

# **Gilles Deleuze and the Libertarian Tradition**

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May 7, 2003

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## Introduction

As its name suggests and as common sense readily confirms, anarchism is not a unified ideology. Unlike other political or religious movements, large or small, it lacks centralized or authoritative bodies capable of defining and imposing ideological unity. All this to emphasize that I am not delegated by anyone and that what I am about to say in no way claims to represent anarchism as a collective movement, nor anarchists as individuals, even though I certainly hope that many of them hold libertarian views similar to my own. The thoughts I'm about to share are therefore strictly personal. But as one might easily guess, there's obviously nothing unique about this, and any other anarchist speaking in my place would have been (so to speak) in the same situation.

This brief overview of the relationship between anarchism and Deleuze will focus primarily on the historical aspect, without going into too much detail, in the hope that most of you are already familiar with the main points of this history.

Historically, we can say that anarchism has undergone three major periods of development or flourishing. This division into three periods is partly retrospective. It depends more specifically on the third, and thus the most recent, period—the one to which Deleuze's thought contributes—which I will address last, but which, paradoxically, is largely at the root of everything I am about to tell you.

## The Birth of Anarchism

The first period of anarchism is, of course, that of its emergence as a school of political thought. It is linked to the explosive situation in Europe in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and, more specifically, to the revolutionary events and movements of 1848. During this period, roughly from the early 1840s to the founding of the First International, anarchism did not exist as an actual political movement, identifiable in organizations or groups claiming to represent it. Its form was primarily philosophical and journalistic, but a philosophy and journalism that were intimately intertwined with the theoretical and political ferment of the time, and which expressed the numerous movements and aspirations for a radical transformation of the status quo in most European countries. Anarchist theory crystallized or took shape over the course of a few years, from Proudhon's pamphlet, *What Is Property?*, published in 1840, to his posthumous book *Political Capacity of the Working Classes*, published in 1865, at the very moment the First International was being formed, via Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*, in 1845, the early writings of Bakunin, those of Joseph Déjacques and Ernest Cœurderoy, as well as the work and artistic concepts of Gustave Courbet, for example.

All these figures were able to read each other's works—and did so—and sometimes met in person, as was the case with Proudhon and Bakunin during the 1840s, but they never coordinated their efforts. They never attempted to form a political or intellectual group. They may have influenced one another, and Proudhon, through the number of his books and, above all, the power of his thought, undoubtedly occupies a preeminent place in the emergence of anarchist political philosophy. But—and we would expect nothing less of them—none of these authors is the master or theorist of the others. Each develops the essence of his thought from within himself, without initially concerning himself with others, drawing from what he experiences and the world in

which he lives, in a strange unity where an entire dimension of the era and its possibilities is spontaneously expressed in their writings.

What the revival of libertarian thought over the past thirty years—which I will return to—has demonstrated is the great richness of this anarchist philosophy that emerged in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, a richness and originality long overshadowed by the subsequent triumph of Marxism and, above all, the class contempt that Marx showed toward this thought, which stood in stark contrast to much of his own thinking and directly threatened his hegemonic ambitions.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously, I cannot summarize in just a few sentences this political philosophy that emerged in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and which Deleuze helps us understand. I will say only this: its originality and richness can be immediately grasped in the strange reference it makes to itself: anarchy.

Just as today (though I hope not to the same extent), anarchy has always been viewed as a negative concept, synonymous with chaos and disorder. With Proudhon, Déjacques, Cœurderoy, Courbet, Bakunin, and many others, the concept of anarchy took on a positive meaning. Contrary to popular belief, these authors' positive reference to the idea of anarchy is not primarily a provocation.

But there is also another mistake that is often made, one that, in a different way, seeks to defuse the theoretical and practical bomb that is the concept of anarchy. By grudgingly agreeing to lift the notion of anarchy out of the disapproving contempt that surrounds it, political science is willing to accept it as a sort of utopian constitutional concept, alongside many others that are far more realistic—monarchy, oligarchy, dictatorship, and democracy, for example. Anarchy, it would seem, is a utopian political system characterized by the absence of government—a political system that (why not, if people want to believe in it and try to convince others?) might one day come to pass, perhaps, in a future as distant as the Last Judgment. What must be clearly understood—and what the libertarian revival of the past thirty years makes evident—is that in the political philosophy that emerged under this name in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, anarchy is neither a provocation nor a vague and utopian notion of political science.

Anarchy is not an ideal either—a perfect society that dreamers might have in their minds back when we dream (that is, when we are young) of a beautiful idea, one that is, of course, unattainable, like all perfect ideas. An idea toward which we would be content to strive, and whose realization would recede (from our beliefs) as we grow older, like two parallel lines destined to meet, but only at infinity, on a horizon line that, like all horizon lines, recedes endlessly.

That is why, and to avoid any misunderstanding or pointless debate, we must clearly understand that, in light of Deleuze's analyses, anarchy is not some distant ideal, but a reality that is already present among us. This reality—this present-day anarchy to which anarchism lays claim—has two faces or two meanings.

The concept of anarchy refers first and foremost to its most common meaning—that of disorder and chaos—but also to its more scholarly meaning: the absence of a first principle (an-arkhé). Anarchy is the manifold, the infinite multiplicity and ceaseless transformation of beings; it is the fact that the world contains an infinite multitude of constantly shifting perspectives, ways of being, and possibilities that collide and destroy one another blindly, amid the sound and fury of the interactions of things and life, which demand oppressive and coercive orders where some devour, exploit, and enslave others, rising above them, in the manner of Capital, the State, and Religion, provoking new revolts and new struggles, most often just as blind and desperate. In short, anarchy in its primary dimension is this story full of sound and fury, told by madmen to fools (or vice versa) of which Shakespeare speaks, the story that everyone lives every day,

that they constantly observe around them, and that the order imposed by science, history books, identity cards, or religious consolations—despite their lies and simplifications—never manages to completely conceal.

But the concept of anarchy, so realistic in the pessimism of its message, also possesses a second meaning that is intimately linked to the first and cannot be separated from it. And this is where the originality and stroke of genius of the early theorists of anarchism lie. What do they say? They say that this primary and realistic anarchy of what is, of things and beings, this primary affirmation of the many at the expense of the one, of ceaseless transformation at the expense of the identical, of disorder at the expense of order, is precisely the condition and the opportunity not only for the emancipation of human beings, but for the affirmation of a world freed from the mutilations and losses of possibilities brought about by the randomness of clashes and destructive or oppressive associations. As Spinoza had already affirmed and sensed, the anarchy of reality offers the possibility of voluntarily constructing a pluralistic world where beings, by associating without ever renouncing their primary autonomy, would have the possibility of freeing themselves from exploitation and servitude, of liberating and expressing the maximum of the power and possibilities that they, others, and the world carry within themselves. That is what anarchy is: a two-faced reality in which the end is entirely contained within the means (we'll come back to that), where everything is at stake in the very moment we speak and act, within the emancipatory modes of association and reconfiguration of the forces that constitute what is.

I apologize for straying a bit from my historical overview, and I'll now return to the earliest period of anarchism—the time of its emergence. In light of Deleuze and the libertarian revival of the past thirty years, and in summary, we can say that the anarchy of Proudhon, Déjacques, Cœurderoy, or Bakunin consists mainly of two things, of equal importance and which always go hand in hand:

1. Anarchy is a philosophical concept—a major philosophical concept—whose radically explosive nature, when compared to many other concepts, is the sole explanation for the disdain or ignorance with which it is met in the field of philosophy. This concept, following Deleuze and in the wake of Antonin Artaud, can—though of course not be defined—be characterized as follows: “anarchy, that strange unity that can only be spoken of in terms of the multiple.”
2. But anarchy is not merely a major philosophical concept. Like all true philosophical concepts, it is also a practical idea, a practical conception of life and of the relationships between things and human beings, which arises just as much from practice as from philosophy; or, to be more precise, which arises above all from practice, philosophy being only one particular dimension and practice—certainly important, but among others. How can we define this practical idea of anarchy? In a few words, we could say that while in the philosophical realm, anarchy is that strange unity that can only be described in terms of the many, the practical idea of anarchy is, from this moment on, the implementation of this concept of anarchy; it is the emergence of revolutionary and emancipatory movements based on the multiplicity, autonomy, and federalism of the associated emancipatory forces—the “free association of free forces” of which Bakunin speaks.

# **Anarchism and the Labor Movement**

## **The First Characteristic of this Second Period**

Anarchism is primarily identified with labor movements. This means that such an identification is not necessarily self-evident. By its very nature and through its goals, anarchism has always stood on the side of emancipatory movements and the rejection of exploitation or oppression of one group by another—whether through capitalism, colonialism, sexism, or any other form. But, contrary to what the transposition of religious representations into the social and political sphere has led us to believe, emancipation does not always lie on the side of a hypostatized working-class reality—a reality that, like everything else, is constantly changing and may even disappear without the anarchist project losing its reasons for existing. It is here that we can grasp a first radical difference between Marxism and anarchism, a difference that Deleuze—following Proudhon, Bakunin, and others—helps us understand; a difference that deserves discussion but which I do not have time to elaborate on. For those who would like to know more, I refer them to the latest issue of the journal *Réfractions*, titled *Fédéralismes et autonomies* (in the plural), and more specifically to Marianne Enckel's article entitled: "Fédéralisme et autonomie chez les anarchistes."

## **A Second Characteristic of this Second Phase of the Anarchist Movement**

The forms these libertarian labor movements take, the conditions and the professional and sociological foundations upon which they develop are extremely diverse across countries and regions, ranging from the Jura Federation of the First International, with its highly serious and educated watchmakers from the Swiss Jura, to the CNT unions of illiterate agricultural workers in Andalusia, and including the highly original IWW in the United States, and many other forms still that I cannot detail here.

## **Third Characteristic**

These libertarian workers' movements of the second phase of anarchism did not emerge everywhere and had little impact on the most industrialized countries. They were found primarily and consistently in the Latin countries—France, Spain, and Italy—as well as in most Latin American countries, including Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Mexico, etc., with a few notable exceptions, such as Sweden with the SAC, the United States with the IWW, Bulgaria, and also, much more briefly and only during revolutionary periods, in Russia in 1905 and 1917 or in Germany in the aftermath of World War I.

## **Fourth Characteristic, Which Follows from the Other Three**

While anarchism has been closely associated with a wide range of workers' struggles and movements, it has always been merely one aspect or one of the minority expressions of these movements—an expression of what the conditions of workers' lives held, at a given moment, in terms of potential and emancipatory prospects. Even in Spain, where anarcho-syndicalism was particularly powerful, it had to coexist with the reformism of the socialist UGT.

In other words, this fourth characteristic of the second period of anarchism—so clearly linked to the emancipatory history of the labor movements—illustrates the first: by showing that an-

archism's emancipatory project is not identified solely with labor history or the working-class condition, that it depends heavily on circumstances rather than on a fatalistic or deterministic belief—both scientific and religious—in the inevitably revolutionary nature of class struggle and the working class. In other words, as anarchism has maintained from the outset and as two hundred years of capitalism demonstrate, the working class—or “the working classes,” as Proudhon would say—are not revolutionary by nature or by structural and historical determination. Rather, the opposite is true (assuming that, in this context, determinism has any meaning). In various forms, workers' movements have historically shown themselves to be profoundly reformist. This reformism was overwhelmingly either apolitical and devoid of any emancipatory vision, as in North America, or shaped primarily by socialism and social democracy, as the British and German examples demonstrate, where the working classes were the most numerous and the most modern. But, in an apparent paradox that the pretences of ideology and partisan representations all too often prevent us from seeing, this reformism was also overwhelmingly shaped and utilized by communism in the decades that followed, from the mid-1920s until its demise in the late 1970s, when revolution and the desire for emancipation, having abandoned immediate social realities and struggles, took refuge in the myth—with little practical impact on the lives of workers in the rest of the world—of a mythologized Russian Revolution that justified the existence of an oppressive, exploitative, and totalitarian state.

This second phase of development and expansion of the anarchist movement came to an end across the globe at the start of the interwar period, for a variety of reasons, but primarily because capitalism gradually extended the integration of the working class into its system to every country on the planet—an integration that had begun in England as early as the First International, where capitalism was most advanced. In other words, the breach opened in history by the dawn of capitalism and industrialization closed during the interwar period, and the anarchist workers' movement in turn disappeared, to the very extent that anarchism is entirely linked, in its practical dimension, to the opening of fissures and breaches in the tight fabric of the existing order and its reproduction.

Before moving on to the third and final phase of the development of the libertarian project, and to set the stage for what I am about to say on this subject, I would like to make one final remark on the relationship between the second phase and the first—the relationship between the practical idea of anarchy put into practice within the libertarian labor movements, and the philosophical concept of anarchy developed during the first phase by Proudhon, Bakunin, Cœurderoy, Déjacques, and a few others. It is only in hindsight, thanks mainly to Deleuze's analyses, that we perceive with such clarity the relationship of homology linking the theories of Proudhon or Bakunin to the libertarian workers' movements that followed. But, in reality, things unfortunately did not unfold that way. The libertarian workers' movements and libertarian workers' practice certainly developed their own theoretical expression, a particularly interesting one. I refer you here, and for the French example alone, to the writings of Pelloutier, Pouget, or Griffuelhes, among others. These theoretical elaborations born of workers' practice owe much to the dissemination of anarchist ideas from the preceding period, which revolutionary syndicalist and anarcho-syndicalist activists knew in part or indirectly. But, overall, and for reasons beyond the control of the actors of the time, the ideas of Proudhon and Bakunin remained largely untapped, invisible, or imperceptible (and not only to the revolutionary workers, who were the most interested). The anarchist groups themselves, who were best positioned to know the writings of Proudhon or Bakunin, did what they could, but they failed to bring to light the subversive power

and logic of these texts, to reveal the affinity that this thought could have with libertarian workers' movements. They gradually stopped reading these texts because they had become unreadable (for a multitude of reasons). They abandoned them, all too often in favor of an ideological patchwork relying on common sense, prevailing humanism, and, above all, a narrow rationalism diametrically opposed to the power and subversive nature of the thought of Proudhon, Bakunin, or Stirner.

## **The Revival of Libertarian Thought**

I finally come to the third period. This roughly corresponds to the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It shares quite a few similarities with the period that saw the birth of anarchism as an emancipatory project—not the events of May 1968, but those of 1848. We see here the international, diffuse, and multifaceted character of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Above all, we find a common phenomenon: the development of an extremely rich and powerful emancipatory philosophical thought, with no direct link to specific political or social movements or organizations, yet capable of articulating or expressing what happened then—the possibilities that emerged over the course of about two decades in most countries around the world. And this is where I come to Deleuze. In what way can philosophers like Deleuze or Foucault identify with the anarchist project, find meaning within it, open it up historically to the full scope of what it was, and, at the same time, to the immense possibilities of the future? I would find it difficult to answer this vast question in just a few minutes. But to give you a brief idea of this answer, I would ask both the older and younger generations to cast their minds back thirty or forty years. At a time when revolutionary hopes were being reborn all over the world, during the 1960s and 1970s of the last century, revolutionary thought was entirely dominated by Marxism—several kinds of Marxism: the rudimentary, authoritarian, reformist, and pontificating Marxism of the communist apparatuses subservient to the Russian state; the stubborn, but in my view no less rudimentary, Marxism of Trotskyist or ultra-left opponents or dissidents; but above all the scholarly, fashionable, and no less pontificating Marxism of the École Normale students on Rue d'Ulm who, following Althusser and with Beijing replacing Moscow, were to impose their theoretical terrorism on the entire far left for a time. Out of honesty and a concern for balance and fairness, I will of course not fail to point out that while anarchist thought was at the same time benefiting from the immense momentum of events, it was undoubtedly also, for its part, reaching the depths of a long theoretical decline that compelled the most active militants to look to Marxism for the means to respond to the call of events. It is within this context that the emergence of Deleuze and a few other philosophers must be situated.

With Deleuze and Foucault in particular, a line of thought emerged in the emancipatory context of the 1960s and 1970s that, as we shall see, was not new, but which at the time took on all the hallmarks of something radically new.

By adapting Pelloutier's formulation regarding social democracy, one could characterize the originality of this thought as follows: no less revolutionary than scholasticism and the vast Marxist canon, to say the least, this thought, drawing primarily on Nietzsche, broke radically with the ideas derived from Marx and Marxism that, for nearly fifty years, had imposed themselves on all revolutionary movements; it revived a hope for emancipation that, almost everywhere in the world, had died with the First World War and the Second Industrial Revolution.

It is true that the connection between anarchism and the “left-wing Nietzscheanism” discussed by Michel Onfray<sup>2</sup> did not originate in the 1960s and 1970s. As early as the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the first publications of Nietzsche’s books, a large number of anarchists identified with this author, and this identification was not one-sided. We now know that Nietzsche had read Stirner, and his most perceptive friends, such as Overbeck, did not fail to notice how, despite his avowed anti-socialism and anti-anarchism, Nietzsche was close to Proudhon. I refer you here to the recent translation of Overbeck’s short book, *Souvenirs sur Friedrich Nietzsche*. The encounter between anarchism and Nietzsche is therefore an old one, but it has been particularly visible in the so-called individualist dimension of anarchism (Georges Palante, for example, studied by Onfray), much less so in its social or collective dimension, or else in a much more diffuse and implicit way, to the extent that, it is true, a large number of labor activists—anarcho-syndicalists or revolutionary syndicalists—were also individualists and, for some of them, avid readers of Nietzsche.

With the left-wing Nietzscheanism of the 1960s and 1970s—that of Foucault and, above all, that of Deleuze—the connection between Nietzsche and libertarian thought and practice finally emerges in all its breadth, in all its dimensions: individual, collective, and historical. Indeed, Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche does more than simply make sense of seventy years of multifaceted libertarian labor movements. It does more than simply help us understand the richness, radicalism, and originality of an emancipatory experience reduced to almost nothing by the historiography of the time. It suddenly makes it possible—and undoubtedly for the first time—to grasp the richness, revolutionary radicalism, and originality of anarchist philosophy and the anarchist project.

Thanks to Deleuze and left-wing Nietzscheanism, the thought of Proudhon and Bakunin finally becomes discernible, just as left-wing Nietzscheanism—seemingly so implausible—itself finds in the libertarian tradition and in libertarian thought the reasons and justifications for Deleuze’s intuitions. Hitherto invisible, anarchist thought finds in Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche the possibility of articulating and unfolding its theoretical and emancipatory power. Disturbing, sometimes co-opted and indeed susceptible to co-optation by the far right, Nietzsche’s thought finds in anarchist thought the possibility of bringing to light all that it itself embodies as emancipatory power. In short, thanks to Deleuze, we are witnessing what libertarian federalism, following Spinoza, calls a “good encounter,” a “good association”—that is, an association that reveals the emancipatory power inherent in the associated beings.

How can we explain this fortunate encounter? Chance is not absent from this event—the chance that stems from the anarchy of reality, an anarchy that the libertarian movement strives to transform into what Proudhon called “positive anarchy,” that is, the art of fruitful encounters and alliances among emancipatory forces, the art of forging a movement in which beings and forces fighting for their freedom—most often in extremely different ways—instead of ignoring one another or destroying one another in blind and endless battles, manage, on the contrary, to unleash all the emancipatory power they possess. But this fruitful encounter between Nietzsche and the libertarian project, on the singular yet significant terrain of philosophy, is obviously not merely a matter of chance. It stems from the nature of each, from the affinity between what they are or what they can be. Above all, it stems from a history and a hidden potential far vaster than this encounter between Nietzsche and libertarian thought, which also helps to bring to light and make evident. I do not have time to elaborate. But it seems possible to briefly point this out.

Thanks in part to Deleuze's philosophy, anarchism, which emerged in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century somewhere in Europe and primarily among the working class, is part of a historical, theoretical, and practical possibility of much greater scope, the traces of which can be traced over a period far longer than the brief history of the labor movements, and which spans all human traditions, civilizations, and experiments. In the realm of Western philosophy alone, we find it from Spinoza to Deleuze, via Leibniz, Nietzsche, Tarde, Simondon, and Whitehead. On the far more significant and expansive plane of human practices and experiments, we can also trace its history—from the assemblies of Athenian citizens and the galley rowers at the end of the Peloponnesian War described by Thucydides, to the Hungarian workers' councils of 1956, via the rebellious slaves of Spartacus, the yellow turbans and red brows of Chinese Taoism, the Czech Hussites of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Communards of 1871, the Makhnovists of 1920, the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists of 1936, and, even more tragically, the rebellious Sonderkommandos of Auschwitz and Treblinka, or, in a completely different way and context, the tiny, the invisible, and the countless workers' and peasants' struggles—those seemingly insignificant and imperceptible “breaches” that Michelle Perrot so aptly describes as “échappées belles.”

## Concluding Questions<sup>12</sup>

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words about the practical implications of this brief historical overview, and more specifically about what seems to me to have been at the heart of our discussions on the relationship between anarchism and Marxism. Many points have been raised.

But it is surely no coincidence that the discussion has become particularly heated around the age-old question of the relationship between ends and means. This question may, quite rightly, seem trivial, hackneyed, and pointless. And while it sometimes arises in discussions and clashes between libertarians and Marxists, it is most often in a peripheral or secondary way, whereas, theoretically, it lies at the heart of their dispute.

On one side, we have the die-hard Marxists who, following in Lenin's footsteps (but also drawing on several millennia of religious and political totalitarianism, and the common sense that goes with it), believe that the end justifies the means, since that end is part of the (providential or scientific) destiny of the world and history (there is no pain without childbirth; there is no production without effort). You don't earn heaven without suffering and without atoning for your sins in the valley of tears; you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs; revolution isn't a gala dinner, etc.). On the other hand, we would have the most idealistic libertarians, sensitive souls (“beautiful souls”), but also nitpickers and more or less hot-tempered individuals, who, unconcerned with the constraints of the moment, would demand, more or less vehemently, that we pay greater attention to forms of organization and the means employed, that we still exercise “a little caution,” etc. Somewhere in between, we would have a sort of compromise that involves not forgetting the end goal, with its sometimes cruel and very often contradictory demands (we

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<sup>1</sup> Sur la façon dont Marx s'est efforcé d'imposer cette hégémonie, je vous renvoie à l'excellent et récent livre de Jean-Louis Lacascade, *Les métamorphoses du jeune Marx*, aux PUF ; sur le mépris de classe de Marx, je vous renvoie à sa correspondance (en particulier avec Engels) ou encore à ses commentaires sur les conceptions de Proudhon dans *Misère de la philosophie*.

<sup>2</sup> Voir notamment Michel Onfray, *Georges Palante – Essai sur un nietzschéen de gauche* (Folle Avoine, 1989) et *Politique du rebelle – Traité de résistance et d'insoumission* (Grasset, 1997).

must be willing to suffer or cause others to suffer so that the happiness of future generations may one day come to be, sometimes doing the opposite of what we set out to achieve, in the name of the mysteries of dialectics, etc.), but still leaving some room for ethical concern, respect for rules, and democratic functioning. And it is in this middle ground that Marxists and libertarians could meet, with, more specifically, the Trotskyists on one side—who, given their history, are well aware of the cynicism, violence, and deceit of which Marxism is capable—and on the other, realist libertarians, concerned with effectiveness, who, in the apparent desert of anarchist thought, hope to find in this very Marxism the theory and strategy they lack—a theory and strategy they believe they can nevertheless imbue with a libertarian spirit and safeguards.

I fear that, without getting to the root of the matter, this compromise or alliance is particularly illusory. Aside from the fact that they are all human beings (most often with two arms and two legs, but in the diverse forms of men and women, young and old, tall and short, civil servants and private-sector employees, etc.), Trotskyists and libertarians (and many others alongside them, with different labels or no label at all) share one essential commonality: they are all fighting for a radical change in the order of things, often side by side and under conditions that bring them very close together, conditions that dictate not only joint action, but also the form and subjectivity of that action and those shared experiences.

This connection between Trotskyists and libertarians is already significant. But it must not obscure the divergence or the theoretical chasm that separates them—a divergence and a chasm that are by no means abstract, but which directly engage our practices and our relationship to others and to the world<sup>3</sup>; a divergence and a chasm that, if not insurmountable, would at the very least require a sustained and in-depth discussion. This theoretical, philosophical, and ethical chasm, at the heart of the emancipatory project, could—to allow for a discussion that gets to the bottom of things—be formulated as follows regarding the libertarian side, as it appears at least in the theoretical and practical light of the past thirty years, and this in the form of two propositions:

1. The first is of a practical, political, and militant nature. It asserts that the end is entirely contained within the means. What is important here is the word “entirely,” which allows for no compromise, no middle ground; which, on the one hand, compels Marxism to revisit in depth the question of contradictions, dialectics, history, and many other things besides; and which, on the other hand, compels anarchism to justify this proposition not through moral or idealistic considerations, but rather through materialist and ethical considerations, considerations of effectiveness from the standpoint of emancipation (which I do not have time to address here); in short, which compels both sides, Marxists and libertarians, Marxists and libertarians, to reflect on how to come together, to organize, to resolve internal conflicts, to articulate desires and demands, to bring together all those who struggle for another world, and to make that other world possible—a world without domination, without exploitation, capable of liberating all the powers and all the freedoms (which are one and the same) that human beings possess.
2. The second proposition is of a purely theoretical or philosophical nature this time. If, from the perspective of action, from the militant perspective, the end is entirely contained within the means, it is because the whole—the totality of all that is—is also entirely contained

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<sup>3</sup> Sans oublier que sur le terrain de la pratique, les « libertaires » et les « marxistes » ne sont pas toujours là où l'on croirait les trouver.

within the parts. This is what we must try to understand, from a consistently libertarian perspective; what Proudhon, Bakunin, Deleuze, and many others (following Spinoza, Leibniz, or Nietzsche) enable us to understand, and what an equally consistent discussion between Marxists and libertarians would require us to examine; insofar as, through this seemingly illogical, abstract, and scholastic proposition, it is indeed our emancipatory and revolutionary practice—both the most immediate and the most distant—that is at stake.

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“*Contretemps*” magazine, Issue 7, May 2003.

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