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Contents

time of the French Revolution, before class analysis, the social changes were quite clearly about the whole of the population, and while patriarchal practice determined that men were usually the leaders and spokesmen, it was understood that women participated and played significant roles. By the time we reach the Russian Revolution, we are clearly looking at a male event — theorised by men, led by men, for men. There were exceptions, of course, Rosa Luxembourg, Krupskaya and others, but their fate is indicative — they were abandoned or their ideas disregarded. But it is more than just a narrowing in gender terms. There is also a narrowing to the workplace, to trade union organisation and thus their leadership, to ethnic Russians and to men of a certain age and of a certain demeanour. Even this does not explain the shift.

The struggle between the anarchists and the Marxists is clearly one between broader and narrower conceptions of a revolution.[46] Some major questions then are: what contributed to this narrowing and what are its implications? Is the narrowing simply part of what we call modernisation? Accumulating scholarship questioning the validity of the basic concepts of Marx and Marxism is going, in some cases, as far as questioning the validity of Marxism being called 'socialist' at all.

[46] See Cahm, p.247 for explicit discussion of this point.

violence he believed were mis-directing their energies. Funds for all groups were being obtained by bank robberies, Joseph Stalin being an adept at this for the Bolsheviks, apparently. The advice was not heeded but the emphasis to the outbreak of war turned to the fomenting of strikes. During the War years activities largely tailed of.

Immediately the more-or-less spontaneous February, 1917, rising had occurred in Petrograd 'and brought the monarchy to dust'[44], anarchist federations were created in Moscow and Petrograd 'with the aim of transforming the twin capitals into egalitarian communes modelled on an idealised image of the Paris Commune of 1871.' This anarcho-communist momentum spread rapidly. Groups of anarcho-syndicalists pinned their hopes on factory committees, which also sprang up quickly.

> By the autumn of 1917 some form of workers' control had taken root in the vast majority of Russian factories, and there were even sporadic instances in which the factory committees expelled their employers, foremen and technical specialists and tried to run the enterprises themselves, sending delegations in search of fuel, raw materials, and financial aid from the workers' committees in other establishments.[45]

All of these groups were about to learn the bitter lesson that their predictions about Bolshevik dictatorship were accurate.

Conclusion:

What is noticeable in this history of European socialism and revolutionary theory is the narrowing of the concept. At the

[44] Avrich, 1973, as above, p.10.

[45] Avrich, as above, p.12.

The anarchist (libertarian socialist) theoretical chronology for this unit, involving the ideas of William Godwin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Michael Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin, is only one small part of the story of anarchism, so I'll give you a quick overview, then return to 19th century Europe to look more closely at the Paris Commune and the run up to the Russian Revolution.

Here are some definitions of anarchism:

- Encyclopaedia Britannnica:

  > Anarchism is the belief that it is practicable and desirable to abolish all organised government, laws and machinery for law enforcement. (p.861)

- Nicholas Walter, self-declared British anarchist:

  > Anarchism is based on a belief that human society can and should be organised by free agreement between individuals and groups without the systematic use of power by some people over other people.[1]

- Lenin:

  > an infantile disorder.[2]

- Michael Schwab, in a courtroom speech after being framed and sentenced to death for the Haymarket bombing in Chicago, 1886:

[1] Freedom, (UK), 25 Oct, 1980.

[2] V. Lenin, 'Left-Wing Communism — An Infantile Disorder', 1920, reprinted in Marx, Engels, Lenin: Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism, International Publishers, 1972, p.304.

> "Anarchy" is Greek and means, verbatim, without rulership: not being ruled. According to our vocabulary, anarchy is a state of society in which the only government is reason.[3]

- Malatesta, an Italian activist:

> Anarchy is a form of social life in which men live as brothers, where nobody is in a position to oppress or exploit anyone else, and in which all the means to achieve maximum moral and material developments are available to everyone; and Anarchism is the method by which to achieve anarchy through freedom and without government, that is without authoritarian organisms which, by using force, even possibly for good ends, impose their will on others.[4]

- Sebastian Faure, a French activist:

> Whoever denies authority and fights against it, is an anarchist.[5]

- The entry on anarchism in the Encyclopaedia Britannica from which I quoted above begins a section on 'History of Anarchism' with:

[3] P. Berman, Quotations from the Anarchists, Praeger, 1972, p.27.

[4] V. Richards (ed), Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas, Freedom, 1977, p.20.

[5] Quoted by G. Woodcock, Anarchism, Pelican, 1979, p.7.

with a number of actions including the assassination of the Czar Nicholas II in 1881. This only led to such intense and determined repression that a few years later the movement was in tatters — 'almost every militant of any shade of opinion was in prison, in exile or dead.'[41] Outside Russia the libertarian dominance reversed itself, numerous well-known anarchist propagandists switching to Marxism, eg in 1883 with the formation of the 'Liberation of Labour' group by Vera Zasulich and others. This group in 1898 became the Russian Social Democratic Party which produced, by schism, the later Mensheviks and Bolsheviks.

Exiles continued to produce anarchist material, a Kropotkin-influenced journal appearing in 1903 at a time of growing unrest:

> industrial strikes, peasant riots, and student demonstrations succeeded each other with growing impetus, and there was disaffection in the army and even among the Cossacks.[42]

The 1905 Revolution, in which factory committees set up a Soviet, or Commune was, as with the Paris Commune, more-or-less spontaneous, again catching 'professional' revolutionaries by surprise. Anarchist theories seemed legitimated, though Kropotkin wrote:

> It is not Social Democrats, or Revolutionary Socialists, or Anarchists, who take the lead in the present revolution. It is labour — the working man.[43]

At a secret conclave in London in 1904, Kropotkin had urged delegates from Russian groups to abandon their tendencies to

[41] Woodcock, as above, p.388.

[42] Woodcock, p.390.

[43] Quoted at Woodcock, p.390.

A development of the syndicalist approach were factory committees and workers' councils which, if they were set up by the workers themselves, were more likely to indicate a common consciousness.

Russia:

Anarchist influence amongst Russian militants was considerable, even producing some home-grown initiatives like the Mahknovists who fought the Red Army to a standstill in the Ukraine after the !917 Revolution, but the anarchist trajectory was, in general terms, similar to that in the rest of Europe, excepting Spain.

It is fair to say that it was the Russian mir or village that Herzen, Bakunin and Kropotkin had in mind when they mused about independent rural communes, and the fierce antagonism towards central authority of the Russian peasants was legendary. Giving that suspicion of authority, devising a coherent, political impetus was the task adopted by numerous activists who financed and carried out the printing and the distribution of propaganda from the 1840's, firstly of the work of Proudhon, then Bakunin, then of Kropotkin. 'Going to the people' was a strategy adopted in the 1860's and later by young intellectuals and organisers.

The first Russian Anarchist group was formed at Geneva in 1867 as a Russian section of the International Brotherhood when Bakunin met up with a number of exiles. Returning home these emigres brought back literature and helped revolutionary groups smuggle material into the country by various means, keeping out of the reach if they could of the Russian secret police which, by the 1870'a and 1880's, was already the most extensive and most feared network in Europe.

By the end of the 1870's the revolutionary movement also went into a period of organised terrorism, succeeding

> Forerunners of anarchism include the Greek philosopher Zeno and some Hussite and Anabaptist religious reformers. Anarchist ideas were expressed by the French writers Rabelais and Fenelon…[6]

George Woodcock, author of the most widely read English-language history of libertarian ideas, devotes a whole chapter to 'The Family Tree' of anarchism and examines claims of influence and/or sympathy in the work and lives of Thomas Jefferson, the Levellers of Cromwell's England, Chinese philosophers such as Lao-Tze, and many others. Organised Anarchist movements have appeared in most if not all countries of the world and any complete history of anarchism would, from their own statements, have to include the likes of Oscar Wilde, Tolstoy, John Cage, George Orwell, Ghandi, Noam Chomsky, Michael Foucault and Germaine Greer.

Some authors have concluded from the literature that there have been three strands of anarchism, historically: anarcho-individualism, anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism. Much of what follows is about the last two of these, but it is relevant for what follows that this list excludes the very potent anarcho-feminism. I'll return to this at the end, for although anarcho-feminism is not relevant to today's discussion, its exclusion serves to summarise my central point.

Other authors have contended that it was not easy to discern a common element in anarchist thought but have settled for an anti-state impulse as the lowest common denominator for classical or 19th-century anarchism, at least.[7]

Identifying anarchists is not like spotting koala bears and some of the fiercest debates within anarchist groups have been between those who believed that no-one could tell another per-

[6] As above, p.861.

[7] R. Fowler, 'The Anarchist Tradition of Political Thought, The Western Political Quarterly, xxx, p.739.

son what anarchism was or wasn't and those who believed that anarchism was just like any other kind of politics and could be defined through discussion and acted upon, collectively, by any number of people. The former position, of course, was essentially anti-intellectual and against any kind of debate or negotiation and thus was destructive of any kind of organisation. It meant that anyone who wanted to call themselves an anarchist would do so and claim that this name gave them freedom from any criticism and freedom from any need to justify their actions in any way. Historically it has manifested from time to time, and some people took themselves quite seriously as anarchists, for example, a group from the 1950's and 60's, the Sydney Libertarian, whose members saw themselves as anarchists and therefore 'permanently in opposition.' The idea has manifested in such slogans as 'Vote (1) for Nobody', 'Guy Fawkes: The Only Man to Enter Parliament with Good Intentions' and 'No matter Who You Vote For, a Politician Gets In.' It has also historically manifested in the notion of the Outlaw as Anarchist, the romantic image of the eternal outsider or Rebel Without a Cause, and more destructively in practice in self-negating lifestyles of meaningless crime, drug abuse and the like.

Such people were plentiful during the Russian Revolution of 1917. Avrich commented:

> The Individualist Anarchists rejected both the territorial communes of the Anarchist-Communists and the workers' organisations of the Syndicalists. Only unorganised individuals, they believed, were safe from coercion and domination and thus capable of remaining true to the ideals of anarchism. Taking their cue from Nietzsche and Max Stirner, they exalted the ego over and above the claims of collective entities…(They) attracted a small following of Bohemian artists and intellectuals, and occasional lone-wolf bandits who found expression for

> parliamentarism. Any anarchist who has agreed to become a permanent and salaried official of a trade union is lost to anarchism.[39]

To which the syndicalist Monatte replied:

> If, instead of criticising the past, present or even future mistakes of trade unionism from above, the anarchists would concern themselves more intimately with its work, the dangers that lurk in trade unionism would be averted forever.[40]

What emerges from this and related debates was another version of 'the mountain climber fallacy.' Just because someone calls themselves 'a worker' or joins an organisation with a name suggesting it supports workers' interests does not ensure that, in practice, the individual or the organisation knows much at all about the issues involved. There is certainly little reason to assume agreement among persons or groups just because they are calling themselves 'worker'. There is even less reason to suppose that persons recruited as 'workers' would all have a libertarian consciousness.

For syndicalists, it was sufficient that workers working alongside one another joined the same organisation. The experiences thereafter would develop class-consciousness and ultimately bring on the revolution. For an anarchist, the serious question is whether the lived experiences of the people involved has already brought or is likely to bring them to a shared understanding of the problem to be solved and the direction of the answer. Simply because people live in the same vicinity or work at the same task or in the same building does not mean they have come to have shared understandings.

[39] Quoted in D. Guerin, Anarchism, Monthly Review Press, NY, 1971, p.79.

[40] Guerin, as above, p.80.

communist structures, the CGTSR and CGTU. By 1902 the CGT involved a complex structure combining local labour councils [bourses de travail or unions of local unions], all with educational, etc, functions, with one another and with trade organisations based on similar occupations, similarly co-ordinated, into a national federation with the task of organising common action. If and when a revolution was successful it was intended that

> the Labour Chambers would take over the administration of existing social capital in each community, determine the needs of the inhabitants of their districts and organise local consumption. Through the agency of the Federation of Labour Chambers it would be possible to calculate the total requirements of the whole country and adjust the work of production accordingly. On the other hand it would be the task of the Industrial and Agricultural Alliances to take control of all the instruments of production, transportation, etc, and provide the separate producing groups with what they need.[38]

Malatesta held serious criticisms of the anarcho-syndicalist forms as well. He consistently argued:

> Trade unionism is not, and never will be, anything but a legalistic and conservative movement, unable to aim beyond — if that far! — the improvement of working conditions…One should not ask workers to strike; but rather to continue working, for their own advantage…In the industrial movement the official is a danger comparable only to

[38] R. Rocker, 'Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism', in P. Eltzbacher, Anarchism, Libertarian Book Club, NY, 1960, p.254.

> their social alienation in violence and crime, with death as the ultimate form of self-affirmation, the ultimate escape from the constricting fabric of organised society.[8]

This idea that anyone can call themselves 'anarchist' is what I call 'the mountain climber fallacy.' Some of the other, related ways in which elements of anarchism have been reduced to glib, easily dismissed slogans include: the definition of 'anarchy' as 'no rulers' is often 'translated' as 'no rules' something which is quite different and something which no serious anarchist would espouse.

Another is that 'freedom', which is a touchstone for anarchists, is turned into 'Anything goes' which is nonsense for anyone who knows anything about anarchism. Anarchists find it particularly galling to be caricatured as disruptive and undisciplined. Similarly, the idea of living the anarchist life 'all day and everyday', in order to diminish the gap between what a person says and what they do, or in more general terms, between theory and practice, has been reduced to spontaneism or acting on impulse.

Further, the reasonable anarchist critique of the corruptibility of organisational forms has been reduced to the notion that all organisation is corrupt and that anarchism therefore could not be organised. One last one was that since power over others was to be opposed by serious revolutionaries, all power was wrong, per se, and was to be (somehow) abolished in a 'new politics.'

Such notions can be easily parodied but they can also be countered with suggestions that they amount to signs of arrested adolescence, an indication of the illness suffered by people living in industrial society, not the cure. They thus invite discussion in the context of the Marxist notion of alienation.

[8] P. Avrich, Anarchists in the Russian Revolution, Thames and Hudson, 1973, p.13.

A 20th-century anarchist response has been a theorisation of the causes of this arrested development and of aids to further personal growth.

In addition to the problem that these superficial readings create for scholars of the history of anarchism, there is the added problem that much of the serious literature on anarchism has been written by its enemies. This is a dilemma faced by numerous groups or ideologies, but the more enemies an idea has the more literature there is which must be treated sceptically. And anarchism has had a lot of enemies. The general problem faced by scholars of anarchism, then, is how to distinguish those who speak from 'the inside', from those who denigrate anarchism without thinking about it and from those who disagree because they have thought about the issues.

In general terms, anarchists hold that humans are essentially social animals, 'who can realise themselves fully only in relationship with others.' Thus a world without coercion, based on 'mutualist social and economic institutions' can be built and stabilised, but it is crucial that the methods used in producing the result be the principles intended to underpin the final result. Anarchists, in their theory, tend to argue that it is only through a non-coercive revolution that a non-coercive society can be established.[9]

In practice, anarchists, like everyone else, have found the dilemma of power more complex. During the Spanish Civil War, 1936–39, the anarcho-syndicalists of the CNT and FAI, the largest and best-developed anarchist movement up to that time, split over the question of the path to be followed. One group, mainly from the leadership of the CNT, joined an interim Spanish Ministry which included Communists and left-reformers, apparently conceding that 'power, hierarchy and discipline' were necessary for the achievement of revo-

[9] M. Ackelsberg, The Possibility of Anarchism: The Theory and Practice of Non-Authoritarian Organisation, PhD, Princeton University, 1976, pp.4,5.

He was sympathetic to individual acts of revolt and profoundly moved by the struggle of the narodniks in Russia, but insisted that such 'attentat' grow as part of a fully-committed popular struggle, in which an International Greviste or Strikers International would play a vital role.[37]

While extremely influential the anarchist-communism of Kropotkin did not escape criticism from the theorists and activists of anarcho-syndicalism in Spain, Italy and France. One particular critic was Errico Malatesta. He pointed out that relying on the spontaneous creativity of an insurrectionary people was not good enough. It meant loss of the initiative at vital moments, a likelihood of fatalism and difficulties for coherent organisation. Kropotkin's notion of a great store of wealth waiting for expropriation was subjected to close examination as well. London proved, for example, to have only two days of reserve food in store. The greatest sufferers of interrupted production would of course be the poorest and most infirm. Other criticisms were that the idea of an abundance simply available somewhere for the taking ignored the questions of the immorality of certain kinds of production and certain levels of consumption. Attempts at rationing would, on the other hand, be inefficient, endlessly bureaucratic and restrictive of civil freedoms.

Strictures on any division of labour would be counterproductive in those situations where great job satisfaction meant increased quantity or quality of production. Similarly, too great a faith in the absolute superiority of small, informal, temporary and strictly functional groups would mean that certain advantages of structured, permanent organisation, given certain safeguards, would be lost.

The first major anarcho-syndicalist organisation was the Confederation Generale du Travail or CGT, established in France in 1895. It was in competition with syndicalist and

[37] See Cahm, pp.270–276, for discussion of these points.

> antagonism which exists between their interests and those of the bourgeoisie,…secondly they help immensely to provoke and establish between the workers of all trades, localities and countries, the consciousness and very fact of solidarity.[34]

The Spanish Federation, from 1870 to 1873, developed 'an elaborate system of local federations of trade unions, ostensibly established on a decentralised basis, but crowned by a federal council with extensive powers and dominated by a few leading militants.'[35] One result of their anxiety to avoid a disastrous confrontation with capital coming too early was that they actively discouraged all strike activity. This satisfied some who preferred reformism, but not all. In the Jura region of Switzerland other Bakuninist trade unions developed successful campaigns for improved wages, reduced working hours and better contracts, without bringing a backlash down on them.[36] This was the beginnings of revolutionary syndicalism but it clearly was capable of interpretation and extension in a number of directions. The Belgian movement developed past its Bakuninist faith in two directions: one towards the twin ideas of direct action and the general strike and another pursued specific reforms such as protection for child workers in factories by legislation.

Kropotkin, influenced by incidents in Pittsburgh, 1877, and by a visit to Spain the same year, and later by the development of New Unionism in Britain, urged determination of answers to these choices on the grounds of a distinctively anarchist action, by which he meant one that aimed at popular expropriation of stored goods and was as broadly based as possible, 'focussing on the activities and concerns of the communes both in the towns and countryside, inside and outside the trade unions.'

[34] Bakunin, 1872, quoted in Cahm, p.216.
[35] Cahm, p.217.
[36] Cahm, p.219.

lutionary goals. On the other hand, the bulk of the anarchist 'rank-and-file' proceeded with a program of mutual aid and thoroughgoing collectivisation over a large part of the Spanish countryside.

It can be argued that it was this spontaneous and widespread sweeping away of capitalism and bourgeois relations which precipitated the crisis, since by doing away with the status-quo the collectivisations produced a fierce backlash, and it was to defend the revolutionary gains against this reaction that the pro-collaborationists needed to take office. Subsequently, the debate about which was the correct or appropriate path has centred on the lack of collaborationist success, which was, of course, also the failure of parliamentary politics. The Franco counter-revolution succeeded and overwhelmed the republican and the libertarian causes. One author has pointed out that the collaborationists failed to see that the collectivisations were potentially their most potent weapon. Rather than gaining power by entering the Ministry the anarchist leaders lost power by, firstly, identifying with and becoming submerged in a hierarchical organisation and, secondly, by becoming distanced from the people who were their natural constituency. The anarchist theory correctly predicted the spontaneous creativity of an aroused populace, but then showed it had no 'clear understanding of the concrete ways in which revolutionary fervour (and effective revolutionary action) could be translated into the structures of a new society.[10]

> They failed to recognise that the collectivisations, workers' committees and revolutionary councils which characterised the revolution were, in fact, elements of the new society. And, in treating all those achievements as only partial realisations of

[10] Ackelsberg, 1976, as above, p.553.

> anarchism, they lost the opportunity to unite theory and practice, as well as any possibility which might have existed for the consolidation of the anarchist position.[11]

In non-revolutionary situations, opponents of the State will make their presence felt in areas of State activity, ie war strategies and the arms race, taxation and the economy, and human rights and internal security. They will manifest as pacifists, as co-operators and communalists, as agitators for freedom of information and for equivalence of treatment in justice systems. The particular 'answer' supplied and acted upon by an individual anarchist will depend on the question posed as the pressing issue. For example, anarcho-feminists have asked: how can women be freed from discrimination?

Historically, and in a very sweeping generalisation, anarchists first saw THE problem to be solved as industrialisation and large work places, then the State and the Church, then material systems of oppression such as the courts, schools and families, then 'the policeman in our heads' or the ways in which everyone internalises the habits of conformity and dependence. Thus, the most recent manifestations of anarchism have been little concerned with grand theories but rather with life-styles and such things as aesthetics, housing, the ecology, personal relations, small group politics and community resources. Throughout, it needs to be said, attachment to the land, integrated education and child-rearing have been constants and the work of Wilhelm Reich, Ivan Illich, Paulo Friere and the whole of the second wave of feminism have been influential.

Literature on the detailed workings of anarchist societies, and the many serious claims that such societies are impossible in practice includes: George Bernard Shaw's pamphlet called

[11] Ackelsberg, as above, p.536.

would be maintained in abundance by 'everyone according to their ability.' There would be no need for standing armies or centralised police and security forces as the whole would be held together and in balance by moral strength, nurtured in children from birth, and by free agreements.

He did not become involved in the turbulent events of the Commune or its aftermath until 1876, when, as a Bakuninist, he was more interested in action rather than anarchist theory. The loss of prestige suffered by anarchism through the 1870's and the clear drift towards violence for its own sake eventually convinced him of the need for a re-think. Russia had no trade unions and, looking especially at the English examples, he and many others were at best ambiguous about them. Trade unions were seen as limited and moderate in their demands, authoritarian in structure and likely only to impede the efforts of real revolutionaries. Even if they could be radicalised it was feared that trade unions would engage in precipitate, ill-considered and poorly organised strikes.

Nevertheless, the nature of capitalist industrialisation compelled a continuing discussion about trade unions within the International from as early as the 1868 IWMA Congress. What emerged was a rough consensus around the idea of solidarity across national boundaries, gradually extending and deepening a specific crisis. This outline, of course, leaves many questions for debate. Bakunin believed that the trade-union based International would 'not only guide the revolution but also provide the basis for the organisation of the society of the future.'[33] He recognised that 'the isolated worker is too crushed by his work and his daily cares, to have much time to give to being instructed.' Strikes were doubly important:

> they electrify the masses, reinvigorate their moral energy and awaken in them the feeling of the deep

[33] C. Cahm, Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism, CUP, 1989, p.215.

sising the work-place and workers' organisations. There have been policies adopted by syndicalists which were social in orientation, but syndicalism is about the transformation of society through control of work, the processes of production and the distribution of the product. The key weapon is the general strike.

By contrast, the fully anarchist position, perhaps best exemplified by the FAI in 20th century Spain, used 'affinity groups' as the basic organisational unit. These could consist of workers in one workplace and could adopt policies about working conditions, but their focus was always the broader one. What can be seen as a compromise term, anarcho-syndicalism, or anarchist trade-unionism, gained great currency in France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, and remains one of the most interesting of political developments. It was necessarily communist and thus we must now look at the contribution of Peter Kropotkin to the debates around the role and function of the emerging trade union movement.

Peter Kropotkin, Russian Prince, geographer and scientist of international reputation, also achieved influence as an anarchist writer and activist as a refugee from his homeland after escaping from jail where he had been placed on charges of conspiracy and revolutionary activities. When he came to espouse 'his' anarchism it was fully and consciously communist, not collectivist. But it was also a 'social' revolution he had in mind not just a workerist or work-place based one. Thus, as with Bakunin, economics did not play the central role and he had the whole community in mind.

He rejected all notions of a workers' state, advocating instead a future society based on free cities or village communes, each independent administratively and economically, though federated where appropriate. No system of representation would be necessary, nor most schemes involving division of labour. Money would be abolished and everyone provided for 'according to their need', out of a central store which

The Impossibilities of Anarchism; Bertrand Russell's contribution, The Roads to Freedom, Aldous Huxley's Island and George Orwell's Homage to Catalonia. Then, of course, there is the vast literature which is usually titled fantasy or utopian much of which seriously considers the questions raised by anarchism.

All of the glib slogans (above) contain a little bit of the anarchist truth but the total is far more profound and far-reaching. Anarchism requires great courage because it necessarily involves risk-taking and has therefore become more interested in why many people are, in Erich Fromm's term, afraid of freedom. Anarchism places its faith in humanity and human potential guided by science, not the other way around. If science or scientists insists on getting out of control or developing in harmful ways, it or they are expendable. On the one hand there have been anarchist poets and outlaws, on the other there have been anarchist scientists, whose contribution has begun with the belief that nature is knowable and therefore integration of human activities into the overall scheme of things was not only theoretically possible it had to be the most basic of building blocks. Since last century, anarchists have been in the forefront of what are now called 'green' issues. From Peter Kropotkin's Fields, Factories and Farms to Murray Bookchin's many titles to Val Plumwood and Ariel Salleh in Australia, anarchists have been environmental pioneers, not just to protect whales or Keep Australia Clean but as part of a comprehensive approach to social organisation.

Anarchism's awareness of humanity's place in the natural world can be summed up in the phrase 'the natural order.' Nature is orderly if violent sometimes and often hard to cope with, it is the man-made world of pollution, exploitation, crime and poverty, which is chaotic and contradictory. Similarly, an anarchist society aims to be orderly and harmonious but through self-regulation, not an imposed discipline. The more society is driven by the agendas of alienated rationality or by out-and-

out injustice the larger is the problem to be solved. Removing the particular dictator or policy analyst is only part of the answer. And the more political theories are compromised by the agendas of mechanistic problem-solving, as in industry, the more they become part of the problem. Thus, the greater the Marxist, socialist or syndicalist emphasis on the work place as THE point of the problem and thus THE point of the solution, the greater the theoretical hostility from anarchism and from anarchists.

For anarchists, it is important to note that the necessary change, the revolution if you like, involves the journey as least as much as the arrival, and thus the emphasis on means and ends. If you want a peaceful, pollution-free world, the path to it must be peaceful and pollution-free. This belief explains the most recent emphasis amongst radicals on making far greater effort to understand the process of social change over product or goal. It also explains much frustration with what passes for political discussion, even political studies courses, which invariably concern themselves with political goals, like electoral victories, not the processes. Corruption of power holders can be said to come about from their ignorance of the political process in which they are involved at least as much as from greed. In aphoristic terms, 'you cannot get the answer right if you can't get the question right'. This applies most severely for ordinary people. The further one is removed from the apex of the decision-making hierarchy, the more crucial information and the ability to process information becomes. Thus, anarchists are determinedly opposed to hierarchical organisation and often conflict with other erstwhile social change colleagues, such as Marxists, over the location of decision-making power. And thus the anarchist exploration of alternative organisational forms (communes/collectives/co-operatives). In the 19th century, the only obvious alternative form seemed to be the secret, conspiratorial group, often with the trappings of Freemasons, and this proved especially

atres, even legislative chambers, in the belief they were striking at 'the enemy', the anonymous bourgeoisie who, it was thought, could stop the poverty, the injustices and the degradation of the working classes if they wished. These acts of individualised warfare were cynically used by the newly-emergent mass circulation media to build sales, hysteria and a conservative backlash.

Condemnation of these events by influential people within the anarchist press as 'dangerous buffoonery' gained no coverage in the mainstream papers. From approximately 1871 to 1917, 'Anarchist' increasingly was THE word of abuse and of fear[31]. Many other ideologies and political movements, also, tried 'propaganda of the deed', of course. In nearly all cases these attempts, anarchist or not, were, in retrospect, naive and futile in the extreme, under-resourced and poorly organised. The Irish Republicans still commemorate a particular 1916 event as 'the Easter Rising' which was about as ridiculous an attempt at revolution as it's possible to imagine.

Some others that have been labelled 'anarchist' have subsequently been proved to be plots to frame and discredit all opposition movements. Some were simply plots by police to get promotion. The most famous of these is the Haymarket Affair in Chicago in 1886, which is inextricably mixed up with the first attempts at a modern May Day.[32]

Syndicalism:

'Syndicat' is the French word for trade union and 'syndicalism' is thus a collection of theories and practices empha-

[31] See R. Kedward, The Anarchists, Library of the 20th Century, 1971, p.45, where he says 'the price the anarchists paid for the terror was a reputation for being satanic and subhuman.'

[32] See H. David, The Haymarket Affair, Collier, 1963; B. James, Anarchism and State Violence in Sydney and Melbourne, 1886–1896, self-published, 1984.

was the theory deficient? There are many individual stories of political turnarounds and of such deep disillusion that former militants suicided or went insane. Others, such as Paul Brousse, learnt from the experience and mixed a degree of pragmatism with the idealism. His strong advocacy of 'propaganda of the deed' during the 1870's was built on the belief that spirited actions could stir a population into revolt, but when he realised that, outside a few exceptional cities like Paris, ordinary people were not convinced by this argument unless living conditions were absolutely intolerable and a specific flash point at hand, he turned to the development of socialism at the level of municipal politics. As Stafford notes, this allowed a coming together of reformist socialists and anarchists in activities at the local or communal level.[30]

During the 1870's and 1880's it is probably fair to say that anarchism lost touch with the labour movement, due to repression, loss of key activists to jail and disillusion, and to the greater attractions of parliamentary and trade union organisations. Marxist politics emphasising economic revolution, bureaucratised Parties and an alternative State apparatus grew steadily. Anti-Authoritarian Internationals set up immediately after the Commune came under heavy fire from a number of sides and took some years to throw off the Bakunin/Proudhon heritage and develop a sufficiently detailed strategy to challenge the more centralised strand of socialism.

Frustration at the lack of improvement in living conditions and at the harsh measures used by State authorities to stop agitation boiled over into unemployed demonstrations, localised insurrectionary skirmishes and assassinations or attempted assassinations of heads of State. In a number of other spectacular cases people calling themselves 'anarchist' or on the fringes of anarchist groups hurled bombs into crowded restaurants, the-

[30] D. Stafford, From Anarchism to Reformism: a Study of the Political Activities of Paul Brousse, 1870–90, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971, p.247.

easy to label 'anarchist' and caricature (GK Chesterton's The Man Who Was Thursday or much of the literature on hippy communes).

To summarise this section, I would suggest that anarchism, as a collection of thorough-going attempts to gain control over one's own life, logically points to the replacement in revolutionary theory of class analysis with power analysis. The process of reaching a democratic society is never ending since decision-making power accumulates in all sorts of ways for all sorts of reasons, thus the anarchist revolution is not about replacing one form of State authority with another but about constantly pushing for the maximum equivalence in power relations.

History is never as clear cut as this. Constant hostility and competition for dominance with Marxist formulations have alternated with periods of united fronts against a common enemy. Marxists would claim overall victory in this struggle, a claim rendered somewhat suspect by the recent collapse of the USSR and the general discrediting of economic determinism, class analysis and Marxist formulations. There are, in fact, numerous reasons why anarchism has not received the same serious consideration as Marxism and some of these will become apparent in what follows.

Anarchism in Relation to Socialism in 19th century Europe:

It is generally accepted, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica says, that the first major, exposition of modern anarchism was provided by William Godwin whose Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Justice was printed in 1793. He did not call himself an anarchist, or even use the word 'anarchism', but advocated a stateless society of small, autonomous communities and a distribution system based on the principle 'to him

who most wants it.' Almost at the same time, in Revolutionary Paris, were occurring probably the first occasions of 'anarchist' being used as a term of abuse — against certain 'enrages' or agitators who pressed for the more radical changes and the more ruthless sweeping away of the old order.

Proudhon, in 1840, first used the term to describe a particular philosophy when he referred to himself as an anarchist and answered the famous question posed by the title of his book, What Is Property? Answer: 'Property is theft', by which he was specifically referring to contemporary European forms of usurpation and monopoly. His preferred system was what become known as 'mutualism', a social system wherein only limited property rights were granted, where profits and interest were banned. At the heart of his scheme were small producers who exchanged their product with customers using units of labour as a means of measuring and comparing value, in other words as currency. Variations on such an approach were developed in the USA and Australia and can be reckoned as one school of anarchism. Woodcock's summary is that Proudhon

> seeks to rebuild society not to abolish it, and he envisages the world of the future as a great federation of communes and worker co-operatives, based economically on a pattern of small individuals and small groups possessing, (not owning) their means of production, and bound by contracts of exchange and mutual credit which will assure to each individual the product of his own labour.[12]

Possession by householders of their land and dwelling and by an artisan of his tools was, for Proudhon, 'a keystone of liberty', his chief criticism of the communists being that they wished to destroy this.[13] A People's Bank, to oversight the sys-

[12] G. Woodcock, Anarchism, Penguin, 1975, p.17. Woodcock's Chapter 5, 'The Man of Paradox' is a detailed study of Proudhon.

[13] Woodcock, 1975, as above, p.105.

proletariat. Although 'the working class' was a label increasingly used to describe the participants, the work-place was not the key location of the agitation. The Commune was the first historical rejection of the belief that ordinary people, not just some arbitrarily defined-group labelled 'workers', were not equipped to govern, in other words to legislate and to administer. The explosion of the electoral process as soon as the Commune was declared was testament to the widespread, suppressed desire.

Major reforms indicate a desire to break down centres of power not to build a new 'State: the standing army was abolished; the Church was no longer to receive aid from the government and to have no role in education; no member of the government was to receive a salary higher than that of a skilled worker, and no section of the government was to operate without popular control; all the legislators were to be subject to recall at all times. The only reform to receive unanimous support from the Communards was one confiscating abandoned factories to allow them to be turned into co-ops run by the also-abandoned workers.

Shortly after the Armies had re-imposed order, Bakunin and one of his key supporters were expelled from the IWMA and the IWMA effectively killed off by Marx and his supporters sending the General Council to New York. Thereafter International Congresses that were held in European cities throughout the 1870's and the early 1880's were Anarchist-organised and run. They have therefore been called the Black or Anti-Authoritarian Internationals when they have been mentioned at all. More usually, they have been excluded from socialist/communist histories of the period. Bakunin died in 1876 and Marx in 1883.

In the wake of the Commune's destruction, the death of the First International and the expulsion of Bakunin came bitter debate, recriminations and soul-searching. The immediate questions were: what went wrong?, who was at fault? and/or how

the aspirations for a better life of the mass of working people who knew their history well enough to know that the 1789 Revolution had been hijacked by demagogues and ideologues and had brought little of lasting benefit to them. Equally, it was a Revolution that could only have occurred in Paris. We can see, in retrospect, that it was destroyed partly because of the cultural and emotional gap between Parisiennes and the provincial French who did not come to its aid. In its short span, however, the Commune reached further and more coherently for realistic responses to inequality and injustice. That it failed showed how much more was still required.

There is no need to go into all the detail of the Commune. Part of its importance is that it has provided theoreticians of many kinds for 'evidence' for their particular assertions. As the Times article I've handed out shows the balance of opinion is that it had an anarchist orientation rather than Marxist. There have been different reactions to this reality however. Schulkind, author and editor of a comprehensive collection of Commune documents, described it in terms that amount to a subtle denigration:

> (The) popular activity that ultimately led to the creation of the Commune remained predominantly spontaneous and improvised…It is primarily in this sense that the revolution of March 18th was the last of the nineteenth century French Revolutions…(It) did not move appreciably towards formation of the kind of programme, structure and strategy that would have made it a forerunner of a modern, Left political strategy.[29]

Clearly, it required none of the claimed Marxist preconditions to begin. There was no vanguard party, no Central Committee providing the pre-planning, no class conscious

[29] Schulkind, p.35.

tem of exchange and to advance credit at a nominal rate (to cover costs of administration) was in the process of being established by Proudhon and his supporters (1849) when he was arrested and jailed for articles he had written in his newspaper Le Peuple. While imprisoned he wrote books including The General Idea of the Revolution.

On release from prison, Proudhon, widely regarded as the only well-known socialist who argued in defence of the 1848 insurgents at the time, fell on hard times. His name frightened possible employers and he had little money to re-establish himself. He continued to write, producing Of Justice in the Revolution and the Church and War and Peace, 'a provocative work on the sublimation of warlike impulses into creative social urges.'[14] He was continuously harassed and spied upon by the authorities and, threatened with further jail, fled to Belgium, from where he found his influence was increasing among radicals of various kinds all over Europe. In 1863 he was able to return to Paris where he published The Federative Principle. He argued that local administration could build into confederations of regions, without breaching the principles of individual and local autonomy. The smallest region would have as much influence as the largest and 'all affairs would be settled by mutual agreement, contract and arbitration.'[15]

In the 1860's the correlation of nationalism with forceful democracy began to unravel and working class organisation was talked about as transcending national boundaries. Proudhon argued against involvement in parliamentary politics and against trade unions, but during the last years of his life he was more than at any other time involved directly with working people and their attempts to organise. His last book Of the Political Capacity of the Workers, set out what he meant when he argued that 'the proletariat must emancipate itself.'

[14] Woodcock, as above, p.127.
[15] Woodcock, p.130.

> To possess political capacity is to have the consciousness of oneself as a member of the collectivity, to affirm the idea that results from this consciousness and to pursue its realisation.[16]

The 'idea' for Proudhon was mutuality, and its realisation would be through federalism.

There are other anarchist strands of interest in the 19th century, such as Max Stirner's extreme individualist or 'egoist' anarchism which also retains adherents today. In this case the State was to be replaced by an Association of Egoists or persons acting entirely for themselves, in which situation society would slowly evolve into federations of free co-operatives.

What have proved to be more widespread and more resilient strands, however, are the collectivist and communist strands which began to appear in the 1860's and 1870's. By the time of the Paris Commune of 1871, which is central to my narrative today it was generally accepted that delegates from Spain, Italy, Belgium and Switzerland to 'the International', gatherings of which might attract a hundred or so every year, would be anarchist in orientation.

Marx established virtual control of the IWMA through its General Council shortly after it was established in 1864 and became the author of its important statements. He only attended one of the annual Congresses, in 1872, and his influence was gained through behind-the-scenes work. At that Congress, however, in September, 1872, Marx preferred to shift the office of the IWMA to New York, which he knew would cause its demise, rather than see a more libertarian socialism become the dominant voice at its meetings.[17] Clearly, discussion of the significance of the Commune must include some attempt at understanding the interplay within the IWMA and the relationship of the Commune to that dynamic.

[16] Quoted at Woodcock, p.132.

[17] Woodcock, as above, p.167.

that they go along with the idea. This 'government', however, quickly ran out of momentum, its legitimacy being undermined in Paris by vigilance committees in each arrondisement [suburb] co-ordinated by delegates elected to a Republican Central Committee. This was put together by the Paris section of the International and the Federation of Trade Unions. Thus, six months of intense 'radical neighbourhood activity' had preceded the Commune.

In the meantime, the original, National Government authorised the recruiting of thousands of National Guardsmen whose pay became in many cases the sole support of families and of shopkeepers. They became the litmus paper for political developments and since lower level commanders were always elected, many battalions of militia finished up being led by revolutionaries. What in effect had happened was that the working class of Paris had been armed. As a whole they were close to starvation because of the Prussian blockade and it seemed to many that not only was the original French Government incompetent, it was only a fear of the social consequences that prevented a determined military attempt to lift the siege and force the Prussians back.

Once an armistice was signed, elections were held which returned a monarchist Government because of the state of the suffrage. The greater % of the National Guard units defied their commanding officers and established a Federation of their own. When the attempt was made to remove the cannon and orders issued to shoot the crowd which stood in the way, the soldiers shot their commanding general instead. The Government removed itself to Versailles, leaving the National Guard's Federation as the only city-wide organisation with muscle and widespread popular support. Thus, the Commune was declared and new elections called.

In brief, the Paris Commune, officially in place for only 8 weeks, began as a spontaneous uprising and ended in a bloodbath. It drew upon all of the anger, all the frustration and all

On the other hand, Auguste Blanqui, a long time organiser of secret, revolutionary brotherhoods, now pleaded:

> Once and for all, let's stop relying on tumultuous uprisings of ten thousand isolated individuals, acting at random, in disorder without any view of the total situation.[27]

What appears to have happened is that the flashpoint of the Commune generated a creative and perfectly rational compromise between suspicion and antipathy towards the sort of representatives who more often than not turned out to be opportunist politicians and the wish to have ordinary people speaking on behalf of ordinary people.

The Franco-Prussian war had ended with a heavy defeat of France, whose government then invited the Prussian army into France to put down their own citizens in the name of insurrectionary activity. This brought a four-month siege of Paris and almost all production 'and concomitant labour organisation' to a standstill.' The people of Paris responded the best way they knew:

> The traditional tendency for political action to be rooted in neighbourhoods in Paris was reinforced; in general, the only sections of the International to maintain their level of activity were precisely those based upon neighbourhood membership.[28]

When the Second Empire collapsed with the capture of Emperor Napoleon by the Prussians, the Parisian deputies had appointed themselves a provisional republican government for the whole of France. Parisian crowds were not happy about this, but the tense, desperate situation seemed to demand

[27] Schulkind, as above, p.32.

[28] Schulkind, p.35.

The IWMA has only become known as the First International because there were subsequent gatherings set up explicitly to further the Socialist/Communist cause. It has become fashionable to describe the IWMA in simple, one-sided terms and even better-informed authors have said it was set up by trade unionists.[18] Its opening clause read:

> This Association was founded in order to create a central means of unity and co-operation between the associations of workers which already exist in the various countries and aim at the same goal, namely, the protection, the rise, and the complete emancipation of the working class.[19]

It had come about as a result of a visit by a group of French workers, mostly supporters of Proudhon's mutualism, to an International Exhibition, a kind of World Trade Fair, in London. Their trip was paid for by the French Government which believed that meeting up with the moderation and good sense of the New Unionists and Co-operators of the most advance capitalist country in the world would lead them to discard their more revolutionary traditions.[20] The English trade unionists they met were no firebrands but they had begun to think internationally, that is, had already begun to break the bounds of parochial trade unionism. That internationalism met, in the IWMA, with a heterogeneous mixture of refugees and exiles, all of whom it could be said were seekers after some larger truth — there were enthusiasts for Owenism, Chartism, Auguste Blanqui, Proudhon, Mazzini and for Polish nationalism.

Proudhon died in early 1865. Later commentators have made the assessment that Marx, who joined it shortly after its establishment, did so attracted by its political potential, and that he

[18] P. Thomas, Karl Marx and the Anarchists, RKP, 1980, p.255.

[19] Quoted at Thomas, 1980, as above, p.255.

[20] GDH Cole, Marxism and Anarchism 1850–1890, Macmillan, 1969, p.88, quoted at Thomas, as above, p.256.

aimed to bring it to its full class consciousness and use it 'to help every movement to get clear about itself, to come to an understanding of the connections between its particular interests and the whole..'[21] The personnel was so diverse that a Committee elected to draft the IWMA's program had to have 55 members. However, Marx quickly contrived to have the drafting referred to a sub-committee and subsequently to himself, but he recognised the strategic need to produce a document aimed at the lowest common denominator. He could not mention 'centralisation' or 'collectivisation' without wrecking the International and he chose not to refer to any need for socialisation of the forces of production. His correspondence with Freidrich Engels reveals his desire to gradually build in more and more of his own ideology and, despite his caution, collectively the Rules, the Preamble and his Inaugural Address reveal much of his particular approach, and this with all the other contributing factors meant that each of the Congresses became a swirling melee of very heated debate.

The major division was probably that over the appropriateness of what was called 'political organising', by which was meant enunciating a policy binding on all members of support for activities designed to get members of the workers own ranks into parliament or the various National Assemblies. Marx, in his Inaugural Address pointed to the widening gap between the wealthy and the poor as a result of the industrial changes being introduced and said that a kind of negative solidarity was uniting those on the losing side of this divide, the same people, incidentally who had lost out after the 1848 uprisings had been put down. He also pointed to the positives represented by the Ten Hours Act introduced in Britain as 'not only a great political success' but as a victory of a principle:

[21] B. Nicholaevsky and O. Maenchen-Helfen, Karl Marx: Man and Fighter, Penguin, 1976, p.284, quoted in Thomas, p.258.

advocating working class legislators.[25] For Bakunin, putting any sort of representative into Parliament meant elevating individuals over those who put them there, giving those elevated the opportunity to became the traitors which the process of elevation inevitably produced. Initial support for his approach came from a melange of exiles and refugees but as the 1860's passed and increasing trade union activity led to increasing numbers of strikes and clashes with authorities, Bakunin's influence spread from Switzerland into France and Italy in particular, carried initially by guest workers returning home. A series of manoeuvres of the rapidly polarising tendencies had resulted in the Jura Federation, based on watchmakers in a mountainous part of Switzerland, becoming in 1870, a kind of Anarchist Headquarters. The increasing influence of the International was often attributed to Bakuninism.

Thomas warns against any suggestion that Bakuninism should be identified with pre-industrial peasants or self-employed artisans and craftsmen, all afraid of 'the leap in the dark' known as capitalism. Or, on the other side, of identifying Marx and Marxism simply with industrialised countries and highly organised labour movements. The Belgian delegation, as one example, and its labour movement, tended to Bakuninism though that country was sufficiently industrialised by the 1860's to stand comparison with Britain. At the same time, however, Thomas claims:

> Immediately before the…Commune…the International was experiencing a marked decline in membership and considerable apathy in the industrial countries. Wherever the International was spreading, it was doing so under the mantle of Bakuninism.[26]

[25] E. Schulkind (ed), The Paris Commune of 1871: The View From the Left, Cape, 1972, p.32, has useful discussion.

[26] Thomas, p.319.

Proudhon had been a 'social individualist', opposed to violence, war and revolution, and against strikes and collectivism, thus opposed to much that Bakunin stood for. Marx didn't realise this distinction until, strategically for him, it was too late.

Bakunin's anarchism was collectivist. He advocated common ownership of the means of production but saw no reason not to retain private ownership in such things as consumption items. He developed the federalist notion much further and vehemently opposed the Marxist ideas of State socialism. He was an atheist and strongly opposed to what he saw as the pernicious influence of the Churches. He believed in the vigour and creativity of a people liberated from the superstition of 'God' and from the corruption of the State. Humankind able to express its full urge for life would, in solidarity with all others, create a form of society far beyond that presently imagined.

Similarly, he emphasised the creative possibilities of revolution and did not shy away from the possibility of his advocacy bringing about violence or deaths and destruction. He did not welcome violence but saw it as inevitable. He articulated the belief in spontaneous uprisings as the way to 'the revolution', and opposed paths laid down by political leaderships and/or military leaders. Such disciplines and such forms of organisation used as the instruments of revolution would necessarily reproduce themselves in a class oligarchy or dictatorship, in other words in merely another State. Others later took this belief in spontaneity and violence and made them ends in themselves rather than means. The 1880's in Europe was a decade in which 'propaganda of the deed' was seized upon by the enemies of all Socialisms as The Future if anarchists, in particular, were not totally suppressed. I return to this below.

'Revolution', then for Bakunin was shorthand for what was referred to as 'political' organisation and this put him at odds with many who otherwise supported his approach, such as the authors of the 'Manifesto of Sixty', an 1864 Parisian wall poster

> it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class had succumbed to the political economy of the working class.

Moreover, an even greater victory was in store, namely the co-operative movement:

> Hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart.

However, to bring this co-operative movement and any other purely economic program to the status of a new social order, one which could emancipate the working class, would require 'national means':

> (The) lords of land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economical monopolies..(so to) conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working class.[22]

Marx, here, was being deliberately ambiguous, allowing individual interpretation. Various formulations of the particular choice he was posing appeared in debate. Terms suggesting the 'economic' would take priority over the 'political' were taken as giving trade union/local work-shop/neighbourhood action dominance over national/centralised/Party action, and vice versa. Thus, since the stakes were seen as extremely high, the difference of a few words could spark agitated disputation. In retrospect, the place of trade unions at the point of contact of these otherwise conflicting approaches helps to explain the

[22] Quoted in Thomas, p.262.

special attention given to them, and the correlation over time of 'the social revolution' with 'the labour movement' and then 'the union movement'. I'll return to this below.

In the comparative safety of London, the General Council of the IWMA contained disproportionate numbers of English trade unionists at the higher levels. Being better organised, but within the industrial structure, and perceiving themselves as pioneers and role-models for the future, they generally supported Marx but were increasingly marginalised by the developments on the European mainland.

Substantial effort in France during the 1860's in the organisation of workplaces and neighbourhoods had been attributed by the French Government to the IWMA. Similarly, as a network of socialist and trade societies developed in a number of European countries and because of the volatility of the total situation the IWMA was given credit for a great deal more influence and for many more members than it actually had. It's actual value was that it acted as a means for exchange of information and as a meetings facilitator. However, the authorities arrested and tried those labour leaders they could capture, the resultant publicity duly increasing the status of the organisation.

The anarchist presence came, initially from mutualists but the major influence in the 1870's was Michael (Mikhael) Bakunin. The General Council up to 1871 'refrained from prescribing any definite methods of conducting the struggle'[23] and any other approach would have fractured the IWMA. But, of course, it was the group's heterogeneity as well as the particular situation in Europe which made it possible for Bakuninism to flourish.

In background, temperament and in policies Marx and Bakunin were opposites and their heated exchanges and wily manoeuvrings against one another inevitable. Bakunin

[23] Nichalaevsky and Maechen-Helfen, p.83, quoted at Thomas, p.266.

disliked anything German, Marx anything Russian. Marx had aligned himself with the English movement as the way of the future, while Bakunin was coming from the situation in Russia which was generally accepted as being the most despotic and the most desperate in the whole of Europe. Marx was ultimately an authoritarian and a centraliser, Bakunin, though often autocratic, was a libertarian and a federalist. Bakunin was intuitive and a man of action, Marx was an intellectual and a committed rationalist. Marx gained his influence through his writings, Bakunin had been on the barricades in 1848, had been arrested and extradited back to Russia and had escaped from Siberia, returning to the comparative freedom of France and Switzerland by way of the United States. Thomas has summarised the difference this way:

> To men on the margins the elan of Bakuninism and its exemplars, their headlong assault on Church and State, landlord and capitalist, parliament and bourse [stock exchange], seemed more immediately relevant and forceful than the less spectacular approach of Marx…its emphasis on gradualism and organisation, on order and parliamentary procedure, on the need to build up, patiently if need be, the political as well as the industrial power of organised labour, seemed plodding and irrelevant when compared with the verve and immediacy of Bakuninism.[24]

Bakunin's exploits were legendary, and though he was prematurely aged and largely exhausted at the time of his greatest influence, he continued to flit and fly wherever he could to breathe life into the slightest spark of unrest. For this and other reasons he, too, only ever attended one Congress.

[24] Thomas, p.317.