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# Anarcho-Marxist Synthesis

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out-of-date, presently questionable, and at any rate fundamentally different from anarchist methods and principles.

PAUL DURAND,  
*Espoir*, no. 421, Feb. 15, 1970,  
translated by George Wuerth.

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is the dialectical method, naturally, which Guérin, in a second try, *Pour un Marxisme libertaire*, is going to propose to him.

Either: Guérin is completely alienated from his original ideology, to the point that he cannot resolve himself to do without it while adopting the anarchist ideal, and thus has skilfully manoeuvred.

Or: in spite of all his erudition, anarchism has appeared to Guérin, really as he has presented it, and thus it is necessary to say that he has failed to understand that anarchism is based on solidarity as instinct, sentiment, practice, human morality, factor of progress and revolutionary ideology deriving from those facts studied in the history of societies.

However that may be, once these few facts are displayed, it is necessary to repeat stronger than ever that it is the task of a really anarchist organization to take in hand the diffusion of anarchist ideas, to assure the formation of anarchist revolutionary militants, if one wants only anarchism, for it has happened too often, i.e., siding with individualists, or reformists, or Marxists, or philosophers, or romanticists, or terrorists, etc...

## **Annex II**

When one will have said that the majority of Marx's 'ingenious' inspirations have been formulated before him by others, one will be entitled to ask himself what interest could anarchism have in a fusion with Marxism.

## **Conclusion**

The Anarchist Revolutionary Organization (ORA) condemns and combats the Marxist ideology, just as the ideologies derived from it, and which rely on a dialectical materialism historically

A more evident dishonesty is that which invokes the works of young Marx, when he had not yet formulated his 'scientific' propositions, when he was animated by an ethical exigence (like the other socialists) and when he, therefore, was not yet 'Marxist'.

Likewise, it is thoroughly dishonest to rely on some texts, such as '*The Civil War in France*: circumstantial text, extractive, obviously opportunistic.' It would be ridiculous for the libertarian militants of today to let themselves fall into the trap when those of that epoch knew how to avoid it. Moreover, we do not think it necessary to insist any more in this paragraph.

## Annex I

He who is conscious of the influence which one's first ideological 'food' can exercise on the mind, is faced immediately with the problem of editing. It is not by accident that the partisans of the Anarchist-Marxist synthesis are as numerous as before. It is necessary to take into account that the two books on anarchism the most widely read these last few years by the new militants have been Bakunin's *La Liberté* and Daniel Guérin's *L'Anarchisme*.

In the first, the prefacer endeavours to demonstrate, with numerous citations, that Bakunin was a Marxist. But, playing the game of citations, it would be easy for us to demonstrate the contrary. Also, as we have already given our opinion on Bakunin, we do not think it necessary to insist.

As for Guérin's book (a Marxist), it contains that particularity of presenting anarchism as a sum of intuitions (luminous, certainly, but intuitions in spite of everything) somehow arranged in an ideological ensemble more or less coherent. Not one word on Kropotkin's works *Ethics* and *Mutual Aid*, not one word on the inductive method, etc... The anarchist is presented as a romantic revolutionary whose visceral revolt and sure instinct suffice to determine it. In short, this brave anarchist lacks only a method, and it

NUMEROUS are the revolutionary militants who, for the last fifty years, have wanted to reconcile the enemy brothers of socialism by realizing a synthesis of Marxism and Anarchism.

Even before examining this proposition, let us recall that Lenin's book, *The State and the Revolution*, appeared, opportunely, as the fruit of this effort at synthesis, and that it motivated quite a few anarchists to rally to Bolshevism. Without taking into account the consequences of their actions, these anarchists thus made the bed for the totalitarian counter-revolution. This teaches us, at least, that it is necessary to be very prudent and to make a decision only with full knowledge of the facts.

Be that as it may, certain persons persist in demanding this fusion of Marxism and Anarchism, justifying their exigence by the necessity of not rejecting the Marxist method, namely dialectical and historical materialism.

## What Is the Dialectical Method?

The dialectic is defined, originally, as the art of reasoning methodically and soundly. Methodical reasoning, sequence of proofs, proceeds through *induction* and *deduction* using *definitions* as a point of departure. Thus understood, we other anarchists would not see any inconvenience in qualifying our method of analysis and research as dialectical. But such is not the case for the Hegelian inspired Marxist dialectic, and in order to avoid any confusion, we prefer to qualify our method of analysis and research as *inductive* rather than *dialectical*. Let us note in passing that induction, according to Bacon, is the essential process of the experimental method.

Hegel, followed by Marx, tried to renovate the dialectic, defining its process by thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. It is a method which, in the abstract, can give some results, but which, applied to social realities, not only reveals itself as too simplistic to explain

whatever, but also becomes extremely dangerous in day to day applications.

## **Marxism and Dialectical Materialism**

Marxism can be perceived in two ways: as ideology and as praxis.

### **(a) The Marxist Ideology**

Basing itself on the dialectical interpretation of history, Marxism wanted to prove that history, thanks to the dialogue of contradictions, was moving towards communism, which it would attain after having passed through a certain number of necessary stages.

Simply to ascertain the innumerable errors of foresight by Marx suffices to make clear the value of his dialectical materialism. And it is not the rupture of Marxism into multiple parties, sects and *chapelles* (all in agreement for using and abusing dialectical materialism) which will be able to invalidate our opinion.

Let us remark simply that certain Marxist theoreticians, conscious of the impasse in which they find themselves, speak today of *antagonistic* contradictions, which poses an insoluble problem if one admits with Marx that nature is conditioned by the dialectical law of non-antagonistic contradictions.

The reality is that the dialectical method (especially when it is confined in the narrow cadre of economics where Marx placed it) cannot explain the movements of history, which constrains the Marxist, who had, thus far, claimed to interpret in advance the developments of history to a pirouette preserving his honour.

It is necessary for us to draw attention to the dangers which the Marxist ideology presents since it claims to have discovered an orientation to history and an end attained after several necessary stages. The anarchists remember only too bitterly the exactions committed by the Marxists (of all obediences) in the name of

‘historical necessity’ in order to be able to subscribe to it in their turn by adopting the dialectical interpretation of history. Unfortunately, it is not rare to see, from the pen of so-called anarchists, a recognition of this necessity, which goes even to admitting implicitly the necessity of the totalitarian stage.

### **(b) The Marxist Praxis**

In deeds Marxism is characterized by calumny, the deformation of the ideas of its adversaries, the most disloyal manoeuvres in order to assure preponderance, etc... In short, it has adopted the motto ‘ends justify means’. One must not see in this a simple accident: it is in fact an inevitable consequence of its dialectical method which opens the door to all political inversions, to all opportunisms, to all treacheries. On the other hand, the inductive method of the anarchists proclaim that ‘the means determine the end’, which does not allow at any stage to justify the behaviour described above. In this, we should conclude in favour of the superiority of the inductive method over the dialectical method.

## **On the Subject of a Few Dishonesties**

The partisans of the Anarchist-Marxist synthesis like to present the Marx-Bakunin coalition against the Proudhonians, inside the First International, to justify their desire for a synthesis. This is a dishonest argument in the sense that this opposition was made between revolutionaries and reformists (problem of private property) and that it cannot justify in any way the proposed synthesis.

There would certainly be no need to adhere to the doctrine of dialectical materialism to recognize and condemn Proudhon’s weaknesses. Bakunin himself was not exempt from weaknesses, and it is the task of the consequent anarchist movement to determine, with the help of its own methods, what is useful to conserve and what is necessary to reject in the works of the libertarian theoreticians.