method for making such decisions that preserves the right of ordinary people to decide what decisions are made (and not as in our "democracy" merely who gets to make them).

The method the Zapatistas use is a variation of "delegate democracy," a method that is used in many countries at the base of trade unions and student unions. An individual is elected from among those they normally work with (e.g. a shop steward or class rep). Rather than being then allowed carte blanche to decide what they like, they are given a clear mandate to represent the views of the group that selected them to regional meetings of delegates. Such systems also contain other mechanisms to limit the power delegates can informally accrue like: limiting the length of time any one person can represent a group; insisting that they still carry out at least some of their normal work; ensuring that they report back how they voted and what decisions were made to the group that delegated them. If they fail to do so then the group can immediately recall them and select someone else.

The Zapatista decision making structure broadly functions along these lines. This makes it one where all levels of the organization from the top down are answerable to the ordinary people at the base. The Zapatista communities form an organizational and decision making network involving hundreds of thousands of people. There are 38 rebel municipalities, each one with from 50 to over 100 individual communities.

The Zapatista military structure is not however internally democratic. Rather it is organized as a conventional army with officers apparently appointed from the top down. Some would argue that in a war situation a democratic structure is not possible. I would point to the Makhnovshchina of the Russian civil war [Volume One, Selections 85 & 86] and the anarchist militia of the Spanish Civil War as historical demonstrations that military systems where the rank and file select delegates to act as officers are feasible. This of course is not simply a debate about military tactics—in any situation where the people do not directly control the army there is a real danger of the army being used against the people.

Although the internal structure of the EZLN is not democratic, overall command of the army is. That is, unlike almost all other rebel armies, the command

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of the army does not end in its own military command but rather in the hands of those at the base whom it claims to represent... In essence, as the EZLN evolved from a few students who had gone into the mountains with the authoritarian project of leading the people to liberation into an army of the people, it was forced to accept that the people and not the army command should have the final say.

The “Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee” (CCRI) is the body that commands the army. This body (or indeed bodies as there are also regional CCRI) is composed of delegates from the communities. It is not in itself a military structure although it appears to include permanent military representatives...

As well as being in control of the army and issuing communiqués, the CCRI is also a structure for making day-to-day decisions that affect the entire region...

A month after the rising *La Jornada* interviewed some members of the CCRI. One of them, Isaac, explained the accountability of the CCRI as follows:

“If the people say that a *companero* who is a member of the CCRI is not doing anything, that we are not respecting the people or are not doing what the people say, then the people say that they want to remove us... In that way, if some member of the CCRI does not do their work, if they do not respect the people, well *companero*, it is not your place to be there. Then, well, excuse us but we will have to put another in your place.”

This was an early description of the system of delegate democracy in place where the communities could recall their CCRI delegates if they felt they were not representing them. In a major interview with Mexican anarchists in May 1994 Marcos described the delegate system of decision making before going on to outline the limitations on even the CCRI's power to make decisions:

“In any moment, if you hold a position in the community (first, the community has to have appointed you independent of your political affiliation), the community can remove you. There isn't a fixed term that you have to complete. The moment that the community begins to see that you are failing in your duties, that you are having problems, they sit you down in front of the community and they begin to tell you what you have done wrong. You defend yourself and finally the community, the collective, the majority decides what they are going to do with you. Eventually, you will have to leave your position and another will take up your responsibilities... [S]trategic decisions, important decisions have to be made democratically, from below, not from above. If there is going to be an action or series of actions that are going to implicate the entire organization, the authority has to come from below. In

this sense, even the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee isn't able to make every decision. You could say that the EZLN is different because in most political-military organizations there is only one commander, and in the EZLN the Clandestine Committees are composed of 80 people, 100 people, 120 people or however many. But this is not the difference. The difference is that even the Clandestine Committees cannot make certain decisions, the most important decisions. They are limited to such a degree that the Clandestine Committees cannot decide which path the organization is going to follow until every *companero* is consulted”...

So even the CCRI does not have the power to make major decisions, such as to choose between peace and war. These must instead be made through a “*consulta*”...

In June of 1994 the “Second Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle”... explained that “The EZLN, in a democratic exercise without precedent in an armed organization, consulted its component bases about whether or not to sign the peace accords presented by the federal government. The Indigenous bases of the EZLN, seeing that the central demands of democracy, freedom and justice have yet to be resolved, decided against signing the government’s proposal.”

How are such consultations carried out? Another communiqué from the same period explained the *consulta* process:

“The consultations took place in every community and *ejido* where there are members of the EZLN. The study, analysis, and discussion of the peace accords took place in democratic assemblies. The voting was direct, free, and democratic. After the voting, official reports of the results of the assemblies were prepared. These reports specify: the date and place of the assembly, the number of people who attended (men, women and children older than 12), opinions and principal points discussed, and the number of people who voted.”

The *consulta* is similar to a referendum but one in which intense discussions in each community are as central to the process as the vote itself. The purpose of these discussions can be to frame the questions that will be voted on. This is important, as it is through dictating the wording of referenda that governments can often impose limitations on what their effect will be. The Zapatista *consulta* take weeks and have been a great source of annoyance to the Mexican government, which always wants an answer to its proposals on the spot or within days.

In his May 1994 interview Marcos had explained how the process worked on the community level: “The people meet in assemblies and the representatives put

forth, for example in the case of the consultations, the demands of the EZLN and the response of the government. They're explained. What is it that we asked for and what has the government said in response? And they begin to debate, well, this is bad and this is good. After the community says, we have already debated, we already understand, now we can vote—this could take days. In fact, almost all the consultations have gone on for two, three days now and they haven't yet reached the point of voting. They arrive and say, well okay, we are in agreement, let's vote if we are ready to vote, if we already understand what it is we are going to decide. It's not about raising your hand or putting a check mark for one option or the other. You have to debate and analyze the pros and the cons”...

The consultas are ideal for making the big decisions on the questions of war or peace. However, statewide votes are far too unwieldy to settle smaller questions. Some of the more important can be settled by the CCRI, but from 1995 another regional structure emerged to deal with regional coordination and record keeping...

The practical problem thrown up by the need for intercommunity coordination saw the formation of... regional councils... known as Autonomous Municipalities. For instance 100 communities make up the Autonomous Municipality named after the Mexican anarchist Ricardo Flores Magón. Another, Tierra y Libertad, on the border with Guatemala, contains a total of 120 Tzotzil, Tseltal and Tojolobal communities from the official government municipalities of Las Margaritas, Ocosingo, La Trinitaria, La Independencia and Frontera Comalap.

EZLN Commandante Samuel explained the reasons why the EZLN decided to create these liberated zones: “It was an idea that surfaced in 1994 as a way of not having to interact with government institutions. We said ‘Enough!’ to them controlling all aspects of our community for us. By creating autonomous municipalities we are defining our own spaces where we can carry out our social and political customs as we see fit, without a government that never takes us into account, interfering for its self-benefit”...

The business of the Autonomous Municipality is concerned with the practicalities of day-to-day life rather than the issuing of communiqués or the commanding of troops. As such they are perhaps less exciting than the CCRI or the military command of the EZLN and so only receive media coverage when the army invades the towns where they are based in order to try and destroy them. But for the ordinary Zapatistas it is the very day-to-day nature of the Autonomous Municipality that means they have a major impact on life.

One observer, Mariana Mora, explains that: “Within the newly created municipal structures, the communities name their authorities, community teachers, local health promoters, indigenous parliaments, and elaborate their own laws

based on social, economic, political and gender equality among the inhabitants of diverse ethnic communities...”

Enlace Civil, another Mexican NGO, in detailing the government’s attempts to smash the Autonomous Municipalities explains how they function:

“The autonomous municipalities are made up by the indigenous communities within an area defined by Zapatista influence. The communities of an indigenous zone or area are the ones who decide, at an assembly of all their members, whether or not they will belong to the autonomous municipality.

The autonomous municipalities, parallel to the constitutional ones, do not receive any financing from the state, nor do they collect taxes.

It is the communities who elect their representatives for the Autonomous Municipal Council, which is the authority for the municipality. Each representative is chosen for one area of administration within the autonomous municipality, and they may be removed if they do not fully comply with the communities’ mandates.

Generally, a Council is made up of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Minister of Justice, a person in charge of Agrarian Matters, a Health Committee and a director for the Civil Registry. Each member’s powers are clearly defined within their appointment, and they function in a collegial manner, with the advice of previous authorities or of the Council of Elders.

The Councils are elected and renewed every one or two years, according to the municipality.

The activities and the responsibilities of each autonomous municipality are dependent on the will of their members, and on their level of consolidation. They do not manage public resources, and their budget, if it exists at all, is very limited, and due to the cooperation of some of their members. Those who hold a position on the Municipal Council do not receive a salary for it, although their expenses should be paid by the same communities who request their presence, through cooperation among the members. In some cases, members of the Council are supported in their farm work, so they can dedicate themselves to their [Council] work, and not have to go the fields.

The autonomous municipalities resolve local problems of coexistence, relations and exchanges between communities, and they attend to minor crimes. The application of justice is based on customary law. For example, in cases of common crimes, the punishment imposed by the Autonomous Council is reparation of the damages: instead of punishment by jail or fines, a sentence is imposed of working for the community, or for the aggrieved family...”

It is this sort of decision-making structure that truly determines the health of a revolution rather than the fine words of its leaders or the slogans it is organized under. And also of course they present a clear alternative to the state (and seizing state power), something the Leninist left is reluctant to acknowledge...

A document written by the Catholic Dioceses of San Cristobal de las Casas says: "The naming of authorities through indigenous norms and customs, signifies that the political party system is no longer the only channel to elect authorities and government representatives. At a local level municipal presidents imposed by the PRI [the then ruling party in Mexico] are left governing only themselves, without being able to penetrate into the communities. Basically this means the slow destruction of the false democracy sustained by the political party system and its replacement by communities and organizations that construct their own history first as autonomous municipalities and eventually as autonomous zones"...

On the local level of Chiapas it is this issue of autonomy that the government most fears as it threatens to remove their right to impose decisions on the people completely. "In its very basic form autonomy consists in recapturing and restoring the culture and self-determination taken away over the last 504 years. That is, in terms of territory, that the people that live in a region administer their own economy, their own politics, their own culture and their own resources" [Zapatista interview]...

The Zapatistas seem to argue for the co-existence of their system of direct democracy and the indirect electoral system of the Mexican state. They also talk of reforming the electoral system, by introducing some element of leading by obeying. Marcos in 1995 claimed that: "What is in crisis is the system, the government, the old things and the anachronous ways of doing politics. But the nation can survive with a new pact, with a new political class, and with new forms of doing politics." The existence of a distinct "political class" separate from the ordinary people implies the continued existence of some form of state system...

Although the Zapatistas have broken with many elements of their political past one thing that appears to have carried over is a stages theory of liberation. In the old days this would have talked about the need for national liberation to precede a socialist revolution. Today the Zapatistas still seem to talk of the need for two stages, the first of which is equivalent to a national revolution.

Their ideas were spelled out in some detail in the Second Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle:

"We aren't proposing a new world, but something preceding a new world: an antechamber looking into the new Mexico. In this sense, this revolution will not end in a new class, faction of a class, or group in power. It will end in a

free and democratic space for political struggle. This free and democratic space will be born on the fetid cadaver of the state party system and the tradition of fixed presidential succession. A new political relationship will be born, a relationship based not in the confrontation of political organizations among themselves, but in the confrontation of their political proposals with different social classes. Political leadership will depend on the support of these social classes, and not on the mere exercise of power. In this new political relationship, different political proposals (socialism, capitalism, social democracy, liberalism, Christian democracy, etc.) will have to convince a majority of the nation that their proposal is the best for the country. The groups in power will be watched by the people in such a way that they will be obligated to give a regular accounting of themselves, and the people will be able to decide whether they remain in power or not. The plebiscite is a regulated form of confrontation among the nation, political parties, and power, and it merits a place in the highest law of the country”...

In a 1995 interview Marcos... suggests a difference between the political leadership of the EZLN and the rank and file on this very question:

“I was saying that the communities are promoting democracy. But the concept seems vague. There are many kinds of democracy. That’s what I tell them (the Indians). I try to explain to them: You can do that (to solve by consensus) because you have a communal life. When they arrive at an assembly, they know each other, they come to solve a common problem. But in other places it isn’t so, I tell them. People live separate lives and they use the assembly for other things, not to solve the problem. And they say, no, but it means that yes, it works for us. And it indeed works for them, they solve the problem. And they propose that method for the Nation and the world. The world must organize itself thus. That is what they call ‘to rule while obeying’ (mandar obedeciendo). And it is very difficult to go against that because that is how they solve their problems. And the one who doesn’t work out, they dismiss him, and there is no big scandal...”

I used to tell them (the communities who had decided to start the offensive), we are going to go to hell, they are going to fuck us up; the international correlation of forces is against us, they are going to cut us to pieces. And the brothers saying: Let’s go, let’s go, and let’s go to war. And now it’s let’s go, and let’s go for this type of democracy. And how do you tell them that it is no good if they have used it for years... What better result than to have resisted all the annihilation campaigns! That is why they say: the country must organize itself like this”...

[I]t is important to note that the EZLN has been very clear that they do not wish to become a political party or promote the formation of one. When the Fourth Declaration of the Lacandon jungle announced the formation of the FZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Front) it defined it as:

“A political force whose members do not exert nor aspire to hold elective positions or government offices in any of its levels. A political force which does not aspire to take power. A force which is not a political party.

A political force which can organize the demands and proposals of those citizens and is willing to give direction through obedience. A political force which can organize a solution to the collective problems without the intervention of political parties and of the government. We do not need permission in order to be free. The role of the government is the prerogative of society and it is its right to exert that function.

A political force which struggles against the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and against the centralization of power. A political force whose members do not have any other privilege than the satisfaction of having fulfilled its commitment”...

The revolutionary laws produced by the EZLN on January 1st 1994 cannot be called anti-capitalist. They restrict but still very much allow for wage labour, rent and even multi-national investment. For example, the law that “Foreign companies will pay their workers an hourly salary in national money equivalent to what would be paid in dollars outside the country,” while a big step forward for many Mexican workers, hardly amounts to the abolition of capitalism.

Perhaps the simple reason is that the Zapatistas don't wish to be a vanguard in any sense of the word and so are waiting for a program for the urban centres and factories to emerge from those who live and work there...

The few Zapatista communiqués directed to workers in struggle tend to support such an interpretation...

The clearest appeal for unity with the workers is contained in the CCRI's 1st of May statement from 1995: “The workers that build this country bleed from three wounds. The powerful bleed them with unjust salaries, humiliations, and threats. The heads of the great central government unions bleed the workers with extortions, beatings, and death. Those who sell the country bleed the workers with the dispatches of usurpation, writing the laws that their treason dictates.

Let your voice run together with ours... Accept this hand that your smallest brothers and sisters offer you. Three forces should unite their paths: the force of the workers, the force of the campesinos, and the popular force. With these three forces there will be nothing to detain us...

Receive our voice, which, although far away, says: ‘Greetings, workers of the sea and of the land! The Zapatistas follow you in their struggles! With you there will be a country and future for all someday! Without you, night will continue to rule these lands!’”

These statements demonstrate that the Zapatistas recognize a common struggle with urban workers in Mexico (and the oppressed everywhere). The fact that they have donated considerable resources in holding gatherings for radical students and teachers as well as the American and intercontinental encounters shows they take building such links very seriously...

There are two meanings to the word leadership. The first one is where a person or organization is put in a position of authority over others and can therefore tell them what to do. This is the sort of leadership exercised by elected politicians. The second, which is often confused with the first, is where the person or group has no power over others but they are recognized as an “authority” in a given area and so people are willing to try what they suggest. Anarchists refer to this as being a “leadership of ideas.” In reality the Zapatistas are already this kind of leadership (whether they want to be or not) not only in Mexico but also elsewhere in the world...

The power of the Zapatistas is the power of example. Their methods of organization are radically different from what has become the norm in trade unions, community organizations and left groups. Their rejection of seizing power is radically different from the project of much of the left, a project that sees revolutionary action more in terms of paper selling and “voting left with no illusions” than ordinary people taking power into their own hands.

In holding the Zapatistas up as an example we must also point out the need to go beyond the point they have reached. Our solidarity with them must remain critical, in particular of the points they have yet to make clear or perhaps even decide on. The Zapatistas represent one example of a different way of doing things, not the sole model to be blindly followed.

59. CIPO-RFM: Enemies of Injustice

The CIPO-RFM or Consejo Indígena Popular de Oaxaca “Ricardo Flores Magón” (“Ricardo Flores Magón” Native People’s Council of Oaxaca) is a radical indigenous movement in the Oaxaca region of Mexico that consciously draws on the heritage of Mexican anarchism, particularly the life and thought of Ricardo Flores Magón (Volume One, Selection 73). As with Flores Magón and his anarchist comrades in the Mexican Revolution, the CIPO-RFM has been subject to serious repression and persecution by the Mexican state, with many of its participants being arrested, imprisoned, tortured, forced into exile and even mur-

dered. The Magónistas eschew power over others, seeking to create “people’s power,” based largely on consensual decision-making modeled after more traditional indigenous practices, while combating the traditional subordination of women. The Magónistas share the anarcho-syndicalists’ rejection of affiliation with or subordination to any political party, but adopt a more inclusive approach to social struggle which does not assign the working class the primary role in social liberation. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from the CIPO-RFM’s statement of principles at the CIPO-RFM website (<http://www.nodo50.org/cipo>).

We Magónistas were not born, nor do we have the bad blood required to be, tyrants. Which is why we do not struggle for power, but in order to be the Zapotecos, Nuu Savi, Chatinos, Mazatecos, Triques, Amuzgos, Tacuates, Chinantecos, Huaves, Mixes, Cuicatecos, etc., that we are. Free association, direct democracy, collective decision-making, the reconstitution of our peoples, autonomy, territory, the reconstitution of our villages, mutual assistance, collective labour, among other things. And, underpinning it all, our communities’ outlook on life and the prospect of liberating our peoples and other peoples around the world from modern forms of domination.

Our actions as CIPO-RFM members will be guided by the community tradition that teaches us not to impose representation and not to supplant, but to abide by mandates and make no decision without one, to offer guidance rather than leadership, to urge rather than order, which is why we will always adopt an attitude of being of service to others, without falling into slavishness, and will steer clear of hogging the limelight or looking for thanks and praise, just as our libertarian forebears have recommended throughout the history of Mexico and the rest of the world.

As the CIPO-RFM, we want to change the world without taking power, which is why we will be preoccupied with the use of it wherever it actually exists, in relation to the individual, the community, the collective, etc. And we will never take up positions of leadership but will instead fill positions of service, as long as these are the products of some sort of direct or participatory democracy, regardless of the name by which it may go—community assembly, general assembly or whatever. And as long as they encourage efforts at grassroots levels and are prescribed by a mandate from those represented...

Convinced that there are no single, absolute or immutable truths and that what sets human beings apart is their approach to injustice, authoritarianism, work, honesty and service, we, as CIPO-RFM, shall always and everywhere uphold and defend the right to be different and we shall strive for consensual decision-making...

Having demonstrated that for good or ill we are going to rely on folk who struggle, and that the many faces displayed by that representative of the great and the wealthy—the State—are designed to break down the organization of those who struggle, we in the CIPO-RFM will remain independent of the state and of political parties and strive at all times to work alongside all organizations, communities and individuals who are prepared to struggle for the liberation of their peoples.

Without losing or denying our human nature, within the CIPO-RFM we shall adopt an analytical, reflexive and fraternal attitude to the views and individual sensibilities of the organization's members and others involved in some way in the struggle, whenever those views differ from the overall approach of the organization, and we will see to it that those views are publicized, debated and analyzed and that on no grounds will any decision be reached on the basis of voting down a debate about ideas...

Given that, to date, there has everywhere been a policy of exclusion and discrimination against women, especially native women, on the basis that they are poor, women and natives, we in the CIPO-RFM will strive everywhere and at all times to put an end to such practices and to promote, wherever we operate—community, organization, school, trade union, etc.—a culture of respect for women and for women's rights, ensuring in practice that within our organization women take up their equal and fair share of positions of representation and responsibility within our ranks.

Everything that we CIPO-RFM members do will be done for and with enjoyment, voluntarily, in a creative and committed way... One of the ways in which our organization gives expression to its anti-authoritarian practice is that the decision to join the CIPO-RFM is a process rooted in personal, voluntary acts of conscience; similarly, resignation is to be a voluntary matter for the individual, so the CIPO-RFM will not put expulsion of a member to a vote...

Imposition, sectarianism, accords reached by means of votes or unchallenged, absolute truths, especially when these are advanced as arguments for keeping up a single-minded approach to the exercise of democracy, form no part of our arsenal of ideas nor of our organization's practice, so the CIPO-RFM, in order to grapple with points of disagreement, to review our practice and to grow as individuals and as an organization, will take as our approach the observance of the highest forms of democratic activity, reasoned debate, and focused and probing investigation...

In all responsibility, in keeping with the needs of the organization in every instance and at every level, members of the CIPO-RFM and its commissions cannot make decisions on a whim, in an authoritarian way or without consulting its assemblies, and we shall operate mostly on the basis of consensus, and, in very

extreme cases, on a mandate from the vast majority, ensuring at all times that there is collective participation in decision-making and in the allocation and completion of tasks...

Certain that change will come about through the efforts of each and every one of us struggling in various places and ways, we have a duty creatively to pursue different peaceable means of confronting and humbling the enemy, so our conduct within the native movement and all others will be driven by the idea of building people's power, which takes a wider view than the single notion of class struggle or some single route.

60. *Colectivo Alas de Xue: Strengthening the Anarcho-Indian Alliance* (1997)

The Colectivo Alas de Xue is a group of anarchists in Colombia, a country where state and paramilitary forces have continued a campaign of violence against indigenous peoples and leftist rebels for decades. In such circumstances, organizing along anarchist lines is particularly difficult. The following excerpts, translated by Paul Sharkey, are taken from a selection of writings on anarchism in Latin America published in Spain by the Collective, Una historia del anarquismo en Colombia: Crónicas de utopía (Madrid: Fundación de Estudios Libertarios "Anselmo Lorenzo," 2000). In the first excerpt, the Colectivo sets forth its anarchist stance. The second excerpt explores the confluence of indigenous and anarchist ideals in the liberation struggles of American Indians. The Collective quotes Marcus Roitman's comments regarding the ruthless Social Darwinism of the Latin American ruling classes, echoing the 1904 essay of the Peruvian anarchist, Manuel González Prada, "Our Indians" (Volume One, Selection 91), in which he wrote: "Once one has accepted that Mankind is divided into superior and inferior races and acknowledged the white man's superiority and thus his sole governance of the Planet, there cannot be anything more natural than the suppression of the black man in Africa, the redskin in the United States, the Tagalog in the Philippines and the Indian in Peru."

ANARCHISTS: Yes, without further qualification. With nothing that might dilute or disguise the bluntness of the name or the essential idea.

Anarchists, rooted in the soil, drawing all of their concerns and grievances from her so as to throw them in the faces of all scoundrels and cowards.

Anarchists? Yes! Rebels against your institutions with all the fire of the volcano spewing out the churning torment from its bowels.

Anarchists, because we have drunk from the springs of all bitterness, because our eyes have widened at the ghastliness of all this wretchedness.

Anarchists? Yes! Rebels against your institutions which foster and consolidate all injustice.

Rebels against your codes and your laws which regulate all the chicanery and hammer home all the inequality.

Anarchists? Yes! We will not back down one step from our struggle. We are in search of a new world, sickened and grieved by the chaos into which you have plunged us.

Look upon your handiwork! All of it. Think about the horror that you mean to perpetuate. Step down into the slums where misery has achieved utter perfection. Step up into the precincts of the mighty, where every vice and extravagance meet with the warmest of welcomes. See the prostitution and the crime. The vile buying and selling of human endeavour. The ignorance fostered by religion. The cowardice lurking behind the shield of humility. Science in the service of mass criminality. Mothers afraid to bear children for fear of seeing their sons sacrificed to war.

This is the world you have made, you, the mighty of every state. A world bankrupted and bleeding. Men who have forgotten what it is to laugh, terrified as they are of the relentless thunder of cannon-fire. Hunger rampant. Everything base and repulsive in the species lording it over virtues which embody human dignity. Something that would make one weep, had tears not long since given way to the overriding need to fight.

The anarchist's struggle is against all of this. And the onslaughts of all your hired killers will founder against the bulwark of our convictions.

In the humane and high-minded anarchist struggle, we reach out our hands to all the wretched and stand with all the rebels; with the rumbling storm of our message and our revolutionary action eternally locked in combat with all the powerful, against all those who are slaves taking pride in their chains.

Yes, anarchists!

And it matters not to us what your view of us may be. Your "ethics" are made up of immoralities and affronts to the human conscience. In the view of your judges, we are criminals. In the eyes of a history that eschews caricature, pioneers of a just and noble cause.

Our god is Humanity, the essence and me.

In place of law—love and fraternity of all people.

The only master we recognize is liberty.

For which and to which end we are anarchists!

AGAINST POWER AND CAPITAL: STRENGTHENING THE
ANARCHO-INDIAN ALLIANCE

The newly emergent anarcho-Indian alliance should be acknowledged as a dynamic factor in struggles against power and capital. The Indian territories are the latest target for the voraciousness of multinationals which loot, not merely their mineral resources, but also their ancient lore and medicine, claiming sinister patents on biodiversity, which is to say, private ownership of the processes and products of Mother Earth, the ultimate conceit of neoliberalism [see Selection 25 above]. That is what the “global village” amounts to, the eradication of Freedom’s last redoubts...

[G]lobalization is a phenomenon of which uniformity is a crucial requirement. Homogenization implies the adoption of a common approach to life, production and trade, as values are standardized and differences eradicated. In this respect, standing up for diversity means creating an arena for struggle against the consequences of *globalization*...

[I]n “Our America” [Latin America] there are upwards of 400 identifiable Indian groups accounting for a population of around forty million men and women. Together with a huge number of Afro-American communities, these Indian groups have enriched Our America’s past and present with their struggles and demands as they have staked their claim to their place in history. Mexico has the continent’s largest Indian population at around ten million, accounting for somewhere between 12% and 15% of her entire population; in Peru and Ecuador, the numbers are almost a half that; in Brazil, they account for only 0.5% of the total but, as in Colombia (where they account for a mere 2.7%), they have played a preponderant role in the most recent social and political developments in their respective countries and in efforts to bring native peoples together across the region.

This wealth and diversity in ethnic and cultural terms provides an opening for relations of solidarity between these groups and anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist sections. Defence of the principles of *unity through diversity* is especially prized by the Indian organizations.

Failed attempts to impose national states as part and parcel of the principle of a *single national culture* were based upon political and cultural exclusion on ethnic grounds, which was carried over into the degrees of citizenship. Membership in the nation hinges upon membership in the prevalent ethnic group, and here in Our America, this means being of Iberian stock or their descendants. Separation along class lines spills over into separation along ethnic lines, statist nationality being rooted in an ethnic-class (based) hegemony.

The repressive face of the state leads to a type of violence that becomes structural as it represses and shuns the participation and diversity of the native peoples. Civil society is founded, not upon diversity, but upon an apparent ethnic homogeneity, as Marcos Roitman seems to confirm with the statement that “past and future frictions highlight the evolutionist thesis of the ruling classes which takes the view that the native peoples are fated to disappear, since there is no place for them in the modern world. From Social Darwinism derive the values that justify violence towards and cultural annihilation of the Indian nations.” Here we have something on which a number of libertarian strands agree: the struggle against the state as a source of authoritarianism and injustice.

In Our America, multiculturalism assumes the dramatic forms of death, poverty, hunger and oppression, the result of an historical burden of exclusion; but it also finds scope for struggle and resistance. The Indian peoples and Afro-American communities have, in the course of their political activity and articulation of their demands, been developing modes of resistance, marrying their millennial lore with the novel tactics employed by other social actors, which makes them part and parcel of the so-called gate-crashing by new popular movements. Rodolfo Stavenhagen states: “they have popped up as new political and social protagonists in Latin America over recent years, or rather, as some might say, as history makers. They are becoming active subjects instead of remaining the passive objects of historical change.” It is worth pointing out that they have always been history makers, but their history—the new history under gradual construction and which today is loudly clamouring for restoration of its stolen dignity—has been denied, concealed and silenced under a cloak of repression and death. In this regard, Indian organizations and libertarian groups share obviously overlapping goals. At present, these posit the consolidation of multiple strategies: ecological, anti-militarist, refusal of military service, anti-patriarchal, feminist, anti-authoritarian, anti-fascist, and so on. The various approaches of the Indian organizations touch upon aspects of such libertarian concerns. For instance, in rejecting compulsory military service, the Indians are subscribing to the anti-militarist principles of anarchist collectives. Unfailing championship of the environment and of Mother Earth, the fight against oil-drilling multinationals and multinational looting of other resources are further instances of this common ground.

One of the arenas in the fight for recognition of multi-ethnicity, the constitutional campaign for Indian jurisdiction and the championing of their traditional rights, does nothing to delegitimize their internal observance of the traditional mechanisms of direct democracy. Recognition by a number of countries of such *cultural pluralism* has been achieved as a result of processes of mobilization and

struggle that extend even to armed struggle, as in the cases of groups such as *Tupac Katari* in Bolivia, *Tupac Amaru* in Peru, *Alfaro Vive* in Ecuador, the *Comando Quintín Lame* in Colombia, and, more recently, the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) in Mexico, which have breathed political life into a form of democracy so often thwarted in Our America: the *mandar obedeciendo* (leading through obedience) which is a synonym for the direct democracy which libertarians have yearned for down through the centuries.

Indian thinkers... since the 1970s have been developing a very fertile strand of thought which takes radical defence of diversity as the starting-point for a libertarian option holding out the prospect of liberation. A stance that might be encapsulated by Virgilio Roel's dictum, according to which "in freeing himself, the Indian will set the whole of humankind free."

With the collapse of the various brands of authoritarian socialism, the chances of building a *libertarian socialism* have received an exceptional boost. Free, multicultural societies are only going to be possible if the libertarian contributions from every people are given due consideration.

In its arrogance, the West has stilled the voices of diversity through the use of violence. So, as a matter of urgency, we must recover the roots of diversity if we are to devise a range of different escape routes from the exclusionist approaches concocted by Western thought. The Indian Kheswa Kollasuyu Wankar is insistent that "there is no liberation through imitation." This is a principle, a call for authenticity starting from the grassroots, from the historical roots, if emancipation is to be achievable. This lesson, that nobody can achieve liberation if he is an imitation of someone else, is of such philosophical profundity that it would be hard to explore it in this essay, although we shall have a go at highlighting its quintessential features...

1. Myth is the driving force behind unrelenting struggles for freedom. Myth as a factor in resistance has defied all attempts by tyrants, past and present, to wipe out the Indian peoples. Myth is dynamic, popping up again in new locations and in altered circumstances. Myths are the founts of freedom, justice, mutual aid and life itself. All Indian peoples and Afro-American communities cling to a fund of fellowship principles; some have been forced to abjure them, but myth protects them, pending the advent of changed circumstances when they bounce back with renewed vigour. Myth is the libertarian language of the Indian peoples.

2. The majority of Indian peoples display no disposition to statism in their collective living arrangements and the state, in whatever form, seems always to have been alien to them. In this respect their demands are trapped within the narrow legal parameters of states, wherein, of course, there is no room for the existence of stateless peoples...

3. The underlying principles of this multicultural outlook should be found in the precepts “the cosmos is constantly changing due to the dialectic which is its underlying governing principle” [Ramiro Reynaga, “Dos mundos opuestos,” *Viejo Topo*, No. 72, Madrid, Spain, 1994], “the essence of human thought and wisdom is rooted in harmonious materialism,” and “the cosmic order is the organizational model” [Kheswa Kollasuyu Wankar and Ramiro Reynaga, *Tawa Inti Suyu: Cinco siglos de guerra Kheswaymara contra España* (Lima: CISA, 1989)].

4. *Organization*: Every time it has been feasible for them to do so, the Indian peoples have given a wide berth to political organizations and parties, because the discourse in which these deal has no comprehension of ethnic and cultural issues. Starting from their own vision of the cosmos, the Indian peoples favour a horizontal style of organization that is respectful of differences and wherein there is ongoing participation by all its members, namely: the exercise of *Direct Democracy*.

5. *Self-Management and Autonomy*: Down through the ages, these have become one of the most heartfelt demands of the Indian peoples. In spite of repeated interference, this core of self-management and autonomy has not been destroyed and their traditional forms of administration and self-government have become the front lines of resistance and defence. In this regard, they are immersed in exploration of a self-centered development that breaks the ties of dependency and colonization.

6. *Communitarianism and Collectivism*: These two are crucial factors in the coexistence of Indian peoples. They are the well-springs of reciprocity and complementarity, along which lines they organize social labour on the basis of mutual aid. It should be noted that there is no particular division of labour such as we find in a Western context. Everybody has a part to play in the production of everything. In this respect, it is equidistant from capitalist individualism and from authoritarian brands of communism. Indian collectivism is a guarantee of a model of equity and diversity and it is diversity that offers a guarantee against hegemonic and exclusive approaches that brook no opposition.

7. *Unity in diversity*. It is plain that as far as the Indian peoples are concerned, diversity is their surest passport to the future. Genuine unity is incubated and consolidated, not through homogenization or standardization, but through the construction of a multiplicity of broad spaces. In which sense, the quest for what peoples have in common in no way eclipses the idiosyncrasies of each of them.

The future being forged by the Indian peoples starts from the basis of a genuine democracy of peoples and cultures. Ethnocentrism and the West's claim to be the only path to the future represent a dead end with no future.

The Indian peoples see pluralism as lying at the root of history and human societies. There were highly differentiated peoples pre-dating and post-dating the advent of social classes, private property and the state. So, one-eyed authoritarian options that seek to assert the superiority of one option over another are at odds with Indian thinking. In their wisdom, the Indian peoples know that there is no way for a single people, a single culture, a single school of thought to provide answers to the wide range of problems confronting humanity.

8. *Federalism*: In contrast to centralistic and vertical ambitions, the Indian peoples contemplate unity as spreading from lesser alliances into greater ones. To explain: take the family as the organizational cell of the first lesser alliance. Later this nuclear family alliance bonds with others and the greater alliances begin. These in turn join forces, serving as greater alliances of differing social proportions, building into a number of models of community, into nations and into a confederation of nations. Social intercourse moves from the particular to the general and vice versa, allowing a dynamism that affords great elasticity of relationships. In practice, this form of organization tends to respect the specificity of each lesser unit which, its integrity undiminished, consents to enter into alliances with various other lesser units to make up larger units that will resolve matters pertaining to their mutual interests.

The struggle against power and capital ought to lead on to the establishment of close ties of solidarity with Indian organizations because the seed for social revolution is also to be found there. Their five hundred years of resistance are testimony to their love of *utopia*.

6I. Kurdistan: Anarchism and Confederation (1999-2011)

The Kurdish people live in territory currently divided between four nation-states, Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. They have been fighting for national independence for over a century. The Kurds were able to achieve a level of independence in northern Iraq after the U.S. invasion in 2003 and the consequent destruction of a viable Iraqi state apparatus. Their primary military conflict is now with the Turkish state which continues to refuse to grant any genuine autonomy to the Kurds. Within Kurdish controlled areas, a Kurdish middle class and Islamic groups have been able to re-establish themselves, and the political leadership has sought integration with the global capitalist economy, leading some Kurdish radicals to move closer to anarchism. In the first selection below, taken from an article written by some Kurdish anarchists, "What's Going On in Kurdistan," originally published by Ates Hirsizi/KaosYayinlari in Turkey in 1999, they argue that there remain libertarian traditions and practices within Kurdish society which could provide the basis for a viable anarchist movement and, ultimately, a de-

centralized, ecological society. The second selection is taken from Janet Biehl's September 2011 interview with a Kurdish activist, Ercan Ayboga, in which he discusses the rise of a democratic confederalist movement among the Kurds, drawing on the ideas of Murray Bookchin (see Selections 10 and 26 above).

WHAT IS GOING ON IN KURDISTAN?

Many, if not all, think that anarchism has nothing to do with Kurdish society. While we carry on certain debates with Kurdish patriots, they always claim that anarchism is a luxurious idea for Kurdistan, as Kurdish society is very much backward. It is sad to see that this false argument is sometimes reflected by various comrades in anarchist ranks as well. Is anarchism really distant from social life in Kurdistan? Nothing of the sort! Certainly Kurdistan is not a perfect ground for anarchism, just like any other societies aren't. But on the other hand, some very significant motives are hidden among Kurdish society which represent great opportunities for the spreading of anarchist thought throughout Kurdistan. We shall examine some of them, trying not to fall into the traps of tribal romanticism.

When we put forward anarchism, we neither talk of a fabrication nor do we mean various imported prescriptions that are foreign to Kurdish society. Social life in Kurdistan itself contains certain traits which are in harmony with anarchism. First of all, Kurdish society has never recognized social centralization although it has lived within the boundaries of various states. Despite long periods of imposed assimilation, Kurds have always protected their own organizational structures... Kurds never felt themselves connected to a centralized authority, namely the state. The ordinary Kurdish person does not know what "citizenship" means.

The natural orientation of Kurdish society has a tribal basis. Each tribe holds a certain area composed of several villages or sometimes small cities. All tribes maintain their own social life in harmony with surrounding tribes. Each tribal area is like a little country with its folkloric motives, with its own production of material necessities. One tribe can be famous for animal feeding while another would be professional at agriculture. So Kurdistan is the country of thousands of similar tribes whose social life is based on complete decentralization. This decentralization was to such an extent that linguistic [differences] used to exist even between neighbouring villages. These tribes from time to time used to face various problems and quarrels... Even in such cases, until recently they would not warmly welcome the intervention of state forces. They would settle the conflicts among themselves. The worst would be armed clashes between tribes which would be stopped by the intervention of other neighbouring tribes. You could fight with your neighbour and break relations for a certain while. But on the first

religious or folkloric feast, some elders respected in that region would establish peace between you and your neighbour...

[M]ost institutions of the modern state had no place among Kurdish society. The principal functioning of social life in Kurdistan was based on social tolerance and moral codes. Therefore, the "State" was an outer object in the life of Kurdish society. The state has always represented a dangerous negativity. Among the majority of Kurdish society, the state was always understood as "trouble" which should definitely be kept away. The state forces would only come to a village to take young boys to the army or to collect taxes or to construct a school to teach them a foreign language by force. Kurds were sure that the state forces would not come to their villages for a peaceful and innocent aim. Living under the domination of various states, a great deal of rage has always existed in the hearts of Kurds towards the authority of the state. So, the police, soldiers and all kinds of state clerks are naturally hated by Kurds. Even nowadays, at the peak of national feelings, Kurdish patriots cannot manage to convince Kurds that a police officer, a soldier, or a prison can be used for the benefit of Kurdish society. Similarly, Kurdish patriots always complain about the fact that Kurds do not place sufficient attention on creating their own "national institutions." It is certainly true that Kurds hate "institutions," be they national or foreign, and it is not a lack at all but the very essence of the Kurdish mentality that is shaped by profound traditions of a decentralized society.

The decentralized social life of Kurdistan hardly protects its existence nowadays. A continuous state of armed struggle, assimilation by colonialist powers, forced immigrations and the increasing effects of modernization have altogether spoiled the social life of Kurds. The most dynamic population of Kurdistan runs to the cities while the remaining population also settles, making links with urban relatives. Similarly natural [local] production is about to stop which opens the doors for artificial products to enter Kurdistan, bringing together the habits of modern consumption. But despite all these negative improvements, the attitude of Kurds towards the state and its institutions continues to exist, though not as strongly as before. The Kurds may live in Istanbul, London, Paris and Frankfurt at the moment, but the very essence of their mentality is still preserved to some extent, despite the hard pliers of modern society. For the Kurds, the moral codes among themselves are much more important than the written laws of the constitution in whichever country they live...

Kurds belong to the mountains! The grey and spiritless atmosphere of modern urban life is absolutely suffocating for the Kurds who grew up in the embrace of fresh morning winds. Vast Kurdish masses had discovered urban life, especially in the 70s. The modern way of life in the cities seemed exciting in the beginning. But now Kurdish society starts to recognize the unbearable consequences of the

technological madness. In brief, what we are saying is that the concept of a modern state finds supporters not among ordinary Kurdish people but only among a tiny group of politicians and intellectuals infatuated with modernization.

All these points bring us to the conclusion that anarchism has quite a few common motives with Kurdish society. We cannot pretend that there are no obstacles at all. Certainly there are. Private possession, religion, sexual exploitation of women and the existence of Kurdish bourgeois classes are only a few of these obstacles. But it still remains our firm opinion that the natural mentality of an ordinary Kurd provides a suitable basis for anarchism. Anarchist roots exist at the very depths of Kurdish society. Thousands of years of the traditional life of Kurds were based on a chaotic colourfulness. The only question is how can anarchists manage to eliminate the authoritarian elements from this traditional life and how will we be able to refresh these decentralist roots.

However, we are aware of the fact that our anarchist approach towards Kurdistan is not that practical for the current process. Unfortunately, we are not strong enough to carry out certain projects for the achievements of our goals. Discovering anarchism only a few years ago, our principal work is naturally propagandistic. Therefore, we do not expect a sudden increase of anarchism in Kurdistan. We regard ourselves as travellers on a long journey.

On the other hand, our faith is strongly linked to the faiths of our worldwide comrades. Our planet faces huge social problems as well as intensive ecological destruction. All the living beings inhabiting this planet are suffering from the profound offensives of global capitalism...

It may seem "unrealistic" for the time being, but we also have an ideal in the depths of our hearts. Instead of a "United Independent Kurdish State," we want a decentralized and cantonal free Kurdistan, which is the form that is best suited to traditional Kurdish life. A stateless and decentralized ecological life in harmony with nature is our utopia for the future Kurdistan. And we believe that the current nightmarish struggle of the Kurdish people can only be crowned in this way: unconditional liberty in the embrace of the mountains!

In the following excerpts from Janet Biehl's interview with Ercan Ayboga, he describes the subsequent development of a democratic confederalist movement among the Kurds, particularly in Turkey, along the lines suggested above.

Until the 1980s the Kurdish society was completely patriarchal. There were no women's rights or feminist groups, not even among the more liberal Alevi Kurds. The most important dynamic in overcoming the patriarchal structures became the Kurdish freedom movement. And without women's participation, the movement could not possibly have achieved broad popular support. By around 1990 women

were participating widely in this movement, and between 1990 and 1992 women were leading demonstrations, which started to change the situation significantly. In the middle of 1990s a broad ideological discussion started in the movement, in which patriarchal structures in the whole society were criticized systematically. Since then, many women's organizations have been founded in all areas of the struggle...

Today women are present in all the political structures, at all levels, in the Kurdish freedom movement, which is a result of the long gender discussion and of women's struggle within the movement and in the democratic assemblies. For instance, in the BDP [Peace and Democracy Party], all chairperson positions must be held by a man and a woman, and there is a 40 percent requirement for both sexes in all management boards, public parliaments, and elected councils. As "gender liberation" is one of the three main principles used by the freedom movement besides "democracy" and "ecology," a social perspective without women's liberation is unthinkable.

Assembly democracy has limited roots in Kurdistan history and geography. ...[T]he society's village character was and is still fairly strong. Some villages had hierarchy and *aghas* (feudal big land owners), but in others, where these factors were absent, villages organized common meetings in the *kom* (village community) in which they made decisions. In many cases, older women participated in these meetings, but not young women.

In past centuries, tribes sometimes held assemblies with representatives from all families (or villages) in order to discuss important issues of the tribe or the larger society. The tribal leader carried out the decisions that the assembly accepted.

During their long history, Kurdish tribes used from time to time and from region to region a confederal organizational structure for facing political and social challenges. It was based on voluntariness, so not all tribes participated in the confederal structure. But in most of Kurdistan, many non-Kurdish tribes or societies were not much involved in the confederal system.

In the 1990s, as the Kurdish freedom movement grew stronger, an effort was made to build up assemblies in "liberated" villages. PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] guerrillas promoted village assemblies, and in villages where the guerrillas were strong, most of the people accepted them. But just as they were getting under way, the Turkish army destroyed 4,000 villages and their political structures. Thereafter the repression intensified. Since 2005, in some of the villages that were close to the freedom movement, this idea has been developed again. Some villages organize regular democratic assemblies, fully including women and all parts of the society.

The Kurdish freedom movement had its ideological sources in the 1968 stu-

dent movement and the Turkish left's Marxist-Leninist, Stalinist, Maoist, Trotskyist, and other communist theories. At the end of the 1980s, the Kurdish freedom movement embarked on a critique of the actually existing (state) socialist model, and in later years it would be deepened. The critique of the 1990s said, among other points, that it's important to change individuals and society before taking the power of any state, that the relationship between individuals and state must be organized anew and that instead of big bureaucratic-technocratic structures, a full democracy should be developed.

In 1999, when the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured and the guerilla forces were withdrawn to Iraqi Kurdistan, the freedom movement underwent a process of comprehensive strategic change. It did not give up the idea of socialism, but it rejected the existing Marxist-Leninist structure as too hierarchical and not democratic enough. Political and civil struggle replaced armed struggle as the movement's center. Starting in 2000, it promoted civil disobedience and resistance (the Intifada in Palestine was also an inspiration).

Further, the movement gave up the aim of establishing a Kurdish-dominant state, because of the existing difficult political conditions in the Middle East and the world; instead, it advanced a long-term solution for the Kurdish question within the four states Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria: democratic confederalism. It now considers it more important to have a democratic, social and tolerant society than to have one's own state. For Turkey, it has proposed the foundation of a second or democratic republic...

The Kurdish freedom movement developed the idea of "democratic confederalism" not only from the ideas of communalist intellectuals but also from movements like the Zapatistas; from Kurdish society's own village-influenced history; from the long, thirty-five-year experience of political and armed struggle; from the intense controversies within Turkish democratic-socialist-revolutionary movements; and from the movement's continuous development of transparent structures for the broad population...

We foresee communalism as developing first in Turkish Kurdistan. Since 2007 the freedom movement has created democratic and decision-making assemblies in neighborhoods of cities where it is strong, particularly in the provinces of Hakkari, Sirnak, Siirt, Mardin, Diyarbakir, Batman, and Van. The assemblies were established to make decisions on all common problems, challenges, and projects of the respective neighborhood according to the principles of base democracy—the whole population has the right to participate. In some of the assemblies, non-Kurdish people are participating, like Azerbaijanis and Aramaic people...

There are assemblies at several levels. At the bottom are the neighborhood assemblies. They choose the delegates that constitute the city assembly. In Diyarbakir, ideas are discussed in the city assembly, of which the city council is

part—not officially, not legally, but in our system. If the city assembly makes a certain decision on an issue, then the city council members who are part of the city assembly will promote it. (But the city council also has members from the other parties, like the ruling AKP, which don't agree with it.) The city council has the legal power to make decisions that become laws. But for the people, the city assembly is the legitimate body.

When decisions on a bigger scale have to be taken, the city and village assemblies of a province come together. In the provinces of Hakkari and Sirnak, the experience has had very positive results. The state authority has no influence on the population—the people don't accept the state authorities. There are two parallel authorities, of which the democratic confederal structure is more powerful in practice.

At the top of this model is the DTK (Democratic Society Congress), which brings together all Kurds in the Republic of Turkey. It consists of more than five hundred civil society organizations, labor unions, and political parties—they make up 40 percent of its members; 60 percent of its members are delegates from village assemblies.

The DTK provincial assemblies were crucial in electing the candidates for the Turkish parliament of the legal pro-Kurdish party, the BDP. For the last elections, the Diyarbakir provincial assembly decided on six candidates chosen by the DTK—those selected became candidates of the BDP for parliament. (Six of 36 elected candidates are now in prison—the court did not release them. We don't know when or whether they will be liberated.)

Slowly but surely, democratic confederalism is gaining acceptance by more Turkish Kurds. Recently, the DTK presented a draft paper on democratic autonomy for Turkish Kurdistan. At a big meeting in Diyarbakir in July 14, 2011, the DTK declared itself in support of “democratic autonomy.” It seeks to realize democratic autonomy step by step, by Kurds' own means, and especially where the Kurdish freedom movement is strong. Much of Kurdish society approved, but the idea was controversial in Turkish society.

One result of the discussions of democratic confederalism has been an objective to found new villages on the communalist idea or transform existing villages whose conditions are suitable for that. Such villages are to be democratic, ecological, gender equal, and/or even peace villages. Here *peace* not only refers to the armed conflict; it expresses the people's relationships among themselves and with the natural world. Cooperatives are the economic and material base of these villages.

The first peace villages were developed in 2010. In Hakkari province, which borders Iraq and Iran and where the freedom movement is very strong, several villages decided to develop a cooperative economy. The new political and social relationship of the population and the economy are suitable for that, as the free-

dom movement is very strong there, with direct support from 90 percent of the society. Close to the city of Weranshah (Viran ehîr), the construction of a new village with seventy households based on the idea of peace villages just started. In Van province, activists have decided to build a new ecological women's village, which would be something special. This would enforce the role of women in the society. Women who have been victims of domestic violence will be accepted. These small communities could supply themselves with all or almost all the necessary energy.

In reality, the assembly model has not yet been developed broadly for several reasons. First, in some places the Kurdish freedom movement is not so strong. Almost half of the population in Turkey's Kurdish areas still do not actively support it. In those places there are no few or no assemblies.

Second, the discussions among the Kurds on democratic confederalism have not proceeded everywhere as well as they might.

And third, the repression by the Turkish state makes further development very difficult. About thirty-five hundred activists have been arrested in the past two and a half years, since 2009, which in many regions has significantly weakened the structures of democratic confederalism. There have been trials for two years. The military clashes between the Turkish Army and the Kurdish guerrillas are once again on the increase... The state simply says these assemblies are coordinated by the KCK (Union of Communities in Kurdistan), the umbrella structure of the leftist Kurdish freedom movement in Middle East, of which today PKK is a part, which is an illegal structure, and that becomes the pretext for arresting them.

People have been arrested whose only activity was to participate in a city assembly. In the last six months 1,650 people have been arrested for being in the KCK... Of all the thousands of people arrested and charged with KCK membership in recent years, only one has gone free...

The Turkish Kurds' legal party, the BDP, proposes "democratic autonomy" for the whole republic... Generally it envisages a fundamental democratization in Turkey's political and administrative structure, achieving it through democratic participation by incorporating people into processes of decision-making. The essential vision is not to create smaller structures with characteristics of the nation-state; rather, the democratic decision-making structures in the societies should be developed through a combination of base democracy and council democracy.

And rather than being a purely "ethnic" and "territorial" conception, democratic autonomy proposes a regional and local structure through which cultural differences are able to freely express themselves. Thus it proposes to establish twenty to twenty-five regions in Turkey with major autonomous rights. These autonomous regions and their assemblies would also assume major responsibil-

ities in fields like education, health, culture, agriculture, industry, social services and security, women, youth and sports. The central government would continue to conduct foreign affairs, finance and external defense services.

In addition, the Kurdish freedom movement demands that Turkish Kurdistan have control over its own “security,” or self-defence; and the right to manage the natural environment and natural resources. At the same time it demands that Turkish Kurdistan be able to establish specific social, cultural, economic and political ties with the other three parts of Kurdistan, in Iran, Iraq and Syria.

In Turkey, the Kurdish freedom movement is in implementation phase, but in the three other parts, the Kurds are in the first stage of discussing democratic confederalism. The existing Kurdish parties and organizations that are not part of the Kurdish freedom movement give no importance to it. They support either full independence for Kurdistan or a classical model of autonomy and federation.

But organizations that are part of or close to the KCK, and intellectuals and small groups, promote democratic confederalism as well as the democratic autonomy project of the DTK. The thirty-five hundred activists arrested since 2009 have all been members of the KCK which is an illegal organization. Every two years they have meetings with delegates from all four countries—they meet secretly—in the mountains...

The Kurdish freedom movement has declared that it is not against existing state boundaries and does not want to change them. But at the same time the movement expects that the states respect all decisions of the population. The movement speaks of two authorities, the state and the population. In democratic confederalism, two different regions of neighboring states can come closer, for instance in terms of culture, education, economy, without challenging the existing states. But in a system of democratic confederalism, the Kurds of different states, or any other suppressed culture in more than two different states, would come closer after decades of separation. This aspect is still not defined well and needs to be discussed deeper.

The Kurdish freedom movement proposes democratic confederalism for all countries and cultures of Middle East, as it is more appropriate than the existing centralized, half-decentralized, or totalitarian political structures there. Before the twentieth-century foundation of nation-states in the Middle East, the structures did not control the societies deeply; the different regions had certain freedoms and self-government, and the tribal structures were dominant. Here many local structures are still strong and resist the state influence.

Further, in the Middle East the cultural diversity is so high that a communalist society could much better consider this richness. It would allow ethnically or religiously nondominant groups to organize themselves and contribute significantly to a dynamic cultural diversity. Direct democratic structures may make

sense here too: in the recent uprisings in many countries, new democratic movements were born or have been strengthened. We would like to object to opinions that consider Arabs or other populations incapable of democratic thinking.

62. Bas Umali: Archipelagic Confederation – an Anarchist Alternative for the Philippines (2006)

Bas Umali is a Filipino anarchist who has suggested that Murray Bookchin's ideas regarding community assemblies can be adapted to conditions in the Philippine archipelago, building on traditional community forms such as the "barangay," a small community of 50 to 100 families. He points out that anarchist ideas and organization are not new to the Philippines, having been introduced in the late 1800s by people like Isabelo de los Reyes (for more on de los Reyes and anarchist influences on the Philippine national liberation movement, see Benedict Anderson, Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-colonial Imagination (London: Verso, 2005)). The following excerpts are taken from Umali's "Archipelagic Confederation: Advancing Genuine Citizens' Politics through Free Assemblies and Independent Structures from the Barangay and Communities," recently republished in pamphlet form as The Re-Emergence of Philippine Anarchism (Red Lion Press, 2007), with a preface by Larry Gambone.

Unlike the existing order where people are motivated by power, profit, private property, and individualism, anarchy... is a society that fosters mutual cooperation, solidarity and freedom from exploitation and oppression, where decisions are made by those who are directly concerned. Any form of political structure that centralizes power is totally unacceptable.

The word archipelago on the other hand recognizes the geographical characteristics of the country and the very essential role of its rich natural resources that strongly influence the lifestyle of its inhabitants. Myriad historical accounts indicate that the bodies of water surrounding the different [Philippine] islands actually connected rather than separated them from each other, and that the economic, social and political activities of the inhabitants were developed due to the interconnectedness of their immediate environment.

It is also important to note that the rich natural endowments of the archipelago allow diverse cultures to flourish and develop into heterogeneous ways of life that are interlinked through mutual cooperation...

The Philippines was one of the first Asian countries to stage a revolution against the colonialism of the West. The early phase of the Filipino struggle was initially carried out by local privileged intellectuals of the likes of Jose Rizal and Marcelo Del Pilar. The revolution was nationalistic in character, which is under-

standable because at that time nationalism was at the height of its propagation in many parts of the world, specifically in Europe. This profoundly influenced Rizal's works and inspired the oppressed masses, culminating in armed resistance organized by Andres Bonifacio in 1896...

The revolutionary tradition in the country was further enriched upon the arrival of Isabelo De Los Reyes in Manila in 1901 from his exile in Barcelona, Spain where he brought a collection of books including those written by Malatesta, Proudhon, Kropotkin, Marx, Darwin, Aquinas and Voltaire. This was followed by a successful wave of protests and strikes within and around Manila that paved the way for the establishment of the Union Obrera Democratica (UOD). This marked the shift of the revolutionary struggle from a mere nationalist to an anti-imperialist one...

We can hardly identify a historical period wherein Filipinos lived in prosperity, abundance and relative peace, except during pre-Spanish times. As described by Pigaffeta, the inhabitants of the archipelago were in perfect health and had no physical defects. He got the impression that food scarcity was not prevalent...

These findings make us think that the phenomena of poverty in the Philippines occurred with the advent of Spanish colonization and coercive formation of a centralized government. Unfortunately, several studies have the tendency to conveniently pin down population explosion as the cause of poverty, thus undermining the fact that this is brought by systemic oppression. For instance, in Southern Asia, around 30 million households own no land or very little, and they represent 40% of nearly all rural households in the subcontinent. Both the African and Latin American continents... have similar data. Moreover, land distribution in the nations of the South favours large-scale commercial agriculture controlled by a few landowners. Ergo, poverty can be rooted socially.

The Philippines is not an exception. In 2000, the country ranked 77 out of more than 150 countries with a poverty incidence of 34%... In the fishery sector alone, 80% of fisher households live below the poverty line. Four primary factors are widely accepted by most of the players in the fishery sectors:

1. the low productivity of land-based resources or lack of access to land;
2. low productivity of aquatic resources due mainly to habitat destruction and stock depletion;
3. resource-use conflict, particularly in coastal waters; and
4. lack of adequate basic services delivery (i.e., health, education, shelter, infrastructures, etc.).

...We know for a fact that the increase of population in coastal communities is due to migration patterns... households displaced in agricultural lands seek

economic opportunities in coastal areas that are de facto open to anybody who wants to use fishery resources. Poverty therefore is not rooted in the natural limit crisis; this is clearly brought about by structural problems, such as the distribution of wealth and the control of natural resources.

It should be clarified that the idea of carrying capacity is well recognized. This concept sets the limit of the number of organisms and non-living matter in a specific ecosystem, based on the availability of food, space and other vital materials necessary for their existence. Also, part of this is the capacity of a specific ecosystem to absorb pressure brought by extraction. But to set the record straight, the destruction of natural resources (which resulted in the death of many citizens and the loss of billions in livelihood) is not directly attributable to population. In fact, it is public knowledge that big corporations benefited from large-scale logging operations. And together with large commercial mining, this eventually led to the denudations of our forests. It should also be noted that mineral extraction is one of the notorious polluters in the coastal zone that significantly reduce fish stocks.

There is insufficient evidence to prove that the country's population of 86 million is close to the limit imposed by carrying capacity of the ecosystems. Clearly, food production is no longer a problem... In our case, the best available data on poverty is highly attributable to low agricultural and fishery productivity and poor economic performance; and this can be directly traced to government negligence, incompetence, irresponsibility and non-accountability. Poverty is caused by unemployment; lack of land to till; degradation of natural resources; lack of economic opportunity; lack of social services, corruption and absence of a logical economic development agenda.

The huge profits being produced through massive extraction of natural resources do not deliver anything concrete to the people. We have enough food sources to feed the entire population due to the highly abundant natural resources of the archipelago. But our finite resources are totally limited to fuel economic growth or to sustain the greed for profit of the elite.

With this conviction, we should be reminded that in order to establish a society that is free, equitable and rational, capitalism must be abolished and oppressive hierarchical political systems should be replaced by a system where citizens are highly involved in all political exercises, specifically in decision-making...

Theoretically, political power resides only in the state, but complete concentration of power is impossible. That is why it is reasonable to say that the existence of the state depends on its fairly concentrated power. Another very important consideration is that the state is the only institution that can use legitimate violence against those who do not recognize its hegemony.

The hierarchical nature of the state inevitably creates a bureaucracy that concentrates governance and decision-making in a few representatives, akin to the institutional arrangement of the red bureaucracy, corporate structures as well as churches' organigram [organizational structure]. A handful of representatives will not constitute a democracy; on the contrary, it is nothing but the rule of a few. Democracy will only be realized through meaningful and substantial participation of the people in politics to which they can relate, understand, appreciate, contribute, perform, benefit and share duties and responsibilities.

The question is, how are we going to involve ordinary people in political exercises if they do not have any interest in engaging politics?

Such disinterest can be possibly rooted to the notion that current political affairs cannot offer anything to the people. All are reduced to promises and texts. For the common people, politics require complicated technical skills and knowledge that can only be earned in prestigious and expensive universities. Such an undertaking requires technical jargon and an expensive outfit which gives the impression that politics is an enterprise solely for the educated and rich families. The term *polis*, as we trace it back to the tradition of the Greeks, refers to the management of the community by the citizens. This apparently lost its meaning due to statism that turned politics into a career and lucrative profession that marginalized ordinary people...

Direct democracy is not a new idea. This was and is still being practiced in many parts of the world. But this concept is poorly explored due to the "power hungry" behaviour of the political and economic elite and some leftists who actually advocate and practice authoritarianism...

Instead of organizing a party, why do we not go back to the communities and localities? Political parties can easily claim that they have an organized network and mass base at the local level, which we will not try to refute. Our concern will focus on the kind of politics that they employ. Their organizational set-up is inherently top-down due to the representative system wherein a few individuals from the party would represent the interests of the entire nation. This breeds bossism wherein a few people are at the apex of the hierarchy. Moreover, they have authority vis-à-vis their members which will eventually end in a leader-and-led relationship. Hence, people become simple members. Instead of having active, creative, imaginative and dynamic citizens, we have passive and mechanized constituents whose duty is reduced to attendance at mobilizations and the routine selection of leaders that merely reinforces the culture of obedience.

Democracy is not about making obedient followers. It is not about imposing uniform rules to a complex and diverse population in terms of their interests, views, way-of-life, prejudices, economic activities, social and natural environment, culture and spiritual life. Rather, democracy is about creating a political at-

mosphere which is participatory and inclusive of this highly diverse population, and which is based on the actual needs and interests of the communities...

In a broad sense, direct democracy will be applied by organizing free assemblies at the local level. People's organizations that are based on their nature such as peasants, fishers, women, youth, indigenous people, vendors, tricycle drivers, jitney drivers, homeless, gays, neighbourhood associations, religious groups and other formations at the localities should be encouraged to organize themselves.

Based on experience, people will surely participate in political processes if the topic to be discussed is directly related to their interests, to their daily activities and to the immediate and strategic needs of the communities. People will conduct face-to-face meetings at the barangay level to tackle their immediate concerns; they will share ideas, duties and responsibilities to address their issues in relation to other barangays. They are encouraged to engage in discussions and debates on public facilities using their own language and the existing local mechanisms to facilitate local political mechanisms.

Obviously, an ideal political structure should not mobilize people for the purpose of elevating the political value of certain political parties for elections or for the goal of taking political power which, in a sense, would merely reinforce the inactivity of their constituents. This kind of political structure will bring the political arena to the very doorstep of the people; this will create a political atmosphere that encourages the citizens' active, creative, imaginative and dynamic participation.

The ultimate direction of this process is to empower the vast number of marginalized citizens from below. This politics is educative since it will enhance the people's capacity to democratically discuss, decide, formulate and implement plans with regard to their common resources and own affairs.

In general, the pre-Hispanic barangays were interdependent but loosely federated. Among their bases of interaction were trade, commerce and war (raids for slaves and wives and revenge). "Highly" federated barangays were usually found in river mouths or wherever the ports were strategically located for commerce and where economic activities were high. This is not to romanticize the idea of the baranganic system but rather to trace our traditional practice of decentralism that actually proved to be far more humane than the statist model that was imposed by the colonialists and that is still in place today.

Our idea of decentralization here should not be mistaken for parochialism which might lead to the isolation of the locality from the rest of world. Confederalism as defined by Murray Bookchin "is above all a network of administrative councils whose members or delegates are elected from popular, face-to-face democratic assemblies". In our context, structures will be independently organized from the barangay or community level. Every barangay or community assembly

will elect delegates whose function is purely administrative, such as transmitting information and other practical functions. Policy-making will take place strictly at the popular assemblies in the barangay and [at the] community level. Delegates have no power to decide and they are totally recallable and accountable to the assemblies that mandated them. More importantly, delegates possess no privilege and authority over the citizens.

Confederal councils comprised of substantial delegates will be organized at the municipal and city level; then municipalities and cities will be confederated at the provincial level. The regional level will then comprise the Archipelagic Confederation. A confederation is a structure that connects and interlinks politically and economically every community of the archipelago, and where the functions are administrative and coordinative. The ultimate idea of confederation is to integrate all social structures, not in a hierarchical or top-down orientation, but rather vice-versa. Public policies will be formulated from the grassroots, which will be expressed at the municipal, city, provincial, and regional levels.

The basis of integration is not competition but rather mutual cooperation, complementation and solidarity. Every sector, group and other formation in a municipality will find their place in production processes to ensure the needs of the communities.

We cannot blame groups inclined to the party system and statist model if they immediately express a low appreciation for the proposed alternative system. Indeed, taking political power is a short cut to institute desired changes; but such changes are not necessarily meaningful for those who did not participate in the seizure of political power. In many instances, the great bulk of masses are reduced into mere spectators to the political exercise initiated by the few, again making passive, inactive and obedient constituents.

True, this process is strategic because it also involves changing the behaviour of people who are highly influenced by the dominant institutions that promote and reinforce an order based on competition, individualism and imposed uniformity. As part of processes that resist the current order and the behaviour that reinforces it, direct democracy can be employed. In the [height] of the brutal effect of grow-or-die market capitalism and a corrupt centralized state, communities should persistently defend their own physical and social space by defining their specific interests in connection with larger communities. We should encourage locals to self-organize and maximize their traditional networks to protect and advance the interests of their localities in relation to the interests and needs of other communities.

63. Ashanti Alston: Black Anarchism (2003)

Ashanti Alston was a member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army who spent many years incarcerated in US prisons as a result of his revolutionary activities. The following excerpts are from a talk he gave in October 2003 at Hunter College in New York City organized by the Institute for Anarchist Studies and co-sponsored by the Student Liberation Action Movement of the City University of New York.

Although the Black Panther Party was very hierarchical, I learned a lot from my experience in the organization. Above all, the Panthers impressed upon me the need to learn from other peoples' struggles. I think I have done that and that is one of the reasons why I am an anarchist today. After all, when old strategies don't work, you need to look for other ways of doing things to see if you can get yourself unstuck and move forward again. In the Panthers we drew a lot from nationalists, Marxist-Leninists, and others like them, but their approaches to social change had significant problems and I delved into anarchism to see if there are other ways to think about making a revolution.

I learned about anarchism from letters and literature sent to me while in various prisons around the country. At first I didn't want to read any of the material I received—it seemed like anarchism was just about chaos and everybody doing their own thing—and for the longest time I just ignored it. But there were times—when I was in segregation—that I didn't have anything else to read and, out of boredom, finally dug in (despite everything I had heard about anarchism up to the time). I was actually quite surprised to find analyses of peoples' struggles, peoples' cultures, and peoples' organizational formations—that made a lot of sense to me.

These analyses helped me see important things about my experience in the Panthers that had not been clear to me before. For example, I realized that there was a problem with my love for people like Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seal, and Eldridge Cleaver and the fact that I had put them on a pedestal. After all, what does it say about you, if you allow someone to set themselves up as your leader and make all your decisions for you? What anarchism helped me see was that you, as an individual, should be respected and that no one is important enough to do your thinking for you. Even if we thought of Huey P. Newton or Eldridge Cleaver as the baddest revolutionaries in the world, I should see myself as the baddest revolutionary, just like them. Even if I am young, I have a brain. I can think. I can make decisions.

I thought about all this while in prison and found myself saying, "Man, we really set ourselves up in a way that was bound to create problems and produce

schisms. We were bound to follow programs without thinking.” The history of the Black Panther Party, as great as it is, has those skeletons. The smallest person on the totem pole was supposed to be a worker and the one on the top was the one with the brains. But in prison I learned that I could have made some of these decisions myself and that people around me could have made these decisions themselves. Although I appreciated everything that the leaders of the Black Panther Party did, I began to see that we can do things differently and thus draw more fully on our own potentials and move even further towards real self-determination. Although it wasn’t easy at first, I stuck with the anarchist material and found that I couldn’t put it down once it started giving me insights. I wrote to people in Detroit and Canada who had been sending me literature and asked them to send more.

However, none of what I received dealt with Black folks or Latinos. Maybe there were occasional discussions of the Mexican revolution, but nothing dealt with us, here, in the United States. There was an overwhelming emphasis on those who became the anarchist founding fathers—Bakunin, Kropotkin, and some others—but these European figures, who were addressing European struggles, didn’t really speak to me.

I tried to figure out how this applies to me. I began to look at Black history again, at African history, and at the histories and struggles of other people of colour. I found many examples of anarchist practices in non-European societies, from the most ancient times to the present. This was very important to me: I needed to know that it is not just European people who can function in an anti-authoritarian way, but that we all can.

I was encouraged by things I found in Africa—not so much by the ancient forms that we call tribes—but by modern struggles that occurred in Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Even though they were led by vanguardist organizations, I saw that people were building radical, democratic communities on the ground. For the first time, in these colonial situations, African peoples were creating what the Angolans called “popular power.” This popular power took a very anti-authoritarian form: people were not only conducting their lives, but also transforming them while fighting whatever foreign power was oppressing them. However, in every one of these liberation struggles new repressive structures were imposed as soon as people got close to liberation: the leadership was obsessed with ideas of government, of raising a standing army, of controlling the people when the oppressors were expelled. Once the so-called victory was accomplished, the people—who had fought for years against their oppressors—were disarmed and instead of having real popular power, a new party was installed at the helm of the state. So, there were no real revolutions or true

liberation in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe because they simply replaced a foreign oppressor with an indigenous oppressor.

So, here I am, in the United States fighting for Black liberation, and wondering: how can we avoid situations like that? Anarchism gave me a way to respond to this question by insisting that we put into place, as we struggle now, structures of decision-making and doing things that continually bring more people into the process, and not just let the most “enlightened” folks make decisions for everyone else. The people themselves have to create structures in which they articulate their own voice and make their own decisions. I didn’t get that from other ideologies: I got that from anarchism.

I also began to see, in practice, that anarchistic structures of decision-making are possible. For example, at the protests against the Republican National Convention in August 2000 I saw normally excluded groups—people of colour, women, and queers—participate actively in every aspect of the mobilization. We did not allow small groups to make decisions for others and although people had differences, they were seen as good and beneficial. It was new for me, after my experience in the Panthers, to be in a situation where people are not trying to be on the same page and truly embraced the attempt to work out our sometimes conflicting interests. This gave me some ideas about how anarchism can be applied.

It also made me wonder: if it can be applied to the diverse groups at the convention protest, could I, as a Black activist, apply these things in the Black community?

Some of our ideas about who we are as a people hamper our struggles. For example, the Black community is often considered a monolithic group, but it is actually a community of communities with many different interests. I think of being Black not so much as an ethnic category but as an oppositional force or touchstone for looking at situations differently. Black culture has always been oppositional and is all about finding ways to creatively resist oppression here, in the most racist country in the world. So, when I speak of a Black anarchism, it is not so tied to the colour of my skin but who I am as a person, as someone who can resist, who can see differently when I am stuck, and thus live differently.

What is important to me about anarchism is its insistence that you should never be stuck in old, obsolete approaches and always try to find new ways of looking at things, feeling, and organizing. In my case, I first applied anarchism in the early 1990s in a collective we created to put out the Black Panther newspaper again. I was still a closet anarchist at this point. I wasn’t ready yet to come out and declare myself an anarchist, because I already knew what folks were going to say and how they were going to look at me. Who would they see when

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I say anarchist? They would see the white anarchists, with all the funny hair etc, and say “how the heck are you going to hook up with that?”

There was a divide in this collective: on the one side there were older comrades who were trying to reinvent the wheel and, on the other, myself and a few others who were saying, “Let’s see what we can learn from the Panther experience and build upon and improve it. We can’t do things the same way.” We emphasized the importance of an anti-sexist perspective—an old issue within the Panthers—but the other side was like, “I don’t want to hear all that feminist stuff.” And we said, “That’s fine if you don’t want to hear it, but we want the young folks to hear it, so they know about some of the things that did not work in the Panthers, so they know that we had some internal contradictions that we could not overcome.” We tried to press the issue, but it became a battle and the discussions got so difficult that a split occurred. As this point, I left the collective and began working with anarchist and anti-authoritarian groups, who have really been the only ones to consistently try to deal with these dynamics thus far.

One of the most important lessons I also learned from anarchism is that you need to look for the radical things that we already do and try to encourage them. This is why I think there is so much potential for anarchism in the Black community: so much of what we already do is anarchistic and doesn’t involve the state, the police, or the politicians. We look out for each other, we care for each other’s kids, we go to the store for each other, we find ways to protect our communities. Even churches still do things in a very communal way to some extent. I learned that there are ways to be radical without always passing out literature and telling people, “Here is the picture, if you read this you will automatically follow our organization and join the revolution.” For example, participation is a very important theme for anarchism and it is also very important in the Black community. Consider jazz: it is one of the best illustrations of an existing radical practice because it assumes a participatory connection between the individual and the collective and allows for the expression of who you are, within a collective setting, based on the enjoyment and pleasure of the music itself. Our communities can be the same way. We can bring together all kinds of diverse perspectives to make music, to make revolution.

How can we nurture every act of freedom? Whether it is with people on the job or the folks that hang out on the corner, how can we plan and work together? We need to learn from the different struggles around the world that are not based on vanguards. There are examples in Bolivia. There are the Zapatistas. There are groups in Senegal building social centers. You really have to look at people who are trying to live and not necessarily trying to come up with the most advanced ideas. We need to de-emphasize the abstract and focus on what is happening on the ground...

Oppositional thinking and oppositional risks are necessary. I think that is very important right now and one of the reasons why I think anarchism has so much potential to help us move forward. It is not asking of us to dogmatically adhere to the founders of the tradition, but to be open to whatever increases our democratic participation, our creativity, and our happiness...

We... could become that voice in our communities that says, "Wait, maybe we don't need to organize like that. Wait, the way that you are treating people within the organization is oppressive. Wait, what is your vision? Would you like to hear mine?" There is a need for those kinds of voices within our different communities. Not just our communities of colour, but in every community there is a need to stop advancing ready-made plans and to trust that people can collectively figure out what to do with this world. I think we have the opportunity to put aside what we thought would be the answer and fight together to explore different visions of the future. We can work on that. And there is no one answer: we've got to work it out as we go...

Our struggles here in the United States affect everybody in the world. People on the bottom are going to play a key role and the way we relate to people on the bottom is going to be very important. Many of us are privileged enough to be able to avoid some of the most difficult challenges and we will need to give up some of this privilege in order to build a new movement. The potential is there. We can still win—and redefine what it means to win—but we have the opportunity to advance a richer vision of freedom than we have ever had before. We have to be willing to try.

As a Panther, and as someone who went underground as an urban guerrilla, I have put my life on the line. I have watched my comrades die and spent most of my adult life in prison. But I still believe that we can win. Struggle is very tough and when you cross that line, you risk going to jail, getting seriously hurt, killed, and watching your comrades getting seriously hurt and killed. That is not a pretty picture, but that is what happens when you fight an entrenched oppressor. We are struggling and will make it rough for them, but struggle is also going to be rough for us too.

This is why we have to find ways to love and support each other through tough times. It is more than just believing that we can win: we need to have structures in place that can carry us through when we feel like we cannot go another step. I think we can move again if we can figure out some of those things. This system has got to come down. It hurts us every day and we can't give up. We have to get there. We have to find new ways.

Anarchism, if it means anything, means being open to whatever it takes in thinking, living, and in our relationships—to live fully and win. In some ways, I think they are both the same: living to the fullest is to win. Of course we will

and must clash with our oppressors and we need to find good ways of doing it. Remember those on the bottom who are most impacted by this. They might have different perspectives on how this fight is supposed to go. If we can't find ways for meeting face-to-face to work that stuff out, old ghosts will re-appear and we will be back in the same old situation that we have been in before.

You all can do this. You have the vision. You have the creativity. Do not allow anyone to lock that down.

64. Harsha Walia: No One is Illegal (2006)

Harsha Walia is a South Asian anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist and anti-colonial organizer and writer currently based in Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories. She is involved in migrant justice organizing, feminist and anti-racist collectives, South Asian community organizing, indigenous solidarity, and anti-imperialist networks. The following excerpts are taken from her article, "No One is Illegal: Confronting the Apartheid System of Migration in Canada," Perspectives on Anarchist Theory, Issue 5, Fall 2006, and are reprinted here with her kind permission, with a new introductory paragraph by the author.

Over the past several years, groups and movements have coalesced around themes like "No One is Illegal." In their day-to-day work of organizing with migrants and for migrant justice, such groups are working against increasingly restrictive immigration policies, the heightened detention and deportation of migrants, and the repressive national security apparatus that discriminates against racialized migrants. At a broader level, these movements are deeply connected to global movements resisting further expansion of the capitalist system, imperialist wars and occupations, and authoritarian state controls. The No One is Illegal movement brings together immigrants, refugees and allies in full confrontation with Canadian border policies in order to strive and struggle for a world in which no one is forced to migrate against their will and for a world where people can move freely in order to live and flourish in justice and dignity...

The border is a historically specific creation, and state monopolization of the legitimate means of movement and migration contributes to the reification of the nation-state and its citizens. While certain government practices act on those deemed worthy, coercive practices of state sovereignty ultimately expel others from the nation... The protection of rights-bearing and deserving (genuine) immigrants and refugees has become contingent on the identification and exclusion of others thought to be security threats, criminals, or system abusers.

"Genuine refugees" are seen as helpless victims forced to leave their country due to persecution and through no personal fault of their own, while "bogus

refugee claimants” are regarded with suspicion as being system abusers and “voluntary economic refugees.” Ironically, economic migrants who immigrate through the point system as skilled workers—the model minorities—are deeply valued. This contradictory notion of the “economic migrant” is better understood from a state perspective: the acceptable economic immigration of skilled workers benefits the national economy, while bogus economic refugees are seen as selfish and simply improving their own economic circumstance. Thus, it is only the genuine refugee and the independent immigrant, though not the bogus economic refugee, who deserve the benefits of Canadian citizenship, thereby creating falsified legal boundaries for inclusion that control people’s right to self-determination.

Many movements like No Borders and No One Is Illegal have reiterated that the category of legitimate versus illegitimate migrants merely goes to further strengthen the power of the state. Contrary to reformist approaches seeking to improve or increase the scope of “humanitarian” immigration policies, the No One Is Illegal campaign sees strength in our unity, and rejects any government attempts to control the lives of migrants and their destiny. The No One Is Illegal campaign has two goals: to attain justice and victories for immigrants and refugees, and to develop the communities’ own capacity to attain dignity for themselves and their families. Real justice will come as immigrants, refugees, and nonstatus people build greater trust in visions of an alternate world, and organize, educate, act, and fight for their own self-determination...

A regularization program allows nonstatus immigrants to apply for legal status, and such programs are often portrayed as the humanitarian act of a compassionate state, for which migrants must remain eternally grateful to their colonial masters. Yet governments have called for regularization programs due to labour shortages, in response to extreme political pressure by nonstatus communities, or often simply as a bureaucratic measure just prior to a complete overhaul of the immigration system.

Regardless of the motivation, one thing is clear: conditions that have been imposed as to who qualifies for status serve to reinforce racialized dynamics, in particular those of “model minorities.” A common criterion, perhaps unsurprisingly, is employment and wealth. Criminality checks have also been a standard criterion in regularization programs, strengthening the racist association between people of colour and criminality. Recent campaigns for regularization have demanded equal and universal access to citizenship that defies the divisions of “good” versus “bad” immigrants. Calls for comprehensive regularization are predicated on the self-determination of migrants and their lived realities of racism, within which exclusions based on medical background, family background, criminality and employment are simply unacceptable.

In reality, creating and facilitating spaces for those directly affected by detention and deportation to unite and organize has been extremely difficult. The highly individualistic nature of the system often ghettoizes and alienates migrants from one another. People do not automatically develop multifocused collective political priorities, yet individual efforts dilute group strength even as they compete for allegiance, priority, and resources. This alienation is further internalized in the process of “casework,” where supporters concentrate political attention on only one situation, often by highlighting the specific “strengths” of that case. There is no doubt that individual victories build morale, and hence build movements that are rooted in people’s actual realities and lived experiences; nevertheless, it can also disempower movements by simply replicating client-service provider models, and more fundamentally, by focusing on “humanitarian” aspects rather than the principle of global solidarity. Despite such barriers, the formation of self-organized committees of refugees, migrant workers, and nonstatus communities represents a fundamental change from reactive survival tactics for individuals and families to an assertive resistance for entire communities. These communities have built strong multiracial, multilingual alliances and networks, and importantly, unlike other coalitions, this network is not built on a lowest-common-denominator set of demands. Instead, the ideas of the so-called genuine refugees and good immigrants are challenged as the network fights for the rights of all migrants along with status for all—whether economic migrants, migrant labour, or those with criminal records. Various forms of disruptive and generalized resistance and mass mobilizations have created a counterpower to government as well as the conditions for its defeat over the past five years in major cities such as Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver...

The assertion of absolute state sovereignty is nowhere more apparent than in the detention regime. Unlike prisons, immigrant detention does not pretend to serve any purpose other than forcible confinement and control to ensure deportation. The detention center in Laval [Quebec] is officially designated the Immigration Prevention Center. There are two main grounds for detention: first, the likelihood that a person poses a danger to the public, or second, that the person is likely not to appear for removal. This second rationale creates a catch-22: those who express fear of deportation and a desire to remain in Canada are often considered flight risks and subject to continued detention...

The reality of migration is one that reveals the asymmetrical relations between “rich” and “poor,” and between North and South, where the effects of colonialism and corporate globalization have created political economies that compel people to move. A salient example of the impact of capitalism and neo-colonialism on migration trends is the U.S.-Mexican border. As part of its inclusion in the

North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, Mexico was forced to adjust its constitution's Article 27, which guaranteed rights to communal lands (*ejidos*). A symbolic illustration of the agreement's effects is the fate of Mexican corn: the Mexican government was forced to eliminate subsidies to corn, while corn produced in the United States remained subsidized, thus making it cheaper to buy U.S. corn inside Mexico than Mexican corn. Over 1.5 million Mexican farmers who subsequently lost their farms migrated north to work in low-paying sectors and *maquiladora* factories...

Such forces are the same ones that have perpetuated the genocide and dispossession of indigenous peoples within the colonial project of North America. Within North America, migrants of colour and indigenous communities in the settler states face similar conditions of unequal citizenship: underrepresented, underpaid, constantly belittled by overt and institutional racism, massively incarcerated, denied equal access to social services, gross inequities in income, wealth, and health, and the daily reality of an apartheid system that delineates—through the categorization of nonstatus immigrants and Indians—the right to a livelihood and dignity.

Anticolonial and anticapitalist immigrant rights groups like No One Is Illegal have prioritized solidarity with indigenous struggles, and acknowledged that demands of migrant communities to the Canadian government will be short-lived if they are gained at the expense of indigenous self-determination. Some of the strongest alliances of trust and solidarity have been built among immigrant/refugees and indigenous peoples. In Vancouver, for example, immigrants and refugees have participated in several delegations to indigenous blockades around British Columbia, and shared histories of struggle and displacement in Latin America, South Asia, and the Middle East as well as within North America. In Montreal, for instance, nonstatus Algerians participated in delegation visits to Federal Indian Ministry offices with the Mohawk Eastern Society, and Mohawks from Kanehsatake have participated in actions against deportation. In Toronto, Palestinian refugees and immigrants are strengthening the alliances with the Coalition for Indigenous Sovereignty. The trust and sense of mutual aid that has developed has resulted in a genuine sharing of our visions of an alternate world. As indigenous warrior Gord Hill states, "The purpose of the colonial strategy is to either destroy or assimilate the indigenous peoples and other oppressed social sectors. This is inherent in colonization, which seeks to impose one world onto another. The strength of our alliance, unlike the shifting alliances made between ruling elites, is ultimately based on trust and solidarity."

It is not a novel assertion that while free trade agreements open borders to capital, borders are increasingly closed to those whom capital has displaced. In

2001, the Canadian government signed the *Canada-U.S. Smart Border Accord*, which ensures that border restrictions will not impair the economic necessity of the free flow of goods and services. It is also important to note, however, that while repressive immigration policies are intended to exclude those deemed undesirable, they are not intended to act as fortresses against all racialized people. It is not in the best interests of the Canadian economy to deport all nonstatus migrants. Instead, border controls serve to create a constantly internalized fear of instability and vulnerability. The state's legally sanctioned right to deny permanent legal status to most who migrate guarantees that a growing number of migrants will constitute a highly exploitable labour pool.

Therefore, the efforts to achieve a borderless capitalist global economy depend on securing territorial borders against undesirable outsiders while creating a pool of noncitizens whose hyperexploitable labour free markets depend on. The notion of "illegals" is a constructed one that allows for the maintenance of social hierarchies based on race and class. The term illegal does not conjure up images of U.S. students who have illegally overstayed their tourist visas. As Nandita Sharma argues, "Categories of legality and illegality are... deeply ideological. They help to conceal the fact that both those represented as foreigners and those seen as Canadian work within the same labour market and live within the same society"...

Approximately 18,000 migrant farmworkers from the Caribbean and Mexico arrive in Canada to work the fields, orchards, and greenhouses every year, typically for periods of three to ten months. Temporary migrant workers are separated from their families and perform rigorous rural labour that few Canadians would choose to do. The low wages of migrant workers has contributed to the multimillion-dollar agricultural industry, while the structure of the *Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program*—particularly the lack of secure work and status—silences the struggles of the workers.

Migrant women of colour on temporary work visas most directly experience the hypocrisy of liberal democracies that promise opportunity while creating categories of exploited workers. The *Foreign Domestic Movement Program*, which came into effect in 1981, allowed migrant women into Canada if they could find employment as a domestic worker, but the women were not granted citizenship. In 1992, the *Live-In Caregiver Program* replaced the *Foreign Domestic Movement Program*. Under the *Live-In Caregiver Program*, migrant women—predominantly Filipinas—enter Canada as temporary workers. Although the program calls for a forty-nine-hour maximum workweek, the live-in aspect allows employers to call on the caregivers at any time, and renders the women sub-

ject to labour rights violations and gross abuse. Women are required to work for two years within a window of thirty-six months in order to qualify for permanent residency. Many advocates have called for the abolition of the *Live-In Care-giver Program*, and to allow women with domestic and caring work skills to immigrate and access the full rights of residency.

Yet even immigrants with permanent residency rights face conditions of underemployment and inequities in income... A Statistics Canada study indicates that even after ten years in Canada, one-fifth of university-educated immigrants are still working in low-income jobs. Research by the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada conducted over ten years reveals that the poverty rate among Canadian-born people in the year 2000 was 14.3 percent, compared to a poverty rate of 20.2 percent among all immigrants and 35.8 percent among recent immigrants. Hence, the oppression of migrants is inextricably linked to the systemic oppression of all racialized people.

In reality, delving into the dynamics and struggles of immigrants and North American-born people of colour has revealed many divisions. We must confront the false barriers that divide us, and make sense of economic transformations, articulate a more complicated and nuanced form of analysis, and face the delicate and ever-evolving constructs of racism and racial identity

In addition to focusing on individual casework advocacy, immigrant rights organizing has also concentrated on campaigns against the institutions that enforce immigration law such as border patrols, detention centers, and immigration and refugee government departments. This organizing has often remained isolated from fights for racial justice, including campaigns for exposing discrimination in housing, employment, education, and law enforcement. This is not to suggest that the links are ignored in theory; in reality, though, antiracism movements rarely incorporate demands for an end to discrimination in the immigration and refugee system. Nor do fights for immigrants' rights include struggles to end discrimination in the lives of migrants beyond the immigration system.

Another major tension is the model minority syndrome. The ability of the state to determine whether one is worthy of citizenship status creates artificial barriers between recent migrants who believe they have met this test of worthiness by being hardworking with no need for government assistance and those ghettoized communities of colour who are caricatured as "welfare bums." As Julie Quiroz-Martinez writes, "The U.S. lures black immigrants by telling them they'll be welcomed, that they are different from African Americans, who refuse to 'pull themselves up by their bootstraps.' This superior attitude exists even among black immigrants who have the lowest earnings and status, where it

makes no sense in reality. But no one immigrates to the U.S. to become part of a racially oppressed group, so it takes long personal experience with racism for even black immigrants to see that they are viewed as ‘niggers’.”

Some of these divides can be attributed to the labour movement. The predominantly white labour movement from the 1950s to 1970s supported anti-immigrant measures due to fear of “job-stealing” migrants. This hysteria, informed by a sense of national entitlement that white people feel to North America and its economy, is an attempt to subjugate communities of colour in ghettoized spaces in the South. Organizations of colour within the labour movement have internalized this form of entitlement, exacerbated by the reality that racialized communities only have any form of entitlement when in relation to undocumented migrants. In 1986 in the United States, for instance, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People supported “employer sanctions” in the proposed *Immigration Control and Reform Act*, citing a fear of African American worker displacement by immigrants.

Therefore, without a consciousness for racial justice, immigrant rights campaigns become focused on integration and assimilation, and could perpetuate racist stereotypes. Similarly, without an analysis of global migration, which is highly racialized, racial justice movements stagnate in a domestic framework that neglects the realities of many people of colour...

Patriotic discourses emphasize the nation as a contained entity threatened by outside forces. The illusion of the nation as a place of safety and security is reified through state bureaucratic organizations, such as the military, federal intelligence organizations, and immigration departments, which produce the sense that “the enemy” is outside the realm of “us.” For example, within days of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese in North America were seen as enemy aliens. A minister of Parliament in the British Columbian government at the time announced, “Let our slogan be for British Columbia; no Japs from the Rockies to the seas.” And on the enactment of the War Measures Act in 1942, about 22,000 Japanese were relocated, 75 percent of whom were naturalized Canadians.

With the “war on terrorism,” the identities of North Americans versus the terrorists are being reimagined. Although the enemy was now Osama bin Laden, his image personified all Arabs in the Western imagination, and the nation was reconfigured to exclude all Arabs. By comparison, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing was considered to be the act of one lone man, and thus resulted in no mass profiling, nor was there an exclusion of the entire white race from sociopolitical spaces. Borders and nation-states are historically specific systems that shape distinctive cultures, and within this culture, terrorism is perceived as a third world import (without any recognition of Western, state-sponsored terrorism

whose victims predominantly reside in the third world and indigenous territories of the first world). Such imagery reinforces the normalization of whiteness in the Western imagination and renders racialized communities as hyphenated citizens—a colonial construction of identity and entitlement. The ability to control immigration reveals a deep-rooted system of apartheid whereby the Canadian state and all those entitled to make pronouncements on immigration (not racialized migrants themselves, since they are too “biased” to weigh in) maintain the power to construct migrants as problems to be managed and contained. Phrases like “immigrants,” then, do not actually reflect one’s legal status; rather, the seemingly innocuous term is actually a euphemism for racialized migrants from the third world.

Finally, it is worth noting that Canada’s *Anti-Terrorism Act*, which amends the *Criminal Code*, is scarcely being used to combat terrorism. Instead the *IRPA* [the ironically named *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*], which gives the state the powers to charge, detain, and deport noncitizens, is being used through the provision of security certificates. While the *Anti-Terrorism Act* gives the police extraordinary investigative powers, it still requires that the accused are actually charged with some defined act. Under the security certificates regime, however, detainees can be held without charge. Much has been written about how security certificates violate principles of due process; more significantly, though, security certificates are a form of legislated racism in only applying to noncitizens. Law professor Audrey Mackim points out that “immigration law has long done to noncitizens what the *Anti-Terrorism Act* proposes to do to citizens—without public outcry and with judicial blessing.”

Although different eras have been dominated by different perceptions of threats to the nation-state, each time period has formulated threats as being external to the nation-state, thereby justifying exclusionary immigration policies. As Catherine Dauvergne has written, “One reason why the concept of ‘national interest’ is so vital to immigration law is because of the role this law plays in constituting the nation.” It is not enough to simply defend the “civil liberties and human rights” of immigrants and refugees—a demand that has come to dominate the leftist landscape. Human rights standards have not altered the reality of the immigration and refugee system. For example, the *UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, which came into force in 1954, sets standards of treatment for refugees, yet does not alter the fundamental fact that states are under no obligation to admit those who are not their nationals. Sunera Thobani offers this challenge: “What makes it alright for us to buy a t-shirt on the streets of Vancouver for \$3, which was made in China, then stand up all outraged as Canadian citizens when the woman who made that t-shirt tries to come here and live with

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us on a basis of equality?” Instead, we must also confront and challenge the nationalistic processes and logic of racialized notions of belonging and entitlement in order to build a powerful grassroots movement for genuine justice and self-determination for migrants fighting state control.

Chapter 12

New Directions in Anarchist Theory

65. Todd May: Post-Structuralism and Anarchism (1989)

In the aftermath of the May-June events in France in 1968, and the apparent defeat of the radical movements of the 1960s, some intellectuals began to question the presuppositions of radical theory and politics. Michel Foucault (1926-1984) is perhaps the best known of these poststructuralist theorists. Their critiques of various authoritarian institutions, such as mental hospitals and prisons, shared a number of similarities with various anarchist perspectives, but they were reluctant to acknowledge any relationship. Coming from the academy, where anarchism has never been fashionable, Foucault and other post-structuralists appear to have known little about anarchism, viewing it as the illegitimate offspring of the Enlightenment whose liberatory project was supposedly vitiated by its commitment to Enlightenment ideals of freedom, autonomy and social justice, a position disputed by many anarchists, including Noam Chomsky (Volume Two, Selection 55 and Selection 27 above) and Mark Leier (Selection 68 below). When Foucault debated Noam Chomsky in 1971, Foucault responded to Chomsky's statement that if a proletarian seizure of power "would lead to a terrorist police state, in which freedom and dignity and decent human relations would be destroyed, then I wouldn't want the proletariat to take power" by saying that when "the proletariat takes power, it may be quite possible that the proletariat will exert towards the classes over which it has just triumphed, a violent, dictatorial, and even bloody power. I can't see what objection one could make to this" (The Chomsky-Foucault Debate: On Human Nature (New York: New Press, 2006)). Todd May has argued nevertheless that post-structuralism is implicitly anarchist, despite its philosophical differences with historical forms of anarchism. The following excerpts are taken from his groundbreaking article, "Is post-structuralist political theory anarchist?" Philosophy and Social Criticism, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1989. May deals with the relationship be-

tween post-structuralism and anarchism in more detail in his book, The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism (University Park: Penn State Press, 1994). Reprinted with the kind permission of the publisher.

Anarchism is often dismissed in the same terms as post structuralism for being an ethical relativism or a voluntarist chaos. However, the theoretical tradition of anarchism, though not as voluminous as Marxism or liberalism, provides a general framework within which post-structuralist thought can be situated and thus more adequately evaluated...

Anarchism can be defined as the struggle against representation in public life. Representation, as a political concept, is the handing over of power by a group of people to another person or group of people ostensibly in order to have the interests of the former realized. Political representation differs from administrative representation, which involves no fundamental transfer of power but instead merely a delegation of administrative capability. In administrative representation, a group empowers an individual or another group to enact specific programs or specific means to a general goal; the representing group can be withdrawn or recalled at anytime, and all final decisions lie with the represented group. By contrast, political representation involves a transfer of decision-making power from the represented to the representer. The representing individual or group acts in the name of, and thus with the legitimation of, the represented group; its decisions cannot be overturned by the represented group.

Anarchist thought distrusts political representation because it sees the cession of power as the invitation to abuse. In this sense, it is not only state or economic power which is the object of its mistrust, but all forms of power exercised by one group over another. Within the anarchist tradition, the concept of politics and the political field is wider than it is within either Marxism or liberalism. For Bakunin, the two fundamental power arrangements to be struggled against (along with the capitalists) were, as his major work [*God and the State*] indicates, the state and the church. To these, later anarchists have added plant managers, patriarchy and the institution of marriage, prisons, psychotherapy, and a myriad of other oppressions...

Marxism, no matter how supportive of struggles against racism, sexism, etc. it has been, has always seen them as strategically subordinated to the struggle for economic socialism. That is why it lends itself to centralized forms of struggle and political representation, in short Leninism, as its strategic expression. As anarchists have pointed out, however, and as history has made evident, such means are not to be divorced from their ends. The dictatorship of the proletariat has turned out to be, above all, a dictatorship. "It has thus become obvious that a further advance in social life does not lie in the direction of a further concen-

tration of power and regulative functions in the hands of a governing body, but in the direction of decentralization, both territorial and functional” [Kropotkin, *Anarchist Communism*]. Both territorial and functional. Both in strategy and as the goal. Real political change comes from below and from many points, not from above and from a center. “The anarchist alternative is that of fragmentation, fission rather than fusion, diversity rather than unity, a mass of societies rather than a mass society” [Colin Ward, *Anarchy in Action*].

Anarchism, then, focuses upon the oppressed themselves rather than upon those who claim to speak for them. And it sees oppression not merely in one type of situation, but rather in a variety of irreducible situations. In order to understand oppression, one must describe the situation in which it is found; there is no such thing as a class that is *a priori* oppressed across all situations. Here anarchism exhibits a resistance not only to reducibility but to abstraction more generally. “By proclaiming our morality of equality, or anarchism, we refuse to assume a right which moralists have always taken upon themselves to claim, that of mutilating the individual in the name of some ideal” [Kropotkin, *Anarchist Morality*, Volume One, Selection 54]. What anarchism resists are the many ways in which the individual becomes subordinated to something outside him or herself. Representation by a group or another individual is one form of that subordination. Representation of one’s humanity by means of an ideal is another. Whether it be “the good,” “the march of history,” or “the needs of society,” anarchism is suspicious of ideals that function to coerce individuals into subordinating themselves to a larger cause.

This does not mean, however, that anarchism is either individualist in the liberal sense or morally hedonistic. Liberal individualism has always claimed to value freedom over enforced equality, holding the latter to require unnecessary constraints upon the former. In the anarchist tradition, however, it makes no sense to talk about freedom without some notion of equality. “Freedom without equality means that the poor and weak are less free than the rich and strong, and equality without freedom means that we are all slaves together” [Nicolas Walter, *About Anarchism*, Volume Two, Selection 54]. Freedom is not juridical, it is material; it is defined not by how one is treated under the law but by the concrete choices one is capable of making in the situations in which one finds oneself. Although there is a tradition of individualist anarchism, its thought runs counter to the anarchist analyses of concrete oppression occurring within a variety of concrete contexts. Anarchism is not, fundamentally, liberalism gone wild.

It is also not a form of amoralism. By refusing to submit to an ideal of “the good,” anarchism does not reject morality. Instead, it argues that by holding an ideal to which individuals must subordinate themselves, one in fact acts counter to the moral intuition of respect for others. The rejection of a moral ideal is made

precisely on moral grounds. “The good” is merely another way to represent people to themselves by means of something external to them. Rather than relying upon their own moral intuitions and their capacity to reflect upon them in irreducible concrete situations, individuals are asked to submit to an ideal which claims to realize their highest nature but in fact disjoins them from their capacities for critical reflection and thoughtful action. If individuals are to be able to act morally, they must be allowed to consider the situations in which they find themselves in their specificity and materiality, rather than submitting to an abstract formula which is imposed upon situations from above.

Here lies the *a priori* of traditional anarchism: trust in the individual. From its inception, anarchism has founded itself on a faith in the individual to realize his or her decision-making power morally and effectually. The clearest contemporary statement of this trust comes from anarchist Murray Bookchin: “The revolutionary project must take its point of departure from a fundamental libertarian precept: every normal human being is *competent* to manage the affairs of society and, more specifically, the community in which he or she is a member” [*Re-making Society*]. Left to their own devices, individuals have a natural ability—indeed a propensity—to devise social arrangements that are both just and efficient. It is only in situations of inequality, situations in which some individuals are permitted to have power over others, that individual capabilities are deformed and become directed toward oppression rather than mutual respect and creativity. “It is the characteristic of privilege and every privileged position to kill the mind and heart of men” [Bakunin, *God and the State*, Volume One, Selection 24].

In this sense, the distinctive feature shared by all institutions that oppress—economic, religious, patriarchal, or other—is the repression of individual potential. Although oppression occurs on a variety of fronts and in a multitude of ways, all of its variegations share the trait of restricting action, of limiting individual choice. It is, of course, a parody of anarchism to claim that it promotes a chaos of hedonism to subvert the monolith of state power; but it is here, in the complementary notions of individual competence and oppression as repression, that such a claim takes root.

There are, on the surface, several similarities between traditional anarchist thought and post-structuralist theory. The critique of representation is a central theme of the post-structuralists; Deleuze once told Foucault “you were the first... to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others.” Decentralization, local action, discovering power in its various networks rather than in the state alone, are hallmark traits of post-structuralist analyses. However, if post-structuralist political thought were to be characterized by a single feature, it would be the critique of autonomy involved in the theory of the sub-

ject. Foucault's histories of the constitution of the subject, Deleuze and Guattari's encrustation of the social into the interstices of the personal, and Lyotard's analyses of the pragmatic aspects of language that are determinative for thought were produced, in part, to denigrate the concept of the subject as an autonomous, self-transparent, self-sustaining entity. The *a priori* of traditional anarchism is anathema to post-structuralism.

It would seem, then, that the similarities between anarchism and post-structuralism end at the surface. For what would anarchism be without individual autonomy? It is autonomy that founds the possibility of action from below, that resists the reduction to representation, and that constitutes the moral dignity that abstraction and representation offend. Without a trust in the individual it makes no sense to accuse institutional powers of repressing the individual; without a subject recognizably distinct from the social sphere, it makes no sense to talk of autonomy at all. Traditional anarchism is founded on the conception of the individual as possessing a reserve that is irreducible to social arrangements of power; to remove it, or to dilute it in a network of social practices, effectively precludes the possibility of resistance.

Yet it is precisely the denial of a reserve within subjectivity forming the locus of resistance that the post-structuralists assert. Foucault and Lyotard are clear on this. Foucault: "All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence." Lyotard (in a review of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*): "Looking for the creditor [the one from whom surplus value is stolen and who will revolt for its repayment] is wasted effort, the *subject* of the credit would always have to be *made to exist*, the proletariat to be incarnated on the surface of the *socius*." Deleuze is the closest to traditional anarchism; his claim that "[t]here is only desire and the social, and nothing else" appears to lend itself to an interpretation of individual autonomy opposing social repression. But, for Deleuze, desire is not autonomy: it is anonymous energy that has revolutionary potential only because it is an excess over the constraints which, in connivance with the social, *it also creates and sustains*. "To the question 'How can desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its slavery?' we reply that the powers which crush desire, or which subjugate it, themselves already form part of the assemblages of desire."

Why does post-structuralist political theory reject the concept of individual autonomy, which forms the cornerstone of traditional anarchist theory? Foucault, Deleuze, and Lyotard seek social change no less than the anarchists. But if they do not rely upon a reserve within the subject to constitute the wellspring of change, where will they find it? Certainly not in an external representative they are unanimous in rejecting. The abandonment of the autonomous individual or subject as the locus of resistance, and for it the substitution of "something else,"

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constitutes the decisive passage from a concept of resistance rooted in nineteenth century thought to more current conceptions. It parallels changes that have occurred in other areas in philosophy, as theorizing rooted in the subject has given way to the “linguistic turn” and, more recently, a “social turn.”

The reasons for jettisoning the subject as the locus of resistance are both historical and conceptual. Historically, the revolution predicted by Marx has not, in the West at least, come to pass. This failure is in part due to the fact that the working classes of the industrially developed nations have not, as Marx thought they would, become increasingly immiserated. However, part of the reason for the failure of the revolutionary prediction has also been ascribed to the ability of capitalism to manipulate subjectivity. The Frankfurt School, for instance, had sought to explain the absence of revolution by recourse to the cultural system’s ability to absorb all resistance, and with it all subjectivity. In the events of May, 1968 in France, students claimed that contemporary capitalism created a spectacle in which everyone was maneuvered into participating. In short, the reserve of individual autonomy had been absorbed into the systems of oppression, and thus was unsuited to form the basis for radical change.

The questioning of individual autonomy, however, is more than a historical matter. Twentieth century philosophy has come to understand the subject to be suffused by forces once considered external to it. The structure of knowledge has been found to be tied to the structure of language and to social and cultural practices of justification; it is not a given of the species. Behaviour is thought to be more deeply rooted in surrounding milieux (whether they are societal reinforcements or the unconscious family theater) than was previously considered. To these changes post-structuralism has added a critique of humanism that precludes a return to the subject as the hope of resistance.

The post-structuralist critique of humanism is founded on two intertwined tenets: first, that the subject as such is constituted in exteriority, and second, that power does not repress but rather creates. In Foucault, the critique cuts across both historical and conceptual dimensions. Particularly in his later work, he concerns himself with the question of how the subject is constituted within networks of knowledge that are also networks of power (a schism that Foucault calls “power/knowledge”). *Discipline and Punish*, “a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge,” demonstrates how the discourse of knowledge about the modern psyche is also a practice of power such that what has been read as a journey of scientific discovery can as easily be read as an increasingly subtle display of disciplinary technique. In this nexus of science and discipline, the subject as such is being constituted. An autonomy is ascribed to the subject, a realm of individual character that offers itself to prison wardens, psychologists, social workers, educators, and others as material to be shaped into so-

cially acceptable patterns. Subjectivity and “normalization” become corresponding terms with a relationship of direct implication; the wholeness of each depends upon the adequacy of the other. The first volumes of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* broaden these themes, using as their point of reference “‘that interplay between truth and sex’ which was bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century.” His studies offer historical reasons that are simultaneously political and conceptual for rejecting the view of subjectivity as a proper cite for situating resistance to the current order.

Deleuze focuses more on the energetic than on the historical. Like the anarchists, and more than Foucault, he is concerned with finding a space of resistance. But like Foucault, he rejects the concept of subjectivity, seeing it as constituted rather than constituting. His analysis of this constitution takes the form, in the two-volume *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, of showing how desire, a productive energetic stratum that is “*part of the infrastructure*,” can become self-oppressive in its appropriation by the social field within which it exists. Under capitalism, the central mechanism of the oppression of desire is the constitution of the subject through the Oedipus complex. The operation of Oedipus is, for Deleuze and Guattari, historical rather than anthropological; its result, the modern subject, is a contributor to the social order rather than a form of resistance to it. To discover the possibility of revolution is to abandon the subject and to seek alternative routes, which Deleuze calls “lines of escape,” in which to channel desire. Thus Deleuze’s critique of humanism parallels Foucault’s, and denies the subject the dignity of its autonomy through an analysis of the mechanisms by which it becomes constituted to be a subject.

During most of the 1970s, Lyotard shared Deleuze’s concern with energetics, objecting only that Oedipus was an irrelevant part of the analysis and that capitalism had its own energetic mechanism of self-destruction. For him, the subject was not so much dangerous as negligible; humanism was more irrelevant than insidious. In more recent works, Lyotard moves away from energetics to a concern with language; the subject, however, remains unaddressed. What *The Differend* analyzes are the pragmatics of discourse that enable some discourses to achieve hegemony while others are reduced to silence. The concern here is with justice, which in his earlier book, *Just Gaming*, had emerged as a preoccupation for Lyotard because he was seeking, in the wake of the demise of metanarratives, the concept (following Aristotle) of “justice without models.” *The Differend* studies the political pragmatics of language, and argues that linguistic discourse always appears in the form of a genre, with its own rules of style, evidence, and succession. In his most urgent example, he takes up the denial by Robert Faurisson that the holocaust ever occurred. Faurisson argues that since no one can describe the operation of the gas chambers from first-hand experience, there is no evidence for

their having actually operated or killed anyone. This type of argument Lyotard calls a “differend,” “the case where the plaintiff is divested of the means to argue and becomes for that reason a victim.”

For Lyotard, the dominance of certain genres of language creates victims by denying the expression proper to other genres. The dominance of the scientific genre is one of those victimizing genres, whose rules of evidence Faurisson uses (or better, warps) to deny the claims of Jews upon history. The underlying argument of Lyotard’s concern with the pragmatics of discourse is that there must be space created for a proliferation of different (and even new types of) genres, if the incommensurability that attaches to different genres is not to result in the victimization of speakers. In this concern, Lyotard focuses not upon the autonomy of a subject—a focus which would merely substitute another dominant genre—but upon discourse itself, the possibilities and dangers presented by the necessity of events of spoken discourse. Genres of discourse create worlds; at the same time, the dominance of some genres threatens to cast the worlds of some into obscurity, and ultimately into non-existence.

The post-structuralist analyses of knowledge, of desire, and of language, subvert the humanist discourse which is the foundation of traditional anarchism. Moreover, they consider humanism’s emphasis on the autonomy and dignity of the subject to be dangerous (except for Lyotard, for whom it is mostly irrelevant), continuing in a subtler guise the very mechanisms of oppression it sought to resist. Humanism is the nineteenth century motif, and individual autonomy and subjectivity its concepts, that must be rejected if a politics adequate to our age is to be articulated. This motif and its concepts are not peculiar to anarchism; they provide the foundation both for liberalism, with its emphasis on freedom and autonomy, and for traditional Marxism, with its focus on labour as a species-being, as well. (It is no accident that recent Marxists such as Althusser have tried to re-formulate Marxism by divesting it of all humanist categories.) Humanism is the foundation of all political theory bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century. In rejecting it, post-structuralism has questioned not only the fundamental assumptions of such theory, but also the very idea that political theory actually requires foundations. That is why post-structuralism is so often misunderstood as an extreme relativism or nihilism.

However, it is not in favour of chaos that post-structuralism has abjured the notion of foundations, humanist or otherwise, for its political theorizing. What it has offered instead are precise analyses of oppression in its operation on a variety of registers. None of the post-structuralists claims to offer unsurpassable perspectives on oppression; indeed their analyses raise doubts about the coherence of the concept of an unsurpassable perspective in political theory. Instead, they engage in what has often been called “micropolitics”: political theorizing

that is specific to regions, types, or levels of political activity, but makes no pretensions of offering a general political theory. To offer a general political theory would in fact run counter to their common contention that oppression must be analyzed and resisted on the many registers and in the many nexes in which it is discovered. It would be to invite a return to the problem created by humanism, which became a tool of oppression to the very degree that it became a conceptual foundation for political or social thought. For the post-structuralists, there is a Stalin waiting behind every general political theory: either you conform to the concepts on which it relies, or else you must be changed or eliminated in favour of those concepts. Foundationalism in political theory is, in short, inseparable from representation.

This is the trap of an anarchist humanism. By relying on humanism as its conceptual basis, anarchists precluded the possibility of resistance by those who do not conform to its dictates of normal subjectivity. Thus it is no surprise when in Kropotkin's critique of the prisons he lauds Pinel as a liberator of the insane, failing to see the new psychological bonds Pinel introduced and which Foucault analyzed in *Histoire de la Folie*. For traditional anarchism, abnormality is to be cured rather than expressed; and though far more tolerant of deviance from the norm in matters of sexuality and other behaviours, there remains in such an anarchism the concept of the norm as the prototype of the properly human. This prototype, the post-structuralists have argued, does not constitute the source of resistance against oppression in the contemporary age; rather, through its unity and its concrete operation it is one form of such oppression.

Traditional anarchism, in its foundational concepts—and moreover, in the fact of possessing foundational concepts—betrays the insights which constitute its core. Humanism is a form of representation; thus, anarchism, as a critique of representation, cannot be constructed on its basis. Post-structuralist theorizing has, in effect, offered a way out of the humanist trap by engaging in non-foundationalist political critique. Such critique reveals how decentralized, non-representative radical theorizing can be articulated without relying upon a fundamental concept or motif in the name of which it offers its critique. However, one question remains which, unanswered, threatens the very notion of post-structuralism as a political *critique*. If it is not in the name of humanism or some other foundation that the critique occurs, in what or whose name is it a critique? How can the post-structuralists criticize existing social structures as oppressive without either a concept of what is being oppressed or at least a set of values that would be better realized in another social arrangement? In eliminating autonomy as inadequate to play the role of the oppressed in political critique, has post-structuralism eliminated the role itself, and with it the very possibility of critique? In short, can there be critique without representation?

To the last question, the answer must be: in some sense yes, and in some sense no. There can be no political critique without a value in the name of which one criticizes. One practice or institution must be said in some way to be wrong relative to another. Simply put, evaluation cannot occur without values; and where there are values, there is representation. For instance, in his history of the prisons, Foucault criticizes the practices of psychology and penology for normalizing individuals. His criticism rests on a value that goes something like this: one should not constrain others' action or thought unnecessarily. Lyotard can be read as promoting the value, among others, of allowing the fullest expression for different linguistic genres. Inasmuch as these values are held to be valid for all, there is representation underlying post-structuralist theorizing.

However, these values are not pernicious to the anarchist project of allowing oppressed populations to decide their goals and their means of resistance within the registers of their own oppression. They do not reduce struggles in one area to struggles in another. They are consonant with decentralized resistance and with local self-determination. The values that infuse the works of Foucault, Deleuze, and Lyotard are directed not toward formulating the means and ends of the oppressed considered as a single class; they try to facilitate the struggles of different groups by offering analyses, conceptual strategies, and political and theoretical critique. Foucault observes that “[t]he intellectual no longer has to play the role of an advisor. The project, tactics and goals to be adopted are a matter for those who do the fighting. What the intellectual can do is to provide instruments of analysis.” Post-structuralism leaves the decision of how the oppressed are to determine themselves to the oppressed; it merely provides them with intellectual tools that they may find helpful along the way.

And to those who say that even the minimal values of the post-structuralists are too much, who refuse to be represented as people who think others should not be constrained unnecessarily, or would like to allow others their expression, the post-structuralists have nothing to offer in the way of refutation. To seek a general theory (outside any logical conflict or inconsistency between specific values) within which to place such values is to engage once again in the project of building foundations, and thus of representation. Beyond the point of local values that allow for resistance along a variety of registers, there is no longer theory—only combat.

Thus post-structuralist theory is indeed anarchist. It is in fact more consistently anarchist than traditional anarchist theory has proven to be. The theoretical wellspring of anarchism—the refusal of representation by political or conceptual means in order to achieve self-determination along a variety of registers and at different local levels—finds its underpinnings articulated most accurately by the post-structuralist political theorists. Conversely, post-structuralism,

rather than comprising a jumble of unrelated analyses, can be seen within the broad movement of anarchism. Reiner Schurmann was correct to call the locus of resistance in Foucault an “anarchist subject” who struggles against “the law of social totalization.” The same could be said for Deleuze and Lyotard. The type of intellectual activity promoted by the traditional anarchists and exemplified by the post-structuralists is one of specific analysis rather than of overarching critique. The traditional anarchists pointed to the dangers of the dominance of abstraction; the post-structuralists have taken account of those dangers in all of their works. They have produced a theoretical corpus that addresses itself to an age that has seen too much of political representation and too little of self-determination. What both traditional anarchism and contemporary post-structuralism seek is a society—or better, a set of intersecting societies—in which people are not told who they are, what they want, and how they shall live, but who will be able to determine these things for themselves. These societies constitute an ideal and, as the post-structuralists recognize, probably an impossible ideal. But in the kinds of analyses and struggles such an ideal promotes—analyses and struggles dedicated to opening up concrete spaces of freedom in the social field—lays the value of anarchist theory, both traditional and contemporary.

66. Saul Newman: *The Politics of Post-Anarchism* (2003)

Saul Newman is the author of From Bakunin to Lacan: Anti-authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2001), Power and Politics in Poststructuralist Thought: New theories of the political (London: Routledge, 2005) and Unstable Universalities: Postmodernity and Radical Politics (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2007). “The Politics of Postanarchism” was originally published by the Institute for Anarchist Studies in July 2003, and in an expanded book form by Edinburgh University Press in 2010. Newman discusses the interrelationship between post-structuralism, discourse analysis, the anti-globalization movement and the re-emergence of anarchism, arguing for an anti-essentialist “post-anarchism” that combines the poststructuralist critique of representation, scientific rationality and Enlightenment humanism with an anarchist critique of power and authority. Reprinted with the kind permission of the author.

In recent years radical politics has been faced with a number of new challenges, not least of which has been the reemergence of the aggressive, authoritarian state in its new paradigm of security and bio-politics. The “war on terror” serves as the latest guise for the aggressive reassertion of the principle of state sovereignty, beyond the traditional limits imposed on it by legal institutions or democratic

polities. Coupled with this has been the hegemony of neo-liberal projects of capitalist globalization, as well as the ideological obscurantism of the so-called Third Way. The profound disillusionment in the wake of the collapse of Communist systems nearly two decades ago has resulted in a political and theoretical vacuum for the radical Left, which has generally been ineffective in countering the rise of the Far Right in Europe, as well as a more insidious “creeping conservatism” whose dark ideological implications we are only just beginning to see unfold.

It is perhaps because of the disarray that the Left finds itself in today that there has been a recent revival of interest in anarchism as a possible radical alternative to Marxism. Indeed, anarchism was always a kind of “third way” between liberalism and Marxism, and now, with the general disenchantment felt with both “free-market” style liberalism and centralist socialism, the appeal of, or at least interest in, anarchism is likely to increase. This revival is also due to the prominence of the broadly termed anti-globalization movement. This is a movement which contests the domination of neo-liberal globalization in all its manifestations—from corporate greed, to environmental degradation and genetically-modified foods. It is based around a broad social protest agenda which incorporates a multitude of different issues and political identities. However, what we are witnessing here is clearly a new form of radical politics—one that is fundamentally different to both the particularized politics of identity that has generally prevailed in Western liberal societies, as well as to the old style Marxist politics of class struggle. On the one hand, the anti-globalization movement unites different identities around a common struggle; and yet this common ground is not determined in advance, or based on the priority of particular class interests, but rather is articulated in a contingent way during the struggle itself. What makes this movement radical is its unpredictability and indeterminacy—the way that unexpected links and alliances are formed between different identities and groups that would otherwise have little in common. So while this movement is universal, in the sense that it invokes a common emancipative horizon which constitutes the identities of participants, it rejects the false universality of Marxist struggles, which deny difference, and subordinate other struggles to the central role of the proletariat—or, to be more precise, to the vanguard role of the Party.

It is this refusal of centralist and hierarchical politics, this openness to a plurality of different identities and struggles, that makes the anti-globalization movement an *anarchist* movement. It is not anarchistic just because anarchist groups are prominent in it. What is more important is that the anti-globalization movement, without being consciously anarchist, embodies an anarchistic form of politics in its structure and organization—which are decentralized, pluralistic and democratic—as well as in its inclusiveness. Just as classical anarchists like

Bakunin and Kropotkin insisted, in opposition to Marxists, that the revolutionary struggle could not be confined or determined by the class interests of the industrial proletariat, and must be open also to peasants, the lumpenproletariat, and intellectuals *déclassé*, etc., so too the contemporary movement includes a broad range of struggles, identities and interests—trade unions, students, environmentalists, indigenous groups, ethnic minorities, peace activists, and so on.

As post-Marxists like Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argue, the radical political horizon is no longer dominated by the proletariat and its struggle against capitalism. They point to a whole series of new social movements and identities—blacks, feminists, ethnic and sexual minorities—which no longer fit into the Marxist category of class struggles: “The common denominator of all of them would be their differentiation from workers’ struggles, considered as ‘class’ struggles” [*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*]. Class is therefore no longer the central category through which radical political subjectivity is defined. Moreover, contemporary political struggles are no longer determined by the struggle against capitalism, but rather point to new sites of domination and highlight new arenas of antagonism—racism, privatization, workplace surveillance, bureaucratization, etc. As Laclau and Mouffe argue, these new social movements have been primarily struggles against *domination*, rather than merely economic exploitation as the Marxist paradigm would suppose: “As for their novelty, that is conferred upon them by the fact that they call into question new forms of subordination.” That is to say, they are *anti-authoritarian* struggles—struggles that contest the lack of reciprocity in particular relations of power. Here, economic exploitation would be seen as part of the broader problematic of domination—which would include also sexual and cultural forms of subordination. In this sense, one could say that these struggles and antagonisms point to an *anarchist* moment in contemporary politics.

According to post-Marxists, contemporary political conditions simply can no longer be explained within the theoretical categories and paradigms central to Marxist theory. Marxism was conceptually limited by its class essentialism and economic determinism, which had the effect of reducing the political to a site that was strictly determined by the capitalist economy and the dialectical emergence of what was seen as the universal emancipative subject. That is to say, Marxism was unable to understand the political as a fully autonomous, specific and contingent field in its own right, seeing it always as a superstructural effect of class and economic structures. Thus, the analysis of politics was subordinated to the analysis of capitalism. Because of this, Marxism simply has no theoretical purchase on political struggles that are not based on class, and are no longer centered around economic issues. The catastrophic failure of the Marxist project—its culmination in the massive perpetuation and centralization of state power and

authority—showed that it had neglected the importance and specificity of the political domain. By contrast, contemporary post-Marxists assert the *primacy of the political*, seeing it as an autonomous field—one that, rather than being determined by class dynamics and the workings of the capitalist economy, is radically *contingent and indeterminate*.

What is surprising, then, is that post-Marxist theory has not recognized the crucial contribution of classical anarchism in conceptualizing a fully autonomous political field. Indeed, it is precisely this emphasis on the primacy and specificity of the political that characterizes anarchism and distinguishes it from Marxism. Anarchism offered a radical socialist critique of Marxism, exposing its theoretical blindspot on the question of state power. Unlike Marxism, which saw political power as deriving from class position, anarchists like Mikhail Bakunin insisted that the state must be seen as the main impediment to socialist revolution, and that it was oppressive no matter what form it took and/or which class controlled it: “They (Marxists) do not know that despotism resides not so much in the *form* of the State but in the very *principle* of the State and political power” [*The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution*]. In other words, domination existed in the very structure and logic of the state—it constituted an autonomous site or place of power, one that must be destroyed as the first act of revolution. Anarchists believed that Marx’s neglect of this domain would have disastrous consequences for revolutionary politics—a prediction that was proven all too accurate by the Bolshevik Revolution. For anarchists, the centralized political power could not be easily overcome, and was always in danger of being reaffirmed unless addressed specifically. The theoretical innovation of anarchism therefore lay in taking the analysis of power beyond the economic reductionist paradigm of Marxism. Anarchism also pointed to other sites of authority and domination that were neglected in Marxist theory—for example, the Church, the family and patriarchal structures, the law, technology, as well as the structure and hierarchy of the Marxist revolutionary Party itself. It offered new theoretical tools for the analysis of political power and, in doing so, opened up the site of the political as a specific field of revolutionary struggle and antagonism, which could no longer be subordinated to purely economic concerns.

Given anarchism’s contribution to radical politics and, in particular, its theoretical proximity to current post-Marxist projects, there has been a curious silence about this revolutionary tradition on the part of contemporary radical theory. However, I would also suggest that just as contemporary theory should take account of the intervention of anarchism, anarchism itself could benefit greatly through an incorporation of contemporary theoretical perspectives, in particular those derived from discourse analysis, psychoanalysis and poststructuralism. Perhaps we could say that anarchism today has been more about practice than the-

ory, despite, of course, the interventions of a number of influential modern anarchist thinkers like Noam Chomsky, John Zerzan and Murray Bookchin. I have already pointed to the *anarchy in action* that we see in the new social movements that characterize our political landscape. However, the very conditions that have given rise to the anarchist moment—the pluralization of struggles, subjectivities and sites of power—are also the conditions that highlight the central contradictions and limits of anarchist theory. Anarchist theory is still largely based in the paradigm of Enlightenment humanism—with its essentialist notions of the rational human subject, and its positivistic faith in science and objective historical laws. Just as Marxism was limited politically by its own categories of class and economic determinism, as well as by its dialectical view of historical development, anarchism can also be said to be limited by its epistemological anchoring in the essentialist and rationalist discourses of Enlightenment humanism.

The paradigm of Enlightenment humanism has been superseded by the paradigm of postmodernity, which can be seen as a critical perspective on the discourses of modernity—an “incredulity towards metanarratives,” as Jean-Francois Lyotard put it [in *The Postmodern Condition*]. In other words, what the postmodern condition puts in question is precisely the universality and absolutism of rational and moral frameworks derived from the Enlightenment. It unmasks the very ideas that we have taken for granted—our faith in science, for instance—showing their arbitrary nature, and the way they have been constructed through the violent exclusion of other discourses and perspectives. Postmodernism also questions the essentialist ideas about subjectivity and society—the conviction that there is a central and unchanging truth at the base of our identity and our social existence, a truth that can only be revealed once the irrational mystifications of religion or ideology have been discarded. Instead, postmodernism emphasizes the shifting and contingent nature of identity—the multiplicity of ways in which it can be experienced and understood. Moreover, rather than history being understood as the unfolding of a rational logic or essential truth—as in the dialectic, for instance—it is seen from the postmodern perspective as a series of haphazard accidents and contingencies, without origin or purpose. Postmodernism therefore emphasizes the instability and plurality of identity, the constructed nature of social reality, the incommensurability of difference, and the contingency of history.

There are a number of contemporary critical theoretical strategies that engage with the question of postmodernity, and that I see as having crucial implications for radical politics today. These strategies would include poststructuralism, “discourse analysis” and post-Marxism. They derive from a variety of different fields in philosophy, political theory, cultural studies, aesthetics and psychoanalysis, yet what they broadly share is a *discursive* understanding of social reality. That is to

say, they see social and political identities as being constructed through relations of discourse and power, and as having no intelligible meaning outside this context. Furthermore, these perspectives go beyond a structural determinist understanding of the world, pointing to the indeterminacy of the structure itself, as well as its multiple forms of articulation. There are several key theoretical problematics that can be drawn out here, that are not only central to the contemporary political field, but also have important implications for anarchism itself.

A) *The opacity of the social.* The socio-political field is characterized by multiple layers of articulation, antagonism and ideological dissimulation. Rather than there being an objective social truth beyond interpretation and ideology, there is only the antagonism of conflicting articulations of the social. This derives from the Althusserian (and originally Freudian) principle of *overdetermination*—according to which meaning is never ultimately fixed, giving rise to a plurality of symbolic interpretations. Slavoj Žižek provides an interesting example of this discursive operation through Claude Lévi-Strauss' discussion of the different perceptions of the spatial location of buildings among members of a Winnebago tribe. The tribe, we are told, is divided into two groups—"those who are from above" and "those who are from below." An individual from each group was asked to draw the ground plan of his or her village on sand or a piece of paper. The result was a radical difference between the representations of each group. "Those who are from above" drew the village as a series of concentric circles within circles, with a group of circles in the center and a series of satellite circles clustered around this. This would correspond with the "conservative-corporatist" image of society held by the upper classes. "Those who are from below" drew the village also as a circle, but one that is clearly divided by a line into two antagonistic halves—thus corresponding with the "revolutionary-antagonistic" view held by the lower classes. Žižek comments here: "the very splitting into the two 'relative' perceptions implies a hidden reference to a constant—not the objective, 'actual' disposition of buildings but a traumatic kernel, a fundamental antagonism the inhabitants of the village were unable to symbolize, to account for, to 'internalize,' to come to terms with—an imbalance in social relations that prevented the community from stabilizing itself into a harmonious whole" [*Contingency, Hegemony, Universality*].

According to this argument, the anarchist notion of social objectivity or totality would be impossible to sustain. There is always an antagonism at the level of social representation that undermines the symbolic consistency of this totality. The different perspectives and conflicting interpretations of the social could not be seen merely resulting from an ideological distortion which prevents the subject from grasping the truth of society. The point here is that this difference in social interpretations—this incommensurable field of antagonisms—is the

truth of society. In other words, the distortion here is not at the level of ideology, *but at the level of social reality itself.*

B) *The indeterminacy of the subject.* Just as the identity of social may be seen as indeterminate, so too is the identity of the subject. This derives from a number of different theoretical approaches. Poststructuralists, such as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, have attempted to see subjectivity as a field of immanence and becoming that gives rise to a plurality of differences, rather than as a fixed, stable identity. The supposed unity of the subject is destabilized through the heterogeneous connections it forms with other social identities and assemblages. A different approach to the question of subjectivity can be found in Lacanian psychoanalysis. Here the identity of the subject is always deficient or lacking, because of the absence of what Jacques Lacan calls *objet petit a*—the lost object of desire. This lack in identity is also registered in the external symbolic order through which the subject is understood. The subject seeks recognition of himself through interaction with the structure of language; however, this structure is itself deficient, as there is a certain element—the Real—that escapes symbolization. What is clear in these two approaches is that the subject can no longer be seen as a complete, whole, self-contained identity that is fixed by an essence—rather its identity is contingent and unstable. Therefore, politics can no longer be based entirely on the rational claims of stable identities, or on the revolutionary assertion of a fundamental human essence. Rather, political identities are indeterminate and contingent—and can give rise to a plurality of different and often antagonistic struggles over precisely how this identity is to be defined. This approach clearly calls into question the anarchist understanding of subjectivity, which sees it as being based on a universal human essence with rational and moral characteristics.

C) *The complicity of the subject in power.* The status of the subject is further problematized by its involvement in relations of power and discourse. This was a problem that was explored extensively by Michel Foucault, who showed the myriad ways in which subjectivity is constructed through discursive regimes and practices of power/knowledge. Indeed, the way that we come to see ourselves as self-reflexive subjects with particular characteristics and capacities is based on our complicity in relations and practices of power that often dominate us. This throws into doubt the notion of the autonomous, rational human subject and its status in a radical politics of emancipation. As Foucault says, “The man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself” [*Discipline and Punish*]. This has a number of major implications for anarchism. Firstly, rather than there being a subject whose natural human essence is repressed by power—as anarchists believed—this form of subjectivity is actually an *effect of power*. That is to say, this subjectivity has been

produced in such a way that it sees itself as having an essence that is repressed—so that its liberation is actually concomitant with its continued domination. Secondly, this discursive figure of the universal human subject that is central to anarchism is itself a mechanism of domination that aims at the normalization of the individual and the exclusion of forms of subjectivity that do not fit in with it. This domination was unmasked by Max Stirner, who showed that the humanist figure of man was really an inverted image of God, and performed the same ideological operation of oppressing the individual and denying difference.

D) *The genealogical view of history.* Here the view of history as the unfolding of a fundamental law is rejected, in favour of one that emphasizes the ruptures, breaks and discontinuities in history. History is seen as a series of antagonisms and multiplicities, rather than the articulation of a universal logic, like the Hegelian dialectic, for instance. There is no “timeless and essential secret” to history, but merely, as Foucault says, the “hazardous play of dominations” [“Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” in *The Foucault Reader*]. Foucault saw Nietzschean genealogy as a project of unmasking the conflicts and antagonisms, the “unspoken warfare” that is waged behind the veil of history. The role of the genealogist is to “awaken beneath the form of institutions and legislations the forgotten past of real struggles, of masked victories or defeats, the blood that has dried on the codes of law” [“War in the Filigree of Peace: Course Summary,” in *Oxford Literary Review* 4, No. 2]. In the institutions, laws and practices that we come to take for granted, or see as natural or inevitable, there is a condensation of violent struggles and antagonisms that have been repressed. For instance, Jacques Derrida has shown that the authority of the Law is based on a founding gesture of violence that has been disavowed. The Law must be founded on something that pre-exists it, and therefore its foundation is by definition *illegal*. The secret of the Law’s being must therefore be some kind of disavowed illegality, an original crime or act of violence that brings the body of the Law into existence and which is now hidden in its symbolic structures [“Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority,” in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*]. In other words, social and political institutions and identities must be seen as having *political*—that is to say, antagonistic—rather than natural origins. These political origins have been repressed in the psychoanalytic sense—that is, they have been ‘placed elsewhere’ rather than eliminated entirely, and can always be *re-activated* once the meaning of these institutions and discourses is contested... Because genealogy sees history as a clash of representations and an antagonism of forces, in which power relations are inevitable, this would destabilize *any* identity, structure or institution—even those that might exist in a post-revolutionary anarchist society.

These four problematics that are central to poststructuralism/discourse analysis thus have fundamental implications for anarchist theory: if anarchism is to be theoretically effective today, if it is to fully engage with contemporary political struggles and identities, it must eschew the Enlightenment humanist framework in which it is articulated—with its essentialist discourses, its positivistic understanding of social relations and its dialectical view of history. Instead, it must fully assert the contingency of history, the indeterminacy of identity, and the antagonistic nature of social and political relations. In other words, anarchism must follow its insight about the autonomy of the political dimension to its logical implications—and see the political as a constitutively open field of indetermination, antagonism and contingency, without the guarantees of dialectical reconciliation and social harmony.

Postanarchism may therefore be seen as the attempt to revise anarchist theory along non-essentialist and non-dialectical lines, through the application and development of insights from poststructuralism/discourse analysis. This is in order to tease out what I see as innovative and seminal in anarchism—which is precisely the theorization of the autonomy and specificity of the political domain, and the deconstructive critique of political authority. It is these crucial aspects of anarchist theory that must be brought to light, and whose implications must be explored. They must be freed from the epistemological conditions that, although they originally gave rise to them, now restrict them. Postanarchism thus performs a salvage operation on classical anarchism, attempting to extract its central insight about the autonomy of the political, and explore its implications for contemporary radical politics.

The impetus for this postanarchist intervention came from my sense that not only was anarchist theory *in nuce* poststructuralist; but also that poststructuralism itself was *in nuce* anarchist. That is to say, anarchism allowed, as I have suggested, the theorization of the autonomy of the political with its multiple sites of power and domination, as well as its multiple identities and sites of resistance (state, church, family, patriarchy, etc) beyond the economic reductionist framework of Marxism. However, as I have also argued, the implications of these theoretical innovations were restricted by the epistemological conditions of the time—essentialist ideas about subjectivity, the determinist view of history, and the rational discourses of the Enlightenment. Poststructuralism is, in turn, at least in its political orientation, fundamentally anarchist—particularly its deconstructive project of unmasking and destabilizing the authority of institutions, and contesting practices of power that are dominating and exclusionary. The problem with poststructuralism was that, while it implied a commitment to anti-authoritarian politics, it lacked not only an explicit *politico-ethico* content, but also an

adequate account of individual agency. The central problem with Foucault, for instance, was that if the subject is constructed through the discourses and relations of power that dominate him, how exactly does he resist this domination? Therefore, the premise for bringing together anarchism and poststructuralism was to explore the ways in which each might highlight and address the theoretical problems in the other. For instance, the poststructuralist intervention in anarchist theory showed that anarchism had a theoretical blindspot—it did not recognize the hidden power relations and potential authoritarianism in the essentialist identities, and discursive and epistemological frameworks, that formed the basis of its critique of authority. The anarchist intervention in poststructural theory, on the other hand, exposed its political and ethical shortcomings, and, in particular, the ambiguities of explaining agency and resistance in the context of all-pervasive power relations.

These theoretical problems centered around the question of power, place and the outside: it was found that while classical anarchism was able to theorize, in the essential revolutionary subject, an identity or place of resistance outside the order of power, this subject was found, in the subsequent analyses, to be embroiled in the very power relations it contested; whereas poststructuralism, while it exposed precisely this complicity between the subject and power, was left without a theoretical point of departure—*an outside*—from which to criticize power... [W]hile we have to assume that there is no essentialist outside to power—no firm ontological or epistemological ground for resistance, beyond the order of power—radical politics nevertheless needs some theoretical dimension outside power, and some notion of radical agency not wholly determined by power...

[P]ostanarchism is not so much a coherent political program, but rather an anti-authoritarian problematic that emerges genealogically—that is, through a series of theoretical conflicts or aporias—from a poststructuralist approach to anarchism (or indeed, an anarchist approach to poststructuralism). However, postanarchism also implies a broad strategy of interrogating and contesting relations of power and hierarchy, of uncovering previously unseen sites of domination and antagonism. In this sense, postanarchism may be seen as an open-ended politico-ethical project of deconstructing authority. What distinguishes it from classical anarchism is that it is a *non-essentialist* politics. That is, postanarchism no longer relies on an essential identity of resistance, and is no longer anchored in the epistemologies of the Enlightenment or the ontological guarantees of humanist discourse. Rather, its ontology is constitutively open to [the] other, and posits an empty and indeterminate radical horizon, which can include a plurality of different political struggles and identities. In other words, postanarchism is an anti-authoritarianism which resists the totalizing potential of

a closed discourse or identity. This does not mean, of course, that post-anarchism has no ethical content or limits. Indeed, its politico-ethical content may even be provided by the traditional emancipative principles of freedom and equality—principles whose unconditional and irreducible nature was affirmed by the classical anarchists. However, the point is that these principles are no longer grounded in a closed identity but become “empty signifiers” that are open to a number of different articulations decided contingently in the course of struggle [See Ernesto Laclau, “Why do Empty Signifiers Matter to Politics?” in *The Lesser Evil and the Greater Good*].

One of the central challenges to radical politics today would be the deformation of the nation state into a bio-political state—a deformation which, paradoxically, shows its true face. As Giorgio Agamben has shown, the logic of sovereignty beyond the law, and the logic of bio-politics, have intersected in the form of the modern state. Thus, the prerogative of the state is to regulate, monitor and police the biological health of its internal populations. As Agamben has argued, this function produces a particular kind of subjectivity—what he calls *homo sacer*—which is defined by the form of “bare life,” or biological life stripped of its political and symbolic significance, as well as by the principle of legal murder, or murder with impunity [*Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*]. Paradigmatic of this would be the subjectivity of the refugee, and the refugee internment camps that we see springing up everywhere. Within these camps, a new, arbitrary form of power is exerted directly on the naked life of the detainee. In other words, the body of the refugee, which has been stripped of all political and legal rights, is the point of application of sovereign bio-power. However, the refugee is merely emblematic of the bio-political status that we are all increasingly being reduced to. Indeed, this points to a new antagonism that is emerging as central to politics. (As Agamben argues [in *The Coming Community*]: “The novelty of coming politics is that it will no longer be a struggle for the conquest or control of the State, but a struggle between the State and the non-State (humanity)...”) A postanarchist critique would be directed at precisely this link between power and biology. It is not enough to simply assert the human rights of the subject against the incursions of power. What must be critically examined is the way in which certain human subjectivities are constructed as conduits of power.

The conceptual vocabulary to analyze these new forms of power and subjectivity would not have been available to classical anarchism. However, even in this new paradigm of subjectifying power, classical anarchism’s ethical and political commitment to interrogating authority, as well as its analysis of state sovereignty—which went beyond class explanations—continues to be relevant today. Postanarchism is innovative precisely because it combines what is crucial in an-

archist theory with a poststructuralist/discursive-analytic critique of essentialism. What results is an open-ended anti-authoritarian political project for the future.

67. Jesse Cohn: Anarchism and Essentialism (2003)

Jesse Cohn is the author of Anarchism and the Crisis of Representation: Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, Politics (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2006) and numerous articles on anarchism, literary theory and popular culture. In the following essay, published here for the first time, he criticizes post-structuralist claims that classical anarchist theory was based on essentialist concepts of a benign human nature and an all powerful malevolent state.

In the last decade or so, a number of poststructuralist philosophers, interested in politicizing the poststructural but leery of bolting their concepts onto Marxist frameworks, have rediscovered the anarchist tradition. Their embrace of that tradition has been cautious, however, for they have found classical anarchist theory (save, in some instances, for the marginal works of Max Stirner) shot through with residues of metaphysical, foundationalist Western thought—a thoroughgoing essentialism. As Todd May writes in his *Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism*, “almost all anarchists rely on a unitary concept of human essence” to argue for the abolition of the State: “the human essence is good; therefore, there is no need for the exercise of power.” “The concept of human essence,” May writes, “has been criticized by poststructuralists as another facet of strategic thinking, one that leads to its own practices of oppression.” Accordingly, theorists like May, Andrew M. Koch, and Saul Newman have sought to detach anarchism from what they see as its investment in essentialism, and to wed anarchist themes to poststructuralist ones (e.g., the Foucaultian notion of power and resistance as disseminated throughout society, and a critique of “identity” and “representation” as primary forms of oppression). A frequent corollary is the pragmatist claim that these adjustments to anarchist theory will make it into a more suitable and up-to-date instrument for political practice. To what extent is this plausible? To pose this question properly, we should articulate what is meant by “essentialism” in this context.

An essentialist presumes, as Nick Haslam puts it, that an essence is a set of “underlying intrinsic properties” which “are causally related to the accessible ones, giving rise to them in some fashion,” so that these properties “have great inductive potential; knowing that something is an instance of such a kind allows many things to be inferred about it and generalized from it” [“Natural Kinds, Human Kinds, and Essentialism,” *Social Research* 65:2, Summer 1998]. Essentialism therefore means attributing fixed characteristics to things—particularly to people, whether

as a species (“human nature” as the unchanging character underlying all the surface differences between actual human beings) or as members of particular groups (e.g., the negative “Jewish nature” ascribed to Jews by anti-semites, or the positive “feminine nature” sometimes ascribed to women by feminists).

In short, essentialism in its crudest form is *naturalism*, the theory that things have natures which predestine their behaviour. It goes without saying that essentialist behavioural predictions often translate into moral and political prescriptions: for Thomas Hobbes, the belief that human beings are naturally predisposed to vicious, egotistical behaviour makes the disciplinary agency of the State “a necessary evil” to which all should submit, while for Bakunin and Kropotkin, the belief that human beings are naturally predisposed to be socially responsible, reasonable, and morally good, translates into the belief that the power of the State is “an unnecessary evil” (Newman, “Anarchism and the Politics of Ressentiment,” *Theory and Event* 4:3, 2000). Likewise, for anarchists, “the State” has an essence that makes it what it is, an intrinsic “nature” and a destiny: just as “human subjectivity is essentially moral and rational,” so “the State is essentially immoral and irrational” (*ibid*). Poststructuralists view naturalist predictions about human behaviour as unfounded, useful only for the purpose of coercing people into behaving as expected...

Poststructuralists see classical anarchism as resting on “the assumption... that human beings have a nature or essence,” that is, a set of fixed “characteristics” which define them as human—e.g., “sociability,” “cooperation,” and “competence” (May), or “reason, compassion, and gregariousness” (Koch, “Poststructuralism and the Epistemological Basis of Anarchism,” *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 23 (1993)). Such a theory cannot be founded on anything; at best, essentialist identities are merely “strategic,” situationally useful for the purpose of unifying people in opposition to dominant forces like sexism or colonialism (G.C. Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*). Moreover, poststructuralists take issue with the way anarchist theory “essentializes” the very power it opposes” (Newman): anarchists assume that States are by their very “nature” destined to “oppress by suppression” (May). This notion of the State as bearer of an oppressive essence, of “power” itself as essentially repressive and constraining, implies, in turn, that any and all “just social arrangements” must be defined by certain “fundamental features,” i.e., that they must be based on the good “human essence,” which is *a priori* opposed to power and the State (May). From the standpoint of poststructuralist pluralism, this tendency to read off “the fundamental features of just social arrangements” from the fundamental features of power and the human is unnecessarily “reductive,” even “contradictory” (May); where a playful experimentalism might otherwise prevail (Newman), classical anarchists seem to offer a menu with only two choices...

For an essentialist, each thing is distinguished from other things by its “essence,” the intrinsic qualities which are “essential” to the thing rather than merely “accidental,” “the ones it needs to possess to be the thing it is” (*Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). This is the substance of Saul Newman’s charge that the anarchism of Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin is founded on the notion that “society” and “the State,” or “humanity” and “power,” are separate objects with distinct, pre-existing identities; in the words of Bruno Latour, anarchism is taken to mean “believing in the existence of a center of power that is findable, touchable” (*Configurations*, 1993, 1.2:247-268). Ostensibly, this belief that “power” has a “centre,” that it is contained in the State rather than disseminated throughout social space, is part of what allows anarchists to argue that society and humanity are naturally opposed to the State and to power, which naturally oppress society and distort the human essence. This picture of things, Newman argues, mystifies State power, giving rise to an unanswerable question: if power and the State do not come from humanity and society, then where *do* they come from? Classical anarchism still thinks in terms of foundations, principles, origins, sources, *arché*; a true an-archism would do away with the notion of *arché* or essence, accepting the ubiquity of power and its always-already presence within the subject, rather than seeking to “locate” it in an external object, the State...

Essentialists presume that essences “are immutable and historically stable”—i.e., that “despite developmental transformations in the outward appearance of their members and historical changes in human understandings of their nature, the essential sameness of the kind remains” (Haslam). Essentialists engage in *transcendental* thought: they attempt to transcend the flux of shifting “appearance” for the security of absolutes, turning fluid phenomena into fixed nouns, leaving the world of becomings for a world of static being...

Essentialism, in this sense, is part and parcel of what William Spanos calls the “metaphysical” project of the West, drawing on the root meanings of the Greek words *metá-tá-physiká* (μετά τά φυσικά); that is, essentialist thinking wishes and claims to occupy a vantage point situated “after or beyond or above (μετά) the (τά) immediate processes of being (φυσικά)” (*Repetitions: The Post-modern Occasion in Literature and Culture*). This dualistic way of thinking, driven by a fear of death, a hatred of the body, and a wish for control, stands accused of a whole host of philosophical, moral, and political crimes: the will to forget differences and impose sameness at all costs has issued in genocide and ecocide (*Heidegger and Criticism*). In Ram Kalpana’s words, essentialism, as “a metaphysics that understands all change as a movement away from truth,” has “informed and guided the perspectives adopted by colonial governmentality,” producing heretofore unheard-of violence and devastation [“Listening to the Call

of Dance: Re-thinking Authenticity and 'Essentialism'," *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 11:3, 2000]. If the anarchism of Bakunin and Kropotkin does, in the end, reiterate these dire themes of the Western tradition, then surely it is in need of poststructuralist intervention—or even reinvention.

But is this the case? I would like to suggest that traditional anarchist theory has more to offer than yet another episode of the same old nightmares of Western ontotheological reason, and that it is time to reevaluate the poststructuralist interpretation of classical anarchist theory. Indeed, I will argue that it is time to rethink the very categories and concepts through which the poststructuralists have passed sentence on the anarchist tradition.

It is perhaps easiest to dismiss the charge that classical anarchist theory was a simple minded naturalism. Bakunin's appeal to "nature" is not a refusal to see the ways in which subjects are socially constructed. Individual subjectivity is socially produced: "The real individual," he writes, is overdetermined by "a confluence of geographic, climatic, ethnographic, hygienic, and economic influences, which constitute the nature of his family, his class, his nation, his race" (*The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution*). Here, one's "nature" is less *constitutive* than *constituted*. "Every individual," Bakunin continues, "inherits at birth, in different degrees, not ideas and innate sentiments, as the idealists claim, but only the capacity to feel, to will, to think, and to speak"—a set of "rudimentary faculties without any content" (*ibid*). These empty "faculties" must be filled in with a "content" that comes from generations of cultural development, the creation of a "common consciousness" which is "the intellectual and moral patrimony of a nation, a class, and a society" (*ibid*). Since each real individual is always "the product of society," all that is "natural"—in other words, inevitable or inescapable—is the "influence that society naturally exercises over him" (*ibid*). Thus, since they do not exist ready-made in the human soul, "mutual aid and solidarity" must be "*developed*" through concrete experience in society (*Revolutionary Catechism*). In short, Bakunin is not a naturalist, founding his hopes on the assumption that human behaviour is driven by unvarying natural drives and instincts, but a constructivist: for him, anarchy is not a "state of nature," but something that must be collectively willed, struggled for, built, achieved, produced—in a word, *constructed*.

Like Bakunin, Kropotkin works from an empiricist psychology—a concept of self that presupposes both conflict and development. This notion of *development* is part of what places Kropotkin in the camp of the social constructivists rather than that of the naturalists. Kropotkin's ethics are thoroughly constructivist; if he links them to his studies of "mutual aid," it is because social construction appropriates the materials deposited by the evolutionary process, not because there is a ready-formed morality which is sufficient unto itself. The in-

instinct to preserve the genetic commons of the group is an “origin” for “feelings of benevolence,” a “starting-point” for “higher ethical feelings,” but “it is upon this foundation” that a “higher sense of justice, or equity” must be “developed” (*Ethics*, emphasis added)... None of the “feelings and practices” of “primitive peoples” (e.g., “hospitality,” “respect for human life,” and “the sense of reciprocal obligation”) is “inherent in man,” he asserts; rather, all must be “developed,” for they are “the *consequence* of life in common” rather than the cause of it (*Law and Authority*, Volume One, Selection 52, emphasis added).

Thus, Kropotkin does not assume, as in May’s caricature, that “people are naturally good,” and that this good essence is being repressed by the State; this is why Kropotkin’s political program does not assume that the only condition for a good life is that “the obstacles to that goodness are removed” (*Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism*). Rather, he insists that “it is not enough to destroy,” but that “we must also know how to build”: the elimination of “authority,” “laws,” and “hierarchical organization” must be accompanied by the preservation of a “precious kernel of social customs” and their elaboration into “communist customs and institutions.” Once again, Kropotkin is delivering an imperative, not merely enunciating a description, when he says that ethical “relations” must be *established*, that the “social customs” of a free community must be *developed*, that human beings must be *unified* in solidarity (*Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*, Volume One, Selection 41). Solidarity, community, and ethical relationships are not already there as an “essence” awaiting expression; nor are they non-existent, so that they must be created *ex nihilo*. Rather, they exist as *possibilities* implicit in the biological and social matrix of nature and humanity. Nature alone is not the sufficient condition for their realization; culture is necessary.

When poststructuralists question the classical anarchists’ belief in the “purity” of the human essence in the face of the vast spectacle of viciousness, irrationality and evil in human history (Newman, “Anarchism and the Politics of Ressentiment.” *Theory and Event*, 4:3, 2000), they repeat an old critique of anarchism. G.D.H. Cole wrote that “it was never clear why he [Kropotkin] supposed that, in view of men’s natural propensity to mutual aid, the world had come to be so dominated by coercive government and the competitive struggle of man with man” (*A History of Socialist Thought, Vol. II: Marxism and Anarchism, 1850-1890*). Newman, more cannily, perceives that both Kropotkin and Bakunin admit that humans have something like a “natural lust for power” (*ibid*). This only raises larger questions: how can they maintain that human beings are innately corruptible, marked by a “desire for power and authority,” and simultaneously contend that “man is naturally cooperative, sociable and altruistic, rather than competitive and egotistic” (Newman)? Since classical anarchism

assumes that the human subject is naturally opposed to power *and* that power naturally emanates from this subject, Newman concludes, it is plagued by a fundamental inconsistency—a “hidden contradiction that lies at the heart of anarchist discourse.”

In so arguing, Newman assumes that these two characterizations of the human subject are mutually exclusive. For Bakunin and Kropotkin, however, it is the human subject itself which is the site of the “contradiction.” Just as the authors of classical anarchist theory assume that the supposed contraries of “culture” and “nature” inform and produce one another in constant interaction, they also work from what Dave Morland calls a “double-barrelled conception of human nature,” ascribing an essence composed of “both sociability *and* egoism” to human beings (“Anarchism, Human Nature and History: Lessons for the Future,” *Twenty-First Century Anarchism*, ed. J. Purkis and J. Bowen, emphasis added).

Morland’s assertion is easily borne out by a close inspection of their work: one finds, for instance, that Bakunin’s very ontology reflects this duality. “What we understand by the words *material* and *matter*,” writes the arch-materialist, “is the totality, the entire range of real beings.” For Bakunin, “*matter*” gives birth to and includes not only noble thoughts and acts but crazed and debauched ones, “sacrifice as well as selfishness” (“The Political Theology of Mazzini,” *Selected Writings*, ed. A. Lehning). It appears that “human nature” is equipped with a “propensity for evil” as well as for good—and since “the morality of the individual depends much more on the conditions of his existence and the environment in which he lives than his own will,” this propensity, too, can be “intensified by external circumstances” (*Revolutionary Catechism*). The innate *corruptibility* of human beings, not their innate “goodness,” is the fundamental reason that individuals invested with authority become exploiters, and that the exploited come to normalize their own exploitation; “inasmuch as anyone invested with authority must, through the force of an immutable social law, become an oppressor and exploiter of society,” as Bakunin writes, “no one should be *entrusted* with power” (*Statism and Anarchy*, emphasis added).

Kropotkin, too, writes from a sense of the natural corruptibility of human beings: “When we ask for the abolition of the State and its organs we are always told that we dream of a society composed of men better than they are in reality. But no; a thousand times, no. All we ask is that men should not be made *worse than they are*, by such institutions... the best of us would soon be corrupted by the exercise of power” (*Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*, emphasis added). Indeed, “Man is the cruelest animal upon earth” precisely because we, more than other animals, have “developed” whatever “cruel instincts” evolution has handed us (*Law and Authority*). Likewise, just as Bakunin’s “human nature” includes

irrationality and brutality, Kropotkin assumes that human beings “naturally” act from both egoistic and altruistic motives, and that any social construction must take these conflicting tendencies into account if it is to be viable. Human nature, as it presents itself in our historical experience, is split in two, riven, locked in conflict with itself, so that we find “two sets of diametrically opposed feelings which exist in man”—both those “which induce man to subdue other men in order to utilize them for his individual ends” and those which “induce human beings to unite for attaining common ends by common effort.” Both are “equally fundamental.” The ethics which Kropotkin sought to create are not simply a representation of an already present morality, but an attempt to mediate this internal “struggle” which marks subjectivity, to discover a social “synthesis” capable of resolving “this fundamental contradiction” (*Ethics*).

“For Kropotkin,” Newman writes, “anarchism can think beyond the category of the State... because it has a place, a ground from which to do so. Political power has an outside from which it can be criticized and an alternative with which it can be replaced.” In other words, anarchist theory externalizes power in order that it may see itself as external *to* power—“outside” its corrupting influence. In reality, Newman argues, power comes from human subjects. If, as Foucault remarks, power is that which “one is never outside,” this is because power is not an object or an item, not localizable at all: “It is merely a relationship of forces, forces that flow between different actors and throughout our everyday actions. *Power is everywhere*, according to Foucault. Power does not emanate from institutions like the State—rather it is immanent throughout the entire social network, through various discourses and knowledges” (Newman). Classical anarchism is crippled by its inability to recognize this.

Or is it? In fact, it is Bakunin who writes that “no minority would have been powerful enough to impose all these horrible sacrifices upon the masses if there had not been in the masses themselves a dizzy spontaneous movement which pushed them on to continual self-sacrifice, now to one, now to another of these devouring abstractions, the vampires of history” (*God and the State*); it is Kropotkin who points out that if, in spite of their patent injustice, the State survives and grows, this is because “all of us are more or less, voluntarily or involuntarily, abettors of this society” (*Anarchist Morality*)—or, as Proudhon puts it, “everyone connives with the prince” (*De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans L’Eglise*). Ultimately, as Gustav Landauer summarizes this consensus, “the state” is not “a thing... that one can smash in order to destroy”; rather, it is “a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to one another... *we are the state*” (Volume One, Selection 49, emphasis added).

How, then, did we *become* the State? Bakunin speculates that for primitive peoples, “reason” itself—“the capacity for generalization and abstraction, thanks

to which man is able to project himself in his thought, examining and observing himself like a strange, external object”—produced the illusion that “abstract ideas” such as eternity or omnipotence were “real objects,” such that “they began to worship their fictions”—the primordial alienation which gives the priestly caste, and with it the class system, its first foothold in human community (*The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State*). It is “in the depths of the human being” that “religion”—and consequently the State—first “took root” (*Federalism, Socialism and Anti-Theologism*). The conception of God as master, which he calls “the intellectual and moral source of all slavery on earth” (*The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution*), was perhaps an inevitable product of human thought, particularly in its capacity to abstract away from its concrete, material surroundings; at the same time, this faculty of abstraction produces the possibility of critical self-awareness and revolt.

Kropotkin, too, theorizes prehistory in this dialectical fashion. In his account, the very feature of primitive communities which makes them nearly models of functional anarchy—their ability to exist peaceably without law and the State—is pregnant with the fatal flaw which will tear the egalitarian social nexus apart. In oral cultures, Kropotkin writes, “human relations were simply regulated by customs, habits and usages, made sacred by constant repetition” (*Law and Authority*). It is this susceptibility to the hypnotic effect of repetition in daily life—the “tendency to run in a groove, so highly developed in mankind” (*ibid*)—that makes human subjects prone to regimes of exploitation, provided these are introduced gradually enough. Thus, “profiting by the indolence, the fears, and the inertia of the crowd, and thanks to the continual repetition of the same acts,” the priests and warriors manage to establish “customs which have become a solid basis for their own domination” (*ibid*). Appealing to the logic of sameness, these emergent ruling classes gain power by persuading others to identify the “principles of morality and social union” through which the social power had been codified with “mandates which are meant to ensure external existence to inequality”: “Customs, absolutely essential to the very being of society, are, in the code, cleverly intermingled with usages imposed by the ruling caste, and both claim equal respect from the crowd” (*ibid*). As these new practices become customary, they are invested with “the spirit of routine,” and even those most heavily exploited are often too afraid of “the unknown” to challenge their exploiters. The past itself is fetishized, and repetition endows it with a “sacred” aura (*ibid*). Hierarchy becomes an enduring presence in human life.

Bakunin and Kropotkin trace the emergence of domination and hierarchy back to a process through which the very attributes which make humanity potentially capable of living in a rational and equitable order generated irrational fetishes—and with them, social and political inequality. We human subjects are

not *actually* separate from the power that seems to confront us as “a strange, external object,” but our alienated power comes to *appear* as some “thing” which is separate from us, an abstract entity endowed with concrete might: “the State.”

Since, for the classical anarchists as well as for Newman, power is ineradicably bound up with the human, neither wish to abolish power *as such*—an impossible project; rather, the point is to abolish “domination” (Newman). Bakunin’s account of the way that domination emerges and operates, however, is more concrete than that given by Newman, who appeals to such notions as “eternal return” and “irrepressible lack.” In Newman’s writing, as in Deleuze’s, abstract concepts are treated as quasi-tangible entities: “power relations” can “flow” or “become congealed” or “crystallized”; abolishing “assemblages” of these “power relations” too quickly can mean “allowing new institutions and relations of domination to rise up,” and so on. Might not this application of physical language to the social domain result in naturalist mystification, as some ask of Deleuze and Guattari (S. Best and D. Kellner, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*)? For Bakunin, “social power,” as the mutual play of influence between individuals in a society, is “natural” in a far more commonsensical manner, as the product of individuals’ natural *need* for “the approval and esteem of at least some portion of society”: “The power of collective sentiment or public spirit is even now a very serious matter. The men most ready to commit crimes rarely dare to defy it, to openly affront it. They will seek to deceive it, but will take care not to be rude with it unless they feel the support of a minority larger or smaller.” (*God and the State*)

Since, along with their biological necessities, human beings also need the companionship and support of others—“approval and esteem”—human beings are open to the “influence” of others whom they “influence” in turn (*The Organization of the International*, Volume One, Selection 25).

Far from wishing to destroy this “power of collective sentiment,” Bakunin sees in it the only real guarantee that, in the absence of the organized violence of the State, acts of informal, anti-social violence will not erupt and form the basis for a new State: “The only grand and omnipotent authority... which we may respect, will be that of the collective and public spirit of a society founded on equality and solidarity and the mutual human respect of all its members” (*God and the State*). The persuasive and normative power woven into our social relationships is Bakunin’s *alternative* to the brute-force rule of State law.

We have already seen that for Bakunin, “social power” is *not* an essentially “good” alternative to an essentially “evil” State power. Nonetheless, if disseminated power—“the natural powers of the masses,” as Bakunin calls it elsewhere (*The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State*, Volume One, Selection 29)—is preferable to centralized State power, and if this disseminated power always al-

ready exists, why are we not now living in a Stateless social order? If Bakunin thinks the processes of socialization and education at society's disposal powerful enough to produce subjects who will not violate, make war on, or oppress one another, how does he account for criminality, warfare, and oppression? Again, he anticipates the question: "if this social power exists," but has not "sufficed" to create freedom and equality, it is because this power has been intertwined with a tradition of the "worship of divinity," "authority," "privilege," "exploitation," "iniquity," and "falsehood"; "Consequently its real action... has constantly exercised a disastrous and depraving influence. It does not repress vices and crimes; it creates them. Its authority is consequently a divine, anti-human authority; its influence is mischievous and baleful" (*God and the State*). It is not that social power simply "is" good or bad; it is that its historical *forms*, riddled with hierarchy and irrationality, have given rise to conflicts, placing us in relations of domination and submission to one another, and producing ideologies that justify these depredations as natural and necessary.

Social power has not yet found a form which does not generate anti-social behaviour, a form which is fully *social* and therefore fully "human"; it has remained incoherent, self-contradictory. However, Bakunin claims, a coherent, consistently social form of power does exist as a possibility to be realized in history: if we "wish to render its authority and influence beneficent and human," we must reconstruct society so that "the material and social interests of each conform to the human duties of each" (*ibid*). Once again, the words "authority" and "power" do not always mean one thing to Bakunin, nor are they simply synonymous with "evil"; these signs are as ambiguous as the social contradiction itself. Moreover, since he sees subjectivity as socially produced, these contradictions are played out within each individual subject: "social tyranny... *permeates every facet of life*, so that each individual is, often unknowingly, in a sort of conspiracy against himself. It follows from this fact that to revolt against this influence that society naturally exercises over him, he must at least to some extent revolt against himself" (*The Knouto-Germanic Empire*; emphasis added).

Bakunin specifically says that the "influence" of society on individuals can be either "injurious" or "beneficent" (*ibid*)—hardly located on one pole of a "Manichean" opposition. This social power is not located or localizable at all; it needs to be combated—more properly speaking, *transformed*—not only in its concentrated, centralized, institutional manifestations, but in its dispersed, everyday forms. Thus, Bakunin calls for the contradiction between the liberatory and domineering forms of social power to be played out within the subject as well as in the streets: the individual must "revolt against himself" in order to overthrow not only the ruling institutions without but the reigning ideologies within.

The notion that classical anarchist theory presupposes an "essentialist foun-

dation” or metaphysical “ground” (Newman) is also open to challenge. The materialism and this-worldliness intrinsic to the tradition is beyond dispute, as is its contempt for what Kropotkin called “the metaphysical conceptions of a Universal Spirit, or of a Creative Force in Nature, the Incarnation of the Idea, Nature’s Goal, the Aim of Existence, the Unknowable, Mankind (conceived as having a separate spiritual existence), and so on” (*Modern Science and Anarchism*); what is less well-understood is the sense in which its accounts of ethical life are rooted in this ontological decision.

“The end of morals,” Kropotkin writes in his *Ethics*, “cannot be ‘transcendental,’ as the idealists desire it to be: it must be real. We must find moral satisfaction *in life* and not in some form of extra-vital condition.” Instead of postulating a “transcendental” source of goodness outside of nature, Kropotkin articulates ethics through embodiment, embeddedness, and development. Ultimately, it is *phusis*, the “immediate processes of being,” which creates not the *inevitability* of an ethical social order, but the material *preconditions* for ethical life, and even, to the extent that violence and injustice threaten human survival, the empirical *necessity* of a viable ethics. Nor is this ethics pronounced from the supposed “ground” of a metaphysical no-place or a view-from-nowhere, the panoptical perspective which surveys the temporal world from “after or beyond or above” (Spanos, *Heidegger and Criticism and Repetitions*); one formulation Kropotkin suggests to replace the falsely globalizing, generalizing, and universalizing “do unto others as you would have others do unto you” is the more particularizing, contextualizing, and individuating (yet still universally binding) “treat others as you would like them to treat you *under similar circumstances*” (*Anarchist Morality*). Thereby, Kropotkin admits a degree of relativity, flux, ambiguity, and temporality into the ethical: “the conception of good and evil varies... There is nothing unchangeable about it” (*ibid*). This is hardly evidence of metaphysical, foundationalist thinking.

Indeed, for Kropotkin, the ecological embeddedness of morality is contiguous with a certain kind of *groundlessness*: he describes the most striking instances of moral “courage” and “devotion” not in terms of an instrumentally rational logic or “calculation,” but in terms of “fertility,” “energy,” “expansion,” “overflowing,” the excessive and the gratuitous (*ibid*). Here, Kropotkin does not draw a “Manichean” dichotomy between power (in the sense of an ability to intervene in the world, to exert influence on others) and morality, as Newman alleges—quite the contrary. “Power to act is *duty* to act,” writes Kropotkin, whose attention to the gratuitous aspect of altruistic behaviour at times approaches Nietzsche’s. For Kropotkin’s ecological anarchist morality, in the words of J.-M. Guyau, whose *Equisse d’un morale sans obligation ni sanction* inspired both Kropotkin and Nietzsche, altruism “is nothing but a superabundance of life,

which demands to be exercised, to give itself; at the same time, it is the consciousness of a power” (as quoted by Kropotkin in *Anarchist Morality*).

Ethical action, for Kropotkin, cannot be said to emanate from any *arché* or foundation outside of life itself (indeed, in the most profound instances, outside of the *act* itself). If all of this simply amounts to replacing the divine *logos* with “Nature” or “Life”—a danger of which Kropotkin is well aware (*Anarchist Morality*)—then none can do more than to add, as he does, that even if our capacity for ethical behaviour has evolved in time, ethics is not a destiny or *telos*. “We certainly must abandon the idea of representing human history as an uninterrupted chain of development from the prehistoric Stone Age to the present time,” he warns; “The intellectual evolution of a given society may take at times, under the influence of all sorts of circumstances, a totally wrong turn” (*Ethics*). Consequently, his historical studies, in contrast to those of Marx and Engels, do not represent history as the unfolding of material necessity, but as a series of largely contingent events, possibilities opened for a time but then closed again, roads not taken, and avoidable catastrophes. Even Bakunin, with his strict emphasis on material determinism, regards the project of a “science of history” as impossible (*God and the State*), denies that any “process of economic facts” is “inevitable,” and rejects the Marxist tendency to retrospectively justify the catastrophe of State and capital as a particularly loathsome form of theodicy (“Critique of Economic Determinism,” *Bakunin on Anarchism*).

If anarchist ontologies resist the labels “essentialist” and “non-essentialist,” perhaps it is because these categories do not exhaust all the theoretical possibilities. This suggests that there must be a better way to distinguish noxious or useless ontologies from useful or beneficial ones. What is fundamentally at issue in the critique of essentialism? May considers the idea that essentialism may do the most damage when it is translated into practices of “normalization”—the ideal used as an instrument to discipline the material body—but as he acknowledges in his discussion of Lyotard, an injunction not to normalize already refers back to an ethical norm (*The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism*). Moreover, while certain types of normalizing institutions have clearly served domination, to condemn practices of normalization indiscriminately begs the question of when and where such practices are to be distinguished from the very normative practices which would constitute an anarchist polity, which no less than any other would depend for its existence on at least certain kinds of norms: i.e., the expectation that everyone should be capable of participating in the self-management of the *polis*, a taboo against the arrogation of privilege to individuals, and so on. Since no one operates without expectations or values, no one thinks and acts outside of essentialism or normativism. On further analysis, as Diana Fuss comments, it becomes impossible to think of “essentialism” *per se* as

“good” or “bad,” “progressive” or “reactionary,” “beneficial” or “dangerous”; such judgments all fall victim to the irony that “in the very act of making the charge,” one must “*act as if essentialism has an essence*” (*Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference*).

Nonetheless, it seems equally hasty to simply embrace essentialism as necessary and inevitable. Haven’t poststructuralist critiques of racism and sexism as forms of essentialist thinking been worthwhile? Isn’t there really some danger that anti-essentialism responds to, however inadequately? I would suggest that there is, and that we should identify the danger to be guarded against not as “essentialism,” but as our liability to *reification*: i.e., representing reality in uniform and static terms, interpreting the world in such a way as to ignore the dimensions of potentiality and temporality, and acting in the world so as to suppress these dimensions in practice, imposing uniformity and stasis on that which is developing and changing.

Anarchism, as a movement and as a theory, is not the product of any abstract notion of “essences,” but of a concrete struggle against the tendency of certain institutionalized practices (e.g., factory labour, patriarchal family life, and State-controlled education) and systems of thought (e.g., Christian dualism, mechanical determinism, and authoritarian ideologies) to turn living beings into submissive, disciplined objects, stripping them of that capacity for self-organization and self-transformation which constitutes life. As such, it has accumulated and codified quite a bit of wisdom about the causes and cures of reification. Politically engaged poststructuralists, and all those wishing to articulate a coherent perspective from which to critique the actual and propose the possible, have much to gain from a more careful re-reading of the anarchist tradition.

68. Mark Leier: *Bakunin, Class and Post-Anarchism* (2009)

Mark Leier is the author of Mikhail Bakunin: The Creative Passion (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2006) and numerous other works on labour history, including Where the Fraser River Flows: The Industrial Workers of the World in British Columbia (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1990).

The postanarchist belief that contemporary anarchism needs to break with classical and modern anarchism is not based merely on an argument that historical changes in, say, the state, capitalism, technology, demographics, or knowledge have prompted a need to adjust and revamp anarchist thought to bring it up to date. The differences between the movements are held to be more profound than simple periodization and chronology. Postanarchists hold that the insights of postmodernist and poststructuralist philosophers have so thoroughly undermined

traditional knowledge and values that there is little to be learned from earlier anarchists and anarchist theory. Instead, postanarchists argue that anarchism must be founded on very dissimilar philosophical principles that correspond to radical changes in critical thought and critical theory, that is, those taken from postmodernism and poststructuralism.

These schools are complicated and often contradictory, but some basic threads may be drawn from them. One important argument is that material reality cannot be known. Instead of absolute knowledge of the world, we have partial knowledge and partisan interpretations of the world. Furthermore, all our experience of the world is shared with others through language, and language is a slippery thing. Therefore, postmodernism invites profound skepticism towards knowledge and a strong relativism that challenges the idea that impartial truth is possible. As Michel Foucault put it, “‘truth,’ is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements,” rather than a correspondence between the real world and our perceptions of it. Finally, postmodernism and poststructuralism call for what Jean-François Lyotard has labeled “incredulity towards the meta-narrative,” meaning that we must reject abstract ideas that claim to be a comprehensive explanation of historical experience or knowledge.

In this reading, earlier anarchists were wrong to assert that there was a material reality that lay behind language and that science could render true knowledge of the world. They were mistaken in their assumption that there was a fundamental or essential human nature that society had violated and that anarchist societies would allow to flourish. Politically, classical and modern anarchists were mistaken in their assertion that there was any necessary, causal connection between economic position and ideology. The idea that certain groups, such as the working class, could be identified as leading elements in the anarchist movement or as constituencies that had a material interest in anarchism, was elitist and exclusive.

Postanarchists argue that history has no goal or end; it is contingent, without laws or trends of historical development. Instead, while postanarchists cover a wide range of ideas, broadly they tend to hold instead that knowledge and values are relative and that grand narratives of history and human development are tyrannical, not liberating. The corollary of this position is that classical anarchism is only of historical, even antiquarian, interest and has little to teach us. Indeed, since some postmodernists insist we can know nothing of history, they argue that there is no real knowledge to be gleaned from history.

There are, however, some reasons to be cautious in embracing postmodernism and poststructuralism as the necessary and sufficient philosophical basis for anarchism. The first is the acknowledgement that postmodernism and poststruc-

turalism do not inevitably lead to anarchism. Just as a reading of the Bible may lead one to liberation theology or the theological fascism of Opus Dei, or *Das Kapital* may point one to libertarian socialism or Stalinism, so may postmodernism and poststructuralism logically take one to virtually any political position on the spectrum. Arguments for relativism and the end of the meta-narrative, the belief in the indeterminacy of truth, and the idea that facts do not exist in any meaningful way may be pressed into service for any political belief: and have. If all we have, as the postmodernist philosopher of history Keith Jenkins insists, are stories of which it is meaningless even to inquire if they are true, then there is no way to distinguish between any claims, that is, to distinguish between valid and invalid claims. Thus Richard J. Evans has suggested that postmodernism gives “a licence to anyone who wants to suppress, distort, or cover up the past,” and so it is by no means clear that there is any particular reason to ground anarchism in postmodernist thought and principles.

Second, anarchism and anarchists are no less susceptible to trends and fashions and fads than any other ideology and group. As a result, different generations have sought to attach anarchism to the prevailing critical philosophy, from Hegelianism to Christianity to evolutionary science to existentialism to Buddhism to postmodernism. If there is no single philosophical road to anarchism then anarchism may not need a philosophical base for its ethical and political arguments. That each of the philosophical bases for anarchism has also served as a basis for virtually every other political ideology suggests that they have no necessary connection to anarchism. Attaching anarchism to postmodernism may not be as useful or as necessary as it first appears, for postmodernism itself may be a reflection of contemporary trends, influences, and forces rather than the ultimate, universal philosophical position; it may be as transient as any other philosophical moment.

A discussion of Bakunin’s work demonstrates that much postmodernist thought is not new at all. Bakunin may be seen as a premature anti-postmodernist, as he critiqued very similar positions more than one hundred years before they became codified and labeled as postmodernism.

In 1842, Bakunin wrote “The Reaction in Germany,” the source of his famous line, “The passion for destruction is a creative passion” [Volume One, Selection 10]. Elsewhere in the article, he denied the arguments of his contemporaries who, like postmodernists today, privileged language over material reality and experience as the primary focus of analysis. Bakunin acknowledged that of course one had to deconstruct language, but he insisted that “language was not reality.” It was reality that gave shape to language, not language that gave shape to reality. The Declaration of the Rights of Man, he observed, gave, in theory, political equality to all. But this language concealed the reality that the working

class was “still condemned by its birth, by its ties with poverty and ignorance, as well, indeed, as with actual slavery.”

Implicit in this view is the assumption that we can know something about the real world, that there are facts that exist outside of our perceptions, beliefs, and language. While some expressions of truth may be false and others clearly pressed into service for partisan positions, and though our knowledge will always be imperfect, still Bakunin insisted we can know some things. Today, postmodernists such as Keith Jenkins would argue that we can know nothing about the past, and the postmodern historians, Ellen Somekawa and Elizabeth Smith, have argued that empirical evidence “cannot demonstrate the superiority of one interpretation or story-type over another.”

The more usual postmodernist argument is that while we may know some facts, for the most part these facts do not, in themselves, explain the world. This is an argument Bakunin had a great deal of sympathy for, as he was not a crude empiricist who thought that facts alone would reveal the truth. In the first place, he, along with postmodernists, understood that our interpretations were often informed not just by fact but by circumstance. “All of us,” Bakunin wrote, “are formed under the influence of the society in which we are born. But each nation, each state has its popular beliefs, its particular limitations, depending in part on its individual character, its historical development, and its relationship to the history of humanity.” We are formed by society and can obtain only a partial, subjective knowledge, and facts themselves are not so self-evident and meaningful as empiricists insist.

Furthermore, Bakunin noted that while facts can be known, in themselves they do not constitute a way of understanding the world. Pursued as the quest for facts, history is, Bakunin wrote, “reduced to the dead work of memory, the duty of which is contained only in the preservation of contingent, singular facts.” What Bakunin called “only the empty play of contingency” “does not accomplish anything and is nothing more than fantastic flashes, not based on anything and proving nothing.” In this, he seems to align himself with postmodernists such as Jenkins, who insist that there is no meaning to history, as it is largely unknowable, contingent, and accidental. “If history is” however, Bakunin wrote, “in effect, nothing more than a senseless succession of accidents, it cannot be of interest to humanity, it cannot be an object of our knowledge, and it cannot be useful to us.”

Bakunin rejected the suggestion that we can know nothing of the past. There are facts, he argued, and these can be known, if only partially and incompletely. History does have meaning, but not from the accumulation of so-called objective facts. Real knowledge, he argued, lies not in the collection of “dry facts,” but “in finding the internal, necessary link within facts.” This requires interpretation

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and theory. The key to understanding the past is not to reject the claims of the empiricists on the one hand and whom he called the theorists, whom we might call the postmodernists, on the other. It is necessary to understand that the two sides had essentially misstated the argument, driven apart by what he characterized as “abstraction and extremism.” While people might line up on one side or the other, and while the debate might tilt first towards one side and then the other, both sides need each other, for “there is no theorist who is not an empiricist, just as there is no empiricist who is not a theorist.” Just as empiricists such as von Ranke do offer interpretations, so too do postmodernist historians use footnotes. Thus Bakunin argued that we can have real knowledge of the world and the past through empirical study combined with theoretical analysis.

Bakunin’s philosophical resolution of this debate, I expect, will satisfy no one, largely because the fun lies in the debate itself, not in the resolving of it. In particular, postanarchists may reject Bakunin’s claim that we can understand and make sense of the past as a teleological causal argument based on the belief that there is a purpose to history. This is, the argument continues, a metaphysical notion of laws of historical motion that allows us to discern—or to invent and impose—a scheme of an unfolding historical development. Bakunin himself argued against teleological explanations, refusing to countenance the “subjugation of living individuals to general abstractions,” whether these were God’s will, the Whiggish development of institutions, the triumph of capitalism, or the cruder forms of historical materialism offered up not by Marx but by some Marxists. All such faith in metaphysics, he thundered, is “fatal to my reason, my liberty...it would immediately transform me into a stupid slave, an instrument of the will and interests of others” [Volume One, Selection 24].

But, there is a vast difference between teleology and our understanding of a system that has a persistent tendency to achieve and maintain a certain state or direction. There is a vast difference between the belief that history is progressing in a particular, inevitable direction and understanding that the present was caused by people, forces, and tendencies that we can know something about. While Bakunin rejected teleology, he also rejected the idea that history was just contingency and accident. And for him, one of the crucial facts of history was economic exploitation. The quest for abstract political freedom and political equality taken up by philosophers and liberals in his day did little to improve the lives of “the people, the poor class, which without doubt constitutes the greatest part of humanity.” Exploitation, not philosophy, provided the key to understanding the world and to political action; it was the underlying fact that interpretation had to acknowledge.

In “The Reaction in Germany,” he argued that “labour is the sole producer of wealth.” Moreover, work is the “fundamental basis of dignity and human

rights, for it is only by means of its own free, intelligent work that humanity becomes a creator...and creates the world of civilization.” But work in feudalist and capitalist societies meant something very different for most people, for whom labour was reduced to a “purely mechanical task, no different from that of a beast of burden.” Most labour, he observed, was designed “more to deaden than develop their natural intelligence.” Meanwhile, to live off the labour of others, Bakunin concluded, was to be “a parasite, an exploiter, and a thief.” In Bakunin’s words, “to be a slave is to be forced to work for another; to be a master is to live off the work of another.”

Of particular importance is Bakunin’s insistence that the division of humanity into classes is systemic. The division between those who own capital and land and the “working classes without capital and land” is reproduced and self-sustaining over time; it is not accidental or contingent. Furthermore, this struggle between “citizens and wage earners, that is to say, those who are compelled to work, not by law but by reality—that is the antagonism of the modern world.”

This insistence on class is important for several reasons. First, it moves politics from abstract discussions over “justice” and anchors it in experience. Second, it demonstrates that “the people” is not a unified notion, for material interests—class—divide people. Whatever other issues may unite people, class remains a critical fault line. Finally, the argument about class suggests that while focusing on local issues, on identity questions, or on reforms is important, none touches on the primary issue, exploitation, that affects the vast majority of humanity. Talking about class, therefore, is more than a matter of determining a meta-physical “historical agent”; it is about seeing politics as rooted in exploitation, which is itself rooted in class structure.

Bakunin focuses our attention on the historical structures of capital and the state and presents a systemic critique of them that is still useful today because their fundamental nature has not much changed since his time. And that is perhaps the chief objection to postanarchism: its tendency, by no means universal, but certainly influential, to play down class struggle in favour of politics aimed primarily at the state and individual emancipation.

We see this especially in those postanarchists who look not to Bakunin but to Max Stirner and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, seeing in their individualism and rejection of class a politics more in line with postmodernist thought. However, as Rita Felski puts it in *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture*, “class is essentially, rather than contingently, a hierarchical concept.”

It is not, perhaps, surprising that intellectuals tend to de-emphasize class exploitation; by their very social position, they are somewhat removed from class antagonisms. They have a little property, some control over their work, and all the tools needed to have considerable say and considerable sway in battles that

may be fought within the realm of politics. That is why Bakunin was critical of intellectuals. Education was one of the ways the system reproduced itself and confirmed a few people as a class with access to all the good things of life and the majority as a class that toiled to provide for them.

This runs counter to much of what we hear today: education is supposed to break down class walls, not reinforce them. We are still told that education, upgrading, retraining are the key to surviving changes in the economy, that education equals wealth. But poverty is systemic and it is based on exploitation, not ignorance. Thus, today, no less than in Bakunin's time, often "a very bright worker must stand silent while a stupid scholar gets the better of him, not because the latter has any sense but because of the education denied the worker."

Education, Bakunin argued, is itself a form of capital, and if all other divisions in society were eliminated save education, humanity would again soon be divided into "a large number of slaves and a small number of rulers, the former working for the latter" [Volume One, Selection 64]. That is why, he suggested, the privileged called only for "*some* education of the people," but restrict "total education" for themselves. The net result is to "divide the world into a small, excessively affluent, learned, ruling minority, and a vast majority of wretched, ignorant, slavish proletarians." In addition, he pointed out, much so-called education was designed to enable the rich to better oppress workers. The "science of government, the science of administration, and the science of finance," he wrote, are the "science of fleecing the people without making them complain too much and, when they begin to complain, the science of imposing silence, forbearance, and obedience on them by scientifically organized violence; the science of tricking and dividing the masses of people, of keeping them eternally and advantageously ignorant."

Bakunin's solution fits today: "Improve working conditions, return to labour what justice demands it be given, and in this way give the people security, affluence and leisure. Then have no doubt, they will educate themselves. They will toss aside all your catechisms and create a more generous, sane, and elevated civilization than yours." This is a call to recognize the fundamental importance of class, and it is a call that is too often unheeded.

This is not to say that battles outside those of class are unimportant. It is not, for example, sufficient to dismiss fights for gender and sexual equality, racial equality, and the like as mere "identity politics." Yet by the same token, it is surely a mistake to minimize class exploitation. After all, while our contemporary world may be "post" a great many things, it is assuredly not post-capitalist. Even in the so-called "industrialized world," real wages have shrunk, the working day has gotten longer, the security, affluence, and leisure of workers has worsened. Whether you call them slaves or serfs or workers or a labour force, or, as the

CEO of Starbucks does, “partners,” makes little difference so long as people are forced to work by “hunger as well as the political and social institutions” while their labour makes possible “the complete or relative idleness of others.”

My suggestion here is not that postanarchism is without merit or that we should ask ourselves, “what would Bakunin do?” when confronted with philosophical, political, and ethical choices. I am claiming, however, that the fundamental social relationships that were developing in his lifetime were real, reflected material interests, and have not much changed. Therefore much of his critique of philosophy, capital and the state is still applicable and useful today. His most important contribution was to understand that political freedom and economic equality are not opposed to each other; they are essential for each other. He summed it up nicely in 1867: “Liberty without socialism is privilege and injustice; socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality.”

Postanarchist thought uses very sophisticated, elegant, though not new, philosophical arguments to suggest that postmodernist philosophy is the basis for justifying anarchism. To the degree that this downplays class exploitation, postanarchism may resemble liberalism more than anarchism. The problem with liberalism is that its vision of political freedom leaves the chains of class intact, whatever improvements may be made for other groups in society. The irony is that just as activists have put anarchism on the agenda in new and exciting ways, philosophers threaten to make it irrelevant. Since this is not a postmodern or new problem, Bakunin’s attempts to think through these problems may still be of some use as anarchism moves into the twenty-first century.

69. Schmidt & Van Der Walt: *Black Flame* (2009)

In their controversial book, Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism, Counterpower Volume 1 (Oakland: AK Press, 2009), Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt argue that “there is only one anarchist tradition,” the tradition of class struggle anarchism “rooted in the work of Bakunin” and his International Alliance of Socialist Democracy (page 71), thereby excluding, among others, the Daoists (Volume One, Selection 1), Godwin (Volume One, Selection 4), Stirner (Volume One, Selection 11), and even Proudhon (Volume One, Selections 8, 9, 12 & 18), from the anarchist “canon,” a position distinctly at odds with the approach taken in this anthology. In addition to defending a narrow definition of anarchism, they argue in support of a Platformist position (Volume One, Selection 115,) that for anarchists to be effective they need to form ideologically unified anarchist groups “with a shared analysis, strategy, and tactics, coordinated action, and an organizational discipline.”

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“Anarchism” is often wrongly identified as chaos, disorganization, and destruction. It is a type of socialism, and is against capitalism and landlordism, but it is also a *libertarian* type of socialism. For anarchism, individual freedom and individuality are extremely important, and are best developed in a context of democracy and equality. Individuals, however, are divided into classes based on exploitation and power under present-day systems of capitalism and landlordism. To end this situation it is necessary to engage in class struggle and revolution, creating a free socialist society based on common ownership, self-management, democratic planning from below, and production for need, not profit. Only such a social order makes individual freedom possible.

The state, whether heralded in stars and stripes or a hammer and sickle, is part of the problem. It concentrates power in the hands of the few at the apex of its hierarchy, and defends the system that benefits a ruling class of capitalists, landlords, and state managers. It cannot be used for revolution, since it only creates ruling elites—precisely the class system that anarchists want to abolish. For anarchists the new society will be classless, egalitarian, participatory, and creative, all features incompatible with a state apparatus.

Now, “every anarchist is a socialist, but not every socialist is an anarchist” [Volume Two, Selection 55]. Since its emergence, socialism has been divided into two main tendencies: libertarian socialism, which rejects the state and hierarchy more generally; and political socialism, which advocates “a political battle against capitalism waged through centrally organized workers’ parties aimed at seizing and utilizing State power to usher in socialism” (W. Thorpe, *The Workers Themselves*). Anarchism is an example of the first strand; classical Marxism is an example of revolutionary political socialism, while social democracy stands for a peaceful and gradual political socialism.

For anarchism it is a struggle by the working class and peasantry—the “popular classes”—that can alone fundamentally change society. These two groups constitute the great majority of humanity, and are the only ones with a basic interest in changing society as well as the power to do so. The emancipation of the popular classes—and consequently, the creation of a free society and the emancipation of all human beings—must be undertaken by those classes, themselves. Struggles against the economic, social, and political injustices of the present must be waged from below by “ordinary” people, organized democratically, and outside of and against the state and mainstream political parties.

In stressing individual freedom, and believing that such freedom is only realized through cooperation and equality, anarchism emphasizes the need to organize the popular classes in participatory and democratic movements, and the significance of direct action. It is critical to build movements that are able to develop a counterpower to confront and supplant the power of the ruling class and

the state. At the same time, it is essential to create a revolutionary popular counterculture that challenges the values of class society with a new outlook based on democracy, equality, and solidarity.

The most important strand in anarchism has, we argue, always been syndicalism: the view that unions—built through daily struggles, a radically democratic practice, and popular education—are crucial levers of revolution, and can even serve as the nucleus of a free socialist order. Through a revolutionary general strike, based on the occupation of workplaces, working people will be able to take control of production and reorient it toward human need, not profit. Syndicalism envisages a radically democratic unionism as prefiguring the new world, and aims to organize across borders and in promotion of a revolutionary popular counterculture. It rejects bureaucratic styles of unionism as well as the notion that unions should only concern themselves with economic issues or electing prolabour political parties...

The broad anarchist tradition stresses class, but this should not be mistaken for a crude workerism that fetishizes male factory workers in heavy boots and hardhats. The working class and peasantry are understood in expansive terms: the working class includes all waged workers who lack control of their work, whether employed in agriculture, industry, or services, including casual and informal workers as well as their families and the unemployed; the peasantry includes all small farmers who are subject to the control and exploitation of other classes, including sharecroppers and labour tenants.

The stress on class also does not mean a narrow focus on economic issues. What characterizes the broad anarchist tradition is not economism but a concern with struggling against the many injustices of the present. As the popular classes are international, multinational, and multiracial, anarchism is internationalist, underscoring common class interests worldwide, regardless of borders, cultures, race, and sex. For anarchists, a worker in Bangalore has more in common with a worker in Omsk, Johannesburg, Mexico City, or Seoul than with the Indian elite. Karl Marx's ringing phrase "Working men of all countries, unite!" is taken in its most literal and direct sense.

To create a world movement requires, in turn, taking seriously the specific problems faced by particular groups like oppressed nationalities, races, and women, and linking their struggles for emancipation to the universal class struggle. There is a powerful anti-imperialist, antimilitarist, antiracist, and feminist impulse—"feminist" in the sense of promoting women's emancipation—in the broad anarchist tradition, all within a class framework...

According to Eltzbacher... anyone who held an antistatist position must be an anarchist, even if they disagreed over fundamental issues like the nature of society, law, property, or the means of changing society. This minimalist defini-

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tion of anarchism overlapped with the tendency of many anarchists and syndicalists to invent myths about their own history. Kropotkin was not alone in constructing an imagined prehistory for the anarchist movement, a supposed genealogy of anarchist ideas and movements that dated back to the antiquity of Asia and Europe...

There are obvious problems here. If an anarchist is someone who “negates” the state, it is by no means clear how anarchism differs from the most radical economic liberals, like Murray Rothbard, who envisage a stateless society based on private property and an unrestrained free market. Likewise, classical Marxism’s ultimate objective is a stateless society without alienation and compulsion. Using Eltzbacher’s definition, both Rothbard and Marx could arguably earn a place in the pantheon of anarchist sages; it would be arbitrary to exclude them. In other words, Eltzbacher’s definition fails the basic task of clearly delineating anarchism from other ideas and therefore cannot be regarded as adequate.

The tendency to project anarchism onto all of human history has related problems: on the one hand, no serious examination of Lao-tzu [Volume One, Selection 1], the Anabaptists, and Bakunin can maintain that they shared the same views and goals, so it is not clear why they should be grouped together; and on the other hand, if anarchism is a universal feature of society, then it becomes very difficult indeed to explain why it arises, or to place it in its historical context, to delineate its boundaries, and analyze its class character and role at a particular time...

The obvious temptation is to take refuge in psychological explanations. Peter Marshall, for example, claims that the “first anarchist” was the first person who rebelled against “authority,” and that anarchism was rooted in human nature, “a timeless struggle” between “those who wanted to rule and those who refused to be ruled or to rule in turn,” premised on a “drive for freedom,” a “deeply felt human need.” The radical environmentalist and libertarian socialist Murray Bookchin made the same argument, adding a Freudian touch: anarchism is a “great libidinal movement of humanity to shake off the repressive apparatus created by hierarchical society” and originates in the “age-old drive” of the oppressed for freedom.

Yet there is no real evidence for this line of argument, and it fails to explain why anarchism has been significant in some periods and almost entirely absent in others. If anarchism is a human drive, why have its fortunes varied so dramatically over time? Only a historical and social analysis can really explain the rise and fall of anarchism, and this requires recourse to social science, not psychology...

Having rejected the contention that antistatism and a belief in individual freedom constitute the defining features of anarchism, we have suggested that a

more adequate definition of anarchism can be derived from an examination of the intellectual and social trend that defined itself as anarchist from the 1860s onward. Given that antistatism is at best a *necessary* component of anarchist thought, but not a *sufficient* basis on which to classify a set of ideas or a particular thinker as part of the anarchist tradition, it follows that Godwin [Volume One, Selection 4], Stirner [Volume One, Selection 11], and Tolstoy [Volume One, Selections 47 & 75] cannot truly be considered anarchists. Thinkers and activists who follow in the footsteps of these writers cannot, in turn, be truly considered anarchists or part of the anarchist tradition, even if they may perhaps be considered libertarians.

It follows from there that commonly used categories such as “philosophical anarchism” (often used in reference to Godwin or Tucker), “individualist anarchism” (used in reference to Stirner or the mutualists), “spiritual anarchism” (used in reference to Tolstoy and his cothinkers), or “lifestyle anarchism” (usually used in reference to latter-day Stirnerites) fall away. Because the ideas designated by these names are not part of the anarchist tradition, their categorization [as] variants of anarchism is misleading and arises from a misunderstanding of anarchism. Likewise, adding the rider “class struggle” or “social” to the word anarchist implies that there are anarchists who do not favour class struggle or who are individualists, neither of which is an accurate usage...

It is possible to identify libertarian and libertarian socialist tendencies throughout recorded history, analyse the ideas of each tendency, and examine their historical role. Yet anarchism, we have argued, is not a universal aspect of society or the psyche. It emerged from within the socialist and working-class movement 150 years ago, and its novelty matters. It was also very much a product of modernity and emerged against the backdrop of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of capitalism [Volume One, Chapter 3]. The ideas of anarchism themselves are still profoundly marked by the modern period and modernist thought. Its stress on individual freedom, democracy, and egalitarianism, its embrace of rationalism, science, and modern technology, its belief that history may be designed and directed by humankind, and its hope that the future can be made better than the past—in short, the idea of progress—all mark anarchism as a child of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, like liberalism and Marxism. Premodern libertarian ideas were expressed in the language of religion and a hankering for a lost idyllic past; anarchism, like liberalism and Marxism, embraces rationalism and progress. Nothing better expresses this linkage than the notion of “scientific socialism,” a term widely used by Marxists, but actually coined by Proudhon [Volume One, Selection 8].

Not only is it the case that anarchism *did* not exist in the premodern world; it is also the case that it *could not have*, for it is rooted in the social and intellec-

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tual revolutions of the modern world. And as modernity spread around the globe from the northern Atlantic region, the preconditions for anarchism spread too. By the time of Bakunin, the Alliance, and the First International, the conditions were ripe for anarchism in parts of Europe, the Americas, and Africa; within thirty years, the modernization of Asia had opened another continent...

“Class struggle” anarchism, sometimes called revolutionary or communist anarchism, is not a type of anarchism; in our view, it is the *only* anarchism...

[W]e develop a distinction within the broad anarchist tradition between two main strategic approaches, which we call “mass anarchism” and “insurrectionist anarchism.” Mass anarchism stresses that only mass movements can create a revolutionary change in society, that such movements are typically built through struggles around immediate issues and reforms (whether concerning wages, police brutality, high prices, and so on), and that anarchists must participate in such movements to radicalize and transform them into levers of revolutionary change. What is critical is that reforms are won *from below*: these victories must be distinguished from reforms applied from above, which undermine popular movements.

The insurrectionist approach, in contrast, claims that reforms are illusory, that movements like unions are willing or unwitting bulwarks of the existing order, and that formal organizations are authoritarian [Volume One, Selection 35]. Consequently, insurrectionist anarchism emphasizes armed action—“propaganda by the deed”—as the most important means of evoking a spontaneous revolutionary upsurge. What distinguishes insurrectionist anarchism from mass anarchism is not necessarily violence as such but its place in strategy: for insurrectionist anarchism, propaganda by the deed, carried out by conscious anarchists, is seen as a means of generating a mass movement; for most mass anarchism, violence operates as a means of self-defence for an *existing* mass movement...

At the heart of the mass anarchist tradition is the view that it is necessary to build a popular revolutionary movement—centred on a revolutionary counter-culture and the formation of organs of counterpower—in order to lay the basis for a new social order in place of capitalism, landlordism, and the state. Such a movement might engage in struggles around reforms, but it ultimately must aim to constitute the basis of a new society within the shell of the old, an incipient new social order that would finally explode and supersede the old one. Insurrectionist anarchism is *impossibilist*, in that it views reforms as impossible and futile; mass anarchism is *possibilist*, believing that it is both possible and desirable to win, to force reforms from the ruling classes, and that such concessions strengthen rather than undermine popular movements and struggles, and can improve popular conditions. Through direct action, for example, progressive changes in law

can be demanded and enforced, without the need for participation in the apparatus of the state.

Syndicalism is a powerful expression of the mass anarchist perspective [Volume One, Chapter 12]. Historically, it was above all syndicalism that provided the anarchist tradition with a mass base and appeal. Not all mass anarchists were syndicalists, however. Some were supporters of syndicalism, but with reservations, usually around the “embryo hypothesis”: the view that union structures form an adequate basis for a postcapitalist society [Volume One, Selections 25–27]. There were other mass anarchists who were antisyndicalist, for they did not believe unions could make a revolution. Here we see two main variants: those who rejected the workplace in favour of community struggles, and those who favoured workplace action with some independence from the unions...

One of the key debates we discuss in this volume is the question of whether anarchists and syndicalists need political groups dedicated to the promotion of the ideas of the broad anarchist tradition, and if so, what form such groups should take. When the editors of the Paris-based anarchist newspaper *Dielo Truda* (“Workers’ Cause”) issued the *Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists* in 1926 [Volume One, Selection 115], they were met by a storm of controversy. Some anarchists saw the editors’ advocacy of a unified anarchist political organization with collective discipline as an attempt to “Bolshevisize” anarchism and accused its primary authors, Arshinov and Makhno, of going over to classical Marxism. We argue, on the contrary, that the *Platform* and “Platformism” were not a break with the anarchist tradition but a fairly orthodox re-statement of well-established views.

From the time of Bakunin—who was part of the anarchist International Alliance of Socialist Democracy, which operated within the First International—the great majority of anarchists and syndicalists advocated the formation of specific anarchist political groups *in addition* to mass organizations like syndicalist unions.

In other words, most supported organizational dualism: the mass organization, such as unions, must work in tandem with specifically anarchist and syndicalist political organizations. Moreover, most believed that these groups should have fairly homogeneous principled, strategic, and tactical positions as well as some form of organizational discipline...

Any progressive movement for social change must inevitably confront the question of the relationship between the militant minority of conscious activists with a revolutionary programme and the broader popular classes. Should the revolutionaries substitute for the masses, as Blanqui suggested, or dominate them through a dictatorship, as Lenin believed? For the broad anarchist tradition, such positions are not acceptable, as they reproduce the very relations of domination

and the oppression of the individual that the tradition rejects. It follows that the role of anarchists or syndicalists is to act as a catalyst for the self-emancipation of the masses, promoting both the new faith of which Bakunin spoke as well as popular self-organization and participatory democracy.

There are various ways in which this can be done, and it is on this issue that the question of the need for a specific anarchist political organization arises. There are a number of anarchist and syndicalist positions on this issue, as we have noted. The antiorganizationalist approach is flawed by its failure to consider the dangers of informal organization and its dogmatic view that it is impossible to establish a formal organization compatible with anarchist principles. The strand of syndicalism that denies the need for a specific anarchist or syndicalist political organization fails to explain how a syndicalist union will be defended against the inevitable emergence of rival political currents within its ranks in the absence of such a body. The approach that calls only for a loose organization that seeks to unite all anarchists and syndicalists, regardless of profound differences in outlook, on the basis of what they share does not provide a solution either: an organization characterized by a wide diversity of views must lack a clear programme of action and fail to effectively coordinate the efforts of its militants in the battle of ideas; it is likely to split when confronted with situations that require a unified response. This approach also fails to explain why the unity of all anarchists should be seen as an end in itself and why a common programme should be seen as incompatible with anarchist principles.

The Bakuninist position, advocating an organization of tendency with a shared analysis, strategy, and tactics, coordinated action, and an organizational discipline, seems the most effective approach. By coordinating activity, promoting common positions on the tasks of the present and future, and rallying militants around a programme, it offers the basis for consistent and coherent work, the direction of limited resources toward key challenges, and the defence and extension of the influence of anarchism. This approach, going back to the Alliance and expressed in the *Platform*, is probably the only way that anarchism can challenge the hold of main stream political parties as well as nationalist, statist, and other ideas, and ensure that the anarchists' "new faith" provides a guide for the struggles of the popular classes.

70. Daniel Colson: Belief and Modernity (2005)

Daniel Colson is a philosopher and historian of anarchism. His publications include Anarcho-syndicalisme et communisme : Saint-Etienne 1920-1925 (Saint-Etienne : Université de Saint-Etienne, 1986), Petit lexique philosophique de l'anarchisme : De Proudhon à Deleuze (Le Livre de poche, 2001), and Trois Es-

sais de Philosophie Anarchiste – Islam, Histoire, Monadologie (Léo Scheer, 2004). The following excerpts, translated by Sharif Gemie, are taken from his essay, “Belief, Anarchism and Modernity,” *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2007), originally published in *Refractions*, No. 14 (Spring 2005).

As both Bakunin and Nietzsche remarked, it is not easy to clear one’s mind of God and the very real domination that his shadow imposes on our lives. Once evicted he returns by the back door, and not just in the guise of an illegal, illiterate immigrant who clings on to outmoded beliefs, but in modern garb, talking in terms that are central to arrogant modernity. Indeed, as Proudhon, Bakunin and Nietzsche all perceptively noted, it is at the very moment that western societies believe that they have definitively transcended the religious issue that they adopt religion’s most despotic characteristics: a belief in human destiny, the acceptance of divine providence and faith in the realization of an earthly paradise. Naturally, these beliefs are expressed in non-religious ways: in the idea of historical determinism, the inevitable march of science, rationality and the progressive evolution of civilization—each justifying the global domination of order and western interests—and, finally, in the hope of a bright future in which human society will be reconciled with itself in the name of reason—dialectical or otherwise—by means of a new despotism, organized by the State, political parties and the elite.

After more than a century of catastrophes, and in view of the way in which western ideals have been reshaped to fit the destructive imperatives of an economic system motivated only by the nihilistic drive to reproduce itself on an ever-expanding scale, the libertarian movement has a real opportunity. If it cannot offer an immediate and effective alternative to western ideals, it can at least rediscover the power and originality of the movement’s initial inspiration and the significance of its past projects.

While anarchism was born at a precise time and place, it is not defined by this historical context. On the contrary, it has always attempted to challenge the restrictive pretensions of history. In each of its struggles, large or small, in each of the extremely diverse contexts in which anarchists have mobilized, and for each of the collective identities or collective structures that have been articulated in particular times and places, the libertarian movement has never justified thoughts or actions with reference to an external dynamic of change. Anarchism has never claimed to be anything other than what the unique situation and circumstances have allowed. In fact, for anarchism, there are only singular situations. And these are sufficient in themselves. Each situation has its own *raison d’être*, a point repeated ceaselessly in anarchist books and writings. As Bakunin tells us, following what one might call an anarchist neo-monadology, each being,

each situation, each event, each moment, carries in itself—in a sense—the totality of that which is: the totality of good and bad possibilities, here and else where, the past, present and future. Libertarian thinking thus allows an absolute freedom and absolute affirmation that at different moments libertarian movements have succeeded in putting into practice—notably in Spain and Ukraine. Every entity, every event equally carries this potential within itself.

In contrast to the despotisms it challenges, anarchism does not constitute a superior, eternal truth and has no claim to an absolute beginning or end, whether constructed by Christ, the *Qur'an* or Modernity. It does not deify or generalize the forms or the moment of the movement's beginning, nor does it transform them into calendars, transcendent events or models closed to subsequent revision. Despotism, in the form of the State, Science, Capital and Religion, generalizes the particular. Anarchism, on the contrary, proposes what Deleuze calls the universalization of the singular. The appearance of anarchist writings and the rise of anarchist actions in mid-nineteenth century Europe are not so much models or founding acts as they are rehearsals for all the books and rebellions that are to come. As Deleuze puts the point: “the theatre of rehearsal is opposed to the theatre of representation ... it is not the festival of Federation [1790] which commemorates or represents the taking of the Bastille [1789], [but] the taking of the Bastille which celebrates and rehearses all future Federations.”

Following a similar line of reasoning, Leo Ferré suggests that he sings for those who will be living in ten thousand year time: not because he believes that today's audience are incapable of understanding him but because his songs rehearse what will be re-said and re-made tomorrow and ever-after, and because each statement, unique in itself, is and will be today and tomorrow, at once the same and different.

Just as anarchism can conceptualize a future that is already present, so it can also view a past that will never end. This is the lesson of Proudhon's neo-monadology. Opposing the despotic illusions and pretensions of modernity, anarchism never creates a *tabula rasa* of the past. Like all other entities, anarchism has a heritage, but its inheritance is not transmitted like a title or property, a dogma or a state. Unlike the “triumphal funeral cortege” loaded with the booty torn from those who work the soil, of which Benjamin speaks, anarchism is linked to the living. The argument here is not merely that the qualities “oppression” and “emancipation”, “sadness” and “joy”, “suffering” and “happiness”, “submission” and “revolt” had meaning before the appearance of anarchism. Human beings were involved in struggles long before anarchism emerged and these struggles should be remembered and celebrated. What I am suggesting is that the anarchist analysis with which I am concerned is drawn from the neo-monadological argument that all past situations and experiences, whether good or bad, happy

or unhappy, finished or not, always present options. Thus, while repeating them in turn, each person—according to their abilities and particular views, whether emancipatory or oppressive—can choose to re-affirm them. In this manner we create those discontinuous series that Landauer calls “traditions”—where “every glance into the past or the present of human communities is also an act which draws towards the future and which constructs that future.”

Two points can be drawn from the arguments presented above.

1. Once we are liberated from the vulgar, theological model of history that has been endlessly and scrupulously repeated by modernity, we should no longer be surprised or horrified by the “return” of religion. Religion “returns”, but—like all other things—it returns in an infinite, unpredictable series of events and situations that are modified in turn by religious forms. Religion “returns” at once the same and yet different and surprising. Religion “returns” with archaic qualities, with misleading or threatening qualities in its inventions and innovation. Religion “returns” in secular and atheist morality, even in the most anti-religious revolutionary thought, as well, of course, as in the most apparently traditional forms that, even given their familiar features, prepare us for unpredictable events.

2. Once we are liberated from the exorbitant and dominating pretensions of European, western modernity, we no longer have to keep referring back to a tiny part of Europe, amputated from its own past, to make sense of the challenges that currently face us. Elisée Reclus made an astonishing attempt to describe civilization in its “infinite variety” and map its “geographical individualities” in order to create a genealogy of the thousand ways in which “nature becomes conscious of itself” and make clear “the intimate link which joins series of human deeds to the subterranean forces of the earth”. For Reclus, “contemporary society contains within itself all previous societies.” Following him, we can analyze, in turn, the totality of those past and present human cultures that modernity either considers abandoned or which it tries to abolish and force into categories of equivalence, commodities and market practices. To the countless experiences, situations and traditions that led to the birth of anarchism in a specific time and place, we can add the infinite resources of other cultures and traditions. We can deconstruct the structures of domination in which they were caught; we can select and associate, here and elsewhere, all the revolts, affirmations and spontaneous acts, all the modes of being that are needed for an emancipatory transformation of that which is. We can rehearse a movement that is inspired by anarchism, by its multiplicities and its differences; by the capacity of beings to rely on themselves, by the singularity of the relationship each has to the world, because each of them, considered as unique and irreplaceable, is the bearer of all of the others.

Here, we return to the religious question. We will not brook any compromise. In fact, as soon as anarchism affirms its rejection of the modern distinction

between the present (modernity) and the past (all previous periods), between here (the west) and elsewhere (the rest of the world), then anarchism must explain how it can accept themes and influences from that past, that elsewhere, how it can make them its own when they are so clearly marked by the oppressive religious representations that anarchism radically opposes. How can one accept that which one refuses? Here, I wish to show that anarchism has the means by which to confront such a dilemma. In practice, no one can escape the inheritance of the past, even those who claim to make a *tabula rasa* of history. Anarchist neo-monadology shows that the past does not pass, and that elsewhere is also here. Through a rehearsal in which every present situation, every present being, is at once the same and different; through an unceasing process of evaluation, selection, re-composition and re-arrangement of the present; through philosophical and practical experimentation one can construct an emancipatory movement which is capable of defeating all forms of oppression. How can this libertarian reconstruction of the past be effected? If we wish to hang on to every emancipatory moment, even the smallest and the most fleeting, how can this be done with those that exist within oppressive structures or, more particularly, those marked by religious themes in which godly symbols form precisely the most sophisticated form of domination and dispossession of the self? Among the many ways in which to reply to these questions, one can, by way of a provisional conclusion, propose three approaches.

1. The first is clearly the least subtle and the most debatable. One could cite the old biblical image of separating the wheat from the chaff. How can we separate the good wheat of past revolts and struggles from the chaff of their religious symbolism? Among the jumble of old beliefs and practices, how can we reveal and identify those revolts and struggles that were inevitably without any public, conscious expression, as anarchism did not yet exist? If we pull these revolts to the surface, if we cut them from the ideological veils which have covered them, if we identify these struggles without names, without sounds, without projects and without any terms to describe what they are to our eyes, we find that they were covered in the fogs and lies of a primitive conception of the world. This first form of the exhumation of the past thus seems quite similar to the modernist approach which was denounced in the arguments above: it is a simple inventory of a twice-dead past: dead because it is past, dead because it has been carefully separated from its subjective expressions. However, you don't touch the past with impunity. This first form of scholarly re-appropriation of the past, considered as a simple prehistory, is certainly rudimentary and simplistic. But it can contribute to a neo-monadologic approach. Even the heart (or the soul?) of the most ossified scholar can be moved by the echoes of historic revolts, struggles and sufferings: those endured in the building of the Great Wall of China, by Spartacus and

the Roman slaves, the movements of Roman plebeians, and so on. This feeling might take a vague, merely negative form in regret, loss or guilt. Yet by coming into contact with these events we cannot help but be tempted, like Walter Benjamin's *angelus novus*, to revive the dead—subjectively affirm the revolts of the past and nourish our present forces of life and autonomy.

2. There is a second method by which one can re-appropriate the past. It is similar to the first, in that it also aims to separate the wheat of revolts from the chaff of illusions and the ideological and religious masks in which they were hidden. But this second approach proposes a form of separation that is at once more subtle, more wide-ranging and more sensitive to the autonomy and subjective expression of each of these past events. Here, the proposal is not just to distinguish between, on the one hand, clear examples of oppression and revolt and, on the other hand, an erroneous consciousness of these situations which must be set aside in the name of modernity. Instead, it is to consider whether there was a link between the subversive and emancipatory dimension of the events and the explanations that were provided: the discursive and imaginary constructions that structured their subjective autonomy. In this approach, we would not be concerned to strip past struggles of all that made them particular, in accordance with our reductive and objectifying interpretations. On the contrary, we would consider the particular justifications for these struggles, recognize their *raison d'être*, affirm their subjective autonomy and acknowledge forms that were more or less religious (and therefore strange to our eyes), but that nonetheless carried in themselves original expressions and statements of emancipation capable both of surprising us and enriching our cultures of struggle and agitation. The third-century Daoist yellow turbans, with their strange cults and banquets in which men and women mixed as equals; the twelfth-century reformed Ismaeliens of Alamut, with their fortresses and their peculiar interpretation of Islam; the neo-Franciscans of thirteenth-century Italy; the Czech Hussites of the fifteenth century; the Protestant Camisards of the Cevennes; and the Hassidic Jewish movements of eastern Europe—such movements constitute the most visible moments of ancient, imperceptible class struggles. Deviant forms of Daoism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism were produced by great movements of revolt: they are *not* more or less deceptive coverings which, in the absence of an explicitly revolutionary program, tricked the rebels they inspired and forced them to submit to an ideological, religious order. On the contrary, in this second approach, we wish to consider seriously how these rebels modified the religious ideologies of their time, we want to think about what we might learn from them.

3. The third and last approach of appropriating the various emancipatory traditions of the past can only be sketched. It develops the second approach, but is quite distinct. It is not concerned with making simple distinctions between

emancipatory struggles and the social, cultural or religious base from which they emerge, or between the religious, oppressive cultures and the more or less original, desperate initiatives of the rebels and deviants who, while waiting for future revolutionary ideologies, seize these ideas and turn them against the rulers. This third approach, closer to the original inspiration of anarchism, is more concerned with widening our evaluations and analyses of oppressive and emancipatory structures to consider the totality of forces and relationships of past societies, including its representations, perceptions and even those relationships that can be termed “religious” but which today, as yesterday, carry within themselves the totality of possibilities.

71. Richard Day: Groundless Solidarity and Infinite Responsibility (2005)

Richard Day is a sociologist who writes about anarchy, community and education with a focus on relationships between social subjects and group identity. The following excerpts are taken from his Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements (London: Pluto Press, 2005), in which he criticizes leftist notions of the “hegemony of hegemony,” which assume “that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and en masse, across an entire national or supranational space.” Reprinted with the kind permission of the publisher.

A community composed by affinity-based relationships is not a Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* [ethical community], nor is it a brand of liberal/postmarxist pluralism. It is not even what the more hegemonically oriented autonomists think of as “the multitude”. All of these conceptions gloss over too many real differences and struggles that are encountered by those trying to come together against neoliberalism, while inhabiting disparate regions, positions in political-economic structures and racial/cultural/sexual identifications. Even the logic of affinity as it emerged within classical anarchism, and as it has been taken up by postanarchists, still lacks something crucial—adequate attention to axes of oppression based on practices of division rather than of capture or exploitation... we must speak of the coming *communities*, in the plural, if we want to go as far as possible in warding off what may appear as a hegemonic moment. As postmodern and anti-racist feminists have argued, a multidimensional, interlocking analysis of oppression is crucial to an adequate understanding—and undermining—of the neoliberal project. But this alone is not enough. In addition to theorizing about a non-identical identity that is assumed to already exist, at least *in potentia*, it is necessary to find more ways to link actually existing groups through a shared commitment to

groundless solidarity driven by infinite responsibility. To the extent that this commitment drives concrete action, to the extent that it brings about changes in daily practices, obstacles based on traditional divisions can be overcome. This is, of course, an endless process, but is essential to creating and maintaining the affinity-based relationships that compose the coming communities...

Just as the rejection of coercive morality need not necessarily lead to passive nihilistic relativism, so the rejection of Hegelian community need not necessarily lead to an anti-social individualism. In poststructuralist theory, it leads to something quite different that can be approached via the concept of *singularity*.

This concept provides relief from a number of dichotomies that have long plagued western social and political thought. In the context of political organization, it breaks down hard-and-fast distinctions between the individual and the community, the particular and the universal. As [Giorgio] Agamben notes, singularity is “freed from the false dilemma that obliges knowledge to choose between the ineffability of the individual and the intelligibility of the universal” (*The Coming Community*). What Agamben calls “whatever being” is that aspect or moment of being that is relatively free from dependence upon identification and subjectification, from the poles of the mass, the many, the well-disciplined, the people. What is this sort of being, apart from its abstract expression? Agamben says it is *the example*: “Neither particular nor universal, the example is a singular object that presents itself as such, that *shows* its singularity”...

In everyday terms, whatever being is what causes/allows subjects to resist the systematic imperatives, both overt and covert, that attempt to structure their lives; it is what breaks us out of the societies of discipline and control, and urges us towards creating our own autonomous spaces. Whatever being also compels us to act ethically in the poststructuralist sense; it compels us to *make choices* under circumstances where it is impossible to relieve ourselves of responsibility by an appeal to moral necessity.

Whatever being in the coming community constitutes, of course, a politics, a set of interventions in linked fields of power/knowledge. Agamben argues... that “the novelty of the coming politics is that it will no longer be a struggle for the conquest or control of the state, but a struggle between the state and the non-state (humanity), an insurmountable disjunction between whatever singularity and the State organization”. Here Agamben takes up the anarchist distinction between social and political revolution and, like the autonomist Marxists (with whom he has close connections) comes down on the side of the former. He is also aware of the problems associated with liberal multiculturalism, arguing that whatever singularities must not form a “societas”; if they do, they become vulnerable to recognition and integration. “What the state cannot tolerate in any way”, he

remarks, “is that the singularities form a community without affirming an identity, that humans co-belong without any representable condition of belonging”...

Rather than longing for total communion, we must understand communities as multiplicities that cannot be totalized, as *n*-dimensional networks of networks that spread out infinitely and are infinitely interconnected. We must always speak of the coming communities in the plural form, and forget about the Spinozan trick that allows us to think that *our* way of sewing everyone up into the same bundle somehow avoids the problem of suffocation...

[T]he coming communities are more likely to be found in those crucibles of human sociability and creativity out of which the radically new emerges: racialized and ethnicized identities, queer and youth subcultures, anarchists, feminists, hippies, indigenous peoples, back-to-the-landers, “deviants” of all kinds in all kinds of spaces. To the extent that these communities are the sources of energy (“difference”) upon which postmodern states and corporations rely for their very existence, it could be said, as the autonomists say, that they have created the state and capital. But this process of co-optation, as they also note, is often contested, sometimes subverted, and never totally successful. This struggle defines the coming communities from another direction, as those identities that are not acceptable to, or at least not yet entirely normalized within, the global system. At their most radical limit, they present that which cannot be represented, that which *must not signify*—they are the disavowed, unconscious underside of globalizing capital, the Real that, just as it must be repressed, must just as surely return...

The disparities that allow the coming communities to act as crucibles for social change... mean that the simple dichotomy Agamben sets up between “state” and “humanity” is impossible to maintain. There need to be struggles not only between “the state” (the bad?) and “humanity” (the good?), but *within* “humanity” *as well*. To postulate any identity category as unmarked and undifferentiated is, as... with... “the multitude” and “the proletariat,” to assume a unity that not only must be striven for, but will never fully arrive. It appears possible only if one postulates a “fundamental oppression,” a substructure upon which all other oppressions are supposedly erected... this mode of analysis has become all but impossible to maintain. Pushing earlier critiques of the New Left to their logical and political limits, transnational feminists have convincingly argued that the great levelling and totalizing efforts of neoliberalism must be seen as just that—efforts, attempts, hegemonic constructs, fantasies imposed upon a field of endless and various struggle...

While neoliberalism is globally present, and operates across all axes of domination and exploitation, we must keep in mind that it is manifested differently for different identities, at different times and places. A multidimensional analy-

sis of oppression is therefore crucial to any effort to oppose, subvert or offer alternatives to the neoliberal world order...

Living affinity-based relationships means not only hooking up with those with whom we share values, but actively warding off and working against those whose practices perpetuate division, domination and exploitation.

Although feminists, postcolonial and queer theorists have all rejected totality in its various forms, there are currents within each of these traditions that help to guide us away from the trap of positing in its place a community that is entirely without presuppositions. Just as there can be no purely nomadic subject, there can be no purely nomadic community. There can, however, be communities that share presuppositions that are *different* from those of the global system of states and corporations, and that are at the same time changeable and open to *anything but* the emergence of apparatuses of division, capture, and exploitation. This is the crux of the task of building the coming communities: we must develop—and live according to—shared ethico-political commitments that allow us to achieve enough solidarity to effectively create sustainable alternatives to the neoliberal order...

A politics of affinity... is not about abandoning identification as such; it is about abandoning the fantasy that *fixed, stable* identities are possible and desirable, that one identity is better than another, that superior identities deserve more of the good and less of the bad that a social order has to offer, and that the state form should act as the arbiter of who gets what. Although what constitutes a “minority” at a particular place and time may change, and the composition of a given “minority” identity will always shift, a poststructuralist analytics of power tells us that there will never be a time when there are no minorities. If we continue to put our energy into a politics of demand, we will be putting our energy into the perpetuation of the state form; we need to begin to understand better how, as persons of relative privilege, we can work to *demolish* our privilege without asking the state to do it for us...

Diane Elam... has argued for a feminism that “would seek neither to liberate a female subject nor to secure certain fundamental rights for her” (*Feminism and Deconstruction*), but would, at the same time, continue to “strategically appeal to rights politics”... I would suggest that state apparatuses are relatively uninterested in *why* we come to them to solve our problems for us. It is the fact that we come to them at all that perpetuates the state form as a state of relations in [Gustav] Landauer’s sense [Volume One, Selection 49]. All the same, I find Elam’s conception of a “groundless solidarity” that is “not based on identity, but on suspicion of identity” to be very compelling. She arrives at this concept by asking herself a philosophical question about feminism and deconstruction, which

she answers (partially) by suggesting that the relationship between them “is not one of consensus (political common *ground*), but rather that of groundless solidarity.” Elam is, of course, thinking of consensus in the Habermasian sense here, as something always achievable through the magic of language use, and therefore somehow always-already achieved. But at the same time she leads us towards a more anarchistic conception of consensus as a *process* rather than a state, something to be worked on via discussions that are tenuous and difficult. “Groundless solidarity”, she contends, “is a stability but not an absolute one; it can be the object of conflict and need not mean consensus.” Thus we might finally have done with the idea that either conflict or consensus are “at the heart” of human social relations; both are not only always possible, but always present, intermixing and at play...

[T]he concept of groundless solidarity has value for struggles on *all* axes of subordination, and especially for making links across these struggles. Trans theorist Leslie Feinberg has related how the early gay and lesbian movement suffered from the predominance of a “similar middle-class White current” that had difficulty accepting the presence of drag queens at Pride events, and thereby “weakened the movement they themselves depended upon for liberation” (*Trans Liberation*). Feinberg asks: “What is the bedrock on which all of our diverse trans populations can build solidarity? The commitment to be the best fighters against each other’s oppression.” The goal is not to “strive to be one community” (*Sittlichkeit*), but to build many linked communities; not to “find” leaders, but to recognize that everyone is a leader, that “we are the ones we have been waiting for” (Feinberg). That this potential is not merely theoretical is shown by the intense activity that is going on in activist circles around the world, to find ways to build concrete, practical links between disparate struggles, and to begin to engage in the extremely difficult task of dealing directly with the divisions that exist among us while resisting the temptation to pass this responsibility off to a state (or corporate) apparatus...

PGA [Peoples’ Global Action] is particularly interesting in terms of practices of solidarity, in that it was organized by ten activist groups from five different continents, including the Zapatistas, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST, Brazilian Landless Peasants Movement), and Karnataka State Farmer’s Union (KKRS), known for direct action against genetically engineered crops in southern India (PGA 2002)... Its core principles, or hallmarks, include a “very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism and feudalism,” as well as “all trade agreements, institutions and governments that promote destructive globalization” (*Hallmarks of People’s Global Action 2004*, 1st hallmark). The rejection of feudalism may seem anachronistic to many readers; the group’s website explains that it was added at the request of the Indian and Nepalese delegates,

whose immediate struggles are oriented in this way. This is an excellent example of how Eurocentric assumptions about the nature of globalization can be challenged and the discourse of resistance enriched, given the right sort of organizational structure—one based on “decentralization and autonomy” rather than hierarchical command (PGA, 5th hallmark). To maintain this structure, PGA has refused to take on a legal existence, and maintains that “no organization or person represents the PGA, nor does the PGA represent any organization or person” (*Organizational Principles*). The group also maintains a multidimensional analysis of oppression within the neoliberal order, arguing that “denunciation of ‘free’ trade without an analysis of patriarchy, racism, and processes of homogenization is a basic element of the discourse of the right.” Finally, it adopts what it calls a “confrontational attitude”, on the assumption that the politics of demand cannot have much effect on “biased and undemocratic organizations in which transnational capital is the only real policy maker” (3rd hallmark). This attitude extends to support for, and participation in, direct action civil disobedience, and in the case of Chiapas, armed rebellion. There are many similar groups now in existence, such as Via Campesina, which is a network of peasant organizations, agricultural workers, rural women and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, America and Europe. Like PGA, Via Campesina is organized along non-hierarchical lines and respects the local autonomy of its members.

While all of these organizations oppose the current organization of global capitalism and the statist institutions upon which it depends, they do not always challenge the neoliberal system of states as such. That is, while they are strong on building solidarity *against* the existing order, they are not as effective in building alternatives to it. Perhaps not surprisingly, given their hyper-exclusion from almost all of the so-called benefits of modernization and postmodernization, in combination with their precarious, yet vastly superior hold on traditional values and ways of life, it is indigenous peoples who are leading the way here...

[T]he Mohawk nation of the Haudenosaunee have conceptualized a path of self-determination that involves neither a recovery of a partial remnant of a sovereignty lost in the past, nor a futural project of a totalizing nation-state. This approach is guided by the reflection that while redistribution of sovereignty may indeed challenge a particular colonial oppressor, it will not necessarily challenge the tools of his oppression. According to Taiaiake Alfred, sovereignty, as “an exclusionary concept rooted in an adversarial and coercive western notion of power,” is itself deeply problematic (*Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*). Taking up a position that is consonant with the Weberian critique of rationalization, Marie Smallface Marule and Lee Maracle argue that the structures and processes of bureaucracy that are necessary to postmodern sovereignty are oppressive as such, regardless of whether they are “imposed” from “outside”,

or “chosen” from “inside” a community (Marule, in *Pathways to Self-Determination*, and Maracle, *I am Woman*). Taken to its limit, this critique approaches that of the anarchist and anarchist-influenced groups described above, in positing modes of social organization in which there is “no absolute authority, no coercive enforcement of decisions, no hierarchy, and no separate ruling entity” (Alfred). The Haudenosaunee know what they want, because they’ve had it before; yet their struggle to walk their own path has been met with intense repression by all levels of the Canadian government, for which no tactic is too underhanded to ward off what it fears most—the successful construction of a form of indigenous governance that eludes its control, that does not rely in any way upon a devolution of “authority” from the system of states. From the Oka Crisis of 1990 up to the present day, communities like Kahnésatake have been split internally and subject to constant external interference as they strive to find ways to maintain and reinvigorate their traditional forms of organization in the context of the postmodern condition...

The struggles for autonomy being carried out by indigenous peoples around the world show that the coming communities are in fact beginning to arrive, that there is more to this notion than mere high theory. But, in observing that the logic of affinity guided by groundless solidarity does structure some actually existing movements and social experiments, I am not by any means trying to suggest that all of the work has been done. The problems encountered by women in the Zapatista autonomous zones are generalizable to other axes of oppression, other regions, movements, and traditions—every “historical” society has been to some extent patriarchal, racist and homophobic...

Like groundless solidarity, the concept of infinite responsibility comes from Derridean deconstruction and serves as its necessary complement. Simon Critchley, who has been very influential in working against the reading of Jacques Derrida as a postmodern relativist, argues that “Derridean deconstruction has a horizon of responsibility or ethical significance, provided that ethics is understood in the Levinasian sense” (*The Ethics of Deconstruction*). In this Levinasian sense, ethics... does not seek to impose any universal-normative procedures or codes. Rather, the “face” of the other “whom I cannot evade, comprehend, or kill” calls forth an infinite responsibility “to justice, to justify myself.” Derridean/Levinasian ethics, then, relies upon the claim that the “deep structure of subjective experience is always already engaged in a relation of responsibility or, better, responsivity to the other” (Critchley, in *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*). Taking a similar line, but in an explicitly feminist register, Ewa Ziarek has recently argued that the politics of radical democracy “cannot be based only on the hegemonic consolidation of dispersed struggles against manifold forms of oppression; rather, it has to be articulated in the gap between the ethos of becom-

ing and the ethos of alterity, between the futural temporality of political praxis and the anarchic diachrony of obligation” (*An Ethics of Dissensus*). To put it in less jargon-laden terms, this means that as individuals, as groups, we can never allow ourselves to think that we are “done,” that we have identified all of the sites, structures and processes of oppression “out there” and, most crucially, “in here,” inside our own individual and group identities. Infinite responsibility means always being ready to hear another other, a subject who by definition does not “exist,” indeed *must not* exist (be heard) if current relations of power are to be maintained. To respond means at least to have heard *something*—though one can never hear entirely “correctly” or completely—and thus represents a crucial step on the way to avoiding the unconscious perpetuation of systems of division.

Once again, this is a question that is not merely “academic.” As Lorenzo Komboa Ervin has argued, “movements for social change in this 21st century will make a decisive mistake” if they ignore the specificity of struggles that are not directly oriented to state domination and capitalist exploitation. “They will create a middle-class ‘white rights’ movement which will not elevate the masses of the world’s peoples” (*Colours of Resistance*). In the aftermath of the mass protest convergences of the late 1990s, and in response to day-to-day problems encountered in more locally-based work, activists of all persuasions have been ramping up their efforts to address the ways in which structured inequalities and exclusions divide anti-globalization and other struggles. In a proposal for a Zapatista-style *encuentro*, a coalition of IMC [Independent Media Centre] activists highlighted the issues that are at stake: “how to build open, inclusive, decentralized structures of accountability, decision-making, and action locally, regionally, nationally, and globally?” How to “bridge gaps in gender, colour, culture, age, access, language and ‘otherness’ for capacity building and empowerment?” (IMC Encuentro Proposal Working Group 2000). Clearly, this is going to require much more than simply “including” those who are “excluded” by the invisible hierarchies inherent even in the most anti-authoritarian organizing styles. As Chris Crass has argued:

“The idea that we just need to get more people of colour to join our groups is an example of how white privilege operates. It carries the idea that we have the answers and how it just needs to be delivered to people of colour—as opposed to, people of colour have been organizing for a long time and we (white activists) have a lot to learn so maybe we could find a way to form alliances, relationships, and coalitions to work with folks of colour and be prepared to learn as well as share” (“Confronting Global Capitalism and Challenging White Supremacy”).

Getting beyond a practice that looks all too much like state-based liberal multiculturalism will require White/male activists giving up control of movements, events and projects, listening rather than talking, linking up with existing organizations rather than duplicating, colonizing or depleting them because they do not seem to be guided by familiar models or led by familiar people. It will mean remembering that despite what may be a very real commitment to anti-oppression struggles, those of us who are privileged benefit from our positions in oppressive structures, primarily through not having to worry about the effects they have upon our own theory and practice. Infinite responsibility means being aware of this privilege and refusing/diffusing it to the greatest extent possible. More than anything, though, it means being willing to hear that you have not quite made it just yet, that you still have something more to learn.

While liberal theorists and politicians pretend that all is well—except for a few minor difficulties that can be overcome by making a new law, creating an NGO, or adjusting a bureaucratic function here and there—increasing numbers of people all over the world are converging on the notion that the new global order needs to be fought on all levels, in all localities, through multiple, disparate—yet interlocking—struggles. Although an immense amount of work remains to be done, it does seem that connections across the chasms created by apparatuses of division are being made, with increasing frequency and complexity. This gives us a reason to hope that groundless solidarity/infinite responsibility can offer an alternative to the politics of recognition and integration, that apparatuses of division can be significantly dismantled through direct, community-based action, rather than just being ameliorated—or even further entrenched—by state-based reforms. Groundless solidarity arises from a precarious “unity in diversity” of its own, a complex set of (partially) shared experiences of what it means to live under neoliberal hegemony, what it means to fight it—and to create alternatives to it. It provides a basis for linking the coming communities, for creating relationships that do not divide us into disparate, defenceless subjects begging to be integrated by the dominant order...

With the corporations working to undermine the states, and both states and corporations increasingly dependent upon a complex, rickety system of computerized control, there are now more gaps than ever to be exploited, more dis- and a-topias within which autonomous experiments might be conducted. Now, more than ever, it would seem that we are faced with a choice between anarchy and anarchism.

Afterword

The Anarchist Current: Continuity and Change in Anarchist Thought

ROBERT GRAHAM

FROM ANARCHY TO ANARCHISM

Anarchism, George Woodcock once wrote, is like the river of the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus: constantly changing, with different sources, eddies and currents, sometimes percolating below the surface, at other times bursting forth in revolutionary torrents, but generally moving “between the banks of certain unifying principles” (1977: 16). Contrary to popular misconceptions, those unifying principles are not chaos and terrorism, but a rejection of hierarchy, authority and exploitation, and an alternative vision of a society without domination based on freedom and equality. Anarchists reject the State and its institutions, advocating societies based on free association, without anyone having the power to dominate or exploit another.

Long before anyone consciously articulated anarchist ideas, people had lived in societies without a State for thousands of years. So-called primitive and prehistoric peoples lacked any formal institutions of government and hierarchical social structures based on relationships of command and obedience (Clastres, Volume Two, Selection 64). As the anthropologist Harold Barclay puts it, “Ten thousand years ago everyone was an anarchist” (1982: 39). Around 6000 years ago, the first hierarchical societies began to emerge in which a minority of their members assumed positions of prestige and authority, from which they came to exercise power over others (Barclay, Volume Three, Selection 17).

It took thousands of years for this process of State formation finally to encompass the entire globe, with some people continuing to live in stateless societies into the 20th century. Members of stateless societies lived in roughly egalitarian communities without rank or status (Taylor, 1982). For the most part, stateless

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societies had sustainable subsistence economies based on relationships of equality, reciprocity and mutual aid (Clastres, Volume Two, Selection 64; Bookchin, Volume Three, Selection 26; Sahlins (1974), Barclay (1982) and Kropotkin (1902)).

Relatively few States emerged from within their own societies: ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, Mexico, Hawaii, Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa and possibly India (Barclay, 2003). State institutions were forced on most societies by external powers, or were created in response to such power. According to Barclay, a combination of factors led to the emergence of State forms: 1) increased population; 2) sedentary settlement; 3) horticulture/agriculture; 4) redistribution of wealth; 5) military organization; 6) secondary significance of kinship ties; 7) trading; 8) specialized division of labour; 9) individual property and control of resources; 10) a hierarchical social order; and 11) ideologies of superiority/inferiority (Volume Three, Selection 17).

As most people were innocent of government, having lived without it for thousands of years, they had nothing against which to compare their so-called primitive forms of social organization until it was too late. “Anarchy” was for them a way of life, not a concept. Although they may have had nonhierarchical conceptions of their societies and the natural world (Bookchin, Volume 3, Selection 25), it is unlikely that they conceived of anarchy as some sort of ideal. Anarchist ideas only began to be articulated after people started living within hierarchical societies based on exploitation and domination. When looking for precursors of the anarchist idea, one must be careful then not to read too much into the writings of people who never identified themselves as anarchists and never explicitly endorsed anarchy as an ideal.

DAOISM AND EARLY ANARCHISM

Daoism in ancient China helped give more formal expression to the nonhierarchical sensibilities of earlier human societies, eventually leading some Daoists to adopt an anarchist stance. John P. Clark has argued that the classic text, the *Daode Jing* (or *Tao Te Ching*), circa 400 BCE, evokes “the condition of wholeness which preceded the rending of the social fabric by institutions like the State, private property, and patriarchy” (1984: 168).

Writing around 300 CE, the Daoist sage Bao Jingyan gave the Daoist rejection of the hierarchical cosmology of the Confucians a more political slant, seeing it as nothing more than a pretext for the subjugation of the weak and innocent by the strong and cunning (Volume One, Selection 1). He harkened back to the “original undifferentiated” condition of the world in which “all creatures found happiness in self-fulfillment,” expressing a nonhierarchical, ecolog-

ical sensibility which eschews “the use of force that goes against the true nature of things.” He noted that in “the earliest times,” prior to the creation of a hierarchical social order, “there was neither lord nor subjects.” He saw compulsory labour and poverty as the results of the division of people into ranks and classes. With the emergence of a hierarchical social order, everyone seeks to be above the other, giving rise to crime and conflict. The “people simmer with revolt in the midst of their poverty and distress,” such that to try to stop them from revolting “is like trying to dam a river with a handful of earth.” He preferred a life worth living to the religious promise of life after death.

In his commentary on Bao Jingyan’s text, Etienne Balazs argues that Bao Jingyan was “China’s first political anarchist” (1964: 243). As with later self-proclaimed anarchists, Bao Jingyan opposed hierarchy and domination, seeing them as the cause of poverty, crime, exploitation and social conflict, rejected religious beliefs that justify such a state of affairs, predicted the revolt of the masses and advocated a society without hierarchy and domination where there are “neither lord nor subjects,” a phrase strikingly reminiscent of the 19th century European anarchist battle cry, “Neither God nor Master.” While similar ideas may have been expressed in ancient Greece by the Stoic philosopher, Zeno of Citium (333-262 BCE), only fragments of his writings have survived, making Bao Jingyan’s text perhaps the oldest extant to set forth a clearly anarchist position.

ÉTIENNE DE LA BOÉTIE AND VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE

Bao Jingyan argued that the strong and cunning forced and tricked the people into submitting to them. That the people may play a part in their own servitude is an idea that was explored in much greater detail by Étienne de la Boétie (1530-1563), in his *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude* (1552, Volume One, Selection 2). Seeking to explain how the masses can be subjugated by a single tyrant, de la Boétie argued that it is the masses themselves “who permit, or, rather, bring about, their own subjection, since by ceasing to submit they would put an end to their own servitude.” Despite de la Boétie’s focus on tyranny, rather than hierarchy and domination as such, as Murray Rothbard points out, de la Boétie’s critique of tyranny applies to all forms of government, whether democratic, monarchic or dictatorial, such that his arguments can easily be pressed on “to anarchist conclusions,” as they were by subsequent writers (1975: 20).

This idea that the power of the State depends on the voluntary submission or acquiescence of the people, such that State power can be abolished or undermined by the withdrawal of cooperation, was taken up by later anarchists, including William Godwin (Volume One, Selection 4), Leo Tolstoy (Volume One, Selection 47), Gustav Landauer (Volume One, Selection 49), Praxedis Guerrero

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(Volume One, Selection 72), Alex Comfort (Volume Two, Selection 26) and contemporary writers, such as Noam Chomsky (Volume Two, Selection 68) and Ed Herman (Volume Three, Selection 40), who have emphasized that so-called democratic States require an extensive propaganda apparatus to “engineer” or “manufacture” the consent of the people to their own continuing domination and exploitation.

HERESY AND REVOLUTION

While religion has often served as both a justification and palliative for coercive authority, various heretical religious currents have emerged throughout human history denying the legitimacy of earthly authority (Walter, Volume Two, Selection 43). In the 1960s, Gary Snyder highlighted those strands of Buddhism that evinced an anarchist sensibility (Volume Two, Selection 42). In the 9th century, a minority among the Mu‘tazili Muslims argued that anarchy is preferable to tyranny (Crone, 2000), while another Islamic sect, the Kharijites, “disputed any need at all for an imam, or head of State, as long as the divine law was carried out” (Levy, 1957).

In Europe, several heretical Christian sects emerged during the Middle Ages and Reformation, rejecting human authority in favour of freedom and community. The Brethren of the Free Spirit adopted a libertarian amorality similar to Max Stirner’s egoism (Volume One, Selection 11), advocating total freedom for themselves while taking advantage of others (Marshall, 2008: 87-89). In contrast, the Taborites in Bohemia were egalitarians, seeking to abolish private property, taxes and political authority, asserting that “All shall live together as brothers, none shall be subject to another” (Marshall: 92). The Hussites and Moravian Brothers also advocated an egalitarian community without coercive authority, modeled after Christ’s relationship with his apostles.

But it was not until the English Revolution (1642-1651) that Christian teachings were transformed into a body of ideas resembling modern anarchism. The Ranters advocated and practiced free love and the holding of all things in common, with some adopting a libertarian amorality similar to that of the Brethren of the Free Spirit. The Diggers also advocated holding things in common, and sought to establish egalitarian communities on waste lands.

GERRARD WINSTANLEY

One of the Diggers, Gerrard Winstanley (1609-1676), published a pamphlet in 1649, *The New Law of Righteousness*, in which he advocated an early form of anarchist communism, drawing inspiration from the Bible (Volume One, Selection 3).

Winstanley argued that anyone getting “authority into his hands tyrannizes over others,” whether husband, parent, master or magistrate. He saw private property, inequality and exploitation as the inevitable result of “rule and dominion, in one part of man-kinde over another.” He advocated making the earth the “common treasury” of all, such that anyone in need should be able to “take from the next store-house he meets with.” There “shall be none Lord over others,” and “no need for Lawyers, prisons, or engines of punishment,” with the distinction between “*Mine and Thine*” having been abolished.

In opposing coercive authority, hierarchy and private property, Winstanley was careful to endorse means consistent with his ends. He endorsed a form of nonviolent direct action, while denouncing those who would replace one tyranny with another. For Winstanley, “the manifestation of a righteous heart shall be known, not by his words, but by his actions,” for “Tyrannie is Tyrannie in one as wel [sic] as in another; in a poor man lifted up by his valour, as in a rich man lifted up by his lands.”

Although couching his argument in religious terms, Winstanley conceived of God as “the law of righteousness, reason and equity” dwelling within all of us, a position similar to that later adopted by Leo Tolstoy. He advocated freedom for both men and women, applying his critique of hierarchy and domination not just to their more obvious manifestations, but also to relationships between husband and wife and parents and children.

UTOPIAN UNDERCURRENTS

Hounded by both parliamentary and royalist forces, the Digger movement did not survive the English Civil War. However, anarchist ideas continued to percolate underground in Europe, resurfacing during the Enlightenment and the 1789 French Revolution.

In 1676, Gabriel de Foigny, a defrocked priest, published in Geneva *Les Aventures de Jacques Sadeur dans la découverte de la Terre Australe*, in which he depicted an imaginary society in Australia where people lived without government, religious institutions or private property. De Foigny was considered a heretic and imprisoned. A year after his death in 1692, an abridged English translation of *Les Aventures* appeared as *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita Australis*. According to Max Nettlau, de Foigny’s book became “well known,” being “reprinted and translated many times” (1996: 12).

Jean Meslier, a priest from the Champagne area of France, wrote a political *Testament* in the 1720s in which he denounced the alliance of Church and State, calling on the people to keep for themselves “all the riches and goods you produce so abundantly with the sweat of your brow,” and to let “all the great ones

of the earth and all nobles hang and strangle themselves with the priests' guts" (Joll: 14). Similar sentiments were expressed by the French *philosophe*, Denis Diderot, who wrote in 1772 that "nature has made neither servant nor master—I want neither to give nor to receive laws... weave the entrails of the priest, for want of a rope, to hang the kings" (Berneri: 202). During the French Revolution this was transformed into the slogan, "Humanity will not be happy until the last aristocrat is hanged by the guts of the last priest." Many variations on this slogan have followed since, with the Situationists during the May-June 1968 events in France calling for the last bureaucrat to be hanged by the guts of the last capitalist (Knabb: 344).

On the eve of the French Revolution of 1789, Sylvain Maréchal (1750-1803) published some fables and satirical works evincing an anarchist stance, picturing in one "the life of kings exiled to a desert island where they ended up exterminating each other" (Nettlau: 11). He attacked religion and promoted atheism. In 1796, in the face of the growing reaction, he published his "Manifesto of the Equals" (Volume One, Selection 6), in which he called on the people of France to march over the bodies of "the new tyrants, seated in the place of the old ones," just as they had "marched over the bodies of kings and priests." Maréchal sought "real equality," through "the communal enjoyment of the fruits of the earth," and the abolition not only of "individual property in land," but of "the revolting distinction of rich and poor, of great and small, of masters and valets, of governors and governed."

THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION

Anarchist tendencies emerged among the more radical elements during the first, or "Great," French Revolution of 1789, particularly among the *sans-culottes* and *enragés* who formed the backbone of the Revolution. Denounced as anarchists by their opponents, they did not entirely reject the label. In 1793, the *sans-culottes* of Beaucaire identified their allies as "those who have delivered us from the clergy and nobility, from the feudal system, from tithes, from the monarchy and all the ills which follow in its train; those whom the aristocrats have called anarchists, followers of faction (*factieux*), Maratists" (Joll: 27).

The *sans-culottes* played an important role in the revolutionary "sections" in Paris, directly democratic neighbourhood assemblies through which ordinary people took control of their lives. As Murray Bookchin has argued, the sections "represented genuine forms of self-management" that "awakened a popular initiative, a resoluteness in action, and a sense of revolutionary purpose that no professional bureaucracy, however radical its pretensions, could ever hope to achieve" (Volume Two, Selection 62).

Unfortunately, other forces on the left, notably Robespierre and the Jacobins, adopted an authoritarian policy of revolutionary terror to fight the counter-revolution, leading the *enragé* Jean Varlet (1764-1837) to denounce so-called “revolutionary government” as a monstrous “masterpiece of Machiavellianism” that purported to put the revolutionary authorities “in permanent insurrection” against themselves, which is patently absurd (Volume One, Selection 5).

Varlet and other *sans-culottes* and *enragés* had fought with the Jacobins against the more conservative Girondins, unwittingly helping the Jacobins to institute their own dictatorship. When Varlet saw his fellow revolutionaries “clapped in irons” by the Jacobins, he “retreated back into the ranks of the people” rather than support “a disgusting dictatorship dressed up with the title of Public Safety.” He could not accept that “Robespierre’s ghastly dictatorship” could somehow vindicate the preceding dictatorship of the Girondins, nor that he and his fellow *enragés* could be blamed for being the unwitting dupes of the Jacobins, claiming that they had done “nothing to deserve such a harsh reproach” (Volume One, Selection 5).

Varlet made clear that the Jacobin policy of mass arrests and executions, the so-called “Reign of Terror,” far from protecting the gains of the revolution, was not only monstrous but counter-revolutionary, with “two thirds of citizens” being deemed “mischievous enemies of freedom” who “must be stamped out,” *terror* being “the supreme law” and torture “an object of veneration.” The Jacobin terror “aims to rule over heaps of corpses” under the pretext that “if the executioners are no longer the fathers of the nation, freedom is in jeopardy,” turning the people against the revolution as they themselves become its victims. Even with the overthrow of Robespierre in July 1794, Varlet warned that “his ghastly system has survived him,” calling on the French people to take up their arms and their pens to overthrow the government, whatever its revolutionary pretensions.

Varlet, in rejecting his own responsibility for the Jacobin ascendancy to power, avoided a critique of revolutionary violence, simply calling on the people to rise yet again against their new masters, a call which went largely unanswered after years of revolutionary upheaval which had decimated the ranks of the revolutionaries and demoralized the people. There were a couple of abortive uprisings in Paris in 1795, but these were quickly suppressed.

GODWIN’S CRITIQUE OF COERCION

It was for Varlet’s English contemporary, William Godwin (1756-1836), to develop an anarchist critique not only of revolutionary violence but of coercion as such, whether the institutionalized coercion of the law with its penal systems, or the individual coercion of a parent toward a child. Godwin wrote and revised his

great philosophical work, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (Volume One, Selection 4), during the French Revolution, publishing the final revised edition in 1797, around the time that Napoleon was coming to power, three years after the fall of Robespierre.

Godwin argued that coercion, and its positive correlate, inducements offered by those with wealth and power, distort political debate and moral discussion by causing people to evaluate a policy or course of conduct in terms of the punishments or rewards attached to them, rather than on their intrinsic merits. Coercion and inducements also have a debilitating effect on both persons in power and the people who obey or accept them.

“Dressed in the supine prerogatives of a master,” those in power are “excused from cultivating” their rational faculties. Those who are forced to obey their rulers become resentful and fearful. Instead of being encouraged to think for themselves, they learn how to avoid detection and seek power for themselves so that they can effect their own purposes.

The deleterious consequences of coercion and inducements are not surmounted by parliamentary debates, or what is now referred to as “deliberative democracy” (Dryzek, 2000). In the first place, the laws and policies of the government are not the result of direct debate among the people, but the result of the debates of elected representatives who represent particular interests. Decisions are made by majority vote of the representatives, who invariably vote along party lines. Even when a debate is not cut short by the ruling party, the “minority, after having exposed, with all the power and eloquence, and force of reasoning, of which they are capable, the injustice and folly of the measures adopted, are obliged... to assist in carrying them into execution,” since all the representatives are required to uphold the law. For Godwin, “nothing can more directly contribute to the deprivation of the human understanding and character” than to require people to act contrary to their own reason.

During parliamentary debates, which must come to a close with a vote of the assembled representatives, the “orator no longer enquires after permanent conviction, but transitory effect. He seeks to take advantage of our prejudices than to enlighten our judgement. That which might otherwise have been a scene of patient and beneficent enquiry is changed into wrangling, tumult and precipitation.”

This is particularly true during revolutionary upheavals. Reasoned and impartial debate “can scarcely be pursued when all the passions of man are afloat, and we are hourly under the strongest impressions of fear and hope, apprehension and desire, dejection and triumph.” Revolutions invariably provoke counter-revolution. When “we lay aside arguments, and have recourse to the sword,” amidst “the barbarous rage of war, and the clamorous din of civil contention,

who shall tell whether the event will be prosperous or adverse? The consequence may be the riveting on us anew the chains of despotism.” To combat the counter-revolution, the revolutionaries suppress freedom of expression and resort to terror, organizing “a government tenfold more encroaching in its principles and terrible in its proceedings” than the old regime.

Despite regarding revolutions as being “necessarily attended with many circumstances worthy of our disapprobation,” Godwin recognized that “revolutions and violence have too often been coeval with important changes of the social system.” While we should “endeavour to prevent violence,” during revolutionary upheavals we cannot simply “turn away our eyes from human affairs in disgust, and refuse to contribute our labours and attention to the general weal.” Rather, we must take “proper advantage of circumstances as they arise, and not... withdraw ourselves because everything is not conducted according to our ideas of propriety.” Godwin’s critique of revolutionary violence must not therefore be misconstrued as tacit support for the injustices which the revolutionaries are seeking to overturn.

Since Godwin’s time, anarchists have continued to struggle with questions regarding recourse to violence and the role of anarchists during revolutionary struggles. The validity of Godwin’s warning, based on his own observations of the French Revolution, that revolution may result in a new tyranny because it is the strongest and not the most just who typically triumph, has been borne out by the experience of anarchists in subsequent revolutions. In the 20th century, both the Russian (Volume One, Chapter 18) and Spanish (Volume One, Chapter 23) revolutions resulted in dictatorships even more “ghastly” than that of Robespierre, despite the presence of significant anarchist movements.

When anarchist movements began to emerge in 19th century Europe, Godwin’s work was relatively unknown. It was largely through the work of the anarchist historian, Max Nettlau (1865-1944), that the ideas of de la Boétie and Godwin were introduced to European anarchists, well after anarchism had emerged as an identifiable current of thought (Walter, 2007).

CHARLES FOURIER AND THE LIBERATION OF DESIRE

It was a younger contemporary of Godwin who was to have a noticeable influence on the development of anarchist ideas, the French writer, Charles Fourier (1772-1837). Fourier had lived through the French Revolution. Imprisoned for a time, he almost became another victim of the Terror. He witnessed the hoarding and profiteering that occurred during the Revolution and sought to develop a libertarian alternative by which everyone would not only be guaranteed their means of subsistence but would be able to engage in productive work which they

themselves found fulfilling. “Morality teaches us to love work,” Fourier wrote, “let it know, then, how to render work lovable” (Volume One, Selection 7).

Fourier recognized that in order to survive in the emerging capitalist economy, workers were compelled to take whatever work they could find, regardless of their personal talents, aptitudes and preferences. They had to work long hours under deplorable conditions, only to see their employers reap the fruits of their labours while they continued to live in poverty. The new economy was “nothing but... a league of the minority which possesses, against the majority which does not possess the necessaries of life.”

Fourier, however, did not advocate revolution. He hoped to attract financial benefactors to fund the creation of communes or “phalanxes” where each person would rotate through a variety of jobs each day, free to choose each task, doing what they found to be enjoyable, giving expression to their talents and passions. Each member of the phalanx would be guaranteed a minimum of material support and remunerated by dividends from the phalanx’s operations. While later anarchists agreed that work should be freely undertaken, enjoyable and fulfilling, rather than an onerous burden, they found Fourier’s more detailed plans regarding the organization of society to be too constrictive and his idea that wealthy benefactors would bankroll the abolition of their own privileged status naïve.

Fourier was an early advocate of sexual liberation. Foreshadowing the work of Wilhelm Reich (Volume One, Selection 119; Volume Two, Selection 75), Fourier argued that people should be free to satisfy their sexual needs and desires, and that the repression of such desires is not only harmful to the individual but one of the foundations of a repressive society (Guérin, Volume Two, Selection 76).

PROUDHON: THE SELF-PROCLAIMED ANARCHIST

In 1840, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) declared himself an anarchist in his groundbreaking book, *What is Property? An Inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government*. Karl Marx (1818-1883), later Proudhon’s scornful opponent, at the time praised Proudhon’s book as “the first resolute, pitiless and at the same time scientific” critique of private property (Marx, 1845: 132). To the question posed by the title of the book, Proudhon responded that “property is theft” (Volume One, Selection 8). According to Proudhon, the workers should be entitled to the full value of their labour, not the mere pittance the capitalists doled out to them while keeping the lion’s share for themselves. By arguing that, in this sense, “property is theft,” Proudhon was not giving expression to bourgeois notions of justice, as Marx later claimed (Marx, 1867: 178-179, fn. 2), but was ex-

pressing a view of justice held by many workers, that people should enjoy the fruits of their own labours.

That the capitalists were parasites exploiting the workers by depriving them of what was rightfully theirs was to become a common theme in 19th century socialist and anarchist propaganda. In the 1883 Pittsburgh Proclamation of the International Working People's Association (the so-called "Black International"), the then anarchist collectivist Johann Most (1846-1906) put it this way: "the propertied (capitalists) buy the working force body and soul of the propertyless, for the mere cost of existence (wages) and take for themselves, i.e. steal, the amount of new values (products) which exceeds the price" (Volume One, Selection 55).

Besides declaring property theft, Proudhon boldly proclaimed himself an anarchist, denouncing "the government of man by man" as "oppression." It is government, through its laws and coercive mechanisms, that protects the property of the capitalists, condemning the workers to lives of servitude and misery. The only just form of society is one in which workers are free to associate, to combine their labour, and to exchange what they produce for products and services of equivalent value, instead of receiving wages "scarcely sufficient to support them from one day to another." In a society based on equivalent exchange there would no longer be any need for government because those things which make government necessary, such as "pauperism, luxury, oppression, vice, crime and hunger," would "disappear from our midst" (Volume One, Selection 8). Proudhon described this form of socialism as "mutualism."

Proudhon was not the first to have drawn the connection between economic exploitation and political servitude. Bao Jingyan, Winstanley, Maréchal, Godwin and Fourier all made similar arguments. But Proudhon was the first to describe himself as an anarchist. Others were soon to follow.

REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS IN EUROPE

In the 1840s there was an explosion of radical ideas and movements in Europe, culminating in a wave of revolutions that swept the continent in 1848-49. In Germany, radical intellectuals inspired by and reacting against the philosophy of Hegel, sometimes referred to as the "Young" or "Left Hegelians," began developing a "*ruthless criticism of everything existing*," as Marx put it in 1843. The previous year, Bakunin had published his essay, "The Reaction in Germany," in which he described the revolutionary program as "the negation of the existing conditions of the State" and "the destruction of whatever order prevails at the time," concluding with the now notorious phrase, the "passion for destruction is a creative passion, too!" (Volume One, Selection 10). Max Stirner's master-

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piece of nihilistic egoism, *The Ego and Its Own*, came out in 1844 (Volume One, Selection 11). Arnold Ruge, one of the most prominent of the “Young Hegelians,” called for “the abolition of all government” in favour of “an ordered anarchy... the free community... of men who make their own decisions and who are in all respects equal comrades” (Nettlau: 53-59).

Three aspects of the Young Hegelian critique had a lasting impact on Bakunin, and through him on the development of anarchist ideas. The first was the Young Hegelian critique of religion. The second was the development of a materialist worldview, from which all “divine phantoms” were banished. The third, which followed from the first two, was atheism. Bakunin and later anarchists were to denounce the alliance of Church and State, particularly the role of religion in pacifying the masses and in rationalizing their domination and exploitation, advocating a materialist atheism that emphasizes human agency because there are no divine or supernatural forces to protect or deliver the people from their earthly misery. The people can only liberate themselves through their own direct action.

MAX STIRNER

Max Stirner (1806-1856) took the Young Hegelian critique of “divine phantoms” to its furthest extreme, attacking all ideal conceptions, whether of God, humanity, or good and evil, as “spooks” or “wheels in the head” which dominate the very consciousness of the unique individual, preventing him or her from acting freely.

In *The Ego and Its Own*, Stirner argued that through upbringing, education and indoctrination, people internalize abstract social norms and values, putting the individual “in the position of a country governed by secret police. The spy and eavesdropper, ‘conscience,’ watch over every motion of the mind,” with “all thought and action” becoming “a matter of conscience, i.e. police business.” Anticipating radical Freudians like the anarchist psychoanalyst, Otto Gross (Volume One, Selection 78), Stirner observed that everyone “carries his gendarme within his breast.”

Stirner advocated freedom “from the State, from religion, from conscience,” and from any other power or end to which the individual can be subjected. He rejected any concept of justice or rights, arguing that the unique individual is free to take whatever is in his or her power. Whenever the egoist’s “advantage runs against the State’s,” he “can satisfy himself only by crime.” After Stirner’s writings were rediscovered in the late 1890s, this aspect of his critique was developed by individualist anarchists, such as Albert Joseph (“Libertad”), into the doctrine of “illegalism,” which was used by the Bonnot Gang as an ideological cloak for their bank robberies in the early 1900s in France (Perry, 1987).

Stirner denounced socialism for seeking to replace the individual capitalist with a collective owner, “society,” to which the individual will be equally subject, but nevertheless argued that the workers need only stop labouring for the benefit of their employers and “regard the product of their labour” as their own in order to bring down the State, the power of which rests on their slavery.

Another aspect of Stirner’s thought that was to have some influence on later anarchists is his distinction between insurrection and revolution. Revolutions seek to rearrange society into a new order. Insurrection or rebellion, by contrast, is “a rising of individuals... without regard to the arrangements that spring from it” (Volume One, Selection 11). In light of the defeats of the anarchists in the Russian and Spanish Revolutions, Herbert Read (1893-1968) sought to revive Stirner’s distinction, arguing that anarchists must avoid creating “the kind of machinery which, at the successful end of a revolution, would merely be taken over by the leaders of the revolution, who then assume the functions of government” (Volume Two, Selection 1). During the 1960s, many of the younger anarchists endorsed the notion of “spontaneous insurrection” (Volume Two, Selection 51). More recently, Hakim Bey has argued in favour of the creation of “temporary autonomous zones,” which can be seen as “an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, *before* the State can crush it” (Volume Three, Selection 11).

PROUDHON: MACHINERY AND WORKER SELF-MANAGEMENT

In one passage in *The Ego and Its Own*, Stirner described individuals as mere cogs in the “*State machine*.” In Proudhon’s 1846 publication, *The System of Economic Contradictions*, he argued that the first and “most powerful of machines is the workshop” The workshop degrades “the worker by giving him a master.” The “concentration of forces in the workshop” and the introduction of machinery “engender at the same time overproduction and destitution,” rendering more and more workers redundant, such that in a capitalist economy it is continually necessary to “create new machines, open other markets, and consequently multiply services and displace other” workers. Industry and wealth, population and misery, “advance, so to speak, in procession, one always dragging the other after it” (Volume One, Selection 9).

This focus on and opposition to relationships of subordination in both the economic and political spheres sharply distinguished Proudhon and the anarchists from many of their socialist contemporaries. In his sarcastic attempt to demolish Proudhon, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), Marx dismissed Proudhon’s critique of factory organization and machinery as a reactionary demand for a

return to a pre-industrial utopia of skilled craft production. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), co-written with Friedrich Engels, Marx called for the centralization of “all instruments of production in the hands of the State... to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.” This would require the establishment of “industrial armies, especially for agriculture” (1848: 490).

Proudhon’s solution to this problem was neither to advocate a return to a pre-industrial craft economy nor the creation of industrial armies, “for it is with a machine as with a piece of artillery: the captain excepted, those whom it occupies are servants, slaves” (Volume One, Selection 9). While Proudhon argued that free credit should be made available so that everyone would have the opportunity to engage in whatever productive activity they chose, he recognized from the outset the advantages of combining one’s labour with the labour of others, creating a “collective force” that in existing society was being exploited by the capitalists who reaped the benefit of the resulting increase in productive power. “Two hundred grenadiers stood the obelisk of Luxor upon its base in a few hours,” Proudhon wrote in *What Is Property*, “do you suppose that one man could have accomplished the same task in two hundred days?” (Volume One, Selection 8).

Proudhon therefore advocated workers’ control or worker self-management of industry, later referred to in France as “autogestion,” an idea that became a major tenet of subsequent anarchist movements (Guérin, Volume Two, Selection 49). In Proudhon’s proposals, all positions in each enterprise would be elected by the workers themselves, who would approve all by-laws, each worker would have the right to fill any position, “unpleasant and disagreeable tasks” would be shared, and each worker would be given a “variety of work and knowledge” so as to avoid a stultifying division of labour. Everyone would “participate in the gains and in the losses” of the enterprise “in proportion to his services,” with pay being “proportional to the nature of the position, the importance of the talents, and the extent of responsibility” (Volume One, Selection 12).

1848: REVOLUTION IN EUROPE

In early 1848, revolution broke out in Sicily, quickly spreading throughout the Italian peninsula. The February 1848 Revolution soon followed in France, with the king being overthrown and a provisional republican government proclaimed. There were revolutions in various parts of Germany and Eastern Europe (with Bakunin somehow managing to take a part in most of them until his arrest in Dresden in May 1849). Anarchist ideas began to gain some currency, particularly in France, in no small part due to Proudhon’s own efforts.

The provisional government in France instituted universal male suffrage, which Proudhon referred to as “the counter-revolution” because the election of representatives, no matter how broad the electoral base, gives power to those representatives, not of the people, but of particular interests, legitimizing rule by those interests by making it appear that a government elected by universal suffrage represents the interests of the people. In fact, the Constituent Assembly elected in April 1848 was dominated by right-wing and bourgeois representatives. Rejection of and opposition to representative government and participation in parliamentary politics distinguished the anarchists from other socialist currents and helped lead to the split in the First International between Marx and his followers, who advocated the creation of national political parties to represent the interests of the working class, and the proto-anarchist anti-authoritarian federalists associated with Bakunin (Volume One, Chapters 5 & 6).

In *Confessions of a Revolutionary* (1849), Proudhon denounced the alliance between capital, religion and the State:

Capital, which in the political field is analogous to *government*, in religion has *Catholicism* as its synonym. The economic idea of capitalism, the politics of government or of authority, and the theological idea of the Church are three identical ideas, linked in various ways. To attack one of them is equivalent to attacking all of them... What capital does to labour, and the State to liberty, the Church does to the spirit. This trinity of absolutism is as baneful in practice as it is in philosophy. The most effective means for oppressing the people would be simultaneously to enslave its body, its will and its reason. (Nettlau: 43-44)

In *The General Idea of the Revolution in the 19th Century*, written from prison while Proudhon was incarcerated for having denounced Napoleon III as the personification of reaction, Proudhon wrote that the “fundamental, decisive idea” of the Revolution is this: “NO MORE AUTHORITY, neither in the Church, nor in the State, nor in land, nor in money” (Volume One, Selection 12). He described the law as “spider webs for the rich and powerful, steel chains for the weak and poor, fishing nets in the hands of the government,” advocating in their place a “*system of contracts*” based on the notion of equivalent exchange (Volume One, Selection 12). While subsequent anarchists were, for the most part, to reject Proudhon’s notion of equivalent exchange, they concurred with Proudhon that social relationships should be based on free agreements between individuals directly and between the various voluntary associations to which they may belong (Graham, 1989).

In Spain, anarchists referred to these agreements as “pacts” (*pactos*). In 1854,

Francisco Pi y Margall (1824-1901), who introduced Proudhon's ideas to a Spanish audience, argued that between "two sovereign entities there is room only for pacts. Authority and sovereignty are contradictions. Society based on *authority* ought, therefore, to give way to society based upon *contract*" (Volume One, Selection 15).

Not only in Spain, but throughout the nascent international anarchist movements, anarchists advocated contract, conceived as free agreement, as the means by which people would voluntarily federate into broader trade union, communal, regional and international organizations with no central authority above them, with each person and federated group being free to disassociate or secede from any federalist organization (Graham, 1989). They agreed with the argument put forward by Proudhon in his influential book, *On the Political Capacity of the Working Classes* (1865), that without the right of secession, federalism would be "merely an illusion, empty boasting, a lie" (Volume One, Selection 18).

In the aftermath of the 1848 French Revolution, Proudhon was not alone in advocating anarchy as a positive ideal. In 1850, the young journalist, Anselme Bellegarrigue, briefly published a newspaper, *L'Anarchie*, in which he argued that "anarchy is order, whereas government is civil war" (Volume One, Selection 13), echoing Proudhon's comment in *What Is Property* that society "finds its highest perfection in the union of order with anarchy" (Volume One, Selection 8).

The Italian revolutionary, Carlo Pisacane (1818-1857), demanded the abolition of all hierarchy and authority, to be replaced by a form of socialism similar to Proudhon's mutualism, based on voluntary contract and "free association". Anticipating the doctrine of "propaganda by the deed," Pisacane argued that the most effective propaganda is revolutionary action, for ideas "spring from deeds and not the other way around" (Volume One, Selection 16).

Joseph Déjacque (1821-1864), the first person to use the word "libertarian" as a synonym for "anarchist," conceived of anarchy as the "complete, boundless, utter freedom to do anything and everything that is in human nature" (Volume One, Selection 14). Exiled from France after the 1848 Revolution, he called for the abolition of religion, private property, the patriarchal nuclear family, all authority and privilege, and for the "liberation of woman, the emancipation of the child."

DÉJACQUE'S CRITIQUE OF PROUDHON

Déjacque's anarchist critique was much broader than Proudhon's. Proudhon saw the patriarchal nuclear family as the basis of society, and argued that woman's place was in the home. He did not advocate the complete abolition of property,

arguing instead for a fairer distribution of wealth based on individual contribution and equivalent exchange.

Déjacque took Proudhon to task on both points, arguing for the complete abolition of “property and authority in every guise” (Volume One, Selection 17). He rejected Proudhon’s mutualism as a “system of contracts” for determining each person’s “allotted measure” of things instead of everyone having access to whatever their “nature or temperament requires.” Déjacque believed that everyone should be “free to consume and to produce as they see fit,” advocating a form of anarchist communism twenty years before similar views were to be adopted by anarchists associated with the anti-authoritarian wing of the First International (Volume One, Chapter 8).

Rejecting Proudhon’s views on women, Déjacque argued that “the issue of woman’s emancipation” must be placed “on the same footing as the issue of emancipation of the proletarian” (Volume One, Selection 17). He looked forward to “man and woman striding with the same step and heart... towards their natural destiny, the anarchic community; with all despotism annihilated, all social inequalities banished.”

ERNEST COEURDEROY: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

Another French exile with anarchist sensibilities was Ernest Coeurderoy (1825-1862). In a passage from his *Days of Exile*, remarkably similar to comments made by Subcomandante Marcos in the 1990s, Coeurderoy identified himself with all of the oppressed, writing that:

“In every land there are folk who are kicked out and driven away, killed and burnt out without a single voice of compassion to speak up for them. They are the Jews.—I am a Jew.

Skinny, untamed, restless men, sprightlier than horses and as dusky as the bastards of Shem, roam through the Andalusian countryside... The doors of every home are barred to them, in hamlet and town alike. A widespread disapproval weighs upon their breed... Such men are known as Gitanos.—I am a Gitano...

In Paris one can see wayward boys, naked, who hide under the bridges along the canal in the mid-winter and dive into the murky waters in search of a *sou* tossed to them by a passing onlooker... Their trade consists in purloining scarves and pretending to ask for a light but swapping cigarettes. These are the Bohemians.—I am a Bohemian...

Everywhere, there are people banned from promenades, museums, cafes

and theatres because a heartless wretchedness mocks their day wear. If they dare to show themselves in public, every eye turns to stare at them; and the police forbid them to go near fashionable locations. But, mightier than any police, their righteous pride in themselves takes exception to being singled out for widespread stigma.—I am one of that breed” (1854).

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

Bellegarrigue, Déjacque and Coeurderoy were dead or forgotten by the time the International Association of Workingmen (the First International) was founded in 1864 (Volume One, Selection 19). It was only after the emergence in Europe of self-identified anarchist movements in the 1870s that Pisacane’s writings were rediscovered. Of the anarchists from the 1840s and 50s, only Proudhon and Pi y Margall continued to exercise some influence, but by then both identified themselves as federalists rather than anarchists (Volume One, Selection 18). Proudhon’s followers in the First International supported his mutualist ideas, advocating free credit, small property holdings and equivalent exchange. They agreed with Proudhon that a woman’s place was in the home and argued that only workingmen should be allowed into the First International, which meant that intellectuals, such as Karl Marx, should also be excluded. They shared Proudhon’s critical view of strikes, regarding them as coercive and ineffective, but in practice provided financial and other support to striking workers.

Within the First International there were more radical elements that gave expression to a renewed sense of militancy among European workers. These Internationalists, such as Eugène Varlin (1839-1871) in France, were in favour of trade unions, seeing them as a means for organizing the workers to press their demands through collective direct action, such as strikes and boycotts. The ultimate aim was for the workers to take control of their workplaces, replacing the State and capitalism with local, regional, national and international federations of autonomous workers’ organizations.

Opposing these “anti-authoritarian” Internationalists were not only the orthodox Proudhonists, but Karl Marx and his followers, as well as some Blanquists, who favoured centralized organization and the subordination of the trade unions to political parties that would coordinate opposition to capitalism and seek to achieve State power, either through participation in bourgeois politics, revolution or a combination of both. Disagreements over the International’s internal form of organization and participation in politics would lead to the split in the International in 1872.

By 1868 the International had adopted a policy in favour of strikes and collective ownership of the means of production. However, collective ownership did

not necessarily mean State ownership, as many Internationalists advocated workers' control of industry through the workers' own organizations and continued to support other aspects of Proudhon's mutualism, such as workers' mutual aid societies, cooperatives and credit unions. Varlin, for example, organized a cooperative restaurant with Nathalie Lemel (who later converted Louise Michel to anarchism). Some Geneva Internationalists proposed that half of the cooperatives' profits be paid into the workers' "resistance" funds, with the cooperatives also providing workers with financial aid and credit during strikes (Cutler, 1985: 213, fn. 69).

BAKUNIN: "WE DO NOT FEAR ANARCHY, WE INVOKE IT"

Bakunin had begun to articulate a revolutionary anarchist position in the mid-1860s, prior to his entry into the International in 1868. He advocated socialism and federalism based on "the most complete liberty for individuals as well as associations," rejecting both bourgeois republicanism and State socialism (Volume One, Selection 20). He rejected any "call for the establishment of a ruling authority of any nature whatsoever," denouncing those revolutionaries who "dream of creating new revolutionary States, as fully centralized and even more despotic than the States we now have" (Volume One, Selections 20 & 21).

"We do not fear anarchy," declared Bakunin, "we invoke it. For we are convinced that anarchy, meaning the unrestricted manifestation of the liberated life of the people, must spring from liberty, equality, the new social order, and the force of the revolution itself against the reaction." The new social order will be created "from the bottom up, from the circumference to the center... not from the top down or from the center to the circumference in the manner of all authority" (Volume One, Selection 21).

Bakunin opposed any attempts to justify the sacrifice of human lives in the name of some ideal or "abstraction," including patriotism, the State, God or even science. Someone who is "always ready to sacrifice his own liberty... will willingly sacrifice the liberty of others" (Volume One, Selection 20). The revolutionary socialist, "on the contrary, insists upon his positive rights to life and to all its intellectual, moral, and physical joys." In addition to rejecting any notions of individual self-sacrifice, Bakunin argued against revolutionary terrorism as counter-revolutionary. To "make a successful revolution, it is necessary to attack conditions and material goods, to destroy property and the State. It will then become unnecessary to destroy men and be condemned to suffer the sure and inevitable reaction which no massacre had ever failed and ever will fail to produce in every society" (Volume One, Selection 21).

Bakunin argued that the means adopted by revolutionaries should be consis-

tent with their ends. Accordingly, the International should itself be organized “from the bottom up... in accordance with the natural diversity of [the workers’] occupations and circumstances.” The workers’ organizations would “bear in themselves the living seeds of the new society which is to replace the old world. They are creating not only the ideas, but also the facts of the future itself.” Consequently, he rejected the view that the majority of the workers, even within the International itself, should accept the “*fraternal command*” of those who claimed to know what is best for them, as this would divide the International “into two groups—one comprising the vast majority... whose only knowledge will be blind faith in the theoretical and practical wisdom of their commanders,” and a minority of “skilled manipulators” in control of the organization (Volume One, Selection 25).

Bakunin’s anarchist critique went well beyond attacking property, religion and the State. In addition to arguing against hierarchical and authoritarian organization within the revolutionary movement itself, Bakunin sought to free women from their domestic burdens, with society taking collective responsibility for raising and educating children, enabling women to marry and divorce as they please. Bakunin rejected patriarchy in general, denouncing the “despotism of the husband, of the father, of the eldest brother over the family,” which turns the family “into a school of violence and triumphant bestiality, of cowardice and the daily perversions of the family home” (Volume One, Selection 67).

With respect to education, Bakunin argued that “one who knows more will naturally rule over the one who knows less.” After the revolution, unless differences in education and upbringing are eliminated, “the human world would find itself in its present state, divided anew into a large number of slaves and a small number of rulers” (Volume One, Selection 64). Bakunin looked forward to the day when “the masses, ceasing to be flocks led and shorn by privileged priests,” whether secular or religious, “may take into their own hands the direction of their destinies” (Volume One, Selection 24).

Bakunin argued against the rule of the more learned, the *savants*, the intellectuals and the scientists, whether within the International or in society at large. His targets here were the followers of Auguste Comte (1798-1857) and Karl Marx, with their pretensions to “scientific government” and “scientific socialism.” To confide “the government of society” to any scientific body, political party or group would result in the “eternal perpetuation” of that group’s power “by rendering the society confided to its care ever more stupid and consequently in need of its government and direction” (Volume One, Selection 24). Bakunin was perhaps the first to develop this critique of the role of intellectuals, the “new class,” and their rise to power, either by taking over leadership of the revolutionary workers’ movement or through control of the State bureaucracy, for the

“State has always been the patrimony of some privileged class: the priesthood, the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and finally, after every other class has been exhausted, the bureaucratic class, when the State falls or rises... into the condition of a machine” (Volume One, Selection 22).

Noam Chomsky has described Bakunin’s analyses and predictions in this regard as being perhaps “among the most remarkable within the social sciences” (Volume Two, Selection 68). Subsequent anarchists adopted Bakunin’s critique (Berti, Volume Two, Selection 67) and his suggestion that the inequalities that arise from differences in knowledge can be prevented by “integral education,” which breaks down the barriers between practical and scientific education, and by the elimination of any distinction between manual and “intellectual” or “brain” work (Volume One, Selection 64). In his highly influential book, *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (1898), Peter Kropotkin set forth practical alternatives to the present “division of society into brain workers and manual workers,” with all its “pernicious” distinctions, advocating, much like Fourier had before him, a daily combination of manual and intellectual work, human-scale technology and the integration of the fields, factories and workshops in a decentralized system of production, providing for “the happiness that can be found in the full and varied exercise of the different capacities of the human being” (Volume One, Selection 34).

Bakunin was instrumental in spreading anarchist ideas among revolutionary and working class movements in Italy, Spain, Switzerland and Russia and within the International itself. According to Kropotkin, it was Bakunin more than anyone else who “established in a series of powerful pamphlets and letters the leading principles of modern anarchism” (1912).

THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR AND THE PARIS COMMUNE

The Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune of 1870-1871 had a significant impact on emerging anarchist movements. Bakunin argued that the War should be turned into a mass uprising by the French workers and peasants against their domestic and foreign masters. To bring the peasants over to the side of the social revolution, Bakunin urged his fellow revolutionaries to incite the peasantry “*to destroy, by direct action, every political, judicial, civil and military institution,*” to “throw out those landlords who live by the labour of others” and to seize the land. He rejected any notion of revolutionary dictatorship, warning that any attempt “to *impose* communism or collectivism on the peasants... would spark an armed rebellion” that would only strengthen counter-revolutionary tendencies (Volume One, Selection 28).

Although it was Proudhon who had first proposed an alliance between the

workers and peasants, it was Bakunin who saw the peasantry as a potentially revolutionary force. Bakunin and subsequent anarchists did not believe that a social revolution was only possible in advanced capitalist societies with a large industrial proletariat, as Marxists claimed, but rather looked to the broad masses of the exploited and downtrodden to overthrow their oppressors. Consequently, anarchists supported the efforts of indigenous peoples to liberate themselves from colonial domination and the local elites which benefitted from colonialism at their expense, particularly in Latin America with its feudalist *latifundia* system which concentrated ownership of the land in the hands of a few (Volume One, Selections 71, 76 & 91). In Russia, Italy, Spain and Mexico, anarchists sought to incite the peasants to rebellion with the battle cry of “Land and Liberty” (Volume One, Selections 71, 73, 85, 86, & 124), while anarchists in China, Japan and Korea sought the liberation of the peasant masses from their feudal overlords (Volume One, Selections 97, 99, 101, 104 & 105).

Bakunin argued that the best way to incite the masses to revolt was “not with words but with deeds, for this is the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda” (Volume One, Selection 28). In Mexico, the anarchist Julio Chavez Lopez led a peasant uprising in 1868-1869, in which the insurgents would occupy a village or town, burn the land titles and redistribute the land among the peasants (Hart: 39). In September 1870, Bakunin participated in a short-lived attempt to create a revolutionary Commune in Lyon, proclaiming the abolition of mortgages and the judicial system (Leier: 258). He made a similar attempt with his anarchist comrades in Bologna in 1874.

In 1877, Bakunin’s associates, Carlo Cafiero (1846-1892), Errico Malatesta (1853-1932) and a small group of anarchists tried to provoke a peasant uprising in Benevento, Italy, by burning the local land titles, giving the villagers back their tax moneys and handing out whatever weapons they could find. Paul Brousse (1844-1912) described this as “propaganda by the deed,” by which he did not mean individual acts of terrorism but putting anarchist ideas into action by seizing a commune, placing “the instruments of production... in the hands of the workers,” and instituting anarchist communism (Volume One, Selection 43).

The inspiration for this form of propaganda by the deed was the Paris Commune of 1871, when the people of Paris proclaimed the revolutionary Commune, throwing out their national government. Varlin and other Internationalists took an active part in the Commune. After its bloody suppression by the Versailles government, during which Varlin was killed, several Communards were to adopt an explicitly anarchist position, including Elisée Reclus and Louise Michel.

The anti-authoritarian sections of the First International supported the Commune and provided refuge for exiled Communards. Bakunin commended the

Communards for believing that the social revolution “could neither be made nor brought to its full development except by the spontaneous and continued action of the masses” (Volume One, Selection 29). James Guillaume thought that the Commune represented the revolutionary federalist negation of the nation State that “the great socialist Proudhon” had been advocating for years. By 1873, the Jura Federation of the International was describing the Commune as the first practical realization of the anarchist program of the proletariat. However, as David Stafford points out, the “massacre of the Communards and the savage measures which followed it (it has been estimated that 30,000 people were killed or executed by the Versailles forces)” helped turn anarchists further away from Proudhon’s pacifist mutualism, which was seen as completely unable to deal with counter-revolutionary violence (Stafford: 20).

Louise Michel (1830-1905) had fought on the barricades when the French government sent in its troops to put down the Commune. Her group, the Union of Women for the Defence of Paris and the Care of the Wounded, issued a manifesto calling for “the annihilation of all existing social and legal relations, the suppression of all special privileges, the end of all exploitation, the substitution of the reign of work for the reign of capital” (Volume One, Selection 30). At her trial, she declared that she belonged “completely to the Social Revolution,” vowing that if her life were spared by the military tribunal, she would “not stop crying for vengeance,” daring the tribunal, if they were not cowards, to kill her (Volume One, Selection 30).

Anarchists drew a number of lessons from the Commune. Kropotkin argued that the only way to have consolidated the Commune was “*by means of the social revolution*” (Volume One, Selection 31), with “expropriation” being its “guiding word.” The “coming revolution,” Kropotkin wrote, would “fail in its historic mission” without “the complete expropriation of all those who have the means of exploiting human beings; the return to the community... of everything that in the hands of anyone can be used to exploit others” (Volume One, Selection 45).

With respect to the internal organization of the Commune, Kropotkin noted that there “is no more reason for a government inside a commune than for a government above the commune.” Instead of giving themselves a “revolutionary” government, isolating the revolutionaries from the people and paralyzing popular initiative, the task is to abolish “property, government, and the State,” so that the people can “themselves take possession of all social wealth so as to put it in common,” and “form themselves freely according to the necessities dictated to them by life itself” (Volume One, Selection 31).

THE SPLIT IN THE INTERNATIONAL

Following the suppression of the Commune, the conflict in the International between the anti-authoritarians and the supporters of top down political organization, such as Marx and his followers, came to a head. In response to Marx's attempt to consolidate power in the International's General Council, and to make the conquest of political power by the working class a mandatory policy of the International, the Swiss Jura Federation denounced the fictitious unity the Council sought to create through "centralization and dictatorship," arguing that the "International, as the embryo of the human society of the future, is required in the here and now to faithfully mirror our principles of freedom and federation" (Volume One, Selection 26).

After Bakunin and Guillaume were expelled, largely at Marx's instigation, from the International on trumped up charges at the 1872 Hague Congress, the anti-authoritarian sections of the International held their own congress at St. Imier in Switzerland. The Congress declared "the destruction of all political power," rather than its conquest, as "the first duty of the proletariat," whose "aspirations... can have no purpose other than the establishment of an absolutely free economic organization and federation, founded upon the labour and equality of all" (Volume One, Selection 27).

The St. Imier Congress extolled the benefits of militant trade union organization, for "it integrates the proletariat into a community of interests, trains it in collective living and prepares it for the supreme struggle." The Congress embraced strike action "as a precious weapon in the struggle," because it exposes "the antagonism between labour and capital" and prepares "the proletariat for the great and final revolutionary contest" (Volume One, Selection 27). Whether the final revolutionary contest would be an insurrection, a general strike, or a combination of the two remained open to debate. At the time, many anarchists favoured insurrection, particularly those associated with the Italian Federation, which attempted insurrections in Bologna in 1874 and Benevento in 1877.

The proto-syndicalist elements in the anti-authoritarian wing of the International, exemplified by Guillaume, emphasized the need for organized working class resistance to the State and capital. This approach was particularly prominent in Spain and various parts of Latin America, where anarchists were involved in creating some of the first trade unions and workers' federations.

In Spain this doctrine became known as anarchist "collectivism," which the Spanish veteran of the First International, José Llunas Pujols (1850-1905), defined as "*a society organized on the basis of collective ownership, economic federation and the complete emancipation of the human being*" (Volume One, Selection 36). The "unit of organization would... be the trades section in each lo-

cality,” with administrative tasks performed by delegates who would be replaced if they failed to adhere to the mandates given to them by their respective sections (Volume One, Selection 36). This form of working class direct democracy, similar to the “Worker Democracy” advocated by Proudhon in *On the Political Capacity of the Working Classes* (Volume One, Selection 18), was later taken up by the anarcho-syndicalists (Volume One, Chapter 12).

Following the defeat of the Paris Commune, the International was outlawed in much of Europe, making it extremely difficult for anarchists to maintain or create revolutionary working class organizations. Although the anti-authoritarian International outlasted the Marxist wing by several years, it eventually split between the anarchist communists, who favoured insurrectionary methods, the proto-syndicalists who favoured federations of revolutionary unions, and more moderate anti-authoritarians who eventually embraced State socialism, such as César de Paepe from Belgium.

ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

It was from among the debates within the anti-authoritarian International that the doctrine of anarchist communism emerged in the 1870s. François Dumartheray published a pamphlet in February 1876 advocating anarchist communism, and Elisée Reclus spoke in favour of it at the March 1876 Lausanne Congress of the anti-authoritarian International. By the fall of 1876, the Italian Federation considered “the collective ownership of the products of labour to be the necessary complement of the [anarchist] collectivist” program of common ownership of the means of production (Nettlau: 139). Anarchist communism was debated at the September 1877 Verviers Congress of the anti-authoritarian International, with Brousse and the Italian anarchist, Andrea Costa, arguing in favour, and the Spanish anarchists, Tomás González Morago and José García Viñas, defending the collectivist view, shared by Proudhon and Bakunin, that each person should be entitled to the full product of his or her labour.

At the October 1880 Congress of the Jura Federation, the delegates adopted an anarchist communist position, largely as the result of Cafiero’s speech, “Anarchy and Communism” (Volume One, Selection 32). Cafiero defined the communist principle as “*from each and to each according to his will,*” with everyone having the right to take what they will “without demanding from individuals more work than they would like to give.” With production being geared towards satisfying people’s wants and needs, instead of the financial demands of the military, the State and the wealthy few, there will be no “need to ask for more work than each wants to give, because there will be enough products for the morrow.”

Cafiero argued against the collectivist position on the basis that “individual

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distribution of products would re-establish not only inequality between men, but also inequality between different kinds of work,” with the less fortunate being relegated the “dirty work,” instead of it being “vocation and personal taste which would decide a man to devote himself to one form of activity rather than another.” Furthermore, with “the ever-increasing tendency of modern labour to make use of the labour of previous generations” embodied in the existing economic infrastructure, “how could we determine what is the share of the product of one and the share of the product of another? It is absolutely impossible.” With respect to goods which are not sufficiently abundant to permit everyone to take what they will, Cafiero suggested that such goods should be distributed “not according to *merit* but according to *need*,” much as they are in present-day families, with those in greater need, such as children and the elderly, being given the larger portions during periods of scarcity (Volume One, Selection 32).

Kropotkin further developed the theory of anarchist communism in a series of pamphlets and books, the best know and most influential being *The Conquest of Bread* (Volume One, Selection 33), and *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (Volume One, Selection 34). The *Conquest of Bread* helped persuade many anarchists, including former collectivists in Spain, anarcho-syndicalists (Volume One, Selections 58, 84, 95 & 114), and anarchists in Japan, China and Korea (Volume One, Selections 99, 106 & 108), to adopt an anarchist communist position, sometimes referred to, particularly in Spain, as “libertarian communism” (Volume One, Selection 124).

In *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, Kropotkin set forth his vision of a decentralized anarchist communist society “of integrated, combined labour... where each worker works both in the field and in the workshop,” and each region “produces and itself consumes most of its own agricultural and manufactured produce.” At “the gates of your fields and gardens,” there will be a “countless variety of workshops and factories... required to satisfy the infinite diversity of tastes... in which human life is of more account than machinery and the making of extra profits... into which men, women and children will not be driven by hunger, but will be attracted by the desire of finding an activity suited to their tastes” (Volume One, Selection 34). This remarkably advanced conception of an ecologically sustainable society inspired many subsequent anarchists, including Gustav Landauer (1870-1919) in Germany (Volume One, Selection 111), and through him the kibbutz movement in Palestine (Buber, Volume Two, Selection 16, and Horrox, 2009), the anarchist communists in China (Volume One, Selection 99), the “pure” anarchists of Japan (Volume One, Selection 106), and the anarchist advocates of libertarian communism in Spain (Volume One, Selection 124).

Paul and Percival Goodman updated Kropotkin's ideas in *Communitas* (1947), proposing not only the integration of the fields, factories and workshops, but also the home and the workplace, providing for decentralized, human-scale production designed "to give the most well-rounded employment to each person, in a diversified environment," based on "small units with relative self-sufficiency, so that each community can enter into a larger whole with solidarity and independence of viewpoint" (Volume Two, Selection 17). In the 1960s, Murray Bookchin (1921-2006) argued that "the anarchist concepts of a balanced community, a face-to-face democracy, a humanistic technology, and a decentralized society... are not only desirable, they are also necessary" to avoid ecological collapse and to support a libertarian society (Volume Two, Selection 48), a point made earlier by Ethel Mannin (Volume Two, Selection 14). Kropotkin continues to influence and inspire "green" anarchists, such as Graham Purchase, who advocates an anarchist form of bioregionalism (Volume Three, Selection 28), and Peter Marshall, with his "liberation ecology" (Volume Three, Selection 30).

There is another aspect of Kropotkin's conception of anarchist communism that had far-reaching implications, and this is his vision of a free society which "seeks the most complete development of individuality combined with the highest development of voluntary association in all its aspects." These "ever changing, ever modified associations" will "constantly assume new forms which answer best to the multiple aspirations of all" (Volume One, Selection 41). Some Italian anarchist communists, such as Luigi Galleani (1861-1931), argued for an even more fluid concept of voluntary association, opposing any attempts to create permanent organizations, whether an anarchist federation or a revolutionary trade union, arguing that any formal organization inevitably requires its members to "submit for the sake of discipline" and unity to "provisions, decisions, [and] measures... even though they may be contrary to their opinion and their interest" (Volume One, Selection 35).

As Davide Turcato points out (2009), the debate between "anti-organizationalists," such as Galleani, and the "organizationalists," such as Malatesta, "was a debate of great sophistication," which developed many ideas which were to "become common currency in the sociological literature, particularly through the work of Robert Michels," who recognized that "anarchists were the first to insist upon the hierarchical and oligarchic consequences of party organization."

Most anarchist communists, including Kropotkin and Malatesta, believed that nonhierarchical organization is possible and desirable, although one must always be on guard against oligarchic and bureaucratic tendencies. In our day, Colin Ward (1924-2010), drawing explicitly on Kropotkin's theory of voluntary association, has endeavoured to show that anarchist ideas regarding "au-

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onomous groups, workers' control, [and] the federal principle, add up to a coherent theory of social organization which is a valid and realistic alternative to the authoritarian, hierarchical institutional philosophy which we see in application all around us" (Volume Two, Selection 63).

MEANS AND ENDS

There were ongoing debates among anarchists regarding methods and tactics. Cafiero agreed with the late Carlo Pisacane that "ideals spring from deeds, and not the other way around" (Volume One, Selections 16 & 44). He argued that anarchists should seize every opportunity to incite "the rabble and the poor" to violent revolution, "by word, by writing, by dagger, by gun, by dynamite, sometimes even by the ballot when it is a case of voting for an ineligible candidate" (Volume One, Selection 44).

Kropotkin argued that by exemplary actions "which compel general attention, the new idea seeps into people's minds and wins converts. One such act may, in a few days, make more propaganda than thousands of pamphlets" (1880).

Jean Grave (1854-1939) explained that through propaganda by the deed, the anarchist "preaches by example." Consequently, contrary to Cafiero, "the means employed must always be adapted to the end, under pain of producing the exact contrary of one's expectations". For Grave, the "surest means of making Anarchy triumph is to act like an Anarchist" (Volume One, Selection 46).

Some anarchists agreed with Cafiero that any method that brought anarchy closer was acceptable, including bombings and assassinations. At the 1881 International Anarchist Congress in London, the delegates declared themselves in favour of "illegality" as "the only way leading to revolution" (Cahm: 157-158), echoing Cafiero's statement from the previous year that "everything is right for us which is not legal" (Volume One, Selection 44).

After years of State persecution, a small minority of self-proclaimed anarchists adopted terrorist tactics in the 1890s. Anarchist groups had been suppressed in Spain, Germany and Italy in the 1870s, particularly after some failed assassination attempts on the Kaiser in Germany, and the Kings of Italy and Spain in the late 1870s, even before Russian revolutionaries assassinated Czar Alexander II in 1881. Although none of the would be assassins were anarchists, the authorities and capitalist press blamed the anarchists and their doctrine of propaganda by the deed for these events, with the *Times* of London describing anarchism in 1879 as having "revolution for its starting point, murder for its means, and anarchy for its ideals" (Stafford: 131).

Those anarchists in France who had survived the Paris Commune were imprisoned, transported to penal colonies, or exiled. During the 1870s and 1880s,

anarchists were prosecuted for belonging to the First International. In 1883, several anarchists in France, including Kropotkin, were imprisoned on the basis of their alleged membership, despite the fact that the anti-authoritarian International had ceased to exist by 1881. At their trial they declared: “Scoundrels that we are, we claim bread for all, knowledge for all, work for all, independence and justice for all” (*Manifesto of the Anarchists*, Lyon 1883).

Perhaps the most notorious persecution of the anarchists around this time was the trial and execution of the four “Haymarket Martyrs” in Chicago in 1887 (a fifth, Louis Lingg, cheated the executioner by committing suicide). They were convicted and condemned to death on trumped up charges that they were responsible for throwing a bomb at a demonstration in the Chicago Haymarket area in 1886.

When Emile Henry (1872-1894) threw a bomb into a Parisian café in 1894, describing his act as “propaganda by the deed,” he regarded it as an act of vengeance for the thousands of workers massacred by the bourgeoisie, such as the Communards, and the anarchists who had been executed by the authorities in Germany, France, Spain and the United States. He meant to show to the bourgeoisie “that those who have suffered are tired at last of their suffering” and “will strike all the more brutally if you are brutal with them” (1894). He denounced those anarchists who eschewed individual acts of terrorism as cowards.

Malatesta, who was no pacifist, countered such views by describing as “ultra-authoritarians” those anarchists who try “to justify and exalt every brutal deed” by arguing that the bourgeoisie are just “as bad or worse.” By doing so, these self-described anarchists had entered “on a path which is the most absolute negation of all anarchist ideas and sentiments.” Although they had “entered the movement inspired with those feelings of love and respect for the liberty of others which distinguish the true Anarchist,” as a result of “a sort of moral intoxication produced by the violent struggle” they ended up extolling actions “worthy of the greatest tyrants.” He warned that “the danger of being corrupted by the use of violence, and of despising the people, and becoming cruel as well as fanatical prosecutors, exists for all” (Volume One, Selection 48).

In the 1890s, the French State brought in draconian laws banning anarchist activities and publications. Bernard Lazare (1865-1903), the writer and journalist then active in the French anarchist movement, denounced the hypocrisy of the defenders of the status quo who, as the paid apologists for the police, rationalized the far greater violence of the State. He defiantly proclaimed that no “law can halt free thought, no penalty can stop us from uttering the truth... and the Idea, gagged, bound and beaten, will emerge all the more lively, splendid and mighty” (Volume One, Selection 62).

Malatesta took a more sober approach, recognizing that “past history con-

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tains examples of persecutions which stopped and destroyed a movement as well as of others which brought about a revolution.” He criticized those “comrades who expect the triumph of our ideas from the multiplication of acts of individual violence,” arguing that “bourgeois society cannot be overthrown” by bombs and knife blows because it is based “on an enormous mass of private interests and prejudices... sustained... by the inertia of the masses and their habits of submission.” While he argued that anarchists should ignore and defy anti-anarchist laws and measures where able to do so, he felt that anarchists had isolated themselves from the people. He called on anarchists to “live among the people and to win them over... by actively taking part in their struggles and sufferings,” for the anarchist social revolution can only succeed when the people are “ready to fight and... to take the conduct of their affairs into their own hands” (Volume One, Selection 53).

ANARCHISM AND THE WORKERS’ STRUGGLES

The Haymarket Martyrs were part of the so-called “Black International,” the International Working People’s Association. The IWPA drew its inspiration from the anti-authoritarian International, and adopted a social revolutionary anarchist program at its founding Congress in Pittsburgh in 1883, openly advocating armed insurrection and the revolutionary expropriation of the capitalists by the workers themselves (Volume One, Selection 55). Following the example of the anti-authoritarian International of the 1870s, the IWPA sought to create revolutionary trade unions that would press for the immediate demands of the workers, for example the 8 hour day, while preparing for the social revolution. Around the same time, similar ideas were being propounded by the Workers’ Federation of the Spanish Region (Volume One, Selection 36), and by anarchists involved in working class movements in Latin America.

But by 1894 in Europe, when Malatesta again urged anarchists to go to the people, many agreed with him that after “twenty years of propaganda and struggle... we are today nearly strangers to the great popular commotions which agitate Europe and America” (Volume One, Selection 53). One of those anarchists was Fernand Pelloutier (1867-1901). Sensing growing disillusionment among the workers with the electoral tactics of the socialist parties, some anarchists had again become involved in the trade union movement. Pelloutier argued that through participation in the trade unions, anarchists “taught the masses the true meaning of anarchism, a doctrine” which can readily “manage without the individual dynamiter” (Volume One, Selection 56). It was from this renewed involvement in the workers’ struggles that anarcho-syndicalism was born (Volume One, Chapter 12).

Pelloutier argued, as Bakunin had before him (Volume One, Selection 25), that revolutionary trade union organizations, unlike the State, are based on voluntary membership and therefore operate largely on the basis of free agreement. Any trade union “officials” are subject to “permanent revocability,” and play a coordinating rather than a “directorial” role. Through their own autonomous organizations, the workers will come “to understand that they should regulate their affairs for themselves,” and will be able to prevent the reconstitution of State power after the revolution by taking control of “the instruments of production,” seeing “to the operation of the economy through the free grouping,” rendering “any political institution superfluous,” with the workers having already become accustomed “to shrug off tutelage” through their participation in the revolutionary trade union, or “syndicalist,” movement (Volume One, Selection 56).

Also noteworthy in Pelloutier’s call for renewed anarchist involvement in the workers’ movement was his endorsement of anarchist communism as the ultimate goal of the revolutionary syndicalist movement. However, in France, after Pelloutier’s death, the revolutionary syndicalist organization, the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), adopted a policy of nonaffiliation with any party or doctrine, including anarchism. CGT militants, such as Pierre Monatte, claimed that within the CGT all doctrines enjoyed “equal tolerance” (Volume One, Selection 60). The CGT focused on the means of revolutionary action, such as direct action and the general strike, instead of arguing over ideology.

This was in contrast to anarcho-syndicalist union federations, such as the Workers’ Federations of the Argentine Region (FORA) and the Uruguayan Region (FORU), which, as with Pelloutier, recommended “the widest possible study of the economic-philosophical principles of anarchist communism” (Volume One, Selection 58). The anarcho-syndicalists sought to organize the workers into revolutionary trade unions through which they would abolish the State and capitalism by means of general strikes, factory occupations, expropriation and insurrection. For the most part, their ultimate goal was anarchist communism, the abolition of wage labour, private property and the State, and the creation of free federations of worker, consumer and communal associations, whether in Latin America (Volume One, Selection 95), Russia (Volume One, Selection 84), Japan (Volume One, Selection 107), Spain (Volume One, Selection 124), or elsewhere.

Anarcho-syndicalists were behind the reconstitution of the International Workers’ Association (IWA/AIT) in 1922, with a membership of about two million workers from 15 countries in Europe and Latin America. At their founding Congress, they explicitly endorsed “libertarian communism” as their goal and rejected any “form of statism, even the so-called ‘Dictatorship of the Proletariat’,” because dictatorship “will always be the creator of new monopolies and new privileges” (Volume One, Selection 114).

Anarchists who sought to work within revolutionary working class organizations or popular movements adopted different approaches regarding the proper relationship between their anarchist ideals and these broader based social movements. Some, such as Amadée Dunois (1878-1945), argued that anarchists needed their own organizations to coordinate their activities, to support their work within the trade unions and to spread their ideas, infusing the workers' organizations "with the anarchist spirit" (Dunois, 1907). This model of dual organization was similar to what Bakunin had advocated during the First International, when he urged his comrades in his revolutionary brotherhood, the Alliance of Social Revolutionaries, which adhered to Bakunin's anarchist program, to join the International in order to steer it in an anarchist direction.

Antonio Pellicer Paraire (1851-1916), a veteran of the anarchist Workers' Federation of the Spanish Region (Volume One, Selection 36), acknowledged in an article from 1900 that, given the existing state of the workers' movement, "parallel or dual organization has to be accepted," with the anarchists maintaining their own revolutionary groups, but he argued that the primary focus must be on creating libertarian workers' federations in which each worker is an equal and active participant, so as to prevent the development of a trade union bureaucracy and a de facto executive assuming control of the organization. Each organization must in turn retain "their autonomy and independence, free of meddling by other groups and with no one having methods, systems, theories, schools of thought, beliefs, or any faith shoved down his throat" (Volume One, Selection 57). Only through the self-activity of the masses can an anarchist society hope to be achieved.

In his posthumously published work, *The Anarchist Conception of Syndicalism* (1920), Neno Vasco (1878-1920), who was active in the Brazilian and Portuguese anarchist movements, warned of the dangers of self-proclaimed anarchist groups, "populated more by rebels than by anarchists," seizing the initiative and forcing "emancipation" on the people by claiming "the right to act on its behalf," instead of prompting the people "to look to its own liberation," with "the persons concerned" taking matters "directly in hand." For example, the provision of suitable housing "should be left to the tenants themselves," a point later emphasized by Giancarlo de Carlo (Volume Two, Selection 18) and Colin Ward (1983), and "all the other production, transport and distribution services... should be entrusted to the workers working in each sector."

LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION

Anarchists did not limit their involvement in popular struggles to the workers' movement. Anarchists were also involved in various libertarian education move-

ments that sought to bring to the masses the “integral education” of which Bakunin spoke, in order to ensure “that in the future no *class* can rule over the working masses, exploiting them, superior to them because it knows more” (Volume One, Selection 64). In Europe, North America, Latin America, China and Japan, Francisco Ferrer (1859-1909) inspired the “Modern School” movement which sought to liberate children from the authoritarian strictures of religious and State controlled schools by creating schools outside of the existing education system in which children would be free to pursue their individual inclinations and interests. Ferrer argued that, in contrast, religious and State schools imprison “children physically, intellectually, and morally, in order to direct the development of their faculties in the paths desired” by the authorities, making children “accustomed to obey, to believe, to think according to the social dogmas which govern us,” and education “but a means of domination in the hands of the governing powers” (Volume One, Selection 65).

Ferrer had himself been influenced by earlier experiments in libertarian education in England and France by anarchists like Louise Michel and Paul Robin (1837-1912). His execution by Spanish authorities in 1909, rather than putting an end to the Modern School movement, gave it renewed inspiration.

In France, Sébastien Faure (1858-1942) founded the “la Ruche” (Beehive) free school in 1904. La Ruche was noteworthy for providing boys and girls with equal educational opportunities, sex education, and for its rejection of any form of punishment or constraint, all very radical approaches during an era when girls were either excluded or segregated, information regarding sex and contraception was censored, even for adults, and corporal punishment of students was routine. Faure, as with Godwin before him, rejected any system of punishments and rewards because “it makes no appeal” to the child’s reasoning or conscience, producing “a slavish, cowardly, sheepish breed... capable of cruelty and abjection” (Volume One, Selection 66).

WOMEN’S LIBERATION

Louise Michel felt that women were “famished for learning” and could not understand why men would try to cripple women’s intelligence, “as if there were already too much intelligence in the world.” For Michel, discrimination against girls and women was the greatest barrier to “the equality of the sexes.” What women “want is knowledge and education and liberty.” She looked forward to the day when men and women “will no more argue about which sex is superior than races will argue about which race is foremost in the world” (Volume One, Selection 68).

Bakunin opposed the legal institution of marriage, arguing that the “union of

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a man and a woman must be free" (Volume One, Selection 67). Carmen Lareva, an early anarchist feminist in Argentina, decried how this position was distorted by opponents of anarchism into the claim that anarchists wanted to liberate women only to turn them "into concubines, sordid playthings for man's unrestrained passions." Lareva argued that it was existing society, with its inequality, sexual hypocrisy and exploitation, which drove women to prostitution and forced them into marriages in which the woman "is required to feign love of someone she simply detests" in exchange for food and housing (Volume One, Selection 69).

Emma Goldman (1869-1940) argued that the only difference between a married woman and a prostitute was "that the one has sold herself into chattel slavery during life, for a home or a title, and the other one sells herself for the length of time she desires." She demanded "the independence of woman; her right to support herself; to live for herself; to love whomever she pleases, or as many as she pleases," in the here and now, not after the revolution (Volume One, Selection 70). Real sexual liberation meant that women should have free access to contraception so that they could be sexually active while still being free to decide whether and when to have children. Both Goldman and the American anarchist, Ezra Heywood (1829-1893), were imprisoned by U.S. authorities for trying to make birth control information and devices available to women.

ANARCHIST MORALITY

"Official morality," wrote Elisée Reclus in 1894, "consists in bowing humbly to one's superiors and in proudly holding up one's head before one's subordinates" (Volume One, Selection 38). True morality can only exist between equals. "It is not only against the abstract trinity of law, religion, and authority" that anarchists declare war, according to Kropotkin, but the inequality that gives rise to "deceit, cunning, exploitation, depravity, vice... It is in the name of equality that we are determined to have no more prostituted, exploited, deceived and governed men and women." This sense of justice and solidarity, "which brings the individual to consider the rights of every other individual as equal to his own," has been successively widened, from the clan, to the tribe, to the nation, to the whole of humankind, until it is transcended by a "higher conception of 'no revenge for wrongs,' and of freely giving more than one expects to receive from his neighbours" (Volume One, Selection 54). For Kropotkin, acting morally is not only natural, but a means of self-fulfillment.

What anarchists sought to achieve was a world in which everyone is free to develop his or her talents and abilities to their fullest. This is impossible as long as workers are required to engage in labour merely to eke out an existence, taking whatever jobs they can get, women must work at home and in the factory or

office, subject to their husbands and fathers at home, to their bosses at work, and to conventional morality always, and children must be trained to accept their lot in life and to obey their “betters.” It is for these reasons that anarchism, Kropotkin wrote, “refuses all hierarchical organization” (Volume One, Selection 41). As Charlotte Wilson (1854-1944), who helped found the English language anarchist newspaper, *Freedom*, with Kropotkin in 1886, explained, “all coercive organization” with its “machine-like regularity is fatal to the realization” of the anarchist ideal of self-fulfillment for all, not just the privileged few (Volume One, Selection 37).

ART AND ANARCHY

Wilson argued that when “each worker will be entirely free to do as nature prompts... to throw his whole soul into the labour he has chosen, and make it the spontaneous expression of his intensest purpose and desire... labour becomes pleasure, and its produce a work of art” (Volume One, Selection 37). For artists in bourgeois society, Jean Grave observed that they must sell their works to survive, “a situation which leads those who would not die of hunger to compromise, to vulgar and mediocre art.” To “live their dream, realize their aspirations, they, too, must work” for the social revolution. Even when possible, it “is vain for them to entrench themselves behind the privileges of the ruling classes,” for “if there is debasement for him who is reduced to performing the vilest tasks to satisfy his hunger, the morality of those who condemn him to it is not superior to his own; if obedience degrades, command, far from exalting character, degrades it also” (Volume One, Selection 63).

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), who for a time described himself as an anarchist, agreed with Grave that with the abolition of private property, all will be free “to choose the sphere of activity that is really congenial to them, and gives them pleasure” (1891: 6). However, he did not look forward to the day when manual and intellectual labour would be combined, for some forms of manual labour are so degrading that they cannot be performed with dignity or joy: “Man is made for something better than disturbing dirt. All work of that kind should be done by machine” (1891: 26).

Wilde spoke in favour of anarchist socialism as providing the basis for true individualism and artistic freedom. He believed that the only form of government suitable to the artist “*is no government at all*. Authority over him and his art is ridiculous,” whether exercised by a government or by public opinion (Volume One, Selection 61). Wilson agreed that public opinion, “the rule of universal mediocrity,” is “a serious danger to individual freedom,” but in a free society “it can only be counteracted by broader moral culture” (Volume One, Selection

37). For Wilde, this meant that “*Art should never try to be popular. The public should try to make itself artistic*” (Volume One, Selection 61).

In turn of the century France, much of the artistic avant-garde allied themselves with anarchism, including such painters as Camille Pissarro, Paul Signac, Charles Maurin and Maximilien Luce, and writers like Paul Adam, Adolphe Retté, Octave Mirbeau and Bernard Lazare (Sonn, 1989). Jean Grave would include their work in his anarchist papers, *La Révolte*, and later, *Les Temps Nouveaux*. When the French authorities again prosecuted anarchists simply for expressing their subversive ideas in the mid-1890s, Lazare wrote in *La Révolte*: “We had the audacity to believe that not everything was for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and we stated and state still that modern society is despicable, founded upon theft, dishonesty, hypocrisy and turpitude” (Volume One, Selection 62).

As can be seen, the anarchist critique of existing society was never limited to denouncing the State, capitalism and the church. It extended to the patriarchal family, the sexual exploitation and subjection of women, censorship, conformism, authoritarian education, and hierarchical and coercive forms of organization in general, no matter where they might be found, whether in the school, at the workplace or within the revolutionary movement itself.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The anarchist critique of science and technology goes back at least to Proudhon, who denounced machinery which, “after having degraded the worker by giving him a master, completes his degeneracy by reducing him from the rank of artisan to that of common labourer” (Volume One, Selection 9). Carlo Pisacane argued that technological innovation under capitalism simply concentrates economic power and wealth “in a small number of hands,” while leaving the masses in poverty (Volume One, Selection 16).

Other anarchists have argued that once the people take control of technology, it can be redesigned to eliminate onerous toil, much like Oscar Wilde suggested, to make workplaces safer and to increase production for the benefit of all. Carlo Cafiero recognized that in capitalist economies, the worker has reason to oppose the machinery “which comes to drive him from the factory, to starve him, degrade him, torture him, crush him. Yet what a great interest he will have, on the contrary, in increasing their number when he will no longer be at the service of the machines and when... the machines will themselves be at his service, helping him and working for his benefit” (Volume One, Selection 32).

Gustav Landauer took a more critical position, arguing in 1911 that “the capitalist system, modern technology and State centralism go hand in hand... Tech-

nology, allied with capitalism, makes [the worker] a cog in the wheels of the machine.” Consequently, the technology developed under capitalism cannot provide the basis for a free society. Rather, workers must “step out of capitalism mentally and physically,” and begin creating alternative communities and technologies designed to meet their needs in conditions which they themselves find agreeable (Volume One, Selection 79). In the early 1960s, Paul Goodman (1911-1972) suggested some criteria “for the humane selection of technology: utility, efficiency, comprehensibility, reparability, ease and flexibility of use, amenity and modesty” (Volume Two, Selection 70), the use of which would result in something which Goodman’s friend, Ivan Illich (1926-2002), described as “convivial tools,” enabling “autonomous and creative intercourse among persons and... with their environment” (Volume Two, Selection 73).

Nineteenth century anarchists often extolled the virtues of modern science, particularly in contrast to religious belief, as part of their critique of the role of organized religion in supporting the status quo. In *What is Property*, Proudhon looked forward to the day when “the sovereignty of the will yields to the sovereignty of reason, and must at last be lost in scientific socialism” (Volume One, Selection 8). José Llunas Pujols wrote in 1882 that in an anarchist society, “the political State and theology would... be supplanted by Administration and Science” (Volume One, Selection 36), echoing Saint Simon’s comment that in an enlightened society, the government of man will be replaced by the “administration of things”. In the conclusion to his 1920 anarchist program, Malatesta summed up what anarchists want as “bread, freedom, love, and science for everybody” (Volume One, Selection 112).

However, this did not mean that anarchists were uncritical supporters of science. One of the most widely published and translated anarchist pamphlets in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was Bakunin’s essay, *God and the State*, in which he discussed the limitations of scientific theory and research, and warned against the danger of entrusting our affairs to scientists and intellectuals. Bakunin argued that science “cannot go outside the sphere of abstractions,” being “as incapable of grasping the individuality of a man as that of a rabbit.” Because science cannot grasp or appreciate the existential reality of individual human beings, “it must never be permitted, nor must anyone be permitted in its name, to govern” individuals. Those claiming to govern in the name of science would yield “to the pernicious influence which privilege inevitably exercises upon men,” fleecing “other men in the name of science, just as they have been fleeced hitherto by priests, politicians of all shades, and lawyers, in the name of God, of the State, of judicial Right” (Volume One, Selection 24).

Even Kropotkin, who argued in *Modern Science and Anarchism* (1912) that anarchism “is a conception of the Universe based on the mechanical [kinetic] in-

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terpretation of phenomena” that “recognizes no method of research except the scientific one,” never suggested that scientists should have a privileged role in society, nor that scientific hypotheses should be regarded as akin to human laws that need to be enforced by some authority. He decried the introduction of “artificial modes of expression, borrowed from theology and arbitrary power, into [scientific] knowledge which is purely the result of observation” (Volume One, Selection 52), and argued that all theories and conclusions, including those of the anarchists, are subject to criticism and must be verified by experiment and observation.

Kropotkin no more endorsed “the *government* of science” than Bakunin did (Volume One, Selection 24). Instead, he looked forward to:

A society in which all the mutual relations of its members are regulated, not by laws, not by authorities, whether self-imposed or elected, but by mutual agreement... and by a sum of social customs and habits—not petrified by law, routine, or superstition, but continually developing and continually readjusted, in accordance with the ever-growing requirements of a free life, stimulated by the progress of science, invention, and the steady growth of higher ideals (1912: 59).

EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION

Kropotkin noted that among the scientific works that appeared in the mid-19th century, “there was none which exercised so deep an influence as *The Origins of Species*, by Charles Darwin” (1912: 38). What Darwin demonstrated was that “man... was the product of a slow physiological evolution; that he drew his origin from a species of animals which gave birth both to man and the now-living apes and monkeys; that the ‘immortal mind’ and the ‘moral sense’ of man had developed in the same way as the intelligence and the social instincts of a chimpanzee or an ant” (1912: 38-39).

While anarchists welcomed Darwin’s ideas regarding evolution because they undermined the authority of religion by discrediting notions of divine creation and design, they also had to contend with the apologists of a rapacious capitalism, the “Social Darwinists,” who used Darwin’s notion of “the struggle for existence” to attack egalitarianism and to argue against social reform in general. As Kropotkin put it, there was “no infamy in civilized society, or in the relations of the whites towards the so-called lower races, or of the strong towards the weak, which would not have found its excuse in this formula” (1899: 498).

To combat the ideas of the Social Darwinists, Kropotkin wrote a series of essays, later published as *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), in which he

sought to demonstrate “the overwhelming importance which sociable habits play in Nature and in the progressive evolution of both the animal species and human beings.” It is from these practices of mutual aid, Kropotkin argued, that moral feelings are developed, leading him to conclude that “in the ethical progress of man, mutual support—not mutual struggle—has had the leading part” (Volume One, Selection 54). Kropotkin’s notion of mutual aid and his critique of Social Darwinism was very influential in anarchist circles, not only in Europe but also in Latin America and Asia.

Some opponents of revolutionary change argued that the notion of “progressive evolution” was inconsistent with the anarchist commitment to social revolution. As Elisée Reclus observed in 1891, the “word Evolution, synonymous with gradual and continuous development in morals and ideas, is brought forward in certain circles as though it were the antithesis of that fearful word, Revolution, which implies changes more or less sudden in their action... entailing some sort of catastrophe.” It was Reclus, not Kropotkin, who first developed the idea that revolutionary upheavals are part of a natural evolutionary process, an accelerated period of evolutionary change, such that revolution and evolution “are fundamentally one and the same thing, differing only according to the time of their appearance.” Turning Social Darwinism on its head, he argued that as “powerful as may be the Master,” and the “privileged classes” in general, they “will be weak before the starving masses leagued against” them. “To the great evolution now taking place will succeed the long expected, the great revolution” (Volume One, Selection 74). This was a common theme among late 19th and early 20th century anarchists, including anarchists in Japan (Volume One, Selection 102) and China (Volume One, Selections 97, 100 & 102).

AGAINST RACISM

Anarchist supporters of science also had to contend with the development of a racist ethnology, purportedly based on scientific theory and research, which was used to justify colonial exploitation and war against the so-called “inferior” races. In his 1904 essay, ironically entitled “Our Indians,” the Peruvian anarchist intellectual, Manuel González Prada (1848-1919), marveled at what “a handy invention” ethnology was in the hands of those who seek to justify white domination: “Once one has accepted that Mankind is divided into superior and inferior races and acknowledged the white man’s superiority and thus his right to sole governance of the Planet, there cannot be anything more natural than suppression of the black man in Africa, the redskin in the United States, the Tagalog in the Philippines and the Indian in Peru” (Volume One, Selection 91).

While González Prada questioned the “science” behind racist doctrines, point-

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ing out that there “is such a mish-mash of blood and colouring, every individual represents so many licit or illicit dalliances, that when faced by many a Peruvian we would be baffled as to the contribution of the black man or the yellow man to their make-up: none deserves the description of pure-bred white man, even if he has blue eyes and blond hair,” he argued that rather than “going around the world spreading the light of [European] art and science, better to go around dispensing the milk of human kindness,” for “where the ‘struggle for existence’ is enunciated as the rule of society, barbarism rules.” González Prada agreed with Kropotkin that the true mark of progress and civilization is the degree to which practices and institutions of mutual aid are spread throughout society, such that “doing good has graduated from being an obligation to being a habit” (Volume One, Selection 91).

NATIONALISM AND COLONIALISM

From the time that explicitly anarchist ideas emerged from Europe in the 1840s, anarchists have denounced the artificial division of peoples into competing nations and States as an unceasing source of militarism, war and conflict, and as a means by which the ruling classes secure the obedience of the masses. “It is the governments,” Proudhon wrote in 1851, “who, pretending to establish order among men, arrange them forthwith in hostile camps, and as their only occupation is to produce servitude at home, their art lies in maintaining war abroad, war in fact or war in prospect. The oppression of peoples and their mutual hatred are two correlative, inseparable facts, which reproduce each other, and which cannot come to an end except simultaneously, by the destruction of their common cause, government” (Volume One, Selection 12).

In *Moribund Society and Anarchy* (1893), Jean Grave asked, “what can be more arbitrary than frontiers? For what reason do men located on this side of a fictitious line belong to a nation more than those on the other side? The arbitrariness of these distinctions is so evident that nowadays the racial spirit is claimed as the justification for parceling peoples into distinct nations. But here again the distinction is of no value and rests upon no serious foundation, for every nation is itself but an amalgamation of races quite different from each other, not to speak of the interminglings and crossings which the relations operating among nations, more and more developed, more and more intimate, bring about everyday... To the genuine individual all men are brothers and have equal rights to live and to evolve according to their own wills, upon this earth which is large enough and fruitful enough to nourish all... Instead of going on cutting each other’s throats [the workers] ought to stretch out their hands across the frontiers

and unite all their efforts in making war upon their real, their only enemies: authority and capital” (Volume One, Selection 76).

Having drawn the connection between racism, patriotism and war, Grave went on to deal with colonialism, “this hybrid product of patriotism and mercantilism combined—brigandage and highway robbery for the benefit of the ruling classes!” Bakunin had earlier remarked that “to offend, to despoil, to plunder, to assassinate or enslave one’s fellowman is ordinarily regarded as a crime. In public life, on the other hand, from the standpoint of patriotism, when these things are done for the greater glory of the State, for the preservation or the extension of its power, it is all transformed into duty and virtue” (Volume One, Selection 20). In his discussion of colonialism, Grave observed in a similar vein that when someone breaks “into his neighbour’s house,” stealing whatever he can, “he is a criminal; society condemns him. But if a government finds itself driven to a standstill by an internal situation which necessitates some external ‘diversion’; if it be encumbered at home by unemployed hands of which it knows not how to rid itself; of products which it cannot get distributed; let this government declare war against remote peoples which it knows to be too feeble to resist it, let it take possession of their country, subject them to an entire system of exploitation, force its products upon them, massacre them if they attempt to escape this exploitation with which it weighs them down... It is no longer called robbery or assassination... this is called ‘civilizing’ undeveloped peoples” (Volume One, Selection 76).

Anarchists opposed colonial domination and exploitation, as well as militarism, war and the State. At the 1907 International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam, the delegates declared themselves “enemies of all armed force vested in the hands of the State—be it army, gendarmerie, police or magistracy” and expressed their “hope that all the peoples concerned will respond to any declaration of war by insurrection” (Volume One, Selection 80). Unfortunately, when war broke out in Europe in 1914, the peoples concerned did not respond with insurrection against their warring masters but for the most part rushed off to slaughter. This caused a very small minority of anarchists, including some very prominent ones, such as Grave and Kropotkin, to support the war against Germany in order to defend English and French “liberties” against German imperialism.

Most anarchists opposed the war, with a group including Malatesta, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Luigi Bertoni, George Barrett, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis and Alexander Schapiro issuing an International Anarchist Manifesto Against War (1915), in which they argued that France, with “its *Biribi* [penal battalions in Algeria], its bloody conquests in Tonkin, Madagascar, Morocco, and its compulsory enlistment of black troops,” and England, “which exploits,

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divides, and oppresses the population of its immense colonial Empire,” were hardly deserving of anarchist support (Volume One, Selection 81). Rather, it is the mission of anarchists who, Malatesta wrote, “wish the end of all oppression and of all exploitation of man by man... to awaken a consciousness of the antagonism of interests between dominators and dominated, between exploiters and workers, and to develop the class struggle inside each country, and the solidarity among all workers across the frontiers, as against any prejudice and passion of either race or nationality” (Volume One, Selection 80).

THE SPREAD OF ANARCHISM

Prior to the First World War, anarchism had become an international revolutionary movement, with the largest anarchist movements in countries with anarcho-syndicalist trade union organizations, such as Spain, Italy, Portugal, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Uruguay, or like minded revolutionary syndicalist movements, as in France. In the early 1900s, anarchist ideas were introduced to Japan (Volume One, Selection 102) and China (Volume One, Selections 96-99). Anarchists and syndicalists, despite the efforts of the Marxists and social democrats to exclude the anarchists from the international socialist movement, formed the extreme left wing of the socialist and trade union movements. Anarchist ideas regarding direct action, autonomous social organization, anti-parliamentarianism, expropriation, social revolution and the general strike were gaining more currency, particularly after the 1905 Russian Revolution, and the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

THE 1905 RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

In January 1905, Czarist troops massacred scores of protesters at a demonstration in St. Petersburg, precipitating a general strike and the formation of the first “soviets,” or workers’ councils in Russia (Voline, 1947: 96-101). Following Russia’s defeat in its war against Japan in February 1905, unrest spread throughout Russia, culminating in a countrywide general strike in October 1905. The Czar was forced to promise constitutional reforms, which he soon reneged upon. Nevertheless, the great general strike of October 1905 made a deep impression on workers and revolutionaries around the world, giving renewed credence to anarchist ideas, for it was the anarchists who had been advocating the general strike as a revolutionary weapon since the time of the First International (Volume One, Selection 27). The Marxist social democrats had been dismissing the general strike as “general nonsense” for years (Joll: 193).

Kropotkin observed that “what exasperated the rulers most” about the general strike “was that the workers offered no opportunity for shooting at them and reestablishing ‘order’ by massacres. A new weapon, more terrible than street warfare, had thus been tested and proved to work admirably” (1905: 280). Despite this practical vindication of anarchist ideas, Malatesta was careful to point out the limitations of the general strike. Instead of “limiting ourselves to looking forward to the general strike as a panacea for all ills,” Malatesta warned, anarchists needed to prepare for the insurrection or civil war which would inevitably follow the workers’ seizure of the means of production. For it is not enough for the workers to halt production; to avoid being forced by their own hunger back to work, the workers need to provide for themselves (Volume One, Selection 60). As the anarchist pacifist Bart de Ligt (1883-1938) put it in the 1930s, “the workers must not strike by going home or into the streets, thus separating themselves from the means of production and giving themselves over to dire poverty but... on the contrary, they must stay on the spot and control these means of production” for their own benefit (Volume One, Selection 120). Maurice Joyeux (1910-1991), following the May-June 1968 events in France, described such action as the “self-managerial” general strike, by which the workers directly take control of the means of production (Volume Two, Selection 61).

No revolutionary group could claim credit for the 1905 Russian Revolution. As Kropotkin noted, the October 1905 general strike “was not the work of any revolutionary organization. It was entirely a workingmen’s affair” (1905: 278). What the anarchists could do was point to the 1905 Russian Revolution as a practical vindication of their ideas, enabling them to reach a much broader audience inspired by these events.

REVOLUTION IN MEXICO

While the Russian workers were able to bring Russia to a standstill in October 1905, it was during the 1910 Mexican Revolution that expropriation was first applied on a wide scale by landless peasants and indigenous peoples. Anarchists in Mexico had been advocating that the people seize the land and abolish all government since the late 1860s, when Julio Chavez Lopez declared that what they wanted was “the land in order to plant it in peace and harvest it in tranquility; to leave the system of exploitation and give liberty to all” (Volume One, Selection 71). In 1878, the anarchist group La Social advocated the abolition of the Mexican State and capitalism, the creation of autonomous federated communes, equal property holdings for those who worked the land, and the abolition of wage labour. When the government renewed its campaign of expropriation of

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peasant lands in favour of foreign (primarily U.S.) interests and a tiny group of wealthy landowners, the anarchists urged the peasants to revolt. Anarchist inspired peasant rebellions spread throughout Mexico, lasting from 1878 until 1884 (Hart: 68-69). Another peasant rebellion broke out in Veracruz in 1896, leading to a lengthy insurgency that continued through to the 1910 Mexican Revolution (Hart: 72).

In 1906 and 1908, the anarchist oriented Liberal Party of Mexico (PLM) led several uprisings in the Mexican countryside. On the eve of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, the PLM issued a manifesto, "To Arms! To Arms for Land and Liberty," written by the anarchist Ricardo Flores Magón (1874-1922). He urged the peasants to take "the Winchester in hand" and seize the land, for the land belongs "to all men and women who, by the very fact that they are living, have a right to share in common, by reason of their toil, all that wealth which the Earth is capable of producing" (Volume One, Selection 73). The PLM organized the first armed insurrections against the Díaz dictatorship in the late fall of 1910, beginning a revolution that was to last until 1919. Throughout Mexico, the largely indigenous peasantry arose in rebellion, seizing the land and redistributing it among themselves.

Anarchists outside of Mexico regarded this expropriation of the land by the Mexican peasantry as yet another vindication of their ideas. As Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912) put it, "peasants who know nothing about the jargon of the land reformers or of the Socialists" knew better than the "theory spinners of the cities" how to "get back the land... to ignore the machinery of paper landholding (in many instances they have burned the records of the title deeds) and proceed to plough the ground, to sow and plant and gather, and *keep the product themselves*" (Volume One, Selection 71). This was the model of the peasant social revolution that Chavez Lopez had tried to instigate in 1869, that Bakunin had advocated during the 1870 Franco-Prussian War (Volume One, Selection 28), and that anarchists in Europe and Latin America had been promoting.

ANARCHISM IN ASIA

In Japan, Kôtoku Shûsui (1871-1911), who had begun his political career as an orthodox Marxist, embraced anarchism in 1905, introducing anarchist communist and anarcho-syndicalist ideas to Japanese radicals. Kôtoku advocated the creation of interlinked trade union and cooperative organizations to provide the basis for anarchist communes "at the time of or in the aftermath of a revolution," an idea that can be traced back to Bakunin, Guillaume and the anarchist currents in the First International. He argued in favour of working class direct action and

anti-parliamentarianism: the workers “must act for themselves without relying on slow moving parliaments.” The workers would strike to improve their working conditions while pushing “on to the general strike,” while the hungry would expropriate food from the rich, instead of waiting for legal reforms (Volume One, Selection 102). He translated Kropotkin into Japanese, and anarcho-syndicalist material, such as Siegfried Nacht’s 1905 pamphlet, *The Social General Strike*.

In 1910, Akaba Hajime, another Japanese anarchist, published *The Farmers’ Gospel*, in which he called for the “return to the ‘village community’ of long ago, which our remote ancestors enjoyed. We must construct the free paradise of ‘anarchist communism,’ which will flesh out the bones of the village community with the most advanced scientific understanding and with the lofty morality of mutual aid” (Crump, 1996). The Japanese anarchist feminist, Itô Noe (1895-1923), pointed to the Japanese peasant village as an example of living anarchy, “a social life based on mutual agreement” and mutual aid (Volume One, Selection 104). As with anarchists in Europe and Latin America, the Japanese anarchists sought to unite the workers and peasants in the struggle for a free society.

Despite the execution of Kôtoku in 1911 following the infamous Japanese treason trials, which were used to smash the nascent Japanese anarchist movement, Akaba’s imprisonment and death in 1912, and the 1923 police murder of Itô Noe and her companion, Osugi Sakae, another prominent anarchist (Volume One, Selection 103), the anarchists remained a significant force on the Japanese left throughout the 1920s.

In 1907, a group of Chinese anarchists created the Society for the Study of Socialism in Tokyo. Two of the Society’s founders, Liu Shipai (1884-1919) and Zhang Ji (1882-1947), were in contact with Kôtoku Shûsui, who introduced them to the ideas of Kropotkin and the anarcho-syndicalists. Liu, Zhang and Kôtoku all spoke about anarchism at the Society’s founding meeting (Scalapino & Yu). Zhang contributed to *Balance*, a Chinese anarchist journal published in Tokyo, which in 1908 ran a series of articles calling for a peasant revolution in China and “the combination of agriculture and industry,” as proposed by Kropotkin in *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (Dirlik: 104). Following Kôtoku’s example, Zhang also translated Nacht’s pamphlet on *The Social General Strike* into Chinese.

Liu and his wife, He Zhen, published another Chinese anarchist journal in Tokyo, *Natural Justice*. He Zhen advocated women’s liberation, a particularly pressing concern in China, where foot-binding and concubinage were still common practices. She was familiar with the debates in Europe regarding women’s suffrage but argued that “instead of competing with men for power, women should strive for overthrowing men’s rule,” a position close to that of Louise

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Michel and Emma Goldman. She criticized those women who advocated sexual liberation merely “to indulge themselves in unfettered sexual desires,” comparing them to prostitutes, a view similar to that of European and Latin American anarchist women, such as Carmen Lareva, who were also concerned that the anarchist notion of “free love” not be confused with making women sexually available to men (Volume One, Selection 69). He Zhen insisted that “women should seek their own liberation without relying on men to give it to them” (Volume One, Selection 96). Women’s liberation became a common cause for the Chinese anarchists, who rejected the traditional patriarchal family and often lived in small communal groups.

Chinese anarchists in Guangzhou began labour organizing in 1913, creating the first Chinese trade unions, inspired by Shifu (1884-1915), the anarchist communist who became known as “the soul of Chinese anarchism” (Krebs). Heavily influenced by Kropotkin, Shifu advocated anarchist communism, the abolition of all coercive institutions, freedom and equality for men and women, and voluntary associations where no one will “have the authority to manage others,” and in which there will “be no statutes or regulations to restrict people’s freedom” (Volume One, Selection 99).

In the conclusion to his 1914 manifesto, “The Goals and Methods of the Anarchist-Communist Party,” Shifu referred to the “war clouds [filling] every part of Europe,” with “millions of workers... about to be sacrificed for the wealthy and the nobility” (Volume One, Selection 99). Kropotkin’s subsequent support for the war against Germany shocked anarchists throughout the world, and was particularly damaging in Russia where his position was seen as support for Czarist autocracy (Avrich, 1978: 116-119; 136-137). However, as the war continued, the anarchists who maintained their anti-war, anti-militarist and anti-statist position began again to find a sympathetic ear among the workers and peasants who bore the brunt of the inter-imperialist slaughter in Europe, and who were to arise *en masse* in February 1917 in Russia, overthrowing the Czar.

INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHISM

In addition to the various revolutionary currents that existed within the anarchist movement prior to the outbreak of World War I, individualist anarchism began to emerge as a distinct current in the United States and Europe. In contrast to many contemporary individualists, particularly in the United States, who sometimes identify themselves as “anarcho-capitalists,” a concept most anarchists would regard as hopelessly self-contradictory (Volume Three, Chapter 9), the individualist anarchists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were anti-capitalist.

The leading individualist anarchist in the United States was Benjamin Tucker (1854-1939). Tucker was a great admirer of Proudhon, translating *What Is Property* (1876) and Volume One of *The System of Economic Contradictions* (1888) into English. Nevertheless, when describing Proudhon's anarchism, Tucker in reality set forth his own view of anarchism as "the logical carrying out of the Manchester doctrine; *laissez faire* the universal rule," a position which Proudhon would have rejected. Tucker was opposed to compulsory taxation, State currencies, regulation of the banking system, tariffs, patents, and the large corporations, the "trusts," that were building their own monopolies on the basis of these State "monopolies." He denounced revolutionary anarchists, such as Kropotkin and Johann Most, as "Communists who falsely call themselves anarchists," particularly for their advocacy of expropriation, which Tucker regarded as inconsistent with anarchist ends (Tucker, 1888).

Yet despite Tucker's discovery of Max Stirner's egoism in the late 1880s (Martin: 249-254), Tucker remained a self-righteous ideologue disapproving of those anarchists who advocated armed struggle, expropriation and social revolution. Stirner, on the other hand, would have had no reason to condemn expropriation or the use of force, having suggested that the dispossessed simply take from the rich because "I give myself the right of property in taking property to myself." In fact, Stirner can be seen as the original advocate of anarchist "illegalism," when he argued that "in all cases where [the egoist's] advantage runs against the State's," the egoist "can satisfy himself only by crime" (Volume One, Selection 11). It was this aspect of Stirner's egoism that was seized upon by individualist anarchists in Europe around the turn of the century, who articulated and sometimes put into practice a much more radical conception of individualist anarchism than had been developed in the United States by Tucker and his associates, one which did not shy away from violence and which regarded itself as revolutionary.

In 1909, the then individualist anarchist, Victor Kibalchich (better known by his later moniker, Victor Serge (1890-1947), after he went over to Bolshevism), wrote in France that the anarchist "chooses the methods of struggle, according to his power and circumstance. He takes no account of any conventions which safeguard property: for him, force alone counts. Thus, we have neither to approve or disapprove of illegal actions... The anarchist is always illegal—theoretically. The sole word 'anarchist' means rebellion in every sense" (Perry: 50).

Kibalchich was associated with some of the future members of the "Bonnot Gang," which conducted the first bank robbery using getaway cars in late December 1911. Soon after the robbery, during which a bank clerk was shot, Kibalchich wrote that the shooting "proved that some men have at least understood the virtues of audacity. I am not afraid to own up to it: I am with the bandits" (Perry:

90). However, after Bonnot was killed in a shoot out and Kibalchich was put on trial along with survivors of the gang, he tried to distance himself from the “bandits,” claiming that he was merely an anarchist “propagandist” who did “not pretend to defend” his former comrades, “for a gulf separates philosophical anarchists” from those who seek to justify their crimes in the name of anarchism (Perry: 158-159).

It was the kind of betrayal Kibalchich was to repeat in Russia after the 1917 Revolution when he renounced anarchism altogether, throwing his support behind the Bolshevik dictatorship. When justifying the Bolsheviks’ violent suppression of the anarchist movement, Kibalchich (now Serge) again drew a distinction between “counter-revolutionary” armed anarchist groups who hid common criminals within their ranks, and “ideological” anarchists, who were allegedly left alone to make their “ineffective” propaganda (Serge, 1930). It was a distinction Lenin and the Bolsheviks were happy to make, but never honour (Berkman, 1925: 91 & 142-151).

Emile Armand (1872-1962), a more consistent individualist anarchist writing in France in 1911, supported “illegalism... with certain reservations.” For him, the individualist “anarchist seeks to live without gods or masters; without bosses or leaders; a-legally, bereft of laws as well as of prejudices; amorally, free of obligations as well as of collective morality.” The European individualists shared the anti-organizationalist critique of all formal organization but, as with Tucker and his associates, opposed anarchist communism. The individual, Armand wrote, “would be as much of a subordinate under a communist system as he is today.” Armand believed that individual autonomy could only be guaranteed by individual ownership of the means necessary to support oneself, the product of one’s own labour, and the goods one receives in exchange with others. He was much clearer than Tucker in opposing “the exploitation of anyone by one of his neighbours who will set him to work in his employ and for his benefit” (Volume One, Selection 42).

Both Tucker and the European individualists developed a conception of anarchism representing an incoherent amalgam of Stirnerian egoism and Proudhonian economics, although the European individualists were more consistent in their extremism. The problem for both is that while an egoist will not want to be exploited or dominated by anyone else, there is no reason why he or she would not exploit or dominate others. If the egoist can use existing power structures, or create new ones, to his or her advantage, then there is no reason for the egoist to adopt an anarchist stance. Furthermore, when each person regards the other simply as a means to his or her ends, taking and doing whatever is in his or her power, as Stirner advocated, it would seem unlikely that a Proudhonian economy of small property holders exchanging their products among one another

would be able to function, for Proudhon's notions of equivalent exchange and economic justice would carry no weight, even if they were feasible in a modern industrial economy.

Armand rejected Proudhon's notion of contract, arguing that "every contract can be voided the moment it injures one of the contracting parties," since the individual is "free of all obligations as well as of collective morality." At most, the individualist "is willing to enter into short-term arrangements only" as "an expedient," being "only ever answerable to himself for his deeds and actions" (Volume One, Selection 42).

Tucker, despite his attempts to base his anarchism on Stirner's egoism, believed that contracts freely entered into should be binding and enforceable. In addition, he advocated the creation of "self-defence" associations to protect people's property, opening the way, Kropotkin argued, "for reconstituting under the heading of 'defence' all the functions of the State" (1910: 18). Anarchist communists, such as Kropotkin, did not "see the necessity of... enforcing agreements freely entered upon" by people in an anarchist society, for even in existing society the "simple habit of keeping one's word, the desire of not losing confidence, are quite sufficient in an overwhelming majority of cases to enforce the keeping of agreements" (1887: 47 & 53). Force is only necessary to maintain relationships of subordination and exploitation, "to prevent the labourers from taking possession of what they consider unjustly appropriated by the few; and... to continually bring new 'uncivilized nations' under the same conditions" (1887: 52).

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

In 1916, echoing Bakunin's position during the Franco-Prussian War, Russian anarchists who rejected Kropotkin's pro-war stance called for the "imperialist war" in Europe to be transformed into an all embracing social revolution (Geneva Group of Anarchist-Communists, 1916: 44-47). In February 1917, the long sought after Russian Revolution began with relatively spontaneous uprisings for which, much like the 1905 Russian Revolution, no particular group could claim credit.

For the anarchists, the "February Revolution" was another vindication of their view of social revolution. "All revolutions necessarily begin in a more or less spontaneous manner," wrote the Russian anarchist Voline. The task for revolutionary anarchists is to work with the insurgent people to enable them to take control of their own affairs, without any intermediaries, and to prevent the reconstitution of State power. For Voline and the anarchists, effective "emancipation can be achieved only by the *direct, widespread, and independent action of those concerned, of the workers themselves*, grouped, not under the banner of a

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political party or of an ideological formation, but in their own class organizations (productive workers' unions, factory committees, co-operatives, etc.) on the basis of concrete action and self-government, *helped, but not governed*, by revolutionaries working in the very midst of, and not above the mass" (Volume One, Selection 87).

The anarchists therefore opposed the Provisional Government which replaced the Czarist regime and pressed for the expropriation by the workers and peasants themselves of the means of production and distribution, a process the workers and peasants had already begun, with workers taking over their factories and peasants seizing the land that they had worked for generations. Anarchist communists expropriated the homes of the rich and called for the creation of revolutionary communes (Avrich, 1978: 125-126 & 130).

Many anarchists supported and participated in the peasant and worker "soviets" that sprang up across Russia, following a pattern similar to the 1905 Russian Revolution. The anarcho-syndicalist, Gregory Maksimov, described the soviets as having "been brought into being by the proletariat spontaneously, by revolutionary means, and with that element of improvisation which springs from the needs of each locality and which entails (a) the revolutionizing of the masses, (b) the development of their activity and self-reliance, and (c) the strengthening of their faith in their own creative powers" (Volume One, Selection 83).

When Lenin rejected the orthodox Marxist view that Russia had to proceed through a "bourgeois" revolution and the development of a capitalist economy before socialism could be implemented, calling for a proletarian revolution that would replace the Russian State with worker and peasant soviets modeled after the Paris Commune, he was not only recognizing what was already happening, but adopting a position so close to the anarchists that both orthodox Marxists and many anarchists regarded the Bolsheviks as the anarchists' allies (Avrich, 1978: 127-130). Many anarchists worked with the Bolsheviks to overthrow the Provisional Government in October 1917, and to dissolve the newly elected Constituent Assembly in January 1918.

FACTORY COMMITTEES

Soon after the October Revolution, some anarchists began to realize that rather than pushing the social revolution forward, the Bolsheviks were seeking to establish their own dictatorship, subordinating the soviets to their party organization. Maksimov therefore proclaimed in December 1917 that the anarchists "will go with the Bolsheviks no longer, for their 'constructive' work has begun, directed towards what we have always fought... the strengthening of the State. It is not our cause to strengthen what we have resolved to destroy. We must go to

the lower classes to organize the work of the third—and perhaps the last—revolution” (Volume One, Selection 83).

Because the soviets, as “presently constituted,” were being transformed by the Bolsheviks into organs of State power, Maksimov argued that the anarchists “must work for their conversion from centres of authority and decrees into non-authoritarian centres,” linking the “autonomous organizations” of the workers together (Volume One, Selection 83). But as the Bolsheviks continued to consolidate their power, subordinating not only the soviets but also the trade unions to their “revolutionary” government, the anarcho-syndicalists began to emphasize the role of the factory committees in furthering the cause of the anarchist social revolution and in combatting both capitalism and the nascent Bolshevik dictatorship.

At their August 1918 congress, the Russian anarcho-syndicalists described the factory committee as “a fighting organizational form of the entire workers’ movement, more perfect than the soviet of workers’, soldiers’ and peasants’ deputies in that it is a basic self-governing producers’ organization under the continuous and alert control of the workers... With the aid of the factory committees and their industry-wide federations, the working class will destroy both the existing economic slavery and its new form of State capitalism which is falsely labelled ‘socialism’,” which the Bolsheviks were in the process of establishing (Volume One, Selection 84).

A similar approach was put forward by anarchists in Italy during the factory occupations in 1919-1920, and by anarchists in Germany. Malatesta, returning to Italy in late 1919, argued, as he had before in his debates with the syndicalists (Volume One, Selection 60), that general strikes were not sufficient to bring about a revolution. The anarchists therefore “put forward an idea: the take-over of factories,” which would constitute “an exercise preparing one for the ultimate general act of expropriation” (Malatesta, 1920: 134). The Italian factory occupation movement peaked in September 1920, with armed workers running their own factories using a factory committee form of organization, but ended that same month when reformist trade union and socialist leaders negotiated an agreement with the government that returned control of the factories to their capitalist owners.

In Germany, anarchists fought to establish a system of workers’ councils, most notably in Bavaria, where Gustav Landauer and Erich Muehsam were directly involved in the short lived Council Republic of 1919. However, the Bavarian Revolution was crushed by troops sent in by the more conservative Social Democrats, whom Landauer had been denouncing as the scourge of the socialist movement for years (Volume One, Selections 79 & 111). Landauer was brutally murdered, and Muehsam was imprisoned for several years (Kuhn, 2011: 8-10).

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Both the soviet and factory committee models of revolutionary organization were very influential in anarchist circles. At the founding congress of the reconstituted anarcho-syndicalist International Workers' Association in early 1922, the delegates declared themselves in favour of "a system of free councils without subordination to any authority or political party" (Volume One, Selection 114). Nevertheless, some anarchists voiced concerns regarding the limitations of soviet and factory council modes of organization.

Maksimov pointed to the danger of the soviets being transformed into representative bodies instead of direct organs of libertarian self-management (Volume One, Selection 83). More recently, Murray Bookchin has argued that "council modes of organization are not immune to centralization, manipulation and perversion. These councils are still particularistic, one-sided and mediated forms of social management," being limited to the workers' self-management of production, "the preconditions of life, not the conditions of life" (Volume Two, Selection 62). Following the May-June 1968 events in France, Maurice Joyeux pointed out that factory committees need to coordinate their actions during the revolutionary process in order to spread and succeed, and then, after the revolution, to coordinate production and distribution, leading him to suggest that broader trade union federations would be better able to undertake this coordinating role (Volume Two, Selection 61).

COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The Russian Revolution raised another issue of fundamental importance to revolutionary anarchists: how to deal with counter-revolution, whether from the left or the right. From 1918 to 1921, Russia was racked by civil war. Many anarchists took the position that in order to protect the gains of the 1917 Revolution, they had no choice but to work with the Bolsheviks (the "Reds") in preventing Czarist counter-revolutionaries (the "Whites") from forcing a return to the old order, with all the reprisals and massacres of the revolutionaries that that would entail. According to Paul Avrich, during the civil war "a large majority [of anarchists] gave varying degrees of support to the beleaguered regime," leading Lenin in 1919 to compliment some anarchists for "becoming the most dedicated supporters of Soviet power" (1978: 196-197).

THE MAKHNOVIST MOVEMENT

Other anarchists argued that there were alternatives to simply supporting the Bolsheviks in their struggle against the White counter-revolutionaries, thereby strengthening the Bolshevik dictatorship. Instead, they argued for "relentless par-

tisan war, here, there and everywhere,” as Voline put it in February 1918 (Avrich, 1973: 107). But it was only in Ukraine that anarchists were able to instigate a popular insurgency, with the anarchist Nestor Makhno leading a peasant and worker guerrilla army (the “Makhnovshchina”) against a variety of forces, from occupying German and Austrian troops, to local strongmen (the “Hetman”), to the Whites, and when necessary, to the Bolsheviks themselves (Volume One, Selections 85 & 86).

When the Makhnovists liberated an area, they would abolish all decrees issued by the Whites and the Reds, leaving it to “the peasants in assemblies, [and] the workers in their factories and workshops” to decide for themselves how to organize their affairs. The land was to be returned to “those peasants who support themselves through their own labour,” and the “factories, workshops, mines and other tools and means of production” to the workers themselves (Volume One, Selection 85).

The Makhnovists denounced “the bourgeois-landlord authority on the one hand and the Bolshevik-Communist dictatorship on the other.” They would throw out the Bolshevik secret police, the Cheka, from areas that had been under Bolshevik control and reopen the presses and meeting places that the Bolsheviks had shut down, proclaiming that “freedom of speech, press, assembly, unions and the like are inalienable rights of every worker and any restriction on them is a counter-revolutionary act.” The Makhnovists called upon the soldiers of the Red Army, sometimes with some success, to desert and join the Makhnovists in their struggle for “a non-authoritarian labourers’ society without parasites and without commissar-bureaucrats” (Volume One, Selection 85).

Despite their opposition to “State militia, policemen and armies,” which they would declare abolished in the areas they had liberated (Volume One, Selection 85), the Makhnovist insurgents adopted some aspects of more conventional military organization, including a chain of command and conscription, and sometimes carried out “summary executions” (Avrich, 1988: 114 & 121).

Many anarchists who were still free to do so, such as Voline, Aaron Baron and Peter Arshinov, went to Ukraine to support the Makhnovists, setting up the Nabat confederation, one of the more effective anarchist organizations during the Revolution and Civil War. But as Peter Arshinov noted, “three years of uninterrupted civil wars made the southern Ukraine a permanent battlefield,” making it difficult for the anarchists and Makhnovists to accomplish anything positive (Volume One, Selection 86). Yet for five months in early 1919, “the Gulyai-Polye region” where Makhno was based “was virtually free of all political authority,” giving the anarchists a chance, albeit a very brief one, to put their constructive ideas into practice by helping the peasants and workers to set up libertarian communes and soviets (Avrich, 1988: 114). A “series of Regional Congresses of Peas-

ants, Workers and Insurgents” was held, the third in April 1919, “in defiance of a ban placed upon it” by the Bolsheviks (Avrich, 1988: 114-115). After “two Cheka agents [who] were sent to assassinate Makhno were caught and executed” in May 1919, and the Makhnovists called upon the Red Army soldiers to join them, Trotsky outlawed the Makhnovists, sending in troops to dismantle their peasant communes (Avrich, 1988: 115). Despite subsequent temporary alliances to fight the Whites, by early 1921, the Bolsheviks had crushed the Makhnovist movement.

Unlike the Bolsheviks, the Makhnovists were able to garner significant support among the Ukrainian peasantry, who resented Bolshevik seizures of their grain and food, seeing that “the bread taken by force from [them] nourishes mainly the enormous governmental machine” being created by the Bolsheviks. For the revolution to succeed, the anarchists believed that the masses “must feel truly free; they must know that the work they do is their own; they must see in every social measure which is adopted the manifestation of their will, their hopes and their aspirations” (Volume One, Selection 86).

THE PLATFORM AND ITS CRITICS

The defeat of the Makhnovists in Ukraine and the anarchist movement in Russia led Arshinov and Makhno to argue that anarchists needed to rethink their approach. In 1926, now in exile, they published the *Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists*, calling for the creation of a General Union of anarchists based on theoretical and tactical unity, collective responsibility and federalism (Volume One, Selection 115). Although, for the most part, the *Platform* merely restated the Makhnovist conception of anarchism, it generated considerable controversy in anarchist circles. The *Platform* argued in favour of military organization based on “unity in the plan of operations and unity of common command,” “revolutionary self-discipline,” and “total submission of the revolutionary army to the masses of worker and peasant organizations common throughout the country.” Despite its insistence on revolutionary self-discipline and contrary to the practice of the Makhnovists during the Civil War, the *Platform* rejected any form of conscription, stating that “all coercion will be completely excluded from the work of defending the revolution,” marking a return to rather than a departure from anarchist principles (Volume One, Selection 115).

It was the *Platform*’s emphasis on the need for theoretical and tactical unity, and the notion of “collective responsibility,” that caused the greatest debate. The *Platform* argued that “the tactical methods employed by separate members and groups within the Union should... be in rigorous concord both with each other

and with the general theory and tactic[s] of the Union.” Collective responsibility “requires each member to undertake fixed organizational duties, and demands execution of communal decisions.” The *Platform* took the position that revolutionary activity in collective areas of life “cannot be based on the personal responsibility of individual militants,” describing such an approach as “irresponsible individualism” (Volume One, Selection 115).

The General Union of anarchists was to strive “to realize a network of revolutionary peasant [and worker] economic organizations” and unions, “founded on anti-authoritarian principles,” with the General Union serving as “the organized vanguard of their emancipating process” (Volume One, Selection 115). Voline and several other exiled Russian anarchists argued against any anarchist organization assuming a vanguard role. For them, the social revolution “must be the free creation of the masses, not controlled by ideological or political groups,” for the “slightest suggestion of direction, of superiority, of leadership of the masses... inevitably implies that the masses must... submit to it.” A General Union of “anarchists” that “orients the mass organizations (workers and peasants) in their political direction and is supported as needed by a centralized army is nothing more than a new political power” (Volume One, Selection 115).

Voline and his associates found the *Platform*’s conception of social and economic organization “mechanical” and simplistic, with its scheme for the coordination of production and consumption by workers’ and peasants’ soviets, committees and unions run by elected delegates subject to recall. They saw in such organizations a danger of “immobility, bureaucracy [and] a tendency to authoritarianism that will not be changed automatically by the principle of voting.” They thought a “better guarantee” of freedom lies “in the creation of a series of other, more mobile, even provisional organs which arise and multiply according to the needs that arise in the course of daily living and activities,” offering “a richer, more faithful reflection of the complexity of social life” (Volume One, Selection 115).

While the Voline group acknowledged that ideological differences among anarchists, and the resulting disunity, were partly responsible for the failure of the Russian anarchist movement, they argued that there were other factors at play, including the “existing prejudices, customs [and] education” of the masses, the fact that they “look for accommodation rather than radical change,” and the repressive forces lined up against them (Volume One, Selection 115). For Voline, what was needed was not a more centralized and disciplined party type organization, but a “synthesis” of all the “just and valid elements” of the various anarchist currents, including syndicalism, communism and individualism (Volume One, Selection 116). Foreshadowing subsequent ecological conceptions of anar-

chism (Volume Two, Selection 48; Volume Three, Chapter 6), Voline argued that anarchism should reflect the “*creative diversity*” of life itself, achieving unity through “diversity and movement” (Volume One, Selection 116).

Malatesta responded to the *Platform* by emphasizing that “in order to achieve their ends, anarchist organizations must, in their constitution and operation, remain in harmony with the principles of anarchism.” He argued that the proposed General Union of anarchists should be seen for what it really was, “the Union of a particular fraction of anarchists.” He regarded as authoritarian the proposal for a “*Union Executive Committee*” to “oversee the ‘ideological and organizational conduct’” of the Union’s constitutive organizations and members, arguing that such an approach would turn the Union into “a nursery for heresies and schisms” (Volume One, Selection 115).

For Malatesta, what the Platformists were proposing was a form of representative government based on majority vote, which “in practice always leads to domination by a small minority.” While anarchist organizations and congresses “serve to maintain and increase personal relationships among the most active comrades, to coordinate and encourage programmatic studies on the ways and means of taking action, to acquaint all on the situation in the various regions and the action most urgently needed in each; to formulate the various opinions current among the anarchists... their decisions are not obligatory rules but suggestions, recommendations, proposals to be submitted to all involved, and do not become binding and enforceable except on those who accept them, and for as long as they accept them” (Volume One, Selection 115).

Since the publication of the *Platform* in 1926, anarchists have continued to debate which forms of organization are compatible with an anarchist vision of a free society. Some have championed various forms of direct democracy, whether in factory committees (Volume Two, Selection 59) or community assemblies (Volume Two, Selection 62). Others have followed Kropotkin, Voline and Malatesta in arguing in favour of more fluid, ad hoc organizations forming complex horizontal networks of voluntary associations (Volume Two, Selection 63; Volume Three, Selection 1).

Malatesta suggested that the Russian Platformists were “obsessed with the success of the Bolsheviks,” hence their desire “to gather the anarchists together in a sort of disciplined army which, under the ideological and practical direction of a few leaders, would march solidly to the attack of the existing regimes, and after having won a material victory would direct the constitution of a new society” (Volume One, Selection 115). But for those so inclined, there were other organizations for them to join, namely the various Communist Parties that were soon organized in Europe, Asia and the Americas under Russian tutelage.

Despite the creation of an anarcho-syndicalist International in early 1922

(Volume One, Selection 114), many anarchists and syndicalists, and the trade unions in which they were influential, affiliated instead with the Comintern (Communist International) and its related organizations. In addition, many anarchist and syndicalist groups and organizations were forcibly suppressed, by the Bolsheviks in Russia, the Fascists in Italy, the new “revolutionary” government in Mexico, military dictatorships in Portugal, Spain and Latin America, and the “democratic” government of the United States, which deported scores of radicals in 1919 (including Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman), imprisoned Mexican anarchists like Ricardo Flores Magón, and enacted “criminal syndicalism” laws to prohibit revolutionary syndicalist speech and action.

THE TRANSVALUATION OF VALUES

When Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman arrived in Russia in 1919, they were sympathetic to the Bolsheviks, whom they regarded as sincere revolutionaries. They began to take a more critical stance after making contact with those anarchists who still remained at liberty. Eventually they realized that the Bolsheviks were establishing their own dictatorship under the guise of fighting counter-revolution. Berkman noted how the “civil war really helped the Bolsheviks. It served to keep alive popular enthusiasm and nurtured the hope that, with the end of war, the ruling Party will make effective the new revolutionary principles and secure the people in the enjoyment of the fruits of the Revolution.” Instead, the end of the Civil War led to the consolidation of a despotic Party dictatorship characterized by the “exploitation of labour, the enslavement of the worker and peasant, the cancellation of the citizen as a human being... and his transformation into a microscopic part of the universal economic mechanism owned by the government; the creation of privileged groups favoured by the State; [and] the system of compulsory labour service and its punitive organs” (Volume One, Selection 88).

“To forget ethical values,” wrote Berkman, “to introduce practices and methods inconsistent with or opposed to the high moral purposes of the revolution means to invite counter-revolution and disaster... Where the masses are conscious that the revolution and all its activities are in their own hands, that they themselves are managing things and are free to change their methods when they consider it necessary, counter-revolution can find no support and is harmless... the cure for evil and disorder is *more* liberty, not suppression” (Volume One, Selection 117).

Emma Goldman drew similar lessons from the Russian Revolution, arguing that “to divest one’s methods of ethical concepts means to sink into the depths of utter demoralization... No revolution can ever succeed as a factor of libera-

tion unless the MEANS used to further it be identical in spirit and tendency with the PURPOSES to be achieved.” For Goldman, the essence of revolution cannot be “a violent change of social conditions through which one social class, the working class, becomes dominant over another class,” as in the Marxist conception. For the social revolution to succeed, there must be “a *fundamental transvaluation of values*... ushering in a transformation of the basic relations of man to man, and of man to society,” establishing “the sanctity of human life, the dignity of man, the right of every human being to liberty and well-being” (Volume One, Selection 89).

In conceiving the social revolution as “the mental and spiritual regenerator” of human values and relationships, Goldman was adopting a position close to that of Gustav Landauer, the anarchist socialist martyred during the short-lived Bavarian Revolution in 1919. Before the war, he criticized those revolutionaries who regard the State as a physical “thing—akin to a fetish—that one can smash in order to destroy.” Rather, the “State is a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to one another... one destroys it by entering into other relationships, by behaving differently to one another.” If the State is a kind of social relationship, then “we are the State” and remain so “as long as we are not otherwise, as long as we have not created the institutions that constitute a genuine community and society of human beings” (Volume One, Selection 49).

This positive conception of social revolution as the creation of egalitarian communities was later expanded upon by Landauer’s friend, the Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber (1878-1965). Consciously seeking to build upon Landauer’s legacy, Buber called for the creation of “a community of communities,” a federation of village communes “where communal living is based on the amalgamation of production and consumption, production being understood... as the organic union of agriculture with industry and the handicrafts as well” (Volume Two, Selection 16). Such a vision drew upon both Landauer and Kropotkin, particularly the latter’s *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (Volume One, Selection 34). This vision was shared by some of the early pioneers of the kibbutz movement in Palestine (Horrox, 2009), and by Gandhi and his followers in India (Volume Two, Selection 32). It received renewed impetus after the Second World War, with the development of communitarian and ecological conceptions of anarchism by people like Paul Goodman (Volume Two, Selections 17 & 70) and Murray Bookchin (Volume Two, Selections 48 & 74).

FASCISM: THE PREVENTIVE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Those anarchists who were not seduced by the seeming “success” of the Bolsheviks in Russia were faced with an equally formidable opponent in the various

fascist movements that arose in the aftermath of the First World War. As with the Communists, the Fascists championed centralized command and technology, and did not hesitate to use the most brutal methods to suppress and annihilate their opponents. One of the first and most perceptive critics of fascism was the Italian anarchist, Luigi Fabbri (1877-1935), who aptly described it as “the preventive counter-revolution.” For him, fascism constituted “a sort of militia and rallying point” for the “conservative forces in society,” “the organization and agent of the violent armed defence of the ruling class against the proletariat.” Fascism arose from the militarization of European societies during the First World War, which the ruling classes had hoped would decapitate “a working class that had become overly strong, [by] defusing popular resistance through blood-letting on a vast scale” (Volume One, Selection 113).

Fascism put the lie to the notion of a “democratic” State, with the Italian judiciary, police and military turning a blind eye to fascist violence while prosecuting and imprisoning those who sought to defend themselves against it. Consequently, Fabbri regarded a narrow “anti-fascist” approach as being completely inadequate. Seeing the fascists as the only enemy “would be like stripping the branches from a poisonous tree while leaving the trunk intact... The fight against fascism can only be waged effectively if it is struck through the political and economic institutions of which it is an outgrowth and from which it draws sustenance,” namely “capitalism and the State.” While “capitalism uses fascism to blackmail the State, the State itself uses fascism to blackmail the proletariat,” dangling fascism “over the heads of the working classes” like “some sword of Damocles,” leaving the working class “forever fearful of its rights being violated by some unforeseen and arbitrary violence” (Volume One, Selection 113).

The anarchist pacifist Bart de Ligt regarded fascism as “a politico-economic state where the ruling class of each country behaves towards its own people as for several centuries it has behaved to the colonial peoples under its heel,” an inverted imperialism “turned against its own people.” Yet fascism was not based on violence alone and enjoyed popular support. As de Ligt noted, fascism “takes advantage of the people’s increasing misery to seduce them by a new Messianism: belief in the Strong Man, the Duce, the Führer” (Volume One, Selection 120).

AUTHORITY AND SEXUALITY

Anarchists who sought to understand the popular appeal of fascism turned to the work of the dissident Marxist psychoanalyst, Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). Reich was unpopular in Marxist circles, having described Soviet Communism as “red fascism,” which resulted in his expulsion from the Communist Party. In his book, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Reich discussed the role of the patriarchal nu-

clear family, legal marriage, enforced monogamy, religion and sexual repression in creating an authoritarian character structure (Volume One, Selection 119).

Reich's work was similar to the earlier psychoanalytic anarchist critique of Otto Gross (1877-1920), who argued on the eve of the First World War, echoing Max Stirner, that previous revolutions "collapsed because the revolutionary of yesterday carried authority within himself." Gross believed that "*the root of all authority lies in the family,*" and that "the combination of sexuality and authority, as it shows itself in the patriarchal family still prevailing today, claps every individuality in chains" (Volume One, Selection 78). Although he put greater emphasis than Reich on the "inner conflict" between "that which belongs to oneself" and the "*authority that has penetrated into our own innermost self,*" Gross also called for the sexual liberation of women and for a struggle "against the father and patriarchy" (Volume One, Selection 78).

The Japanese anarchist feminist, Takamure Itsue (1894-1964), argued that the ruling class viewed sexual fulfillment "as a mere extravagance for everyone except themselves" and "babies as eggs for their industrial machines... to be chained up within the confinement of the marriage system," with the burdens of pregnancy, child birth and child rearing being imposed on women. She acknowledged the changes in sexual relations arising from the development of birth control, which potentially gave women more control over their lives, but as with Carmen Lareva and He Zhen before her, warned against mere "promiscuity." For her, "genuine anarchist love" was based on mutual respect, such that those who seek it can "never be satisfied with recreational sex" (Volume One, Selection 109). The liberalization of marriage laws and the legalization of birth control were not enough, for men would continue to view women as sex objects and deny responsibility for child care.

In Spain, Félix Martí Ibáñez argued that sexual revolution, because it involves the transformation of individual attitudes and relationships, can neither be imposed from above nor completely suppressed by the ruling authorities. The sexual revolution must begin now, "by means of the book, the word, the conference and personal example." Only then will people be able to "create and forge that sexual culture which is the key to liberation" (Volume One, Selection 121). That this would be no easy task was highlighted by Lucía Sánchez Saornil, one of the founders of the Mujeres Libres anarchist women's group in Spain. She criticized those anarchist men who used notions of sexual liberation as a pretext for looking "upon every woman who passes their way as a target for their appetites" (Volume One, Selection 123). Such conduct either results in the reduction of women to "a plaything of masculine whims," or alienates them from participation in the anarchist movement.

Some anarchists felt that Reich's analysis overemphasized the role of sexual repression in the rise of fascism. A Spanish article suggested that a "completely healthy and well-balanced individual in terms of his sexual life may be a long way off from being a perfect socialist and a convinced revolutionary fighter," for "an individual free of bourgeois sexual prejudice may lack all sense of human solidarity" (Volume One, Selection 119). Others were more enthusiastic. Marie Louise Berneri (1918-1949) endorsed Reich's argument that the "fear of pleasurable excitation" caused by conventional morality and the legally mandated patriarchal family "is the soil on which the individual re-creates the life-negating ideologies which are the basis of dictatorship." She also drew on the work of the anthropologist, Bronislaw Malinowski, whose studies indicated that in those societies where people's sex lives are "allowed to develop naturally, freely and unhampered *through every stage of life, with full satisfaction*" there are "no sexual perversions, no functional psychoses, no psychoneuroses, no sex murder," in marked contrast to societies based on the "patriarchal authoritarian family organization." Berneri accepted Reich's claim that when his patients "were restored to a healthy sex-life, their whole character altered, their submissiveness disappeared, they revolted against an absurd moral code, against the teachings of the Church, against the monotony and uselessness of their work" (Volume Two, Selection 75). In other words, they became social revolutionaries.

Paul Goodman drew the connection between the repression of homosexual impulses among adolescent males and the war machine. These "boys" are made to feel "ashamed of their acts; their pleasures are suppressed and in their stead appear fistfights and violence." In the army, "this violent homosexuality, so near the surface but always repressed and thereby gathering tension, turns into a violent sadism against the enemy: it is all knives and guns and bayonets, and raining bombs on towns, and driving one's lust in the guise of anger to fuck the Japs" (Volume Two, Selection 11).

The libertarian communist, Daniel Guérin (1904-1988), wrote that "patriarchal society, resting on the dual authority of the man over the woman and of the father over the children, accords primacy to the attributes and modes of behaviour associated with virility. Homosexuality is persecuted to the extent that it undermines this construction. The disdain of which woman is the object in patriarchal societies is not without correlation with the shame attached to the homosexual act." While Guérin urged people "to pursue simultaneously both the social revolution and the sexual revolution, until human beings are liberated completely from the two crushing burdens of capitalism and puritanism," he agreed with Emma Goldman, Martí Ibáñez, and Paul Goodman that the process of sexual liberation must begin now, not after the revolution. Yet, as with Good-

man, he also recognized that the gay liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s “created a whole generation of ‘gay’ young men, profoundly apolitical... a million miles from any conception of class struggle,” casting doubt on the Reichian view that sexual liberation leads to social revolution (Volume Two, Selection 76).

Alex Comfort (1920-2000), who was also a pioneer of sexual liberation, suggested that part of the appeal of fascism lay in people’s consciousness of their own mortality and fear of death. Since “to admit that I am an individual I must also admit that I shall cease to exist,” people take refuge in the belief in “an immortal, invisible and only wise society, which can exact responsibilities and demand allegiances... Each sincere citizen feels responsibility to society in the abstract, and none to the people he kills... Fascism is a refuge from Death in death.” (Volume Two, Selection 20).

The veteran anarcho-syndicalist, Rudolf Rocker (1873-1958), argued that fascism was the combined result of the capitalists’ urge to dominate workers, nations and the natural world, the anonymity and powerlessness of “mass man,” the development of modern mass technology and production techniques, mass propaganda and the substitution of bureaucratic State control over every aspect of social life for personal responsibility and communal self-regulation, resulting in the dissolution of “society into its separate parts” and their incorporation “as lifeless accessories into the gears of the political machine.” The reduction of the individual to a mere cog in the machine, together with the constant “tutelage of our acting and thinking,” make us “weak and irresponsible,” Rocker wrote, “hence, the continued cry for the strong man who is to put an end to our distress” (Volume One, Selection 121). Drawing on Freud, Herbert Read argued that it is the “obsessive fear of the father which is the psychological basis of tyranny” and “at the same time the weakness of which the tyrant takes advantage” (Volume One, Selection 130).

THE TRIUMPH OF THE IRRATIONAL

Rocker noted how in Germany fascism had assumed a brutally racist character, with German capitalists citing Nazi doctrines of racial superiority to justify their own domination and to dismiss human equality, and therefore socialism, as biological impossibilities. Writing in 1937, Rocker foresaw the genocidal atrocities which were to follow, citing this comment by the Nazi ideologue, Ernst Mann: “Suicide is the one heroic deed available to invalids and weaklings” (Volume One, Selection 121).

The Italian anarchist, Camillo Berneri (1897-1937), described fascism as “the triumph of the irrational.” He documented and dissected the noxious racial doc-

trines of the Nazis, which, on the one hand, portrayed the “Aryan” and “Nordic” German people as a superior race, but then, in order to justify rule by an elite, had to argue that the “ruling strata” were of purer blood (Berneri, 1935). As Rocker observed, “every class that has thus far attained to power has felt the need of stamping their rulership with the mark of the unalterable and predestined.” The idea that the ruling class is a “special breed,” Rocker pointed out, originated among the Spanish nobility, whose “blue blood” was supposed to distinguish them from those they ruled (Volume One, Selection 121). It was in Spain that the conflict between the “blue bloods,” capitalists and fascists, on the one hand, and the anarchists, socialists and republicans, on the other, was to reach a bloody crescendo when revolution and civil war broke out there in July 1936.

CHINESE ANARCHISM: AGAINST MARXISM

In Asia during the 1920s and 30s, the anarchists faced obstacles similar to those of their European comrades. The success of the Bolsheviks in Russia led to the creation of Marxist-Leninist Communist parties in various parts of Asia. The anarchists had until then been the most influential revolutionary movement in China. By the late 1920s, the anarchists had been eclipsed by the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang, who fought each other, and the Japanese, for control of China over the next twenty years.

Chinese anarchists rejected the Marxist notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat, concentrating all power “in the hands of the State,” because this would result in the “suppression of individual freedom” (Volume One, Selection 100). The Chinese anarchists did not regard Marxist State socialism as sufficiently communist, for during the alleged “transition” from socialism to communism, a wage system and some forms of private property would be retained.

Huang Lingshuang (1898-1982), one of the more noteworthy Chinese anarchist critics of Marxism, rejected the Marxist view that society must progress through successive stages of economic and technological development before communism can be achieved. Drawing on the work of European anthropologists, Huang Lingshuang was able to more clearly distinguish between cultural change and biological evolution than Kropotkin, who had largely conflated the two. Huang Lingshuang argued that, contrary to the Marxist theory of historical materialism, the “same economic and technological conditions do not necessarily result in the same culture,” cultural and economic changes do “not occur at the same rate,” and not every society goes through the same economic stages of development in the same order (Volume One, Selection 100). Rudolf Rocker made similar arguments in *Nationalism and Culture* (Volume One, Selection 121).

CLASS STRUGGLE AND 'PURE' ANARCHISM IN JAPAN

In contrast to the decline of the Chinese anarchist movement in the 1920s, according to John Crump, “the anarchists in Japan were organisationally stronger than ever before, and there was a corresponding flowering of ideas and theories, particularly among the anarchist communists” (Crump, 1996). The anarchist communists identified themselves as “pure anarchists.” They criticized the anarcho-syndicalist concept of workers’ control of the existing means of production. As Hatta Shûzô (1886-1934) put it, “in a society which is based on the division of labour, those engaged in vital production... would have more power over the machinery of coordination than those engaged in other lines of production.” The Japanese “pure anarchists” therefore proposed a decentralized system of communal production “performed autonomously on a human scale,” where “production springs from consumption,” being designed to meet local and individual wants and needs, in contrast to existing systems of production, where consumption is driven by the demands of production. Under such a system of decentralized human scale production, people “can coordinate the work process themselves,” such that there is no need for a “superior body and there is no place for power” (Volume One, Selection 106).

Japanese anarcho-syndicalist advocates of class struggle agreed that the existing authoritarian system of production should be replaced by “communal property... where there is neither exploiter nor exploited, neither master nor slave,” with society being “revived with spontaneity and mutual free agreement as an integral whole” (Volume One, Selection 107). However, in order to create such a society a profound revolutionary transformation was required. The anarcho-syndicalists argued that it was only by participating in the workers’ daily struggles against the capitalist system that anarchists would be able to inspire a revolutionary movement capable of creating the anarchist community to which the “pure anarchists” aspired.

Contrary to the claims of the “class struggle” anarcho-syndicalists though, the “pure anarchists” did not hold themselves aloof from the workers’ struggles but convinced the anarchist Zenkoku Jiren labour federation to adopt a “pure anarchist” position which emphasized that their goal was not to take over the existing means of production, replacing the capitalists and the government with a trade union administration, but to create a decentralized system of communal production based on human-scale technology, a position similar to that developed by Murray Bookchin in the 1960s (Volume Two, Selections 48, 62 & 74). The Zenkoku Jiren reached out to Japanese tenant farmers, seeing them “as the crucial social force which could bring about the commune-based, alternative society to capitalism” advocated by the “pure anarchists” (Crump, 1996). The ap-

peal of this vision to radical Japanese workers and farmers is illustrated by the fact that by 1931, the Zenkoku Jiren had about 16,000 members, whereas the more conventional anarcho-syndicalist federation, the Jikyô, had only 3,000.

In the early 1930s, as the Japanese State began a concerted push for imperialist expansion by invading Manchuria, the State authorities renewed their campaign against the Japanese anarchist movement, which was staunchly anti-imperialist. In the face of the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, the Japanese Libertarian Federation had called on all people to “cease military production, refuse military service and disobey the officers” (Volume One, Selection 110). Anarchist organizations were banned and hundreds of anarchists arrested. By 1936, the organized anarchist movement in Japan had been crushed.

ANARCHISM IN THE KOREAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT

Japan had annexed Korea much earlier, in 1910, around which time Japanese authorities had made their first attempt to destroy the nascent anarchist movement by executing several leading anarchists, including Kôtoku Shûsui (Volume One, Selection 102). The Japanese occupation of Korea gave rise to a national liberation movement to free the Korean people from Japanese exploitation and domination. Some of the more radical elements in the liberation movement gravitated toward anarchism.

In 1923, a prominent member of the movement, Shin Chaeho (1880-1936), published his “Declaration of the Korean Revolution” in which he argued that when driving out their Japanese exploiters, the Korean people must be careful not to “replace one privileged group with another.” The goal of the Korean revolution should be the creation of a world in which “one human being will not be able to oppress other human beings and one society will not be able to exploit other societies.” The revolution must therefore be a “revolution of the masses.” To succeed in constructing a free society, the revolution must destroy foreign rule, the “privileged class” that benefits from it, the “system of economic exploitation,” “social inequality” and “servile cultural thoughts” created by conformist forms of “religion, ethics, literature, fine arts, customs and public morals” (Volume One, Selection 105).

In emphasizing the constructive role of destruction, Shin Chaeho was expressing a viewpoint shared by many anarchists that can be traced back to Proudhon and Bakunin (Volume One, Selection 10). He also recognized that to win the masses over to the cause of the revolution, they must be convinced that the revolution will result in material improvements and greater freedom for themselves, not simply the expulsion of their foreign rulers. As Kropotkin put it, for “the revolution to be anything more than a word... the conquest of the day it-

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self must be worth the trouble of defending; the poor of yesterday must not find themselves even poorer today” (Volume One, Selection 45).

This was one of the reasons why Kropotkin had entitled his most sustained argument in favour of anarchist communism *The Conquest of Bread* (Volume One, Selection 33). When Korean anarchists began publishing their own paper in 1928, they called it *Talhwan*, or *Conquest*, and championed anarchist communism, calling for the abolition of capitalism and government (Volume One, Selection 108). They also rejected the Marxist “State capitalism” that was being created in the Soviet Union through the “despotic and dictatorial” policies of the Soviet Communist Party (the Bolsheviks).

Korean anarchists, including Shin Chaeho, were instrumental in forming the Eastern Anarchist Federation in 1927, which had members from Korea, China, Vietnam, Taiwan and Japan. Most of their work and publications had to be carried out from exile, and even then at great risk to themselves. Shin Chaeho was arrested by Japanese authorities in Taiwan in 1928 and died in prison in 1936. However, after the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, it was only in Korea that a significant anarchist movement reemerged in southeast Asia. In China, the Marxist Communists under the leadership of Mao Zedong had seized control by 1949. They no more tolerated an independent anarchist movement than had the Communists in the Soviet Union. In Japan, the U.S. occupiers engineered the purging of radicals, whether Marxist or anarchist, from positions of influence within the trade union movement, and the reform of rural landholdings, creating “a new class of landowning small farmers” who “then became a bastion of political conservatism” hostile rather than sympathetic toward anarchism (Crump, 1996).

During the war, some Korean anarchists participated in the Korean Provisional Government in exile. Their desire for Korean independence superseded their commitment to anarchist ideals. Before the war, the Korean Anarchist Federation had rejected the establishment of a “national united front” (Volume One, Selection 108). After the war, Yu Lim, who had served as a cabinet minister in the Provisional Government, urged the anarchists to support an independent Korean government to prevent Korea from falling “into the hands of either the Stalinists to the north or the imperialistic compradore-capitalists to the south” (Volume Two, Selection 9). Other Korean anarchists, while seeking “to cooperate with all genuinely revolutionary nationalist groups of the left,” continued to call for “total liberation” through the “free federation of autonomous units covering the whole country” (Volume Two, Selection 9). At the conclusion of the war in 1945, grass roots committees for the reconstruction of Korea sprang up across the country, and peasants and workers began forming independent unions. However, this process of social reconstruction “from the bottom upward” came to a halt after

the Soviet Union and the United States imposed their own “national” governments in the north and south in 1948, leading to the divisive and inconclusive Korean War (1950-1953).

SPANISH ANARCHISM

The Spanish anarchist movement which Bakunin had helped inspire experienced its greatest triumphs and most tragic defeats during the Spanish Revolution and Civil War (1936-1939). The two most prominent anarchist groups in Spain were the Iberian Anarchist Federation (the FAI) and the anarcho-syndicalist trade union confederation, the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (the CNT). The FAI was a federation of anarchist revolutionaries which sought to foment social revolution and to keep the CNT on an anarchist path. This “dual organization” model had been followed in Spain since the days of the First International, when Bakunin recruited Spanish radicals into his Alliance of Social Revolutionaries. Members of the Alliance were to ensure that the Spanish sections of the International adopted Bakunin’s collectivist anarchist program.

By the 1930s, the Spanish anarchist movement had moved toward an anarchist communist position, although the doctrine of “anarchism without adjectives,” which originated in the debates between the anarchist collectivists and anarchist communists in the 1890s, continued to be influential. Diego Abad de Santillán (1897-1983), who played a prominent role in the Argentine and Spanish anarchist movements, saw anarchism as representing a broad “humanistic craving” which “seeks to defend man’s dignity and freedom, regardless of circumstances and under every political system, past, present and future.” Anarchism must therefore be without adjectives because it is not tied to any particular economic or political system, nor is anarchy only possible at a certain stage of history or development. Abad de Santillán argued that anarchism “can survive and assert its right to exist alongside plough and team of oxen as readily as alongside the modern combine-harvester; its mission in the days of steam was the same as it is in the age of the electric motor or jet engine or the modern age of the computer and atomic power” (Volume Two, Selection 53).

Despite his endorsement of “anarchism without adjectives,” Abad de Santillán did not shy away from controversy. Although he participated in the anarcho-syndicalist movements in Argentina and Spain, he urged anarchists “not to forget that the Syndicate is, as an economic by-product of capitalist organization, a social phenomenon spawned by the needs of its day. Clinging to its structures after the revolution would be tantamount to clinging to the cause that spawned it: capitalism” (Volume One, Selection 94).

On the eve of the Spanish Revolution, when the CNT reaffirmed its commit-

ment to libertarian communism (Volume One, Selection 124), Abad de Santillán argued not only that people should be free to choose between “communism, collectivism or mutualism,” but that “the prerequisite” of such freedom is a certain level of material abundance that can only be achieved through an integrated economic network of productive units (Volume One, Selection 125).

THE CNT IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

But by far the greatest controversy in which Abad de Santillán was involved arose from the decisions by the CNT during the Spanish Civil War to accept posts in the Catalanian governing council in September 1936 and, in November 1936, the central government in Madrid. In December 1936, Abad de Santillán became the Councillor of Economy in the regional government in Catalonia (the *Generalitat*). Not only did the “militants” of the FAI fail to prevent this fatal compromise of anarchist principles, some of the CNT ministers were themselves members of the FAI (such as Juan García Oliver, who became the Minister of Justice in the Madrid government, and Abad de Santillán himself). The decision to join the government was engineered by the National Committee of the CNT (which became the de facto ruling council of the CNT during the course of the Civil War) in order to obtain arms and financing, neither of which were forthcoming.

The decision of the CNT leadership to join the Spanish government was sharply criticized by many well known anarchists, including Camillo Berneri, Sébastien Faure, and Alexander Schapiro. Writing for the IWA publication, *The International*, the Swedish anarcho-syndicalist Albert Jensen (1879-1957) pointed out that it was by way of revolution that the workers in Catalonia had prevented General Franco from seizing power when he began the military revolt against the republican government in July 1936. Anarchists and syndicalists stormed military barracks, seized weapons and began collectivizing industry, while the republican government was in a state of virtual collapse. However, in order to maintain a “united front” against fascism, and to avoid imposing their own *de facto* dictatorship, the CNT-FAI decided it was better to work within the republican government rather than against it.

The problem was that, as Jensen pointed out, during a civil war the government “must have recourse always to dictatorship,” governing by decree and imposing military discipline, so instead of imposing an “anarchist” dictatorship the CNT-FAI was propping up a “counter-revolutionary” dictatorship, which hardly constituted “loyalty to [anarchist] ideas” and principles. “Wounded unto death, the State received new life thanks to the governmental participation of the CNT-FAI.” If the CNT-FAI had to work with other anti-fascists, whether capitalists or the authoritarian Communists loyal to Moscow, it would have been better for the

CNT-FAI to remain outside the government, taking the position that “under no pretext, would they tolerate any attack on the revolutionary accomplishments and that they would defend these with all the necessary means” (Volume One, Selection 127).

THE SPANISH REVOLUTION

In the factories and in the countryside, in areas that did not immediately fall under fascist control, there was a far-reaching social revolution. Spanish peasants collectivized the land and workers took over their factories. In the factories, the workers in assembly would make policy decisions and elect delegates to coordinate production and distribution. In the countryside, village and town assemblies were held in which all members of the community were able to participate.

In “the agrarian regions and especially in Aragon,” observed Gaston Leval (1895-1978), “a new organism appeared: the Collective.” The collective was not a trade union or syndical organization, “for it encompasses all those who wish to join it whether they are producers in the classic economic sense or not.” Neither was it a commune or municipal council, as it “encompasses at the same time the Syndicate and municipal functions.” The “whole population,” not merely the producers, “takes part in [the] management” of the collective, dealing with all sorts of issues, “whether it is a question of policy for agriculture, for the creation of new industries, for social solidarity, medical service or public education” (Volume One, Selection 126).

Although the anarchist collectives were ultimately destroyed, first by the Stalinist Communists in republican areas, and then by the fascists as they subjugated all of Spain, they constitute the greatest achievement of the Spanish anarchist movement. Through the crucible of the social revolution itself, the Spanish people developed this new, more inclusive form of libertarian organization which transcended the limits of anarcho-syndicalist trade union and factory committee forms of organization, inspiring generations to come.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SPAIN

Those anarchists who attempted to work within the republican government were consistently outmaneuvered by the Republicans, Socialists and Communists. The areas in which anarchists were free to implement their ideas continued to shrink, but it was the May Days in Barcelona in 1937 that effectively marked the end of the anarchist social revolution in Spain. Factories and services under anarchist inspired workers’ self-management were attacked by Republican and Communist forces while they did battle with the anarchist militias, and several prominent

anarchists were murdered, including Camillo Berneri and the Libertarian Youth leader, Alfredo Martinez. The CNT leadership negotiated a truce with the Republican government rather than engage in a “civil war” within the civil war. Hundreds of anarchists were killed in the fighting, and many more were imprisoned. The Socialists and Communists, unsuccessful in having the CNT declared illegal, forced them out of the government and continued their campaign of “decollectivization” and disarmament of the anarchist groups.

Given this disastrous turn of events, Abad de Santillán had second thoughts about the CNT’s policy of collaboration. By April 1937, he had already ceased being a member of the Catalanian cabinet. The following year he denounced those “anarchists” who had used their positions within the movement “as a springboard to defect to the other side where the pickings are easier and the thorns less sharp,” obtaining “high positions of political and economic privilege.” The CNT-FAI’s participation “in political power,” which he had also once “thought advisable due to circumstances, in light of the war,” had demonstrated “yet again what Kropotkin once said of the parliamentary socialists: ‘You mean to conquer the State, but the State will end up conquering you’” (Volume One, Selection 128).

Abad de Santillán noted that the self-styled anarchist “avant-garde,” who fancied themselves the “best trained, most prestigious, sharpest witted,” himself included, were not “in the vanguard of economic and social change” but instead “proved a hindrance, a brake, a hurdle to that change.” He had to admit that the “broad masses” of the Spanish people “were better prepared than their supposed mentors and guides when it came to revolutionary reconstruction.” For Abad de Santillán, by “standing with the State and thus against the people,” anarchists who were working within the Republican government were “not only committing an irreparable act of betrayal of the revolution,” they were “also betraying the war effort, because we are denying it the active support of the people,” who were becoming increasingly alienated from the Republican government as it sought to dismantle the anarchist collectives and other organs of self-management that had been created by the people themselves (Volume One, Selection 128).

Under the pressure of civil war, the CNT-FAI came more and more to resemble a conventional political party. The CNT’s National Committee would negotiate with the Republican government, and then present whatever deals they could get to the membership as a *fait accompli*. In effect, the “inverse” pyramidal federalist structure of the CNT was turned upside down, as the CNT began to function as a top-down political organization. The anarchist militias were dissolved, broken up or absorbed into the Communist dominated Republican army and subjected to strict military discipline (Richards, 1972).

Looking back on the Revolution and Civil War, José Peirats (1908-1989), active in the CNT and later its historian, believed that “those of us who consistently opposed collaboration with the government had as our only alternative a principled, heroic defeat.” Nevertheless, he was sympathetic to those principled anarchists for whom “the only solution was to leave an indelible mark on the present without compromising the future,” through their “constructive revolutionary experiments like the collectives, artistic and cultural achievements, new models of free, communal living.” This entailed “staying out of intrigues, avoiding complicity with the counterrevolution within the government, protecting the organization and its militants from the vainglory of rulers or the pride of the newly rich.” The seemingly insurmountable difficulties in maintaining these revolutionary achievements in the midst of civil war caused Peirats to question not these achievements, but “the idea of revolution” itself, conceived as a mass armed uprising seeking to overthrow the existing regime which inevitably degenerates into civil war (Peirats: 188-189), a critique further developed by Luc Bonet (Volume Three, Selection 12). This process of rethinking revolution was to be continued by many anarchists after the Spanish Revolution and the Second World War.

POETRY AND ANARCHISM

One of the anarchists involved in rethinking anarchism was the English poet, art critic and essayist, Herbert Read (1893-1968). In *Poetry and Anarchism* (1938), Read acknowledged that “to declare for a doctrine so remote as anarchism at this stage of history will be regarded by some critics as a sign of intellectual bankruptcy; by others as a sort of treason, a desertion of the democratic front at the most acute moment of its crisis; by still others as mere poetic nonsense.” Read sought to “balance anarchism with surrealism, reason with romanticism, the understanding with the imagination, function with freedom” (Volume One, Selection 130). He developed an ecological conception of anarchism emphasizing spontaneity and differentiation. He saw society as “an organic being” in which communities “can live naturally and freely” and individuals can “develop in consciousness of strength, vitality and joy,” with progress being “measured by the degree of differentiation within a society” (Volume Two, Selection 1). It was partly through Read’s writings that Murray Bookchin was later inspired to draw the connections between ecology and anarchism (Volume Two, Selection 48).

Read noted that even “if you abolish all other classes and distinctions and retain a bureaucracy you are still far from the classless society, for the bureaucracy is itself the nucleus of a class whose interests are totally opposed to the people it supposedly serves.” Taking advantage of the bureaucratic structure of the

modern State, the professional politician rises to power, “his motive throughout [being] personal ambition and megalomania” (Volume One, Selection 130), a notion further developed by Alex Comfort in his post-war book, *Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, in which he argued that the bureaucratic State, through its power structures, provides a ready outlet for those with psychopathic tendencies (Volume Two, Selection 26).

Read sought to reverse the rise to power of professional politicians and bureaucrats by advocating a “return to a functional basis of representation,” by which he meant the development of decentralized but federated organs of self-management, as had long been advocated by anarchists from Proudhon and Bakunin to the anarcho-syndicalists. The professional politician would be replaced by the “*ad hoc* delegate,” who would continue to work within his or her area, such that there would be “no whole-time officials, no bureaucrats, no politicians, no dictators” (Volume One, Selection 130).

Arguing that “real politics are local politics,” Read proposed that local councils or “governments” composed of delegates from the community and the functional groups that comprise it “control all the immediate interests of the citizen,” with “remoter interests—questions of cooperation, intercommunication, and foreign affairs—[being] settled by councils of delegates elected by the local councils and the [workers’] syndicates.” Read admitted that this was a system of government, but distinguished this conception of local and functional organization from the “autonomous State,” which “is divorced from its immediate functions and becomes an entity claiming to control the lives and destinies of its subjects,” such that “liberty ceases to exist” (Volume One, Selection 130).

DRAWING THE LINE

Bearing in mind the difficulties recently faced by the Spanish anarchists, Read warned against the revolutionary seizure of power, instead looking forward to “a spontaneous and universal insurrection” (Volume Two, Selection 1), but one which would employ nonviolent methods, for people “cannot struggle against” the modern State, armed with atomic bombs, “*on the plane of force*... Our action must be piecemeal, non-violent, insidious and universally pervasive” (Volume Two, Selection 36). Alex Comfort took a similar position, arguing that the “very States which are able to make and use atomic weapons are singularly vulnerable, by their very complexity, to the attacks of individual disobedience” (Volume Two, Selection 12).

Paul Goodman described this process as “Drawing the Line, beyond which [we] cannot cooperate.” But although we “draw the line in their conditions; we proceed on our conditions,” replacing “the habit of coercion [with] a *habit* of

freedom... Our action must be aimed, not at a future establishment; but... at fraternal arrangements today, progressively incorporating more and more of the social functions into our free society,” for the creation of a “free society cannot be the substitution of a ‘new order’ for the old order; it is the extension of spheres of free action until they make up most of the social life” (Volume Two, Selection 11).

Read, Comfort and Goodman all advocated various forms of non-violent direct action, including war resistance and opposition to conscription through such means as draft evasion. Such attitudes were dangerous and unpopular, particularly during the Second World War. Anarchists who practiced draft resistance were imprisoned in France, England and the United States. It was only in the early 1960s in France, and a few years later in the United States, that mass draft resistance movements emerged in opposition to the French war in Algeria and the U.S. war in Vietnam (Volume Two, Selection 31).

FACING THE WAR

At the beginning of the Second World War, a group of anarchists in Geneva wrote that it is “an indispensable right, without which all other rights are mere illusions”, that “no one should be required to kill others or to expose themselves to being killed.” For them, the “worst form of disorder is not anarchy,” as critics of anarchism claim, “but war, which is the highest expression of authority” (Volume Two, Selection 3). That expression of authority was to result in the loss of tens of millions of lives in Europe and Asia during the next six years, culminating in the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. As Marie Louise Berneri remarked, anarchist acts of violence pale in comparison. A single bombing raid “kills more men, women and children than have been killed in the whole history, true or invented, of anarchist bombs.” When Italian anarchists tried to assassinate Mussolini, they were denounced as terrorists, but when “whole cities” are rubbed “off the map” as part of the war effort, reducing “whole populations to starvation, with its resulting scourge of epidemics and disease all over the world,” the workers “are asked to rejoice in this wholesale destruction from which there is no escaping” (Volume Two, Selection 4).

When anarchists resort to violence, they are held criminally responsible, and their beliefs denounced as the cause. When government forces engage in the wholesale destruction of war, no one (at least among the victors) is held responsible, belief in authority is not seen as the cause, and the very nation States which brought about the conflict are supposed to bring, as Marie Louise Berneri remarked, “peace and order... with their bombs” (Volume Two, Selection 4).

In response to the comments of a U.S. Army sergeant surveying a bombed out area in Germany that in “modern war there are crimes not criminals...

Murder has been mechanized and rendered impersonal,” Paul Goodman wrote that “it is ridiculous to say that the crime cannot be imputed or that any one commits it without intent or in ignorance... The steps [the individual] takes to habituation and unconsciousness are crimes which entail every subsequent evil of enslavement and mass-murder” (Volume Two, Selection 11).

Alex Comfort noted that modern bureaucratic societies “have removed at least one of the most important bars to delinquent action by legislators and their executive, in the creation of a legislature which can enact its fantasies without witnessing their effects, and an executive which abdicates all responsibility for what it does in response to superior orders.” The “individual citizen contributes to [this] chiefly by obedience and lack of conscious or effective protest” (Volume Two, Selection 26). Comfort argued that the individual, by making “himself sufficiently numerous and combative,” can render the modern State impotent “by his withdrawal from delinquent attitudes,” undermining “the social support they receive” and the power of the authorities “whose policies are imposed upon society only through [individual] acquiescence or co-operation” (Volume Two, Selection 26).

At the beginning of the war, Emma Goldman had written that the “State and the political and economic institutions it supports can exist only by fashioning the individual to their particular purpose; training him to respect ‘law and order’; teaching him obedience, submission and unquestioning faith in the wisdom and justice of government; above all, loyal service and complete self-sacrifice when the State commands it, as in war.” For her, “true liberation, individual and collective, lies in [the individual’s] emancipation from authority and from belief in it” (Volume Two, Selection 2).

Herbert Read held a similar position, but focused on the role of modern education in creating a submissive populace, much had Francisco Ferrer before him (Volume One, Selection 65). Through the education system, “everything personal, everything which is the expression of individual perceptions and feelings, is either neglected, or subordinated to some conception of normality, of social convention, of correctness.” Read therefore advocated libertarian education, emphasizing the creative process and “education through art” (1943), arguing that it “is only in so far as we liberate” children, “shoots not yet stunted or distorted by an environment of hatred and injustice, that we can expect to make any enduring change in society” (Volume Two, Selection 36).

Paul Goodman described the school system as “compulsory mis-education” (1964), which perpetuated a society in which youth are “growing up absurd” (1960). His friend Ivan Illich was later to advocate “deschooling society” as a way of combating the commodification of social life, where everything, and everybody, becomes a commodity to be consumed (Volume Two, Selection 73).

By the 1960s and 1970s, people were again experimenting in libertarian education (Volume Two, Selection 46), something which anarchists had been advocating since the time of William Godwin.

COMMUNITY AND FREEDOM

In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, Dwight Macdonald (1905-1982) wrote that the “brutality and irrationality of Western social institutions has reached a pitch which would have seemed incredible a short generation ago; our lives have come to be dominated by warfare of a ferocity and on a scale unprecedented in history,” leading him to conclude that the “Anarchists’ uncompromising rejection of the State, the subject of Marxian sneers for its ‘absolutist’ and ‘Utopian’ character, makes much better sense in the present era than the Marxian relativist and historical approach” (Volume Two, Selection 13).

Macdonald argued that in the face of these harsh realities, “we must reduce political action to a modest, unpretentious, personal level—one that is real in the sense that it satisfies, here and now, the psychological needs, and the ethical values of the particular persons taking part in it.” He suggested forming “small groups of individuals” into “*families*” who “live and make their living in the everyday world but who come together... to form a *psychological* (as against a geographical) community.” Through these groups their “members could come to know each other as fully as possible as human beings (the difficulty of such knowledge of others in modern society is a chief source of evil), to exchange ideas and discuss as fully as possible what is ‘on their minds’ (not only the atomic bomb but also the perils of child-rearing), and in general to learn the difficult art of living with other people.” The members of these groups would “preach” their “ideals—or, if you prefer, make propaganda—by word and by deed, in the varied everyday contacts of the group members with their fellow men,” working “against Jim Crow [racist laws]” in the United States, “or to further pacifism,” and supporting individuals “who stand up for the common ideals” (Volume Two, Selection 13).

The pacifist David Dellinger (1915-2004), writing a few years later in the anarchist journal, *Resistance*, went a step further, arguing for the creation of small communes “composed of persons who have the same type of disgust at the economic selfishness of society that the conscientious objector has concerning war and violence.” In these “experimental” communities, “economic resources” would be shared, “so that the total product provides greater strength and freedom for the members than they would be able to achieve, ethically, as isolated individuals,” while providing “daily pleasures and satisfactions” by “finding time to do things together that are fun” (Volume Two, Selection 40).

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The “families” of like minded individuals proposed by Macdonald would today be described as affinity groups, a form of organization that had been utilized for decades by anarchists, particularly anarchist communists wary of the more formal organizational structures of the anarcho-syndicalists (Grave, Volume One, Selection 46). As Murray Bookchin pointed out, the FAI in Spain had been based on an affinity group structure. In the 1960s, Bookchin helped to popularize this intimate form of non-hierarchical organization, which combines “revolutionary theory with revolutionary lifestyle in its everyday behaviour.” Much like the “families” advocated by Macdonald, each affinity group would seek “a rounded body of knowledge and experience in order to overcome the social and psychological limitations imposed by bourgeois society on individual development,” acting “as catalysts within the popular movement.” For Bookchin, the aim of anarchist affinity groups is not to subordinate “the social forms created by the revolutionary people... to an impersonal bureaucracy” or party organization, but “to advance the spontaneous revolutionary movement of the people to a point where the group can finally disappear into the organic social forms created by the revolution” itself (Volume Two, Selection 62).

Similarly, the small-scale communes advocated by Dellinger had long been a part of many anarchist movements, in Europe, the Americas, and in China, arising from the need and desire of anarchists to create daily living arrangements consistent with their ideals, and as an alternative to hierarchical and authoritarian social institutions, such as the patriarchal nuclear family. What distinguished these types of communes from affinity groups were the factors highlighted by Dellinger himself, primarily living together and sharing financial resources. In the 1960s and early 1970s, there was a flourishing of communal groups, particularly in North America, created by disaffected youth seeking to create alternate lifestyles. In Europe, the various squatting movements often adopted communal living arrangements, for example in the Christiania “freetown” in Copenhagen.

While many anarchist communes were short-lived, some have been remarkably resilient. In Uruguay, for example, the *Comunidad del Sur* group, which originated in the social struggles of the 1950s, sought to create libertarian communities based on self-management, including productive enterprises (Volume Three, Selection 56). Assets were shared, compensation was based on need, education, work and art were integrated, and people lived communally. Despite a long period of exile in Sweden that began in the 1970s due to growing State repression, the *Comunidad* group eventually returned to Uruguay where it continues to promote the creation of a self-managed ecological society through its own ongoing experiments in community living. For the *Comunidad* group, the “revolution consists of changing social relationships,” much as Gustav Landauer

had argued previously (Volume One, Selection 49). Fleshing out their “ideals of equality and sociability in a free space,” the Comunidad group has sought to inspire the creation of that “community of communities” long envisioned by anarchists like Landauer, Martin Buber, Paul Goodman and many others (Volume Two, Selection 60).

NEITHER EAST NOR WEST

After the Second World War, despite the “Cold War” between the Soviet Union and the United States, anarchists sought to keep alive their libertarian vision of a free and equal society in which every individual is able to flourish. Marie Louise Berneri coined the phrase, “Neither East nor West,” signifying anarchist opposition to all power blocs (Volume Two, Selection 10). Anarchists continued to oppose colonialism and the imperialist expansion of the Soviet and American empires (Volume Two, Selections 8, 9, 28, 29 & 31).

Due to their opposition to both dominant power blocs, during the Cold War organized anarchist movements faced almost insurmountable obstacles, similar to the situation faced by the Spanish anarchists during the Revolution and Civil War. In Bulgaria, there was a significant pre-war anarchist communist movement which reemerged briefly after the defeat of Nazi Germany, but which was quickly suppressed by their Soviet “liberators.” The Bulgarian anarchists repudiated fascism as an “attempt to restore absolutism [and] autocracy... with the aim of defending the economic and spiritual dominance of the privileged classes.” They rejected “political democracy” (representative government) because “its social foundations [are] based on the centralized State and capitalism,” resulting in “chaos, contradictions and crime.” As for State socialism, “it leads to State capitalism—the most monstrous form of economic exploitation and oppression, and of total domination of social and individual freedom” (Volume Two, Selection 7).

The program of the Bulgarian Anarchist Communist Federation is noteworthy today for its emphasis on anarchist federalism as “a dense and complex network” of village communities, regional communes, productive enterprises, trade unions, distribution networks and consumer organizations that would be “grouped in a general confederation of exchange and consumption for satisfying the needs of all inhabitants” (Volume Two, Selection 7). Such network forms of organization mark an advance over the “inverse pyramid” structure that had long been advocated by anarcho-syndicalists, which was much more prone to being transformed into a more conventional, hierarchical form of organization during times of crisis, as in Spain. By the early 1950s, many anarcho-syndicalists were advocating similar horizontal networks based on factory councils and com-

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munity assemblies, resembling a “honeycomb,” as Philip Sansom put it, in which “all the cells are of equal importance and fit into each other,” instead of control being “maintained from the centre” (Volume Two, Selection 58).

Within their own organizations, the Bulgarian anarchist communists advocated a form of consensus decision-making. However, while “the decision of the majority is not binding on the minority,” in practice “the minority generally rallies to the decision of the majority,” after the majority has had an opportunity to demonstrate the wisdom of its position. Thus, while the minority was not bound to follow the decisions of the majority, the majority was not prevented from acting in accordance with its own views, such that the minority could not assume *de facto* authority over the majority by refusing to agree with the majority decision, as sometimes happens under other forms of consensus decision-making. The Bulgarian anarchist communists recognized that in broader based mass organizations that were not specifically anarchist in orientation, majority rule would generally prevail, but even then “the minority may be freed from the obligation to apply a general decision, on condition that it does not prevent the execution of such a decision” (Volume Two, Selection 7). In this regard, their position is remarkably similar to that of contemporary advocates of participatory democracy, such as Carole Pateman (1985: 159-162; see also Graham, 1996), and anarchist advocates of various forms of direct democracy (Volume Three, Chapter 2).

RESPLENDENT ANARCHY

Given the difficult political circumstances faced by anarchists in the aftermath of the Second World War, it should not be surprising that there was a resurgence of anarchist attitudes in the arts, for it was on the cultural terrain that anarchists had the greatest freedom of action. In Quebec, the Automatistes, who were loosely affiliated with the Surrealists, issued their “Global Refusal” manifesto in 1948, in which they foresaw “people freed from their useless chains and turning, in the unexpected manner that is necessary for spontaneity, to resplendent anarchy to make the most of their individual gifts” (Volume Two, Selection 22).

The Surrealists recognized their affinity with the anarchists, sharing their “fundamental hostility towards both power blocs,” and seeking with them to bring about “an era from which all hierarchy and all constraint will have been banished” (Volume Two, Selection 23). André Breton (1896-1966) noted that it was “in the black mirror of anarchism that surrealism first recognized itself,” but admitted that the surrealists, along with many others on the left, had for too long supported the Soviet Union, mesmerized by “the idea of efficiency” and the hope for a worldwide social revolution. Now it was time “*to return to the prin-*

ciples” which had allowed the libertarian ideal “to take form,” arriving at a conception of anarchism as, in the words of Georges Fontenis (1920-2010), “the expression of the exploited masses in their desire to create a society without classes, without a State, where all human values and desires can be realized” (Volume Two, Selection 23).

THE ART OF LIVING

In the 1940s, Herbert Read, who had helped introduce Surrealism to English audiences, extolled modern art for breaking through “the artificial boundaries and limitations which we owe to a one-sided and prejudiced view of the human personality.” For Read, all “types of art are not merely permissible, but desirable... Any kind of exclusiveness or intolerance is just as opposed to the principles of liberty as social exclusiveness or political intolerance.” He argued that only in an anarchist society would everyone be free to develop “the artist latent in each one of us” (Volume Two, Selection 19).

Alex Comfort agreed with Read that “in truly free communities art is a general activity, far more cognate with craft than it can ever be in contemporary organized life.” He looked forward to the creation of communities in which “art could become a part of daily activity, and in which all activity [is] potentially creative” (Volume Two, Selection 20). As Richard Sonn has put it, “In the anarchist utopia the boundaries between manual and intellectual labour, between art and craft, dissolve. People are free to express themselves through their work. Artistry pervades life, rather than being restricted to museum walls and bohemian artist studios” (Volume Three, Selection 38). In contrast, as David Wieck (1921-1997) noted, in existing society we “take it for granted that a small number of people, more or less talented, shall make—one would say ‘create’—under the usual consumption-oriented conditions of the market, our ‘works of art,’ our ‘entertainment,’ while the rest of us are spectators” (Volume Two, Selection 39).

Holley Cantine, Jr. (1911-1977) saw art as a form of play which “must disguise itself” in adulthood “as useful work in order to be socially acceptable.” The artist must either find a market for his or her art, put him or herself at the service of some cause, or live the life of an impoverished bohemian—in neither case “is the artist really free... Only a relative handful of spontaneous artists, who give no thought to any standards but their own satisfaction, can be said to function in the realm of pure art.” For Cantine, a free society is one in which everyone “works, according to his capacity, when there is work to do, and everyone plays the rest of the time,” much as people do in “non-status societies,” where “play is regarded as natural for everyone, whenever the immediate pressure of the environment permits” (Volume Two, Selection 21), an observation

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confirmed by the anthropological studies conducted by Pierre Clastres (1934-1977) in South America (Volume Two, Selection 64).

In New York, Julian Beck (1925-1985) and Judith Malina founded the Living Theatre in 1947, which sought to break down the barriers between playwright and performer, and between performer and audience. The Living Theatre staged plays by people like Paul Goodman, whose use of “obscene” language in the late 1940s and 1950s helped keep the Theatre in trouble with the authorities, when censorship laws were much stricter than in the USA today. The Theatre developed a more and more improvisational approach, with the actors designing their own movements and the director ultimately “resigning from his authoritarian position” (Volume Two, Selection 24). By the late 1960s, the Theatre abandoned the confines of the playhouse altogether, pioneering guerilla street theatre and performance art in Europe and Latin America (Volume Two, Selection 25).

Richard Sonn has argued that only “anarchists can claim that not the State, not the military, not even the economy, but rather culture is central to it both as movement and as ideal” (Volume Three, Selection 38). For Max Blechman, art “acts as a reminder of the potential joy of life, and as an anarchic force against all that which usurps it. It functions as a perpetual reminder that all meaningful life involves a stretching of the limits of the possible, not toward an absolute, but away from absolutes and into the depths of imagination and the unknown. This creative adventure, at the bottom of all great art, is the power which, if universalized, would embody the driving force of social anarchy” (Volume Three, Selection 39).

RESISTANCE OR REVOLUTION

Not all anarchists were enamoured with the turn toward personal liberation, alternative lifestyles and cultural change in the aftermath of the Second World War. In Italy, the class struggle anarchists of the *Impulso* group denounced these anarchist currents as counter-revolutionary, much as Murray Bookchin did many years later (Bookchin, 1995). The *Impulso* group described these approaches as “resistencialism,” a term suggested in 1949 by the French anarchist paper, *Études Anarchistes*, to describe the new perspectives and approaches being developed by anarchists in the English speaking countries in the aftermath of the Second World War which emphasized resistance to authoritarian and hierarchical modes of thought and organization, and the creation of libertarian alternatives here and now, regardless of the prospects of a successful social revolution.

What the *Impulso* group’s critique illustrates is the degree to which these new conceptions and approaches had spread beyond England and the USA by 1950,

when they published their broadside, for much of their attack is directed toward the Italian anarchist journal, *Volontà*, belying the claim that the “new” anarchism was a largely “Anglo-Saxon” phenomenon (Volume Two, Selection 38).

The *Volontà* group, with which Camillo Berneri’s widow, and long time anarchist, Giovanna Berneri (1897-1962) was associated, had begun exploring new ideas and analyses which have since become the stock in trade of so-called “post-modern” anarchists (Volume Three, Chapter 12), including a critique of conventional conceptions of rationality and intellectual constructs which seek to constrain thought and action within a specific ideological framework. As one contributor to *Volontà* put it, “All ideologues are potential tyrants” (Volume Two, Selection 38).

The *Impulso* group denounced *Volontà* for celebrating “irrationalism” and “chaos,” turning anarchism into “a motley, whimsical subjective representation,” and for abandoning any concept of class struggle. For the *Impulso* group, anarchism was instead “the ideology of the working and peasant class, the product of a reasoned re-elaboration of revolutionary experiences, the theoretical weapon for the defence of the unitary, ongoing interests of the labouring class, the objective outcome of a specific historic process,” illustrating the degree to which the class struggle anarchists had incorporated into their outlook several Marxian elements (Volume Two, Selection 38). For them, there were “three vital coefficients to the act of revolution: the crisis in the capitalist system... active participation by the broad worker and peasant masses... and the organized action of the activist minority.” To the criticism that the “masses” can never become self-governing if led by an elite activist minority, the *Impulso* group responded that an informed, consciously anarchist minority cannot betray the revolution because its theory “is not only the correct general theory” but the correct theory “especially in relation to the activist minority and its nature, its functions, [and] its limitations” (Volume Two, Selection 38).

This claim that an activist minority of anarchists would never effectively assume positions of authority because their general theory eschews such a role is not particularly persuasive on either theoretical or historical grounds. No matter how well informed by or committed to anarchist principles, the “activist minority,” armed with their “correct” theory will, as Malatesta had said of the Platformists, be prone “to *excommunicate* from anarchism all those who do not accept their program,” promoting sectarianism rather than creating a unified movement (Volume One, Selection 115). Neno Vasco (1920) and other anarchists had long argued that the focus of anarchist minorities should instead be on fostering the self-activity of the masses. That being informed and guided by anarchist theory does not prevent one from assuming a more conventional leadership role

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was demonstrated by those CNT-FAI “militants” who joined the Republican government in Spain during the 1936-39 Revolution and Civil War (Volume One, Selections 127 & 128).

The *Impulso* group saw themselves performing a “locomotive function,” pulling the masses toward liberation through the revolutionary upheaval that would inevitably result from the crisis of international capitalism, committing themselves to “a harsh self-discipline” (Volume Two, Selection 38), the kind of self-abnegation that Bakunin had warned against earlier (Volume One, Selection 20). Despite the denunciations of the *Impulso* group, it was the “new” anarchism pioneered by the so-called “resistencialists” that was to inspire radicals in the 1960s, with people like the Cohn-Bendit brothers writing, “Act with others, not for them. Make the revolution here and now,” for “it is for yourself that you make the revolution,” not some abstract ideal to which all should be sacrificed (Volume Two, Selection 51).

THE POVERTY OF HISTORICISM

The *Impulso* group remained committed to an essentially Marxist view of progressive historical development, the kind of view that Dwight Macdonald argued had literally been exploded by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Volume Two, Selection 13). One can no longer claim that from “out of present evil will come future good,” wrote Macdonald, when “for the first time in history, humanity faces the possibility that its own activity may result in the destruction not of some people or some part of the world, but of all people and the whole world for all time” (Volume Two, Selection 13).

The *Impulso* group clung to the view that as the result of an objective historical process, the working class developed “unitary, ongoing interests,” impelling it to fulfill its “historical role” of abolishing capitalism (Volume Two, Selection 38). That the working class has unitary interests is a concept that has been criticized by other anarchists since at least the time of Bakunin, who argued against Marx that city workers “who earn more and live more comfortably than all the other workers,” by virtue of their “relative well-being and semibourgeois position” form a kind of “aristocracy of labour... unfortunately only too deeply saturated with all the political and social prejudices and all the narrow aspirations and pretensions of the bourgeoisie” (1872: 294).

Macdonald pointed to the post-War “failure of the European masses to get excited about socialist slogans and programs,” suggesting that the “man in the street” feels “as powerless and manipulated vis-à-vis his socialist mass-organization as... towards his capitalistic employers and their social and legal institutions” (Volume Two, Selection 13). For Louis Mercier Vega (1914-1977), social

stratification within the “working class” makes it necessary “to speak of several working classes,” each with conflicting interests. “Wage differentials,” for example, “make class consciousness that much harder to achieve... encouraging collusion between (private or State) management and privileged brackets of wage-earners. They accentuate rather than curtail the tendency to retain a sub-proletariat reduced to low wages and readily disposed of in the event of a crisis or economic slow-down, alongside groups of workers, employees and officials locked into complex [regulatory] arrangements wherein their docility and diligence are reflected in their wage levels” (Volume Two, Selection 45).

The *Impulso* group implicitly accepted the Marxist view of historical stages of development which other anarchists, from Bakunin onward, have also challenged. Even before Bakunin’s conflict with Marx in the First International, one of the points of disagreement between Marx and Proudhon was whether an anarchist form of socialism could be achieved before capitalism created the technology that would produce an abundance of goods allegedly necessary to sustain a socialist society (Marx, 1847). Anarchists promoted peasant revolutions in a variety of circumstances, rather than waiting for the development of an urban proletariat as suggested by the Marxist view of history.

Gustav Landauer rejected that “artifice of historical development, by which— as a matter of historical necessity—the working class, to one extent or another, is called by Providence to take for itself the role of the present day ruling class” (Volume One, Selection 40). For Landauer, “the miracle that materialism and mechanism assume—that... fully-grown socialism grows not out of the childhood beginnings of socialism, but out of the colossal deformed body of capitalism—this miracle will not come, and soon people will no longer believe in it” (Volume One, Selection 49). Huang Lingshuang and Rudolf Rocker later put forward similar critiques of the Marxist theory of history.

In the 1950s, some anarchists were influenced by the contemporaneous critique of Marxist “historicism” that was being developed by philosophers such as Karl Popper (1957). Writing in the early 1960s, the Chilean anarchist Lain Diez urged anarchists to reject all “historicist systems” based on “the supremacy (in terms of decision making in men’s affairs) of History... which, unknown to men, supposedly foists its law upon them,” for this “new and jealous divinity has its intermediaries who, like the priests of the ancient religions, interpret its intentions, prophesying as they did and issuing thunderous anathemas against miscreants refusing to be awed by their revelations” (Volume Two, Selection 47). More recently, Alan Carter has presented a thoroughgoing anarchist critique of Marxist “technological determinism” (1988), emphasizing the role of the State in creating and enforcing “the relations of production that lead to the creation of the surplus that the State requires” to finance the “forces of coercion” neces-

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sary to maintain State power, turning Marx's theory of history on its head (Volume Three, Selection 19).

PERMANENT PROTEST

The *Impulso* group was most concerned that the "new" anarchism represented by the "resistencialists" would lead anarchists away from their historic commitment to revolution, a concern not without foundation. In the 1950s in Australia, for example, the Sydney Libertarians developed a critique of anarchist "utopianism," which for them was based on the supposed anarchist over-emphasis on "co-operation and rational persuasion" (Volume Two, Selection 41), a critique later expanded upon by post-modern anarchists (Volume Three, Chapter 12). In response, without endorsing the more narrow approach of the *Impulso* group, one can argue that these sorts of critiques are themselves insufficiently critical because they repeat and incorporate common misconceptions of anarchism as a theory based on an excessively naïve and optimistic view of human nature (Jesse Cohen, Volume Three, Selection 67).

For the Sydney Libertarians, not only is it unlikely that a future anarchist society will be achieved, it is unnecessary because "there are anarchist-like activities such as criticizing the views of authoritarians, resisting the pressure towards servility and conformity, [and] having unauthoritarian sexual relationships, which can be carried on for their own sake, here and now, without any reference to supposed future ends." They described this kind of anarchism as "anarchism without ends", "pessimistic anarchism" and "permanent protest," stressing "the carrying on of particular libertarian activities within existing society" regardless of the prospects of a successful social revolution (Volume Two, Selection 41).

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The resurgence of anarchism during the 1960s surprised both "pessimistic anarchists" and the more traditional "class struggle" anarchists associated with the *Impulso* group, some of whom, such as Pier Carlo Masini, abandoned anarchism altogether when it appeared to them that the working class was not going to embrace the anarchist cause. Other class struggle anarchists, such as André Prudhommeaux (1902-1968), recognized that the masses were "unmoved" by revolutionary declamations "heralding social revolution in Teheran, Cairo or Caracas and Judgment Day in Paris the following day at the latest," because when "nothing is happening," to make such claims is "like calling out the fire brigade on a hoax." To gain the support of the people, anarchists must work with them to protect their "civil liberties and basic rights by means of direct ac-

tion, civil disobedience, strikes and individual and collective revolution in all their many forms” (Volume One, Selection 30).

By the early 1960s, peace and anti-war movements had risen in Europe and North America in which many anarchists, following Prudhommeaux’s suggestion, were involved. Anarchist influence within the social movements of the 1960s did not come out of nowhere but emerged from the work of anarchists and like-minded individuals in the 1950s, most of whom, like Prudhommeaux, had connections with the various pre-war anarchist movements. There was growing dissatisfaction among people regarding the quality of life in post-war America and Europe and their prospects for the future, given the ongoing threat of nuclear war and continued involvement of their respective governments, relying on conscript armies, in conflicts abroad as various peoples sought to liberate themselves from European and U.S. control.

LIBERATION STRUGGLES

Anarchists continued to oppose colonialism and imperial domination but were wary of those who sought to take advantage of national liberation struggles to facilitate their own rise to power, much like the State socialists had tried to harness popular discontent in Europe, and had succeeded in doing in Russia and China. Drawing on James Burnham’s concept of the managerial revolution (1941), while rejecting his pessimistic and politically conservative conclusions, the anarcho-syndicalist Geoffrey Ostergaard (1926-1990) warned of the “increasingly powerful managerial class” which holds out the prospect of “emancipation but in reality hands over the workers to new masters,” turning trade unions and other popular forms of organization into “more refined instruments for disciplining the workers” after the intellectuals, trade union leaders and party functionaries succeed in riding waves of popular discontent to assume positions of power (Volume Two, Selection 27).

French anarchists associated with the Groupe Anarchiste d’Action Révolutionnaire recognized the “proliferation of nation-States” as “an irreversible historical trend, a backlash against world conquest” by European powers, and that although “national emancipation movements do not strive for a libertarian society,” such a society “is unattainable without them. Only at the end of a widespread process of geographical, egalitarian redistribution of human activities can a federation of peoples supplant the array of States.” Nevertheless, anarchists could afford “national liberation movements only an eminently critical support,” for the mission of anarchists remains “to undermine the foundations of all... nationalist world-views, as well as every colonial and imperial institution. The bulwark of exploitation and oppression, injustice and misery, hatred and ignorance

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is still the State whosoever it appears with its retinue—Army, Church, Party—thwarting men and pitting them against one another by means of war, hierarchy and bureaucracy, instead of binding them together through cooperation, solidarity and mutual aid “ (Volume Two, Selection 31).

Mohamed Sail (1894-1953), an Algerian anarchist who fought with the Durruti Column in Spain, regarded Algerian nationalism as “the bitter fruit of French occupation.” He suggested that “the Algerian people, released from one yoke, will hardly want to saddle itself with another one,” given their strong village ties and historic resistance to central authorities, whether Turk, Arab or French. While things did not work out as he had hoped, his fellow Kabyles have continued the “revolt against authoritarian centralism” for which he praised them (Volume Two, Selection 28; Volume Three, Selection 50).

During the 1950s, Cuban anarchists were directly involved in the struggle to overthrow the U.S. supported Batista dictatorship but at the same time had to fight against Marxist domination of the revolutionary and labour movements. They encouraged the “workers to prepare themselves culturally and professionally not only to better their present working conditions, but also to take over the technical operation and administration of the whole economy in the new libertarian society” (Volume Three, Selection 55). After Castro seized power, they struggled in vain to maintain an independent labour movement and to prevent the creation of a socialist dictatorship. Outside of Cuba, Castro’s victory divided anarchists, particularly in Latin America, with some arguing that to support the revolution one must support the Castro regime, similar to the arguments that had been made earlier by the “Bolshevik” anarchists in Russia. Others came to doubt the efficacy of armed struggle and violent revolution, such as the anarchists associated with the Comunidad del Sur group in Uruguay, who turned their focus towards building alternative communities (Volumes Two and Three, Selection 60).

NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTION

In post-independence India, the Gandhian Sarvodaya movement provided an example of a non-violent movement for social change which aspired to a stateless society. Vinoba Bhave (1895-1982), one of the movement’s spiritual leaders, noted that “sarvodaya does not mean good government or majority rule, it means freedom from government,” with decisions being made at the village level by consensus, for self-government “means ruling you own self,” without “any outside power.” What seemed wrong to Bhave was not that the Indian people were governed by this or that government, but that “we should allow ourselves to be governed at all, even by a good government” (Volume Two, Selection 32). He

looked forward to the creation of a stateless society through the decentralization of political power, production, distribution, defence and education to village communities.

Bhave's associate, Jayaprakash Narayan (1902-1979), drew the connections between their approach, which emphasized that a "harmonious blending of nature and culture is possible only in comparatively smaller communities," and Aldous Huxley's anarchist tinged vision of a future in which each person "has a fair measure of personal independence and personal responsibility within and toward a self-governing group," in which "work possesses a certain aesthetic value and human significance," and each person "is related to his natural environment in some organic, rooted and symbiotic way" (Volume Two, Selection 32). The Sarvodaya movement's tactics of Gandhian non-violence influenced the growing anarchist and peace movements in Europe and North America (Volume Two, Selection 34), while the Sarvodayans shared the antipathy of many anarchists toward the centralization, bureaucratic organization, technological domination, alienation and estrangement from nature found in modern industrial societies.

Paul Goodman summed up the malaise affecting people in advanced industrial societies during the 1950s in his essay, "A Public Dream of Universal Disaster" (Volume Two, Selection 37), in which he noted that despite technological advances and economic growth, "everywhere people are disappointed. Even so far, then, there is evident reason to smash things, to destroy not this or that part of the system (e.g., the upper class), but the whole system en bloc; for it offers no promise, but only more of the same." With people paralyzed by the threat of nuclear annihilation, seeking release from their pent up hostility, frustration, disappointment and anger through acquiescence to "mass suicide, an outcome that solves most problems without personal guilt," only "adventurous revolutionary social and psychological action" can have any prospect of success (Volume Two, Selection 38).

As Goodman's contemporary, Julian Beck, put it, we need to "storm the barricades," whether military, political, social or psychological, for "we want to get rid of all barricades, even our own and any that we might ever setup" (Volume Two, Selection 24). What is necessary, according to Dwight Macdonald, is "to encourage attitudes of disrespect, skepticism [and] ridicule towards the State and all authority" (Volume Two, Selection 13). This challenge to conventional mores, fear and apathy came to fruition in the 1960s as anarchists staged various actions and "happenings," often in conjunction with other counter-cultural and dissident political groups, from the Yippies showering the floor of the New York Stock Exchange with dollar bills, causing chaos among the stock traders, to the Provos leaving white bicycles around Amsterdam to combat "automobilism" and to challenge public acceptance of private property (Volume Two, Selection 50).

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Macdonald thought that the “totalization of State power today means that only something on a different plane can cope with it, something which fights the State from a vantage point which the State’s weapons can reach only with difficulty,” such as “non-violence, which... confuses [the State’s] human agents, all the more so because it appeals to traitorous elements in their own hearts” (Volume Two, Selection 13). As Richard Gregg described it, non-violent resistance is a kind of “moral ju-jitsu” which causes “the attacker to lose his moral balance” by taking away “the moral support which the usual violent resistance... would render him” (Volume Two, Selection 34).

RESISTING THE NATION STATE

The anti-war movements in Europe and North America that began to emerge during the late 1950s started as “Ban the Bomb” or anti-nuclear peace movements, the primary aim of which was to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons. These movements began to adopt a more expansive anti-war approach as draft resistance movements also began to emerge, first in France in response to the war in Algeria, and then in the U.S. as the war in Vietnam escalated and intensified.

Many people in the various peace movements were pacifists. Some of them began to move towards an anarchist position as they came to realize that the banning of nuclear weapons was either unlikely or insufficient given the existing system of international power relations. Many came to agree with Randolph Bourne that “war is the health of the State” and became advocates of non-violent revolution, for one “cannot crusade against war without crusading implicitly against the State” (Volume Two, Selection 34).

Veteran anarchists, such as Vernon Richards, despite recognizing the limitations of peace marches, realized that for “some the very fact of having broken away from the routine pattern of life to take part” in a march, and “for others the effort of will needed to join a demonstration for the first time in their lives, are all positive steps in the direction of ‘rebellion’ against the Establishment,” for there “are times when the importance of an action is for oneself” (Volume Two, Selection 33).

Some of the people opposed to conscription in France and the U.S. also gravitated toward anarchism, as they came to realize not only that meaningful draft resistance was illegal, thereby making them criminals, but also the degree to which those in positions of power were prepared to use force not only against their “external” enemies but against their own people to prevent the undermining of their authority. As Jean Marie Chester wrote in France in the early 1960s, the young draft resisters had, “through their refusal, unwittingly stumbled upon anarchism” (Volume Two, Selection 31).

Unlike more conventional conceptions of civil disobedience, where demonstrators emphasize that their disobedience is an extraordinary reaction to an extreme policy, accepting the punishment meted out to them because they do not want to challenge the legitimacy of authority in general, anarchist disobedience and direct action suffer from no such contradictions but instead seek to broaden individual acts of disobedience into rejection of institutional power by encouraging people to question authority in all its aspects. From individual acts of revolt and protest, and experience of the repressive measures the State is prepared to resort to in response, will come a growing recognition of the illegitimacy of State power and the hierarchical and exploitative relationships which that power protects. As the Dutch Provos put it, the “means of repression” the authorities “use against us” will force them “to show their real nature,” making “themselves more and more unpopular,” ripening “the popular conscience... for anarchy” (Volume Two, Selection 50).

During the 1960s, anarchist ideas were reintroduced to student rebels, anti-war protesters, environmentalists and a more restless general public by people like Murray Bookchin (Volume Two, Selection 48), Daniel Guérin (Volume Two, Selection 49), the Cohn-Bendit brothers (Volume Two, Selection 51), Jacobo Prince (Volume Two, Selection 52), Nicolas Walter (Volume Two, Selection 54) and Noam Chomsky (Volume Two, Selection 55). While libertarian socialist intellectuals such as Claude Lefort from the *Socialisme ou Barbarie* group, who came from a Marxist background, regarded the anarchist ideas and actions of the student radicals of the May-June 1968 events in France as the “brilliant invention” of “naïve prodigies,” the Cohn-Bendit brothers, who were directly involved, replied that, to the contrary, those events were “the result of arduous research into revolutionary theory and practice,” marking “a return to a revolutionary tradition” that the Left had long since abandoned, namely anarchism (Volume Two, Selection 51).

ANARCHY AND ECOLOGY

Anarchists had long been advocates of decentralized, human scale technology and sustainable communities. In the 1940s, Ethel Mannin drew the connections between increasing environmental degradation, existing power structures and social inequality, writing that as long as “Man continues to exploit the soil for profit he sows the seeds of his own destruction, not merely because Nature becomes his enemy, responding to his machines and his chemicals by the withdrawal of fertility, the dusty answer of an ultimate desert barrenness, but because his whole attitude to life is debased; his gods become Money and Power, and wars and unemployment and useless toil become his inevitable portion” (Vol-

ume Two, Selection 14). Murray Bookchin expanded on this critique in the 1960s, arguing that the “modern city... the massive coal-steel technology of the Industrial Revolution, the later, more rationalized systems of mass production and assembly-line systems of labour organization, the centralized nation, the State and its bureaucratic apparatus—all have reached their limits,” undermining “not only the human spirit and the human community but also the viability of the planet and all living things on it” (Volume Two, Selection 48).

Bookchin was fundamentally opposed to those environmentalists who looked to existing power structures to avert ecological collapse or catastrophe. This was because the “notion that man is destined to dominate nature stems from the domination of man by man—and perhaps even earlier, by the domination of woman by man and the domination of the young by the old” (Volume Three, Selection 26). Consequently, the way out of ecological crisis is not to strengthen or rely on those hierarchical power structures which have brought about that crisis, but through direct action, which for Bookchin is “the means whereby each individual awakens to the hidden powers within herself and himself, to a new sense of self-confidence and self-competence; it is the means whereby individuals take control of society directly, without ‘representatives’ who tend to usurp not only the power but the very personality of a passive, spectatorial ‘electorate’ who live in the shadows of an ‘elect’” (Volume Three, Selection 10).

In *Mutual Aid*, Kropotkin argued not only that the State was unlikely to effect positive social change, given the interests it represents, but that reliance on State power renders people less and less capable of collectively managing their own affairs, for in “proportion as the obligations towards the State [grow] in numbers the citizens [are] evidently relieved from their obligations towards each other.” As Michael Taylor puts it, under “the State, there is no *practice* of cooperation and no growth of a sense of the interdependence on which cooperation depends.” Because environmental crisis can only be resolved through the action and cooperation of countless individuals, instead of strengthening the State people should heed the anarchist call for decentralization, by seeking to disaggregate “large societies... into smaller societies,” and by resisting “the enlargement of societies and the destruction of small ones,” thereby fostering the cooperation and self-activity upon which widespread social change ultimately depends (Volume Two, Selection 65). Otherwise, as Paul Goodman argued, we are stuck in “a vicious circle, for... the very exercise of abstract power, managing and coercing, itself tends to stand in the way and alienate, to thwart function and diminish energy... the consequence of the process is to put us in fact in a continual emergency, so power creates its own need.” For the emergency or crisis to be effectively resolved, there must be “a profound change in social structure, including getting rid of national sovereign power” (Volume Two, Selection 36).

TOWARD A CONVIVIAL SOCIETY

Ivan Illich, who was close to Paul Goodman, therefore called for the “inversion of present institutional purposes,” seeking to create a “convivial society,” by which he meant “autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and intercourse of persons with their environment.” For Illich, as with most anarchists, “individual freedom [is] realized in mutual personal interdependence,” the sort of interdependence which atrophies under the State and capitalism. The problem with present institutions is that they “provide clients with predetermined goods,” making “commodities out of health, education, housing, transportation, and welfare. We need arrangements which permit modern man to engage in the activities of healing and health maintenance, learning and teaching, moving and dwelling.” He argued that desirable institutions are therefore those which “enable people to meet their own needs.”

Where Illich parted company with anarchists was in his endorsement of legal coercion to establish limits to personal consumption. He proposed “to set a legal limit to the tooling of society in such a way that the toolkit necessary to conviviality will be accessible for the autonomous use of a maximum number of people” (Volume Two, Selection 73). For anarchists, one of the problems with coercive legal government is that, in the words of Allan Ritter, the “remoteness of its officials and the permanence and generality of its controls cause it to treat its subjects as abstract strangers. Such treatment is the very opposite of the personal friendly treatment” appropriate to the sort of convivial society that Illich sought to create (Volume Three, Selection 18).

Anarchists would agree with Illich that existing political systems “provide goods with clients rather than people with goods. Individuals are forced to pay for and use things they do not need; they are allowed no effective part in the process of choosing, let alone producing them.” Anarchists would also support “the individual’s right to use only what he [or she] needs, to play an increasing part as an individual in its production,” and the “guarantee” of “an environment so simple and transparent that all [people] most of the time have access to all the things which are useful to care for themselves and for others.” While Illich’s emphasis on “the need for limits of per capita consumption” may appear to run counter to the historic anarchist communist commitment to a society of abundance in which all are free to take what they need, anarchists would agree with Illich that people should be in “control of the means and the mode of production” so that they are “in the service of the people” rather than people being controlled by them “for the purpose of raising output at all cost and then worrying how to distribute it in a fair way” (Volume Two, Selection 73).

Illich proposed that “the first step in a more general program of institutional

inversion” would be the “de-schooling of society.” By this he meant the abolition of schools which “enable a teacher to establish classes of subjects and to impute the need for them to classes of people called pupils. The inverse of schools would be opportunity networks which permit individuals to state their present interest and seek a match for it.” Illich therefore went one step beyond the traditional anarchist focus on creating libertarian schools that students are free to attend and in which they choose what to learn (Volume One, Selections 65 & 66), adopting a position similar to Paul Goodman, who argued that children should not be institutionalized within a school system at all (1964).

By replacing the commodity of “education” with “learning,” which is an activity, Illich hoped to move away from “our present world view, in which our needs can be satisfied only by tangible or intangible commodities which we consume” (Volume Two, Selection 73). The “commodification” of social life is a common theme in anarchist writings, from the time when Proudhon denounced capitalism for reducing the worker to “a chattel, a thing” (Volume One, Selection 9), to George Woodcock’s critique of the “tyranny of the clock,” which “turns time from a process of nature into a commodity that can be measured and bought and sold like soap or sultanas” (Volume Two, Selection 69).

Illich criticized those anarchists who “would make their followers believe that the maximum technically possible is not simply the maximum desirable for a few, but that it can also provide everybody with maximum benefits at minimum cost,” describing them as “techno-anarchists” because they “have fallen victim to the illusion that it is possible to socialize the technocratic imperative” (Volume Two, Selection 73). It is not clear to whom Illich was directing these comments, but a few years earlier Richard Kostelanetz had written an article defending what he described as “technoanarchism,” in which he criticized the more common anarchist stance critical toward modern technology (Volume Two, selection 72).

Kostelanetz suggested that “by freeing more people from the necessity of productivity, automation increasingly permits everyone his artistic or craftsmanly pursuits,” a position similar to that of Oscar Wilde (Volume One, Selection 61). Instead of criticizing modern technology, anarchists should recognize that the “real dehumanizer” is “uncaring bureaucracy.” Air pollution can be more effectively dealt with through the development of “less deleterious technologies of energy production, or better technologies of pollutant-removal or the dispersion of urban industry.” Agreeing with Irving Horowitz’s claim that anarchists ignored “the problems of a vast technology,” by trying to find their way back “to a system of production that was satisfactory to the individual producer, rather than feasible for a growing mass society,” Kostelanetz argued that anarchists must now regard technology as “a kind of second nature... regarding it as similarly cordial if not ultimately harmonious, as initial nature” (Volume Two, Selection 72).

In response to Horowitz's comments, David Watson later wrote that the argument "is posed backwards. Technology has certainly transformed the world, but the question is not whether the anarchist vision of freedom, autonomy, and mutual cooperation is any longer relevant to mass technological civilization. It is more pertinent to ask whether freedom, autonomy, or human cooperation themselves can be possible in such a civilization" (Watson: 165-166). For Murray Bookchin, "the issue of disbanding the factory—indeed, of restoring manufacture in its literal sense as a manual art rather than a muscular 'megamachine'—has become a priority of enormous social importance," because "we must arrest more than just the ravaging and simplification of nature. We must also arrest the ravaging and simplification of the human spirit, of human personality, of human community... and humanity's own fecundity within the natural world" by creating decentralized ecommunities "scaled to human dimensions" and "artistically tailored to their natural surroundings" (Volume Two, Selection 74).

PATRIARCHY

In his discussion of the emergence of hierarchical societies which "gradually subverted the unity of society with the natural world," Bookchin noted the important role played by "the patriarchal family in which women were brought into universal subjugation to men" (Volume Three, Selection 26). Rossella Di Leo has suggested that hierarchical societies emerged from more egalitarian societies in which there were "asymmetries" of authority and prestige, with men holding the social positions to which the most prestige was attached (Volume Three, Selection 32). In contemporary society, Nicole Laurin-Frenette observes, "women of all classes, in all trades and professions, in all sectors of work and at all professional levels [continue] to be assigned tasks which are implicitly or explicitly defined and conceived as feminine. These tasks usually correspond to subordinate functions which entail unfavourable practical and symbolic conditions" (Volume Three, Selection 33).

RADICAL FEMINISM

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a radical feminist movement emerged that shared many affinities with anarchism and the ecology movement. Peggy Konegger argued that "feminists have been unconscious anarchists in both theory and practice for years" (Volume Two, Selection 78). Radical feminists regarded "the nuclear family as the basis for all authoritarian systems," much as earlier anarchists had, from Otto Gross (Volume One, Selection 78), to Marie Louise Berneri (Volume Two, Selection 75) and Daniel Guérin (Volume Two, Selection

76). Radical feminists also rejected “the male domineering attitude toward the external world, allowing only subject/object relationships,” developing a critique of “male hierarchical thought patterns—in which rationality dominates sensuality, mind dominates intuition, and persistent splits and polarities (active/passive, child/adult, sane/insane, work/play, spontaneity/organization) alienate us from the mind-body experience as a *Whole* and from the *Continuum* of human experience,” echoing the much older critique of Daoist anarchists, such as Bao Jingyan (Volume One, Selection 1).

Kornegger noted that as “the second wave of feminism spread across the [U.S.] in the late 60s, the forms which women’s groups took frequently reflected an unspoken libertarian consciousness,” with women breaking off “into small, leaderless, consciousness-raising groups, which dealt with personal issues in our daily lives,” and which “bore a striking resemblance” to “anarchist affinity groups” (see Bookchin, Volume Two, Selection 62), with their “emphasis on the small group as a basic organizational unit, on the personal and political, on antiauthoritarianism, and on spontaneous direct action” (Volume Two, Selection 78).

As Carol Ehrlich notes, radical feminists and anarchist feminists “are concerned with a set of common issues: control over one’s body; alternatives to the nuclear family and to heterosexuality; new methods of child care that will liberate parents and children; economic self-determination; ending sex stereotyping in education, in the media, and in the workplace; the abolition of repressive laws; an end to male authority, ownership, and control over women; providing women with the means to develop skills and positive self-attitudes; an end to oppressive emotional relationships; and what the Situationists have called ‘the reinvention of everyday life’.” Despite the Situationists’ hostility toward anarchism, many anarchists in the 1960s and 70s were influenced by the Situationist critique of the “society of the spectacle,” in which “the stage is set, the action unfolds, we applaud when we think we are happy, we yawn when we think we are bored, but we cannot leave the show, because there is no world outside the theater for us to go to” (Volume Two, Selection 79).

Some anarchist women were concerned that the more orthodox “feminist movement has, consciously or otherwise, helped motivate women to integrate with the dominant value system,” as Ariane Gransac put it, for “if validation through power makes for equality of the sexes, such equality can scarcely help but produce a more fulsome integration of women into the system of man’s/woman’s domination over his/her fellow-man/woman” (Volume Three, Selection 34). “Like the workers’ movement in the past, especially its trade union wing,” Nicole Laurin-Frenette observes, “the feminist movement is constantly obliged to negotiate with the State, because it alone seems able to impose respect for the principles defended by feminism on women’s direct and immediate opponents,

namely men—husbands, fathers, fellow citizens, colleagues, employers, administrators, thinkers” (Volume Three, Selection 33). For anarchists the focus must remain on abolishing all forms of hierarchy and domination, which Carol Ehrlich has described as “the hardest task of all” (Volume Two, Selection 79). Yet, as Peggy Kornegger reminds us, we must not give up hope, that “vision of the future so beautiful and so powerful that it pulls us steadily forward” through “a continuum of thought and action, individuality and collectivity, spontaneity and organization, stretching from what is to what can be” (Volume Two, Selection 78).

THE SEXUAL CONTRACT

In criticizing the subordinate position of women, particularly in marriage, anarchist feminists often compared the position of married women to that of a prostitute (Emma Goldman, Volume One, Selection 70). More recently, Carole Pateman has developed a far-reaching feminist critique of the contractarian ideal of reducing all relationships to contractual relationships in which people exchange the “property” in their persons, with particular emphasis on prostitution, or contracts for sexual services, noting that: “The idea of property in the person has the merit of drawing attention to the importance of the body in social relations. Civil mastery, like the mastery of the slave-owner, is not exercised over mere biological entities that can be used like material (animal) property, nor exercised over purely rational entities. Masters are not interested in the disembodied fiction of labour power or services. They contract for the use of human embodied selves. Precisely because subordinates are embodied selves they can perform the required labour, be subject to discipline, give the recognition and offer the faithful service that makes a man a master” (Volume Three, Selection 35).

What distinguishes prostitution contracts from other contracts involving “property in the person” is that when “a man enters into the prostitution contract he is not interested in sexually indifferent, disembodied services; he contracts to buy sexual use of a *woman* for a given period... When women’s bodies are on sale as commodities in the capitalist market... men gain public acknowledgment as women’s sexual masters.” Pateman notes that “contracts about property in persons [normally] take the form of an exchange of obedience for protection,” but the “short-term prostitution contract cannot include the protection available in long-term relations.” Rather, the “prostitution contract mirrors the contractarian ideal” of “simultaneous exchange” of property or services, “a vision of unimpeded mutual use or universal prostitution” (Volume Three, Selection 35).

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COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES

The contractarian ideal seeks to reduce all relationships to contractual relationships, ultimately eliminating the need for any public political process. Murray Bookchin has argued to the contrary that there is, or should be, a genuine public sphere in which all members of a community are free to participate and able to collectively make decisions regarding the policies that are to be followed by that community. Community assemblies, in contrast to factory councils, provide everyone with a voice in collective decision making, not just those directly involved in the production process (Volume Two, Selection 62). Such assemblies would function much like the anarchist “collectives” in the Spanish Revolution documented by Gaston Leval (Volume One, Selection 126).

Questions arise however regarding the relationship between community assemblies and other forms of organization, whether workers’ councils, trade unions, community assemblies in other areas, or voluntary associations in general. In addition to rejecting simple majority rule, anarchists have historically supported not only the right of individuals and groups to associate, network and federate with other individuals and groups but to secede or disassociate from them. One cannot have voluntary associations based on compulsory membership (Ward: Volume Two, Selection 63).

Disregarding the difficulties in determining the “will” of an assembly (whether by simple majority vote of those present, as Bookchin advocated, or by some more sophisticated means), except in rare cases of unanimity one would expect genuine and sincere disagreements over public policy decisions to continue to arise even after the abolition of class interests. The enforcement of assembly decisions would not only exacerbate conflict, it would encourage factionalism, with people sharing particular views or interests uniting to ensure that their views predominate. In such circumstances, “positive altruism and voluntary cooperative behaviour” tend to atrophy (Taylor, Volume Two, Selection 65), as the focus of collective action through the assemblies becomes achieving coercive legal support for one’s own views rather than eliciting the cooperation of others (Graham, 2004).

THE ECONOMICS OF ANARCHY

In the “economic” sphere, Bookchin came to advocate “municipal control” of the economy by community assemblies, thereby abolishing the “economic” as a distinct social sphere by absorbing it into the “political” sphere (Volume Three, Selection 46), a reversal of Proudhon’s earlier argument that “political institutions must be lost in industrial organization” (Volume One, Selection 12). In order to

avoid such community control from degenerating into a system of competing city-States, he advocated anarchist communism within each community (the abolition of private property and distribution according to need), and federalism between communities. Bookchin claimed that the “syndicalist alternative” of workers’ control “re-privatizes the economy into ‘self-managed’ collectives,” opening “the way to their degeneration into traditional forms of private property” (Volume Three, Selection 46).

However, most anarcho-syndicalists would respond that workers’ self-management would not be based on a simple factory council model of organization but would include self-managed communal, consumer, trade (or vocational), industrial and service organizations forming a complex network of interlocking groups in which factory councils would be unable to reconstitute themselves as autonomous private firms operating for their own profit (see, for example, Sansom, Volume Two, Selection 58, and Joyeaux, Volume Two, Selection 61), particularly when the economy as a whole would be organized along anarchist communist lines. John Crump and Adam Buick have emphasized that selling, “as an act of exchange... could only take place between separate owners. Yet separate owners of parts of the social product are precisely what would not, and could not, exist” in an anarchist communist society. “With the replacement of exchange by common ownership what basically would happen is that wealth would cease to take the form of exchange value, so that all the expressions of this social relationship peculiar to an exchange economy, such as money and prices, would automatically disappear” (Volume Three, Selection 48).

Anarchists continue to debate the kind of economy compatible with their vision of a free society. Kevin Carson, updating Proudhon and Benjamin Tucker’s “mutualist” ideas, argues for a gradual transition to a stateless society through the creation of “alternative social infrastructure,” such as “producers’ and consumers’ co-ops, LETS [local exchange trading] systems and mutual banks, syndicalist industrial unions, tenant associations and rent strikes, neighbourhood associations, (non-police affiliated) crime-watch and cop-watch programs, voluntary courts for civil arbitration, community-supported agriculture, etc.” For Carson, “mutualism means building the kind of society we want here and now, based on grass-roots organization for voluntary cooperation and mutual aid—instead of waiting for the revolution.” Unlike most other anarchists, Carson advocates the retention of market relations because when “firms and self-employed individuals deal with each other through market, rather than federal relations, there are no organizations superior to them. Rather than decisions being made by permanent organizations, which will inevitably serve as power bases for managers and ‘experts,’ decisions will be made by the invisible hand of the marketplace” (Volume Three, Selection 47).

John Crump and Adam Buick argue against reliance on market mechanisms and deny that there can be a gradual transition from capitalism to anarchist communism. In an anarchist communist society, “resources and labour would be allocated... by conscious decisions, not through the operation of economic laws acting with the same coercive force as laws of nature,” such as the “invisible hand” of the market. A “gradual evolution from a class society to a classless society is impossible because at some stage there would have to be a rupture which would deprive the State capitalist ruling class—be they well-meaning or, more likely, otherwise—of their exclusive control over the means of production” (Volume Three, Selection 48).

Luciano Lanza argues that there are ways to temper reliance on market mechanisms, for example by sharing profits among firms. But for him the main point is to move beyond the “logic of the market,” a society in which “the capitalist market defines every aspect of social coexistence,” to a society where, quoting Cornelius Castoriadis, “economics has been restored to its place as a mere auxiliary to human life rather than its ultimate purpose” (Volume Three, Selection 49). As George Benello puts it, “the goal is a society organized in such a fashion that the basic activities of living are carried out through organizations whose style and structure mirror the values sought for.”

Because this “vision is a total one, rather than centered on specific issues and problems, projects of many sorts will reinforce the vision: co-operative schools, day care centers, community unions, newspapers, radio, and later producer enterprise.” As these projects proliferate, society becomes more “densely and intensively organized in an integrative fashion wherein the basic activities of life interrelate,” so that what comes to be “defended is not simply a set of discrete political goals, but a way of life” (Volume Two, Selection 44). This is yet another example of the “prefigurative politics” that anarchists have advocated and practiced since at least the time of Proudhon, and which has again come to the fore with the advent of “global justice” movements against neo-liberalism toward the end of the 20th century.

ANARCHISM AND GLOBAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS

As David Graeber notes, many groups involved in the global justice movement utilize “a rich and growing panoply of organizational instruments—spokescouncils, affinity groups, facilitation tools, break outs, fishbowls, blocking concerns, vibe-watchers and so on—all aimed at creating forms of democratic process that allow initiatives to rise from below and attain maximum effective solidarity; without stifling dissenting voices, creating leadership positions or compelling anyone to do anything which they have not freely agreed to do,” an essentially anarchist

approach. Indeed, the “very notion of direct action, with its rejection of a politics which appeals to governments to modify their behaviour, in favour of physical intervention against State power in a form that itself prefigures an alternative—all of this emerges directly from the libertarian tradition” (Volume Three, Selection 1). Similar approaches have been adopted by the Occupy movements that spread across the globe in 2011 (Volume Three, Selection 9).

In light of these developments, some anarchists have begun to articulate a less sectarian and more inclusive conception of anarchism which focuses on process and action, allowing for a diversity of views regarding ultimate ends, recognizing that what anarchists seek is social liberation, not the triumph of an ideology. Anarchists have participated in such international resistance networks as People’s Global Action, which also include many non-anarchists, but which also reject more conventional organizational structures. As the Zapatista inspired Second Declaration of La Realidad put it, such networks have “no central command or hierarchies. We are the network, all of us who resist” (Volume Three, Selections 1 & 58).

This view has been embraced by a variety of anarchist groups. In the 2001 Madrid Declaration of social revolutionary libertarian groups from Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, they argue that anarchists “should currently strive towards encouraging convergence, the interaction of social movements—including the workers’ movement—in a solid social movement antagonistic to capital and its present true face: economic globalization and all other types of domination. This antagonistic social movement does not have, and nor should it have, a single organizational expression. It is pluralistic, based on current reality, coming and acting together in the same territory, recreating a common territorial identity, composed of many identities,” such as “the workers’ movement, the unemployed, the excluded, indigenous movements, discriminated groups, ecologists and feminists, promoting direct action as a way towards social reappropriation of wealth and as a form of propaganda by the deed, as an exercise in direct democracy, participatory and federalist, without delegations or intermediaries, building on a community level in each territory and as an alternative to *authoritarian* institutions” (Volume Three, Selection 2).

One of the signatories to the Madrid Declaration, the CIPO-RFM or Consejo Indígena Popular de Oaxaca ‘Ricardo Flores Magón’ (‘Ricardo Flores Magón’ Native People’s Council of Oaxaca), is a liberation movement in the Oaxaca region of Mexico that consciously draws on the heritage of Mexican anarchism and indigenous traditions (Volume One, Selection 73; Volume Three, Selection 59). As the Columbian anarchist group, Colectivo *Alas de Xue*, argues, there exists much common ground between anarchists and many indigenous (or “Indian”) groups in the Americas, such as opposition to the conformity and

homogenization imposed by nation States within their own borders, with their centralized power structures, national “culture” and “official” languages, and the separation of peoples by those same borders, dividing families and inhibiting people’s movements (Volume Three, Selection 60). Many anarchists have become involved in groups like “No Borders” and “No One Is Illegal,” which seek, in Harsha Walia’s words, “to attain justice and victories for immigrants and refugees, and to develop the communities’ own capacity to attain dignity for themselves and their families. Real justice will come as immigrants, refugees, and nonstatus people build greater trust in visions of an alternate world, and organize, educate, act, and fight for their own self-determination” (Volume Three, Selection 64).

This quest for self-determination often brings indigenous peoples and immigrants into conflict with national governments, multinational corporations and the paramilitary organizations upon which they sometimes rely, but it is a quest which lies at the heart of anarchism conceived as a movement that seeks to create a world in which people may, in Bakunin’s words, “take into their own hands the direction of their destinies” (Volume One, Selection 24).

From this perspective, there is no necessary conflict between anarchist anti-statism and communal self-determination—rather, they can be seen as parts of the same age old struggle for freedom, often incorporating similar decision making procedures and forms of organization while employing similar tactics, such as direct action. As Uri Gordon argues in the context of the Palestinian struggle for independence, “anarchists may take action in solidarity with Palestinians (as well as Tibetans, West Papuans and Sahrawis for that matter) without reference to the question of Statehood. The everyday acts of resistance that anarchists join and defend in Palestine and Israel are immediate steps to help preserve people’s livelihoods and dignity, which are in no way necessarily connected to a statist project” (Volume Three, Selection 21).

The Colectivo *Alas de Xue* notes that many indigenous societies utilize collective forms of decision making similar to the kinds of direct democracy that “libertarians have yearned for down through the centuries” (Volume Three, Selection 60). As David Graeber argues, many indigenous communities developed forms of consensus-based decision making that provide a model consonant with anarchist conceptions of direct democracy precisely because in such societies there is “no way to compel a minority to agree with a majority decision—either because there is no State with a monopoly of coercive force, or because the State has nothing to do with local decision-making” (Volume Three, Selection 6).

This is not to say that libertarian groups drawing on these communal traditions uncritically endorse every aspect of them. Sharif Gemie points out that “many tribal lifestyles are explicitly patriarchal: they refuse women any formal

involvement in decision-making. Many tribes also affirm the sanctity of rule by elders, thus rejecting the political potential of younger people” (Volume Three, Selection 50). In Mexico, the CIPO-RFM has consciously striven to deal with these sorts of issues by, for example, actively promoting “a culture of respect for women and for women’s rights, ensuring in practice that within our organization women take up their equal and fair share of positions of representation and responsibility within our ranks” (Volume Three, Selection 59).

In Africa, anarchists have sought to build upon the pre-colonial history of people living without States in egalitarian communities, particularly in light of the disastrous consequences of colonialism and the division of Africa into nation States whose borders were arbitrarily set by the former colonial powers (Volume Three, Selections 51 & 52). Kurdish anarchists have similarly argued that tribal traditions of decentralization and hostility toward the various nation States which have sought to control them predispose the Kurds toward anarchism, leading to the development of a community assembly movement drawing on the ideas of Murray Bookchin (Volume 3, Selection 61). Bas Umali has suggested that Bookchin’s ideas can also be adapted to conditions in the Philippine archipelago, building on traditional community forms such as the “barangay,” a small community of 50 to 100 families (Volume Three, Selection 62).

Whether in Africa, the Americas, the Middle East, or the South Pacific, wherever functioning communities exist, there will also exist social practices and institutions of solidarity and mutual aid. As Elisée Reclus noted long ago, “where anarchist practice really triumphs is in the course of everyday life among common people who would not be able to endure their dreadful struggle for existence if they did not engage in spontaneous mutual aid, putting aside differences and conflicts of interest” (Volume One, Selection 38). Colin Ward therefore argues that “an anarchist society, a society which organizes itself without authority, is always in existence, like a seed beneath the snow, buried under the weight of the State and its bureaucracy, capitalism and its waste, privilege and its injustices, nationalism and its suicidal loyalties, religious differences and their superstitious separatism” (1973: 11). From this perspective, anarchism is not “the founding of something new,” but as Gustav Landauer wrote, “the actualization and reconstitution of something that has always been present, which exists alongside the State, albeit buried and laid waste” (Ward, 1973: 11).

SELF-ORGANIZATION

Instead of recruiting people into specifically anarchist organizations, many anarchists today advocate working within popular organizations that embrace anarchist styles of organization and action, for it is through these sorts of

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organizations that people will be able, in Paul Goodman's words, to extend the "spheres of free action until they make up most of the social life" (Volume Two, Selection 11). A recent example of this approach is the "horizontalidad" movement in Argentina which emerged following the collapse of the Argentine government and economy in December 2001.

People from all walks of life, including the unemployed, workers, the middle class, women, the elderly and gays and bisexuals, created their own non-hierarchical ("horizontal") neighbourhood, community and workplace organizations without any formal leadership, independent of the government, the political parties and the trade unions, in which decisions were made by consensus or through directly democratic assemblies in which each person had an equal voice (Volume Three, Selection 57).

This approach should not be confused with the earlier position of the anti-organizationalists, or with those anarchists who put a one-sided emphasis on spontaneity (such as Hakim Bey: Volume Three, Selection 11). This current of anarchist thought does not reject organization, but views as more fruitful than specific anarchist organizations participation in popular and community organizations created and controlled by the people themselves because, as Murray Bookchin has written, "*a society based on self-administration must be achieved by means of self-administration*" (Volume Two, Selection 62).

ESPECIFISMO

Neither should this approach be confused with *especificismo*, a doctrine developed by certain Latin American anarchist groups which, despite emphasizing the need for anarchists to participate in popular struggles, nevertheless continues to advocate separate revolutionary anarchist organizations that will serve as "a means of overseeing the sustained spread of popular struggles, successfully providing a forum for discussion and action in which these struggles... can overcome their own shortcomings" (Volume Three, Selection 3). But if what anarchists want, in Alfredo Errandonea's words, "is to set up popular organizations capable of taking over the running of society in the most libertarian society possible," then "it is unthinkable that such all-embracing organizations should be under the sway" of any particular political ideology, including anarchism. Errandonea therefore questions whether, from this perspective, "there is any need for [separate anarchist] organizations... to exist." He suggests that there is, if "the aim is to invest anarchism with some dynamic thrust, if we want to grapple with the issue of it being brought up to date, if we feel the need to update and deepen the analysis of where it stands vis-à-vis the present times and in different locations, if we feel it is important to coordinate the activity of its militants within a variety of pop-

ular organizations, if we feel the need to engage in reflection and collective collaboration” (Volume Three, Selection 4).

While Errandonea argues that the “notion of the Social Revolution as an abrupt, apocalyptic act of insurrection is merely a romantic image drawn from 19th century history,” he recognizes that there “may or may not be instances of insurrectionary violence: that will depend on the resistance that the system puts up in different circumstances to the transfer of decision-making capacities and responsibilities” from the hierarchal, bureaucratic organizations of the State and capital to the people themselves (Volume Three, Selection 4). A vivid example is the 2008-2009 revolt in Greece. In December 2008, following the police murder of a young anarchist, there was an insurrection in Greece in which anarchists played a prominent role. As A.G. Schwarz writes, although the “December revolts were not planned... they were prepared for. The insurrection would never have flowered at the moment if the Greek anarchists had not readied themselves to react, and they did this by developing proactive affinity groups united by trust, common politics, and practical experience together; and by carrying out dangerous actions with varying levels of preparation, from spontaneous (reacting in the heat of the moment) to minimal (deciding to do something in just a few hours or the next day and just going and doing it) to meticulous (with intensive planning)” (Volume Three, Selection 15).

One of the longer lasting insurgencies emphasizing self-organization has been the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, which arose in the mid-1990s, creating “a partially liberated zone of thousands of square kilometers. Within this zone thousands of Zapatista communities have carried out a long running experiment in self-management” (Volume Three, Selection 58). One of the differences between the Zapatistas and Argentine and Greek movements is that the Zapatistas do have a military organization which has been able to prevent Mexican police and military forces from reimposing “order” in the liberated areas. To prevent the Zapatistas’ military wing from becoming a new power over the people, all military decisions are made by a clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee composed of recallable delegates from the base communities, and major policy decisions, such as waging an armed campaign, are made through a process of consultation with the base communities, much like the scheme the Makhnovist movement tried to implement in Ukraine during the Russian Revolution (Volume One, Selections 85 & 86).

DIRECT ACTION

What is common to these different approaches is the use of direct action. As Murray Bookchin has written, direct action “forms a decisive step toward

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recovering the personal power over social life that the centralized, over-bearing bureaucracies have usurped from the people. By acting *directly* we not only gain a sense that we can control the course of social events again; we recover a new sense of selfhood and personality without which a truly free society, based on self-activity and self-management, is utterly impossible” (Volume Three, Selection 10). For Bookchin, direct democracy is the institutional counterpart of direct action, the means by which the “direct action ethic” of which Benjamin Franks writes (Volume Three, Selection 14) is given its most concrete expression (Volume Two, Selection 62). Franks notes that direct action may or may not be illegal. What is important, from an anarchist point of view, is that direct action “embody anti-hierarchical behaviour that prefigures the forms of social relationship that the actors wish to bring about” (Volume Three, selection 14).

BEYOND REPRESENTATION

It is through direct action and various forms of direct democracy that anarchists seek to overcome mediated social relationships, creating a society in which relationships are “direct and many-sided,” in Michael Taylor’s words, much as they were in the egalitarian communities found in prehierarchical stateless societies (1982: 27-28). Instead of being represented by others, individuals directly participate in policy making through neighbourhood or community assemblies based on “face-to-face,” rather than “mediated,” relationships (Bookchin, Volume Two, Selection 62). It is this opposition to representation and mediated relationships that anarchism shares with certain post-structuralist currents, leading to the development of a “post-structuralist anarchism” (Volume Three, Selections 65 & 66). As Todd May has written, anarchism “can be defined as the struggle against representation in public life... the handing over of power by a group of people to another person or group of people ostensibly in order to have the interests of the former realized... What both traditional anarchism and contemporary post-structuralism seek is a society—or better, a set of intersecting societies—in which people are not told who they are, what they want, and how they shall live, but who will be able to determine these things for themselves” (Volume Three, Selection 65).

POST-STRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM

Where post-structuralist anarchists part company with other anarchists is in their “abandonment of the autonomous individual or subject as the locus of resistance” to exploitation and domination. According to May, the “post-structuralist analyses of knowledge, of desire, and of language, subvert the humanist

discourse which is the foundation of traditional anarchism. Moreover, they consider humanism's emphasis on the autonomy and dignity of the subject to be dangerous... For the post-structuralists, there is a Stalin waiting behind every general political theory: either you conform to the concepts on which it relies, or else you must be changed or eliminated in favour of those concepts" (Volume Three, Selection 65).

In this respect, post-structuralist anarchism resembles the "epistemological anarchism" of the philosopher, Paul Feyerabend, who argued that the scientific worldview was merely one view among many, with "no greater authority than any other form of life" (Volume Two, Selection 71). His rejection of "universal standards, universal laws, universal ideas such as 'Truth,' 'Reason,' 'Justice,' 'Love' and the behaviour they bring along" is reminiscent of Max Stirner's rejection of such concepts as "spooks" or "wheels in the head" that dominate the individual (Volume One, Selection 11). Saul Newman notes that it was Stirner "who showed that the humanist figure of man was really an inverted image of God, and performed the same ideological operation of oppressing the individual and denying difference" (Volume Three, Selection 66).

HUMAN NATURE AND HUMAN FREEDOM

The post-structuralist critique of "traditional" anarchism is not without its critics. One may seriously question whether a commitment to "the autonomy and dignity of the subject" informed Stalin's megalomaniacal project in any way. In his analysis of Stirner, R.W.K. Paterson suggests that in fact Stirner's critique of "humanism" helped turn Marx away "from a passionately moral commitment to communism as a humanitarian creed... to a sociological affirmation of communism as the historical outcome of objective economic forces" (1971: 117). In Lenin and Stalin's hands, this "scientific socialism" was completed denuded of any moral content or respect for the "autonomous individual," something which "traditional" anarchists were at pains to point out, having suffered firsthand the application of such doctrines and their attendant atrocities (Volume One, Selections 88, 89 & 117).

"If people are, in fact, malleable and plastic beings with no essential psychological nature," Noam Chomsky asks, "then why should they not be controlled and coerced by those who claim authority, special knowledge, and a unique insight into what is best for those less enlightened? ...The principle that human nature, in its psychological aspects, is nothing more than a product of history and given social relations removes all barriers to coercion and manipulation by the powerful" (Volume Three, Selection 27). Feyerabend and the post-structuralists attempt to avoid this criticism by rejecting all claims to intellectual authority, but

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the question remains how the post-structuralists can avoid the nihilistic egoism in which Stirner's analysis ultimately results. May denies that post-structuralism necessarily ends in nihilism, acknowledging that there "can be no political critique without a value in the name of which one criticizes," but argues that what post-structuralists value, namely "self-determination along a variety of registers and at different local levels," is consistent with "the anarchist project of allowing oppressed populations to decide their goals and their means of resistance within the registers of their own oppression" (Volume Three, Selection 65).

In their critique of more "traditional" forms of anarchism, the post-structuralists sometimes repeat more conventional criticisms of anarchism, such that anarchists believe that people are essentially good. To this criticism Kropotkin long ago responded that far from "living in a world of visions and imagining men better than they are, we see them as they are; and that is why we affirm that the best of men is made essentially bad by the exercise of authority... if men were those superior beings that the utopians of authority like to speak to us of... perhaps we also should believe in the virtues of those who govern" (Volume One, Selection 41).

Jesse Cohn has argued that for the "classical" anarchists of the 19th and early 20th centuries, "Solidarity, community, and ethical relationships are not already there as an 'essence' awaiting expression; nor are they non-existent, so that they must be created *ex nihilo*. Rather, they exist as *possibilities* implicit in the biological and social matrix of nature and humanity." For Cohn, "Anarchism, as a movement and as a theory, is not the product of any abstract notion of 'essences,' but of a concrete struggle against the tendency of certain institutionalized practices (e.g., factory labour, patriarchal family life, and State-controlled education) and systems of thought (e.g., Christian dualism, mechanical determinism, and authoritarian ideologies) to turn living beings into submissive, disciplined objects" (Volume Three, Selection 67).

LIBERALISM AND POST-MODERNISM

Mark Leier notes not only that post-structuralist arguments "for relativism and the end of the meta-narrative, the belief in the indeterminacy of truth, and the idea that facts do not exist in any meaningful way may be pressed into service for any political belief," but that "different generations have sought to attach anarchism to the prevailing critical philosophy, from Hegelianism to Christianity to evolutionary science to existentialism to Buddhism to postmodernism... That each of the philosophical bases for anarchism has also served as a basis for virtually every other political ideology suggests that they have no necessary connection to anarchism." Insofar as post-structuralist anarchism "downplays class

exploitation,” it may be seen as resembling “liberalism more than anarchism. The problem with liberalism is that its vision of political freedom leaves the chains of class intact, whatever improvements may be made for other groups in society. The irony is that just as activists have put anarchism on the agenda in new and exciting ways, philosophers threaten to make it irrelevant” (Volume Three, Selection 68). The question of class is central to Schmidt and van der Walt’s arguments in favour of class struggle anarchism in the 21st century (Volume Three, Selection 69).

THE ANARCHIST CURRENT

While May and Newman do give some credit to more “traditional” anarchist critiques of power and domination, Daniel Colson and Richard Day have tried to build on the insights of both post-structuralism and anarchism in developing a new conception of anti-authoritarian politics for the 21st century. “Despotism, in the form of the State, Science, Capital and Religion, generalizes the particular,” Colson writes. “Anarchism, on the contrary, proposes what Deleuze calls the universalization of the singular. The appearance of anarchist writings and the rise of anarchist actions in mid-nineteenth century Europe are not so much models or founding acts as they are rehearsals for all the books and rebellions that are to come.” Colson notes that “anarchism has a heritage, but its inheritance is not transmitted like a title or property, a dogma or a State. Unlike the ‘triumphal funeral cortege’ loaded with the booty torn from those who work the soil, of which Benjamin speaks, anarchism is linked to the living” (Volume Three, Selection 70).

One can speak of an anarchist “tradition” or current then in the sense suggested by Gustav Landauer, where “every glance into the past or the present of human communities is also an act which draws towards the future and which constructs that future,” recognizing that people “were involved in struggles long before anarchism emerged and these struggles should be remembered and celebrated” too. “To the countless experiences, situations and traditions that led to the birth of anarchism in a specific time and place,” Colson argues, “we can add the infinite resources of other cultures and traditions,” and thereby “rehearse a movement that is inspired by anarchism, by its multiplicities and its differences; by the capacity of beings to rely on themselves, by the singularity of the relationship each has to the world, because each of them, considered as unique and irreplaceable, is the bearer of all of the others” (Volume Three, Selection 70).

In his discussion of anarchist currents in contemporary movements against neo-liberalism, Richard Day develops an anarchist conception of “groundless solidarity” and “infinite responsibility” which “can offer an alternative to the politics of recognition and integration,” providing a basis “for creating relation-

ships that do not divide us into disparate, defenceless subjects begging to be integrated by the dominant order.” Instead of seeking to create a unified movement around a common identity or ideology, “the new global order needs to be fought on all levels, in all localities, through multiple, disparate—yet interlocking—struggles” (Volume Three, Selection 71).

What this entails for those who consciously identify themselves as anarchists, in terms of practice, is “giving up control of movements, events and projects, listening rather than talking, linking up with existing organizations rather than duplicating, colonizing or depleting them because they do not seem to be guided by familiar models or led by familiar people.” Day reminds us that while “neoliberalism is globally present, and operates across all axes of domination and exploitation... it is manifested differently for different identities, at different times and places. A multidimensional analysis of oppression is therefore crucial to any effort to oppose, subvert or offer alternatives to the neoliberal world order... Living affinity-based relationships means not only hooking up with those with whom we share values, but actively warding off and working against those whose practices perpetuate division, domination and exploitation” (Volume Three, Selection 71).

Day points to the affinities between contemporary anarchist currents and various indigenous struggles that conceive of self-determination as something which “involves neither a recovery of a partial remnant of a sovereignty lost in the past, nor a futural project of a totalizing nation-State... guided by the reflection that while redistribution of sovereignty may indeed challenge a particular colonial oppressor, it will not necessarily challenge the tools of his oppression.” (Volume Three, Selection 71). As the *Colectivo Alas de Xue* notes, both anarchists and certain indigenous groups oppose the “multinational looting” of natural resources, capitalist exploitation, compulsory military service and the separation of peoples by national borders, while using federative forms of organization (or “alliances”) and respecting social and bio-diversity (Volume Three, Selection 60).

Sharif Gemie argues that the Zapatista movement in Chiapas and the Kabyle rebellions in Algeria, by showing “an incredible resilience in the face of military oppression, a dogged commitment to libertarian forms of democracy, and a surprising ability to seize opportunities: often refusing head-on battles which would only result in (glorious?) defeat, but working to establish a lived culture of resistance... both point to a different type of political culture, neither nationalist nor regionalist, neither particularistic nor universalistic,” which may provide “sketches for a new form of global anarchism,” suggesting “a rethinking of what federalism might mean. Not so much the linking of village to town to city, but a way of living within global cultural structures, within which tribal, regional, na-

tional and transnational cultures could co-exist in some form of harmony” (Volume Three, Selection 50).

Yet as Day notes, while many of the groups seeking self-determination “oppose the current organization of global capitalism and the statist institutions upon which it depends, they do not always challenge the neoliberal system of States as such” (Volume Three, Selection 71). Although anarchists need to avoid appointing themselves the intellectual guides or conscience of popular movements seeking self-determination through self-organization, there is no reason why they cannot participate in such movements as self-identified anarchists, always looking for ways, in Chris Crass’ words, “to form alliances, relationships, and coalitions to work” with others, being “prepared to learn as well as share” (Volume Three, Selection 71). As Malatesta argued, the task for anarchists is not to create their own anarchist trade unions nor to hold themselves aloof from popular struggles, but to work within these organizations as equals, “supporting all struggles for partial freedom, because we are convinced that one learns through struggle, and that once one begins to enjoy a little freedom one ends by wanting it all” (Volume One, Selection 112).

In *Modern Science and Anarchism*, Kropotkin suggests that throughout history “two currents of thought and action have been in conflict in the midst of human societies,” an anarchist current representing the creative activity and self-organization of the masses, and an authoritarian current of hierarchy, command and obedience (1912: 15). While post-structuralists and others have argued that freedom and power cannot be characterized in such binary terms, what I hope to have demonstrated in the material included in this anthology is that there is indeed an anarchist current running throughout human history, from the nonhierarchical sensibilities and social relationships found among people living in stateless societies, to the nonhierarchical and anti-authoritarian worldviews of the Daoists and various religious sects, heretics and free thinkers, to literary and popular utopias with their visions of freedom and well-being, to the radical egalitarianism of the anarchist currents in the English and French revolutions, to landless peasants and indigenous peoples, to artisans and workers resisting industrialization and factory discipline, to artists seeking freedom of expression, to students and draft resisters, to women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people struggling against patriarchy and heterosexism, to the discriminated, dispossessed and all manner of people seeking sexual and social liberation.

From this perspective, as Malatesta wrote, “it is not a matter of achieving anarchy today, tomorrow, or within ten centuries, but that we walk toward anarchy today, tomorrow, and always... every blow given to the institutions of private property and government, every uplifting of the popular conscience, every

disruption of the present conditions, every lie unmasked, every part of human activity taken away from the control of the authorities, every augmentation of the spirit of solidarity and initiative, is a step toward anarchy” (Volume One, Selection 131).

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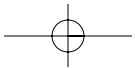
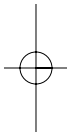
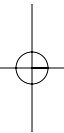
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