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2019

The Palgrave Handbook of Anarchism (edited by Carl Levy & Matthew S. Adams), chapter 23, pp. 389–407, DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-75620-2_23.

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to anarchism's status as a living ideology.[69] After all, even those commentators prone to see anarchism's response to the war as the start of a journey that ended with its obliteration in the Spanish Civil War are struck by the tradition's 'strikingly protean fluidity', by its ability to reinvent, to innovate, to draw inspiration from diverse currents of practical and intellectual dissent.[70] This was not something that even the war to end war could defeat.

[69] Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008), 76.

[70] Woodcock, *Anarchism*, 414.

Contents

With the First World War not only failing to address the geopolitical issues that were its cause, but creating fresh ones that would inform an even more sanguinary conflict, there seemed little room for optimism, and anarchism shared in these failures.

The First World War was obviously a serious test for anarchists, and one that they, in many respects, failed to meet. Yet such prelapsarian narratives do not reflect the reality of the situation. For one, the idea that there was widespread apostasy, epitomised by Kropotkin's defence of the Entente, usually neglects both the complexity of his theoretical position, and the extent to which it emerged through a conversation with the contemporary peace movement rather than being simply a product of nationalist sentiment.[68] Moreover, it is important to remember that while the weight of anarchist opinion gathered behind the anti-militarists, Kropotkin was far from being alone in seeing the war as an act of German aggression that had to be opposed in the name of libertarian understandings of freedom. As Malatesta, Berkman, and others recognised, the accuracy of this reading is certainly open to question, but to portray it as an abandonment of principle simplifies tactical, organisational, and intellectual positions that were ultimately multifaceted.

Viewed from this perspective, anarchists' handwringing on the eve of war points to something else entirely. Instead of a moribund movement attached to a cluster of unrealistic ideas, it shows a vibrant political tradition defined by a commitment to tactical plurality and passionate internal contestation. Moments of stress provide an opportunity to see these processes of decontestation with particular clarity, and although the debates caused by the war may often have produced more heat than light, the fight to define a logical position on the conflict congruent with anarchist premises points

[68] For more thorough examinations of Kropotkin's position, see Ryley, *Manifesto of the Sixteen* and Kinna, *Kropotkin*.

diction, is a common motif in explorations of the war, emphasising the unprecedented scale of the conflict; its shattering impact upon the verities of the pre-war era; and the fact that nothing would be the same again.

It might seem that the fortunes of the anarchist movement sit particularly comfortably with this narrative. The picture that the foregoing pages have painted of international anarchism is in many ways a doleful one: a threatening movement reduced to impotence; its greatest thinkers engaged in internecine warfare and seemingly renouncing the political positions they had devoted their lives to developing; and, just when it was at its weakest, long-awaited revolutionary opportunities finally emerged that were quickly captured by anarchism's political rivals. And, as Malatesta had predicted, the First World War was not the war to end war. Herbert Read, a veteran of 1914, politicised in the inter-war years, returned to his experiences in verse as the noise of the Dunkirk evacuation in May 1940 travelled across the English Channel to reach him in the British countryside. 'No longer apt in war', he could not 'distinguish between bombs and shells', but he was clear that the lessons of 1914 had not been learned:

> … we drifted twenty years
> down the stream of time
> feeling that such a storm could not break again
>
> Feeling that our little house-boat was safe
> until the last lock was reached.[67]

[67] Herbert Read, *A World Within a War: Poems* (London: Faber & Faber, 1944), 12. For Read's position on the First World War, consider: Matthew S. Adams, 'Herbert Read and the Fluid Memory of the First World War: Poetry, Prose, and Polemic' in *Historical Research*, 88:240, 333–354; Matthew S. Adams, 'Mutualism in the Trenches: Anarchism, Militarism and the Lessons of the First World War', Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism*, 1914–1918, 243–262.

Abstract

Centring on the defining debate between Kropotkin and Malatesta, this chapter contextualises anarchist responses to the outbreak of war in the major belligerents—Britain, France, Italy, Germany, the United States, and Russia. Drawing on the latest historical research, it examines the multifaceted reactions to the war amongst anarchists and their struggles to plot a path through the unprecedented crisis confronting them in 1914. In so doing, it demonstrates the importance of grappling with these challenges to the articulation of a distinctive anarchist political identity; the importance of the war in generating fresh tactical perspectives, especially in terms of anti-militarism and anti-colonialism; and, the tactical and theoretical plurality obscured by undue focus on the Kropotkin/Malatesta debate.

On the last day of July 1914, Jean Jaurès, co-founder and leader of the *Parti socialiste, section française de l'internationale ouvrière* (SFIO), took the short walk from the offices of his campaigning newspaper *L'Humanité* with a group of fellow journalists to the Café du Croissant for a late dinner. He had just returned from a meeting of the *Bureau Socialiste International*, the organising committee of the Second International, held in Brussels over the 29th and 30th of July, where socialists from all the major European powers, including Keir Hardie, Rosa Luxemburg, and Karl Kautsky, had met in an atmosphere of mounting international tension. Austria-Hungary had already declared war on Serbia in retaliation for the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, and Russia, keen to increase its power over Serbia at Austria's expense, had started moving a portion of its vast military manpower to the Russian-Austrian border.[1] The comradely greetings exchanged be-

[1] Martin Gilbert, *First World War* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 26.

tween the delegates in Brussels' Maison du Peuple stood in contrast to the antagonisms that were pushing their national governments to the brink of war, but their public statements reflected the unprecedented nature of the crisis. Issuing an 'Appeal to the British Working Class', Hardie and Arthur Henderson observed that 'for more than 100 hundred years no such danger has confronted civilisation' like the escalating conflict, and closed with an appeal to the virtues of internationalism that socialists had been trumpeting for decades:

> Workers!—stand together … for peace. Combine and conquer the militarist enemy and the self-seeking imperialists today once and for all.
>
> Men and women of Britain, you now have an unexampled opportunity of rendering … a magnificent service to humanity, and the world.[2]

With the German declaration of war against France now just days away, Jaurès and his anti-militarist friends were no doubt preoccupied with similar ideas as they dined at the Croissant. But they had been spotted. Raoul Villain, a young French nationalist radicalised by Charles Maurras' monarchist *Action Française*, approached the seated Jaurès, revolver in hand.[3] Firing twice, Jaurès, 'the greatest man of the Third Republic', fell dead.[4]

Jaurès was not an anarchist, but his fate highlights both the febrile atmosphere in antebellum radical politics and the potential personal price at stake. Given the time spent by anarchists over the preceding decades outlining the value of international working-class solidarity as an antidote to Europe's imperialist wars, started,

[2] 'Appeal to the British Working Class' quoted in Margaret Bondfield, *A Life's Work* (London: Hutchinson & Co., N.D.), 140.

[3] For the narrative of these events, see Harvey Goldberg, *The Life of Jean Jaurès* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 470–473.

[4] Leon Trotsky, "Jean Jaurès", *Bulletin Communiste*, 47 (November, 1923), 845–849 (845).

ical actors. With a pre-war progressivist agenda increasingly finding expression in a state readied for war, the results of this concatenation of progressivism and state agency could produce contradictory results. Emma Goldman and Eugene Debs suffered as a result of governmental anxiety concerning dissenters and fifth columnists, but the IWW grew rapidly, with the booming wartime economy giving the organisation the chance to wrest improvements from employers conscious of both labour shortages and a steady demand for their goods. The war was then 'both a threat and an opportunity', and the IWW's focus on addressing working conditions rather than opposing state militarisation tended to incubate it from the restrictions that affected more outspoken participants in the US's labour struggles.[65] This would soon change, but it highlights the Janus-faced nature of the conditions sowed by the war. Where nationalism, the maximalisation of the nation state, and the triumph of centralising models of radical politics served to undermine the libertarian left, they could also pose new opportunities: lending credence to the anarchist critique of the state, engendering an economic chaos that appeared to confirm anarchist perceptions of capitalism's instability, and, in practical terms, destroying existing state structures. Confronting this legacy would be the duty of a new generation of radicals.

Conclusion

For Leszek Kołakowski the 31st July 1914, the date of Jaurès' death, was 'the last day of the nineteenth century'.[66] This sense that the First World War marked a radical rupture with the past, seen in fields as diverse as the state's role in industry and modernist

[65] Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1969), 358.

[66] Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism* (London: W.W. Norton, 2005), 451.

of political innovation were possible that demonstrated both the enduring presence of anarchist ideas in the debates spurred by moments of social crisis and an appetite for intellectual and political experimentation. From the wreck of the *Kaiserreich*, for instance, rose revolution in 1918. Mühsam and Landauer both leapt into action to support a Bavarian Republic that, they hoped, might be one component of a broader German council republic, with the Revolution's disparate groups uniting behind the slogan *Alle Macht den Räten!*[61] The German Revolution was a brief but bright flame, yet its glow illuminated the presence of a political movement—council communism—that was either a 'powerful anti-bureaucratic Marxist alternative' to Leninism, or a conceptual sibling of anarchism, the product of 'convergent perspectives between councilism and class struggle anarchisms'.[62] Either way, the hegemony of state socialist models on the left was not assured. So too the Kronstadt Rebellion of 1921 demonstrated that even in the heart of the Bolshevik experiment, an anarchistic commitment to the 'free soviet', liberated from the '"nightmare rule" of the Communist dictatorship', could momentarily flourish.[63] Indeed Kronstadt highlighted the continuing, if increasingly threatened, presence of anarchist groups in Russia, fighting what the anarchist revolutionary and intellectual Volin termed the 'statization' of the soviets.[64]

In calmer waters, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) also demonstrated that concentration of power in the hands of the state need not necessarily mean the obliteration of anti-state polit-

[61] Gabriel Kuhn, 'Introduction', *All Power to the Councils! A Documentary History of the German Revolution of 1918–1919* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012), xiii.

[62] John Gerber, 'From Left Radicalism to Council Communism: Anton Pannekoek and German Revolutionary Marxism', *Journal of Contemporary History* 23:1 (1988), 169–189 (169); Saku Pinta, 'Council Communist Perspectives and the Spanish Civil War and Revolution, 1936–1939' in *Libertarian Socialism*, 116.

[63] Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 160.

[64] Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005), 181.

they judged, by adventurous politicians and cheered on by avaricious capitalists, it might be expected that the anarchist movement would emerge from the fray bruised by the inevitable domestic restrictions, but confident in its theoretical diagnoses. In 1918, however, with the European landscape bearing witness to the ferocity of the four years of fighting, and with the granite that now memorialises the conflict in the world's cities still lying in unquarried rock, the anarchist movement was in many respects a shell of its former self. It had failed to oppose consistently the war, and once the scourge of the ruling classes, it looked to have been superseded by a successful revolution in Russia in 1917 that offered new models of political organisation and mobilisation at odds with many of anarchism's core values. If the Russian example converted some to Marxism, and more broadly starved competing leftist movements of oxygen, the divisions that had characterised the anarchist movement on the outbreak of war appeared to be a deeper symptom of its senility. If anarchists could not agree on their most fundamental principles at a time of crisis, perhaps it was, as Trotsky pontificated when its ideas were tested once more in the context of the Spanish Civil War, an 'utterly anti-revolutionary doctrine'.[5]

The strain that the war placed on the anarchist movement was very real—as it was for all internationalists—but time would demonstrate its ability to survive and even thrive once more. Indeed, 1914, as a moment of crisis, presents a useful vantage point from which to view the assumptions of key protagonists in the international anarchist movement and the intellectual depth and diversity that characterised anarchism as a political tradition. Seen from one angle as a nadir betraying anarchism's fragile intellectual foundations, from another, the ink and invective pouring forth in these years also demonstrates a lively commitment to exploring the potential of the tactics favoured by anarchists, to elucidating strategies for

[5] Leon Trotsky, 'The Lessons of Spain—the Last Warning', *Socialist Appeal*, 15 January 1938, 4–5+8 (4).

change that reflected anarchist values, and to reassessing their political tradition in the light of rapidly shifting geopolitical realities.

For many anarchist and non-anarchist onlookers, this was a debate personified in the clash between Peter Kropotkin and Errico Malatesta, two of the tradition's most distinguished thinkers and activists. This is in many ways reductive. Varieties of their argument—over the legitimacy of supporting either side in the war and how it reflected or violated anarchist principles—were played out around the world as national anarchist movements endeavoured to respond to the conflict in meaningful ways. Moreover, their debate itself was not simply about the legitimacy of the war itself but rested upon intellectual positions they had adumbrated over the course of their political careers, revolving around competing understandings of history, the role of national struggles, and differing conceptions of revolutionary change. Nevertheless, the Kropotkin-Malatesta spat, reconstructed contextually as a clash of competing intellectual visions rather than simply a question of personalities, does offer a useful avenue into the broader issues at stake for anarchists as the world marched to war. From this perspective, it also casts light on the multifarious ways that anarchists grappled with the crisis of the First World War, played out against a backdrop characterised by the faltering light of internationalism and the frequently ferocious governmental suppression of dissident activities.

Kropotkin vs. Malatesta

The evolution of attitudes towards the First World War is captured in the shifting response to a phrase that H.G. Wells used to title a series of essays he published in 1914 to stiffen British resolve in the coming conflict, *The War That Will End War*. In this collection, he laid the blame for the war squarely at Germany's door, describing 'Prussian Imperialism' as an 'intolerable nuisance' that

a common military danger might have aroused', sectional interests in Spain were therefore exacerbated, sowing, in the long term, the seeds of revolution.[59]

As in Spain and Russia, instability sometimes served to promote opportunities for concerted revolutionary action, but this was also partly a product of both countries' antediluvian state structures, where green shoots of resistance could thrive between the toes of monolithic but unwieldy systems of control. Elsewhere, the intensification of state power that was the result of economic and political changes forced by the exigencies of fighting total war tended to not only inhibit opportunities for action but also encouraged ideological repositioning on the left. Britain, as the intellectual, if not linguistic, home of laissez-faire political economy stands as an obvious example of these changes. Consider, for instance, the case of Labour Party leader Arthur Henderson, thrust into the limelight following Ramsay MacDonald's exit to the wings in protest at the Party's willingness to act in concert with its parliamentary rivals during the war. Henderson had always been on the liberal wing of the Labour Party—betraying the Party's dual origins in liberalism and socialism—but his experience at the fore of wartime politics encouraged him to see 'Methods of State control' previously regarded as 'intolerable infringements' as amounting to a positive 'revolution … of economic evolution'.[60] In this context, and allied to what looked for many on the radical left like the clear achievements of Bolshevism in forging a new model of revolutionary organisation, anarchists, humbled by their pre-war failures, faced a stern challenge.

Yet the emergence of the warfare state and the triumph of Bolshevism were only expressions of one side of the war's impact on radical politics. Where instability was an opportunity, processes

[59] Gerald H. Meaker, *The Revolutionary Left in Spain, 1914–1931* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 30.

[60] Arthur Henderson, *The Aims of Labour* (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1919), 9.

Germany countryside *en route* to St Petersburg's Finland Station, regardless of how fateful that journey was for the future course of European history. Instead, he had in mind the transformative power of the war: its impact in rattling the confidence, power, and resilience of the capitalist democracies, and in hastening the advent of world communism. But the First World War acted as a locomotive force in other senses: it betrayed both the hubris and quixotism of much left thinking on the eve of war; it sparked, partly in response to these failures, but also under the impact of revolution in Russia in 1917, a rethinking of strategic possibilities; and it accelerated the reassessment of core ideological values across the political spectrum.[57] The economic and political upheavals occasioned by the war also, inevitably, had an impact on political thinkers and activists endeavouring to maintain the relevance of their respective political traditions and carve out opportunities for action. In Spain, for example, it was soon apparent that the country's neutrality did not shield it from the economic turbulence of the period. Booming exports to the combatants led to wage rises, but the 'pre-industrial outlook' of successive cabinets failed to create an environment ripe for sustained economic growth, while inflation, and a crumbling infrastructure, ultimately hit wage packets. The ensuing political volatility these issues created encouraged various interest groups to press their claims; in the military, but also in the trade unions, where the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT), the anarcho-syndicalist union, cooperated with the socialist *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT), in organising two general strikes. The second, in March 1917, made up for the quick defeat of the first and gained energy from news of revolution in Russia.[58] Suffering the economic uncertainties of war without the 'spirit of unity that

[57] Leon Trotsky, 'Report on the Communist International, December 1922', https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1922/12/comintern.htm (accessed 12.9.2017).

[58] Robert W. Kern, *Red Years Black Years: A Political History of Spanish Anarchism* (Philadelphia: ISHI, 1978), 27.

had plagued the earth since German unification, with the country pursuing 'nationally selfish ends' trumpeted by 'little, mean, aggressive statesmen and professors'. But, for all its mendacity, Germany had presented the world with an opportunity. 'The opportunity of Liberalism has come at last', Wells wrote; where once the 'heritage of the Crown Prince of Germany … seemed as fixed as a constellation', its defeat would augur a 'new age' defined by a confederative Europe, collective disarmament, and thoroughgoing social reconstruction.[6] These musings showed Wells oscillating between the roles of utopian and hard-headed patriot, but he was quickly disabused of the notion that this was a war of opportunity or that Britain was the valiant defender of liberty[7]:

> This "war to end war" of mine was … no better than a consoling fantasy, and … the flaming actuality was simply this, that France, Great Britain and their allied Powers were, in pursuance of their established policies, interests, treaties and secret understandings … engaged in war with the allied central powers, and … no other war was possible. The World-State of my imaginations and desires was presented hardly more by one side in the conflict than by the other.[8]

The War That Will End War changed from a premonition of a better world, to a 'taunt', a reminder of a 'broken promise'.[9]

Both Kropotkin and Malatesta were sharing the British soil with Wells in 1914 and were similarly preoccupied with events across the Channel. Indeed, for some onlookers, Kropotkin shared more

[6] H.G. Wells, *The War That Will End War* (London: Frank & Cecil Palmer, 1914), 11, 55, 57, 59.

[7] W. Warren Wagar, *H.G. Wells: Traversing Time* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 148.

[8] H.G. Wells, *Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain: Volume II* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937), 669.

[9] Ibid., 667.

with a figure like Wells than just proximity. In October 1914, as Wells' book entered a third printing, Kropotkin published an open letter in the anarchist newspaper *Freedom*. To the surprise of many he appeared to break with a lifetime's opposition to the nation state and expressed support for the Entente in terms that echoed Wells' anti-German sentiments:

> I consider that the duty of everyone who cherishes the idea of human progress … is … to crush down the invasion of the Germans into Western Europe … Since 1871 Germany has become a standing menace to European progress … All were living under the menace of sudden invasion. More than that … Germany was the chief support and protection of reaction.[10]

Trotsky, admittedly no friend of anarchism, certainly saw Kropotkin's pro-war, anti-German position as a renunciation of his previous views, later charging him with becoming an ally of Lloyd George and Poincaré in supporting the 'state principle' and repudiating his internationalism.[11] But if Trotsky was predisposed not to appreciate Kropotkin's position, Malatesta could not fathom it either.

Responding to Kropotkin in *Freedom*, Malatesta accused 'anarchists of forgetting their principles', and insisted that while he was no pacifist, and saw the worth of fighting 'wars that are necessary, holy wars … wars of liberation', the current imbroglio was no such thing. Socialists appeared to forget, he continued, that there was a natural antagonism between the 'dominators and dominated' that was both international in nature and made a mockery of the 'bourgeois' concept of 'national agglomerations' such as France or Germany as 'homogeneous ethnographic units, each

[10] P. Kropotkin, 'A Letter on the Present War', *Freedom*, October 1914, 76–77.

[11] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution: Volume II* (London: Wellred, 2007), 687.

to a crippled Russia incapable of continuing the carnage on the Eastern front. The anarchist tradition was buffeted in similar ways by the ethical predicaments posed by these tactical opportunities and also by the possibilities afforded by revolution in 1917. On his reasoning, Kropotkin's apparent anger at being too old to enlist in the French army would have been concordant with an anarchist vision that saw the triumph of Germany as an obstacle to any future internationalist revolution.[54] The collaboration between a group of Indian anti-colonial activists, Italian anarchists, and the German government in 1915, similarly points to the awkward strategic options presented to aspirant revolutionaries in these years.[55] From a different perspective, Malatesta's commitment to maintaining the revolutionary momentum by replacing international war with class war and forming a new, truly internationalist, international amounted to 'mobilising [the] counter-dynamics of imperialism and militarism to craft insurrectionary alliances'.[56] Malatesta remained convinced that the special circumstances of the era did not legitimise acting in tandem with nation states—as his debate with the 'pro-government anarchists' made clear—but it remained in his view a period ripe for novel tactical fusions to occur. Therefore despite overweening state interference, and indeed, for some anarchists, *because* of the opportunities this presented in terms of finance and weaponry, debates over the validity of certain tactical actions continued apace in the war years.

When Trotsky spoke of the 'locomotive of history', he was not thinking of the sealed German train that sped Lenin through the

[54] For this story, see 'Alexander Kropotkin' in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 12.

[55] Ole Birk Laursen, '"The bomb plot of Zurich": Indian nationalism, Italian anarchism and the First World War', Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism, 1914–18*, 135–154.

[56] Levy, 'Malatesta', 83.

ments or the rights of oppressed minorities in occupied territories posed troubling theoretical questions, but wartime restrictions also had more quotidian effects: communication channels—lifeblood for geographically scattered rebels—were disrupted, further hobbling an already suffering movement. William C. Owen, an advocate of Kropotkin's pro-war position, went on the run in the United States after being indicted for sending seditious material about the Mexican Revolution through the post; multiple American periodicals including *The Blast*, *Mother Earth*, *The Alarm*, *L'Era Nuova*, and *Regeneración* were delayed or confiscated when they entered the postal system; and both Malatesta in Britain and Domela Nieuwenhuis in the neutral Netherlands found that their personal letters were delayed, tampered with, or simply disappeared.[52]

In this context, in a period when state control over every facet of economic and social life reached proportions beyond even the most dystopian of anarchist premonitions, it is perhaps unsurprising that when strategic opportunities did arise, the hand of governmental guidance could sometimes be discerned in the background. After all, despite Lenin's ridiculing of 'anarcho-trenchists' like Kropotkin, it should be remembered that his passage to the Finland station was through, and at the behest of, Germany.[53] Both Lenin and the German government hoped that the ultimate destination for this journey was a Russia gripped by revolution, but the strategic vision of each obviously rested on radically different hopes for where this would ultimately lead: Lenin to a viable workers' state and a resolution of the dialectic; Germany

[52] Zimmer, 'At war with empire', 186; Ferguson, 'Anarchist anti-conscription movement', 206; Bert Altena, "'No man and no penny': Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, anti-militarism and the opportunities of the First World War' in Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism, 1914–18*, 114–134 (123).

[53] Lenin quoted in Schmidt and van der Walt, *Black Flame*, 216. Lenin attributes this phrase to the Russian anarchist Alexander Ghe, but it varies between translations, for example appearing elsewhere as 'Anarcho-*Jusquaubout*-ism', V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (London: Martin Lawrence, 1933), 76.

having its proper interests, aspiration, and mission'. Anarchists had always challenged patriotism, Malatesta added, but now, in a war that was patently the product of 'capitalist and State domination', socialists had aligned themselves 'with the Governments and bourgeoisie of their respective countries', blind to the fact that this was not, as state propaganda declared, a fight for 'general well-being … against the common danger', but another episode in a long history of exploitation.[12] Countering Kropotkin's pro-Entente screed, he concluded with a different picture:

> I have no greater confidence in the bloody Tsar, nor in the English diplomatists who oppress India, who betrayed Persia, who crushed the Boer Republics; nor in the French bourgeoisie, who massacred the natives of Morocco; nor in those of Belgium, who have allowed the Congo atrocities and … profited by them … The victory of Germany would certainly mean the triumph of militarism … but the triumph of the Allies would mean … Russo-English … domination in Europe and in Asia.[13]

If Kropotkin was willing to support one state over another, perhaps there was little difference between him and a figure like Wells after all.

Malatesta's reading of the situation has largely been the one inherited by historians of the anarchist movement, spying in Kropotkin an apostasy that either marked a decisive break with anarchism, or the culmination of a longer process that saw him move from a revolutionary to a gradualist theory of social

[12] Errico Malatesta, 'Anarchists have forgotten their principles, 1914' in Vernon Richards (Ed), *Malatesta: Life & Ideas* (London: Freedom Press, 1993), 243–247 (243, 244, 245, 244, 245).

[13] Ibid., 246.

change.[14] On the surface it seems difficult to view Kropotkin's reading as anything but a decisive step away from his anarchist convictions. Not only did he decry, in 1885, Europe's perpetual instability in an age of imperial rivalry—arguing that war was now less the product of kingly whim than the fruit of the 'Three Powerful Ones … Rothschild, Schneider, Anzin' thirsty for profits—but he advanced much the same argument in 1914 itself in a pamphlet for *Freedom*. 'The reason for modern war', he declared on the first page, 'is always the competition for markets and the right to exploit nations backward in industry'. This was obvious in Europe's imperialist scrambles but was a logic that promised intra-European conflict too:

> In all the wars of the last quarter of a century we can trace the work of the great financial houses. The conquest of Egypt and the Transvaal, the annexation of Tripoli … the massacres in Manchuria … the … looting in China during the Boxer riots … Everywhere financiers had the casting vote. And if up till now a great European war has not burst out, it is simply because the financiers hesitate. They do not know … which horse to back with their millions.[15]

Kropotkin therefore saw capitalism as fundamentally responsible for the bellicosity of the contemporary world, but he indicted the state too. With a subtle gibe at Marxist economism—'those economists who continue to consider economic forces alone'—he insisted that focusing solely on economics was insufficient, and

[14] Consider Michael Schmidt and Lucien van der Walt, *Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009), 216–217; John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse* (London: Granada, 1978), 287; George Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (London: Penguin, 1986), 179–180.

[15] Peter Kropotkin, *Wars and Capitalism* (London: Freedom Press, 1914), 3, 8.

sam's subsequent comment that these words were written under duress is true, it highlights the weight of pressure—both moral and practical—applied to dissidents who might have been expected to maintain an anti-war position. Landauer's *Sozialist* managed to stumble on, albeit appearing erratically, before it too fell victim of practical pressure: Landauer's typesetter was conscripted and his replacement arrested and deported.[50]

Questions of nationality and internationalism were at the heart of the internal debates that troubled the anarchist movement at the outbreak of the war. There was a good degree of embarrassment in this too, for anarchism had made a particular virtue of its internationalism, with its major and minor theorists all adopting as a shibboleth the notion that international working-class solidarity was the natural antidote to the exploitation that capitalism fed upon, and a solution to the unnatural divisions it sowed. This internationalism in theory also informed an internationalism in practice. Partly this was the product of the inevitable disparateness of communities of activists dispersed across the globe by official repression, but it was also an active commitment to spreading anarchist ideas through complex international networks of communication and exchange.[51] It is ironic, therefore, that if anarchism was synonymous in the popular imagination in this period with candescent sticks of dynamite clutched by terrorists hiding in the shadows, a more accurate, if less sensational corpus of symbolism might include the writing desk, the fountain pen, and the penny post. But inevitably the war challenged these international connections. Disputes over the legitimacy of supporting national govern-

[50] Keller, 'Beyond the 'people's community', 105.

[51] For examples and discussion of these networks, consider Constance Bantman, 'Internationalism without an International? Cross-Chanel Anarchist Networks, 1880–1914', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'histoire*, 84.4 (2006), 961–981; Federico Ferretti, 'Reading Reclus between Italy and South America: Translations of Geography and Anarchism in the work of Luce and Luigi Fabbri', *Journal of Historical Geography* 53 (2016), 75–85.

ended, deported to an uncertain fate in revolutionary Russia. The late entry of the United States into the war did grant a period of relative calm for American radicals, however, whereas in the European belligerents the opportunity, not to mention the desire, for active opposition was often more limited. In Germany, where, much to Kropotkin's dismay, anarchism had always been comparatively weak, a tough pre-war climate for dissident socialists became much more inhospitable once war broke out. Otto von Bismarck's warning that 'crowned heads, wealth and privilege may well tremble should ever again the Black and Red unite', purportedly uttered in the wake of the split of the First International, betrayed a fear of socialism gaining ground that led to draconian 'anti-socialist laws' which inhibited the growth of anarchism in the final two decades of the nineteenth century.[47] Once these laws were relaxed, anti-militarism became a cornerstone of the nascent German anarchist movement, reflecting antipathy to the important role that the military played in German political culture.[48] With this in mind it might have been expected that German anarchists, however modest their practical strength, would have taken a principled stance against the war. Yet here too the divisions apparent in the Kropotkin-Malatesta debate were visible. Erich Mühsam, for example, next only to Gustav Landauer in terms of influence amongst German anarchists, famously suspended his journal *Kain* in 1914, concluding with the statement that 'I am united with all Germans in the wish to keep foreign hordes away from our women and children'.[49] Regardless of whether or not Müh-

[47] Otto von Bismarck quoted in Ruth Kinna and Alex Prichard, 'Introduction' to *Libertarian Socialism: Politics in Black and Red* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1; Lukas Keller, 'Beyond the 'people's community': the anarchist movement from the *fin de siècle* to the First World War in Germany' in Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism, 1914–18*, 95–113 (95).

[48] Ibid., 101.

[49] Gabriel Kuhn, 'Introduction' to *Erich Mühsam: Liberating Society from the State and Other Writings* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2011), 1–22 (7).

that it was also necessary to comprehend how 'groups of monopolists and privileged men' react to these economic circumstances, and through the agencies of state power protect their financial and political interests.[16] This synchrony was the cause of modern war.

With Kropotkin presenting arguments like this right up until war actually broke out, Malatesta was confident in accusing him of recanting the political theory he had so patiently elaborated. Across the Atlantic, Alexander Berkman agreed with Malatesta, deeming Kropotkin's letter in support of the war 'weak and superficial' and suggested that he had 'fallen victim to the war psychology now dominating Europe'.[17] In reality, however, Kropotkin's position was more complex, had deeper roots in his thought, and amounted to more than simply the product of a patriotic fugue. On one level, his Francophilia—the land of the Revolution and of the Commune and the crucible of modern socialism—was matched by a strident Germanophobia—the home of Bismarck, *Realpolitik*, and Marxism.[18] Not only did Kropotkin hold a preference for French culture common amongst aristocratic nineteenth-century Russians, but this was amplified by an identification with its radical political heritage, and a sense that the revolutionary tradition bequeathed by the French Revolution would be the forebear of any future, successful, revolution.[19]

Kropotkin's distaste for Germany may have predisposed him to look askance at its geopolitical manoeuvring, but his support for the Entente war effort revolved around a cluster of more complex

[16] Ibid., 18, 19. Original emphasis.

[17] Alexander Berkman, 'In Reply to Kropotkin [November 1914]', (Ed) Peter Glassgold, *Anarchy! An Anthology of Emma Goldman's Mother Earth* (Berkley, CA: Counterpoint, 2012), 380–381 (380).

[18] Carl Levy, 'Malatesta and the war interventionist debate 1914–1917: from the 'Red Week' to the Russian revolutions', in Matthew S. Adams and Ruth Kinna (Eds), *Anarchism 1914–1918: Internationalism, anti-militarism and war* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 69–72 (72–74).

[19] Matthew S. Adams and Ruth Kinna, 'Introduction', *Anarchism 1914–1918*, 1–26 (5–7).

issues. Where Malatesta criticised Kropotkin for failing to remember that the most important duty of anarchists was always to act to weaken the state, and therefore looked upon the war as an opportunity to foment social revolution in the immediate moment, Kropotkin viewed the war as an unpropitious time for mass revolution and feared what German victory would do to the relative freedoms won in Britain and France.[20] Indeed, he saw it as a time to revisit anarchist tactics, writing in *Freedom* that the anti-militarist movement had been too wedded to the idea of a panacean general strike. Kropotkin argued, in rather tortured prose, that the idea that the 'German Social Democrats would not think, even for a single moment, of *not* joining the mobilisation' made discussion of general strikes moot, adding that if the French had laid down their arms and taken to the streets, the nation would have been gifted to the invaders. Moreover, while he did not think that revolution was imminent, he tied the present war to an understanding of future social revolution, depicting participation as both a moral necessity and a means to furthering revolutionary aims:

> If the anti-militarists remain … onlookers … they support by their inaction the invaders; they help … make slaves of the conquered … they aid them … be a still stronger obstacle to the Social Revolution in the future … Men and women of the most varied capacities will find a full scope for the application of their powers in time of war. It must not be forgotten … that for every million men fighting … there are at least twice, if not thrice, that number … engaged in support … How immense is the number of men and women engaged in

[20] Ruth Kinna, *Kropotkin: Reviewing the Classical Anarchist Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 177–183; Davide Turcato, "Saving the future: the roots of Malatesta's anti-militarism", in Adams & Kinna (eds.), *Anarchism 1914–1918*, 29–48 (30–37).

> to Tsarism; they have restored the prestige of the tottering throne of Italy. Can anarchists accept this state of things for a single moment without renouncing all right to call themselves Anarchists?[44]

This was a position with which other anarchists, viewing the war from further afield, agreed. For Berkman for instance, writing before the United States had joined the battle, one of Kropotkin's key faults had been to equate states with peoples, seeing 'the German people … at war with the French, the Russian or English people, when as a matter of fact it is only the ruling capitalist cliques of those countries that are … responsible'.[45] Rather than merely a question of theoretical posturing, Berkman, along with Goldman, Abbott, and others, coupled anti-war agitation in *The Blast* and *Mother Earth* with the formation of organisations to actively oppose the draft shortly after the United States entered the war in April 1917. Having been able to watch events unfold in Europe, they recognised the impending threat posed to civil liberties by the amplification of state power as countries assumed a war footing. 'We believe', Goldman wrote in *Mother Earth*, describing the platform of the No Conscription League, 'that the militarization of America is an evil that far outweighs, in its antisocial and antilibertarian effects, any good that may come from America's participation in the war'.[46]

Both Berkman and Goldman would suffer as their anti-war agitation clashed with the interests of a state preparing for European mobilisation, first being arrested, and then, after the war had

[44] Errico Malatesta, 'Pro-Government Anarchists', in Richards, *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*, 249.

[45] Alexander Berkman quoted in Kenyon Zimmer, 'At war with empire: the anti-colonial roots of American anarchist debates during the First World War', Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism, 1914–18*, 175–198 (192).

[46] Emma Goldman quoted in Kathy E. Ferguson, 'The anarchist anti-conscription movement in the USA', in Adams and Kinna, *Anarchism, 1914–18*, 201–222 (204).

> It is foolish and childish, after having multiplied the causes and occasions of conflict, to seek to fix the responsibility on this or that Government. No possible distinction can be drawn between offensive and defensive wars. In the present conflict, the Government of Berlin and Vienna have sought to justify themselves by documents not less authentic than those of the Governments of Paris, London, and Petrograd … None of the belligerents is entitled to invoke the name of civilisation, or to declare itself in a state of legitimate defence.[42]

It was foolish too, the statement continued, for anarchists to do anything but maintain their long-held belief that 'there is but one war of liberation', and throw themselves into the enduring struggle against the state.[43]

When the *Manifesto of the Sixteen* appeared in *Freedom* in April 1916, reprinted from the French syndicalist newspaper *La Bataille*, it was followed by a rejoinder from Malatesta restating his position and that of the *International Manifesto*. The title of his article—'Pro-Government Anarchists'—captured both what he felt was at stake for the anarchist movement and was a stinging insult for those it arraigned. Writing in the context of Britain's move from the ultimately unworkable notion that the war could be pursued while conducting 'business as usual', to the militarisation of the state to meet the demands of total war, Malatesta argued that:

> In the problematical hope of crushing Prussian militarism, they have renounced all the spirit and all the traditions of Liberty; they have Prussianised England and France; they have submitted themselves

[42] 'International Anarchist Manifesto on the War', *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchist Communism* (March, 1915), 21.

[43] Ibid.

> this country in freely organised work to aid the nation to pull through the war.[21]

There was little here that would have persuaded Malatesta.

A series of articles followed Kropotkin's contribution, mostly siding with him, debating the merits and costs of participation that highlighted the scale of the handwringing. Jean Grave echoed Kropotkin's indictment of Prussian militarism, questioning whether British anarchists would have been so opposed to taking up arms if it was Britain, not France, subject to 'German invasion'. Inadvertently echoing Wells' sentiment, he also opined that this indeed must 'be the last, the end of wars', but for this to occur the 'German hordes must be driven back'.[22] The Georgian anarchist Varlam Cherkezishvili agreed, echoing the 'poor little Belgium' message popular in the British press, denouncing the treatment of this 'small civilised nation by a huge military brute'. He too censured social democracy, writing that rather than fighting its 'parasitism', socialists had mistakenly glorified state power as a worthy end and, as a result, simply delivered greater control to entrenched elites.[23] For Lothrop Withington, in contrast, an American historian and collaborator of the British individualistHenry Seymour, it was obvious that this war was the product of an 'international band of commercial priests' and that anarchists must stand firm, 'in spite of any traitors in our midst who scurry off during the battle to make sure of their own little bag of boodle in rent, usury, or profit'.[24] Withington would become a casualty of the war the following year, losing his life on the *Lusitania*.

[21] P. Kropotkin, 'Anti-Militarism: Was it Properly Understood?', *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchism Communism* (November, 1914), 82–83 (82).

[22] J. Grave, 'Ought Anarchists to Take Part in the War', Ibid., 84–85 (84).

[23] W. Tcherkesoff, 'The War, Its Causes, and German Responsibility', Ibid., 86.

[24] Lothrop Withington, 'The Three Internationals', Ibid., 87; Peter Ryley, '*The Manifesto of the Sixteen:* Kropotkin's rejection of anti-war anarchism and his critique of the politics of peace', Adams & Kinna (eds.), *Anarchism*, 49–68 (61).

A distinctive feature of the philosophical edifice that Kropotkin spent his years in Britain developing was a conception of the historical process, but he also frequently looked to historical examples and argument to endow his political claims with greater authority in a more general sense. It was thus a common rhetorical approach of his to begin a work on the merits of anarchist communism with a history of the development of socialist thought; to dissect statist assumptions through a history of medieval communalism; and he crowned a lifelong interest in the French Revolution by writing a 600-page history in 1909.[25] Underpinning his support for the war, then, was a sense that there was a discernible pattern to the processes of historical development, and it was this notion that shaped his view on the deleterious impact of German militarism on the trajectory of European history, on the timing of social revolutions, and on appropriate anti-state tactics more broadly.[26]

As his comments in the *Freedom* letter showed, Kropotkin feared that German victory would inaugurate 'another half century or more of general reaction'.[27] This statement hints at the fact, often overlooked by those who see Kropotkin as advancing a narrowly progressive vision of the historical process with anarchism as its culminating apex, that the constant potential for decline and degeneration was a feature of his understanding of social development.[28] In this sense Kropotkin was a characteris-

[25] P. Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1907), iii–xii; Peter Kropotkin, *The State: Its Historic Role* (London: Freedom, 1908); P. A. Kropotkin, *The Great French Revolution: 1789–1793* (London: William Heinemann, 1909).

[26] Kinna, *Kropotkin*, 179–181.

[27] Kropotkin, 'A Letter on the Present War', 10.

[28] For the vision of Kropotkin's optimism, consider David Miller, *Anarchism* (London: J.M. Dent, 1984), 75; George Crowder, *Classical Anarchism: The Political Thought of Godwin, Bakunin and Kropotkin* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 168; Richard D. Sonn, *Anarchism* (New York: Twayne, 1992).

Cherkezishvili and Grave reaffirmed the positions they had taken in *Freedom* by joining Kropotkin in endorsing these claims, and the *Manifesto* also bore the imprimatur of the Dutch syndicalist Christiaan Cornelissen and the Japanese anarchist Ishikawa Sanshirō, signing as Tchikawa. It was principally a Francophone affair, however, with the 'mathematician and former Boulangist deputy turned anarchist militant' Charles-Ange Laisant; the propagandist and 'controversialist' Charles Malato; the direct actionist Jules Moineau; and Elie Réclus' son Paul amongst those also adding their names.[41] The *Manifesto of the Sixteen* was partly inspired by the momentary lift Zimmerwald gave European radicals, but a more direct inspiration was the *International Anarchist Manifesto on the War* published in *Freedom* in March 1915. It boasted a longer, more international, and arguably more impressive list of names. Émigrés and indigenous anarchists including Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Harry Kelly, Hippolyte Havel, Saul Yanovsky, and Leonard Abbott were amongst the signatories from the United States, as were Italian anarchists including Luigi Bertoni, Malatesta, and Emidio Recchioni; the Spanish anarchist Pedro Vallina; the Russian Alexander Schapiro; British anarchists Lilian Wolfe, George Barrett, and Thomas Keell; and the Dutch activists Gerhard Rijnders and Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis. Portraying the present war, in rather overwrought terms, as an 'inevitable' product of the 'ceaseless increase in the budgets of death', it saw war as an eternal product of a social system 'founded on the exploitation of the workers'. It also chided those siding with Kropotkin in seeing the war as the responsibility of any one power:

[41] C. Alexander McKinley, *Illegitimate Children of the Enlightenment: Anarchists and the French Revolution, 1880–1914* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008), 28; Max Nettlau, *A Short History of Anarchism* (London: Freedom Press, 1996), 162, 228; for Moineau, see Ernesto A. Longa, *Anarchist Periodicals in English Published in the United States (1833–1955): An Annotated Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 247.

prowess, is simplistic. Kropotkin explicitly justified his position as an expression of his anarchist politics just as much as Malatesta did. In the early days of the war to end war, anarchists were fighting to define their principles just as much as they were fighting to influence the unfolding events.

Manifestos and International Divisions

The articles competing for space in the November 1914 edition of *Freedom* demonstrated the unsurprising fact that the impact of the war was felt worldwide throughout the anarchist movement. Perhaps more surprising were the continuing shockwaves of the Kropotkin-Malatesta debate, a conflict in a sense codified in early 1916 when Kropotkin and fourteen allies issued their *Manifesto of the Sixteen*, gaining its misleading name after 'Husseinday', a suburb of Algiers that was home to the signatory Antoine Orfila, was mistaken for an additional contributor. The fifteen who endorsed the statement subscribed to Kropotkin's vision of Germany as the aggressor.[39] The Zimmerwald Conference, held in Switzerland in September 1915, which firmly denounced the failures of the Second International in preventing the war, gained a mention in the *Manifesto*, but this anti-militarist venture was dismissed as toothless. Its lack of 'representation of the German workers' was taken as a measure of its obsolescence, while German calls for peace were presented as duplicitous efforts to make the Allies drop their guard, mirroring, it accused, the machinations of men like German ambassador Bernhard von Bülow who 'spread the rumour of an imminent peace'.[40]

[39] George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 384–385.

[40] For a copy of the manifesto, see https://contrun.libertarian-labyrinth.org/the-manifesto-of-the-sixteen-1916/ (accessed 6.9.17).

tically *fin de siècle* thinker.[29] Despite frequently being impugned for unrealistic optimism, his historical theory, supported by a particular reading of Darwinian evolutionary theory and reflecting an ontology defined by an 'ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium', necessarily recognised the potential for progressive social gains to be lost.[30] When, for example, Kropotkin turned to the history of medieval communalism in *Mutual Aid* in order to demonstrate the role of sociability and mutual aid institutions in not only making life bearable for many but also engendering the cultural and scientific achievements of the Renaissance, he nevertheless paid particular attention to the crumbling of these independent city-states. Identifying a number of factors, including the urbanites' haughty disregard of the peasantry, the rise of petty despots preying on and mobilising the shunned peasants, and the tactical unity between aspiring kings, organised religion, and ambitious lawyers, Kropotkin described the collapse of the commune and the rise of the 'Roman Caesarism' of the modern 'military State'.[31] With this in mind, rather than representing a break with his anarchism, Kropotkin's position on the war was congruent with his broader political theory. It may have demonstrated a faltering internationalism and a striking lack of reflectiveness in appreciating the realities of the conflict's origins in imperialist

[29] J. W. Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848–1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 96–104.

[30] Peter Kropotkin, *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal* (London: Freedom, 1897), 8. For more detailed analyses of Kropotkin's approach to history, evolutionary theory, and his ontology, consider Matthew S. Adams, *Kropotkin, Read, and the Intellectual History of British Anarchism: Between Reason and Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Matthew S. Adams, 'Formulating an Anarchist Sociology: Peter Kropotkin's Reading of Herbert Spencer', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 77:1 (2016), 49–73; Matthew S. Adams and Nathan J. Jun, 'Political Theory and History: The Case of Anarchism', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 20:3 (2015), 244–262.

[31] P. Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (London: William Heinemann, 1908), 224. See also 153–187.

geopolitics, but his reading of it fundamentally echoed his view of the historical process.[32] From Kropotkin's perspective, both the relative liberties wrested from the state over the last hundred years, and the future possibility of achieving an anarchist society, were imperilled by the prospect of German victory.

Running through Kropotkin and Malatesta's argument was also a disagreement on the tactical implications of the 'national question', a phrase at the heart of socialist discourse in this period. Kropotkin saw national liberation struggles as a potential avenue for anarchist action, with anarchists encouraging rebels to adopt an expansive view, stretching from the narrowly national to the broader 'economic question' of capitalist exploitation and its state support.[33] He urged participation in such movements, cautioning against a 'purity of principle' that informed a self-defeating aloofness amongst revolutionaries, but insisting that anarchists must 'cling to our principles while working with others', and also arguing that:

> Each movement should be evaluated separately on its merits … Needless to say, we want no part of a movement in favour of dictatorship … [But] … I see no general yardstick … There is something better than written prescriptions. There is the sentiment and intuition accrued by every politicised militant and which enable him to get the measure of a movement and divine its secret recesses.[34]

Kropotkin's position on the war stemmed exactly from this contextual logic, rejecting tactical purism in favour of participation

[32] Ryley, '*Manifesto of the Sixteen'*.

[33] Peter Kropotkin, 'Letter to Maria Isidine Goldsmith', in Iain McKay (Ed), *Direct Struggle Against Capital: A Peter Kropotkin Anthology* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2014), 137–147 (141). See also Iain McKay, 'Introduction: Bread and Liberty', 1–97 (45–47).

[34] Kropotkin, 'Letter to Maria', 145, 146.

informed by a particular reading of the historical process, and a measure of the failures of anti-militarism.[35]

Malatesta, in contrast, rejected the 'lesser evil' argument and suggested that anarchists see, in Davide Turcato's words, 'that the worst government is their own government'. He therefore had little use for historical reasoning of the kind that Kropotkin devoted himself to, and, indeed, tended to see this historical perspective as further evidence of his debilitating commitment to a 'mechanistic fatalism'.[36] True, Malatesta believed, these anti-state struggles would be influenced by context too, but, he felt, his prescription left little room for anarchists to desert their principles by losing a sense of perspective and seeing present conflicts as the work of ineluctable historical forces immune to the actions of individuals. As he wrote, German victory 'would certainly mean the triumph of militarism', but the 'triumph of the Allies' would result in much the same: both guaranteed the victory of the state principle.[37] With statism delivered in both cases, and the tensions that caused the war remaining unresolved, Malatesta perspicaciously warned that with 'both sides … exhausted some kind of peace will be patched up, leaving all questions open, thus preparing for a new war more murderous than the present'.[38]

The Kropotkin-Malatesta debate, while not encompassing all the points of contention between anarchists as the long-awaited world war finally broke out, captures many of the core principles at stake and hints at the range of possible responses. What is apparent is that the familiar representation of Malatesta as the conscience of anarchism, remaining committed to anarchist principles as those around him lost their heads, and Kropotkin as the apostate, renouncing his politics and exposing his declining intellectual

[35] Ryley, '*Manifesto of the Sixteen*'.

[36] Errico Malatesta, 'Peter Kropotkin—Recollections and Criticisms of an Old Friend', in Richards, *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*, 257–270 (263).

[37] Turcato, 'Saving the future', 36, 37.

[38] Malatesta, 'Principles', Richards, *Malatesta: Life and Ideas*, 247.