

# THE RAVEN 9

ANARCHIST QUARTERLY



SERGE CIPKO ON BAKUNIN AND NATIONS  
LASLO SEKELJ ON ANARCHO-COMMUNISM  
COLIN WARD ON ARCHITECTURE  
BRIAN MORRIS ON SOCIOBIOLOGY  
DON ALEXANDER ON HUMAN NATURE  
NICKIE HALLAM AND DAVID POTTER ON FEMINISM  
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## Subscriptions

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## Editorial

This is the last of the 'unplanned' issues of *The Raven*. Most readers will have long ago forgotten the editorial to the first number, and we now propose to refer to it because we feel it explains to a large extent the direction taken by *The Raven*.

The first issue of a new magazine is expected to begin with a programmatic editorial. I am afraid in this case these expectations will be deceived. There are hundreds if not thousands of anarchist magazines and papers with sometimes very elaborate programmes in the respective first issues. Reality usually is different, and often drastically so. But flying balloons is generally a very satisfying and comforting activity. We intend to indulge in that, if ever, only in our last issue, and then in the form of an 'epigram' instead of a 'program'.

The editor then went on to explain what he was in fact *planning* to do, though since the journal would have to depend on 'what is on offer' all he could do was 'hope' for the best. The first number was late coming out and the editorial recognised that it contained 'a fairly large proportion of historical material'. This has been the pattern ever since and finally, when it took nine months for *The Raven 7* to take flight, we felt that we should take over its production. Apart from the delays the magazine was not fulfilling the intention of its original sponsor, Art Bartell, nor that of FREEDOM PRESS who after all are the publishers and are financially responsible (since the original donation has long ago been absorbed).

Excellent as much of the material published in *The Raven* certainly is, it appeals in the main to academics and historians. For those of us who are engaged in anarchist propaganda, anarchist history is of relative importance except when it provides us with valuable lessons for the future. Of even less importance, it seems to us, are the detailed biographies that have appeared. Some readers have expressed surprise at the choice of 'comrades' to be included in *The Raven* pantheon!



The original intention in having a quarterly journal was that anarchism and the issues of the day could be presented and discussed in depth in a way that for space reasons could not be done in *Freedom* monthly. And now that *Freedom* is appearing fortnightly in newspaper format,

even more reason for *The Raven* to be a journal of anarchist theory and practice.

With these considerations in mind and starting with number 10, *The Raven* will no longer be a free-range bird, consuming whatever it can pick up. Instead we are aiming to plan at least a year ahead, and approximately two-thirds of each 96-page issue will be on a particular subject. The other 32 pages will be 'unplanned' to a certain extent, in that we hope the planned material will produce contributions for publication. We also intend to have a regular Book Review (incidentally, the only planned contribution to this issue is Andrew Hedgecock's review of volume 3 of the FREEDOM PRESS CENTENARY SERIES). And there will still be room for relevant 'on offer' contributions such as Serge Cipko's 'Mikhail Bakunin and the National Question', a perfect example of what we mean by the relevance of history to problems of today. And to encourage contributions from our readers about anarchism we are publishing a controversial piece by Laslo Sekelj, 'Has Anarcho-Communism a Future?'



Hitherto *The Raven* and *Freedom* have had separate existences, editorially speaking. This year as an experiment, both journals will be *edited* by the FREEDOM PRESS group. With *Freedom* fortnightly we have sought to decentralise the editing with comrades undertaking to be sectional editors, regional and local correspondents as well as feature editors — books, the land, the media, science and technology, etc. We are proposing also to decentralise the editing of the *planned* two-thirds of *The Raven*. Number 10 on education is ready, but would-be contributors please bear in mind that there are 32 *unplanned* pages and the decision as to which articles will be included will not be taken until the beginning of February 1990.

As to the topics for future planned issues we are hoping they will include a first hand account of what is happening in Eastern Europe from an anarchist point of view. We also want issues on economics, use (and abuse) of the land, public services, on communicating minority views in a politically hostile/indifferent world (a vital subject for anarchist propagandists internationally, which has never been tackled), and with the present ideological crisis in the Communist Parties of Europe a *Raven* on Anarchism versus Marxism is surely called for!

In wanting *The Raven* to be an anarchist propaganda magazine we shall disappoint some of our readers who have obviously enjoyed it as it has been. We hope they will give the new look *Raven* a fair trial, and perhaps come to like it in the end. At least we can promise that this 'disciplined' *Raven* will take off in March, June and October 1990!

**FREEDOM PRESS**

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*Serge Cipko***Mikhail Bakunin and the National Question**

The revolutions of 1848 have often been referred to as the 'Spring of Nations', and quite rightly, for the events of 1848 gave expression to the aspirations of submerged nations. Although national independence did not result for nationality groups in the Austrian or in the Ottoman empires, the experience of 1848 laid the foundations for a crystallisation of two forces in Europe: socialism and nationalism. These two currents often overlapped, for the 'national question' was as much a concern for revolutionaries in Europe as was social emancipation, and even if it wasn't a paramount concern for some, it became an issue that no major revolutionary figure in Europe could ignore in the post-1848 period.

It was during the revolutions of 1848 that Mikhail Bakunin, a founder of modern anarchism, achieved notoriety, and in later years he would become an influential figure in socialist circles, a serious rival to Karl Marx with whom he debated heatedly principles of revolutionary doctrine. Among the differences which drove a wedge between the two were their perspectives on the role of the State, of certain social strata as promoters of revolution, and, within the context of the latter, the projected prominence of one national group, or nationality bloc, in the course of revolutionary events over another. Although both men were internationalists, they were raised in different national environments, Bakunin in Russia and Marx in Germany. Consequently, their perspectives on a number of issues were shaped in part by personal experiences in one of these two states. We will return later in more detail to this aspect of the Bakunin-Marx estrangement, but first it is necessary to trace the development of Bakunin's own views on the 'national question' before they can be appraised and compared.

Bakunin first became interested in the national question through his contacts with Polish exiles. Having left Russia in 1840 at the age of 26, he spent time variously in Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and France during the course of the next decade, where he became acquainted with French radicalism, Left Hegelianism and Polish émigré nationalism. To Bakunin, the liberation of Poland, then partitioned between Prussia, Austria and Russia, was essential to the emancipation of the peoples of Russia. However, he believed that this liberation should be achieved in conjunction with the liberation of the Slavs in general. In November

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1847, at a banquet commemorating the Polish uprising of 1830-31, he denounced Tsarism and called on the Poles to join with other Slavs in the struggle for liberty. In the Slav Congress of Prague in June 1848, as one of two Russian delegates, Bakunin elaborated on this principle. He believed that the Prague Congress afforded the opportunity for the promotion of the revolution that would dissolve the Austrian Empire. But he was disappointed when the Slav delegates there, representing diverse nationalities, could not reconcile their differences and act as a homogeneous whole toward a singular goal: liberation from foreign rule by Pan-Slavic effort.<sup>1</sup> The Czech delegates, he noted, were more concerned with establishing hegemony over the Slavs in a reformed Austrian monarchy, the Poles wanted predominance over the Ukrainians in Galicia, while the Slavs under Hungary were preoccupied only with what affected them directly — Magyar occupation.<sup>2</sup> Bakunin appealed to the delegates to put aside their 'provincial interests' and to strive for liberation on a Pan-Slavic scale, for only through such an effort could the Slavs under Russian rule, and those under Prussian, Austrian, Hungarian and Turkish, attain full freedom. He argued that hopes of accomplishing gains within the framework of a restructured Austrian Empire were not only naive but a limited aspiration, for they denoted the abandoning of the other Slavs to their fates at the mercy of their respective occupying regimes, while it also ensured the continuance of a foreign (Austrian) power in Slavic territories. No less naive, in his view, were the expectations entertained by Slavic groups in the Balkans, who had succumbed to Tsarist Pan-Slavic propaganda purporting to liberate these groups under the Russian imperial banner. There would be no liberation, Bakunin cautioned the Balkan Slavs, only subjugation:

There is no place for you in the womb of the Russian Tsardom. You want life, but deathly silence is there; you demand independence, movement, but mechanical obedience is there. You desire resurrection, elevation, enlightenment, liberation, but death, darkness, and slavish labour are there. Entering the Russia of Emperor Nikolai you would enter the tomb of all national life and of all freedom.<sup>3</sup>

Bakunin thus distinguished himself from the Pan-Slavism advocated by Tsarist circles. His own programme for Slavic unity was formulated in *The Fundamental Principles of the New Slav Policy*, written for the occasion of the Prague Congress. Here he noted the symbolic nature of the Congress, bringing together for the first time Slavs representing assorted nationality groups. As Lawrence Orton affirms, Bakunin's notions of a Slav federation were not original, since such a scheme had already been espoused by groups like the Decembrists, the Ukrainian Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood and Polish exile circles. But what

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separates his programme from others is its messianic tone.<sup>4</sup> For instance, Bakunin relates the unhappy predicament that had periodically befallen the Slavs, but enthusiastically announces that the hour has come for the Slavic nations to achieve what other nations of Europe had accomplished. They had for too long been subjected to alien rule, he explained, and thus this experience allowed the Slavic nations to be sensitive to the liberty of others. As victims of foreign rule and central power, with all their multifarious connotations, Bakunin envisaged their salvation to be a Slav federation which would be 'based on nations, of independent and free peoples'.<sup>5</sup> This federation would not be dictated by 'statist policy' but by a Slav Council which would preclude the domination of one Slavic group over another, and which would formulate policies of common interest, particularly in the area of foreign affairs. The Slav Council would recognise the independence of each Slavic nation, 'each may freely establish institutions adapted to its customs, interests, and situation without the Council having the right to interfere'.<sup>6</sup> What Bakunin had in mind was a kind of Slavic commonwealth, 'every individual belonging to a Slav nation likewise has the right of citizenship in all other nations of the same race'.<sup>7</sup>

Bakunin's vision of a Pan-Slavic federation remained with him even in his anarchist years (from the 1860s onwards), when he was able to define more clearly internationalist objectives. To him the goal of Pan-Slavic unity was essential to the self-preservation of the Slavic race, threatened on all sides by alien empires. Once the objective of federation had been accomplished the Slavic peoples could then embark upon the task of assisting other groups (for instance, the Magyars and Romanians) equally languishing under foreign rule, the ultimate goal being a federated, United States of Europe, one free of empires and their concomitant abuses. Bakunin had never stated where the capital of such a Slavic federation would be, but his later writings indicate that in his pre-anarchist phase at least, his sympathies laid with Moscow for such a centre. At one time he entertained the idea of having a benevolent Tsar taking the initiative for the establishment of a Slavic federation:

In alliance with Poland and Ukraine, having broken all the hateful German ties, and having audaciously raised the all-Slavic banner, he would become the redeemer of the Slavic world.<sup>8</sup>

The prominent role given to Russia, and a Tsarist one at that, naturally alarmed members of submerged nationality groups in that empire.<sup>9</sup> It is possible that Bakunin considered this idea in part, his affinities with Russian culture aside, for tactical and practical reasons. In the period between the 1848 revolutions and the Polish uprising of 1863, the relative

inaction that prevailed in Slavic territories probably convinced him in his impatience that the 'benevolent Tsar' option was, given the conditions, the most viable.

At the same time it should be acknowledged that Bakunin was astutely aware of national sensibilities, championing the rights of those groups whose existence had not been recognised by official and intellectual circles alike. For instance, he admonished the exiled Polish intellectual, Joachim Lelewel, for wishing to absorb Byelorussia and Ukraine into a restored Poland.<sup>10</sup> Not that Bakunin considered these nations Russian, for as early as January 1846 he had written in the French periodical *Le Constitutionnel* detailing the historical circumstances which brought them under Russian rule.<sup>11</sup> On another occasion he criticised Tsarist policies of expansionism and Russification. Using Ukraine as an example, he asked whether it was possible for Ukrainians along with other nationalities to ever become Russian: 'Can they forget their language . . . their literature, their native culture, in a word, their own hearth, in order to disappear completely and in the words of Pushkin, "mingle in the Russian sea"?'<sup>12</sup> Bakunin's answer was an emphatic no. Each nationality group had the right to self-determination and to develop its culture on a natural basis. Union with another group should not take place under coercion, but, if the need should present itself, voluntarily. To force a nationality group to conform to the dictates of another could only breed the endemic enmity of the subjected party. In 1862 in a proclamation titled *To Russian, Polish and all Slavic Friends*, he expanded on this point:

I demand only one thing: that every tribe, great and small, be given the full opportunity and right to act according to its will. If it wants to merge with Russia and Poland — let it merge. Does it want to be an independent member of a Polish or Russian or general Slavic federation? Then let it be so. Finally, does it want to separate completely from every other people and live as a totally separate state? Then God bless it! Let it separate.<sup>13</sup>

Measured by the standards of today, such a declaration may appear self-evident, but Bakunin was dealing with intellectuals for whom these endorsements were difficult to fathom. For instance, when Polish émigrées advocated independence, they limited this to mean Poland, not Ukraine, Byelorussia or Lithuania which they wished to absorb into its midst. Similarly, while the democratic Russian intelligentsia tended to favour Polish independence, they were reluctant to extend the same principle to Ukrainians or Byelorussians whom they considered limbs in the greater Russian body. Bakunin, and his colleague Alexander Herzen, whose view Bakunin shared that national boundaries should



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conform to the wishes of the inhabitants of the regions affected,<sup>14</sup> were notable exceptions to this rule. Therefore, Bakunin's views can be considered very enlightened for his time and it was with some justification that Peter Kropotkin wrote in 1907:

If Russian progressive thought has always remained faithful to the cause of the nationalities oppressed by the regimes of Russia or Austria, it owes its fidelity to a considerable degree to Bakunin.<sup>15</sup>

In 1862-63, Bakunin's primary attention was directed towards Poland. By this time he had in fact married a woman of Polish extraction, Antonia Kwiatkowski, in 1858, while in exile in Siberia. Having escaped from Siberia in 1861, after several years of imprisonment and exile, he once again resumed his revolutionary activities in Europe. With insurrection in Poland looming, Bakunin renewed his contacts with émigré Poles. However, he was unable to convert them to his perspective of the direction the imminent insurrection should take. To Bakunin, the social character of the impending insurrection should take precedence over its national aspect. Only then would peasants, not only those in Poland but those of Ukraine, Lithuania and other parts of the Russian Empire too, participate wholeheartedly and a revolution be realised.<sup>16</sup> Bakunin advised the Polish exiles to learn the lesson of 1846, when in the Austrian province of Galicia the Polish nobility staged an uprising and were defeated not by the Austrian authorities, but by the Galician peasants themselves who turned against their landlords. But such warnings fell on deaf ears. Bakunin's formula was too radical.

The post-1863 period — that is the period after the abortive Polish revolt — marked a new phase in Bakunin's ideology. He continued to perceive the resolution of national conflicts in Eastern Europe by means of a social revolution forged by a Pan-Slavic alliance,<sup>17</sup> but his emphasis on revolutionary Pan-Slavism had worn off slightly in favour of more broader goals. This can be attributed in part to his ever-increasing contacts with foreign revolutionaries while in exile. Having now visited the United States and spending considerable time in Switzerland and Italy, among other places, Bakunin began to assume a more cosmopolitan outlook and drew maturity from these experiences. For one thing, he had become acquainted with the struggles of the Italians and Spaniards, whom he often compared with the Slavs. Through his contacts in Britain he also learned of the plight of the Irish and in a letter written in 1870 commented on how pleased he was that English workers had finally taken up the cause of the Irish.<sup>18</sup> His first-hand experience with the federative systems of Switzerland and the United States enriched

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his perspective of the model of federation he himself would like to promote. Furthermore, his contacts with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on the one hand, and Giuseppe Mazzini, the famous Italian nationalist, on the other forced him to formulate an ideology which would preclude chauvinism inherent in the platforms advanced by both parties. The ideology this arrived at was anarchism. We will assess its ingredients in due course, but let us pause for a moment to recapitulate the dates and events of the break between Marx and Bakunin. Although the differences between the two go back to the 1840s, Bakunin, like Marx, joined the International Workingmen's Association, better known as the First International. Frustrated at his efforts to receive recognition for his postulates there, Bakunin, in 1868, founded the International Alliance of Social Democracy as a pressure group within the First International, which immediately earned him the hostility of Marx. Even when the Alliance was dissolved, Marx continued to consider Bakunin a menacing rival and the tensions between the two culminated in the expulsion of the latter from the International in 1872. Bakunin, together with a considerable number of followers primarily from the Netherlands, France, Spain, the Jura part of Switzerland, Italy and Belgium, their memberships withdrawn from the First International, convened an Extraordinary Congress of the Jura Federation in September 1872 in Saint-Imier, and here was born the international anarchist movement. Among the disagreements between Marx and Bakunin was the role of social strata in revolutionary events, Marx stressed the industrial proletariat in forming the vanguard, while Bakunin gave equal prominence to the peasantry and what Marx would call the *lumpenproletariat*. In 1870 Bakunin wrote his *Letters to a Frenchman on the Present Crisis* at the height of the Franco-Prussian War.

These *Letters* are considered to be among his most important works, for it is here that he elaborated such theories as turning international wars into civil strife and ultimately into social revolutions, the formation of people's militias to repulse foreign invaders, and a federalist alternative to a centralised state. It was here, too, that he expounded his confidence in the revolutionary capabilities of the peasantry. He noted that the peasants, whether in France or in Eastern Europe, 'harbour the thoroughgoing and intense socialistic hatred of labouring men against the men of leisure, the "upper crust",<sup>19</sup> but that these socialistic passions had been traditionally manipulated by the 'reactionaries'. The city workers tended to display a condescending attitude towards the peasantry, but if any revolution was to succeed, Bakunin advised, this gulf had to be narrowed, because in reality the interests of both strata were compatible. Ignoring the peasantry, he concluded, was to thrust it to the camp of reaction, for paternalistic emperors have conveniently

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been perceived by this group as a countercheck to the nobility.<sup>20</sup> In like fashion, he equated the 'historical mission' of the proletariat, because of its supposed superiority, to that of the 'historical mission' of one nation, in this case the German, to civilise another, in this case the French:

Beware! The Germans are already saying that German Protestant civilisation is far superior to the Catholic civilisation of the Latin peoples in general and to French civilisation in particular. Take heed! The Germans may soon feel morally obliged to civilise you, just as you are now telling us that you are duty-bound to civilise and forcefully emancipate your countrymen, your brothers, the French peasants.<sup>21</sup>

After all, he noted, was it not this pretext that the Germans used to legitimise their occupation of the Slavs and other peoples? And he concluded:

I openly declare that in relations between nations as in relations between classes, I will always be on the side of those whom you intend to civilise by these tyrannical methods. I will join them in rebellion against all such arrogant civilisers, be they workers or Germans; and in so doing, I will be serving the revolution against reaction.<sup>22</sup>

Compare such a view with that advanced by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who had condemned subjected nationalities to playing 'non-historical' roles:

These dying nationalities, the Bohemians, Corinthians, Dalmations, etc., had tried to profit by the universal confusion of 1848, in order to restore their political status quo of A.D.800. The history of a thousand years ought to have shown them that such a retrogression was impossible. [They ought to have understood that] the natural and inevitable fate of these dying nations was to allow this process of dissolution and absorption by their strong neighbours to complete itself.<sup>23</sup>

Engels, Marx's spokesperson on Central European Affairs and on the national question in general, divided Europe into 'historical' and 'non-historical' nations. In his scheme of things the non-historical nations were doomed:

Apart from the Poles, the Russians, and at most the Slavs of Turkey, no Slav people has a future, for the simple reason that all the other Slavs lack the primary historical, geographical, political and industrial conditions for a viable independence. Peoples which have never had a history of their own, which come under foreign domination the moment they have achieved the first, crudest

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level of civilisation, have no capacity for survival and will never be able to attain any kind of independence.<sup>24</sup>

It was against this type of chauvinism that Bakunin struggles, and which ultimately contributed to his break with Marx and Engels in the First International. He often compared this chauvinism with Bismarck's attempts to gain control over the Slavs, and argued that the Germanic groups within the First International were equally inclined to subordinate under their control its Slav and Latin members. He thus describes his break with Marx partially in the following terms:

As a Slav, I wanted the liberation of the Slav race from the German yoke. I wanted this liberation to be brought about by the Revolution, that is to say by the destruction of the regime of Russia, Austria, Prussia and Turkey, and by the reorganisation of the peoples from below upwards through their own freedom, upon the foundation of complete economic and social equality, and not through the power of any authority, however revolutionary it might call itself. Already . . . the difference between our respective systems . . . was well marked. My ideals and aspirations could not fail to be very displeasing to Marx. First of all, because they were not his own; secondly, because they ran counter to the conviction of the authoritarian Communists; and finally, because, being a German patriot, he would not admit then, any more than he does today, the right of the Slavs to free themselves from the German yoke — for still, as of old, he thinks that the Germans have a mission to civilise the Slavs, this meaning to Germanise them whether by kindness or force.<sup>25</sup>

However, if he opposed the type of chauvinism that Marx and Engels represented, Bakunin was equally critical of the exclusive nationalism championed by persons like Mazzini.<sup>26</sup> In his circular *On Nationality, the State and Federation*, directed to 'My Friends in Italy', Bakunin distinguished between 'nationality' (which we today would call 'patriotism') and 'patriotism' (which in modern parlance would be 'nationalism'). The first he defined as a natural fondness for the place and people with whom one is reared and attached; the second, denoted the absolute power of a State over its native subjects and submerged ethnic groups:

Nationality, like individuality, is a natural fact. It denotes the inalienable right of individuals, groups, associations and regions to their own way of life. It is the product of a long historical development, a confluence of human beings with a common history, language, and a common cultural background. And this is why I will always champion the cause of oppressed nationalities struggling to liberate themselves from the domination of the State.<sup>27</sup>

As for nationalism (or 'patriotism'), it is 'always disastrous to the popular and real interests of the country it claims to exalt and serve. Often

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without wishing to be so, it is a friend of reaction — an enemy of the revolution, i.e. the emancipation of nations and men.<sup>28</sup> For Bakunin, any movement for national liberation had to be directed towards social goals, to prevent it from becoming a bourgeois revolution. Because this kind of nationalism espoused by the bourgeoisie, he explained, was essentially economic and a national revolution directed by this strata would have dire consequences for the masses:

The bourgeoisie love their country only because, for them, the country, represented by the State, safeguards their economic, political and social privileges. Any nation withdrawing this protection would be disowned by them. Therefore, for this bourgeoisie the country *is* the State. Patriots of the State, they become furious enemies of the masses of the people, tired of sacrificing themselves, of being used as a passive footstool by the government, revolt against it.<sup>29</sup>

So, for Bakunin, what was the solution? In his view, the emancipation of all nationalities and labouring classes could only result from a social revolution followed by a loose federation of nations on a macro level. This federation, however, would not follow either the Swiss or US example. Switzerland, for instance, tended towards centralisation<sup>30</sup> and the people there, in spite of successive democratic revolutions, were sovereign *de jure* but not *de facto*; real power was vested in the hands of a propertied class. The situation was worse in the United States where the political system had degenerated into perverse corruption.<sup>31</sup> No, his federation would be different:

The federation will operate with elected functionaries directly responsible to the people; it will not be a nation organised from the top down, or from the centre to the circumference. Rejecting the principle of imposed and regimented unity, it will be directed from the bottom up, from the circumference to the centre, according to the principles of free federation. Its free individuals will form voluntary associations, its associations will form autonomous communes, its communes will form autonomous provinces, its provinces will form the regions, and the regions will freely federate into countries which in turn will sooner or later create the universal world federation.<sup>32</sup>

Bakunin's views on the national question did not gain widespread acceptance. He had to contend with the deep-seated prejudices of the Mazzinis (nationalists) on the one side, and of the Marxists on the other, and, indeed, had to submerge his own Pan-Slavic biases in favour of internationalist-universal goals.

His support for the liberation of the oppressed nationalities struck a chord in such places as Ukraine, where community activists, Mikhailo Drahomanov and Ivan Franko in particular, echoed his points after his

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death in the international socialist movement<sup>33</sup> and formulated programmes which drew considerably from Bakunist tenets. If it has been argued that Bakunin's vision was essentially utopian and romantic, and that his writings and theories lacked the sophistication of Marx's, it has also been said that much of his writings reveal astute thinking. Scholars have contended that he had influenced Lenin's posture on a number of issues,<sup>34</sup> including the federative principle, the right of nations to self-determination, and on whether Russia contained the 'objective' conditions for revolution, matters on which Lenin expended much ink in his debates with Rosa Luxemburg. Of course, the regime that came to power on the ashes of the Russian Empire was not quite what Bakunin had in mind. He anticipated that this regime would not be a dictatorship of proletarians, but one of bureaucrats, a legacy with which we are familiar today, that has been left behind for Gorbachev to contend with. In 1873 he had cautioned against the formation of a workers' state of the Marxist mould. Would this State, he asked, really be ruled by a minority of workers as Marx advocated?

Yes, possibly of former workers, who, as soon as they become the rulers of the representatives of the people, will cease to be workers and will look down at the plain working masses from the governing heights of the State; they will no longer represent the people, but only themselves and their claims to rulership over the people. Those who doubt this know very little about human nature.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, just how universal would this Marxist State be? Here, Bakunin anticipated what Stalin called 'Socialism in one country':

Whoever says State necessarily implies a particular, limited State, which may well include many different peoples and countries if it is a large one, but which excludes even more. Because, short of dreaming of the universal State, as Napoleon and Charles V did, or as the papacy dreamed of the Universal Church, and in spite of the international ambitions which consume him today, Herr Marx will have to be satisfied with ruling a single State, not several states at once, when the bell sounds for the realization of his dreams — if ever it does sound. Consequently, State means *a* State, and *a* State confirms the existence of *several* States, and *several* States means rivalry, jealousy, and incessant, endless war. The simplest logic bears this out, and so does the whole of history.<sup>36</sup>

History, in fact, did bear this out, particularly the events that climaxed in World War II. In light of the Soviet and Nazi experiences (remember that Bakunin had drawn attention to the peril that exclusive nationalism, particularly German, presented), and in spite of his somewhat over-reaching style, which, for some, has detracted from the merits of his arguments, Bakunin's insightful ideas still deserve consideration today.

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## Controversy

*Laslo Sekelj*

### Has Anarcho-Communism a Future?

When socialist alternatives are discussed, the anarchist doctrine must also be taken into account. Anarchism belongs to the family of socialist doctrines. It was defined, in its communist form, in the second half of the nineteenth century, and as a movement it exerted quite an amount of influence in certain European countries up to the end of the Spanish Civil War. In the 1960s the anarchist heritage was present in student and extra-parliamentary movements of the radical left. Nowadays, even according to the opinion of its followers this movement has become marginal, but the anarchist *theory* is nevertheless still worthwhile considering in the framework of the socialist alternatives.

Anarchism is the last growth of the philosophy of natural right in the nineteenth century. As a theory and a movement, anarchism aspires to abolish the existing social evil embodied in the institutions of the bourgeois society and state. The anarchists consider these institutions to be an expression and also a cause of political, economic, legal and other dependence and coercion. In their view, man must live adequately to his human potentials, and this is possible only in a society in which coercive institutions are replaced by solidary and non-coercive ones. In such a free society decisions are taken and carried out not by government and coercion but by mutual agreements and the mediation of a rational authority. In such an abstract form anarchist ideas can also be an integral part of other currents within the socialist and communist movement. The specific difference of anarchism is a theory of revolution as a simultaneous process of overthrowing the old society and the self-realisation of the humanist ideal for the fulfilment of which it breaks out. Another specific element of the anarchist theory is a total rejection of the state and other coercive political institutions. In contrast to other socialists and communists, anarchists reject the very concept of the state — not only this or that concrete form of the state, but the very notion of the state in any concrete moment of the history of human society.

#### **The anarcho-communist ideal of a just society**

The historical founder of anarchism as a social and political theory and

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a movement is Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Quite contrary to tradition, Proudhon defines anarchy positively in terms of an absence of government, as a social ideal and a socio-political programme. For Proudhon anarchy means not disorder but order, a natural one contrary to the one imposed artificially from above. Anarchy is therefore a true unity as against an artificial one produced by state coercion. Proudhon also connects the ideal of a just society with a new conception concerning the constitution of a political community. A just society must be structured from below upwards on the basis of agreement and equality. So such a society would consist of workers' associations and a confederation of autonomous and sovereign communes based on direct democracy. However, the mediation role would be run by the market corrected through mutualism. Anarchy is a society of equality in ownership and a mutual solidarity among spontaneously formed productive associations creating a uniform process of production (economic centralisation) through the mediation of the market on the basis of a free contract. The job of administration is to organise social affairs and it performs this function of government on the basis of a full assent by every independent political unit (commune). The political community and the economic one constitute two independent spheres of society. For Proudhon such an order was Europe's political future; he advocated a European confederation of communes.

The anarcho-communists follow Proudhon's idea of the constitution of the community as a political (stateless) commonwealth and his two fundamental ideas: worker's association, and direct democracy based on the communes. Communist anarchism was founded by Michael Bakunin in the last decade of his life. The most systematic variant of this doctrine was developed by Peter Kropotkin, and it was the programme of the European anarchism as a social movement.

Bakunin conceptualised the anarchist society as a stateless society without private ownership, authoritarian power or coercion: 'Freedom or anarchy is the final goal of social development and it means a free society, a free organisation of working masses from below upward.' Taking over Proudhon's conception of society's decentralisation and direct democracy, Bakunin opposes both the liberal concept of the state and the market economy based on private ownership and the social democratic concept of people's state, as well as the revolutionary dictatorship based on the nationalised means of production as expounded in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. To Bakunin and Kropotkin the society of anarchy means an absolutely free uniting of individuals in associations mutually linked by identical interests and aspirations unmediated by the market, coercion, authority or the state. On the

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other hand, it is a federation of communes based on a full and unmediated direct democracy. Such a communist society is a necessary social assumption of the realisation of man's liberty for all followers of anarcho-communism. So there are abolished all the authoritarian institutions (the state, army, law, church) on the one side and private ownership and other assumptions of a coercive structuring of the society on the other. The only authority in this organically spontaneous society will be 'a collective and public spirit of a society founded on equality and solidarity as well as on mutual human respect for all of its members'. Communist anarchism reached a complete fulfilment in Kropotkin's work as a full communism of production and consumption. The global society is a complex structure of a federation of communes and diverse associations. In it decisions are made by agreement and coordination rather than by coercion and/or representation. According to Kropotkin, this social ideal is based biologically as an instinct of mutual aid and historically as the institutions of mutual aid: the rural commune, clan, guild and commune.

As anarcho-communists understand it, the essence of a good society is that is a community based exclusively on the elements of direct democracy. The anarcho-communistic ideal is directly opposed to any concept of representation within the framework of the state. This form of structuring society demands the abolition of any form of private or state property, social coercion and the state. The commune thus emerges not only as a local community, as a simple intermediary between the individual and the state, but as the basic political and social institution of society lacking any form of state regulated organisation. The commune is the basic constitutional organ of direct democracy and the universal model of the organisation of a political community, and small productive units — associations — are the essential links of the productive network of society. Decisions are made by general consent and free agreements between all members of groups and communes, and on the level of global society — between all communes and associations. Explicitly or implicitly, to all anarchists this means that global society is a complex mosaic of the federation of communes and productive associations, and that each commune is self-sufficient and independently structured in the same way as global society.

These ideas about the structuring of a communist society are a common part of the socialistic/communistic heritage. In them we can easily recognise the influence of Robert Owen and of Charles Fourier, as well as Proudhon's influence on Karl Marx. In the same way there is a similarity between the anarcho-communistic concept of a just society and Marx's concept of communism, especially as he described it in the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*. Marx also demands the abolition

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of private property and the social division of labour, and favours the associated work of individuals within free associations of workers, the communism of consumption and production and the total elimination of coercive structuralisation of society, therefore he is also in favour of the abolition of the political sphere and the state. To Marx, also, the freedom of the individual is the condition for the freedom of society, and in his later works as for example in *Capital*, the basic principle of communism is defined as 'the total and free growth of each individual'. In the same way, Marx's later concept of communism as a realm of freedom — that the sphere of freedom is on the other side of socially necessary working time and in its shortening to a minimum — has its parallel in Kropotkin's works. On the other hand, what essentially differentiates Marx and the anarcho-communists is Marx's determinism and historical orientation towards social development, and the concept of social revolution as the anarcho-communists see it.

To the anarcho-communists communism can be realised anywhere and at any time. It is the result of the spontaneous initiative of the people. To Marx there must be objective conditions for the realisation of communism and it is the result of a historical process filled with mediation. As communism is possible only as the result of change in the existential mode of being, his first supposition is that it is an affluent society. This condition is fulfilled by capitalism, through the concentration and high development of the means of production and the reduction of social structure to only two classes: the class of the owners of the means of production, and the class of hired workers. At the same time capitalism universalises this process throughout the world by the world market and develops the social and economic infrastructure. Social infrastructure means a highly developed civil society with its net of institutions and a highly developed proletariat. This means that the working class both quantitatively and qualitatively dominates the mass of population and by its own activity achieves an adequate level of class consciousness and an understanding of its historical mission. As opposed to Marx, Kropotkin wrote *Fields, Factories and Workshops* to prove the thesis that with the then existing quantum of the forces of production, fertile land and mineral and ore wealth and with the existing technology there was adequate material basis for the realisation of communistic anarchism. At the same time Kropotkin had in mind the autonomous commune as the fundamental basis of communism, and in *The Conquest of Bread* he describes the scenario of a communist society and revolution on the example of Paris whose parks were turned into agricultural farms. This basic concept of anarcho-communism — that society is the network of self-sufficient communes and productive associations of the face-to-face type — was upheld by following generations of theoreticians and

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practitioners of this orientation — Schwitzguébel, Cafiero, Andrews, Merlino, Malatesta, Berkman, and in our time, for example, Murray Bookchin. An approved society is seen as a continuous structuring of social relations. This is the effect of the founding principle of anarcho-communism that individuals should freely form both a working and political community.

In this respect the experience of the Civil War in Spain is especially important, as it was the only historical situation in which anarchists were a significant constitutional social force and had the opportunity to realise the wished for political and territorial framework. We should not here attempt a reconstruction of Spanish anarchism; we would only point out the connection between Kropotkin's vision of anarcho-communism and the practice of anarcho-communist communes and the collectivisation of 1936 in Aragon, Castile, Levant and Catalonia. The popular Spanish theoretician of anarcho-communism, Isaac Puente, wholly took over Kropotkin's vision of anarcho-communism, with the exception that, true to the Spanish tradition, he speaks of trade unions as well as communes as elements of the federative structure of anarchist society. The Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) at a congress in Zaragoza in May 1936 proclaimed as the aim of social revolution a free communism which abolishes private property, classes, the state and the authoritarian structuring of society as a whole. A free communism exchanges the existing society for the free organisation of producers which directly manages production and consumption. The programme also insists on non-authoritarian planning, the application of all the inventions of science and technology, the abolition of the army by an armed people, etc. We shall not analyse the complicated question of how much of this programme was realised, but shall take an eye-witness account of the functioning of these collectives. In those libertarian communes in which money was abolished, wages were paid in coupons, and the amount depended on the size of the family. Goods which were produced on the spot, in case there were plenty of them, were distributed freely, without restriction. Other articles could be obtained with coupons in communal storehouses. Goods were exchanged with other anarchistic towns and villages and money was used only in transactions with those communes which had not yet adopted the new system.

In essence Marx suggested the same method of distribution for the lower stages of a communist society. We should also state that this system of production and consumption exists in the kibbutzim of Israel today.

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### The anarchist theory of revolution

All communistically orientated anarchists are characterised by a belief in the spontaneous character of social revolution. As for Marx, so for all anarcho-communists — from Bakunin to Bookchin — a communist revolution means the change of the whole manner of existence of the individual in society. But, as opposed to Marx and different neo-Marxistic streams, the anarchists believe in the principle of the unity of means and ends without compromise. Anarcho-communists do not accept mediation or the transitory stage in the process of the changing of the world as it is (bourgeois-capitalist society and state) and as it should be. So far, they are consistent in not making any difference between different forms of political systems and states: they are all equally unacceptable as means of mediation. For the same reasons different modes of representative democracy and mixed economies are also rejected as well as political struggle, after the split in the International Working Men's Association in 1872.

As anarcho-communism understands it, revolution is made up of two parts. The first, 'negative' aspect of revolution, Bakunin defines as a short act of the destruction of the existing order. The humanistic ideal of a just society is immediately realised in the second 'positive' part of revolution. The pulling down of the old order is in fact only the preparation for revolution — revolution is identical to the society in the name of whose emergence it erupts. The specific difference of anarchism is that even in revolution itself all forms of the principle of government are abolished, and the federation of communes and voluntary productive associations established.

This viewpoint was held as far back as Bakunin and was most fundamentally elaborated by Kropotkin. As a generic element of anarcho-communism it is upheld in the same form by the most important contemporary theorist of this movement, Murray Bookchin.

The rejection of the transitory period, the dictatorship of the proletariat and party struggle for power result from this basic postulate of the anarchist theory of revolution. Based on these ideas, the critique of Marx, Social Democracy and Bolshevism is very fertile and empirically confirmed. Its essence can be reduced to Bakunin's critique of Marx — that there cannot exist a dictatorship of a transitory character, least of all a dictatorship of the proletariat. The state, both democratic and dictatorial, cannot be the means of the realisation of communism, and this anarchistic objection equally applies to Social Democracy and Bolshevism. History has shown that freedom cannot be realised through dictatorship, a free community of associated producers through the state, and also that parliament cannot be a substitute for social revolu-

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tion. Many anarchist authors have with success varied this basic thesis of the anarchist critique of Marx and of the Marxism of the Second and Third Internationals. However, the truth is a whole. Let us consider the historical significance of anarchism, especially anarcho-communism, and the conditions under which this socialist alternative has a chance of being realised.

### **Revisionism and Libertarian Socialism**

The contemporary marginalisation of anarcho-communism is the result of the fact that this theory and movement lack a mediator between the world as it is and the revolutionary ideal — anarcho-communism lacks the practice of realisation. Its goal is a society of harmony and its means a social revolution which directly, without mediation, puristically leads to the achievement of this harmonic society. Let us consider anarcho-communistic revolutionary purism, the disowning of intermediary stages in society, and the total rejection of participation in the political systems of existing societies. At the very moment that anarcho-communists as a movement represented a serious political, social and armed power, at the time of the Spanish Civil War, they themselves transgressed this principle. The members of the anarchist organisation, the *Federación Anarquista Iberica* (FAI), joined the government, and circumstances forced anarchist communes and anarchist politicians to compromise (e.g. money was abolished only in certain communes). Bakunin and Kropotkin — when Russia was in question — were in favour of the programme of democratic, republican and non-communist reforms. The contemporaries of the October Revolution, Kropotkin, Arshinov, Goldman and Berkman, although they severely criticised the Bolsheviks, still accepted the idea of a transitory period, of course without a dictatorship. In this transitory period, workers manage factories, but besides this community of work, there still exists the political community of the state. This period of transition is a preparation and heralds the realisation of a new society in the name of whose realisation revolution erupts. Political community is constituted by a combination of direct and representative democracy.

Should one be less of a revisionist now than seven decades ago? After all our experiences, we cannot dogmatically accept a concept of the transformation of the world which was conceived in the nineteenth century and whose model was the French Revolution of 1789. Difficult as it is to imagine the people of New York on barricades, so it is equally difficult to imagine a social revolution whose forerunner, a negative aspect of revolution, is a successful spontaneous rebellion of the people against the government which sends tanks and rockets to quell this

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spontaneous rebellion. This approach to the phenomenon of revolution is derived from the anarcho-communistic concept of society as a harmonious mosaic of small communities. As the time of the storming of the Bastille has passed, so total decentralisation which is the necessary condition of direct democracy is a thing of the past. To all this one should add that most people care for other values, not for spontaneous rebellion for the sake of the constitution of a federation of self-sufficient sovereign communities.

Let us re-examine the anarchist postulate that communism and the state are incompatible. From this viewpoint the state in any shape cannot mediate in the realisation of a free society of associated producers and a community constituted on direct democracy. This is an empirically proved viewpoint, very fertile in its critique of Marx and Bolshevism. But is the production on the basis of self-sufficient sovereign communes — or, to take a milder version, face-to-face groups — imaginable in today's world? We live in a global world society with a great frequency of highly specialised activities. In a certain sense it is a society on the other side of scarcity — as Bookchin states — but only in some of its segments. Only at the cost of reducing the quality and quantity of material needs to the level of manufacture at the end of the eighteenth century (where the roots of the anarcho-communistic model of production are) can we even discuss the anarcho-communistic model of production. Of course, no developed country would accept this option. Perhaps this is the result of capitalistic indoctrination, of their ignorance, manipulation and everything which Marxists use to call the lack of insight into true interests and needs. If people do not want to accept these 'true', 'historical', 'real' needs and insights, they must be forced to do so, and the history of the Marxist Communist movement shows where such a method leads.

However, this does not mean that we should passively and uncritically accept various forms of the bourgeois modes of production; private capitalist or state-oligarchist. As it is possible to suggest the pushing back (restriction) of the state instead of its abolition, such a contemporary revisionistically orientated libertarian communism must turn back to the rich tradition of workers' self-management and participation and define the community of work in a contemporary way. Man cannot be free as a social and political being and as an individual if he is subjected to despotic and authoritarian relations in the sphere of work, as can be concluded from some of Lenin's, Engels's, Trotsky's and other Marxist viewpoints. But a free human community cannot be constituted solely by the mediation of a community of work (Karl Korsch and Council Communists), just as it cannot be constituted through ignoring the community of work. There must, according to a liberal model, exist a



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balance between the sphere of the community of work (which excludes all those who do not participate in productive work) and the political community — in which there is maintained the rule of the egalitarian representation of all citizens. These ideas are also upheld by Pannekoek, Otto Bauer and Max Adler, and on the basis of the experience of the Hungarian revolution of 1956. They are also expressed in Hannah Arendt's book *On Revolution* and in a modified form by Agnes Heller. On the other hand, we must not forget the tradition of collective property of the revisionist stream of German Social Democracy, Fabianism or the contemporary participatory theory of democracy. All these orientations, however, only partially and if regarded through a long continuum satisfy the aspirations of anarcho-communism or Marx's communist utopia. Today the possibilities of radical change are exhausted. This is most clearly apparent in the impossibility of the organisation of a parallel or counter-life according to the radical principles of communist production and distribution. The most significant experiment of this kind are the Israeli kibbutzim (communes). But they are not able and today they do not even want to transcend the main current of the social encirclement of global society.

The other important constituent element of anarcho-communism is the concept of political community based only on the mediation of direct democracy. The basic idea is derived from Rousseau's conception that any form of representation is an alienation of freedom. As the philosophy representative of the natural law — anarcho-communism is a direct continuation of Rousseau's teachings in a more extremist version. That is, Rousseau limited direct democracy only to legislation, while anarcho-communists thought that a directly democratic system of the unity of powers is possible not only in small political entities, but as a universal world system of a confederation of communes. This anarchistic utopia takes as a model the Greek *polis*, but without its privileged class of free citizens: everybody is equal and equally obliged to fulfil their obligations in the sphere of work.

The idea of constituting a commonwealth without the mediation of politics and political authority on the basis of self-sufficient, sovereign communities in which alienated labour is reduced to a minimum is a very significant regulative idea. In the nineteenth century it was not only a corrective to the dominant state-orientated socialism, but also a desirable form of a political model for the liberation of work. But even then under one condition explicated by Proudhon and taken over from him by Marx through the incorporation of the institution of the commune: direct democracy concludes on the level of the commune. All regional, national and the supposed global political organs are representative, self-governed and legislative organs which are in firm control of

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executive authority. As opposed to the liberal-democratic parliament, the delegates represent their constituent commune on the basis of firm instructions (imperative mandate of their voters) and are not independent representatives eventually tied to their political party. The imperative mandate of communes is in fact Rousseau's general will, while the whole is reduced to the commune. This method of constituting a political community was attempted in the revolutionary sections of Paris in 1793 and again in the Paris Commune of 1871. Without going into the question of the extent to which this model was actually realised in Paris in 1793 and 1871, we allow that this model was adequate in the era of communal revolutions. But to embrace this model today, as Bookchin does, means not to take account the reality of national states and to ignore in a completely dogmatic way essential structural changes of the modern age. In fact, even if we accept that all the technical problems of the direct democracy model are soluble without the depopulation of big cities, it is very clear that the realisation of such a model is possible only in a homogeneous society. Outside a homogeneous society direct democracy understood in such a consistent way becomes its own caricature or its own totalitarian opposite.

The problem of our age is not a perfect direct democracy, but the constitution of political pluralism and representative democracy or, for the minority of mankind where such democracy already exists, how to gradually push back the state, in such a way that the institutionalised and formalised authority of the state should not be exchanged for the non-institutionalised, informal and therefore uncontrollable power of a one party oligarchy (or decentralised oligarchies). Lassalle was not correct when he stated that the state was the embodiment of the idea of freedom and the only means of the realisation of socialism. In the example of actually existing socialism and actually existing self-management we have seen where the caricature of direct democracy and the abolition of imperfect political democracy leads in the name of a perfect future direct democracy. Today the state is a necessary evil. The state and bureaucracy, even under the condition of an option for a different type of technology and economic growth, are unavoidable factors of the organisation of a society on that level of complexity at which it exists today. Therefore the relevant question is not how to conduct the organisation of a political community based on the model of the Paris sections of 1793, or citizens' gatherings in the era of the Paris Commune of 1871 — but how to restrict, control and at last push back the state. The pushing back of the state, as experience shows, is only possible on the basis of an already realised modern representative democracy and state; therefore, only in such a political system in which exist the freedom of the press, an independent system of jurisdiction,

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the freedom of political assembly, the right of free speech, a division of authority and in which the individual, civil and social rights of all citizens are respected. Only on the basis of political equality can we attempt to achieve economic equality, the elements of workers and political self-management which will gradually repress the state through such social forms in which the individual achieves direct and total self-realisation.

If this is the trend of the times, then all the great socialist communist projects of the nineteenth century must be fundamentally revised. In my opinion this revision should be made in two directions. On one hand, mutual sectarianism and exclusivism should be abandoned to enable an elaboration of competitive but not mutually incompatible projects of libertarian socialism. On the other hand, in accordance with the demands of our times great fundamental projects of communism should be re-examined and revised — such as the abolition of the state (anarcho-communism), the overcoming of the state (Marx) or the withering away of the state (Engels and orthodox Marxism). Projects of libertarian socialism should be orientated towards social reality, with the retention of communist utopia as a regulative idea. Therefore to be a libertarian revisionist today does not mean pragmatically to reject the idea of the founding of a true human community constituted through institutions of direct democracy and the communist mode of production. Socialist revisionism must retain different variations of the communist utopia as an individual project and regulative ideas. On the other hand, how to push back the state, how to shorten work to the greatest degree possible and to free the individual both as a member of civil society and a citizen in the sense of a participating subject in the state — that is, how to create as many as possible social conditions for the individual happiness of each human being — is a question of the concrete circumstances of each country or sub-types of socio-economic systems.

A talk given at the joint conference of the International Communal Studies Association and the National Historic Communal Societies Association at New Lanark, Scotland, in July 1988.

*Colin Ward*

## Architecture: Making Nowhere Somewhere

I never expected to find myself at a party in a twenty-storey penthouse on the Duquesne Heights at the point where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers join to become the mighty Ohio. I turned my back on the spectacle of Pittsburg's Golden Triangle on Light-Up Night, 8 March 1988, because a fellow guest was a twinkling-eyed, white-bearded eighty-one-year-old, Carl Feiss, former professor of architecture at Columbia University. He had been the assistant to the architect Raymond Unwin (1836-1940), when Unwin became director of the Planning and Housing Division there in 1936. And when Unwin lay dying in Connecticut in 1940 he gave to Feiss various bits of 'beloved trivia' as mementoes. There was the ivory pocket rule and the small pair of dividers Unwin always carried in his pocket to measure scales on plans, and there was the little vellum-bound copy of *News from Nowhere* that Unwin took around with him and which he inscribed to Carl Feiss, who told me how Unwin stressed that this book was the key to every one of his architectural, social and political opinions.

In practice, of course, Unwin was like the rest of us, a disillusioned utopian who had accepted every kind of compromise with the world as it is, just to get something done here and now. As early as 1902 he had exclaimed, 'How we loved our Morris when he came to us sharing our illusions, full of life and joy' (*Labour Leader*, 18 January 1902); and thirty years later, paying tribute to another of Morris's architectural disciples, William Richard Lethaby (1857-1931), he returned to this theme of *joy*:

At the Lethaby evening at the RIBA in 1932 Unwin returned to the belief underlying 'the joy which Lethaby and William Morris took in Gothic art: that is, their belief that it gave great opportunities for enjoyment to the workman . . .' and affirmed 'I still retain the conviction that some day we shall again find a style of building which will afford an opportunity for joy to all the workmen who are engaged on it', although he admitted that 'we do not seem to be approaching much nearer at the present time'. (*RIBA Journal*, 20 February 1932)

Unwin's early writings, both before and after the publication of *News from Nowhere*, with their advocacy of the collegiate plan of buildings around a quadrangle and of communally prepared and served meals in

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a common dining room and kitchen, have an almost uncanny resemblance to the architectural landscape that Morris described. For example, writing in June 1889 in *The Commonweal*, the journal in which Morris was to serialise *News from Nowhere* in the following year, Unwin describes the Sunday outing of the Chesterfield socialists to an early eighteenth-century house, Sutton Hall, in words that sound as though they had slipped out of Morris's text:

Small wonder that, as we stood looking at the house and the splendid view it commands, we should fall to talking of the 'days that are going to be', when this Hall and others like it will be the centre of a happy communal life. Plenty of room in that large house for quite a small colony to live, each one having his own den upstairs . . . and downstairs would be large common dining-halls, smoking rooms — if indeed life shall still need the weed to make it perfect.

And we chatted on, each adding a bit to our picture; how some would till the land around and others tend the cattle, while others perhaps would start some industry, working in the outbuildings or building workshops in the park, and taking care not to spoil our view.

Unwin went on to become the designer and planner of New Earswick, outside York, of Letchworth, the first of the two Garden Cities developed by another utopian, Ebenezer Howard (who said in 1910 that Morris, like Ruskin, Kropotkin and others, had only failed 'by a hair's breadth' to develop their own garden cities), and then of the Hampstead Garden Suburb. On a balmy summer day in any of these quiet domestic environments it is easy to imagine that we have wandered into the landscape of *News from Nowhere*.

Indeed the particular characteristics of Morris's book that lift it above 'the dullness and artificiality' that our best historian of utopian travels, Marie Louise Berneri, found to be typical of most utopian writers of the period, rest on three things. The first is that Morris is a libertarian, and does not turn his personal preferences into rules for the whole of humankind. The second is that 'the persuasive charm of *News from Nowhere* does not reside so much in the admittedly convincing arguments put forward by its various utopian inhabitants to explain why they have chosen their manner of life, but in the atmosphere of beauty, freedom, calm and happiness which pervades the whole story' (*Journey Through Utopia*, 1950). The third is that Morris, with his passionate feeling for architecture and its setting, permanently affects the way sympathetic readers view reality.

There is a passage in the book where Morris describes his traveller's arrival at the house which is evidently Kelmscott:

We crossed the road, and again almost without my will my hand raised the latch of a door in the wall, and we stood presently on a stone path which led up to the old house. . . . My companion gave a sigh of pleased surprise and

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enjoyment; nor did I wonder, for the garden between the wall and the house was redolent of the June flowers, and the roses were rolling over one another with that delicious super-abundance of small well-tended gardens which at first sight takes away all thought from the beholder save that of beauty. The black-birds were singing their loudest, the doves were cooing on the roof-ridge, the rooks in the high elm-trees beyond were garrulous among the young leaves, and the swifts wheeled whining about the gables. And the house itself was a fit guardian for all the beauty of this heart of summer.

The scene formed the frontispiece for the Kelmscott edition of Morris's book. I felt the same sensation in a different climate when I paid a visit to Melsetter House, built by one of Morris's architectural disciples, Lethaby, on the island of Hoy in Orkney. A walled garden was a necessity there because of the high winds; after I had walked through it the then ninety-year-old owner allowed me to wander through the rooms, with their original furnishings from Morris & Company, and I really felt, on that bleak Northern island, as though I had stepped into the pages of Morris's romance.

Readers of the volume of the letters exchanged between Frederic Osborn and Lewis Mumford will recall that Mumford felt an identical sensation, not in Utopia but in Welwyn Garden City. He told Osborn that 'the breakfasts in your garden have almost indissolubly mingled in my mind with the kind of morning fragrance that William Morris put into the opening pages of *News from Nowhere*, so that I feel that I have actually had a foot in utopia at one moment in my life; a feeling that I never had as a mere visitor anywhere else before' (*Letters of Lewis Mumford and Frederic J. Osborn*, 1971).



It would be an intriguing experiment in environmental psychology and in the techniques of architectural appraisal to filter out the qualities that give any particular group of buildings a high NNQ (News from Nowhere Quotient). I don't believe that it is in the slightest degree a matter of architectural style. After all, Morris's account of the arrival at Kelmscott was written in terms of birds and gardens, not of the building. And after all, Osborn's house in Welwyn was not an arts-and-crafts building at all, it was a sub-Georgian house designed by Louis de Soissons in a style that Morris deprecated, though he would have approved the choice of materials. There are buildings of all periods which have a high NNQ; often they are very ordinary houses in ordinary places, quite often they are slung-together shacks built by the merest *bricoleur*, and sometimes they are the work of modern movement architects.

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Let us try to identify the NNQ factors. The one that was most passionately held by Morris himself was that of joy in the work of building. The passages from the writings of Raymond Unwin that I have quoted on this theme are drawn from Mark Swenarton's elegant study of the evolution of this idea which he sees as originating with the work of John Ruskin (*Artisans and Architects: The Ruskinian Tradition in Architectural Thought*, 1989). By the time, in 1853, that Ruskin came to write the third volume of *The Stones of Venice*, he concluded that the secret of the glory of Gothic building was that the workman was free to find pleasure and creativity in the work. When Morris at the Kelmscott Press reprinted Ruskin's chapter called 'On the Nature of Gothic, and the Office of the Workman therein', in 1892, he wrote a preface in which he made the impressive statement that this chapter 'in future days will be considered one of the very few necessary and inevitable utterances of the century'.

Swenarton carefully traces this belief through Morris's work and through that of Philip Webb (1831-1915) who tried hard but failed to integrate his architecture with his emerging socialism, that of W. R. Lethaby, who was inspired by it in the founding of the Central School of Arts and Crafts and of the Brixton School of Building, that of Raymond Unwin and that of Arthur J. Penty (1875-1937), who inspired the Building Guilds of the early 1920s (and who later succumbed to the ideology of Mussolini's corporate state). He even teases out Ruskin's influence on Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius. For the work of the first generation of Arts and Crafts architects had inspired a monumental three-volume book *Das Englische Haus* (1904-1905) in which Hermann Muthesius summed up Ruskin's message: 'Ruskin was the first to reach the point of calling in question machine civilisation as a whole. He maintained that it made man himself a machine since it forced him to spend his whole life performing a single mechanical operation and was thus literally death to the worker's spiritual and material wellbeing.'

Like the rest of us, Swenarton has no difficulty in pointing to the fallacies of the Ruskinian approach and to the likelihood that few of Ruskin's disciples had ever actually been on a building site and that fewer still were acquainted with building workers, and 'were therefore able to indulge in fantasies about the supposed pleasures of labour and the supposed attributes of the labourer'. Correct, no doubt, but Philip Webb, for example, would always act as general contractor himself and would engage individual tradesmen personally, and I myself have seen an elderly Arts and Crafts architect explaining to a bricklayer on site how he would have a better time and produce a better building if he increased the lime content and reduced the cement content of the mortar.

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Morris's disciples, in building just as in furniture-making, kept alive old practices which had been lost in the industries themselves. This is why so many, like Morris himself, abandoned the profession of architecture to become craftsmen.

The second of these NNQ factors relates to something Morris took completely for granted: the fact that traditional building materials grow old gracefully. Stone, timber, brick, clay and straw may wear out, they may erode and split and leak. They may become unpractical for the building user, but when properly maintained they last better than the materials of building a century later. Even in decline, they are not offensive. The architectural landscapes of *News from Nowhere*, and indeed of all his writings, is one of building materials which improve by aging and by loving care and selective renewal. A century later, structural components he deplored, like cast iron or even corrugated iron, have acquired their own patina of pleasing decay in the form of oxidisation, moss and lichens. Morris, who, knowing the horrors of restoration, favoured leaving old buildings alone, would have been flummoxed by our own dilemmas. But he would point to the elementary fact that most of the building materials we used today deteriorate from the moment they are on the site, while the components of the built environment of *News from Nowhere* improve in appearance from the moment that, fresh, raw and new, they are put in place, so that in a few years they will mellow to become an inevitable and cherished part of the environment.

This raises the third NNQ factor. Morris's work, in and out of *News from Nowhere*, assumes something that he took for granted: the mutual accommodation of the human and the natural world. At an elementary level, the worst of buildings becomes 'humanised' (as we quaintly put it), by the fact that plants will grow up it or around it, trees and bushes will screen it, but also provide something for the occupants to watch, changing throughout the seasons, out of the window. At a communal level, Morris can be seen as a precursor of not only the Garden City movement, but of the whole twentieth-century exodus from the grotesquely overcrowded industrial city of his own day.

Morris wanted, in the passages selected by Paul Thompson, 'neither the towns to be appendages of the country, nor the country of the town: I want the town to be impregnated with the beauty of the country, and the country with the intelligence and vivid life of the town. I want every homestead to be clean, orderly and tidy; a lovely house surrounded by acres and acres of garden. On the other hand, I want the town to be clean, orderly and tidy; in short, a garden with beautiful houses in it' (*The Work of William Morris*, Second Edition, 1977). He similarly thought that 'every child should be able to play in a garden close to the



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place where his parents live', and to this end, seeking a balance between town and country, 'I even demand that there be left waste places and wilds in it.'



All Morris's hopes and fears in the area that we now call town and country planning, as well as his aspirations for a simple, vernacular architecture, are put into an imaginative context in *News from Nowhere*. The actual preferences of that proportion of his fellow citizens a century later who have been able to choose their own environment indicate that most people agree with him. Making this choice available to all is a political issue, just as Morris always insisted that it was. Study the preferred domestic environments of the 1990s, as displayed in the 'neo-vernacular' estates of speculative builders, or the prices paid for converted barns and granaries, or the out-of-town hypermarkets designed like farm-yards with acres of hand-made clay tiles on their steeply-pitched roofs, the make-believe ruralism, the magazines devoted to selling the paraphernalia of 'country living', and you see a kind of parody of Morris's vision. The visual trimmings, but not the substance.

But in the architectural world there has always been a handful of architects consciously working in the tradition inspired by Morris. Their work was seldom published, their commissions were few, they tended to be one-person practices, giving a direct, personal and professional service to their clients. They keep getting rediscovered when a perceptive visitor stumbles across a building that grows old gracefully, that merges into the landscape, but is distinguished by the quality of detailing and the signs of loving care devoted to modest simple structures. The generation actually trained in the Arts and Crafts tradition has died out, but has been continually replaced by new recruits whose attributes would be seen by Morris as those of fellow-workers, even though their architectural idiom was far from his.

This claim can be made for contemporary architects like Ralph Erskine, or Giancarlo de Carlo, and most certainly for David Lea who declares:

An architecture which expresses a planetary vision, rather than an abstract technological romanticism, would be, as in the Middle Ages, rooted in its own region. Though it is impossible to achieve with any degree of purity in these days, we can work towards it if we look for the non-technological solution at the planning stage, use low energy materials, include the material's life in assessment of building costs, start from traditional techniques, simplify and purify construction details; plan to trap heat and sunlight, and avoid complicated mechanical systems; cut down hours of alienating paper work, and help building

users to take back control of the building process and the planning and design of their villages and neighbourhoods. ('One Earth: William Morris's Vision', in *William Morris Today*, 1984)

To my mind the contemporary architect who most completely epitomised Morris's approach a century later was Walter Segal (1907-1985), and this is a judgement loaded with paradox. For Segal was an architect totally wedded to the Modern Movement, always seeking appropriate uses for new synthetic materials. He was reared in an anarchist commune in the Ticino canton of Switzerland, trained as an architect in Germany, absorbed the message of Philip Webb and W. R. Lethaby through the book by Muthesius, and actually met Raymond Unwin when he was obliged to emigrate to England.

Segal did not shirk the biggest challenge of the Morris-Ruskin tradition on the nature of work and the status of the worker, and he tried to re-express it in a way that was shorn of romanticism. His biographer, John McKean, says:

He was, however, deeply concerned about the traditionally anti-social and hazardous nature of the building industry and this helped form his own method of construction. 'I am thinking about the need to improve the working conditions in the industry which will allow it to attract more capable men and women. We offer in the building industry some of the worst working conditions that exist.' He was equally scathing of the nostalgia for outdated craftsmanship and glorification of 'honest toil' which he felt had trickled right through to Gropius from William Morris. 'Would Morris have liked the look of a Black and Decker drill?' he asked, 'I fear not.' All Segal's activity has implicitly followed that motto which is, however, attributed to Morris: 'I want to design things that people get pleasure in making, and to make things that people get pleasure in using.'

Over the gable of a fine old timber house in the Bernese Oberland, 200 years old, are written the words: *Master K and his men did everything to my entire satisfaction*. 'Please note', added Walter Segal, 'not merely to his reasonable satisfaction as stipulated in the RIBA Contract. On how many houses in post-war England could this be written?' (*Learning from Segal*, 1989)

This passage bridges the gap between the alleged unreality of Morris's views on work and the actual situation of the building worker in contemporary Britain. McKean is raising an issue of immense importance for those of Morris's readers for whom his book is something more than a contribution to ruralist make-believe.

Segal himself developed a system of timber-framed house-building, with links, as he always claimed, with the American method of 'balloon-frame' construction, and with medieval frame construction as well as with the Japanese tradition of building. Late in his life he experienced a demand from private clients for houses built in his method as it was

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cheap and simple. A carpenter, Mr Wade, would follow him around from job to job, but slowly it became apparent that the clients could do more and more of the work for themselves. Segal fretted over the issue of making this method available to all. Why couldn't families on local authority waiting lists build their own houses? Eventually it happened, in the London Borough of Lewisham. (See Brian Richardson's article in *The Raven* 6.) The result was a triumph. One of the self-builders, Ken Atkins, said: 'The house took me and the wife eleven months to build. It is an adaptable building, unusual yes, but extremely nice to live in. The sheer joy of putting a spade in the ground . . . well it's an indescribable feeling . . . you finally have control over what you are doing in your life.' (Quoted in my book *When We Build Again*, 1985.) For Segal himself it was the vindication of the hopes of a lifetime: 'What I found astonishing with these people', he said, 'was the direct personal friendly contact that I had with them and which they had among themselves. And quite beyond the tapping of their own ideas — countless small variations and innovations, and additions were made by them. . . . But it is astonishing that there is among the people that live in this country such a wealth of talent.' (*Transactions of the RIBA*, 1982) The moral world of *News from Nowhere* had actually been brought to life in a London borough.

I am convinced that Morris would have recognised, beyond architectural incompatibilities and disappointed hopes, that his spirit is alive and well a century later.

A chapter from a volume of essays edited by Paddy O'Sullivan and Stephen Coleman to celebrate the centenary of *News from Nowhere*, to be published by Green Books in 1990.



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*Brian Morris*

## **Sociobiology: An Alternative View**

Peter Gibson argued (in *The Raven* 6) that sociobiology offers a 'useful perspective' to anarchism. I shall present an alternative view, suggesting that, rather than being useful, sociobiology is in its denial or depreciation of human consciousness and human agency profoundly anti-libertarian, and useless and even dangerous to anarchism.

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'Sociobiology' suddenly burst upon the intellectual scene amid a fanfare of publicity in the spring of 1975, with the publication of *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* by the Harvard University biologist Edward O. Wilson, a scholar who until then was hardly known outside the narrow halls of academe, although four years earlier he had published an important book on *The Insect Societies*. *Sociobiology* was a massive tome of nearly 700 pages, aimed at providing a comprehensive synthesis of existing knowledge on the social behaviour of animals. Although well-illustrated and in coffee-table format, its subject-matter was hardly of the kind to appeal to the ordinary person in the street, but, anticipating that the book would be controversial, the publishers gave its maximum publicity. The book did indeed become the subject of controversy, and the author suddenly found himself a famous celebrity.

What caused the furore was that Wilson applied his theories — sociobiology, as a branch of evolutionary biology, was defined as 'the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behaviour' — not only to animal life, from the lower invertebrates to primates, but also to humans. And in the book, particularly in the final chapter entitled 'Man: From Sociobiology to Sociology', he argued that biological principles may be applied to the social sciences and may give a biological explanation for such human cultural manifestations as religion, warfare, ethics, competition, entrepreneurship, altruism, tribalism and genocide. Although the book was reviewed favourably in some journals, the book aroused what Antony Flew has described as 'an explosive outburst of fury and execration', for it was angrily attacked by geneticists and anthropologists on both intellectual and ideological grounds. Much of this criticism, as we shall see, has substance, but some was personal

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and unfair, for Wilson's ideas on biological determinism were falsely identified not only with reactionary ideas in general but with those of the most extreme form, even to the gas chambers in Nazi Germany. Wilson was clearly unprepared for the bitterness of the attacks, especially since many of his critics were colleagues. But his book also generated a good deal of intellectual excitement, and over the past decade sociobiology has become something of a sub-discipline with many adherents in psychology and anthropology as well as the social sciences more generally.

I shall not review the extensive literature on sociobiology here; I shall instead focus on the writings of Wilson himself, particularly on two texts — *On Human Nature* (1978), which is specifically on human sociobiology, and *Promethean Fire* (1983), co-authored with the physicist Charles J. Lumsden. The latter presents reflections on the origin of mind, presenting in a more readable form — and free from sophisticated-looking mathematical equations — the ideas earlier expressed in *Genes, Mind and Culture* (1981). I shall then review some of the key criticisms levelled at sociobiology — the latest of a long line of biological theories of culture. In fact, during the previous decade a whole series of books had been published which have been aptly called 'pop-ethology', all of which suggested a reductionist, biological explanation of human existence and culture — Robert Ardrey's *The Territorial Imperative* (1966), Konrad Lorenz's *On Aggression* (1966), Desmond Morris's *The Naked Ape* (1967), and Tiger and Fox's *The Imperial Animal* (1970). All these works propagate the myth of 'man the mighty hunter' and support the view of humans as innately aggressive, territorial, entrepreneurial and male-dominated.

Wilson's sociobiology is motivated by a desire to study human nature as part of the natural sciences, and to integrate these sciences with the social sciences and humanities. This intended integration is not in the form of a marriage but, as Edmund Leach has graphically expressed it, more in the nature of rape — a 'jargon-loaded take-over bid', a reductionist analysis that Wilson misleadingly assumes to be the traditional method of scientific analysis. Thus Wilson does not suggest or offer a needed integration of biology and the social sciences, but rather the uncompromising application of evolutionary biology to all aspects of human existence. Biology, he writes, 'is the key to human nature'.

Wilson's essential argument is contained in the following extract:

The heart of the genetic hypothesis is the proposition, derived in a straight line from neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory, that the traits of human nature were adaptive during the time that the human species evolved and that genes consequently spread through the population that predisposed their carriers to develop those traits. Adaptiveness means simply that if an individual displayed the traits

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he stood a greater chance of having his genes represented in the next generation than if he did not display these traits. The differential advantage among individuals in this strictest sense is called genetic fitness.

Such a postulate seems to imply a close relationship of 'fit' between genotype and phenotype, and to introduce a teleological element into the evolutionary process — individuals consciously or unconsciously seeking to propagate their genes or to ensure that their genes are transmitted to a future generation. Richard Dawkins in his equally controversial book *The Selfish Gene* (1976) introduced the notion of the 'selfish gene', the individual organism being seen as simply the receptacle whereby genes are preserved unaltered: 'We are survival machines, robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes.' Wilson is less graphic and mystifying than this, but his argument is basically the same, and has an essential circularity — gene, organism, mind and culture are almost functionally equivalent. Thus the possession of certain genes predisposes the individual to think and act in a certain way, such traits or social responses convey superior fitness for the individual (as these traits proved their adaptive worth in the by-gone days of hunter-gathering), and thus the genes themselves will gain an increase in the next generation. Variations would seem to arise from genetic mutation; the individual organism ceases to be the agent on which the forces of natural selection operate and a 'substantial fraction', as Wilson puts it, of human behavioural variation is based on genetic differences among individuals.

In essence, then, Wilson proposes a theory of 'genetic determinism', suggesting that human social behaviour is genetically determined. He disclaims, however, that this theory implies a rigid determinism, 'a single channel, running from a given set of genes to the corresponding single predestined pattern of behaviour'. And arguing against the kind of cultural determinism which he sees as inherent in much Marxism and social science, he writes: 'Each person is moulded by an interaction of his environment, especially his cultural environment, with the genes that affect social behaviour.' Elsewhere he similarly writes: 'The evidence is strong that almost all differences between human societies are based on learning and social conditioning rather than on heredity' — though he adds the proviso: 'yet perhaps not quite all'.

Wilson also concedes that virtually all the social changes that have occurred over the past several thousand years have been due to 'cultural rather than genetic evolution', and he suggests that cultural evolution, unlike biological evolution, is 'Lamarckian and very fast'. But what interests Wilson is the extent to which the hereditary qualities of hunter-gatherer existence have influenced the course of subsequent cultural evolution. As he writes about cultural change: 'The directions this

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change can take and its final products are constrained by the genetically influenced behavioural predispositions that constituted the earlier, simpler adaptations of preliterate human beings.'

He therefore speaks of contemporary social behaviour as 'hypertrophic outgrowths of the simpler features of human nature joined together into an irregular mosaic' — hypertrophy being the extreme growth of a pre-existing structure, like the tusk of an elephant. History, therefore, for Wilson, is guided by the biological evolution that preceded it, and the culture of each society 'travels along one or the other of a set of evolutionary trajectories whose full array is constrained by the genetic rules of human nature'. His whole approach is summed up in that oft-quoted phrase: 'The genes hold culture on a leash.'

To substantiate his theory Wilson draws on the literature, particularly from anthropology, to indicate how social phenomena can best be understood by relating them to genetic factors. His examples and strategies are somewhat ad hoc. Here are some samples.

Although we all have the capacity to become schizophrenic, some people have distinctive genes predisposing them to this condition.

Psychologists have shown that there are universal expressions of emotion.

Noam Chomsky and other linguists have indicated that there is a 'deep grammar' facilitating the rapid acquisition of language by all humans.

The inefficiency, brutality and inhumanity of slavery as a human institution, and the fact these institutions 'fail', suggest that they are contrary to human nature.

The fact that warfare has been endemic to all societies throughout history indicates that human beings are innately aggressive — we have not an instinct but a 'marked hereditary disposition'. Like the earlier ethologists, he suggests that human beings are ecologically akin to lions, wolves and hyenas.

Altruism (which would appear to be contrary to classical Darwinian theory — especially if it involves self-sacrifice) is ultimately self-serving, for it may lead to the continuance of the individuals' genetic capital if those supported are close kin. (Under the theory of kin selection this topic has generated a wealth of literature, which tends to be bedevilled with contradictions and anthropological naivety. See Marshall Sahlins's study *The Use and Abuse of Biology* (1976) for an important critique.)

Incest taboos are universal because sexual relations with close kin entail loss of genetic fitness.

Hypergamy, polygamy and infanticide may be explained in terms of an inherited disposition to maximise the number of offspring in competition with other members of the society. Even religion, tribalism and

racism make sense seen in the context that they confer genetic or biological advantage on their adherents. Racism, he seems to suggest, is just like the springtime singing of male birds.

Although, when discussing chimpanzees, Wilson stresses that these animals have a consciousness of self and the ability to communicate ideas, when discussing the human species in *On Human Nature* he is strangely silent on this subject. Other than suggesting that the mind may be explained as 'an epiphenomenon of the neuronal machinery of the brain' and that the self is a 'leading actor in this neural drama' (of memory and fantasy), Wilson has nothing to say on what is most obviously unique about the human subject — our language, our symbolic propensities and our developed sense of consciousness. Wilson's later writings had the specific aim of attempting to rectify the limitations of the earlier studies, namely to provide an adequate theory of the mind.

*Promethean Fire* is sub-titled 'Reflections on the Origin of Mind'. The authors argue against the notion that culture (or mind) is separate and independent from the physiology of the brain, like 'a layer on top of the biological mechanism capable of being explained only by means of unique procedures and laws', and suggest instead that the evolution of mind is due to a mechanism they call 'gene-culture co-evolution', which is both explicable in terms of physical laws and unique to the human species. This mechanism connotes an 'interaction in which culture is generated and shaped by biological imperatives while biological traits are simultaneously altered by genetic evolution in response to cultural innovation'. They thus see a 'tight linkage' between genetic evolution and cultural history. They also postulate what they term epigenetic rules. These are in the nature of universal constraints — certain cognitive mechanisms, universal expressions of emotion, phobic reactions, the tendency to avoid sex with close kin, patterns of mother-infant bonding are among those discussed. Such epigenetic rules, they suggest, cause individuals to adopt cultural choices that enable them to survive and reproduce more successfully. Over many generations these rules and the genes prescribing them will tend to increase in the population. Hence they suggest that culture affects genetic evolution. To facilitate analysis, they suggest we should consider culture atomistically, as consisting of specific elements or basic units, which they refer to as 'culturgens' — discrete entities which they clearly associate with specific genes. The preference for, for example, outbreeding they see as such a culturgen. They assume that human culture can be broken down into clusters of traits — an idea that anthropologists long ago abandoned.

Throughout the book they focus on the relation between gene and culture (the mind, human subjectivity and practical concerns are of



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secondary interest) and assume a 'complicated sequence' or 'circuit', a long 'chain of causation' stretching from genes to culture. As they put it, a proper understanding of mind and culture involves an understanding of gene-culture co-evolution — 'the great circuit of causation that runs from the genes to brain architecture and the epigenetic rules of mental development, then to the formation of culture, and finally back to the evolution of the genes through the operation of natural selection and other agents of evolution'. Hereditary and environmental factors, they conclude, cannot be separated. They admit that new forms of behaviour, the 'mutations' of culture, as they describe them, are invented by the mind, but which forms occur, they insist, 'is very much influenced by the genes'. They contrast their own approach with the view of human evolution that sees culture as a new emergent force which has replaced genetic evolution. Although appearing to stress the importance of culture and the human mind, consciousness has little function, and the whole analysis emphasises a genetic determinism: genes determine the configuration of brain cells, these determine the epigenetic rules, and the latter having been of survival value in prehistory, 'shape' or 'affect' which cultural innovations will be invented and adopted.



A number of criticisms have been made of Wilson's attempt to apply sociobiological principles to the human subject. They may be summarised as follows.

First, many anthropologists have been critical of Wilson's presentation of empirical data, which is selective and which tends to universalise what are essentially the values and attributes of a particular kind of society — one with a capitalist market economy. Wilson's depiction of hunter-gatherers as aggressive carnivores hardly matches the empirical evidence, and although he notes that not all societies are engaged in genocidal warfare and that meat forms only a minor proportion of the food intake of hunter-gatherers, he follows the early ethologists in seeing hunting and aggressive conflict as ubiquitous. Equally evident is Wilson's tendency to describe other cultures in terms that derive from his own culture; indeed his whole discourse is permeated with the values and ideas which C.B. MacPherson has described as 'possessive individualism'. Human beings are seen — universally — as being territorial and xenophobic, as being self-aggrandising and selfish creatures who are essentially concerned with the maximisation of their own reproductive fitness. Even the genes they possess are described as 'capital', and all co-operative aspects of human life are viewed as really a form of

selfishness. As with Thomas Hobbes, Wilson seems to equate the state of human nature with the ideology of capitalism. Sahlins has written perceptively on the reciprocal influences between bourgeois political economy and biological theory, and on the way the Hobbesian vision of humans in the natural state is almost the 'origin myth' of Western capitalism. Darwin, as Engels and others noted, applied the ideas of the classical economists like Malthus to biology, and in turn, social Darwinists like William Sumner transferred Darwin's teaching back to their original source — society. Wilson is engaged in a similar endeavour, though he moves back and forth between the biological and cultural domains, often using social concepts — such as caste or slavery — quite inappropriately in discussing insect life. Sahlins concludes that sociobiology is a form of scientific totemism which represents 'the modern encompassment of the sciences, both of culture and of life, by the dominant ideology of possessive individualism'. Other anthropologists have been critical of Wilson's 'astonishing ignorance' of non-Western cultures.

Second, many writers have been critical of the genetic determinism implicit and stressed by Wilson's brand of sociobiology. As Steven Rose and his colleagues suggest: 'The trouble with the simple deterministic model of gene control is that the manifest traits of an organism, its phenotype, are not in general determined by the genes in isolation but are a consequence of the interaction of genes and environment in development' (*Not in Our Genes*, 1984).

If this is the case with the phenotype, human behaviour and culture as phenotypical attributes would seem even less determined. There is also the erroneous suggestion that the gene rather than the individual organism is the unit of natural selection — as it is in classical Darwinian theory. Although there has been a long debate in biology whether the group or the individual is the unit of selection, the general consensus is that selection operates on the phenotype — on the organism and its behavioural responses. Genes are not selected, they are only replicated, as even Dawkins seems to suggest. But even the term 'selection' is an inappropriate one here, for as Flew noted in his *Darwinian Evolution* (1984), there is no agent as such doing the selecting. There is the question, however, whether sociobiologists are suggesting that only the universal features of human nature — the epigenetic rules — are determined by our genes, and thus whether these rules only constrain culture. If this is the case, they have yet to specify how the constraints operate, or whether specific culturgenes have in fact associated genes. Although jesting, O. J. Flanagan made an important point when he wrote in *The Science of Mind* (1984) that 'it would be odd to think that there was some specific gene or set of genes that underwrote car-driving and which

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therefore was decreasing in frequency because 50,000 Americans with the gene(s) died in automobile accidents every year'. If the genes of epigenetic rules are seemingly only constraints like gravity (to which human beings must also adapt), then they explain nothing. Wilson continually disclaims that all culture can be explained by genetic factors, and he is quoted as suggesting that perhaps only 10 per cent of social life can be laid to biology. But, as Sahlins has argued, this kind of factorial specification is meaningless, for all the organic and inorganic constraints on human life are in some sense always 100 per cent involved. The constitution of the human subject is in some ways like the baking of a cake — and this is just an analogy. To make a cake four elements are involved — the ingredients (genes), the oven (environment), the recipe (culture), and the cook (the human agent). It is quite misleading to attempt to express these elements as percentages in the process of baking a cake.

Finally, although Sahlins's critique is offered from the standpoint of the Boasian anthropological tradition — which is a limiting cultural determinist perspective — other anthropologists, while accepting the importance of biology in understanding the human subject, have found Wilson's approach too limiting. William Durham for example argues that Wilson, though claiming to offer a 'new synthesis', in fact presents a one-sided account and focuses entirely on the genetic-inheritance mechanism, thus ignoring the importance of the cultural mechanism as a mode of human adaptation. Durham postulates that human beings have two principal inheritance mechanisms, and that the cultural mechanism — cultural patterns and behavioural attributes that serve to enhance human adaptation and survival, and which are acquired through learning — is no less important than the biological one. The human capacity for culture allows human beings to modify aspects of phenotype without any concomitant genotypic changes, he suggests, and an adequate co-evolutionary theory must embrace both mechanisms. The process of 'cultural selection' functionally complements that of natural selection.

The problem with this theory, as with Wilson's, is that it takes what Flanagan has called a 'vertical' approach to human behaviour and implies that whatever cultural manifestations are in evidence have functional value for human survival. With Wilson there is the suggestion, earlier made by Marvin Harris, that the religiously sanctioned cannibalism of the Aztecs was an adaptive strategy, a cultural response to a genetically programmed need for protein. Any attempt to argue that every aspect of human culture is specifically adaptive, whether cannibalism or xenophobia, is essentially to justify things as they are. Many have seen Wilson's analyses as thus legitimising the status quo. The 'vertical'

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nature of Wilson's approach — the chain of causation from genes to culture — is limiting, for it ignores what Flanagan calls the 'horizontal' dimension of human life: the cultural patterns and behaviour that are embedded in complex social and historical contexts. Equally, the stress on gene-culture co-evolution mediated only by epigenetic universal rules inevitably tends to underestimate the transformational power of the mind, and its ability to mediate between higher and lower levels of organisation. Thus a response to Wilson's genetic determinism, with its reductive tendency, should not be an equally one-sided cultural determinism (as Sahlins appears to suggest), and a complete denial of biology, but rather an integrated understanding of the relationship between the biological and the social. 'Humanity cannot be cut adrift from its own biology, but neither is it enchained by it', as Rose and his colleagues put it.

Like B. F. Skinner's psychology, Wilson's sociobiology often has a prophetic quality and offers a technocratic solution to human problems. And though they express very contrasting viewpoints — one an extreme environmentalism, the other a form of biological determinism — Skinner and Wilson have much in common in their positivistic approach and in excluding or playing down what is perhaps fundamental about the human species — human consciousness and the structures of meaning that constitute human culture. Given their shared natural scientific standpoint, what is lacking in both Wilson and Skinner is any real sense of human history and human agency.



Sociobiology may serve to solve some of the problems about anarchism, as Peter Gibson suggests, but in its biological determinism and in its crude nature/culture dichotomy it hardly constitutes a *basis* for anarchist thought and politics. It seems to me that Murray Bookchin, whose social ecology is biologically informed, has far more theoretical substance and far more political relevance than the anthropological musings of right-wing zoologists like E. O. Wilson.

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*Don Alexander*

## **Anarchism and Human Nature\***

L. Susan Brown (*The Raven* 5) claims to be rejecting the theory of 'human nature', but she is in fact advancing a theory of her own — that human nature equals consciousness. This ignores the fact that much of human behaviour is determined by unconscious psychological structures which are only imperfectly subject to conscious analysis and manipulation. A woman who has been raped can analyse why she is afraid of sex, but mere analysis will not make the fear go away. Much of the shaping of the human character occurs before the individual is even conscious of what is happening to it; we set up defences in response to repressive socialisation; once established, they are often very difficult to remove. Research on hermaphrodites has shown that gender identity is firmly established by the age of three, and is largely unshakable — so much for people 'making' themselves!

The unconscious portion of the psyche manifests itself in many ways — in dreams and phobias, in myths and legends. As Wilhelm Reich argued, it is a potent force in shaping people's response to leaders and determining their overall political behaviour (see *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*). In some ways, Brown's perspective is a throwback to the nineteenth-century view that humans are primarily rational beings who need only to be convinced of the rationality of socialism to abandon capitalism. That they choose capitalism has a lot to do with their unconscious psychological make-up, and how this make-up has been manipulated.

If existence — i.e. self-consciousness — precedes essence, then how are we to understand the need of infants to touch and love, and to explore and experience external reality, or the innate creativity and curiosity of children not yet repressed by society's educational institutions? If humans have no nature, how are we to explain the fact that people languish in prison which, as infinitely adaptable creatures, should be a matter of indifference to them? How are we to explain the fact that humans, with very few exceptions, have always sought community — as is the case with all primates — and have always

\* The first two comments on L. Susan Brown's essay appeared in *Raven* 7 — Eds

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benefited from a sense of place (John Livingston has argued that the lack of such a sense causes various distortions in human behaviour).

In point of fact, existentialism — which purports to describe humans in general — could only have arisen in the era of capitalism when individuals become atomised and separated from their community integument. Most humans have not conceived of themselves as isolated beings existentially alone in a forbidding universe. Such a vision of human existence would have been unthinkable in another era. Moreover, most people have no known self-consciousness in the way existentialists conceive it. In most human societies, people have not thought consciously about their social relations — they have accepted them as given by God or Nature, and have never considered that things could be any other way.

Brown asks how, if oppressive social relations contravene human nature, they can have arisen in the first place. There are really three questions involved here. First, how did oppressive social relations — among them, the state and private property — become universalised? Quite simply, they were imposed on the majority of people by a few imperialistic cultures. The other two questions are what motivated people to become oppressors, and what motivated (and motivates) people to accept oppression? To begin with, the majority of oppressors have been men. As Brown herself has written, men, alienated from the processes of birthing and nurturing life, seek a false immortality in 'empire-building'. They are driven by a basic insecurity, a lack of groundedness that women, by contrast, have often possessed. As Erich Fromm wrote, 'Destructiveness . . . is . . . the alternative to creativeness. . . . If life's tendency to grow, to be lived, is thwarted, the energy thus blocked undergoes a process of change and is transformed into life-destructive energy.'

Humans do not exist in a vacuum, they exist in a context — in the context, most importantly, of the natural world. Although it may not have been the only way to have dealt with it, the way humans responded to the physical capability of women to birth and suckle children was to institute a sexual division of labour in which men did the hunting and fighting. This sexual division of labour, as Gayle Rubin says, transforms 'males and females into "men" and "women", each an incomplete half which can only find wholeness when united with the other'. Thus humans at birth are crippled into accepting the fulfilment of only half of their potentialities as humans. This core alienation virtually guarantees that people will be more or less susceptible to the temptations of either perpetrating or accepting oppression. Susan Griffin, among others, has argued that sexism, racism, national chauvinism, misogyny, and even hatred of nature can be attributed to

this self-alienation, in addition to the effects of institutionalised privilege. If people (especially men) were not filled with self-loathing, if they were not threatened by the existence of the 'other', in terms of what it represents to their own repressed selves, they would not feel a need to repress and dominate others.

Is this self-alienation natural? Is it something which people have willed? Are the degradation and dehumanisation of boot camp where people are taught to hate the 'enemy' and to equate fucking with killing on pain of being branded 'wimps' and 'sissies' something which people have made for themselves, or is it the horror of a system which they have been born into and are not necessarily in a position to transcend ideologically?

Is a concept of human nature incompatible with 'free will'? Not at all. Animals fulfil their needs by mostly instinctual (and some learned) patterns of behaviour. Human beings, however, can only fulfil their physical and psychic needs by conscious action which requires identifying the needs and devising strategies to fulfil them. Humans must set their own goals and priorities. They can only discover through exploration and experimentation how to live in harmony with their environment, and how to live in harmony with themselves. If people are allowed to harmonise their 'male' and 'female' potentialities, I believe that they will for the most part turn out to be happy, well-adjusted, creative, empathetic and constructive members of society. However, if they choose not to be, I am not in favour of branding them as 'abnormal' or discriminating against them in any way, so long as they do not violate the rights of others and contribute in some way to the collectivity of which they are a part.



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*Nickie Hallam & David Pepper*

## **Feminism, anarchism and ecology: some connections**

The literature of modern environmentalism is charged with references to feminist and anarchist ideas. 'Greens' like Jonathan Porritt, Fritjof Capra and Theodore Roszak strongly maintain that feminine principles are essential to an ecological perspective. Roszak and Murray Bookchin are two authors who argue openly that an ecologically sound society would be an anarchist one — while other writers who envisage what an ecological society would be like implicitly are drawing an anarchistic picture (compare, for example, E. Callenbach's *Ecotopia* with Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops*).

In what follows we explore links between *some* environmentalist thought, and *some* anarchist and feminist perspectives. We put it this way because it is important to remember that, while environmentalism, anarchism and feminism often converge, they also constitute quite broad and many-faceted social and political movements. Not all anarchists, feminist and environmentalists would see eye to eye; a Marxist feminist, for example, would repudiate much of what a liberal anarchist or a conservative Green would say.

Our approach also attempts to reflect the fact that eco-feminists and eco-anarchists often take a strongly subjective and personal 'experiential' approach to knowledge, rather than striving for a detached and objective perspective. Hence we start with an uncompromisingly personal statement which, we think, typifies eco-feminism. Then we go on to comment more analytically on this statement in order to describe areas of congruence with eco-anarchist and Green thinking.

Some readers may feel that this first part is less valuable through being subjective, others may think that what follows it illustrates the deficiencies of a 'detached' academic perspective. Eco-anarchism and eco-feminism, however, often mix and combine the two approaches, and we think that there is considerable merit and strength in this.

### **An eco-feminist's view**

Here is how an eco-feminist might define his or her view of how feminism relates to anarchist and green perspectives.



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Each of the concepts I later identify are central to my world view now, and certainly to my world of the future. Hence I have thought long and hard about how they connect, and feel that these connections are very much a part of my ideals. In thinking out what I perceive to be the important elements of feminism, I have discovered the value of learning and writing through experience rather than through theory of which we have no direct experience. We can sometimes learn as much or more about how the world works in this way rather than through theoretical simulations of how people tick. For this reason I have decided that a personal approach is more appropriate in defining my view.

To me, feminism is an awareness of how male and female conditioning to adopt roles of 'appropriate' behaviour makes the lives of many women and men miserable, frustrating and inadequate. It is also a commitment to resisting these roles, and a belief that as values have produced them they can, by the same token, redefine how it is possible and desirable for people to relate.

In the case of men this conditioning dictates the following messages: be tough, control yourself, your emotions are irrational, uncontrollable, unconstructive (all qualities usually attributed to women only). You must not be seen to be weak. By demonstrating emotion you make yourself susceptible to self-doubt — if you keep a grip on yourself you are immovable. You must control situations and people. If a woman friend is out of control you must calm her or invalidate her expression, so as to negate what you yourself would never do. The messengers are our families, contemporaries, the media, our schools — in fact, anywhere from whence the messages of the status quo arise. I believe that men are unable to live up to these inhuman demands because they do feel emotional, to the extent that they have no control at times, and in a more 'natural' state this would be recognised and seen as a strength — because balance between rational and emotional is, I believe, healthy; and that some men do recognise this and want desperately to achieve this balance.

They believe that it is these pressures from society in defining what is 'normal' that bottle up their emotions. This can and does lead to violent situations: the expression of anger, frustration and despair at being denied emotional expression by a society that condemns it in men, as unmasculine. Hence a variety of emotional disorders, ranging from loneliness to depression, and their expression through physical violence against women and abuse of the environment, are prevalent.

This conditioning process denies women's feelings any recognition at all. They are told to be gentle, loving, caring and open, but then informed that these characteristics have little real value in a world where to succeed requires nothing short of being a man or 'masculine' (i.e. traditionally speaking, unfeeling, at least outwardly). So men feel justified in trivialising or patronising the emotional expression of their womenfolk. Women can either react to situations as good mothers, daughters, wives — i.e. with love, care and selflessness — or, recognising that this is impossible all the time, react against it. Either way their identities are marginalised: neither is deemed useful (and this is how human qualities are valued in a basically competitive uncaring patriarchal world). This makes me very angry and is one of the most potent forms of oppression I experience.

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I believe that these conditioning processes are so deep-rooted that I frequently despair. However, I still feel that we must work towards balance in people — that is to say, between the emotional and rational, spontaneous and analytic, etc., to move away from years of gender roles that make some of us powerless. This is what feminism means to me.

This perspective links closely to our view of our relationship with nature — that balance that can come out of human/environment connectedness and the responsible use of the earth for the future. The eco-feminists have a gut feeling that life on earth is a beautiful, all-encompassing miracle. They share the pain in watching and being a part of the tearing apart of this life force that drives them to try to create a better world.

As a feminist, I am also an anarchist. For I believe that we cannot just change economic and social structures in collective struggle, but must also work for this through personal change. I suppose it's a belief that our collective action is really effective only when it arises from a complete personal willingness to work for it. So we need to feel the benefits of taking increased personal responsibility for our lives and those of others, through co-operation, so that our actions have a potential to be permanent.

This point arises out of a shared belief that power oppresses people, women and nature, whether through the leadership of governments, through the family (men over women — economically speaking) or through personal relationships (the reinforced 'masculine' characters of calm and sense overriding the undervalued emotional expression of women). Hence, both the feminism I have described and some forms of anarchism reject this notion of power in favour of the empowering of individuals, through consciousness-raising, to ensure that they do not get trodden on. For example, anarchists do not believe that the people with the 'right' ideas should gain political power, feminists (except liberal feminists) do not hope that women will rise into male positions of power. Instead they wish to replace patriarchy with a non-hierarchical, non-sexist society. The personal is the political.

### **Approaches to learning**

The above passage takes a clearly personal approach to the analysis of society and feminism, which is somewhat alien to the supposed drive for objectivity sometimes implied in academic knowledge. It is based on a recognition that personal experience is a valid learning resource, which is accessible to everyone, not just intellectual elites. The consciousness-raising or encounter group is an important feminist learning device, where women come together to exchange experiences and feelings in mutualism, in order to build their strength in terms of both theory and potential for action. Bookchin has reminded us of the affinity groups in pre-Franco Spain, where anarchists met in autonomous, communal and directly democratic association to provide initiative and

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heightened consciousness through intimate personalised learning — they are clearly analogous to these feminist groups referred to above, as they are to many Green groups.

Although Green writers are often less specific about the form of learning which they desire (having more to say about educational content), there is a tendency among activist members of the 'counter-culture', which is infused by Green ideas, to 'learn by doing' and experience, and to build their own theory rather than apply existing theory. Hence, 'skills and knowledge sharing' events often come high on the agenda of Green activists. In their study of communes, Abrams and McCulloch write of how the members of these counter-cultural groups regard academics and academicism as 'anti-life'. 'The aversion to theory in modern British communes is almost a matter of principle.' In a world where hierarchies are to be avoided at all costs, knowledge of academic theory as a prerequisite for education is regarded as a barrier to collective learning: those who know the theory might assume a superiority to those who do not, leading to hierarchies of teacher and taught, linked in one-way passive relationships, as is often the case in conventional education.

### **Balancing Yin and Yang**

The eco-feminist, a form of 'cultural' feminist, writes of how, through cultural conditioning, men have been pressured to play down the emotional, intuitional and irrational side of their natures, in favour of rational, analytic and 'objective' thought and action. This is so marked in our society that gender roles have been adopted which allot such characteristics as being *either* masculine (Yang) *or* feminine (Yin). And it is the 'masculine' characteristics which are said to be emphasised generally in society — through them both women and nature are tamed and marginalised, especially by the vehicle of science which is largely the domain of men. Capra believes that ecological crisis can be averted only by a general reassertion of 'feminine' values in the West. In so doing he echoes a persistent theme in Green writings, which is encountered frequently in journals such as *Green Line* or *Resurgence*. Here is an area of major fusing between Greens and feminists, who are frequently the same people. They articulate a basically romantic sentiment, whereby nature, as well as people, must be loved, spiritually and intuitively known, and revered instead of coldly and rationally exploited (this sentiment is called the 'bioethic'). Furthermore, in any ecologically sound society material standards of living in the industrialised world

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must fall, in accordance with a more frugal use of the planet's resources. As a form of 'compensation' to rich Westerners for material reductions in the standard of living, *quality of life* (a key phrase) must rise, and an important component of this is enhanced spirituality, emotional fulfilment and holistic thinking — and living in loving relationships with others and 'Mother Nature'. So the inhabitants of any ecological utopia will revel in spirituality and sensuality, and will value emotions and intuitively gained knowledge.

Many of these sentiments also tie in strongly with anarchism. Bookchin describes how an anarchist, like an ecologist, wants to see diversity and balance in all spheres of life. In a properly rounded society, rounded people will embrace the physical and the mental, sensuality and spirituality, spontaneity and self-discipline. Like the cultural feminist, anarchists and Greens believe that suppression of any side of our natures and the marginalisation of some of our instincts leads to actual and structural violence — it is not 'natural', and anarchists wish to see people in a more natural state. Both Roszak and Bookchin, who believe that anarchism is a 'precondition for the practice of ecological principles', regard natural behaviour as spontaneous, loyal, unhierarchical, egalitarian and co-operative (echoing Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*).

### **The view of social change**

Such an emphasis on reform of the values of the individual as the primary *political* route to radical social change is a keystone of Green and eco-feminist thinking about how to do away with an ecologically harmful and patriarchal society. The eco-feminist says that 'the personal is the political', and emphasises individual personal change — in values and practices — as a precondition for collective struggle. Roszak's anarchist-ecological view says: 'Persons come first before all collective fictions.' There is no shelter in revolutionary mass movements, and the counterculture's concern for the individual is 'beyond class struggle'. So what Roszak views as the conventional politics of socialism (extreme collectivism, where the individual is submerged and alienated) and conservatism (extreme individualism, where people's collective nature is ignored) are rejected.

This is a constant theme in British Green politics, and it is doggedly adhered to. It puts little faith in eliminating hierarchies by political change at the top of a hierarchy, and Marxists will say that it therefore ignores the 'material' factors which underpin economic and social structures. Instead, it puts faith in the potency of *ideas*, and actions by individuals based on such ideas, to achieve social change. It is therefore

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*idealist*, as opposed to *materialist*, as are elements of eco-feminism and eco-anarchism. But, for such anarchists and feminists particularly, there is a compelling reason for not seeking change through political structures and action in order to change the material 'base' of society. This is that such a route is seen to perpetuate existing power structures, or to replace them with others in which there are still hierarchy, inequality and social imbalance. Violence, confrontation and political-economic power cannot be used to create a society in which none of these things exist — far better to sidestep the power structures altogether and set up an alternative to which people might be naturally attracted.

Many Greens have a rather stereotyped view of Communism and Marxism, and so to them the outcome of a socialist revolution would be a state-controlled society, in which alienation of people from each other and nature would persist.

### **Individuals, the collective and the state**

However, in emphasising the liberal philosophy of individualism, neither Greens, eco-feminists, nor mutualist or pacifist anarchists, reject the collective. As the cultural feminist puts it, when individuals are free from alienating power structures, they feel 'increased responsibility' for their lives. This (apparently Thatcher-esque) sentiment is also very anarchist and Green. Roszak argues that 'personhood' (individualism) involves others, and that full realisation of the self can only come about through relating fully to others — in an extended rather than a nuclear family, living and working together in mutual aid (c.f. Kropotkin, and also Godwin and Proudhon).

George Woodcock sums up the anarchist perspective on this when he says that in most modern societies responsibility is in 'urgent danger' of being strangled by paternalistic authority — and the feminist would add 'patriarchal' authority. The state is evil, and community life should not be politically organised but should come about through free contractual agreements between individuals. Most Greens do not intend to do away with the state entirely, but there is a strong emphasis on decentralisation in nearly all aspects of social and economic life, with the devolution of power to the regions, districts and communities. Here is a cautious form of anarchism. It is more spontaneously and fully expressed in that countercultural annexe to the Green movement in Britain, the communes movement. Here, an extreme individualism is part of an overwhelming search for *self*-identity, but this is balanced by a strong sense that self-fulfilment comes only by relating to others in a context without leaders, hierarchy or state apparatus.

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### Nature and holism

The eco-feminist expresses a love of, and an anxious concern for, all life on earth, and its beauty and miraculousness. The 'rape' of the planet by industrialism, capitalism and consumerism, facilitated by science and high technology, is a 'tearing apart of the life force' — a particularly debasing assault on Gaia or Mother Nature. It causes pain for those who want to cherish all life — and women's traditional nurturing role might make them particularly sensitive to the destruction of life: hence some feminists claim that women are inherently 'more concerned with ecology and peace and less with sexuality than men'.

Indeed, a sense of 'wholeness' or oneness with the rest of nature is often regarded as a 'feminine' characteristic by Greens. Just about all mainstream Green philosophy emphasises the perceived interconnectedness of humans and the rest of nature. New Age mysticism, Eastern mysticism, romanticism, paganism, new physics, systems theory — all of these holistic ways of thinking are enthusiastically embraced by the Green movement as ways to express its message that society must break with the world view of classical science that puts 'man' as separate from 'nature'. It is a central tenet of most radical environmentalism, or ecocentrism.

And it is latent in anarchism. Woodcock's description of the anarchist's position about where humans belong in the scheme of things shows that this view is holistic too, and places humans firmly within nature. It is a 'modified version of the view of the natural world that was celebrated in the Renaissance and especially in the eighteenth century proceeding from the humblest form of life to Godhead . . . Everything . . . had its place in the order of being, and if it followed its own nature, all would be well. But let any species break the chain by departing from nature, and disaster would ensue.' Woodcock adds: 'It was a doctrine that would appeal to a modern ecologist.' This is true, although it might be a conservative or liberal ecologist rather than a socialist red-green. For the last shies away from the idea that nature, in some objective form, does and must form the model for human society (because, following Marxist thought, red-greens see 'nature' as essentially socially constructed, so what it is varies from culture to culture and time to time).

So, like most Greens, anarchists may believe in a natural order of society, of which humans are a part. The essential conservatism of this is tempered by the anarchist's particular view of what this order is. There are two political interpretations of the Great Chain of Being. On the one hand, it may be seen as a hierarchy, putting humans over and above the rest of nature. On the other, since it is a chain, then each

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link is of equal importance to the strength of the whole. The non-hierarchical view is decidedly anarchistic, together with the idea that although human societies should be 'natural', nature is not competitive, aggressive and 'red in tooth and claw' — as social Darwinists would have us believe — but is co-operative and caring, where individuals and species exhibit strong mutualism.

### **Non-hierarchical organisation**

Eco-feminists and anarchists express a similar revulsion from hierarchical relationships, personal or in the wider society, which are seen as relationships where power and control are exerted by some people over others. This is regarded as the basis of patriarchy, capitalism, state-dominated communism, conventional education and indeed all the institutions of 'advanced' societies, including that of the nuclear family. Removing or sidestepping hierarchy therefore becomes the cornerstone of anarchism, as it is a key to cultural feminism (particularly in respect of patriarchal hierarchies). Similarly, Greens may attack the notion of hierarchy, especially as expressed in our current relationship to nature.

As indicated above, hierarchical relationships are seen to go deeper than capitalism, and the achievement of socialism is not of itself regarded as a remedy. The tendency to dominate and control others is thought to be a wider cultural phenomenon than would result specifically from political-economic structures. The manifestations of this anarchistic desire to 'replace patriarchy with a non-hierarchical, non-sexist society' and 'not to control situations and in doing so, people' are seen in women's groups. Women in the peace movement have especially resisted the idea of leadership and led, elected or assumed spokeswoman or 'specialists' to convey their message of peace and anti-militarism. Their anarchism also extends to a strong sense of mutualism.

Greens, by and large, have not been so conspicuously anarchic, except, perhaps, for those who are part of the communes movement. While Friends of the Earth do have a strong commitment to local group autonomy, local democratically organised action and work through the local community, on the other hand both they and Greenpeace make a point of creating and cultivating hierarchies of expertise to combat the technocratic industrial society. There are unofficial media gurus like Jonathan Porritt or David Bellamy, and intellectual gurus galore — Arne Ness, Fritjof Capra and Paul Erlich, for example. But both the British and German Green Parties have agonised over the contradiction between their professed beliefs and the necessity for political organisation, with experts, spokespeople and experienced leaders. In Germany,

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especially, a rift was created when, after an agreed period of a few years, the time came for leaders like Petra Kelly (a feminist Green) to stand down and assume anonymity. Some argued that for them to do so would waste years of effort spent in creating people with charisma and savoir-faire, which made them a powerful political influence outside the Green Party, and therefore more able to extend Green ideas.

### **Making connections**

Clearly there are connections between anarchism and the feminist and ecology movements in the mainstream of cultural feminism and Green environmentalism. This is not to say that members of these modern movements always recognise their debt to anarchism or have a clear sense of what anarchism involves. However, as teachers we are convinced that there is value in attempting to see the links and correlations between these movements — this value is educational, among other things. For if they are regarded by schoolchildren and students as disparate and unconnected, and not facets of a wider movement for social change, then the potential to think holistically about society and history, and to identify broader patterns of injustice and the quest to eliminate it, will have been passed by. Following from this, the true nature and extent of contemporary pressures for social change in a similar direction may go unappreciated, without conscious attempts by teachers to link apparently discreet pressure groups. If this is allowed to happen then the illusion created by a minority of Thatcherites — that their world view is a majority and 'sensible' one in the face of divided and incoherent opposition — will continue to be successfully transposed from the wider society to the classroom.

### **Acknowledgement**

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*Harold Barclay*

## **Male/female relations and the anthropological record**

I must first preface my remarks with a brief note on sexual bias and the anthropological record. Most anthropological research until twenty or so years ago was the product of men. There is nothing inherently wrong with male researchers, but in these days it should hardly require emphasising that male researchers come from a male-dominant society and thus are so imbued with a male bias towards the world that most of them have been totally oblivious of it and the insidious ways in which it can distort observations. Anthropologists have long recognised the importance of distortions induced by ethnocentrism — racial bias. Only recently have they become more aware of sexual bias. Often implicit in much anthropological research has been the notion that what men do is somehow more important than what women do: men wheel and deal in the realm of community politics, while women only stay at home and babysit.

In human societies there exists a sub-culture identified with each sex. The male anthropologist has then had best access to that of his own sex and has invariably presented it as the culture of the whole society. I believe it is safe to suggest that a woman anthropologist can work more freely and with greater success among the men in a given society than a male anthropologist might among the women. Certainly it is commendable to have a man and a woman researcher in the same community. In sum, the situation is improving as anthropologists become more fully conscious of the problem and as more women enter the discipline. In the latter regard, a goodly proportion of anthropologists are today women, and in the United States it seems that half or more are female.

The remainder of this essay will address some of the contradictions of anthropology to the matter of gender relations. At the same time I should like to speak to certain related ideas which have been raised by some of those in the feminist movement — ideas which might be called matriarchal myths.

I heartily concur with the view that humanity should be mobilised to counteract domination wherever and however it arises. Too often, however, feminism as a social movement has veered too closely to being anti-male and expressing a kind of chauvinism which is, as the prospec-

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tus states, a mirror image of male domination. This chauvinism has drawn upon certain ideas from ethnology and archaeology and endorses notions of female priority and pre-eminence. It is appropriate, therefore, to commence this review with a critique of these kinds of argument.

### Female divinities

There seems to have been a slight revival of ideas which apparently have their roots in J. J. Bachofen's book *Das Mutterrecht* (1861). These ideas include the view that the more archaic forms of religion centre on female divinities. Recently I noticed a new book (whose title I neglected to note down) which argues that the oldest religion was one orientated around female divinities. Now it is clearly true that in later Upper Palaeolithic times in Europe (about 10,000 years ago) there were numerous female figurines often called 'Venuses'. These are characteristically featureless in the face, but emphasise large breasts and bellies. Hence they have been interpreted as fertility objects and as evidence of a religious cult in which woman, symbolising fertility, was the central object of worship. For some it appears that the 'Venuses' are evidence of a universal evolutionary sequence from female divinities who were later usurped by male divinities. This presumably parallels a social transformation from matriarchy to patriarchy. We, however, have no way of knowing anything about the specific content of the ideology and ritual of such early Venus cults or about their place in the total religious system of the time. Additionally, such cults had a limited geographical distribution. They apparently did not exist in Africa or Asia. What may be more important is that they do not represent the earliest form of religious expression. Presently the archaeological record on religion takes us back to the Neanderthals, now agreed to have been an archaic race of the species *Homo sapiens* and to have lived from approximately 100,000 to 40,000 years ago. Very little is known of the religious beliefs of these people, but there is no indication of female divinities or the worship of female in any form. It is known that the dead were buried according to customary practice, sometimes with objects such as tools, bear skulls or horns. Apparently some Neanderthals practiced ceremonial cannibalism. Numerous bear skulls and their arrangement at several sites suggest a widespread bear cult.

What we may properly conclude on this topic is what has long been recognised: males have no monopoly on divine status. There have been and there remain around the world both male and female divinities. Patrilineal and patriarchal societies give priority of place to male gods. But no one can say that goddess worship is either the oldest religion or

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even an older religion than god worship. A universal evolutionary sequence from a female-orientated religion to a male-orientated one is as much a myth as one which holds to an original universal stage of matriarchy, which is the next issue I wish to consider.

### **Matriarchy and matriliney**

A persistent thesis has been that matriliney is the oldest form of human social organisation. This is a slight variation on the nineteenth-century view, especially expounded by Bachofen, that the original stage of human society was 'promiscuity' followed by matriliney and then by patriliney. Advocates of the priority of matriliney invariably confuse it with matriarchy. Matriliney means only the reckoning of descent through a line of females and the inheritance of rights and property through that line. Matriarchy means female domination: the rule of women. Those who equate matriliney with matriarchy and then proceed to argue that this is somehow a more original form of human social organisation since usurped by men are in essence looking back nostalgically at a 'dream time' when women presumably ruled men. In other words this view too frequently betrays a sexist, anti-male bias.

There is no evidence that matriarchy — the rule of women — has ever existed anywhere. Certainly there are no matriarchies among known matrilineal societies, and those who tend to equate the two must have little real appreciation of how matrilineal societies operate. In those matrilineal societies in which the residence pattern on marriage requires the groom to live in the house of his bride's mother (matrilocal residence), an equality between the sexes is approached. Under these residential conditions the married males are always outsiders, while the females are a close-knit group of kin settled in their own home. They acquire a kind of command by prior right and occupancy. This does not mean that women will necessarily prevail over men in all areas of social life. It is difficult to generalise for all matrilineal-matrilocal societies, but it does appear that more often than not women have the upper hand within the household and the matrilineage, while in affairs of the community at large and of major religious matters matrilineally related men are most influential.

Of all matrilineal-matrilocal societies, the Iroquois Indians of New York State in the United States were probably the most egalitarian in sexual relations.

A husband has no authority over his wife. One woman, urged by her spouse

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to do something against her will, replied: 'I am my own mistress. I do what I choose, and do thou what thou chooseth.' The wife enjoys strictly independent property rights. She alone exercises authority over the children. She is the mistress of the apartment in the long house occupied by the family. The husband always goes to live with his wife, and he is present in the home only on sufferance. (George Murdock, *Our Primitive Contemporaries*, 1934.)

An Iroquois matrilineage which included the matrilineally related females in a single 'long house' was administered by a senior female in the group. A number of these lineages constituted a clan, which in turn was under a body of chiefs and a council upon which both men and women sat. Each of the five Iroquois tribes had its council of chiefs drawn from the member clans, and for all the Iroquois there was a supreme council of fifty chiefs. These individuals were always men, but they were nominated by an assembly of women. Additionally, both men and women were allowed to participate in discussions with the chiefs at both the tribal and all-Iroquois council meetings.

With the Iroquois it should be noted how most local levels of social integration — the family and the matrilineage — are controlled more by women. These institutions come closest to matriarchy. But with social units encompassing these smaller units and with the ultimate integrative institution of the whole society, men become pre-eminent. A majority of the remaining matrilineal-matrilocal societies have not been so sexually egalitarian as the Iroquois.

A considerable number of matrilineal societies do not practise matrilocal residence. Murdock observed that of 27 matrilineal societies he recorded, thirteen had matrilocal residence while six had avunculocal residence (where the married couple lives with the groom's mother's brother). Six others were patrilocal, and two were matri-patrilocal (where matrilocal residence for a short initial period is followed by permanent patrilocal residence). Thus in more than half the cases of matrilineal residence is associated with a male-orientated household.

This suggests that matrilineality may not be a highly stable form of social organisation, since while descent is through the females there is pressure on the part of the males to extend their influence. Indeed, avunculocal residence is one resolution to the dialectical opposition between matrilineality and masculinity, since it preserves the former while ensuring the dominance of a group of males related through females. A great number, if not a majority, of societies in the so-called matrilineal belt of south central Africa are avunculocal. This allows for a group of matrilineally related males to remain in the maternal village and so maintain close surveillance over the farm lands owned by the matrilineal group.

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Where patrilocal residence — or, for that matter, neolocal residence — exists in conjunction with matrilineal descent, the household comes under the control of men who are not matrilineally related. Such a situation often leads to a transformation to a bilateral non-lineal or patrilineal mode of descent reckoning.

In sum, a matrilineal society may provide greater equality between males and females, especially where it practises matrilocal residence. The importance of the woman's role is most marked and sometimes is characterised by female pre-eminence at the most local levels of social integration. For more all-encompassing levels men come more to the fore and tend to prevail. And for matrilineal societies which practise other forms of residence patterns these also bring men into pre-eminence.

It would be my hypothesis, however, that sexual asymmetry is less pronounced in those societies which have no unilateral principle of descent and are bilateral. Pygmy society in the African tropical rain forest is noticeable for its egalitarian and anarchic social organisation. There is no unilineal descent system, and not much property either. Women participate freely in community debate as equals with men and clearly show equality with their husbands in the management of the household. Even modern Western societies which are non-lineal as well, but where property is of paramount significance, tolerate more sexual equality today than do most matrilineal societies.

Is matrilineality the oldest form of human social organisation, and did it everywhere precede patrilineality? The nineteenth-century evolutionary argument held that all societies evolved from an original state of promiscuity, followed by a condition of universal matrilineality and eventually the ultimate victory of the male in patrilineality. In the present state of knowledge there is no evidence for a stage of promiscuity within the history of human or human-like populations possessing culture. For all cultures for which there is any record there have been mechanisms of social control. Sex and kinship relations especially have been matters of careful definition, even though some people's definitions might appear promiscuous to others. Matrilineality seems to have arisen in conjunction with the rise of horticulture as a major source of subsistence. This would have been about 10,000 or 12,000 years ago. In all likelihood the earliest gardeners were women, transferring their older practice of seed and plant gathering to garden activity once domesticated plants were adopted. In such a situation gardens would pass from mother to daughter and there would be matrilineal descent, particularly as the gardens became an increasingly important source of sustenance. And, as gardens became more important, matrilocal residence would become more wide-

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spread since the family household should be centred with the main source of wealth — the woman's garden. However, as this horticulture was transformed into agriculture, where there is extensive cultivation of permanent fields with the use of draft animals and where large populations are sustained totally by an agricultural mode of production, the role of men became more important. Men usurped the females, coming to command the fields and instituting patriliney. However, it cannot be said that this scenario is universally true. Many societies were never matrilineal at all, and not a few have been patrilineal and later transformed to matriliney.

Older than any form of dependence on domesticated plants or animals is the hunting-gathering mode of production which characterised human societies for a couple of million years and survived until most recently in a few isolated parts of the globe. The typical pattern of social organisation of such societies is what has been called the patrilocal band. This is a small group of between ten and fifty individuals who move about together and exploit a common territory. The group is centred on a core of related males, mostly fathers and sons. It is called patrilocal because the typical practice is for a man to remain in the band of his father and bring his wife to it from another band. This, it is suggested, arises because for whatever reason hunting is considered of primary importance and a man, who is the hunter raised within a certain territory would know it best and so be more successful in it than in some strange location.

Despite this paternal emphasis, such societies are not patrilineal. As in modern Western society, they were non-lineal. Neither my father's kin nor my mother's kin achieves a monopoly status. It is bilateral since both sides of the family are seen as approximately the same. Thus, kinship terms of reference are the same for both sides of the family — 'uncle' refers to both father's brother and mother's brother, and 'aunt' refers to both father's sister and mother's sister, and 'cousin' refers to any offspring of these (not all hunting-gatherers had this kind of terminology; this is an *example* of bilaterality with common occurrence).

From what we know of hunting-gathering societies, it would appear that the oldest form of human social organisation is some kind of non-lineal, bilateral band organisation. At the same time it is interesting to note that the non-lineal kin system of Western societies arose out of an older patrilineal system during the first millennium of the Christian era.

Perhaps the various transformations in social organisation may be summarised in the following diagram:

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	original form	later transformations
	<i>matrilineal</i>	<i>patrilineal</i> <i>non-lineal</i>
<i>non-lineal</i>	<i>patrilineal</i>	<i>matrilineal</i> <i>non-lineal</i>
	<i>non-lineal</i>	<i>matrilineal</i> <i>patrilineal</i>

### Patriarchy and patriliney

The majority of people in the world today live in patrilineal patriarchal style societies (China, South West Asia, most of India, most of Africa and much of South East Asia). Such societies are particularly associated with agriculture, a rural/urban dichotomy, the centralised state, social classes and hierarchical religious systems — in fact practically all the forms of domination are fitted together under one roof. How this situation came to exist, and especially how it arose out of an original much more egalitarian society, is a complex question which will undoubtedly never be fully answered. Friedrich Engels, of course, blames the enormous increase in the significance of private property, although it is not exactly clear how we get from a society with an egalitarian ethos to one of domination and property. To help explain this process others have stressed the increasing role in simpler, more egalitarian societies of important men as centres of the redistribution of goods — as, for example, the ‘Big Men’ in New Guinea or the ‘chiefs’ among potlatching West Coast American Indians. At any rate, it does not seem to be a common process that, as an activity acquires more central economic and political significance, it comes under male control.

This seems to be what happened with the expansion of horticultural activity into agriculture. While there are both matrilineal and patrilineal horticultural societies, there are very few matrilineal agricultural societies. In the vast majority of agricultural societies men prevail, and agricultural societies involve considerable property in land, livestock and implements. In the Western world today it seems that many sports at the amateur level are shared by members of both sexes, but when they become professional money-making operations, they become a male monopoly. One might wonder whether the ultimate reason for such a process — if it is a process — must go back to human dimorphism and its implications. Men are bigger and more muscular than women,



and child-bearing and nursing limit a woman's activities outside the home, whereas men are far less curtailed.

I have tried to show that there is a wide variation in the relations between the sexes in matrilineal societies. Similarly, the extent of male domination in patrilineal societies varies considerably. As with matrilineal societies, so in the patrilineal ones, women have more influence in the family group than they do in the community or society at large. I believe that as men have not fairly gauged the role of women in many societies, so also feminists have unfairly evaluated it in some patrilineal societies. Muslim societies have been frequent objects of castigation for their treatment of females. Muslim society is obviously a male-dominant world and, despite what Muslim modernists might say, the teaching of Islam is that men and women are inherently unequal. Men are above women. At the same time in its early days Islam was a liberalising force for women in Arabia as well as elsewhere, and many women were active in public affairs. Soon however, the movement became frozen and static. Among other things, Muslims came to adopt the veil from Byzantine upper classes where it was a sign that the family was so wealthy that women did not have to work. Yet there is no regulation in Islam that women must be veiled. Indeed, Islamic rules gave greater freedom in many areas of life to women than they enjoyed in much of the Western world down to the early twentieth century. For instance, Islamic law provides that a woman may own and manage property independently of her spouse, which was not the case in most of the West until very recent times. Also in Islamic society women on marriage do not adopt their husband's name but retain their own. Finally, in Muslim society women have been active operators behind the scenes and in the close family circle have exerted great influence. In the Egyptian peasant village the senior woman in the family is in full control of the kitchen, a situation which can have extremely widespread repercussions, since male prestige is based heavily upon the demonstration of generosity and hospitality, symbolised most often in food.

### **The division of labour**

The anthropological literature has long recognised the arbitrary nature of the sexual division of labour in different societies, the point being that there are actually only two jobs which are determined by sex: child-bearing and breast-feeding. Other activities are determined by local cultural tradition. Yet hunting, feuding and warfare seem to be almost exclusively male domains. There is recent evidence to suggest that prolonged, vigorous physical activity in women inhibits fertility and

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thus, it is argued, those societies which curtailed such activity in women would produce more offspring and have a higher likelihood of survival. Depending on the cultural milieu, men in one society may be seen as the only individuals to make pots, while in another this is a job appropriate only for women. The same is true for basket-making or house building or other crafts. It is no more 'natural' for women to be nurses or office secretaries than it is for men to be dentists or carpenters.

In recent years anthropological investigations have given greater recognition to the contribution of women in various societies. This is in part because more women have become involved in research so that one is given a different perspective from the traditional male's eye view. It was once thought that man the hunter provided the great bulk of the food for hunting-gathering communities. Now it is recognised that the hunting activity outside the Arctic regions provides less than half of the food requirements and woman's foraging the bulk of it. Studies show as well that among horticultural and agricultural people women often contribute more than their share of the physical labour.

In an interesting book, *On Becoming Human* (1981), Nancy Makepeace Tanner convincingly argues a crucial role for women in the early evolution of our species. She holds that the 'key innovation' for the transition from a pongid (ape-like) to a hominid (man-like) population was perhaps the sharing of food between mother and offspring. Food-sharing and nursing were also the crucial elements in the survival of offspring. The most effective food-gatherer was a woman who thus could better feed herself and her young, could live longer, bear more children and with a higher survival rate. In so doing she would make a major — if not the major — contribution towards the improvement of the stock.

We are prone to attribute technological innovations to men, but Tanner believes the invention of early gathering technology — tools and containers for acquiring and processing seeds, nuts, roots, fruit, and leaves — must have been achieved by women. They were the gatherers and, additionally, the nutritional stress of child-rearing and nursing may have added a spur to such invention. I think too that it is likely that women made the major contribution in the domestication of plants and played a considerable role in animal domestication. As the chief seed-gatherers women would have the best opportunities for comprehending principles of plant procreation. As the ones most identified with nurturing, women would have played a major part in tending and caring for young tamed animals and so fostering the domestication process.

Among peasant societies women are frequently portrayed as being immersed in drudgery. This, however, is the general condition of

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peasant life for both men and women. Nevertheless, the employment of draft animals by peasants and others has tended to alleviate the woman's lot. Much of the carrying and pulling by women is taken over by draft animals and men. The latter have invariably been the teamsters of the world, and thus work with oxen or horses has been under male direction.

Another interesting case of 'women's liberation' brought about through the adoption of a domesticated animal is that of the Plains Indians, the buffalo hunters of North America. In the days before the adoption of the horse, women carried most of the belongings on a change of campsite and, of course, everyone walked. With the acquisition of the horse it became the beast of burden as well as providing everyone with a ride.

I will conclude this section with a final note of irony. The Muslim practice of veiling and of secluding women, as well as the Chinese practice of foot-binding, inhibit labour in the fields. Indeed, a strict enforcement of veiling and seclusion has freed women from such work.

### Female mutilation

In the past decade or so feminists have discovered that in various places around the world — especially in parts of Africa — women are subjected to bodily mutilations. Particularly disturbing to them are those involving the sexual organs. The most drastic of these operations is infibulation. Less traumatic is clitoridectomy. Some years ago I published a book on my investigations of a village in the northern Sudan, *Buurri al Lamaab: A Suburban Village in the Sudan* (1984). Much to my surprise I now find that perhaps its only notoriety is derived from the few pages I devoted to a description of infibulation. Obviously an objective evaluation of this operation would only show that it produces totally unnecessary pain and trauma. It certainly achieves nothing of what its advocates allege, and even the alleged ends are unacceptable. Yet I cannot help but question those who make a single-minded crusade to wipe out infibulation (their inevitable solution is to have the state suppress it). These individuals usually see the operation *in vacuo*, as not being integrally tied up with other aspects of the social life. They see it as well as a form of torture imposed upon women by a dominant and sadistic class of old men. Actually infibulation is a ritual for acceptance into the female society, and elderly grandmothers are among its chief advocates. Like any other long-established practice, merely to attempt to extricate the mutilation alone may create considerable social repercussions producing more stress than peace. It is not only the mutilation which

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must disappear, but a host of related ideas as well, and this can only be accomplished by a long process of education.

It is interesting that sexual mutilations are so much stressed when in Africa there are innumerable other forms as well: scarification of the face, the back, the chest, knocking out teeth, stretching the neck, and stretching the lips by use of enormous lip plugs. And several of these forms of mutilation, including sexual mutilations, are performed on men as well as women. In a great many societies mutilation rites apply only to men and not to females. In some areas male sexual mutilation can be as traumatic as infibulation for a girl. Thus, there is the practice of the circumcision of adolescent boys, and there are cases where this means flaying the penis. Tribes of Australian aboriginals have not only practised circumcision of adolescent boys, but sub-incision and even removal of a testicle. Happily many of these forms of mutilation are dying out, as also infibulation and circumcision of females is on the decline in many parts of Africa. It may give cause for thought to consider that if all the various mutilations concocted by humankind were performed on a single living human body its appearance, at least to us, would be more like a hacked up piece of meat. Those who anguish only over female sexual mutilation practices would be taken more seriously if they anguished as well over all forms of mutilation, including those performed upon males.

### **Inborn sexual attributes**

A common Western notion is that men are by their inherent nature dominant and aggressive, competitive and rational; by contrast women are alleged to be retiring, passive and emotional. Comparative ethnography demonstrates that these qualities are heavily influenced by differing cultural values. No doubt in a majority of cultures men are considered properly more dominant and aggressive. Yet there are peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa and New Guinea, for example, among whom women are quite aggressive. There are others such as Hutterites, Amish or some Pueblo Indians, who strongly discourage aggressive behaviour in both sexes. In Iran it is the men who are expected to be emotional and to weep in public; women should be more stoical and self-controlled. I do not suggest that all these qualities are entirely culturally determined — that is, learned. Men and women *are* biologically different, and the behaviour of males among mammalian species does differ from that of females. 'Unisex' may be so for amoeba, but it isn't for humans and other mammals. The peculiarity of the human species, however, is that what is biologically given is so often of less

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importance than the ability of humans to mould and alter behaviour through the cultural process.

### **Conclusion**

The anthropological record suggests that there are certain social and cultural forms which are more compatible with sexual equality. The most favourable mode of subsistence would be either horticultural or hunting-gathering. Among other things, there is in this context less opportunity for property accumulation and the creation therefore of social differences in power and wealth. Reciprocity, which reinforces the concept of equality, is a central mechanism for economic distribution. Markets and redistribution tend to be less important, and the less their importance the greater likelihood for more equality.

The appropriate society would have either a non-linear bilateral or a matrilineal-matrilineal form of kinship organisation. Most political milieux which approach sexual equality are acephalous and stateless. Others may be organised around elected councils. It must be borne in mind that none of these factors alone means sexual equality, nor is the presence of all of them in one society any guarantee. Exceptions are significant. There are matrilineal societies where sexual asymmetry is more pronounced than in some patrilineal societies. Australian forager societies have been noted for their dominance by elder males. Finally, these remarks are not to be taken as advocacy of one or another of these social patterns. I do not support a return to a hunting-gathering or a horticultural way of life.

It might be suggested that those societies which downplay warfare and feuding would also tend towards sexual equality, since this would mean a de-emphasis of the macho male aggressive image. On the other hand, let us recall that the Iroquois were one of the most sexually egalitarian societies. They were hardly pacifists; indeed, they acquired no small reputation for their refinement of techniques for the torture of war prisoners.

Sexual equality does not correlate with patriliney, and the history of state organisation indicates the clear association of that institution with male dominance. The contemporary state in the Western world is somewhat of an anomaly, in that women have been achieving some improvement in their status within it and perhaps in spite of it. One may suspect that within the present circle of power-brokers the sexual factor is no longer perceived as that important. We know that a Margaret Thatcher can be as warlike and aggressive as a Ronald Reagan. In other words, reflecting on earlier remarks above, the female of the species is not

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inherently passive and retiring. She can and will learn and employ the tricks of state management as readily as her male counterpart. Further current events indicate that state domination is not merely some aspect of a monster conspiracy for male domination. State systems are adaptable — one reason for their good survival record — and if they can be made to prosper with female participation and direction we are learning that this makes no difference. The state is more important than the sex.

In the religious-ideological realm Christianity, Islam and Judaism have long been incompatible with sexual equality. In the past decade, however, certain Protestant denominations of the non-‘fundamentalist’ variety have assumed the cause of women’s equality. This suggests that these male-dominated religions can be altered. As with the state and sex, so with religion, when it is a matter of survival of the religious system or of male dominance in that system, it is the latter which will give way.

I have tried to suggest that the female contribution to human society has been underestimated. In stressing economic contributions I have slighted the women’s role in other areas of life. The often subtle influence of the female in communal decision-making and family affairs is more fully recognised. Of course, we shall never know what the full contribution of the female might have been to human society, since it has been so widely inhibited. But at the same time, we shall never know what the contribution of millions of peasants and other exploited people around the world might have been either, and for similar reasons. This gets back to my early observation on this theme: that it is domination in all its forms which is the adversary. Feminists who direct their energy and hostility against males are not attacking the enemy. The enemy includes all those — male and female alike — who perpetuate systems of oppression.

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*Nicolas Walter***C. W. Daniel: The Odd Man**

C. W. Daniel is one of the forgotten odd men out of the twentieth century. He is forgotten because he didn't ever do or say anything particularly dramatic, or follow any powerful person or join any powerful party, or belong to any of the favoured groups of fashionable left-wing biography. He wasn't a member of any socialist or anarchist or pacifist organisation; he wasn't female or Jewish or Marxist or working-class; he was a publisher and editor rather than a writer or speaker; he never held any position other than director of his own little company; he never made or lost much money; he didn't write his memoirs.

Nevertheless he deserves to be remembered, for several reasons — as an odd man (which is what he called himself) and as a crank (which he also called himself), who had a great sense of life and fun, but above all as the man who was probably responsible for the publication of more libertarian and other alternative writings in English during the first half of the twentieth century than any other single person. This is an inevitably sketchy and selective attempt to remember him as he deserves, emphasising his contributions to social and political debate, but neglecting the personal and spiritual sides of his life and work.

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Charles William Daniel was born on 24 April 1871 at 35 King's Cross Road in London (near the site of the old Clerkenwell Prison, and also of Arnold Bennett's Riceyman Steps). He came from the middle of the middle class. His father's family was of Welsh origin and claimed descent from the Elizabethan poet Samuel Daniel; his mother's family had Dutch connections. He was brought up with nine brothers and sisters in Liverpool Road, Islington. Their father worked for the London publisher, Frederick Warne, but he died of drink in 1883.

Young Daniel left school at once and began to earn his living at the age of fourteen. He worked for a time as an office boy and then as an advertising agent, but eventually he went into publishing, where he stayed for sixty years. He got a job with the London publisher, Walter Scott (no connection with the novelist), now long defunct. The

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manager of the firm was Fred Henderson, a philosophical anarchist who later ran the well-known 'Bomb Shop' in Charing Cross Road and who was at that time a follower of Tolstoy; indeed Walter Scott was the main British publisher of Tolstoy's works. Daniel had through family connections met another Tolstoyan — J. C. Kenworthy, the main British propagandist for Tolstoy's social and political ideas during the 1890s (until he went mad).

The influence of the great Russian writer and thinker nearly a century ago can hardly be overestimated, even though it was exerted quietly on individuals through his writings rather than noisily on the masses through organisations, and Daniel was one of many who fell completely under its spell. He adopted the very unorthodox Christianity, the rejection of both Church and State and of both authority and violence, the abstention from meat and tobacco (though not from alcohol), the prejudice against sex (and against women), and the acceptance of all sorts of unorthodox views about life and health. At the same time he adopted the more specifically economic ideas of Henry George and political ideas of Proudhon. He also accepted the occult, reincarnation, homoeopathy, health food, herbal medicine, organic farming, and many other of the minority ideas which were floating in the air at the end of the last century, some of which are still doing so at the end of this one — all elements of what was later called the alternative or counter-culture. Daniel first entered public life as the main organiser of the London Tolstoyan Society, a short-lived little group of eccentrics who from September 1900 held weekly meetings in the hall of the West London Institute of Music over a shop off the Edgware Road (and who also held open-air meetings in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoons in Summer 1901). He soon became one of its main speakers, being listed ten times during the year from December 1900 to November 1901 (mostly on Tolstoy himself, but also on other topics). This tiny organisation belonged to the shadowy world between progressive religion and progressive politics, and was close to the then flourishing Ethical societies.

Daniel's involvement in the London Tolstoyan Society not only began his public life, as I have said, but also changed his private life. He met there Florence Worland, a young middle-class New Woman who was leading a bohemian life in a garret in Bloomsbury, and who was first listed as a speaker (on Kropotkin) in September 1901. She impressed Daniel against his will — according to her later account, his comment on her first intervention in the discussion was: 'I welcome with joy any sign that the feminine mind is capable of thought' (*Focus*, February 1926) — and they eventually fell in love. The path of love did not run smooth (as is shown by their sometimes painful private letters),



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but eventually they married — at the Lambeth Register Office on 23 March 1905 (during working hours on a weekday!). More important, in a way, they became close colleagues; for although he was a good manager and organiser, she was a better writer and editor, and she became his professional as well as personal inspiration.

They had only one child, a son born in 1913 who was symbolically called Henry George Daniel; like the children of so many remarkable people, he had a difficult childhood and an unhappy life, and died after a mental breakdown in 1985. It was a rather cruel irony that among his mother's books were such titles as *Of Babies* and *Of Children*. (One of their colleagues later said: 'They should never have had real children, they had so many children of the mind.')

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In 1902 Daniel began the main thing for which he is sometimes remembered — his own publishing business, the C. W. Daniel Company Ltd., which occupied various premises in the City and Bloomsbury, often with a bookshop as well as an office, for nearly forty years, and which occupied the rest of his life. To begin with, he continued business as an advertising agent, and he also worked closely with other publishers of similar material. He became the London agent for the Free Age Press, which was the main source of English translations of Tolstoy's later works in dozens of editions (under the direction of Tolstoy's leading disciple Vladimir Chertkov); and he cooperated closely with Arthur C. Fifield, then the main British publisher of unorthodox progressive and left-wing material. One of Fifield's projects was several series of pamphlets in tiny sextodecimo format (roughly A6) — first the Simple Life series (from 1903 to 1906), and then the Brochure series (from 1906 to 1907). Many of the titles were taken over by Daniel, who also produced his own People's Classics (from 1905 to 1906), which included short works by a score of great writers from the ancient world to the present day. He started several other similar series, and gradually expanded his list of publications as Fifield's contracted, eventually replacing him as the main publisher of unorthodox progressive and left-wing material for several decades. Although it should be remembered that Daniel always produced plenty of ordinary publications, especially if the authors were prepared to pay for them, he was more important as a publisher who generally produced what he approved of — indeed it was said that his imprint was his imprimatur.

At the same time, Daniel and Florence Worland ventured together into the world of periodicals, which occupied him for forty years. They

first planned a paper called *The Idealist*, but in November 1902 it appeared as *The Tolstoyan: A Magazine of Practical Idealism* in the same tiny format as the pamphlets. This lasted only until June 1903, partly because — as with the Tolstoyan Society itself — the great man objected to organisations or periodicals named after himself. One of the most useful features of *The Tolstoyan* was their series of articles on Tolstoy's ideas, which were collected as a booklet called *Tolstoy's Teaching: An Epitome, with a Programme of Study* by 'F. E. & C. W. D.' (1912).

In January 1904 the paper was relaunched as *The Crank: An Unconventional Magazine*, and the Daniels were firmly set on the course they followed for the rest of their lives together. The title of the paper was taken from a saying of Henry George — 'A crank is a little thing that makes revolutions' — and its intention was to celebrate crankiness as the salvation of the world. The first issue proudly proclaimed: 'This little Magazine . . . is published by one Crank, edited by another, and generally conducted, guided, and helped by a committee of Cranks. . . .' There was a series of articles on 'Historic Cranks', from Socrates to Henry George himself; there was a series of interviews with contemporary 'Representative Cranks', most of whom have long been forgotten, but one of whom was Bernard Shaw. Daniel himself wrote most of the editorials, under the heading 'Instead of an Editorial', and over the pseudonym 'The Odd Man'.

In January 1907 the title of the paper was changed to *Ye Crank*, but this turned out to be altogether too cranky, and in July 1907 it became *The Open Road*, taking its place as one of the many little periodicals preaching faith and hope during the period just before the First World War. The title came from one of Walt Whitman's best-known poems — *The Song of the Open Road* — and had already been given to one of the most popular poetry anthologies of the age — E. V. Lucas's *The Open Road* (1899). Soon its many preoccupations grew altogether too many for one periodical, and the health aspect was taken over by a new magazine, *Healthy Life*, which began in August 1911 under the editorship of Daniel's friend Edgar J. Savage (who adopted the more suitable pseudonym of Saxon!), and which continued long after Daniel ceased to publish it. The contributors to the Daniels' papers were generally obscure, but they included several writers who later became well known, among them such diverse names as G. K. and Cecil Chesterton, Arthur Ransome and Victor Neuburg, and they are among the few papers of the past which may still be read with pleasure and profit.

The main overt influences on the Daniels remained Tolstoy and Henry George; but a powerful covert influence at least on Florence

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Daniel was Mary Everest Boole, who has been almost forgotten (except — following common sexist lines — as a niece of the mountaineer George Everest, the wife of the mathematician George Boole, and the mother of the writer Ethel Voynich). She was a very eccentric thinker, who developed the concept of 'mental hygiene', pioneered ideas about the unconscious mind, held an informal London salon for several years, and wrote under several names in the Daniels' papers; four volumes of her *Collected Works* were edited by Eleanor M. Cobham and published by Daniel in 1931. Her writings are an extraordinary combination of good sense and apparent nonsense, and I must confess that I find Boolean psychology almost as incomprehensible as Boolean algebra.

Daniel himself slowly became better known in the wider world. He was one of the founding members of the Cranks' Table, a group of progressive journalists and publishers who met and talked over meals at vegetarian restaurants in central London, and were the subject of amused but admiring comments in more respectable papers. Most of his then well-known associates are now as little known as he is; more interesting now are some of those who were then little known. Let me take one example.

Among the many obscure writers who first appeared in Daniel's columns was Dorothy Richardson, another young middle-class New Woman leading a bohemian life in a garret in Bloomsbury, who later wrote the pioneering feminist 'stream-of-consciousness' novel *Pilgrimage*. She contributed to the Daniels' papers from August 1906 to December 1907 — just at the time when she was involved in an affair with H. G. Wells (which ended with her pregnancy and abortion during 1907). She kept in touch with the Daniels during her later life; she also described them in the seventh volume of *Pilgrimage — Revolving Lights* (1923) — which was indeed dedicated 'To F.E.W.'. In one of the long conversations between 'Miriam' (Dorothy Richardson herself) and 'Hypo Wilson' (H. G. Wells), she praises 'George and Dora Taylor' (Charles and Florence Daniel):

They are wonderful. Their atmosphere is the freest I know. . . . You go there, worn out, at the end of the day, and have to walk, after a long tram-ride through the wrong part of London, along raw new roads, dark little houses on either side, solid, without a single break, darkness, a street-lamp, more darkness, another lamp; and something in the air that lets you down and down. Partly the thought of these streets increasing, all the time, all over London. . . . Suddenly you are in their kitchen. White walls and aluminium and a smell of fruit. Do you know the smell of root vegetables cooking slowly in a casserole? . . . You are all standing about. Happy and undisturbed. None of that feeling of darkness and strangeness and the need for a fresh beginning. Tranquillity. . . . Making every one move like a song. And talk. You are all, at once, bursting with talk. All over the flat, in and out of the rooms. George

washing up all the time, wandering about with a dish and a cloth, and Dora probably doing her hair in a dressing-gown, and cooking. It's the only place where I can talk exhausted and starving. . . . We find ourselves sitting in the bathroom, engrossed — long speeches — they talk to each other, like strangers talking intimately on a bus. Then something boils over and we all drift back to the kitchen. Left to herself, Dora would go on for ever and sit down to a few walnuts and midnight. . . . But she is an absolutely perfect cook. An artist. She invents and experiments. But he has a feminine consciousness, though he's a most manly little man with a head like Beethoven. So he's practical. Meaning he feels with his nerves and has a perfect sympathetic imagination. So presently we are all sitting down to a meal and the evening begins to look short. And yet endless. With them everything feels endless; the present I mean. They are so immediately alive. Everything and everybody is abolished. . . . And a new world is there. You feel language changing, every word moving, changed, into the new world. . . . The evening is wonderful. None of these people mind how far or how late they walk. And it goes on till the small hours. . . .

There is also a vivid account of 'Dora' speaking at a meeting of the London Tolstoyan Society, when 'Miriam' says that 'I felt I was hearing the whole truth spoken aloud for the first time', and adds that behind all the prophets of social and political change 'I see little Taylor, unanswerable, standing for more difficult deep-rooted individual things'. [1]

But the most important person for the Daniels and their papers, of course, was Tolstoy himself. He was still very much alive, though approaching eighty, holding court among the quarrelling factions of his relations and disciples at his country estate in central Russia. It is not surprising that the Daniels sent him their publications; what is surprising is that he responded to them. There are several entries in his Diaries referring to them and their papers, and some of their writings were included in the anthologies he compiled under the general title *The Reading Circle (Krug Chteniya)*.

Then on 4 January 1907 (22 December 1906) he wrote a letter directly 'To the Odd Man of the Crank':

Dear Sir,

I thank you very much for the Crank Magazine, which I enjoy very much. To-day I have read the last article of Worland: "The Earth for all." It is very good; especially his criticism of Maltus's [sic] theory, which, notwithstanding its weakness, has had such a large spreading. I think that true christianity with its ideal of chastity, is the best remedy for the population. I will take care that it should be translated in russian, if he will allow it. I liked it very much, also your answer to Shaw, as I like all the pages signed by "Odd Man." I would be very glad to know your name and be in direct intercourse with you.

Have you many subscribers to your magazine? I wish the greatest success to your work, so very necessary in our time.

Yours truly,  
Leo Tolstoy

P.S. Reading your very good note to the world "anarchism" I remembered on the same matter the saying of Lao-Tze. He says: "When great sages have power over the people, the people do not notice them; if the power is in the hands of sages (not the great ones), the people like them and praise them; if those who govern are less sage — the people are afraid of them; and where those who govern are still less sage — the people despise them."

A corrected version of this letter was published in the *Crank* in February 1907. (It is worth mentioning that Tolstoy himself had thirteen legitimate children, as well as an unknown number of illegitimate ones!) When proper introductions had been made and true identities established, Tolstoy wrote another encouraging letter on 15 (2) February 1907:

Dear Mrs Daniel,

I did not answer your letter before, because I was ill, and am not quite well till now. I am glad to hear that you intend to work at your article on land. Though it is very good as it is, it can only gain by it. I appreciate also very much your idea of the connection of the three principles of poverty, continence (as a degree of chastity) and obedience to natural law. And I think and hope that you will express those ideas as strongly as all the articles of *Worland*, and as simply and shortly as you say you wish to do it.

The sole advise [sic] that I should wish to give you is to avoid polemic as much as possible.

I have received also a letter from your husband, I hope he will excuse me if I do not write to him separately and will ask you to be so kind and tell him:

1) That although I like the "Crank" very much, I quite agree with him that it would be very good not only to combine gardening and agricultural work with writing, but to put the foundation of your life in manual work, as I keep publishing work as an accessory. Then he will not be afraid to be too successful.

2) That I hope I will send something for the "Crank" which will be worthy of it.

and 3) That I will be very glad to know his questions and answer them if I feel myself able to do it.

With best wishes for you and your husband.

Your friend,  
Leo Tolstoy [2]

Tolstoy did send a few short items to the *Crank* and the *Open Road* during the next few years. And at the end of 1909 Daniel made the long

pilgrimage to Yasnaya Polyana. The *Open Road* reported that 'The Odd Man is in Russia, sitting at the feet of Tolstoy' (January 1910). Tolstoy's Diaries included several references to his visit, not all of them favourable. 'Had dinner, spoke with difficulty in English. Dan. is a clever, cold person' (25 November). 'With Dan. especially hard because of my ignorance or, rather, half-knowledge of the language' (28 November). The master and disciple don't actually seem to have got on very well, and the latter wrote little about the former on his return; but he retained his Tolstoyan convictions, and he also strengthened his friendship with Chertkov, whom he defended when the old man died only a year later (*Open Road*, January 1911).

One of the most interesting features in the *Crank* and the *Open Road* was a series of articles signed F. E. Worland which was collected in a booklet called *Love: Sacred and Profane* (1908), dedicated "To 'My lover, my dear friend'", and explaining the Tolstoyan doctrine of love and marriage for an English audience. It now seems extraordinarily dated in many of its ideas, but it is deeply felt and elegantly written, and it may be taken as expressing the Daniels' feelings for each other.

Daniel's own main preoccupation in the *Crank* and the *Open Road* was the criticism of socialism — not so much the revolutionary movement represented by the Marxists or anarchists as the parliamentary movement represented by the Fabian Society and the new Labour Party, which he saw as just another oligarchy or monopoly long before it got near to achieving political power. His early articles on the subject were often attacked by the young Dorothy Richardson, then influenced by Wells and active in the Fabians (who appear as the 'Lycurgans' in *Pilgrimage*). His later articles, which appeared throughout the life of the *Open Road*, from 1908 to 1912, were collected as a booklet called *Instead of Socialism: And Papers on Two Democratic Delusions* (1913). This was the only book of which Daniel was the acknowledged author, and it gives a useful summary of his political ideas — or at least of his negative political ideas, for despite the title it offers nothing 'instead of socialism', though it does make very cogent criticisms of a centralised collectivist economy. One of the articles was called 'Socialism: its Cause and Cure', echoing Edward Carpenter's famous book *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure*, and this was originally going to be the title of the book; but he discussed the disease rather than the cure. Similarly, he didn't develop his sketchy remarks on anarchism, and they were not included in the book version of the articles. All he definitely advocated was what he called 'Thearchy', or the rule of God; but what he meant by 'God' was even less clear than

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what Tolstoy meant, and what he meant by 'Thearchy' (which he first discussed in 1907) was even less clear than that. His personal religion was an informal affair, involving no kind of dogmatic belief or external observance; he later preferred to use such formulas as *God = Good* and *Lord = Law*. What 'Thearchy' really amounted to was 'the rule of universal goodwill' — that we should follow the law in our own hearts, which is to treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves, and to develop a society and an economy in which cooperation and competition are combined on a practical basis. Daniel called himself a 'philosophical anarchist'; perhaps he would be better described as a philosophical libertarian, since he rejected some of the basic elements of anarchism. But although he always avoided political activity as such, he maintained some strong negative principles — he would never vote or serve on a jury, for example, and he never supported any violence or war.

Daniel's articles were interrupted by the closure of the *Open Road*, the last issue appearing in January/March 1913. Two other series of articles which were interrupted at the same time for the same reason were also collected in popular books. One was 'Where the Road Leads', by Ethel Wedgwood (the first wife of the radical politician Josiah Wedgwood), which appeared as *The Road to Freedom: And What Lies Beyond* (1913). The other was 'Liberty Luminants', compiled by Henry Bool and S. Carlyle (the former an individualist who had lived in the United States, and the latter a pseudonym of S. Carlyle Potter, a libertarian writer and editor who ended as a London bookseller), which appeared as *For Liberty: An Anthology of Revolt* (1914), and was a rich source for apt quotations (of the kind which used to appear on the masthead of *Freedom*). At the same time, Daniel published British editions of such American libertarian classics as Stephen Pearl Andrews' *The Science of Society* (1913) and Victor Yarros' version of Lysander Spooner's *Free Political Institutions* (1912), and he later published S. Carlyle Potter's digest of Godwin's ideas as a pamphlet called *Reflections on Political Justice*.

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Daniel's criticisms of socialism were of course increasingly unfashionable as socialist ideas and organisations gained support. So of course were his criticisms of war, especially when the First World War began. Despite his general avoidance of political activity, he was not only dragged into controversy over the war but twice got into trouble with the authorities through his involvement with anti-war propaganda. He was himself too old to be called up when conscription eventually came

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in 1916, but he published several pacifist books, including some moving novels about unwilling conscripts (especially by 'Herbert Tremaine', the pseudonym of Mrs Norman Deuchar), and J. Scott Duckers' vivid account of his experiences as one in the hands of the army, *'Handed Over'* (1917).

Eventually trouble came for Daniel himself. At the end of 1916 he was involved in the clandestine production and distribution of an anonymous pacifist pamphlet called *A 'Knock-Out' Blow*, a bitter critique of the more aggressive war policy of the new Lloyd George government. Daniel's office was raided by the police, and he and the editor and printer were prosecuted under the Defence of the Realm Act in Spring 1917. At the Chief Metropolitan Magistrates Court in Bow Street on 28 April they were convicted and fined (Daniel's share was £80 and 10 guineas' costs). The printer paid up, but the editor (James Evans) and Daniel refused and went to prison instead. Daniel spent two months in Wormwood Scrubs. He later told the story that when he was asked for his religion he gave it as 'Christian'. 'Oh!' he was told, 'you can't be that 'ere.' 'Very well, then,' he said, 'put me down as No Religion.'

Trouble came again a year later. In Spring 1918 he published another anti-war novel called *Despised and Rejected*, which contained a new element in his publications. It was generally about a group of people who were involved in the struggle against conscription, but it was especially about two homosexuals in the group — indeed it was one of the very first open fictional accounts of homosexuality in English. The author was given as 'A. T. Fitzroy' but was in fact Rose Laure Allatini, the young daughter of an Italian diplomat and an Austrian mother who had already produced several romantic novels under her own name. This particular one had been submitted to Stanley Unwin, who relates in his autobiography, *The Truth About a Publisher* (1960), that he rejected it because he feared it would be prosecuted, and adds that 'in view of the subjects dealt with I did not think that any publisher would consider it; the only man who might conceivably do so was C. W. Daniel' — which was indeed the case, with precisely the result Unwin feared.

The initial public reception of the book was mixed; the review in the *Times Literary Supplement* (6 June 1918) expresses it well enough:

A well-written novel — evidently the work of a woman — on the subjects of pacifism and of abnormality in the affections. The author's sympathy is plainly with the pacifists; and her plea for more tolerant recognition of the fact that some people are, not of choice but by nature, abnormal in their affections is open and bold enough to rob the book of unpleasant suggestions. As a frank



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and sympathetic study of certain types of mind and character, it is of interest; but it is not to be recommended for general reading.

The latter feeling spread to official quarters, and Daniel was once more prosecuted under the Defence of the Realm Act. At the City of London Court at Mansion House on 10 October 1918 (only a month before the war ended) he was convicted and fined £420 with £40 costs. The official reason was the pacifist message, but an unofficial one was the even more objectionable homosexual message. Daniel immediately circulated a statement dissociating himself from this aspect of the book, and at the same time his friend Gilbert Sadler, an unorthodox pacifist clergyman, circulated an appeal for help with the fine, which was soon over-subscribed.

Rose Allatini was briefly taken up by the Bloomsbury Group; in 1921 she married the composer Cyril Scott; they were involved in the occultist movement and associated with the libertarian millionaire George Davison, had two children, and separated in 1941; she spent the rest of her life with a woman friend in Rye, and returned to romantic novels, achieving considerable success under the name 'Eunice Buckley'; she died only a few years ago. *Despised and Rejected* has recently been reprinted by the Gay Men's Press, in 1988, with an informative and entertaining introduction by Jonathan Cutbill.

Daniel's wartime experiences fixed his pacifist convictions more firmly than ever, and afterwards he produced *The Indictment of War* (1919), a big anthology of anti-war extracts from British and American but also many foreign (including German) writers, edited by H. Stanley Redgrove and Jeanne Heloise Rowbottom, which was one of his most impressive publications, and is still a very valuable source of pacifist material.

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The major political event after the war was of course the Russian Revolution. At first Daniel took no particular view of it, and in 1920 he published a booklet called *Russia Before and After the Revolution* by S. Carlyle Potter defending the Bolsheviks against outside criticism or intervention. (In 1919 he published *Factory Echoes*, the first book by R. M. Fox, later a well-known Communist writer.) But he was soon persuaded by the libertarian critics of the new regime to become one of the main publishers of their writings. In 1925 he was responsible for the first British (and only complete) edition of Emma Goldman's book *My Disillusionment in Russia*. In 1926 he became the British publisher of *Letters from Russian Prisons* (1925), the influential collection of primary documents officially edited in the United States by Roger N. Baldwin,

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but actually compiled in Europe by Alexander Berkman. Also in 1926 he published a British edition of Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*, with a new introduction by Edward Carpenter; though he later declined Berkman's *Now and After: The ABC of Communist Anarchism* (1928). Incidentally, the record of these publications didn't prevent Daniel from being invited to Moscow as one of the official British representatives at the national celebration of the centenary of Tolstoy's birth in 1928 — just before the cultural life of the Soviet Union fell under the total control of the Stalinist dictatorship.

Daniel continued to publish the same kind of books as before, and he was also the first British publisher of such foreign writers as Søren Kierkegaard, Georg Groddeck and José Ortega y Gasset, but he continued to keep up with unorthodox developments in Britain. When Leslie Paul founded the new left-wing youth movement, the Woodcraft Folk, his first account of the organisation was published by Daniel as *The Green Company* (1928). When Nellie Shaw, one of the founders of the libertarian community at Whiteway in 1898, wrote its history, this was published by Daniel as *Whiteway: A Colony on the Cotswolds* (1935); and he himself had several friends there, including Thomas Keell and Lilian Wolfe.

Daniel also ventured into pure literature. He always published novels, plays and poems, though few were successful or memorable. But one project which had some impact was a series of 'Plays for a People's Theatre', of which the second was D. H. Lawrence's *Touch and Go* (1920), published at a time when he was an extremely unpopular writer. Later in the 1920s there were serious discussions about forming a publishing company with Lawrence and some of his friends, but they came to nothing — probably fortunately for Daniel, who would have suffered the difficulties involved in any cooperation with Lawrence, and who might have faced a trial of Lady Chatterley thirty years early!

It took some time for the Daniels to start a magazine again. But in January 1926 they began *Focus: A Periodical to the Point in Matters of Health, Wealth, and Life*. At the same time he revived the People's Classics series (and Dorothy Richardson returned to his columns for a few months). One of the most attractive features of *Focus* was a series of articles called 'Meetings and Partings' and signed 'F. E. W.', which described the old London Tolstoyan Society (January - May 1926). They incidentally included a nice portrait of Daniel in 1901: '... a serious-looking young man of medium height, clean-shaven, with broad shoulders and dark brown hair. He had a fine head, but, in those days, not much sense of humour' (February 1926). But by then she had fallen ill, and she died of cancer in September 1927. Her friend Eleanor

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M. Cobham wrote a little pamphlet, *A Tribute to the Memory of Florence Daniel* (F. E. Worland) (1927).

Without her inspiration and cooperation, Daniel himself soon decided to relinquish editing and concentrate on publishing; at the beginning of 1929 *Focus* was replaced by *Purpose: A Quarterly Magazine*. At first it was nominally edited by 'John Marlow' (Daniel himself), but he soon handed over to his old friend W. Travers Symons. *Purpose* was a much more conventional and sophisticated magazine than its predecessors, with a more deliberate approach to politics (of the Social Credit variety) and psychology (of the Individual variety), and with a stronger literary side (conducted by Desmond Hawkins). Perhaps most of the political and psychological material has now dated beyond recall, but it is worth recording that in January/March 1940 Herbert Read contributed 'A Community of Individuals', a characteristic defence of anarchism, which was reprinted in his book *A Coat of Many Colours* (1945). The literary contributors included such names as W. H. Auden, George Barker, Elizabeth Bowen, Laurence Durrell, T. S. Eliot, James Hanley, Rayner Heppenstall, Hugh MacDiarmid, Henry Miller, Edwin Muir, Middleton Murry, Anais Nin, Ezra Pound, John Pudney, Kathleen Raine, Stephen Spender, Julian Symons, Dylan Thomas, and so on. In short, *Purpose* was one of the many serious magazines of the low dishonest decade before the Second World War, which soon brought it to an end with the issue of July/September 1940.

At the same time Daniel had revived his health magazine in June 1934 as *Health and Life*, which was again edited by Saxon, and which again continued long after he had given up his connections with it. His premises in Great Russell Street in the late 1930s had a well-known shop, to which the Post Office once delivered a letter addressed to 'The Bookshop near the British Museum with Health Books in the Window'! That period was probably the peak of his success as a publisher, though he suffered the experience of all small firms, of discovering new writers who moved on to bigger firms when they achieved some fame. He later told a nice story against himself of overhearing one man telling another about 'Daniel, the publisher — a nice chap, but a damn fool at business'!

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Daniel was as much opposed to the Second as to the First World War, and he experienced a more personal anguish when his son joined the Royal Air Force. He didn't get into any trouble with the authorities this time, but he suffered more directly when his premises were destroyed

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in the Blitz in 1941. Rather than try to resume activities in wartime London, he moved near several old friends and colleagues in the libertarian colony of The Chase at Ashingdon, a few miles north of Southend. He took a rambling Victorian house which was renamed 'Oprodan' (the old telegraphic address for 'The Open Road, Daniel'), and stayed there for the rest of his life, along with his few remaining colleagues. He dropped his political and literary publications and concentrated on health books, especially the works of Bircher-Benner, the inventor of muesli, and Edward Bach, the inventor of flower remedies. He read and talked with his friends, worked and sat in his garden, enjoyed the company of his dog and cats, and lived in his memories. He described himself as an anarchist to the end, and always subscribed to anarchist periodicals and purchased anarchist books, though he was virtually unknown to the anarchist movement.

C. W. Daniel died at Ashingdon on 15 January 1955. His death was almost unnoticed in the outside world, though his oldest colleague, Denise Waltham (who had been with him for more than forty years), anonymously wrote and published a little pamphlet *A Tribute to the Memory of Charles William Daniel* (1955). She and a few other colleagues kept the firm going for several years, and in 1971 Daniel's great-nephew Jeremy Goring wrote another little pamphlet, *The Centenary of a 'Crank' Publisher: Charles William Daniel (1871-1955)* (1971), and also an article about him in *The Bookseller* (18 December 1971). This came to the notice of a young London publisher, Ian Miller, who got in touch with the firm and eventually took it over. He continued its work for a time in London, and then in beautiful old premises in Saffron Walden, where it still flourishes as one of the main publishers in the English-speaking world of unorthodox health books and pamphlets. Meanwhile Denise Waltham, now in her nineties, lives at Oprodan with Mary Sweetlove, a niece and former colleague of Daniel, among the many relics of their work together, sharing their memories, keeping up with old and new friends, and looking for a better world of the kind Daniel strove for all his life.

Jeremy Goring concluded his 1971 pamphlet with the following paragraph:

It is not easy to estimate the influence upon his generation of the work of one quiet man. It is particularly difficult in the case of a man like Charles Daniel, who was not a beginner or finisher of things, but a go-between — one who, through the medium of the printed word, put one mind into touch with another. Daniel, by his chosen definition, was a crank — not a big thing that made a great commotion, but a little one that helped to make a revolution. One wonders how much of the revolution that has taken place this century in men's

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attitudes to things was furthered by people like him who, avoiding the limelight, got on quietly with the work of producing the books and pamphlets and journals that fed the minds of men.

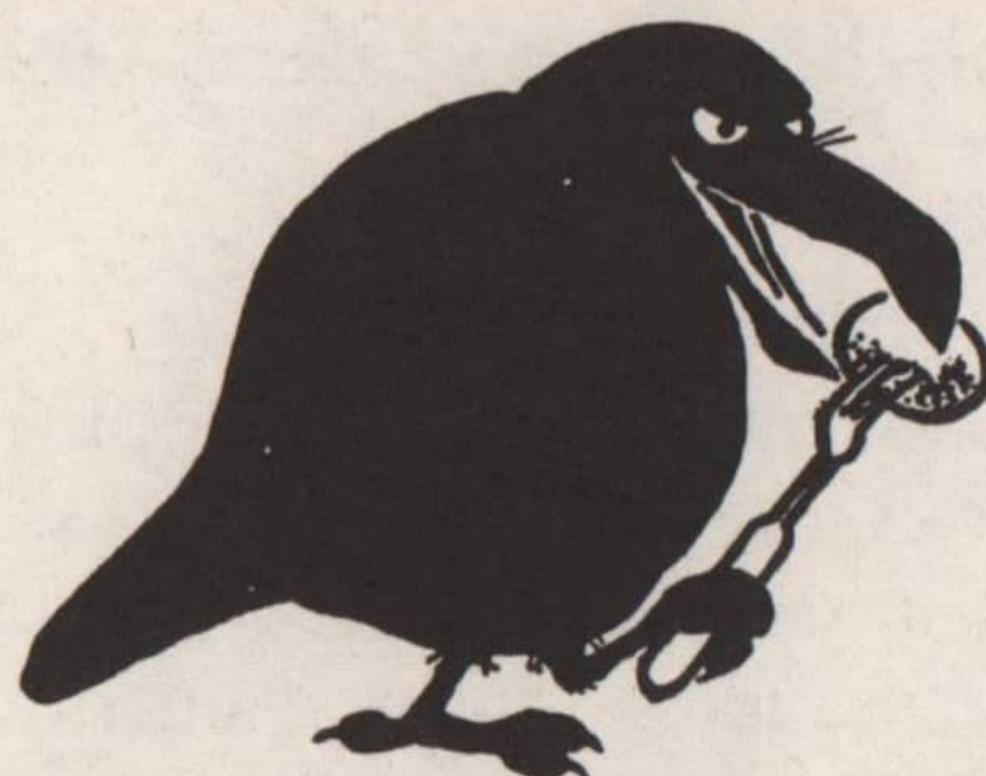
### Notes and Acknowledgements

[1] The relevant passages from *Revolving Lights* appear in the third volume of the collected edition of *Pilgrimage* (1967, 1979), pages 368-373.

[2] The relevant passages from the Diaries appear in the standard Russian edition of Tolstoy's works (*Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii*, Volumes 56 and 57, 1937). The relevant letters appear in fairly accurate transcripts of the original English texts in the same edition (*Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii*, Volumes 76 and 77, 1956); the first letter also appears in R. F. Christian's English selection (*Tolstoy's Letters*, Volume 2, 1978). The versions here are taken from the originals in the Daniel papers.

The main sources of information about C. W. Daniel are his own publications and papers. Thanks are due to Heiner Becker, Dennis Hardy, Ian Miller, Christine Walter, Natasha Walter, and Colin Ward. Special thanks are due to Jeremy Goring and Mary Sweetlove for their great help, and above all to Denise Waltham, who shared her very accurate memories and her very precious books and papers with extraordinary generosity and enthusiasm.

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## Review

*Andrew Hedgecock*

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*World War - Cold War*, together with its four supplementary volumes, constitutes Volume 3 in the *Freedom Press Centenary Series 1886-1986*

Voltaire's assertion that 'all our ancient history . . . is no more than accepted fiction' is equally applicable to recent history. In the summer and autumn of 1989 browsing in a bookshop has been like blundering through a minefield of nostalgia, with new publications ranging from Vera Lynn's memoirs to numerous political and military histories. None of this material attempts to do anything more than confirm the established view of the events. *World War - Cold War* and its four supplementary volumes challenge the accepted fictions concerning an era which saw widespread carnage and severe abuse of human rights, while pre-

senting many opportunities for the creation of free communities and a genuine spirit of international co-operation. These collected articles report on the squandering of these opportunities and the hypocrisy shown by the ruling classes of the imperialist powers in justifying their attempts to cling to power at all costs.

The main volume *World War - Cold War* is divided into two sections. The first section ('World War') contains articles published in *War Commentary* from 1939 to 1945, while the larger 'Cold War' section contains selections from *Freedom* from 1945 to 1950.

The war provided two myths which continue to nourish our authoritarian government. These are the myth of national unity and the myth of the nation fighting a war to liberate the world from fascism. The durability and power of this mythology was demonstrated by the frenzy of nationalism and bigotry evoked by the sailing of the Falklands task force in 1982. The 'Gotcha!' headlines and Alastair Burnett's astonishing national pep talk during News at Ten were legitimised by the nostalgic image of Britain standing alone against tyrannical dictators. This uncritically accepted sense of national identity may have been responsible for the assertion by an acquaintance in the Labour party that Thatcher was right to wage war on Argentina since 'we' had to take a stand against the aggression of 'their' fascist junta.

The leading spokesmen of the party did not differ significantly in their views, and echoed the attitudes of their power seeking predecessors Morrison and Bevin. The material in the 'World War' section attempted to dismantle this pernicious mythology while it was being created.

The myth of national unity is exploded by a set of articles on 'The Industrial Scene'. I was previously unaware of the high level of discontent which resulted in illegal strike action by railway workers, Kent miners and workers on Clydeside and Merseyside. Those who challenged the regulations demanding 'sacrifice for all' from workers while furnishing their employers with enormous profits were denounced as 'quislings', fined or even gaoled.

The Left is only now beginning to reinterpret the events leading to the Second World War and to challenge the myth of a war against fascism. The 'World War' section of this volume shows that contributors to *War Commentary* treated the war as a struggle between competing imperialist interests from the outset.

A series of articles deals with Churchill's use of British troops to support a semi-fascist Greek government against workers who had resisted German occupation. It is pointed out that the troops used in Greece were withdrawn from the struggle to liberate Italy — thus confirming the anarchist suspicion that the prospect of widespread social revolution held greater fears for the British ruling class than the idea

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of Nazi domination in Europe. It is also pointed out that the issuing of 'No Fraternisation' orders by the Allied High Command, during the allied invasion of Germany, illustrated the fear among military commanders of the revolutionary potential of a union between German anti-Nazis and Allied rank-and-file anti-Nazis.

A number of contributors make the point that, as Europe was 'liberated', reactionary governments were supported by the Allies in Italy, Belgium and France. The most damning evidence against the notion of a 'war for democracy' was provided by the Allied appointment of Nazis as local officials when German towns were occupied.

The 'Cold War' section of the book demonstrates that anarchist writers did not accept the assumption that the war ended in 1945. Articles on 'The Politics of Hunger' record the palliative measures taken by the Western powers to fend off starvation in countries all over the world, and the way in which the appalling plight of the German population was exacerbated by power games between Russia and Great Britain. Anarchists made a declaration of solidarity with their starving fellow workers and continued to call for a breaking of 'the state power which exists to defend the market economy'.

A great deal of space in this volume is dedicated to the way in which the continual competition for markets, territory and influence between the major states placed the world under a constant threat of 'another war'. The inevitable cycle of conflict between capitalist states is traced through a series of red witch-hunts and war scares in the West, to the power struggle between Stalinist and American imperialism in Korea. We are informed that despite the onset of yet another war for 'freedom and democracy', both Left and Right in Britain continued to hold that war is the result of ideological rivalry.

Both the 'World War' and 'Cold War' sections contain items dealing with the hypocrisy of the 'democratic' governments in condemning the abuse of human rights by their rivals. There are a number of references to expressions of admiration for Hitler by members of the British ruling class. It is pointed out that condemnation of Nazi atrocities only arose when it became clear that Hitler posed a threat to markets for British goods. The doublethink which British politicians applied to the issue of 'war crimes' is highlighted by one writer. He points out that former members of the British Union of Fascists were tried as traitors on the basis that they had broken the allegiance they owed to the crown, while German Nazis were tried at Nuremberg on the basis that they should have placed matters of conscience above their allegiance to their state. It is argued that the revenge exacted from these pathetic scapegoats distracted attention from the contribution of the Allies to the six years of slaughter.



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The human rights record of the Western democracies is highlighted by articles on the brutality of police in post-war Paris, the arrest of a political refugee by British police on behalf of the American government, the introduction of peace time conscription by Attlee's Labour Government, the action taken by Britain's political police force (the Special Branch) against political minorities and the CID raid on *Freedom Press* offices in 1945 which led to 9 month prison sentences for Vernon Richards, Philip Sansom and John Hewetson.

A fascinating section concerned with the development of atomic energy points out the responsibilities of scientists, and reflects upon the way in which the demands of our present economic system determine the type of scientific research that is carried out. I was surprised to learn that there were health scares concerning workers in atomic plants as early as 1947 — but considerably surprised by official suppression of the facts concerning illness among energy workers.

While many of the particular circumstances relating to these articles no longer apply, the way in which society is organised has not altered in any fundamental way and the themes they deal with are of tremendous contemporary relevance. For example, John Hewetson's indictment of the self-appointed arbiters of morality in 1943 for facilitating the spread of venereal disease by clinging to 'cruel and obscene taboos' could equally well be aimed at Margaret Thatcher's recent banning of a survey of sexual habits in relation to the spread of the AIDs virus. Now, as then, our rulers refuse to acknowledge any diversity of sexual preference and conduct since they do not wish to appear to condone the notion of individual sexual freedom. It is salutary to consider that the relevance of many of these pieces in the 1980s demonstrates just how little impact anarchist ideas have had on our society in the last 40 years.

The annual report published today (25th of October 1989) by Amnesty International reveals that 'tens of thousands' of people were murdered by governments last year, and that many people lost their lives as a result of belonging to a community which a state had designated as 'the enemy'. This appalling news merely demonstrates how little has changed in the past 50 years. The value of *World War - Cold War* lies in the clarity and consistency with which it presents the anarchist argument that capitalism and the state are the causes of war and oppression.

### **What a Lovely/Awful/Lovely War**

The Left is now in the process of reassessing the conduct and causes of the war, but *The Left & World War II* reveals that fifty years ago anarchists were isolated in their condemnation of the conflict as a strug-

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gle to maintain British imperialism. While anarchists sought to end the war through widespread social revolution, the rest of the Left found it expedient to support the expansionist policies of the allied powers.

This volume provides a comprehensive survey of the policies of a number of prominent left-wing groups, and reveals the extent to which they were prepared to support the war aims of the ruling class. When the Independent Labour Party abandoned its 'Stop-the-War' campaign in favour of the opportunist strategy of transforming the conflict into a revolutionary war against Nazism, Marie Louise Berneri exposed their intellectual dishonesty by pointing out that acceptance of the war, with its benefits for capitalism and suppression of liberties for workers, precludes struggle against the capitalist class. She suggests that to engage in a revolutionary class struggle, and challenge British imperialism, would have involved abandoning any concern with the outcome of the war in Germany.

The Pacifist movement adopted an approach to the conflict as unrealistic as the ILP's, but in this case the muddled thinking involved treating the war as an isolated phenomenon. John Hewetson attributes their 'direct appeals to the deaf ears of governments' to the mistaken idea that war could be prevented by mobilising national opinion. The main body of the movement paid no attention to the root causes of war: capitalism and imperialism.

A number of articles deal with the duplicity of the Communist Party as it performed ideological contortions in order to slavishly follow Stalin's line on whether Britain was engaged in a 'just war' concerning the whole working class, or an 'unjust and imperialist war' between German and British capitalists.

*The Left & World War II* demonstrates the way in which Churchill's alliance with Stalin gave rise to the use of Communist propaganda by the Capitalist class in the drive to exploit the workforce more effectively. The Russian worker was held up as a paragon in the struggle against Fascism and the Communist papers assisted the ruling class in the creation of the myth of super-productive British 'Stakhanovites'. While South Yorkshire miners claimed that production was limited through reservation of rich coal seams for post-war exploitation by the mine-owners, the parties of the Left and the unions were busy supporting employers by calling for an increase in the work rate of those whose interests they claimed to represent.

While the rest of the Left had abandoned the idea that war, capitalism and imperialism are inextricably linked, anarchists were advocating direct action against their rulers by workers all over the world. Presentation of the anarchist case in the first part of the war must have been made more difficult by the fact that the allied imperialists were paying

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lip service to the same policy. We are informed that in April 1941 the Beaverbrook press abandoned its usual reactionary stand to support the idea of defeating fascism through 'left-wing revolutions in Europe', and called for German Socialists to act as a fifth column for the allied powers. The popular view at this time was that we were not at war with the German people. The idea of ending the war through workers' revolutions in Europe became a less attractive proposition when there was considered to be a danger of revolution in Allied countries. In response, an article by Marie Louise Berneri calls for sincere Socialists amongst European refugees to abandon their complicity with Allied governments and appeal to the masses in Europe for a genuine social revolution in all countries.

The articles in *The Left & World War II* point to the futility of supporting the aims of the ruling class as an expedient towards bringing about social transformation. As events were to show, a war fought on behalf of a set of imperialists designated as 'the lesser evil' cannot be translated into a class war. At the height of the conflict contributors to *War Commentary* pointed out that war presented an opportunity for defeating capitalism and imperialism only if the working class in Europe were to abandon spurious notions of national security in favour of a truly international class struggle.

### **Capitalism is dead, long live capitalism**

*Neither Nationalisation Nor Privatisation* deals with the failure of Attlee's Labour Government (1945-1950) to deliver a real alternative to capitalist control of industry and their failure to carry out any genuine redistribution of resources and power. In a series of articles dealing with the structure of the newly nationalised industries it becomes clear that Labour's notion of workers' control began and ended with the appointment of influential trade union bosses to highly paid managerial positions.

*Freedom's* 'Industrial Notes' for February 1946 reveal that the nationalised industries did not gradually degenerate into centralised managerial bureaucracies, but were designed to be that way from the start. The Minister of Fuel and Power, Shinwell, declared at the outset that the new bodies governing the mining industry were to be 'business corporations' and invited 'men of business capacity' to seek management positions within them. In other words, Labour's idea of a socialist approach to industry did not involve removing its authoritarian power structures, or even removing the particular set of authoritarians who were already in control!

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Article after article in this collection supplies evidence to show that the Attlee Government had every intention of maintaining the profit motive as the central factor in production. Tom Carlile complains that the state 'expropriation' of the coal industry was compensated in the form of government bonds so that the miners were still, in effect, producing wealth for the coal company owners.

An illustration of the gulf between the needs of the worker and the demands of state capitalism was provided by widespread industrial action in the public sector in 1949. *Freedom's* coverage recorded the strikers' grievances: low pay and understaffing on the rail network, insanitary conditions for dockers, wage reductions through bonus cuts for power workers and a shift system which denied time off at weekends to London busmen. In December 1949 *Freedom* pointed out that the vast majority of strikes during the Labour administration had been unofficial. This trend was explained in terms of the complicity between the government and the supposed representatives of the workers' interests: the Trade Union leaders. One of the recurring themes in *Neither Nationalisation . . .* is that the unions had been assimilated into the state structure as an arm of government with responsibility for implementing unpopular economic policy. Anarchist commentators were not surprised when unofficial strikes were condemned as 'disloyal activities' at the 1948 Trade Union Congress.

Many people today regard the period from 1945 to 1950 as an era of radical socialism, but these articles reveal that neither the Labour Government nor the TUC challenged the idea of production for profit and both groups were keen to perpetuate the tradition of controlling the workforce by threats, promises and moral blackmail. Their obsession with cutting production costs to enable Britain's state capitalist economy to perform well in export markets is echoed in Labour's current policy review (*Meet the challenge, make the change*) with its 'new' market socialist approach.

In a remarkably prescient article from December 1945 ('The Nationalisation Queue') it is suggested that the nationalisation programme was doomed from the moment that generous compensation was paid to the stockholders of the Bank of England. The writer, Ricardo, suggests that this first step in Labour's economic strategy not only failed to 'diminish the hold of privilege in English society' but also 'established a precedent which may serve as a weapon for its opponents in the impending struggles for the reorganisation of Britain's economic life'. The nationalisation strategy has served the capitalists who really run Britain far better than Ricardo could have anticipated. They have not merely benefited from 'socialist' nationalisation compensation — they are now cashing in on the privatisation policy inaugurated by the Tory

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'New Right'. The advent of 'Popular Capitalism' has been facilitated by the unpopularity of the nationalised industries. Since people are keen to obtain some degree of benefit from the work they do, the idea of a 'share-owning democracy' has had a greater appeal for many than the concept of a state-owned company which they do not really have any stake in. Many workers will be able to obtain better wages in the private sector but, as the large capitalist interests acquire the shares and 'rationalise' the companies, many will lose their jobs. As it becomes clear that privatisation will not enable them to exert any influence in the running of the new businesses, the policy will be treated with the same scepticism as the idea that a state owned industry is run for the benefit of the people.

*Neither Nationalisation Nor Privatisation* demonstrates that, if we are to have decent working conditions in industries which produce things the community really needs, there must be genuine expropriation of industries by the community and non-hierarchical workers' control. These articles also show that these gains cannot be made through the political 'horse-trading' of paid union officials. There must be solid direct action which aims to challenge capitalism and not merely to ameliorate its effects. In the 1990's, while most political groupings desperately try to repackage their free market or state capitalist policies in a popular form, anarchists must get the issue of workers' control back on the agenda.

### **Palestine: From Tyranny to Oppression**

The genesis of one of the century's most complex geo-political problems is subjected to a thorough analysis in *British Imperialism & The Palestine Crisis*. Developments in Palestine are traced from Britain's exploitation of its mandate by importing Jewish settlers, as an imperialist strategy, to the development of the new Jewish state: Israel.

The effectiveness of this volume is due, to a large degree, to the fact that *Freedom* was fortunate enough to have two particularly well informed correspondents in Reginald Reynolds and Albert Meltzer. Their articles provide a clear exposition of the developments which led to years of bloodshed and repression. Meltzer describes the international conditions which led to Britain's use of strictly limited Jewish immigration to 'commercialise the assets of the country and at the same time guard against foreign aggression towards the oil-fields of the Middle-East, and the route to India'. The resentment that blew up between the Jewish settlers and the Arab population is ascribed to the profiteering behaviour of Arab landlords and Jewish capitalists which led to Arab

peasants being forced off their land. A number of contributors to this volume express disappointment that the nationalist feelings among Arab peasants led to them holding the Jews responsible for their dispossession, while the Jews saw Zionism as the only possible reaction to the threat of yet another pogrom.

In June 1938 Reginald Reynolds expressed the hope that it was not too late for the Jewish and Arab communities to achieve self-determination by abandoning Zionism and Arab nationalism in favour of working together to push out British imperialists, Arab feudal landlords and Jewish capitalists. Sadly, there was little support for a libertarian internationalist approach at the time. The Labour Party had exhibited its traditional hypocrisy on the question of imperialism by unanimously supporting the Palestine Mandate in 1936, on the basis that the country was the object of 'rival imperialist ambitions'. The Arabs began to look to the Axis powers for support — despite the fact that Hitler's policies were fostering an increase in Zionist fervour and speeding up Jewish immigration into Palestine. This volume includes a number of trenchant condemnations of the tactic of countering nationalism with nationalism and enlisting the support of one imperialist power to remove the influence of another.

. . . *The Palestine Crisis* catalogues the brutalities committed by the British against the Arabs in order to maintain the existence of the Jewish colony and, when the level of immigration had exceeded the desired 'trickle', against the Jews in order to prevent the formation of a Jewish state outside the British sphere of influence. Once Jewish aspirations towards self determination conflicted with Britain's interests, anti-Jewish declarations were made and the British troops were forbidden to fraternise with the Jewish settlers. Reginald Reynolds accused Britain of deliberately creating a Jewish Ulster. Ironically, the situation in Palestine in the 1940's with repressive occupation by the British army, and two communities at war with each other, bears an uncanny resemblance to the contemporary situation in Northern Ireland.

The final section of . . . *The Palestine Crisis* is concerned with the development of the new State of Israel, and the adoption of the role of 'master Race' by the Jews of Palestine. In the period covered by this volume, the Arab population of Palestine 'progressed' from suffering repressive measures at the hands of British occupying forces to deportation, imprisonment, search and eviction by the Israeli army. The post-script contains a series of press reports detailing the atrocities of the Lebanon invasion of 1982 and a series of assaults upon the liberty of Palestinians in 1989. On a more hopeful note, the volume ends with a report on the Intifada, or 'shaking': a movement made up of young Arabs demanding nothing less than Israeli withdrawal from the West

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Bank and the Gaza strip while aspiring to peaceful co-existence with the Jewish community.

This volume is essential reading for anyone concerned with the liberation of communities from the grip of any kind of imperialism. Taken as a case study . . . *The Palestine Crisis* demonstrates that internationalism, and not nationalism, must be employed in the struggle against racial oppression, and that imperialist oppression can only be ended if the communities in an occupied country display solidarity in their opposition. It also provides, in its discussion of the newly formed Israel, an illustration of the tyranny and violence necessary to the maintenance of all states.

### **An Enemy of Hypocrisy**

*Neither East Nor West*, a selection of Marie Louise Berneri's journalism for *War Commentary* and *Freedom*, was first published as a tribute to her memory in 1952. Her untimely death in 1949, at the age of 31, robbed the anarchist press of one of its most effective critics of capitalism, imperialism and the state. Throughout these articles Berneri carries out an unswerving anarchist analysis of the events of the 1940's. The genuine internationalist perspective evident in this work may have been informed by her own experiences: born in Florence, educated in France, working in London and proficient in four languages. Her writing suggests that she was not embittered by personal tragedy. She did not react to the assassination of her anarchist father, Camillo Berneri, at the hand of Spanish communists by supporting the western anti-communist hysteria after the war. Berneri's reaction to her personal experiences and the horror of world events was to provide an incisive commentary demonstrating the hypocrisy of ALL imperialist powers, the moral and ideological bankruptcy of the Left and the impossibility of ending war without ending the state. This supplement reiterates the major themes and issues of the rest of the rest of the *World War - Cold War* series and, as Vernon Richards suggests in his new introduction, represents anarchist journalism at its best.

The material in this volume is grouped under three headings, dealing with three broad trends in the period from 1939-1948. The first section, 'Defenders of Democracy' demolishes the claim that the Allied nations were fighting for democracy by revealing some of the measures used to curtail the liberty of their workers, and presenting evidence of their territorial and economic motives. At a time when most publishers were 'voluntarily' censored on the subject of the Stalin regime, Berneri challenged the illusion of 'Democratic Russia' presented by the journalists

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and politicians of both Left and Right. As one might expect from the title of this volume, there is also a vigorous challenge to 'the great democratic reputation enjoyed by America'.

The section headed 'The Price of War and of Liberation' deals with the horrific effects of 'the war for democracy'. Berneri covers events such as the British bombing of Italy and Germany and the lack of compassion shown by the Allied countries when starvation conditions existed in Germany, Italy and Roumania. She was particularly outraged by the hypocrisy of states which had condemned revolutionary terrorism, but were prepared to 'kill thousands of workers indiscriminately', in order to secure their interests.

'United Nations', the final section, is concerned with the realignment of imperialist interests after the war. Berneri points out the hypocrisy of Britain and America in denouncing Russian totalitarianism after lauding Stalin as a fellow democrat when their interests were being threatened by Nazism. Berneri's rejection of the idea that the Allied victory would create a more peaceful world is expressed in a series of articles condemning the United Nations organisation as an ineffectual and expensive bureaucracy. Far from nurturing a genuine spirit of international co-operation, the UNO is accused of providing a smoke-screen for the imperialist stratagems of powerful states. In comparing the repressive measures taken to secure the Communist regimes to the assaults upon civil liberties in the 'democratic' countries, Berneri exploded the myth of 'Democracy versus Communism' just as she had attacked the myth of 'Democracy versus Fascism' at the start of the war.

In the aftermath of the war, many on the Left were convinced that grudging support for the imperialism of the western democracies was the only alternative to Russian totalitarian expansionism. Berneri saw this expediency as 'making a choice between the plague and cholera', and advocated a 'third way' which involved rejection of all imperialism and opposition to any kind of state since: '. . . where the state continues the restriction of freedom at home and imperialist ventures abroad are inevitable'.

With the benefit of hindsight, Berneri's commentary provided a remarkably accurate analysis of world events in view of the fact that the government was subjecting people to a constant barrage of disinformation. In *Neither East Nor West* she is never less than totally honest about the difficulties involved in achieving a social revolution, but each article demonstrates her determination to change popular opinion by shattering the illusions cultivated by the capitalist media. In the present political climate, when British politicians express sympathy for the struggle from below in China and Eastern Europe while restricting Trade Union rights at home, it is clear that the relevance of *Neither East Nor West* goes far



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beyond the particular events it uses as evidence to support the anarchist case.



These volumes provide a comprehensive survey, from an anarchist perspective, of the events of the 1940s. To buy all five books would cost £17.30 and provide the reader with around 260 articles filling nearly 900 pages: so the volume represents excellent value for money. One minor improvement to these works would have been the inclusion of a glossary in each book, to inform those of us born 20 years after these events as to the roles of some of the less noted or notorious figures of the 1940s.

*World War - Cold War* and its supplements not only provide an antidote to the glut of myth-preserving war anniversary books, but also demonstrate that the anarchist aim of replacing repressive institutions with a spirit of humane internationalism is the only practical approach for the long-term survival of humanity.

The editor of these collections reveals in his introduction to *World War - Cold War* that 248 issues of *War Commentary* and *Freedom* were published between 1939 and 1950 and that the publication of ALL this material would have resulted in a 7,000 page volume. The articles published here suggest that despite working in a decade which saw restrictions on the freedom of the press and a focussed persecution of political minorities, the editorial group produced a high quality anarchist journal which was not afraid to be out of step with received wisdom. Anarchists who have never had to face the threat of conscription, or challenge defence regulations restricting free speech, can only applaud the commitment to the ideals of revolutionary anarchism demonstrated in this vast and informative work.



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