

Why people leave anarchism, and how to make anarchism work

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An unusually wise and rich political philosophy of anarchism is encountering with serious simplification and dogmatization nowadays, turning into a clichéd and self-centered naivete. Most often, people «outgrow» anarchism, based on the representations of some local talking heads and hangouts. On the one hand, they realize its insolvency and inability to influence the situation, and on the other hand, they face political challenges, to which anarchism has no answers.

Most anarchists are generally more interested in how to declare something hostile, unnecessary and contrary to anarchism than to find answers to topical questions. When reality shows that this approach does not work — anarchism is ditched.

At least, it's an honest act — to leave alone the political philosophy, which you no longer accept. It is much better to leave than to continue trying to fit a round peg into a square hole, giving simple explanations for complex problems and reducing everything to populism and vulgar demagoguery. Perhaps anarchism as a movement degraded this way, because instead of development, it preferred to close its eyes to contradictions and create a closed environment that does not develop in the 21st century, and continues to repeat some tired phrases of the 19th century in interpretation of the 20th's theorists. Any developing person, seeing the scarcity and limitations of anarchism and the richness and diversity of life, will choose the second.

In fact, anarchism imposes more restrictions on its adept than gives hope. The workers deliberately do not fight for their rights, the war requires a choice of lesser evil, in the party's favor with completely antisocial proposals, the fascists easily get support, speaking about the same problems as the anarchists but in other words.

You can not sit back, you need to do something, save the situation, and anarchism does not give any instructions. Everything is wrong, there is no sense in anything else, only the class struggle against the state and capital. You can hold out for a couple of years, handing out the right leaflets and shouting the right slogans on the marches. And then what? Nothing happens, nothing changes. It is impossible to achieve any kind of evolution from the movement — it is good at, it has not seized on the best tactics of the past decade, but does not want to think about strategy at all.

People will leave this movement and join another, carrying in himself the offended remnants of anarchist values. Perhaps, he will become a Social-Democrat, believing that without the state and the government, it is impossible to lead a society anywhere. Or a liberal, believing that anarchism is too categorical, although it is worthwhile to be slightly more flexible having the same values. It sometime happens that a disappointed anarchist becomes a fascist, asserting the freedom of his obsessive ego and leveling all other values.

Of course, it is much more difficult and more responsible to undermine the hardened dogmas of anarchism, which are, perhaps formal and fair, but really completely useless. Someone would call this «revisionism», by analogy with the revision of the socialist positions by disillusioned Marxists. But I would call it a cleansing of dogmas, because in the heart of anarchism there should be no dogmas — and what can I say, if there is not even a single theory in anarchism. All values are built around the ideals of freedom and equality applicable to specific circumstances.

«True socialism,» chosen by the anarchists as a landmark, is more like a utopia and rests not on thoughtful mechanisms and technologies, but on the alleged spontaneity and spontaneity of the creativity of the masses liberated by the revolution. There are no concrete ideas about how to ensure the smooth operation of energy, communications and infrastructure in the society where the state has fallen. The main thing is to take power, and the rest will go like clockwork! Of course, during the period of power confrontation, it will be possible to leave for this, but then a system will be established that will prove to be the most stable and effective, and not the one that the anarchists sang as a revolution.

Why did the Maidan win the Pyrrhic victory? Because it could not provide a working system, which would be safer and more just. Therefore, the new government reanimated corrupt bureaucratic capitalism. At least, it worked when it had to save the integrity of the country.

Yes, here the state apparatus showed its effectiveness in all its glory, saving the sovereignty of Ukraine on the most that neither is at the grassroots level. Without the military assistance of Russia, the DNR-LNP junks would not have survived a couple of months — a rusty and inefficient Ukrainian state grinded them with a bang. And what would the anarchists do, what would they suggest?

What conclusion can we draw from this? For example, that the state, capitalism and revolution are far more complex phenomena than we are used to thinking. What do the anarchists think about this in their mass? That the Maidan was doomed from the beginning, because it did not sufficiently approve the social agenda, did not follow the tasks of the class struggle, did not seek to destroy the state and capitalism?

Excellent evaluation, which can be given for any reason. Why did Russia occupy the Crimea and put its special forces in the Donbas? Why did the SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket fly not quite as planned? Why did the Bitcoin fall? The is one answer — because under capitalism there is nothing good! In all crises, capitalism is to blame, in all tragedies the state is to blame, and only workers are innocent lambs that will gut the other innocent lambs, since they were bullied by the bourgeoisie's brains. Excellent answer for all occasions.

Watching this, you involuntarily understand why people leave anarchism for liberalism and even fascism. The contemporary French philosopher Michel Onfray quite recently asked good questions in the essay «Postanarchism, explained to my grandmother» for the purification of anarchism from ill-judged views and misunderstood ideas:

Is it worth religious sacrifice to the old doctrines of anarchist councils? Should we obey, as in the church, the decrees proclaimed by the synods? Is it compulsory to follow the fact that the anarchist catechism preaches to its flock? Or, perhaps, here and somewhere, but rather and better — here, than anywhere, come up with a healing slogan: «No gods, no masters»?

Let us recall some dogmas. «The state embodies absolute evil,» even when it comes to a mechanism that distributes the results of taxes equally and freely, fairly and impartially? «Elections are always a trap for fools,» even when Proudhon takes part in them, or, as Murray Bukchin thought, when libertarian societies can be developed, or political forces can be established through voting, which are certainly not ideal, but more favorable for the libertarian ideal?

Another dogma: «Capitalism is just a moment in the history of the world, it must be destroyed,» but it is an insurmountable truth of exchange, ever since the world became a world. After all, capitalism is often confused, as a way of producing wealth that provides for private property, and liberalism is a way of redistributing the wealth thus obtained. So there could be libertarian capitalism, like the way Soviet capitalism existed or as ecological capitalism, to which it seems we are now moving...

So, really, is it worth to be influenced by dogmas when you call yourself the enemy of all dogmas? Or should we deny any authority other than the authority of our own church? Is not anarchism in fact a rejection of any dogmas, including anarchist dogmas, in the name of freedom of thought, the critical and free use of one's mind, the development of rationality without epistemological, instructive and ideological obstacles? Very often the anarchist mind obeys the epistemological hindrance, in particular, beliefs, it is crystallized, and then cemented into a harmful ghost.

A revolution that solves all problems once and for all and guarantees the disappearance of evil in all its forms (no more crimes, murders, exploitation, violence, malice, poverty, atrocities, hatred, rancor and so on, society, finally, without police, without «an army, war, gallows, negativity...») — this is an unthinkable invention, worthy of fantastic scenarios, the most infantile and religious.

How many anarchists are satisfied with an old-fashioned activist practice of an old-fashioned way? From stocks that are imprisoned for the distribution of brochures, to the keeping of a sincere diary (or site today), drawings on the walls, making banners, creating slogans, participating in marches, during which the world is killed, of course, with words, obviously in negative and negative style, but with the dominance of the sentimentality and sad passions? These actions, in fact, besides the fact that they cause a smile in the right, leadership, liberal capitalism, rulers ruling the world and plundering the planet, come from political folklore, in which no tangible progress is noticeable.

It's true, how much can one repeat about «anarchist communism» if it is thought of either at the level of a village community or at the level of a fictional utopia? What should we do here and now, so that the management of society takes place under the control of the society itself? How do we get rid of poverty, which forces people to engage in the most dirty work and abandon self-

development? How do we preserve the sovereignty of such a society, surrender to the enemies and not quarrel with the whole world, become an «evil empire»?

How do you maintain the basic values of freedom, equality and brotherhood? Can an anarchic modification of an already existing republic be considered anarchy proper? Where does the state end and anarchy begin? Is it worth «getting your hands dirty» by making decisions that create relations of power? To beat enemies, is to exercise power over them, and if anarchists are against any power, then how can you can beat your enemies? Is it necessary to prohibit a private initiative in the economy, if capitalism with its private property is the main enemy of all workers? Or maybe capitalism is not labor, money and goods in themselves, but a certain organization with privileges for some and discrimination for others?..

These questions can and should be asked endlessly by everyone, and it is even more necessary to soberly assess the situation, make a decision and implement it, perceiving mistakes as useful lessons, and not as defeat or «suck.» If anarchism is not working to solve public problems, it will be brewing in its internal, existential problems, creating an environment conducive to strengthening collective trauma. This is a common problem for many movements, not just for anarchism. But this is not easier, because while anarchists are thinking about how to be anarchists correctly, others take the initiative and change society in the way they want.

If the awareness of such a pessimistic picture pushes you out of the rut and pushes you away from anarchism or politics in general — this is normal. It is bad to continue to believe in overdue dogmas, and even worse — to engage in such an environment with the arrangement of one's own power. And most importantly — do not lose hope, revise your goals and means, continue to act in accordance with the rational.

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