

Towards a more complete Peter Kropotkin Bibliography

Anarcho

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Given how Kropotkin's articles and letters appeared in journals (both anarchist and non-anarchist) across the globe, in a multitude of languages and that many of them were unsigned, it would be unlikely that a complete bibliography of his writings could ever be achieved. Various people have produced partial attempts, including myself.¹

Here, I add a few more articles and letters to my previous work and hope they will be of use to anarchists and historians for as Nicolas Walter noted in 1971:

to study Kropotkin properly it is still necessary to read him in the original publications – not only his books, but also and especially his many articles and pamphlets, which he himself said were “are more expressive of my anarchist ideas”... Over the years I have found more than two hundred important items which have never been published in book form, and there must be as many more.²

This remains the case, for while more material has become available – not least thanks to the anthology *Direct Struggle Against Capital* and new, complete editions of *Words of a Rebel* and *Modern Science and Anarchy* – there is still plenty of material which remains hidden in archives (albeit slowly appearing on-line) and awaiting translation (particularly Russian works). Yet Kropotkin's class struggle politics are best seen in his writings for the anarchist press on events and tendencies within the labour movement and its struggles. It is no coincidence that the best account of Kropotkin's ideas – Caroline Cahm's *Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism 1872–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) – did precisely this.

Such investigations do more than help clarify our understanding of Kropotkin's ideas, they also show his influence across the globe. For example, it is interesting to note that two articles by Kropotkin were translated from *Le Révolté*, for *The Alarm*, once at the end of 1884³ and the other, “Expropriation”, an “Anarchistic Programme” shortly before the Haymarket events⁴ and, moreover, that the newspaper reported on his and Louise Michel's travails in the French penal system. With the relaunch of *The Alarm* in 1887, Kropotkin's articles (ones which were included in *Words of a Rebel*⁵) and letters appeared regularly. Likewise, Lucy Parson published articles by Kropotkin in her paper *The Liberator* as did Emma Goldman in *Mother Earth*.

This would be expected given the I.W.P.A.'s evolution towards communist-anarchism and should not really be worthy of note, except for the suggestions of the likes of Caroline Ashbaugh and James Green – and gleefully parroted by various Leninists – that the Chicago anarchists were not anarchists. Kropotkin – like anarchists across the globe – considered them as anarchist martyrs and they considered themselves as sharing the same ideas, as seen by actually looking at

¹ “Sages and Movements: An Incomplete Peter Kropotkin Bibliography”, *Anarchist Studies* (volume 22, number 1) and “Kropotkin, Woodcock and Les Temps Nouveaux”, *Anarchist Studies* (volume 23, number 1).

² Nicolas Walter, “Kropotkin's Anarchist Communism,” *The Anarchist Past and other essays* (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 2007), 112. Sadly he never published this list.

³ “Order and Anarchy: A Statement of the Principles of Capitalism and Anarchism”, *The Alarm*, 13 December 1884 (“L'Ordre”, *Le Révolté*, 1 October 1881 – later included as Chapter IX of *Words of a Rebel*)

⁴ “Expropriation”, *The Alarm* (Chicago), 20 March 1886 (“L'expropriation”, *Le Révolté*, 23 December 1882 – later included as section III of Chapter XIX of *Words of a Rebel*). It is interesting to note that this article contained lessons from the 1877 Great Railroad Strike which many of the I.W.P.A. had been part of or saw first-hand.

⁵ I should note that this makes some of my “Bibliographical Sketch” in the new edition of *Words of a Rebel* (PM Press, 2022) incorrect as English translations of certain chapters had first appeared in *The Alarm* rather than in the 1992 edition of that book published by Black Rose. I must also note, that as well as appearing in *The Alarm*, the *Anarchist* in Sheffield serialised several chapters of *Words of a Rebel* between March 1894 and March 1895.

the contents of their newspapers rather than relying on summaries by others (whether driven by an agenda or, at best, reflecting shocking ignorance of the movements they claim to be reporting on). Likewise, both Goldman and Parsons being revolutionary communist-anarchists would have reprinted Kropotkin's writings – any personal animosity to each other not blinding them to what they and Kropotkin shared in common, a commitment to revolutionary class struggle politics based on direct action, solidarity, the general strike and social revolution.

What becomes clear from an awareness of the “hidden” Kropotkin (a somewhat misleading term, as he regularly mentioned this aspect of his ideas in even the most general of his introductions to anarchism) is that some of the conventional wisdom on the development of anarchism is at best incomplete, at worse wrong. Thus we discover that Kropotkin rather than Pouget first raised sabotage (*ca'canny*) within the anarchist press (in 1891).⁶ Likewise it was Kropotkin rather than Pelloutier who initially championed anarchist involvement in the labour movement in 1890.⁷ So we discover Kropotkin attending a meeting in London the following year which resolved:

The following items of the agenda were agreed to, (1) The necessity of working more in the Labour movement. (2) We ought to join our trade union when there is opportunity for Anarchist propaganda. (3) Try to induce the unions to dispense as far as possible with committees and officials, but when there is no chance of making propaganda, start new unions on Anarchist lines.⁸

Kropotkin's contribution to the discussion was summarised as follows:

Kropotkin thought there were two kinds of trade unions. There is the trade-union of the aristocrats of labour, and the trade union more properly so called the idea of the trade unionists originally, was the making of a general conflagration throughout Europe. All this was altered by the Marxist party who directed the movement into the 8 hours channel. Hence the greater necessity for working in the trade unions. In this work he would not direct his attention to the old trade unions.⁹

This was, of course, in the context of the New Unionism which developed after the London Dock Strike of 1889 and which saw the rise of mass unions which differed from the older, more exclusive, craft unions which generally organised skilled workers (members of the so-called labour aristocracy). As such, the call for new unions was reflective of actual developments within the British Labour movement just as his articles on anarchist tactics for the 8 hours movement and marking May Day reflected French conditions.¹⁰ Yet this was no new development and, in fact, repeated his arguments from ten years previously on the necessity of anarchist activity within the labour movement.¹¹ However, in the 1890s there was more success in France – as was ruefully noted when he asked a prosecution witness at the Lyon trial in 1883 whether he had succeeded in having “the International reconstituted” and received the reply: “No. They did not find it revolutionary enough.”¹²

⁶ “Les Grèves Anglaises”, *La Révolte*, 21 February 1891.

⁷ For example, “Le Mouvement Ouvrier En Angleterre”, *La Révolte*, 13 September 1890.

⁸ “Anarchists and the Labour Movement”, *The Commonwealth*, 7 November 1891.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ See, for example, the three-part article “1st May 1891” included in *Direct Struggle Against Capital*.

¹¹ The relevant articles can be found as “Supplementary Material” in *Words of a Rebel* (PM Press, 2022).

¹² *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1989), 420.

Reading his articles for the anarchist press places Kropotkin squarely at the centre of key developments within the anarchist movement such as the rise of syndicalism.¹³ Just as he noted syndicalism's similarities with the Federalist-wing of the International, so his ideal of a libertarian labour movement was embodied in that organisation. Like the syndicalists themselves, he traced his ideas back to Bakunin and his championing of the syndicalist ideas which had developed within the International by militant trade unionists across Europe.

Likewise, reading Kropotkin's contributions to a series of publications shows how he, like any good writer and propagandist, tailored what he wrote to his intended audience. The language, rhetoric and examples used differed between articles written for the anarchist press and those intended for, say, *The Nineteenth Century*, a leading British Liberal publication with a polite middle-class readership. As Matthew Adams notes:

Alongside journalistic pieces for *Freedom*, his main avenue [to reach a British audience] was James Knowles' periodical *The Nineteenth Century*, a self-consciously intellectual vehicle with a middle-class readership. Here Kropotkin continued to propound his anarchism, but the motifs of British urbanism superseded illustrations plucked from rural Russia and revolutionary Paris: museums, free libraries, parks, pleasure grounds, and tramways. His point... was that as forms of social organisation already existed that rejected compulsion in favour of mutuality, the common objection that anarchism held an unrealistic appreciation of human nature was unfounded. While not models to implement, these institutions allegedly showed the practicality of anarchism's organisational ethos.¹⁴

An obvious example of this is Kropotkin's well-known 1891 pamphlet, *Anarchist-Communism: Its Basis and Principles*. Revised from two articles written for *The Nineteenth Century* shortly after his exile in Britain began.¹⁵ Happy to utilise this opportunity to get an account of his ideas to a new readership, Kropotkin tailored his articles to an audience unfamiliar with Anarchist ideas by relating them to those that his readers *were* familiar with: British liberalism and State Socialism. In other words, rearticulating libertarian politics in the language of British radicalism.

A passage in this pamphlet, for example, reflects an earlier discussion which contrasted the "disorder" of the struggle for freedom by the many and the "order" of oppression and exploitation by the few.¹⁶ Kropotkin knew that the examples used would be viewed sympathetically by the *Nineteenth Century's* readership and hoped to show it the contradiction between supporting rebels against political and religious autocracy and opposing working-class rebels against economic autocracy.

This also means that the examples drawn from the class struggle which appear in his articles for the anarchist press are lacking here, so potentially giving an incomplete – perhaps even

¹³ See my "Precursors of Syndicalism III: Kropotkin's Anarchist Communism", *Anarcho-Syndicalist Review* 77 (Summer 2019) and "Precursors of Syndicalism IV: The Anarchist-Communist Critique", *Anarcho-Syndicalist Review* 78 (Winter 2020)

¹⁴ Matthew S. Adams, *Kropotkin, Read, and the Intellectual History of British Anarchism: Between Reason and Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 144.

¹⁵ "The Scientific Basis of Anarchy", *The Nineteenth Century*, February 1887 and "The Coming Anarchy", *The Nineteenth Century*, August 1887. These were included (without their footnotes) by Albert Parsons in his 1887 collection *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Scientific Basis as Defined by Some of Its Apostles* (Chicago: Lucy E. Parsons, 1887).

¹⁶ "L'Ordre" *Le Révolté*, 1 October 1881 (included as chapter IX – "Order" – of *Words of a Rebel*).

misleading – ideas of his politics which would be dispelled by a wider reading and understanding of his works.

Given all this, the importance of bibliographical work becomes clear. Yet we need to be selective, particularly given that Kropotkin was also a noted scientist and earned his living writing scientific articles. So here, as before, I concentrate on his anarchist writings and exclude, say, his “Recent Science” columns in the *Nineteenth Century* and other scientific work, although we should never forget his standing as a scientist while we mark his contributions to anarchism.¹⁷ Yet this would make a lengthy task even longer and while of interest, not as pressing for anarchists seeking a better understanding of our past to help us in current and future challenges. For any engagement with Kropotkin is not – or at least should not be – driven by historical curiosity, but rather to help us win the class war which Kropotkin, as a revolutionary anarchist, also sought to win.

To end by reiterating my initial comments, it is doubtful that a complete bibliography of Kropotkin will ever appear: he wrote too many letters to both anarchist and non-anarchist newspapers as well as unsigned articles for *Le Révolté*, *La Révolte*, *Freedom* and *Khleb i volja (Bread and Freedom)*, not to mention that many of his articles appeared in anarchist newspapers across the world.

This does not make it a worthless task, far from it. This task is an important one – even if it will never be completed – for it gives us a better grasp of Kropotkin’s influence and ideas. His engagement with developments in the class struggle and current affairs can only be understood by reading these writings, seeing which ones were deemed important enough at the time to translate, all help to free Kropotkin’s ideas from the distortions and condescension inflicted upon them by those who would sooner repeat the false summations handed down by previous uninformed commentators than spend the time and effort to discover what he actually thought and advocated – and why he was so influential within the movement for so long.

Books

This includes new translations of books, whether they have appeared before or not.

Pamphlets

This is a list of Kropotkin’s pamphlets, whether published during his lifetime or not.

Anthologies

This lists any new collections of Kropotkin’s articles and/or pamphlets.

¹⁷ Lest we forget, Kropotkin contributed to the ninth, tenth and eleventh editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (published between 1875 and 1911), although his entry on “Anarchism” for the eleventh edition is undoubtedly the most famous and the one which is best remembered and republished.

Year	Original	Notes
2018	<i>Modern Science and Anarchy</i> , Edinburgh: AK Press	Translation of <i>La Science Moderne et L'Anarchie</i> , (Paris: P. V. Stock et Cie, 1913). Also includes various supplementary texts.
2022	<i>The Great French Revolution, 1789-1793</i> , Oakland: PM Press <i>Words of a Rebel</i> , Oakland, PM Press	Includes 'The Great French Revolution and its Lesson', <i>The Nineteenth Century</i> , June 1889 Translation of <i>Paroles d'un Révolté</i> (1885), including the Italian (1904) and Russian (1919) prefaces as well as the Russian (1919) Afterward. Also includes various supplementary texts.

Table 1: Books

Anarchist articles, letters and prefaces by Kropotkin

This is a comprehensive, but incomplete, listing of articles by Kropotkin along with letters, prefaces, introductions and postscripts added to new editions of his works.

Year	Original	Notes
1898	<i>La liberté par l'enseignement (L'école libertaire)</i> , Publications du Groupe d'initiative pour l'école libertaire	Kropotkin one of the signers of the statement.
1909	'Kropotkin's speech (Memorial Hall, October 21st)	Five thousand leaflets printed in November as a protest against the execution of Ferrer
1970	<i>Peter Kropotkin, Freedom Anarchist Pamphlets, No 4</i> <i>Peter Kropotkin, Freedom Anarchist Pamphlets, No 5</i>	Includes: 'Order' and 'The Situation' from <i>Words of a Rebel</i> (1885) and the pamphlet <i>Politics and Socialism</i> (1903) Includes: 'Anarchism and Revolution (extracts from 'Must We Occupy Ourselves with an Examination of the Ideal of a Future System', 1873), 'Note to the English Edition (1895)', 'Preface to the Italian Edition (1904)' and 'Postscript to the Russian Edition (1921)' of <i>Words of a Rebel</i>
1975	<i>Fatalité de la révolution</i> , Toulouse: Editions CNT.	A collection of nine articles from <i>La Révolte</i>

Table 2: Pamphlets

Year	Original	Notes
2014	<i>Direct Struggle Against Capital: A Peter Kropotkin Anthology</i> , Edinburgh: AK Press	
2019	<i>Anarchism, Anarchist Communism, and The State: Three Essays</i> , Oakland, PM Press	Includes 'Anarchism', 'Anarchist-Communism: Its Basis and Principles' and 'The State: Its Historic Role'

Table 3: Anthologies

Year	Original	Notes
1881	'A la Presse Suisse', <i>Le Révolté</i> , April 2	
1884	'Droit d'asile, ou Droit à l'asile?', <i>Le Révolté</i> , April 16	
	'Order and Anarchy: A Statement of the Principles of Capitalism and Anarchism', <i>The Alarm</i> , December 13	'L'Ordre' <i>Le Révolté</i> October 1, 1881.
1886	'Une Lettre de Kropotkine', <i>Le Révolté</i> , January 31	
	'Expropriation', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), March 20	"L'expropriation", <i>Le Révolté</i> , 23 December 1882.
1887	'Prince Kropotkin', <i>The Freeman's Journal</i> (Dublin), October 27	An interview
1888	'Anarchy in the Evolution of Socialism', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), January 14, 28, February 11	Translation of <i>L'Anarchie dans l'Evolution Socialiste</i> (Paris: Le Révolté, 1887), better known as <i>The Place of Anarchism in Socialistic Evolution</i> .
	'Le Lendemain de la Révolution', <i>La Révolte</i> , 31 March	Included in <i>Fatalité de la révolution</i>
	'Expropriation', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), April 28	Part III of "Expropriation" in <i>Words of a Rebel</i> .
	'Order and Disorder', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), June 23	"Order" in <i>Words of a Rebel</i> .
	'Power of Minorities', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), June 30	"Revolutionary Minorities", <i>Words of a Rebel</i>
	'The Situation Today', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), July 7	"The Situation", <i>Words of a Rebel</i> .
	'To Women of America', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), August 19	Letter to the Woman's National Council, March 1888
	'Kropotkin on Proudhon', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), September 15	Letter to the editor
	'Appeal to the Young', <i>The Alarm</i> (Chicago), November 24, December 8, 15, and 22	'To the Young', <i>Words of a Rebel</i> .
1889	'Fatalité de la Révolution', <i>La Révolte</i> , 7 April	Included in <i>Fatalité de la révolution</i>
	'Théorie et Pratique', <i>La Révolte</i> , 29 April	Included in <i>Fatalité de la révolution</i>
	'La Grève de Londres', <i>La Révolte</i> , 21 September	Included along with 'Ce que c'est qu'une grève', <i>La Révolte</i> (7 September 1889) in the pamphlet <i>La Grande Grève des Docks</i> (1897)
	9	
	'Égoïsme ou Solidarité?', <i>La Révolte</i> , 28 September	Included in <i>Fatalité de la révolution</i>
1890	'Esclavage, Servage, Salariat', <i>La Révolte</i> , July 5	Included in <i>Fatalité de la révolution</i>
	'Possibilities of agriculture'	

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Another article which tries to document Kropotkin's writings and why this is important to understand his ideas and influence. It appeared in *Black Flag: Anarchist Review* (Vol. 2, No. 3) and follows on from "Sages and Movements: An Incomplete Peter Kropotkin Bibliography", *Anarchist Studies* (volume 22, number 1) and "Kropotkin, Woodcock and Les Temps Nouveaux", *Anarchist Studies* (volume 23, number 1).

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