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Nevertheless, anarchists and syndicalists remained influential within some Latin American unions through the 1960s and 1970s, and the diminished remnants of organisations such as the French CGT, the IWW, and the CNT still exist today.[66] May Day, too, remains an international workers' holiday, and in the United States it has been reclaimed by immigrant rights activists as an occasion to honour and defend migrant labourers. And although few mass syndicalist unions still exist, the red and black flag of anarcho-syndicalism can still be seen flying at protests—including May Day demonstrations—across the globe.

tives on Anarchism, 41–42; Lars Peterson, 'From Anarchists to 'Anarcho-Batllistas': Populism and Labor Legislation in Uruguay', in De Laforcade and Shaffer, *In Defiance of Boundaries*, 117–141; Alexander, *Anarchists*; Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Civil War: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Pagès i Blanch, *War and Revolution*.

[66] Steven Hirsch and Lucien van der Walt, 'Final Reflections: The Vicissitudes of Anarchist and Syndicalist Trajectories, 1940 to the Present', in Hirsch and van der Walt, *Anarchism and Syndicalism*, 403.

Contents

dicalists to join the Communist International or its Red International of Labor Unions. Some organisations, including the Dutch *Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat* (National Labour Secretariat), the French *Confédération générale du travail unitaire* (United General Confederation of Labour), and the Argentine anarcho-syndicalist FORA V—the latter two already the results of earlier splits—broke into pro- and anti-Communist factions. Almost nowhere was a majority of syndicalists won over to communism, but many individual militants were.[64]

More damaging was direct state repression and violence, which between 1917 and 1940 crushed or crippled revolutionary syndicalist organisations in Argentina, Bulgaria, Chile, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, the United States, and elsewhere. Syndicalist unions were also co-opted or entered into alliances with national governments, always with disastrous results for their revolutionary goals. Such was the case, for example, with the Mexican anarcho-syndicalist *Casa del Obrero Mundial* (House of the World Worker), which allied with the Carranza regime and took up arms against the followers of Emiliano Zapata on its behalf; the CGT, which joined the *union sacrée* to support the French government during the First World War; the *Federacion Obrera Regional de Uruguay* (Uruguayan Regional Workers' Federation), which supported populist politician José Batlle y Ordóñez in hopes of achieving labour reforms; and the participation of the CNT-FAI in the Spanish government during the civil war, which led to the complete marginalisation of the anarchists who, in 1936, had been in virtual control of much of that country.[65]

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[64] Thorpe, *The Workers Themselves*; Darlington, *Syndicalism and the Transition to Communism*; Reiner Tosstorff, *The Red International of Labour Unions (RILU), 1920–1937*, trans. Ben Fowkes (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[65] Hart, *Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class*, chap. 9; Wayne Thorpe, 'Uneasy Family: Revolutionary Syndicalism in Europe from the Charte D'Amiens to World War One', in Berry and Bantman, *New Perspec-*

ical opponents' was all too often well-founded.[61] Almost inevitably, syndicalist movements splintered along ideological lines, usually to the detriment of anarcho-syndicalist factions, while state repression or co-optation devastated most of those organisations that remained.

In the best of circumstances, Socialist, Communist, moderate, pro-war, or 'pure' syndicalist minorities broke away from groups like the CNT and Italy's USI, increasing anarchist influence in these bodies while the dissidents formed their own organisations, many of which deviated from the doctrines of revolutionary syndicalism—including a few extreme cases in which syndicalists transitioned to fascism.[62] More commonly, anarcho-syndicalist minorities either split off from organisations like the French CGT and the Argentine FORA once these had fallen under the control of moderates and lost their revolutionary character, or they remained oppositional minorities within syndicalist organisations like the American IWW and Sweden's *Sveriges Arbetares Centralorganisation* (Central Workers' Organisation of Sweden).[63]

The Russian Revolution produced one of the largest waves of defections, as Lenin attempted to woo revolutionary syn-

[61] Garner, *Goals and Means*, 247.

[62] See David D. Roberts, *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); John J. Tinchino, *Edmondo Rossoni: From Revolutionary Syndicalism to Fascism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991); Alessandro Luparini, *Anarchici di Mussolini: dalla sinistra al fascismo, tra rivoluzione e revisionismo* (Montespertoli: M. I. R. Edizioni, 2001).

[63] David Berry, *A History of the French Anarchist Movement, 1917–1945* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002); Ronald Munck, Ricardo Falcón, and Bernardo Galitelli, *Argentina, from Anarchism to Peronism: Workers, Unions and Politics, 1855–1985* (London: Zed Books, 1987); Ruth Thompson, 'Argentine Syndicalism: Reformism before Revolution', in Thorpe and Van der Linden, *Revolutionary Syndicalism*, 167–183; Kenyon Zimmer, "A Cosmopolitan Crowd': Transnational Anarchists, the IWW, and the American Radical Press', in Cole, Struthers, and Zimmer, *Wobblies of the World*, 29–43; Lennart K. Persson, 'Revolutionary Syndicalism in Sweden Before the Second World War', in Thorpe and Van der Linden, *Revolutionary Syndicalism*, 81–99.

Abstract

This chapter will present a global survey of the evolution of anarchists' views of, and participation in, workers' movement and labour unions. The executions of the Haymarket Martyrs—Chicago anarchists involved in the 1886 strike movement in pursuit of the eight-hour workday and condemned to death in a controversial trial connected to a bomb thrown at police—marked a pivotal moment in this history. It provided both an example of anarchist labour militancy and a potent new international workers' holiday in the form of May Day. The American strike movement of 1886 informed the development of syndicalist ideas in Europe, which in turn spread throughout the globe and intermixed with local traditions of labour radicalism. Synthesising the sizable body of literature on this topic, this chapter will (1) survey anarchist views of labour unions prior to Haymarket, (2) summarise the events of the Haymarket bombing and trial, (3) describe the influence of the Haymarket Martyrs on the development of syndicalism and creation of May Day, (4) trace the spread of anarcho-syndicalism from the 1890s to the 1910s, (5) provide an overview of anarchist debates over syndicalist organisation and tactics, and (6) review the subsequent evolution of anarcho-syndicalist ideas and organisations.

Anarchism and syndicalism are revolutionary doctrines that seek the abolition of both capitalism and state power. However, while their histories are entangled, the two ideologies and movements were never entirely synonymous. Syndicalism (sometimes known as 'revolutionary syndicalism' or 'revolutionary industrial unionism') emerged as a coherent doctrine in the 1890s and 1900s, primarily under the influence of anarchist labour activists. Its outlook and tactics were

largely rooted in the federalist or 'anti-authoritarian' wing of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International), as well as in the 'Chicago Idea' formulated by anarchists and revolutionary socialists associated with the Haymarket Affair of 1886–1887. In the first decades of the twentieth century, syndicalism became a powerful revolutionary force in many parts of the globe, often—but not always—spearheaded by anarchists.

First International Roots

Many syndicalist ideas and tactics could already be found in early nineteenth-century workers' movements. Both anarcho-syndicalist theorist Rudolf Rocker and historian E. P. Thompson, for example, identified 'syndicalist tendencies' in the English labour movement of the 1830s.[1] However, it was within the radical milieu of the First International (1864–1876), which included trade unionists, radical republicans, and socialists of all stripes, that the foundations of what would become syndicalism and anarcho-syndicalism were laid.

The International united behind the declaration, 'the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves'. When it came to accomplishing this task, however, it was the anti-authoritarian faction, most closely associated with anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, that advocated four central elements of what later became syndicalist praxis: the independence of labour unions from political parties; the rejection of parliamentary politics in favour of working-class direct action; the tactic of the revolutionary general strike; and the notion that present-day workers' or-

[1] Rudolf Rocker, *Anarcho-Syndicalism* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1938), 56–66; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 829–830.

defeating the fascist-backed uprising in Barcelona and then constituted the core of the militias that waged war until the reconstitution of the Republican Army. The street fighting of 1936 was accompanied by a general strike and the expropriation of factories and farms throughout Republican-held Spain, which were operated for much of the war under workers' control by members of the CNT.[59]

In practice, the CNT wedded syndicalism to anarchist tactics of insurrection and armed defence in a manner more reminiscent of Bakunin and the Chicago Idea than of the CGT. Spanish anarcho-syndicalism was at least as much anarchist as it was syndicalist, as was made clear during the civil war when the CNT and FAI came to be simply identified together as the CNT-FAI.[60] And for a brief moment, these tactics came close to realising the social revolution that both anarchism and syndicalism took as their goal.

The Decline of Revolutionary Syndicalism

If the CNT represented the climax of revolutionary syndicalism in action, anticlimaxes were far more common. Anarchists usually found it impossible to maintain labour organisations that were both revolutionary and popular. Anarcho-syndicalist fears that 'the political void at the heart of revolutionary syndicalism would inevitably be filled by their polit-

[59] The literature on the CNT and the war is massive; for a sampling see Robert J. Alexander, *The Anarchists in the Spanish Civil War*, 2 vols (London: Janus, 1998); Antoni Castells Duran, 'Revolution and Collectivization in Civil War Barcelona, 1936–9', in *Red Barcelona: Social Protest and Labour Mobilization in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Angel Smith (London: Routledge, 2003), 127–141; Casanova, *Anarchism*; Frank Mintz, *Anarchism and Workers' Self-Management in Revolutionary Spain*, trans. Paul Sharkey (Oakland: AK Press, 2013); Pelai Pagès i Blanch, *War and Revolution in Catalonia, 1936–1939*, trans. Patrick L. Gallagher (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[60] Casas, *Anarchist Organisation*, 183–187.

just as insurrectionists viewed every uprising and riot, as a form of 'revolutionary gymnastics' (a term used by the CNT) that helped to radicalise the masses and prepare them for the coming revolution. Thus, Monatte argued in 1907, 'Every strike is a lesson in revolutionary action. A strike is also the best means of propaganda'.[56] Syndicalists further believed that any given strike could potentially spread and inaugurate the revolutionary general strike, just as insurrectionists believed that any uprising might likewise become the spark to ignite the social revolution.

The Spanish CNT most fully embraced the anarchists' insurrectionary conception of the general strike and paramilitary action within its conception of anarcho-syndicalism. In the face of fierce conflict with employers and the Spanish state, throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s, the CNT engaged in an intermittent guerilla labour war that included assassinations, bombings, and armed uprisings, as well as general strikes.[57] In 1927, to ensure that the CNT remained firmly anarchist in its aims, anarchist members and supporters founded the *Federación Anarquista Ibérica* (Iberian Anarchist Federation, or FAI) to informally guide the CNT on an anarcho-syndicalist path.[58] By the early 1930s the CNT had replaced its clandestine 'action groups' with paramilitary Defence Committees that, when civil war erupted in July 1936, were instrumental in

[56] *International Anarchist Congress*, 15.

[57] Angel Smith, *Anarchism, Revolution, and Reaction: Catalan Labour and the Crisis of the Spanish State, 1898–1923* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007); Abel Paz, *Durruti in the Spanish Revolution*, trans. Chuck Morse (Oakland: AK Press, 2007); Jerome R. Mintz, *The Anarchists of Casas Viejas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Chris Ealham, *Anarchism and the City: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Barcelona, 1898–1937* (Oakland: AK Press, 2010).

[58] Juan Gómez Casas, *Anarchist Organisation: The History of the F.A.I.* (Toronto: Black Rose Books, 1986); Jason Garner, *Goals and Means: Anarchism, Syndicalism, and Internationalism in the Origins of the Federación Anarquista Ibérica* (Oakland: AK Press, 2016).

ganisations would provide the structure of post-revolutionary society.[2]

The Belgian section of the International most forcefully promoted the general strike, as both an anti-militarist tactic to prevent war and the primary means through which to carry out the social revolution.[3] Bakunin, too, proclaimed that the general strike 'can result only in a great cataclysm which forces society to shed its old skin'.[4] After the First International split in 1872, the breakaway 'Anti-Authoritarian International' reiterated its commitment to 'the strike as a precious weapon in the struggle', which prepared workers for 'the great and final revolutionary contest'.[5]

Bakunin had also hoped that the International, as 'an earnest international organization of workers' associations from all countries', would itself become 'capable of replacing this departing political world of States and the bourgeoisie'. Its sections, he argued, therefore 'bear in themselves the living seeds of the new society which is to replace the old world. They are creating not only the ideas, but also the facts of the future itself'.[6] This anticipated the syndicalist project of 'building the new world within the shell of the old', as a slogan of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) put it.

The Anti-Authoritarian International held its last congress in Belgium in 1877, although there was an attempt to revive

[2] V. Damier, *Anarcho-Syndicalism in the 20th Century*, trans. Malcolm Archibald (Edmonton: Black Cat Press, 2009), 14–15; Robert Graham, *We Do Not Fear Anarchy—We Invoke It: The First International and the Origins of the Anarchist Movement* (Oakland: AK Press, 2015).

[3] Pere Gabriel, 'Sindicalismo y huelga: Sindicalismo revolucionário francés e italiano. Su introducción en España', *Ayer*, no. 4 (1991), 16; Graham, *We Do Not Fear Anarchy*, 205–206.

[4] Mikhail Bakunin, *The Basic Bakunin: Writings 1869–1871*, ed. Robert M. Cutler (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1992), 149–150.

[5] Graham, *We Do Not Fear Anarchy*, 198–199.

[6] Bakunin, *The Basic Bakunin*, 110; Mikhail Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchism*, ed. Sam Dolgoff (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980), 255.

it at the 1881 International Social Revolutionary Congress in London. What remained of the Marxist wing of the International, meanwhile, relocated its headquarters to New York City in 1873 and dissolved three years later. Both revolutionary currents subsequently shaped the proto-syndicalism of the Chicago Idea in the United States.

The Chicago Idea

In 1876, a number of former American sections of the Marxist International were incorporated into the new Workingmen's Party of the United States, which in 1878 became the Socialistic Labor Party (SLP). In 1881, 'social revolutionaries' who opposed the SLP's focus on electoral politics split off, and in 1883 members of this group helped form the International Working People's Association (IWPA). Many of the new organisation's members, including seven of the eight future Haymarket Martyrs, were former SLP members who transitioned to full-fledged anarchists in this period.[7] The IWPA declared itself to be the American section of the anarchist 'Black International' founded in London in 1881—although no such international organisation actually materialised—which it in turn viewed as a direct continuation of the First International.[8] One of the authors of the IWPA's declaration of principles, known as the 'Pittsburgh Manifesto', was French anarchist Victor Drury, who had in fact belonged to the International and was also, along with coauthor Albert

[7] Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), chaps. 4 and 5; Saku Pinta, 'Anarchism, Marxism, and the Ideological Composition of the Chicago Idea', *Working USA* 12, no. 3 (2009), 421–450. Louis Lingg, who arrived in the United States in 1885, was the only Haymarket defendant already a committed anarchist at this time.

[8] Lucy Parsons (Ed), *Life of Albert R. Parsons: With Brief History of the Labor Movement in America*, 2nd edition (Chicago: Mrs. Lucy E. Parsons, 1903), 25.

the Revolution (1909), written by the anarcho-syndicalists Émile Pataud and Émile Pouget of the CGT. Although the revolution they portray is a largely peaceful affair (Peter Kropotkin reproached the authors for having 'considerably attenuated the resistance that the Social Revolution will probably meet with on its way'), it nevertheless includes the construction of barricades and formation of armed worker militias that are 'ready for a fight', if necessary. Eventually, the last vestiges of the 'governmentalist' counterrevolutionaries are wiped out by an aerial bombardment of explosives and poisonous gas, and the same weapons are successfully deployed against an invading alliance of capitalist armies.[53]

Some anarcho-syndicalists' embrace of armed revolution alongside, rather than in the place of, the general strike complicates the common interpretation of anarchists' turn to syndicalism as 'a reaction against the infantile disorder of anarchism that was terrorism'.[54] Many self-professed anarcho-syndicalists did not entirely abandon 'propaganda by the deed', a tactic which was originally conceptualised and practised as small-scale insurrections—not assassinations—intended to be inspiring examples of direct action that might also create the possibility of unleashing a general revolutionary uprising. This is how the doctrine was understood by Malatesta and his fellow Italian insurrectionists of the 1870s, as well as by most of the Haymarket anarchists.[55] Syndicalism simply replaced, or merged, insurrections with strikes in this formulation. Syndicalists viewed every strike,

[53] Pataud and Pouget, *How We Shall Bring About the Revolution*, quote on xvi.

[54] Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste*, 259.

[55] Ulrich Linse, "'Propaganda by Deed' and 'Direct Action': Two Concepts of Anarchist Violence", in *Social Protest, Violence and Terror in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Gerhard Hirschfeld (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 201–229; Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism, 1864–1892* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), chaps. 4 and 5; Messer-Kruse, *Haymarket Conspiracy*.

For anarchists like Malatesta, both propositions were reversed: syndicalism represented just one important front of the anarchist struggle, and the general strike was only a first step in a process that must culminate in armed insurrection. The Italian condemned the 'Pacifist conception' of the general strike, whose advocates 'make people think they can do things without fighting, and thus actually spoil the revolutionary spirit of the people'. Instead, a general strike would inevitably be met with violence, and workers must arm themselves in response, 'and that would mean Revolution'.[49]

Some anarcho-syndicalists, however, conceptualised the general strike as much as Malatesta did. The Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada, which appears to have been the first organisation to use the label 'anarcho-syndicalist', adhered to an IWW-inspired declaration of principle that called for 'violent (or forcible) social revolution'.[50] More consequentially, the IWMA's 'Declaration of the Principles of Revolutionary Syndicalism' (1923) describes the general strike as 'the prelude to the social revolution', and admits that 'the decisive struggle between the capitalist present and free communist future will not occur without conflict. [Syndicalists] accordingly recognize violence as a means of defense against the violent methods of the ruling classes in the struggle for the possession of the factories and the fields by the revolutionary people'.[51] Harking back to Chicago's worker militias of the Haymarket era, the same Chinese anarchists who championed syndicalism in Shanghai also promoted the formation of a 'people's militia' to help carry out and defend the revolution.[52]

These contradictory visions informed the description of the general strike in the utopian novel *How We Shall Bring About*

[49] *International Anarchist Congress*, 17, 19.

[50] Grueter, 'Red Scare Scholarship', 80, n. 43.

[51] Thorpe, *The Workers Themselves*, 324.

[52] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 67.

Parsons, an influential figure within the national labour union the Knights of Labor.[9] The IWPA soon had 5000 members nationwide, and dominated Chicago's labour movement.[10]

The Pittsburgh Manifesto attempted to reconcile the revolutionary Marxism of the 'social revolutionaries' with the insurrectionary anarchism of German immigrant Johann Most and the labour union-oriented anarchism of anarchists like Drury and Parsons. It boldly called for 'Destruction of the existing class rule, by all means, i.e., by energetic, relentless, revolutionary, and international action', but avoided dictating what such action should look like. The document failed to mention labour unions but did call for 'Establishment of a free society based upon co-operative organization of production' and 'Free exchange of equivalent products by and between the productive organizations without commerce and profit-mongery'.[11] For Chicago anarchists like Parsons and German-born editor August Spies, 'productive organisations' were clearly synonymous with labour unions, and in 1884 these two men helped form the Central Labor Union (CLU), a federation of local unions that took the IWPA's anarchist platform as its own. By 1886, the CLU had twenty-four affiliates, 'including the eleven largest unions in the city', and between 28,000 and 40,000 members.[12]

Parsons' conception of revolutionary unionism synthesised Marxist economics with anarchist tactics. His posthumously published book, *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Scientific Basis as Defined by Some of Its Apostles* (1887), contains extensive

[9] Robert Weir, '"Here's to the Men Who Lose!": The Hidden Career of Victor Drury', *Labor History* 36, no. 4 (1995), 530–556.

[10] See Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*; Bruce C. Nelson, *Beyond the Martyrs: A Social History of Chicago's Anarchists, 1870–1900* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988); James R. Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006).

[11] Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 75.

[12] Ibid., 91–94; Nelson, *Beyond the Martyrs*, 142, 182, 228.

passages from Marx's *Capital* and *The Communist Manifesto*, but places these alongside works by anarchists like Peter Kropotkin and Élisée Reclus, and omits Marx's programmatic recommendations. Although Bakunin is barely mentioned, his influence is also clear, particularly in repeated references to labour unions as the 'embryonic' form of the future anarchist society.[13] Similarly, in an 1885 editorial for his newspaper *The Alarm*, Parsons declared, 'The Trades Union [is] the embryonic group of the future "free society." Every Trades Union is, *nolens volens*, an autonomous commune in the process of incubation. The Trades Union is a necessity of capitalist production, and will yet take its place by superseding it under the system of universal free co-operation'.[14] Although quite close to syndicalism, the Chicago Idea formulated by Parsons and his comrades did not incorporate one of syndicalist ideology's essential elements: the revolutionary general strike. Instead, its model for revolutionary action was the popular armed insurrection of the Paris Commune of 1871, an event upon which the Chicago anarchists 'bestowed … an almost holy aura'.[15]

Chicago's labour movement had experienced years of violent repression at the hands of police and militiamen, prompting immigrant socialists to form armed workers' militias beginning in 1875. The IWPA and CLU prioritised the arming and drilling of their members in order, as the CLU resolved, to 'be in a position of meeting our foe with his own argument,

[13] A. R. Parsons, *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Scientific Basis as Defined by Some of Its Apostles* (Chicago: Mrs. A. R. Parsons, 1887).

[14] *The Alarm*, April 4, 1885, quoted in Michael R. Johnson, 'Albert R. Parsons: An American Architect of Syndicalism', *Midwest Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (1968), 204.

[15] Philip M. Katz, *From Appomattox to Montmartre: Americans and the Paris Commune* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 186. On the Chicago Idea's similarities to syndicalism, see Johnson, 'Albert R. Parsons'; Pinta, 'Anarchism'.

ment while recognising that syndicalism 'is but one of the forms of the revolutionary class struggle'.[46]

Differences between 'pure' syndicalists, anarcho-syndicalists, and labour-oriented anarchists like Malatesta often rested on the question of the general strike. For syndicalists, the union and the strike were the sufficient and exclusive instruments of revolution. Many anarcho-syndicalists agreed, and argued that the general strike was the exclusive means to bring about anarchism. According to CGT militant Pierre Besnard, anarcho-syndicalism 'draws its doctrine from Anarchism and its organizational format from Revolutionary Syndicalism … [I]n the revolutionary field, the anarcho-syndicalist movement exhausts, *in the present landscape*, the means of achieving libertarian communism'. The role of independent anarchist groups, he argued, was, '*on an exclusively ideological level*, to carry out propaganda as far as possible … Anarchism assists the anarcho-syndicalist movement, without supplanting it'.[47] Many syndicalists also portrayed the general strike as an essentially peaceful alternative to armed revolution, accomplished when workers simply 'fold their arms', as 'Big Bill' Haywood was fond of saying. Rudolf Rocker similarly wrote, 'For the workers the general strike takes the place of the barricades of the political uprising'.[48]

[46] Group of Russian Anarchists Abroad, 'The Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists (Draft), June 20, 1926,' in Alexandre Skirda, *Facing the Enemy: A History of Anarchist Organization from Proudhon to May 1968* (Oakland: AK Press, 2002), 204.

[47] Pierre Besnard, *L'anarcho-syndicalisme et l'anarchisme: Rapport de Pierre Besnard, secrétaire de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs au Congrès anarchiste international de 1937*, https://www.theyliewedie.org/ressources/biblio/fr/Besnard_pierre_-_anarchisme_et_anarcho-syndicalisme_1937.html. Emphasis in original.

[48] Gabriel, 'Sindicalismo y huelga', 18–19; Joyce L. Kornbluh (Ed), *Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968), 36; Rocker, *Anarcho-Syndicalism*, 123.

has been geometrically proven that parallels never meet'.[43] Even many 'organisationist' anarchists who supported syndicalism, such as Emma Goldman and Peter Kropotkin, were apprehensive about the centralised nature of some syndicalist organisations—and, therefore, those organisations' views of the future order.[44] Perhaps the most common anarchist stance was one of critical engagement: support for, and even participation in, syndicalist organisations, while continuing to pursue agitation and revolutionary activities outside of them as well. This was the stance of Errico Malatesta during his famous debate with the anarcho-syndicalist Pierre Monatte at the 1907 International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam, where the delegates adopted resolutions that supported syndicalism, 'without forgetting that Anarchist action cannot be entirely contained within the limits of the Syndicate', and declared, 'The Anarchists consider the Syndicalist movement as a powerful means of revolution, but not as a substitute for revolution … The Anarchists further think that the destruction of capitalist and authoritarian society can only be realized through armed insurrection and expropriation by force'.[45] The famous and controversial 'Organizational Platform' written by Nestor Makhno and other Russian exiles in Paris in 1926 similarly urged anarchists to 'be involved in revolutionary syndicalism as one of the forms of the revolutionary workers' movement' and to work to 'anarchise' the syndicalist move-

[43] Luigi Galleani, *The End of Anarchism?* (Orkney: Cienfuegos Press, 1982), 11.

[44] Emma Goldman, 'Observations and Comments,' *Mother Earth*, October 1914; Peter Kropotkin, Preface to Émile Pataud and Émile Pouget, *Syndicalism and the Co-Operative Commonwealth: How We Shall Bring About the Revolution*, trans. Charlotte Charles and Frederic Charles, 2nd ed. (Oxford: New International Publishing Company, 1913), xiv–xv.

[45] *The International Anarchist Congress Held at Plancius Hall, Amsterdam, on August 26th–31st, 1907* (London: Freedom, 1907), 21, 22.

force'.[16] Having seen both the Paris Commune and the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 violently crushed, the anarchists also seized upon dynamite as a great leveller that would finally tip the balance of force in favour of the working class. They viewed armed resistance and 'scientific warfare' through the use of explosives as necessary compliments to labour organising and strikes and as legitimate forms of self-defence and working-class struggle. The already ongoing war against capital, they believed, would inevitably escalate into armed conflict. They therefore did not abandon the insurrectionary strain within anarchism but instead incorporated it into their proto-syndicalist programme.

The IWPA also contained an 'Autonomist' faction that shared Johann Most's distrust of even radical labour unions, embracing instead the strategy of 'propaganda by the deed' then popular in European anarchist circles.[17] Members of this group included Haymarket Martyrs George Engel, Adolph Fischer, and Louis Lingg. Although the latter two were both union members themselves, they doubted the value of strikes and boycotts. As Lingg put it during his trial, 'the fact is, that … at every endeavor to combine the efforts of workingmen, you have displayed the brutal violence of the police club, and this is why I have recommended rude force, to combat the ruder force of the police. … [I]f they use cannons against us, we shall use dynamite against them'.[18] In 1886, both the unionist and insurrectionary wings of Chicago's IWPA would face the full force of police repression.

[16] Green, *Death in the Haymarket*; Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 45–46, 160.

[17] See Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, chap. 11; Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Haymarket Conspiracy: Transatlantic Anarchist Networks* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

[18] Parsons, *Anarchism*, 82, 84–85.

The Haymarket Affair

American labour organisations set 1 May 1886 as the date for a nationwide general strike unless employers granted workers the eight-hour workday. Most of Chicago's anarchists were initially unreceptive to what they viewed as a reformist movement that merely addressed a symptom rather than the deeper problem of capitalist exploitation. Many further believed that even this modest demand was doomed to failure in the face of employers' political power. Albert Parsons, however, had been involved in the eight-hour movement since before his turn to anarchism, and he continued to endorse it as an important, albeit insufficient, goal in 1886. Eventually most of his fellow IWPA members, often reluctantly, also threw their support behind the movement, if only because they viewed even failed labour struggles as important rehearsals for the coming revolution, and also 'because we did not choose to stand aloof and be misunderstood by our fellow-workers'. Some of the Autonomists, meanwhile, prepared for the possibility of retaliatory violence in the event that the strike was met with force. Anarchists therefore became the unlikely leaders of the eight-hour movement in Chicago.[19]

On the 1 May, 30,000–40,000 Chicago workers, and hundreds of thousands nationwide, walked out on strike. Riding this wave of labour militancy, on 3 May, anarchist August Spies spoke at a rally in support of workers at the McCormick Reaper Works who had been out on strike since February. When a scuffle broke out between strikers and strikebreakers, police opened fire, killing at least three strikers. Outraged anarchists called a protest meeting for the following day in the city's Haymarket Square, where Spies, Parsons, and Samuel Fielden all addressed the crowd. At around 10:30, as the event was wind-

[19] Parsons, *Life of Albert R. Parsons*, xxxii, 24–26. See also the differing accounts in Green, *Death in the Haymarket*; Messer-Kruse, *Haymarket Conspiracy*.

Second and Third Internationals, but an international association of revolutionary workers'.[42]

Anarchism, Syndicalism, and Anarcho-Syndicalism

Although anarchists were largely responsible for fashioning syndicalist doctrine, labour radicals belonging to a variety of political currents drew on and modified syndicalism as they saw fit. In some cases, such as Italy and most of the Anglophone world, it was revolutionary Marxists rather than anarchists who took the lead in launching syndicalist movements. Soon a new faction emerged in many countries: 'pure' syndicalists, who insisted that syndicalism as a theory and practice was 'sufficient in itself' and could not be subsumed within either anarchism or Marxism. Some syndicalist unions, including the CGT and IWW, explicitly declared their independence from political ideologies of all kinds, including anarchism. Nowhere was syndicalism purely anarchist nor purely Marxist—nor even purely syndicalist. It was an amalgamation of multiple tendencies which took on different configurations depending on time and place. Inevitably, these differences led to tension and conflict.

A minority of anarchists opposed any form of anarchist organisation above the small affinity group, believing that large bodies like unions are prone to hierarchy and bureaucratisation. Although they supported workers' spontaneous struggles against capital, they criticised the labour functionaries that claimed to speak on workers' behalf. Luigi Galleani, the leading propagandist of the 'antiorganisationist' wing of Italian anarchism, declared that the 'anarchist movement and the labor movement follow two parallel lines, and it

[42] Ibid., 253.

forty to fifty labor organisations and roughly fifty thousand workers'.[39]

By the end of the First World War, syndicalism had spread to every inhabited continent. In several countries syndicalist federations were, for a time, the dominant national labour bodies, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, France, Ireland, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, and Spain. More often, syndicalism was a minority current. Nevertheless, secondary syndicalist movements in countries like Australia, China, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, the United States, and Uruguay still played important roles. Although on the decline in most of Europe during the interwar years, syndicalist organisations continued to grow in Asia, Latin America, and southern Africa throughout the 1910s and 1920s, and in Bulgaria, Poland, and Spain throughout the 1930s.[40]

After several false starts, in 1922 syndicalist unions from around the world formed a global federation, the International Working Men's Association (IWMA). Its founding convention included representatives from organisations from fifteen countries and with an estimated combined membership of 1.5 million workers.[41] The IWMA's name was a direct invocation of First International, of which it considered itself the true successor, as the IWMA 'was not a union of political parties, like the

[39] Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 170, 237.

[40] Lucien van der Walt and Steven Hirsch, 'Rethinking Anarchism and Syndicalism: The Colonial and Postcolonial Experience, 1870–1940', in Hirsch and van der Walt, *Anarchism and Syndicalism*, xlvi; Jack Grancharoff, 'The Bulgarian Anarchist Movement', *Rebel Worker*, May 2010; Rafał Chwedoruk, 'Polish Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism in the Twentieth Century', in Berry and Bantman, *New Perspectives on Anarchism*, 141–162; Julián Casanova, *Anarchism, the Republic, and Civil War in Spain, 1931–1939*, ed. Paul Preston, trans. Andrew Dowling and Graham Pollok (London: Routledge, 2005).

[41] Wayne Thorpe, *'The Workers Themselves': Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour, 1913–1923* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989), 244, 313 n. 13.

ing down, police marched on the meeting and ordered it to disperse. In response, an unknown individual in the crowd—though in all likelihood someone affiliated with the IWPA—threw a homemade bomb into the police ranks. The explosion and subsequent panicked police gunfire resulted in the deaths of seven policemen and at least four workers, as well as dozens of injuries.

In the following days, Chicago police raided the meeting places and homes of local radicals and union organisers, and eventually charged eight IWPA members with murder for having allegedly conspired with the unidentified bomb thrower. After a sensationalised and deeply flawed trial, all eight defendants were found guilty; one was sentenced to fifteen years, two more had their sentences commuted to life in prison, and the remaining five—Parsons, Spies, Engel, Fielden, and Lingg—were sentenced to death by hanging. Lingg committed suicide in his cell, and the remaining four men were executed on the 11 November 1887. Spies' final words from the gallows proved prophetic: 'The time will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today'.[20] Outrage over the executions reverberated around the globe and contributed to the radicalisation of a new generation of anarchists and labour activists. Among them was William 'Big Bill' Haywood, a future founder and leader of the syndicalist IWW.[21]

[20] The best accounts of the bombing and trial remain Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*; and Green, *Death in the Haymarket*. For a controversial revisionist view see Messer-Kruse, *Haymarket Conspiracy*; Timothy Messer-Kruse, *The Trial of the Haymarket Anarchists: Terrorism and Justice in the Gilded Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). On the possible identity of the bomb thrower see Paul Avrich, 'The Bomb-Thrower: A New Candidate,' in Franklin Rosemont and David Roediger (Eds), *Haymarket Scrapbook* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1986), 71–73.

[21] William D. Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book: The Autobiography of William D. Haywood* (New York: International Publishers, 1929), 31.

The dead men's martyrdom was most directly felt through the advent of the global working-class holiday created to honour their memory: May Day. The first congress of the Second International—the self-designated socialist successor of the International Workingmen's Association—called for strikes in favour of the eight-hour workday on the 1 May 1890, to commemorate the Haymarket Martyrs, and in 1891 it officially declared May Day to be International Workers' Day. In many countries, however, it was an anarchist who pioneered May Day as a day of workers' protest—often including strikes and insurrections—and fought to prevent the Haymarket anarchists from being co-opted by social democrats.[22] In addition, anarchists all over the world turned the 11 November, the date of the Haymarket executions, into their own, separate holiday in honour of the Chicago anarchists.

Ironically, although the Chicago Idea had not revived the notion of the revolutionary general strike, the Haymarket Martyrs were frequently credited with introducing the idea to European radicals. The Chicago anarchists had embraced the eight-hour strike belatedly and often reluctantly, but the mythology of May Day portrayed them as spearheading both the eight-hour movement and the general strike. In France, for example, the idea of the revolutionary general strike was first championed by anarchist carpenter Joseph Tortelier, who 'had been deeply stirred by the general strike movement in

[22] Philip S. Foner, *May Day: A Short History of the International Workers' Holiday, 1886–1986* (New York: International Publishers, 1986), 45–55; Michelle Perrot, 'The First of May 1890 in France: The Birth of a Working-Class Ritual', in *The Power of the Past: Essays for Eric Hobsbawm*, ed. Pat Thane, Geoffrey Crossick, and Roderick Floud (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 143–171; Andrea Panaccione (Ed), *May Day Celebration* (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1988); José Antonio Gutiérrerz (Ed), *Los orígenes libertarios del Primero de Mayo: de Chicago a América Latina (1886–1930)* (Santiago: Editorial Quimantú, 2010); George Esenwein, *Anarchist Ideology and the Working-Class Movement in Spain, 1868–1898* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), chap. 9.

Africa's Industrial Workers of Africa and Industrial and Commercial Workers Union.[35] The IWW also strongly influenced the anarchist Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada (UORW), which had over 10,000 members at its peak in 1919. Following the February Revolution, a number of UORW leaders returned toRussia where their new Union of Anarcho-Syndicalist Propaganda gained a significant following among the factory committee movement and several unions.[36]

At the turn of the century, anarchist migrants from southern and eastern Europe took part in the labour movement of Egypt, where, '[b]y the end of the first decade of the [twentieth] century, the anarcho-syndicalist international union had emerged as a significant industrial and indeed moral force'.[37] Syndicalist ideas, drawn from both the IWW and the CGT, informed the creation of anarchist-led unions in Japan in the 1910s and 1920s, culminating in the formation of a syndicalist federation in 1926.[38] Anarchists also founded China's 'first modern labour unions' in 1917, and the anarchist-led Federation of Shanghai Syndicates created in 1924 'held sway over

[35] Bob Holton, *British Syndicalism, 1900–1914: Myths and Realities* (London: Pluto Press, 1976); Emmet O'Connor, *Syndicalism in Ireland, 1917–1923* (Kildare: Cork University Press, 1988); Erik Olssen, *The Red Feds: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism and the New Zealand Federation of Labor 1908–14* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1988); Lucien van der Walt, 'The First Globalisation and Transnational Labour Activism in Southern Africa: White Labourism, the IWW, and the ICU, 1904–1934', *African Studies* 66, nos. 2–3 (2007), 223–251.

[36] Mark Grueter, 'Red Scare Scholarship, Class Conflict, and the Case of the Anarchist Union of Russian Workers, 1919', *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 11, no. 1 (2017), 53–81; Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), chap. 5.

[37] Anthony Gorman, "Diverse in Race, Religion and Nationality … But United in Aspirations of Civil Progress': The Anarchist Movement in Egypt 1860–1940', in Hirsch and van der Walt, *Anarchism and Syndicalism*, 23.

[38] John Crump, *Hatta Shuzo and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 75–83.

Paraguay in 1905–1906; Bolivia in 1908 (and again in 1912 and 1926); Peru in 1912; and Chile in 1913.[31] Anarchists had dominated the labour movements of Mexico and Cuba since the 1870s and 1880s, respectively—well before the advent of syndicalism—and founded national syndicalist federations in those countries in the 1910s and 1920s.[32]

In the United States, an uneasy coalition of socialists, anarchists, and militant industrial unionists founded the IWW in 1905, influenced by both European anarcho-syndicalism and the Chicago Idea.[33] Between 1908 and 1912 both the Socialist Labor Party and Socialist Party of America severed their ties to the union, leaving it in the hands of dedicated syndicalists and anarchists. The IWW peaked at over 150,000 members in 1917, and also established branches in at least sixteen other countries between 1906 and 1925, including Australia, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, and Uruguay.[34]

The IWW's 'revolutionary industrial unionism' was second only to the syndicalism of the French CGT in its influence on labour movements abroad, and it provided much of the ideological basis for the Industrial Syndicalist Education League in Britain, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, the New Zealand Federation of Labour, and South

[31] See Diego Abad de Santillán, *La F.O.R.A.: ideología y trayectoria del movimiento obrero revolucionario en la Argentina*, 2nd edition (Buenos Aires: Editorial Proyección, 1971); Carlos M. Rama and Angel J. Cappelletti, *El Anarquismo en América Latina* (Caracas: Fundacion Biblioteca Ayacuch, 1990); Hirsch and van der Walt, *Anarchism and Syndicalism*; Geoffroy de Laforcade and Kirwin R. Shaffer, eds., *In Defiance of Boundaries: Anarchism in Latin American History* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015).

[32] John M. Hart, *Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class, 1860–1931* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978); Frank Fernández, *Cuban Anarchism: The History of a Movement* (Tucson: See Sharp Press, 2001), 39–59.

[33] Salvatore Salerno, *Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989); Cole, Struthers, and Zimmer, *Wobblies of the World.*

[34] Cole, Struthers, and Zimmer, *Wobblies of the World.*

the U.S.A. in 1886–1887'. Thus, the French anarcho-syndicalist leader Émile Pouget claimed, '[from] the United States, the idea of the general strike—fertilized by the blood of anarchists hanged in Chicago, following the events of May 1st 1886—was imported to France'.[23] In Italy, too, 'anarchists spread the celebration of May Day and associated it with the "syndicalist" general strike', while in Spain, 'with the advent of the eight-hour campaign and the celebration of May Day … [anarchists] began reassessing the revolutionary potential of strikes'.[24] Regardless, the rehabilitation of this tactic from the anti-authoritarian wing of the First International bridged the gap between the Chicago Idea and revolutionary syndicalism. Albert Parsons' widow, anarchist agitator Lucy Parsons, closed the circle in 1905 when she addressed the founding conventions of the Industrial Workers of the World in Chicago and declared, 'my conception of the future method of taking possession of this Earth is that of the general strike […] My conception of the strike of the future is not to strike and go out and starve, but to strike and remain in and take possession of the necessary property of production'.[25]

The Rise of Syndicalism

Recognisably syndicalist ideas and organisations emerged more or less simultaneously throughout the world between the 1890s and 1910s, due to changes in global capitalist production, disillusionment with the social democracy of the Second Inter-

[23] Phil H. Goodstein, *The Theory of the General Strike from the French Revolution to Poland* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1984), 54–55; Rocker, *Anarcho-Syndicalism*, 133; Pouget quoted in Pinta, 'Anarchism', 428.

[24] Carl Levy, 'Currents of Italian Syndicalism before 1926', *International Review of Social History* 45, no. 2 (2000), 215; Esenwein, *Anarchist Ideology*, 157.

[25] *The Founding Convention of the IWW: Proceedings* (New York: Merit Publishers, 1969), 170.

national, mutual transnational influences, and the migration and exile of leftwing militants.[26] However, between 1895 and 1906, it was France's *Confédération Générale du Travail* (General Confederation of Labour, or CGT) that first explicitly articulated a revolutionary syndicalist programme containing all of the hallmarks of syndicalist doctrine: the inevitability of class struggle, working-class autonomy from political parties and the state, the self-sufficiency of labour unions as the agents of revolution and the revolutionary general strike as the means, federated workers' organisations as the organisational basis of post-revolutionary society, and the tactics of direct action—including strikes, boycotts, and sabotage (originally defined as any means through which workers reduce production while on the job)—for workers' everyday struggles to improve conditions.[27] These ideas resonated widely. Eric Hobsbawm, a Marxist with little sympathy for either anarchism or syndicalism, admitted that 'in 1905–1914 … the bulk of the revolutionary left was anarcho-syndicalist, or at least much closer to the ideas and the mood of anarcho-syndicalism than to that of classical Marxism'.[28]

Spain and Italy, both strongholds of anarchism dating back to the First International, produced sizable syndicalist movements. In the 1880s Spain had already been home to a large anarchist labour federation that closely resembled later anarcho-syndicalist organisations, but repression and internal divisions led to its demise, and a true syndicalist federation did not appear until 1910, with the formation of the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (National Confederation of Labour, or CNT). Only in 1919, however, did the CNT adopt an explicitly anarchist programme.[29] In Italy, it was revolutionary Marxists from the Socialist Party who first promoted syndicalism and, in 1912, formed the syndicalist *Unione Sindacale Italiana* (Italian Syndicalist Union, or USI). Anarchists remained a minority within the USI until the First World War, when pro-war syndicalists broke away, leaving the organisation under anarchist control.[30]

Earlier, in 1901, Spanish and Italian anarchists founded what became the *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* (Argentine Regional Workers' Federation, or FORA), which touted an explicitly anarchist programme and was Argentina's largest union federation for three decades. Similarly, anarchist-led syndicalist unions were formed in Uruguay, Brazil, and

[26] Comparative and transnational studies of syndicalism include Larry Peterson, 'The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism, 1900–1925', in *Work, Community, and Power: The Experience of Labor in Europe and America, 1900–1925*, ed. James E. Cronin and Carmen Sirianni (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 49–87; Marcel van der Linden and Wayne Thorpe, eds., *Revolutionary Syndicalism: An International Perspective* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1990); Ralph Darlington, *Syndicalism and the Transition to Communism: An International Comparative Analysis* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008); Damier, *Anarcho-Syndicalism*; Steven Hirsch and Lucien van der Walt (Eds), *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World, 1870–1940: The Praxis of National Liberation, Internationalism, and Social Revolution* (Boston: Brill, 2010); David Berry and Constance Bantman (Eds), *New Perspectives on Anarchism, Labour and Syndicalism: The Individual, the National and the Transnational* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010); Peter Cole, David Struthers, and Kenyon Zimmer, eds., *Wobblies of the World: A Global History of the IWW* (London: Pluto Press, 2017).

[27] There is a large literature on the CGT; see, for example, Lewis Lorwin, *Syndicalism in France*, 2nd edition (New York: Columbia University, 1914); Jean Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1975), vol. 2; Peter N. Stearns, *Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labor: A Cause Without Rebels* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1971); Barbara Mitchell, *The Practical Revolutionaries: A New Interpretation of the French Anarchosyndicalists* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987).

[28] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Revolutionaries: Contemporary Essays* (New York: New American Library, 1973), 61.

[29] Esenwein, *Anarchist Ideology*; Antonio Bar, 'The CNT: The Glory and Tragedy of Spanish Anarchosyndicalism', in Thorpe and Van der Linden, *Revolutionary Syndicalism*, 119–138.

[30] Charles L. Bertrand, 'Revolutionary Syndicalism in Italy', in Thorpe and Van der Linden, *Revolutionary Syndicalism*, 139–153; Levy, 'Currents of Italian Syndicalism'.