

Stirner

October 26, 1806 — June 23, 1856

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Contents

Vibration (By way of Prologue)	3
Chapter I: Birth of the 19th Century	5
Chapter II: The Man	7
Chapter III: The Work	11
Chapter IV: Critique	14
Chapter V: Spring	16

In Memorium

To Emile Armand, individualist anarchist, as an offering of profound admiration and great affection.

M.G.I.

Today, June 23, 1956,

Makes one hundred years since the death of Juan Gaspar Schmidt,

Born in Bayreuth, Germany,

October 25, 1806

This single man gave birth to the most original and daring book of the recent centuries, *The Unique and Its Property*, signing it with the name Max Stirner.

As a tribute of gratitude to those who offered me the spring of virgin knowledge, from which I drank, sounding like my word, perhaps alone in the world.¹

Miguel Gimenez Igualada

Vibration (By way of Prologue)

When human material vibrated for the first time, the entire Universe vibrated; upon vibrating, man was conceived and, upon conceiving himself, acquired the knowledge of himself and of created work.

To say man is to say cosmos: creator, creature, environment, and creation.

Without man, there would not have been virtue in the cosmos, nor beauty nor happiness. He created crying and laughter, pain, pleasure, justice, religion, and science. Because of him, god and fossil live. On him, depend the human and the unhuman, the political, the religious, and the atheist.

Man was created by creating, and in creating man increases, expands, grows, and raises – the last and most important dimensional direction of the man who wants to be unity, togetherness, Everything.

Because only in man do the cosmos vibrate, only he can express them. That which he doesn't express, doesn't exist.

God exists because man created him. It was a hairbrained idea of his, a desire, a dream, a concept. Perhaps out of fear of falling into egotism, man made the ideal of himself, personifying the ideal in being its creation.

It is that as far as he saw or dreamed, or sees or dreams, man communicates his life, his vibration.

Man created time and space, the finite and the infinite, and there is no time, nor space, nor limits for him. His thinking, the only affirmation of his life, protects him in space, destroys the barriers that limit him, and drills into the infinite.

The message that he put on the lips of Christ, and that he made Buddha speak earlier, is the expression of his messages of light, the light of tomorrow that is to illuminate the centuries to come, and the light of yesterday that illuminated the centuries that passed. And it is that the steps of man pierce through prehistory and lose themselves in time, towards the future.

Because of this, only man is capable of poetry, that is to say, capable of creating, and only he can rummage through the baggage that another man, his ancestor, was leaving in the darkness of yesterday, in order to uncover it today now that he illuminates it, today that he summarizes the past and puts it on a pedestal to jump into tomorrow.

¹ This tribute should have been edited on the date indicated, but misplaced by a change of domicile, I lost the manuscript. Today, April 1, 1968, I found it in the background of an old, abandoned trunk and I hasten to publish it.

Not all of the creatures have vibrated; not all, to our disgrace, will vibrate; not all reach or have reached the ability to pierce time and space. Some only are, they're there, without consciousness of their own, without life, without vibration. They are in pain and they aren't capable of transforming the pain into pleasure.

Chapter I: Birth of the 19th Century

A brain that forges thoughts, is something that does not admit comparison. Because what eagle's nest can be made in an altitude that man doesn't scale? What mountain fills the heavens that man doesn't fill?

Man brought pregnancy the 19th century in its fertilized womb, so that he couldn't disappear without leaving planted in life two of his children, commissioned to launch to their siblings the messages that they extracted from the quarry of manhood.

Thus, shortly after arriving, and calling him to shake the foundations of society, he gives birth to his first child, Stirner, and, immediately, to remove the cobwebs that he previously might have left in gullible minds, paired him with his second, Darwin. Because of them, the 19th century will be full of commotion: a volcano that will launch thoughts like boiling larvae.

After this birth he smiles with content and satisfaction: it will not be a dark century, as so many were, but a century that will mark an epoch: in the midst of creatures that, like human-nothings, vegetated and died without name and without light, he has planted, in order to illuminate the coming centuries, two men that bring hardy baggage.

The previous centuries, those of the fall of Greece, put in circulation an essay of a man: Jesus; but this double birth is a reality: manhood has exceeded for having acquired its maximum potential. Stirner and Darwin are two beacons that will light a world in darkness by having recognized in themselves the light that couldn't shine from Thales.

His first explosion, his first eruption, an earthquake that should the planet and space, is produced in 1844, when the century is in its maturity, with the appearance of *The Unique and Its Property*, the work of his first son; the second and third take place, one in the year 1859 with the appearance of *The Origin of Species*, that drives a landmark into the world of biology, and another in 1871, in which Darwin speaks to the world about *The Origin of Man*, casting Adam and Eve not only out of their Garden of Eden, but out of the world, by demonstrating that they were only a pipe dream and not the parents of the human race.

What a commotion this produced on the planet! What kinds of discussions were heard from all parts of the world! What damning words poured from believing lips!

It is that the century had given birth to two men and, consequently, the works and prose that they have produced have left the Earth to fill the Cosmos, for cosmic thoughts populate the brains of these unique.

Because Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle aren't Hellenic, but precursors to the Triune God, they dirty all that pertains to the individual, sewing his lips so that he cannot speak nor laugh, for if with Thales and the philosophers of his school man is incited to engage in struggle with the world to dominate it, with Socrates, with Plato, and with Aristotle man is invited to have contempt for the worldly goods, to believe in The Idea and to worship God.

Both represent the two paths that the world has to follow, the two paths it will walk, the two principles or concepts that men will use to regulate their lives. The former are triumphant;

gradually walking, the Hellenic grace disappears and with it the joy of living, the terracotta of Tanagra and the majestic marbles of Phidias following.

Then arrives Christ, prohibiting thought and belittling man, entering into the Middle Ages with his procession of darkness. And though it produces a kind of renaissance, life falls into a stupor. Ideas ruminate, they are not thought. Christ prevails, and with him enter or prevail over the world Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, his precursors.

But as the path of manhood could not be stopped nor directed askew, though banned, men work in the shadows, clandestinely, digging a tunnel in time to emerge in the 19th century.

Because of this, Stirner, heir of Thales and Anaximander, strains himself, like others, in putting the world at the service of man, for that which leaves the Earth, that elevates man to space, finding in it an immense vacancy: the Aristotelian god, who is so feared, is a spook created by feverish imaginations; the paths of man are free of nuisances and can travel them without fear.

How Stirner would have enjoyed, if he were alive, the affirmations of his brother Darwin! In power and in truth, the glory was in the Earth, filling all of it, and it would be tomorrow if one creature after another were abandoning their false positions from the nobodies of the species to acquire the hierarchy of unities, of individuals, of men, of unique.

For if there are not gods, we can understand ourselves, we that live on this land, which should no longer be a valley of fears.

Chapter II: The Man

Give me wide, clear fronts that are like clean, open skies through which worlds of light circulate.

Stirner is not known. Philosophers, who should know him, are panicked at the irreverent that rises up against all divine and human dogmas, and libertarians, who should not ignore him, have only read intentionally misrepresented excerpts from his portentous work or evil spins of criticism from those who could not understand him.

Today makes one hundred years since the death of Stirner, and like the world of hypocrisy, and that of barbarism, and that of cowardice remain the same as those he wrote, his thoughts, from which the great libertarians who succeeded him seem so fresh, clear, and pure, as if they had just been written today.

But let's look for him, as he is here before us.

For being a child of the century, it was this, his great parent, who gave him brand and name. Brand, because he gave him a clear and beautiful forehead; name, to enhance its attributes.

In the baptismal font he was adopted by Juan Gaspar, that is to say, zero, nothing; the century, not conforming, baptized him in light. His name would be Stirner, for his beautiful and luminous forehead: it was his childhood nickname and he couldn't agree to having a Christian name, since he would not be a follower of Christ.

Nor did he have ancestors, since the genealogical tree of Miletus had been extinguished and a surname wasn't necessary. Stirner, child of Time, would fill the coming centuries with light.

Because thoughts flow within that create cranial box, his young friends call him the century, and in the University, he is known as Stirner, for his beautiful forehead. Without a doubt, they see or admire that which stirs in that head as without equal.

Needing language as a necessary, precise, and reliable instrument to express the beauty and charm of the thoughts that dwell in his young mind, he becomes a philologist, longing to know that which each word carries, its formation and origin, since through words passed down the world can understand the men that gave it life; and because he needed to know how to pierce through things, and through the acts that produce things, he studies philosophy. With these weapons, that only the unique knows and can brandish, he charges against the ideas of God and the State, considered by him as the most harmful ideas that could harbor in the mind of the human creature.

He studies with Hegel in the University of Berlin; but he quickly fights with his teacher, a metaphysician with grand views of rationalism. Who could have imagined then that the young man with a wide forehead, blue eyes, and a clear and dreamy look would come to be the greatest nonconformist that the human race would ever meet!

Michelet, then at the head of the Hegelian left, gives some courses in the University of Berlin, and, knowing of it, there runs Stirner, anxious to drink from the fountain of pure thought. But neither did it satisfy him, nor did he shape him. A divorce had been produced between teachers and disciples, and that powerful mind went off drawing a new path.

In 1835 *the Life of Jesus*, by Strauss, was published, producing a deep stir in the spheres of German intellectualism. There were moments where it appeared that in the garden of intellectual life the beliefs in divinity were blooming for the last time; but Strauss, who poetized religious legends, making them more attractive and beautiful, reinforced the idea of God. In *the Life of Jesus*, Christ is more god and less man than in the biblical legend. And it is that the rationalism of Hegel, reinforced by Bruno Baüer, Strauss, and Feuerbach, is at its source an exacerbation of theology.

It is said that Hegel had been overcome, that the concept of individual liberty, and that of the individual, are going to bloom, but Protestantism, which brings God down from the heavens to seat him in each home to preside over family gatherings, reinforces, rather than destroys, the idea of divinity.

Therefore, theologians end up embracing Strauss's Man-God, and of the few who dare to scrutinize the Bible, some accept as truths the legends that others poetize, and they listen to the heresies that frightened them yesterday. So, many believe, few think, and all argue, as both Marx and Engels, who stroll through those circuses, make the Hegelian dialectic their own, which has so much use in supporting their God-State theories.

From that epoch, three books are conserved: *The Life of Jesus*, by Strauss, *the Essence of Christianity*, by Feuerbach, and *the Unique and Its Property*, by Stirner. The strongest, firmest, most thought-provoking, and the one that stays the surest, is *The Unique and Its Property*, which is the one that most shakes the foundations of the old; the one which, for its great originality, encapsulates in its pages the most audacious and novel ideas; the one which obliges you to think. Strauss and Feuerbach are Christians, though the latter calls himself an atheist. Stirner, not needing to make a show of his atheism, is the supreme negator of God.

Feuerbach's book, which incarnates the rational atheism of those years, germinated socialism – Lasalle and Feuerbach are friends, coinciding in the theoretical aspects of the rationalist theology –, that, for not being able to be the absolute negator of divinity and, consequently, of authority, translates both to the Earth, conserving for Society, converted by them into God, the same earthly prerogatives that are given to God in heaven.

Socialism is, then, though a negator of Christ, a Christian sect: it denies God in the heavens, but erects the State, which is its God, and even has its iconography. Thus, Lenin can say that "liberty is a bourgeois prejudice", just like it is also a prejudice for socialists to be owners. Like ancient Christianity, its ancestor, socialism comes to be the religion of the poor, of those that neither want to be nor feel like having. The huge collective houses of today are the successors of churches, collective houses of yesterday, and the proletarian family is the same Christian family that has changed in name. Therefore, if yesterday it was burning someone who denied God, today it shoots someone who denies that State, because those men fit neither in the house of God nor in the house of the People.

But then why do socialists laugh at Mosaic law? That's true, that's true; but it is no less true that they require that the law of the State is accepted, and that the commandments for this, of an origin as doubtful as those from Moses, are equally demanding and inexorable, which is why the contributions and taxes are as burdensome as the tithes and offerings, the former keeping the political hierarchies plump and lustrous, the latter keeping the bishops plump and lustrous.¹

¹ The socialist *clergy*, like the Christian clergy, considers itself as the direct heir of God, although, the socialist god is named Society.

A current socialist minister takes on the jurisdictions of a cardinal, and the provincial governors are equated to the old bishops. From there they invoke the same rights – oh how they confuse divine and human rights! – in order to direct the masses, fiercely disputing their catechization. And those catechized are not the men, we have them for sure, but spooks of men, human nothings. The order, which isn't maximum, from Ignacio de Loyola is accepted and practiced equally by Christians and socialists: *you will be like the assistant of a blind man who is unwilling to move.*

And as reforming is reinforcing, reinforced are those who reform. That's why, justly, Lutheranism is called Reform: Luther reformed and reinforced the idea of God, which was fading, undone, and lost in the Middle Ages. Therefore, viewed correctly, the idea of God doesn't end in 1459 with the fall of Constantinople in the hands of the Turks bringing an end to the Byzantine Empire, but that it is Luther who brings it down to Earth, because with him is who produces the rapture of the previous epoch. The day that Luther (1517) nails into the doors of the Church of Wittenberg his ninety-five theses against Catholicism, begins the Reform and, consequently, a new historical epoch, making the fall of Byzantium represent no more than an episode, a guerrilla skirmish with luck for the Turks and disgrace for the Byzantine. With him, then, with Luther, the Middle Ages die and the Modern begins, which is the time of Socialism, or that of the collective or common against the human unit; that of the flock against the individual; that of the masses against the man.

Marxism had to be born by force in the rich land by the protestant, and Karl Marx is as Lutheran as Luther, his putative father, as protestant and as reformist and as reinforcing as him. Thinking in detail and examining carefully and attentively the intellectual movement of Germany of the 19th century, it is easily explained that socialism was born from the fatherhood of Luther, and that Marx, son of a German Jew, was who filled it with breath and provided it with life. Israel and Germany are two nations that considered themselves the chosen people, and Marx, raised and cultivated in this double environment of religion and authoritarianism, believed, like another Messiah of Moses and Wotan, that he was chosen to reincarnate the new God State. In the base of Marx's consciousness germinated a strong religious feeling, therefore, thinking, creatures should be united (subjected, voluntarily enslaved, which is the most abject of slavery) to the State. The idea of God did not reach such development in the Middle Ages as socialism (Marxism) has reached in the present, having overcome Lutheranism, of which it is a direct, legitimate descendent.

The Lutheran Hegel would say that the State was the reality of moral life, because it was the manifestation of God on Earth. Hence, he would also need to make clear the idea of the Prince, of the First, incarnated in him the idea of the State, being the Prince a kind of God against whom creatures are worthless nothings. There's nothing strange about how Hegel triumphed in that faithful Germany, as the greatest singer of despotism. The Prussian government paid its zeal through making the Hegelian philosophy obligatorily the official philosophy of the State. Hegel coincided with Calvin in that the Church and the State were divine institutions, and with Marx in that the State is the regulator of life. The great "doctrinarian" despots Lenin and Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini, thought in the same way. And it is that there is no difference at all between the Hegelian conception of the State, and Hitler's conception, and the Marxist conception, and

² Current socialists offer to the world a second edition of the fights that the Church supported between the empires of the East and the West. It should not be forgotten that the Catholic crusades looted their brothers in Constantinople.

Mussolini's conception, though they arrived to it through different routes. The state, the only moral force, is the regulator of life (Wotan). Marx wasn't a Hegelian in vain, Hegel wasn't a fervent Lutheran in vain, and not in vain were, and until they disappeared, after filling the world with men, with anger, with pain, and with fears, convinced socialists, composing between them the high clergy of Socialism.²

Alone, defiant, upright towards everyone, Stirner raises his powerful voice denying from gods, popes, princes, and governments their human and divine rights, showing with his accusing finger at the theologues of all sorts and faiths that, covered in false principles, that they build with sacred doctrines, they overexploit man.

Before his powerful voice, everything trembles; before his pickaxe, everything crumbles.

And with that it is explained that all the religious hate him: among the flocks. Stirner is the man; among the human nothings, Stirner is the unit of value; among those that permit that they be divided, Stirner is the individual, the indivisible; among those that, through fear, stay mute, Stirner is he who speaks, and therefore, the rebel, the deserter, the Unique, he who sends to man, his brothers, the message of freedom that has never been heard on the planet.

Chapter III: The Work

The job of man is not to conquer bodies to subdue and devour them, that is the job of rapacious animals; the job of man is that of creating light. That's why Stirner said: "I am like a candle that illuminates and consumes itself". A candle, is to say, a light. And that was his job.

When someone opens *the Unique and Its Property*, the first thing they will read is the following: "I have not based my cause on anything", title of the preface; but if upon beginning to read one is frightened, it is better they throw away the book, because *The Unique* was not written for cowardly people, believers in God, in the Law, in the State, in Justice, in Truth, in the Crown, in Spirit, or in Homeland, causes in which all or almost all found or base their own cause, but for those that believe in themselves, for he ends his short preface with these words:

"Evil is every cause that is not entirely and exclusively mine! ... I am my cause, and I am neither good nor bad, for to me those are words".

We now know, then, that Stirner bases his cause in himself, that his cause "is neither divine nor human; not the truth nor the just nor the free; it is mine; it is not general, but unique, like I am unique".

That's why, some pages further, and after attacking the Spirit – the idea of the spirit –, he exclaims: "For me, nothing is above me". "And blasphemy doesn't scare me, because I do not fear", thus if "the divine looks at God and the human looks at man", I look at myself.

Until Stirner arrived, such irreverence was never pronounced, hence he is paid with contempt, casting a thousand curses upon him that he always hears with Olympic disdain.

Speaking of the Moral, a god that also calls for sacrifices, he says:

"Socrates, the perfectly moral man, despises the offers of Crito to escape from prison, and for his subjugation to the Moral, Socrates dies. And it is that Socrates – we say – couldn't do anything else because the sophist lacked a sense of freedom and even a sense of personality, clinging as he was to the Moral. With Socrates, the Moral was a religion for which he would die. With his renunciation of life, he intends to keep the moral principle safe – to save the ideas though the man perishes, principle of the religious Plato –, and the Moral doesn't triumph, and the man dies. The cause of Socrates is the cause of the Moral, the ungodly God who, like the other gods, demands sacrifices.

And it is that "fanaticism – Stirner continues – is especially typical of educated people, because the culture of a man is in relation with the interest that he takes for the things of the spirit, and this interest, if it is strong and lively, cannot be more than fanaticism, interest for the sacred (*fanum*)".

And we should ask ourselves in order to see how, though we changed in the exterior, that not in our insides, Socratic ideas perpetuate. Don't our democrats, and our socialists, and our communists, and our unionists, and our conservatives put as much fanaticism in their actions as the Jesuits? Like Socrates, they are all ready to die for their cause, which is God. However, they all call themselves free men, whether they're liberals that speak – like Feuerbach, of the man-god, or communists that speak of the man-masses.

Referring to freedom, always as judicious as he is irreverent, Stirner says:

“Doesn’t the spirit aspire to freedom? Oh! It’s not just my spirit, it’s all my flesh that burns incessantly in the same desire”.

And he gives an example:

When you think about what others have and what you don’t get to enjoy, “what you want is not the freedom to have those beautiful things, because freedom does not give them to you; what you want are those exact things, call them yours, own them as property. How does a freedom that gives you nothing serve you? If you free yourself from everything, you will not have anything, because freedom is, in its essence, emptiness from everything”.

“I find nothing to disapprove of in freedom; but I wish you more than freedom: that you have what you need and want, because it is not enough to be free, you must be more: owner”.

“Freedom is the doctrine of Christianity. Thus, it says: ‘You are called, dear brothers, to freedom’”.

“But should we reject freedom because it is revealed as a Christian ideal? We shouldn’t lose anything; we should only make our own what is presented to us as an ideal of freedom”.

“What a difference between freedom and individuality! Because one can be without many things, but one cannot be without everything. Freedom doesn’t exist more than in the world of dreams; but individuality, my property, is, conversely, my demand and my reality. I am free of what I do not have; I am owner of what is in my power”.

“Submitting into servitude of an owner, I set my sights onto no more than myself... and since I have no sight but myself, I will take the first opportunity that arises and crush my owner. And I will be free of him and of his whip. And my action will be the consequence of my egoism”.

“Think maturely about it and decide whether you will inscribe upon your flag the word freedom, a dream, or individualism, a reality. Freedom activates your anger against anything but you; egoism calls you to the joy of yourself, to the joy of being; freedom is an aspiration, a Christian hope for the future, individuality is a reality that in itself suppresses all obstacles to freedom”. “The individual is radically free; the free is a dreamer”. “My freedom becomes complete only when it is my power; for the latter I only give up being free to become an individual, possessor”.

And later on, continuing with the same theme, since the changes mean nothing more than greater exaltation of the individual, he affirms:

“Man is an ideal; the species, a thought. For me, to be man is to be individual... I am who I am... because I am without rule, without law, without model. Perhaps I can do little, but that little is worth more than what a strange force could make of me: God, the Moral, Religion, Law, or the State”.

“... the social reformers tell me that the individual doesn’t have more rights than those that Society grants to him, that is to say, that he has rights if he lives not as an individual, but as a legal person. And the Christians tell me the same, and the communists, and the socialists, and the libertarians, ignoring or wanting to ignore that who gives me rights can take them away whenever he pleases, because if I do not submit, Society, the State, the Prince, or the President may declare me outside the law, amassing any social or treasonous laws against me. And it is that in a compulsory society it is to say as Euripides said: ‘We serve the gods, whoever they are. That is to say, the law, whatever it is, god, whatever it is.’ And in this we live just like they did six thousand years ago”.

This explains why “my individual will be destructive to the State; so, society dehornes it in the name of indiscipline. Individual will and the State are enemy powers between whom peace is

not possible”, because “the power of the State manifests itself under the power of compulsion: it employs force. This force, when the State employs it against me, is called right, and when I employ it against the State, is called crime”.

“Now, when the individual considers that the State is a God which he must respect, that is, that the State is sacred, he respects it and abides; but if the individual considers himself above the State, he tries to destroy it. The barbarian Roman emperors spoke of the *sacramautoritatem*, and Augustus, sacred himself, turns Rome into the *Urbs Sacra*. Brutus, who does not respect the consecrated endowments, attacks Caesar”.

Chapter IV: Critique

Man: open the window of your intellect to all the winds, and when you have bathed in them, judge and tell us, with serene judgment, which was the purest.

To understand Stirner, the language of Christianity isn't useful to us, because many times he gives a meaning to the words that, though real and logical, Christianity doesn't accept, this occurs with individual, personality, egoist, autonomy, autocrat, which is to say governing oneself, and that autocratism, and not the other, is what he recommends, knowing as he knows, that one cannot be an egoist – a cultivator of one's ego – any more than one is the owner and master of oneself. That's why the association he speaks of is an association of autocrats, of autonomies, of masters of themselves, of anarchists, of unique, extending anarchism to not only rejecting external governments or forces, but also refusing to impose their will on anyone else. Hence, he calls to men – the single call that records history, because it is the call of an unmatched consciousness – to be units of value, to not just look like it, because only among high individuals, between unique, can there be understanding, and because only among them, among egoists, cultivators of their personality, can they enjoy true freedom.

And that is why he doesn't give his conclusions the character of doctrine, as do those who consider themselves creators of ideas, parties, organizations, or religions, for doctrine binds and compels, and he wishes that no one will be endowed with powers to organize and direct the life of another person. So, when he searches for men – he greatly enjoys meeting with the people – he wants to find in each one a unique with his own desires, with particular needs, with singular thoughts; he seeks unique with the will to be, loving themselves not to risk their salvation by putting their salvation into the hands of others, so they refuse to hierarchicalize man's activities, not wanting masters nor slaves; he seeks men as associates – “take me, he says, and spend me to your advantage, as I take you and spend you in mine” – not like things to climb upon to achieve power, for even though he wants to be powerful – power of himself and in himself, inner and proper strength – he does not wish to force any person to think or act as he pleases, but so that no divine or human power can silence his voice or twist his thought. Hence, when he exalts force it does not refer to the force of subduing, but, on the contrary, to the force that does not allow himself to be subdued.

Considering that being and having are the same – it is not, for him, that someone doesn't own the property of his individuality, which is the greatest treasure, and doesn't have that which is not personal or individual – he says to men: “You will never exist more than when you are your owner and will never have more property than when you lose respect for property, the same way that slaves quit being slaves and become men when they lose respect for the master”. And like individualists, free in their fullness of joy, they wouldn't come to be free as long as they have to rent their minds or their bodies, he invites men not to defect from work, but not to work for someone else. “Work for yourself, and not for anyone other than you; for your association, and not with another person you haven't given life to, but with someone who forms with you a partnership of shared interest”.

“If you work for yourself, you won’t have a master that orders you nor exploits you, for the master becomes so when you humbly erect him as such and ceases to be so as soon as you refuse to kneel before him. Put, then, your will at your own service, and not at the service of another person”.

Can our trade unionists speak like this, whatever their ideological or doctrinal position, as they call it? No, they cannot, because if one day they began speaking like this it would be because they had quit being herders of men.

If the workers were advised not of production, but of insubmission; if they were made to desire property and manhood, instead of working for the bourgeois, they would work for themselves, and the bourgeois, who will exist as long as they have employees at their service, would have to partner with those who are trained to produce. And then the unions would disappear, that tyranny, just as the churches will disappear when the fear of God disappears.

Understand why the word individualist is spoken with contempt and why it is wanted to be made synonymous with inhumane. Oneness, that is, manhood, is reached when the powers of individuality are highlighted; when one does not live dependent to anyone, man or god, idea or society; when one wants to be and feels like having: bread and ideas, their own bread that they owe to no one and their own ideas that have formed in their own brain. Because there is no individuality in humanity taken collectively; there is individuality in the ego. From one ego to another there can be understanding and commerce, while as a people no one can understand anyone, because the unique necessarily hinders the State and the people. Between individuals, the individual unites with the other, because an egoist can unite with another egoist, and between themselves form an association.

“I do not pretend – and it is Stirner speaking – to have or be anything particularly to make me pass before the others; I do not want to benefit myself at their expense through any privilege; but I don’t measure myself with the measure of others, and I don’t want reason in my favor, I don’t want any kind of right either. I want to be everything that I can be, to have everything that I can have. That the others are or have something analogous, I don’t care. I have what I have, and I am what I am, what they can’t be”.

And I beg readers to pay attention to the following words:

“Because, I have discovered in you the gift of enlightening my life, I have made you my companion. Take me as I take you and use me as I use you. I make you my property, you make me yours”. But for this it is precise that you begin by being the owner of yourself. “My individuality, that is to say, my property is myself. I am at all times and in all circumstances mine, and from the moment that I understand being mine, I do not prostitute myself”. Do not prostitute yourself and we will be able to take the path together, hand in hand.

Who talks like that? The individualist anarchist Stirner; the man that without calling himself moral gave the world the strongest and highest morality the world could see.

Stirner killed within himself the hatreds, all the hatreds, even the grudges, because placed outside of all the beliefs that teach to hate those who do not accept their political or religious dogmas, he feels free, totally and completely free. Through being free and living on the margin of those hatreds, he understands those who live dominated by their passions. Hence his sense of full freedom. He is freed from all others’ doctrinal guardians and even from those that he could give himself. That’s why he is an egoist, individualist, and anarchist; unique.

Chapter V: Spring

It will be madness, though beautiful madness, to raise the problem of harmonious human living; but it is possible, and magnificent, to solve it in itself.

Those who, without fear, would have finished reading *The Unique and Its Property* will have verified that this book, after one hundred and twenty-four years of its publication, remains a spring from which flows the always virgin lymph of pure thought, so in it they drank and so do the philosophers and revolutionaries of this century and of the past and they will continue to drink for generations to come.

Bakunin's affirmative denial, "to destroy is to create", was clear water from the Stirnerian source: "everything we destroy in us from ghostly prejudices, let us exalt our personality".

Not in Hegel, as some have awkwardly said, but in that song to the will to overcome, that is *The Unique and Its Property*, did the Russian nihilists rely on to carry out those formidable extermination campaigns against Tsarist absolutism, and when in St. Petersburg or in Moscow a tsar or a grand duke "flew", the dynamite was, neither more nor less, the voice of Stirner, that of that broad and dreamy forehead, who spoke to the world through the interpretation made of his ideas by the Russian nihilists.

From him, and from no other, springs the *International*, for when no one had dreamed of speaking to the workers as men, he speaks to them, and when everyone finds it that the worker lives only dying wrapped in his misery, he calls to the unique who can be germinating or asleep in every man to rebel against his exploiter. Bakunin and Marx, who heard his words, were the clumsy craftsmen of what the genius dreamed of.

Kropotkin, who before Stirner feels a kind of doctrinal terror – Kropotkin in a Socratic moralist – endorses a principle of Stirner's, which is the vital law: the evolution of man and the tendency of every living thing towards a happier existence.

Guyau, a tinker and moralist, endorses the same affirmation considered by him as an appetite that frees the species. Stirner said: "It is necessary to banish pain so that instead satisfaction and joy may grow in its place". And some time later, Guyau says: "Pain approximates death; joy leads to life".

Tucker, the individualist anarchist cult, in love with Stirnerian thought, propagates, as a legacy or inheritance of the great egoist, his libertarian egoism.

But did Owen know Stirner's ideas? Possibly, even if it cannot be confirmed. Owen unveiled his cooperativist ideas in 1844, the same year that *The Unique and Its Property* appeared. Stirner had previously talked about his ideas on the "association of individuals" who refused to work for the lords, and although the cooperative is only a caricature of the association between individualists, there is nothing particular about Owen's idea having its roots in Stirner. (The participation of workers in the profits of enterprises, which poses as a socialist idea or conquest, is nothing more than a disguise of what Stirner posed by telling the unique: "work for yourself and form the association of uniques in which you neither exploit nor are exploited".)

And is Nietzsche not a non-confessed disciple of Stirner? Doesn't his better, radical evolution have its antecedent in *The Unique and Its Property*? Is there no analogy between the superman – man overcome – and the Stirnerian unique? Is the Nietzschean will not directly related to Stirner's will of power, to such an extent that they are the two anarchies, since they mean neither power of dominance, but power not to allow being dominated? The exaltation of Stirner's individuality? Couldn't Nietzsche's commitment against Christianity have its origin in Stirner's attacking the idea of divinity? And isn't the great philologist's aristocratism the child of the other great philologist's autocratism?

These two thinkers present such analogies, that it would be good and curious to be able to investigate the influence that Stirner might have had on Nietzsche, which would have happened if he could have freely rummaged through the six thousand kilos of papers that the loner of Engandina left in the basement of his home; but who that knows Stirner will not think that he was looking at him as Nietzsche wrote *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, although it was conceived and written when Nietzsche had already lost his mind?

Finally, and to finish, even Tolstoy's pietism has a kinship, and not far away, with that immense spring of thoughts and suggestions that was Stirner.

In love with its mettle and strength, his talent and depth, Mackay collected his works, and Armando constantly made known since *l' en de hors* ideas of production from which he was undoubtedly the father of anarchism. Thus, we know that, apart from *The Unique and Its Property*, Stirner published a translation, in eight volumes, of the major works of J.B. Say and Adam Smith, a *History of Reaction*, due to his pen and an essay by J.B. Say about *Capital and Interest*. In *Small Writings* Mackay collected his studies and replies to the criticism that were made to him.

He died – June 23, 1856, 112 years ago – in poverty, if by poverty we understand the non-possession of gold, in wealth, if by wealth one can understand self-dominance, living his ideas, feeling unique in the midst of the whirlwind of human-zeros who, terrified of thoughts, throw themselves against each other with open jaws. He could have asked for a professorship in the State, but he preferred to go looking for candidates to whom to freely give a lesson in manhood.

Mexico, April 1968.

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