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As Marxism, and state-socialism in general, have increasingly been discredited, there has been a tendency for leftists to turn to another tradition, that of the democratic revolution.Democracy can be seen as a ground for opposition to the authoritarianisms of capitalist society (Morrison, 1995; Mouffe, 1992; Trend, 1996; Wood, 1995). One influential work concludes, "The task of the Left, therefore, cannot be to renounce liberal democratic ideology, but, on the contrary, to deepen and expand it in the direction of a radical and plural democracy… [S]ocialism is one of the components of a project for radical democracy, not vice versa" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, pp. 176, 178).

"Democracy" has two contradictory meanings today: the justification of the existing state versus a tradition of revolutionary popular liberation. It is the ideological support of the existing "democratic" states of the West and elsewhere—precisely because democratic ideals are so attractive. Periodical elections and (relative) freedom of expression and association are used to justify a society where a few really rule over the majority. Capitalist democracy is used by competing factions of rulers to settle their disputes without (much) bloodshed. It serves to coopt rebellious popular forces.

But democracy is also the cry of the oppressed against ruling elites—the idea that ordinary people should participate in, and control, the institutions which make up their society. This idea of democracy goes back to tribal councils, to classical Athens,to the great bourgeois revolutions of England, the U.S., and France, to the U.S. abolitionists, and, today, to ideals loved by millions. It is rights torn from rulers by the struggle and blood of the people. It is the standard for judging the state—and for condemning it. As such, it may not yet have lost its revolutionary potential.

This theoretical development is interesting to those of us who see socialist-anarchism as nothing but the most extreme, consistent, and thorough-going democracy. Writers such as

Paul Goodman (1965) and Noam Chomsky(1994), have claimed their versions of anarchism as extensions of the democratic tradition from Jefferson to John Dewey. Benjamin Tucker, the nineteenth century U.S.anarchist, wrote, "The anarchists are simply unterrified Jeffersonian democrats" (1888; p. 11). The contemporary anarchist Murray Bookchin writes, "…A free society will either be democratic or it will not be achieved at all" (1995; p. 17).

Yet the historical relation between anarchism and democracy is highly ambiguous. This should not be surprising, considering how vague and open-ended have been both terms. Like "socialism" or "freedom," they have meant many different things to many different people.

In *What is Property?*, the first work to claim the term "anarchist," Pierre Joseph Proudhon explicitly counterposed it to "democrat": "I hear some of my readers reply: …'You are a democrat.' No… 'Then what are you? ''I am an anarchist'" (quoted in Woodcock, 1962,p. 12). But years later, Proudhon advocated the replacement of the state by a democracy of voluntary producers' associations, "a vast federation of associations and groups united in the common bond of the democratic and social republic" (quoted in Guerin, 1970; p. 45).

Anarchism may offer a unique perspective on democracy's two meanings. Liberals and social democrats believe in democracy and may call themselves "democratic socialists."But while highly critical of aspects of the system, ultimately they succumb to the mystifying aspect of democratic theory. They accept the existing state as undemocratic, but hope to modify it, to make it "even more democratic." On the other hand, authoritarian revolutionaries—Stalinists,radical nationalists, etc.—do not fall for the democratic obfuscations of U.S. imperialism. But they intend to replace this state with a new state, one in which they are the new rulers. They reject the ideal of popular self-management.

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dency of its main wings,social democracy and Stalinism, has been authoritarian statism (as Draper would agree). Between Marxism and anarchism, it is anarchism which has the more democratic and freedom-loving theory and tradition.

Also, anarchists have a different relation to their theoreticians. Unlike Marxism and Leninism, anarchism is not named after its historic figures. It has no sacred writings comparable to *Capital* or *State and Revolution.* It has no problem rejecting the errors of its founders.

However, Draper has a major point. Anarchism, if not inherently hostile to democracy, has had a contradictory relationship with it. The individualist tendencies are the worst in that regard, as has been recognized by socialist-anarchists. What is needed is for anarchists to identify anarchism as extreme, revolutionary democracy. The weaknesses of anarchism are real,but they can be corrected from within the anarchist tradition.

The program of anarchism is to replace the bureaucratic-military state machine with a federation of popular assemblies and associations, as decentralized as is practically possible. This is democracy without the state. Any other program, such as staying within the limits of the existing state but making it "more democratic" ("democratic socialism" or "radical-liberal democracy") falls for "democracy" as an ideological cover of the rule of a minority—of patriarchal/racist capitalism and its bureaucratic state.

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Anarchists, however, can reject the claim that existing states should be supported because they are democratic, while continuing to hold up democracy as a liberating vision. But to do this, anarchism and democracy must be accepted as compatible. To clarify this issue, I will first discuss a criticism of anarchism from the standpoint of democracy, and then a criticism of democracy from the standpoint of anarchism.

Democratic Anti-Anarchism

Robert Dahl's *Democracy and Its Critics* (1989) is a major statement of the case for democracy, clearly written and thoughtful. Before plunging into his argument, Dahl discusses two fundamental "objections" to democracy, namely anarchism and "guardianship." He defines anarchism, fairly enough, as "a society consisting only of purely voluntary associations, a society without the state" (p. 37). He quickly adds, "Because democracy might well be the most desirable process for governing these associations, it might also be the prevalent form of government in an anarchist society" (p. 37). This makes clear that anarchism is not opposed to democracy but to the "democratic state."

Unfortunately, he does not go on to explain what he means by "the state."I do not pro-pose to define the term 'state' rigorously" (p. 359). He uses it, apparently, to mean "the major means of organized coercion" (p. 43, see also p. 359).

Dahl goes on to make an argument that some coercion is necessary and that anarchists are wrong to absolutely oppose all social coercion. The goal should be to "…minimize coercion and maximize consent" (p. 51). Essentially I agree with his argument. Whatever may be the case after centuries of anarchist freedom, a newly-anarchist society will need some way to control individual psychopathic killers or violent organized counterrevolutionaries.However, Dahl seems to assume that coer-

cion means a state. He admits that preliterate peoples, such as the Inuit (Eskimo), lived satisfactorily for centuries or millennia without states,but he does not consider how they dealt with the social need for coercion. They had coercion, whether by public opinion or organized violence—every male, at least, was armed and organized by the tribal council. What they did not have was a state.

Kropotkin defined the state: "The State idea…includes the existence of a power situated above society…the concentration in the hands of a few of many functions in the life of society… A whole mechanism of legislation and of policing has to be developed in order to subject some classes to the domination of others" (1993; p. 160). Comparable ideas were expressed by Engels: "…[T]his power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state…[I]t consists not merely of armed men but also of material adjuncts, prisons, and institutions of coercion of all kinds…" (quoted by Lenin, 1970; pp. 290, 292).

The argument of anarchists is not that it is possible to immediately abolish all coercion (although some may have posed it that way). It is that it is possible to abolish the bureaucratic, socially-alienated institution of the state. The "democratic state" is to be condemned, not because it is still coercive, but because it cannot be truly democratic. By its very nature,this instrument of coercion which stands above and against society must serve a ruling minority against an oppressed majority.

Dahl does not deal with this issue directly, but it relates to a major point of his book. Modern society, he says, is too large and complex to be based on the face-to-face, direct democracy of the preliterate tribes or later city-states. For democracy to exist on a large scale, it needed the "invention" of representation. Only representative government (by implication, a state) could have brought democracy to the modern world, he claims.

the French parliament. Kropotkin, the third "father of anarchism," became an enthusiastic supporter of the Western imperialist states in World War I. Goodman (1965) and Chomsky (1994) could fairly be called reformists. This anarchist support for reformism became a serious matter when the Spanish anarchists of the 1930s, faced with a revolutionary situation, became ministers in the liberal capitalist government. On the other side, many anarchists joined with the Bolsheviks after the Russian Revolution. In the 1960s, the anarchist-pacifists of Liberation magazine became apologists for Castro and Ho Chi Minh. Further examples are easily found.

The Marxist Hal Draper has argued that the basic problem with anarchism is its supposed rejection of democracy. "…[A]narchist 'libertarianism'…is not concerned with the winning of democratic control-from-below, but with the destruction of 'authority' over the individual ego, even the most extremely democratic version of authority imaginable" (1969; p. 93). He quotes Proudhon, "Any man who cannot do what he wants and anything he wants has the right to revolt, even alone, against the government, even if the government were everybody else" (same). Draper comments, "The only man who can enjoy this 'freedom' unlimited by society is a despot" (same).

While there is an authoritarian side of the anarchist tradition, it would be ridiculous to deny that there is also a libertarian-democratic side, in both theory and practice. Whether or not they used the word "democracy," socialist-anarchists have long advocated replacing bureaucratic institutions by self-governing associations, that is, by democracy (and, as I have argued, a strong defense of individual and minority rights does not necessarily contradict democracy or majority rule). Anarchists have organized mass democratic, labor unions, popular armies,and self-managed peasant collectives and worker cooperatives. Marxism too has both democratic and authoritarian sides, but the dominant ten-

or because it is far-sighted and provides benefits before the workers form a union—but whatever the reason, management remains capitalist and the enemy of the workers. There are divisions within management,as within the state, but they are over how best to suppress and/or coopt the oppressed.Neither management nor the state is the friend of workers or women or peasants.

Laclau and Mouffe add that there are times when the state is opposed to "civil society.""…[T]his is what happens when the state has been transformed into a bureaucratic excrescence imposed by force upon the rest of society, as in Eastern Europe, or in the Nicaragua of the Somozas…" (p. 180). That is, in countries, such as the U.S., where the majority do support the regime, the state is not, they claim, a bureaucratic-military excrescence upon society. This is an opinion held by many people, including that U.S. majority. It can be argued for, but I do not see how it can be called "radical."

Democracy's Importance For Anarchism

If democratic theory needs anarchism, so anarchism needs democracy. There is an authoritarian trend within the history of anarchism. It begins with Proudhon, who was racist,anti-Semitic, patriarchal, and who imagined himself ruling France as dictator over his federation of associations (Draper, 1970). Bakunin, the second "father of anarchism," kept on trying to organize secret societies which would manipulate mass organizations from behind the scenes (Guerin, 1970; Woodcock, 1962). Anarchist terrorists and bomb throwers(including the Unabomber) acted as elite heroes without (or against) the people.

From then until now, anarchists have often capitulated either to reformism (support of the current state) or to revolutionary dictatorships. Proudhon ended up getting elected to

But this has two sides. Representation made a sort-of-democracy possible on the large scale of modern nations,but that large scale made it possible to create a form of elite rule which could still be called democracy. Instead of direct,participatory democracy, we have a layer of elected politicians and government bureaucrats who stand between the people and the actual making of decisions. From time to time, the passive citizens elect these "representatives" to be political for them. Wood (1995) cites the views of leading figures among the U.S. Founding Fathers, "Their argument was not that representation is necessary in a large republic,but, on the contrary, that a large republic is desirable so that representation is unavoidable… Representation…is intend-ed to act as a filter" (p. 216).

Undoubtedly, some degree of representation or delegation,from lower to higher bodies, is necessary. As federalists,anarchists have generally agreed with this. But the meaning of representation, and all other aspects of democracy, would change drastically in a different social context. The anarchists' proposed changes in society might be summarized in two concepts:

First, the creation of an egalitarian society in which separate groups of oppressors and oppressed either do not exist any longer (capitalists and workers) or have redefined their relationships as equals (men and women, European-Americans and African-Americans, North Americans and Latin Americans). Where wealth is evenly distributed and no oppression exists, society is no longer pulled in different directions by competing and hostile forces. It does not need a state to hold things together; it is easier to maximize con-sent and minimize coercion.

Second (and here most Marxists disagree), anarchists want a society based in direct democracy through popular assemblies—at the workplace, in the community, and in many voluntary associations. The more decisions are made

locally,then the fewer are made centrally. The more people experience face-to-face democracy as a vibrant, daily way of life, the more they will really control any representatives sent to delegated assemblies. The police and army would be replaced by a militia—the people armed. "If the entire people were truly sovereign, there would no longer be either government or governed…the State…would be identical to society and disappear into industrial [and other—WP]organization" (Guerin, 1970; p. 17).

Dahl is aware of these arguments and agrees with them to a point. He seeks to decrease social and political inequalities. He advocates greatly increasing participation and decision-making at the local community level. He supports a democratic socialism where the economy is socially owned and regulated but firms compete with each other. Unlike most sup-porters of "market socialism," he advocates that the firms be democratically managed by their employees, like producer cooperatives or the previous Yugoslavian system. "…[I]t would be a mistake to underestimate the importance of authoritarian institutions in the daily lives of working people and the consequences of introducing a more democratic system in the governing of economic enterprises" (p. 332).

Yet he does underestimate the consequences of such decentralized democratization on the more centralized, national and international, institutions of society. He dismisses the idea of a drastic transformation of society raised by either Marxists or anarchists. "Market socialism" itself suggests that, even under "socialism," the economy will not be run overall by democratic decision-making but by the market. While agreeing that our society is highly unequal, he denies that there is minority rule (because there are competing elites). This society—which he calls "polyarchy"—is imperfect, but he argues that it is still democratic and worthy of support. In practice, if not in intention, he is one of those who accept the role of democracy as justifying the existing patriarchal capitalist state.

with statism, but they still have no alternative to using the existing state to intervene in the economy.

A democratic theory which is really radical would strongly deny that the existing patriarchal/racist capitalist state is truly democratic, would oppose the whole socially-alienated, bureaucratic-military state machine, and would propose instead a democratic federation of assemblies and associations. Anything less will gloss over the undemocratic—anti-democratic—nature of our society and its state.

A significant attempt to develop a radical democratic theory which includes socialism has been made by Chantal Mouffe and those associated with her. She is quite clear that her "radical democracy" is not an alternative to the existing state but an extension of it. "What we advocate is a kind of 'radical liberal democracy'—we do not present it as a rejection of the liberal democratic regime or the institution of a new political form of society" (1996; p.20). Her aim is "…extending democracy within the framework of a liberal-democratic regime" (1992; p. 3). She is critical of direct democracy or community as goals.

In fact the only time she seems to directly deal with the state is in a discussion of those who oppose "civil society" to "the state" (in Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). It is not hard to show that "civil society"—the realm of capitalism, patriarchy, and racism—is not the ground for salvation from the state. But "civil society" is internally antagonistic, based on the tensions between oppressed and oppressors, including the struggles of classes, genders, and races,among others. This pressure from below for freedom is the source of all social progress.

Mouffe claims that the state also has internal antagonisms, therefore implying that it is wrong to reject the state as such. She notes, for example, that the state may pass legislation against gender discrimination or in defense of peasants against landlords in poor countries. This is true, but these are like raises which the management of a business may offer its workers. It may do this because the workers force it to

least, not tobuild new ones. They may be in the majority on other issues.

Minority rights is an essential part of majority rule. If the members of a community do not have the chance to hear all opinions, including minority ones, then they cannot be said to really decide the issues. The suppression of minority views in capitalist democracy (by force or just by lack of money or lack of coverage in the media) is one way the ruling minority creates the illusion that the majority is governing.

At the same time, minority rights are safest when the majority rules, as opposed to any minority dictatorship. Majority rule and minority rights are not opposites but require each other.

To democracy, Malatesta counterposes "free agreement." But there is no such opposition.People may freely agree to form voluntary associations—whether to trade stamps or to produce shoes. But then how will they run the associations? Presumably people will not agree completely on everything. There must be some process other than dissolving the associations each time everyone fails to agree. That process is democracy. Anarchists are not fora democratic state but can be for a democratic society, for democracy as a "way of life." Anarchism is democracy without the state.

Anarchism's Importance For Democracy

Why is this important? We can see what happens when radicals try to develop democratic theory without incorporating anarchism. Often it is little more than "democratic socialism" restated, that is, reformist state socialism. For example, David Trend's Radical Democracy (1996) is mostly articles by members of Democratic Socialists of America. They are somewhat embarrassed by the identification of their socialism

Part of the problem is that, whenever Dahl backs up theory by referring to practice, he always turns to existing democratic capitalist states. Using these as models produces a rather limited view of what democracy is capable of being. Anarchists, in contrast, focus on the historical revolutions (for example, Dolgoff, 1974; Kropotkin, 1986; Voline, 1974).

The lessons which anarchists draw from these revolutions are summarized by Bookchin(1996): "From the largely medieval peasant wars of the sixteenth century Reformation to the modern uprisings of industrial workers and peasants, oppressed people have created their own popular forms of community association…to replace the oppressive states… [T]hese associations took the institutional form of local assemblies…or representative councils of mandated recallable deputies" (p. 4). These historical examples cannot "prove" the validity of a radically democratic society, but they provide ample evidence of its possibility.

Anarchist Anti-Democracy

The relation of anarchism and democracy has been raised from the other side, by Errico Malatesta, the great Italian anarchist (active from the 1870s to the 1930s). Unlike the individualist, anti-organizational tendency within anarchism, Malatesta advocated that anarchists organize themselves and promote the self-organization of working people. In the1920s, he wrote two brief pieces on our topic, with the theme summarized in the title of one,"Neither Democrats nor Dictators: Anarchists" (Malatesta, 1995; pp. 73–76 and 76–79).

He believed that the capitalist democratic state was preferable to a dictatorship, if only because anarchists could use its ideology against it. "…[T]he worst of democracies is always preferable, if only from the educational point of view, than [sic] the best of dictatorships…Democracy is a lie, it…is, in reality,

oligarchy, that is, government by the few to the advantage of a privileged class. But we can still fight it in the name of freedom and equality…"(p. 77).

As can be seen from this, much of Malatesta's opposition to democracy is really directed against democratic ideology as a rationalization for capitalism and the state. But he mixes this up with a denunciation of the very concept of majority rule. "…[W]e are neither for a majority nor for a minority government; neither for democracy nor for dictatorship… We are…for free agreement… We are for anarchy" (p. 76).

The democratic concept is "the rule of the majority, with respect for the rights of the minority." Under patriarchal capitalism, "majority rule" has meant the rule of the dominant minority which shapes majority public opinion through the control of media and in other ways. "Minority rights" have often been called on against any attempt by the majority to take any of the wealth of the rich. But "majority rule" and "minority rights" have also been rallying cries against ruling minorities and the prejudiced mass which follows them.

Malatesta points out that the majority is often wrong, compared to the most enlightened minority. If the majority rules, he argues, it must dictate to the minority, forcing its will on the minority. This is just as bad as minority rule. How can the majority be trusted to respect minority rights if the majority rules over the minority? For these reasons, Malatesta rejects majority rule in principle. Such views must be responded to.

Civil libertarians have long argued that there are many areas of life where collective decision-making is not necessary. In these areas, such as sexual orientation, the majority have no right to dictate to the minority. Large numbers of people today would respect the rights of "consenting adults" to engage in minority sexual practices. As Thomas Jefferson argued for religious freedom, "…[I]t does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg" (Dewey, 1957; p. 111). Anarchists

seek to vastly expand the range of voluntary association for such self-chosen activities,activities outside the realm of majority rule.

However, there will still be areas which require collective decision-making. For example, a community may need to decide whether to build a new road. Consensus would be best, but people often disagree. A majority and a minority may polarize about this issue. This can-not be treated as a matter of voluntary association (although dissidents are always free to pick up and go elsewhere—but other communities also must decide whether to build roads). Either the road is built or it is not. If a majority forms for road-building, then the anti-builder minority may be asked to participate, to give their share of the labor or social wealth.In any case, they will have to live in the community with a new road, unwanted by them.

This is not coercion by the police but by reality. A decision had to be made collectively. If not determined by majority vote, then how? A community may decide that such decisions must be unanimous. But what if everyone cannot agree? Perhaps the minority gets to veto the proposal, since it is not unanimous. Then it is the minority which rules, preventing the majority from getting its road. Alternately, the minority agrees to keep quiet, so as to "not block consensus." This denies them the right to be openly counted as disagreeing. I am not denying the right of any community or association to decide to rely on consensus, just arguing that majority rule is not authoritarian in principle.

Malatesta asks what rights the minority has under majority rule. People with minority views have the right to participate in all decision making. They have the right to try to win a majority to their views. If they lose one vote, they may continue to participate and to seek to become the new majority. Perhaps in the future they will persuade enough community members that the new road was a mistake and to tear it down, or, at