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a Kropotkin, and we will see the abyss that separates the two kinds of souls . . .

The words anarchism and individualism are frequently used as synonyms. Many thinkers vastly different from each other are carelessly qualified sometimes as anarchists, sometimes as individualists. It is thus that we speak indifferently of Stirnerite anarchism or individualism, of Nietzschean anarchism or individualism, of Barrésian anarchism or individualism, etc. In other cases, though, this identification of the two terms is not looked upon as possible. We commonly say Proudhonian anarchism, Marxist anarchism, anarchist syndicalism. But we could not say Proudhonian, Marxist, or syndicalist individualism. We can speak of a Christian or Tolstoyan anarchism, but not of a Christian or Tolstoyan individualism.

At other times the two terms have been melted together in one name: anarchist individualism. Under this rubric M. Hasch designates a social philosophy that it differentiates from anarchism properly so-called, and whose great representative, according to him, are Goethe, Byron, Humboldt, Schleiermacher, Carlyle, Emerson, Kierkegaard, Renan, Ibsen, Stirner and Nietzsche. This philosophy can be summed up as the cult of great men and the apotheosis of genius. It would seem to us to be arguable whether the expression individualist anarchism can be used to designate such a doctrine. The qualification of anarchist, in the etymological sense, can be applied with difficulty to thinkers of the race of Goethe, Carlyle, and Nietzsche, whose philosophy seems on the contrary to be dominated by ideas of hierarchical organization and the harmonious placing of values in a series. What is more, the epithet of individualist can't be applied with equal justice to all the thinkers we have just named. If it is appropriate for designating the egotist, nihilist and anti-idealist revolt of Stirner, it can with difficulty be applied to the Hegelian, optimist and idealist philosophy of a Carlyle, who clearly subordinates the individual to the idea.

There thus reigns a certain confusion concerning the use of the two terms anarchism and individualism, as well as the systems of ideas and sentiments that these terms designate. We would here like to attempt to clarify the notion of individualism and determine its psychological and sociological content by distinguishing it from anarchism . . .

Individualism is the sentiment of a profound, irreducible antinomy between the individual and society. The individualist is he who, by

virtue of his temperament, is predisposed to feel in a particularly acute fashion the ineluctable disharmonies between his intimate being and his social milieu. At the same time, he is a man for whom life has reserved some decisive occasion to remark this disharmony. Whether through brutality, or the continuity of his experiences, for him it has become clear that for the individual society is a perpetual creator of constraints, humiliations and miseries, a kind of continuous generation of human pain. In the name of his own experience and his personal sensation of life the individualist feels he has the right to relegate to the rank of utopia any ideal of a future society where the hoped-for harmony between the individual and society will be established. Far from the development of society diminishing evil, it does nothing but intensify it by rendering the life of the individual more complicated, more laborious and more difficult in the middle of the thousand gears of an increasingly tyrannical social mechanism. Science itself, by intensifying within the individual the consciousness of the vital conditions made for him by society, arrives only at darkening his intellectual and moral horizons. *Qui auget scientiam augel et dolorem.*

We see that individualism is essentially a social pessimism. Under its most moderate form it admits that if life in society is not an absolute evil and completely destructive of individuality, for the individualist is at the very least a restrictive and oppressive condition, a necessary evil and a last resort.

The individualists who respond to this description form a small morose group whose rebellious, resigned or hopeless words contrast with the fanfares for the future of optimistic sociologists. It is Vigny saying: "The social order is always bad. From time to time it is bearable. Between bad and bearable the dispute isn't worth a drop of blood." It's Schopenhauer seeing social life as the supreme flowering of human pain and evil. It's Stirner with his intellectual and moral solipsism perpetually on his guard against the duperies of social idealism and the intellectual and moral crystallization with which every organized society threatens the individual. It is, at certain moments, an Amiel with his painful stoicism that perceives society as a limitation and a restriction of his free spiritual nature. It's a David Thoreau, the extremist disciple of Emerson, that "student of nature," deciding to stray from the ordinary paths of human

Optimistic and idealistic, imbued with humanism and moralism, anarchism is a social dogmatism. It is a "cause" in the sense that Stirner gave this word. A "cause" is one thing, "the simple attitude of an individual soul" is another. A cause implies a common adherence to an idea, a shared belief and a devotion to that belief. Such is not individualism. Individualism is anti-dogmatic and little inclined to proselytism. It would gladly take as its motto Stirner's phrase: "I have set my affair on nothing." The true individualist doesn't seek to communicate to others his own sensation of life and society. What would be the good of this? *Omne individuum inefabile.* Convinced of the diversity of temperaments and the uselessness of a single rule, he would gladly say with David Thoreau: "I would not have any one adopt my mode of living on any account; for, beside that before he has fairly learned it I may have found out another for myself, I desire that there may be as many different persons in the world as possible; but I would have each one be very careful to find out and pursue *his own way*, and not his father's or his mother's or his neighbor's instead." The individualist knows that there are temperaments that are refractory to individualism and that it would be ridiculous to want to convince them. In the eyes of a thinker in love with solitude and independence, a contemplative, a pure adept of the inner life, like Vigny, social life and its agitations seem to be something artificial, rigged, excluding any true and strongly felt sentiments. And conversely, those who by their temperament feel an imperious need for life and social action, those who throw themselves into the melee, those who have political and social enthusiasm, those who believe in the virtues of leagues and groups, those who have forever on their lips the words "The Idea," "The Cause," those who believe that tomorrow will bring something new and great, these people necessarily misunderstand and disdain the contemplative, who lowers before the crowd the harrow of which Vigny spoke. Inner life and social action are two things that are mutually exclusive. The two kinds of souls are not made to understand each other. As antitheses, we should read alongside each other Schopenhauer's "Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life," that bible of a reserved, mistrustful, and sad individualism, or the *Journal Intime* of Amiel. Or the *Journal d'un Poète* by Vigny. On the other side, we should read a Benoit Malon, an Elisée Reclus or

and can exist without you. In short, society is sacred and the association is your property; society uses you and you use the association.

A vain distinction if ever there was one! Where should we fix the boundary between society and association? As Stirner himself admitted, doesn't an association tend to crystallize into a society?

However we approach it, anarchism cannot reconcile the two antinomic terms, society and individual liberty. The free society that it dreams of is a contradiction in terms. It's a piece of steel made of wood, a stick without an end. Speaking of anarchists Nietzsche wrote: "We can already read on all the walls and all the tables their word for the future: Free society. Free society? To be sure. But I think you know, my dear sirs, what we will build it with: Wood made of iron . . . " Individualism is clearer and more honest than anarchism. It places the state, society, and association on the same plane. It rejects them both and as far as this is possible tosses them overboard. "All associations have the defects of convents," Vigny said.

Antisocial, individualism is openly immoralist. This is not true in an absolute fashion. In a Vigny pessimistic individualism is reconciled with a morally haughty stoicism, severe and pure. Even so, even in Vigny an immoralist element remains: a tendency to dis-idealize society, to separate and oppose the two terms society and morality, and to regard society as a fatal generator of cowardice, unintelligence, and hypocrisy. "*Cinq mars*, *Stello*, and *Servitude et Grandeur militaires* are the songs of a kind of epic poem on disillusionment. But it is only social and false things that I will destroy and illusions I will trample on. I will raise on these ruins, on this dust, the sacred beauty of enthusiasm, of love, and of honor." It goes without saying that in a Stirner or a Stendhal individualism is immoralist without scruples or reservations. Anarchism is imbued with a crude moralism. Anarchist morality, even without obligations or sanctions, is no less a morality. At heart it is Christian morality, except for the pessimist element contained in the latter. The anarchist supposes that those virtues necessary to harmony will flourish on their own. Enemy of coercion, the doctrine accords the faculty to take from the general stores even to the lazy. But the anarchist is persuaded that in the future city the lazy will be rare, or will not exist at all.

activity and to become a "wanderer," worshipping independence and dreams. A "wanderer whose every minute will be filled with more work than the entire lives of many men with occupations." It's a Challemel-Lacour with his pessimistic conception of society and progress. It is perhaps, at certain moments, a Tarde, with an individualism colored with misanthropy that he somewhere expresses: "It is possible that the flux of imitation has its banks and that, by the very effect of its excessive deployment, the need for sociability diminishes or rather alters and transforms itself into a kind of general misanthropy, very compatible, incidentally, with a moderate commercial circulation and a certain activity of industrial exchanges reduced to the strict necessary, but above all appropriate to reinforcing in each of us the distinctive traits of our inner individuality."

Even among those who, like M. Maurice Barrès, by dilettantism and artistic posture, are averse to the accents of sharp revolt or discouraged pessimism, individualism remains a sentiment of "the impossibility that exists of harmonizing the private and the general I." It's a determination to set free the first I, to cultivate it in what it has of the most special, the most advanced, the most rummaged through, both in detail and in depth. "The individualist," says M. Barrès, "is he who, through pride in his true I, which he isn't able to set free, ceaselessly wounds, soils, and denies what he has in common with the mass of men . . . The dignity of the men of our race is exclusively attached to certain shivers that the world doesn't know and cannot see and which we must multiply in ourselves."

In all of them individualism is an attitude of sensibility that goes from hostility and distrust to indifference and disdain vis-à-vis the organized society in which we are forced to live, vis-à-vis its uniformising rules, its monotonous repetitions, and its enslaving constraints. It's a desire to escape from it and to withdraw into oneself. Above all, it is the profound sentiment of the "uniqueness of the I," of that which despite it all the I maintains of unrepressible and impenetrable to social influences. As M. Tarde says, it is the sentiment of the "profound and fleeting singularity of persons, of their manner of being, or thinking, of feeling, which is only once and of an instant."

Is there any need to demonstrate how much this attitude differs from anarchism? There is no doubt that in one sense anarchism proceeds

from individualism. It is, in fact, the anti-social revolt of a minority that feels itself oppressed or disadvantaged by the current order of things. But anarchism represents only the first moment of individualism, the moment of faith and hope, of actions courageous and confident of success. At its second moment individualism converts, as we have seen, into social pessimism.

The passage from confidence to despair, from optimism to pessimism is here, in great part, an affair of psychological temperament. There are delicate souls that are easily wounded on contact with social realities and consequently quick to be disillusioned, a Vigny or a Heine, for example. We can say that these souls belong to the psychological type that has been called "sensitive." They feel that social determinism, insofar as it is repressive of the individual, is particularly tormenting and oppressive. But there are other souls who resist multiple failures, who disregard even experience's toughest examples and remain unshakeable in their faith. These souls belong to the "active" type. Such are the souls of the anarchist apostles: Bakunin, Kropotkin, Reclus. Perhaps their imperturbable confidence in their ideal depends on a lesser intellectual and emotional acuity. Reasons for doubt and discouragement don't strike them harshly enough to tarnish the abstract ideal they've forged and to lead them to the final and logical step of individualism: social pessimism.

Whatever the case, there can be no doubt concerning the optimism of anarchist philosophy. That optimism is spread, often simplistically and with naivety, in those volumes with blood red covers that form the reading matter of propagandists by the deed. The shadow of the optimistic Rousseau floats over all this literature.

Anarchist optimism consists in believing that social disharmonies, that the antinomies that the current state of affairs present between the individual and society, are not essential, but rather accidental and provisional; that they will one day be resolved and will give place to an era of harmony.

Anarchism rests on two principles that seem to complement each other, but actually contradict each other. One is the principle that is properly individualist or libertarian, formulated by Wilhelm von Humboldt and chosen by Stuart Mill as the epigraph of his "Essay on Liberty": "The great principle is the essential and absolute importance of human

makes laws concerning duels. Two men who agree to risk their lives in order to settle an affair (whatever it might be) cannot execute their agreement because the state doesn't want it. They would expose themselves to judicial pursuit and punishment. What becomes of the freedom of self-determination? Things are completely different in those places, like North America, where society decides to make the duelists suffer certain disagreeable consequences of their act and takes form them, for example, the credit they had previously enjoyed. The refusing of credit is everyone's affair, and if it pleases a society to deprive someone of it for one reason or another, he who is struck by it cannot complain of an attack on his liberty: society has done nothing but exercise its own. The society of which we spoke leaves the individual perfectly free to expose himself to the harmful or disagreeable consequences that result from his way of acting, and leaves full and entire his freedom of will. The state does exactly the contrary: it denies all legitimacy to the will of the individual and only recognizes as legitimate its own will, the will of the state." Strange reasoning. The law doesn't attack me. In what way am I freer if society boycotts me? Such reasoning would legitimize all the attacks of a public opinion infected by moral bigotry against the individual. The legend of individual liberty in Anglo-Saxon countries is built on this reasoning. Stirner himself feels the vice of his reasoning, and a little further along he arrives at his celebrated distinction between society and association. In the one (society) the individual is taken as a means; in the other (association), he takes himself as an end and treats the association as a means of personal power and enjoyment: "You bring to the association all your might, all your riches and make your presence felt In society you and your activity are utilized. In the first you live as an egoist; in the second you live as a man, i.e., religiously; you work in the Lord's vineyard. You owe society everything you have; you are its debtor and you are tormented with social obligations. You owe nothing to the association. She serves you and you leave it without scruples as soon as you no longer have any advantages to draw from it . . ." "If society is more than you then you will have it pass ahead of you and you will make yourself its servant. The association is your tool, your weapon; it sharpens and multiplies your natural strength. The association only exists for you and by you. Society, on the contrary, claims you as its good

individual and society. This is because in its eyes society represents a spontaneous growth (Spencer), while the state is an artificial and authoritarian organization. In the eyes of an individualist society is as tyrannical, if not more so, than the state. Society, in fact, is nothing else but the mass of social ties of all kinds (opinions, mores, usages, conventions, mutual surveillance, more or less discreet espionage of the conduct of others, moral approval and disapproval, etc.) Society thus understood constitutes a closely- knit fabric of petty and great tyrannies, exigent, inevitable, incessant, harassing, and pitiless, which penetrates into the details of individual life more profoundly and continuously than statist constraints can. What is more, if we look closely at this, statist tyranny and the tyranny of mores proceed from the same root: the collective interest of a caste or class that wishes to establish or to maintain its domination and prestige. Opinion and mores are in part the residue of ancient caste disciplines that are in the process of disappearing, in part the seed of new social disciplines brought with them by the new leading caste in the process of formation. This is why between state constraint and that of opinion and mores there is only a difference in degree. Deep down they have the same goal: the maintenance of a certain moral conformism useful to the group, and the same procedures: the vexation and elimination of the independent and the recalcitrant. The only difference is that diffuse sanctions (opinions and mores) are more hypocritical than the others. Proudhon was right to say that the state is nothing but a mirror of society. It is only tyrannical because society is tyrannical. The government, following a remark of Tolstoy's, is a gathering of men who exploit others and that favors the wicked and the cheaters If this is the practice of government, this is also that of society. There is a conformity between the two terms: state and society. The one is the same as the other. The gregarious spirit, or the spirit of society, is no less oppressive for the individual than the statist or priestly spirit, which only maintain themselves thanks to and through it.

How strange! Stirner himself, on the question of the relations between society and the state, seems to share the error of Spencer and Bakunin. He protests against the intervention of the state in the acts of the individual, but not against that of society. "Before the individual the state girds itself with an aureole of sanctity. For example, it

development in its richest diversity." The other is the humanist or altruist principle which is translated on the economic plane by communist anarchism. That the individualist and humanist principles negate each other is proven by logic and fact. Either the individualist principle means nothing, or it is a demand in favor of that which differs and is unequal in individuals, in favor of those traits that make them different, separates them and, if need be, opposes them. On the contrary, humanism aims at the assimilation of humanity. Following the expression of M. Gide, its ideal is to make a reality of the expression "our like." In fact, at the current time we see the antagonism of the two principles assert itself among the most insightful theoreticians of anarchism, and that logical and necessary antagonism cannot fail to bring about the breakup of anarchism as a political and social doctrine.

Whatever the case and whatever difficulties might be met by he who wants to reconcile the individualist and humanist principles, these two rival and enemy principles meet at least at this one point: they are both clearly optimistic. Humboldt's principle is optimistic insofar as it implicitly affirms the original goodness of human nature and the legitimacy of its free blossoming. It sets itself up in opposition to the Christian condemnation of our natural instincts, and we can understand the reservations of M. Dupont-White, the translator of the "Essay on Liberty," had from the spiritualist and Christian point of view (condemnation of the flesh) as concerns this principle.

The humanist principle is no less optimistic. Humanism, in fact, is nothing but rendering divine of man in what he has of the general, of humanity, and consequently of human society. As we see, anarchism, optimistic as concerns the individual, is even more so as concerns society. Anarchism supposes that individual freedoms, left to themselves, will naturally harmonize and spontaneously realize the anarchist ideal of free society.

In regard to these two opposing points of view, the Christian and anarchist, what is the attitude of individualism? Individualism, a realist philosophy, all lived life and immediate sensation, equally repudiates these two metaphysics: one, Christian metaphysics, which *a priori* affirms original evil, the other the rationalist and Rosseauist metaphysic, that no less *a priori* affirms the original and essential goodness of our

nature. Individualism places itself before the facts. And these latter make visible in the human being a bundle of instincts in struggle with each other and, in human society, a grouping of individuals also necessarily in struggle with each other. By the very fact of his conditions of existence the human being is subject to the law of struggle: internal struggle among his own instincts, external struggle with his like. If recognizing the permanent and universal character of egoism and struggle in human existence means being pessimistic, then we must say that individualism is pessimistic. But we must immediately add that the pessimism of individualism, a pessimism of fact, an experimental pessimism, if you will, pessimism *a posteriori*, is totally different from the theological pessimism that *a priori* pronounces, in the name of dogma, the condemnation of human nature. What is more, individualism separates itself every bit as much from anarchism. If, with anarchism, it admits Humboldt's principle as the expression of a normal tendency necessary to our nature for its full blossoming, at the same time it recognizes that this tendency is condemned to never being satisfied because of the internal and external disharmonies of our nature. In other words, it considers the harmonious development of the individual and society as a utopia. Pessimistic as concerns the individual, individualism is even more so as concerns society: man is by his very nature disharmonious because of the internal struggle of his instincts. But this disharmony is exacerbated by the state of society which, through a painful paradox, represses our instincts at the same time as it exasperates them. In fact, from the rapprochement of individual wills-to-life is formed a collective will-to-life which becomes immediately oppressive for the individual will-to-life and opposes its flourishing with all its force. The state of society thus pushes to its ultimate degree the disharmonies of our nature. It exaggerates them and puts them in the poorest possible light. Following the idea of Schopenhauer, society thus truly represents the human will-to-life at its highest degree: struggle, lack of fulfillment, and suffering.

From this opposition between anarchism and individualism flow others. Anarchism believes in progress. Individualism is an attitude of thought that we can call non-historical. It denies becoming, progress. It sees the human will-to-life in an eternal present. Like Schopenhauer, with whom he has more than one similarity, Stirner is a non-historical

spirit. He too believes that it is chimerical to expect something new and great from tomorrow. Every social form, by the very fact that it crystallizes, crushes the individual. For Stirner, there are no utopian tomorrows, no "paradise at the end of our days." There is nothing but the egoist today. Stirner's attitude before society is the same as that of Schopenhauer before nature and life. With Schopenhauer the negation of life remains metaphysical and, we might say, spiritual (we should remember that Schopenhauer condemns suicide which, would be the material and tangible negation). in the same way Stirner's rebellion against society is an entirely spiritual internal rebellion, all intention and inner will. It is not, as is the case with Bakunin, an appeal to pan-destruction. Regarding society, it is a simple act of distrust and passive hostility, a mix of indifference and disdainful resignation. It is not a question of the individual fighting against society, for society will always be the stronger. It must thus be obeyed, obeyed like a dog. But Stirner, while obeying, as a form of consolation, maintains an immense intellectual contempt. This is more or less the attitude of Vigny vis-a-vis nature and society. "A tranquil despair, without convulsions of anger and without reproaches for heaven, this is wisdom itself." And again: "Silence would be the best criticism of life."

Anarchism is an exaggerated and mad idealism. Individualism is summed up in a trait common to Schopenhauer and Stirner: a pitiless realism. It arrives at what a German writer calls a complete "dis-idealization" (Entidealisierung) of life and society.

"An ideal is nothing but a pawn," Stirner said. From this point of view Stirner is the most authentic representative of individualism. His icy word seizes souls with a shiver entirely different from that, fiery and radiant, of a Nietzsche. Nietzsche remains an impenitent, imperious, violent idealist. He idealizes superior humanity. Stirner represents the most complete dis-idealization of nature and life, the most radical philosophy of disenchantment that has appeared since Ecclesiastes. Pessimist without measure or reservations, individualism is absolutely anti-social, unlike anarchism, with which this is only relatively the case (in relation to current society). Anarchism admits an antinomy between the individual and the state, an antinomy it resolves by the suppression of the state, but it does not see any inherent, irreducible antinomy between the