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La Fine Dell'Anarchismo, Luigi Galleani Edited by Vecchi Lettori of Cronaca Sovversiva. First Italian edition published Newark, New Jersey, 1925. First English language edition published by Cienfuegos Press 1982. Cover by Pirilampo.

Contents

A few words...

The end of anarchism? An odd question perhaps at a time when just about everybody one meets is 'an anarchist in their heart of hearts'. No enlightened person would ever admit to being in favour of authority or hierarchy today, and even many of the marxist-leninists of once upon a time would never admit to being in favour of a State.[1]

And the anarchists? There are anarchists everywhere, in the four corners of the earth. More than a few are giving the power structure a sting, inspiring others to do likewise, and some are magniloquently paying a high price for it.

There are anarchists—and not only—present in focal points of the struggle such as that against high speed railways and nuclear power, in large demonstrations and confrontations with the police—while there are also those who silently light up the darkness of the night with the irridescent glow of freedom.

Anarchists defend immigrants against racist attacks and support rebellions and riots in the concentration camps of

[1] In fact, Lenin himself preferred the slogans of the anarchists until the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and his own personal dictatorship were firmly established. Read *The Guillotine at Work* by Gregory P. Maximoff, Cienfuegos Press.

The original edition of this book had very few footnotes: they have all been translated and they are printed in *italic type* in this edition. The editor of the second edition, Giuseppe Rose added many interesting notes most of which are repeated in the present edition. Even more have been added by the translator.

Anarchism is still vigorous, impassioned, active, irrepressible.

Anarchy will be.

F S Merlino stands midway, alone, or, worse than alone, in the bad company of the hesitant. Merlino, who, after many years spent with us bold and undaunted, and also with the pains which are the reward of courage and heresy, has been unable to save his soul from the frost of discouragement and disenchantment.

It is sad! Sad for him and sad for us. But his case was not unforeseen and it was neither new nor hopeless. For each herald that falls along the slopes of progress, hundreds arise, valiant and confident, raising the standard and carrying it high and undaunted from trench to trench, erecting it in triumph over the ruins of an old world condemned both by reason and by history, a symbol of resurrection and of liberation.

All that is needed in this immutable task is to persist: *to kindle in the minds of the proletariat the flame of the idea: to kindle in their hearts faith in liberty and in justice: to give to their anxiously stretched out arms a torch and an axe.*

The purest and noblest exaltation of our ideal in the hearts of the people is a constant and intrepid education; a cautious but vigorous preparation for the armed insurrection.

"A program?"

A purpose — perhaps only a condition. But with this condition: *Anarchy will be!*

fortress Europe. There are anarchists locked up in prisons, and anarchists who act in solidarity with them. In the UK, following their spirited presence in the student demos of last year and a quantity of diffused attacks elsewhere over a period of time anarchists were given the status of public bug-bear by the police and media, who invited the populace to 'shop an anarchist'.[2]

There are anarchist individualists—and anarchist individuals.

There are anarchists who are against society and anarchists who participate in neighbourhood assemblies. There are even anarchists who vote in elections, although they are not making a song and dance about it. There are anarchist academics and academic anarchists. And then there are the anarchist punks, activists, organizationalists and all manner of libertarians in the great zoological park generally considered the 'movement' 'against'.

Without a doubt there are anarchists everywhere—but is there anarchism? Is there, that is, a sense of the totality of the struggle, a struggle that always tends towards the absolute destruction of the existent and the experience of freedom, wherever one is, in whatever manifestation of the partial struggle we are involved in at a given moment?

[2] ...next to an image of the anarchist emblem, the City of Westminster police's "counter terrorist focus desk" called for anti-anarchist whistleblowers [snitches] stating: "Anarchism is a political philosophy which considers the state undesirable, unnecessary, and harmful, and instead promotes a stateless society, or anarchy. Any information relating to anarchists should be reported to your local police. (press report 31 July 2011)

The totality of the struggle is not a global vision of the enemy setup in all its forms, it is the totality of freedom without limits or impediments of any kind, therefore something in movement, that grows to infinity, always in act, yet totally present when we think it, destroying limits and domestication.[3]

How many anarchists consciously transport this sense of the totality of the struggle into the ardor of their attack against the enemy?

Once we grasp it it never leaves us, it is our compass whether we are in the stormy seas of revolt or in the stagnant waters of babylon, whereas to ignore it leads us into the dead end of ecumenism, frontism, illusions of quantity, or simply being swept into oblivion by the great tsunami of the excluded in revolt.

Galleani doesn't talk about the totality of the struggle in this little book, but he does talk about something without which the latter could never materialise. He talks about anarchist communism, that which 'implies that the material and moral needs of everyone be satisfied without any restriction other than that which is imposed by nature' and that the contribution to production 'should be given voluntarily by everyone, according to their capacity and aptitude'.

As well as implying the destruction of government in all its manifestations, the non-existence of authority means

[3] These words have been stolen from Alfredo M. Bonanno's introduction to *Feral Revolution*, Feral Faun.

titudes or work, be entitled to the full satisfaction of his needs, of all his needs. Such satisfaction not only assures the participation of each person in production according to his capacities, but also eliminates the danger of falling once again into a regime of inequality, of authority, of disorder and violence that the social revolution would have abolished.

In the political field, in contrast to the authoritarian goals of the socialists, collectivists, or communists which, because of the foreseeable economic inequalities implicit in their systems, are obliged, even now, to posit a coercive power that contains and appeases their inequities, or, at least, an administration-state which rules and regulates production, distribution and consumption; anarchism proposes, instead, the absolute and irrevocable rejection of government and authority in any form, and in place of the principle of good, fair, brotherly government, it proclaims the *ungovernability* of the individual who possesses within himself the means, the right and the power for self-government.

In either case, then, there is a *plus* which the earlier phases had not yet uncovered, which carries within itself the seeds of new traits which will permit future generations to proceed towards higher and more enlightened forms of co-existence and civilization. Anarchy does not claim to be the last word, but only a new, more enlightened, more advanced and more human step along the ascending path of the endless future.

rience and necessity, though it is often embittered by the fervour of competition and is basically superficial. Far from indicating decay, it points out two different approaches to action, diverse manifestations of activity, of consciousness, of energy which will be synthesized eventually for the better fortune of the revolution and for the ultimate triumph of our ideals.

5 If progress is to be understood as the "… succession of phenomena in which force manifests itself at each stage of evolution with an everincreasing variety and intensity; and the series is called progressive when, at each one of its stages, it reproduces all its previous traits plus a new one that did not exist in the preceding phases, and which becomes in its turn, the germ of a new plus in the following stages", then no other ideal corresponds more closely to this law of progress than the anarchist ideal.

In the field of economics — in contrast to the radical movements which do agree in rejecting private property, in advocating collective ownership of the means of production and exchange, in the remuneration of each according to his aptitude and his labour — libertarian communism — once individual property is abolished, the land and means of production made the communal and indivisible property of all — rejects the theory of remuneration, even if it were to involve the total product of labour; it rejects the principle of compensation as irrational, unjust and dangerous in so far as it necessarily engenders the authority and the tyranny that make the bourgeois regime infamous; and it proposes, instead, that every member of society, regardless of his ap-

the freedom of the autonomous individual, all individuals, within the free society (or absence of society, in whatever forms this would take).

Even if allusions are made to anarchist communism today, the implications of what this signifies are rarely if ever gone into by anarchists, as the immediacy of the struggle is what interests us and fear of drawing up a 'blueprint of the future society' terrorises us with its seeming implication of imposing a model, therefore authority.

In response to his old comrade Merlino's statement that what is essential in anarchism has been absorbed by socialism, Galleani elaborates the clear distinction between anarchist communism and the socialist model of collectivism. Collectivism, common ownership of the means of production involving 'from each according to their ability, to each in proportion to their work', is based on an evaluation of the finished product, whereas anarchist communism implies full satisfaction of the needs of the individual regardless of the value of the product. Surely this must be the essential foundation of the 'world without measure' that we often refer to, yet rarely think through. If we did, this would affect our choices and eliminate dubious 'alliances'. We repeat ad nauseam that the means we use condition the ends we achieve. By the same token the ends—intended as embarking on the road of freedom, which as we have said is infinite and never actually 'ends'—we desire should affect the means we use, and never losing sight of the latter might prevent some unfortunate, when not disastrous, undertakings.

We are living in times of 'crisis' and this often leads comrades down the blind alley of pragmatism and compromise, verging on political realism. The arrogant upsurge of nazis, sadistic cops or whatever other enemies of freedom can lead to a unidimensional stance in alliance with those who define themselves in oppositional terms, thereby losing sight of the revolution, the splendor of its beckoning and the vicissitudes of creative diffused insurgency and attack.

Galleani repudiates in total any struggle for partial gains or reforms, 'the ballast of the bourgeoisie' that the latter throws out under the violent pressure of the masses, making some 'inane concessions'. If the socialist aims at the conquest of parliament (albeit without the State), or at least some form of administrative bodies, the most ardent desire of the anarchist—and all the 'excluded'— is to see parliament in flames as part of the self-organisation of the attack. '..instead of the mere passive and polite resistance so fervently recommended by the socialists, the anarchists prefer boycott, sabotage and, for the sake of struggle itself, immediate attempts at partial expropriation, individual rebellion and insurrection.' To the horror of the socialists.

For Galleani the consequences of anarchist abstentionism 'are far less superficial than the inert apathy ascribed to it by the sneering careerists of 'scientific socialism'. By stripping the State of the constitutional fraud with which it presents itself it exposes its essential character as representative, procurer and policeman of the ruling classes'. In the name of what 'greater cause' can any anarchist put that self-evident truth aside, thereby liquidating themselves in-

Utopian? Only Joshua Merlino — for whom the sun ought to stop for ever, hovering over the agony of every human being who yearns for liberty, justice and emancipation.

And he remains alone!

3 We have shown with some success (unless we sin by boasting) that *anarchism has now and has always had first rate men;* that it receives testimonials of the greatest interest and merit quite often in the field of scholarship, as these substantial works (besides those already mentioned) bear witness — *Anarchisme* by Eltzbacher (a judge at the Hall Court) and *Anarchia* by Ettore Zoccoli (a high functionary in the Department of Public Education).[8] And we have also shown that, even if the contrary were true, it would be arbitrary to deduce symptoms of decadence and exhaustion in anarchism, when the hopes and ideals of its heralds have become the thought and action of numberless legions of rebels all over the world, who are rising in solidarity across all frontiers, struggling for the their mutual and total emancipation.

4 No one denies that there may be disagreement, even fierce dissension, at times, between anarchists who believe in party organization and prefer above all other means a systematic propaganda and educational action and anarchists who prefer individual initiative and, above all, individual action. But this difference arises from a misunderstanding which is bound to become clarified under the spur of expe-

[8] Paul Eltzbacher: Anarchism *(L'Anarchisme* — Ed. Giard, Paris, 1923). Ettore Zoccoli: *"L'Anarchia — Gli agitatori, Le idee, I fatti"* — Fratelli Bocca, Milano, 1907.

The Great Revolution divested divinity of all authority, which now took root on Earth and found its repository and its sceptre in each and every citizen.

Only one step remains to reach that Atlantis, where, as the poet used to prophesy in the old days, *everyone has within himself his law and his power, and is his own sovereign.*[7]

And property, which accompanies and gives character to the forms and the historical institutions through which we have rapidly passed; property, which was the *jus utendi et abutendi* [law of use and abuse], the absolute and odious Roman law that allowed the use and abuse of one's own property without having to answer to anyone; property, which has lost much of its primitive arrogance, which tries by means of self-serving philanthropy to earn forgiveness for its past excesses and abuses, which has juridically acknowledged and assumed some social duties (as we have described in its proper place) — will property, with revolution at its heels, ever take the last step? Will it ever be some day the social instrument for well-being, liberty and happiness for all?

When all information in the fields of biology, history and economics is converging to indicate a continuing and endless progression, a constant evolution from slavery to liberty, from coercion to autonomy, who could consider the uprising of the proletariat and the realization of anarchy

[7] The poet was Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863–1938) in his poem *"La Nave"* (The Ship) — Odi Navali — 1892–93, pag.735–738.

stantaneously, reducing being an anarchist to some kind of identity that can vascillate under the pressure of lack of perspective and the abject principle of 'necessary evil'? At a distance of over a century, Galleani reminds us that 'Anarchism rejects authority in any form: to the principle of representation, it opposes the direct and independent action of individuals and masses: to egalitarian and parliamentarian action, it opposes rebellion, insurrection, the general strike, the social revolution.' For any of us who might have forgotten.

Galleani denounces the supreme cowardice of rejecting individual acts of rebellion when it is we ourselves to have sown the first seed. 'The propaganda of the anarchists creates the psychological climate among the people…our responsibility in all acts of rebellion is more precise, more specific and undeniable where our propaganda has been energetic, vigorous and has left a deep impression…'

There is no incompatibility or contradiction between communism and individualism in the context of a free united co-operation of all people for production based on solidarity. Communism is simply the foundation by which the individual has the opportunity to regulate himself and carry out his functions.

Every anarchist who is faithful to his denial of privilege and aspires to an economic reality where land, mines and all the tools of production are indivisible common property is, in his aspirations, a communist. At the same time if he denies authority and is part of the realisation of com-

plete independence and autonomy of the individual from any economic, political and moral boss, he is inevitably an individualist.

Antithesis? No, integration.

It would no doubt be interesting to make an in depth analysis of Galleani's thesis, his use of language, his unqualified belief in progress, etc., but here we have preferred to give the reader just a few sparks from what might otherwise seem to present itself as an historical document, and end with Galliani's unadorned home truth: The anarchist movement and the labour movement [read leftism] follow two parallel lines, and it has been geometrically proven that parallel lines never meet.

Let's fight with all those who have no place in this execrable world, for the conquest of life and the realization of our dreams. JW

"Enforced groupings: the oriental despotisms, the societies bound together by coercion, the subservience of all to a symbolic and living representative of cosmic fate, of deified power."

"Subordinated groupings: corresponding to the era of feudal oligarchical federations, of diversification resulting from armed struggle or economic competition."

"Co-ordinated groupings: a period that has barely begun and which belongs to the future, but whose first thoughts have been: *liberty* — the denial of coercion; *equality* — the denial of social or political difference; *brotherhood* — the loyal co-ordination of individual powers in place of the struggles and conflicts caused by mortal competition."[6]

In plainer words — the first authority was god-in heaven and the Incas and the Pharaohs were nothing but his vicars on Earth.

The representatives of god, who are among the craftiest at any given moment, had to share power with the strong; and so, after long and bloody struggles, which smouldered for centuries, sovereign power and divine authority set foot on Earth and were invested in the emperor or in the king, who will be forced much later to submit to yet another compromise, reconciling within himself the grace of god with the will of the nation… as long as it lasts.

[6] L. Metchnikoff: *"La Civilization et les Grands Fleuves Historiques"* Librairie Hachette, Paris 1889. Pag. 34–35.

2 *The Utopian part of anarchism has been acknowledged as such and no longer has any value.*

The Utopian part is, of course, the aspiration to a society without masters, without government, without law, without any coercive control — a society functioning on the basis of mutual agreement and allowing each member the freedom to enjoy absolute autonomy. Right?

Does Merlino really want to stroll with us, arm-in-arm through the work of a great friend of ours, a man of learning who is as modest as he is profound, the favourite collaborator of Elisée Reclus — Leon Metchnikoff?

Let us reread together, Saverio. At this hearth our faith became unshakable conviction. Who knows, it may rekindle yours!

"In nature's biological progression, liberty may serve as a measure of the progress of the social bond…"

"In the *lower orders* we have *imposed* groupings, based on coercion… rudimentary colonies of cells united by exterior or mechanical ties."

"In the *intermediary orders* we have *subordinated* groupings, based on differentiation, on a division of work progressively more specialized and intimate."

"In the *higher orders* we have *co-ordinated* groupings based on personal inclinations and on the ever more conscious communion of interests."

So there is a continuous ascent from compulsion to autonomy.

In history we have corresponding phenomena:

Introduction

The first decade of the twentieth century seemed to be quite promising. We were being told at school and on the streets that a new era of democratic freedom and social justice had opened. Criticism of the old institutions was encouraged by politicians, and the hopes of working people were raised by the labour unions' promises of protection. The vanguards of political and social thought were spreading the seeds of new ideas among the workers of the world about ways and means to bring about a thorough emancipation from the oppression of political power and from the exploitation of land and capital by private ownership.

Rulers and employers had not changed, of course, and used violence and terror from time to time. But their brutality was beginning to provoke tentative efforts at resistance. In the industrial centres, the mining fields, and agrarian communities, sporadic explosions of rebellion were registered. In Russia a serious revolutionary movement shook the old order of things during the years 1905–1906. The movement was finally defeated, but it had badly destroyed the myth of the Czar's absolute authority, and, even more important, it had deeply hurt the old regime at its roots, the countryside.

In Western Europe working people were in motion. The class struggle was in full development, and no police or military bloodshed seemed able to stop it. Governments use jails and guns against dissent, but there are not enough jails and guns to silence all dissenters when they are determined to speak out and fight for their rights. Everywhere dissent had found ways to express itself. In Italy alone, more than eighty anarchist periodicals were published — with varying success — during the first seven years of the century. And many, many more were, of course, being published elsewhere, in Europe and the Americas.

At the beginning of the year, 1907, some Belgian and Dutch comrades proposed an International Anarchist Congress to be held some time in the following Summer. It was considered the first truly international Anarchist Congress, and it took place in Amsterdam from the 23rd to the 31st day of October 1907.

During this period, one of the most absorbing debates among the anarchists was about the attitude they would take on the subject of syndicalism.[1] Born in France, syndicalism was substantially a rebellion against the submissive character the trade unions and similar labour organizations had assumed under the leadership of the legalist socialists. Regional and national conventions were promoted in all countries. In Italy, one such congress was held in Rome from the 16th to the 20th day of June 1907, with the partici-

[1] Syndicalism is defined in the Encyclopedia Britannica as "the name given to a form of socialist doctrine elaborated by and born from the experience of the French *Syndicats* or trade Unions.

any subsequent work of Marx and Engels. At least, in theory, they had foreseen the inevitably violent expropriation of the ruling class and the destruction of the State. Now the socialist movement aims at nothing more than the conquest of parliament by means of the vote, the conquest of the government (and not of the State) by the means of parliament, collaborating with radicals in the past, with the liberals today, and with the clerical scoundrels tomorrow and thereafter, as the class struggle, the revolution and the expropriation of wealth are stored in the attic and kept under the seven seals.

Thus the socialist movement commits itself to all those means that anarchism repudiates — this admitted repeatedly by Merlino himself — so that the disagreement between those two tendencies of the proletariat has grown into an ever deepening and irreconcilable conflict.

How can Merlino say that the socialist movement has absorbed what is essential in anarchism?

Had he written that, since September 1892 (that is, since the Congress of Genoa), having cast away from its bosom any revolutionary tendency and having dedicated itself to the conquest of political power, the socialist movement has been absorbed bit by bit by capitalist parliamentarism until now it is little more than an advanced wing of it, then Merlino would have rendered a more honest homage to the truth — and given a more sober documentation to the history of the proletarian movement, constantly confirmed by everyday reality.

serious and austere *Journal des Economistes*[4] many years ago) his moral integration requires the "… satisfaction of all his material and moral needs, the freedom and incoercibility of the individual"; if "… the anarchist system excludes the necessity for government, parliament, police, and judiciary"; if (as Merlino, himself, wrote so clearly in his pamphlet. *Why We Are Anarchists*[5]*)* "The first step towards the future society will be inevitable revolution, inevitable because the ruling classes will only surrender to a superior force"; and if anarchism excludes elections and parliamentary action as means to revolution and emancipation, for (again as Merlino once wrote with our full and sincerest assent), "The workers will always be cheated and swindled in elections, because even if the majority of elected representatives were composed of workers, they would be powerless to do anything, for the intelligent and active comrades, once elected, become renegades and indolent; and, lastly, because the people learn to believe that salvation can only come from above, from the government, from parliament, and so cease to struggle for it".

No such absorption could take place and none did. Just in the last twenty years, the socialist movement has poured enough water onto its socialism to drown even the last revolutionary spark of the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 and

[4] FS Merlino: *"L'Internazionale Economica"* (Economic Internationale) Grosseto. Tip. Etruria, 1902.

[5] FS Merlino: *"Perche' siamo anarchici"* (Why we are anarchists) Buenos Aires, Tip. Sociologica, 1900.

pation of more than one hundred militants from all parts of Italy.

It was the first public gathering of anarchists in Italy since the beginning of the century, and the conservative circles, the faint-hearted and the fanatics, informed by an alarmist press, could not help noticing it and brooding over it. How great and how imminent could the danger of such 'subversive' activities be? Mr Cesare Sobrero, the Roman correspondent of a Turin daily newspaper, *La Stampa,* remembered that a Roman lawyer, Francesco Saverio Merlino,[2] who had been for many years a capable and learned anarchist militant and a competent writer on social matters, might be of exceptional help in searching for an answer to these questions.

Merlino consented to be interviewed, and the result was published by *La Stampa* on 18 June under the sensational title, 'La Fine Dell Anarchismo' (The End of Anarchism). Other orthodox newspapers, such as *L'Ora* in Palermo and *L'Unione* in Tunis reprinted it verbatim for the benefit of their middle-class readers.

Obviously, the more than one hundred anarchists gathered in Rome — as well as their comrades scattered through-

[2] Francesco Saverio Merlino (1856–1930) was a militant anarchist from 1877 to 1897. He wrote many pamphlets and books on anarchism and libertarian socialism and edited newspapers and essays. A lawyer, he defended the 26 insurgents of the 'Matese Band' (April 5 1877) at their trial in Benevento (August 29, 1878) and all his life continued to defend — in court and in the press — anarchists who had been accused of subversive or revolutionary acts or words.

out all parts of Italy and the world — felt that the offensive statement was unwarranted, that anarchism was very much alive in their hearts, in their minds, and above all, in their words and deeds.

Luigi Fabbri,[3] who was then co-editor with Pietro Gori[4] of the fortnightly review *Il Pensiero* (Thought) and a personal friend of Merlino, couldn't believe his eyes. He wrote to Merlino, asking if the 'strange' published text of the interview was really a faithful presentation of his opinions. A reply came to him promptly, saying that everything in the published interview, except for the title, reflected his opinions on anarchism. Both Merlino's letter and Fabbri's com-

[3] Luigi Fabbri (1877–1935). When very young he began writing for anarchist papers and reviews — and started to be persecuted by the police. In 1898 he was arrested and sent to the Island of Ponza (off the Gulf of Naples) then to the Island of Favignana (in the Egadi Archipelago, off the westernmost coast of Sicily). He spent his life working for the movement from four to eight in the morning and at his job as a teacher the rest of the day. In 1926, having refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Fascist dictatorship, he lost his position as a teacher and went to France from where he was expelled in 1929. Allowed to land in Uruguay, he started publication of a review called *Studi Sociali* (Social Studies), which he continued until death snatched him from his conscientious world. *Malatesta — The Man and his thought*, *Dittatura e Rivoluzione, Contrarivoluzione preventiva* are just a few of his best books.

[4] Pietro Gori (1856–1911). Lawyer, poet and compelling orator, he dedicated his life to anarchism and its aspirations. He was persecuted and imprisoned for his activities and had to roam around Europe and the two Americas. His works were published in 12 volumes by Cromo-Tipo *La Sociale,* Spezia (1911–12) and again, in 13 volumes, by Editrice Moderna, Milano (1948). Two large volumes of *Selected Works,* were published by Edizioni L'Antistato, Cesena, with a presentation by Guiseppe Rose (1968).

Reclus and Kropotkin, if yesterday was the time for the martyrs and apostles, today belongs to the proletariat, who perform their task with ardour and conscious tenacity, a sign of triumph rather than a symptom of anarchism's decadence, as F S Merlino seems to believe, strangely enough.

Strangely! He would have every reason to cry over the end of anarchism, like Jeremiah or Cassandra, if the trunk had withered, if no ethical value, no revolutionary activity, no faith had sprouted from the works of Bakunin, Reclus and Kropotkin. But if the trunk is alive, he is all wrong. Especially wrong for not having remained faithful to the ideal on which he has spent so much of himself.

* * *

We are at the end!

Of all the reasons which led F S Merlino to infer the incurable exhaustion and consequent death of anarchism, not one survives an impartial examination or resists a conscientious critique.

1 *What is essential in anarchism has not been absorbed by the socialist movement, nor could it have been,* if "… the essence of anarchism — in terms of the evolution of thought and society — is a concept of man, the integration of his needs, his yet-unexplored powers, his sociability, his varied relations with his fellow-man and with the external world he lives in; if (as F S Merlino, himself, declared in the

tious herds so that they may have faith in themselves and become the authors of their own destiny, accomplishing this on the basis of equality and freedom. This harder task has been sustained by the more modest and ardent propagators of ideas!

Fra Contadini, by our good Errico Malatesta; *The Religious Plague,* by old Johann Most; *Dieu n'existe pas,* by Sebastien Faure,[3] books translated into twenty languages and spread among all kinds of people — are they not the thoughts of Bakunin, Reclus and Kropotkin, continuing to convince and to propagate? And are they not, in fact, the most enthusiastic signs of the masses' agreement with our aspirations, the necessary road to any revolutionary experiment, to any initial realization?

None of the Encyclopaedists led the people to the conquest of the Bastille. At the Constitutional, Legislative and Convention assemblies, the men who abolished the privilege of caste, shoved the king of France under the guillotine and wrote the Declaration of Rights, were totally unknown before July 14, 1789. In the crucible of revolution they distinguished themselves as the pure metal from which the new order emerged. None of them enjoyed the benefits of the revolution they had started, supported or led it to its glorious success — a demonstration that the events, themselves, of each historical period, forge men for the purpose at hand; that, if the day before yesterday was the time for Bakunin,

[3] Errico Malatesta (1853–1932) See p. 126, Johann Most (1846–1906), Sebastian Faure (1858–1939) See p. 131.

mentary were later published in *Il Pensiero* in Rome and in *Cronaca Sovversiva,* the Italian language weekly Luigi Galleani had been publishing in Barre, Vermont, since 1903.

Luigi Galleani had been, like Merlino, a well known militant in the Italian movement since the eighteen-eighties. Both were then passionate fighters for freedom and social justice against the brutal repressions of the Italian Government. In 1884 Merlino was tried for 'conspiracy' and sentenced by a Roman tribunal to four years in prison. On appeal, the sentence was reduced to three years, but by then Merlino had gone abroad. For ten years he travelled through Western Europe and North America, spreading everywhere, by word of mouth, by books, articles and essays, his competent criticisms of the existing order of things. In 1892, while in New York City, he, with other Italian comrades, founded the journal, *Il Grido degli Oppressi,* (The Cry of the Oppressed), which existed until November 1894. But, by that time, Merlino had returned to Italy where he was arrested in Naples and imprisoned to serve his old sentence.

Galleani was also in prison, having been arrested in Genoa at the end of 1893, tried for conspiracy with 35 other comrades and sentenced to three years in prison.

But, at the end of that period, while Galleani, was more resolute than ever in his convictions, was forced to take up residence on an island under police supervision *(domicilio coatto),* Merlino was set completely free at the end of his term. And at the beginning of 1897, having established himself in Rome, he sent a letter to the conservative newspaper, *Il Messaggero* declaring that his opinions had changed. This

provoked a debate with Errico Malatesta,[5] a debate that continued until 1898, when Malatesta was arrested. In conclusion, Merlino stated that he no longer considered himself an anarchist, but that he would rather define himself a 'libertarian socialist'. Furthermore, he now approved of parliamentary action, so much so, that, in agreement with other friends, he proposed to present Galleani (who was then confined to the island of Pantelleria, situated between Sicily and Tunisia) as a candidate for Parliament on the Socialist Party ticket as a protest against political detention and as a means to set him free by popular request.

Galleani refused the offer, publicly and most emphatically, and sent to the anarchist paper *L'Agitazione* (of Ancona) a signed statement to that effect. After this, a collective proposal from the anarchist prisoners on Pantelleria

[5] Errico Malatesta (1853–1932). It may be said that the story of Malatesta's life is intimately woven with the story of the first sixty years of the international anarchist movement. From his first trip to Switzerland, in 1872 to his last return from London in December 1919, he lived more abroad than in Italy and spoke to workers and people of all nations. His essays and pamphlets have been translated and published in many languages: in Italy, three volumes of Scritti (Writings) edited by L Fabbri and printed in Bruxelles under the auspices of Geneva's *Il Risveglio* (1932–1934); a volume of *Scritti Scelti* (Selected Writings) Ed R L Napoli, 1947; over a dozen pamphlets, one of which, *Fra Contadini* has been translated into a score of languages and published in no one knows exactly how many editions and copies. In English it was first published in instalments by *Freedom* and then in pamphlet by Freedom Press in 1891, under the title: *A talk about Anarchist-Communism.* The book *Errico Malatesta — His Life and Ideas* by Vernon Richards (London, Freedom Press, 1965) is certainly worthy of its subject.

almost inaccessible world of metaphysics; but he doubts its destiny to the point of predicting its agony when its word has become flesh and blood through the incorruptible faith of several millions of followers spread all over the five parts of the world.

According to the law of physics as well as the experience of history, intensity is offset by dimension.

We gladly concede to Merlino that Bakunin, Reclus and Kropotkin remain unsurpassed, and we are also ready to admit that we will never again have forerunners as noble and great But let him concede, in turn (and he can do so without effort or contradiction)that the intensity of thought and life peculiar to the few superior spirits is inversely compensated for by the greater and more industrious number of intelligent, conscientious, devoted and fierce militants, who although stumbling against all the snares of reaction — from the Bourbonic garrote to the Tokyo imperial gallows — are always in arms, have hoisted the flag of revolt, and roused the hope of emancipation in the oppressed all over the world.

Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* sets forth the doctrine, the law of solidarity among all living beings, to the mortification of those who insist on misinterpreting Darwin; Elisée Reclus spells the alternate rhythm of evolution and revolution with the same rigid synchronism of the pendulum's oscillations; and both are incisive winners in the world of scholarship and thought. But how much harder is the struggle to instill that same feeling of solidarity and faith in revolution into the masses, to instill the denial of god among the superstí-

Anselmo Lorenzo, vigorous, straight and inflexible as an oak under the fury of the wildest reaction? And Francisco Ferrer, just yesterday felled by Bourbon lead in the Montjuich moats? And Edward Carpenter? And Tarrida del Marmol? and William Tcherkesoff? And Max Nettlau, who has erected the most beautiful monument to Bakunin, with his complete, documented biography? Are they not names and men who, for wisdom and propaganda and loftiness of the anarchist ideal, can properly face the beat in the opposing parties? Don't they with their assiduous vigilance, provide the vanguard of the movement with the material and ammmunition indispensable for bold incursions?[2]

And considering that the best dreams, the passion of superior minds, intrepid hearts, heroic souls, would go up in smoke like all dreams if they did not find their incarnation in the enthusiasm, the self-abnegation and faith of the humble people, have not the members of the vanguard, in the paradoxical intensity of that great trinity's thought, prepared the host for greater eucharists?

It is peculiar! Merlino believes in the good fortune and triumph of anarchism so long as it remains the inspiration of prophets, of a few thinkers who weigh the word in the

[2] James Guillaume (1844–1916) author of *"L'Internationale: documents et souvenirs"*. Anselmo Lorenzo (1841–1914), Tarrida del Marmol (1861–1915), Francisco Ferrer (1859–1909). Edward Carpenter (1844–1929). William Tcherkesoff (1846–1925). Max Nettlau (1865–1944): all Internationalists and Anarchists of importance for their writings, their feelings and activities.

was sent to all other anarchist prisoners, either in Italian jails or in *domicilio coatto.* It was an appeal to publish a special paper, edited and paid for by themselves, for the purpose of asserting once and for all their firm refusal to compromise, or in any way distort, their opposition to the State — a fundamental tenet of their convictions as anarchists

Their proposal was accepted by all. The comrades from Ancona agreed to publish the prisoners' declarations, and a four-page newspaper appeared on the second day of November 1899 under the title, *I Morti* (The Deceased). It carried the byline, "Edited and published by the political prisoners". Articles and statements were signed individually or collectively by the detained anarchists. The front page carried an editorial by Galleani entitled, *Manet Immota Fides* (The faith remains unshaken), stating that the hostages of reaction were very much alive and determined to save the dignity of their principles. They would rather remain in the squalor of their jails or their islands of confinement, at peace with themselves, than return to the so-called free world by bowing to their jailers — whom they despised — with concessions they knew to be false and shameful.

The paper was confiscated by the police, but enough copies were saved and circulated all over Italy and abroad to secure it an enduring place in the hearts and memories of militants and concerned people.

Shortly after this, Galleani escaped from the island of Pantelleria. He landed in North Africa and tried to settle in Egypt, but without success. In fact, he found himself facing

the danger of extradition to Italy. So he moved to London with his family and from there embarked for the United States, where he had been offered editorial responsibility for *La Questione Sociale,* an Italian language weekly which had been published in Paterson, NJ since 1895.

Arriving in Paterson in October 1901, he found thousands of weavers and dyers of the textile industry in turmoil against their employers and exploiters. Of course, he was soon involved in their struggle and he contributed unsparingly, not only with the spoken and written word, but also with his personal solidarity. So much so, that on 18 June 1902, on the occasion of a sharp clash, he was wounded in the shooting. He saved himself from arrest by crossing the Slate line. Comrades William McQueen and Rudolf Grossman (Pierre Ramus),[6] although not involved in the clash, were arrested, tried, and sentenced to live years in prison.

[6] William McQueen a young militant writer and public speaker, from Scotland, was an enthusiastic supporter of the strikers' cause. He was arrested and charged with being one of the instigators of the Paterson disorders of June 18, 1902. He was tried and condemned *in abstentia* for conspiracy, with Galleani and Rudolf Grossman, to five years of hard labour. After the sentence was confirmed by the higher courts, McQueen returned from Scotland, where he had gone to join his family, and surrendered to the New Jersey authorities who kept him in prison for three years. He was released after a Paterson jury refused to condemn Galleani, who was tried on the same charges in April 1907.

Rudolf Grossman (1882–1942), better known by his pen-name Pierre Ramus, was a non-violent anarchist, born in Austria and well-known internationally for his zeal and writings. He was pitilessly persecuted by governments. He was not in Paterson on June 18, 1902. Nevertheless he was arrested, tried and condemned to five years hard labour. The

spreading of the gospels was followed the day after by the *Summa Theologiae* of Saint Thomas Aquinas.[1]

Doesn't the dazzling announcement to the deprived of a totally new world, totally different from the one that afflicts them — a world of equality, brotherhood, freedom, well-being and joy — have to be followed by a long and painful daily apostolate *in partibus infidelium [*in the land of the unbelievers], against fierce opposition, so that its echo may reach to the ends of the nation or of the globe, recruiting the phalanxes to whom will be entrusted the banners of the burning faith, the secret of victory?

It was a long, long journey from the simple evangelism along the shores of Lake Tiberias to Constantine's edict, in 313 AD — and it was by way of the Roman catacombs. And Christ — if he ever lived — never reappeared; the apostolate was the work of humble, obscure and simple minded fishermen — as the legend says.

Agreed that Reclus and Kropotkin will remain, together with Bakunin, in the first rank of our history, unsurpassed in this period. They are and remain the heralds.

But how many apostles they aroused! James Guillaume, who is now constructing the history of the First International Workingmen's Association with indisputable documents and great patience — is he not in the forefront a shining example of productivity and fervour? And

[1] Saint Thomas Aquine, a Dominican friar who lived from about 1227 to 1274, that is, almost thirteen centuries after the birth of the supposed founder of Christianism, and more than one thousand years after the writing of the *"New Testament"*.

do not brighten the records of the civil state every day, in any country.

Meanwhile, he has died, leaving us his last masterpiece, *L'Homme et la Terre,* the synthesis of sixty years of research, study and meditation which will be a source of wisdom for a long time. This means that the good Reclus remains in the battle, still in the forefront.

But, then, Kropotkin is still alive, as always, vigorous, ardent, and productive. *Modern Science and Anarchism,* his latest work, [1903] belongs to yesterday, but we have good reason to state that he has other works in the making, in no way inferior to the preceding ones that have received so much credit and praise in the scientific world — notwithstanding its fundamental heterodoxy.

He too remains in the forefront, and it seems to me excessive and strange that Merlino should hurry to bury them in order to say that anarchism has no more first-rate men and can no longer produce works of considerable scientific and political value.

Confidentially, I would also like to ask him a question. When a new movement dawns — and, from its ideals down to its tangled structure of interests, it reflects, and also subverts, all of the social relationships, the whole moral, legal, political and economic make-up of society — is it possible that the theoretical articulation of its aspirations, the first step in choosing a goal and determining the ways and means of achieving it, can immediately be followed by the sprouting of a complete philosophical, scientific and literary structure of the system? As if, for example, the first

Galleani found refuge in the State of Vermont, where under the name of Luigi Pimpino he started with the help of the local anarchist group the weekly *Cronaca Sovversiva,* which continued until the year 1918 when it was suppressed by the US Federal Government for its stand against the war.

Merlino's interview was duly noted in *Cronaca Sovversiva,* as was the text of Merlino's letter to Fabbri. Once the authenticity of the interview had been established, Galleani felt that something else had to be said. And he said it in a very interesting way.

Under the headline 'La Fine del'Anarchismo?' — Galleani turned the title of Merlino's interview into a question — a series of ten articles was published from 17 August 1907 to 25 January 1908. Then the series stopped never to reappear on the pages of *Cronaca Sovversiva.*

To be sure, Galleani never resigned himself to leave the essay on anarchism unfinished, but things were happening in the world which attracted his immediate attention. He was a fighter, an agitator, if you prefer, and he conceived of anarchism as a way of life, a method intended to open and expand a coherent way to the eventual emancipation of mankind. He felt that his time and energies should be dedicated to the immediate tasks and problems of the daily struggle that are necessary to assert the vitality of anarchism and pave the way to the future.

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higher Court of New Jersey voided the Paterson verdict for procedural reasons.

Those, the pre-World War One years, were dynamic times. There was the world-wide awakening of the toiling masses to the consciousness of their place in society and to their right to be free from capitalist exploitation and political oppression. There were strikes on an unprecedented scale and violent repressions; military conquests, warmongering and intrigues among capitalists and rulers. In the United States it was the time of the truculent T. Roosevelt regime that, in the name of freedom, conquered alien territories in the Caribbean Sea and in the Pacific Ocean, and introduced at home the inquisitorial crusade against anarchism. Then came the First World War. *Cronaca Sovversiva* was suppressed — as were hundreds of other more or less radical newspapers and reviews, accused of heresy or treason; Galleani was deported to Italy — as were hundreds of others deported to their respective native lands, marked as undesirable for their unorthodox opinions.[7]

Such were the reasons that compelled him to give priority to the daily struggle against the immediate evils. When, at the beginning of the year 1924, he was released from a Turin prison (he had spent a fourteen month sentence imposed on him by the local criminal court for some anti-militaristic articles), he found himself alone, old, ill and under the constant police surveillance of the fascist regime. His mind returned to his unfinished works. One was the

[7] For information consult: *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty — A personal narrative of an Historic Official Experience* by Louis F Post, Chicago, Charles N Kerr & Co.

Chapter 8. Anarchy Will Be!

I am unable to reply to one of Merlino's statements with consideration and breadth that it requires and that my opponent deserves.

I am sorry. But he who has had to live for about ten years in a small mountain town, with only a small library for the needs of twelve thousand inhabitants of least half-a-dozen nationalities, has only a sparse and backward bibliography at his disposal.

And, unable to renew or increase his slender library with the scanty compensation of his work (compensation susceptible to frequent eclipses when *Cronaca Sovversiva* sails among the rocks of deficit), he can only with uneasiness, contest F S Merlino — a walking library in himself — when he states that, "Anarchism which was once so productive, can no longer inspire any works of noticeable scientific and political value"; and that "… since Kropotkin and Reclus it has had no other first-rate names".

Reclus is dead, true; and no one else is taking his place; but Merlino will certainly admit that men of Reclus' stature

its strings and have learned the decalogue, and… you who never move, not even under the lash?".

They argue and then they leave us in the lurch.

But internal and profound causes of inertia and decay are to be found here, not any doctrinal disagreement between the organizationalists and the individualists of anarchism. These disagreements — neither many, nor forceful, negligible in comparison to the immensity of the task and the goals — will lead them under the sharp spur of experience and necessity to find the appropriate way, the way to revolution, whose initial phase must be the individual act of rebellion, inseparable from propaganda, from the mental preparation which understands it, integrates it, leading to larger and more frequent repetitions through which collective insurrections flow into the social revolution.

This, then, is the result of this contempt for action.

translation of the last chapters of Clement Duval's autobiography.[8] The essay on anarchism was the other. Both were published by *L'Adunata dei Refrattari* The Call of the Refractaires) the Italian language weekly that had started its publication in New York City, 15 April 1922.

'La Fine dell'Anarchismo?' appeared in its entirety lor the first time in twenty-four installments from 11 October 1924, to 11 April 1925. Later, in the same year, the whole series was issued in book form by the editors of *L'Adunata;* a book of one hundred and thirty pages, fifty-two of which cover the text written and first published in 1907 and the remaining seventy-eight pages, the section which was written in its definitive form in 1924.

The text was preceded by a six-line inscription, handwritten and signed by Luigi Galleani. It was dedicated to his old comrades, living in America, in memory of the many years they had spent side by side, working, hoping and struggling for their mutual cause of freedom and justice. This was followed by a preface, written by the

[8] Clement Duval (1850–1935) was a French anarchist who favoured direct action by means of expropriation. He had been sentenced to capital punishment, having been arrested for burglary and wounds inflicted on a police agent in 1885, but in 1887 the sentence was changed to hard labour for life. In 1901 he escaped from the Cayenne Island penitentiary and reached the United States where he rejoined the anarchist movement and died in 1935. Those of us who knew him well had the opportunity to appreciate the physical and moral strength of the man and the depth of his convictions. He wrote his autobiography, which was translated in Italian by Galleani and published in one volume by *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*.

first editor of *L'Adunata,* Costantino Zonchello.[9] In the second edition these two items do not appear. In their place, instead, was a 'presentation' by G Rose.[10] who added a considerable number of footnotes to the essay, many of which are translated for the present edition.

The book was well received by the movement on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Errico Malatesta, who received one of the few copies that passed through the thick wall of fascist censorship, wrote favourably about it in *Pensiero e Volontà* (the review he was publishing in Rome) — saying that it was not only, "A clear presentation of anarchist communism", it was also "A lucid statement of the ever-present problems of anarchism in relation to the would-be revolu-

[9] Costantino Zonchello (1883–1967) came to America from his native Sardinia in 1907. Happening to meet some comrade in Cincinnati, Ohio, he became a supporter and collaborator of *"Cronaca Sovversiva"*. He was also an enthusiastic speaker. The difficulties in which the paper and the movement found themselves, made him more interested and active than ever. And when *"Cronaca Sovversiva"* was suppressed in 1918, he edited several underground papers, *"Il Diritto"*, and *"L' Inevitabile"*. In the spring of 1922, as the result of the efforts of old militants from all parts of the country, *"L'Adunata dei Refrattari"* started its publications as a fortnightly, becoming a weekly the following year. Zonchello was its first editor, and remained a frequent collaborator till the end of his active life

[10] Giuseppe Rose (1921–1975) a teacher by profession, he was a capable writer for our Italian anarchist press. He edited the review *"Volontà"* after the death of Giovanna Berneri from 1962 to the end of his life. Among his better writings are: *"Le Aforie del Marxismo Libertario"* and *"Bibliografia di Bakunin"* (Bakunin's bibliography).

waved his anarchists appeal to abstain from voting over the obscene electoral shows, a document which to this day is unsurpassed for its fierceness of thought and beauty of expression. That was living!

Compare that period with the one in which we live.

We have mocked, rejected, cursed revolutionary action because it exceeded our canons, our expectations, the ethical and aesthetic lines within which we wanted it contained. And we have dried up the sources from which it could spring, we have cut the nerves anxiously stretching to reach it, we have extinguished any flame that might nourish it. And now we pay with humiliation and bruises.

Because here, in these too-frequent public repudiations, in these insidious repudiations that are whispered about within certain coteries that bristle with distrust and suspicion of the unruly and the iconoclast, here, in particular, lies the cause of the atrophy that makes us the laughing stock of ever reactionary whim, of every reactionary bestiality.

Naturally!

Those who are eager for action find that we are very hard to please: "We make faces at the good Lord and you grumble! We rise against the state or its representatives, and you grumble; we revolt against property, and you frown and look at your pockets; we rise against morality and you, afraid of the scandal, retreat to your shell and excommunicate us! But will you do us the great favour of stirring yourselves, once and for all, you who know so well how revolution should take its first steps, you who hold

seed and brought forth, the first bud, it is supreme cowardice to add our cursing to the indignant outcry of the paid journalistic hacks, professional mourners, and evil cut-throats.

And like all cowardices, this one too must be paid for with the spasm of impotence and the anguish of abandonment.

F S Merlino should remember the fervour of propaganda and action that brightened the four years from May 1,1890, to June 24,1894. When we would leave our garret in the morning, we never had the slightest certainty of returning in the evening; arrests were made every day, at any hour; trials and sentences followed; and in case of acquittal, banishment was the rule. But it meant living! And inside the cells of Mazas,[21] or in the sadness of exile, early in the morning we would hear the echo of a dynamite blast, a judge's chamber had blown up with one of the accomplices still inside, and the unknown author of the rebellious deed had accepted full responsibility for his act and was walking with a song into the 'widow's' arms [the guillotine]. And that tragic wave of enthusiasm and of fervour, brightened by sacrifice, filled everyone with an irresistible pride. Poets and men of letters, impressed by that fervour for renewal, were paying daily homages of sympathy and veneration to the fallen rebels, the Parisian newspaper *Figaro,* frightened, dedicated one of its special issues to the 'peril anarchiste' and, Octave Mirbeau[22],

[21] Mazas was a Parisian prison, long ago demolished.

[22] Octave Mirbeau (1848–1917). Writer of novels, dramas, essays, fascinated, at that time, by the Anarchists' logic, devotion, and courage.

tionary movements". He deplored the fact that very few Italians had the opportunity to read it.[11]

That anarchism is neither dead nor dying is — in these final decades of the twentieth century — better proved by facts than words. The chronicles of the Russian and the Spanish Revolutions have documented beyond any reasonable doubt the great importance of the anarchist ideas and activities in the struggle for the overthrowing of the old feudal and militaristic regimes. No less important have been the anarchists' experimentations with new forms of social existence, production and distribution.

Equally impressive is the fact that, even where the self-styled socialist revolutionaries have managed to impose their party's rule, they have failed to live up to their original promises of freedom and justice for all their subjects. Where they rule alone, they inflict on their peoples the yoke of a political and economic tyranny that has no equal except in fascist dictatorships. And where they have entered into a partnership with the old politicians of capitalism and the privileged classes, they function more as custodians and guardians of the common people who vote for them, than as defenders of their rights and freedom.

In these circumstances, men and women, endowed with heart and brains, concerned about the future of mankind, feel they have nowhere to turn for hope and inspiration

[11] Two recent editions of this book have been announced sometime ago: one by the publishers of the review "*Anarchismo*" in Catania; the other by Luigi Assandri, in Turin.

except to the ideas, experience, and history of the anarchist movement. And that is where Galleani's little book will be of great help today, tomorrow and forever, until the total emancipation of mankind from the scourges of oppression, exploitation and ignorance are erased from the face of the earth.

It is, of course, one man's conception of anarchism, its meaning, its history and its hopes for the future. But that man has knowledge, experience, integrity and a whole life of struggle, suffering and courage' It is worth seeing what he has to say.

Galleani's book was well-received by his friends and comrades, but, as a result, he was increasingly persecuted by his enemies. Immediately after the publication of *La Fine dell'Anarchismo?,* in America the Italian police began to intensify their harassments with more frequent invasions of his house, with arrests and imprisonments for receiving 'dangerous' newspapers from abroad. Before the end of the year 1927, he was finally arrested and sent back to *confino* in the Tyrrhenian Archipelago of Lipari, off the northern coast of Sicily, where he remained until 28 February 1930. Even there he was arrested again and sent to Messina, where he was formally tried — and sentenced to six months and six days in prison on a trumped-up charge of having insulted… Mussolini. In a small mountain village, still under police surveillance, he died on 4 November 1931, at the age of seventy.

M.S. November 1981

What else was the goal of the armed bands in Romagna in 1874, or those with Cafiero, Malatesta, and Stepniak in 1877?[20]

Now, we have been inciting, convincing, screaming at the people for half a century: "Arise, revolt, attack, expropriate, strike! Strike without pity, for there comes a point where revenge takes on the necessity and the awesomeness of justice and hastens its triumph". After fifty years of having instilled the necessity of action among the suffering people, as soon as the plebeian lion strikes the first blow (and perhaps it is awkward, because it has been chained for centuries and has lost the habit), and just as we should show our coolness and our resolve, we become disturbed by problems of conscience, made uneasy about the threat of reaction, distressed by residual evangelism, tormented by the burning need, if not of confusing ourselves in the Umbo of common morality certainly of lessening the contrasts. Too often, especially in the more responsible circles, we rush to belittle, to shame the act of rebellion, and, at times, are even inclined to classify it among the usual 'police frame-ups'.

Well, then, in plain words: *it is supreme cowardice to reject acts of rebellion when we, ourselves have sown the first*

[20] Carlo Cafiero (1846–1892). One of the first Italian Internationalists, close friend of Bakunin, a member of the "Matese Band" (1877). Also the first Italian translator of Karl Marx' *"Das Kapital"*.

Stepniak, pseudonym used by the Russian Anarchist Serge Kravcinski, who participated in the preparation of the "Matese Band" but was arrested before he joined the group of the rebels among which were Malatesta and Cafiero.

With honest conviction and corrosive persistence, haven't we proved the futility of hopes in legal means of resistance, progress, or success?

In the camp opposed to socialism and its political activity, its electoral or parliamentary victories, its supposed improvements in economic affairs, have they ever found more convinced disbelievers, more acrid critics, more unrelenting scoffers than us?

And in every circumstance, in our papers, all our lectures, in our meetings shaking with empty stomachs or ill contained passions, haven't we underlined a thousand times over that since political and economic privilege has no basis in equity or right, it could be justified only by its own violence and our cowardice? And that therefore capitalism and the state could not resist the impact of the working classes, whose right and strength, together, would be sure warranty of final victory?

That, instead of wasting time chattering in town, provincial, or national councils, searching for the philosopher's stone of good law, or for a good master, it would be better to start the revolution inside oneself and realize it according to the best of our abilities in partial experiments, wherever such an opportunity arises, and whenever a bold group of our comrades have the conviction and the courage to try them?

Chapter 1. The Interview with Merlino

Let us begin by giving the complete text of the interview. Our own modest considerations will follow.

> The Congress held in Rome and attended by 37 groups from the more important centres in Italy, has led me to undertake an investigation that I consider of interest; that is, to get acquainted with the anarchist party of today and to try to foresee its probable future.
>
> For this purpose I have turned to the wisest mind the anarchist party had in Italy up to a few years ago, Saverio Merlino, the lawyer who defended Bresci[1] at his trial in Milan.

[1] Gaetano Bresci was an Italian weaver who emigrated to Paterson, NJ. He returned to Italy and on July 29,1900 he killed the King Umberto I in Monza. At his trial, in Milan he explained his act as a necessary consequence of the State's cruel repressions of the people. The text of Merlino's courageous defense is still in circulation in pamphlet form. Bresci died in jail in 1902.

The name of Merlino evokes a whole past of struggle and, let us say it, of persecution. Saverio Merlino was, for a certain period of time, among the most active internationalists in Italy at a time when this could mean arrest, jail, exile, 'domicilio coatto' [enforced residence].

In 1884 he was a member of the famous armed rebels of Benevento and everybody remembers his sensational arrest, when he was discovered in the robes of a priest, while he was trying to save himself from serving a three-year sentence in jail for political crimes.[2]

Later, the combative spirit of Saverio Merlino turned to writing, and, as the socialist star was rising on the horizon of Italian politics, he, the anarchist no longer militant, published two books which have taken a durable place in the literature of its kind. *Socialism: Pro and Con* and *The Utopia of Collectivism.*[3]

Saverio Merlino separated from the anarchists when their activity turned more towards individualism. He then joined the Socialist Party,

[2] F S Merlino was not a member of the famous "Matera Band" which was active during year 1877. He participated, instead, in the defense of its 26 members at their trial in Benevento, from the 14th to the 25th of August 1878.

[3] *"Pro e contro il Socialismo. Esposizione critica dei principi e dei sistemi socialisti"* (Fratelli Treves. Milano. 1897). *"L'Utopia collettivista e la crisi del socialismo scientifico"* (Fratelli Treves, Milano 1896).

the causes, social context) the age, the immediate and remote repercussions of events; these are the elements for a correct evaluation of the individual acts of rebellion.

But everybody should understand that any such free examination, using reasonable criteria, cannot leave out of consideration the fact that the first cause of all individual acts of revolt is the psychological climate created by our propaganda among the people.

It seems unnecessary to point out that no revolutionary act is conceivable where the rebel does not feel himself surrounded by a certain spirituality of consent and by a broad-based consciousness which is ready to receive him sympathetically.

When Bresci rendered justice to the august and unpunished butcher of Italians, he felt that, though the bigoted and fainthearted rabble would be shaken, shocked and scandalized by his act, many others would assent to his act of justice, and he acted in the faith that the first spark would start a more intense rebellion, a greater fire.

But our responsibility in all acts of rebellion is more precise, more specific and undeniable, where our propaganda has been energetic, vigorous, and has left a deep impression.

After all, did we not open the first breech in the devotion of the faithful to constituted authorities, in their vassalage to the king, in their submission to the law, in their respect for and in their holy fear of the codes, the judiciary, the police?

Duval, Ravachol, Stellmaker,[19] all those who have attacked private property for the sake of revolution reveal that the sovereignty of money can't be so sacred, nor so enviable, after all, if it gets slapped around every day. All, all of them scourge cowardice, rebel against submission, engrave a lesson; they do the work of revolution.

A king dies and another takes his place. But the king who picks up the crown with his father's blood on it learns prudence, moderation, wisdom. He restores the national covenant and refrains from violence and abuse. It is enough to recall that, opening the new Parliament, immediately after Bresci's attempt, Saracco not only abstained from proposing emergency laws, but he also declared that the anarchist idea should be opposed with civilized debate and that there was sufficient restraint in the penal code for illegal anarchist activities. And this doesn't consider the renewed courage of the common people and the stronger consciousness of their strength, the firmer faith they have attained in their own emancipation.

Thus! None of the apologetic fanaticism that would indicate a religious state of mind incompatible with the slightest anarchist conviction, and no frenzied diatribes which might be suspected of opportunism, preoccupation, or more unworthy sentiments.

Salvation lies always in a free, objective and conscientious examination, in the investigation and explanation of

[19] Hermann Stellmacher and Anton Kammerer, tried in Austria for the killing of several police agents, were given the death penalty and executed respectively on August 8 and September 29, 1884.

but, since the recent division of that party, he has kept to himself. He has remained, however, a scholar, an observer, and he has especially dedicated himself to the legal profession (he comes from a family of lawyers) which he practices with great success.

I found him in his well-lit study on a steep Roman street, *au saut du lit,* amidst a mountain of legal papers. His face, which exudes intelligence and has the expressiveness of the southern Italians, appeared a little troubled when I asked him for an interview. Saverio Merlino seemed hesitant to express an opinion about a party of which he had been a member — an opinion which, as the reader will see, is not at all optimistic. But he was kind enough to consent to answer my questions,which were at times quite provocative.

"What do you think of the present conditions of the anarchist movement?"

"For me, the anarchist movement has no importance today."

"Why?"

"Because those anarchist principles which had permanent value have been adopted and are being diffused by socialism, while the Utopian part has been recognized as such and has been

dropped as useless. There has been a process of absorption in favour of socialism."

"What is your opinion about anarchist congresses in general, and, in particular, about the coming International Congress to be held in Luxemburg?"

"In my opinion", replied Merlino. "the international, as well as local congresses, are mere attempts to give life to a dead body. As I have said, socialism has absorbed what was essential in the anarchist programme, and so today, anarchism is only one of the aspects through which socialist propaganda presents itself. Therefore the anarchist party no longer has a meaningful political function."

"But", I remarked, "hasn't the anarchist party still an organization at its disposal?"

"Yes, there do exist anarchist federations and groups, and party newspapers as well. Actually, in some regions of Italy, one can still find remnants of the old anarchist organizations, for it should not be forgotten that socialism was born anarchist in Italy. But, in its present condition, the anarchist party is divided by the partisans of two different tendencies; that is, between the *individualists* and the *organizationalists*".

god, the king who oppresses and bleeds you, the king who commands everyone and can be commanded by none, the king who judges everyone and can be judged by none, the king who is glory, myth, power — is like any other man, only a miserable bag of fragile flesh and bones. A single revolver shot can reduce him to litter the way he did with you, your aged, your children, the way he did in Conselice, in Milan, for an evil whim, for an obscene lust for power. Your dependence is a shame from which you can redeem yourselves; your devotion is unworthy of you and is wasted. Stand up on your feet, slaves, you resigned, cowardly slaves who could free yourselves from the millennial yoke with a shrug of your shoulders and reach the pinnacle of freedom".

Isn't this what the Monza tragedy means?

From the ashes at the foot of the stake in Campo di Fiori,[18] Angiolillo gathers the tradition of free thought and warns that the blazing dawn of the twentieth century will tolerate neither the shadow nor the shame of the Inquisition. Vaillant exposes those who, under the anonymous mask of the representational system, are responsible for the same infamies and exploitation and slashes their obscene faces. (The Sun King, at least, had the courage to present himself before his subjects and History, shouting, "I am the State!") Luccheni, himself a bastard, warns that priests try to throw out the fruits of their inadmissable loves in vain.

[18] Spot in Rome where Giordano Bruno was executed in 1600.

saints of the social revolution, as it would be to think of condemning them posthumously.

No act of rebellion is useless; no act of rebellion is harmful.

Philosophasters of the quiet life may declaim, for instance, that Gaetano Bresci's act was a pointless folly, immediately rendered senseless by the constitutional aphorism: *"Le roi est mort, vive le roi."* When one king dies, another king is crowned; and the death of Umberto I leaves the throne for Vittorio Emanuele III. It was hardly a prediction that Gaetano Bresci couldn't make beforehand and better than those cheap salesmen of political common sense. But, after an atrocious chain of proletarian massacres, after the slaughters of May 1898 in Milan, after the years of imprisonment that the sinister monarch thought would forever disperse the revolutionary movement in Italy, after the acclaim and decorations this majesty had bestowed on underlings and rogues (beginning with Bava Beccaris) thereby proving that the king, despite the constitutional fiction, both reigns and rules and assumes all the responsibilities and risks of government; after this repression had been endured by all with a resignation even worse than the outrage — the humble weaver from Prato rose alone above the general indolence, and alone faced the symbols of so much infamy. With a stroke he put back history, wayward and arrested, back on the path of its future, towards its destiny. That gesture spoke to the confused masses. It said something that neither silence nor indifference can erase: "The king you fear, the king who was picked by the grace of

"The *organizationalists* are unable to find a form of organization compatible with their anarchist principles. The *individualists*, who are opposed to organization in any form, can't find a clear way to action."

"One must remember", added Merlino, "the strange position the individualists find themselves in. They arose out of the theory of *propaganda by deed,* and so, violent action was a necessity for them. But when the idea of reprisal — which was at first the root of anarchist action against the capitalist class — failed, even the individualist anarchists felt that their survival depended upon organization, which they had been striving to reject."

"Would you tell me now what are, in your opinion, the present conditions of anarchism in Italy?"

"In Italy", said Saverio Merlino, "we have now the remnants of the old internationalist party, a party which was anarchist in contradistinction to state socialism. It survives because our working class is reluctant to participate in any kind of disciplined party activity and is against any kind of parliamentary life, so much so, that even the socialist party itself has an anti-parliamentary faction — the syndicalist

faction. Thus, anarchism in Italy is reduced to these splinters of the internationalist party".

At this point, touching upon a sensitive issue, I asked: "What place do you see for the anarchist party in the future?" "I believe", he replied in all sincerity and not without a little bitterness, "*I believe that the anarchist party is bound to end.* It is my personal impression that the anarchist party hasn't any more men of high calibre. Reclus and Kropotkin[4] were the last. Furthermore the anarchist party is no longer intellectually productive; no scientific or political work of notable value has come from the anarchist party. In fact, it has not even proliferated. At the time when the anarchist mind was inspiring vigorous manifestations in the United States, in Germany, even in Great Britain, the

[4] Elisée Reclus (1830–1905) was a French anarchist thinker of high merits and an eminent geographer, the author of *"Nouvelle Geographie Universelle — La Terre et les Hommes"* (19 Vol.) and *"L'Homme el la Terre"* (6 Volumes). There is an important work on Reclus by Max Nettlau: *"Elisée Reclus, La Vida de un sabio, justo y rebelde"* (Ed. Revista Blanca, Barcelona 1928,2 vol, 294,312 pages): there is also the recent work by Paul Reclus: *"Les Frère Reclus"* (Paris, 1964, 209 pages).

Peter Kropotkin (1842–1821). One of the most important anarchist thinkers and the author of many interesting books on history, science, philosophy: *"Paroles d'un Revolté"* (autobiographical), *"Modern Science and Anarchism", "Mutual Aid", "Ethics", "Revolutionary Pamphlets"* Ed. Roger Baldwin.

Let us be understood: we are not being nostalgic for unneeded brutality nor for vulgar coarseness. We too would prefer that every act of rebellion had such sense of proportion that its consequences would correspond perfectly to its causes, not only in measure, but also in timeliness, giving it an irresistible automatic character. Then every act would speak eloquently for itself with no need for glosses or clarifying comments. Furthermore, we would like this unavoidable necessity to assume a highly ethical — and even an aesthetic — attitude. Michele Angiolillo, after attacking Canovas, the despicable organizer of the inquisitorial torments in the Alcala prison, found himself face to face with the latter's wife. Letting his revolver fall from his hand, he took off his hat and bowed, saying, "Madam, I am sorry for the grief I am causing you, but your husband was a monster unworthy of any pity". There is something noble and chivalrous in Angiolillo's gesture that illuminates the profound humanity and civility inspiring his rebellion. It would be pleasing if such sentiments were always present in our actions, for anarchism, being truth and kindness, is, above all, beauty.

Unfortunately (and we have at length stated why), the individual act of rebellion, due to intrinsic and extrinsic causes, due to the pressures of the moment, the environment and the subject's own psychology, cannot be different from what it is, no matter what our preference may be.

Then it follows that it would be absurd and ridiculous for us to think of compiling a new calendar of saints, the

We agree that, face to face with the enemy's brutal, overwhelming preponderance, vanguard minorities cannot gain respect nor inspire confidence without an exemplary and transparently austere way of life. And, again, we agree that in order to avoid ugly suspicions of personal material advantage, those who proclaim the necessity of the final expropriation and justify partial expropriation in certain specified cases, must surround themselves with a voluntary and evocative poverty, a holy dread of other people's property. But that we should submit to Origen's[17] operation — no! At this juncture there is no third solution. If we are forced to choose between private property and its supporters, or against private property and its attackers, we cannot and will not align ourselves with the former, and certainly it is not we who will try to revoke the decisions of Magnaud and Fichte. No!

And then… to hell with it! Surrounded with strongboxes, ignoring and despising the sufferings of the world, the bourgeoisie and its misfortunes do not move us one bit.

A few more words, before closing this chapter.

We do not believe there are useless or harmful acts of rebellion. Every one of them, together with the accidents inseparable from any violent change of the monotonous routine of life, has deep echoes and lasting gains, which compensate abundantly for them.

[17] Origen (185–254?) A Christian theologian who castrated himself in order not to be distracted by sexual problems.

anarchist movement seemed on its way to prevail. Now not only has it stopped, it is finished".

"Then you are sceptical about the results of the International Congress in Luxemburg?"

"It will leave things as they are. After all, it will not be the first congress that this happens to. The importance assumed by the first congresses of the international movement was exceptional, as was the importance attained by some of the farmworkers' congresses. After all what is to be expected, as a general rule, from a congress?"

"Then what do you think of the present Congress in Rome?"

"This Congress is debating, as usual, the question of organization and individualism, a question which, I dare say, is the scandal of the party."

"Are the Paterson groups still alive?"

"Yes, the Paterson groups in the United States are still in existence. They are made up of immigrants in transit, mostly Italians and Germans. They also publish papers. But they are artificial entities, they are not spontaneous. Thanks to the emphasis of the labour movement, these and other anarchist groups continue to live — in part because of tradition and in part through

inertia — but they amount to nothing really vital…"[5]

I wanted to close the interview with the question that I was most curious about, and so I asked Merlino:

"How do you explain the obvious and comforting decrease of anarchist attempts?"

"The reasons for such an undeniable decrease are complex.

[5] There may have been some excuse for a statement of this kind in 1894, the last time Mr Merlino saw the United States. It could have been successfully contradicted in 1907 when he made it in Rome, for *"La Questione Sociale"*, a weekly begun and regularly published in Paterson, was in its 17th year of uninterrupted life, and vital enough to be suppressed by order of the Federal Government in 1908… only to be replaced — by the same people, in the same place with *"L'Era Nuova"* (The New Era) which lived a normal life until it was suppressed in its turn by the delirium raised by World War I. Nowadays all those newspapers and reviews that Merlino scorned as inane are considered an integral part of this country's culture. So much so, that the newspaper Merlino himself founded and directed in New York from 1892 to 1894, has been carefully saved by the Columbia University Librarians, and can be read by anyone who cares to ask — or bought for a few dollars, in microfilm, by whomsoever, near or far, wishes to own it. And so are later papers as *"Cronaca Sovversiva"* the complete collection of which has been microfilmed by the Boston Public Library. So was *"L'Adunata dei Refrattari"* (1922–1971) and, I suppose, the *"Freie Arbeiter Stimme"*, the periodical in Yiddish language, that our comrades published from 1890 to 1977 in New York.

Merlino came and departed, but their passage left marks that cannot be erased nor neglected.

conclude that it could have been used in a better way. But you can't condemn.

We stand with Severine[15] and Reclus, who, without reservations, have extolled the courage, the heart and the self-abnegation of these lost sentinels.

Furthermore, to be completely frank and to close this parenthesis we confess that we can't even rage against the petty thief who, pressed by need, reaches for a loaf of bread, a herring or a tempting slice of ham in the shop window.

Even before Lino Ferriani, the royal prosecutor, extenuated these pariahs from a theoretical point of view, and before President Magnaud, the good judge, acquitted them, disturbing and horrifying the wealthy, a German philosopher, named Johann Gottlieb Fichte[16] in his *Principles of Natural Right* delivered the impartial sentence: "He who has no means of subsistence, has no duty to acknowledge or respect other people's property, considering that the principles of the social covenant have been violated to his prejudice".

[15] Sévérine — Madame Sévérine as she was called in Paris for many years — was the pen-name of Caroline Remy (1855–1929). She was a writer and a speaker who, since the beginning of her career, had assigned to herself the role of public defender, from the press, from the public rostrum, and face to face with the dispensers of official justice, of all the victims of social injustice.

[16] Lino Ferriani (1852–1921). Lawyer, Sociologist, student of delinquency among minors.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) German philosopher author of *"Science of Knowledge"*, *"Talks to the German Nation"* and many other books.

fore. Tom is getting rich, as Harry did in the past, on the shoulders and the labour of harnessed slaves.

Nothing has changed, and there is no reason why we should congratulate Tom for having taken Harry's wealth.

But suppose, as it recently happened, a band of revolutionaries attack a bank; they immobilize the guards, empty the safes and, weapons in hand, defend their retreat. Then, having secured it, they deliver their loot to insurrectionary committees to further the revolutionary movement in their community, to provide the necessary means for attaining victory.

Do you disapprove?

No, you cannot disapprove. There has been expropriation, the very expropriation you have invoked a thousand times as a revolutionary necessity. There has been no appropriation in the sense that the confiscated wealth has been used to re-establish some other private property with all its consequences. Not at all. We are faced exactly with an initial, partial act of revolutionary expropriation. Besides the material advantages for the movement, it initiates, enables and encourages the multitude to proceed to the final expropriation of the ruling class for the benefit of every one. This has been our desire and our aim.

How can we curse, condemn, or reject?

Clement Duval, Vittorio Pini, Ravachol have never taken for themselves a single penny of the loot that they obtained with the constant risk of death or life imprisonment. You may say that they have used that money for questionable propaganda means and action and even

"In the first place, one must remember that many anarchist attempts of the past had their source in the oppressive policies followed by certain governments. Everybody knows by now that the governments understood nothing about the internationalist movement. They saw the anarchists as ferocious animals and persecuted them mercilessly. The anarchists, to protect themselves from the persecutions of their national police, sought refuge abroad, where, embittered by the violence they had suffered, they would organize groups (like, for instance, the Italian group in Paterson, New Jersey), from which the anarchist point of view would be propagated with renewed intensity. However, the European governments, after the international congresses held by the representatives of their police forces, came to understand the uselessness of persecutions. They served no purpose at all, because no one can foresee or prevent the individual act of a possessed mind. Moreover, the police have almost always arrived too late, even when they have had the opportunity to do something. Consequently, the illusion that the anarchist attempts, which originate from the impulse of a solitary person, could be prevented has vanished. And so, the anarchist *attentat* is now considered like any other act committed

by the individual will and even, at times, provoked by causes other than political. Now, for instance, it is revealed that Moral,[6] after a disappointment in love, may have chosen his attempt to kill the king of Spain as a means to end his own life… As I was saying, once the police persecutions in their more severe forms had ceased and the oppressive measures, at first adopted by governments against the anarchists, had abated, a decrease in attacks logically followed…"

At this point it appeared to me that my inquiries concerning contemporary anarchism had been exhausted and I closed the interview which contained the remarkable statement that the anarchist party is finished.

<right>Cesare Sobrero</right>

So! Merlino says that, "The anarchist movement has no longer any importance, because that portion of anarchist principles which is lasting has passed into socialism and is being propagated by it, while the Utopian part has been recognised as such and no longer has any value.

"As the essential part has been absorbed by the socialist movement, anarchism is nothing more than one of the

[6] Mateo Moral, learned scholar and polyglot, used to translate books for the Ferrer School. On May 31, 1905, in Madrid, he tried to kill the King of Spain, Alphonse XIII. Two days later he killed himself in order to avoid arrest.

property and where the products of work have only one purpose — to assure the satisfaction of everyone's needs — theft has no meaning. It is impossible, absurd.

Therefore, among anarchists, no question of principle concerning theft exists.

When it comes to action, or tactics as it is usually called, there was a time when some comrades believed (and some still do) that in order to develop our propaganda, to equip vanguards, to arm them for action, boldly to initiate attacks, or to repel violence by force of arms, financial means would be needed that could not be provided by poor militants with more energy and courage than weapons: so they *expropriated,* as they used to say, with rigorous precision.

They took wherever they found it.

What does *expropriation* mean?

It means to take from somebody the goods or real estate that he owns, claiming he has no right to them.

From Saint Clement[14] to Babeuf, Proudhon, Bakunin and the most modest of our comrades, the invalidity of all property titles has never been questioned: expropriation is legitimate unless it ends as its opposite, *appropriation.*

To make myself better understood: if Tom takes Harrys wealth for his own enjoyment, we say that he has appropriated it. The property in question has only changed its titular owner, but as an institution it remains just what it was be-

[14] Saint Clement is reported to have expressed the opinion that: "In good Justice everything should belong to everybody. Iniquity has made private property" (*Almanacco Libertario* for the year 1938 — Ginevra).

had been acting as a restraint, and the explosion roars dreadful, deadly.

Isn't it so?

The individual act of rebellion is what it is, caused by a long series of predisposing conditions, which has suddenly met an imponderable accidental cause.

Of what value is repudiation?

* * *

"And, after this, you would conclude that we must unconditionally approve any act of individual rebellion, even those acts that are disgusting and harmful, even Duval's or Ravachol's or Luccheni's?"[13]

Let us clear up quickly a misunderstanding which has been cleared up many times before, but which arises now and then with the qualms and bigotry of a certain respectable anarchism.

It is the misunderstanding concerning revolutionary expropriation, usually called *theft* by others, although the noun does not fit the deed.

Everyone agrees on one point: in an egalitarian society, where all means of production and exchange are common

[13] Clement Duval — see page viii.

François Claudius Koenigstein (1859–1892) better known as Ravachol, was a French anarchist arrested for acts of dynamite explosions and expropriation. Sentenced to die, he was executed on July 11, 1892.

Luigi Luccheni, a "bastard", killed the Empress of Austria Elisabeth, in Geneva (Switzerland) on September 10, 1898. He died in the Vescovado Prison in 1910. (See: J. Fehmi in *"Cronaca Sovversiva"* Sept. 14, 1912).

many aspects through which the more forceful socialist propaganda presents itself."

Conclusion: "Anarchists no longer have a specific political function to fulfill".

De profundis… "Not only has the anarchist movement stopped, it is finished".

His evidence? Here it is: "The anarchist movement no longer has men of prime importance; the last were Elisée Reclus and Peter Kropotkin; from its womb, once so fertile, no works of notable scientific or political value are issuing forth; no new offspring coming into the world".

Furthermore: "The movement is divided by the internal struggles between *individualists* and *organizationalists:* the latter cannot find an organization that is compatible with anarchist principles; the former, after the idea of reprisal, which had been the soul of anarchist activity, ceased to exist, cannot find a manner of acting and cannot exist without the organization they strive to reject". This, in short — though with strict adherence to his meaning — is the argument of Francesco Saverio Merlino.

But if we could prove that the enduring portion of anarchist principles has never been absorbed by socialism:

— That the portion which has been recognised as Utopian and worthless, far from being the essence of the anarchist philosophy, is only the residue of ancient Jacobinism, and that, through the selective process, anarchist ideas have asserted themselves better and with greater precision than all other socialist trends;

— That, in this antithesis of ends and means, the anarchist movement, compared to all other trends of socialism, is the slow but persistent forerunner of a different and more advanced society than has been conceived by any other doctrine and by any other political party, and has its own good reason to exist, its own specific function to perform;

— That the anarchist movement has always contained men of the first rank; that, in these last years, it has not only produced works of inestimable value in science and in politics, but it has also put its mark upon the whole intellectual movement of modern times;

— That, far from being as sterile, as Merlino complains, the anarchist movement has nothing to deplore but… an excesssive proliferation;

— That deplored internal struggles between individualists and organizationalists are an inevitable crisis of development, an inevitable process of selection: they are evidence of vitality, of energy and progress rather than symptoms of exhaustion and anguish;

What would remain of the sinister sophisms, the dark prophecies, and the distressing lamentations of Jeremiah… Merlino?

Upon the ruins of his unfortunate thesis would remain this victorious conclusion: *that anarchism, as a doctrine and as a movement, has never had more than today its own good reason to exist, and it never has asserted itself more than at present with such intensity and such dimension; that far from being moribund, it lives, it develops and it goes forward.*

to form coalitions of the international proletariat; the bourgeoisie is compelled to moderation and discretion.

And so on. But while they are navigating full of hope, towards their happy Atlantis, a clash of arms at the frontier, a machine-gun volley in the foul ditch of a castle tower, the flash of an axe in the sleepy dawn, a hurried gallop of dragoons through the streets and squares to the sound of trumpets and death rattles, plunges them back again into reality. The Inquisition is still alive and unrelenting; war is more insane, paradoxical, and horrible than ever; massacres of the proletariat are daily occurrences everywhere.

The shock is tragic; the pressure intolerable; even more intolerable because, in disillusion and defeat, in the limbo of despair, imprecations and invectives come from every side.

Swollen by the shock, the soul is embittered by its shameful defeat and lives with a throbbing pain that only revenge, a tremendous, exemplary revenge can soothe. And revenge stands as the only purpose, the only possible reparation for the anguish that torments it every living day.

No discharge is possible. He who is lost when among books, he who as a child was compelled to leave school for the factory or the mine, how can he write, speak, or hope to gain the attention of others?

Where can the militants be found for a sweeping agitation, when the reaction has banished or imprisoned them?

This old boiler has no discharge valve; the pressure rises; the level of resignation drops; the slightest touch breaks through the crust of prejudice and convention that

revolutionary only when and insofar as we know how to resist and react against the wickedness, corruption and violence of our environment. And, when, through experience, we have become worthy of the cause, we will be able to arouse the same need of moral elevation and freedom that will spread in an ever-widening concentric movement, reaching those groups farthest from us, like the effect of a stone cast into a pond.

The revolution cannot be made by the anarchists alone, at a pre-established time and by pre-arranged movements; but if a movement should burst out tomorrow — no matter where — they could place themselves in the forefront, or near it, with the sole aim of pointing it towards decisive positions or solutions, and in so doing, counteracting the usual intriguers who take advantage of the good faith and sacrifices of the proletariat to foster their own interests and political fortune

But the proletariat doesn't think of it. Didn't a great anarchist writer state many years ago that the *revolution is inevitable?* One must only wait for it; it knocks on the door; the glittering announcement says it'll be here tomorrow. No return to the past is possible; after so many years of anti-religious propaganda, the Inquisition is no more than a sad memory of an age that has been overcome; after so many years of anti-militarist propaganda, war is only a sterile wish of a handful of stock market manipulators; after the workers' strikes that, starting from the modest borders of a province, have invaded a whole nation and even dare

Chapter 2. The Anarchism of Merlino

We believe that such a demonstration is easy, even face to face with Francesco Saverio Merlino, who is a a formidable debater, wise, versed in dialectics, learned — provided that two essential terms of the debate are defined with precision.

If we agree — and I am almost certain that we do — on the notion of *progress* and if we agree on the fundamental and characteristic meaning of anarchism, then we have only to test the content of anarchism as a doctrine, the multiple aspects and scope of its manifestations as a movement, on the touchstone of our mutual notion of *progress* in order to deduce — perhaps again in agreement — whether it still contains the basis of a positive progressive aspiration (even if it lies in the distant future), whether it carries the vigorous throbs of exuberant vitality, or the incoherent convulsions of distress and agony.

Hoping to reach the desired and necessary harmony of these premises, we will refer for the notion of *progress*

to Leon Metchnikoff,[1] a philosopher as great as he is unknown, in whom Merlino has undoubtedly the greatest regard and confidence. We find his definition of progress most positive and clear. For the notion of anarchism we shall refer to a man of whose competence Merlino has the highest opinion, for that man is… F. S. Merlino himself. In the noted pamphlet *Perche siamo anarchici?* [Why are we anarchists?] and in the incisive presentation of our principles, written by him many years ago for the ponderous *Journal*

[1] Leon Metchnikoff (1838–1888). Born in Petersburg of Ukrainian extraction, he was expelled from Kharkow University in 1856 for participation to a student demonstration. Two years later, for the same reason he was expelled from the University of Petersburg. A student of Oriental Languages, he was enrolled by a diplomatic mission to the Middle East, in 1858, as an interpreter. But he soon quit the Mission and went to Italy, in I860, where he joined the Garibaldi expedition in Calabria. He was wounded at Volturno and remained in Italy where be met Bakunin and participated in revolutionary activities in Spain and elsewhere. His political writings were published in Herzen's *"Kokol"*, his scientific ones in Russian reviews and papers. In 1874 Metchnikoff went to Japan as teacher of the Russian Language. Two years later he was in Switzerland with a manuscript on the "Japanese Empire" which was received by Elisée Reclus who incorporated it in his lifework. Metchnikoff settled in Switzerland where he died in 1888 leaving to the care of Elisée Reclus the text of his book *"La Civilization et les Grands Fleuves Historiques"* (Civilization and the Great Historical Rivers). It was published in 1889 by Librairie Hachette et Cie, Paris, with an extensive and informative Preface by E Reclus containing a friendly sketch of the author's eventful life. (Quotation, from original edition, page 11).

A more recent biography of Leon Metchnikoff was written by James D White of the University of Glasgow and published by S.E.E.R., Vol. LIV. No. 3, July 1976 under the title *"Despotism and Anarchy: The Sociological Thought of L I Mechnikov"*.

abolish abuses, avoid misfortunes, restrain the injustice and violence of the exploiters and the oppressors, and start humanity on the path of security, well-being and happiness that is its destiny. Although it lacks a precise and clear consciousness of its own right and even more, of the irresistible strength it could attract to the defence of its sacred cause, the proletariat has a deep faith (and this is perhaps rooted in the evangelical idea of punishment for evil and reward for good) in the final triumph of truth and justice.

But, partly because of this persistent evangelism, and more because of the millennial resignation which has for centuries paralyzed its initiative and its confidence, the proletariat believes that the revolution will be realized by some strange, distant force and it will be propelled by the enigmatic and fatal weight of things, undermining events and men. It harbours an ambiguous, almost religious mix of reverence and terror in this belief.

And the humble people wait for it to come and try to hasten it with all their wishes: "How great if the revolution breaks out some day"! And to that day, to that revolution which will finally destroy every obstacle, they turn their hearts, their energy, their hates and their longings for revenge… far, very far away from thinking that *we, ourselves, have to start the revolution from within ourselves,* by discarding old superstitions, selfishness, self-imposed ignorance, foolish vanities and moral deficiencies.

We are children of the bourgeois regime, heirs to all its degradations, materially and actually incapable of shedding its bestial yoke at this time, except for a few, and *we are*

sympathy for the fallen rebel, and a deep active solidarity with the ideal that inspired the rebellion.

Relentlessly they strike right and left; they work; they give vent to their feelings; they discharge their excessive steam through many open valves… the pressure, dangerous for a moment, returns to normal; the boiler regains its breath, its usual rhythm, and its regular function.

When Reclus or Kropotkin are at the wheel there will be no explosion except in absolutely exceptional circumstances.

* * *

The other… the other alas! functions in an altogether different condition. It has no safety valves, no discharge pipes, no gauge to register the sudden pressures, which swell it to the point where its rhythm is upset and its function and safety are threatened. And its walls are all encrusted with dangerous superstitions.

This is the proletarian soul. Although our propaganda has barely begun to touch it, still our criticism of the vicious social order has received a profound approval, confirmed by their experience and their reasoning: the gluttons leave for the poor, who create wealth and joy with their hands, no bread, no peace, no love, no future! How true! How terribly true!

Thus, the poor living in despair have been deeply enraptured by our vision of an egalitarian society, together with the hope that a coalition (even if temporary or accidental) of all the proletarian forces could, on a daily basis,

des Economistes, he outlines with brief but simple clarity the nature and character of our aspirations.[2]

In his splendid study of *La Civilization el Les Grands Fleuves Historiques,* [Civilization and the Great Rivers of History] Leon Metchnikoff writes about progress:

"In the field of pure science, 'progress' is understood as the sequence of natural phenomena wherein, at each stage of evolution, energy manifests itself with a growing variety and intensity. The series is called 'progressive' when each one of its stages reproduces the preceding ones *plus* some new trait that did not exist in the preceeding phase, and, in its turn, it becomes the embryo of a new *plus* in the following stage. A plant marks a 'progress' over the mineral world; it represents the process of non-organized nature plus the specific peculiarities of nutrition, growth, reproduction. The animal, in its turn, shows a progress beyond vegetable life, because it adds its peculiar faculties of movement and sensitivity to the acquisitions of the plant. Man is a progress over all other vertebrates because his sensitive and intellectual life make him capable of enjoying a wealth unknown to his predecessors."

Of anarchism as an aspiration and philosophy, Merlino writes: "The essence of anarchism within the evolution of thought and society is the total image of man, his integra-

[2] F S Merlino wrote two essays for the Paris *"Journal des Economistes".* The first: "Integration Economique — *Expose' des doctrines anarchistes"* (December 1889); the second: *"Le caracter pratique de l'Anarchisme"* (1890). Galleani refers to the first one which was translated into Italian in 1892 (Tip. dell' Etruria, Grosseto).

tion, his needs, his unexplored energies, his infinite capacity for development, his sociability, his many relations with his fellow man and with the outer world." Therefore, from the point of view of the individual, the aims of anarchism are:

1. "*The economic integration* of man, who is at present fragmentary or incomplete, either master or slave, mind or muscle, by combining the qualities of both producer and consumer in every single person, by making the tools and means of production available to all the workers."

2. "*The intellectual integration* of the working people by uniting material and intellectual, industrial and agricultural work by means of a variety of occupations, so that all the human faculties may be activated (intensive cultivation of the human being)."

3. "*The moral integration* of man; satisfaction of all his moral and material needs; *liberty and lack of coercion of the individual;* security of life; complete development of life for all human beings."

But, in this society, which wants to make available to all workers all means of production, and wants to assure everyone of its members the satisfaction of all material and moral needs, liberty, lack of coercion and integral development of each person —

1. Who will organize work and all its requirements?

Vaillant's[12] attempt against the French Parliament, which gave rise to Caserio's act), provoke the same indignation, the same violent shock on a cold, balanced, experienced mind as on pure minds and primitive souls. With different results, however! Because… because the boilers are different.

One has all its valves in full working order. Scholars, writers, speakers and poets react promptly to the shock and relieve the enormous pressure by means of the discharge valves of their many faceted activities. They confront the fulminations that crash from Olympus when public powers are endangered, when vested interests are disturbed, when hypocritical morality is subverted; and they throw the awful responsibility for the rebellious act back into the face of the exploiters who squeeze out the last drop of sweat and blood from the common people, back into the face of the cops holding the bag open for the crooks, the judiciary winking indulgently and conniving impunity for oppressors, exploiters, corruptors. And they courageously denounce all these with vehemence and passion, in the name of right, justice, civilization or humanity, in vibrant public meetings, in relentless articles and from every forum, pouring out to their audience the fullness of the noblest feelings, hopefully arousing enthusiasm and

[12] Auguste Vaillant (1861–1894) French anarchist who threw a bomb in the Chamber of Deputies on December 9, 1893, and was condemned to death although no one had been killed by it. The sentence was executed on February 5, 1894.

The same danger would be incurred if the water level was lowered excessively, causing the walls of the boiler above the water level to become red hot to the point where careless contact with water would cause an explosion.

Furthermore, when the walls of the boiler are dirty (ie covered by a chalky sediment that accumulates between the water and the boiler's wall), this forms a crust which slows the heating of the water so that, when the metallic walls become red hot and the water is still much colder, the least crack in the crust again creates the danger of an explosion. Hence the need for safety and warning mechanisms to keep the engineer on guard: pressure gauges, water level and venting valves, feed and discharge pipes.

An episode of unusually cruel ferocity (in the prison of Alcala del Valle the anarchists waiting trial underwent testicles distortion, brain compression, insertion of wedges between finger nails and flesh), the mass slaughter on an unarmed crowd (as happened in Milan during the month of May 1898 under the command of Bava Beccaris,[11] for the purpose — now clear to everyone — of a *coup d'Etat),* or the legal murder of a rebel, even though no one is known to have died as a consequence of his act (as was the case of

[11] Fiorenzo Bava Beccaris (1831–1924) General of the Royal Italian Army sent to Milan to crush the popular demonstrations in May 1898. He executed his orders without restraint causing many casualties (90 dead officially admitted) and was publicly commended and rewarded by the king himself.

2. On what principles will organization be built?
3. How will the participation of everyone in work and in leisure be managed?

Merlino replies:

1. Each individual, autonomous within a free group, will manage his own interests.
2. The basis of the organization of anarchist society will be in the solidarity of all interests and the mutual agreement among the workers.
3. Everyone will participate in both production and enjoyment, according to his or her ability and needs.

"Would there be need for a government, a parliament, a cabinet, a police force, a judiciary?" Nothing of this kind would exist in the anarchist system. "And how can all this come about?"

The first step towards the future society will be revolution, inevitable because the ruling classes will yield only to force. The working man must make his own revolution, take back what has been taken from him, repossess everything he has produced and others have seized, in short: *expropriate the owners and the capitalists.*

"Could not some good be accomplished, a few steps forward taken, by participating in the elections with formal candidates?"

No. We know for certain that workers are deceived and cheated in elections, that they will never be able to send their comrades to Parliament and… that even if the majority in Parliament were workers, they would be unable to do anything.

Instead of helping the workers, elections damage their own cause. Once elected to office, even the more active and intelligent among their comrades become renegades or idlers. The people are led to believe that salvation will come from above, from the government, from the Parliament, and they cease to fight.

* * *

This is anarchism, doctrine and tactic, according to Francesco Saverio Merlino.

We could have been more concise and. at points, more explicit, by drawing the fundamentals of anarchism from Kropotkin, from Malatesta. Grave, Tcherkesoff or Faure.[3] But, as we said at the beginning, we wanted to avoid any possible misunderstanding, which might misdirect the de-

[3] Jean Grave (1854–1939) French militant. Editor of historical papers: *"Le Revolte" — "Temps Nouveaux".*

Varlaan Tcherkesoff — Russian from Georgia, was one of the Tchaikovsky Circle in St Petersburg, a lifelong friend of Kropotkin.

Sebastien Faure (1858–1939). For over sixty years a passionate anarchist militant in France. Writer, essayist, publisher and, above all effective orator. Besides books and pamphlets he left a monumental *"Encyclopédie Anarchiste"* in four volumes 2894 pages Ed Li [rest unreadable, OCR-note]

emy without respite, to disconcert him in other ways, with other means, on an altogether different field?[9]

Why do those who attack the church, property, State, morality and destroy their symbols — why do these avengers, with few exceptions, almost always arise from the twilight of oppression and suffering, from the proletariat? And, far from being stigmatized by rickets, idiocy, or even worse, degeneration (which would please the police of Sernicoli's ilk,[10] or some wiseacres of the new school of penology) why are they, out of all the proletarian multitude, among the foremost in normality, equilibrium, education and intelligence?

This is a problem of elementary mechanics. And since our readers are more at home in this field than the present writer, it will not be difficult to come to an understanding.

In order to function in a normal way, every boiler must have a gauge indicating the steam pressure and two essential valves, one registering any excess of pressure, the other the water level. An excess of heat could produce too great a volume of steam for the capacity of the boiler and bring about a corresponding danger of explosion.

[9] Eugène Cavaignac (1802–1857) a French General, violently repressed the June 1848 insurrection.

Gaston Alexandre Auguste Gallifet (1830–1909) French General responsible for the massacre of the Paris Commune 1871.

[10] E. Sernicoli, a Judge of hostile views, author of a book *"L'Anarchia e gli Anarchici"* (Anarchy and Anarchists) Ed. Treves. Milano, 1894, 2 volumes.

a gun and coldly shot Canovas del Castillo in Santa Agueda, that filthy and ferocious hyena, who renewed and intensified all the horrors of the Holy Inquisition against the anarchists in the prison of Alcala del Valle, though their innocence had even been recognized by tribunals? And, among those of us who knew Sante Caserio[8] intimately as an excellent youngster, modest, reserved, sober in words and in deeds, who could have foreseen that, one day, armed with a formidable knife, he, on a street in Lyon, crowded with delirious vassals, would leap impetuously and render justice to Sadi Carnot, the sponsor of the *lois scelerates,* [the anti-anarchist laws] passed for the purpose of choking off freedom of thought on the threshold of the twentieth century?

And why did Kropotkin, who had been a member of the Tchaickowsky Group, which had produced the most audacious iconoclasts — why did Elisée Reclus, who had survived two blood-baths and barely escaped the Cavaignac and Gallifet slaughters — why did they seek to fight the en-

abroad in 1895. Two years later, from London he went to Spain where he killed the dictator Canovas del Castillo on August 8, 1897. He was arrested and executed nine days later, August 17, 1897.

[8] Sante Caserio, from Motta Visconti (Milano) where he was born in 1873, baker by trade and anarchist by conviction, had been sentenced to prison for "anarchist propaganda". To spare himself a term in prison, he passed the Swiss border and then went in France. On June 24, 1894, in Lyon he killed Sadi Carnot, President of the Republic. Sentenced to die, he was executed on August 16, 1894.

bate, making it worthless, endless, or inconclusive; therefore, we have restricted ourselves to Merlino's own conception.

After all, his conclusions are the ones generally accepted: anarchism is the political doctrine that aims to achieve a society wherein all means of production, transformation, or exchange being common property, where each member of society will find full satisfaction of his (or her) material and moral needs and can spontaneously give his contribution according to his (or her) capacity and ability. The security of each individual in a free society lies in the universal solidarity of human interests and in the free agreement of the interested people; all forms of compulsion, of authority, of exploitation are rejected: these are the fundamental tenets of the social order called *Anarchy.*

It is common knowledge that Merlino disowned these ideas ten years ago [1897]. But that doesn't mean that, if he has to speak about anarchism as thought and action, he does not refer in a special way to the ideas and the methods that he held for so many years with conviction, action and unequalled self-denial. The characteristic aspirations of anarchism are then, in the economic field, *communism;* in the political field, *the elimination of all forms of authority and compulsion.*

But this two-fold aspiration of anarchism must be understood in a larger and more complex manner than this summary might indicate at first sight.

Besides denoting *common ownership of the means of production and exchange* (an expression that is generally used by all branches of socialism), communism implies nowadays a whole series of relations; it implies that the material and moral needs of everyone be satisfied without any restriction other than that which is imposed by nature; and it further implies that the contribution to the necessary task of production should be given voluntarily by everyone, according to their capacity and aptitude.

Thus, the absence of authority and coercion not only implies the abolition of government, laws and constituted social orders; it implies also — and above all — the abolition of all forms of centralization of functions, even if merely administrative…; it implies the nonexistence of authority, be it of the majority or of a minority; it means the freedom of the autonomous individual — all individuals — within the free society.

act of rebellion is a necessarily intermediary phenomenon between the sheer ideal or theoretical affirmation and the insurrectionary movement which follows it and kindles the torch of the victorious revolution.

A necessary and inevitable medium; it is what it is, that which the circumstances command or consent to, above and beyond any preference of ours. Can you reject or condemn it? You may as well reject a thunderbolt, an earthquake, or any unlucky meteor; you can only endure them, for they originate from causes acting beyond the will and power of man.

And it is what it is, not only because of the intricate convergence of the causes, which demand it at a certain time, in a certain way and not otherwise; but also because of the instrument called upon to accomplish it.

The paid journalistic hacks of the ruling class, the police and their informers, the cowardly and reactionary magistrates may still believe in the legends of plots, of drawing lots to choose the instrument of the revolutionary act, the avenger. But F S Merlino has lived long enough among or near bomb-makers (uncontaminated, of course) to be able to testify that in most cases the individual act of rebellion comes even more as a surprise to the comrades than to the enemies.

Who, for instance, would have thought that Michele Angiolillo,[7] calm kind and gentle as a girl, could have grasped

[7] Michele Angiolillo, born in Foggia in 1871, anarchist. To save himself from the severity of the special laws against "press-crimes" he went

masses, unsheath the arms of their faith, putting on the halo of a martyrdom devoted to victory.[6]

What Bloodshed! Against a gloomy background of anguish and grief, the dawn of redemption — the second phase of the revolution — is all blood.

However, the day comes when the executioner can no longer cope with his shameful task. There are no jails big enough to stifle the expanding insurrection of the subjects. The palladium crumbles, the army conspires and then rises in Alessandria, Pinerolo, Brescia, Nola, Palermo. A storm of perdition shocks the world and upsets the peninsula; it rocks the Holy Alliance, which can only stem the torrent in Troppau, in Laibach, in Verona with the terror of bayonets, but these are too fragile a barrier against the irresistible press of the insurrectionists in Venice, Palermo, Rome, and Milan [1848–1849], who savour the joy of victory — ephemeral, yes — but a tremendous spur to the final desperate conquest.

But we are not here to write the history of the Piedmont conquest of Italy… with all due respect for the rights of the Holy See.

It is sufficient for us to deduce from this quick foray — which could, with a little more effort and patience, be repeated for any other historical cycle — that *the individual*

[6] Patriots of the XVIII Century who have their blood and lives in the struggle against the old regimes: Luigi Zamboni (1772–1795); Giovanni De Rolandis (1774–1796); Ettore Carafa (1763–1799); Mario Pagano (1740–1799); Domenico Cirillo (1730–1799); Luisa Monti Sanfelice (executed in 1800 after having given birth — in Naples).

Chapter 3. The Characteristics of Anarchism

These aims are characteristic of anarchism, not only because the whole anarchist doctrine rests upon them as a fundamental basis, but also because *anarchism alone promotes them and pursues their realization* and, therefore, they constitute the *essence* that distinguishes anarchism from all the other schools of socialism.

If we reduce the antitheses existing in the various schools of socialism to those that distinguish anarchist-communists from socialist-collectivists (these being, after all, the only vital trends of popular socialism, the only ones involved in this controversy, because, according to Merlino, what is essential in anarchism has been absorbed by socialist-collectivisim) this will expose in a much clearer way the exact terms of their differences.

In the collectivist society, promoted (almost without exceptions) by the International Socialist Party, work and satisfaction of needs will be directed by the workers' collective

by means of representatives, administrators, functionaries — in short, by what the socialists like to call the 'administration government' — because, after the disappearance of the existing division of society in classes, the political functions of government would have no reason to exist, and the government would be nothing but a council charged with the collective management of the social estate.

In an anarchist society, the free individual within the free society would proceed to take care of his interests personally. To conceive of a government — even if it were a simple administrative government — one must implicitly agree that "All the interests of the whole people be concentrated in the hands of a few; that a small number of people act for the whole nation; that instead of letting the single individual think for himself, he be forced to submit to the will of those who think for all the people".

Now all this is inconsistent with the free and egalitarian society of which we are talking.

The contrast is even more violent if the standards with which a collectivist society arranges each person's participation in work and in pleasure are compared to the standards which would prevail in an anarchist-communist society.

The collectivist-socialists demand *from each one, according to his ability*, rewarding each ability in proportion to its work.

The communist-anarchists say instead that anyone who, of his *free will,* takes part in the productive process according to his capacity, will receive according to his needs.

... ai dissueti orecchi
ai pigri cuori, a gli animi giacenti.
Italia! Italia!?...[4]

Was it Vittorio Alfieri, with the impetuous rumble of his tragedies? Or Gaetano Filangeri, who, in his *Declaration of the Rights of Man,* first revealed and spread among the young the idea of the fatherland and the dignity of the citizen? Or was it Melchiorre Gioia who, towards the end of the century, discoursing on the best form of government under which the Italian people might live in freedom and happiness, concluded that "*... everything invites us to unite in the best possible way under one indivisible republic*"?[5]

We are not concerned with these details. But certainly here we are in the first phase of the revolutionary process where protest has no other means of expression but faith and word.

The second period will come: the time of the believers when thought becomes flesh and action, and Zamboni, De Rolandis, Carafa, Pagano, Cirillo, Luisa Sanfelice, daring both the wrath of the powerful and the apathy of the

[4] ... to the lowly land
... to unaccustomed ears
to lazy hearts, to disheartened spirits
Italy! Italy!
This poem is actually by Carducci, in it he invokes Alfieri.

[5] Harbingers of the National Italian Revolution: Vittorio Alfieri (1749–1803) poet; Gaetano Filangeri (1752–1788) Jurist; Melchiorre Gioia (1795–1865) Historian and Philosopher.

dies, another takes his place", and that the world continues without a tremor on its immutable way.

Even in our own ranks there are short-sighted persons who, looking at the immediate consequences of shock and reactionary fury caused by violence, hesitate and wonder whether the rebellious act, by provoking wild, unexpected repressions and by corroding our already scanty liberties, may not have compromised our slow, but persistent and certainly beneficial, work of propaganda, organization and preparation.

Whatever our doctrinal and tactical disagreements may be, we have too much respect for F S Merlino to assign him to any of the above-mentioned categories.

He never would, nor could, separate the individual act of rebellion from the revolutionary process of which it is the initial phase — not an episode — and whose *following phases* are, in their turn, inevitable consequences and developments.

The Ideal, a solitary aspiration of poets and philosophers, is embodied in the martyrdom of its first heralds and sustained by the blood of its believers. Their sacrifice raised as a sacred standard leads the first heroic but doomed insurrections and triumphs in the end through revolutionary deeds, the joy and glory of all.

Without going far from home, doesn't the history of the last Italian revolution offer a clear outline of this process?

Who said first;

> …a l'umile paese

While the collectivist-socialists limit their demands to the finished product of their work, the anarchists proclaim that regardless of the value of the product, the individual worker will be entitled to the full satisfaction of his needs.

* * *

The antithesis of the economic and political aims of the two schools points again to a contrast of means.

While the socialist party promotes "A struggle by trades to obtain immediate improvements in the working conditions — hours, wages, shop rules, etc (reforms) and a wider struggle that aims to conquer political power, state and local administrations, charitable institutions for the purpose of transforming them from tools of oppression into tools capable of expropriating the ruling class (political and administrative electoral competition)"[1] — the anarchists believe that no effective conquest in the economic field is possible so long as the means of production remain the personal property of the capitalists. Reforms can appear to be beneficial for a short time. The worker who used to work ten hours a day in the past and works now only eight hours, the worker who used to earn three *lire* a day and now earns four *lire,* feels that he has gained something until he realizes that the high cost of living — inevitable consequence of the reduction of working time and raise of pay — has re-established the equilibrium to the exclusive advantage of the… capitalist. But the anarchists believe that to solicit

[1] *Statute of the Italian Socialist Party.*

these reforms is not and cannot be a function pertaining either to the proletariat or themselves.

The anarchists, like the socialists, want and urge the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, but they do not hope at all for its generosity nor its philanthropy and justice. Confronted with the violent pressure of the masses trying to overthrow it, the bourgeoisie throws out each day a little of its ballast; it gives up some of its arrogance or it makes some inane concession — paid holidays, laws protecting women and working children, state medicine, etc, but only for the purpose of saving its bankrupt privileges.

That is their business: *reforms remain — and should remain — a concern and a function of the ruling class,* not of the anarchists, nor of the socialists either, if they are sincerely convinced that the expropriation of the ruling class is an inevitable condition of their economic emancipation.

Consequently, anarchists believe that rather than short-range ineffectual conquests, tactics of corrosion and continuous attack should be preferred, which demand from strikes of an openly revolutionary character more than shorter hours or paltry wage increases; which demand, instead, the experience of a more extensive solidarity and an ever deeper awareness as an indispensable condition for the realization of the *general economic strike* of a whole trade, of all the trades, in order to obtain, through the inevitable use of force and violence, the unconditional surrender of the *ruling* classes. Merlino, himself, knows that *they yield only to force.* Thus, instead of the mere passive and polite resistance so fervently recommended

The State sees only a criminal in anyone who breaks a law and, by delivering him to a dozen bigots or butchers, is certain to have him committed to the executioner, to the penitentiary, to hell in any case.

The conventionally-minded cry out contradictorily that "Human life is sacred and inviolable, and whoever attacks it offends both divine and human laws"; while they are fattening their wallets and their bellies without the least scruple; condemning the helots toiling in the fields, the factories and the mines to starvation, despair and early death, their women to prostitution and their children to the gutter. Or else, they push them over frontiers into monstrous slaughter tor the sake of a killing in the stock market.

The clowns and spellbinders of self-serving politics, who only yesterday proclaimed the martyrdom of Sophia Perowskaya and Albert Parsons,[3] having hardly wiped their obscene mouths, now spit upon our own rebels because they have suddenly thrown into the web of their plans and machinations the carcass of the tyrant they had been cursing the day before. They shed their crocodile tears over the royal victim; they sententiously declare that political assassination is sheer folly, that *"When a pope*

[3] Sofia Perowskaia (1853–1881) Russian militant member of the revolutionary Club founded in 1869 by Nicolas Tchaikovsky. She was executed in St Petersburg on April 1st 1881 during the repression that followed the death of Czar Alexander II.

Albert R. Parsons, Editor of the Chicago anarchist paper *"The Alarm"* and one of the Chicago Martyrs, executed on November 11, 1887 with August Spies, Adolf Fischer and George Engel. Luis Lingg, sentenced with them, committed suicide rather than let the hangman murder him.

I would regret it, too, because Saverio Merlino has such a wide knowledge of history and the philosophy of history, as well as economy and jurisprudence, that it must be sooner envied than equalled even among the better informed. And therefore, he cannot separate the individual act of rebellion from the political climate in which it strikes, from the causes, remote or near, complex in any case, by which it is almost fatalistically determined, from the particular psychology of the medium Nemesis has chosen for its ends of atonement, reparation, justice, from the consequence, from the admonitory impact it puts on everybody's memory and experience.

The church, of course, *aborret a sanguine* (abhors the spilling of blood) and anathametizes any attempt… that doesn't serve its interests and, so, finds rewards, indulgence and beatifications for Dominic Guzman, Clement and Ravaillac, for the Dragonnades and the St Barthelmys.[2]

[2] Domingo de Guzman (1170–1221) founder of the Dominican Order and instigator to the slaughter of the religious dissenters of Southern France. He was

sanctified by Pope Gregory IV. Jacques Clement (1567–1589) a Dominican friar who killed Henry III King of France.

Francois Ravaillac (1578–1610) another monk, killed Henry IV, another king of France.

Dragonnades: violent repressions ordered by King Louis 14 against the Protestants of Southern France.

Saint-Barthelemy: Name given by popular tradition to the slaughter of religious dissenters — Huguenots — perpetrated on the night of August 24, 1572. Started in Paris on the orders of king Charles IX and his mother, it spread all over France.

by the socialists, the anarchists prefer boycott, sabotage, and, for the sake of struggle itself, immediate attempts at partial expropriation, individual rebellion and insurrection — actions which usually reap so much socialist horror and cursing, but which exert the most spirited influence over the masses and resolve themselves in a moral advantage of the highest order.

The different standards by which socialists and anarchists evaluate reforms lead to a different and divergent political action.

The socialists believe that reforms are an indispensable and inevitable way to the gradual elevation of the proletariat, and so they delude themselves about the advantages they may realize. They consider the winning of reforms as a *specific function* of their party, and for this they have given up the most important and characteristic part of their economic aims. Undertaking a whole series of political struggles and conquests, they have had to retreat from the course which they had so courageously taken at first, and they have ended by confusing themselves with the old radical democracy that they had violently broken away from a score of years before.

Their trust in immediate improvements, in gradual gains, and in legislative reforms, was bound to reconcile them with parliamentary activity, since these reforms could be initiated, approved and proclaimed only as laws of the State. This, in turn, had to reconcile them to the State, which would be entrusted with the application and compliance of such reform laws. And this would inevitably

reconcile them with the hated bourgeoisie, since only with the co-operation of its less backward sectors could they hope to attain the parliamentary sanction for the desired reforms.

Not only has this deviation led the Socialist Party to disavow many of its original tenets, but it has pushed the party down the slope of systematic concessions, rejecting the action and essence of socialism itself.

For direct pressure put against the ruling classes by the masses, the Socialist Party has substituted representation and the rigid discipline of the parliamentary socialists, who have always sacrificed the general interest of the proletariat to the advantage of their own political and parliamentarian function. And instead of fostering the class struggle, which was, in the past, the characteristic mark of socialist organization and activity; it has adopted class collaboration in the legislative arena, without which all reforms would remain a vain hope. Thus, the need to gain the trust of the ruling classes, whose collaboration was necessary for this work of reform, and of the State, which was to supervise its application, compelled the Socialist Party to renege on the essential aims of socialism; ie, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the social revolution. These became on the part of 'scientific socialism' the favourite target for the sarcastic laughter and ferocious ironies of its bemedalled prophets.

* * *

Since the anarchists value reforms for what they are — the ballast the bourgeoisie throws overboard to lighten its

It is enough to remember Vittorio Pini[1] was one of them); I also remember Merlino's gesture, (which was considered heroic and was certainly unusually courageous in that moment of white terror) when he assumed the defence of Gaetano Bresci at his trial in Milan, a task he performed with great dignity and determination before a public cowed by the bullying police and their spies, the insidious provocations of the prosecutor, and the stern admonishments of an impatient judge.

For that gesture of courage, loyalty and honesty — a gesture that had to be inspired, if not by a feeling of true political and moral solidarity, certainly by a deep and sincere understanding of the causes which made the Monza tragedy an act of vindication and retribution — I have in the inmost recess of my heart the deepest gratitude and admiration for Francesco Saverio Merlino.

The purity of Gaetano Bresci's sacrifice must have told him something that he could not reject.

[1] Vittorio Pini, anarchist partisan of immediate expropriation by direct action. Founder with Parmeggiani and others, (in Paris on or about 1887) of the anarchist Group "Intransigents". In 1890 he was condemned to deportation to the "Safety Islands" of French Guyana, where he died in December 1903. On this occasion Galleani published (in *Cronaca Sovversiva* January 16, 1904) a "medallion" saying: "His activities may be disputed, one may dissent from his methods, but no one who has known Vittorio Pini will ever dare say of him that he was a vulgar thief or malefactor". On Pini consult: *"La Gazette des Tribunaux"* (Paris, 5–6 Novembre 1889); *"Le Revolte'"* (Novembre 1889); *"Le Crapouillot"* (January 1938, page 32–33); J. Maitron: *"Historie du Mouvement Anarchiste en France"* (1830–1914 — Paris 1955 pl77-179); L Galleani: *"Aneliti e Singulti"* (Newark, NJ 94–96). (G.R.)

Chapter 7. Propaganda of the Deed

I am beginning to suspect that Merlino may see in the *individual acts of rebellion* — rebellion against the church, against the State, against property or morality — and in the iconoclasts who commit themselves to them, almost always losing their freedom or their lives — the essential source of disagreement and the insurmountable obstacle to a cordial and productive understanding among the various tendencies of anarchism.

If that were the case, I would be very sorry… for a long series of reasons.

Because, if I remember the disdainful and bitter attitude Merlino assumed in Paris a quarter of a century ago against the 'Intransigent Groups' (in these, side by side with some scoundrels who exploited the fervour and generosity of some comrades and, in the name of anarchism, thought only of piling up money for themselves, becoming capitalists as greedy as all the others, sincere and courageous men were to be found working only to provide adequate means for action — *propaganda of the deed* — as it was then called.

old boat in the hope of saving the sad cargo of its privileges from sinking in the revolutionary storm — they have no particular interest in them except to discredit their dangerous mirage, for they are sure that social reforms will come anyway, faster, more often and more radically, as attacks against the existing social institutions become more forceful and violent.

Hence, they have always firmly resisted appeals that favour legal action, especially electoral and parliamentary action, because anarchists are convinced that: "In the electoral process, the working people will always be cheated and deceived; that they will never succeed in sending their own comrades to Parliament, but even if they did manage to send one, or ten, or fifty of them there, they would become spoiled and powerless. Furthermore, even if the majority of Parliament were composed of workers, they could do nothing. Not only is there the senate, the king, the court, the ministers, the chiefs of the armed forces, the heads of the judiciary and of the police, who would be against the parliamentary bills advanced by such a chamber and who would refuse to enforce laws favouring the workers (it has happened); but furthermore laws are not miraculous; no law can prevent the capitalists from exploiting the workers; no law can force the owners to keep their factories open and employ workers at such and such conditions, nor force shopkeepers to sell at a certain price, and so on."[2]

[2] From F S Merlino's essay: "Perche Siamo Anarchici?"

Contrary to electoral and parliamentary action, which requires disciplined authoritarian organizations, anarchists favour direct action by the workers and abstention from political activity.

The anarchists' electoral abstentionism implies not only a conception that is opposed to the principle of representation (which is totally rejected by anarchism), it implies above all an absolute lack of confidence in the State. And this distrust, which is instinctive in the working masses, is for the anarchists the result of their historical experience with the State and its function, which has, at all times and in all places, resulted in a selfish and exclusive protection of the ruling classes and their privileges. Furthermore, anarchist abstentionism has consequences which are much less superficial than the inert apathy ascribed to it by the sneering careerists of 'scientific socialism'. It strips the State of the constitutional fraud with which it presents itself to the gullible as the true representative of the whole nation, and, in so doing, exposes its essential character as representative, procurer and policeman of the ruling classes.

Distrust of reforms, of public powers and of delegated authority, can lead to direct action in the struggles of demolition and vindication. It can determine the revolutionary character of this two-fold action; and, accordingly, anarchists regard it as the best available means lor preparing the masses to manage their own personal and collective interests; and, besides, anarchists feel that even now the working people are fully capable of handling their own political and administrative interests, and, made conscious by the ex-

this question involves elements of such disparity as to make Merlino foresee the agony of anarchism.

We shall have to look for it elsewhere.

comfortable agreement, and are more easily blinded by their delegates' stories than bought by shining coin. It would take too much money to deal with them, and the quarrel would have to be repeated every day.

fortunes of battle end in disaster for want of the boldness and self-denial they always practiced.

The sympathy and the trust that go beyond the personal, into the action and the ideal which inspired it; the sympathy and trust in revolutionary action and in the anarchist ideal; the sympathy and trust which will end by transforming themselves into passionate and persistent co-operation; isn't this all that we can expect from our modest but earnest work of propaganda, education, and renovation?

We have no dogmatic pretence whatsoever. Modestly, we have said what we think about a controversial question, conscious of the fact it has the consent of a considerable number of comrades — and we have expressed it in all sincerity without hate or contempt.

Furthermore, hate and contempt would be misplaced, since action, either within or without a labour organization, should imply neither merit nor demerit. Everyone should choose the ways, means, and field more suited to his ability and preference.[2] In any case, it doesn't seem to me that

[2] *Nowadays, it is impossible for the workers of any trade to remain independent from their union. In the United States, at least, those who remain separate are considered "scab", even if they are respected for their ability and are already paid above the union scale. But above all, the employers claim that all their employees belong to the union, so they discharge those that cannot show a union card.*

Employers have learned from experience that it is easier to bargain with the union committee, which is composed of intelligent workers, generally well placed and jealous of their privileged positions but, after all, still pliant and corruptible than it is to quarrel with a rough, variable and restless crowd of individuals who have no legal standing to establish a long term,

perience of past mistakes, they are advancing towards the ultimate forms of liberation — social revolution, economic communism, anarchy!

The antithesis between socialists and anarchists is also evident in the means of propaganda and action.

The socialists need authoritarian organizations, centralized and disciplined, for their legal and parliamentarian activities. Their action lies in the ceding of power by all to someone, the delegate, the representative, individual or group, and their action is therefore condemned to be circumscribed within the choking confines of the existing laws.

Anarchism rejects authority in any form: to the principle of representation, it opposes the direct and independent action of individuals and masses: to egalitarian and parliamentarian action, it opposes rebellion, insurrection, the general strike, the social revolution.

Having thus briefly defined the traits that distinguish anarchist theory and the anarchist movement from those of the socialists, we have only to relate them to the notion of progress.

According to Metchnikoff — and we refer to him because we think that nobody else has defined progress in a better way — progress means a continuous succession of phenomena in which energy manifests itself at each stage of evolution with an ever-growing variety and intensity; the series is called 'progressive' when, at each one of its stages, it reproduces all its previous traits plus a new one that did not exist in the preceding phases, and which be-

comes, in its turn, the germ of a new *plus* in the following stages.

Now, in the succession of those social phenomena which mark the evolutionary steps of property and the State, of economic and political forms, what place do anarchist-communism and socialist-collectivism occupy? Which of these two doctrines and movements reproduces all the traits of the preceding phases, adding a new trait non-existent in preceding phases, and will be the embryo of a new trait appearing in all subsequent stages?

By solving this first point we will arrive at the solution of the main problem.

Obviously, if it can be proven that anarchist-communism conforms to this definition of progress much more than does socialist-collectivism, one could no longer speak about decadent and moribund anarchism; one would conclude instead that socialism is decadent and moribund. As vitality, energy, and the possibility of realization, are the conditions of progress, so inertia, stillness and death are its contradiction and denial.

For us this demonstration seems to be easy. A mere glance at the historical evolution of *property* is enough to see the progressive succession of the steps marking the way from slavery to economic freedom.

Greedy and autocratic at its origins, which were fraud and violence, *property;* ie, the right to use and misuse one's own things without restraint (and it is well to remember that at that time *human beings* were among the *things* owned), knew no opposition nor limitations, not even the

"If you join an organization with ideas like this and mean to keep them, you'll be gagged and expelled as a provocateur at the first opportunity. That is something you have had occasion to see not long ago."[1]

That is why those of our comrades who undertake such an arduous task must possess the qualities of seriousness, coherence, humility and great patience that are required to gain, first the liking, then the esteem and finally the trust of the best of their fellow workers. They must be in the front line where there is danger; last in line always, where there is ambition or persona] gain; they must be bitter opponents when faced with deals and compromises that are inconsistent with their faith and dignity as workers and revolutionists.

And if they fail, if they have to pack up and go, there will be no regrets. They will have sown the good seed of independence, of consciousness and of courage. Their work will be remembered and invoked whenever leaders waver or manoeuver, whenever the hard, fruitless struggle is followed by renewed pain and disillusionment, whenever the

[1] *This is a reference to a strike of the granite workers in Barre, Vermont, where the Italian workers — radicals in their majority — had so notably prevailed that their enthusiasm scared the flabby leaders of the American Federation of Labor even more than the bosses of the Industry. So much so that at the AFL Convention for the Constitutional Revision, an amendment was proposed and approved, making it mandatory to use the English language exclusively in Union assemblies, denying aliens the right to express themselves in their own language. Of course, the amendment was totally ignored wherever the Union members were strong enough to prevent the leaders from talking in English.*

the organization was established, and it is clear that an anarchist cannot assume the responsibility for sponsoring aspirations of this kind. He knows that every conquest of such improvements is deceitful and inconsistent, since, in the increased cost of food, rent and clothes, the worker, as a consumer will pay more to live no matter how much more he earns as a producer. No comrade of ours, therefore, can assume the management of such an organization, nor any role implying any solidarity whatever with its programme or action, without denying all his anarchist and revolutionary convictions, without aligning himself with the reformist crowds whose spearhead he pretends to be.

Our place is in opposition, continually demonstrating with all possible vigilance and criticism the vanity of such aims, the futility of such efforts, the disappointing results; relentlessly pointing out, in contrast, the concrete and integral emancipation that could be achieved quickly and easily with different ways and other means.

The outcome of every agitation, of every union struggle would confirm the foresight and the fairness of our criticism. Even if it is not easy to hope that an organization might soon follow our suggestions, it is nevertheless believable that the more intelligent and bold among its members would be inclined to favour our point of view. They would form a nucleus ready to fight with passion in the struggles of the future, attracting their fellow workers to shake the authority of their union leaders.

need to explain or justify it. It was the right sanctioned by the well-known aphorism: "Blessed be the owners, for asked why they own, they can reply simply: 'Because we do!'"

But insolent, arrogant abuse arouses anger, instigates protests, ignites rebellion, and dispels the curse from the hearts of the resigned serfs. The gospels, the holy fathers of the church the christian doctrine, brand wealth as a crime, the rich as god's enemies, admonishing that a camel can more easily pass through the eye of a needle than a rich person through the gates of heaven; Christianity opposes the absolute right of property with *charity,* as a prize for renunciation, as a token of grace.

Human rights — barely dawning on the horizon of Rome — will, through Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius,[3] take from property as a first conquest, the right of life and death over slaves, and then, reaching maturity, will require that it live with honesty, not offend anyone, and give each person his own due.

Notwithstanding the bloody rebellion of the Anabaptists, property will remain privileged, feudal, lordly during the middle ages, but it will humble itself and will seek to justify itself. Therefore, the fief is the due and fitting reward for bravery in war, or for the political wisdom one's forebears have displayed in the service of king's cause, or the church,

[3] Two Roman Emperors: Publius Aelius Hadrianus, from 117 to 138 AD; Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, from 161 to 180 AD.

or the country. It is, above all, the reward for the continued loyalty and devotion of their descendants.

After the rights of man and citizen, the equality of rights and obligations have been proclaimed upon the ruins of the Bastille, a much more profound revolution than the one that sprouted from the Encyclopaedists begins, one that is based upon the substitution of individual effort with mechanical and collective means. And property no longer seeks its justifications from investiture, legal gifts, or rights, but from genius, from savings, from the indispensable co-operation that the bourgeoisie and the capitalists have given to the revolution, from the indisputable improvement of the general condition of life.

Though in real life things have remained unchanged in their essence, what a distance has been travelled in the ethical and juridical field from the old Roman concept of property, which gave the owner absolute right of life and death over his slaves, to the laws now existing in the more developed of our nations, which, by recognizing the workers' right to security and pensions, sanction the *social function of property!*

The social function of property, which is after all the pure and plain negation of the right to private properly, was perceived by the *Jacques,* who rose under Caillet's leadership in the fourteenth century, crying, "Fire to the castles!"; by Thomas Muentzer's anabaptists, in the sixteenth century, who in their proclamation of faith advocated *"The perfect community of property, redeemed*

in an egalitarian society — if they did not find their basis and protection in the freedom and welfare of those around us. If freedom is knowledge, if well-being is solidarity; then the educational work to be performed among proletarians, organized or not appears not only as a pressing need but one which cannot be delayed

"Well then, would you be willing to join any organizations? To remain outside them prevents you from exerting any influence or action "

Certainly! We should enrol in labour organizations whenever we find it useful to our struggle and wherever it is possible to do so under *well defined pledges and reservations.*

Pledge number one! As we were anarchists outside the organization so we shall remain anarchists inside it. First reservation! We shall never be part of the leadership; we shall be always in the opposition and never assume any responsibility in running the union.

This is for us an elementary position of coherence.

It has been firmly established that the labour organizations, those that are managed by somnolent conservatives, as well as the red ones led by the so-called revolutionary syndicalists, recognize and consent to the existing economic system in all its manifestations and relations. They limit their demands to immediate and partial improvements, high salaries, shorter hours, old-age pensions, unemployment benefits, social security, laws protecting women's and children's working conditions, factory inspections, etc, etc… They are the main purpose for which

pursue with passion, patience and faith, a society incompatible with these monstrosities. And meanwhile, with all the means we can muster, we contest and oppose their arbitrary and atrocious functions, quite often sacrificing our freedom, our well-being, even our loved ones for many long years, sometimes forever.

As you can see, we follow different roads, and it is unlikely that we will ever meet.

* * *

However, labour organizations are a fact; they exist. And even it their rusty and blind conservatism is an obstacle and oftentimes a danger, they deserve our consideration and careful attention.

If we find ourselves facing an ignorant child, a devout woman, or a blockhead who doesn't see, or doesn't want to see, we do not react with derision or contempt to the immaturity of one, the ingenuousness of the other, nor to the blindness of most.

We treat them with the same kindness and assist them all with care, because we are proud to uncover the shining metal hidden beneath the rude and rash exterior, to transform a primitive being into a person who has value, individually and socially, because we know above all the task we have chosen is too important to neglect any energy that might contribute to the success of our ideal and, finally, because we know that our own freedom, security, and individual well-being would be precarious and ephemeral — even

by the spirit";[4] by Babeuf's and Buonarroti's egalitarians who — after the French Revolution had been usurped with impunity by the bourgeoisie, "… mainly because it had wanted to impose one form of government over another, without caring about the conditions of those for whom any government that considers itself legitimate is supposed to look after and provide for" — proclaimed that the "… main sources of all the evils that harass mankind are the inequality of fortunes and private property";[5] and by the English Levellers, who in the nineteenth century maintained that "The land owners are thieves and murderers who must be destroyed and proclaimed that all land is the common property of mankind.[6]

[4] Jacques Bonhomme was the name ironically given by the landowner aristocracy to the peasants, in the XIV Century. Jacquerie was called the insurrection against feudalism, exploded in France, headed by Guillaume Caillet or Jacques Bonhomme. From the XIV to the XVI Century, "Jacqueries" appeared in Italy, England and Germany, besides France. Anabaptism was a Protestant sect arisen in Zurich in 1523. They were, among other things, a consequence of the people's dissatisfaction and of the more radical elements concern about the problem of property. They were called Anabaptists because they claimed that baptism should be administered at the age of reason. Concerning Thomas Muentzer's anabaptists see the excellent Soviet essay by Soviet historian M M Smirin: *"The popular Thomas Muenzer Reform and the great peasant war"* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1947).

[5] Francois Noel Babeuf (1760–1797) and Philippe Michel Buonarroti (1761–1837) forerunners of the economic revolution, were arrested by the Directoire — then ruling in France. Babeuf was executed as a traitor of the French Republic.

[6] "Levellers" were the extremist of the revolutionary movement in the British Civil War of the Seventeenth Century. In a letter dated Novem-

It was the task of modern socialism — the clear diagnosis and the implacable criticism of Godwin and Owen, Saint-Simon and Fourier, Proudhon, Marx and Bakunin[7] — to point out the horrible symptoms from which all kinds of miseries and pains spring; to search deeply for their causes; to identify and define the social function of property; and to draw from this bold premise the unbiased conclusion that *everything must belong to everybody and must present the hypothesis of a world without god, without king, without government, without masters.*

But the tendency to blunt the insolence of private property (a tendency that is nothing but the longing of those who produce to be free from capitalist oppression) is not extinguished nor abated by the State and the law agreeing to and accepting some symbolical concessions that say property must have a social function.

Indeed, in the second half of the nineteenth century, from this concession, strictly theoretical and formal, begins a slow and relentless investigation of the institution of private property, concluding with its unavoidable condem-

ber 1st, 1647, they were described as follows: "They have given themselves a new name, viz: Levellers, for they intend to sett all things straight, and raise a parity and community in the Kingdom" (Gardner: *"Great Civil War").*

[7] William Godwin (1756–1836), Robert Owen (1771–1858), Claude Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Charles Fourier (1772–1837), Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Mikail Bakunin (1814–1876): all of them contributed in the attempt to carry theoretical socialism from vague and Utopian aspirations to more concrete and precise conceptions.

strength, the egalitarian revolution would be a thing of the past, freeing us from these melancholy and bitter musings.

The great mass is bourgeois *non natione sed moribus* [not by birth but by custom] — not by origin, for nothing was found in its cradle, but by habit, superstition, prejudice and by interest, too, because it feels its own interests are tied to and dependent upon the masters', who, therefore, become providence itself, providing job, wages, bread, life for father and children. And for job, life and security, the great mass is grateful to the master who has always existed and will exist forever: blessed be he — and blessed be the institutions, the laws, the policemen who defend and protect him.

In other words, while the anarchist makes a sharp, severe positive diagnosis, and sinks the scalpel deep to remove the main source of the social malaise at its root (not hiding the long and painful duration of the treatment) the great mass remains empirical. It does not contest property, let alone reject it; it wishes only it were less greedy. It does not repudiate the master; it desires only that he be better. It does not reject the State, law, tribunals and the police; it wants only a fatherly State, just laws and honest courts, police that are more humane.

We do not argue about whether property is greedy or not, if masters are good or bad, if the State is paternal or despotic, if laws are just or unjust, if courts are fair or unfair, if the police are merciful or brutal. When we talk about property, State, masters, government, laws, courts and police, we say only that *we don't want any of them.* And we

for other goods or shining gold, which is the tool of the wealth, power, and of the tyranny which the privileged minority practices with impunity over the rest of mankind. The church consecrates this usurpation as a special blessing of god; the State legitimizes it in its parliaments, codes, tribunals, protected by its laws, police and armies. And hypocritical morality surrounds this thievish hoarding with religious devotion.

The anarchist impugns this monopoly, but since a mere denial is of no use, he strikes with all his might at the roots of the accursed tree, trying to cut it down and destroy it together with its branches and its fruits: *everything belongs to everybody.* No more private ownership of means of production and exchange, nor of any other institution that guards the injustice and the inequality, which are the inevitable issue of that initial privilege.

And since our good burghers, even those who pretend philanthropy redeems usury, will never stop being exploiters or give back what they have unjustly taken; the anarchists, including those who abhor violence and bloodshed, are compelled to conclude that the expropriation of the ruling class will have to be accomplished by the violent social revolution. And they dedicate themselves to this, seeking to prepare the proletariat with every means of education, propaganda and action at their disposal.

Do not forget and do not delude yourselves! The proletariat is still *a mass, not a class.* If it were a class, if it had a clear, full consciousness of its rights, of its function, of its

nation. Proudhon is the main unrelenting investigator, and, although he has later been repudiated by his disciples in almost all the branches of socialism, the proofs and the elements of guilt collected by him, arise mockingly every time the criticism of private property resumes its destructive task.[8] From Proudhon's tragic conclusions, the ideal and the movement of socialism were born to present a new concept and to bring to the series of phenomena that mark the progressive evolution from slavery to freedom in the field of economy a new characteristic that did not exist in the preceding phase and that will be the germ of a new evolutionary period in the following phases.

The Socialist theory reached the conclusion that *"Being itself the result of the mind and energy of men and women from all times and all nations, capital, a property which renews itself perpetually only by virtue of this universal activity, cannot be a source of personal power but should be a social force that therefore must lose its class character and become the social property of every human being."*

[8] This is a reference to P-J Proudhon's essay: *"Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?"* (What is Property?).

Chapter 4. Socialist-Collectivism and Anarchist-Communism

This new characteristic has not yet appeared within the thought of classical democracy, which, following in the footsteps of Ledru-Rollin and Mazzini[1], is still raving about the Utopia of an impossible alliance between capital and labour, an impossible harmony between the exploited and the exploiters. Socialist philosophy expressed it as *the social ownership of all means of production and exchange.*

So, the socialist movement represents a progress over the old democratic doctrine, which used to lull us to sleep with its old nursery songs about alliances and harmony.

[1] Alexandre-Auguste Rollin (1807–1874) a spokesman in Parliament for the French Democratic-Republican opposition, who had as a press organ *"La Presse"*.

Guisenne Mazzini (1805–1872) Italian standard-bearer of Republican Demo- [rest unreadable, OCR-note]

Chapter 6. Workers' Organization

"Against the workers' organizations, also?"

It is not a question of pro or con. The anarchist movement and the labour movement follow two parallel lines, and it has been geometrically proven that parallels never meet.

It is presumed that through experience, research, learning, meditation, the anarchist, at least, has reached the conviction that the social malaise, in general and, in particular, poverty, serfdom and the involuntary, imposed ignorance of the working people who produce everything that gives life its fullness and the splendour they will never enjoy, but which is and will be enjoyed by those who have never done a day's work anywhere) derive from a primitive and fundamental monopoly — from the hoarding, by a greedy and cunning minority, of the land, fields and mines and their products; of the factories and forges, where the earth's products are transformed into the elements of life, security, and pleasure; of the railroads and ships, carrying such products to all parts of the world, there to be exchanged

faith and our convictions. These certainly would not draw forth a good omen for the libertarian future if we could not proceed on our own, without the proxies and the tutors, which are inseparable from the notion of organization, be it either the political organization of the anarchist party or the organization of the craft and trade unions.

Such progress becomes more and more evident as the huge proletariat of all nations, called to action and insurrection by the new social theories, inspires and hastens the selective processes within the socialist party itself.

Because, even if there is no disagreement, generally speaking, on the main point (the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and exchange), nor on the ultimate aim (the social ownership of such means of production and exchange), even if there is no disagreement, generally speaking, about the means necessary for accomplishing the great transformation, even if it is generally agreed that the emancipation of the working people must be the result of the workers' own effort and that the expropriation of the bourgeoisie can only be brought about"... by the violent destruction of the present social orders"; yet differences of opinion and frictions will emerge, sharp and numberless at every step, just as soon as one passes from theory to practice and experiment, as soon as a hypothesis is put forth concerning the relations that might bind together the dwellers of the happy city that the revolution will erect upon the ruins of private property.

So, at the International Workers Association, when the problem arose of how to translate the generic formula 'social ownership' of all means of production and exchange into terms describing with precision what everyone wanted, many said 'collectivism', many others 'communism', some said the 'socialist state' and others wanted

'anarchy'; some preferred 'conquest of power' and some 'social revolution'.

Hence, disagreement over the economic and the political aims, disagreement about the means of propaganda and action. And we have already pointed out that the initial disagreements became in time irreconcilable antagonisms.

The two main opposing schools were in perfect agreement about the illegitimacy of private property and in favour of socializing all means of production and exchange, and, together, they brought into the struggles for economic emancipation a new concept and brought into the continuum of evolutionary phenomena a more progressive phase. Now the problem is to find out if and to what extent each of the two schools has remained faithful to this notion of progress immediately following the period of broad generalizations; if, in their hurry to apply principles to reality, each has retained any, and how much, of the old systems condemned by history, criticism and reason; how much does each one of them carry along that is inert, dead, or Utopian; and, finally, which of them is entitled to speak in the name of life and of the future.

Now those who said 'collectivism', meant *socialization limited to the means of production and exchange.* "We do not want to abolish in any manner the private appropriation of the product of labour… what we want to abolish is the wretched way appropriation is done, whereby the worker lives only to increase capital and lives only so long as and because the interest of the ruling class demands it".

under the threat of repudiation, blame, or punishment for lack of discipline?

Many who have been with an organization of any kind have had the bitter occasion to watch its indolence and its negligence. They end up doubting whether the organization is set up to defend the workers and support their aspirations, wondering whether it isn't at the critical moment, an obstacle or impediment, instead. They can tell you if we are exaggerating.

It would not help to object that here we deal with anarchists, selected people, who know what they want, who are able to choose their road, and who have the good legs and strength to climb it. Like the members of all the vanguard parties, anarchists are children of bourgeois society, carrying its stigma, and, understandably, the crowds that join them are not better and expect the maximum result from the least effort. We have been forced into too many compromise arrangements to be willing to seek more. As we accept wages, as we pay for the house we rent, our revolutionary claims and our anarchist aspirations notwithstanding, we recognize and we legitimize in the most concrete and painful way, capital, rent, profit — the tribute that our exploiters impose on our labour and on our despised sweat.

Compromise, renunciation, betrayal! but there is no other way out; the yoke is on our necks and our hands are tied.

But, wherever possible, we must avoid, we must shun, we must reject compromise and renunciation. We must be ourselves, according to the strict character outlined by our

enslaved, like all the others, by its constitution which, like all other constitutions, laws and codes, would be overtaken, on the day after its promulgation, by events and needs, by the pressing necessities of the struggle. A government, absurd and illegitimate like the others, based on delegation and representation, though it would be only too clear and obvious, especially from the experience of the anarchists, that every delegate and deputy could represent only his own ideas and feelings, not those of his constituents, which are infinitely variable on any subject. A government, intrusive and arbitrary, like any other government, because its preoccupation with directorial responsibility will, at every development, in every stage of its hierarchy, push it to adopt — always moved, of course, by the most noble and generous purpose — provisions, decisions, measures to which the card-carrying members will submit for the sake of discipline, even though they may be contrary to their opinion and their interest. A government, all-absorbing like any other, because it wants and has an organ for every function, of little or no use, but through which everybody must pass, against which all initiatives will have to collide, and before which all original and unorthodox projects will appear suspicious, if not outright subversive.

Is it necessary to do this or that for propaganda? A committee exists for that purpose and will take care of it. Is it urgent to do this or that for solidarity? What does this appropriate committee exist for, if not for that purpose? Is there an initiative for affirmation or action? Isn't there a committee charged with these tasks and mustn't you go through it,

This same thought was expressed even with more precision by Andrea Costa,[2] after his conversion to parliamentary socialism. At the Italian Socialist Party Congress in Mantua, on September 26, 1886, he defined collectivism as "… communalization of the means of production, reserving for the individual as private property his work's production, thus assuring the rights of the community, on one side, and those of the worker, on the other."

In his *Quintessence of Socialism* Shaffle said the same thing with less clarity but more explicitly: "Substituting collective for private capital means that, instead of the system of private production, there is a system based on the collective ownership of all means of production. Besides obtaining a more unified, a more social, a more collective organization of labour, this system of production would eliminate day-to-day competition; it would place that part of production which is susceptible to collective operation under the direction of professional entities and corporations, and would also direct the division or distribution of the collective products according to the social value of each worker's labour."[3]

Then, it is clear that in collectivism, the socialization of property — the new trait that elevates socialist thought and movement to a level of progress unknown to all preceding theories and schools — is limited to the means of produc-

[2] Andrea Costa (1851–1910).

[3] Albert Shaflle (1831–1903) His *"Quintessence of Socialism"* was published in the Spring of 1874.

tion, while it reserves for the individual worker all rights to the fruits of his work.

The collectivist premise of socializing the means of production is revolutionary insofar as it displaces all the old relations, all the old forms and, in so doing, counters private property with collective social ownership of all means of production. But it remains the *conservator* of the old absurd irrational bourgeois criterion of compensation, insomuch as it regulates everyone's share of the products of common work, even if such compensation should be extended to the final product of each one's work.

Of course, the conclusion that socialist-collectivism derives from its revolutionary socialization of all means of production is irrational, absurd and Utopian, because it does not resolve the political problem of equality and freedom; because it confirms, rather than removes, the hypothesis of the State, against which the socialist critique has struggled for half a century; because it is not supported by a logical and positive criterion; because it will never find practical means of explanation, unless they are based on gross iniquity, stupid privileges, strident inequalities and contradictions.

The demonstration is implicit in the very form that collectivism assumes. It proposes a society based on the *common ownership of all means of production and exchange and the private ownership of one's own work*, a formula which creates an initial inequality that would turn out to be a Pandora's box, out of which would come all kinds of rivalries,

Other anarchists call themselves organizationalists, not only because they promote the specific establishment of a political party, but also because they believe that the basis of anarchist movement should be the existing labour organizations and, even more, those that would arise under their auspices, with their stimulus, and have an open revolutionary character.

To these two trends, which differ only by degree, and whose action should always be collective in character, Merlino — if we do not misunderstand his thought — opposes those anarchists who prefer individual activity both in the field of propaganda and revolutionary action.

Modestly, but firmly, we are opposed to those anarchists who call themselves organizationalists, whether they wish to organize an anarchist party politically, or whether, in order to strengthen it, they aim to base it on labour organizations as they exist now, or on other ones they might organize that correspond more to their aims.

A political party, any political party, has its programme; ie, its constitutional charter: in assemblies of group representatives it has its parliament: in its management, its boards and executive committees, it has its government. In short, it is a graduated superstructure of bodies a true hierarchy, no matter how disguised, in which all stages are connected by a single bond, discipline, which punishes infractions with sanctions that go from censure to excommunication, to expulsion.

The anarchist party cannot help but be a party like the others. Worse! A government like any other government,

two trends' respective internal contradictions:"… the former, the organizationalists, are unable to find a form of organization compatible with their anarchist principles" ; the latter, the individualists,

".. with the failure of the idea of reprisal, which had been the soul of anarchist action, cannot find a way to action and cannot exist without the organization they strive to reject" .

That the organizationalists cannot find a form of organization compatible with their anarchist principles is perfectly natural and logical, and, on this point, we are in total agreement with Merlino. But, we do not understand why the individualists cannot exist without an organization, since, according to Merlino himself, an organization compatible with anarchist principles is not to be found.

Still, it seems to us that a distinction should be made concerning this designation of *organizationalist anarchists,* when we consider the frequent statements and the practical attitudes they express and adopt.

Organizationalists are, if we do not err, those anarchists who deem it desirable, necessary and possible to organize systematically, on the basis of previously agreed programmes, as a political party, distinguishable from all other proletarian parties, and able, whenever the opportunity appears, to make itself heard in bargainings, alliances and coalitions that might be suggested by the necessities of the moment, the circumstances of the struggle against the ruling class, against any intolerable misdeed that might have occurred.

hatreds, and competitions, worse and deadlier than the social inequalities existing in our times.

The socialists say that each will receive the value of each one's work from the product of the collective work. But we know, even now, that intelligence, strength, activity, aptitude and physical capability vary from person to person, so that the quantity and quality of their production is bound to vary from person to person, and each worker will be entitled to receive a different quota of the product. Thus, it has to be admitted that the citizens of the collectivist city will satisfy their needs in an *unequal* measure, since it appears obvious that those who produce more and better will be entitled to receive more of the product of the social work than the unlucky ones who, being less strong and less capable, will produce less or with more strenuous effort.

And one will have to admit, willingly or not, that this is the first absurdity, the first inequality and the first injustice.

An absurdity, because no labour union, were it the most intelligent and bold within international collectivism, will ever find the standard with which to evaluate the effort and the strain which its members — varying and differently developed — are forced to exert in order to give their necessary contribution to the collective production. Nor will it find the means to evaluate the raw manual labour requiring a minimal effort from a strong, intelligent young man, but causing great pain for a weak, less intelligent, and awkward person who, nevertheless, will be called to show the total of his work done before he opens the account of his needs. Beyond sheer manual labour, it will be even harder

to determine the value of the wages due for work less measurable in its nature and in its processes, but no less useful in its results — when, for instance, one must determine the use value of Pascal's theorem, or of Newton's law of gravitation, or of Marconi's wireless telegraphy.[4]

* * *

Even if this impossible evaluation criterion were found, the injustice would not be less evident and real. Those who by nature or a fortunate environment have been endowed with a powerful body, or a sharp mind, or with a more pronounced disposition to undertake any difficult endeavour, will be able to produce abundantly without effort, without pain, while he who has received from an unjust nature or a less fortunate environment a feebler body, a lesser mind, or less varied aptitudes, will produce with pain and in smaller quantities.

It is obvious that, if there has to be some consideration, this should be in favour of those who arc below average, because their needs are more numerous and more urgent, needs that are less numerous and less pressing in healthy and normal people, who find pleasure and satisfaction in their work.

Contrariwise, with a Malthusianism that couldn't be more idiotic or ferocious, collectivism reserves for the less-endowed all the pains of a social hell; and it assures

[4] Blaise Pascal (1623–1662). Isaac Newton (1642–1727). Guglielmo Marconi (1875–1937).

But, then, what kind of power would Galileo have over my belies, my ideas and my education, if I remain unmoved in my prejudice, and if he hasn't the slightest influence or mental jurisdiction over me? I'd remain a stranger, outside his dominion.

And, sadly, that such is the case is proved by the general allegiance, (thanks to the ignorance and superstition cultivated with relish among the common people by those inseparable accomplices, the State and the church) that the great majority continues to pay to Genesis and the Mosaic tradition. And by the rather thin ranks of suspicious 'characters' and 'reprobates' who accept and trust Galileo's scientific theory.

One might, with some success, carry the debate into a wider field; ie, the relationship between those who discover a new scientific approach to industry and life, itself, and those who, with the necessary intelligence and co-operation, make possible its realization and benefit. We arrive then at the conclusion of the equivalence of functions, which we have mentioned before, and in which the sources and the security of libertarian equality are found.

But we feel that we have spent too much time arguing about an objection that refutes itself automatically from the anarchist standpoint the rejection of all authority.

Yet, in our opinion, Merlino sees the disintegration, the agony of the anarchist movement, not in these quarrels, but in the struggle between the organizationalists and the individualists *on the grounds of immediate action,* and in the

Our answer is, categorically and without hesitation, *no*! Even if it be Galileo, Pascal, or Newton, who in the darkness of past centuries raised the torch of hope, of truth, of redemption.

Against the biblical tradition of creation, which claimed that the Earth is the centre of the universe, Galileo affirmed and proved (and his demonstration has since then been validated by many clear proofs which are now accessible to the unskilled in astronomy) that the sun is the immobile centre of our planetary system, and that Earth is only one of many satellites which revolve around the sun at a rhythm that can now be calculated exactly to the second.

Now! Either Galileo has convinced me that his theory is right, and, if so, he has ceased to dominate me because I am able to understand and verify it — and today, even with the help of data and means that were not known in his time. Then, as far as the relationship between the sun and its satellites is concerned, there is such complete agreement between Galileo and me — pardon the comparison that it excludes any form of hierarchy, supremacy, or domination.

Or Galileo has not convinced me. And then, as far as I am concerned, the sun continues to revolve as it did in the time of Joshua, who allowed himself the pleasure of stopping it in order to give him time to destroy A-do-ni-ze-dec, king of Jerusalem. The Earth stands still (and it must stand still — as some peasants I was trying to persuade to the Galilean theory used to say — because otherwise all of us would go upside down), and the Bible and Moses are right.

those who had from nature all the blessings of intelligence and the ability to perform a great variety of work, all the joys of life from the beginning.

Thus, from the marriage of the absurd with injustice, we have socialist-collectivism reconsecrating the division of society in two classes: the class of the strong, of the quick, of the fortunate to whom all satisfactions are guaranteed; and the class of the feeble, the slow, the inept whose perpetual inheritance will be deprivations, disgrace and poverty.

Hatred, rivalry and unhealthy jealousy will spring from the unequal private ownership of labour's product in a more furious way than those inequalities that are fomented in our times by the private ownership of all means of production and exchange.

Even now, socialist-collectivism forsees such inequality and the consequent division of society into two enemy classes; and it tries to avoid it by means of a *state administration,* created to supervise production and distribution and to re-establish, where necessary, the social equilibrium where imperiled or disturbed by the social inequalities.

True, the collectivists hasten to add that the new State would have mere administrative functions and that, keeping an eye on *things*, it would scrupulously abstain from being a ruler of *men*. But the more orthodox exponents of socialist collectivism, like Morgari, are arising against this oblique sophism. He writes, "It is impossible to understand what the distinction between government of people and management of things could mean in practice. In our times the State does both: it governs the citizens and manages

directly one-fifth of the country's wealth. Equally, under socialism, we would have the management of things and the government of the people, and these would be bound by law to even more social duties, both in number and in depth, than there are today".[5]

As opposed to a bourgeois regime, which, in spite of its constitutional lies, is the rule of a minority over the majority, socialist-collectivism may be the rule of the majority over the minority, and, even supposing that it might be a mitigated form of tyranny, it would still represent a denial of freedom, so much so, that the same Morgari, who foresees *man armed with education and the vote, but controlled by social covenants; ie laws that the majority will approve from time to time,* is forced to admit that *collectivism will, of necessity, maintain... the authoritarian principle; that is to say, the coercive means regulating labour and other social institutions,* and that therefore *collectivism is a lower stage of social evolution* compared to anarchism.

It had to be just our good old Merlino to vindicate the charm of socialist-collectivism among the woolly-minded and to rehabilitate its reputation among the masses as the ultimate stage of the social progress in comparison to, and much to the confusion and mortification of, libertarian communism.

* * *

[5] Oddino Morgari (1865–1929) Socialist Party Deputy. He was a Secretary of the Italian Socialist Party, and, for a short time, editor of its organ, *"Avanti!"*

The thought, which uncovers a new truth in an original manner and in a remote relationship, has arisen from the thought, the study, the work, the pain, the tragic disenchantment of all those who took the first steps on the harsh road of research, who dissipated the first clouds of darkness, who overcame the first and most arduous obstacles, boldly challenging mockery, contempt, the angry conservatism of the vulgar, and the even more furious hatred of the entrenched interests, and who, in so doing, opened a gleam into the future.

Who can say, that he, alone, equipped exclusively with his limited knowledge, has gone very far on the steep path of progress? That he has created something from nothing, without using the work of his forerunners, the pioneers who proceeded him?

So, it appears that the right to command begins to lose some of its absolute and autocratic character. At the very least, we are on the level of a constitutional regime!

Here again — everything belongs to everybody

But here we do not intend to deal with genius, the debate would take us too far.

Our subject is more modest: does the person who has a wealth of knowledge unknown to most people exert a real and exclusive domination over ignorant laymen? Or does he not?

Maxwell (1831–1879); William Crookes (1832–1919): all physicists whose previous work and research on electricity, made Guglielmo Marconi's discoveries and inventions possible. As a matter of fact, A Righi was Marconi's teacher at the University of Bologna.

of the Holy Inquisition, which has the special, unenviable task and mission of defending the dogmatic absurdity of the Genesis against the rights of reason.

We are compelled to believe in and to swear *in verba magistri* [in the words of the master] to the truths they have revealed and which we cannot verify nor contest. Isn't this, in many branches of the human knowledge, an absolute and incontestable authority?

The authority of genius? Well, one is almost tempted to accede. But, if, according to Bovio (and so far no one has said it with more seriousness and clarity), *genious is the highest degree of synthesis with which human thought discovers truth in an original manner and in remote relationships*, how much will this synthesis (ie, the method which in philosophy as well as in chemistry proceeds from causes to effects, from principles to consequences, from the elements to the whole) owe to analysis and to those who, with their labour, with their persistence and, equally, with their intuition, have collected the elements, discovered and arranged the causes, established the fundamental principles from which the new discovery has taken its start, and without which the new relationship could never have been grasped, nor the superior truth been able to reveal and assert itself? How much does Marconi owe Galvani, Volta, Righi, Hertz, Maxwell, Crookes, for his wireless telegraphy?[5]

[5] Luigi Galvani (1737–1798); Alessandro Volta (1745–1827); Augusto Righi (1850–1920); Heinrich Rudolf Hertz (1857–1894); James Clark

Meanwhile, in contrast to the tortuous and contradictory premise of common ownership of all means of production and exchange — tempered by the private ownership of the product of one's own labour — that is waved about by socialist-collectivism, libertarian communism begins with two logical terms much more correlative and positive: *the common ownership of all means of production and exchange*, and the *equal right of all to receive from the total production of collective work according to his or her needs*. This means that from a revolutionary premise (socialization of the means of production) collectivism draws a reactionary conclusion (compensation according to one's work rather than according to one's needs) and re-establishes within the collectivist city the same economic and political inequalities, all the old and discredited legal and moral relations. Instead, libertarian communism from a revolutionary premise (common ownership of all means of production and exchange) draws a conclusion equally revolutionary: to each according to his or her needs, which shifts, at the same time, the axis of all the old relationships, legal, political and moral, and, in so doing, proclaims a new idea, revealing also in the ethical and the political field, the new trait, the *plus* missing until most recently, which will be the embryo of the new revolutionary period that will assert the *ungovernability of man*, autonomy and anarchy.

As a matter of fact, in shunning the absurd and arbitrary notion of compensation (which, together with its opposite poles, reward and punishment, reproduces in the collectivist world the catholic contrast between vice and virtue,

the catholic predestination to heaven or hell, according to whether its future citizens reveal themselves good or bad at the necessary task of production), libertarian communism rejects the Utopia, the incoherence, and the injustice implicit in the collectivist pretense of measuring the effort and the energy of each worker in order to compensate him or her according to the use-value of his or her labour, and, in so doing, it resolves the problem of each and everyone's sharing the product of the collective work, without arbitrary limitations, without odious controls, without offense to justice or liberty.

Libertarian communism does not feel that the rights and limits of such participation should be dictated by merit or demerit, by the greater or lesser aptitude and productivity of the single worker. It should be inspired by the unsuppressible right of each organism to go all the way and under the best possible conditions in its ascent from the most elementary to superior and more complex forms; it should be the unsuppressible right of every person to grow, to develop his faculties in every way, to achieve his full and integral development.

Now, this ascent of the organism from a rudimentary to a fully developed state is marked by a series of ever-more, growing and varied needs claiming satisfaction, and its progressive development results from the more or less complete satisfaction of those numberless and infinitely diverse needs.

The newborn baby, who at his first contact with air and light protests with his first cry, warns us that the change of

when anarchy has come into existence, when each one will be able to do *anything he pleases.* They suppose, of course, that the masses, having rejected the refined and progressive political wisdom of the bourgeoisie, will want to submit to their will and to their rod — in vain, if the social revolution has prevailed and anarchy has been realized. One can only smile and go on!

Yet, we have met some who were able to cover their sophisms with a less vulgar appearance and with more ingenious tricks — they object that personalities emerge from the masses, who are endowed by nature with an extraordinarily powerful mind, or are favoured with special means of education and learning, keenness in study, perseverance in research. As a result they succeed in penetrating enigmas, in discovering natural laws which were unknown before, drawing from them applications of great and uncontested value for the advancement of civilization as well as for the well-being of mankind. They succeed in grasping a truth which surpasses not only all usual and normal knowledge, but also that which, pertains to the specialized technology of a particular branch of learning, becoming the teachers of it, pioneers, *masters,* if you please, because no one else can compete with them or share in their eminence. When Galileo, for instance, or Pascal, or Newton enuniciated the law concerning universal gravitation, the equilibrium of fluids, or the immobility of the sun at the centre of its system with the Earth and other planets circling around it and reflecting its light, where could they find competent, conscientious and worthy opponents? — With the exception

Alas! Fundamentally there is always the soul of the slave who despairs of emancipation, who carries in his memory and, even more, in his scars, the experience of his suffering, a tragedy in which he sees only two characters — himself, chained to the millenarian column of serfdom, and, in front of him, his master, dull, herculean, bestial, scourging and choking him.

When we mention to our peasants — the old ones, especially — the radiant hypothesis of a brotherly society of equals, where they will be able to rest, their women be able to smile and their children can grow-free, enlightened and strong, the old peasants shake their heads perplexed. Their look, which had been for a moment enlivened by hope, fades and vanishes as they murmur, *"There have always been rich and poor, and there always will be".* And because being rich or poor is the fatal crossroad of life, they don't eat, and they yoke their women and children into a servitude even worse than their own in order to save the few coins which, they ingeniously hope (a hope that will die with the dream in a squalid hospital bed), will place them some day on the side of the blessed *possidentes,* the wealthy and from where they will, in turn, exert the same savage exploitation of which they are now the victims.

They cannot realize that the master does not have to exist. In the same way, the proponents of power are unable to conceive of a society without government. Called to choose between being governed and governing, they dream of aligning themselves with the latter, not now, because nobody in government has any use for them, but

temperature is too sudden and that he cannot adapt himself to the new environment without danger, without pain, and without many precautions. The newly-delivered mother, who even in the lower stages of the animal kingdom has foreseen these dangers, has softened the nest with the finest feathers or hair, pulled tuft after tuft from her own aching bosom, and will cover her offspring with her warm body as soon as it has been born in order to protect it from the rude fondlings of the wind and of the sun.

It is the first step, signalled by the urgency of purely animal, purely physiological needs. But, once out of the nest, once out of the cradle, the new citizen stumbles upon a whole chain of experiences, each one more challenging than the last, calling on new organs that have not been used before or have been neglected, to move and to function in order to gain successes and victories, to ward off dangers, to sense satisfactions, and to attain the enjoyment they promise.

It is a whole series of psychological needs that demand satisfaction through this storm-like activity; it is an endless series of *whys?*, persistently curious and fortunately inexhaustible, with which children exasperate us. In so doing they let us know their need to understand, to know, to learn, and we try to satisfy that need with our personal knowledge, with schools and books, with the educational work which reflects and epitomizes the heritage of experience arduously accumulated during centuries of sufferings and mistakes.

Another step. Others will follow later. But the more we advance, the more complicated and extensive becomes the series of needs, which is the index of the progress realized by the individual as well as the community. A farmer who lives in an Alpine valley, in the present conditions of his development, may have satisfied all his needs—eaten, drunk, and rested to his heart's content; while a worker who lives in London, in Paris, or in Berlin, may willingly give up a quarter of his salary and several hours of his rest, in order to satisfy a whole category of needs totally unknown to the farmer stranded among the gorges of the Alps or the peaks of the Apennine mountains — to spend an hour of intense and moving life at the theatre, at the museum or at the library, to buy a recently published book or the latest issue of a newspaper, to enjoy a performance of Wagner or a lecture at the Sorbonne.

Since these needs vary, not only according to time and place, but also according to the temperament, disposition and development of each individual, it is clear that only he or she who experiences and feels them is in a position to appreciate them and to measure adequately the satisfaction they may give.

Therefore, in drawing the measure of each person's share in the total social production from *need*, from the complex and infinite needs of each organism, rather than from the social use-value of each one's labour, anarchist-communism is inspired not only by a logical motive, but also by an eminently practical criterion of equality and justice.

And against such pretence — which might encounter more than one obstacle at the time of its practice — we would have nothing to oppose, if it did not claim from anarchy its right, its investiture, its justification.

No! In anarchy only one domination is justifiable, legitimate and desirable, and it is the *domination each one exerts on himself*. To exceed this is authority, command, despotism and, as anarchy is by definition absence of authority, anyone who calls for or sustains domination, that is authority, places himself, by his own action, against and outside anarchy, without the bother of excommunication or anathema by councils or popes.

We do not excommunicate anybody. We acknowledge anybody's right to seek power if he has a taste for it, to obtain it if he can, and to wield it if there are eunuchs who submit to it. We only find the disguise unfair and grotesque. But what pleasure can there be in masking such desire — a devout, perhaps perpetual desire for power and authority — as anarchism?

"But everything would be topsy-turvy if everyone did anything he pleased."

"But who says that everyone would be free to do everything he wants? Do you yourself count for nothing, then? Are you bound to let anyone do anything he wants to you? Defend yourself and no one will touch you. If millions of people are behind you, supporting you, then you are a formidable force and you will win without difficulty."

Max Stirner(1806–1856), pen name of German writer Kaspar Schmidt, author of a book published in 1845 under the title: *"Der Einzige und sein Eigentum"* — "The Ego and his own" or, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica:* "The Unique Man and his Own"!

sophistry — original, witty, stunning at times — but sheer sophistry.

No less sophistical is the tendency of those who, under the comfortable cloak of anarchist individualism, would welcome the idea of domination. They stretch Rabelais's aphorism: *fais ce que veux!* beyond its reasonable meaning, and they ignore that he did not suggest his merry, " Do what you wish" to a few rich people or loafers, but to everybody, with no exceptions.[3] He was certain that nothing but cooperation and harmony can result from the free play of initiatives, attitudes and multiform energies (like the natural cohesion of the cells of an organism, vigorously carrying out their unceasing function of nourishing and renewing tissues and organs. Thus, they keep the torch of life ignited, with no incentive other than their chemistry). But the heralds of domination presume to practice individualism in the name of their *ego,* over the obedient, resigned, or inert *ego* of others.[4]

[3] Francois Rabelais (1494–1553) French monk, writer, physician… author of *"Gargantua"* and *"Pantagruel"*.

[4] *To those who are intoxicated by Nietsche but would also like to have Stirner on their side, we dedicate the following lines from "The Ego and His Own" (Ed Stock Paris, 1900, p.234), which is not only a vivid appeal to rebellion, but a categorical and resolute denial that anyone may treat his neigbors as he pleases:*

"What is the remedy for all this?"

"Only one: to not admit any duty, which meant I am not duty bound to restrict myself, nor to consider myself restricted. If I have no duties, I don't have any law"

"Will they handcuff me?"

"No *one can bind my will. I shall always be free to not will."*

The very bourgeois objection that the total production is insufficient for the full satisfaction of everybody's needs belongs to those objections which have been triumphantly defeated by the socialist-collectivists as well as by the anarchist-communists. Furthermore, they are even now easily defeated, daily, on the basis of undeniable facts aligned in opposition to all *laudatores temporis nostri*,[those who praise our times (ie the 'good old days')].

There is no reason, therefore, to repeat here for the thousandth lime the same refutation. [L. Galleani; who greatly admired Kropotkin, was probably referring to his many writings on this topic; eg *The Conquest of Bread*, *Modern Science and Anarchism*, *Fields, Factories and Workshops*].

As the ways and measure of the satisfaction of needs vary from person to person, according to their development and to the particular environment in which they live, while the right to *satisfy them in the manner which each person, the sole judge, deems convenient, remains equal for all*;equality and justice could not receive a more real and sincere sanction than that which is given by the libertarian communist conception of society. All have an equal right to live a full life — the strong and the weak, the intelligent and the dull, the capable and the inept; and, without regard to the contribution each one may have given to the total production of society, they all have the same right to satisfy their needs and to reach the superior forms of higher development.

"But does this anarchist-communist premise to freedom, to individual liberty, give an equally logical and trustwor-

thy warranty? Suppose among the dwellers of the future society there were some who liked to dissipate and refused to do any kind of work? Wouldn't you, out of necessity, be induced to compel them to do something? Wouldn't that mean the return of authority with its savage retinue of coercive institutions?"

This objection is less serious than it may appear at first sight. From the economic relationships ruling bourgeois society we can deduce the causes for which some refuse to work at certain kinds of labour and for which a few refuse to do any work at all.

At present, work has a servile character; it is not chosen freely according to one's aptitudes; it does not give any satisfaction whatever, material or moral; it offers only risks, deprivations, humiliations; it is uncertain, painful, excessive, paid in inverse proportion to its duration- it is sought reluctantly, executed with disgust; it is endured, in short, as a punishment, as a curse. The aversions it arouses at the present time are understandable as is understandable the horror with which work, this inevitable condition of life, is looked at by the unfortunates who bear on their faces, on their eyes, on their tortured flesh, the stigma of all the aberrations and degenerations caused by centuries of slavery, of deprivations, of poverty, of grief, of brutality — all compressed into a state of arrested development, which makes them incapable of any fertile function or of any original action.

However, transplant that rickety progeny of sclerotics, drunkards, arthritics and prostitutes to a healthier social

into a savage troglodyte, a blind puppet of his bestial instincts? But, if tomorrow people should still slaughter one another for a crust of bread, this one single truth, however sad, would have to be admitted: that not only have we failed to make the social revolution, but we have also turned many centuries backward. And then certain survivals could be explained.

However my experience — and perhaps even better for you, your own experience — tells me that certain big words, uttered *pour epater le bourgeois,* to stun the clumsy crowd, are generally contradicted by the whole activity of these innocuous *matamoros,*[2] who know, perhaps more profoundly than anybody else, the satisfaction of having restored the smile on the lips of their suffering neighbour, by offering him their own piece of bread.

It is seldom, in fact, that the wealthy give more than crumbs, while the chronicles of poverty have never told of a strong healthy but poor man who has snatched a crust of bread from a child. Generally speaking, the poor who have only rags and torments, who know only hunger and pain, give their penny without regret for any worthy cause and are inclined to bend mercifully and delicately over any anguish or wound.

Only the poor give in such a manner — by impulse, with generosity and gentle kindness. At least, I have seen them this way during my whole life, always. All the rest is

[2] Matamoro — Spanish for bully, blusterer

But, to these people, whom we love and to whom we would like to give our most serious and assuring trust, we can offer only a magnificent profile of the free society, drawn from hope, imagination, and some positive logical deduction, rather than a certain mathematical reality. Besides, we could not produce a more accurate and complete architecture without being arbitrary and ridiculous. The most ideal construction might appear shabby or even grotesque to our descendants, who would have to live in it — and who will be able to build their own houses, suitable to their own needs, according to their own taste, worthy of the more advanced and superior civilization in which they will live.

Our task is more modest and even more peremptory. We must leave them a clear ground, without the gloomy ruins, the filthy jails, the greedy privileges, the predatory monopolies, the eunuch fears, and the poisoned prejudices among which we roam like shadows in pain. We must leave them an earth clear of churches, barracks, tribunals, brothels and, above all, clear of ignorance and fear, which preserve these establishments much more faithfully than the sanctions of laws and police forces

We can look at the future only through the prism of the present, and our vision is obscured by the muddy reality that surrounds us. So, is it surprising that any one of the poor wretches who have known foodless days, sleepless nights and the bitterness of ever-increasing unsatisfied desires, should suppose that even in anarchy the same hunger may exist that turns the citizen of the twentieth century

climate, to a world of equals where production is ruled by collective interest, not by whim and speculation; where it is limited to what is necessary and pleasant, excluding all that is stupid, useless, or harmful, from miser's safes to monstrous battleships; make room within the ranks of redeeming labour for all the energies that now lie stagnant, tricked by all kinds of lies and frauds, by all the evil doings of usury, inquisition and murder — in monasteries, barracks, jails, in the endless circles of bureaucracy; look at the progress of the last fifty years, and calculate the progress that is bound to take place during the next fifty years through the application of science to industry; open to everyone the theatres and the schools, the gymnasiums and the academies; let there be air and bread for everyone, sun and joy, life and love — and then tell us if work, short in hours, varied in kind, freely chosen by every worker according to his own preference, in whom security of intellectual and physical life will have accumulated and kept alive all kinds of energy; tell us then, if any one will refuse to participate in a work which has become a source of joy to the spirit, a physiological necessity and a universally acknowledged condition of life and of universal progress.

Everyone will work according to one's aptitudes and energies.

"Another *if*, as usual" — whispers a stubborn dissenter… without thinking that his objection (that there will always be somebody, in the new society, unwilling to work) is, again, a supposition — with this difference; however, it

lacks the positive and scientific basis which supports the anarchist-communist prediction.

Let us make sense. Inertia is the property whereby an object persists in the state in which it finds itself unless and until an outside cause operates on it, but nobody has ever thought to define it or imagine it as a cessation of activity in matter. It would be nonsense.

Thus, it would be nonsense to suppose that blood refuses to circulate, the heart refuses to beat, the brain to feel and reflect, that all the body organs collectively revolt against their respective functions. It would be death.

But so long as the constant processes of assimilation, of elimination, of nourishment of replacement, of development, of reproduction, of decrease — which are the condition and character of our life — take place in our body, all our vital energies will be active.

Our opponents are obsessed by the many and profound perversions with which the regime of authority and private property — the regime of exploitation of men by other men — has corrupted every ethical human relation and sentiment. And, forgetting or neglecting the fact that man, his progress, his intelligence and his morality are intimately related to the environment in which he lives, they may fear that many of the citizens of the future city will feel the strongest aversion for certain kinds of work, and that, encouraged by the lack of any coercive force, may revolt against it. But this is an objection that resolves itself through everybody's freedom to choose the job or

But this is not an issue involving economic individualism; a limb, a member cannot, except under pain of immediate death, be cut off from the main organism.

The only economic individualism we know is the one erected upon the private ownership of the means of production and exchange; ie, the bourgeois regime, with which we are now so blessed and from which we are trying to find refuge and safety in communism and anarchy, by means of the social revolution.

In theory I do not find any other individualist tendency…

"Bravo! And what about those who proclaim the inevitability of power? And those who yell that tomorrow, if urged by need, they would, without a moment's hesitation, snatch from a mother's hand the last bite of bread meant for her hungry child?"

Some of these I have heard also, but I am sorry to have to admit that I was not impressed at all.

I know, and you know as well, that whatever we do, however much we try to sharpen our insight and our wisdom in order to reach the new society — redeemed from the master and exploitation, from the state and oppression, from superstition and humiliation — and want to be worthy of it, we succeed only to a very small degree. We are the offshoots of the bourgeois trunk, and we carry its vicious and malignant stigma. At best, we carry inside us only the intention, the aim to be better, to wish that those who surround us, suffering, unhappy, wild, or wicked, should be better off.

a rhythmic tireless pace, for the frail arms of man; it is certainly believable that when production — instead of being at the mercy of a bunch of entrenched pirates, who have sunk their ferocious claws into the land, its crops and herds, its mines and treasures, its factories, railroads and ships — is steered with more concern and eagerness by all the workers, arisen from vile servitude to the full consciousness of their worth and destiny, discoveries, inventions, new economy of physical energy in production will be gained, and more of the day will be left for scientific, technical, literary, or aesthetic culture.

Is it conceivable that where it is possible to obtain maximum satisfaction with minimum effort, some eccentric will persist in choosing to live outside of society and, terrified by the fear of social contact and the tyranny of regimentation, he will want to do everything by himself, only for himself: house, clothes, library, cooking? And under the illusion of living individualistically, he will sacrifice the twenty-four hours of each day (which would not be enough) for the satisfaction of the most elementary needs, without taking a minute for recreation, rest or respite?

There have always been eccentrics, and most probably they will also exist in an anarchist regime… but such a society will have no reason for apprehension, since it will be able to provide odd and eccentric persons, who are generally intelligent, a place to live in and a work space with all the instruments and tools for study, observation, research and work they might want to perform in their disdainful and misanthropic solitude.

the profession, the occupation most suitable to one's own capacity or inclination.

It cannot be seriously argued that the unruly persons who are *unwilling to work at certain occupations* will refuse to work at *any job* and will let themselves go adrift like brutalized opium smokers, or like the blessed of the buddhist Nirvana, eliminating any and all activities by the total annihilation of their own selves.

To satisfy our needs, to nourish ourselves physically and intellectually, means that we must accumulate a treasure of strength, bend the arc of our energy, sharpen the spur of our will, compel our vital exuberance to seek in action, any action, its outlet, its exhaust valve. The young ones who, regardless of fatigue and dangers, expose their youth every day to all kinds of risks, are the true index of that exuberance, of that selfless impetuousness which is nothing but the result of the easy and constant process of assimilation, a process which in old people — whose body, having reached its maximum development, begins to decline — becomes slow, painful, faulting, barely sufficient to conserve the failing energy, the stiffening activity, the slipping life. It is the struggle of exuberance against deterioration: the former is altruism, fearlessness, selflessness, generosity; the latter is egoism, meanness, calculation, fear, conservative distrust.

In order to believe in the possibility, in the realization of a society without private property and without government, it is not necessary that men be angels. It will be enough that this society be capable of satisfying the

needs of all its members on the land which has become again the great mother of us all, made fertile by human labour, redeemed from all humiliations and yokes. The bourgeois, who are in a position to satisfy these needs in large measure are the best witnesses to the fact that if energy can be diverted, it cannot be constrained, so that our opponents fears of inertia and vagrancy are plainly absurd: fencing, horsemanship, boating, motoring, mountain-climbing, oceanic cruising, politics, diplomacy, philanthropy, tropical and polar expeditions are nothing but the different aspects, physical or intellectual, frivolous or noble, of the energy and vital exuberance which burst forth from the full satisfaction of needs enjoyed by rhe ruling classes

When everyone's physical, intellectual and moral needs arc fully satisfied, we shall have in every human being the exuberance of energy that is at present the exclusive privilege of the ruling classes.

Once the field of education, of science and of the arts — now barred to the majority of mankind — is opened, it will be filled by an immense torrent of gushing energy, seeking out its most useful function, its highest aims. With the fall of the barriers dividing humanity in classes and with the joining of all human interests in the struggle against the forces of nature and external threats, the *association for struggle* will be a much more effective support for civilization, progress, and evolution than is the *struggle for existence* with its savage daily competitions.

it so?" If it were so, there would be no disagreement. But in the real world the interpretations of communism as well as of individualism, are quite different and arbitrary, varying without end, a confusion! " Clarification is needed, and then agreement will find its guarantees, its sources, and its basis in an honest and mutual comprehension. Shall we try?"

Let us begin by making an uncontested point: anarchy is the antithesis of authority. Among anarchists, at least, there is no possibility of disagreement on this point.

And now, let us ask ourselves if communists, on the one hand, and individualists, on the other, can deviate from this fundamental definition to the point of forgetting it, placing themselves against this first tenet, against their own conscience, against all the positions it implies, and finally against themselves.

In the field of economics, individualists are inconceivable.

We must bear in mind that work is an unavoidable necessity, because nature does not yield the abundance of its products without the strong and productive grip of labour. And since it is necessary to work in order to live, and the act of living physically is the indispensable condition for attaining the higher life of knowledge, beauty, harmony; work must be performed with all possible economy, without pain, without strain, without the humiliations and degradation which are now its sad fate and paltry wage.

If the sheer craving for speculation, large interest rates, fast and fabulous profit, has prompted the bourgeoisie to adopt mechanical means of production, substituting, wherever it was possible, the steel-lunged machine operating at

sidered by the common people, or at least by the peoples vanguard, not only as iniquitous and shameful, but also as a monstrously parasitic, hateful and expensive class, from which it was urgent to be freed.

This judgment was taking form early, even while the bourgeoisie was still unsure on its newly-conquered throne and needed the common people in order to defeat the aristocracy's repeated attempts to regain its lost power. It was ready to pay for that alliance by acknowledging the right and the competence of the people to select their own rulers, even from those outside the dubious sanctions of divine right.

But whoever has the political competence to choose his own rulers is, by implication, also competent to do without them, especially when the causes of economic enmity are uprooted. Likewise the bitterness, hatred, discord and disorder that branch out from that fatal trunk must yield before the ever more conscious and widespread solidarity that renders the role of the state and its hierarchies totally superfluous, and confers on everybody the full consciousness and the incontestable right of self-rule.

Thus, in the mind of the proletarian vanguard, the rejection of private property became enmeshed with and completed by the rejection of authority in all its varied and unfortunate forms. At the same time, the first libertarian aspiration based on experience and critical thought was asserted as a doctrine which foresaw libertarian communism as the indispensable condition for the development and security of the individual's autonomy in a free society. " Isn't

This is a logical deduction, supported by incontrovertible proofs, and to deny it, our adversaries take refuge behind the ironic presumption that, in order to live without government, without private property and without masters, men will suddenly have to have wings, halos and the seraphic goodness of mythical angels.

But the ideal is human and men are sufficient to realize it.

Against this unshakable belief of ours in economic emancipation and political autonomy, our adversaries might oppose only one argument: that men do not change, that in spite of any progress, of any noticeable improvement of individual and social life, workers will persist in being slaves without dignity, ferocious barbarians, degenerates deprived of conscience, indecent idlers who, through thousands of years of privilege and tyranny, ignorance and superstition, have been lovingly raised by the ruling oligarchies.

But, in that case, our adversaries would be the Utopians, the apostles and heralds of an impossible stasis, instead of which, we, without being Utopians, without accepting the legend of angels and demigods, believe in the unceasing evolution and the constant progress of peoples and society.

We have eliminated the vulgar objection that once out of the *inferno* of present-day society — where work is not freely elected according to the worker's inclinations, but is imposed by the privileged interests of the ruling classes, where no satisfaction of his material and moral needs is assured — the individual, once having attained, through the

epic events of the equalizing revolution, the free society where he can work, according to his ability, at the trade he has freely selected, under the sole influence of a clear conscience of his task, and with the knowledge of the generally accepted necessity of contributing to the security and to the fullness of social life in which lies the greatest, the only warranty of everybody's security and freedom), and once having received the certainty that all of his physical and intellectual needs will be adequately satisfied, this individual, even in spite of the irresistible stimulations of his physiological exuberance, will deliberately refuse to work and be totally useless. We have rejected this vulgar objection and we believe we have achieved the most interesting, if not the most decisive, part of our demonstration.

We have demonstrated — and we believe with success — to our sneering adversaries, as well as to our timid, uncertain allies, that once the full satisfaction of every need is assured to everyone, the hypothesis that each person will spontaneously choose and execute his task according to the collective welfare and his own ability is not absurd; and that, therefore, the aspiration to a society without masters and without government is neither absurd nor Utopian.

* * *

As proponents of the broadest individual autonomy, we have shown that this absolute independence from any domination by either a majority or a minority, from any human oppression, cannot find a better or more vigilant security

of Babeuf, Proudhon, or Bakunin, the way Minerva, according to the myth, is said to have sprung from Jove's brain. It has budded, grown, ripened, slowly and painfully by the experience of centuries, during which the common people have besought from time to time, god, the State, the law, or universal suffrage to give them a good master, a good judge, a little piece of bread, a little compassion, a little rest, a little light and love — always in vain.

As their trust in gods and demigods was fading, under continual mocking and repulsions, into the twilight of disenchantment and defeat; as their strength was revealing itself in their heroic and glories, but unfortunate struggles, and as they were gaining solidarity — instinctive at first, then through sacrifices and disaster — the common people came to understand that the faith they had spent in vain on the threshold of temples, thrones, parliaments and masters was to be revived in their own right and in their own strength. They began to believe in themselves and could see themselves freed from their chains.

They alone knew how to create wealth; and they alone, with the inexhaustible fertility of their labour and sweat, were seeking, protecting, supporting life… for the others, for those who, conceited as they were useless, were degrading it in idleness and orgy.

Since the social wealth was growing and increasing only because of and in proportion to this patient, courageous and necessary human effort; the idle, the indolent and the poltroons, many and superfluous, had no right to that wealth. Thus the propertied class came to be con-

with its coercive and monstrous hierarchies. And then we shall have anarchy.

Between *communism* (of course, understood, not as another aspect of the State, compelled to reproduce in itself all the iniquities of the preceding governments, but as a free, united co-operation of all people for production) and *individualism* (in the sense that no institutional authority, neither that of the majority nor of a minority, can interfere with the development and freedom of the individual or in any way diminish his autonomy) there is no contradiction, no incompatibility. Communism is simply the;foundation by which the individual has the opportunity to regulate himself and carry out his functions.

They are two terms which complement each other.

Every anarchist who is faithful to his denial of any privilege, especially of the most fundamental and nefarious of all privileges, that of the private ownership of the means of production and exchange, and who, for this reason, aspires to realize an economic regime where land, mines, factories and every other Labour or exchange tool, all means of production, will be indivisible common property, is, in his economic aspirations, a communist. Likewise, if he is faithful to his denial of authority and supports a regime which will realize the complete independence and autonomy of the individual from any economic, political and moral boss, he is inevitably an individualist.

Antithesis? No, integration.

Anarchy is not a metaphysic abstraction. The anarchist idea did not spring alive, complete, perfect from the minds

than in anarchist-communism: unlimited freedom in the satisfaction of needs; unlimited freedom in the choice of work.

Exceptional conditions of the moment or of the situation might require that we limit our inclinations as well as increase our work. In the future, as it happens at present, might we not, we who are in good health, tighten our belt a little in order to help people afflicted by an epidemic with food and medicine? Do we not, even now, if a sudden fire develops act as firemen?… As nurses, if an epidemic occurs?… As diggers in cases of flood or landslide? And doesn't this happen without command or coercion?… Without regard to individual inclinations or unusual risks?… All this is only in obedience to the voice surging from the depth of every conscience, calling in the name of life, of preservation and solidarity with the species. And is not that voice the automatic and irresistible stimulus to the highest and noblest of our actions?

And is not that call valid? Is it not received with an outburst of love and concern such as has never greeted a commandment of god, an edict of a king, a law of parliament?

Let them call us Utopians as much as they want — those who remember only one phrase of Darwin's doctrine and revive, under the shining sun of this twentieth century, the maxim *homo homini lupus*[man is wolf to man]. As for us — even in a society where the interests of the species might be joined together for the noblest struggle of all, the one against nature and the environment land this 'association for the struggle' will be the main factor of future evolution)

— we cannot accept even here the domination of intellectual aristocracy.

We find this dominance in old as well as in contemporary civilizations. Based on privilege and prompted by the wildest competition, it triumphs and delights in ignorance and in the resignation, fear and universal subjection that follow. In this climate of privilege, Moses and Mohammed can lure millions of people to any adoration and sacrifice. And, just as easily, Galileo and Bruno can become the victims of their wrath, of their curses and contempt.[6] In this climate of competition, Nobel and Krupp[7] can ascend through golden arches and clouds of incense into the Olympus of national heroes, while Gorini, Bovio and Reclus can die of starvation[8].

[6] Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) Mathematician, Astronomer and Physicist, was persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church for his theories conflicting with the biblical legends.

Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) convinced that Copernicus was right in refusing to believe that Earth is at the centre of the Universe, was convicted of heresy by the Holy Office of the Roman Catholic Church and burnt at the stake on a Public Square in Rome, on February 17, 1600.

[7] Alfred Bernhard Nobel (1833–1896) Inventor of dynamite and founder of the Nobel Prize.

Friedrich Krupp (1787–1826) founder of the Krupp steel corporation and arms producer for the German Imperial armies.

[8] Paolo Gorini (1813–1896) Italian Naturalist and Philosopher, author of a book on the *Origins of Vulcans.*

Giovanni Bovio (1841–1903) Philosopher and politician, author of *"Sistema di Filosofia Universale", "Fiosofia del Diritto in Italia"* and many other literary and philosophical works.

Elisée Reclus, see p. 129.

expansion and colonies, which will live for war, and will be forced to carry it to the last corners of the world: this will be empire, or better. Roman imperialism, arrogant, voracious, insatiable.

Is it aristocratic? Then the economy, the whole economy of the middle ages will flow into the political organization of feudalism and serfdom with the inevitable servitude of the massses.

Will property free itself from the thick net of bondage, tributes, barriers, frontiers, with no other limit but the competition of other economic forces, equally unchecked? Then, the corresponding political regime can only be the modern State, the constitutional and representative regime where, with god's grace confined to the attic and the nation's will under its feet, the bourgeoisie, empowered by its sole ownership of the national wealth, will seize the reins of the State, make and enforce all the laws by every means.

Will the common ownership of all the means of production and exchange be the economic substratum of the social life of the future?

Having realized, through the fundamental solidarity of interests, the suspension of the rivalries which have torn mankind asunder for centuries, the first experiment of a *society* understood to mean a union of individuals united by the same interests for the same purpose') will set as its corresponding goal, the first opportunity to realize a *social order,* one that has been looked for in vain up to this day by the wisdom of legislators, the shrewdness of laws, or the violence of the police — in sum the uselessness of the State

The condition and character of solidarity are spontaneity and freedom. But whereas the bourgeois regime is the domination of a majority over the minority, we aspire to realize *the autonomy of the individual within the freedom of association,* the independence of his thought, of his life, of his development, of his destiny, freedom from violence, from caprice and from the domination of the majority, as well as of various minorities; and when we refer to libertarian communism, a term which our descendants will take care to amend, we are trying to find an economic *ubi consistam* [where should I stand] in which this political autonomy of the individual may find an enlightened and happy reality.

It seldom happens that our comrades stop to consider this dual aspect, economic and political, of every institution in all the eras of history.

* * *

Is property unstable, wandering, fortuitous — like crops and herds, exposed to all kinds of dangers? Then it can be protected only by god — the god who thunders in the storm and shines in the sun and glitters in the stars, which are the compass of the tribes migrating into the unknown. Only god commands, or in his name, the high priest, the prophet, the wizard; that is, hieratic despotism.

Does property present itself as omnipotent. legalistic, exacting, sanctum *jus* [the letter of the law] even if *summa injuria* [the greatest injustice]? Then the political advocates of this economic regime will require harsh laws, general dependence upon a single supreme power, which will long for

There are, on one hand, a fortunate few destined by chance to enjoy everything; on the other, a multitude of outcasts condemned by those few to experience nothing. But destroy the existing economic inequalities, recompose a now-divided humanity upon a reclaimed Earth, and the last traces of hideous inequality will disappear, together with the hierarchies that today perpetuate them. The farmer and the agronomist, who are now separated by a chasm, will be reconciled as *equals* because their respective functions will be equally valued. Because, in the future while it may be the agronomist who discovers a new method of cultivation, it is the farmer who will make it work well in practice. And this, in a society not based on privilege and competition, means that in the different areas of their skills and in the different application of their energies, they are both equally necessary to new forms of production. One equals the other; both are equally indispensable to a necessary co-operation, which has no place for savage competitions nor for absurd and wicked privileges.

We have given sufficient elements for the lunatics of the State to arrive, on their own, at the conclusion that, if government is necessary or, rather, a 'condition *sine qua non*' [a necessity] for the existence of a regime which is dedicated, like a bourgeois regime, to economic inequality and the political subjection of the great majority of the people constituting the so-called society; government has no justification whatever and, therefore, no reason to exist in a real and true society where the economic interests of all its components are united and mutual. Disagreement and fric-

tion will always exist. In fact they are an essential condition of unlimited progress. But once the bloody arena of sheer animal competition — the struggle for food — has been eliminated, problems of disagreement could be solved without the slightest threat to the social order and individual liberty.

Merlino knows and teaches us that the State (which is a bankrupt and perpetual failure as administrator) has a precise and essential political function: the preservation of the economic 'status quo', the protection of the economic privileges of the ruling class, whose agent and *gendarme* it is and around which it has created a threefold barrier — the political, the judicial and the military. These barriers, with their diversified functions, pursue one single aim: to reassure the fortunate wealthy that no one will spring forth from the immense, angry crowd of the disinherited to curse, threaten, or destroy their vineyard or their comfort. Parliament and the police have expected all kinds of threats and curses, and they have scrupulously catalogued everyone of them. Educational and cultural institutions, from kindergarten to university; the judicial system, from magistrates to the supreme courts, are all there to avert devastation. And, if and when, during times of upheaval, their measures should appear insufficient or belated, the military institutions, ruthless guardians of order at any cost, will intervene with their laws of war, their martial courts and mass executions. Things must remain as they are; social relations cannot be disturbed; the ruling minority must luxuriate in wealth and idleness, while ruthlessly governing the immense majority, who have only one duty

work in educating the masses to a clear comprehension of the economic and political organisms responsible for their bondage. In supporting the masses against the abuses of capitalism and State as well as against the superstitions and prejudices in which the tyranny of the bourgeoisie finds its most powerful stronghold, they are preparing them for the revolution which is the indispensable way to the final redemption of the proletariat.

There are, along with these previously mentioned absurdities, some shallow truths in Merlino's statement; among them, the disagreement between anarchists, so-called 'individualist' anarchists, and the presumed 'organizational' anarchists. But does this disagreement have a really important basis, or is it only the result of incomprehension and equivocation, caused more often by inaction and indolence than by bad faith, and which hard experience is bound to dispel?

What is anarchism by definition?

It is the struggle for a condition of society where the only link among individuals is solidarity, basically the solidarity of material and moral interests, which leads to the elimination of the vicious daily competitions between individuals and among peoples. (A very sad era, and one that, except during periods of famine or of love, the so-called inferior animals have surpassed a long time ago, to our shame.) And it calls upon them to unite for a greater and more noble struggle against the adverse forces of nature in order to realize superior, more complete and more secure forms of social life.

And Merlino, who is an intelligent man, knows that this hypothesis is worse than nonsense: it is a downright aberration.

* * *

One, among others, of Merlino's arguments deserves special consideration: " The anarchist movement is divided by the internal struggle between individualists and organizationalists. The latter cannot find an organization compatible with anarchist principles; the former, after the idea of reprisal, which had been the soul of anarchist action, ceased to exist, cannot find a manner of acting, and cannot exist without the organization they strive to reject" .

This statement by Merlino contains something downright absurd: it is that the soul of anarchist action was the notion of reprisal and that this has ceased to exist.

The soul of anarchist action (and no one has understood this better than Merlino in the good old times, when he believed in anarchy and anarchism and was proud to suffer persecution for his faith and with us throughout the jails of Europe) is not reprisal, which is a mere episode and whose causes are far from having ceased to exist. The soul of the anarchist movement is the ardent desire for a society of free and equal people, which the anarchists know cannot be attained without the inevitably violent destruction of the existing order of things, without the social revolution which, in spite of their limited forces, they foster by their criticism of the iniquitous existing social order and by their

to toil without relief in a state of servitude, to remain, alter having produced wealth, in a state of blind ignorance and squalid poverty for as long as they live.

What is there for such an institution as the State to do in a society where all class privileges have disappeared, where class distinctions are eliminated; where hatred, revenge, and armed rebellion have vanished under the sun of absolute economic equality?

Could it direct social relations or protect public order? But isn't it common knowledge, even now, that the State's intrusion into the private relations of individuals and groups is not only ineffective, but utterly disastrous for the relations and initiatives it pretends to manage? Concerns conducted by private initiative offer a security, an income, and an efficiency that cannot be expected from the services that have been assumed by the State. Furthermore, even those who avail themselves of the services of the State, admit that, in its function as protector of order and the security of its citizens, the State arrives too late to forestall the consequences of disturbances and injuries that have already happened despite its vigilance. Is it possible to wish, in social relations, for a more alert,a more competent, a more even-minded and reliable regulator than the concern of the interested parties?

The recent scandals concerning the distribution of the money collected for the earthquake victims in Calabria [1908] testify that, while millions of dollars could be collected in just a few hours among thousands of citizens, moved by a spontaneous, noble impulse of solidarity, the

State, entangled by its rickety bureaucracy, does not know how to distribute them, and when it does do so (two or three years after the catastrophe), it gives them out the wrong way.

And then, what threats to public order can be feared in a society where the fundamental causes of any public disturbance have been eliminated by the reconciliation of the economic interests of each individual with the economic interests of the whole community?

Non solo pane vivit homo [man does not live by bread alone], object our adversaries. After food is assured, men will fight over something else. Have you forgotten the religious wars, the national struggles, the hopeless and bloody struggles for the conquest of political freedom?

We haven't forgotten anything, and we are very far from believing that, after having reached equality, the inhabitants of the future city will give up any assertion of individual energy, of every independent action and every competitive activity. On the contrary.

But we also know (and this is a truth that is largely supported by the world of science) that there are two basic needs, food and reproduction, to which all living creatures are subject. The first pushes them to ferocious struggles, even to mutual destruction, while the second draws them together and tends to unify them.

If the need that leads to ferocity and mutual destruction has been satisfied, other forms of competition can be developed without violent collisions that will threaten public order or individual freedom, because, in certain fields

if, in so doing, he forgets that every premise implies a deduction and that only anarchism can correspond to the economic premise of communism.

No, if we pay attention to the text of the Merlino interview, and, if we remember his repeated criticisms of collectivism, and remember the cordial antipathy he has persistently expressed for the programme and action of the Socialist Party, we would have to conclude that he too would agree with our theoretical deductions. In fact, he bases his judgments and funereal prophecies more upon the outward manifestations of anarchism 'as a movement', rather than on the essential substance of anarchist doctrine.

We think this irremediably undermines his own thesis.

For Merlino to be right, it would be necessary to conclude that the doctrine which has the greater content of logic, of truth, of progress, of future, is fated to perish ignominiously from starvation, while the other, with the florid complexion of a sudden — too sudden — growth (*pars major saepe pejor* [the greater part is often the worst part], as old Seneca used to say), the one cuddling the worms of the most putrid conventionalisms and the most absurd contradictions, is fated to survive.

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a lot of courage for us to continue to call ourselves by that name. We need a new word that makes a differentiation. Words have their fortune, as the Romans would say. They also have their misfortune. And we believe it indispensable to write this footnote precisely in order to reject any possible relationship with Soviet "communism" (C.Z.)

Chapter 5. Anarchist-Communism and Individualism

This conclusion is so far from being rash that it is shared, more or less sincerely, by even the most qualified exponents of socialist-collectivism. In addition to Morgari, who, as we have seen, admits that socialist-collectivism represents a lower stage in social evolution than anarchist-communism, there is no other apostle of socialism who, when pressed, would not be willing to call himself a communist[1], even

[1] The collectivists of the past display, nowadays, the communist label. But where they have dared, for the first time, to realize their "communism" they have confirmed our obvious and melancholy premonitions. The Soviet State outdoes the Dominicans of the Holy Inquisition in their despotism and intolerance. The obscene dictatorship of the handful of scoundrels ruling over the Muscovite proletariat, the consequent persecution of those who proudly dare to refuse to bow to the clumsy arrogance of a Zinovieff, or a Trotsky; the contempt for farmworkers and the systematic fawning over the worst and most corrupt foreign capitalism, make further illustration superfluous.

When people like Zinovieff, Trotsky, Tchicherin, Krassin call themselves "communists", it, of course, takes a very deep conviction and

and competitions, brutal violence and majority pressure are fundamentally ineffective. For instance, there is a profound disagreement concerning the prevention of smallpox in the field of sanitation. Some believe the smallpox inoculation is absolutely useless if not outright dangerous; others, on the contrary, consider it a real salvation. This conflict of opinion has been going on for many years without a bad word from either side to alarm the guardians of public order. On the contrary, so many facts have been certified, so many observations, experiences and results have been gathered, that confer the character of a real blessing upon these theoretical disagreements, these civilized forms of competition.

As the average intellectual level rises, many diverse energies will participate in debates of this kind, and we can readily assume that the new society will be the most active, the most daring, the most persevering imaginable in the field of research, without having to conclude that these discussions, these theoretical and philosophical disagreements must end in tragedy.

Those who recall the religious wars, the wars for national independence or for political freedom, ignore or forget that those were rebellions against tyranny, a cause that would have no reason to exist in a libertarian society and that, beneath the theological, nationalist or political surfaces, existing economic interests were being threatened by new economic interests, struggling to assert themselves in a convulsed world.

* * *

At this point, we can sum up and reply to the first question we have posed: "Of the two trends, both denying the legitimacy of private property and both promoting the socialization of all means of production and exchange in the struggle for economic emancipation, which one has voiced the new idea that marks the inception of a more advanced phase in the series of evolutionary phenomena, which one has remained rigorously faithful to the criterion of progress?".

In furthering the socialization of the means of production and exchange, socialist-collectivism seeks, on one hand, to guarantee the rights of the community, while recognizing, on the other, the *private property of each worker's production.* It barely whispers — and immediately repents doing it — the new idea which, in the evolution of the economic institutions says: abolish private property and means: *everything belongs to everybody!* And this initial contradiction, stretching out from the economic to political and moral areas, prevents socialist-collectivism from asserting the new idea of equality, of justice, of freedom, which could open an era of a new civilization and begin a new phase in the series of evolutionary phenomena that reproduces all its preceding traits and adds the *plus* that was not yet in the preceding phase, which will become the germ of a *new trait* in the following phase, and is, as we have seen, according to Metchnikoff, the condition of every progressive step.

Now, if in comparing libertarian communism with socialist-collectivism, we have proven successfully that

tions of the new society, which, from the successful events of its initial liberation, will generate more advanced and civilized forms of the freedom it has won.

Anarchism rejects the arrogant claim of capital (which is, in itself, unproductive) to gain, rent and profit, and disapproves of the naive reliance of labour (which is an unavoidable necessity and indispensable condition for the preservation and development of life) on remuneration and wages. And, considering this difficult phenomenon that is life, it has developed the notion that the rights of both the individual and the community find their consecration and their most secure protection in the full triumph of equality, justice and of freedom.

The organism which lives can have but one aspiration: to attain its full development in the most favourable environment possible (and the economic-levelling revolution will have opened it for him). It has also only one function: to transform into active energies, useful to it as well as to others, the strength that its own work and the work of cooperating others will have contributed to its rising from the most elementary forms to the highest forms. Hence: the *spontaneous* participation of everyone in the task of production according to their energy and abilities; the free and unlimited sharing of everyone in satisfactions and pleasures; the indisputable solidarity of interests among the inhabitants of the redeemed city; the absolute uselessness of coercive power; the disappearance of privilege and exploitation; the end of slavery and authority; the autonomy of the individual within free social groupings! This will be anarchy!

Here, in short, is the progressive series. It reproduces every trait of its preceding period, but at the same time it carries in its womb the *plus* — the economic and moral rela-

by taking the *finished product of each worker* as the basis of all economic relations, the equality proclaimed at first by socialist-collectivism is upset as soon as methods and measures to evaluate each worker's share in the total production are considered, because these measures are unequally dependent upon and related to each worker's effort; it becomes evident that socialist-collectivism is actually promoting a flagrant *economic inequality* in defiance of its own premises.

We have proven also that social injustice and authority will be grafted onto this fundamental economic inequality, because they are consequences of the same cause, the scourge of the bourgeois society against which socialist-collectivism revolted with the best of intentions. And we have also pointed out an element that has its own value — how the collectivist pretence, to gauge each worker's right to satisfy his needs according to the production of his own labour, would not only be unjust, unequal and authoritarian, but would be Utopian and absurd, because it is practically impossible to find a scale capable of weighing the effort and measuring the individual energy used in the production process — the length of work, the importance of the product, its use and exchange value, represent criteria not only insufficient for such evaluation, but absolutely arbitrary, since they cannot have any relation with the physical activity of the individual, nor with the mechanical effort required from him, nor with the physiological needs that press him, the satisfaction of which is conditioned by the preservation and development of his own personality.

With its conception of a new society and of its citizens' relations with each other, socialist-collectivism lessens the consequences, but does not eliminate the causes of the inequality, of the injustice, of the oppression that it deplores and fights in the existing bourgeois regime, and, in so doing, it carries along too many of the inherited relics, too much ballast of immobility, of superstition, of the absurd, to be qualified to speak in the name of progress and of the future.

And, if it is permitted to draw an omen from the ethical content of a doctrine on the basis of evolutionary lessons and experiences, it is not foolhardy to foresee that, passing from concession to concession, socialist-collectivism will end by mingling with the democratic radicalism of the more advanced factions of the bourgeoisie — and will never find the time and season for the realization of its dreams.

The immediate responsibilities have terrified it; the haste to arrive and to accomplish, the obsession to be *practical,* have pushed it back towards the outdated forms of the old political democracy it had once violently divorced; and so its task is finished!

Just the opposite is true for anarchist-communism. It remains faithful to its original tradition and to its understanding of the meaning of progress, of which it is, without a doubt, in the economic, political and moral field, the final and most formidable expression.

We have seen, in the economic field, how it denies that the conquest of observation, research and collective labour may be privately appropriated. *Everything that has been produced, is being produced, and will be produced by everybody's thought and labour, belongs to everybody.* And, of all that has been accumulated during the centuries and generations to enable humanity to survive in its perennial struggle against the adverse forces of nature, anarchist-communism wants to destroy only those barriers that prevent the great majority of people, who are also the most deserving, from enjoying it freely: *All that everybody's genius and labour have created in pain must be the source and the means of existence and enjoyment for everybody.*

Thus, having established that private property is the main cause of economic dependence and of the political and moral submission of the great majority to the little but fraudulent minority of hoarders, and, having established that common ownership of all means of production and exchange is the main condition for the return of mankind to justice, to brotherhood and liberty, all of which had been banished by the ferocious rivalries of class interests; anarchist criticism boldly faces the political and moral problems that have plagued and frustrated scholars and philosophers up to the first half of the nineteenth century: "According to what principles will it be possible, without offence to equality, justice and liberty, to regulate the participation of everyone in the indispensable task of production?": "According to what principles will it be possible, without offence to equality, justice and liberty, to regulate the participation of everyone in the satisfaction of needs?".