Industrialization

If Marxist support for national unity is related to acceptance of the need for full and rapid industrialization, Proudhon's emphasis on regionalism is certainly consistent with his general preference for a peasant economy and mode of life. A key distinction between Marxism and anarchism is in their view of industrialization. This contrast is complicated however by the fact that anarchists are themselves divided. Anarchist attitudes to industrial development fall into broadly three categories: opposition to industry as a dehumanizing process; acceptance of it as a necessary means of creating social wealth; and a conditional willingness to use industrial techniques, combined with proposals for directing industrial growth so that it is [64] compatible with decentralism, and maintains close links with agriculture. Tolstoy is the most extreme exponent of the first position. In his view factory work, and its concomitant division of labour, is the antithesis of the healthy labour of the peasant; and mass production is only necessary in a society corrupted by luxury. Tolstoy also dismisses the socialist belief that when the workers have become masters of the means of production they will adopt the living standards enjoyed by the bourgeoisie. Workers freed from the economic compulsion to do the jobs demanded by modern industry would refuse to be enslaved to machines, and would only accept a division of labour which produced obvious communal advantages. Abolition of wage slavery, like the abolition of serfdom, might require the loss of certain economic and cultural refinements now enjoyed by a few (see 'The Slavery of Our Times' in *Essays from Tula*).

Proudhon seeks to promote an anarchism based on an independent peasantry and small family workshops, whilst accepting the need for large-scale industry, which is to be owned and run by workers' co-operatives. Both agrarian independence and industrial co-operatives are to be promoted by economic measures: virtually free credit leading to free competition; and a system of mutual ex-

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tionalist aspiration of others, led some of [63] his contemporaries to accuse him of, in effect, promoting the national interests of France. While Marx commented that Proudhon's attack on Polish nationalism in its struggle against Russia led to his writing 'for the greater glory of the tsar'. Proudhon may not have been guilty of any greater nationalist bias than Marx himself; but whereas the latter is supremely aware of the immediate political implications of his position, Proudhon seems more interested in extending his principles to logical (though not always consistent) conclusions. Despite the difficulties Proudhon's distrust of nationalist movements created for him, in retrospect his emphasis on the dangers of nationalism, which he said would promote autocracy internally and wars between nation States, seems more profound than the easy endorsement of nationalism by many liberals and radicals.

Proudhon's dislike of nationalism reflected his fear not only of any tendency to political centralization, but also of a trend towards centralization of economic power. Marx on the other hand insisted on the necessity of retaining that 'unity of great nations which, if originally brought about by political force, has now become a powerful coefficient of social production' (*Selected Works*, 293). In this view the nation State is one stage in that historical development which is creating the necessary conditions for socialism, as it promotes the progress of industrialization. Engels comments that 'by far the most important decree of the Commune instituted an organisation of large-scale industry and even of manufacture which was not only to be based on the association of the workers in each factory, but also to combine all these associations in one great union' — an organizational form which would have led to communism. Therefore 'the Commune was the grave of the Proudhon school of socialism' (*Selected Works*, 260).

Proudhon too was scornful about constitutionalist devices like the balance of power and the separation of the legislature and the executive, when these are a disguise for an underlying drive to maximize the power of the State itself, as in the 1848 Constitution in France. He also deplores the use made by Rousseau of the distinction between framing and executing the laws, since Rousseau is led to posit the need for a permanent executive which by its very nature will tend to usurp power from the people legislating as a body. However, Proudhon also hails the principle of the balance and separation of powers as a great invention if its potential implications can be extended to demolish unified and centralized State power. He suggests that the balance of power at the centre of the State should be replaced by a federative contract in which each commune, canton, province and region retains more power than it surrenders to the higher level; and that the division of power should be extended to functional separation of powers between different branches of industry.

Proudhon's federalism stems not only from a general belief in local autonomy but also from acute distrust of new nationalisms. He argues that many nationalist movements aspiring to create new nation States are based on the historical claims of old kingdoms or empires, and so embody a desire towards nationalist domination. His book on *The Federative Principle* is particularly critical of Italian nationalism for its lack of concern for the economic emancipation of the peasants, and its willingness to subordinate republican principles to the real politik demands of national unification under the Piedmontese King. Proudhon tries to distinguish between imperialistic forms of nationalism, and a concept of nationality based on culture, tradition and geographical factors, which would favour regionalism in Italy rather than a unified State. Proudhon's own brand of ardent patriotism is rooted first in his regional loyalty to the France-Comte. His belief in regional 'nationalism' is also entirely consistent with his advocacy of confederation. Nevertheless, his patriotism, allied to his insensitivity to the na-

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had degraded the town governments to 'mere secondary wheels in the police-machinery of the Prussian State' (293). He also denied that the Commune represented 'an attempt to break up into a federation of small states, as dreamed of by Montesquieu and the Girondins', or 'an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against overcentralisation' (293). Constitutionalist theorists' admiration for England, where the logic of state centralization has been impeded, is derided; corrupt local government in the towns and 'virtually hereditary magistrates in the counties' simply 'complete the great central State organs'.

Federalism and Nationalism

Marx was necessarily committed to abolishing institutions which embodied the practices of a previous regime, and rightly emphasized the distinctively new character of the Commune. But his opposition to 'federalism' raises questions about the direction of revolutionary change. It is on this point anarchists have always taken issue with Marxists, and it is relevant that Marx's pamphlet on *The Civil War in France* is in a sense 'claiming' the Commune for the First International, and implicitly discrediting the Proudhonist claims to it as an embodiment of their own theories of confederation. Marx stresses that 'the unity of the nation was not to be broken', and 'the few [62] but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated ...' (292). Lenin takes up this question in *The State and Revolution*:

> To confuse Marx's views on the 'destruction of the state power — the parasitic excrescence' with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! ... Federalism as a principle follows logically from the petty-bourgeois views of anarchism. Marx was a centralist (89–91).

organization. For Marxists the Commune symbolizes a type of participatory democracy which draws on the French Revolutionary idea of popular sovereignty, but seeks to realize it through a combination of radical decentralism and populist devices. The Commune which rose phoenixlike out of the destruction of Louis Napoleon's Empire was in Marx's eyes the antithesis of the previous imperial power — 'the centralized state power with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy and judicature'. The model of communal government in Paris was intended to be a pattern for the rest of the country, 'even the smallest hamlet', to follow. The Commune guarded [61] itself against the domination of the organs of the new 'state' over society by what Engels called 'two infallible means':

> In the first place, it filled all posts — administrative, judicial and educational — by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to the right of recall at any time by the same electors. And, in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, 261–2).

The Marxist commitment to radical popular sovereignty also entails contempt for constitutionalist devices like balance of powers, separation of functions and the hedging of central power through local autonomy or federalism. Marx commended the Commune for abolishing the distinction between legislature and executive, between policymaking and administration: 'The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time' (291). He attacked the view that the Commune was a reversion to the medieval commune, commenting that the local communes which were an inheritance from feudalism had been in France converted effectively into a 'substratum' of modern State power, and that in Prussia the municipal constitution

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Author's Note

This book was conceived and written as a brief study in political theory, primarily for students of politics. Its main aim is to explore anarchist ideas in relation to a number of important themes in political thought.

The book assumes no prior knowledge of anarchist history and philosophy, and will therefore cover ground familiar to those already versed in the literature on anarchism. On the other hand it does assume some knowledge of general political theory, although the specific connexions between anarchist and other theorists are spelt out as clearly as possible. It also explores the relevance of anarchist ideas to contemporary politics and political discourse.

1 The Political Theory of Anarchism

The Leviathan

This chapter examines some of the key concepts and themes of anarchism and their relation to orthodox political theory. The discussion centres round Hobbes's Leviathan. Because Hobbes stated with exceptional clarity and incisiveness some of the key problems of politics, and did so at a high level of abstraction which gives his philosophy a relatively timeless quality, it is possible to draw on his thought for the purposes of general analysis.

Hobbes is also particularly relevant to a discussion of anarchism. As a philosopher of rigorous 'realism' he contrasts strongly with the 'Utopian' elements in anarchist thought; and the Leviathan, which is a classic statement of the need for strong government, persuasively equates anarchy with violence and disorder. But interestingly Godwin, the first philosopher of anarchism, is in the direct line of intellectual descent from Hobbes's individualism and rationalism. It is, therefore, possible to point to the complexity of political ideas, by tracing how Hobbes's theory can generate its own opposite — a consistent individualist anarchist theory, whilst at the same time laying the theoretical foundations for an anarchist inversion of itself.

Anarchist ideas can be linked with Hobbes's theory at three levels. First, at the most obvious level, an anarchist vision of a peaceful society free from the ills of government, is a reverse image of Hobbes's picture of the state of war which results when

3 Anarchism and Society

The Paris Commune

The anarchist alternative to State control based on repression is a self-regulating social order. What an anarchist society would be like has been indicated primarily by Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin, who despite significant differences share certain common values, and who all three define their position to some extent in opposition to Marxist socialism. Any comparison with Marxism is rendered difficult by the inherent diversity of the anarchist tradition, including the very divergent interpretations of Proudhon and Bakunin available, and the increasing complexity of Marxism as it has evolved. But since anarchism has been engaged in a conscious critique of Marxism for over a century, comparison is clearly relevant. Both start off with a common commitment to abolish capitalism and the capitalist State; both reject parliamentary liberalism; and both aspire to create a society free from inequality and exploitation. Where they often differ is in their attitudes to nationalism, industrialization and democracy, and so in their conceptions of historical progress. The crucial point of difference is on the role of State power in the transitional period after a socialist revolution. Ultimately they also disagree on the role of government and of law, and in their understanding of 'politics'.

Many of the differences between Marxists and anarchists emerge interestingly in their views of the 1871 Paris Commune, adopted by both as a symbol of the new socialist society — focusing on the Commune means comparing anarchism with the most libertarian element in Marxist thinking about post-revolutionary

trends in Western society, it is important to recognize the degree to which the Senate or the Supreme Court may still act to oppose the administration, and the significant areas of liberty which exist (for example freedom for political propaganda in the armed forces) alongside striking illiberalism. Secondly, the sheer size and great power status of the United States are clearly relevant. An extreme anarchist case for 'revolution' is less persuasive in smaller countries like the Scandinavian liberal democracies; though the greater degree of democracy, liberty and equality their citizens enjoy constitute a strong argument in favour of the general anarchist plea for decentralism.

The nation State is now apparently undergoing further transformation, especially in Western Europe where it has existed longest. Economic and technical factors are breaking down national frontiers in favour of larger economic units, and technical developments in warfare have greatly reduced the military significance of national boundaries. These considerations do not, however, invalidate the [59] anarchist critique of the State; on the contrary they suggest that both anarchist proposals for confederation based on the power of local communities, and the anarchist scepticism about the merits or inevitability of industrial and technical 'progress', have great contemporary relevance. If it can be argued persuasively that the anarchist critique of the State and modern society is becoming more, rather than less, relevant, it remains to consider the nature of the alternative anarchist society.

government breaks down, or in the absence of any central power. Secondly, there are interesting connections to be made between Hobbes's psychology and conception of the individual, and anarchist attitudes. Thirdly, Hobbesian propositions about the State, the role of law, and the nature of crime, illuminate the central concerns of anarchism. There are limitations in the Hobbesian account of society which takes the psychological make-up of the individual as the basis for analysis, and self-interest — even the enlightened self-interest leading to virtuous behaviour Godwin envisages — as the motive force holding society together. But the emphasis of many later anarchists on the positive role of social groups in influencing and binding together individuals provides a partial solution for some of the difficulties inherent in this position. [14]

Anarchy means literally 'without government', and the lowest common denominator of anarchist thought is the conviction that existing forms of government are productive of wars, internal violence, repression and misery. This critique of government extends to liberal democratic governments as well as to the more frequently criticized dictatorships. Hobbes was, like the anarchists, more interested in government as a general phenomenon than in distinguishing between different types of government. While he thought monarchial government would be more efficient and less open to corruption than other forms, he was primarily concerned to explain in abstract terms why government is necessary.

The Social Contract

Hobbes's abstract justification for government rests on the legalistic fiction of the social contract. The contract is envisaged between individuals driven to set up a government because of the miseries they endure in the 'state of nature', where there is no stable social organization. The state of nature is sometimes envisaged in a

quasi-historical way: once upon a time, before government existed, men lived in small scattered groups — sometimes perhaps joined together in bands for hunting or war — and tried to live off the land. But no one could cultivate the land in peace, or be secure in his possessions, because at any time he might be attacked by marauders and driven off or killed. Therefore, everyone had to be ready to fight off attackers; and men were likely to attack both for the sake of possessions and the power which possessions bring; or through sheer love of fighting and the glory to be won from success in battle. Even if only a minority were likely to act in this fashion, everyone was forced through fear to take defensive measures, and might, in line with the familiar logic of defence, feel impelled to launch preventive attacks against their more threatening neighbours.

Hobbes is not claiming to describe an actual historical situation — even though in the seventeenth century historical and anthropological evidence would not have thrown as much doubt as they do now on the realism of his picture of a pre-social stage. He is exploring the logic of a situation in which human nature predisposes men to act in certain ways, and there is no superior power to prevent them warring with one another. So in the state of nature there is no economic prosperity — because economic advance depends on security and co-operation; no scientific knowledge, 'no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death' (Leviathan, 82). This is an extreme picture of what [15] life would be like without any government at all. Superimposed on this are images of a partial 'state of nature' resulting from the breakdown of central government, or civil war — the realistic dangers Hobbes is trying to avert.

Hobbes is aware that the state of nature in which there is no organized society is a logical fiction; it is the basis for the second fiction, the social contract. Individuals who have been driven by fear and guided by reason to seek a rational solution to their difficulties are envisaged as coming together to draw up what amounts to a peace treaty, and simultaneously setting up a sovereign to en-

entailed in De Tocqueville's views is now even more pronounced. And a distrust of proposals for sweeping social change or of 'fanatical' utopianism leads many modern constitutionalists to adopt in relation to modern society an inherently conservative stance. Some of the values and ideas held by anarchists may link up with 'conservative' ideology — Goodman comments that the 'gentlemen of the Right, [58] who invented the protective tariff and the trusts, now complain in Populist terms that liberty is encroached on' (People or Personnel, 48). But the interpretation is totally different.

Anarchists who may accept some of De Tocqueville's key values reinterpret them in a radical style of politics. Local community is seen not simply as a desirable intermediary between the individual and the State, but as the basis for a society totally free of any State organization. The local community is also seen as a base for direct action for social change — housing the homeless, experimenting in workers' control, creating local associations to build a better environment. Anarchist freedom is linked to a concept of citizenship which demands direct resistance to the State, and civil disobedience as the fulfillment of responsible citizenship. And anarchists, despite their disillusionment with the State socialism inaugurated by Marxist parties in power, usually ally themselves with the ideals and goals of the socialist movement.

In view of the trends which have in this century tended to destroy genuine social pluralism based on local independence and voluntary initiative, to reduce the role of law in protecting individual freedom, and to extend the power of the police and military organs of the State, De Tocqueville's ideal of liberty and community does appear to demand in Western society resistance to the war-making powers of the State in particular, and a restructuring of the institutions of modern society. The case for a 'radical' reinterpretation of constitutionalist values appears particularly strong in the country De Tocqueville hoped would escape the ills of centralization — the United States. Though if we are looking at America in concrete terms, and not simply treating it as a model of the

reau of Investigation after the First World War, stresses the anarchist emphasis on individual freedom. Drinnon comments:

> From the standpoint of the general Western liberal tradition, the anarchism for which Emma stood is perhaps superior ethically to any other political theory. No other theory makes so primary an appeal to the individual responsibility and intelligent self-expression of man … Emma Goldman had the early and relatively rare insight that responsible individual freedom is the touchstone of supreme importance in the modern world (*Rebel in Paradise*, 111).

The primacy of the value of 'freedom' is also suggested by George Molnar in a review of Woodcock's survey of anarchism. Molnar concludes :

> Anarchism has certain features in common with socialism, populism, etc. It is distinguished from them by being the only radical movement whose principal avowed concern was with freedom … Freedom is not something to which the world can be converted; it is of its nature a minority interest (*Anarchy*, No. 28, June 1963, 169).

The crucial distinction between all forms of liberalism and all forms of anarchism is reflected in the phrase 'radical movement'. Liberals who feel attached to the constitutionabst tradition tend in practice to support existing parliamentary and party politics, partly on the grounds that the likely alternatives are very much worse. They rely on the 'rule of law' as one of the main bulwarks of freedom, and so deplore all forms of unconstitutional and illegal action. Their adherence to pluralism leads them to oppose State intervention in the economic sphere designed to re-place or closely control existing business corporations, so the opposition to socialism

sure the treaty is, in future, kept. The articles of the treaty, and the obligations of the parties to it, are spelt out in full on the analogy of other legally binding contracts, for example in the commercial sphere. Hobbes is able through this analogy to argue a double case. First, he shows that it is in the interest of the individual to live under strong government, and therefore he should act in such a way as to maintain the existing government (i.e. keep the terms of the 'social contract'). Secondly, by drawing on the sophisticated concepts and sense of moral obligation evolved in legal practice and familiar to his readers, Hobbes is able to suggest why government is not only necessary and useful, but has legitimate authority.

Hobbes is the most brilliant and original of the contract theorists, but the conception of the social contract is common to many other seventeenth century writers. It was carried over into the eighteenth century, but by the time of the French Revolution it had lost much of its original relevance as a political analogy; and it had also lost its logical clarity as a result of being merged in political discourse with the Whig interpretation of British history, and being identified with the settlement of 1688. Moreover, by this time contract theory often seemed designed to justify existing political practices, which struck many reformers and radicals as corrupt, unjust and frequently absurd. As a result the contract tended to look like a form of intellectual mystification, designed to delude the people into forgoing their rights. The theoretical foundations of the contract theory were undermined by Hume. Bentham attacked the fiction of the contract in the name of utilitarianism; Tom Paine derided, in defence of popular sovereignty, the idea of a contract which vested in the Government continuing rights; and William Godwin dismissed the notion of an 'original contract' in the course of constructing a rational anarchist philosophy.

But the idea of the contract did not simply disappear; as is frequent with political conceptions, it underwent a series of transformations, ifle notion of individual consent to government, which is intrinsic to the social contract, has inherently radical implications,

as Hobbes [16] was uneasily aware; and as Locke carefully demonstrated in his defence of rebellion. These radical possibilities were developed in three directions. The utilitarian theory of democracy retained the implicit contractual notions of utility as a criterion of the purpose of government, and of individual consent as a criterion of legitimacy, whilst abandoning the legal fiction of the contract. In the radical democratic theory propagated by Paine the historical fiction was transmuted into a present and recurring renewal of the contract between the governed and their chosen government; and sovereignty was transferred from the 'sovereign' monarch to the people. The anarchist conception developed by Godwin went a stage further than Paine. Godwin thought of contracts not between that fictitious entity, the 'people', and the government; but between specific individuals. Whereas Hobbes's society is based on a single compact in the assumed past, Godwin's society is to be built on a series of mutual and constantly renewed compacts between freely contracting individuals; permanent contracts like marriage are an infringement of freedom. This conception of contracts based on the principle of justice, implicit in Godwin, was built systematically into the social theory of Proud-hon, who contrasted voluntary contract with law enforced by superior power.

The impact of Hobbes's theory lies partly in the image he evokes of the violence, chaos and fear which ensue when there is no government to enforce law and order. If his assumptions are reversed, and one argues that men are by nature — when uncorrupted by the perverting influence of government and evil societies — cooperative, peace-loving and activated by spontaneous sympathy towards others, then the logic of the situation is also reversed. Government ceases to be a protector of individuals, and a guarantor of their lives and property. Instead, the State is seen as the chief threat to the liberty, security and prosperity of the individual, whom it circumscribes with laws and regulations, jails for infringement of these rules, conscripts to fight in wars, executes for any treason to the State, and robs through exorbitant taxes. Hobbes conceded

Constitutionalist Theory and Anarchism

The link between constitutionalist theory and anarchist theory exists not only at an analytical level but in their common adherence to certain values: the value of local community realized through a wide range of independent associations; the value of individual freedom usually seen in terms of social activity and as inseparable from a sense of responsibility to society; and, sometimes, a sense of belonging to a minority, or 'aristocracy', and a related sense of pessimism about achieving more than integrity in action. Paul Goodman notes the anarchist elements in the thought of Madison, writing on the experimental values of decentralism; and quotes Jefferson: 'A little rebellion now and then is a good thing … This truth should render republican governors so mild in their punishment of rebellions as not to discourage them' (*People or Personnel*, 33). Goodman also suggests that after the American Revolution society remained organized in fairly autonomous communities and associations which, in relation to State or Federal Government 'existed in a virtual community-anarchy' (32). They were not, however, non-political; the independent elite especially 'regarded themselves as a band of citizen-friends born to make institutions, constitutions or whatever' (33). It is this image of pluralism, reproduced with qualifications by De Tocqueville in 1830 in *Democracy in America*, which has continuing appeal for many in the anarchist tradition. Colin Ward quoting G. D. H. Cole expresses sympathy with pluralistic ideas and suggests their relevance to modern Western Society (*Anarchy*, No. 14, April 1962). [57] The connexion between this conception of pluralism and the 'pluralism' of big corporations and pressure group politics, often endorsed in American political science, is purely rhetorical.

Richard Drinnon in his biography of Emma Goldman, in the course of which he notes the switch in America from 'vigilante authoritarianism', hostile to all radical agitation, to 'bureaucratic authoritarianism', demonstrated by the growing power of the Bu-

illiberal implications, like the Emergency Laws recently passed in West Germany. Allen Dulles commented that the American 1947 National Security Act had 'given Intelligence a more influential position in our government than Intelligence enjoys in any other government of the world' (*The Invisible Government*, 4).

The war-making powers of the State have always greatly preoccupied anarchists. Godwin observed that war has 'been found the inseparable ally of political institutions'. But in this century war has become a dominant theme in anarchist writing. Read comments:

> War increases in intensity and effect as society develops its central organization ... this problem of war and peace ... has been an obsession with my generation. There is no problem which leads so inevitably to anarchism (*Anarchy and Order*, 120–1). [56]

Geoffrey Ostergaard writing in Anarchy claims that 'the omnipresent threat of nuclear annihilation now clearly vindicates the anti-statism of the anarchists and the syndicalists. For war is a function of the state and the state system into which mankind is politically divided' (No. 28, June 1963, 184).

De Jouvenel too relates State centralization to modern war. Writing Power under the impression of the horrors of the Second World War he quotes Montesquieu's warning on the danger of large armies: 'And soon having soldiers will result in having nothing but soldiers, and we shall become like the Tartars' (18). He goes on to document the development of total war from the time of the French Revolution, which ushered in conscription to the total mobilization of whole populations in the Second World War. Alex Comfort, also writing immediately after the last War, comments in Art and Social Responsibility that 'barbarian society is rooted today in obedience, conformity, conscription ...' (83).

that governments might harm their subjects, but argued the worst a government could do to people is 'scarce sensible in respect of the miseries, and horrible calamities, that accompany a civil war, or that dissolute condition of masterless men, without subjection to laws, and a coercive power to tie their hands from rapine and revenge' (Leviathan, 120). Anarchists like Godwin and Tolstoy believed that governments are responsible for the greatest crimes, and promote devastating wars between States. It is of course an over-simplification to say that anarchists believe men are always naturally co-operative and peaceable, just as it is misleading to suggest Hobbes thought all men are necessarily competitive [17] and vainglorious. But Hobbes's emphasis led him to the conclusion that government is a necessary evil. The anarchists conclude that government is a great and unnecessary evil, and that anarchy in the literal sense of no government need not mean anarchy in the popular sense of violence and disorder.

Hobbes and Godwin

But apart from the basic image of Hobbes's state of nature in reverse, there are more direct and subtle links between Hobbes and one strand of the anarchist tradition — that is the individualist and rationalist tradition represented especially by William Godwin. Hobbes's theory contains the ingredients of a consistent theory of anarchism, and these are present in Godwin's writings. The most basic element common to both is the theoretical framework — the assumption that social analysis starts with the individual, and his personal needs and desires, rather than with society, the Stale, or the pattern of history. Godwin considers it obvious that 'society is nothing more than an aggregate of individuals'. The individual is for purposes of analysis abstracted from society. The importance of education into society is recognized by Hobbes, and even more so by Godwin; but political conclusions are based on deductions

from human nature, which is seen as more fundamental than any specific social or cultural influence. Stemming from this individualist position are Hobbes's and Godwin's views on freedom, equality, rationality, and the nature of the State.

Hobbes defines freedom as the absence of external constraints on the individual. The underlying assumption is that freedom to do what one likes is for the individual a fundamental good, and though some social restraints may be necessary for the sake of peace, they are inevitably irksome to the individual. Once Hobbes's overriding emphasis on strong government in the interests of preventing civil disorder has been replaced by a more sanguine reliance on a natural harmony of interests — for example, through the mechanism of the market — then the logical consequence is laissez-faire liberalism, in which there is a residual Hobbesian belief in the role of the State in maintaining internal peace and providing defence against external enemies, but the restrictive sphere of the State is reduced to a minimum. If this brand of liberalism is taken to its logical extreme, what results is a kind of laissez-faire anarchism postulating a natural harmony of individual interests in all spheres of social life.

Hobbes not only creates a conception of individual freedom ultimately subversive of his own belief in the overriding rights of government; [18] he also espouses a radical egalitarianism. There are three reasons for his emphasis on the basic equality of all men. One is the specific political desire to deny to the nobility a privileged, and hence disruptive, status in the realm: all men are equally obliged to obey the sovereign. Secondly, the basic equality of men in the state of nature is a necessary postulate if all men are to have an equal incentive to live under a sovereign. If in a state of nature some men through superior strength or intelligence could secure permanent power and security, then the logic of the situation would dictate their remaining in a state of anarchy. Hobbes does not argue what is obviously untrue, that men all have exactly the same degree of strength or same degree of intelligence, but that

> over countries to military government, but it must invariably and immeasurably [55] increase the powers of civil government; it must almost compulsorily concentrate the direction of all men and the management of all things in the hands of the administration (*Democracy in America*, Vol. II, 268–9).

Randolph Bourne, best known among anarchists for his unfinished essay on the State, coined the phrase 'war is the health of the State'.

> The nation in war-time attains a uniformity of feeling, a hierarchy of values culminating at the undisputed apex of the State ideal, which could not possibly be produced through any other agency than war (quoted in H. W. Morton, 'Randolph Bourne vs. the State', *Anarchy*, No. 31, September 1963, 265).

If the effects of cold war are less startling, they are also more prolonged. Massive investment in armaments, a major bureaucracy administering the instruments of destruction and the extensive activities of the Central Intelligence Agency, which takes in 'business firms and institutions seemingly private' and 'many domestic activities, from broadcasting stations and a steamship company to the university campus' (David Wise and Thomas B. Ross *The Invisible. Government*, 4–5), have dominated American politics for twenty years and show no sign of diminishing. The role of law as a check on State power or safeguard of individual freedom and constitutional liberties is also least effective in relation to military policies which demand the predominance of 'security'. In Britain campaigners for nuclear disarmament and in the United States protesters against the Vietnam War have tried unsuccessfully to challenge in the courts the assumption that government policy promotes necessarily the interest and security of the State. Moreover, military requirements may promote legislation with very

> Not so easily hoodwinked as many have imagined, the 'common people' ceased to take any active part in local government… In towns where a semblance of free elections had been retained [the ordinary citizen] was pressed to the voting urns, but he usually preferred to stay at home. Every student of history knows that this phenomenon is a common one; rulers who destroy men's freedom commonly begin by trying to retain its forms … (*The Old Regime*, 45).

Herbert Read comments on the apathy of voters in parliamentary democracies that it is due to 'this very process of centralization and collectivization which is taking place independently' (Anarchy and Order, 104).

War and the State

The tendencies towards giant-sized organization, State co-ordination with big business, dominance of technology and the erosion of traditional political safeguards are epitomized and promoted by a fifth factor — war and national defence. The two World Wars have had a lasting impact on the State. Even more significant is the entrenchment of major military establishments in a time of nominal peace — a development particularly noticeable in the United States, remarkably free from military pressures prior to the First World War and even the Second. De Tocqueville himself noted that America was in the nineteenth century favoured by being secure from military attack, and so free from military burdens and the threat of military ambitions. He also saw the importance of war in hastening centralization:

> No protracted war can fail to endanger the freedom of a democratic country … War does not always give

these inherent differences are not significant, since men continuously compete with one another. Above all, men are equal in their vulnerability to violent death. This vulnerability is more significant than accidental personal attributes or artificial social trappings. Here Hobbes takes up his third and most radical argument for equality. He refuses to accept that it is part of the order of the universe (or ordained by God) that some sections of humanity are 'naturally' superior to others; the aristocracy are not superior by nature, but by social convention; and women are not inferior by nature, but by family convention.

Hobbes is undermining with his critical rationality the social traditions of aristocracy and of the patriarchal family. As Burke later saw when trying to maintain the values of tradition — and appealing to the God-given order of the universe which enshrines the traditional order of society — abstract and critical reasoning in politics is inherently radical, in the sense of destroying the previously unquestioned beliefs and habits of thought which maintain and shelter social institutions. Once egalitarianism has been posited, in however abstract terms, then the way is open for pursuing the logic of ideas to more radical political conclusions. Godwin takes up the concept of equality. He too accepts that men are not identical in their physical or mental powers. But he argues in his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*: There is no such disparity among the human race, as to enable one man to hold several other men in subjection, except so far as they are willing to be subject' (Vol. I, 145). More importantly, all men and women are morally equal. Therefore, justice demands they should be socially and economically equal.

The role of rationality in Hobbes's philosophy is complex. In his psychology Hobbes stresses that rationality is the servant of the passions: 'For the thoughts are to the desires, as scouts, and spies, to range abroad, and find the way to the things desired' (*Leviathan*, 46). Even when men decide to leave the state of nature, fear is the spur. [19] On the other hand, man's reason is a crucial bridge be-

tween the state f nature and civil society — the contract assumes both a sophisticated rational awareness of what is necessary, and the temporary dominance of a rational sense of long term self-interest. This excessive reliance on reason in the formation of the social contract stems from the exigencies of the contract fiction, and is dropped when Hobbes comes to consider how far men can be relied on to keep the contract. However, Hobbes's position is further complicated by the rationalist method and commitment of the Leviathan. Its brilliance and persuasive power is partly due to Hobbes's method of rigorously logical deduction from a priori principles on the model of his admired geometry. Hobbes himself is committed to belief in the power of reason in the development of science: both natural and social science.

Faith in the power of science entails a belief in the key role of reason in man's control over his natural and social environment, and is associated with the theory of progress, and with the optimism which characterized the rationalist temper of the Enlightenment. Godwin puts his trust in reason as the basis for a civilized society, and as the guarantor of progress towards a better one. But whilst Hobbes presumed reason can show us how to create a stable society through political science, but cannot guide political life, Godwin relies on reason to direct the passions continuously, and to prescribe day to day rules of behaviour in accordance with the principles of justice. Reason — which in Godwin has taken on Platonic overtones totally absent from Hobbes — will be the basis for contracts between free and mutually assenting individuals.

The method of *Political Justice* is also similar to that of the *Leviathan*. Godwin himself defined it in a preface to The Enquirer as a process of a priori reasoning by 'laying down one or two simple principles which seem scarcely to be exposed to the hazard of refutation, and then developing them, applying them to a number of points, and following them into a variety of inferences', so constructing a total system which should 'overbear and annihilate all opposition' (H. S. Salt, ed., *Political Justice*, 12).

> liances: in real estate, with municipalities and promoters; in agriculture, with giant croppers and grocery chains; in science and education, with the universities and high-technology corporations; in highways, with automobile manufacturers and oil men (45).

Automation and cybernetics suggest that in the future there will be even greater pressures towards central planning in order to avoid mass unemployment. This possibility of State planning for mass welfare and leisure in a society dominated by technology threatens both individual freedom and models of social action at a level so far mostly explored in the realms of science fiction rather than political theory. The somewhat incoherent concept of 'mass society' attempts to chart the early stages of this process, for example in relation to the mass media.

Fourthly, there is widespread concern that representative assemblies are unable to exert any real check on the actions of government or the organs of the State, and that the electorate is apathetic about elections and parliamentary politics. One school of thought associated with Schumpeter has reinterpreted democratic theory to square with present reality, in effect accepting Proudhon's view that 'democracy' [54] only means choosing every few years between sets of rulers. This concept of democracy based on competing elites encourages the theory — advanced, for example, by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues on the basis of their voting studies in the United States — that apathy is a sign of political well-being, since it denotes satisfaction and promotes stability.

But in the republican tradition of political thought political activity has always been associated with freedom, and inactivity with despotism — albeit perhaps a mild and even enlightened despotism. De Tocqueville suggests in relation to the cities of the ancien regime, that sham rituals were rejected when their reality had been lost:

the sphere of defence, but applies to all aspects of American life: economic corporations, universities and foundations as well as government agencies. The result, McDermott suggests, has been to render almost meaningless the old distinctions between public and private, industrial and educational, military and civilian. He gives as examples : [53]

> A company like RCA manages missile tracking systems, does research in linear algebra, edits and markets new novels, plans new educational systems, and experiments with electronic music. The University of Michigan, another growing corporate, teaches students at Ann Arbor, advises welfare mothers in Detroit, and pacifies peasants in Thailand ... America believes in progress. Hence it gives free rein to those very large organizations which have mastered technology, calling this *pluralism* (458–9).

There has also been a major expansion of centralized administration for largely economic reasons: the depression of the interwar years, the subsequent influence of Keynesian economic theory, and the scale of modern technology have promoted State intervention in the economy even by governments ideologically averse to 'planning'. Development of welfare programmes has also tended to strengthen central administration, even if detailed application has been delegated to local agencies. Government involvement is linked to a centralizing tendency within the business world itself. Paul Goodman comments, in People or Personnel on the situation in the United States:

> The warring trusts have settled into a system of semi-monopolies, with fixed prices, for mutual security. The free market has turned into a synthetic creature of advertising. Government has entered into colossal al-

It follows from both the individualism and rationalism of the Hobbesian kind of approach that the State is seen as primarily a coercive organization. The State exists to serve the interests of individuals, and to maintain law and order among unruly individuals k requires the use of force. The sovereign enforces the social contact to maintain the security of the commonwealth; for 'covenants Without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all (*Leviathan*, 109). The anarchists agree that the State is distinguished above all by its coercive power. This means that government [20] 'even in its best state is an evil' for Godwin. Later anarchists have stressed this point with greater passion. For Tolstoy the guillotine has superseded the sword as the symbol of government. For Emma Goldman the machinery of government comprises 'the club, the gun, the handcuff, or the prison' (*Anarchism and Other Essays*, 54).

Primacy of the Individual

At this point I wish to drop the detailed comparison between Hobbes and Godwin and to take up some more tenuous but interesting links between Hobbes and various strands of the anarchist tradition. Earlier in the discussion it was indicated that the Hobbesian assertion of the primacy of the individual is at least potentially subversive of the State. Hobbes is prepared to subordinate the interests of the individual to State power, but only for strictly limited and practical reasons — to increase general security. Hobbes is not prepared to sacrifice individual interests to any social grouping, to any political cause, moral ideal or religious faith. The Great Leviathan is never in any sense sacred. Hobbes does not appeal to the divinity of kings. Nor does he make any of the modern appeals to the idea of the nation, the motherland, the cause, or the just war. Indeed any kind of unconditional loyalty or fanatical devotion are alien to Hobbes. If the government is losing

its grip, then the individual is encouraged to use bis common sense and to look after himself.

Hobbes is opposing two kinds of loyalty and idealism: an aristocratic and heroic code of honour which, because it is heroic, is also very destructive of peace and quiet; and religious or political idealism and devotion to a cause, a more contemporary phenomenon. The first attitude was represented by the Royalists; the second by the Puritans and the Parliamentarians in the Civil War. Hobbes's critique of misguided enthusiasm is based on a strong sense of the political necessity of order. But it is also based on an assumption that fear is a natural — and therefore healthy and sensible — emotion. Hobbes used to joke about his own timid disposition. In his own words, at the outbreak of the Civil War he was 'the first of all that fled'. When Cromwell had won, Hobbes was one of the first Royalists to make his peace with the new government. This prudential concern for one's own safety takes in Hobbes the form of political obedience to any strong government, and imposes a political obligation to maintain this obedience unless the government ceases to be effective.

But if this attitude is extended, as it was for example by Hobbes's [21] contemporary Anthony Ascham, who wrote a treatise on *The Confusions and Revolutions of Government*, then it may become a totally political position, if not an anti-political one. Ascham addressed himself to the mass of ordinary people: 'the Anvill on which all sorts of Hammers discharge themselves' (see Irene Coltman, *Private Men and Public Causes*, 199). All politics become in this view a dangerous and troublesome interruption of day to day life. And this personal day to day life is all that matters to the individual. So if contending politicians start fighting over one's territory, then one protects oneself as best one can, and co-operates with whoever is winning at a particular time. This attitude makes connections with a popular revolt against the heroism and ambitions of the upper classes; and with elements in the intellectual anarchist tradition — the appeal to the commonsense and natural

in practice; his rejection of the approach to government espoused by De Tocqueville is complete.

Both De Tocqueville and Kropotkin developed their political ideas out of historical scholarship (which united them in admiration for the medieval cities) and an awareness of social diversity. The most appropriate way to assess their respective positions is to consider historical developments since they wrote. Twentieth-century experience to date suggests that while Kropotkin's optimism for the evolution of anarchist society was unfounded, De Tocqueville's hope for limited government in a free and constitutional society has not been fulfilled either, least of all in America. His distinctions between voluntary association and bureaucratic control, and between local and central administration, have become blurred due to institutional, economic, technological and political developments.

Modern Society

Bureaucratic modes of organization are, as Weber predicted, affecting many non-governmental spheres — industry, universities, scientific research, and communications media. Horowitz includes in his collection of writings *The Anarchists*, an essay by Robert Presthus on the deadening effect of giant organizations on research and creativity, and the ironing out of individuality in favour of an organization man. 'Bureaucratization plays its part relentlessly as the trend towards spending one's work life in a single organization … In sum, big organizations typically seek control, discipline, and standardization' (555). Presthus however is so far from being an anarchist that he is mainly concerned the United States may be falling behind the Soviet Union in the arms race. In a more radical analysis John McDermott argued in The Nation (14 April, 1969) that rapid technical progress has meant the development of giant institutions applying this knowledge. This development has been pioneered in

ism, decentralism and constitutional liberty he admires a strong government, which he believed the Americans possessed.

> As all persons must have recourse to certain grammatical forms which are the foundations of human language, in order to express their thoughts; so all communities are obliged to secure their existence by submitting to a certain amount of authority, without which they fall into anarchy (*Democracy in America*, Vol. 1, 70).

Elsewhere De Tocqueville underlines that power in itself is not necessarily harmful: 'Men are not corrupted by the exercise of power, or debased by the habit of obedience; but by the exercise of a power which they believe to be illegitimate, and by obedience to a rule which they consider to be usurped and oppressive' (Vol. I, 9).

It is interesting to contrast Kropotkin on the society envisaged by anarchism: 'It seeks the most complete development of individuality combined with the highest development of voluntary association in all its aspects … A society to which pre-established forms, crystallized by law, are repugnant.' Later in the same pamphlet, *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*, he comments:

> Far from living in a world of visions and imagining men better than they are, we see them as they are; and that is why we affirm that the best of men is made essentially bad by the exercise of authority and that the theory of the 'balancing of powers' and [52] 'control of authorities' is a hypocritical formula, invented by those who have seized power, to make the 'sovereign people', whom they despise, believe that the people themselves are governing (7–8).

In this passage Kropotkin attacks both the constitutionalist and democratic theories of government, which have tended to merge

instincts of the man in the street against the inflated claims of the State, and the propaganda and ritual of war. The insistence that the individual's first good is his own can be converted back into a subversive kind of 'polities'. Alex Comfort in a review of Herbert Marcuse salutes the idea that 'pig-politics is to be overthrown, not by a revolutionary clique or an irrational mob, but by the weapon of "Irish democracy" — the withdrawal, resistance and ennui of the ordinary person — in other words by rational, dogged human bloodymindedness' (*The Guardian*, 22 May, 1969, 9).

Hobbes's detailed psychological theory links up with another anarchist attitude — a libertarian approach to the pleasures of life, and, in particular, sex. Hobbes takes the importance of men's desires and passions for granted, and avoids any condemnation of them. There is no hierarchy of higher and lower passions; no puritanism or asceticism. Man is a kind of machine propelled onward by a succession of desires. This view, which has its inherent limitations — viz. Bentham's famous 'quantity of pleasure being equal, pushpin is as good as poetry' — is subversive both of social taboos and of a social morality which demands suppression and punishment of vice.

Belief in the naturalness of men's desires can be developed into a positive plea to encourage individuals to satisfy their desires and find happiness. The French Utopian socialist Charles Fourier constructed a picture of a community which would ensure harmony through giving scope to different human passions. Instead of suppressing and perverting these desires, as he believed early nineteenth-century society did, Fourier's communities would provide creative outlets for them in the form of useful work and in free personal relationships. In spite of eccentricities of detail, Fourier's psychological approach has connexions with modern libertarian attitudes. These [22] attitudes have however been greatly influenced by the psychology of Freud, especially as developed by neo-Freudians who have questioned Freud's own pessimistic conclusions. Social and even political evils may in this

view be traced to the harmful repression of natural drives — the word 'repression' taking on a double significance. This approach involves rejection of traditional institutions, conventional moral codes, and religious conceptions of sin. In its iconoclasm, though not in its tone, modern libertarianism still has certain connexions with Hobbesian scepticism.

Law and Government

A more direct agreement between Hobbes and anarchist thinkers is in their view of law. Hobbes is one of those theorists who defines law purely as the will of the sovereign. The authority of the law stems from the fact that the sovereign has willed it, not because it corresponds to the laws of nature or principles of natural justice. If the legitimacy of the sovereign's authority is denied, so is the legitimacy of the law; and if one believes in independent standards of justice and morality — as anarchists do — existing laws may be judged morally unjust. Moreover, if government itself is an evil, then the laws promulgated by governments are not only coercive restrictions on individual liberty — which Hobbes would accept, but an intolerable form of coercion.

An individualist critique of the intrinsic evil of coercive law is usually backed by another anarchist argument: that laws are largely designed to protect property, and therefore are a bastion for the privileges of wealth. Proudhon summed up the idea that the laws protecting property are a form of injustice in his celebrated slogan 'Property is Theft'. This conception had already been put forward forcibly by Godwin:

> The fruitful source of crimes consists in this circumstance, one man's possessing in abundance that of which another man is destitute… Accumulated property has fixed its empire (H. S. Salt, ed., *Political Justice*, 58–9).

equipped with the traditions and institutional safeguards of personal liberty, a representative assembly may be seen as an added bulwark of liberty against the State.

If democratic concepts are grafted onto a parliamentary institution one theory of representation which emerges is that of the representation of interests — the prevailing notion in eighteenth-century England. Representation of individual or group interests by a parliamentary advocate prepared to plead a case is quite compatible with the constitutional nature of parliament in principle (though in practice powerful pressure groups may harness government power to their own ends). This concept of representation is not necessarily 'democratic' and is quite distinct from the idea that an elected assembly represents the 'will of the people', which, whether this 'will' is viewed individually or collectively, is impossible — except in [51] Hobbes's purely formal sense. It is this myth-making conception of representation, and the related idea of sovereignty, that Proudhon attacked, arguing that government by the grace of the people was replacing government by the grace of God, and the idol of the people being enthroned in place of the idol of the king. Moreover, said Proudhon, the supposed delegate of the sovereign people will always become the master. Whether parliamentary assemblies usurp, through the ritual of elections, the interpretation of the general will, or a dictator usurps it from parliament through the magic of a plebiscite, the concept of 'sovereign will' provides a justification for centralized power and for sweeping aside all barriers to the exercise of this power. So 'democracy' may threaten liberty. It was an alternative to the French theory of democratic sovereignty that De Tocqueville sought, and believed he had found, in America. Proudhon likewise bitterly compared the French people, hemmed in like a prisoner in a cell, with the Americans who 'have no police, no centralisation, no army; who have not any government in the sense attached to this term in antiquity' (La Revolution Sociah, 24). De Tocqueville would not, however, have entirely accepted this picture. In the context of federal-

(*Julius Caesar*, Act I, Scene II.)

This image of republican liberty has both its aristocratic and democratic interpretations. De Jouvenel, who stresses the former, comments that 'Brutus' dagger, so dear to the Jacobin heart, was [50] wielded by an aristocratic hand' (*Power*, 277). The constitutionalist thinkers have tended to superimpose the aristocratic version of repub-licanism upon feudal Europe, in which freedom was guaranteed by customary laws, independent local communes and guilds, and a proud aristocracy of peers prepared to fight for their privileges, or liberties, against the incursions of royal power. Theorists who accept this picture tend to stress the significance of rule of law, balance of powers and of federalism as means of curbing despotic government, De Tocqueville inherits this constitutionalism, but has both the sensitivity to democratic values and the social realism to seek to transform these models into a picture compatible with modern society. In America he finds a possible answer — a federal constitution, further decentralized by the existence of vigorous local governments able to administer their own affairs, and rooted in the custom of the town meeting; a general habit of creating voluntary associations for social purposes; a free and localized press; and a widespread respect for the laws and the constitution.

In the picture of a liberal society espoused by De Tocqueville and later constitutional theorists parliamentary institutions have a role quite distinct from that of democratic representation. In its historical evolution in England, parliament acted as a check on arbitrary power, and a public forum for grievances, while extending to its members a privilege and immunity which enabled them to attack the administration. The change from government by the king to government by the leaders of the major party has not substantially altered the role of parliament as a whole, though the fact that voters may throw out the ruling party can, with qualifications, be seen as an additional check on misuse of power. In America the constitution enshrined this function of the legislature as a check on the elected president through division of powers. In a society

If the existing laws are unjust, then breaking the law may be a natural if unwise response to injustice (as Godwin saw it), or a quite legitimate form of rebellion, as some later anarchists, who often tended to romanticize criminals, claimed. An intellectualized view of the criminal as a rebel against an unjust and repressive society gains some colour and depth from the folk traditions in which common [23] people have sometimes respected robbers and bandits as heroic protectors and avengers of the poor.

A second element in the anarchist opposition to laws, and the law courts, police forces, and prisons which enforce them, is the conviction that the evils stemming from judicial and punitive institutions are far greater than the results of occasional crime. This belief is partly a response to the suffering of men and women sent to jail. Emma Goldman wrote in an essay on 'Prisons':

> There is not a single penal institution or reformatory in the United States where men are not tortured 'to be made good', by means of the black-jack, the club, the strait-jacket, the water-cure, the 'humming bird' (an electrical contrivance run along the human body), the solitary, the bull-ring, and starvation diet… But prison walls rarely allow the agonized shrieks of the victims to escape — prison walls are thick, they dull the sound (*Anarchism and Other Essays*, 83–4).

The related anarchist argument — that prisons increase crime — Emma Goldman illustrates from Oscar Wilde's Ballad of Reading Gaol:

> The vilest deeds, like poison weeds, Bloom well in prison air; It is only what is good in Man That wastes and withers there.

The third argument here, which is more original to anarchists, is that the whole system of law enforcement creates 'criminals'

among those who enforce the law. Kropotkin commented on 'the torrent of depravity let loose in human society by the "informing" which is countenanced by judges, and paid in hard cash by governments', and the corruption entailed in a system which demands men become executioners and jailers (*Law and Authority*, 22–3). "Wilde observed in *The Soul of Man under Socialism* that in reading history one is sickened 'not by the crimes that the wicked have committed, but by the punishments that the good have inflicted' which are in fact far more brutalizing for the community (36).

This type of analysis can be extended to a more central attack on the uses and abuses of power to encompass government as a whole, it may be argued that competition for power and position in government encourages those personalities seeking dominance and prestige, so the vast power and responsibility inherent in government may be put in the hands of those intrinsically least fitted for this role, secondly, even if initially men go into politics with a sense of social responsibility, the nature of the political system and the means neces-*y to achieve one's goals may over time corrupt political [24] practitioners. A further refinement of this analysis rests on an examination of the role of bureaucracy in eroding any sense of direct responsibility for governmental or judicial actions, by creating an immense psychological distance between those who make decisions and those who carry out orders — between the head of State and the soldier in the field, between the judge and the hangman. This anarchist concern has been expressed most insistently by contemporary anarchist writers faced with the phenomena of twentieth century technology and the enormous extension of State bureaucracy. Paul Goodman recognizes the scope of the problem in a pamphlet on *Drawing The Line*. He quotes from a sergeant writing about a bombed area in Germany:

> In modern war there are crimes not criminals … Here, as in many cases, the guilt belonged to the machine. Somewhere in the apparatus of bureaucracy, memo-

emotion. Herbert Read drew attention to the fact that after twenty years of socialism in Russia, 'the deification of Lenin (sacred tomb, effigies, creation of a legend — all the elements are there) is a deliberate attempt to create an outlet for religious emotions' (*Anarchy and Order*, 45). Stalin, whilst he was alive, had statues of himself erected throughout his domain in a manner reminiscent of the Roman Emperors — a feature of what has been aptly termed the personality cult.

Revolutionaries have always felt the need of their own symbolism. In 1956 in Hungary the giant-sized statue of Stalin was smashed from its pedestal. In 1871 the Paris Commune to 'mark the new era of history it was conscious of initiating … pulled down that colossal symbol of martial glory, the Vendome column' (Marx, *The Civil War in France, Selected Works*, 297). Anarchists themselves often symbolize their allegiance by black and red flags. Symbolism, ceremonial and imagery appear to be intrinsic to political activity, though they may not always be flamboyant. In the republican and constitutionalist strand of European thought there have always been two dominating and contrasting images: on the one hand an 'oriental' despotism, in which a man claiming godlike powers towers over his abject subjects and rules according to personal caprice through arbitrary violence; on the other a polity of equals, in which free citizens fear no one but respect the laws, and share with their peers the risks, responsibilities and privileges of governing. These images are both captured in a speech Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Cassius at a time when republicanism is crumbling before Caesarism. Cassius is urging Brutus to resist Caesar's ambitions:

> Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world Like a Colossus; and we petty men Walk under his huge legs, and peep about To find ourselves dishonourable graves … When could they say, till now, that talk'd of Rome That her wide walls encompas'd but one man?

their office; they encourage people to respect authority; and they discourage usurpers from seeking to seize power. The existence of respected procedures for the transfer of power is exceptionally hard to achieve. Under kings the problem was at last partially resolved by making the throne hereditary. Electoral and parliamentary rituals now fulfill the role in liberal democracies of denoting the legitimacy of government, and ensuring a peaceful transition of power. Where no such procedures exist, or are not generally respected, power becomes the prize of the most ruthless conspirator, the man controlling the army or police or party apparatus, or whoever is prepared to foment civil war.

Proudhon in an interesting passage in *The Federative Principle* recognizes the general value of oaths and ceremonies performed in public in binding individuals to perform the duties of the role, or office, they are about to undertake. Proudhon, unlike most anarchists, sees a positive value in a marriage ceremony. He supports for the same reasons the taking of oaths by witnesses and arbitrators, and, by extension of his reasoning, public oaths by public officials. Proudhon makes, however, a sharp distinction between a contract among individuals, or an undertaking to society as a whole, and an oath of fealty or submission to higher authority. Whilst anarchists might admit the value of custom and ritual to promote a sense of responsibility, they naturally reject the value of ceremony designed to promote respect and obedience to government. Alex Comfort comments in *Authority and Delinquency in the Modem State* that 'Obedience in modern societies is more often a hideous vice than a Christian virtue' (83); elsewhere he states that 'Every atrocity of the war was [49] the direct consequence of somebody obeying when he should have thought' (*Art and Social Responsibility*, 83). Ceremonials of legitimacy may also blind people to quite illegitimate usurpations or abuses of power, as Proudhon continuously tried to show in his critique of universal suffrage. The anarchist suspicion of the mystique surrounding power is reinforced by the sense that it may be a secularized outlet for religious

> randa, and clean efficient directives, a crime has been committed (5).

Goodman goes on to attack this approach and to argue that individual responsibility must be accepted:

> For every one knows moments in which he conforms against his nature, in which he suppresses his best spontaneous impulse, and cowardly takes leave of his heart (5–6).

The behaviour which continues to make war crimes possible can be imputed; why is the sergeant still a sergeant?

Examining the impact of bureaucracy is an exercise in sociological analysis and therefore enters into a realm outside the concerns of Hobbesian, or indeed Godwinian, political theory, which makes its deductions on the basis of purely individual psychology. The limitations of the individualist social theory stemming from Hobbes are the limitations of Hobbes himself. What is missing is the necessary dependence of the individual on a wider social group, and the understanding that a developed sense of individuality is in itself a social product. The Hobbesian conception of freedom as the absence of external restraints on the individual would only be possible in a society with a highly developed sense of individuality and allowing a considerable degree of personal freedom.

Society and the Individual

The missing dimension of 'society' suggests a possible solution to the Hobbesian dilemma of either anarchic competitive individuals or else a coercive Leviathan to keep them in order. Society may create [25] the kind of individuals who have strongly internalized values and can live co-operatively and freely without the threat of force. Secondly, the term 'society' suggests that people already

live in some kind of social unit, so social organization is not just imposed artificially by contract and maintained by force. Instead there may be 'natural' social units already existing and maintaining an unforced co-operation.

This solution of looking to 'society' was in fact seized on by some anarchists, for instance Kropotkin. Darwin's theory of evolution had resulted in a revival of Hobbesian social theory stressing individualism and the role of competition. To combat this Kropotkin drew on anthropology and history to show that closely knit communities antedate individual competition. In this nineteenth-century sense society is usually opposed to the State. In Hobbes 'society', in so far as the concept enters into his picture at all, is defined by the State. But for anarchists and many socialists, society becomes the opposite of the State. Society is the repository of all the good aspects of social life and organization — co-operation, sympathy, affection, initiative and spontaneity. While the State incorporates all the bad aspects of social interaction — coercion, force and domination; and politics tends to be seen as the arena of force, fraud and trickery. The State is an incubus -upon society — a distorting factor.

But there are problems in turning to society. The concept of society in itself is empty, and it may be made the repository of differing sets of ideas or differing images. Conservative theorists, like Burke, can draw on society as a product of national history and tradition to defend the existing State and social order. Or Utopian thinkers can draw up pictures of social conditioning in an ideal society which is too narrowly and rigidly defined to allow for a truly anarchist freedom or individualism. Moreover, actual societies, far from filling the bill, may be said to actively foster competition and aggression, or to promote attitudes which support the existing State; while present social institutions and groupings may subordinate the individual further to the State rather than provide the basis for an alternative social order. So 'society' is the answer to the key problem of how to achieve organized co-operation among

personal risks, and who do not rely on voluntary recruits to their band, but often enroll their soldiers by force.

Tolstoy's objections to symbols and ceremonies in both government and the Church is also a rationalist objection to the paraphernalia and superstitions cluttering up men's minds, and obscuring the clear and simple solutions of reason and common sense. Godwin attacks the mystique of office for similar reasons. But Godwin himself partly suggests in Political Justice the potential value of such symbols of authority:

> In the riots in the year 1780, the mace of the house of lords was proposed to be sent into the passages, by the terror of its appearance to quiet the confusion; but it was observed that, if the mace should be rudely detained by the rioters, the whole would be thrown into anarchy (Vol. II, 54–5). [48]

This passage is reminiscent of Madame De Stael's comments on the Constituent Assembly, which believed 'there was some magic in its decrees'.

> But its pronouncements can be compared to the ribbon which had been drawn through the garden of the Tuileries to keep the people at some distance from the palace … (quoted in Bertrand de Jouvenel, *The Pure Theory of Politics*, 36).

When people ceased to respect this barrier it became meaningless. When Napoleon broke up the Assembly with soldiers and publicly humiliated its members, he exposed the fragility of conventions protecting parliamentary immunity. De Jouvenel comments wryly, 'Indeed the law is a mere ribbon' (37).

Symbols and ceremonials have always surrounded government, as De Jouvenel stresses, not only in nation States but in tribal communities, ancient city republics and feudal kingdoms. They impress upon those holding power the gravity and responsibilities of

Authority and Government

The anarchist attitude to law is very closely related to the wider question of the role of government in society, and the meaning of legitimate authority. It is on these issues that anarchists tend to part [47] company altogether with the constitutional theorists. Law combines authority — embodied in certain persons, denoted by rituals, and often hallowed by age — with a strictly defined use of force designed to protect society. Legitimate governments likewise derive the authority vested in them from adherence to certain procedures in obtaining power, and from using their power only in modes defined by custom or the constitution. As in the case of law courts, the authority of governments is usually enhanced by ritual ceremonies and insignia of office — this was especially true of monarchs who came to the throne through the pageantry of a coronation and spent their lives amid the etiquette of courts. In Europe kings were crowned by bishops, and the ritual of their office was often interwoven with church rituals. It is partly because the spiritual authority of the Church has so often reinforced the temporal authority of the ruler that anarchists tend to be so antagonistic to the Church as the handmaid of earthly powers.

But opposition to religion is closely related to a general opposition to regalia, symbols, ceremonies and beliefs which encourage people to venerate government. Tolstoy, for instance, is always anxious to strip the Emperor of his clothes and reveal the naked violence underneath. He seizes on an article written for a Budapest paper, Ohne Staat, which led to the prosecution of its author, Eugen Schmitt, for saying that 'Governments, justifying their existence on the ground that they ensure a certain kind of safety to their subjects, are like the Calabrian robber-chief who collected a regular tax from all who wished to travel in safety along the highways' (Essays from Tula, 124–5). This is perfectly true, Tolstoy comments, except that the robber-chief is morally superior to governments who plunder not the rich but the poor, who, unlike the brigand, never take

individuals — beyond the level of small groups — without resorting to coercion and the sanctions of force, largely at an ideal and abstract level. Nevertheless it provides an important theoretical advance on the Godwin model of political analysis, and may provide an advance in practice if the anarchist society is seen as a goal to work towards — i.e. if linked to social activism.

For one limitation in a theoretical approach based on individual self-interest is that in its immediate political application it tends [26] either toward passive obedience — as it is meant to in Hobbes; or in anarchist versions towards passive disobedience and a purely personal opting out, which is not likely to further the anarchist aims of preventing injustice or changing society. In Godwin .there is the more constructive alternative of social change through persuasion and education. But a method which relies on influencing individuals not only involves a perhaps excessive faith in reason, but ignores the sociological significance of institutions and the political importance of power.

Activism in the anarchist tradition has often been associated with the individual heroic gesture of 'propaganda by deed', or assassination, which Lenin dubbed contemptuously, in What Is To Be Done?, as the 'spontaneity' of the intellectuals, and criticized for its political irrelevance. Many anarchists were unhappy about the image of anarchism which acts of terrorism propagated, and the tendency for this method sometimes to rebound in assassination attempts against some of the leading anarchists. Some, like Tolstoy, objected to violence in principle, and others, like Kropotkin, gave support largely out of loyalty to anarchist comrades.

Other anarchists did not object to violence as such but adopted a more Marxist position, that the only effective violence was the combined and organized force of the working class. Malatesta was spokesman for this view. Organization is necessarily crucial for any movement relying on mass action, and trying to build up support among workers in the teeth of opposition and repression by employers and police. Joe Hill, song writer for the Wobblies, on the

eve of his execution for murder in 1915 (it was widely believed he was framed) sent an appropriate farewell telegram urging 'Don't waste time mourning, organize'. But for anarchists the necessity of organization, and the demands of a general strategy for a movement, both seem in danger of undermining the anarchists' own ideals. Problems of organization within the revolutionary movement are also central to the disagreements between anarchists and socialists.

The importance of organization bears on the other key disagreement between anarchists and socialists — the role of government after a socialist revolution. Socialists have not in general the same intrinsic distrust of government which characterizes anarchists, and many socialists accept the concept of popular sovereignty within the radical democratic tradition espoused by Paine. Anarchists retain a deep distrust of 'democratic' governments. Proudhon argued in 1848 that universal suffrage was a form of counter-revolution; and his slogan that democracy is a form of dictatorship was being repeated by students in Paris in May 1968. For anarchists the legalistic trappings of elections or plebiscites — the 'mandate' and the expression of the [27] 'will of the people' — are as fictitious as the 'original social contract', and have, like the contract concept, been adapted to the uses of political propaganda. Indeed, in the name of popular sovereignty the government may arrogate to itself powers not dreamed of in Hobbes's philosophy.

scales. Though the idea of retribution, represented by the sword of Justice, has come to dominate, the original conception is retained in 'the very precious independence of the judiciary. That independence may by now be more in name than in substance, but at any rate it is a recognition of distinct values' (*Anarchy and Order*, 188). Read then reverts to a more familiar anarchist position, noting that the independence of the judiciary is symbolized by its wigs and gowns and rituals which create 'a shell of custom and formality', which excludes all direct human response and human values.

Anarchists can quite consistently recognize the possible value of judicial independence within existing States, but maintain that in a new and better society the defensive role of the judiciary against the State would be unnecessary. In the revolutionary tradition stemming from the French Revolution abolition of the old courts is usually seen as a necessary stage in achieving a new society. But denial of judicial independence has proved to have its dangers in practice. De Jouvenel quotes Faguet, *Le Liberalisme*:

> 'The subordination of the magistracy to the government is one of the triumphs of the Revolution. At the moment of proclaiming the rights of man, it destroyed their castle and paralysed their defenders.' (*Power*, 197).

More recent experience in socialist countries has shown that once application of the law is 'legitimately' subject to political direction, it is also directly vulnerable to the pressures which arise in the political process itself. From an anarchist standpoint, however, the history of the countries where Communist Parties have come to power reinforces their belief in the necessity of abolishing the State and avoiding the creation of a new government authority.

bitrary and dictatorial powers. In South Africa for a long period the impartiality of judges in administering the law helped to mitigate the Government's drive against opponents of its apartheid policy. In Greece the extent of judicial resistance was indicated when the regime decided in May 1968 to depose twenty-one judges, a move Greece's Supreme Administrative Court declared illegal when the judges appealed.

As both South Africa and Greece show, strict application of the law can help maintain despotic laws and cruel penalties if the regime makes repressive laws, and can bypass safeguards in the existing law by allowing detention of prisoners for long periods without trial, or by setting up separate tribunals to try political prisoners. But the training and professional status of lawyers, magistrates and judges makes them less amenable to serving a dictatorship than either the administrative bureaucracy or police, and to regard the judiciary in all circumstances simply as an organ of the State is a rather dangerous simplification. Members of the judiciary also inherit a set of values on which to base a wider political resistance. The professor of Penal Law at Athens University, dismissed in a political purge in 1969 and later arrested, said in a farewell lecture on the spirit and essence of law:

> The fundamental value towards which it is oriented is freedom … If the lawyer forgets this, he becomes a mere technician, an instrument of oppression in the hands of the strong… My [46] separation from you now is the price I must pay for adhering to the values I have venerated all my life (*The Guardian*, 24 February 1969, 3).

That the model of legality and justice enshrined in laws and courts has genuine meaning is demonstrated by our ability to recognize 'mockeries of justice', which flout not only the principles but the procedures of fair trial. Herbert Read comments that Justice, in her ancient personification, is blind and holding a pair of

2 Anarchism and the State

State and Government

Opposition to the State is central to anarchism. But what is meant by the State in political theorizing is frequently ambiguous, partly because there are substantive theoretical issues at stake. Some attempt at definition must, however, be made, and there are two distinctions which have considerable importance. These are the distinction between State and Government — though many anarchists have used the words interchangeably; and the distinction between State and Society — which is now commonly reflected in our thought and language.

The State is usually associated with its main organs — the administrative bureaucracy, the police and the army; from an anarchist viewpoint the judiciary and the Church may also be seen as adjuncts of State power. The main anarchist analysis of the State was formulated in the nineteenth century. Nicolas Walter recently commented in the journal Anarchy :

The anarchist literature of the past weighs heavily on the present, and makes it hard for us to produce a new literature for the future. And yet, though the works of our predecessors are numerous, most of them are out of print, and the rest are mostly out of date (No. 100, June 1969,161).

Contemporary anarchist writing does not deal in detail with the nature of political power or the modern State; and where it does discuss these questions the emphasis is primarily psychological. In his anthology on anarchism, Irving Louis Horowitz, after locating bureaucracy as an issue central to anarchism, has to fall back on a

non-anarchist sociologist for a contemporary examination of this phenomenon. But recent political trends are important to an understanding of a renewed interest in anarchism, and in assessing the current validity of anarchist principles: so some attempt is made in this chapter to relate anarchist ideas to modern realities.

In its critique of the State anarchism has parallels with the tradition of liberal constitutionalism, which is associated in the eighteenth century with Whig theory in England and with Montesquieu in France, and evolved into one strand of nineteenth-century liberalism. [29] Constitutionalism also shares with anarchism a deep distrust of democratic government and democratic ideology when conjoined to State power; this link is very clear in the work of the contemporary French theorist Bertrand De Jouvenel, who draws on the writings of Proudhon One of the greatest writers in the constitutionalist tradition, De Tocqueville, tried to adapt its leading ideas to conform with the new democratic spirit, and his resultant emphasis on the value of decentralism and voluntary association brings him at some levels close to Kropotkin.

A useful starting point for discussion of the State is Kropotkin's attempt to dispel confusion about terminology. Kropotkin remarks in his pamphlet on *The State* that:

> State and government represent two ideas of a different kind. The State not only includes the existence of a power placed above society, but also a *territorial concentration and a concentration of many or even all functions of the life of society in the hands of a few* (10).

Kropotkin argues that to understand the State one must understand its historical origins and development; this historical analysis also reveals how the State differs from Society. 'Men have lived in societies for thousands of years before having known the State.' For European nations the State 'hardly dates from the sixteenth century'. Kropotkin suggests that the Roman Empire had

social hierarchy. They are largely accepted by those at the top who make and administer the laws, and provide them with the principles they need in the process; and these theories are often mutely or openly rejected by those at the bottom, who see the 'law' from the perspective of the police cell and the jail — to what extent those at the bottom constitute a majority, and whether they comprise the working class, does, however, vary considerably. The analysis of jurisprudence as an ideology of the ruling class, put forward in simple and popular terms by Marx and Engels in The Communist Manifesto, is embraced by Tolstoy on the basis of his own observation. But this view cannot be accepted as it stands for a number of reasons, one of which was given by Engels in a letter written in 1890 trying to explain the Marxist position on ideology (Marx and Engels, *Selected* [45] *Correspondence*, 504–5). Engels argues that in the modern State law cannot simply be a reflection of economic relationships, or too blatantly an instrument of the ruling class, because as a legal system is elaborated it develops a life and logic of its own, and is constrained by the demands of internal consistency. A legal system has, therefore, an internal dynamic towards the realization of principles of equity and justice embodied within a legal code.

If we pursue the implications of Engels's qualifications about law as pure ideology we begin to arrive at a very strong case for seeking to maintain the role of law in society, at both a theoretical and immediately practical level. The existence of an elaborate set of procedures may be an important means of seeking redress for those abuses anarchists attack. Procedural rules help constrain all those involved in administering the law, and maintaining the rules may become a matter of professional pride. In addition, because any particular judicial system embodies general principles like protecting individual rights, it generates principles to which reformers can appeal in seeking to increase individual rights or to repeal unjust laws. The judiciary may also provide a certain bulwark of resistance against a government which seeks to exercise ar-

> Law was originally devised, that ordinary men might know what they had to expect; and there is not, at this day, a lawyer existing [44] in Great Britain, vainglorious enough to pretend that he has mastered the code … It is a labyrinth without end; it is a mass of contradictions that cannot be disentangled (*Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, Vol. II, 402).

Tolstoy underlines in his novel *Resurrection*, written after his conversion to anarchism, how following the letter of the law and the formalities of procedure may prevent genuine justice being done, and the arbitrary element in judgments and in sentencing policy. But the heart of his case is a conviction that the way the 'law' treats people is humanly intolerable. James Baldwin recounts at the end of his story of his prison experiences in Paris that when he finally came before the court, having made contact with an attorney friend via an ex-cell mate and been sent a lawyer, 'the story of the drap de lit, finally told, caused great merriment in the courtroom'. He adds, 'I was chilled by their merriment. It could only remind me of the laughter I had often heard at home … This laughter is the laughter of those who consider themselves to be at a safe remove from all the wretched, for whom the pain of living is not real.' Durkheim's aphorism about socialism — that it 'is not a science, a sociology in miniature — it is a cry of grief, sometimes of anger …' (Socialism, 41), is perhaps more directly relevant to anarchism. But Durkheim's concept of science leads him to overlook the fact that juxtaposing experienced reality with theoretical abstractions and 'objective' facts like legal codes is crucial to a serious sociology or theory of politics. The anarchist is, in attacking the presuppositions of law, speaking for large numbers of people, in particular the poor and inarticulate, who, as Baldwin comments, have for the most part never trusted legality.

There is an almost inescapable sense in which accepted theories of politics and law act as ideological justifications for the existing

all the characteristics of a State, and that the images of law and sovereignty derived from Rome, which influenced the bureaucratic and legal evolution of the new European States, have dominated the attitudes of lawyers and theorists ever since. What makes the State is 'the Triple Alliance, constituted at last, of the military chief, the Roman judge, and the priest, forming a mutual insurance for domination' (25). In the modern State these roles are extended, but for anarchists its salient characteristics remain an organized use of force to compel obedience, a system of penal laws and administrative codes operated by experts, and a set of beliefs and ceremonies which enshrine the State power m the hearts of its subjects. Kropotkin's analysis is close to that of the sociologist Max Weber, who defined the modern State in terms of jurisdiction over a specific territorial area, a bureaucratic administration, and a monopoly of legitimate force within its borders.

In an early work on *Anarchism* the German jurist, Paul Eltzbacher, defined the State as 'a legal relation by virtue of which a supreme authority exists in a certain territory' (18). The fact that it is egal relationship excludes for Eltzbacher purely arbitrary domination through conquest (a conquered country is perhaps a colony, but not a State) and also an anarchist Utopia governed only by moral [30] laws. The role of territorial boundaries means that neither a Church, whose membership is denned by faith, nor a nomadic tribe, in which membership is defined by kinship, are States, though both may have forms of government. Eltzbacher assumes in his juristic definition what Kropotkin emphasizes in a sociological and historical approach — that a State implies a territory of a certain size and a concentration of power. Hence the ancient cities of Greece, or medieval city republics, were not States in Kropotkin's sense. The historical phenomenon we now identify as the State is primarily represented in the European tradition by the national kingdoms which emerged out of the plurality of the Middle Ages.

The Evolution of the State

In the Middle Ages some monarchies did indeed have their national territories and made claims to sovereign power within them. But these monarchies were part of European Christendom, their subjects members of the Catholic Church; and the monarchs themselves were bound by religious allegiance to respect edicts from Rome, and politically restricted by the countervailing claims of the Pope to establish the rule of a Universal Church. Moreover, the Church claimed independent jurisdiction over its own affairs within the territorial realm of the King. As Ernest Barker stresses in a lecture on the State, the clergy were only one of the three medieval Estates limiting the King's powers. The second comprised the feudal nobles, 'who individually acted as sovereigns, so far as they could, in their local fiefs, and collectively formed a baronage ready to dispute authority at the centre as a body of rival kings' (Principles of Social and Political Theory, 13). Thirdly there were the 'commons', who 'locally sought autonomy for their municipal governments and their various merchant and craft gilds, and centrally, if they were joined together in an assembly of "the Commons" might join the baronage in challenging the king'. Barker concludes that 'there was little of a national State — indeed there was little of any sort of State — in the territorial rcgnum of the Middle Ages. It was a paradise of Estates rather than the pattern of a State' (12). Bertrand De Jouvenel in his book on Power, which he identifies with State power, attacks the misconception that monarchy could claim a divine absolutism in the Middle Ages. We should remember that:

> Power in medieval times was shared ... limited (by other authorities which were, in their own sphere, autonomous), and that, above all, it was not sovereign (35). [31]

they were teasing me it was simply not possible for me to totally disbelieve them' — and after several days taken to court, where the lack of an interpreter meant his case had to be postponed. Baldwin comments on the proceedings:

> It seemed to me that all the sentences meted out that day were excessive; though, again, it seemed that all the people who were being sentenced that day had made, or clearly were going to make, crime their career. This seemed to be the opinion of the judge, who scarcely looked at the prisoners or listened to them; it seemed to be the opinion of the prisoners, who scarcely bothered to speak in their own behalf; it seemed to be the opinion of the lawyers, state lawyers for the most part, who were defending them. The great impulse of the courtroom seemed to be to put these people where they could not be seen ... (131).

Baldwin's account is not written in the directly polemical spirit of Tolstoy's attacks on courts and jails, though it has in this passage Tolstoyan overtones, which are even clearer in a later paragraph where he describes how he went to Mass one Christmas day locked in a cold cubicle and peering through an eye hole at 'an old Frenchman, hatted, overcoated, muffled and gloved, preaching in this language which I did not understand, to this row of wooden boxes, the story of Jesus Christ's love for men'. But it is an unusually vivid account of what happens daily to many less articulate men caught up in due process of law. Some of Baldwin's helplessness arose from his imperfect understanding of the language and ignorance of French law. The average prisoner, however, confronted with legal jargon and the complexities of legal and court procedures, is probably in much the same position. Godwin commented bitterly on English law:

> paper has been read, the long-haired man, addressing those whom other people are about to strangle with cords, says something about God and Christ (*Essays from Tula*, 174).

Tolstoy then comes to the fourth element in his attack on law enforcement — the way in which direct responsibility is evaded by subdividing the stages of passing the sentence and executing the verdict, so that 'each may think and say it is not he who is responsible for them' (175).

Tolstoy's picture is a caricature, but like most caricatures it serves to bring into prominence features often not noticed. There is a frightening gap between the principles of legal theory and the actual experience of the machinery of justice. This is true not only of the Kafkaesque nature of a judicial organization, like that in Italy, which may keep a man in jail for two years without trial; but of English law, where the maxim that a person is to be held innocent until proved guilty fits oddly with a system in which, if police refuse bail, the accused may spend months in strict confinement, before a court has convicted him.

James Baldwin has described in his essay 'Equal in Paris' his farcical but terrifying experience of being arrested by mistake in [43] Paris for the theft of a hotel sheet (see *Notes of a Native Son*). The legal machinery in which he was caught up involved the initial interrogation 'quite chillingly clipped and efficient (so that there was shortly no doubt in one's own mind that one should be treated as a criminal)', being fingerprinted and photographed, moved from a cell to a communal shed in the Prefecture, and then driven in a police wagon to a prison outside Paris, where he was locked in, 'divested of shoelaces, belt, watch, money, papers, nailfile, in a freezing cell in which both the window and toilet were broken, with six other adventurers'. Here he waited like the rest for the unknown day of his trial, was told stories by his cell mates of men taken to be tried being sent to the guillotine by mistake — 'though I knew

Far from being sovereign in the sense of being absolute and above the law, Power was 'tied down, not only in theory but in practice, by the *Lex Terrae* (the customs of the country), which was thought 0f as a thing immutable' (35).

The gradual emergence of a territorial state in which the government could claim sovereign power within its borders is closely related to the development of a standing army. The existence of a permanent army simultaneously increased the demands made by governments on their subjects, especially in the realm of taxation, and their power to quell rebellion against these demands. External wars might also be used by monarchs to keep their subjects quiet at home. Hobbes comments that:

> kings and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies, and in the state and posture of gladiators; having … their forts, garrisons and guns on the frontiers of their kingdoms;… But because they uphold thereby, the industry of their subjects; there does not follow from it, that misery, which accompanies the liberty of particular men (*Leviathan*, 83).

Hobbes's *Leviathan* can indeed be seen as one of the clearest statements of the new Absolutism, in which the sovereign power is not hindered by any rival bodies in the State, the sovereign's will is above the law (which it creates) and the sovereign rules within his territory through his command of organized force. Hobbes explains that the only way the participants in the social contract can erect a common power to defend them is:

> to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will… (112).

In this way Hobbes sees the multitude being united in one 'person', who combines the power of all individuals under the direction

of a unifying will to create 'that great leviathan, or rather to speak more reverently of that mortal god, to which we owe under the immortal God our peace and defence'.

Hobbes would very much prefer that the 'sovereign' who 'represents the State both at home as author of all government acts, and abroad as head of State, should be a monarch, upon whom all the attributes of sovereignty coalesce. This conception was summed up by the Roi Soleil when he said 'L'etat, cest moi'. But Hobbes insisted that logically his theory applied equally to a governing assembly, who could claim to represent and so embody the wills of the people. This point is important, as De Jouvenel brings out. Other theorists [32] more or less contemporary with Hobbes were claiming that the King's right to rule derived from divine authority. But Hobbes made the real source of authority the people. The sovereign monarch is at the same time the representative of the people; his will represents their wills, and the absoluteness of his power stems from this delegation of authority. When, as in the French Revolution, the 'people' or the 'nation' claim their sovereignty and overthrow the tyranny of princes, then they elect a popular assembly to represent their will — the concepts of the Revolutionaries derived in part from Hobbes via Rousseau. But a government ruling through the 'will of the people', and so bound neither by belief in the eternal laws of God, nor by the previous customary laws of the country, may become the most arbitrary despotism, against which there is no appeal. And the people may discover that they are no better off than before, indeed they may be worse off. De Jouvenel comments:

> How very strange! When their masters were kings, the peoples never stopped complaining at having to pay war taxes. Then, when they have overthrown these masters and taken to taxing themselves, the currency in which they pay is not merely a part of their incomes but their very lives! (*Power*, 20).

his policy of free competition (see the Postscript to sixth edition of *State Socialism and Anarchism*).

Whilst police forces are seen primarily as organs of the State, many aspects of police behaviour stem from the values of existing society. In Britain, for instance, Anarchy has pointed out that police now hunt down drug addicts with exceptional zeal. The difficulty of disentangling the operations of the State from the influence of the surrounding society is apparent in many anarchist writings. Their awareness of this relationship between the State and present society, and in particular the influence of a hierarchical class structure, leads anarchists to stress the need for fundamental social as well as political change. The importance of the social and economic context is particularly evident in discussions of the role of law and the operation of the legal system.

The Law

The anarchist view of law has been stated with great clarity and simplicity by Tolstoy. In his essay 'The Slavery of Our Times' he argues that the one characteristic common to all law is:

> that if any man does not fulfill them, those who have made these laws will send armed men, and the armed men will beat, deprive of freedom, or even kill, the man who does not obey the law — (*Essays from Tula*, 110).

> Several peasants similar to those about to be hanged, but armed, dressed in clean soldiers' uniforms, with good boots on their feet, and with guns in their hands, accompany the condemned men. Beside them walks a long-haired man, wearing a stole and vestments of gold or silver cloth, and bearing a cross. The procession stops. The manager of the whole business says something; the secretary reads a paper; and when the

tims were unlikely to complain, or to be believed if they did (Ben Whitaker, *The Police,* 148).

Where the level of violent crimes is exceptionally high, or gangsterism particularly well entrenched, the anarchist case for abolishing the police may be most persuasive. In the United States, for example, an official Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence has stressed that poverty is the main cause of the crime rate, and urged the need to completely rebuild American cities. Nor does the existence of a police force sufficiently reassure the large number of householders who fear to walk outdoors at night, or have invested in their own guns — a truly Hobbesian picture. Whilst in western Sicily ruled by 'the Church, the State, and the Mafia' for decades, the most serious challenge to the Mafia has come from men working for radical social change. The Mafia shot forty-three trade [41] unionists; and 'day labourers claiming the land, peasants taking part in Communist gatherings were met by rifle fire' (*The Times*, 26 February 1970, 11). But the direct action movement initiated by Danilo Dolci has survived intimidation and helped to uncover Mafia influence.

But in Sicily the Mafia is so closely linked to the powers-that-be that political resistance is appropriate; and poverty in the American ghettos is so closely linked to discrimination that social and economic measures are relevant. Where the social and political overtones of crime are less obvious, immediate political and social action becomes less plausible as an adequate response to the problem. Anarchists also confront the difficulty that, although a large proportion of crimes are committed by individuals or small groups, there are also highly organized and sometimes international crime syndicates. Crime, like big business, has tended to increase its organizational scale, and it poses, for anarchists trusting in social change and community care of individuals, a problem similar to that created in the economic sphere by trusts, cartels and monopolies. There may be no alternatives to Government regulation, as Benjamin Tucker reluctantly came to acknowledge in relation to

If the despotism inherent in the unitary and secular State can sometimes be seen even more clearly in an era of 'democracy' than kingship, so also can the outlines of State power. It is probably only in a period of democratic aspiration and overthrow of governments that the idea of a 'state machinery' separate from government could take shape. Whilst earlier kings, as Kropotkin stresses, had their own growing bureaucracies, and their armies and personal spies, the focal position of the monarch as the centre of allegiance, and living symbol of the State, influenced language and imagery about the nature of government. But when in a period of years successive ministries of differing political hues might be in office, or even more radical changes in government — from constitutional monarchy, for example, to parliamentary republic to dictatorship — could occur without greatly altering day to day administration and policies, then people began to notice the specific organs of the State. These features have been particularly visible in France, and were noted by three nineteenth-century thinkers of markedly different political tendencies: De Tocqueville, Marx and Kropotkin.

De Tocqueville comments at the end of his book on The Old Regime and the French Revolution that, after the first period of revolutionary enthusiasm and the spirit of freedom it generated, Napoleon's capture of power led to the salvaging of the institutions of the old regime and their integration into the new. [33]

> Centralization was built up anew, and in the process all that had once kept it within bounds was carefully eliminated … Napoleon fell but the more solid parts of his achievement lasted on; his government died, but his administration survived, and every time that an attempt is made to do away with absolutism the most that could be done has been to graft the head of Liberty onto a servile body (*The Old Regime*, 209).

Karl Marx writing on The Eighteenth Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte reached very similar conclusions:

> This executive power, with its enormous bureaucratic and military organisation… which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten … Napoleon perfected this state machinery.., All revolutions perfected this machine instead of smashing it (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, 170–1).

While Kropotkin illustrates his thesis on the State by reference to the Third French Republic, which 'in spite of its republican form of government, has remained monarchical in its essence'. How has this come about? Kropotkin answers:

> It comes from France having remained as much a State as it was thirty years ago. The holders of power have changed their name; but all the immense scaffolding of centralised organisation, the imitation of the Rome of the Caesars which has been elaborated in France, has remained (*The State*, 42).

Bureaucracy

France has proved a useful model for generalizations about the modern State, and it also provides illustrations for a specific critique of bureaucracy. In their analysis of French bureaucracy De Tocque-ville and Kropotkin converge. De Tocqueville draws on his knowledge of the ancien regime to develop his case — the damaging effects of the administration on the French economy, its inherent cumber-someness and rigidity, its disregard of individual rights and of the law, and its enervating influence on social attitudes. In eighteenth-century France Government inspectors made peasants tear up vines not planted in soil specified by official regulations;

Death, 8). Slum dwellers or coloured minorities often feel that they are objects of automatic suspicion and fair game for any policeman. [40] Doubts about the category of crime are reinforced by the fact that both the investigations of the police, and the researches of social scientists, are usually directed — as a recent issue of Anarchy on criminology remarked — to 'lower working-class criminals' rather than to 'gangs' in the business and financial world (*Anarchy* No. 98).

Police are also placed in a position of unique opportunity and temptation to commit crimes themselves. One of the most frequent charges made against police is that of violent assault — widely publicized in certain cases of police violence against demonstrations, for example in Paris in May 1968 and in Chicago in August 1968 at the Democratic Party Convention. In recent years there has also been publicity in the United States about indiscriminate police shooting causing many deaths during 'riots' in black ghettos — which can be seen as a form of semi-political demonstration. But the most serious cases of police violence may be hidden from the public. Alex Comfort quotes from H. von Hentig, *The Criminal and His Victim*: 'The police force and the ranks of prison officers … afford legal channels for pain-inflicting, power-wielding behaviour, and … confer upon their holders a large degree of immunity' (*Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, 38). A particularly extreme example is that of the police death squad in Brazil: in December 1969 a Rio de Janeiro district police chief said he had evidence that members of the police were responsible for torturing and murdering 120 petty criminals in the previous two years (*The Times*, 10 December 1969, 7). Third degree methods are standard practice in many police forces — in France for example special expressions have been coined for the initial police interrogation. Britain has a better reputation. But the detective inspector who looked on while four men were beaten with a truncheon and rhino whip by two constables in Sheffield in March 1963 told an Inquiry 'these things go on fairly frequently, don't they', and apparently thought the vic-

the Socialist Party, the second in command of the latter was allegedly trying to frame two Socialist Ministers whom he wanted to have shot (see Philip Williams, *Politics in Post-War Prance*, 387). Nor is a secret police excluded by a tradition of liberalism. In 1965 an *Observer* article estimated there were police dossiers on two million political suspects in Britain.

Hannah Arendt comments that 'the secret services have rightly been called a state within the state, and this not only in despotisms but also under constitutional or semiconstitutional governments' (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 425). The dangers inherent in a specifically political police may also be seen as inherent in a normal police force. Ortega y Gasset urged in 1930 in *The Revolt of the Masses* that a concrete example of the dangers of the modern State crushing individual freedom was 'the enormous increase in the police force of all countries'. He goes on to predict that the police will not be content to maintain 'law and order' on the terms people want, but 'will end by themselves defining and deciding on the order they are going to impose' (94). It is a minor illustration of the link between aristocratic liberalism and anarchism that Anarchy uses a quote from this passage, together with Seymour Lipset's example of how police in the United States are publicly threatening to disobey orders which require police leniency towards black or student demonstrators (see Seymour Lipset, 'The Politics of the Police', *New Society*, 6 March 1969, and Anarchy No. 98, April 1969). De Jouvenel also comments with concern that: 'The growth of the police, in numbers, importance and dignity, is a universal phenomenon of the present time' (*Power*, 302).

The police role in maintaining public order necessarily tends to have political overtones. But suppression of 'crime' can in itself be seen as a form of political repression directed against the poor — especially when the highest crime rates occur in the poorest areas. It has been estimated, for example, that in communities in Western Sicily eight out of ten men have spent over a year in jail, and a further four per cent are outlaws (Gavin Maxwell, *The Ten Pains of*

the Controller General in Paris had to decide the site of a workhouse hundreds of miles away, or regulate a village fete; a passion for building highways in perfectly straight lines led to the tearing down of houses [34] in the way and confiscation of land without just compensation; and the Administration frequently overstepped its statutory powers; worst of all local councillors became abjectly servile before central authority, and every Frenchman became accustomed to the idea that the only way to get things done was to petition Paris.

Looking at France at the turn of the century Kropotkin comments that when a tree blows down on the National highway about fifty documents have to be exchanged between the Home Office and the Treasury before the tree can be sold. 'This is under the Third Republic, for I do not speak of the barbarous methods of the ancien regime that limited itself to five or six documents.' But Kropotkin's concern, like De Tocqueville's, goes much deeper:

> If it were only this, it would be but twenty thousand functionaries too many, and a thousand million francs more added to the budget… But there is worse beneath all this, for the principle kills everything. The peasants of a village have a thousand interests in common … But the State cannot allow them to unite! It gives them school and priest, police and judge; these must suffice, and should other interests arise, they must apply in the regular way to Church and State (*The State*, 36).

Kropotkin adds that until 1883 villagers were forbidden by law to unite even to irrigate their fields.

The notable increase in the size of central administration in all 'advanced' countries in this century has strengthened Kropotkin's general case. Indeed some of the more obvious problems of bureaucracy have been acknowledged in both liberal and socialist democracies. Italy's overweighted civil service, for example, has

long been an incubus on the body politic, but since 1945 successive governments have failed to achieve any civil service reforms. 'Nearly every Government had appointed a special Minister whose job was "reform of the Civil Service"; they had investigated and reported with more or less diligence but with little effect. Every so often a scandal would blow up to spur them on' (Muriel Grindrod, Italy, 155). Italy's civil service is in part a product of inertia and corruption, and reflects wider social and political problems. As Herbert Read once remarked: 'every country has the bureaucracy it deserves.' Max Weber, with the example of Prussia before him, saw in the rationalization and division of functions a method capable of managing large scale economic and governmental enterprises with considerable effectiveness.

But the potential efficiency of bureaucracy is undermined both by a general tendency towards excess of red tape, and by the specific problems of centralized economic planning. Modern industrial [35] development appears both to require State intervention and to multiply the difficulties of central control — a fact which has led to the French attempt at regionalism in economic planning. In the Soviet Union 'the planners' task has become about one thousand times more complex than it was when the first Five Year Plan was launched in 1928. Indeed, one Soviet expert has estimated that if the planning system were allowed to continue unchecked along its present lines, by 1980 it would occupy every adult member of the population' (Erik De Mauny, Russian Prospect, 96). This trend has promoted the limited measures of decentralization to regions and factories in the mid-1950s, and the Liberman reforms introducing the profit incentive in the 1960s. 'The Liberman reform has at least slowed down the paper flood. Under the old system, forty to fifty of a factory's "indicators" (directives on prices, delivery dates, production schedules and so on) were handed down from above. Now, only five or six are handed down' ... (ibid.). Whether strictly controlled decentralization and use of market mechanisms can do more than mitigate bureaucratic chaos is still to be proven. But

> To the mind of the great majority of people only the government was capable of maintaining order in the land ... The mounted policeman was, in fact, the embodiment of law and order, not merely its chief defender ... No one seemed to have had the faintest inkling that the protector might one day become the master (*The Old Regime*, 69).

De Tocqueville then quotes the remarks of an uncomprehending French emigre in England on the absence of a military police: 'It is the literal truth that the average Englishman consoles himself for having been robbed with the reflection that his country has no mounted police!' It had obviously never occurred to him, comments De Tocqueville drily, that 'these "eccentricities" were bound up with the whole British concept of freedom'. But now an anarchist arguing against the existence of a police force is likely to be regarded with the same incredulity and condescension as the emigre then regarded the English.

It was in France under Napoleon that the organizational model of a modern political police was first created. Under Fouche, former Revolutionary Minister of Police, the Ministry of Police was reorganized in 1804 and provided an efficient instrument of surveillance and repression to maintain Napoleon in power. Fouche's department declined in influence after the fall of Napoleon, but many of its methods were retained by succeeding regimes, and the political [39] police was strengthened again by Louis Napoleon to maintain his own dictatorship after 1851. After his fall the police under the Third Republic changed its leading personnel, but 'its functions altered little' (see E. K. Bramstedt, *Dictatorship and Political Police*, 48). Government ministers were reputed to live in fear of the dossiers of the police. In the early years of the Fourth Republic a public scandal revealed the bizarre workings of the rival secret services attached to the Ministry of the Interior and the Prime Minister's Office. Whilst the former was hushing up a scandal about

officially administered welfare is liable to be given inflexibly, officiously and heartlessly — objections envisaged by Kropotkin. Nor would anarchists subscribe to critiques of bureaucracy based primarily on judicial fears for the 'rule of law' or parliamentary fears about the lack of parliamentary control, though they might well agree that absence of adequate judicial and parliamentary checks increased the dangers of irresponsible use of power.

The spirit of De Tocqueville's attack on bureaucratic centralism is, however, closer to anarchist concerns, though his answer marks him sharply off from anarchism. De Tocqueville discovered in America and England a political alternative to State centralization, which led nun to formulate a theoretical distinction between the spheres of government' and of 'administration'. There are, he suggests, certain [38] interests common to a whole country, like passing general laws and securing defence: these interests may usefully be centralized. There are also local interests; to centralize these is to create a rigid and unwieldy centralized administration. Instead local affairs should be conducted through the political initiative of local citizens through municipal government and voluntary associations. Whether De Tocqueville's distinction between local and central interests, and between the role of voluntary associations and bureaucratic organizations, is still valid, and whether it can be maintained in practice, is best answered in relation to other features of State power, and in the light of historical developments since he wrote.

Police

A second feature of the State machinery of great importance for anarchists is a police force. While De Tocqueville is committed to the need for a government to maintain order, his comments on the role of mounted police under the ancicn regime in France are pertinent:

from an anarchist standpoint both approaches are totally unsatisfactory in principle, and fail to tap resources of initiative and responsibility which stem from free co-operation and participation in decisionmaking.

The criteria for measuring a concept like 'efficiency' in relation to bureaucratic and economic organization are far from unambiguous — and in Kropotkin's approach they overlap with an assessment of the total quality of social, cultural and personal life. It may be relevant that where a serious movement away from bureaucratic centralism has occurred in socialist countries, as in Yugoslavia, and briefly in Czechoslovakia in 1968, narrowly defined questions of economic efficiency have been closely related to issues of political and industrial democracy, local autonomy and cultural freedom. The anarchists' main concern is certainly with the wider social implications of bureaucracy. Herbert Read noted in 1938 in relation to the Soviet Union that: 'since the revolution of 1917 the State machine has year by year grown in size and importance ... in the very process of developing the power of the State new classes are born which usurp this power and use it to oppress the people at large' (Anarchy and Order, 94).

Alex Comfort remarks that centralized administration means a proliferation of new laws and regulations, thus increasing the quantity of State defined 'crimes' in society. A sufficiently cumbersome bureaucracy may not only impose rules people will want to break, but rules which they are actually forced to break. This is the situation in Italy. In 1964, for example, a former director of the Superior [36] Institute of Health was charged with irregularities in his administration. His arrest promoted widespread protests among scientists, who alleged that 'the antiquated condition of Italian administrative regulations makes scientific research impossible without some form of evasion of the law', for example in procedures for ordering equipment (*The Times*, 1 May 1964, 11). Soviet planning regulations have similarly forced managers to improvise and cooperate in defiance of the rules in order to fulfill their required quo-

tas. The authorities have turned a blind eye, but punished severely those who have taken private enterprise too far. Erik De Mauny notes in relation to the 1963–4 Shakerman case that, after reading the trial records of the complex transactions involved in building up an illegal commercial empire, a Russian acquaintance commented: 'I wouldn't have put him on trial — I'd have made him Minister of Finance!' (*Russian Prospect*, 90).

Comfort is less concerned than Read about the power of a bureaucratic class, but is afraid that the effect of centralization of functions and power is to provide opportunities for psychopathic leadership. 'The greater the degree of power, and the wider the gap between governors and governed, the stronger the appeal of office to those who are likely to abuse it, and the less the response which can be expected from the individual' (*Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State*, 75). In this connexion it is relevant to note that the new German State created in the 1860s could boast an efficient civil service, an efficient army and a booming economy: what it lacked was a tradition of political responsibility and civil liberty — a lack which manifested itself in the signal failure of the numerically strong Social Democratic Party to challenge either State repression or German militarism. Max Weber saw in Bismark's Germany a type of bureaucratic absolutism, in which the top officials tended to maintain a high degree of secrecy, and so become a power-seeking clique who were a law unto themselves.

Weber emphasized that the effects of bureaucracy in general on the majority of its lesser officials was to encourage timidity, longing for order, and narrowness of vision. When considering the implications of the trend to growing bureaucracy in all spheres of life he is appalled:

> It is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving towards bigger ones … It is as if in politics … we were deliberately to become men who need 'order', and nothing but order… and the great question is … what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from this [37] parcelling-out of the soul, from this supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life (quoted in Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber*, 464).

Weber, deeply committed to a code of aristocratic values (in which concepts of freedom and citizenship had a conservative and patriotic cast, but were linked to the constitutional tradition) was repelled partly by the pettiness of this mode of life, as De Tocqueville was repelled by the picture of 'democratic' uniformity in a centralized State.

The erosion of a sense of 'citizenship' among bureaucratic officials may have more directly sinister implications if conjoined to division of functions and the parcelling out of responsibility, since bureaucratic anonymity may allow men to commit atrocities they would never condone as individuals. Comfort comments that: 'The Policymaker's assessment of the orders which he gives is blunted by the fact that he is separated from their physical execution — that of the executive by the fact that it is not responsible for them' (Authority and Delinquency in the Modern State, 61). Camus notes: 'One of the Dachau executioners weeps in prison and says, "I only obeyed orders. The Fuhrer and Reichsfuhrer, alone, planned all this … Gluecks received orders from Kaltenbrunner and, finally, I received orders …"' (*The Rebel*, 151–2).

The worst perversions of bureaucracy occur however in conjunction with two other organs of State power deplored by anarchists: the military establishment and the police. In the economic and social spheres of government it is necessary to distinguish between anarchist criticisms and common liberal-conservative complaints about bureaucracy. The anarchist objection to 'welfare services' administered by civil servants, for example, is not that community welfare saps individual initiative and responsibility but that

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The Political Theory of Anarchism
1971

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change, designed to eliminate the middlemen between producers and consumers, based on use of labour cheques. A People's Bank was the institution he hoped could promote both. He tried to inaugurate such a Bank in 1849, which was closed down for political reasons before its economic viability could be tested. Marx commented on Proudhon's ideas in a letter to J. B. Schweitzer (24 January, 1865):

> Proudhon's discovery of 'Credit gratuit' and the 'banque de peuple' based upon it, were his last economic 'deeds'... That under certain economic and political conditions the credit system can serve to hasten the emancipation of the working class ... is quite unquestionable, self evident. But to regard *interest-bearing capital* as the *main form of capital* while trying to use a special form of credit, the alleged abolition of interest, as a basis for a transformation of society, is a thoroughly *petty-bourgeois* fantasy (*Selected Correspondence*, 190–1).

This critique is not entirely fair, since Proudhon did recognize the need for some social reforms — for example, redistribution of land by the local communes. Proudhon's writings do, however, convey a tendency to rely on economic formulas. These had some influence in America, where social conditions encouraged a demand for free credit. But his main legacy to the anarchist movement has been his [65] emphasis on bypassing the political process, and concentrating on the independent economic action of the workers.

Proudhon has also helped to promote a tradition of positive support for agricultural as opposed to industrial values. Herbert Read writing almost a century later confesses:

> I am by birth and tradition a peasant... I despise this foul industrial epoch — not only the plutocracy which

> it has raised to power, but also the industrial proletariat which it has drained from the land and proliferated in hovels of indifferent brick (*Anarchy and Order*, 58–9).

Industrialization must, however, be endured in an attempt to get to the other side, when man can 'return to the land not as a peasant but as a lord'. Elsewhere Read stresses that it is retrogressive to forsake the inventions of modern technology, like the aeroplane and the telegraph, and that 'liberty is always relative to man's control over natural forces'. As a result he endorses without qualifications anarcho-syndicalism. The syndicalist is for Read 'the anarchist in his practical rather than his theoretical activity'. The syndicalist answer to the organization of the economy and administration of society is summarized as follows:

> The syndicalist… proposes to liquidate the bureaucracy first by federal devolution. Thereby he destroys the idealistic concept of the State … He next destroys the money monopoly and the superstitious structure of the gold standard, and substitutes a medium of exchange based on the productive capacity of the country — so many units of exchange for so many units of production. He then hands over to the syndicates all other administrative functions — fixing of prices, transport, and distribution, health and education. In this manner the State begins to wither away (*Anarchy and Order*, 101).

This picture owes a good deal to Proudhon, whose co-operatives foreshadowed the later concept of trade union control, and who had already in 1851 envisaged a similar role for professional associations when suggesting that education should be organized directly by parents and teachers. Proudhon assumed however an

administrative function for the local communes, though he does not suggest a detailed geographical administrative system until his later, and less anarchist, work on *The Federative Principle*. The role of the local community in relation to industrial organization has been one of the issues tending to divide anarchists and syndicalists.

Bakunin and Malatesta represent that wing of anarchism which unhesitatingly accepts industrialism and technology. Malatesta takes [66] for granted the need for division of labour and the technical direction of collective undertakings on a large scale. He also favours, in principle, international control of crucial raw materials (coal, minerals, oil), but urges that in practice a country which achieved a socialist revolution would have to become self-sufficient, or do without these raw materials, until socialism was established everywhere. Bakunin's commitment to propagate anarchism among the peasants of Italy and Spain has meant that his anarchism is associated more closely with the peasant commune than the industrial collective (see, for example, Gerald Brenan, *The Spanish Labyrinth*, chapter VII on 'The Anarchists', which emphasizes this element in Bakunin's approach exclusively). Nevertheless, Bakunin fully endorsed Marx's economic theory and Marx's belief in increasing world economic interdependence. Daniel Guerin, writing on anarchism from a syndicalist standpoint, concludes his recent book *L'Anarchisme* as follows:

> Constructive anarchism, which found its most accomplished expression in the writings of Bakunin, relies on organization, self-discipline, integration, a centralisation which is not coercive but federal. It depends on large-scale modern industry, on modern technology, on the modern proletariat, on internationalism on a world scale (181).

Bakunin contrasts economic and political centralization. In Switzerland, for example, the increase in political centralization

after 1848 produced no progress except in the economic domain: 'like the introduction of a single currency, a single standard of weights and measures, large scale public works, commercial treaties, etc' (*The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, 256). He denies that economic and political centralization are inseparable. 'Economic centralization, the essential condition of civilization, creates liberty; but political centralization kills it' (ibid.).

Other anarchists, however, have believed that local autonomy requires economic devolution. Kropotkin's Fields, Factories and Workshops is a detailed attempt to describe a decentralist use of modern technology suitable to an anarchist ideal of society. He seeks to combine craftsmanship with the benefits of scientific invention, and to create organic links between industry and the land in order to preserve rural values. He also aims to abolish excessive division of labour — between individual workers, and between regions and countries specializing in one type of industry or agriculture. The idea is:

> Each nation her own agriculturalist and manufacturer; each individual working in the field and in some industrial art; each [67] individual combining scientific knowledge with the knowledge of a handicraft — such is, we affirm, the present tendency of civilised nations (6).

Small industries can use new technical developments to reduce manual labour and increase the output and quality of goods. Kropotkin suggests that the main advantages of large-scale industry are not in the application of technology but in the command big organizations have over the market, both in purchasing raw materials and in securing outlets for their goods. While certain industries like iron works and mining enterprises require hundreds, or thousands, of workers to be on one spot, many factories either comprise several distinct industries under common management,

or are 'mere agglomerations of hundreds of copies of the very same machine' (179). There are very few technical reasons why the machines should not be distributed between several establishments, or why the different processes of production should not be separated. Kropotkin also urges the potentialities of applying science to agriculture in order to increase production and cut down the time needed on agricultural labour. He backs up his prescriptions for an economy founded less on the division than the 'integration' of labour with an analysis of how far industrial technology is promoting new handicrafts and petty trades.

Technically and economically Kropotkin's research and specific proposals have naturally become outdated, a fact which leads Herbert Read (though in an introduction to Kropotkin's writings he suggests the details only require updating) to opt for industrial syndicalism. But other anarchists have insisted on the continuing relevance of Kropotkin's approach. Alexander Berkman stresses in his ABC of Anarchism, written in 1929, the importance of economic independence through self-sufficiency, citing the early experience of the Bolshevik Government trying to secure foreign capital. He also sees value in internal decentralization of industrial and agricultural organization if there were attempts to destroy the revolution by economic pressure. For the same reason Berkman deplores any attempt to suppress existing small-scale industries or home manufacturers. But his main reason for favouring such devolution is his estimation of its long term social effects in promoting contact 'between the farm and the city' and a sense of community. He regrets that 'most people are still in the thraldom of the Marxian dogma that centralization is more efficient and economical"'. Centralization not only degrades the worker to being a cog in the machine, but tends to concentrate the running of industry in the hands of a powerful bureaucracy (92). Paul Goodman writing since the last War has been pointing in a [68] direction similar to Kropotkin, to whose inspiration he pays tribute. While emphasizing the general trend towards centralization, and the disposition, when 'organiza-

tion begins to creak' to 'enlarge it further by adding new bureaus and overseers', he suggests there are some examples of a contrary tendency:

> The management of a giant corporation — General Motors is the classic example — can shrewdly decide to delegate a measure of autonomy to its corporate parts, because more flexible enterprising is more profitable in the long run. Similarly, a huge physical plant can be geographically dispersed, and the management somewhat decentralized, to save on labour costs ... (*People or Personnel*, 23).

Goodman is, however, more cautious than Kropotkin about the blessings of technical invention, and argues the need to make conscious choices about our use of technology. He quotes John Ullman, a scientist, to the effect that 'the invention of flight ... is probably on balance a curse' (Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals, 27). Technical assumptions tend toward centralization, and so create inefficiency :

> For instance, it can be demonstrated that, except in highly automated factories where labour cost is small compared to fixed capital, or in heavy mining attached to its site, for the most part large scale industrial plants and concentrations of industry are less efficient than smaller ones that assemble parts machined in small shops; it is cheaper to transport the parts than the workers (*Utopian Essays*, 30–31).

As unit cost of production falls, so the unit cost of distribution rises; thus 'it is likely that much of the vast technology of food processing and transportation is inefficient'. Goodman points out also that in an age of machines most people have no notion of how they work, so 'the mass of people are in bondage to a system of

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service men for even trivial repairs' (32). Goodman is not against all centralization. He suggests that in certain areas where there are no district limits but something must be done — for instance smog control, or rapid decisions must be taken — for example air traffic control, or where there is a temporary emergency, central authority is necessary. There are also gains, as Bakunin saw, in central decision on standardization of currency or weights and measures. Indeed Goodman suggests that in certain areas, like standardized building materials or spare parts, more 'centralization' is required (*People or Personnel*, 9–11). Nor is he urging efficiency as a key criterion: 'A more human-scaled production has obvious political and cultural advantages; it [69] allows for more flexible planning, it is more conducive to scientific education and invention' (*Utopian Essays*, 32).

Goodman is speaking of a situation in which technological criteria are related to a particular type of profit-motivated economy, in a country where there is (despite areas of extreme poverty) an unprecedented degree of affluence. He comments, for example, on 'the tendency of the manufacturers to build obsolescence and nonrepair-ability into the machinery'. Though American society may be seen as a warning against uncritical pursuit of industrialization and its latest technology, a critique of the life style of a society moving into the automation age has little direct relevance to countries struggling for a subsistence level standard of living for their people, many of whom have not moved into the bicycle age. But there are a few groups in the Third World which favour a Kropotkin-style approach to economic growth, the most obvious example being the Gandhian movement in India. Gandhi himself always linked his political agitation for Indian independence to a constructive programme for building up economic independence, and promoting village crafts like weaving to combat dependence on English produced cottons. His approach was not unlike Berkman's: a practical sense of the requirements of revolutionary change, and a profound belief in the values of local community.

Since Indian society, like Russia in the nineteenth century, rested primarily on the great mass of peasants living in semi-feudal conditions in the villages, Gandhi, like Tolstoy, looked to the tradition of the village commune, laid most stress on handicrafts as a form of self-help, and, like Tolstoy, saw a partial solution to poverty in voluntary abstinence. (This view was encouraged by his personal asceticism, which, also like Tolstoy, but more realistically, he adopted both for its moral virtues, and as a means of identification with the poorest peasants.) Gandhi's views on industrialization were ambiguous, and are open to varying interpretation, but he tended to differ from Tolstoy in welcoming industry and technology, provided they were socially applied to ease human labour, but not to throw the masses out of work; and were adopted on a human scale compatible with decentralist political democracy.

One Marxist criticism of the Gandhian approach is that it misunderstands the requirements of economic development. A Hungarian economist discussing Gandhi's ideas comments that Gandhi's 'dislike of modern technology and industry and his bias against towns' are mistaken, as industry is indispensable in every developing country, and 'wherever there is industry urbanization will be inevitable' (The New Hungarian Quarterly, No. 37, Spring 1970, 170). But Professor Bognar concedes that Gandhi was partially right: traditional technology, especially in India where there is an enormous [70] surplus of labour, will be needed for generations; and rapid increase in agricultural output is vital to stave off famine, so 'the weight of agriculture is substantially larger than was assumed in traditional "pro-industry" economic theories'. Finally, Gandhi's belief that 'recurring gaps in the balance of the economic development of society' could be bridged by reducing consumption (as well as expanding production) though it 'runs counter to the progress of human society and the economy' nevertheless makes some sense in a poor, densely populated, country with a high birth rate.

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The City versus the Country

Conflicting attitudes to large scale industry are closely related to attitudes towards cities. Tolstoy totally rejects city life, which he sees as wantonly destructive of the beauties of nature, bad for people's health, and worse for their morals. Resurrection starts with this passage:

> Though men in their hundreds of thousands had tried their hardest to disfigure that little corner of the earth where they had crowded themselves together, paving the ground with stones so that nothing could grow... filling the air with the fumes of coal and gas, cutting down the trees and driving away every beast and every bird — spring, however, was still spring, even in the town (19).

Proudhon's peasant background and regional loyalty predisposed him to distrust the metropolitan culture of Paris. Paris, moreover, both symbolized and propagated the centralization of all branches of French life. As De Tocqueville wrote: 'Paris was becoming more and more the national arbiter of taste, sole centre of authority and of the arts, the focal point of all that was most vital in France ...' (*The Old Regime*, 75). Proudhon is very aware that French Revolutions were too often both made and defeated in Paris. Rather than blaming the success of Caesarism in the 1850s on the conservatism of the peasants, he blames instead the political organization which allowed Paris to dominate France, and a political conception of democracy which enshrined this domination of the Provinces by a Paris-based Assembly. Kropotkin, on the other hand, combined respect for a peasant mode of life with an awareness of the liberating and cultural role of the medieval cities, which developed areas of self-government, promoted trade and prosperity, and encouraged technical and

artistic skills. Kropotkin also responded eagerly to the Parisian revolutionary tradition from 1789 to 1871, and valued the radical consciousness it bred. [71]

The implications of the debate about the values of rural versus city life have changed with the impact of modern technology and industry on both, and on society in general. Paul Goodman suggests that in our present era of regimentation and urban anomie, there is a good deal of validity in both 'a conservative and peasant critique of centralized court and town as inorganic, verbal and ritualistic' (Tolstoy), and 'a democratic urban critique of centralized bureaucracy and power ...' (he puts both Proudhon and Kropotkin into this category). Goodman adds: '"We need to revive both peasant self-reliance and the democratic power of professional and technical guilds ...' (*People or Personnel*, 12).

He is primarily concerned with revivifying these values within American cities. Together with Percival Goodman he has made detailed planning proposals for remedying some of the ills of New York and Manhattan — the housing shortage, blighted industrial areas and traffic-congested streets — whilst urging a degree of neighbourhood self-government in running schools, promoting urban renewal, and policing local areas. Specific proposals are, however, linked to a wider ideal for community planning and architecture. Form follows function. But is the function good? Does it make sense, and does it make for beauty, what are its consequences? Only such ethical questions will provide the basis for adjusting means to ends of community planning (*Communitas* 19).

Apart from accepting that growth of cities is inevitable, Marxist theory tends to be intrinsically more favourable to the values of city life. Marx's own attitude is diametrically opposed to Proudhon's peasant and rural bias. In the *Manifesto* Marx saluted the Bourgeoisie for having 'rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life'. In his analysis of the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, when he is explaining why the peasants do not strictly form a coherent class because of their isolation

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Suggestions for further reading

A number of introductory books on anarchism have recently appeared in paperback:

George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, Penguin Books

Irving L. Horowitz, (ed.), *The Anarchists*, Dell Publishing Co.

Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry, (eds.), *Patterns of Anarchy*, Doubleday

Many of the writings of anarchist theorists have not been translated into English, or are out of print. However, the following are available in paperback:

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Selected Writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon* (ed. Stewart Edwards), Macmillan

Michael Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin* (ed. G. P. Maximoff), The Free Press of Glencoe

Peter Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, Dover Books

Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy's Writings on Civil Disobedience and Nonviolence*, Signet Books

The best recent book on anarchism is Daniel Guerin's *Anarchism: From Theory to Practice*, Monthly Review Press. The English translation appeared in 1970, with an Introduction by Noam Chomsky.

A generally interesting analysis of the anarchist content of current left-wing movements is provided by an issue of *Government and Opposition* edited by James Joll: Anarchism Today', *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Autumn 1970. This issue includes a helpful survey of the literature on anarchism.

One of the best guides to literature being published, and to anarchist theory past and present is the monthly journal *Anarchy*, published by Freedom Press, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E.i.

from each other, he compares them with overtones of contempt to 'a sack of potatoes'. On the other hand, Marx, and particularly Engels, were well aware of the horrors of industrial slums. If they made the connexion between city life and civilization denoted by the Latin word for city, (civitas), they also drew on the classical tradition in which cities were not only centres of culture and politics, but were (like the medieval cities) small in size, with the countryside easily accessible. Moreover, Marx recognized, at least in the abstract, that the gap between the city and the country was damaging to the inhabitants of both, and proposed in the *Manifesto* that a Communist society would end the distinction between town and country. [72]

Democracy and Egalitarianism

Diverging attitudes to the industrial and urban revolution are closely connected with differing assessments of the era of 'democracy' ushered in by the French Revolution. One of the overtones of the word 'democratic' has been willingness to identify with 'the people' or 'the masses', whom anti-democrats see as 'the mob' or the 'ignorant multitude'. Proudhon's attitude is interestingly ambivalent, and not altogether dissimilar from De Tocqueville's. The latter moves between appreciation of the particular virtues of the spirit of democracy, and reversion to an inborn sense of the superiority of aristocratic values. Proudhon moves between acting as a socialist spokesman for the wronged workers (even Marx commended his courage in adopting this role in 1848), and a positive disdain for the shiftless urban proletariat. Proudhon seems to draw on the republican tradition in which democracy is associated with urban mob rule, and the related danger that the masses, lacking the education or the economic independence to sustain civic liberty, will veer towards popular despotism. Indeed, Proudhon argued in *The Federative Principle* that historically the

aristocracy and bourgeoisie have tended to protect liberty and federalism, whilst the masses have supported a despotic and unitary State. In The *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century* he comments that if he accepted totally the innate virtues of universal suffrage, he would have to support Louis Napoleon as the choice of the people. Proudhon draws the conclusion that the people are by circumstance objectively better placed to support liberty wholeheartedly than are the bourgeoisie, who sponsor liberalism, but necessarily rely on an exploitative economic and political system. But the people as a whole must be protected from their own folly by a federal structure which limits the effects of their mistakes. Complementary to this analysis Proudhon stresses the inherent defects in universal suffrage and the referendum, which rest on the fallacy of the collective will, and in practice will result in manipulation from the top.

Proudhon's attitudes tend to be reflected by Herbert Read, who can also display contempt for the majority of the people. 'Such a majority, as any intelligence test will immediately reveal, is inevitably an ignorant majority ...' (*Anarchy and. Order*, 15). Read recognizes this attitude leads towards elitist politics, and elsewhere unhesitatingly endorses the need for genuine democratic participation in running society, while desiring to dispose of democratic shibboleths like 'universal franchise' which is 'no more essential to democracy than divine right is to monarchy'.

The tone of Kropotkin is much more consistently democratic. He [73] never wavers in his faith in the capacity of the people — not just in a future society, but here and now if they are given half a chance. Whereas Proudhon distrusts revolution which may unleash 'anarchy' in the pejorative sense, Kropotkin welcomes revolutions which liberate the suppressed capacity for self-organization:

> Give the people a free hand, and in ten days the food service will be conducted with admirable regularity.

organization suggested by Colin Ward: that organization should be voluntary, functional, temporary and small. His article on 'The Organization of Anarchy' successfully shows that giving full scope to different talents and individual initiative may work much better than a standardized and hierarchical structure; and he illustrates how 'spontaneous order' can emerge out of apparent chaos. Ward also refutes the belief (voiced by Engels) that 'authority' is necessary to run a ship or a factory, by reference to the gang system among workers in Coventry, and composite working of the Durham coal fields, which both demonstrate that self-regulating groups of workers can promote high productivity without conventional supervision (Krimerman and Perry, *Patterns of Anarchy*, 393–5). But the article does not show how confederation can be based on his four principles. Indeed, confederation has usually been regarded as a compromise solution by anarchists. Proudhon sought to limit the scope and permanence of individual authority, and to maintain the principle of confederation by retaining more power at the local and intermediary levels than is delegated to the centre. As a compromise with constitutionalist or socialist approaches to politics, the idea of confederation has immediate relevance to political theory.

Whether anarchism will produce more than suggestive ideas for a theory of politics, or whether a specifically anarchist movement will ever achieve success, are both open to considerable doubt. On the other hand, anarchist ideas may be important in the reinterpretation [110] of liberalism and socialism, and may be partially realized in the aims or activities of popular movements. Since anarchism is in essence the least sectarian of doctrines, effective diffusion of anarchist influence might constitute its ultimately most valuable contribution to politics.

more in tune with the aspirations which have been shown by the movements which have embraced this form of social organization.

One important respect in which anarchism appears to represent the embryonic institutional ideas of the council movements is in their advocacy of confederation built up from below as an alternative to the centralized power of the State, a power making at most concessions towards deconcentration of administrative authority. The idea of confederation put forward successively by the major anarchist theorists provides a potential bridge between the anarchism adapted to a small community and the need for co-ordination in modern industrial society.

The promise of confederation lies, however, partly in its ambiguity. For example, though Bakunin follows Proudhon in emphasizing the [109] organizational role of the local commune, as well as of producers' associations, this may not be entirely consistent with his stress on large scale industry. On the one hand, there arise questions, which have tended to divide anarchists and syndicalists, about the relative role of the local commune and industry-based trade unions. On the other, wider questions of economic planning arise. Some of these problems may be resolved by voluntary agreement on standardization, as in the popular anarchist example of inter-continental railway networks. Some may be resolved by strictly functional delegation to specialized bodies, or by the creation of reserve emergency powers subject to political restrictions. And given the noteworthy failures of over-centralized planning it would be rash to dismiss the possibility of economic co-ordination on a confederal basis. But there are still major questions about the size of the basic units involved and about the mechanics of communication and decision making.

There are also questions about the permanence and formality of the organization involved. A confederal constitution and planning organization tend to conflict with Kropotkin's emphasis on no formal 'government' and on spontaneous co-ordination and federation. They would also conflict with the four principles of anarchist

> Only those who have never seen the people hard at work … can doubt it. Speak of the organizing genius of the 'Great Misunderstood', the people, to those who have seen it in Paris in the days of the barricades, or in London during the great dockers' strike, when half a million of starving folk had to be fed, and they will tell you how superior it is to the official ineptness of Bumbledom (*The Conquest of Bread*, 79).

This view is not altogether antagonistic to Proudhon's belief that men must acquire political experience in local organization — Kropotkin admits people may make serious mistakes in an electoral context, where they lack means or criteria for clear judgments. But Kropotkin is happy to take democratic risks — Proudhon's caution underlies his general scepticism about the wisdom of any attempt to seize political power.

Kropotkin's democratic and revolutionary optimism is echoed by Berkman and Malatesta, though the latter, who had a strong sense of the political difficulties which would be encountered after a revolution, criticized Kropotkin for radiating excessive optimism on the question of a speedy solution to the problem of economic scarcity. Nor is it surprising that a democratic commitment should be linked to the total economic egalitarianism of the communist anarchists. Proudhon, on the other hand, opposed complete equality in the economic sphere. He believed that private property was an incentive to hard work; he also wished individual talent and industry to be rewarded. In his proposed co-operatives all individuals would be given varied experience and equal opportunities; but skill and responsibility would earn higher salaries. Proudhon, like many nineteenth-century liberals, also feared that a communally imposed equality would lead to a loss of individual independence and liberty, and defended the rights of private property as a necessary bulwark of personal liberty. "While recognizing State ownership of land might be preferable to the existing system of owner-

ship, Proudhon attacks the dogma of 'association', and the principle of 'fraternity', as Utopian goals hiding a despotic tendency to force humanity into conformity with principles repugnant to human nature. [74]

Class Rule and Elites

Marx condemned Proudhon for his 'sham criticism' of Utopias in which 'there is the anticipation and imaginative expression of a new world', and replacing this Utopian communism by his own 'petty-bourgeois' Utopia (*Selected Correspondence*, 223), Marx is much closer to the anarchist communists in his commitment to equality and fraternity as social values, in his hopes for revolution, and trust in popular action. But Marxism parts company with anarchism on two points of political importance. Though Marxism has generally adopted the democratic language of the French Revolution, it has equally insisted that 'the people' form distinct social classes, and that the immediate aim of the socialist revolution is the class rule of the workers. Marxism has also been prepared to accept the validity of universal suffrage as a basis for democratic government in a socialist society. 'The way out of parliamentarianism', commented Lenin, 'is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the electoral principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into "working" bodies' (*The State and Revolution*, 79). These two issues are particularly significant for the organization of society during the transition period from socialism to true communism envisaged by Marx. Bakunin suggests that both the idea of class rule, and reliance on universal suffrage, enhance the dangers implicit in the Marxist theory that in the transition period it is necessary to retain the instruments of the State — this time a State governed by the majority class, the workers, and directed against the minority of the previous ruling class.

war, and of ultimately achieving the overthrow of the government and the capitalist class. Syndicalism has [108] built-in dangers of authoritarian organizational tendencies, or of trade union reformism arising out of immediate demands for higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions. As Nicolas Walter comments (*Anarchy* No. 100). these problems are not in themselves an argument against syndicalism; he criticizes it rather for its Marxist emphasis on exclusively working class militancy (178).

Another area in which anarchism has come into its own, and can point to striking temporary successes, is in that tradition of popular revolutionary experience which has thrown up the organizational system of workers and communal councils. This tendency, which can be traced to the French Revolution, has been demonstrated recently in Hungary and Poland in 1956, and in France in May 1968. With the exception of Spain in the 1930s, the council system has not been directly inspired by an organized anarchist movement, and conscious anarchist influence has often been totally absent. The symbol of the communal council, or local soviet, has been incorporated also into both official and unofficial Marxism. More surprisingly, it has certain attractions for constitutionalist theorists. De Jouvenel, drawing on Montesquieu, creates in his book, Power, an abstract outline of a confederation of councils as an alternative to party-based parliamentary democracy. Since the emergence of the workers' Soviets in Hungary in November 1956, Hannah Arendt has explored this approach to democracy in detail in *On Revolution*. But in her constitutionalist version the councils are assigned an exclusively 'political' role and deemed inappropriate to management of industry, and so are denuded of their specifically socialist character. Whilst under Marxism the councils tend to be divested of their truly democratic character — rapidly the case in Russia after 1917; and partly true today in Yugoslavia, where they are still to some extent subordinate to the Party as well as to the central government. Anarchists can, therefore, perhaps claim that their theory is

> We want to bring the Co-operatives, which are socialist in form without socialist content, and the trade-unions, which are valour without avail — to Socialism, to great experiments (54).

The distinction made by Landauer between a social principle and a political principle suggests two important modes of action appropriate to anarchism. One is to build up independent communities^ and organizations within the existing State, and so create a new society in embryo, and an alternative power base. The other is to erode the power of those at the top — a power in reality springing from the co-operative action of the social group as a whole — by withdrawing co-operation and refusing to obey orders. If non-co-operation were adopted on a mass scale the 'power' of the men at the top would cease to exist. Both these approaches are wholly consistent with anarchist principles, and both are potentially effective. The snag is that both must be linked to some form of popular movement if they are to have immediate impact; and to achieve ultimate success they must be part of a strategy which can force changes in policy at a national level, and eventually overthrow the powers-that-be. Hence both approaches may still require political compromises.

The relevance of both approaches when anarchism is linked to an existing movement was demonstrated by the development of syndicalism. Trade union organization provided an institutional base which could be strengthened in immediate struggles, extended to constructive experiments in forms of workers' control, and could be seen as an alternative administrative framework in the future. Trade union activity could link people's immediate interests to wider long term goals. The strike provided a potent means of direct action, which could be supplemented by boycotts and sabotage; and trade union struggle could be extended to the seizure and control of the factories. The general strike held out the promise of achieving specific political goals, like prevention of

Bakunin is particularly wary of a theory of class rule which seeks to subordinate the peasantry to the workers: T do not believe that even under the most favourable circumstances the city workers will have sufficient power to impose communism or collectivism upon the peasants; and I have never wanted this way of realizing socialism, because I hate every system imposed by force' (*The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, 400). When discussing what is meant by the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', Bakunin asks:

> What does it mean: 'the proletariat raised into a ruling class' ? Will the proletariat as a whole be at the head of the government? ... This dilemma is solved very simply in the Marxist theory. By a people's government they mean the governing of people by means of a small number of representatives elected by the people. Universal suffrage — the right of the whole people to elect its so-called representatives and rulers of the State — this is the last word of the Marxists as well as of the democratic [75] school. And this is a falsehood behind which lurks the despotism of a governing minority... (287).

He comments that in response to the anarchists' polemic the Marxists had conceded that 'Anarchism or freedom is the goal, the State or dictatorship is the means.' However Bakunin maintains: 'No dictatorship can have any other aim but that of self-perpetuation.' Therefore, as soon as the workers capture the State, they ought to 'proceed with its destruction*. Yet according to Marx the people should strengthen the State, 'and transfer it in this form into the hands of its benefactors, guardians, and teachers, the chiefs of the Communist Party' (288).

Anarchists' early experience of the Bolshevik regime in Russia, where a number of prominent anarchist exiles had returned to participate in the building of socialism, tended to confirm their belief

in Bakunin's critique. The symbol of their final disillusionment was the attack on Kronstadt in 1921, when Lenin and Trotsky turned the 'workers" army against the dissident sailors and workers demanding free Soviets. Alexander Berkman noted:

> March 7 — Distant rumbling reaches my ears as I cross the Nevsky … Kronstadt has been attacked! Days of anguish and cannonading … The people on the streets look bowed with grief, bewildered …
>
> March 17 — Kronstadt has fallen today. Thousands of sailors and workers lie dead in its streets. Summary execution of prisoners and hostages continues.
>
> March 18 — The victors are celebrating the anniversary of the Commune…
>
> (from *The Bolshevik Myth*, 303).

Both Berkman and Emma Goldman produced specific critiques of the early evolution of Soviet Socialism. Bakunin's style of analysis is, however, at a level of such generality that it could be applied equally to Russia in the 1920s, 1930s or 1960s. For Bakunin himself, engaged in a movement still far from reaching its goal, a degree of rhetorical generalization was inevitable. But there is a temptation inherent in this style of polemical anarchism to allow opposition to the abstraction of 'the State' to preclude concrete understanding of any particular regime. As a result important political differences are swept aside as peripheral. 'There is only one kind of freedom: total freedom', writes a contributor to *Anarchy*, 'it cannot exist within the framework of somebody's state, not though his name be Dubcek, [76] nor Johnson nor Castro nor De Gaulle' (*Anarchy*, No. 94, December 1968, 383). Herbert Read commenting that in the course of the Civil War the Spanish Government had 'created, in the form of a standing army and a secret police, all the instruments of oppression', says therefore Franco's victory 'regrettable in that it leaves the power of the State in still more ruthless

Anarchists themselves are split between those who regard all forms of violence as brutalizing, and believe violent means are incompatible with the goal of an anarchist society; and those who think that a degree of violence may often be necessary, or inevitable. Emma Goldman, who is in the latter category, distinguishes between types of 'violence':

> It is quite one thing to employ violence in combat, as a means of defence. It is quite another thing to make a principle of terrorism, to institutionalize it, to assign it the most vital place in the social struggle. Such terrorism begets counter-revolution and in turn itself becomes counter-revolutionary (xix).

Within the anarchist tradition there is not only a critique of the abuse of power after a revolution, but an important criticism of the romantic theory of revolution — the belief that a revolution which breaks decisively with the past will automatically promote a new social era. Instead it is urged that building up the institutions of a new society is a long term process, which must be started here and now. A revolution which cannot build on creative tendencies and institutional forms already in existence is likely to become increasingly destructive, and resurrect coercive centralized power. This approach goes beyond Stirner's distinction between a politically directed 'revolution' leading to a new State, and a spontaneous [107] insurrection destroying all political power; and it underlines the dangers of the Bakuninist ideal of rebellion. It is one of the contributions to anarchist thought made by Landauer, who, drawing on both Proudhon and Kropotkin, appeals to the communal traditions of the past. 'The radical reformer will find nothing to reform except what is there' (Buber, *Paths in Utopia*, 49). Landauer's aim is in Buber's phrase 'a revolutionary conservation'. But it can be understood without Landauer's 'conservative' overtones. Landauer himself looked to the new working class institutions of the co-operatives and trade unions:

but a matter of tactics. The anarchists in Spain oscillated between these two positions, joining with the democratic Parties in 1930 to overthrow Primo de Rivera, counselling abstention in the 1933 general election, and in 1936, though supporting the Popular Front, half-heartedly advising abstention — advice they did not expect to be heeded.

Secondly, anarchism has not yet been able to meet the Marxist demand for political effectiveness; and continuous failure can only be translated into a form of glory by appealing to non-political values. The nature of anarchist theory means that in any important political crisis individuals who seek to influence events by accepting [106] a leadership position — for example, in a 'government' — are open to charges of gross inconsistency or treachery to the cause. Similarly at the level of mass action anarchists prepared to sink their differences in a united front, or to ally themselves with a popular movement, may be torn between the importance of action and maintaining their principles. During the Russian Revolution and Civil War anarchists were split not only on the question of whether to support the Bolsheviks, but on their attitude to the popular peasant 'anarchism' of Makhno's movement. As a guide to action Marxism has an advantage, since it refrains from imposing abstract and inflexible principles upon political evaluation of a total situation.

Nevertheless, tactical flexibility has its own traps, and one of the most important contributions of anarchism to political theory is its critique of Marxist 'success', and insistence on relating means to ends. Emma Goldman comments in *My Disillusionment with Russia* that she came to realize that the Bolsheviks believed that the end justifies all means:

> Any suggestion of the value of human life, quality of character, the importance of revolutionary integrity as the basis of a new social order, was repudiated as 'bourgeois' sentimentality (70).

hands, is to be looked upon with a certain indifference …' (*Anarchy and Order*, 51–2).

One objection to Bakunin's denunciation of 'Marxism' is that it is positively misleading about Marx's own theory of the State. In the *Manifesto* Marx had certainly envisaged State control of credit, transport and communications, industry and land. The proletariat will, after winning political supremacy, 'centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e. of the proletariat organized as the ruling class' (*Selected Works*, 52). The definition of 'the State' here is sufficiently ambiguous to suggest the authoritarianism Bakunin detected. But Marx's overall position is anti-statist in emphasis. In his early writings he regarded the State as one aspect of alienation; and in his later years he attacked Lasalle's attempt to woo support from Bismarck's State, and was scathing about the slogan of the 'free state' adopted in the 1875 German Social Democrats' Gotha Programme. His pamphlet on the Commune, which he describes as 'the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of Labour' suggests no predisposition to impose a political form on a workers' revolution, and indicates a far from authoritarian view of the 'dictatorship' of the proletariat.

Indeed, it is interesting to note that whereas there are considerable differences between Marx and Proudhon, Bakunin is very close to Marx on many issues. For example Bakunin too maintains that what the Commune wanted 'was not the dissolution of the national unity of France but its resurrection'. This unity is the antithesis of a bureaucratic State regime. "Where Bakunin differs is insisting such unity must be 'federalist' in character (see *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, 272). Lenin basing himself on Marx speaks of 'voluntary centralism' and 'the voluntary amalgamation of the communes into a nation', which is not to be confused with a bureaucratic and military centralism imposed from above (*The State and Revolution*, 91–2). It is by no means clear how this differs from Bakunin's own programme of spontaneous

federation, since in both formulations the organizational implications are vague. Max Nomad argues in Apostles of Revolution that Bakunin used libertarian slogans primarily as a politically useful tactic in his struggle against Marx's leadership of the First International. Nomad stresses Bakunin's own predisposition to rely on a revolutionary elite to act as a vanguard, [77] and suggests that Bakunin was foreshadowing organizational tactics later adopted by Lenin. Nomad's thesis is highly polemical and certainly questionable. He assumes that the existence of a conscious revolutionary minority must necessarily mean a dominant elite seizing power after a revolution. He also links Lenin and Stalin indiscriminately as Bakunin's unwitting heirs. But Nomad does usefully underline that Marxists and anarchists in the nineteenth century faced common problems of how to put their ideals into practice, that anarchism has remained primarily a doctrine of those in opposition, and that anarchist awareness of the traps of political power is no guarantee that they could avoid them. Indeed Nomad's description of Makhno's career suggests that in some circumstances they could not.

Leaving aside the question of adapting ideals to political realities, it is relevant that the Marxist ideal of a workers' democracy does diverge significantly from the anarchist communist ideal, exemplified by Kropotkin's comments on the Paris Commune. Kropotkin sees the Commune's adherence to the principle of government not as an illustration of the political realism of the workers engaged in a concrete experiment in socialist organization, but as a sign of lingering prejudice in favour of the institutions of the old society.

> In the midst of the Commune the ancient principle of authority cropped up and the people gave themselves a Council of the Commune, on the model of municipal Councils elsewhere. And yet if we admit that a Central Government to regulate the relations of Communes between themselves is quite needless, why should we

Conclusion

This study has tried to demonstrate that anarchist ideas are directly related to the more orthodox concepts and concerns of political theory, and closely allied to other major political traditions. It has also attempted to show that anarchism has acquired more, rather than less, relevance in contemporary political, economic and technical conditions. While the last chapter suggested that those forms of anarchism which seem to be least political often, in fact, promote a sense of individual social responsibility. Standing aside from conventionally conceived politics may paradoxically enable anarchists to realize certain values of citizenship, and an ideal of political community, almost lost within the present meaning of 'polities'.

Nevertheless, this standing aside from the political arena entails at the same time a serious theoretical and practical weakness. A pure anarchism cannot fully meet the constitutionalist demand for immediate political responsibility, because it refuses to consider the possible necessity of compromise with the bad to prevent the worse. This form of consistency has its virtues, especially when it takes the form of resistance to State policies in a primarily conformist society; but its value is largely predicated on it being a minority position. Guerin points to the incoherence of the anarchist position on voting (*L'Anarchisme*, 22–3). He quotes Malatesta, who maintained in relation to the new 'Cartel des Gaudies', formed for the May, 1924, French election, that even if some small amount of progress might be achieved through the election, the anarchists should retain their revolutionary purity and boycott the polls. On the other hand, the Bakuninists in the First International had protested that boycotting the polls was not an article of faith

The rarity of such qualities, however, leads Hobbes to place his faith in passive obedience to a sovereignty which men may well call 'tyranny'. Citizenship appears to imply a community of citizens, which depends on favourable cultural and political forms; conditions which in many cases are not more favourable now than when Hobbes wrote. But, as Thomas Mann realized when looking desperately for a possible conjunction of cultural values and political organization capable of stopping the rise of Hitler in Germany, the existence of this kind of political responsibility may be essential to stave off total barbarism. Hobbes's philosophy of the tame man has often succeeded all too well; while his own type of critical intelligence, and sense of the conditional nature of obedience, have frequently been submerged by the kind of myths and fanaticism he deplored.

One reason why many anarchists hold on, from their varying standpoints, to a sense of political or social responsibility, which transcends or opposes government definitions of what a 'good citizen' should do, is because they retain a degree of optimism about realizing a better community — here and now in the interstices of the State, and in the future. This optimism is not facile; in this century it may at times become desperate. But as Herbert Read once commented : 'The task of the anarchist philosopher is not to prove the imminence of a Golden Age, but to justify the value of believing in its possibility' (Anarchy and Order, 14). [105]

> admit the necessity to regulate the mutual relations of the groups which make up each Commune ? (*The Commune of Paris*, 10).

Kropotkin is opposing any form of representative government, and relying solely on the free initiative of 'groups' and on the spontaneous inventiveness of individuals.

Social Administration without Government

As a comment on the best way of running a revolution Kropotkin's views are pertinent. There is ample evidence of practical improvisation to deal with immediate crises, and the liberating effect a revolution may have on men's imaginations. Kropotkin's most persuasive criticism of the Commune's city government is that it stultified its own goals: [78]

> Paris sent her devoted sons to the Town Hall. There, shelved in the midst of files and old papers, obliged to rule where their instincts prompted them to be and do amongst the people, obliged to discuss where it was needful to act, and to compromise where no compromise was the best policy; … they saw themselves reduced to impotence. Being paralysed by their separation from the people … they themselves paralysed the popular initiative (10).

Certain parallels exist between Kropotkin's observations on the Commune's government and the more or less irrelevant role played by the Spanish Government during the real military and social struggles of the Civil War. Anarchists can indeed point to numerous instances in which an official leadership tied to orthodox procedures of political organization, and to conventional

concepts of political realism, have slowed down or betrayed a popular struggle. But it is far from certain that the total informality of organization proposed by Kropotkin is appropriate to dealing with long term problems of economic co-ordination, or that the degree of activism and involvement typical of revolution can be expected from people in day to day life, or that it is even to be welcomed as an ideal.

It is implicit in Kropotkin's approach here that not only the State machine will wither away, but all forms of governmental organization. If what government means is an administrative structure, then both federalist and syndicalist proposals clearly involve formal organization. If Kropotkin's ad hoc co-operation between groups within a commune were to continue it would certainly evolve into organizational routines — though the way it had evolved might well affect its degree of flexibility and freedom from authoritarianism. But 'government' has other connotations — of an 'authority' which may resort to force. Government in this sense is closely connected to the law — both depending ultimately on police enforcement, but claiming to embody social values and aims, and maintained by the passive assent of the majority. If anarchists differ about details of economic and administrative organization, they are unanimous in declaring for the abolition of law and the police. The underlying theoretical model which leads them to this conclusion is not however always the same. There are at least three social models in which natural harmony supersedes imposed and distorting forms of 'order': the reign of economics, in which a hidden hand will promote a natural coincidence of interests; the reign of reason in accordance with natural law or historical evolution; and the traditional community exemplified by peasant villages or tribal organization.

The importance of economics dominated much nineteenth-century [79] thinking. The fascination of the new science, and the evidence that economic activity involved a multiplicity of operations which could not be fully comprehended by a single

the ideal subject, or of the validity of other values. In the Conclusion of his Leviathan he discusses those qualities which go to make up a good citizen of the commonwealth, qualities which are said to be incompatible in one man, but which can be combined through education and discipline. Two of these incompatibles are courage which disdains death and wounds, and so also inclines men to unsettling the public peace; and that safe timorousness, which however 'many times disposeth to the desertion of the public defence'. Hobbes then inserts an epitaph to the man to whose memory the *Leviathan* is formally dedicated:

> There is therefore no such inconsistence of human nature, with civil duties, as some think. I have known clearness of judgement and largeness of fancy; strength of reason, and graceful elocution; a courage for the wars, and a fear for the laws, and all eminently in one man; and that was my most noble and honoured friend, Mr Sidney Godolphin; who hating no man, nor hated of any, was unfortunately slain in the beginning of the late civil war, in the public quarrel, by an undiscerned and undiscerning hand (461).

The figure of Godolphin which briefly illuminates the Leviathan also introduces a sense of loss, not only because he personifies the tragedy of violent death, but because he embodies political values of active and responsible citizenship. Oakeshott in his essay on 'The Moral Life in the Writings of Thomas Hobbes' comments:

> Indeed, it seems almost to have been Hobbes's view that men of this character are a necessary cause of the civitas; and certainly it is only they who, having an adequate motive for doing so, may [104] be depended upon to defend it when dissension deprives the sovereign of his power (*Rationalism in Politics*, 293).

and the selfish prudence of the commoner pictured by Shakespeare. Citizenship denotes critical judgment and personal responsibility, and is, therefore, opposed to the 'somnambulant heroism' of those who go to war and commit atrocities; at the same time it demands courageous, but where possible prudent, resistance. The model of citizenship also narrows the gap between the political virtues of the ruling Prince — a sense of social responsibility and of social necessities — and the moral standards of the individual conscience.

One of the main tenets of anarchist political theory is, therefore, the belief in the frequent necessity of disobedience to governments and resistance to particular policies. This idea of resistance may be based on a wide range of values: it may be seen primarily as an assertion of original 'political' or republican values against the distorted justifications of power politics; it may stem from a non-political moral commitment; from a sense of artistic or scientific or philosophical responsibility; or from an instinctive and intuitive sense of human responsibility. While these standpoints may often conflict in the values they espouse and the specific actions they encourage, they also tend to overlap and to gain a certain unity from their opposition [103] to common evils. They also unite in their refusal to accept uncritically any appeal to morality, idealism or faith designed to justify various forms of war and oppression. Alex Comfort sums up this scepticism: 'when they begin to say "Look, injustice," you must reply, "Whom do you want me to kill?"' (*Art and Social Responsibility*, 83).

This commonsense scepticism is intrinsic to the philosophy of that theorist most concerned to inculcate civil obedience — Hobbes. But Hobbes directs his attack not against the justifications of governments, but against the independence of conscience, philosophical questioning, aristocratic heroism, or devotion to the ideal of democratic citizenship, which may all in different ways undermine the stability of government. As a result Hobbes defends the morality of the 'tame man' who obeys through fear and prudence. He is not, however, unaware of the political limitations of this model of

intelligence, and which could therefore be harmed by conscious regulation, contributed to the idea of self-regulating economic harmony. So did the impact of early industrialization and technology, which seemed to point to the potentiality of unlimited wealth. They also seemed to be creating conditions in which men became necessarily dependent upon one another, and so could be brought to follow their natural economic interests by voluntary co-ordination. The first vision owes much to Adam Smith, the second to Saint-Simon, who recognized the need for conscious planning, but believed the 'administration of things', in accordance with scientific principles, would replace the 'government of men' by the arbitrary will of other men. Proudhon seems to draw on both images. The State will be dissolved into Society, according to Proudhon, when industrial division of labour supersedes class divisions; when the collective force of workers' co-operatives replaces that of government armies; when commerce promotes the replacement of law by contract; when 'centralization' of interests through credit takes the place of obedience to central power; and through free competition, equality of exchange, and equilibrium of values and properties.

The implicit natural law basis of anarchism has been developed in accordance with three different strands in political theory; belief in enlightened rationalism, in historical teleology, and in science as .a–' guide to social action. For Godwin moral principles are accessible to the reason of all right-thinking men and are self-evident truths which will constrain men to accept their conclusions with a kind of mathematical rigour. Bakunin also appealed to the moral conscience of mankind but was influenced by Hegelianism towards a view of history in which human consciousness develops through a necessary dialectic with social reality towards a true moral understanding. Bakunin's faith in reason is also supplemented by a sense of the diversity of society: the Adam Smith view of economics is broadened into a general view of the complexity of social activity, which cannot without repression be fitted into the mould of any

governmental design. Bakunin argues that no individual or group can devise a social organization capable of satisfying the multiple and diverse interests, aspirations, and needs of the people. 'Such an organization would ever be a procrustean bed into which violence, more or less sanctioned by the State, would force the unfortunate society' (*The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, 299). Therefore, only popular spontaneous organization is likely to realize this diversity and satisfy real interests and needs. [80]

Kropotkin elaborated the view that anarchism is based on the scientific study of society and natural history and so a rational attempt to live in harmony with natural and social 'laws'. He pointed to the role of natural instincts in creating a morality of sympathy between men, and to the role of tradition and social habit in creating a set of largely unquestioned beliefs which guide man's behaviour. For Kropotkin tradition and habit are analogous to the instinctual behaviour patterns of animals, and historical evolution parallels natural evolution. His moral views conflict with those of Godwin, who lays great stress on scrupulous rational calculation of the path of duty. Kropotkin stresses rather the role of natural instinct (for example, to protect a child), spontaneous sympathy, and the inspirational force of heroic or devoted actions, which society turns into legends and teaches its children.

Kropotkin's approach was strongly influenced by the concrete examples of the peasant communes, or the Siberian tribal communities, with their own customs and values. The importance of this model is even clearer in Tolstoy when he comes to talk about what will replace organized forms of law and punishment. The economic solution suggests that crime will disappear when individual interests are satisfied — it has no built-in answer as to how intermediate difficulties should be met. The solution based on natural reason or conscience assumes crime is an error which reason and social progress can remedy, and in the interim the answer is moral suasion and the coercion of public opinion — to which Godwin explicitly appeals. But the solution based on examples of previous or

fore the worst disasters of war and tyranny the individual is often most helpless to save himself by being apolitical. Brecht, who often salutes the qualities of tenacious self-preservation, and of dogged obedience to the absurd commands of the powers-that-be, embodied in the Good Soldier Schweik, also emphasizes the necessity of social responsibility. He shows, for example, in The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (about Hitler's rise to power) how social corruption, the narrow interests of those with economic and political power, together with [102] the timidity of the common man, enable Hitler to gain increasingly irresistible power. Alex Comfort, who is sceptical about the values of heroism, is nevertheless convinced in *Art and Social Responsibility* that desire for self-preservation must be translated into active resistance: 'From now on, the deserter is every man's friend' (88) and 'You can abolish firing squads only by refusing to serve in them' (85). But this steers dangerously close to heroism.

The Citizen

Indeed, once the apolitical common man begins to pursue the logic of his values and engage in disobedience he begins to find a meeting ground with the individual following the star of his own conscience, especially when the conscientious resister also begins to politicize his stand. Both may seize on the idea of responsible citizenship. Socrates and later Thoreau justified their actions in part on the grounds that they were acting for the real good of their society, and submitted themselves to the laws of that community. Alex Comfort is less concerned with individual civil disobedience in a relatively civilized State, and more with popular and 'underground' resistance in a dictatorship or society mobilized for war. But he also stresses that the criterion is personal responsibility, the safeguarding of freedom by disobedience. A concept of citizenship also fills the gap between an aristocratic code of heroism

example. In discussing the influence of the Socratic proposition that 'it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong' she suggests that the influence this statement has had arises not from philosophical argument, but the power of example — because Socrates staked his life on this truth. She sees this as the only way ethical principles can enter the political realm without distortion. The inspiration of the principle in action encourages imitation, and creates a model which enables us to grasp the principle. It is certainly true that the history of individual conscientious disobedience to the commands of government is understood, and handed down, largely in terms of certain key figures; and one can trace the inspiration of Thoreau and Tolstoy on, for example, Gandhi, who has in turn partially inspired movements of civil disobedience in the United States and Britain.

Tolstoy appeals to the individual conscience and to a morality which claims its validity from a source outside the political sphere, but which often challenges the crimes committed under the label of political necessity. But individual disobedience has its roots also in that very different personal commitment which means clinging doggedly to one's home, family, health, life and personal enjoyment as long as humanly possible. Despite the apolitical nature of this common ambition, private values do have relevance to politics in encouraging qualities like prudence and caution. These are political virtues for Machiavelli too, but in his context tend to look like pure calculation of risks, and of the risks of those who have, or are gambling for, power. A general respect for the goods of private life suggests a much greater caution about gambling with other people's lives. Debunking of heroic pretensions and principles also guards against fanaticism and idolatry and helps to keep politics down to earth.

Not only does commitment to private values have general implications for political policies, it also tends to have implications for personal political action. Men can sometimes build precarious happiness by concentrating on their private welfare; but be-

existing communities incorporates concrete procedures. Tolstoy comments:

> Why suppose that there cannot be tribunals without violence? Trial, by people trusted by the disputants, has always existed and will exist, and needs no violence … Russian communes migrating to distant regions, where our Government leaves them alone, arrange their own taxation, administration, tribunals, and police, and always prosper until government violence interferes (*Essays from Tula*, 116).

The Administration of Justice

Proudhon also looks to the past for his practical proposals about the administration of justice in his book on *The General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, but focuses on the history and theoretical development of the legal tradition itself. A distinction can be made between law which involves restitution for a wrong, [81] broadly the category of civil law; and law which involves punitive retribution, penal law. Durkheim discussed this distinction, but considered that punishment expressing the moral reprobation of the community was a necessary aspect of social cohesion; and that the moral norms of any society would always tend to be so constricting that they would promote individual deviance and rebellion. Proud-hon, however, uses this distinction to argue that the concept of reparation (to individuals or to society) should be extended to the realm of penal law to eliminate entirely the idea of vengeance. A second and related distinction is between arbitration — neutral mediation between conflicting parties who agree to accept the arbiter's decision, and the judgment of legal courts representing imposed authority. Proudhon seeks to replace judges by arbiters who will be elected by both parties to a case.

Proudhon's suggestions have precedents in primitive law, which as De Jouvenel comments 'could do without means of coercion. Judgment was an arbitral award accepted in advance. Maine noted the entire absence of sanctions in the earliest systems of Law' (Power, 275–6). Kropotkin stresses in his pamphlet on The State that common law or customary law provides a greater protection for individuals and greater independence for communities. 'Customary law naturally pertains to local life and Roman law to centralisation of power' (35). Kropotkin draws on Maine's Ancient Law to describe how justice was understood and administered in tribal and village communities, and adds:

> all notions of right which we find in our codes (mutilated to the advantage of minorities), and all forms of judicial procedure, in so far as they offer guarantees to the individual, had their origin in the village community. Thus, when we imagine we have made great progress — in introducing the jury for example — we have only returned to the institution of the barbarians, after having modified it to the advantage of the ruling classes (15).

Kropotkin wished to restore the unity between social attitudes and the administration of justice that existed under customary law, by eliminating formal legal codes, which tend to perpetuate a rigid class structure based on legal distinctions, and to crystallize social institutions and attitudes long after society itself has begun to change. Kropotkin's point can be amply illustrated from English law — for example, the heavy sentences attached to crimes against property, the long campaign required to alter legislation on homosexuality, and the perpetuation on the statute books of crudely drafted legislation like the Official Secrets Act of 1911 (whose repressive potentialities aroused concern early in 1970). [82]

But it is clearly impossible simply to transpose a model of administering justice appropriate to a small, traditional and tightly

balance. If men succumb to the temptation to assume godlike powers through an over-weaning pride, then just and inevitable retribution will follow. The relevance of this principle (which is both a moral and an aesthetic principle) has been demonstrated in modern science — in, for example, the splitting of the atom. Its relevance to politics is equally obvious. While Greek city states were as prone as most regimes to the 'arrogance of power' their view of politics was informed by the sense that moderation was an inherent political value. Moreover, politics in this sense was based primarily on speech, and so on reasoned persuasion, not on force; on the collective action of equals, not the enforced obedience of slaves.

This picture of politics among a community of citizens naturally undergoes a radical change if politics is understood primarily in relation to the rulers of nation States, within which society is hierarchical and the majority of subjects passive. This is the context assumed by Shakespeare. Machiavelli sketches an outline of politics which includes both the virtues of the citizen in the classical republic, and the machinations of the Prince whose heroic capacity may be demonstrated by the magnitude of his crimes. This blurring of republican politics with princely-power politics has been handed down to us, though for most people the latter image is probably predominant. But a double image of the political sphere creates confusion about the relevance of moral criteria. A tradition of republican politics embodies values which pure power politics may destroy. So the anarchist contention that power politics within nation States is not inevitable can claim support from the classical tradition of politics.

Machiavelli's ideal is Rome with its austere and martial virtues. But even the more diverse and humanistic Athenian ideal of republican 'politics' is not compatible with Tolstoy's Christian morality. [101] Hannah Arendt has, however, made an interesting concession towards the Tolstoyan view in a recent essay on 'Truth and Polities', though she chooses first a Greek rather than a Christian

ence it also involves use of this knowledge to direct and dominate society by the scientific elite. But this misconception of 'science' can be refuted from within the scientific tradition. Bakunin in one of his perceptive flashes argues in *God and the State* that the very nature of science — its tendency to generalization and abstraction — makes it unsuited to guide or govern a society. 'Science cannot conceive real individuals and interests' (60). Paul Goodman outlines in his essay on ' "Applied Science" and Superstition' (in *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals*) the humanist inspiration of science, in which 'pursuit of natural truth is a transcending good' and in which the discipline of scientific habits is of positive value. When Kropotkin sought in *Modern Science and Anarchism* to relate anarchism to scientific method, his analogies with the animal world did not lead him to subordinate social experience to models drawn from the natural sciences. Instead he appeals to the evidence of history and anthropology, and popular experience. Anarchists stand within a tradition of science which seeks to pursue understanding for its own sake, but also applies this understanding to improve men's environment, and social conditions, in an experimental and critical way. From this [100] standpoint 'sociology' or psychology may promote areas of freedom and creativity which seem to be denied by the iron necessities of power politics. Comfort for example sees modern sociology as upholding an experimental and anarchist view of social change while 'politics' obtructs social possibilities. But when science becomes a legitimating ideology for the abuse of power, and a source of techniques to be used in the interests of power, then the pretensions of 'science' may be opposed by the political tradition of creativity and freedom (for a persuasive attack on 'scientism' in the name of political values see, Bernard Crick, *In Defence of Politics*).

The confusions of the debate between 'science' and 'politics' arise because both have been divorced from their original humanistic context. Greek philosophy was imbued with conviction that in human affairs it is essential to retain moderation and

knit community to a large, mobile and anonymous urban population. And it is even less possible to rely, as Godwin and Proudhon suggest, on the application of general principles of justice, dispensing both with formally defined rules of law and with formal procedures for administering them. Informal justice presupposes an agreement on moral and judicial principles, and their procedural application, unlikely except in a society with the cohesion and traditions which rationalism tends to destroy. Similar problems arise in relation to Kropotkin's desire to create a more flexible set of legal rules amenable to social change. Unless one can assume social homogeneity there may be passionately held divisions on issues of moral and social conduct and appropriate penalties. Moreover, Kropotkin is taking for granted a steady 'progression' in public opinion, whereas recent experience in Britain suggests that 'progressive' legal and penal reforms are supported only by a minority. Indeed, one strong argument in favour of legislation in areas like racial, religious or sexual discrimination is that the existence of laws carrying the weight of legal authority will influence public opinion in an egalitarian direction.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that modern theories of penal reform tend to agree with nineteenth-century anarchist writers who criticized not only the barbarity of existing modes of punishment, but their social effects and their irrelevance in preventing crime. Considerable doubt has now been cast both on the idea of punishment as a form of social retribution and on the uses of punishment as a deterrent. Whilst there is a new danger, as anarchists have noticed, that modern psychology and sociology will be used simply as a more subtle instrument for manipulating 'social deviants', experiments in penal reform and developments in psychological theory do hold out possibilities of alternatives to the present penal system. Similarly there are areas of modern law — for example, legislation to prevent discrimination — in which law is used in a more flexible and less punitive manner, with a greater emphasis on arbitration, and a greater reliance on individuals and

local communities to make the law effective. Despite anomalies involved in drafting and implementing this type of law, it provides a model which might be extended. Whether judicial 'arbitration' between individuals is, as Proudhon suggested, appropriate to crimes like violent assault is more questionable. Kropotkin in his account of village justice in fact suggests that the village commune made a collective 'judgment' when finding the appropriate sentence for a crime under customary law.

Anarchists concerned to promote a more flexible, socially realistic and humane administration of law tend to look to the local [83] community both as the unit in which a wide range of laws should be implemented, and as the unit in which any enforcement necessary should be carried out. Proudhon urged that every workshop, corporation, commune and locality should organize its own police just as it should organize its more general administration. Kropotkin recognizing that the family unit which used to bind its members together in a community of welfare is disintegrating, looks to new geographical and economic communities to play a similar role in dealing with 'moral' as well as 'material' troubles, for instance looking after 'criminals'. Paul Goodman suggests that in America the violence of modern urban police, and their ineffectiveness in preventing crime, points to the need for smaller units within cities to run their own police — a proposal which makes obvious sense for ghetto communities.

Utopian Thinking and Historical Progress

Anarchists tend to vary between making specific, gradualistic proposals in areas like police and penal reform, and upholding a radical and absolute demand for abolishing existing courts, jails and police forces. The former is more immediately relevant, and more likely to win converts among non-anarchists. But uncompromising radicalism can be justified at three levels. Without a 'utopian'

justice, or in philosophical debates about moral and political concepts.

A modern defence of the interrelation between politics and other spheres can perhaps best appeal to a situation which is understood as the complete negation of free politics — 'totalitarianism'. Hannah Arendt suggests in her study of The Origins of Totalitarianism that the logic of a total ideology excludes genuine thought: 'The self-coercive force of logicality is mobilized lest anybody ever start thinking [99] — which as the freest and purest of all human activities is the very opposite of the compulsory process of deduction' (473). Thought in this sense is both spontaneous and creative, and so is capable of challenging the existing order and creating something new. The Polish philosopher Kolakowski says that creative thought is 'precisely the activity which cannot be duplicated by an automaton. Philosophy is the eternal effort to question all that is obvious … The police ideal of order is the order of a comprehensive file; philosophy's ideal is the order of an active imagination' (*Marxism and Beyond*, 40, 55).

Both the critical and the creative contributions of art and philosophy to society promote an ideal of individual and social freedom. The role of science is now peculiarly complicated, and in its impact on politics is frequently seen as a threat to freedom and creativity. This development is particularly ironical in view of the hopes placed in science as an instrument of enlightenment and liberation, though this identification of science with progress now helps perpetuate the dangers arising from superstitious respect for 'science'. In the natural sciences the aim of pursuing truth, and understanding the mysteries of nature, has been largely subordinated to the aim of using science to dominate nature. The prestige of natural science has led theorists for well over a century to attempt to create a social science of equal status, which would rid us of our present uncertainties. The triumph of this social science would appear to imply a total determinism, an uncovering of the 'laws' which individuals or societies must follow; but on the analogy of natural sci-

Hannah Arendt's position is based on a belief that there are separate realms of experience and activity, with different criteria applicable to them: religion, art, philosophy, and science — all distinct from the sphere of politics, as is the private world of the household. Given the confusions and dangers of trying to fit politics into the mould of another mode of understanding and experience, the idea of multiple spheres of activity is helpful. But any view which accepts a total separation of spheres runs into trouble. Their total separation within the experience of an individual implies the invasion of bureaucracy into the personality, Max Weber's 'parcelling-out of the soul'. Moreover, all these spheres must have a common locus in a given society, and their social separation is dangerous, since their effects cannot be totally separated. If science is pursued irrespective of social consequences, philosophy and art divorced from public relevance, religion concerned entirely with the other world, and if the average man retreats into his private life, the result may be pure Machiavellianism — rampant political irresponsibility. Total separation of spheres is potentially as disastrous as that Stalinism which, in a gross distortion of the Marxist attempt at social integration, dictated scientific and philosophical truth, decreed artistic forms, denied autonomy to moral standards, and invaded personal privacy.

When the Greek idea of politics as the public realm (located literally in the assembly place) is linked to the constitutional tradition, the picture that emerges is of a political sphere hedged round by distinct worlds over which politics may claim no dominion. The boundary between politics and private life protects individual freedom. The world of learning and of factual documentation creates, Hannah Arendt suggests, another boundary which resists political attempts to distort their truth. However, a constitutional outlook, formed under the necessity of setting up barriers to the incursions of royal power in a centralized State, tends to overlook the Greek understanding of the interpenetration of culture and politics; embodied for instance in the role of drama in refining the notion of

commitment to question the underlying assumptions of social practices, proposals for reform tend to bypass the central problems, and may ameliorate a situation which ought never to be tolerated. Secondly, as Kropotkin indicates when discussing nineteenth-century changes in the treatment of the insane, there is often historical evidence that what seems 'utopian' to one generation is accepted as obvious good sense by their successors. Oscar Wilde commented that 'A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing … Progress is the realization of Utopias' (The Soul of Man under Socialism, 43). Thirdly, as Kropotkin also emphasized, most people are prisoners of their own education, and of the reigning conventional wisdom. So their world view shuts out large stretches of historical experience, alien areas of social reality, and a vision of future possibilities. De Tocqueville, the least Utopian of theorists, recognized the significance of this social blindness. He wrote of the mid-eighteenth-century French 'Physiocrats':

> It is a curious fact that when they envisaged all the social and adminstrative reforms subsequently carried out by our [84] revolutionaries, the idea of free institutions never crossed their minds … political liberty in the full sense of the term was something that passed their imagination or was promptly dismissed from their thoughts if by any chance the idea of it occurred to them (*The Old Regime*, 159).

Marxism also retains a Utopian dimension, which it inherits from the historical optimism of the nineteenth century, and which is intrinsic to any revolutionary political movement. But Marxism lays much greater stress on the requirements of political and sociological realism, which demarcate the boundaries of Utopian possibility. 'Men make their own history, but they do not make

it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered and transmitted from the past' ('The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', *Selected Works*, 97). Marxists accept the need for institutionalized systems of law and government in any foreseeable socialist future. While Engels endorses Saint-Simon's slogan that the government of men will give way to the administration of things, he comments elsewhere in a highly critical analysis of Bakunin that 'in this society there will above all be no authority'. He adds 'how these people propose to run a factory, operate a railway or steer a ship … they do not of course tell us' (*Selected Correspondence*, 336). Marx and Engels did envisage that the socially repressive aspects of the State would fully disappear when communism had been realized, but left the organizational forms of such a society open. In all their specific statements about the nature of a post-revolutionary socialist society they assume delegation of authority to government bodies, and a democratically organized system of law. Marx commenting on the Commune approved the measures whereby magistrates and judges were to be 'elective, responsible, and revocable' and thus 'divested of that sham independence which has but served to mask their abject subserviency to all succeeding governments …' (*Selected Works*, 291–2).

Ernest Barker has suggested that Marxism revived through Hegel the Greek conception of politics, in which State and Society are not distinguished, and that Marx wished to dissolve the State and reabsorb its activities into Society. This suggestion is illuminating — though Barker himself then confuses the issue by assuming Marx equated 'society' with economic activity. Athens provides a rare model of democratic and egalitarian government based on public debate and the possibility of all citizens holding office: direct democracy may be seen as means of dissolving a separate State power into Society. Athens also provides a model of law being operated in a democratic and political mode,

an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? No. What is honour? A word … Who hath it? He that died o' Wednesday … Honour is a mere scutcheon' (*Henry IV*, Part I, Act V, Scene 1).

Falstaff's virtues are contrasted with the honors of battle wreaked by men less prudently timid. They are also contrasted with opposing values. Shakespeare embodies in Hotspur, who would 'pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon', the heroic virtues of ardent ambition, generosity and impetuous courage, -which bring him to an untimely death at the hands of Prince Heniry on the battlefield. The Prince is more hard-headed and cold-blooided than Hotspur. He also knows when to renounce Falstaff's world and his personal friendship, which he does brutally on becoming King. Yet his sense of political realism is also a sense of responsibility, and is presented as being more conducive to the public good than Hotspur's gallantry or Falstaff's anarchy.

The Political Realm

Shakespeare tends to accept that rulers live in a separate sphere from their subjects, that their burdens are much greater and their decisions necessarily founded on necessity of state. This is the secular view of politics to be found in Machiavelli, which has since become an important influence on political theorizing. A sensitive modern interpretation which avoids crude Machiavellianism is to be found in Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition*. She insists that certain values and attitudes are inappropriate to the political realm—among [98] these, love, both personal love and universalized Christian love. This love 'can only become false and perverted when it is used for political purposes such as the change or salvation of the world' (47). This is a direct refutation of the Tolstoyan aspiration.

parliament a group of celebrities were asked by a journalist to comment, and one of them replied: 'What do the victims matter if the gesture is fine?' (Barbara W. Tuchman, 'Anarchism in France', in Horowitz, ed., *The Anarchists*, 452). This attitude veers towards that alliance between the intellectual elite and the underworld 'mob' that Hannah Arendt traces as one of the cultural strands leading towards fascism. At the other extreme rigorous intellectual consistency may take the form of idealizing merciless ruthlessness for the sake of the cause, and willingness to sacrifice to this end all moral scruples and individuals who get in the way. The fantasy of the ice cold conspirator, embodied in *The Catechism* of a Revolutionist, was played out with inflexible willpower by the Russian student Nechaev, who manipulated and cheated Bakunin, lied his way to revolutionary influence, murdered a fellow student who saw through him, and died defiant and unrepentant in a dungeon. [97]

The Coward

The intellectual may, however, look for a solution in another form of popular experience, not to find a golden age simplicity, pure faith or romantic rebellion, but to discover a vein of common sense and normality with which people protect themselves from the perils of politics. This emphasis on self-preservation became one of the motifs in political thought at the time of the English Civil "War. As noted in Chapter 1, not only is it central to Hobbes's brand of authoritarianism, but it took more subversive and anti-political forms. Irene Coltman in her book *Private Men and Public Causes* charting the various currents of thought emerging from the Civil War suggests that the insistence on self-preservation had already found classic literary expression in Shakespeare's FalstafL 'What is honour?', Falstaff asks himself just before a battle in which his main interest is to avoid being killed. 'Can honour set to a leg? No. Or

prosecutor and defendant pleading [85] their own case before a large jury of fellow citizens. The defects of this system of law, noted by constitutionalist theorists who prefer the classical model of Rome, spring from its democratic character. Athens was not in any sense explicitly idealized by Marx and Engels. It was, as Engels points out, based on slavery, degraded the status of women, and represented, in his analysis, the movement towards private property and centralized government power, in place of the equality, communalism and independence of the previous tribal societies. Moreover, a communism looking to the future was impatient of revolutionaries who dressed up in the clothes and symbols of antiquity. Engels regarded Athens as 'the prototype of the self-governing American municipality', but not a symbol of revolutionary possibilities. He concludes his study of the 'Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State' with a quotation from the anthropologist Lewis Morgan. The forthcoming society will be 'a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes' (*Selected Works*, 593).

It is, however, crucial to the Marxist approach that modern communism will be the product of an historically evolved social consciousness, drawing on the benefits of economic development and intellectual development, including a new understanding of the social powers which now appear to men as uncontrollable and alien forces. This understanding will enable men consciously to control social activity. The kind of culture and consciousness envisaged is not unlike the humanist confidence and creativity evolved in the Greek city state, but incorporating modern science and the much richer sense of individuality developed by bourgeois society. The conception of humanism which Marxism embodies stems both from the optimism of the French Revolution, which promulgated the universality of the 'rights of man', and from the influence of Hellenism on the German cultural renaissance around the beginning of the nineteenth century. Marx did, however, believe in his later writings that historical development had not only exacted a

heavy price in the past, but that some price must be paid in the future. For example, the demands of industrialism must limit the free scope of the individual worker — a limit which automation may now transcend; or developing sophistication destroys certain kinds of art and culture.

The anarchist tendency to look to the medieval guild or township, or to present tribal or peasant societies, rather than to the evolution of existing trends, has by comparison both strengths and weaknesses. It avoids a facile optimism about 'progress', and the danger of identifying progress with technology; and it also challenges a crude historical determinism. But when Kropotkin, seeking [86] to prove the possibility of 'harmony in an ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of varied forces and influences' (*Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*, 8), says this popular tendency can be found in 'the clan, the village, the guild and even the urban commune of the Middle Ages in their first stages', he is dodging historical and sociological issues. Kropotkin bypasses the fact that growth of individualism is usually associated with the breakdown of medieval institutions, or the escape of the individual from the clan. He also appeals to the rule of custom without examining its possibly restrictive effects on individuality or the development of intellectual culture. If an urban and industrial society is expected to revert to the flexible rules of custom, in preference to formal law or government of any kind, then the realism of this approach is questionable. If on the other hand one is aiming to avoid changing tribal or peasant societies where these still exist, idealizing custom tends to become conservative. Tolstoy recognizes that turning to the village commune entails a rejection of urban and 'civilized' culture, science and art. Proudhon is less willing to reject philosophy and science. But like Tolstoy he accepts as an ideal a peasant mode of living, including the patriarchal family, which assigns women to then-permanent place in the home.

Robin Hood tradition of bandits as avengers of a robbed peasantry. This tradition merges via Bakuninist romanticism into the anarchist expropriators who robbed banks for the benefit of the revolutionary movement. Hobsbawm, in a recent book on the theme of Bandits, chooses as a symbol of the expropriators Francisco Sabate from Barcelona. After the victory of Franco in the Civil War, Sabate was reduced to making brief raids into Spain from over the French border, and was eventually shot by the police. Sabate's mode of life was [96] simple, his habits were ascetic and he was always poor; and he acted with the conscious chivalry and daring of a hero, taking risks to avoid hurt to other people, and always walking towards the police. Hobsbawn quotes a comment by one of Sabate's friends after his death: 'When we were young, and the Republic was founded, we were knightly though also spiritual ... We have grown older, but not Sabate ... he was one of those Quixotes who come out of Spain' (106–7).

The image is attractive, but its quality depends on the character of the hero, and its validity depends on the social context. The danger of allying moral purism to exaltation of violence is that it can turn into the brand of fanaticism which led in the Spanish Civil War to the murder of pimps and male prostitutes. While the peasant bandit transferred to the urban underworld tends to become a 'gangster'. If intellectuals espouse romantic violence they may blend quixotic righting of the wrongs of the poor with a republican tradition of public-spirited men who risk their lives to kill a tyrant. A good example was Alexander Berkman's attempt to shoot Frick, the man who during the Pennsylvania Homestead Steel Strike of 1892 imported the thugs who killed eleven strikers, including a ten-year-old child. But this style of action easily merges into more indiscriminate terrorism, or blends with ordinary criminality. French anarchists in the 1890s were confronted with these dilemmas. Some of the French intellectuals at this time, many of whom inclined towards anarchism, adopted a dilettante pose towards violent deeds. When a homemade bomb was exploded in

refusal to be conscripted or to co-operate with the war machine. The way to create anarchist society is not to await 'the revolution', but to start living it. That Tolstoy seriously tried to live up to this conception js a measure of his honesty. That the attempt could not fail to be incomplete and slightly absurd is due not only to the inherent difficulty of adopting a Utopian stance in a 'realistic' and cynical world — a dilemma Read wryly accepts in calling himself an anarchist — but to the fact that Tolstoy, sophisticated in every sense of that word, chose as his ideal a peasant simplicity.

His instinct in linking his search for moral purity, asceticism, a sense of brotherhood and messianic vision to a peasant outlook was, however, in a way sound. Peasant societies may be able to fuse an idealistic and simple programme with religious fervour and pure faith. Gerald Brenan writes on rural anarchism in Andalusia in the late nineteenth century:

> 'The idea', as it was called, was carried from village to village by Anarchist 'apostles'. In the farm labourers' gananias or barracks … the apostles spoke on liberty and equality and justice to rapt listeners … many learned to read, carried on anti-religious propaganda and often practised vegetarianism and teetotalism. Even tobacco and coffee were banned by some … But the chief characteristic of Andalusian anarchism was its naive millenarianism (*The Spanish Labyrinth*, 157).

The anarchists expected a new age in which even the landowners and the Civil Guard would be free and happy.

The Hero

Simple idealism may be linked either to fervent non-violence or to violent action. Idealistic violence as a form of peasant rebellion tends to be symbolized (and in due course sentimentalized) in the

The Meaning of Politics

Even if one grants the possibility of forming new communities endowed with a libertarian consciousness, an anarchist society which avowedly relies on social control by a local community to replace formal law and police is in danger, as George Orwell once pointed out, of appealing to an extremely coercive public opinion. Moreover, whatever the values of community by comparison with the anonymity and inhumanity of large cities, loss of anonymity may also mean a serious loss of personal freedom. It is true that a genuine and fairly stable community like a village may show more concern for individuals, and more tolerance of eccentricity, than a larger society governed by general codes and fashions; but its disapproval is also more overwhelming.

An anarchism which appeals primarily to the role of the local community tends towards using the family as an attractive image for social organization. The family has indeed always been a favoured model — socialists overthrew the patriarchal image of the family which justified paternal authority in government in favour of fraternal equality. There are, however, difficulties in seeking to extend the affection and personal understanding possible within a family circle [87] to a larger society — since the extension is either metaphorical or forced. This is true even of a society very small by modern standards, for example, classical Athens. Conscious deliberations about a society as a whole deal in categories of people and interests, and must exclude the unique personality and circumstances of each person affected by social decisions. Rousseau saw this gap between personal and communal interest, but resolved it in favour of public duty, whilst suggesting that ideally each person in his capacity as citizen would understand and agree the need to promote the 'general will' before his private needs or wishes. It is this impersonal aspect of judicial and political decisions and procedures that easily promotes inhumanity, that creates a gap between public and private morality, and arouses passionate protest against

the artificialities of law and government. It is this sense that there is a separate realm of public affairs, which cannot be assimilated to other aspects of private life, which we inherit from the classical tradition, and which provides a primary definition of 'politics' (see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*). Proudhon partially recognized the distinction between a private and public sphere when he urged the danger of trying to impose an artificial fraternity on society—but then appeared to deny politics in favour of economics.

It is possible, however, to see in Proudhon's espousal of economics a recognition of a basic distinction between a 'social principle' and a 'political principle'. The concept of economic activity can easily be extended to social activity — the identification of the two was not uncommon in the nineteenth century, and still dogs interpretations of Marxism. The German anarchist, Gustav Landauer, writing at the beginning of this century, drew a distinction between social and political action based on Proudhon's affirmation that social revolution was quite different from political revolution. Landauer's ideas are developed by his friend Martin Buber in an essay 'Society and the State' (reprinted in *Pointing the Way*). The difference between State and Society is the difference between two kinds of relationship and two modes of behaviour which have always coexisted, but have often not been distinguished. The social principle involves action by equals co-operating together, and is a principle of community. 'Political' action involves relationships of domination and subordination, and therefore the use of force, and is typical of the State. Buber goes on to suggest that political organization gives men at the top more power than they need to fulfill a specific function, and so they extend and consolidate this surplus of 'power' — a power which in reality stems from the social group as a whole.

The ambiguity of terminology, which confuses much political theorizing, is here revealed. Because the anarchist principle of 'social [88] action' seems very close to the Greek conception of 'polities', realized most fully in direct democracy, Buber suggests that

daughters in an attempt to make a good catch; women desperately cultivating the charms they know are their main weapon in establishing power over men. In *Resurrection* the Prince's realization that he has casually ruined Maslova's life is the first step in his progressive discovery of the realities of Russian society.

Most important of all, Tolstoy turns to the Gospels because he is, like Read, looking for a Utopian vision and commitment, one which will shatter Tsarism and avoid the dangers of organized and violent revolution. In an essay discussing other anarchists, 'An Appeal to Social Reformers', Tolstoy comments that while they recognize the importance of spiritual weapons in abolishing power, they fail to provide the religious basis which is necessary to create this spiritual force. Nor do they realize that only a religious life-conception will enable men to live in an anarchist society and to co-operate without violence. This view has been largely borne out by experiments in 'community' living; Read notes after reading Infield's historical study of *Co-operative Communism at Work* that the most successful communities were religious or — as in the case of non-religious cooperative settlements in Palestine — drawn together by 'some central emotional impulse, comparable to the religious motive' (*Anarchy and Order*, 170). Berdyaev in a perceptive critique of Tolstoy recognizes the full significance of this religious element:

> The principle of non-resistance advocated by him aims at remaining within the realm of divinely created nature prior to, and independently of, any relations that might exist between the citizens of a state. It draws its force from those dimensions where the Law of God operates ever against the Law of the World, and it presents a challenge to man to return to those dimensions (*Introduction to Essays from Tula*). [95]

Tolstoy sees his gospel as one which has to be lived here and now. The answer to war is not peace conferences, but individual

Georg Lukacs has suggested that the best novelists transcend their own explicit social doctrines because of their artistic commitment to reproduce the detail of social reality. As a result nowhere is 'Tolstoy's Christian plebeian dream of brotherhood with the peasants more powerfully refuted than in … Resurrection' (*Essays on Thomas Mann*, 16).

Tolstoy's attempt to identify with popular culture is, however, easier to grasp sympathetically than his pursuit of a moral purity based on a literal interpretation of the Christian gospels. Indeed, Tolstoy stands in opposition to many elements in the anarchist tradition. His emphasis on the need for sexual purity is from a Stirnerite standpoint a form of self-castration. Janko Lavrin suggests, in a generally critical assessment of Tolstoy's ideas, (*Tolstoy: an Approach*), that his efforts to achieve a generalized love of man purged of all sexuality may result in a form of peculiarly selfish domination, sacrificing others to one's own spiritual welfare. Lavrin refers to Prince Nekhlyudov in *Resurrection*, who is overcome by remorse when he recognizes, while sitting on a jury, that the defendant is a servant girl he once seduced. The Prince then tries to save her, and offers to marry her. Though Maslova is still attractive [94] enough to turn every male head in the courtroom, the Prince now feels no flicker of sexual attraction, and, says Lavrin, no trace of spontaneous tenderness and generosity (Chapter IX, 'A Puritan's Progress'). The general point is implicit in Stirner, and can be elaborated from modern psychology. But Tolstoy's approach, which includes recognition of the inadequacy of the Prince's conversion, is as it is worked out in the novel both psychologically subtle and socially aware. It is clear from reading Tolstoy — even the contorted Kreutzer Sonata — that he rejects sex in part because of its degrading social usages (for a sympathetic defence of Tolstoy's general position, see R. V. Sampson, *Equality and Power*). He sees aristocratic young men taking peasant women out of momentary lust, or because it is the fashionable thing to do; powerful men displaying their ownership of beautiful women; mothers displaying their

the Greeks confused the social and political sphere. This is misleading. While the polis comprised both the social and political community, the Greeks made a very clear distinction in principle between co-operative action between equals — 'polities', and the relationship of force and domination epitomized by the rule of a master over slaves. In practice, however, politics of course tended to involve force and domination in various forms. The notion of 'politics' has by now come to include positive recognition of the necessity of force and coercion, of meeting 'power' with power, and of compromise with social realities in ? very imperfect world — which is why anarchists reject 'polities', and Marxists, in the short term at least, do not. [89]

4 Anarchism and the Individual

In the Introduction to this book a brief sketch of some better known anarchist thinkers and movements indicated the extreme diversity of the anarchist tradition. In the succeeding three chapters anarchist ideas have been contrasted with the individualist contract theory emanating from Hobbes; with the constitutional liberalism which finds an important interpreter in De Tocqueville; and with the Marxist movement in socialist thought. These traditions are in themselves complex, but anarchism is in many respects much less coherent. Godwin's brand of anarchism can be seen as a logical extension of laissez-faire liberalism. But modern anarchists have frequently claimed to be the true heirs of the idealism and libertarianism of the Utopian socialists and the early socialist movement; Bakunin and Malatesta, for example, are indisputably important figures in socialist history. And while at some levels anarchism seems further removed from constitutionalism, at others, as Proudhon in particular illustrates, there are common values and a common adherence to the republican heritage of political ideas.

In all these guises anarchism is a political doctrine — if one that displays a tendency to logical extremes and Utopian commitment alien to the usual concept of what 'politics' is all about. There are, however, within the spectrum of anarchism elements which appear to stand right outside the normal political sphere and assert the primacy of non-political values — individualism, artistic creativity, moral commitment, romanticism, or simply the common pleasures of everyday living. But on examination these approaches all have

tives of bourgeois 'civilization'. In the extreme, an artist may escape by resorting to suicide, like the poet of the Russian Revolution, Vladimir Mayakovsky. In April 1930 Mayakovsky killed himself — Read quotes (62) the poem which Mayakovsky left behind him:

> As they say 'the incident is closed*. Love boat smashed against mores. I'm quits with life. No need itemizing mutual griefs, woes offences. Good luck and good-bye. [93]

Read sees only one alternative to escape — he labels as escape retreat into isolation and private phantasy, which is destructive of art and of oneself — and that is: 'To reduce beliefs to fundamentals, to shed everything temporal and opportunist, and then to stay where you are and suffer if you must' (61).

The Moralist

Artists in Russia have frequently felt a social responsibility to rebel — among them Tolstoy, who also turned to anarchism. But Tolstoy found little social relevance in his art — except as a form of moral parable — and was prepared to renounce art in general together with all the other privileges and pastimes of aristocratic society. Tolstoy rejected culture in part as an emanation of a society founded on exploitation, and so inherently 'false*. He was also aware of alternative values embedded in the peasants' own culture. Tolstoy's position as an artist and intellectual was naturally not as simple as this interpretation suggests, and was linked to his general ascetism and moral theory (for an interesting critical discussion, see George Orwell, 'Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool'). But his answer to his dilemma was a little like Gauguin's, in the sense that it was a flight towards simplicity, though in political terms Tolstoy stayed in Russia and defied both the censor and the police. To the degree that he was trying to escape he was doomed to failure.

sees rebellion as an expression of unity and solidarity — and more idealistic: 'The slave is not a man without possessions … but a man without qualities, a man without ideals for which he is willing to die' (*Anarchy and Order*, 18). [92]

It is the nature of ideals which especially interests Read. Ideals provide a Utopian consciousness which may enable men to transcend the barriers of their existing social reality and promote historical change. Ideals may be dangerous partly because the imaginative conception of a Utopia which is a totality may lead to authoritarian blueprints in which individuality is subordinated to the requirements of symmetry and order. But such ideals are necessarily creative constructs, and Read sees this elaboration of symbols as a primarily aesthetic activity, and 'the concretization and vitalization of ideals is one of the main tasks of the aesthetic activity in man' (20).

Therefore, the imaginative expression of social ideals is peculiarly the role of the artist. But it is far from being his exclusive role — the artist creates symbols which are 'as multiform as the feelings that motivate man', while social ideals only represent collective feelings. Where society is perverted by power the social ideals are also perverted, and the conditions for creating freedom eroded if not extinguished. In a corrupted society the artist faces an agonizing dilemma. He is cut off from the public he needs for his own creative work; and at the same time has a special and often dangerous responsibility to provide the creative impetus which may break down the barriers hemming in his society. In a very personal statement of why he had chosen to be an anarchist at a time, 1938, when the criterion of political responsibility might suggest the need for unconditional support of the democratic front against fascism, Herbert Read examines the possible ways in which artists may respond to the tensions of their position.

He cites Gauguin, who tried to escape from the commercialism of bourgeois society by going to Tahiti, only to discover that this paradise had been corrupted by particularly degraded representa-

relevance to any attempt to define the sphere of politics and the nature of political activity. In this chapter they are explored in relation to Hannah Arendt's attempt to set limits to the political realm; and their relevance for an anarchist theory of politics.

The Egoist

One thinker who has a recognized place in the evolution of anarchist ideas and attitudes, but who has so far scarcely been mentioned, is Max Stirner. He is perhaps the hardest thinker to understand, writing as he does in the context of Hegelianism in Germany in the 1840s; and the easiest to dismiss, since he leaves behind him no political [90] movement, career as an activist, or independent claim to fame. Moreover, in summary (even by anarchists) his ideas can easily sound ridiculous, unattractive, or both. But Stirner, who can be seen as a forerunner of existentialism, does have certain very important things to say.

The central contention of *The Ego and His Own* is that for each individual the only universe that either does or can genuinely matter is his own. The individual's own life experience comprises all aspects of his being and personality — his sensuousness, his natural affections, his will to assert his own identity. This concrete individual is, however, always being sacrificed, and sacrificing himself, to abstractions and entities outside of himself. Most often the individual is sacrificed to the dictates of orthodox religion, or to that Moloch, the State. But Stirner is even more interested in exposing the abstractions of contemporary radicals, who also oppose Church and State, but seek to constrain the individual with the principles of liberalism or morality. He attacks too his contemporaries who have sought to end that form of alienation which arises when men deny their own highest attributes, and embody them in a God whom they worship, but have only succeeded in abasing the real individual before a new idol, the abstract essence of Man

or Humanity (see Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*). This criticism is pertinent to that Marxist vision whose full richness is to be realized in the future, but which is often in danger of sacrificing to this end those men living and suffering here and now.

Stirner is precluded by his commitment to the pre-eminence of the individual self, distrust of intellectual abstractions, and belief that the future cannot be predicted in advance of experience, from systematic generalization of the social implications of his position. He is also perhaps more excited by iconoclasm. But he throws out certain illuminating ideas which have direct social relevance. He notices that fanaticism for an ideal for which a man is prepared to sacrifice himself may lead him to immolate others on the altar of this virtue — Stirner cites Robespierre. Secondly Stirner's 'egoism' does not exclude relationships with other people — it would indeed be an attenuated individuality which attempted to do so — but posits a spontaneous union between individuals, which is the antithesis of the formally imposed ties of 'society' (for Stirner 'society' has connotations of artificiality not, as for Kropotkin, of naturalness). This union is potentially subversive of a social order enforced by discipline. Stirner illustrates his point by looking at prisons:

That we jointly execute a job, run a machine, effectuate anything in general — for this a prison will indeed provide; but that I [91]

> forget that I am a prisoner, and engage in intercourse with you who likewise disregard it, brings danger to the prison, and not only cannot be caused by it, but must not even be permitted. For this reason the saintly and moral-minded French chamber decides to introduce solitary confinement, and other saints will do the like in order to cut off 'demoralizing intercourse' (*The Ego and His Own*, 218–9).

This passage is reminiscent of De Tocqueville's comments on how a few warders could control all the prisoners in Sing Sing jail by the device of isolating them from each other, and the implications of this device for imposing political despotism. Stirner also has an almost republican belief in the role of courage and sense of freedom. 'A Nero is a "bad" man only in the eyes of the "good" … In old Rome they would have put him to death instantly, would never have been his slaves. But the contemporary "good" among the Romans opposed to him only moral demands, not their will' (54). And so for Stirner true 'freedom' cannot be given to a slave, but can only be won through his own actions. Finally, he makes a distinction, which Herbert Read takes up, between 'revolution' — which is an organized political act; and 'insurrection' — which has political consequences but is primarily 'a rising of individuals, a getting up without regard for the arrangements that spring from it'. Insurrection is inspired by 'egoism', the desire to rise and exalt oneself.

The Artist

Herbert Read adopts this idea of spontaneous uprising because he sees it as a way of escaping from the revolutionary trap — overthrowing one power structure in order to replace it with another. But insurrection may alter social attitudes, by 'creating a new morality or new metaphysical values'. Read quotes Camus on the idea of 'rebellion' (which is close to Stirner's insurrection). Rebellion is for Camus 'the refusal to be treated as an object and to be reduced to simple historical terms. It is the affirmation of a nature common to all men, which eludes the world of power' (*The Rebel*, 216). Read goes on to argue that 'a power structure is the form taken by the inhibition of creativity: the exercise of power is the denial of spontaneity' (Anarchy and Order, 17). Read then translates Stirner's insurrection into terms more social — he