

Agorists = The Anti-Utopian Visionaries

A First Introduction to the Positions of the Market-Anarchists

Samuel Edward Konkin III

July 1, 1978

Perhaps a century ago the classic division of Anarchists into Individualists, Communists, and Syndicalists had validity both in ease of communication and in correspondence to reality. Twenty years ago “anarchocapitalist vs anarchocommunist” probably described a serious schism in Anarchist ranks undoubtedly abetted by the Cold War mentality of factions within the State. Today there are still divergences in mentality among those who have arrived at the need for statelessness from many directions. The time has not arrived (if it ever will) for the discarding of labels among **Anarchy’s defenders**.

After all, there is no such thing as “Anarchism”. Only the extreme distortions caused by the existence of the State could bring one to believe that Anarchists base an entire ideology — a vision of how to live — on the minor adjustment of Humanity’s lifestyle to eliminate the petty annoyance of institutionalized parasitism. Would one base an entire theory of human life on the extermination of cockroaches, or even leprosy or the Plague?

In our present society, the State is indeed a pressing problem. But those who have arrived, for all their many reasons, at the conclusion that it must be abolished, are precisely those whose vision is clear enough to catch a glimpse of the possibilities of life unstunted by rampant coercion. There will be Anarchy, and those who pursue this necessary and heroic goal are indeed Anarchists; but they are much more: Communists, Syndicalists, Christians, Scientologists, Utopians, Taoists, New Philosophers,... and Agorists.

One of the most serious divisions of the Anarchist ranks stems from the speculation of what will happen to the institution of Property when the State is eliminated. It should be obvious that the deduction of where Property arises is important to this debate. A strong, almost dominant, view of the Property Question among Anarchists is that Property arose from conquest and hence is entirely illegitimate. In a society of free persons, cooperation and voluntary action will somehow allocate goods without the need for specific boundaries around the material in the universe.

The marketeers (agora = wide-open marketplace) do not share this utopian, and ultimately fear-ridden, view of Property. They perceive their existence to require material substance, and they do not draw their lines around the narrow-outlook boundaries the bodies they chance to be born with. Agorists see the limit of the Ego arising only from contact with the bubble of another Ego. In short, Agorists see Property as a fact of human nature, and waste no time lamenting that-which-is. They embrace this Truth joyfully and develop their libertarianism toward eliminating

conflict among the Individuals in Society, and allowing each and all to expand in permissible dimensions without limit: **Peace and Profit!**

The possibilities of confusion and communication breakdowns between those who arrived from the Left (anti-property) tradition and those from the Free Market (Centre in Europe, Right in America) tradition are bad enough from contact between the half-educated in both camps. The difference in terminology requires a virtual translation in order for Market and Non-Market Anarchists to understand each other without feeling threatened “from Within”.

A couple of examples will suffice. To the Non-Market Anarchist, Profit signifies some act of vicious exploitation, involving coercion and violence. To the Agorist, Profit is that increase in material wealth arising from innovation, i.e., the reward for creative genius, Would any anarchocommunist deny reward for creative genius? Would any Free Market Anarchist accept gain by coercion, unearned plunder? The Anarchist Commonality of Thought is there, if effort is made to cut through the verbiage to see and respect the other’s Vision.

Another problem arises from the view of “Wage slavery”, as the anarchosyndicalists call it. It may surprise some Anarchists from the Left that hard-core Agorists sneer at the ware System as something fitting for Medieval Europe (or modern Russia), a hang-over of feudal organizational methods incompatible with high-powered free enterprise. Their Vision of Devision of Labor foresees the “withering away” of the Worker function with the rise of cybernetics and robotics, and a great expansion of the Capitalist, and especially Entrepreneurial, economic functions of Humans. The rise of the Independent Contractor and the Consultant are present day trends lauded and heralded by marketeers.

This is not to say that there is no difference in outlook. Non-Market Anarchists see the employment of workers as “exploitation” desired and practiced by employers. Market Anarchists see employment as a sacrifice chosen *by* workers with irrational insecurities and unwillingness to accept risk; as almost compelled upon employers who would be far better served (in the account books) by dealing with contractors who would accept risks themselves for completion of work projects.

Not all anarchists see an end to violence, though all seek the end of monopolized, aggressive violence of the State. But even outright pacifism is not exclusive to the Left Anarchist tradition. The 10,000-odd graduates of Robert LeFevre’s educational effort have renounced defensive force to varying degrees, willing to rely on free market processes for their defense. This **hardly** supports the charge that Agorism is a refuge for camouflaged big-business plutocrats seeking to survive after a People’s Revolution (a charge often thrown wildly at the anti-utopian idealists of the uncoerced marketplace).

Nor are all anarchocommunists paving the way for a Bolshevik takeover, or anarchosyndicalists harbingers of fascism (state syndicalism). There *are* statist in both camps masquerading as Anarchists, to be sure. They are recognized as professing the “Ideals” of Communism or Agorism, while protesting the impracticality of achieving those ideals in the foreseeable future. Indeed, they spend their time accommodating to that “fact of life” called the State.

In conclusion, I’ll address myself to those who ask “So what? So there are all other kinds of Anarchists; why should we achieve any degree of solidarity? Let us each pursue our visions isolated, and each incidentally striking our blows against the State”.

The Agorists, the only ones I can pretend to Speak for to any degree, cannot rationally see such separation in their best interest. If the marketplace is simply made up of those who fully understand the workings of the market, we should have all perished before acquiring our present

understandings. Nor are those with an elementary economic education more valuable to us in trade and social intercourse if they insist on serving the State (like Ropke and Friedman, two outstanding sell-outs) than those who imperfectly but effectively see and oppose the common threat.

Finally, I hope we can all see that the State will be immeasurably hampered in facing a Commonality of Anarchists espousing all views of Human Nature. How can we be smeared by association with the Soviet Monstrosity if unbridled “laissez-faire” advocates are waving their black banners with glee at the TV cameras? How can Anarchy be identified with big-business statism if unalloyed communists cry from the barricades the slogans of freedom? And the rest of the uncommitted world could not fail to be moved and influenced upon seeing the future of freedom and mutual tolerance promised by Anarchy actually working here and now, **in the Camp of the Anarchists.**

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)
Anti-Copyright



Samuel Edward Konkin III
Agorists = The Anti-Utopian Visionaries
A First Introduction to the Positions of the Market-Anarchists
July 1, 1978

<https://www.sek3.net/agorists-the-anti-utopian-visionaries.html>

The Storm! A Journal for Free Spirits

Number 7 / Summer 1978

Pages 26-27

usa.anarchistlibraries.net