

# PANARCHY

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TOWARDS VOLUNTARY COMMUNITIES

Edited by  
GIAN PIERO DE BELLIS



Panarchy. An Anthology (2023)

Panarchy - Polyarchy - Statism - State - War - Territorialism - Aterritorialism - Autonomy  
- Voluntary Communities - Future

Web Sites:

- [www.polyarchy.org](http://www.polyarchy.org)

- [www.panarchy.org](http://www.panarchy.org)

- [www.wwwisdom.net](http://www.wwwisdom.net)

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# INTRODUCTION

## PANARCHY: BIRTH, REVIVAL AND DISSEMINATION OF THE IDEA

### **Birth**

The term panarchy seems to have been first used by a cosmopolitan philosopher Frane Petric (Franciscus Patricius) who was born in 1529 on the island of Cherso, or Cres, off the coast of Dalmatia, and died in Rome in 1597. In his treatise (*Nova de universis philosophia* - New Philosophy Concerning the Universes) published in 1591 (with a second revised edition in 1593), he presented in four parts (*Panaugia* - *Panarchia* - *Pampsychia* - *Pancosmia*) his worldview in which the universe, nature, and knowledge, are seen as an integrated whole. This approach explains his insistence on using the prefix *Pan*, which means Whole in Greek.

However, it was only three centuries later that a scientist (botanist) and scholar named Paul-Émile de Puydt used the term panarchy with the meaning that will be examined here.

In 1860, he published, in the *Revue Trimestrielle*, Brussels, an extremely original article, entitled *Panarchie* (Panarchy) [Document 4]. In it, the author extends the idea of economic competition (*laissez-faire*, *laissez-passer*) from economic theory and practice to social and political relations.

In de Puydt's conception, many governments freely chosen by individuals can coexist side by side on the same territory and supply, more efficiently and economically, all those services that are currently provided, very often poorly and expensively, by a state with monopolistic territorial sovereignty. In the concept of panarchy, the end of any political monopoly and the freedom to choose between competing governments operating as service providers on the same territory, would then constitute the decisive, if not indispensable, factor in achieving better and more cost-effective social services.

While de Puydt is the one who originated the term panarchy in modern times, the first to put forward the proposal of competing governments was Gustave de Molinari, an economist in the classical liberal tradition, editor of the *Journal des Économistes* from 1881 to 1909.

In a paper that appeared in 1849 under the title *De la production de la sécurité* (On the Production of Security) [Document 1] he expressed the conviction that the protection and security of people is a service that, like others, can be provided by many agencies in competition amongst them, freely chosen and financed by individuals, attracting customers on the basis of the quality of their performance (reliability and convenience).

In a book published the same year, entitled *Les Soirées de la Rue Saint-Lazare* (The Evenings of the Rue Saint-Lazare), and consisting of a series of conversations between three people with different worldviews (a conservative, a socialist and an economist), Gustave de Molinari, speaking on behalf of the economist, openly calls for the introduction of "free governments" meaning "governments whose services I can accept or reject according to my free will" (Eleventh Evening).

And the rationale behind it is that, with the end of the state monopoly and the development of competition, the price of services (first and foremost that of *security*) "would always be reduced to the level of the costs of production" because "everyone would enter into a contract with the agency that inspired him with the greatest confidence and whose contractual conditions appeared to him to be the most favourable" (Eleventh Evening).

Unfortunately, a very reasonable and extremely practical idea like this met with no success, crushed by the powerful material interests



represented by the parasitic strata (the growing bureaucratic swarm of profiteers within the central state) and rejected by the mental encrustations of centuries of a feudal past based on territorialism (one territory, one master). The liberals themselves, at a meeting of the *Paris Political Economy Society* in October 1849 [Document 2] rejected this idea as unworkable if not absurd. Thus, even the advocates of economic competition were united in their defence of the state monopoly on many social services, first of all that of security.

That is why nothing has emerged from this idea, not even a theoretical debate, let alone a practical experiment. The statist socialists and the statist conservatives dictated the agenda and for more than a century this conception remained hibernated, with only one notable exception that will be seen shortly.

Panarchy, as a conception advocating maximum freedom of management or self-management for all, should have found many sympathisers among those who most of all, in those days, fought for freedom, namely the anarchists. Instead, many among them were lost in sectarian diatribes and individual outbursts of anger and violence that would later damage both the idea and the image of anarchy. However, some exceptions must be highlighted. We have, for example, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon who advocated the idea that different forms of social organisation intermingle not only within the same governments but also within the same territory [Document 7]. Or figures such as Benjamin Tucker [Document 8 and 9], Stephen T. Byington [Document 10], Joseph Labadie [Document 11], Dr. J. A. Maryson [Document 12] and, in recent times, Karl Hess [Document 24] who, without mentioning the term panarchy, have written in favour of universal tolerance and acceptance of all conceptions and positions if they are introduced and practised in the absence of any kind of imposition.

But we must arrive to the year 1909 to find the discovery of panarchy by an anarchist. In that year, Max Nettlau, the historian and theorist of anarchism, wrote an article published in the periodical *Der Sozialist* edited by Gustav Landauer in Berlin. The title of the article is *Panarchie. Eine verschollene Idee von 1860* (Panarchy. A forgotten idea from 1860) [Document 12]. From the very first sentence of his paper,

Nettlau manifests his enthusiasm for the idea of competing governments, coexisting on the same territory:

“For a long time, I have been fascinated by the thought how wonderful it would be if at last, in the general view on the succession of political and social institutions, the fateful expression "one after the other" would be finally replaced by the very simple and self-evident "side by side.”

In the rest of the article, Nettlau informs the reader of his discovery of de Puydt's text and confesses how attracted he was by the idea of mutual tolerance in political and social life expressed by this author through the proposal of non-territorial governments that individuals can freely and voluntarily join and support.

Unfortunately, no other anarchist will take up this idea and the anarchist movement will be increasingly infested by a sectarianism that will progressively reduce both its attractiveness and its operational capacity.

## Revival

Apart from these isolated instances, the fascinating idea put forward by Gustave de Molinari and Paul-Émile de Puydt, enthusiastically supported by Max Nettlau, would perhaps have remained a hidden gem had it not been for the work of Kurt Zube and especially his son John Zube.

In 1977, Kurt Zube published, under the pseudonym of K. H. Z. Solneman, *Das Manifest der Freiheit und des Friedens* (The Manifesto of Freedom and Peace) [English version: *An Anarchist Manifesto*] in which the idea of panarchy is presented and commented on in very positive terms.

However, the best and most consistent advocate of panarchy has been John Zube in a series of essays and articles he wrote mainly from the 1970s onwards. Among the short writings, special mention should be made of a series of notes *On Tolerance* (1982) in which the basic idea of panarchy, namely “tolerance for any experiment in social life based on tolerance” is expressed in the most convincing and rational possible

manner. Personal and social life is seen as a continuous experience in which everyone learns from his/her own mistakes or those of others and in so doing progresses and develops. Without the freedom to experiment, the individual lacks the basic condition for a meaningful life. Tolerance and free experimentation with one's social existence are the foundations on which panarchy rests.

In another short paper, *The Gospel of Panarchy*, 1986 [Document 13], John Zube defines panarchy with the following words:

“The realization of as many different and autonomous communities as are wanted by volunteers for themselves, all non-territorially coexisting, side by side and intermingled, as their members are, in the same territory or even world-wide and yet separated from each other by personal laws, administrations and jurisdiction, as different churches are or ought to be.”

This anthology includes an article by John Zube in which he emphasises the link between panarchy and voluntary communities [Document 14]. In another paper, anarchists are reproached for not being consistent with their ideas of free and voluntary choices for all, whatever the outcome in terms of social organisation for the individual [Document 15]. In a short text, panarchy is presented using the scheme of a Greek rhetorician, Aphthonius of Antioch [Document 16].

It must be said that, even though the word 'panarchy' was not mentioned for decades before the arrival of Kurt and John Zube, the idea of voluntarism and variety (free choice of governments) is present in various writings by thinkers of different orientations. In this anthology, we have collected some passages and brief illuminations and suggestions. Noteworthy are the writings of Frédéric Bastiat [Document 18] and Voltairine de Cleyre [Document 20] who call for tolerance, of Auberon Herbert [Document 19] and Carl Watner [Document 25 and 33] who advocate voluntarism, of Werner Ackerman with his proposal of a *Cosmopolitan Union* [Document 21], of Henri Follin with his idea of *Cosmometaopolis* [Document 22] and of George Santayana [Document 23] in favour of a territorial governance. All their ideas show a strong resemblance to panarchy.

There are also physicists and philosophers such as Moritz Schlick [Document 27], cybernetics experts such as Ross Ashby [Document 28], and systems theory experts such as John Gall [Document 31] who have realised that modern societies are too complex entities to be managed by a centre (a capital, a parliament, a government). And as complexity increases, so does the need for variety, or put another way, the need for freedom and autonomy on the part of individuals and voluntary communities.

Science fiction writers are particularly adept at envisaging scenarios that depart from conventionalism and routine. In this anthology we find a famous science-fiction writer such as Robert Heinlein [Document 30] and a very creative individual such as Le Grand E. Day [Document 32]. This author has developed the idea of *Multigovernment* in a series of writings that are between social science and science fiction. Le Grand E. Day's proposal is to replace the so-called *social contract* that is supposed to be the foundation of democratic territorial states with *individual contracts* through which each individual has the right to choose his government, regardless of where he lives, just as he has the right to choose his lifestyle, the religion he wants to profess, the insurance company he wants to use, the brand of car he wants to buy, etc.

In the same vein of social creativity, in January 1962, an article [Document 29] appeared in *The Register* newspaper in Santa Ana, California (USA) in which the anonymous author proposes a move from *majoritarian democracy* (in which "majorities make decisions that are binding on everyone") to *democracy with a lower-case 'd'* in which everyone has the government he/she has voted for.

Just like de Puydt, who drew his idea of competing governments from the free market of competing companies, the author of this article compares his proposal to the choice of different brands of products. The idea of being forced to buy the product of the brand chosen by the majority would seem, to many, to be a totally unacceptable proposition; yet this is what happens when it comes to social issues if one refers to the mechanism of current majoritarian representative democracy.

As expressed by the author in very clear terms:

“The concept of representation is essentially a concept of agency. Someone is to act for you. But how can someone act for you if that someone is completely committed to actions contrary to your own best interests? To suppose that he represents you because others have chosen him is to suppose a lie. He can only represent you if you select him, and then, if he confines himself to your interests.”

In more recent times, Yves Plasseraud, president of the *Groupement pour les Droits des Minorités* (Paris) has written a very interesting essay [Document 26] on the ideas of a group of thinkers called Austro-Marxists who developed an original position that has some points of contact with panarchy and could have been the beginning of a panarchic form of social organisation. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, both located in the middle of the tangle of nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, developed the idea of non-territorial federalism. This proposal dissociates several social needs and functions (culture, education, justice) from the territory and assigns their administration directly to the members of the different national groups within a state. Moreover, this proposal emphasises that membership of a national group is a personal choice, a responsibility of the individual and no one else.

What is missing in this type of non-territorial federalism is the idea, present in panarchy, of taking away the government's monopoly of power even in the political and economic spheres (including money management); and the right for all to choose their government for what it is worth, i.e., for its ability to provide services and satisfy its users.

In any case, it would have been very helpful for the development of panarchy if what could be called the Austrian school of federalism had achieved significant results and popular support instead of being obliterated by the explosion of nationalism that led to the disasters of the two world wars.

Some Jews living in Central Europe and Russia also developed a cosmopolitan approach according to which Jews (and other minorities that were without their own state) would be free to organise themselves in the territorial state in which they lived.

The genocide perpetrated by the national socialists and the persecutions and exterminations committed by the Stalinist communists not only destroyed the individuals who supported these ideas, but also erased the knowledge that these ideas ever existed.

It could be argued that all those who were blinded by the belief in the necessity of state territorial sovereignty participated, directly or indirectly, in this nefarious activity of total elimination of *undesirable* elements and ideas *inconvenient* to the dominant group.

Unfortunately, the existence of the central nation-state with monopolistic territorial sovereignty is still regarded by many as a permanent feature, the last stage in human history.

### **Dissemination**

In the present day, under the direct or indirect impulse and inspiration of John Zube, other authors have started to produce articles dealing with panarchy.

In 2005, a Swedish economist, Richard CB Johnsson [Document 35] wrote several essays on the concept of non-territorial government and the consequent end of territorialism (the territorial monopoly of the state) as a necessary condition for the development of panarchy.

Michael Rozeff [Document 37], who was professor emeritus of finance at Buffalo University (New York), has also become a passionate and lucid advocate of panarchy.

Then we have Arnold Kling [Document 39] who is in favour of the right of voluntary exit from any monopoly, even in the state sphere, and Paul Bonneau [Document 41] who presents the case for panarchy with very convincing fervour.

Also notable is the contribution of Max Borders who proposes replacing a hypothetical and anonymous social contract with a real social and personal contract [Document 40].

Various short contributions have been offered also by David Taylor [Document 34], Dwight Johnson [Document 38] and Thomas Knapp [Document 42].

Finally, the last paper in the anthology is by an author, Aviezer Tucker, who has contributed much through his writings and activities to the dissemination of the idea of panarchy in the Anglo-Saxon world.

He deserves much of the credit for the publication of the first anthology in English (Aviezer Tucker and Gian Piero de Bellis, eds., *Panarchy: Political Theories of Non-Territorial States*, Routledge, 2016). He is the author of very interesting articles such as *The Best States. Beyond the Territorial Fallacy*, 1999 and *Panarchy: The State 2.0*, 2017, which appears also in this anthology [Document 43].

The spread of the idea of panarchy in the late 20th and early 21st century is largely due to the Internet, which has made it possible to instantly connect people living in different continents and who share similar life aspirations and research themes.

This phenomenon is not at all strange. Even in the past, the same invention or aspiration emerged in different places and at different times because of favourable conditions (technological tools, information, needs, etc.). Those who formulate the idea of competing non-territorial governments often only discover later that it was already put forward more than 150 years ago by a botanist completely unknown to them.

We have then Roderick Long who speaks of Virtual Cantons (*Virtual Cantons*, 1993), Gene Callaghan who affirms the right of the individual to walk away from state sovereignty (*The Right to Walk Away*, 2003), Bruno Frey who examines the entirely feasible *utopia* of governments without the monopoly of territorial sovereignty (*A Utopia? Government without Territorial Monopoly*, 2001). These essays are all available on the Internet.

The term panarchy is now also commonly used in ecology with reference to environmental systems, their development and balance, following the publication of the anthology by Lance H. Gunderson and C. S. Holling eds., *Panarchy. Understanding transformations in human and natural systems*, 2001.

Panarchy also fits splendidly with the rules of logic (truth as consistency between statements), cybernetics (the law of necessary variety) and systems theory, ethics and law (*honeste vivere, neminem laedere, suum cuique tribuere* - live honestly, injure no one, give each his own - Ulpianus).

The fact that the same word and the same conception are used and can be used in different contexts as a scientific method to deal with

different realities is entirely in tune with the original idea of de Puydt who, considering science as a set of truthful knowledge statements valid everywhere ("There are no truths that, true in one context, cease to be true in another context.") transposed the idea of *laissez-faire* from the field of economics to that of politics. This multiple applicability is a sign not only of the fertility and functionality of the idea but also of its universal validity.

The purpose of this anthology is to present classic writings on panarchy along with many other voices that, without expressly referring to panarchy, are in tune with that idea and have contributed to making it a universal proposition.

It will be up to the future reality, which is made up of the daily choices of billions of people acting and interacting in the global village, to confirm whether the time for panarchy has finally arrived.



# ACT I

## THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA

*Where a Belgian economist has a brilliant idea to promote freedom and peace and the liberals reject it as impractical if not absurd. And a social scientist, on the other side of the Channel, expounds the same brilliant idea.*



1 - (1849) Gustave de Molinari, *On the Production of Security*

2 - (1849) Report of a Meeting of the *Société d'Economie Politique* of Paris

3 - (1851) Herbert Spencer, *The Right to Ignore the State*



## GUSTAVE DE MOLINARI

### ON THE PRODUCTION OF SECURITY (1849)

Gustave de Molinari (1819-1912) was a classic liberal economist, editor of the *Journal des Économistes* from 1881 until 1909. In this text he presents his ideas, very advanced even nowadays, on the production of security. Those ideas have been swept under the carpet for a very long period because they undermine the very bases of the monopolistic power of the territorial state. And yet, the conception that security is a service like many others and, like them, it could be provided by companies in competition between them, has nothing extraordinary or inconceivable about it. As a matter of fact, “in the United States, already by 1972 the private security industry had almost twice as many employees, and 1.5 times the budget, of all local, state, and federal police forces combined.” (Cited in, Martin van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State*, 1999). Clearly, what is still missing is the end of the monopolistic stronghold of the state upon individuals even in the presence of security services provided by other agents. So, the real implementation of Molinari’s idea consists in allowing competition amongst non-territorial governments, a proposal that will be more explicitly put forward in 1860 by Paul-Émile de Puydt in his seminal article *Panarchie* (Panarchy) that appeared in the *Revue Trimestrielle*, Bruxelles.

Source: *De la production de la sécurité*, Journal des Économistes, February 15, 1849.

See also the *Preface* to Gustave de Molinari's "The Production of Security" written by Murray Rothbard in 1977 (<https://www.lewrockwell.com/1970/01/murray-n-rothbard/private-defense/>).



There are two ways of looking at society. According to one view, no immutable providential law has governed the formation of the various human associations; they were organised in a purely factitious manner by primitive legislators, and can therefore be modified or remade by other legislators as *social science* progresses. In this system the government plays a considerable role, for it is the government, as the repository of the principle of authority, that has the task of modifying and remaking society on a daily basis.

According to others, on the contrary, society is a purely natural fact; like the earth on which it stands, society moves in accordance with general, pre-existing laws. In this system there is no such thing, strictly speaking, social science; there is only an economic science which studies the natural organism of society and shows how this organism functions.

We propose to examine, within this latter system, what is the function of government and its natural organisation.

## I

TO DEFINE and delimit the function of government, we must first investigate what society is and what is its purpose.

What natural impulse do men obey in coming together in society? They obey the impulse or, to speak more accurately, the instinct of sociability. The human race is essentially sociable. Human beings are instinctively inclined to live in society.

What is the reason for this instinct?

The human being experiences a multitude of needs, the satisfaction

of which generates pleasures, and whose non-satisfaction causes him suffering. Now, on his own, isolated, he could only provide in an incomplete, insufficient manner for these needs which constantly solicit him. The instinct of sociability brings him closer to his fellows, pushes him to put himself in communication with them. Then, under the impulse of the *self-interest* of the individuals thus brought together, a certain *division of labour* is established, necessarily followed by *exchanges*. In short, we see the foundation of an *organisation*, by means of which the human being can satisfy his needs much more completely than he could by remaining isolated.

This natural organisation is called *society*.

The object of society is therefore the fuller satisfaction of human beings' needs; the means is the division of labour and exchange.

Among the needs of human beings, there is one of a special kind which plays an immense role in the history of humanity, namely the need for security.

What is this need?

Whether they live alone or in society, human beings are, above all, interested in preserving their existence and the fruits of their labour. If the sense of justice were universally spread over the earth; if, therefore, every human being confined himself to working and exchanging the fruits of his labour, without thinking of attacking the lives of other human beings, or of seizing, by violence or deceit, the products of their industry; if everyone had, in one word, an instinctive horror for any act harmful to others, it is certain that security would *naturally* exist on earth, and that no *artificial* institution would be necessary to establish it. Unfortunately this is not so. The sense of justice seems to be the prerogative only of certain elevated, exceptional natures. Among the lower races it exists only in a rudimentary state. Hence the innumerable attacks on the life and property of individuals since the beginning of the world, since the time of Cain and Abel.

Hence also the foundation of agencies whose purpose was to guarantee to each person the peaceful possession of his person and property.

These agencies were given the name of *governments*.

Everywhere, amid the least enlightened peoples, a government is

found, so general and urgent is the need for security which a government provides.

Everywhere, human beings resign themselves to the hardest sacrifices rather than do without government, and hence without security, and it cannot be said that in doing so they calculate badly.

Suppose, indeed, that somebody finds himself incessantly threatened in his person and in his means of existence. Would not his first and most constant preoccupation be to preserve himself from the dangers which surround him? This preoccupation, this effort, this labour will necessarily absorb the greater part of his time, as well as the most energetic and active faculties of his intelligence. Consequently, he would only be able to apply insufficient and precarious work and poor attention to the satisfaction of his other needs.

Even though this individual might be asked to surrender a very considerable part of his time and work to someone who would undertake to guarantee him the peaceful possession of his person and his property, would he not still gain by making the deal?

However, his obvious interest would be to obtain security at the lowest possible price.

## II

If there is one well-established truth in political economy, it is this:

*That in all cases, for all commodities serving to provide for his material or immaterial needs, the consumer is interested in keeping labour and exchange free, for the necessary and permanent result of free labour and exchange is to lower to the maximum the price of things.*

And this one:

*That the interest of the consumer of any commodity must always prevail over the interest of the producer.*

Now, following these principles, we arrive at this rigorous conclusion:

*That the production of security must, in the interest of the consumers of this intangible commodity, remain subject to the law of free competition.*

From this it follows:

*That no government should have the right to prevent another govern-*

*ment from establishing itself concurrently with it, or compel consumers of security to turn exclusively to it for this commodity.*

Nevertheless, I must say that this strict consequence of the principle of free competition has been shunned up to now.

One of the economists who have extended the application of the principle of freedom the furthest, Mr. Charles Dunoyer, thinks "that the functions of governments can never fall into the domain of private activity." [1]

This is a clear and obvious exception to the principle of free competition.

This exception is all the more remarkable because it is unique.

No doubt there are economists who make more exceptions to this principle; but we may boldly assert that they are not pure economists. True economists generally agree that, on the one hand, the government must confine itself to guaranteeing the security of the citizens; on the other hand, that the freedom of labour and exchange must be, for all the rest, complete and absolute.

But why should there be an exception relative to security? What is the special reason why the production of security cannot be left to free competition? Why must it be subject to a different principle and organised under a different system?

On this point, the masters of science are silent, and Mr. Dunoyer, who has clearly pointed out the exception, does not investigate on what ground it is based.

### III

We are therefore led to ask whether this exception is well founded, and whether it can be justified in the eyes of an economist.

It offends reason to believe that a well-established natural law can admit of exceptions. A natural law is everywhere and always, or it is not. I do not believe, for example, that the law of universal gravitation, which governs the physical world, is ever suspended in any instance or at any point of the universe. Now, I consider economic laws as natural laws, and I have as much faith in the principle of freedom of labour and exchange as I have in the law of universal gravitation. I

therefore believe that if this principle can be *distorted*, on the other hand, it admits of no exceptions.

But, if this is the case, the production of security must not be exempted from the law of free competition; and, if it is, society as a whole suffers damage.

Either this is logical and true, or the principles on which economic science is based are not true principles.

#### IV

It is therefore demonstrated *a priori* to us, who have faith in the principles of economic science, that the exception mentioned above has no reason to exist, and that the production of security must, like any other, be subject to the law of free competition.

Once we are convinced, what remains to be done? It remains for us to investigate how it is that the production of security is not subject to the law of free competition, how it is that it is subject to different principles.

What are these principles?

They are those of *monopoly* and *communism*.

There is not a single security industry agency in the world, not a single government that is not based on monopoly or communism.

In this connection we shall make, in passing, a simple remark.

Since political economy disapproves equally of monopoly and communism in the various branches of human activity in which it has so far found them, would it not be strange and inconvenient if it were to accept them in the industry of security?

#### V

Let us now examine how it is that all known governments are subject to the law of monopoly, or organised according to the communist principle.

Let us first investigate what is meant by monopoly and by communism.

It is a truth of observation that the more urgent and necessary are



human being's needs, the greater are the sacrifices a person is willing to make to satisfy them. Now, there are things which are abundantly available in nature, and the production of which requires very little labour; but which, serving to satisfy these urgent and necessary needs, can consequently acquire an exchange value out of all proportion to their natural value. We shall cite salt as an example. Suppose that a man or a group of people succeeded in attributing to themselves the exclusive production and sale of salt. It is evident that this man or group would be able to raise the price of this commodity far above its value, far above the price it would reach under free competition.

It will then be said that this man or group has a monopoly, and that the price of salt is a monopoly price.

But it is obvious that the consumers will not freely consent to pay the abusive surcharge of the monopoly; they will have to be compelled to do so, and in order to do so, force will have to be used.

Any monopoly necessarily relies on force.

When monopolists stop being stronger than the consumers they exploit, what happens?

Always, the monopoly eventually disappears, either violently or as a result of an amicable settlement. What do we put in its place?

If the roused, insurgent consumers seize the means of production of the salt industry, there is every probability that they will confiscate this industry for their own benefit, and that their first thought will be not to leave it to free competition, but to exploit it, *in common*, for their own account. They will, therefore, appoint a director or a managing committee to operate the saltworks, to whom they will allocate the necessary funds to meet the costs of salt production. Then, as the experience of the past will have made them suspicious, distrustful; as they fear that the director named by them will take over the production for his own account, and simply reconstitute, for his own benefit, in an open or hidden way, the old monopoly, they will elect delegates, representatives in charge of voting the funds necessary for the costs of production, of supervising their use, and of examining whether the salt produced is equally distributed to those entitled to it. In this way, salt production will be organised.

This form of organisation of production has been named communism.

When this organisation applies to only one commodity, the communism is said to be partial.

When it applies to all commodities, the communism is said to be complete.

But whether communism is partial or complete, political economy does not admit it any more than it does monopoly, of which it is merely a different type.

## VI

Is what has just been said about salt not obviously applicable to security? Is this not the history of all monarchies and all republics?

Everywhere, the production of security began by being organised as a monopoly, and everywhere, nowadays, it tends to be organised as communism.

This is why.

Among the material or immaterial commodities necessary to a human being, none, except perhaps wheat, is more indispensable, and therefore can bear a higher monopoly tax.

Nor can any be so easily monopolised.

What, indeed, is the situation of individuals who need security? It is weakness. What is the position of those who undertake to provide them with this necessary security? It is strength. If it were otherwise, if the consumers of security were stronger than the producers, they would obviously dispense with their assistance.

Now, if the producers of security are originally stronger than the consumers, can they not easily impose on the latter the regime of monopoly?

Everywhere, therefore, at the origin of societies, we see the strongest and most warlike races taking exclusive government of societies; everywhere we see these races seizing the monopoly of security within certain more or less extensive territories, according to their number and strength.

And this monopoly being extraordinary profitable by its very

nature, everywhere we see the races invested with the monopoly of security engaging also in fierce struggles, in order to increase *the extent of their market*, the number of their *forced* consumers, and consequently, the amount of their gains.

War was the necessary, inevitable consequence of the establishment of the monopoly of security.

As another inevitable consequence, this monopoly was to beget all other monopolies.

Looking at the situation of the monopolists of the security, the producers of other commodities could not fail to recognise that nothing in the world was more advantageous than a monopoly. They were, therefore, tempted, in their turn, to increase the profits of their industry by the same process. But to monopolise the commodity they produced at the expense of consumers, what did they need? They needed the use of force. But they did not have this force, which was necessary to compress the resistance of the consumers concerned. What did they do? They borrowed it, for a fee, from those who did possess it. They solicited and obtained, at the price of certain royalties, the exclusive privilege of exercising their industry in certain determined territories.

As the *granting* of these privileges brought in good money to the producers of security, the world was soon covered with monopolies. Work and exchange were everywhere hindered, chained, and the condition of the masses remained as miserable as possible.

However, after long centuries of suffering, as enlightenment gradually spread throughout the world, the masses, who were being stifled by this network of privileges, began to react against the privileged, and to demand *freedom*, that is, the abolition of monopolies.

This process took many steps. What happened, for example, in England? The race which governed the country, and which was organised as a feudal corporation, with a hereditary chief (the King) and an equally hereditary administrative council (the House of Lords), originally fixed the price of the security it monopolised at whatever rate it pleased. There was no debate between the producers of security and the consumers. It was the regime of *arbitrary rule*. But, as time went by, the consumers, having become aware of their numbers and strength, revolted against the regime of pure arbitrariness, and they obtained the

right to negotiate with the producers the price of the commodity. To this end, they appointed delegates who met in the *House of Commons* to discuss the level of *taxation*, i.e. the price of security. In this way, they were able to reduce the pressure on them. However, as the members of the House of Commons were appointed under the immediate influence of the producers of security, the debate was not entirely transparent, and the price of the commodity continued to exceed its natural value.

One day, the consumers thus exploited rose up against the producers and dispossessed them of their industry. They then undertook to run this industry themselves and for this purpose they chose a manager assisted by a council. This was communism replacing monopoly. But this scheme did not work well, and twenty years later the original monopoly was re-established. Only this time the monopolists had the wisdom not to restore the regime of arbitrary rule; they accepted the free debate over taxation, taking care, however, to incessantly corrupt the delegates of the opposing party. They placed at the disposal of these delegates some of the jobs in the administration of security, and they even went so far as to admit the most influential ones to their higher council. Nothing could have been cleverer than this. Nevertheless, the consumers of security eventually became aware of these abuses and demanded the reform of Parliament. Long refused, the reform was finally won, and since that time the consumers have obtained a significant lightening of their burdens.

In France, the monopoly of security, after having likewise undergone frequent vicissitudes and various modifications, has just been overturned for the second time. [Note: by the riots of 1848]. As in England in the past, this monopoly, exercised first for the benefit of a caste, then in the name of a certain class of society, has been replaced by production in common. All the consumers, considered as shareholders, appointed a manager in charge, for a certain period, of the operation, and an assembly responsible for controlling the acts of the manager and of his administration.

We shall confine ourselves to making a simple observation about this new regime.

Just as the monopoly of security should logically beget all other

monopolies, so should the communism of security logically beget all other communisms.

In actual fact, we have a choice between two things:

Either communist production is superior to free production, or it is not.

If it is, it is superior not only in terms of security, but in all respects.

If not, *progress* will inevitably consist in replacing it by free production.

Complete communism or complete freedom, that is the alternative!

## VII

But is it conceivable that the production of security could be organised in any other way than as a monopoly or communistically? Is it conceivable that it could be left to free competition?

To this question the answer by the so-called political writers is unanimous: No.

Why not? We will tell you why.

Because these writers, who are especially concerned with governments, know nothing about society; they think society to be something built artificially and believe that the mission of government is to modify and remake it constantly.

Now, in order to modify or remake society, it is necessary to be endowed with an *authority* superior to that of the various individualities of which it is composed.

Monopolistic governments claim to have obtained from God himself this authority which gives them the right to modify or remake society according to their fancy, and to dispose of persons and property however they please. Communistic governments appeal to human reason, as manifested in the majority of the sovereign people.

But do monopolistic governments and communistic governments truly possess this superior, irresistible authority? Do they, in reality, have a higher authority than that which a free government could have? This is what we must investigate.

## VIII

If it were true that society was not *naturally* organised; if it were true that the laws which governs its motion had to be incessantly modified or remade, the *legislators* would necessarily need an immutable, sacred authority. As continuators of Providence on earth, they should be respected almost as much as God. If it were otherwise, would it not be impossible for them to fulfil their mission? Indeed, one does not intervene in human affairs, one does not undertake to direct them, to regulate them, without daily offending a multitude of interests. Unless those in power are considered to belong to a higher essence or to be entrusted with a providential mission, the injured interests resist.

Hence the fiction of divine right.

This fiction was certainly the best that could be imagined. If you can persuade the crowd that God Himself has elected certain men or races to give laws to society and to govern it, no one, of course, will dream of rebelling against these appointees of Providence, and whatever the government does will be done well. A government of divine right is imperishable.

On one condition only, that one believes in divine right.

If it be thought that the rulers of peoples do not receive their inspirations directly from Providence, that they obey purely human impulses, the prestige which surrounds them will disappear, and their sovereign decisions will be resisted irreverently, as one resists everything that comes from other human beings, unless its *usefulness* is clearly demonstrated.

It is therefore curious to see how carefully the theorists of divine right endeavour to establish the superhumanity of the races in possession of human government.

Let us listen, for example, to M. Joseph de Maistre:

"Man cannot make sovereigns. At most, he can serve as an instrument to dispossess a sovereign and hand over his States to another sovereign who is already a prince. Moreover, there has never been a sovereign

family traceable to plebeian origins. If this phenomenon were to appear, it would mark a new epoch on earth.

" ... It is written: *I make the rulers*. This is not a church phrase, a preacher's metaphor; it is the literal, simple and palpable truth. It is a law of the political world. God makes kings, literally. He prepares the royal races, he nurtures them in the midst of a cloud that conceals their origin. They then appear crowned with glory and honour; they take their place." [2]

According to this system, which embodies the will of Providence in certain men and which endows these chosen ones, these anointed ones, with a quasi-divine authority, the *subjects* obviously have no rights; they must submit, *without question*, to the decrees of the sovereign authority, as if they were the decrees of Providence itself.

The body is the tool of the soul, said Plutarch, and the soul is the instrument of God. According to the school of divine right, God would choose certain souls and use them as instruments to govern the world.

If human beings *had faith* in this theory, surely nothing could shake a government of divine right. Unfortunately, they have completely ceased to believe in it. Why?

Because one fine day they decided to examine and reason, and by examining and reasoning they discovered that their rulers were not directing them any better than they themselves, mere mortals without communication with Providence, could have done.

*Free inquiry* has demonetised the fiction of divine right, so much so that the subjects of monarchs or aristocrats of divine right no longer obey them unless they believe *it is in their interest* to do so.

Has the communist fiction fared better?

According to the communist theory, of which Rousseau is the high priest, authority no longer comes from above, it comes from below.

The government no longer asks for it from Providence, it asks for it from the individuals gathered together, from the *one, indivisible and sovereign* nation.

This is what the communists, the advocates of the sovereignty of the people, assume. They assume that human reason has the power to

discover the best laws, the most perfect organisation suitable for society; and that, in practice, these laws are discovered as a result of free debate between opposing opinions; that if there is no unanimity, if there is still dissension after the debate, it is the majority that is right, as containing a greater number of reasonable individualities (these individualities are, of course, assumed to be equal, otherwise the whole structure collapses). Consequently, they assert that the decisions of the majority must be the *law*, and that the minority is bound to submit to it, even if it would hurt its most deeply rooted convictions and its most cherished interests.

This is the theory; but, in practice, does the *authority* of the decisions of the majority have really the irresistible, absolute character that is assumed? Does the minority always, in every instance, respect it? Can it be?

Let us take an example.

Let us suppose that Socialism succeeds in spreading among the working classes of the countryside, as it has already spread among the working classes of the cities; that it is, consequently, in the majority in the country, and that, taking advantage of this situation, it sends to the Legislative Assembly a Socialist majority and appoints a Socialist President. Let us suppose that this majority and this president, invested with sovereign authority, decree, as a famous Socialist demanded, the levying of a tax of three billion on the rich, in order to organise the work of the poor. Is it probable that the minority will peacefully submit to this iniquitous and absurd, yet legal, yet *constitutional*, spoliation?

No, without doubt, it will not hesitate to disregard the *authority* of the majority and to defend its property.

Under this regime, as under the previous, one obeys those in authority only insofar as one believes it is in one's interest to obey them.

This leads us to affirm that the moral basis of the principle of authority is neither more solid nor more extensive under the regime of monopoly or communism than it could be under a regime of freedom.

## IX

But suppose that the advocates of an *artificial organisation*, whether



monopolists or communists, are right; that society is not naturally organised, and that it falls to men incessantly to make and unmake the laws which govern it. See in what lamentable situation the world will find itself. The moral authority of the rulers being, *in reality*, based only on the interest of the governed, and the latter having a natural tendency to resist everything that injures their interest, it will be necessary for material force to lend incessant assistance to the disregarded authority.

Monopolists and communists have, by the way, perfectly understood this necessity.

If anyone, says M. de Maistre, tries to evade the authority of God's chosen ones, let him be delivered to the secular arm, let the executioner do his work.

If anyone disregards the authority of the people's elected representatives, say the theoreticians of Rousseau's school, if he resists any decision of the majority, let him be punished as a criminal against the sovereign people, let the guillotine do justice to him.

These two schools, which take *artificial organisation* as their point of departure, therefore necessarily lead to the same end, to TERROR.

## X

Let us now formulate a simple hypothesis.

Let us imagine a society in its infancy: the individuals who compose it begin to work and to exchange the fruits of their labour. A natural instinct reveals to these individuals that their persons, the land they occupy and cultivate, the fruits of their labour, are their *property*, and that no one, except themselves, has the right to dispose or touch this property. This instinct is not hypothetical, it exists. But, being humans imperfect creatures, it happens that this feeling of the right of each one to his person and his goods, is not found to the same degree in every soul, and that certain individuals attack the persons or property of others by violence or by fraud.

Hence the need for an industry to prevent or repress these abusive assaults of force or cunning.

Let a man or an association of men then come and say:

I will, for a fee, prevent or repress attacks on persons and property.

Let those, therefore, who wish to protect their persons and property from all aggression turn to me.

What will consumers do before striking a bargain with this *producer of security*?

First, they will seek to know whether it is powerful enough to protect them.

Secondly, whether his character is such that they will not have to worry about his instigating the very aggressions he is supposed to suppress.

Thirdly, if no other producer of security, offering equal guarantees, is willing to provide this commodity to them, on better terms.

These terms will be of various kinds.

To be able to guarantee consumers full security for their persons and their property, and, in the event of damage, to give them a compensation proportioned to the loss suffered, it will be necessary:

1° That the producer establishes certain penalties against offenders of persons and violators of property, and that the consumers agree to submit to these penalties, in case they themselves commit abuses against persons and property.

2° That he imposes on the consumers certain inconveniences, the object of which is to facilitate the discovery of the authors of offences.

3° That he regularly collects, in order to cover his production costs as well as the natural profit of his industry, a certain premium, variable according to the situation of the consumers, the particular occupations in which they are engaged, the extent, the value and the nature of their properties.

If these terms, which are necessary for the industry to operate, are suitable for the consumers, the deal will be done; if not, the consumers will either do without security, or go to another producer.

Now, if we consider the particular nature of the security industry, we will find that producers will be obliged to restrict their clientele to certain territorial districts. They would obviously not be doing themselves any favours if they were to maintain a police force in localities where they would have only a few customers. Their clientele will naturally cluster around the headquarters of their industry. They will not,

however, be able to take advantage of this situation by dictating to the consumers. In the event of an abusive increase in the price of security, consumers will have the option of selecting a new local contractor or a contractor close to where they live.

From this faculty left to the consumer to buy security wherever he pleases, there arises a constant emulation between all producers, each striving, by the attraction of cheapness or of a more prompt, more complete, better justice, to augment his clientele or to maintain it [3].

On the contrary, if the consumer is not free to buy security wherever he likes, you will immediately see a wide-open field for arbitrariness and bad management. Justice becomes costly and slow, the police vexatious, individual liberty ceases to be respected, the price of security is abusively exaggerated, unequally levied, according to the strength and influence of this or that class of consumers, insurers engage in fierce struggles to wrest consumers from each other. In a word, all the abuses inherent in monopoly or communism are seen to emerge in the wake.

Under free competition, the war between the producers of security ceases to have any reason to exist. Why would they go to war? To win over consumers? But consumers would not let themselves be conquered. They would certainly be wary of having their persons and property insured by men who had unscrupulously attacked the persons and property of their competitors. If a bold victor wanted to impose the law on them, they would immediately call to their aid all the free consumers who were threatened, like themselves, by this aggression, and they would treat him as he deserved. Just as war is the natural consequence of monopoly, so peace is the natural consequence of freedom.

Under a regime of freedom, the natural organisation of the industry of security would not differ from that of other industries. In the small districts a simple entrepreneur could suffice. This entrepreneur would bequeath his industry to his son, or hand it over to another entrepreneur. In large districts, a company alone would have enough resources to properly carry out this important and difficult industry. Properly managed, this company could easily last, and security would perpetuate itself with it. In the industry of security, as well as in most

other branches of production, the latter form of organisation would probably replace the former, in the end.

On the one side there would be a monarchy, on the other side a republic; but monarchy without monopoly, and republic without communism.

On both sides it would be authority accepted and respected in the name of utility, and not authority imposed by *terror*.

It will undoubtedly be disputed whether such a hypothetical situation could be realised. But, at the risk of being called utopian, we shall say that this is not disputable, and that a careful examination of the facts will increasingly solve the problem of government more and more in favour of liberty, just as it does all other economic problems. We are quite convinced, as far as we are concerned, that associations will one day be established to demand *freedom of government*, as associations have been established to demand freedom of trade.

And we do not hesitate to add that after this last progress has been made, all artificial obstacles to the free action of the natural laws which govern the economic world having disappeared, the situation of the various members of society will become *the best possible*.

### Notes by the Author

[1] In his remarkable book *De la liberté du travail*, 1845 (On the Freedom of Labour), Vol. III, p. 253. (Published by Guillaumin).

[2] Joseph de Maistre, *Du principe générateur des constitutions politiques*, 1814, Paris (On the Generating Principle of Political Constitutions) - Preface.

[3] Adam Smith, whose remarkable spirit of observation extends to all subjects, remarks that the administration of justice gained much, in England, from the competition between the different courts of law:

“The fees of court seem originally to have been the principal support of the different courts of justice in England. Each court endeavoured to

draw to itself as much business as it could, and was, upon that account, willing to take cognisance of many suits which were not originally intended to fall under its jurisdiction. The Court of King's Bench, instituted for the trial of criminal causes only, took cognisance of civil suits; the plaintiff pretending that the defendant, in not doing him justice, had been guilty of some trespass or misdemeanour. The Court of Exchequer, instituted for the levying of the king's revenue, and for enforcing the payment of such debts only as were due to the king, took cognisance of all other contract debts; the plaintiff alleging that he could not pay the king, because the defendant would not pay him. In consequence of such fictions it came, in many cases, to depend altogether upon the parties before what court they would choose to have their cause tried; and each court endeavoured, by superior dispatch and impartiality, to draw to itself as many causes as it could. The present admirable constitution of the courts of justice in England was, perhaps, originally in a great measure, formed by this emulation, which anciently took place between their respective judges; each judge endeavouring to give, in his own court, the speediest and most effectual remedy, which the law would admit, for every sort of injustice." (*The Wealth of Nations*, Book 5, Chapter I, Part II : Of the Expence of Justice)

## REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE SOCIÉTÉ D'ÉCONOMIE POLITIQUE OF PARIS

(OCTOBER 1849)

Freedom of production and exchange was the foundation of the conception of the liberal economists of the 19th century. Gustave de Molinari's proposal for a free market to guarantee security went precisely in this direction. Despite this, all liberal economists presented during that meeting rejected it, subjugated by the myth of the state as the sole monopolistic provider of security services. This shows the failure of liberal thinking, which applies only to economics but not to politics, and brings to light the first signs of its path towards conservatism, i.e. the maintenance and perpetuation of the existing reality with the support of the nation state as guarantor of the *status quo*.

Source: *Journal des Économistes*, 1849 (t. XXIV, p. 315)



*In its meeting of October 10, 1849, the Société d'Économie Politique de Paris discussed the question raised by the author of this work, namely: whether the government can be subject to the principle of free competition.*

*We borrow from the Journal des Économistes (vol. XXIV, p. 315) a summary of this debate.*

Mr. Say, who was in the chair, proposed that the conversation should focus on a very delicate subject, on the question of knowing what are the limits of the functions of the State and of individual action; whether these limits are well defined, and whether there is any way of specifying them. Unfortunately, as Mr. Say said that this subject had been suggested to him by the reading of the work just published by Mr. Molinari (*Les Soirées de la Rue Saint-Lazare*), it was not necessary for the main question to be broached again very timidly, and for the discussion to turn to various other subjects dealt with by Mr. de Molinari, and in particular to the principle of expropriation in the public interest, which this writer has fought against in the most absolute manner. Nevertheless, the conversation was very lively and very instructive. Messrs. Coquelin, Bastiat, de Parien, Wolowski, Dunoyer, Saint-Beuve, who is representing the department of Oise (who was attending the meeting for the first time, as well as Mr. Lopès-Dubec, who was representing the department of Gironde), Rodet and Raudot from Saône and Loire, successively asked to speak.

Mr. Coquelin, having taken as the starting point of the discussion the opinion of Mr. de Molinari (who thinks that, in the future, it will be possible to establish competition between insurance companies, capable of guaranteeing security to the citizens who would be their clients), remarked that Mr. de Molinari had not taken into account that, without a supreme authority, justice had no sanction, and that competition, which is the only remedy against fraud and violence, which alone is capable of making the nature of things triumph in the relations between men, could not exist without this supreme authority, i.e., without the State. Below the State, competition is possible and fruitful; above it, it is impossible to apply and even to conceive.

Monsieur Bastiat spoke along the same lines as Monsieur Coquelin; he believes that the functions of the State must be circumscribed in the guarantee of justice and security; but, as this guarantee exists only through force, and as force can only be the attribute of a supreme power, he does not understand a society with such a power attributed to bodies which are equal among themselves, and which would not have a higher point of support. Bastiat then asked himself whether the clear, unambiguous, and palpable exposition of this idea, that the State

must have no other function than the guarantee of security, would not be useful and effective propaganda in the presence of the socialism that is manifesting itself everywhere, even in the minds of those who would like to fight it.

Monsieur de Parieu, following Monsieur de Molinari in the discussion of a very distant ideal, thinks that the question raised by the latter is that of the struggle between freedom and nationality. It is not impossible that these two principles can be reconciled quite naturally. Switzerland already offers examples of populations that split off from former cantons to found independent states. They decentralise in a certain way, but they remain united in terms of nationality. Mr Rodet also cited similar examples in the history of the development of the American Union.

Mr. Wolowski expressed the opinion that the civilisation of peoples involves the coexistence of two principles running in parallel: the principle of the freedom of the individual, and that of the social state, which must not be disregarded, and which is endowed with its own life. The honourable representative does not believe that the future lies in the fragmentation of nations; on the contrary, he believes in their enlargement by means of successive annexations.

Monsieur Dunoyer, like Monsieur Coquelin and Monsieur Bastiat, thinks that Monsieur de Molinari has been led astray by illusions of logic; and that competition between governmental companies is chimerical, because it leads to violent struggles. These struggles would only end in force, and it is prudent to leave force where civilisation has put it, in the State.

However, Mr. Dunoyer believes that competition is in fact introduced into government through the play of representative institutions. In France, for example, all the parties compete, and each party offers its services to the public, which really does choose every time it votes.

Mr. Raudot, who spoke last, shared Mr. Wolowski's opinion on the probability of the formation of larger and larger States in the future; but he thinks that this concentration would lead the peoples to the greatest tyranny and misery, if the State continued to want to absorb everything and to leave the municipalities under a guardianship that



would weaken the life of the communes and engender socialism, the dangers of which are beginning to be understood.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

*Horace Émile Say* (1794-1860) son of Jean-Baptiste Say, the greatest French liberal economist whose works he edited. He was a founding member of the *Journal des Économistes* in 1841.

*Charles Coquelin* (1802-1852), a liberal economist with a background in juridical studies. According to him, the source of the recurrent crises lay in the State intervening in monetary matters. This gave rise to monopolistic privileges for the banking sector and generated economic and social instabilities and injustices.

*Frédéric Bastiat* (1801-1850), one of the most brilliant and fine writers on economics of the first half of the 19th century. He was a passionate advocate of free trade and a convinced opponent of the colonial adventures of the French state.

*Félix Esquirou de Parieu* (1815-1893) was a French politician and government official. He represented liberal ideas and was a supporter of Europe to the point of being considered one of the precursors of the concept of a federated Europe.

*Louis Wolowski* (1810-1876), French jurist, economist, and politician from Poland. He was a supporter and active member of the Free Trade Association.

*Charles Dunoyer* (1786-1862), lawyer and economist. He was the founder of the liberal newspaper *Le Censeur* and contributed articles to the *Journal des Économistes*. He developed a critical view of the State as the expression of a parasitic class that lives at the expense of producers through the forced exaction of taxes.

*Claude Marie Raudot* (1801-1879) French lawyer and politician. He was elected deputy to the National Assembly from 1871 to 1876.

**HERBERT SPENCER**

## THE RIGHT TO IGNORE THE STATE (1851)

The author expounds very clearly the idea that, if we accept the freedom of the individuals, we should also accept the fact that “he is free to drop connection with the state - to relinquish its protection and to refuse paying toward its support.”

In other words, the option to secede from the territorial monopolistic state and to set up alternative forms of personal and social organization is an intrinsic basic feature and exigency of every free human being. And this is panarchy.

Source: Originally published in *Social Statics* as Chapter XIX.



As a corollary to the proposition that all institutions must be subordinated to the law of equal freedom, we cannot choose but admit the right of the citizen to adopt a condition of voluntary outlawry. If every man has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man, then he is free to drop connection with the state - to relinquish its protection and to refuse paying toward its support. It is self-evident that in so behaving he in no way

trenches upon the liberty of others, for his position is a passive one, and while passive he cannot become an aggressor. It is equally self-evident that he cannot be compelled to continue one of a political corporation without a breach of the moral law, seeing that citizenship involves payment of taxes; and the taking away of a man's property against his will is an infringement of his rights. Government being simply an agent employed in common by a number of individuals to secure to them certain advantages, the very nature of the connection implies that it is for each to say whether he will employ such an agent or not. If anyone of them determines to ignore this mutual-safety confederation, nothing can be said except that he loses all claim to its good offices and exposes himself to the danger of maltreatment - a thing he is quite at liberty to do if he likes. He cannot be coerced into political combination without a breach of the law of equal freedom; he *can* withdraw from it without committing any such breach, and he has therefore a right so to withdraw.

"No human laws are of any validity if contrary to the law of nature; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority mediately or immediately from this original."

Thus writes Blackstone, to whom let all honor be given for having so far outseen the ideas of his time and, indeed, we may say of our time. A good antidote, this, for those political superstitions which so widely prevail. A good check upon that sentiment of power worship which still misleads us by magnifying the prerogatives of constitutional governments as it once did those of monarchs. Let men learn that a legislature is not "our God upon earth," though, by the authority they ascribe to it and the things they expect from it, they would seem to think it is. Let them learn rather that it is an institution serving a purely temporary purpose, whose power, when not stolen, is at best borrowed.

Nay, indeed, have we not seen that government is essentially immoral? Is it not the offspring of evil, bearing about it all the marks of its parentage? Does it not exist because crime exists? Is it not strong - or, as we say, despotic - when crime is great? Is there not more liberty -

that is, less government -- when crime diminishes? And must not government cease when crime ceases, for very lack of objects on which to perform its function? Not only does magisterial power exist *because* of evil, but it exists *by* evil. Violence is employed to maintain it, and all violence involves criminality. Soldiers, policemen, and jailers; swords, batons, and fetters are instruments for inflicting pain; and all inflection of pain is in the abstract wrong. The state employs evil weapons to subjugate evil and is alike contaminated by the objects with which it deals and the means by which it works. Morality cannot recognize it, for morality, being simply a statement of the perfect law, can give no countenance to anything growing out of, and living by, breaches of that law. Wherefore, legislative authority can never be ethical - must always be conventional merely.

Hence, there is a certain inconsistency in the attempt to determine the right position, structure, and conduct of a government by appeal to the first principles of rectitude. For as just pointed out, the acts of an institution which is in both nature and origin imperfect cannot be made to square with the perfect law. All that we can do is to ascertain, firstly, in what attitude a legislature must stand to the community to avoid being by its mere existence an embodied wrong; secondly, in what manner it must be constituted so as to exhibit the least incongruity with the moral law; and thirdly, to what sphere its actions must be limited to prevent it from multiplying those breaches of equity it is set up to prevent.

The first condition to be conformed to before a legislature can be established without violating the law of equal freedom is the acknowledgment of the right now under discussion - the right to ignore the state.

UPHOLDERS of pure despotism may fitly believe state-control to be unlimited and unconditional. They who assert that men are made for governments and not governments for men may consistently hold that no one can remove himself beyond the pale of political organization. But they who maintain that the people are the only legitimate source of power - that legislative authority is not original, but deputed - cannot

deny the right to ignore the state without entangling themselves in an absurdity.

For, if legislative authority is deputed, it follows that those from whom it proceeds are the masters of those on whom it is conferred; it follows further that as masters they confer the said authority voluntarily; and this implies that they may give or withhold it as they please. To call that deputed which is wrenched from men, whether they will or not, is nonsense. But what is here true of all collectively is equally true of each separately. As a government can rightly act for the people only when empowered by them, so also can it rightly act for the individual only when empowered by him. If A, B, and C debate whether they shall employ an agent to perform for them a certain service, and if while A and B agree to do so C dissents, C cannot equitably be made a party to the agreement in spite of himself. And this must be equally true of thirty as of three; and if of thirty, why not of three hundred, or three thousand, or three millions?

OF THE POLITICAL superstitions lately alluded to, none is so universally diffused as the notion that majorities are omnipotent. Under the impression that the preservation of order will ever require power to be wielded by some party, the moral sense of our time feels that such power cannot rightly be conferred on any but the largest moiety of society. It interprets literally the saying that "the voice of the people is the voice of God," and, transferring to the one the sacredness attached to the other, it concludes that from the will of the people - that is, of the majority - there can be no appeal. Yet is this belief entirely erroneous.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that, struck by some Malthusian panic, a legislature duly representing public opinion were to enact that all children born during the next ten years should be drowned. Does anyone think such an enactment would be warrantable? If not, there is evidently a limit to the power of a majority. Suppose, again, that of two races living together - Celts and Saxons, for example - the most numerous determined to make the others their slaves. Would the authority of the greatest number be in such case valid? If not, there is something to which its authority must be subordinate. Suppose, once

more, that all men having incomes under £50 a year were to resolve upon reducing every income above that amount to their own standard, and appropriating the excess for public purposes. Could their resolution be justified? If not, it must be a third time confessed that there is a law to which the popular voice must defer. What, then, is that law, if not the law of pure equity - the law of equal freedom? These restraints, which all would put to the will of the majority, are exactly the restraints set up by that law. We deny the right of a majority to murder, to enslave, or to rob, simply because murder, enslaving, and robbery are violations of that law - violations too gross to be overlooked. But if great violations of it are wrong, so also are smaller ones. If the will of the many cannot supersede the first principle of morality in these cases, neither can it in any. So that, however insignificant the minority, and however trifling the proposed trespass against their rights, no such trespass is permissible.

When we have made our constitution purely democratic, thinks to himself the earnest reformer, we shall have brought government into harmony with absolute justice. Such a faith, though perhaps needful for the age, is a very erroneous one. By no process can coercion be made equitable. The freest form of government is only the least objectionable form. The rule of the many by the few we call tyranny; the rule of the few by the many is tyranny also, only of a less intense kind. "You shall do as we will, and not as you will," is in either case the declaration; and if the hundred make it to the ninety-nine, instead of the ninety-nine to the hundred, it is only a fraction less immoral. Of two such parties, whichever fulfills this declaration necessarily breaks the law of equal freedom: the only difference being that by the one it is broken in the persons of ninety-nine, while by the other it is broken in the persons of a hundred. And the merit of the democratic form of government consists solely in this, that it trespasses against the smallest number.

The very existence of majorities and minorities is indicative of an immoral state. The man whose character harmonizes with the moral law, we found to be one who can obtain complete happiness without diminishing the happiness of his fellows. But the enactment of public arrangements by vote implies a society consisting of men otherwise

constituted - implies that the desires of some cannot be satisfied without sacrificing the desires of others - implies in the pursuit of their happiness the majority inflict a certain amount of unhappiness on the minority - implies, therefore, organic immorality. Thus, from another point of view, we again perceive that even in its most equitable form it is impossible for government to dissociate itself from evil; and further, that unless the right to ignore the state is recognized, its acts must be essentially criminal.

THAT A MAN IS free to abandon the benefits and throw off the burdens of citizenship may indeed be inferred from the admissions of existing authorities and of current opinion. Unprepared as they probably are for so extreme a doctrine as the one here maintained, the radicals of our day yet unwittingly profess their belief in a maxim which obviously embodies this doctrine. Do we not continually hear them quote Blackstone's assertion that "no subject of England can be constrained to pay any aids or taxes even for the defence of the realm or the support of government, but such as are imposed by his own consent, or that of his representative in parliament?" And what does this mean? It means, say they, that every man should have a vote. True, but it means much more. If there is any sense in words it is a distinct enunciation of the right now contended for. In affirming that a man may not be taxed unless he has directly or indirectly given his consent, it affirms that he may refuse to be so taxed; and to refuse to be taxed is to cut all connection with the state. Perhaps it will be said that this consent is not a specific, but a general one, and that the citizen is understood to have assented to everything his representative may do when he voted for him. But suppose he did not vote for him, and on the contrary did all in his power to get elected someone holding opposite views - what then? The reply will probably be that, by taking part in such an election, he tacitly agreed to abide by the decision of the majority. And how if he did not vote at all? Why, then he cannot justly complain of any tax, seeing that he made no protest against its imposition. So, curiously enough, it seems that he gave his consent in whatever way he acted - whether he said yes, whether he said no, or whether he

remained neuter! A rather awkward doctrine, this. Here stands an unfortunate citizen who is asked if he will pay money for a certain proffered advantage; and whether he employs the only means of expressing his refusal or does not employ it, we are told that he practically agrees, if only the number of others who agree is greater than the number of those who dissent. And thus we are introduced to the novel principle that A's consent to a thing is not determined by what A says, but by what B may happen to say!

It is for those who quote Blackstone to choose between this absurdity and the doctrine above set forth. Either his maxim implies the right to ignore the state, or it is sheer nonsense.

THERE IS a strange heterogeneity in our political faiths. Systems that have had their day and are beginning here and there to let the daylight through are patched with modern notions utterly unlike in quality and color; and men gravely display these systems, wear them, and walk about in them, quite unconscious of their grotesqueness. This transition state of ours, partaking as it does equally of the past and the future, breeds hybrid theories exhibiting the oddest union of bygone despotism and coming freedom. Here are types of the old organization curiously disguised by germs of the new - peculiarities showing adaptation to a preceding state modified by rudiments that prophecy of something to come - making altogether so chaotic a mixture of relationships that there is no saying to what class these births of the age should be referred.

As ideas must of necessity bear the stamp of the time, it is useless to lament the contentment with which these incongruous beliefs are held. Otherwise it would seem unfortunate that men do not pursue to the end the trains of reasoning which have led to these partial modifications. In the present case for example, consistency would force them to admit that, on other points besides the one just noticed, they hold opinions and use arguments in which the right to ignore the state is involved.

For what is the meaning of Dissent? The time was when a man's faith and his mode of worship were as much determinable by law as



his secular acts; and, according to provisions extant in our statute book, are so still. Thanks to the growth of a Protestant spirit, however, we have ignored the state in this matter - wholly in theory, and partly in practice. But how have we done so? By assuming an attitude which, if consistently maintained, implies a right to ignore the state entirely. Observe the positions of the two parties. "This is your creed," says the legislator; "you must believe and openly profess what is here set down for you." "I shall not do anything of the kind," answers the nonconformist; "I will go to prison rather." "Your religious ordinances," pursues the legislator, "shall be such as we have prescribed. You shall attend the churches we have endowed and adopt the ceremonies used in them." "Nothing shall induce me to do so," is the reply; "I altogether deny your power to dictate to me in such matters, and mean to resist to the uttermost." "Lastly," adds the legislator, "we shall require you to pay such sums of money toward the support of these religious institutions as we may see fit to ask." "Not a farthing will you have from me," exclaims our sturdy Independent; "even did I believe in the doctrines of your church (which I do not), I should still rebel against your interference; and if you take my property, it shall be by force and under protest."

WHAT NOW DOES this proceeding amount to when regarded in the abstract? It amounts to an assertion by the individual of the right to exercise one of his faculties - the religious sentiment - without let or hinderance, and with no limit save that set up by the equal claims of others. And what is meant by ignoring the state? Simply an assertion of the right similarly to exercise *all* the faculties. The one is just an expansion of the other - rests on the same footing with the other - must stand or fall with the other. Men do indeed speak of civil and religious liberty as different things: but the distinction is quite arbitrary. They are parts of the same whole and cannot philosophically be separated.

"Yes they can," interposes the objector; "assertion of the one is imperative as being a religious duty. The liberty to worship God in the way that seems to him right is a liberty without which a man cannot fulfill what he believes to be Divine commands, and therefore

conscience requires him to maintain it." True enough; but how if the same can be asserted of all other liberty? How if maintenance of this also turns out to be a matter of conscience? Have we not seen that human happiness is the Divine will - that only by exercising our faculties is this happiness obtainable - and that it is impossible to exercise them without freedom? And if this freedom for the exercise of faculties is a condition without which the Divine will cannot be fulfilled, the preservation of it is, by our objector's own showing, a duty. Or, in other words, it appears not only that the maintenance of liberty of action *may* be a point of conscience, but that it *ought* to be one. And thus we are clearly shown that the claims to ignore the state in religious and in secular matters are in essence identical.

The other reason commonly assigned for nonconformity admits of similar treatment. Besides resisting state dictation in the abstract, the dissenter resists it from disapprobation of the doctrines taught. No legislative injunction will make him adopt what he considers an erroneous belief; and, bearing in mind his duty toward his fellow men, he refuses to help through the medium of his purse in disseminating this erroneous belief. The position is perfectly intelligible. But it is one which either commits its adherents to civil nonconformity also, or leaves them in a dilemma. For why do they refuse to be instrumental in spreading error? Because error is adverse to human happiness. And on what ground is any piece of secular legislation disapproved? For the same reason - because thought adverse to human happiness. How, then, can it be shown that the state ought to be resisted in the one case and not in the other? Will anyone deliberately assert that if a government demands money from us to aid in *teaching* what we think will produce evil we ought to refuse it, but that if the money is for the purpose of *doing* what we think will produce evil we ought not to refuse it? Yet such is the hopeful proposition which those have to maintain who recognize the right to ignore the state in religious matters but deny it in civil matters.

THE SUBSTANCE of this chapter once more reminds us of the incongruity between a perfect law and an imperfect state. The impracticability of

the principle here laid down varies directly as social morality. In a thoroughly vicious community its admission would be productive of anarchy. In a completely virtuous one its admission will be both innocuous and inevitable. Progress toward a condition of social health - a condition, that is, in which the remedial measures of legislation will no longer be needed - is progress toward a condition in which those remedial measures will be cast aside and the authority prescribing them disregarded. The two changes are of necessity co-ordinate. That moral sense whose supremacy will make society harmonious and government unnecessary is the same moral sense which will then make each man assert his freedom even to the extent of ignoring the state - is the same moral sense which, by deterring the majority from coercing the minority, will eventually render government impossible. And as what are merely different manifestations of the same sentiment must bear a constant ratio to each other, the tendency to repudiate governments will increase only at the same rate that governments become needless.

Let not any be alarmed, therefore, at the promulgation of the foregoing doctrine. There are many changes yet to be passed through before it can begin to exercise much influence. Probably a long time will elapse before the right to ignore the state will be generally admitted, even in theory. It will be still longer before it receives legislative recognition. And even then there will be plenty of checks upon the premature exercise of it. A sharp experience will sufficiently instruct those who may too soon abandon legal protection. While, in the majority of men, there is such a love of tried arrangements and so great a dread of experiments that they will probably not act upon this right until long after it is safe to do so.



# ACT II

## THE FORMULATION OF THE IDEA

*Where a botanist takes up and independently develops the seeds of the proposal, gives it a name, and launches it, like a message in a bottle, into the sea of ideas.*



4 - (1860) Paul-Émile de Puydt, *Panarchy*

5 - (1860) Charles de Brouckère, *Review of Panarchie* by Paul-Émile de Puydt

6 - (2008) Gian Piero de Bellis, *Discovering de Puydt*



**PAUL-ÉMILE DE PUYDT**  
PANARCHY (1860)

A classic text that deserves to be disseminated, analyzed, and discussed everywhere, because it introduces an idea, the end of the territorial sovereignty of states, that could really constitute a radical turning point in personal and social relations, putting an end to most of the bloody conflicts that have characterized and still characterize the time in which we live.

Source: Paul-Émile de Puydt, *Panarchie*, Revue Trimestrielle, Brussels, July 1860



DE PUYDT (Paul-Émile), botanist, literary scholar, economist, born in Mons in 1810 and died there in 1891. He was president of the Society of Sciences, Arts and Letters of Hainaut. His works on horticulture are justly esteemed.

(Source: De Seyn, *Dictionnaire des écrivains belges*, Editions Excelsior, Bruges, 1930)



## I Preface

A contemporary once said: « If I were holding the truth fully in my hands, I should be careful not to open them. »

These words may come from a wise man, but they are certainly from an egotist.

Another wrote this: « The truths we least like to hear are the ones which most need to be told. »

Here then are two thinkers whose views differ widely. I would rather agree with the second, although in practice his way of seeing things presents difficulties. Wise men of all nations advise me that « not all truths should be disclosed. » But, how to know which ones to conceal? In any case, the Gospel says: « Hide not your light under a bushel. »

Thus, I am now confronted with a dilemma. I have a new idea, at least I think it is new, and I think it is my duty to spread it; however, at the moment of opening my hand, I feel a certain anxiety: who is the innovator who has not been persecuted a little?

As for the new idea, once written down and published, it will make its way on its own merits, for I consider it autonomous. My concern is for the author. Will he be absolved for having had a new idea?

An ancient man, who saved Athens and Greece, once said to an unknown brutal individual, who, in a discussion, having run out of arguments, had raised his stick at him: « Strike, but listen. »

Antiquity abounds with such great examples. Thus, imitating Themistocles, I put forward my idea and say to the public: « Read it to the end. You may stone me afterwards if so please you. »

However, I do not expect to be stoned. The brutish person I spoke of died in Sparta twenty-four centuries ago, and everyone knows the immense progress that humanity has made in two thousand four hundred years. Nowadays, ideas may be freely expressed, and if, occasionally, an innovator is still attacked, like in former times, it is no longer as such, but as an agitator and a utopian.

Reassured by these thoughts, I proceed resolutely to the point.



## II

Gentlemen, friend of everyone!

(*The servant Sosie, in Molière's Amphitryon, 1668*)

I have a high esteem for political economy and I wish that the whole world shared my view. This science, of recent origin, yet already the most significant of all, is far from having said its last word. Sooner or later, and I hope it will be soon, it will govern all things. I am justified in asserting this, for it is from the writings of the economists that I have drawn the principle whereof I propose a new application, much broader and no less logical than all the others.

Let us first quote a few aphorisms whose train of thought will prepare the reader for what follows.

« *Freedom and property are closely connected; one promotes the distribution of wealth, the other teaches how to produce it.* »

« *The value of wealth depends on the use to which it is put.* »

« *The price of services is established as a direct result of demand and as an inverse result of supply.* »

« *The division of labour multiplies wealth.* »

« *Freedom breeds competition, which in turn breeds progress.* »

(Charles de Brouckère [1], *Principes généraux d'économie politique*)

Therefore, free competition, first between individuals, then from nation to nation. Freedom to invent, to work, to trade, to sell, to buy. Freedom to price the products of one's work. No intervention by the State outside its specific domain. *Laissez faire, laissez passer.*

This, in a few lines, is the essence of political economy, the summary of a science without which there is only bad administration and deplorable governments.

We can go even further and, in many cases, reduce this great science to the final maxim: *Laissez faire, laissez passer.*

Taking hold of this idea, I go on to say:

In the field of science there are no half-truths; there are no truths which, true in one aspect, cease to be true in another aspect. The plan of the universe is of a wonderful simplicity, as wonderful as its infal-

lible logic. The law is everywhere the same, only the applications are diverse. The highest and simplest beings, from man to the zoophyte, to the mineral, offer intimate relationships of structure, development, and composition; and striking analogies link the moral world to the material world. Life is one, matter is one, only the manifestations are different, the combinations innumerable, the individualities infinite; and yet the general plan embraces them all. The feebleness of our understanding and our fundamentally deceptive education are the only reason for the diversity of systems and the opposition of ideas. Between two opinions which contradict each other, there is one true and one false; unless both are false, but both cannot be true. A truth, scientifically demonstrated, cannot be true here and false elsewhere, good, for example, for the social economy and bad in politics: this is the point I wanted to reach.

Is the great law of political economy, the law of free competition, *laissez faire, laissez passer*, applicable only to the regulation of industrial and commercial interests or, more scientifically, only to the production and circulation of wealth? Think of the economic confusion which this law has dispelled: the permanently troubled condition, the antagonism of conflicting interests, which it has resolved. Are not these conditions equally present in the domain of politics? Does not the analogy indicate a similar remedy in both cases? *Laissez faire, laissez passer*.

Let us agree, however, that there are governments here and there that are as free as human weakness now allows, and yet all is not well in the best of these republics. Some say: "It is precisely that there is too much freedom;" others: "It is that there is still not enough freedom."

The truth is that there is not the right kind of freedom; the fundamental freedom, the freedom to be free or not to be free, as one chooses. Each person is the judge and decides the question according to his or her particular tastes or needs, and as there are as many opinions on this as there are individuals, *tot homines, tot sensus*, you can see from here the mess graced with the fine name of politics. The freedom of some is the negation of the rights of others, and vice versa. Even the wisest and best government never functions with the full and free consent of all the governed. There are parties, triumphant or defeated, there are majorities and minorities in perpetual struggle; and the more

confused their notions are, the more passionately they hold to their ideals. Some oppress in the name of right, others revolt in the name of freedom, only to become the new oppressors, if their turn should come.

*I see! - says a reader.*

*You are one of those utopians who build from scratch a system in which they want to enclose the whole of society, by consent or by force. Nothing is right as it is now, and your panacea alone will save humanity. Take my magic solution!*

Wrong! I have no solution other than everybody's solution, and I differ from all the others only in one respect, namely, that I accept all solutions at the same time, that is, all forms of government. Those, at least, which have supporters.

*I do not follow you anymore.*

So let me continue.

"There is a general tendency to push the theory too far. Must we conclude from this that all the propositions, the whole of which make up a theory, must always be regarded as false? It would seem that there is perversity or madness in the exercise of human intelligence. To declare that one dislikes speculative science, that one hates theories, is not to renounce the faculty of thinking?"

These considerations are not mine; they were held by one of the greatest thinkers of our time, Jeremy Bentham.

Royer-Collard [2] said the same thing with great power of expression:

"To claim that theory is good for nothing and that practice is the only sure guide is to pretend to act without knowing what one is doing and to speak without knowing what one is saying."

Although nothing is perfect in human endeavours, humanity at least tends invariably towards a never attainable perfection: this is the law of progress. There are no immutable laws except those of nature. These are the foundations on which every legislator must build, because they alone have the strength to support the social edifice; but

the edifice itself is the work of mankind. Each generation is like a new tenant who, before taking possession, changes the layout, recreates the facade, adds or removes a wing, according to his own needs. From time to time, a generation, bolder or more short-sighted than its predecessors, pulls down the whole edifice, sleeping out under the stars until it is reconstructed. When, after a thousand privations and with enormous efforts, they have managed to rebuild it to a new plan, they are crestfallen to find it is not much more comfortable than the old one. Those who drew up the plans have, it is true, provided themselves with convenient, well-enclosed accommodation, warm in winter and cool in summer, but the others, who cannot choose, are relegated to the mezzanine, the cellars or the garret. There are then many malcontents, troublemakers, some of whom miss the old edifice, while the most daring are already dreaming of a new demolition. For a few satisfied people, there is an innumerable mass of disgruntled individuals.

There are, however, satisfied people; let us take note of them. The new edifice is not flawless, far from it, but it has its qualities. Why demolish it tomorrow, later, whenever, as long as it conveniently houses enough tenants to pay for its maintenance?

For my part, I hate demolishers as much as I hate tyrants. If you feel your apartment is inadequate or too small or unhealthy, then change it - that is all I ask. Choose another place, move out quietly, but, for heaven's sake, don't blow up the whole house when you leave. What no longer suits you can make your neighbour happy. Do you understand the apologue?

*Almost, but what are you aiming for? No more revolutions, that would be fine! I think that nine times out of ten their costs outweigh their achievements. So we'll keep the old edifice, but where will you house those who are moving out?*

Wherever they want; this is none of my business. I believe that, in this respect, everyone will be totally free to take his decisions. This is the basis of my system: *Laissez faire, laissez passer*.

*I think I understand: those who are dissatisfied with their government will go looking for another. There is a choice, indeed, from the empire of Morocco, not to mention other empires, to the republic of San Marino; from the city of*

*London to the Pampas of America. Is this all your invention? It is not new, I warn you.*

It is not a question of emigration. *A person does not carry his native land on the soles of his shoes.* Besides, such a colossal migration is and always will be impracticable. The expense involved could not be met by all the wealth in the world. Nor do I intend to parcel out citizens according to their convictions; to relegate, for example, the Catholics to the Flemish provinces of Belgium and to draw the border of liberalism from Mons to Liège. I want everybody to continue to live together, where they are, or elsewhere if one wishes, but without discord, as good brothers, each freely professing his opinions and subject only to the powers that he has personally chosen or accepted.

*I am now totally lost.*

I am not at all surprised. My plan, my utopia, is therefore not an old-fashioned idea, as you thought at first, and yet nothing in the world is simpler or more natural; but it is recognised that in government, as in mechanics, simple ideas always come last.

Let us come to the point: nothing lasts if it is not based on liberty. Nothing that already exists can maintain itself or operate with full efficiency without the free interplay of all its active parts. Otherwise energy is wasted, parts wear out rapidly, and ultimately, breakdowns and serious accidents occur. I therefore demand for each and every one of the elements of human society the freedom to aggregate according to their affinities and to act only according to their aptitudes; in other words, the absolute right to choose the political society in which they wish to live and to be governed only by that society.

For instance, you are a Republican ...

*Me! May heavens help me!*

A simple supposition. The monarchical edifice does not suit you; the air is too heavy for your lungs and your body does not have the free play and action your constitution demands. In the present state of ideas, you tend to tear down this edifice, you and your friends, and to build your own in its place. But to do this, you would come up against all the supporters of the monarchy, who cling to their beliefs, and in general all those who do not share your convictions. Do better: assemble, write down your programme, draw up your budget, open

membership lists, count yourselves, and if there are enough of you to bear the costs, found your republic.

*Where? In the Pampas?*

No, certainly not; here; where you are, without moving. I agree that it is necessary, up to the present, for the monarchists to consent. For the sake of my argument, I assume this matter of principle to be settled. Otherwise, I am well aware of the difficulty of changing the state of affairs to the way it should be and must become. I simply express my idea, not wishing to impose it on anyone, but I see nothing, except static conventional thinking, which might stop it from being accepted. Don't we know that in all places, the rulers and the governed cohabit quite uncomfortably. On the civil order we provide against unworkable households by legal separation or divorce. It is an analogous institution that I propose in the political order, and without the need to surround it with so many formalities and protective restrictions, because in politics a first marriage leaves neither physical traces nor progeny. My procedure differs from the unjust and tyrannical procedures followed until now, in that I have no intention to do anyone violence.

Does anyone of you want to carry out a political schism? You are the master of it, but on one condition, that you do it among yourselves, as a family, without touching in any way the rights or the faith of others. For this, there is no need to divide the territory of the State into as many boxes as there are known and accepted forms of government. Once again, I leave each and everything in their place. I only demand that people make room for the dissenters so that they may build their churches and worship the almighty Power in their own fashion.

*And how are you going to put this into practice, may I ask?*

This is my strong point. You know the mechanism of civil status? It is only a question of making a new application of it. We are opening a new office in each municipality, the POLITICAL STATUS office. This office sends each citizen of legal age a declaration form to fill in, just like for the income tax or the dog registration.

"Question. What form of government do you desire?"

You answer, freely: monarchy, or democracy, or something else.

"Question. If monarchy, do you want it absolute or tempered ... and by what?"

You answer: constitutional, I suppose. Whatever your answer may be, you are entered in a register arranged for this purpose, and once you are registered, unless you withdrew your declaration, observing due legal form and process, you are a subject of the king or a citizen of the republic. Thereafter, you no longer have anything to do with the government of others, any more than a Prussian subject has with the Belgian authority. You would obey your own leaders, your own laws, and your own regulations. You would be judged by your peers, taxed by your representatives. You would pay neither more nor less, but morally it would be a completely different situation. Ultimately, everyone would enjoy his own political status, quite as if there were not, next to him, another, nay, ten other governments, each with its own taxpayers.

If a dispute arises between subjects of different governments, or between one government and the subject of another, it is only a matter of conforming to the rules already observed between neighbouring and friendly nations, and if there is any lacuna in them, the law of nations and all possible human rights will cover it without difficulty. Anything else would be the business of ordinary courts of justice.

*This is a new gold mine for legal interventions, which would bring the lawyers on to your side.*

Indeed, I am counting on it.

There can and must also be interests common to all the inhabitants of a given district, whatever their political status. Each government, in this case, would be to the whole nation (political nation) more or less what each of the Swiss cantons, or rather the states of the American Union, is to the federal government.

Thus all these new and, at first sight, frightening questions find ready-made solutions, an already established jurisprudence over most issues, and present no serious difficulties whatsoever.

It will certainly happen that some malicious minds, incorrigible dreamers, unsociable natures, will not accommodate themselves to any known form of government. There will be minorities too weak to cover the costs of their political ideal. Too bad for them. They will be free to

promote their ideas and to recruit people until they have the necessary numbers, or rather the necessary budget, for everything would resolve into a matter of financing their own state. And until then they will have to opt for one of the established forms of government. It is conceivable that such small minorities will not cause any trouble.

This is not all. Problems rarely arise between extreme opinions. One fights more often and much harder, for shades of colour than for strongly contrasted ones. In Belgium, notwithstanding a few admitted shortcomings, the vast majority would, I have no doubt, opt for the current institutions; but, when it comes to specific applications, would we be so united? Do we not have two or three million Catholics who follow only M. de Theux [3], and two or three million Liberals who swear allegiance only to themselves? How can we reconcile them? By not trying to reconcile them at all; by letting each party govern itself as it pleases - and at its own expense. Even choosing Theocracy if one so wishes. Freedom should extend to the right not to be free and should include it.

However, since shades of opinion must not be allowed to complicate government machinery infinitely, one will endeavour, in the general interest, to simplify the machine and to apply the same driving wheel to produce double or triple effect. I shall explain myself: a wise and frankly constitutional king would suit both Catholics and Liberals; only the ministry would have to be doubled, Mr. de Theux for some, Mr. Frère-Orban [4] for the others, the King for all.

In a situation where certain gentlemen, whom I shall not name, convened to introduce political absolutism, who would hinder this same prince from using his superior wisdom and rich experience to manage those gentlemen's business, freeing them of the regretful necessity of having to express their opinions about government affairs? Truly, when I think of it, I do not see why, by changing the arrangement in the opposite direction, this same prince would not make a quite acceptable president for an honest and moderate republic. Holding such a plurality of offices should not be prohibited.



### III

"Though freedom has its drawbacks and pitfalls,  
in the long run it always leads to deliverance."

*M.A. Deschamps* [5]

One of the many incomparable advantages of my system, is that it makes easy, natural, and perfectly legitimate those differences of opinion which, in our day, have discredited very brave people, and which have been cruelly disparaged under the name of political apostasies. This impatience for change, which has been criminally imputed to honest citizens, and which has caused certain ancient and modern nations to be accused of levity or ingratitude, what is it, after all, but the desire for progress? Furthermore, is it not strange that, in many cases, those accused of capriciousness and instability are precisely those who are most consistent with themselves? We want fidelity to the party, to the flag, to the prince; that is all very well if the prince and the party are immutable, but what if they change or give way to others who are not precisely equivalent? What! I would have taken for my guide, for my leader, even for my master, the best existing prince; I would have bowed to his powerful and creative will and I would have abdicated my personal initiative to place it at the service of his genius, and then, this prince dead, there succeeds him, by right of primogeniture, some narrow mind, imbued with false ideas, which demolishes piece by piece the work of his father, and you want me to remain faithful to him? Why should I be faithful to him? Because he is the direct and legitimate heir of the first? Direct, I concede, but legitimate, at least as far as I am concerned, I formally deny it.

I would not rebel over this matter. I have told you that I hate revolutions, but I will consider myself wronged and entitled to change when the contract expires.

Sire," said Madame de Staël to the Emperor of Russia, "your character is like a constitution for your subjects and your conscience a guarantee.

"If that were so", answered Alexander, "I would be merely a lucky accident."

This word, so brilliant and so true, sums up my thoughts perfectly.

Our panacea, if we want to use that word, is therefore free competition in matters of government. It is the right of every human being to seek his welfare wherever he thinks he can find it, and to provide himself with security on such terms as he pleases. It is, on the other hand, progress assured, by a struggle of emulation between governments, obliged to compete incessantly for customers. It is the true freedom inaugurated in the whole world, the freedom which is not imposed on anyone, being for each one just what each one wants it to be; which neither oppresses nor deceives and which is always subject to a right of appeal. To bring about this freedom it will not be necessary to renounce either the traditions of your country or the comforts of your family; it will not be necessary to learn to think in a foreign language; there will be no need to cross rivers and seas, carrying the bones of one's ancestors. It will be a matter of a simple declaration before the local office of political status, and without even the necessity of removing one's dressing gown or slippers, one will find oneself passing, at its discretion, from republic to monarchy, from parliamentarianism to autocracy, from oligarchy to democracy or even to the anarchy of Mr. Proudhon.

Are you tired of the turmoil of the forum, the verbose hair-splitting of the parliamentary tribune or the rather rough kisses of the goddess Liberty? Are you so drunk with liberalism and clericalism that you sometimes confuse Mr. Dumortier with Mr. De Fré and no longer know the exact difference between Mr. Rogier and Mr. De Decker? Do you yearn for rest, for the soft comfort of an honest despotism? Do you feel the need for a government that thinks for you and acts for you, that has its eye on everything and its hand everywhere, and that plays for you the role of deputy-providence as all governments like to do? You have no need to migrate to the South like the swallows in autumn and the geese in November. What you want is here, there, everywhere. Register your name and take your place!

The admirable thing about this discovery is that it removes forever revolutions, riots, street disorders and even the slightest tensions in the political fibre. You are not happy with your government? Change over to another! These four words, always associated with horror and bloodshed, words which all courts, high and low, military and special,

without exception, unanimously condemn as guilty of inciting to rebellion, these four words become innocent and pure, as if uttered by seminarists, and as harmless as the remedy so wrongly mistrusted by Mr. de Pourceaugnac [6].

"Change over to another" means: go to the office of Political Status, take off your hat in front to the chief clerk, and ask politely to strike your name off the list on which you appear and to transfer it to that of ... whatever you like.

The chief clerk will put on his glasses, open the register, enter your declaration, and give you a receipt. You will greet him again, and the revolution will be accomplished, without spilling any more than a drop of ink. Accomplished for you alone, I agree. Your change will not oblige anyone, and that will be its merit. There will be neither a triumphant majority nor a defeated minority; but nothing will prevent the other four million six hundred thousand Belgians from following your example, if they like it. The office of the political status will ask for more personnel.

What is the function of any government, putting aside all preconceptions? It is, as I have already indicated, to provide the citizens with security (I take this word in its broadest sense) under the best possible conditions. I know that, on this point, the ideas are still rather confused. For some people not even an army is protection enough against outside enemies; for some not even a police force, a security force, a royal prosecutor and all the honourable judges suffice to assure internal order and the respect of rights and property.

I know some people who want a government with its hands full of well-paid jobs, grandiose titles and glittering decorations; with customs officers at the frontiers to shield their industry against consumer choice and legions of civil servants protecting the fine arts, theatres, and actresses. But I also know that these are old-fashioned things propagated by those welfare governments we spoke of earlier. Until free experimentation has done them justice, I see no harm in letting them continue, for the satisfaction of those who love them. There is only one thing I ask: freedom of choice.

In a nutshell: freedom of choice, competition. *Laissez faire, laissez passer!* This sublime motto, inscribed on the banner of economic

science, will one day also be the motto of the political world. The expression "political economy" gives some foretaste of it and, curiously enough, no matter how much one wanted to change this name, for example, to "social economy", the intuitive good sense of the people has disallowed this concession. Economics is and will be the political science *par excellence*. Was it not economics that invented the modern principle of non-intervention and its formula: *laissez faire, laissez passer*?

Therefore, free competition in government as in all other matters. Envision, after your initial surprise, the image of a country thus given over to governmental competition, that is to say, simultaneously possessing as many regularly competing governments as have ever been conceived and will ever be invented.

*Yes, indeed! That will be a fine mess. And do you think we could extricate ourselves from such a confusion?*

Certainly, and nothing could be easier to grasp, if only one applies oneself to it a little.

Do you remember the time when people slaughtered each other for religion more than they ever did for political reasons? When the divine creator of all beings was the God of armies, the vengeful and merciless God, in whose name blood flowed freely? Men have always liked to take God's cause into their own hands and make him an accomplice to their bloodthirsty passions.

"Kill them all! God will recognise his own!"

What has become of these implacable hatreds? The progress of the human spirit has swept them away as the autumn wind does with dead leaves. The religions, in whose name stakes and instruments of torture were once erected, live peacefully side by side, under the same laws, feeding from the same budget, and if each sect still preaches its own excellence, it is quite rare if it persists in condemning its rivals

Then, what has become possible in this obscure and unfathomable domain of conscience, with the proselytising spirit of some, the intolerance of others, the fanaticism and ignorance of the masses. What is possible to such an extent that it is practiced and cherished in half the world, without any further disturbance or violence. On the contrary, particularly where there are divergent creeds, numerous sects exist on a footing of complete legal equality; and they are, also, more concerned

with their dignity and the purity of their morals than anywhere else. What has become possible in such difficult conditions, would it not be more so in the purely secular field of politics, where everything should be clear, where the goal is defined by a sentence, where science is set forth in four words?

Under the present conditions a government exists only by the exclusion of all the others, and one party can rule only after smashing its opponents; a majority is always harassed by a minority which is impatient to govern. Under such conditions it is quite inevitable that the parties hate each other and live, if not at war, at least in a state of armed peace. Who would be surprised to see that minorities intrigue and agitate, and that governments put down by force any aspiration to a different political form which would be similarly exclusive? So, society ends up composed of ambitious resentful men, waiting for vengeance, and ambitious power-sated men, sitting complacently on the edge of a precipice. Erroneous principles never bring about just consequences, and coercion never leads to truth or right.

But let all constraint cease; let every adult citizen be and remain free, not once, in the aftermath of some bloody revolution, but always and everywhere, to choose, from among the possible offered governments, the one which suit his spirit and his character or his personal needs; free to choose, let us be clear, but not to impose his choice on others. At that moment, all disorder will cease, all sterile struggles will become impossible.

This is only one side of the matter; here is another: from the moment when forms of government are subject to experimentation and free competition, they are bound to progress and perfect themselves; that is the law of nature. No more political fogginess, no more apparent profundities that conceal nothing but emptiness. No more sly schemes presented as diplomatic finesse, no more cowardly moves or baseness disguised as State reason. No more court or military intrigues deceitfully described as being honourable or in the national interest. In short, no more deception regarding the nature and the quality of the services provided by the government. From now on, full transparency, everywhere. The governed compare and are aware of things, and the governors finally understand this economic and political truth, that there is

only one condition for solid and lasting success in this world and that is to do better and more efficiently than the others. From that moment on, a universal agreement is established, and the forces hitherto lost in sterile labour, in friction and resistance, unite to bring about an unprecedented, marvellous, and powerful impulse towards the progress and happiness of mankind.

*Amen!*

*Let me, however, raise a small objection: When all the possible varieties of government have been tried everywhere, in the full light of publicity and competition, what will be the result? There will obviously be one which will be recognised as the most perfect, and which everyone will then want. This will bring us back to having only one government for all, which is just where we began.*

Not so fast, I beg you, dear reader.

What, by your own admission, all would agree and you call that going back to the starting point? Your objection gives support to my fundamental proposition, since it assumes universal agreement established by the simple functioning of *laissez faire, laissez passer*. I could simply take note and declare you convinced, converted to my system, but I am not interested in half-convictions and I am not looking for converts.

No, we will not revert to having only one form of government, except perhaps in the distant future, when the government function will be reduced, by general consent, to its simplest expression. We are not there yet, nor are we about to get there. Nowadays, the individuals are neither all similar in conceptions and ways of living, nor as easy to reconcile as you suppose, and the system of free competition is the only possible one. One person needs excitement and struggle - quietness would be deadly to him. Another, a dreamer and philosopher, only sees the bustle of society from a distance, and his thoughts are only produced in the most profound quiet. This one, poor, thoughtful, unknown artist, needs encouragement and support to give birth to his immortal work; he lacks a laboratory for his experiments, a palace to build, a block of marble to sculpt God. This one, a powerful and impulsive genius, cannot stand any hindrance and breaks the arm that wants to guide him. One needs the republic, with its spirit of self-sacrifice and

self-denial; the other prefers the absolute monarchy, with its pomp and splendour. One, an orator, would want a parliament; another, unable to put together ten words, would have nothing to do with such babblers. There are strong minds and weak heads, insatiably ambitious people and some simple ones, content with the small lot which has befallen to them.

To sum up, there are as many characters as there are individuals, as many needs as there are different natures. How can all these people be satisfied with a single form of government? Clearly, people would accept it only in varying degrees. Some would be content, some indifferent, some would find faults, some would be openly dissatisfied, some would even conspire against it.

In any case, you can count on human nature to ensure that the number of satisfied individuals would be smaller than the number of dissenters. However perfect we suppose this single government to be, and however absolute might be its perfection, there would always be opposition: that of imperfect natures, to whom all perfection is incomprehensible, even disagreeable. In my system the most extreme dissatisfaction would merely resemble domestic quarrels, with divorce as its final solution.

But, under this system of competition, which government would allow itself to be left behind by the others in the race for progress? What improvements, happily introduced by one's neighbour would one refuse to introduce in one's own house? Such constant emulation would work wonders. But also the governed will all be models to imitate. Since they would be free to come and go, to speak or be silent, to act or to leave things alone, they would have only themselves to blame if they were not completely satisfied. From then on, instead of fomenting dissent to gain attention, they will satisfy their vanity by assuring themselves and persuading others that their own government is the most perfect one can dream of. Thus, between the governors and the governed a friendly understanding will grow up, a mutual trust and a simplicity of relations that is easy to imagine.

*What? You are seriously dreaming of this complete agreement of political parties and sects? Do you expect them to live side by side in the same territory, without clashing, without the stronger ones trying to absorb or subdue*

*the weaker ones? Do you imagine that this great Babel will produce a universal language?*

I believe in a universal language, just as I believe in the supreme power of freedom to pacify the world. I do not intend to foresee either the day or the hour of this universal agreement. My idea is a seed that I throw to the wind; will it fall on fertile soil or on a cobbled road? This is no longer my business. I propose nothing. Everything, moreover, is a matter of time. Who would have believed, a century ago, in freedom of conscience? And who, these days, would dare to question it? Is it so very long since people scoffed at the idea of the Press being a power within the State? Yet now statesmen too bow before it. Did you foresee this new force of public opinion, whose birth we have all witnessed, which, although still in its infancy, imposes its verdict on empires and is of utmost importance even in the decisions of despots? And would you not have laughed in the face of anyone who would have dared to predict its rise?

*Since you do not propose anything, we can talk. Tell me, for instance, how anyone can recognise his own associates in this confusion of authorities. And if one can, at any time, enlist under this government and disengage from that one, on whom and on what will one rely to settle the state budgets and to finance the civil lists?*

First of all, I do not admit that one is free to change at any time and to bankrupt one's government. For this sort of contract, a minimum duration can be given; one year, I suppose. Examples taken in France and elsewhere authorise me to think that it is possible to support, for a whole year, the government to which one has subscribed. The budgets, regularly voted and distributed, would oblige each one up to the amount due, and, in case of dispute, the ordinary courts would resolve the issue. Regarding a government's identification of its subjects, constituents, or taxpayers, would this really present more difficulties than for each church to keep a record of its congregation, or for each company to count its shareholders?

*But you would have ten or twenty governments instead of one, and therefore as many budgets, civil lists; and general expenses would multiply with the number of government departments.*

I do not deny the validity of this objection. Only note that, by virtue



of the law of competition, each of these governments will tend, of necessity, to become as simple and as economical as possible. The government departments, which cost us, God knows! an arm and a leg, would be reduced to the strictest necessities, and superfluous office-holders would have to give up their positions and take on productive work. However, the question would only be half solved by this way, and I do not like half solutions. Too many governments would be an evil, a cause of exaggerated expenditure, if not of confusion. Well, as soon as this evil is felt, the remedy will not be long in coming. Common sense will do justice to the exaggerations, and soon only those governments will remain that are really viable: the others will perish from starvation. You see that freedom has an answer for everything.

*Perhaps. And what about the reigning dynasties, and the triumphant majorities, and the established institutions, and the accredited doctrines? Do you think that they would ever retreat and quietly rally under the banner of laissez faire, laissez passer? It is all very well to say that you are not proposing anything, but you cannot dodge the discussion in this way.*

Tell me, first of all, if you firmly believe that they are so confident of themselves to be able always to afford to refuse large concessions? I myself would not dismiss anyone. All governments exist by virtue of a force which they draw from somewhere outside themselves, and which they use more or less skilfully to perpetuate themselves. Therefore, they have their place assured in my organisation. That they must first lose a good number of their more or less voluntary members I cannot deny; but without mentioning the chances of the future, what enviable compensations in terms of the security and stability of power! Fewer subjects, in other words, fewer taxpayers, but on the other hand, absolute and yet voluntary submission for the duration of the contract. No more constraint, few gendarmes, hardly any police; soldiers, just enough for the parade, but only the especially good-looking ones. Expenses will decrease faster than any decrease in revenues. No more loans, no more financial difficulties. What has so far been seen only in the New World will become reality: economic systems which, at last, could make human beings happy. One will be blessed, incensed, and I am not talking about those stupefying vapours that are blown on the

noses of faltering powers, but about real Arabian perfumes, made for fine noses. What dynasty would not like to last forever? What majority would not agree to let the minority emigrate *en masse*?

At last you see how a system, based on the great economic principle of *laissez faire* can very well deal with all difficulties. The truth is not half true; it is the truth, no more and no less. Today we have reigning dynasties and fallen dynasties; princes who wear the crown and others who would not mind wearing it; and each has its party; and each party is primarily interested in putting spokes in the wheel of the chariot of the State, until they have tipped it up, thus gaining the chance of climbing into it themselves, risking the same fate in turn. A charming game of seesaw, of which the people pay the price for and yet never seem to tire of it, as Paul-Louis Courier [7] used to say. With our system, no more of these costly balancing acts or catastrophic downfalls; no more conspiracies or usurpations; everyone is legitimate, and no one. One is legitimate without question, as long as one lasts, and for one's own people only. Outside of this, there is no divine or earthly right, except the right to change, to perfect one's plans and to make a new appeal to the stakeholders.

No exiles, no proscriptions, no confiscations, no persecutions of any kind. The government that falls pays off its backers; if it has been honest, if its accounts are in order, if the statutes, constitutional or otherwise, have been faithfully observed, it can leave its palace with its forehead raised and retire to the countryside to write its justifying memoirs. Under different circumstances, when ideas have changed, a deficiency is felt in the collective arrangements, a particular service is missing, inactive or discontented stakeholders are looking for an investment... Quickly one launches one's prospectus, recruits members, and when one believes oneself strong enough, instead of taking to the streets, as is said in the language of the riot, one goes to the office of the political status, makes one's declaration, supported by the submission of one's fundamental statutes and of a register in which the members will register, and there you have one more government. The rest is a matter of internal affairs, of housekeeping, and only the members need to worry about it.

I propose a minimum fee for registrations and transfers of alle-

giance which the employees of the political status will collect themselves and for their own benefit. A few hundred francs for founding a government, a few cents for moving, as an individual, from one to the other. The employees will receive no other remuneration, but I imagine that they will not be too badly off and that these sorts of occupations will be very popular.

Are you not amazed by the simplicity of this system, by this powerful mechanism that a child could handle, which nevertheless would satisfy all needs? Search, scrutinise, test, and analyse it. I defy you to find it wanting in any respect.

Furthermore, I am convinced that no one will want it: humans are made that way. It is even this conviction that induces me to publish my idea. Indeed, if I do not make proselytes, this is nothing but an intellectual exercise, and no constituted power, no majority, no organisation, in fact no one, however mighty, has the right to bear ill feelings towards me.

*And if, by chance, you had converted me?*

Shhh ... You might compromise me!

## NOTES

[1] Charles de Brouckère, (Bruges, 1796 - 1860) Belgian politician of liberal tendencies.

[2] Pierre Paul Royer-Collard (1763 - 1845) French politician, philosopher, and supporter of liberal ideas.

[3] Barthélémy de Theux (1794 - 1874) Belgian politician, several times president of the Council of Ministers. Of Catholic inspiration.

[4] Hubert Joseph Walthère Frère-Orban (1812 - 1896) Belgian politician and statesman, of liberal tendencies.

[5] Adolphe Deschamps (1807 - 1875) Belgian politician of Catholic leaning.

[6] *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, title of a play by Molière.

[7] Paul-Louis Courier (1773 - 1825) author of pamphlets in which he expressed his anti-conventional, liberal streak.

**CHARLES DE BROUCHÈRE**  
REVIEW OF PANARCHY BY PAUL-ÉMILE DE  
PUYDT (1860)

Charles de Brouckère (1796-1860) Belgian politician of liberal tendency. From 1848 until his death he was the mayor of Brussels. He was the author of an economics text entitled *Principes Généraux d'Économie Politique* (1851) to which de Puydt refers in his essay. Shortly before his death he wrote this brief review praising de Puydt's text for the clarity and simplicity of its proposition on competing governments.

Source: *L'Économiste Belge, Organe des Intérêts de l'Industrie et du Commerce* (4 August 1860, No. 31, Sixth Year, pg. 503).



Political economy teaches that competition is the best and even the only means of regularly obtaining consumer goods of the highest quality and at the lowest price. This is one of the best proven truths of science, and every application of it gives it a striking confirmation.

These applications of scientific truth are becoming more numerous every day, but, by an inconceivable aberration, the most useful commodity of all, that which is as necessary to the maintenance of the

social body as bread is to the preservation of human life, i.e., security, escapes everywhere the beneficial and regulating influence of competition, its manufacture remaining everywhere the object of the most absolute monopoly, from which the consumer can only escape by the extreme resources of emigration, revolt or death.

Monsieur Paul-Émile de Puydt, who has hitherto been better known for charming and witty literary publications than for works on political economy, has just published in the *Revue Trimestrielle*, under the name of *Panarchie*, an outline of a system which would have the advantage of subjecting the industry producing security, that is to say the governments, to a competition as complete as that which the manufacturers of cloth, for example, are at the present time subjecting themselves to in a country of free trade, and this without having recourse to revolutions, barricades, or even to the slightest acts of violence.

If society were to adopt the system proposed by Monsieur de Puydt, each citizen could change government at least as easily as a tenant changes his furnished flat in a large city; for it would be sufficient for him to commit himself, for one year only, to follow the laws of the government of his choice and to pay its expenses at rates discussed in advance. At the end of this year of trial, the citizen would be free to subscribe, for his consumption of security and other public services, to the establishment that produces these things in the manner most suited to his tastes and for the sum he wishes to devote to this expenditure.

How the author has succeeded in resolving, with a truly marvellous simplicity, the problem of the best and most economical government, agitated for centuries by the most powerful minds, including Aristotle, Plato, and J. J. Rousseau, how he lays out his system with clarity in a style consistently free of the dryness that so often puts off readers of works on political economy, with fine mockery of the shortcomings of present-day governments; how the author foresees and refutes all the objections that might be raised against his system, is something that we cannot pause to describe, for that would exceed the limits assigned to this article, and above all it would diminish the pleasure that the reader will find in acquainting himself with Monsieur de Puydt's opusculé.

Indeed, all those who are interested in the propagation of sound

economic ideas will read with interest this first attempt, already so remarkable, and which offers us the prospect of one more skillful champion of the cause of *laissez-faire, laissez-passer*, that is to say, of one of the most extensive and most fruitful manifestations of the great principles of JUSTICE AND LIBERTY.

**GIAN PIERO DE BELLIS**  
DISCOVERING DE PUYDT (2008)

This short text was supposed to be the introduction to a printed edition of de Puydt's Panarchy. The publication has been delayed by my involvement in the setting up of a Research & Documentation Centre (*World Wide Wisdom*) on Panarchy and related themes.

It is then offered here as an encouragement to discover the beauty of Panarchy as presented by de Puydt more than 150 years ago.



In January 2001 I received a very long and interesting e-mail from a person named John Zube, writing from Berrima, in South-Eastern Australia.

In that message, after expressing a certain interest for a piece of writing I had put on the Web a few months earlier (*Polyarchy: a manifesto*), a text that he critically examined point by point, he asked if the term panarchy, that I had used at the end of my essay, was employed with the same meaning that Paul-Émile de Puydt had given to it in his article of 1860.

At that time I was totally unaware of the fact that somebody else,

well before me, had used the term panarchy, which I considered a product of my imagination and of my inclination for inventing new words. For a moment I really thought that he was taking the mickey out of me. However, after an instant of doubt and bafflement, I started searching for information about this de Puydt and his writings.

At that time (I refer to the beginning of 2001) there was no trace of this author, not even on Belgian web sites, which seemed to me quite strange, considering that he was born in Flanders. As for the original essay, again no trace whatsoever other than in an English translation made, some years earlier, by the same John Zube.

In another message from him I learned that the photocopy of the French original that had been in his possession got lost when he left Europe for Australia at the end of the fifties.

Anyway, once reassured that the article was real, I wanted to read it in its original version, so I started my search. I thought that the *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique* was the surest place to find some information, so I sent an e-mail to the person in charge of assisting the public in their searches. Some days went by without reply.

Then I wrote to the Belgium Libis-Net, which is the consortium of Belgian libraries which manages the unified catalogue of all available documents. Even then, days passed with no news.

Rather discouraged by my unsuccessful search, finding myself at that time in Oxford, I enlisted the help of a friend who is a librarian at the Bodleian Library. A query conducted through the WorlCat database located the text on microfilm at the Library of Congress in Washington.

I was going to write to them when, early in April 2001, a message reached me from Brussels sent by the librarian of the *Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique* asking for my postal address because they had located the text and could send me a photocopy.

In the meantime I had been so taken by a first reading of the text as translated by John Zube that I decided to open a web site ([www.panarchy.org](http://www.panarchy.org)) aiming specifically at presenting such a valuable document in many languages.

To some who rush through it, the text could appear queer, especially if they are used to thinking in terms of territorialism and state territorial sovereignty.



I imagine that, the first writings on religious tolerance produced the same effect upon those used to religious wars and to the exclusivity of religious faith within a specific territory. What now appears quite natural and unquestionable in religious practices (i.e. many religions within the same territory) was totally inconceivable just a few centuries ago.

In a similar way, it is quite likely that political tolerance, which means the acceptance of many governments functioning and competing side by side on the same territory, will become a taken-for-granted reality, sometime in the future, whereas now it is considered a preposterous and impractical proposition.

As already remarked by Arthur Schopenhauer, truth, before emerging, generally goes through three phases: first it is ridiculed, then it is violently attacked, and finally it is accepted as a foregone conclusion. In the age of the Internet, virtual communities and the global village, the concept and the practice of Panarchy are really a wonderful way of solving political complications and unnecessary complexities.

The proposal put forward by de Puydt will apply especially, as a potentially prodigious remedy, in the numerous cases where different cultural or ethnic groups live on the same territory – e.g. Palestine and Iraq, just to mention the most acute current instances. Each community could succeed in being administered by the government of its own choice, without territorial partitions, separating walls or violent political feuds.

We already have examples of this from the past: in the Middle East, merchants from different regions used to abide by the laws of their land of origin, without experiencing or presenting insoluble problems or obstacles.

So, if we do not renew, in a radical way, our conceptions of how to organize our social and political relations, we will find ourselves facing gigantic problems, as technological development encourages a growing number of human beings to aspire to and practice liberty and autonomy. And all this while having at their disposal political and social tools more appropriate to primitive feudalism than to the new millennium.

Trapped in such a situation, we are likely to undergo continuous

personal and social decay, idiotic prisoners of old myths and ancient superstitions. By contrast, replacing territorialism with panarchy (voluntary communities) will open up to us new views, wide horizons and a deep understanding of how social relations are meant to work.

The choice is for each one of us to make!

# ACT III

## FROM ANARCHY TO PANARCHY

*Where some anarchists, including the greatest historian of the anarchist movement, hint at, advance or rediscover the idea, considering it the best means to promote and realise the social organisation the anarchists desire.*



7 - (1865) Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *On the Mixing of Forms of Government*

8 - (1887) Benjamin Tucker, *Liberty and Taxation*

9 - (1887) Benjamin Tucker, *The Nature of the State*

10 - (1894) Stephen T. Byington, *Precedents for Anarchistic Society*

11 - (1896) Joseph Labadie, *The Meaning of Anarchy*

12 - (1905) J. A. Maryson, *Some Misconceptions of Anarchism*

13 - (1909) Max Nettlau, *Panarchy. A Forgotten Idea of 1860*



**PIERRE-JOSEPH PROUDHON**  
ON THE MIXING OF FORMS OF GOVERNMENT  
(1863)

For Proudhon the impossibility of having a pure regime of government or self-government (Monarchy, Democracy, Communism, Anarchy) valid for all demands that all these aspects be present in a society and complement each other. This is not the panarchy envisaged by de Puydt but it could be interpreted as something in the same spirit of panarchy, as the acceptance of the variety and the mixing of social forms of organisation on the same territory.

Source: Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Du principe fédératif*, Part I, Chapter II and IV, 1863.



**Chapter II**

We know the two fundamental and antithetical principles of all government: Authority, Liberty.

By virtue of the tendency of the human mind to reduce all its ideas to a single principle, and hence to eliminate those which seem irreconcilable with that principle, two different regimes are deduced, *a priori*,

from these two primordial notions, according to the preference or predilection accorded to one or the other: the Regime of Authority and the Regime of Liberty.

Moreover, since society is composed of individuals, and since the relationship between the individual and the group can be conceived, from a political point of view, in four different ways, there are four forms of government, two for each regime:

#### I. Regime of Authority

A) Government of all by one: *Monarchy* or *Patriarchy*.

a) Government of all by all: *Panarchy* or *Communism*.

The essential character of this regime, in both its forms, is the indivision of power.

#### II. Regime of Liberty

B) Government of all by all: *Democracy*.

b) Government of each by each: *Anarchy* or *Self-government*.

The essential character of this regime, in its two species, is the division of power.

[...]

Just as monarchy and communism, founded in nature and reason, have their legitimacy and morality, without ever being able to be realised in the rigour and purity of their notion; so democracy and anarchy, founded in liberty and law, pursuing an ideal in relation to their principle, have their legitimacy and morality. But we shall also see that, despite their legal and rationalist origin, they cannot, as they grow and develop in population and territory, maintain themselves in the rigour and purity of their notion, and that they are condemned to remain in the state of perpetual *desiderata*. Notwithstanding the powerful attraction of freedom, neither democracy nor anarchy, in the fullness and integrity of their idea, have been constituted anywhere.

## Chapter IV

Since the two principles on which every social order rests, Authority and Liberty, on the one hand are contrary to each other and always in struggle, and, on the other hand, they cannot either exclude or resolve themselves, a transaction between them is inevitable. Whatever system is preferred, whether monarchical or democratic, communist or anarchical, the institution will only sustain itself for so long as it is able to rely, to a greater or lesser extent, on the data of its antagonist.

For example, one would be strangely mistaken if one imagined that the regime of authority, with its paternal character, its family mores, its absolute initiative, could provide, by its own energy, for its own needs. As soon as the State expands, this venerable paternity quickly degenerates into impotence, confusion, unreason, and tyranny. The prince is unable to provide for everything; he must rely on agents who deceive him, steal from him, discredit him, slander him in public, supplant him, and in the end dethrone him. This disorder inherent in absolute power, the demoralisation that follows, the disasters that constantly threaten it, are the plague of societies and States. Therefore, it can be stated, as a rule, that monarchical government is all the more benign, moral, just, bearable and therefore lasting, leaving aside at this point external relations, the more modest its dimensions and the closer it is to the family. And vice versa, that this same government will be all the more insufficient, oppressive, odious to its subjects and consequently unstable, the larger the State will become. History has preserved the memory, and modern centuries have provided examples of those frightful monarchies, shapeless monsters, real political behemoths, which a better civilisation must gradually make disappear. In all these States, absolutism is a direct result of the mass, it subsists on its own prestige; in a small State, on the contrary, tyranny can only sustain itself, for a moment, by means of mercenary troops. Once closely observed, the tyrannical rule disappears.

To obviate this vice of their nature, monarchical governments have been led to apply, to a greater or lesser extent, the forms of liberty, notably the separation of powers or the sharing of sovereignty.

The reason for this change is easy to understand. If a single man

can barely manage an estate of one hundred hectares, a factory employing a few hundred workers, and the administration of a commune of five or six thousand inhabitants, how can he carry the burden of an empire of forty million men? Here, then, the monarchy has had to bow to this twofold principle, borrowed from political economy: (1) that the greatest amount of labour is supplied and the greatest value produced, when the worker is free and acts on his own account as entrepreneur and owner; (2) that the quality of the product or service is all the better, the more the producer knows his part and devotes himself exclusively to it.

There is yet another reason why monarchy borrows from democracy, and that is that social wealth increases in proportion to the division and interlocking of industries, which means, in politics, that the government will be all the better and will offer less danger to the prince, the better the functions are distinguished and balanced: something impossible in the absolutist regime. This is how the princes have been led to republicanise, so to speak, themselves, in order to escape inevitable ruin.

[...]

Similar facts, but in reverse, are observed in democratic government.

It is all very well to determine, with all possible sagacity and precision, the rights and obligations of citizens, the powers of civil servants, to foresee incidents, exceptions, and anomalies: the fruitfulness of the unforeseen far exceeds the prudence of the statesman, and the more one legislates, the more disputes arise. All of this requires initiative and arbitration on the part of the agents of power, who have only one way of making themselves heard, which is to be constituted as an authority. Take away from the democratic principle, take away from Liberty that supreme sanction, Authority, and the State perishes at once. It is clear, however, that we are no longer in a free contract, unless it is argued that the citizens have precisely agreed, in the event of a dispute, to surrender to the decision of one of them, a magistrate appointed in



advance: which is exactly to renounce the democratic principle and to act as a monarchy.

Let democracy multiply as much as it likes, with civil servants, the legal guarantees and the means of control, let it surround its agents with formalities, call the citizens unceasingly to election, to discussion, to vote: willingly or unwillingly its civil servants are men of *authority*, the word is accepted; and if among this staff of public servants there is one or a few charged with the general direction of affairs, this individual or collective head of government is what Rousseau himself called a prince. It takes little for him to turn into a sovereign.

Similar observations can be made about communism and anarchy. There has never been an example of a perfect community, and it is unlikely, whatever high degree of civilisation, morality, and wisdom humans may attain, that every vestige of government and authority will disappear. But while community remains the dream of most Socialists, anarchy is the ideal of the economic school, which is strongly inclined to abolish all governmental establishments and to constitute society on the sole basis of property and free labour.

I will not multiply the examples any further. What I have just said is sufficient to demonstrate the truth of my proposition, namely, that Monarchy and Democracy, Community and Anarchy, being unable to realise either of them in the purity of their ideal, are reduced to complementing each other by means of reciprocal borrowing.

Certainly, this is enough to humiliate the intolerance of fanatics who cannot hear of an opinion contrary to their own without feeling a sort of horrification. Let them learn, then, the unfortunates, that they are themselves necessarily unfaithful to their principle, that their political faith is woven of inconsistencies. And may the Power in its turn no longer see, in the discussion of the different systems of government, any factious thought! By convincing himself once and for all that these terms monarchy, democracy, etc., express only theoretical conceptions, far removed from the institutions which seem to translate them, the royalist, at the words of *social contract*, *sovereignty of the people*, *universal suffrage*, etc., will remain calm; the democrat, on hearing talk of dynasty, of absolute power, of divine right, will keep smiling his composure. There is no true monarchy; there is no true democracy.

Monarchy is the primitive, physiological and, as it were, patronymic form of the State; it lives in the heart of the masses and is forcefully attested before our eyes by the general tendency towards unity. Democracy in its turn bubbles up on all sides; it fascinates the generous souls and seizes the elite of society everywhere. But it is the dignity of our age to renounce at last these illusions, which too often degenerate into lies. Contradiction is at the heart of all programmes.

[...]

What is Politics now, if it is impossible for a society to constitute itself exclusively on the principle it prefers; if, whatever the legislator does, the government, reputed here to be monarchical, there democratic, remains forever a compound without purity, where the opposite elements are mixed in arbitrary proportions at the whim of caprice and interest; where the most exact definitions lead fatally to confusion and promiscuity; where, consequently, all conversions, all defections can be admitted, and fickleness passed off as honourable? What an open field for charlatanism, intrigue, and treason! What State could subsist under such dissolving conditions? The State is not yet constituted, and already it bears, in the contradiction of its idea, a principle of death. A strange creation, in which logic remains impotent, while the inconsequence appears to be the only practical and rational thing!

**BENJAMIN R. TUCKER**  
VOLUNTARY CONTRACT AND COMPULSORY  
TAXATION (1887)

The power of taxation, being the most vital one for the State, was undoubtably a prominent subject in *Liberty's* discussions. Mr. F. W. Read, in the London revue *Jus*, attacked the position of the anarchists on this point and was answered by Benjamin Tucker with the following article.

The text has some panarchist overtones that are very interesting and show clearly that there is no opposition between panarchy and anarchy (rightly intended) being both based on freedom, voluntary choices, tolerance.

Source: *Liberty*, July 30, 1887



The idea that the voluntary taxationist objects to the State precisely because it does not rest on contract, and wishes to substitute contract for it, is strictly correct, and I am glad to see (for the first time, if my memory serves me) an opponent grasp it. But Mr. Read obscures his statement by his previous remark that the proposal of voluntary taxation is "the outcome of an idea . . . that the State *is, or* ought to be,

founded on contract." This would be true if the words which I have italicized should be omitted. It was the insertion of these words that furnished the writer a basis for his otherwise groundless analogy between the Anarchists and the followers of Rousseau. The latter hold that the State originated in a contract, and that the people of to-day, though they did not make it, are bound by it. The Anarchists, on the contrary, deny that any such contract was ever made; declare that, had one ever been made, it could not impose a shadow of obligation on those who had no hand in making it; and claim the right to contract for themselves as they please. The position that a man may make his own contracts, far from being analogous to that which makes him subject to contracts made by others, is its direct antithesis.

It is perfectly true that voluntary taxation would not necessarily "prevent the existence of five or six 'States' in England," and that "members of all these 'States' might be living in the same house." But I see no reason for Mr. Read's exclamation point after this remark. What of it? There are many more than five or six Churches in England, and it frequently happens that members of several of them live in the same house. There are many more than five or six insurance companies in England, and it is by no means uncommon for members of the same family to insure their lives and goods against accident or fire in different companies. Does any harm come of it? Why, then, should there not be a considerable number of defensive associations in England, in which people, even members of the same family, might insure their lives and goods against murderers or thieves? Though Mr. Read has grasped one idea of the voluntary taxationists, I fear that he sees another much less clearly, - namely, the idea that defence is a service, like any other service; that it is labor both useful and desired, and therefore an economic commodity subject to the law of supply and demand; that in a free market this commodity would be furnished at the cost of production; that, competition prevailing, patronage would go to those who furnished the best article at the lowest price; that the production and sale of this commodity are now monopolized by the State; that the State, like almost all monopolists, charges exorbitant prices; that, like almost all monopolists, it supplies a worthless, or nearly worthless, article; that, just as the monopolist of a food product

often furnishes poison instead of nutriment, so the State takes advantage of its monopoly of defence to furnish invasion instead of protection; that, just as the patrons of the one pay to be poisoned, so the patrons of the other pay to be enslaved; and, finally, that the State exceeds all its fellow-monopolists in the extent of its villainy because it enjoys the unique privilege of compelling all people to buy its product whether they want it or not. If, then, five or six "States" were to hang out their shingles, the people, I fancy, would be able to buy the very best kind of security at a reasonable price. And what is more, - the better their services, the less they would be needed; so that the multiplication of "States" involves the abolition of the State.

All these considerations, however, are disposed of, in Mr. Read's opinion, by his final assertion that "the State is a social organism." He considers this "the explanation of the whole matter." But for the life of me I can see in it nothing but another irrelevant remark. Again I ask: What of it? Suppose the State is an organism, - what then? What is the inference? That the State is therefore permanent? But what is history but a record of the dissolution of organisms and the birth and growth of others to be dissolved in turn? Is the State exempt from this order? If so, why? What proves it? The State an organism? Yes; so is a tiger. But unless I meet him when I haven't my gun, his organism will speedily disorganize. The State is a tiger seeking to devour the people, and they must either kill or cripple it. Their own safety depends upon it. But Mr. Read says it can't be done. "By no possibility can the power of the State be restrained." This must be very disappointing to Mr. Donisthorpe and *Jus*, who are working to restrain it. If Mr. Read is right, their occupation is gone. Is he right? Unless he can demonstrate it, the voluntary taxationists and the Anarchists will continue their work, cheered by the belief that the compulsory and invasive State is doomed to die.

**BENJAMIN R. TUCKER**  
THE NATURE OF THE STATE (1887)

This article is perfectly in tune with the idea of panarchy, i.e., the existence of different non-territorial "states" one next to the other as voluntary associations chosen by the individuals for providing public services.

Source: *Liberty*, October 22, 1887



In answer to Mr. Read's statement (which, if, with all its implications, it were true, would be a valid and final answer to the Anarchists) that "dissolving an organism is something different from dissolving a collection of atoms with no organic structure," I cannot do better than quote the following passage from an article by J. Wm. Lloyd in No. 107 of *Liberty*:

It appears to me that this universe is but a vast aggregate of individuals; of individuals simple and primary, and of individuals complex, secondary, tertiary, etc., formed by the aggregation of primary individuals or of individuals of a lesser degree of complexity. Some of these

individuals of a high degree of complexity are true individuals, concrete, so united that the lesser organisms included cannot exist apart from the main organism; while others are imperfect, discrete, the included organisms existing fairly well, quite as well, or better, apart than united. In the former class are included many of the higher forms of vegetable and animal life, including man, and in the latter are included many lower forms of vegetable and animal life (quack-grass, tape-worms, etc.), and most societary organisms, governments, nations, churches, armies, etc.

Taking this indisputable view of the matter, it becomes clear that Mr. Read's statement about "dissolving an organism" is untrue while the word organism remains unqualified by some adjective equivalent to Mr. Lloyd's concrete. The question, then, is whether the State is a concrete organism. The Anarchists claim that it is not. If Mr. Read thinks that it is, the *onus probandi* is upon him. I judge that his error arises from a confusion of the State with society. That society is a concrete organism the Anarchists do not deny; on the contrary, they insist upon it. Consequently they have no intention or desire to abolish it. They know that its life is inseparable from the life of individuals; that it is impossible to destroy one without destroying the other. But, though society cannot be destroyed, it can be greatly hampered and impeded in its operations, much to the disadvantage of the individuals composing it, and it meets its chief impediment in the State. The State, unlike society, is a discrete organism. If it should be destroyed tomorrow, individuals would still continue to exist. Production, exchange, and association would go on as before, but much more freely, and all those social functions upon which the individual is dependent would operate in his behalf more usefully than ever. The individual is not related to the State as the tiger's paw is related to the tiger. Kill the tiger, and the tiger's paw no longer performs its office; kill the State, and the individual still lives and satisfies his wants. As for society, the Anarchists would not kill it if they could, and could not if they would.

Mr. Read finds it astounding that I should "put the State on a level with churches and insurance companies." I find his astonishment

amusing. Believers in compulsory religious systems were astounded when it was first proposed to put the church on a level with other associations. Now the only astonishment is—at least in the United States—that the church is allowed to stay at any other level. But the political superstition has replaced the religious superstition, and Mr. Read is under its sway.

I do not think “that five or six ‘States’ could exist side by side with” quite “the same convenience as an equal number of churches.” In the relations with which States have to do there is more chance for friction than in the simply religious sphere. But, on the other hand, the friction resulting from a multiplicity of States would be but a mole-hill compared with the mountain of oppression and injustice which is gradually heaped up by a single compulsory State. It would not be necessary for a police officer of a voluntary “State” to know to what “State” a given individual belonged, or whether he belonged to any. Voluntary “States” could, and probably would, authorize their executives to proceed against invasion, no matter who the invader or invaded might be. Mr. Read will probably object that the “State” to which the invader belonged might regard his arrest as itself an invasion, and proceed against the “State” which arrested him. Anticipation of such conflicts would probably result exactly in those treaties between “States” which Mr. Read looks upon as so desirable, and even in the establishment of federal tribunals, as courts of last resort, by the co-operation of the various “States,” on the same voluntary principle in accordance with which the “States” themselves were organized.

Voluntary taxation, far from impairing the “State’s” credit, would strengthen it. In the first place, the simplification of its functions would greatly reduce, and perhaps entirely abolish, its need to borrow, and the power to borrow is generally inversely proportional to the steadiness of the need. It is usually the inveterate borrower who lacks credit. In the second place, the power of the State to repudiate, and still continue its business, is dependent upon its power of compulsory taxation. It knows that, when it can no longer borrow, it can at least tax its citizens up to the limit of revolution. In the third place, the State is trusted, not because it is over and above individuals, but because the lender presumes that it desires to maintain its credit and will therefore



pay its debts. This desire for credit will be stronger in a "State" supported by voluntary taxation than in the State which enforces taxation.

All the objections brought forward by Mr. Read (except the organism argument) are mere difficulties of administrative detail, to be overcome by ingenuity, patience, discretion, and expedients. They are not logical difficulties, not difficulties of principle. They seem "enormous" to him; but so seemed the difficulties of freedom of thought two centuries ago. What does he think of the difficulties of the existing régime? Apparently he is as blind to them as is the Roman Catholic to the difficulties of a State religion. All these "enormous" difficulties which arise in the fancy of the objectors to the voluntary principle will gradually vanish under the influence of the economic changes and well-distributed prosperity which will follow the adoption of that principle. This is what Proudhon calls "the dissolution of government in the economic organism." It is too vast a subject for consideration here, but, if Mr. Read wishes to understand the Anarchistic theory of the process, let him study that most wonderful of all the wonderful books of Proudhon, the *Idée Générale de la Révolution au Dix-Neuvième Siècle*.

It is true that "history shows a continuous weakening of the State in some directions, and a continuous strengthening in other directions." At least, such is the tendency, broadly speaking, though this continuity is sometimes broken by periods of reaction. This tendency is simply the progress of evolution towards Anarchy. The State invades less and less, and protects more and more. It is exactly in the line of this process, and at the end of it, that the Anarchists demand the abandonment of the last citadel of invasion by the substitution of voluntary for compulsory taxation. When this step is taken, the "State" will achieve its maximum strength as a protector against aggression, and will maintain it as long as its services are needed in that capacity.

If Mr. Read, in saying that the power of the State cannot be restrained, simply meant that it cannot be legally restrained, his remark had no fitness as an answer to Anarchists and voluntary taxonomists. They do not propose to legally restrain it. They propose to create a public sentiment that will make it impossible for the State to collect taxes by force or in any other way invade the individual.

Regarding the State as an instrument of aggression, they do not expect to convince it that aggression is against its interests, but they do expect to convince individuals that it is against their interests to be invaded. If by this means they succeed in stripping the State of its invasive powers, they will be satisfied, and it is immaterial to them whether the means is described by the word "restraint" or by some other word. In fact, I have striven in this discussion to accommodate myself to Mr. Read's phraseology. For myself I do not think it proper to call voluntary associations States, but, enclosing the word in quotation marks, I have so used it because Mr. Read set the example.

**STEPHEN T. BYINGTON**  
PRECEDENTS FOR ANARCHISTIC SOCIETY  
(1894)

This is probably the first explicit text in which anarchy is viewed as panarchy (to each the government or non-government of his/her choice). It is also a very lucid argumentation of the practical possibility and functionality of anarchy, beyond general prejudices and personal fears.

Source: *Liberty*, May 5, 1894



Anarchism has the disadvantage of never having been tried under civilized conditions. It appears to work well in certain savage tribes described in Spencer's *Justice*, and in some of the Esquimau tribes. But the conservative will explain that this is because they are naturally inoffensive, and will not believe that their Anarchy can have helped cause their inoffensiveness. Therefore he will not cease to say that Anarchy cannot effectively repress invasive acts; that the protective associations will spend half their time fighting each other, and the other half chasing criminals whom they cannot catch. It is certainly fair to answer by asking how bad they would have to be to be worse than

the State; but it is also worth while to look for what we can find of historical precedent.

In the most ancient social organizations of which we have knowledge, citizenship and jurisdiction depended on family. A man was born into such a tribe; therefore the tribe had a right to command him, and to enforce its commands wherever it could find him, while he had a like right to claim its protection wherever it could reach. These rights and duties were, in some cases at least, inalienable.

We sometimes find this form of order carried even into city life, as in pre-Mohammedan Arabia. The history of Mohammed's life shows us several instances in which a city is inhabited by two or more independent tribes, and the different sections of the city go to war with each other. But it does not appear that they were more disorderly, or fought more, than the tribes of the same turbulent blood in other circumstances. At least, the system was able to live, and give satisfaction to those who lived under it, till overthrown by a power which also overthrew great empires.

This ought to be an answer to those who think that two police agencies cannot coexist in the same place; for there never was a people who "needed a strong government" more than these Arabs.

But this system has been changed in the direction of greater liberty. A man can now change his citizenship, and the laws to which he is subject, whenever he chooses, - provided he will leave his country. Now, imagine what some fine old Tory of the clan system would have said if this change had been proposed to him. "How Anarchistic! A man would be able to escape from all the laws that bind him by simply running away! Law and order would utterly cease!" But the world has survived it. Anarchism proposes to increase the liberty further by removing the condition that a man must leave his country. This would introduce no difficulty, it seems to me, that the world has not got along with fairly well in one or another of the systems which have existed.

But why to go to ancient history? Kansas City is much handier. The State line runs right through the edge of the city, among populous streets. Men who live on the same street are subject to different laws, and look for protection to different powers. Kansas saloons are built up to the State line. The theoretical difficulties in the way of a Missouri

policeman's chasing a man into Kansas are much greater than those in the way of two Anarchistic associations exercising police power on the same ground. But Kansas City claims to be a highly prosperous place.

When New York and Jersey City are connected by tunnel or bridge, nearly the same predicament will arise. The impossibilities of Anarchism are about to be introduced in New York. Why do not the defenders of public order protest against the improvements?

Worse yet. Under Anarchy every man would be subject to his neighbor's association to this extent, that the association could punish him for clearly invasive acts. But today, in every civilized country, there is a large body of men who are under no law whatever. Envoys and consuls are responsible to no one but the government which sends them. Cromwell once hanged an ambassador for murder, but no one ever dared follow the example. If a consul commits a crime here, all we can do is politely to request the consul's royal master to recall him as *persona non grata*, and to punish him at home in such a way as may seem adequate. This privilege extends to the foreign representative's retinue also, including, I believe, even households servants.

It is the uniform practice of Christian countries to maintain as against non-Christian countries the ancient principle that their subjects in a foreign country are not subject to the laws of that country. This privilege is always provided for in treaties. Hence the European in such a country is bound by no law but such as his consul will enforce. In places like Cairo and Jerusalem there are considerable colonies of at least half a dozen nationalities, each of which is responsible solely to its consul. I never heard of a proposition to unite all the European, not to say all the city, under a single authority.

But Anarchism - oh, oh!

**JOSEPH A. LABADIE**

## THE MEANING OF ANARCHY (1896)

This clear and very explicit portrait of anarchy does not differ in any way from the conception and practice known as panarchy. For this reason, we could truly say that panarchy is equivalent to radical, tolerant, and acceptable by all anarchy.

Source: *Liberty*, April 18, 1896



Anarchy means no ruler, no government. That is to say, no one—minority or majority—shall have the right to make me do what I do not want to do, so long as I do not injure him, so long as I do not trespass on his just rights.

For example: We have Anarchy in religion. How so? Because no one has a right to compel me to go to church; to worship God or not worship God; to support the church or not support the church. What another has no right to do I have no right to do. Any one may go to whatever church he likes, providing the members permit him. If no church now established wants him, he may establish a church of his own, from which he may exclude any one he does not want in it. But

the exclusion of a non-member from a church is not an invasion of his right. This is what I understand to be Anarchy in religion. You see I am not obliged to determine which is the "true" religion, or whether any of them be true, or whether they are all "false." There was a time when this was not so.

Further: We are reaching close on to Anarchy in dress. True, no man has yet the right to wear skirts, and no woman has the right to wear the ordinary clothes of a man. But we are fast coming to that. Note the bloomers. Otherwise, however, we have Anarchy in dress and in fashions. One may wear whatever kind of cloth he chooses, cut in almost whatever shape he likes, dyed in whatever color that suits his fancy. There was a time when this was not so. But the existence of Anarchy in dress and fashion does not determine which is the most becoming or economical.

Further still: Between the States within the boundaries of the United States we have Anarchy in trade, — in commerce, — in so far as the mere exchange of products is concerned. In other words, we have free trade between the States. Every one who aims to extend this principle of free trade to other countries is in so far an Anarchist. He denies the right of government interference in trade. But this does not compel him to say which is the best way to trade, or whether two bushels of corn is worth three bushels of potatoes, etc. Each individual trader must determine that for himself.

And still other examples: One in the United States may come and go as he pleases, without let or hindrance, except in those few insignificant localities where prevail the notions of right and wrong only a little removed from the rudest barbarians, and where we find the "modern" tramp laws. This has not always been so. In some countries even to-day one must have a little piece of paper, on which are written words by government authority, to permit one to go from place to place. In the United States we have Anarchy in travel.

The individual workman in this and many other countries may now work for whoever will employ him and take whatever wages he can get. This was not always so. Here, then, is another phase of Anarchy.

Anarchy in so many things has proven such a boon to the human

race that we who have learned and observed its *effects* think it would be a good thing to extend the principle to other fields of human activity, and, if the benefits increase in proportion as the principle is adopted, we see no reason why it should not in time be applied to everything.

I want Anarchy because it will beneficially affect my economic as well as social conditions. The idea of my being subject to someone else's will in my actions in whatever walk of life I may be is irksome to me. The fact that I must ask some fellow-worm for leave to toil, and that he has the power to grant or refuse the request, is galling in the extreme. The slave who fully recognizes his condition feels his disgrace more than one who believes slavery to be his normal condition.

There is authority now in the titles to land. Government assumes, as one of its functions, to see that the ownership or use of land will be just and equitable. This is the theory. But what is the practice? I believe the ownership, the occupancy and use, of land could be better determined if the government had nothing to do with it. Hence, I want Anarchy as to landholding.

Government has for hundreds of years assumed the function of making money. It has never done so to my satisfaction. I believe that, if government will permit us to make our own medium of exchange, we can do so with less expense than is imposed, and greater security than is furnished, by the money issued under government authority and monopoly.

I want the principle of Anarchy pushed wherever it can be and as fast as it can be. Under Anarchy I may join with others and form a community where Communism prevails, and no one has the right to prevent me. On the other hand, I may go away by myself and live isolated from my fellows. I may live in a thickly populated locality without invading the right of others to be either Communists or Individualists. My opinion now is—and it is well verified by facts—that personal responsibility and private enterprise in business and industry produce the best results.

I deny that the community has rights in equity which do not belong to the individual. There is no doubt at all in my mind that liberty has a good effect upon economics. Free competition is the soul of progress.



**J. A. MARYSON****SOME MISCONCEPTIONS OF ANARCHISM  
(1904)**

This text has been repeatedly attributed to the historian and theorist of anarchy Max Nettlau.

As clarified by Nettlau himself in his *History of Anarchy*, it is a lecture held in New York in January 1904 by Dr. M-n (Dr. J. A. Maryson)

For the author, anarchy is "voluntary organisation instead of authoritarian organisation. This also means that anyone can break away from the state (secession) and establish their own social organisation according to the economic principles (communism, capitalism, mutualism) that they find most suitable. Which of these "isms" each person wants to achieve is not a question to be decided by the anarchists but the free choice of the individual. The attempt to pass off anarchism as a social theory that advocates communism or capitalism for all is, according to the author, one of the misconceptions held by many self-professed anarchists.

This view makes anarchy look a lot like the panarchy of Paul-Émile de Puydt.



Anarchism can be divided into three categories: the revolutionary school of Bakunin and Kropotkin, known as communist anarchism; the ethical or philosophical anarchism of Godwin, Proudhon, and Tucker; and, finally, the religious anarchism of Tolstoy.

Therefore, when speaking of the misconceptions that some people have of anarchism, it must be remembered that not only is each of the tendencies misinterpreted, but also that the confusion results from the very existence of the said tendencies, which are necessarily antagonistic in some extremes.

In the same way, those who express or form false ideas about anarchism constitute quite distinct categories. In order to facilitate our demonstrations, we shall classify them into three different types: conservatives, who hate and fear any radical proposal for social renovation; socialists and other reformists, who cannot bear to pursue any objective other than the one they propose; and, finally, the anarchists themselves, who believe that they have a monopoly on the truth.

These misconceptions are many and varied, but it is not necessary to examine them all here. I shall therefore confine my observations to a few of them, and particularly to those which relate to the revolutionary school, as the one which makes the most noise, raises the most reprobation, and is the least understood.

The first and most important misconception of anarchism, held in good faith or by design by friends and foes alike, is that Anarchy, Communism and Revolution constitute an indissociable trinity, so that the former is often pictured as holding bloody revolution in one hand and evangelical communism in the other. Revolution appears inevitably bloody and communism as an inescapable economic necessity.

That the formation of such errors was partly caused by the very teachings of some of the propagandists of anarchy cannot be denied. Like all generalisations not derived from inductions, the conception of anarchism was bold but vague. Moreover, it could not, like many other ideas, escape the influence of neighbouring ideas at the beginning.

The birth of anarchism coincided with the revolutionary period of 1848-71. The traditions of the great French revolution persisted, still fresh, in the popular mind; the environment was imbued with the

desire for political and social change and the aspirations of men rose to the boldest conceptions. The construction of barricades was still a flourishing industry. It was at a time when paper constitutions and social systems were being made that the anti-authoritarian system emerged.

The strongest criticism of the tyranny of the state could not fail to meet with the approval of the most impatient and persecuted revolutionaries of the time. The ideal of a society without authority, an anarchist society, inspired in them the stubborn will to act against the constituted powers, and their nascent love of Humanity could only be satisfied by the highest expression of human brotherhood, by the realisation of fraternal communism.

But while it is historically certain that the first anarchists were primarily revolutionary communists, it does not necessarily follow that anarchism is impossible outside the economic principles of communism and without recourse to violent revolution. Theoretically there is no essential link between the three concepts, although many people believe firmly in this trinity as a whole. Those who do not believe in the need for government may or may not be supporters of revolution and violent propaganda in fact; they may or may not advocate communism.

The guarantee of freedom, in social relations, of the principle of voluntary assistance or the right of secession from the social organisation, presupposes, as I shall explain later in greater detail, only one fundamental economic condition, namely equality of means to achieve economic independence. On the other hand, on the ground of fact, American anarchism, as expounded by its founder Josiah Warren as well as most expressively by Thoreau, is entirely independent of both communist and revolutionary tactics. The anarchism of Benjamin Tucker, generally the most logical and consistent, is decidedly opposed to the communist system and extremely peaceful in its means. Proudhon himself tried to establish anarchy by means of a People's Bank and Labour Exchange.

It is thus obvious that to identify anarchism with communism and revolution is a false conception of its theory and contrary to the manifestations of its history. Nevertheless, we always hear this repeated, in

good faith by sympathisers, who should know better, and intentionally by reactionaries and socialist politicians who have everything to gain by maintaining these errors discrediting anarchists in the eyes of the People.

As an example of this wilful ignorance of anarchism, I quote from a book published a few months ago and praised by the American socialist press as "a remarkable book by a remarkable man". On page 332 of the *History of Socialism in the United States*, the following can be read:

"Anarchists, by refusing to recognise the organic character of human society, deny the gradual and logical course of its evolution. The world would at all times be arranged according to the will of the most radical revolutionaries, and what is needed to establish well-being is a *coup de force* of men determined and capable of risking their lives for the emancipation of the oppressed people.

"Consistent with their view, anarchists reject political action as a harmful farce and scorn the efforts of workers' associations and the socialist movement to improve the conditions of the working class as reactionary means designed to delay the revolution by suppressing the workers' discontent with their present condition. The efforts of the anarchists consist in sowing revolt among the poor and in waging a personal war with those whom they regard as responsible for all social injustice, the great and powerful of all nations. Their weapons are propaganda, by word and deed."

This remarkable man appears not to have read even a single anarchist pamphlet. Every statement in these passages is an absurd interpretation of phrases plucked from the impassioned speeches which the veteran revolutionary John Most made some fifteen years ago. Anarchist theory is unfortunately so little understood, that such a welter of nonsense easily finds credence even among writers, not to speak of pious readers who are seized with a sincere horror for "the dangerous theories of those terrible fools who call themselves anarchists."

Another of the most important of the misconceptions about anarchism, which it is necessary to mention because it affects its fundamental principle, is that which relates to the conception of individual freedom.

This expression is much abused. In the name of liberty, the satisfied bourgeois come to defend even the slavery of our times; and for their successors, for the socialists who aspire to political power, liberty is perfectly compatible with future slavery. Anarchism is hated because it is supposed to be an advocate of unrestrained freedom, of gross licence, which could only destroy all social life, although the anarchists themselves do not agree on the definition of the word. The philosophical school conforms to the Spencerian formula of equal freedom, i.e. that everyone should be free to do as he pleases as long as he does not infringe on the freedom of others. However, the problem is not solved in this way, it only moves forward one step, because the formula does not contain the definition of its limiting clause. What indeed constitutes an encroachment on the freedom of others? The question recurs further and appears to be fundamental, for it is not the principle of freedom that serves as a guideline, but rather the limits of freedom, which brings us back to the very conception of freedom guaranteed by the laws that govern our old bourgeois society.

The 'non-philosophical' anarchist school rejects such a formula. For its proponents, freedom implies nothing less than that idyllic state of affairs, where everyone would be free not only to do, but also to enjoy everything. They trust, anti-philosophically to be sure, in the inherent goodness of human nature, and refuse to limit freedom in any way. It is this aspiration of the communist anarchists towards the perfect idyllic freedom, which prompts the benevolent, but cautious reformers to express the sympathetic opinion, namely: "Anarchism is certainly a beautiful ideal, but... how impracticable!"

Thus we have anarchism, abhorred, on the one hand, as an infernal theory of misfortune and disorder, and idealised, on the other, as a magnificent but unattainable dream.

The freedom advocated by anarchists is neither so terrible as to produce chaos, nor so miraculous as to make its realisation impossible. It has simply been misunderstood. We always speak of freedom as if it were a positive force, a weapon, something that individuals could use for good or ill. We often hear it said: "Give a man liberty and he will abuse it to harm his neighbour"; or, on the contrary: "Give a man liberty and he will be benevolent and considerate of others." But

freedom is not something that is given. It is not a title deed or a letter of seal with which we can do as we please. Essentially freedom is a mere relationship, a negative condition, the absence of something positive in its manifestations, that is, the absence of submission.

Thus freedom is a social relation, not an individual faculty. Outside of society we cannot in any way imagine freedom. We can do absolutely anything we want without this involving the question of freedom. Our actions have meaning only when they affect others, when they have a definite relation to the actions of others, i.e. when they constitute social actions. By speaking of freedom we are not only characterising the relationship of our actions to the actions of others, but also showing that our activity must not affect the activity of anyone else. In man-to-man relations, being free does not mean being invested with the power to direct others; it means increasing the advantages that result from the negative condition of not being directed by them.

It is often said: "It is all very well to speak of perfect liberty in the future, when altruistic feelings shall have developed and replaced selfish ones, and when the interest of men shall consist chiefly, as Spencer says, in being mutual helpers. But with the present conditions of mankind and the complicated relations of conflicting interests, it is necessary that restraint, rather than freedom, should continue to be the chief guide to social organisation."

All the fallacy in these words is due, too, to a mistaken conception of freedom. It is not about making a sacrifice for the benefit of others. It is not about altruism, the idea of mutual support. No imperative, duty to others, etc., but pure egoism, tending to the emancipation of the individual.

The definition of individual freedom is not that each person does what he likes, on the condition, expressed or tacit, that he does not hinder his neighbour, but that each person can refrain from doing what he does not like, without conditions of any kind.

If individual freedom is incompatible with social organisation, so much the worse for the latter.

Leave the individual alone: do not force him, in the name of society, to do what he does not feel the need to do, and you will not be obliged to compel him to do what he needs to do. The purpose of society is the

development of the individual and not vice versa. Social organisation is important only in so far as it facilitates the manifestation of individual initiatives: the more complete personal freedom is, the better for reaching its goal.

Anarchism is the negation of authoritarian organisation, but obviously not of all organisation. It does not ignore the organic character of society, nor the gradual course of its development. However, while recognising the organic character of society, it does not follow that it is seen as an organism in the absolute sense of the word, i.e. an organism in which all the component organs obey, as slaves, the will of a central authority, as the supreme brain. The political organisation of society is an entirely different conception from the biological organisation. Society is an organisation without special organs and is founded solely by virtue of the mutual relations between individuals. What is the character of these mutual relations? It is up to political science to answer. What should be, or rather, what will be the character of these mutual relations in the future? Anarchism teaches that it will be libertarian, that these mutual relations, i.e., that the social organisation must be voluntary and not authoritarian.

The individual does not owe obedience and loyalty to any person or group of persons. He is free, perfectly free, to join his efforts with those of his fellows, and for the ends and by the means which best please him, or to remain isolated and not to participate in the work and, consequently, in the benefits of any social enterprise. The principle of individual liberty is the right to secession, the right to separate oneself at any time from the constituted political organisation; the right not to do what one does not feel the need to do, the right not to conform to the decisions of the majority; it is, in short, the right to the absolute possession of one's own personality.

The idea of anarchism, of the state, in all its manifestations and forms, is based on the theory that a portion of society - a minority in the oligarchic form of the state, a majority in the democratic form - has the right to compel all the rest to fulfil its wishes. All forms of state organisation deny in principle the right of their constituent members to secede, individually or in groups, from such organisation. No state accepts, within its jurisdiction, the existence of any other political

organisation, independent of its authority. For the supporters of government, there is nothing more dangerous than a "state within a state". Anarchism holds a view diametrically opposed to that of the oppressive state. It advocates individual election, instead of the law of majorities; freedom from the orders of authority, in short, voluntary organisation instead of authoritarian organisation.

Anarchism wants all this, but nothing more. And I come to consider another misconception about anarchism.

It is invariably thought, or at least asserted, that anarchism presupposes a particular economic system without which it would not be possible or could not flourish. I am not speaking against those anarchists who prefer communism, private property, or any other system as a desirable economic condition in itself; I am simply speaking against those who see in one or other of these systems an indispensable condition for the development of the anarchist organisation, thus denying any possibility of anarchism unaccompanied by another "ism". In this respect, both communists and individualists are mistaken.

The argument of the communist is that the human being will only be perfectly free if he can dispose of everything he needs, both the resources of the earth and his share in production. And, furthermore, that the equivalence of fortunes is an absolute necessity for the safeguarding of the institution of freedom.

The argument of the individualists, the advocates of private property, is that the community is essentially an organisation for the exploitation of the strong by the weak, which, in the first place, frustrates the progress of the race, and, in general, alienates the freedom of the strong for the benefit of the weak.

To the arguments of the Communists I would reply: You can certainly not be sufficiently and perfectly free in this world, for even in Communism you would not see yourselves free from disease, infirmity, or inevitable death, from the innumerable evils and pains affecting the human body and mind. It is highly doubtful that even a communist has a "free will" over himself.

I do not mean to say that it is not desirable to obtain all these liberties, but I categorically deny that without them we could not enjoy the freedom advocated by anarchism. Let it be remembered that the



freedom aimed at by anarchism is the freedom not to do socially what one does not need; the freedom for each person not to be compelled by any organisation to any course of action which he has not chosen himself. This is the whole of anarchist freedom, so to speak, and it is also the whole of anarchism; the rest is a matter of convenience and voluntary and circumstantial agreements.

All that the human being needs to guarantee himself a freedom not subject to anyone's authority is, apart from mental health, the economic independence made possible by equal conditions for using the land and the spontaneous gifts of nature. Once this is established by means of mutual agreements in a voluntary organisation, the human being can live freely and happily.

It is not by equality of wealth, but by equality of means, added to freedom, that fraternity will be established. How can the strongest and most frugal oppress the weakest and those with the least of restrictions, when the weak and disable would be strong enough and have enough resources, in the presence of the equality of means, to be autonomous and free.

On the other hand, the fears expressed by individualists about voluntarily organised and mutually agreed communism are unfounded. Mutualism does not involve exploitation. No human being who is not obliged to accept certain conditions, can be exploited: and certainly no anarchist has ever thought of forcing anyone into communism. As for the progress of humanity, the idea that mutual support increases it much more than anything else has been gaining ground for some time; it is therefore useless for us to insist on it.

Moreover, this competition for the universal establishment of a special economic system must be regarded as the product of a lamentable and false conception of the very nature of social progress. Things will in future follow the line of least resistance as they have in the past; but who can point out the line which the manifold human necessities will take to obtain adequate satisfaction?

Space is more than enough for the activity of communists and individualists: such is anarchy.

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**MAX NETTLAU****PANARCHY. A FORGOTTEN IDEA OF 1860 (1909)**

This article, dated 22.1.1909, signed with the initials M.N. appeared on 15/March/1909 in Gustav Landauer's newspaper *Der Sozialist*. It was reprinted in the journal *Der individualistische Anarchist* (The Individualist Anarchist) edited by Benedikt Lachmann, Berlin 1920, pages 410-417, thanks to the initiative of Leo Kasarnowski (later editor of John Henry Mackay) who identified in the letters M.N. the anarchist historian Max Nettlau.

Source: Max Nettlau, *Panarchie. Eine verschollene Idee von 1860*, 1909.



For a long time, I have been fascinated by the thought how wonderful it would be if at last, in the general view on the succession of political and social institutions, the fateful expression "one after the other" would be finally replaced by the very simple and self-evident "side by side."

"Down with the state!" and "Only upon the ruins of the state. . ." express emotions and wishes of many but it seems that only the cool

"Opt out of the state" (No. 2 of *Der Sozialist*) can help them to be realized.

When a new scientific insight appears, then those convinced of it do simply proceed on the new path, without trying to persuade the old professors who do not want or cannot follow it, or to force them to accept the new method or to slay them. Quite on their own, they will fall behind, diminish in reputation and dry up - if only the new method has the right energy in it. However, in many cases, ill will and stupidity can put many obstacles in the way of the new idea. That is why hard struggles must be fought for unconditional mutual tolerance until it is finally achieved. Only then does everything proceed by itself, science flourishes and prospers, because the necessary foundation for every progress, namely experimental freedom and free research, has been achieved.

One should by no means attempt to "bring everything under one hat." Even the State did not succeed in doing that: the socialists and the anarchists slipped away from its power. And we would not be any more successful with such an attempt, because people favourable to the state do still exist. Besides, it should rather please us not to have to drag along a die-hard cripple of the state into our free society. The frequently discussed question: "What ought to be done with the reactionaries, who cannot adapt to liberty?", would thereby be very simply solved: They may retain their state, as long as they want it. But for us it would become unimportant. Over us it would have no more power than the cranky ideas of a sect about which nobody cares. Sooner or later, freedom will break a path for itself, everywhere.

Once, while we were on a steamer on Lake Como, a teacher from Milan boarded the ship with a large class. She wanted all the kids to sit down and rushed from one group to the other, ordering them to sit. However, barely had she turned her back upon any of the groups when most of them stood up again and whenever she attempted to survey all of them, believing at last to have finished with her labour, she found them standing up and around, in the same mess as before. Instead of now becoming more severe with them, the young woman laughed herself about it and left the children in peace. Most of them soon sat down anyhow, on their own initiative.

This is just a harmless example to demonstrate that everything, which is left to itself, resolves itself best. Consequently, before the idea of *mutual tolerance* in political and social matters will break its path, we could do nothing better than to prepare ourselves for it, by realizing it in our own daily living and thinking. How often do we still act contrary to it?

These words are intended to demonstrate how dear this idea has become to me and to make others understand my pleasure to have found a forgotten essay of a pioneer of this idea, of which there is otherwise not much talk in our anarchist writings. Also because the anarchist movement found itself embroiled in struggles against its will.

I am referring to the article *Panarchie* by P. E. de Puydt in the *Revue Trimestrielle* (Brussels), July 1860, pages 222 to 245. The author, who was so far unknown to me and about whom I have not yet bothered to inquire in order not to disturb my impression of his ideas, is probably far removed from social movements. But he has a clear vision of the extent to which the present political system, according to which ALL must submit to one government, constituted upon a majority decision or otherwise, flies right into the face of the simplest requirements for liberty.

Without identifying myself in any way with his immediate proposal, or attempting to achieve completeness, I want to summarize his views and quote some passages.

One will feel closer to his idea if one replaces in one's mind the word "government", which he always uses, with "social organization," especially since he himself proclaims the coexistence of all forms of government up to and including "even the AN-ARCHY of Mr. Proudhon", side by side, each form for those who are really interested in it.

The author declares himself in favour of the teachings of the political economy of *laissez-faire, laissez-passer* (the Manchester School of free competition without state interference). There are no half-truths. From this he concludes that the law of free competition, *laissez-faire, laissez-passer*, does not only apply to the industrial and commercial relationships but should also be equally adopted in the political sphere.

Some say that there is too much freedom, others that there is not yet enough freedom. In reality, the basic freedom that is needed right now is missing: the freedom to be free or not free, according to one's own choice. Everyone decides this question for himself and since there are as many opinions, as there are human beings, the result is the confusion that is called politics. The freedom of some is the negation of the freedom of others. The best government never functions according to the will of all. There are victors and vanquished, oppressors in the name of the current law and insurgents in the name of freedom.

Do I want to propose my own system? Not at all! I am an advocate of all systems, that is of all forms of government that find adherents.

Every system is like a building in which the owners and the main tenants have the best flats and are comfortable. The others, for whom there is not sufficient space in it, are unhappy. I hate the destroyers as much as the tyrants. Let the discontented go their way, but without destroying the building. What they do not like may please their neighbours.

But should they emigrate, seek for themselves another government, somewhere in the world? Not at all. Nor should people be deported, here and there, in accordance with their opinions. "I wish people to continue to live together, where they are, or elsewhere if they wish, but without quarrelling, fraternally, each expressing his opinion freely and submitting only to the powers he has personally chosen or accepted."

Let us come to the subject. "Nothing develops and lasts that is not based upon liberty. Nothing that exists sustains itself and functions successfully except through the free play of all its active components. Otherwise, there will be loss of energy through friction, rapid wear of the cogwheels, too many breakages and accidents. Therefore, I demand for each and every element of human society (individual) the liberty to associate with others, according to his choice and affinity and to function only in accordance with his capabilities. In other words, the absolute right to select the political society in which they wish to live and to depend only upon it."

Nowadays, the republican attempts to overthrow the existing form of the state in order to establish his ideal of the state. He is opposed as an enemy by all monarchists and others not interested in his ideal.

Instead, according to the idea of the author, one could proceed in a way which corresponds to legal separation or divorce in family relationships. He proposes a similar divorce option for politics, one which would harm no one.

One wants to be politically separated? Nothing easier than to go one's own way, but without infringing the rights and opinions of others, who, on their side, would just have to make some room and would have to leave the others free to realize their own system.

In practice, the machinery of the civil registry office would suffice. In each municipality a new office would be opened for the Political Governmental Affiliation of individuals. The adults would register, according to their choice, in the lists of the monarchy, of the republic, etc.

From then on, they remain untouched by the governmental systems of others. Each system organizes itself, has its own representatives, laws, judges, taxes, regardless of whether there are two or ten such organizations side by side.

For the differences that might arise between these organisms, arbitration courts will suffice, as between befriended peoples.

There will, probably, be many matters common to all organisms, which can be settled by mutual agreements, as was, for instance, the relationship between the Swiss cantons and of the American States with their federations.

There may be people who do not want to fit into any of these organisms. These may propagate their ideas and attempt to increase the numbers of their followers until they have achieved budgetary independence, i.e., can pay themselves what they want in their own way. Up to then, they would have to belong to one of the existing organisms. That would be merely a financial question.

Freedom must go so far as to include the right not to be free. Consequently, clericalism and absolutism for those who do not want it any other way.

There will be free competition between systems of government. The governments will have to improve themselves to secure followers and customers.

Everyone will stay where they are, without having to give up anything they hold dear.

What is involved is merely a simple declaration at the local Office for Political Membership and without taking off one's dressing gown and slippers, one may pass from the republic to the monarchy, from parliamentarianism to autocracy, from oligarchy to democracy or even to the anarchy of Mr. Proudhon, as one pleases.

"You are dissatisfied with your government? Take another one for yourself" - without an insurrection or revolution and without any unrest - by simply going to the Office for Political Membership. The old governments may continue to exist until the freedom to experiment, here proposed, will lead to their decline and fall.

Only one thing is demanded: free choice. Free choice, competition - these will, one day, be the mottos of the political world.

Wouldn't that lead to an unbearable chaos? One should merely remember the times when people slaughtered each other in religious wars. What became of these deadly hatreds? The progress of the human spirit has swept it away like the wind does with the last leaves of autumn. The religions, in whose names the stakes and torture were operating, do nowadays live peacefully, side by side. Especially where several of them coexist, each one is more than usual concerned about its dignity and purity. Should what was possible in this sphere, despite all hindrances, not be likewise possible in the sphere of politics?

Nowadays, when governments exist only to the exclusion of any other power, when parties dominate after having defeated their opponents, where the majority oppresses the minority, it is inevitable that the minorities, the oppressed, will in turn grumble and intrigue and wait for the moment of revenge, to achieve eventually the power. But when all coercion is eliminated, when every adult has, at all times, a completely free choice for himself, then every fruitless struggle will become impossible.

When governments are subjected to the principle of free experimentation, of free competition, they will in their turn improve and perfect themselves. No more aloofness, no more being up in the clouds, which only hides their emptiness. Success for them will entirely depend in doing things better and cheaper than the others.

The energies, presently lost in fruitless efforts, frictions and resistance, will unite to give an unforeseen, wonderful impulse to the progress and happiness of humanity.

Upon the objection that after all these experiments with governments of all kinds, one would, finally, return to a single one, the most perfect one, the author remarks that even if that were the case, this general agreement would have been achieved through the free play of all forces. But this could happen only in the distant future, "when the function of government, with general consent, will have been reduced to its simplest expression." In the meantime, people are of such different minds, and have so varied customs, that only this multiplicity of governments is possible.

One seeks excitement and struggles, another tranquillity; this one needs encouragement and assistance, that one, the genius, cannot stand any guidance. One wants the republic, submission and renunciation - another the absolute monarchy with its pomp and splendour. The orator wants a parliament; the silent one condemns the chatterers. There are strong spirits and weak minds, ambitious ones and simple, contented people. There are as many characters as persons, there are as many needs as different natures. How could they all be satisfied by a single form of government? The contended ones will be in a minority; even the most accomplished government would find opposition.

In the proposed system, on the other hand, all disagreements would be merely domestic squabbles, with divorce as the ultimate remedy.

Governments would compete with each other and those who associated themselves to their government, would be especially loyal to it because it would correspond to their own ideas.

How would one sort all these different people out? - I believe in "the sovereign power of liberty to establish peace among mankind." I cannot foresee the day and the hour of this concord. My idea is like a seed scattered in the wind. Who thought of freedom of conscience in former times and who would question it today?

For its practical realization one might, for instance, set the minimum period for membership, in one form of government, at one year.



Each group would find its adherents whenever it needs them together, like a church does for its members and a joint-stock company its shareholders.

Would this coexistence of many governmental organisms lead to a flood of public servants and a corresponding waste of energies? This objection is important; however, once this is felt, it will be remedied. Only the truly viable organisms will continue to exist, the others will perish from enfeeblement.

Will the presently ruling dynasties and parties ever agree to such a proposal? It would be in their interest to do so. They would be better off with fewer members, but all of them submitting voluntarily and completely. No coercion would be necessary, no soldiers, no gendarmes, no policemen. There would be neither conspiracies nor usurpations. Each and no one would be legitimate.

A government might today go into liquidation and, later on, when it can find more supporters, it can re-establish itself, by a simple constitutional act, like a joint-stock company.

The small fees to be paid for the registration would finance the offices for political membership. It would be a simple mechanism, one that could be run by a child and that, nevertheless, would meet all needs.

All this is so simple and right that I am convinced that no one will want to know about it.

Man, being man . . .

The style and the way of thinking of the author, *de Puydt*, remind me somewhat of *Anselme Bellegarrigue* [1], as one can get to know him in his numerous articles in *Civilisation*, a daily paper of Toulouse in 1849. Similar ideas, especially regarding taxes, were later and for many years expressed by *Auberon Herbert* [2] (voluntary taxation).

The fact that these ideas sound much more plausible to us today than they may have appeared to his readers of 1860, shows that at least some progress has been made.

*To give these ideas an expression corresponding to our present-day feelings*

*and needs* and to move towards their realisation - that is what matters today.

The idea of one's own initiative, which was still missing in the cool reasoning of the isolated author of 1860 - should it not be the thing that makes a discussion of these questions more promising and hopeful today?

M.N.

22 February 1909

## NOTES

[1] Anselme Bellegarrigue (19th century) was an anarchist writer and activist. He was the editor of *Anarchie, Journal de l'Ordre* and of *Au fait ! Au fait ! Interprétation de l'idée démocratique*.

[2] Auberon Herbert (1838-1906), English writer and philosopher. He was the originator of a current of ideas called *voluntaryism*, advocating, among other things, voluntarily funded governments (voluntary taxation).

## NOTE BY JOHN ZUBE

This article was signed M.N. and dated 22.2.1909.

It was first published in GUSTAV LANDAUER'S "DER SOZIAL-IST", 15.3.1909.

Upon a suggestion by Leo Kasarnowski, the later publisher of John Henry Mackay, who identified M.N. as MAX NETTLAU, it was reprinted in "Der individualistische Anarchist" (The Individualist Anarchist), published by Benedikt Lachman, in Berlin, 1920, pages 410-417.

It is here translated by John Zube from the German reproduction in "Zur Sache", No.9 (On the Topic, No.9), produced 1985 by the Mackay Gesellschaft, Germany, editor: Kurt Zube, 1905-1991.

The existence of this article by Max Nettlau was quite new to me and pleased me very much. I had long sought for anarchist responses to de Puydt's essay, but in vain, except within my own close circle. Alas, Kurt Zube had failed to point it out to me earlier.

De Puydt's proposal, as a core requirement for a consistent anarchism, supplemented by essential conditions, forms the foundation of the autonomous protective and social communities described in Solne-man's 1977 "The Manifesto of Peace and Freedom." Its English edition appeared in 1983. But already in 1930, in Kurt Zube's "RADIKALER GEIST", Berlin, on pages 450/51 (5th issue), appeared the related programme of Werner Ackermann's THE COSMOPOLITAN UNION.

Herbert Spencer discussed similar ideas in his chapter *The Right to Ignore the State*, in "Social Statics," original edition in 1851, and Johann Gottlieb Fichte discussed individual secessionism in his 1793 book on the French Revolution. Voluntary taxation schemes are one of the preconditions or consequences for panarchies. Historical precedents for panarchism abound and go back much further (but they are NOT discussed in MOST history books), in the form of personal law associations, capitulations, the millet system or djemma, special courts for foreigners and consular jurisdiction).

Remnants of this tradition persisted into the 20th century, e.g. in Morocco to 1955 and to our times, e.g. as personal law in civil jurisdiction, in the Middle East and Malaysia.

Curiously enough, most minority groups have shown little to no interest in this form of potentially full extraterritorial autonomy for all minorities that want to form their own volunteer communities. They remain addicted to territorialism - and the atrocities that follow from it.

PANARCHY provides the only framework that could, at the same time and in the same country, satisfy the RIGHTFUL aspirations of all kinds of statistes as well as of all kinds of freedom lovers. Since the radical freedom lovers are almost everywhere a small minority and have little chance, in the short run, to convert all the statistes to their point of view, they should be the first ones to adopt this program. However, they find it very difficult to do, since they are, like most statistes, stuck on the territorial model, which excludes tolerance for extraterritorially autonomous volunteer communities.

It is also the cornerstone for any rightful and efficient peace, defence, revolution and liberation effort, since it could turn most of the resources of any dictatorial or totalitarian regime against it and could do so without driving the regime into a corner, ready to undertake

mass murderous steps. Even the worst regime has some voluntary followers and under panarchism it could retain these, as long as it satisfied them. I know of no better program to defuse and finally abolish the threat posed by ABC mass murder devices combined with popular notions on collective responsibility and enemies, all tied to the territorial model.

One of the remaining panarchistic traits, in all too distorted form, is the practice of and international law on diplomatic immunity. However, this is a bad example because its current version permits diplomats to get away with serious crimes against foreigners. That was NOT the traditional practice in law systems. But then the rulers and their followers or representatives have degrees of secrecy and immunity for their crimes.

# ACT IV

## RESUMPTION AND DISSEMINATION OF THE IDEA

*Where a world citizen rescues the idea from oblivion and through a formidable activity of documentation and dissemination lays the foundations for its affirmation.*



14 – (1986), John Zube, *The Gospel of Panarchy*

15 – (1986) John Zube, *The Road to Voluntaryism*

16 – (1986) John Zube, *Notes on Panarchy and Anarchy*

17 – (2005) John Zube, *Panarchy described by the Simple System of Aphthonius*



## JOHN ZUBE

### THE GOSPEL OF PANARCHY ACCORDING TO SINNER JOHN (1986)

John Zube is the one who has rediscovered the original idea of Panarchy and has done most for its wider diffusion. He has given here one of the best short texts on Panarchy. It takes a few moments to read it, a bit longer to ponder about it and an entire life to become really proficient in practicing it.



PANARCHY : The realization of as many different, autonomous and voluntary communities as are wanted by members for themselves, all coexisting non-territorially, side by side and intermingled, as their members are, in the same territory or even world-wide and yet separated from each other by personal laws, administrations and jurisdiction, as different churches are or ought to be.

PANARCHISM : The body of knowledge and thought regarding the theories and practices of such voluntaristic non-territorial and autonomous communities (panarchies), considered as the rightful, peace-, freedom-, property- and reform-promoting alternatives to any attempt to set up or continue coercive, exclusive, uniform, territorial,

more or less centralized and supposedly ideal or best possible communities for all, whether their subjects agree or disagree.

Panarchism teaches that panarchies form the ideal societies for human beings as diverse as we are. Panarchy would speed up the development and progress of man and his institutions to the utmost, in a peaceful and peace-promoting way, while permitting and institutionalizing one-man revolutions, and would reduce the incidence of violent revolutions and wars to a minimum while retaining and even increasing the capacity of peace-loving people to resist and defeat violent aggressors.

The following are some principles of panarchism which might be considered as amounting to The Gospel of Panarchy (at least once they have been fully collected and expressed more attractively than is here the case in a first draft):

1. You do not have to love your neighbour - but you do owe him justice.

2. People are different, and prefer different things, even in the sphere of laws and social, economic and political institutions. Everyone is entitled to their own choices, at their own expense and risk.

3. If you can't agree with them, do not join them or stay a member. Secede from them and do your own thing.

4. Everyone has the equal right and liberty to live differently.

5. Everyone has the right to do his own thing, to live within his own system, quite undisturbed by others, even by leaders, majorities and people considered to be professionals and experts.

6. Let your actions be free and let them take you where your thoughts take you - as long as you respect the same right in others.

7. Be tolerant towards all tolerant persons, peaceful towards all peaceful persons and leave them alone - while they leave you alone.

8. Act only within and up to the limits set by yourself, as long as you let others set their own limits and respect the limits set by others for their own actions.

9. Agree only to disagree with dissenters. Leave them alone and allow them to leave you alone.

10. Agree only and insist only upon agreement among people who



are agreeable to you and your ideas, opinions and institutions. Between you, and at your expense and risk, anything goes.

11. Everyone has the right to make mistakes and to act foolishly at his own expense and risk and among like-minded people.

12. Everyone has the right to make experiments among like-minded people, even in the political, economic and social sphere.

13. Freedom of action for all who respect freedom of action in others.

14. Tolerance for all tolerant actions among tolerant people.

15. Find, grow, develop and realize yourself, your aims, your methods, your institutions and systems and principles, but only alone or among like-minded people who, with you, volunteered to do so, shutting out all politicians, bureaucrats and experts that are not wanted by you and your voluntary associates for your own internal affairs.

16. To each his own; no more, no less.

17. Everyone to be the master of his own fate.

18. Everyone to be free to pick his ideology, social organization and cooperators and to experiment together with them, at their own risk and expense, in the same way that he may now pick his own friends or religious associates.

19. Everyone to be free to pick his own international allies and enemies, make treaties with them or resist their aggressive acts, as he pleases, provided only that he does so within the framework of individual rights and liberties, which reduce indiscriminate warfare and revolutionary actions to rightful and limited self-defence and policing actions against aggressors.

20. In other words, everyone to be free to decide for themselves whether and to what extent they want to be at war with each other or at peace and for what rightful aims they are to struggle, if they are to struggle at all.

Non-enumeration of similar principles, commandments or articles of faith in this first declaration does not mean that they are to be excluded. On the contrary, an appeal is hereby made to help find, formulate and include all other formulas and wordings and to edit and improve the present ones, in view of a panarchistic gospel or platform or agreement between all groups striving for and being content with

full autonomy on a non-territorial basis. A single expression of panarchistic freedom is obviously not good enough to convey its full meanings, otherwise panarchism would already have been clearly understood and realized long ago. Thus I invite the discovery or formulation or description of all its facets in optimal wording. To sort all these out, in an attempt to find out which are the most successful ones, they might later be arranged in form of flow chart discussions. Or one might merely collect the objections raised to each particular formula and then assemble all those wordings which have not provoked any opposition.

**JOHN ZUBE****THE ROAD TO VOLUNTARYISM (1986)**

The theoretical and practical aspect that best characterises panarchy is voluntaryism. Through voluntaryism, the chances of achieving peace and freedom (for an individual and for groups) are greater than through any other personal and social arrangement. As a matter of fact, the idea that an individual, on his own, fights against the voluntary choices of another person is not really part of the human experience (unless there are serious pathological factors at play).

In these three short writings, John Zube emphasises the links between panarchy, peace and freedom, and shows once again that the absence of a single territorial power (a-territorialism) and the possibility of forming voluntary communities (voluntaryism) are essential preconditions for the realisation of peace and freedom.

**Through Panarchism to Peace and Freedom**

Panarchism is nothing but the consistent application of a basic anarchist principle that has often been expressed and in various wordings.

Thus Errico Malatesta says (in *Il programma anarchico*, 1919):

*Thus freedom for everybody, so that they can propagate their ideas and experiment with them. Freedom without any other restriction than that arising quite naturally from the equal right of everyone else to be free.*

Unfortunately, such general clauses, often even contained in the bills of rights passed by governments, can be very differently interpreted and have been very differently interpreted by anarchists, libertarians and statist.

Panarchists assert that they are the only ones who have given this idea a consistently anarchistic, voluntaryist, individualistic interpretation.

The best analogy is probably that of religious tolerance as opposed to religious hierarchy. Under this religious freedom, any kind person can freely hold and practise his religious beliefs side by side with free-thinkers, rationalists, agnostics, atheists and humanists, who do their own things.

They may still argue with each other, extensively but by words only. Otherwise, they do peacefully coexist and leave each other alone or only try to make individual converts to their cause.

The panarchist equivalent to this, in the political, economic and social sphere, is statism for statist and anarchism for anarchists, any form of statism for those who believe in it ( as long as they can stand it ) and any kind of non-governmental organization for those who believe in it.

As K. H. Z. Solneman put it:

*To each the government of his dreams.*

To which I added: "or the no-government of his or her dreams."

The assumption is that in this case the diverse groups would have the least reasons and motives to be antagonistic to the actions of others, who are doing merely their things, either to or for themselves and this at their own expense and risk only - because thereby the own actions would be least restricted, if at all.

Such a change does, naturally, have consequences upon the present party struggles, resistance and terrorist attempts, civil wars and international wars. All of these presuppose a uniform territorial rule for all with almost no exceptions tolerated in the political, economic and social spheres.

We do already have and enjoy (unconscious of its panarchistic implications ) panarchism in many other spheres of life that are most important in the views of most people, namely, e.g., in sports, fashions, diets, entertainment, arts, crafts, choice of jobs or professions, choice of reading, studying and teaching activities, private lifestyles, private movement and transport choices, alternative medical and fitness means, organizational forms of private and cooperative enterprises, a great diversity of voluntary associations for a variety of purposes, in friendship circles, in sexual relations (even easy marriage and divorce contract options are panarchistic ), in religion and in natural science experimentation.

However, because of a number of popular myths, prejudices and errors, we have so far exempted the political, economic and social spheres from this kind of freedom of action, competition or experimental freedom.

**Panarchists are nothing but consistent anarchists**, who want to realize this freedom in these three important spheres also, which were so far monopolized by territorial governments.

They do expect to achieve, through this extension of liberty (which includes even the liberty not to be free, according to individual choice ), at least the same kind of advantages (quite apart from the ethical justification ), that can be derived from freedom of action in the above-mentioned minor spheres, where diversity of actions is already the norm, the accepted thing, where each does his own thing, not imposing it upon others and takes this kind of mutual tolerance for granted.

**Panarchism means no more than extension of freedom to experiment, freedom to act, into all spheres - as long as the same freedoms are fully respected in others, with their different choices.**

Moreover, panarchists are realistic enough to realize that mere words, no matter how skilfully combined and advanced, do not have a

sufficient persuasive power over most other people. They have not had this power over the last few hundred years and are unlikely to gain it during the next few hundred years, namely the power to persuade all people to subscribe to one particular form of anarchism.

**Panarchism is a kind of uncompromising compromise.** Each gets his own way in his own affairs - but he does not get his ideal practiced by others - unless others come to **individually** accept it.

Freedom to live one's own preferred lifestyle in every way, among like-minded people, quite independent from the preferences of others, which they realize among themselves, is already a great achievement, e.g. for anarchists.

Moreover, in such a new social situation, they do not only have verbal and educational freedom to make more converts, and a, however small, chance to one day persuade everybody to accept anarchism for himself, but they are then quite free to demonstrate their kind of anarchism and whatever benefits they can derive from it, to their neighbours and all other observers close-by.

Their successful actions, as well as their failures would also be likely to become reported world-wide.

Actions speak louder than words. Actions in other countries, other cultures, other language areas etc., do not have quite the same persuasive powers, in spite of the modern mass media, to make alternative ways of living, working, enjoying and ruling oneself, appear as interesting and persuasive as such actions have when undertaken next door.

Even when such actions are frowned upon or despised by others, the others have, in such situations, nothing to fear from them, since they will not be imposed upon them.

For themselves they remain free to reject all practices they dislike and to use these practices among others only as their deterrent examples or for their own amusement.

## On the Panarchist Road to Peace and Freedom

Is the membership in any kind of anarchistic community, collective, society or cooperative ever to become compulsory?

Are non-anarchists only to be given the choice: death or adoption of anarchism for themselves?

Are anarchists prepared to tolerate statist activities among statist adults in the same way as they want their anarchistic activities among themselves tolerated by the present statist?

Are anarchists sufficiently in favor of free individual choices to permit other people to make quite different choices for themselves than anarchists would make for their own groups?

Or do most anarchists, in common with most statist and authoritarians, centralists, universalists, territorialists etc., want to permit only one type of supposedly ideal society to exist in any country at any one time?

Should we therefore distinguish between voluntaryist anarchists and authoritarian anarchists?

If one really believes in any kind of system then one always tends to imagine that all others could or should share one's beliefs and that one day they will.

But should one be prepared to wait as long as would be necessary to persuade all?

Should one, thereupon, postpone the realization of anarchy until all have become anarchists - if ever?

Or should one rather aim at alternative institutions for all who desire them, at minority autonomy, at doing one's own thing, at one's own risk and expense, whilst leaving all others free to do their own thing, however hateful that thing may be to oneself?

If membership in anarchistic communities and societies is not to be compulsory, then what about the however limited liberties and rights which the others wish for themselves?

Are they to be free to organize and limit them in accordance with their own choices, quite undisturbed by anarchists, who are free to do their own thing? If so, then let us state this now and quite clearly:

Primarily and as realists and advocates of the rights and liberties of

others as well, we want only anarchism for anarchists and FAVOR statism for statist, according to their own free and individual choices.

Organizationally this would, naturally, require some changes, preparations and precautions.

The only quite fundamental ones would be voluntary membership, based on individual secessionism and non-territorial organization, under contracts or personal laws of one's choosing.

In other words:

Minority and majority autonomy for all who desire it, based on individual sovereignty, shared and combined as much as individuals want to.

### **How could anarchist communities peacefully coexist even with statist ones, with each individual being free to choose between them?**

For the transformation one would obviously have to do without centralistic, national, compulsory, uniform, territorial and majoritarian "solutions".

The remaining options are:

**Voluntary membership** for all, based on individual secessionism and individual associationism and

**Non-territorial organization** under personal laws or private and cooperative agreements and compacts.

Voluntaryism and non-territorial organization will have to be combined to make this alternative practical.

When alternatives are permitted only on a territorial basis, then only exclusive nation-states are involved, on a smaller scale, or various ghetto, reservation, concentration camp and deportation systems to achieve the desired "territorial integrity" and uniformity, which has nothing in common with individual liberty.

Since there is nothing quite new under the sun, as a rule, one should expect that sometime, some place, between some people, such an alternative has already been practised to some extent and for a while.



If one does not only rely on nationalists, centralists and statist historians alone, then one can find, indeed, quite a number of historical precedents and even contemporary practices for the "panarchistic" alternative, for as many different "governments" or free societies as their clients, consumers or subjects desire, or, if you will, for **consumer-sovereignty even with regard to governmental services or disservices.**

Panarchism attempts to look at all historical precedents and future possibilities of this kind and at all the theories so far advanced on these subjects and tries to develop them further, in order to provide a political, economic and social philosophy of freedom that would release everybody's creative energies in his own self-chosen circles, while freeing or creating new options to resist all privileges, monopolies, coercion, impositions and aggressions.

For panarchists do not just dream that quite non-violent people ought to be at liberty to do their diverse things but that all people are also at liberty to resist aggressors and protect their way of life in diverse forceful and rightful ways and to collaborate in such resistance and protection efforts in many different ways.

Freedom has many more and better answers to offer than statism has.

For the foreseeable future, we cannot expect all people to agree on some, supposedly ideal protection, resistance and penal method.

Thus, in a panarchistically reorganized society, there will be a great variety of protective systems, policing and jurisdiction options, including, naturally, self-defence efforts and neighborhood watches and all kinds of voluntary jurisdiction and arbitration or popular and liberated jury systems, all agreed upon in advance.

The different autonomous and non-territorial groups would have their "international" compacts with each other on all offences across the non-territorial "borders" between them.

## JOHN ZUBE

### NOTES ON PANARCHY AND ANARCHY (1986)

The moral of this powerful short text by John Zube is that anarchists that are not, at the same time, panarchists (i.e. practicing tolerance and voluntarism) are simply a bunch of authoritarian and violent people, no different from the statist they so vehemently oppose.



#### **What Panarchy means**

Panarchy means:

No taxation without individual consent. (Replacement of taxes by prices, fees and subscriptions.)

No dictatorship - unless it is wanted by the individuals involved.

No majority votes - except among volunteers and applying only to them.

No conscription.

No nuclear targets any longer.

No national borders and national enemies any longer.

No economic or political monopoly or privilege any longer. Only

those remain that are based on the unanimous consent of volunteers and that are practised at their expense only.

It would mean, especially, for our times:

No funds, soldiers, targets, motives and enemies for nuclear war but, rather, friends and allies everywhere - against a few remaining criminals, enemies of man.

Panarchy means a free market for politics and economics, for systems and ideologies, even including those amounting to anti-politics and anti-economics.

Each to his own choice.

Each to be the master of his own fate and none to be master over the fate of other more or less rational adults.

That also implies that all their own free actions take place only at their own expense and risk.

Each would purchase, on the free market, whatever political or economic or insurance package deal he likes for himself, at competitive prices. Alternatively, he would provide such services cooperatively, charitably or would receive them in this way.

Consumer sovereignty in all spheres. This would mean even a free market for central planning efforts among central planners, for regulators among those who like to be regulated, for despots among those who like to subordinate themselves to them.

Naturally, it also means anarchism for anarchists, not only archism for archists.

Panarchy means tolerance in the sphere of actions, also experimental freedom and unrestricted liberties and rights - where they matter most, nowadays, in politics, economics and social arrangements.

Panarchy opposes collective responsibility and all "weapons" which apply this "principle" quite wrongly, as, for instance, nuclear devices and all other indiscriminate mass extermination devices inevitably do.

Panarchy IS the only rightful and workable alternative for all. It is the proper framework for all attempts to do the own thing differently.

## What Panarchists can achieve

Panarchists have friends, neutrals and allies everywhere - and very few fanatic enemies - because panarchism favours exterritorial autonomy even for fanatic dissenters and all their followers, as long as they do apply their fanaticism only among themselves.

Panarchists feel and act as allies of all minorities, everywhere, that strive for autonomy - no more. Thus their potential for solidarity with others exceeds that of all other ideological movements.

The various minorities between them do constitute the largest majority. Panarchism can mobilize their combined strength. It could exceed that of the present great powers.

Panarchists can act as spokesmen for all rightful aspirations and can thus make friends and allies everywhere.

Only panarchists can realize fully liberating liberation efforts, i.e. efforts that do not go beyond the degree of liberation that various people want for themselves. They let each advance at his own speed towards his own ideals, alone or in association with others.

## Panarchy as a-territorialism

Is man a territorial animal? He is rather an animal that forever seems to move to new territories and even when he is settled somewhere, he still seems to roam a lot around his country or the world, time and funds permitting and he pursues his profession, hobbies and interests regardless of and independent of those of others - in a relatively tolerant way.

Among the worst aspects of exclusive territorial rule [territorialism] over voluntary and involuntary members is that it channels progress only in one direction, that approved by politicians, bureaucrats and the majority.

Imagine what would happen if we did the same regarding religion, philosophy, arts, science, technology, medicine and agriculture!

It is simply absurd to make the realization of innovations, in one's

own sphere, dependent upon government or bureaucratic or majority approval.

A-territorial autonomy of volunteers would constitute the best kind of "propaganda by deed" of those who are nihilists towards "establishment" values and institutions. It would constitute anarchy in action.

Most people cannot be persuaded, they can only learn from practical examples that are not set in some foreign countries but right before their own eyes. Then curiosity and envy will do the rest.

Panarchism can realize what is rightful among the aspirations of terrorists and can thus turn them from their indiscriminately destructive and murderous activities into creative ones.

Even in family, friendship and scholarly circles, people don't fully agree. How can we expect them to agree in whole territories? Let them sort themselves out, individually, according to individual preferences, for TOLERANT experiments among themselves, self-realizing the degree of liberty which they do want for themselves. Everything else, even when running under anarchistic slogans and banners, amounts to despotism.

## **Panarchy as Freedom**

Panarchy is freedom of choice and choice of freedoms.

Freedom of expression and information are to many almost self-evident liberties. But they alone do not suffice for our purposes, as decades of rather fruitless anarchist agitation have demonstrated. They must be supplemented by freedom to act upon one's information, however limited and misleading it may be, at one's own expense and risk.

Freedom of action and experimentation are moral and useful not just in some limited and minor spheres but in all.

But they must be subjected to the primary requirement of voluntarism, of individual choice.

This implies freedom to join any and to secede from any group or system or organization, even an anarchistic one.

Not just some licensed and limited autonomy is to be achieved as a

moral and essential state of affairs, but full autonomy that is limited only by individual choice, which means non-territorial and personal law organization and voluntary membership.

Any old or new ism, like any religious faith, is right for all its believers and thus the believers should be free to practice it - among themselves.

### **Panarchists and Anarchists**

The all too popular attitude among anarchists towards dissenters to the anarchist faith or conviction can be summed up with: No freedom for non-anarchists that disagrees with our own notions of freedom. Organizational variations are only permitted to anarchists.

Anarchism, when proclaimed or implied in this form, amounts almost to a declaration of war against all others and it does also disagree with its own original and primary notions of rights, individualism, voluntarism, choice, tolerance, independence, consent and equal liberty

Anarchists want the state ABOLISHED, either by revolutions or by reforms or non-violent actions. Panarchists want to abolish only 2 of its most important and coercive features: Territorialism and compulsory membership. They would leave the rest up to individual choice.

To anti-property anarchists: That people ought to be free to "exploit" each other, if they want to, in a propertarian and contractual and free trading way, in their own voluntary associations and free contracts with outsiders, does apparently go beyond the imagination of fanatical enemies of property. They want to destroy it for all, even for those who highly favour it among themselves. In this they are as totalitarian as those who advocate and insist upon either abstinence, or monogamy or polygamy for all.

They are blind to the understanding that a propertarian society permits all to pool and share, socialize and combine their property and use it between them as they please.

They are also blind to the various free market options for the acqui-

sition of considerable private properties for all willing to work for them or use their current assets for this purpose.

Thus "robber-anarchists" might be a more suitable term for these "anarchists". They want to establish their free and non-violent society by theft, ignoring, for instance, the lease and purchase options, even their savings and the future value of their own labour ( which could be capitalized and used for purchasing enterprises ).

Thereby they rather prefer violence and bloodshed (associated with expropriations and occupations) to peaceful trade.

Since even anarchists cannot fully agree among themselves, even after discussions spanning at least 150 years, and can agree far less with others, their framework for the future ought to make possible the highest possible degree of autonomy for dissenters, even non-anarchists.

Such a framework is inevitably panarchistic and would offer to all kinds of anarchists the full chance to realize their particular ideal for themselves.

Anarchist enemies of Panarchism argue in practice, often unaware, AGAINST

- a ) an extension of freedom, cooperation and competition,
- b ) maximizing tolerance,
- c ) experimental freedom for all, in all spheres,
- d ) minority autonomy,
- e ) individual sovereignty,
- f ) individual secessionism or withdrawal options,
- g ) voluntary associationism,
- h ) the consent requirement,
- i ) freedom for individual choices.

OR AS IF THESE IDEALS APPLIED O N L Y TO ANARCHISTS!

In the political and economic sphere they want us to fill our shopping basket only with the same assortment of goodies that are "officially sanctioned" by the anarchist movement - or their particular section of it.

They are, often quite unaware, advocates of:

- a ) territorial rule,
- b ) imposed laws (however few and anarchistic and informal these may be),
- c ) imposed uniformity (even if only the uniformity of an anarchist utopia),
- d ) government (even if it is a highly limited and decentralized one).

In short, without being panarchists, they are not really anarchists.



## JOHN ZUBE

### PANARCHY DESCRIBED BY THE SIMPLE SYSTEM OF APHTHONIUS (2005)

Aphthonius of Antioch, Greek sophist and rhetorician, flourished in the second half of the 4th century A.D., or even later.

The essential part of the Aphthonius system embraces seven simple questions, which every seriously intentioned reform advocate should answer, as a minimum requirement.

The questions could and should be supplemented and sub-divided to suit the subject.

Latin	English	German	French	Spanish	Italian
Quis?	Who?	Wer?	Qui?	¿Quien?	Chi?
Quid?	What?	Was?	Quoi?	¿Qué?	Che cosa?
Ubi?	Where?	Wo?	Où?	¿Dónde?	Dove?
Quibus auxiliis?	Whereby?	Wodurch?	A travers qui- quoi?	¿A través quien- qué?	Attraverso chi-che cosa?
Cur?	Why?	Warum?	Pourquoi?	¿Por qué?	Perché?
Quomodo?	How?	Wie?	Comment?	¿Como?	Come?
Quando?	When?	Wann?	Quand?	¿Cuándo?	Quando?

Do, please, draft, publish and try out your own utopias, panaceas, ideal societies and experiments among yourselves - but make sure that they do not constitute any impositions upon dissenters and that they provide rational answers to at least these seven questions. In this attempt I have changed the order of these questions.

Choose your own sequence - do not omit any question but, rather, add others.

## 1. WHAT?

PANARCHY (or aterritorial multigovernments - or Polyarchy or Personarchy) as the general framework for all the different degrees of liberty and/or restraint which individuals want for themselves in their own associations and voluntary communities, quite independent from those of others.

All presently compulsory memberships (e.g. in states, armed forces and trade unions) to become voluntary.

Territorial and collectivist monopoly claims (for large areas, occupied by many dissenting people) are no longer to be recognized and upheld. Thus territorial borders are to disappear, via peaceful "one-person-revolutions."

## 2. WHO?

ALL INDIVIDUALS who volunteer to participate in the realization or conservation of one or other ideal, reform, experiment, tradition or custom, together with all like-minded people, anywhere, always and only at their own risk and expense, without infringing the individual rights and liberties of anyone else.

In short: Free individuals, without "royal charters" and territorial monopoly claims, aware of their equal rights and liberties - and respecting those of others.

Primarily dissenting minorities striving for self-rule.

All governments in exile already existing or still to be established,

which do not favour any new monopoly power extended over the whole population of any territory.

All revolutionaries and freedom fighters who aim at no more than the development of freedom, so that they can gain the greatest number either of supporters or of people neutral towards them.

Thus, even the enemies of liberties are not provoked into desperate resistance. They can try to enjoy their own more or less authoritarian panarchies, as long as they accept them, directly and personally.

The federations of all autonomous communities, freely and peacefully coexisting and competing with each other for members, like many churches and insurance companies do - although they may dislike each other.

### **3. WHEREBY?**

INDIVIDUAL SOVEREIGNTY, individual secessionism, individualism, voluntarism, self-help, associationism, aterritorial autonomy and personal laws for the members of voluntary communities.

These new organizations are to realize full freedom to experiment, freedom of action and full autonomy for all, always and only at their own expense and risk.

Consumer sovereignty to prevail in all spheres in which politicians and bureaucrats have hitherto blocked or obstructed it.

Individuals to become free to choose for themselves and abide by different political, economic and social systems - with different membership contracts, constitutions, personal laws, fees and/or subscriptions.

### **4. HOW?**

BY RECLAIMING individual independence through withdrawal or disassociation of individuals from the existing territorial states, with freedom from imposed tributes, institutions, laws and jurisdiction, and

also claiming their shares in the remaining capital assets of the territorial states from which they withdraw.

However, the individuals must declare their readiness to pay their shares of the costs of institutions they are still using or want to use in common with the territorial statist. Details are to be peacefully negotiated or settled by arbitration.

Those who have withdrawn from the existing territorial states are to be free to run whatever contributory, budgetary, electoral and administrative system they want for themselves.

By the establishment of alternative, voluntary, aterritorial and parallel institutions, governments, non-governmental societies or experimental systems, with their own constitutions, personal laws, jurisdiction, policing and other services, in free competition with the existing territorial ones, freed from the burdens and regulations imposed upon their territorial counterparts.

For example, freedom for alternative institutions and practices concerning education, police, courts, prisons, parks, libraries, banks, currencies, finance systems, and so on.

By way of individual consumer or contractor preferences, let the good and competitive institutions and services peacefully drive out the inferior ones, which are still imposed upon whole populations.

The individuals who have chosen to remain members of the former territorial states could retain all the laws and institutions they like - but could no longer force them upon others.

## 5. WHY?

BECAUSE TERRITORIAL INSTITUTIONS, with their monopolies, size, power addicts' bureaucracy, and conventional territorial politics, have led to continuous strife among contending parties. Strife and corruption are among the lesser evils, while national wars, violent revolutions and official or group terrorism are the major evils.

With state contestants now largely armed with ABC mass murder devices or other all too efficient tools for killing and destruction, the price to be paid for territorialism - in freedom, rights, security, blood

and tribute-money, even in the very survivability of human beings - has become much too large to be tolerable any longer.

Peace, justice, freedom, progress and enlightenment can only become sufficiently assured and speeded up aterritorially and voluntarily, by freedom of action for all to go their own ways towards their own ideals, at their own risk and expense and also to their own benefit.

Motives and opportunities for aggressions and crimes would become minimized.

Even the targets for mass extermination devices would dissolve.

## 6. WHEN?

WHENEVER THE TIME is ripe for significant secessionist and self-help steps, such as during galloping inflations, by then introducing new, stable and competing currencies; during mass unemployment, achieving full employment via alternatively issued reliable media of exchange or clearing avenues, as well as alternative and sound value standards, all subject to refusals or discounting by all their potential acceptors.

When a territorial government wants to start another unjust war.

Whenever a despot becomes unbearable.

When governments do not sufficiently uphold the rights and liberties of citizens.

When all minor self-help options become insufficient or blocked.

When military insurrections and violent revolutions need averting.

When sufficient freedom of expression and information no longer exists.

When emigration and immigration are largely prevented.

## 7. WHERE?

IN ALL COUNTRIES and continents where minorities and majorities are dissatisfied, suppressed, or exploited.

That is, practically, everywhere.

## **PRECEDENTS, DEMONSTRATIONS, EXAMPLES**

- Religious liberty.
- Voluntary business partnerships.
- Dissent, divorce and voluntary separation within family and friendship circles.
- Personal laws, arbitration courts, freedom of association and disassociation in various clubs and organizations.
- Competition between different sports and sports clubs, charities, scientific associations, universities.
- Consumer sovereignty.
- Choice of doctors, medicines, jobs, hobbies, crafts, meals, contracts, tourist attractions, clothing, houses, gardening options, entertainment, arts involvements.
- All the numerous daily choices of individuals to the extent that they are not pre-empted by government laws, regulations and institutions.

# ACT V

## PAST AND RECENT ELABORATION OF THE IDEA

*Where it is shown that the idea stirred within the minds of many people, with the most varied cultural backgrounds and under the most diverse formulations and qualifications.*



### **Humanists – Voluntaryists – Anarchists**

18 - (1850) Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*

19 - (1885) Auberon Herbert, *On Voluntaryism*

20 - (1901) Voltairine de Cleyre, *Anarchism*

21 - (1930) Werner Ackermann et alii, *The Cosmopolitan Union*

22 - (1934) Henri Léon Follin, *Words of a Foreseeing Person*

23 – George Santayana, *Many Nations in One Empire*

24 - (1980) Karl Hess, *Anarchy without Hyphens*

25 - (2006) Carl Watner, *Fundamentals of Voluntaryism*

26 - (2014) Yves Plasseraud, *Choose your own Nationality*

### **Logicians – Cyberneticians – Futurists**

27 - (1952) Moritz Schlick, *The State*

28 - (1956) W. Ross Ashby, *Cybernetics and Requisite Variety*

29 - (1962) Anonymous, *democracy with a small “d”*

30 - (1966) Robert Heinlein, *Panarchy on the Moon*

31 - (1975) John Gall, *The Principle of Hegemonic Indeterminacy*

32 - (1969-1977) Le Grand E. Day, *The Theory of Multigovernment*



**FRÉDÉRIC BASTIAT**

THE LAW (1850)

With his usual ironic way of presenting his ideas, Bastiat declares himself to be in favour of all social experimenters (Cabetists, Fourierists, Proudhonians, Academics, Protectionists, etc.) provided that they do their experiments on themselves and do not oblige others to follow their lead and their beliefs. And this is exactly what the conception known as panarchy suggests and proposes.

Source: extract from, Frédéric Bastiat, *La Loi*, 1850.



One of the strangest phenomena of our times, and one which will probably astonish our descendants, is the doctrine based on this three-fold hypothesis: the radical inertia of mankind, the omnipotence of the Law, and the infallibility of the Legislator. These three ideas form the sacred symbol of the party which proclaims itself fully democratic.

It is true that it also calls itself *social*. As democratic, it has an unbounded faith in humanity. As *social*, it puts mankind below the mud.

If it is a question of political rights, if it is a matter of bringing the

legislator out of his bosom, oh, then, according to him, the people have the infused knowledge; they are endowed with the finest perception; *their will is always straight, the general will cannot err*. Suffrage cannot be too universal. No one owes society any guarantees. The will and the ability to choose well are always taken for granted. Can the people err? Are we not living in the age of enlightenment? What! Will the people be kept eternally under tutelage? Have they not won their rights by enough effort and sacrifice? Have they not given sufficient proof of their intelligence and wisdom? Have they not reached maturity? Are they not capable of judging for themselves? Do they not know what is best for themselves? Does any man or class dare to claim the right to take the place of the people and to decide and act for them? No, no, the people want to be *free*, and they will be free. They want to manage their own affairs, and they shall do so.

But once the legislator is finally elected and does not need to do any more canvassing, oh, then the language changes. The nation returns to passivity, to inertia, to nothingness, and the Legislator takes possession of omnipotence. Now it is time for him to create, to direct, to propel, and to organize.

Mankind has only to submit; the hour of despotism has struck. And notice that this is a fatal destiny because this very same people, so enlightened, so moral, so perfect, no longer has any inclinations, or, if it has any, they all lead towards degradation.

Ought not the people be given a little liberty? But don't you know that, according to Mr. Considerant [1], *freedom leads inevitably to monopoly*? Don't you know that freedom is competition? and that competition, according to M. L. Blanc [2], *is for the people a system of extermination, for the bourgeoisie a cause of ruin*?

It is for this reason that peoples are all the more annihilated and ruined the freer they are, witness Switzerland, Holland, England, and the United States?

Don't you know, still according to Mr. L. Blanc, that competition leads to monopoly, and that, by the same reason, convenient exchanges lead to very high prices? That competition tends to dry up the sources of consumption and pushes production into a destructive activity? That competition forces production to increase and consumption to

decrease. From this it follows that free peoples produce in order not to consume; that liberty is both oppression and insanity, and that it is absolutely necessary for Mr. L. Blanc to intervene?

What freedom, moreover, could be left to individuals?

Could it be freedom of conscience? But we will see them all taking advantage of that permission to become atheists.

Freedom of education? But parents will hasten to pay professors to teach their sons immorality and falsehoods; besides, according to Mr. Thiers [3] if education was left to be free for the nation, it would cease to be national, and we would bring up our children in the ideas of the Turks or the Indians; whereas, thanks to this legal despotism over education, our children now have the good fortune to be taught the noble ideas of the Romans.

Freedom of labour? But it is competition, which has the effect of leaving all products unconsumed, of exterminating the people and ruining the bourgeoisie.

Freedom of exchange? But it is well known, as the protectionists have demonstrated repeatedly, that a man ruins himself when he exchanges freely, and that, in order to prosper, it is necessary to suppress freedom of trade.

Freedom of association? But, according to the Socialist doctrine, freedom and association are mutually exclusive, since it is precisely the desire to deprive men of their freedom that forces them to associate.

You can see, then, that the Democratic Socialists cannot, in good conscience, allow the individuals any freedom, since, by their very nature, and unless these gentlemen put a stop to it, they tend, on all sides, to all kinds of degradation and demoralisation.

It remains to be seen, in this case, on what basis universal suffrage is so urgently demanded for them.

The claims of the organisers raise another question, which I have often put to them, and to which, so far as I know, they have never given an answer.

If the natural tendencies of mankind are so bad that it is not safe to permit people to be free, how is it that the tendencies of the organisers are good? Are not the legislators and their appointed agents part of the human race? Do they think they are made of a different clay from the

rest of mankind? They say that society, left to itself, runs fatally into the abyss because its instincts are perverse. They claim to stop it in its downward course and to give it a better direction. They have therefore received from heaven an intelligence and virtues which place them outside and above humanity; let them show their titles. They want to be shepherds, and we are to be their flock. This arrangement presupposes in them a natural superiority, of which we have every right to ask for prior proof.

Note that what I dispute with them is not the right to invent social combinations, to promote, to recommend, to experiment with them on themselves, at their own expense and risk; but rather the right to impose them upon us through the intermediary of the Law, that is, by force and taxes.

I do not demand that the Cabetists, the Fourierists, the Proudhonians, the Academics, and the Protectionists abandon their own particular ideas, but that they renounce to that pretence, which is common to all of them, of forcibly subjecting us to their associations and categories, to their social working, to their inflationist banking, to their Greco-Roman morality, to their commercial fetters. What I ask of them is that we be allowed to judge their plans and not to be obliged to join them, directly or indirectly, if we find them offensive to our interests, or repugnant to our conscience.

To pretend to have recourse to power and taxation, apart from being oppressive and despoiling, also implies this prejudicial assumption: the infallibility of the organiser and the incompetence of mankind.

And if mankind is incompetent to judge for itself, why do they talk so much about universal suffrage?

This contradiction in ideas has unfortunately been reproduced in actual reality, and while the French people have been ahead of all others in the conquest of their rights, or rather of their political guarantees, they have nevertheless remained the most governed, directed, administered, imposed, hindered, and exploited of all peoples.

It is also the one of all where revolutions are most likely to happen, and it is perfectly natural that it should be so.

As soon as we start from this idea, admitted by all our publicists and so energetically expressed by Mr. L. Blanc in these words: "Society

receives its impulse from power"; as soon as men consider themselves as capable of feeling yet passive, incapable of rising by their own discernment and by their own energy to any morality, to any well-being, and reduced to expecting everything from the Law; in a word, when they admit that their relations with the State are those of the herd with the shepherd, it is clear that the responsibility of the power is immense. Goods and evils, virtues and vices, equality and inequality, opulence and misery, all proceed from it. Power oversees everything, undertakes everything, does everything; therefore it is responsible for everything. If we are happy, it rightly claims our gratitude; but if we are miserable, it alone must bear the blame. Does he not, in principle, dispose of our persons and our goods? Is the Law not omnipotent? In creating the educational monopoly, it has made a point of responding to the hopes of fathers deprived of liberty; and if these expectations are disappointed, whose fault is it? By regulating industry, it has made a point of making it prosper, otherwise it would have been absurd to deprive it of its liberty; and if it suffers, whose fault is it? By interfering with the balance of trade, by means of tariffs, it made his mission to make commerce flourish; and if, far from flourishing, it is dying, whose fault is it? By granting maritime shipping his protection in exchange for its freedom, it made his task to make it lucrative; and if it is burdensome, whose fault is it?

Thus, there is no pain in the nation for which the government has not voluntarily made itself responsible. Is it any wonder that every suffering threatens to cause a revolution?

And what is the remedy proposed? It is to extend indefinitely the domain of the Law, that is, the responsibility of the government.

But if the government takes upon itself the task of raising and regulating wages and cannot do so; if it undertakes to assist all those who are in want and cannot do so; if it undertakes to provide all workers with pensions and cannot do so; if it undertakes to provide all workers with instruments of labour and cannot do so; if it undertakes to offer easy credit to all who wish to borrow and cannot do so; if, in the words which we have seen with regret escape the pen of Mr. de Lamartine [4], "the State gives itself the mission of enlightening, developing, enlarging, fortifying, spiritualising, and sanctifying the souls of the people,"

and it fails in this, can we not see that at the end of every disappointment, alas!, there is, more than likely, a no less inevitable revolution?

I shall now resume my thesis by remarking that, immediately after the economic science, and before introducing in this matter the political science, the following dominant question presents itself:

What is the Law? What must it be? What is its domain? What are its limits? Where do the powers of the legislator end??

I have no hesitation in answering: Law is the common force organized to prevent Injustice - and to put it briefly, LAW IS JUSTICE.

It is not true that the legislator has absolute power over our persons and our property, since they pre-exist, and his work is to surround them with guarantees.

It is not true that it is the mission of the Law to rule our consciences, our ideas, our wills, our education, our feelings, our work, our exchanges, our gifts, our enjoyments.

Its mission is to prevent the right of one from usurping the right of another in any of these matters.

The Law, because it has force for its necessary sanction, can only have as its legitimate domain the legitimate domain of force, namely: Justice.

And as each individual has the right to use force only in self-defence, collective force, which is only the union of individual forces, cannot be rationally applied to any other end.

The Law is therefore only the organisation of the pre-existing individual right of self-defence.

Law is Justice.

So, far from being able to oppress the individuals, or to plunder their property, even for a philanthropic end, its mission is to protect the people

And let it not be said that it can at least be philanthropic, provided that it refrains from all oppression, from all spoliation; this is contradictory.

The law cannot avoid acting upon our persons and property; if it does not guarantee them, then it violates them whenever it touches them.

Law is Justice.

This fact is clear, simple, perfectly defined and delimited, accessible to every intelligence, visible to every eye, for Justice is a given quantity, immutable, unalterable, which admits of no more and no less.

Go beyond this, make the Law religious, fraternal, egalitarian, philanthropic, industrial, literary, artistic, and you are immediately in the infinite, in the uncertain, in the unknown, in the imposed utopia, or, what is worse, in the multitude of utopias fighting to seize the Law and impose themselves; for fraternity, philanthropy, do not have fixed limits like justice. Where will you stop? Where will the Law stop?

One, like Mr. de Saint-Cricq [5], will extend his philanthropy only to a few classes of industrialists, and he will ask the Law *to slight the consumers in favour of the producers*. Another, like Mr. Considerant, will take up the cause of the workers and will demand for them, by means of the law, *a guaranteed minimum of clothing, housing, food, and all things necessary for the maintenance of life*. A third, Mr. L. Blanc, will say, with reason, that this is only an incomplete fraternity and that the Law must give to all the instruments of work and instruction. A fourth will point out that such an arrangement still leaves room for inequality and that the Law must bring luxury, literature and the arts to the most remote hamlets. You will thus be led to communism, or rather legislation will be... what it already is: the battlefield of all dreams and greed.

Law is Justice.

Within this approach, a simple, unshakeable government is conceived. And I defy anyone to tell me where the thought of a revolution, an insurrection, a simple riot against a public force confined to repressing injustice could come from. Under such a system, there would be more well-being, and this well-being would be more equally distributed, and as to the sufferings that are inseparable from humanity, no one would think of accusing the government of them, which would be as foreign to them as it is to the variations of the temperature.

Have we ever seen the people revolt against the court of appeals or burst into the court of the justice of the peace to demand minimum wages, free credit, instruments of labour, a favourable tariff, or the social workshop? They know well that these matters are beyond the power of the judge, and they would likewise learn that they are beyond the power of the Law.

However, make the Law based on the principle of fraternity, proclaim that it is from the Law that goods and evils flow, that the Law is responsible for all individual pain, for all social inequality, and you open the door to an endless series of complaints, hatreds, troubles, and revolutions.

Law is Justice.

And it would be very strange if it could properly be anything else!

Is justice not right? Are rights not equal? How then should the Law intervene to subject me to the social plans of Messrs. Mimerel, de Melun, Thiers, Louis Blanc, rather than to subject these gentlemen to my plans? Do you think that I have not received enough imagination from nature to invent a utopia? Is it the role of the Law to make a choice between so many chimeras and to put the public force at the service of one of them?

Law is Justice.

And let it not be said, as it is constantly done, that the Law, atheistic, individualistic and heartless, would make mankind in its own image.

This is an absurd deduction, worthy of the governmental infatuation which sees humanity in the Law.

What then? Does it follow that the moment we are free, we cease to act? Does it follow that if we do not receive the impulse of the Law, we are devoid of impulse? Does it follow that if the Law is limited to guaranteeing us the free exercise of our faculties, our faculties will be paralyzed? If the Law does not impose upon us forms of religion, modes of association, methods of education, patterns of work, directions of exchange, plans of charity, does it follow that we shall plunge headlong into atheism, isolation, ignorance, misery and selfishness? Does it follow that we shall be no longer capable to recognise the power and goodness of God, to associate, to help each other, to love and aid our unfortunate brothers, to study the secrets of nature, to aspire to the perfection of our being?

Law is Justice.

And it is under the Law of Justice, under the reign of right, under the influence of liberty, security, stability, responsibility, that every human being will attain to his full worth, to the full dignity of his



being, and that mankind will accomplish with order, with calm, slowly no doubt, but with certainty, the progress which is its destiny.

It seems to me that I have the theory on my side; for whatever question I submit to reasoning, whether it be religious, philosophical, political, or economic; whether it be a question of welfare, morality, equality, right, justice, progress, responsibility, solidarity, property, labour, exchange, capital, wages, taxes, population, credit, or government; at whatever point of the scientific horizon I place the point of departure of my researches, I always invariably arrive at this: the solution of the social problem is in Liberty.

And have I not also the experience on my side? Cast your eyes over the globe.

Which are the happiest, the most moral, the most peaceful peoples? Those where the law interferes the least in personal activity; where the government makes itself felt least; where individuality has the most scope and public opinion the most influence; where the administrative machinery is the least extended and the least complicated; the taxes the least burdensome and the least unequal; the popular discontents the least excited and the least justifiable; where the responsibility of individuals and classes is the most active, and where, consequently, if morals are not perfect, they incessantly tend to correct themselves; where transactions, conventions, and associations are the least hindered; where labour, capital, and population undergo the least artificial displacements; where mankind follows its own inclination the most; where the thought of God prevails the most over the inventions of men; those, in a word, which come closest to this solution: within the limits of law, everything by the free and perfectible spontaneity of the human being; nothing by Law or force except universal Justice.

It must be said: there are too many great men in the world; there are too many legislators, organisers, institutors of societies, leaders of peoples, fathers of nations, and so on. There are too many people who place themselves above mankind to rule it, too many people who make it their business to look after it.

People will say to me: "You yourself are occupied upon it all this time." That is true. But it must be admitted that it is in a very different sense and from a very different point of view, and if I mix with the

reformers, it is solely for the purpose of inducing them to relax their hold.

I deal with it not like Vaucanson [6] with his automaton, but like a physiologist with the human organism: to study and admire it.

I do it in the same spirit as a famous traveller.

He found himself in the midst of a savage tribe. A child had just been born and a crowd of soothsayers, magicians, and quacks were around it, armed with rings, hooks, and bandages. One said: this child will never smell the scent of a calumet unless I stretch his nostrils. Another said: "He will be deprived of his sense of hearing unless I make his ears reach down to his shoulders. A third: he will not see the light of the sun if I do not give his eyes an oblique direction. A fourth: he will never stand upright unless I bend his legs. A fifth: he will not think unless I compress his brain.

Back - said the traveller - God does well what he does; do not pretend to know more than he does, and since he has given organs to this frail creature, let his organs develop, strengthen themselves by exercise, trial and error, experience and Freedom.

God has also put into mankind all that is necessary for it to fulfil its destinies. There is a providential social physiology as there is a providential human physiology. The social organs are also constituted in such a way as to develop harmoniously in the open air of Freedom. Away, then, with the quacks and the organisers! Away with their rings, their chains, their hooks, their pincers! Away with their artificial means! Away with their social laboratories, their phalanstery, their governmentism, their centralisation, their tariffs, their universities, their state religions, their inflationary or monopolizing banks, their cutbacks, their restrictions, their moralisation, or their equalisation by taxation! And now, after having vainly inflicted upon the social body so many systems, let us end where we should have begun, let us push back the systems, let us finally put Freedom to the test, - Freedom, which is an act of faith in God and in His work.

## Notes

[1] Victor Prosper Considerant (1808 – 1893) was a French utopian socialist philosopher and economist. He was a disciple of Charles Fourier.

[2] Louis Blanc (1811 – 1882) was a French journalist and historian, member of the provisional government of 1848 and deputy under the Third Republic.

[3] Adolphe Thiers (1797 – 1877) was a French statesman and historian. He was the second elected President of France and first President of the French Third Republic.

[4] Alphonse de Lamartine (1790 – 1869) was a French poet, novelist, playwright, historian, and political figure. He is one of the great exponents of Romanticism in France.

[5] Pierre de Saint-Cricq (1772 – 1854) was a French customs administrator and politician. He was a deputy (from 1815 – 1820 and 1824 – 1833), and Minister of Commerce and Manufacturing (1828 – 1829).

[6] Jacques de Vaucanson (1709 – 1782) was a French inventor and artist. He invented several automatons including the Vaucanson flute player and the Vaucanson duck.

**AUBERON HERBERT**  
ON VOLUNTARYISM (1885)

Auberon Herbert (1838-1906) was a strong advocate of the moral philosophy known as Voluntaryism, based on the principles of non-aggression and free choice.

In the following excerpt, the author presents the main tenets of the philosophy and practice of Voluntaryism. The essence of the idea is that "... each man asks no more for himself than to go to his own way, while he in turn concedes the same perfect liberty to his neighbour ...." Only when the voluntary state takes the place of the authoritarian state, "men can befriend each other, or work for the public good; for under the compulsory state all such services are tainted by the compulsion of those who compel, and the submission of those who submit."

Source: Auberon Herbert, *The Right and Wrong of Compulsion by the State*, 1885.



## **The Aim of the Voluntaryist**

What is the work of the voluntaryist? It is to destroy the love of power; to destroy alike in himself and in his fellow-men the desire to force opinions or interests — whatever they may be — upon others; to be content to be a self-ruler, not a ruler of others; to strengthen belief in the moral weapons of reason, discussion and example; to bear patiently many evils rather than to weaken at any point the principle of self-ownership and self-direction; and to live in the faith that there is no evil which cannot be overcome by courage and resolution, no moral failure that cannot be remedied, except the one evil, the one moral failure, of abandoning self-ownership and self-direction. To abandon self-ownership is to become corrupt and servile in spirit, and for the servile and corrupt there are no great things possible. You cannot carve in rotten wood; you cannot lead to greatness those who have renounced the essence of their own manhood or womanhood.

Let the voluntaryist boldly preach the doctrine of self-ownership everywhere. Let him seek to persuade the socialist that he has no right to offer comfort and advantage at the price of the sacrifice of personal liberty; that it is quite vain to try to destroy one kind of bondage by building up another in its place; let him persuade the capitalist that all wealth, founded on any kind of state favour or privilege and opposed to free trade, is wealth taken by force from others, and rests on wrong and unjust foundations; let him persuade the members of all churches that it is a travesty and a mockery of their own creed — rightly and simply understood — to attack any kind of moral evil with state punishments; that all such persecutions are in direct conflict with the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, and that Christians, above all men, are bound to fight with the weapons of reason, discussion and persuasion; let him seek to persuade all men, whether rich or poor, employers or employed, men of this country or other countries, that the organization of any kind of material force against each other is a barren and pitiful waste of life — that a victory gained over unwilling bodies and minds is a defeat, and not a victory, that in peace, friendly cooperation, unrestricted experiment, constant difference, almost unlimited toleration as regards the actions of others, free trade in every

direction, the increased mobility, life experience and self-protection of the individual, the removal of all compulsory burdens and services, the abandonment of the evil power of mortgaging the faculties of future generations by the present generation, the abandonment of great political inducements for men to struggle with each other, which inducements to war must exist so long as each man desires the possession of power for himself and dreads to see it in the hands of his neighbor, and lastly in the perfect security of person and property, so that the conditions of successful effort may be recognized as constant and persisting—that in these things are the true watchwords of progress, to which it is our duty under every temptation to be faithful. Let us sum up what voluntaryism is—in a few words:

Voluntaryism is the reconciler of differences.

It is the system of liberty, peace, and friendliness.

Under voluntaryism the state employs force only to repel force — to protect the person and the property of the individual against force and fraud; under voluntaryism the state would defend the rights of liberty, never aggress upon them.

It takes part with no sect; it belongs to no faction.

It persecutes nobody, and, except in the defense of self-ownership, restricts nobody, regulates nobody.

It refuses to force the opinions or interests of any one part of the people upon another part.

It refuses to fight for any moral view with the immoral weapons of force.

It compels no services, confiscates no property, takes no compulsory payments.

It refuses to be the instrument of any part in any country that places the power of the state above the rights of the individual.

It is opposed to all privileges, monopolies, and restrictions, and seeks to leave men free to shape their own lives in a free world.

It protests against all forms of salvation by force.

It believes that vast sums are annually wasted in constructing the great force machines of the state and in governing by force; it believes that if human faculties were universally set free, if men were emancipated from the burdens of taxation and official interference, and if they

once deliberately resolved not to struggle for power over each other, a new world of peace, friendliness, and prosperity would take the place of the world as it is today, defaced by jealousies and strife and hatred, and saddened by much unnecessary suffering.

### **Principles of the Voluntary State**

1. To recognize all points and under all circumstances the self-ownership of men and women, and their full right to direct their faculties and employ their own property (within the one limit of nonaggression by force or fraud upon others) as they choose.

2. To recognize that the state should compel no services and exact no payments by force, but should depend entirely upon voluntary services and voluntary payments.

a. That it should be free to conduct many useful undertakings, in connection with education, sanitary matters, poor relief, insurance, post office business, trade, inspection of buildings, machinery, etc., and many other matters, but that it should do so in competition with all voluntary agencies, without employment of force, in dependence on voluntary payments, and acting with the consent of those concerned, simply as their friend and their adviser;

b. That it should use force only to restrain the force of the murderer, of the thief and of violent persons, and certain coarse forms of fraud — thus guaranteeing the self-ownership of the individual by protecting him in person and property;

c. That it should take no property of any kind from any citizen by force; nor regulate any part of his life; nor interfere with any exercise of faculties by force (within the nonaggressive limit); nor seek to obtain any moral purpose by force.

3. To get rid of all public debt, central or local, by selling and mortgaging public property and by organizing a great system of voluntary contribution — certain days in the year being specially observed as holidays for the raising of voluntary revenue, local and central.

4. To extend the voluntary defenses of the country and to place them on a much broader basis and more permanent foundation than that on which they now stand; to depend in war as in peace solely on

voluntary contributions; and to renounce absolutely the flagrant wrong of compelling those who are opposed to war to give any support to it.

5. Without abandoning in panic any duty toward those connected with us or depending upon us in other countries, to press forward the peaceful and friendly settlement of all unsettled external questions; to narrow responsibilities; to resolutely give up an aggressive and grasping policy; and to seek to establish international friendly agreements as regards all questions in dispute.

6. By thus removing all burdens, all restrictions and interferences with personal activities, by cutting down officialism, by getting rid of the mischievous interference of the politician with private property, and his constant bribing of the people, only too often for the sake of his own advancement, by destroying the reckless rivalry of political parties for place and power, and by steadily creating free trade in everything, to allow the free development not only of the almost infinite capacities and intellectual resources possessed by every intelligent nation, but also of the friendliness and natural desire of all classes to work together for common ends. By these methods to give to the world an example of the happiness and prosperity that can be won by all nations alike, where the natural right of every person to direct his own faculties and to deal with his own property according to his own desires, and not at the dictation of others, is universally respected, and all undertakings and all services are founded upon persuasion of each other, not upon force.



## VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE

### ANARCHISM (1901)

In this essay Voltairine de Cleyre presents her universalistic vision of Anarchism, that she sums up in a powerful statement: "Anarchism means freedom to the soul as to the body, - in every aspiration, every growth."

The original contribution to the anarchist conception emerging from this text consists in her acceptance of each and every type of anarchist ideas and practices (Anarchist Individualism, Anarchist Mutualism, Anarchist Communism and Anarchist Socialism) provided that it was, in every case, the freely selected option of their advocates. In this respect there are strong points of contacts between Voltairine de Cleyre's anarchy and Paul-Émile de Puydt's panarchy. Both accept the joint presence of different views and different ways of organizing society on condition that each of them is voluntarily chosen and implemented by its supporters and not imposed on everybody (in many cases with the absurd pretext that this is done for people's own good). And this wholeheartedly acceptance of differences is what freedom (i.e., anarchy), rationally intended and consistently practiced, is mainly about.

Source: *Free Society*, October 13, 1901



There are two spirits abroad in the world, - the spirit of Caution, the spirit of Dare, the spirit of Quiescence, the spirit of Unrest; the spirit of Immobility, the spirit of Change; the spirit of Hold-fast-to-that-which-you-have, the spirit of Let-go-and-fly-to-that-which-you-have-not; the spirit of the slow and steady builder, careful of its labors, loath to part with any of its achievements, wishful to keep, and unable to discriminate between what is worth keeping and what is better cast aside, and the spirit of the inspirational destroyer, fertile in creative fancies, volatile, careless in its luxuriance of effort, inclined to cast away the good together with the bad.

Society is a quivering balance, eternally struck afresh, between these two. Those who look upon Man, as most Anarchists do, as a link in the chain of evolution, see in these two social tendencies the sum of the tendencies of individual men, which in common with the tendencies of all organic life are the result of the action and counter-action of inheritance and adaptation. Inheritance, continually tending to repeat what has been, long, long after it is outgrown; adaptation continually tending to break down forms. The same tendencies under other names are observed in the inorganic world as well, and anyone who is possessed by the modern scientific mania for Monism can easily follow out the line to the vanishing point of human knowledge.

There has been, in fact, a strong inclination to do this among a portion of the more educated Anarchists, who having been working men first and Anarchists by reason of their instinctive hatred to the boss, later became students and, swept away by their undigested science, immediately conceived that it was necessary to fit their Anarchism to the revelations of the microscope, else the theory might as well be given up. I remember with considerable amusement a heated discussion some five or six years since, wherein doctors and embryo doctors sought for a justification of Anarchism in the development of the amoeba, while a fledgling engineer searched for it in mathematical quantities.

Myself at one time asserted very stoutly that no one could be an

Anarchist and believe in God at the same time. Others assert as stoutly that one cannot accept the spiritualist philosophy and be an Anarchist.

At present I hold with C. L. James [1], the most learned of American Anarchists, that one's metaphysical system has very little to do with the matter. The chain of reasoning which once appeared so conclusive to me, namely, that Anarchism being a denial of authority over the individual could not co-exist with a belief in a Supreme Ruler of the universe, is contradicted in the case of Leo Tolstoy, who comes to the conclusion that none has a right to rule another just because of his belief in God, just because he believes that all are equal children of one father, and therefore none has a right to rule the other. I speak of him because he is a familiar and notable personage, but there have frequently been instances where the same idea has been worked out by a whole sect of believers, especially in the earlier (and persecuted) stages of their development.

It no longer seems necessary to me, therefore, that one should base his Anarchism on any particular world conception; it is a theory of the relations due to man and comes as an offered solution to the societary problems arising from the existence of these two tendencies of which I have spoken. No matter where those tendencies come from, all alike recognize them as existent; and however interesting the speculation, however fascinating to lose oneself back, back in the molecular storm-whirl wherein the figure of man is seen merely as a denser, fiercer group, a livelier storm centre, moving among others, impinging upon others, but nowhere separate, nowhere exempt from the same necessity that acts upon all other centers of force, - it is by no means necessary in order to reason oneself into Anarchism.

Sufficient are a good observant eye and a reasonably reflecting brain, for anyone, lettered or unlettered, to recognize the desirability of Anarchistic aims. This is not to say that increased knowledge will not confirm and expand one's application of this fundamental concept; (the beauty of truth is that at every new discovery of fact we find how much wide and deeper it is than we at first thought it). But it means that first of all Anarchism is concerned with present conditions, and with the very plain and common people; and is by no means a complex or difficult proposition.

Anarchism, alone, apart from any proposed economic reform, is just the latest reply out of many the past has given, to that daring, breakaway, volatile, changeful spirit which is never content. The society of which we are part puts certain oppressions upon us, - oppressions which have arisen out of the very changes accomplished by this same spirit, combined with the hard and fast lines of old habits acquired and fixed before the changes were thought of. Machinery, which as our Socialistic comrades continually emphasize, has wrought a revolution in Industry, is the creation of the Dare Spirit; it has fought its way against ancient customs, privilege, and cowardice at every step, as the history of any invention would show if traced backward through all its transformations. And what is the result of it? That a system of working, altogether appropriate to hand production and capable of generating no great oppressions while industry remained in that state, has been stretched, strained to fit production in mass, till we are reaching the bursting point; once more the spirit of Dare must assert itself - claim new freedoms, since the old ones are rendered null and void by the present methods of production.

To speak in detail: in the old days of Master and Man - not so old but what many of the older workmen can recall the conditions, the workshop was a fairly easy-going place where employer and employed worked together, knew no class feelings, chummed it out of hours, as a rule were not obliged to rush, and when they were, relied upon the principle of common interest and friendship (not upon a slave-owner's power) for over-time assistance. The proportional profit on each man's labor may even have been in general higher, but the total amount possible to be undertaken by one employer was relatively so small that no tremendous aggregations of wealth could arise. To be an employer gave no man power over another's incomings and outgoings, neither upon his speech while at work, nor to force him beyond endurance when bust, nor to subject him to fines and tributes of undesired things, such as ice-water, dirty spittoons, cups of undrinkable tea and the like; nor to the unmentionable indecencies of the large factory. The individuality of the workman was a plainly recognized quantity: his life was his own; he could not be locked in and driven to death, like a street-car horse, for

the good of the general public and the paramount importance of Society.

With the application of steam-power and the development of Machinery, came these large groupings of workers, this subdivision of work, which has made of the employer a man apart, having interests hostile to those of his employees, living in another circle altogether, knowing nothing of them but as so many units of power, to be reckoned with as he does his machines, for the most part despising them, at his very best regarding them as dependents whom he is bound in some respects to care for, as a humane man cares for an old horse he cannot use. Such is his relation to his employees; while to the general public he becomes simply an immense cuttle-fish with tentacles reaching everywhere, - each tiny profit-sucking mouth producing no great effect, but in aggregate drawing up such a body of wealth as makes any declaration of equality or freedom between him and the worker a thing to laugh at.

The time is come therefore when the spirit of Dare calls loud through every factory and work-shop for a change in the relations of master and man. There must be some arrangement possible which will preserve the benefits of the new production and at the same time restore the individual dignity of the worker, - give back the bold independence of the old master of his trade, together with such added freedoms as may properly accrue to him as his special advantage from society's material developments.

This is the particular message of Anarchism to the worker. It is not an economic system; it does not come to you with detailed plans of how you, the workers, are to conduct industry; nor systematized methods of exchange; nor careful paper organizations of "the administration of things." It simply calls upon the spirit of individuality to rise up from its abasement, and hold itself paramount in no matter what economic reorganization shall come about. Be men first of all, not held in slavery by the things you make; let your gospel be, "Things for men, not men for things."

Socialism, economically considered, is a positive proposition for such reorganization. It is an attempt, in the main, to grasp at those great new material gains which have been the special creation of the

last forty or fifty years. It has not so much in view the reclamation and further assertion of the personality of the worker as it has a just distribution of products.

Now it is perfectly apparent that Anarchy, having to do almost entirely with the relations of men in their thoughts and feelings, and not with the positive organization of production and distribution, an Anarchist needs to supplement his Anarchism by some economic propositions, which may enable him to put in practical shape to himself and others this possibility of independent manhood. That will be his test in choosing any such proposition, - the measure in which individuality is secured. It is not enough for him that a comfortable ease, a pleasant and well-ordered *routine*, shall be secured; free play for the spirit of change - that is his first demand.

Every Anarchist has this in common with every other Anarchist, that the economic system must be subservient to this end; no system recommends itself to him by the mere beauty and smoothness of its working; jealous of the encroachments of the machine, he looks with fierce suspicion upon an arithmetic with men for units, a society running in slots and grooves, with the precision so beautiful to one in whom the love of order is first, but which only makes him sniff - "Pfaugh! it smells of machine oil."

There are, accordingly, several economic schools among Anarchists; there are Anarchist Individualists, Anarchist Mutualists, Anarchist Communists and Anarchist Socialists. In times past these several schools have bitterly denounced each other and mutually refused to recognize each other as Anarchists at all. The more narrow-minded on both sides still do so; true, they do not consider it narrow-mindedness, but simply a firm and solid grasp of the truth, which does not permit of tolerance towards error. This has been the attitude of the bigot in all ages, and Anarchism no more than any other new doctrine has escaped its bigots. Each of these fanatical adherents of either collectivism or individualism believes that no Anarchism is possible without that particular economic system as its guarantee, and is of course thoroughly justified from his own standpoint. With the extension of what Comrade Brown [2] calls the New Spirit, however, this old narrowness is yielding to the broader, kindlier and far more reasonable idea, that

all these economic ideas may be experimented with, and there is nothing un-Anarchistic about any of them until the element of compulsion enters and obliges unwilling persons to remain in a community whose economic arrangements they do not agree to.

(When I say "do not agree to" I do not mean that they have a mere distaste for, or that they think might well be altered for some other preferable arrangement, but with which, nevertheless, they quite easily put up, as two persons each living in the same house and having different tastes in decoration, will submit to some color of window shade or bit of bric-a-brac which he does not like so well, but which nevertheless, he cheerfully puts up with for the satisfaction of being with his friend. I mean serious differences which in their opinion threaten their essential liberties. I make this explanation about trifles, because the objections which are raised to the doctrine that men may live in society freely, almost always degenerate into trivialities, - such as, "what would you do if two ladies wanted the same hat?" etc. We do not advocate the abolition of common sense, and every person of sense is willing to surrender his preferences at times, provided he is not compelled to at all costs.)

Therefore I say that each group of persons acting socially in freedom may choose any of the proposed systems, and be just as thorough-going Anarchists as those who select another. If this standpoint be accepted, we are rid of those outrageous excommunications which belong properly to the Church of Rome, and which serve no purpose but to bring us into deserved contempt with outsiders.

Furthermore, having accepted it from a purely theoretical process of reasoning, I believe one is then in an attitude of mind to perceive certain factors which account for these differences in proposed systems, and which even demand such differences, so long as production is in its present state.

I shall now dwell briefly upon these various propositions, and explain, as I go along, what the material factors are to which I have just alluded. Taking the last first, namely, Anarchist Socialism, - its economic program is the same as that of political Socialism, in its entirety; - I mean before the working of practical politics has frittered the Socialism away into a mere list of governmental ameliorations.

Such Anarchist Socialists hold that the State, the Centralized Government, has been and ever will be the business agent of the property-owning class; that it is an expression of a certain material condition purely, and with the passing of that condition the State must also pass; that Socialism, meaning the complete taking over of all forms of property from the hands of men as the indivisible possession of Man, brings with it as a logical, inevitable result the dissolution of the State. They believe that every individual having an equal claim upon the social production, the incentive to grabbing and holding being gone, crimes (which are in nearly all cases the instinctive answer to some antecedent denial of that claim to one's share) will vanish, and with them the last excuse for the existence of the State. They do not, as a rule, look forward to any such transformation in the material aspect of society, as some of the rest of us do. A Londoner once said to me that he believed London would keep on growing, the flux and reflux of nations keep on pouring through its serpentine streets, its hundred thousand buses keep on jaunting just the same, and all that tremendous traffic which fascinates and horrifies continue rolling like a great flood up and down, up and down, like the sea-sweep, - after the realization of Anarchism, as it does now. That Londoner's name was John Turner [3]; he said, on the same occasion, that he believed thoroughly in the economics of Socialism.

Now this branch of the Anarchist party came out of the old Socialist party, and originally represented the revolutionary wing of that party, as opposed to those who took up the notion of using politics. And I believe the material reason which accounts for their acceptance of that particular economic scheme is this (of course it applies to all European Socialists) that the social development of Europe is a thing of long-continued history; that almost from time immemorial there has been a recognized class struggle; that no workman living, nor yet his father, nor his grandfather, nor his great-grandfather has seen the land of Europe pass in vast blocks from an unclaimed public inheritance into the hands of an ordinary individual like himself, without a title or any distinguishing mark above himself, as we in America have seen. The land and the land-holder have been to him always unapproachable



quantities, - a recognized source of oppression, class, and class-possession.

Again, the industrial development in town and city - coming as a means of escape from feudal oppression, but again bringing with it its own oppressions, also with a long history of warfare behind it, has served to bind the sense of class fealty upon the common people of the manufacturing towns; so that blind, stupid, and Church-ridden as they no doubt are, there is a vague, dull, but very certainly existing feeling that they must look for help in association together, and regard with suspicion or indifference any proposition which proposes to help them by helping their employers. Moreover, Socialism has been an ever recurring dream through the long story of revolt in Europe; Anarchists, like others, are born into it. It is not until they pass over seas, and come in contact with other conditions, breathe the atmosphere of other thoughts, that they are able to see other possibilities as well.

If I may venture, at this point, a criticism of this position of the Anarchist Socialist, I would say that the great flaw in this conception of the State is in supposing it to be of simple origin; the State is not merely the tool of the governing classes; it has its root far down in the religious development of human nature; and will not fall apart merely through the abolition of classes and property. There is other work to be done. As to the economic program, I shall criticise that, together with all the other propositions, when I sum up.

Anarchist Communism is a modification, rather an evolution, of Anarchist Socialism. Most Anarchist Communists, I believe, do look forward to great changes in the distribution of people upon the earth's surface through the realization of Anarchism. Most of them agree that the opening up of the land together with the free use of tools would lead to a breaking up of these vast communities called cities, and the formation of smaller groups or communes which shall be held together by a free recognition of common interests only.

While Socialism looks forward to a further extension of the modern triumph of Commerce - which is that it has brought the products of the entire earth to your door-step - free Communism looks upon such a fever of exportation and importation as an unhealthy development, and expects rather a more self-reliant development of home resources,

doing away with the mass of supervision required for the systematic conduct of such world exchange. It appeals to the plain sense of the workers, by proposing that they who now consider themselves helpless dependents upon the boss's ability to give them a job, shall constitute themselves independent producing groups, take the materials, do the work (they do that now), deposit the products in the warehouses, taking what they want for themselves, and letting others take the balance. To do this no government, no employer, no money system is necessary. There is only necessary a decent regard for one's own and one's fellow-worker's self-hood. It is not likely, indeed it is devoutly to be hoped, that no such large aggregations of men as now assemble daily in mills and factories, will ever come together by mutual desire. (A factory is a hot-bed for all that is vicious in human nature, and largely because of its crowding only.)

The notion that men cannot work together unless they have a driving-master to take a percentage of their product, is contrary both to good sense and observed fact. As a rule bosses simply make confusion worse confounded when they attempt to mix in a workman's snarls, as every mechanic has had practical demonstration of; and as to social effort, why men worked in common while they were monkeys yet; if you don't believe it, go and watch the monkeys. They don't surrender their individual freedom, either.

In short, the real workmen will make their own regulations, decide when and where and how things shall be done. It is not necessary that the projector of an Anarchist Communist society shall say in what manner separate industries shall be conducted, nor do they presume to. He simply conjures the spirit of Dare and Do in the plainest workmen - says to them: "It is you who know how to mine, how to dig, how to cut; you will know how to organize your work without a dictator; we cannot tell you, but we have full faith that you will find the way yourselves. You will never be free men until you acquire that same self-faith."

As to the problem of the exact exchange of equivalents which so frets the reformers of other schools, to him it does not exist. So there is enough, who cares? The sources of wealth remain indivisible forever; who cares if one has a little more or less, so all have enough? Who

cares if something goes to waste? Let it waste. The rotted apple fertilizes the ground as well as if it had comforted the animal economy first. And, indeed, you who worry so much about system and order and adjustment of production to consumption, you waste more human energy in making your account than the precious calculation is worth. Hence money with all its retinue of complications and trickeries is abolished.

Small, independent, self-resourceful, freely cooperating communes - this is the economic ideal which is accepted by most of the Anarchists of the Old World to-day.

[...]

I pass to the extreme Individualists, - those who hold to the tradition of political economy, and are firm in the idea that the system of employer and employed, buying and selling, banking, and all the other essential institutions of Commercialism, centering upon private property, are in themselves good, and are rendered vicious merely by the interference of the State. Their chief economic propositions are: land to be held by individuals or companies for such time and in such allotments as they use only; redistribution to take place as often as the members of the community shall agree; what constitutes use to be decided by each community, presumably in town meeting assembled; disputed cases to be settled by a so-called free jury to be chosen by lot out of the entire group; members not coinciding in the decisions of the group to betake themselves to outlying lands not occupied, without let or hindrance from any one.

Money to represent all staple commodities, to be issued by whomsoever pleases; naturally, it would come to individuals depositing their securities with banks and accepting bank notes in return; such bank notes representing the labor expended in production and being issued in sufficient quantity, (there being no limit upon any one's starting in the business, whenever interest began to rise, more banks would be organized, and thus the rate per cent would be constantly checked by competition), exchange would take place freely, commodities would circulate, business of all kinds would be stimulated, and, the govern-

ment privilege being taken away from inventions, industries would spring up at every turn, bosses would be hunting men rather than men bosses, wages would rise to the full measure of the individual production, and forever remain there. Property, real property, would at last exist, which it does not at the present day, because no man gets what he makes.

The charm in this program is that it proposes no sweeping changes in our daily routine; it does not bewilder us as more revolutionary propositions do. Its remedies are self-acting ones; they do not depend upon conscious efforts of individuals to establish justice and build harmony; competition in freedom is the great automatic valve which opens or closes as demands increase or diminish, and all that is necessary is to let well enough alone and not attempt to assist it.

It is sure that nine Americans in ten who have never heard of any of these programs before, will listen with far more interest and approval to this than to the others. The material reason which explains this attitude of mind is very evident. In this country, outside of the Negro question, we have never had the historic division of classes; we are just making that history now; we have never felt the need of the associative spirit of workman with workman, because in our society it has been the individual that did things; the workman of to-day was the employer to-morrow; vast opportunities lying open to him in the undeveloped territory, he shouldered his tools and struck out single-handed for himself. Even now, fiercer and fiercer though the struggle is growing, tighter and tighter though the workman is getting cornered, the line of division between class and class is constantly being broken, and the first motto of the American is "the Lord helps him who helps himself." Consequently this economic program, whose key-note is "let alone", appeals strongly to the traditional sympathies and life habits of a people who have themselves seen an almost unbounded patrimony swept up, as a gambler sweeps his stakes, by men who played with them at school or worked with them in one shop a year or ten years before.

This particular branch of the Anarchist party does not accept the Communist position that Government arises from Property; on the contrary, they hold Government responsible for the denial of real prop-

erty (viz.: to the producer the exclusive possession of what he has produced). They lay more stress upon its metaphysical origin in the authority-creating Fear in human nature. Their attack is directed centrally upon the idea of Authority; thus the material wrongs seem to flow from the spiritual error (if I may venture the word without fear of misconstruction), which is precisely the reverse of the Socialistic view.

Truth lies not "between the two," but in a synthesis of the two opinions.

Anarchist Mutualism is a modification of the program of Individualism, laying more emphasis upon organization, co-operation and free federation of the workers. To these the trade union is the nucleus of the free cooperative group, which will obviate the necessity of an employer, issue time-checks to its members, take charge of the finished product, exchange with different trade groups for their mutual advantage through the central federation, enable its members to utilize their credit, and likewise insure them against loss. The mutualist position on the land question is identical with that of the Individualists, as well as their understanding of the State.

The material factor which accounts for such differences as there are between Individualists and Mutualists, is, I think, the fact that the first originated in the brains of those who, whether workmen or business men, lived by so-called independent exertion. Josiah Warren [4], though a poor man, lived in an Individualist way and made his free-life social experiment in small country settlements, far removed from the great organized industries. Tucker [5] also, though a city man, has never had personal association with such industries. They had never known directly the oppressions of the large factory, nor mingled with workers' associations. The Mutualists had, consequently, their leaning towards a greater Communism. Dyer D. Lum [6] spent the greater part of his life in building up workmen's unions, himself being a hand worker, a book-binder by trade.

I have now presented the rough skeleton of four different economic schemes entertained by Anarchists. Remember that the point of agreement in all is: no compulsion. Those who favor one method have no intention of forcing it upon those who favor another, so long as equal tolerance is exercised toward themselves.

Remember, also, that none of these schemes is proposed for its own sake, but because through it, its projectors believe, liberty may be best secured. Every Anarchist, as an Anarchist, would be perfectly willing to surrender his own scheme directly, if he saw that another worked better.

For myself, I believe that all these and many more could be advantageously tried in different localities; I would see the instincts and habits of the people express themselves in a free choice in every community; and I am sure that distinct environments would call out distinct adaptations.

Personally, while I recognize that liberty would be greatly extended under any of these economies, I frankly confess that none of them satisfies me.

Socialism and Communism both demand a degree of joint effort and administration which would beget more regulation than is wholly consistent with ideal Anarchism; Individualism and Mutualism, resting upon property, involve a development of the private policeman not at all compatible with my notions of freedom.

My ideal would be a condition in which all natural resources would be forever free to all, and the worker individually able to produce for himself sufficient for all his vital needs, if he so chose, so that he needs not govern his working or not working by the times and seasons of his fellows. I think that time may come; but it will only be through the development of the modes of production and the taste of the people. Meanwhile we all cry with one voice for the freedom to try.

Are these all the aims of Anarchism? They are just the beginning. They are an outline of what is demanded for the material producer. If as a worker, you think no further than how to free yourself from the horrible bondage of capitalism, then that is the measure of Anarchism for you. But you yourself put the limit there, if there it is put. Immeasurably deeper, immeasurably higher, dips and soars the soul which has come out of its casement of custom and cowardice, and dared to claim its Self.

[...]

Anarchism means freedom to the soul as to the body, - in every aspiration, every growth.

A few words as to the methods. In times past Anarchists have excluded each other on these grounds also; revolutionists contemptuously said "Quaker" of peace men; "savage Communists" anathematized the Quakers in return.

This too is passing. I say this: all methods are to the individual capacity and decision.

[...]

Ask a method? Do you ask Spring her method? Which is more necessary, the sunshine or the rain? They are contradictory - yes; they destroy each other - yes, but from this destruction the flowers result.

Each choose that method which expresses your selfhood best, and condemn no other man because he expresses his Self otherwise.

## Notes

[1] C. L. James (1846-1911) American anarchist, author of articles, essays, poems in which he defended and diffused the anarchist conception.

[2] George Brown (1858-1915) anarchist shoemaker, lived in Philadelphia and was active in anarchist circles in his city.

[3] John Turner (1865-1934) anarchist-communist, born in England where he edited, with ups and downs, the publication of *Freedom - A Journal of Libertarian Thought, Work and Literature*, until the year of his death.

[4] Josiah Warren (1798-1874) individualist anarchist, among the first to spread the anarchist conception in the USA.

[5] Benjamin Tucker (1854-1939) the greatest exponent, in the USA, of the anarchist conception based on the *laissez-faire*. He was for many years editor of the periodical *Liberty*.

[6] Dyer D. Lum (1839-1893) an anarchist who was particularly active in the American labour movement. He was also a prolific author of writings in which he presented his ideas that constituted a synthesis of various directions present in the anarchist conception (individualism, syndicalism, mutualism, etc.).



**WERNER ACKERMANN ET ALII**  
THE COSMOPOLITAN UNION (1930)

**Note by John Zube**

This is my rough translation of the German original, an advertisement in a German magazine (*Radikaler Geist*), in 1930. This association was suppressed by the Nazis before it could grow to any considerable size. I know of only three former members.

1. *Werner Ackermann*, who signed for it, later managed to escape the Nazis and was among other things a writer in South Africa, still under considerable restrictions there. His earlier correspondence with Ulrich von Beckerath, mainly on minority rights, filled two arch lever files and is presumably lost. Beckerath's part of it was burned in an air raid in 1943.
2. *Ulrich von Beckerath*, 1882-1969, who, I suspect, greatly assisted in this draft. It very much looks like his style for proposing new associations.
3. My father, *Kurt Zube*, 1905 -1991.

With Hitler's rise to power this association was, naturally, dissolved. It had about 60 members. Beckerath reported that even after it had existed for a considerable time, many members were still shocked when they were brought to realize that it implied a competitive juridical court system as well. They had automatically assumed that a

territorial State would always exist to provide them with such services - or disservices. My father, presumably, first learned to know Ulrich von Beckerath in this association and suggested to me, back in 1952, that I pay him a visit. I did, and it greatly changed my life and my ideas for the better. He influenced my thinking much more than my father, any schooling, training, or general reading did. I've never met, heard about, or read about another person who was so full of constructive and rightful ideas in the social sciences. That may have been one of the main reasons why he remained largely unknown.

Source: *Die Cosmopolitische Union*, 1930



Membership in the Cosmopolitan Union is free. Its members support - without any personal obligation - the following basic demands of the Cosmopolitan Union:

I. Everyone has the right to secede from the State (compare: withdrawal from a church).

II. Cosmopolites (people who have voluntarily renounced their state membership) possess the right to migrate, settle, and work everywhere.

III. Persons who have lost their nationality against their will may, by simple option, become either Cosmopolites or members of a State.

IV. The State recognizes as rightful a condition of non-membership and recognizes Cosmopolites as an international minority according to modern international law.

V. The State respects the independence of a protective association for Cosmopolites and recognizes its right to conclude treaties. This protective association may open branches with consular rights.

VI. Cosmopolitan passports and personal documents issued by the protective association to its registered members are to be recognized by all State departments.

VII. In case of war Cosmopolites are to be considered as neutral foreigners. The State has neither in peace nor during times of war a right to infringe freedom and property rights of Cosmopolites. Cosmopolites may not be forced to serve in the armed forces or auxiliary war services of a State, to contribute to war taxes or other expenses connected with a war effort.

VIII. Nobody may be coerced in any form and under any pretence to retain his nationality, not even in wartime.

IX. The State respects the independence of cosmopolitan benevolent and mutual benefit associations like welfare centres, insurance companies, banking institutions, associations for legal protection, archives, educational and training institutions, hospitals, homes for aged people, etc. The State will not force any institutions or services upon Cosmopolites which the Cosmopolites are willing and capable to supply themselves or which they do not desire.

X. The State will investigate further demands resulting from the above fundamental principles of the Cosmopolitan Union. Upon application by their protective association, it will enter into negotiations concerning an extension of the treaties concluded between them. Regulations concerning the detailed application of the above principles, including rules for the period of transition, will be worked out between the State and the Cosmopolitan Union.

## HENRI LÉON FOLLIN

### COSMOMETAPOLIS (1934)

The humanist Henri Léon Follin (1866-1949) was too far ahead of his time and was therefore known and appreciated only by a small circle of people. The text presented here consists of a series of considerations contained in his works. It presents the idea of COSMOMETAPOLIS which has a strong resemblance to Panarchy. Both conceptions are in favour of free personal choice in relation to the social organisation of which each person wants to be a member, beyond the territorial sovereignty imposed on all by nation-states.

Source: Henri Léon Follin, *Paroles d'un Voyant*, 1934



### **Free and voluntary communities**

The evolution of the world must be based on the development and improvement of individual or freely and contractually associative realities, and not on the frameworks in which their birth, origin, habitat, or activities enclose individuals and their groups.

There must be no power of peoples over each other. This political form of power will always lead to conflicts.

The only healthy powers are economic, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic. They have nothing to do with ethnical-political-geographical divisions. Power must be the prerogative of free individuals and groups, recruited from all over the world, to exercise it over themselves for the benefit of all.

No community has a reality other than in the existence of the individuals who are members of it at a given moment. Its characteristics are nothing other than the totality of the characteristics received from the past and the present by each of these individuals, and which he/she alone can transmit to the future.

The individual cosmopolitical rights, which must be recognised and guaranteed to every human being throughout the world, to whatever national, regional, or local community he may belong, can essentially be reduced to six:

1. The right of non-participation, in any form, in competitions or conflicts between political states or their consequences.
2. The right to choose the State or the administrative and juridical States on whose laws he intends to depend for his private relations and to move or settle in any State in accordance with the laws of that State for his social relations.
3. The right to exchange property and services freely with the inhabitants of all other States.
4. The right to value his exchanges and to make agreements by means of a universal or even a particular standard without the intervention of any monetary monopoly.
5. The right to express freely all his thoughts in all matters, except inciting to violence against established institutions.
6. The right to protect the instruction and education of his children from any influence contrary to the five preceding rights.

The cosmopolitical doctrine wants the human being not to be,

from birth, subject to a single authority which will be felt by him in all the manifestations of his existence.

It wants him to be able to free himself from the common law in all matters that do not directly and patently harm others, and to submit only to that part of human public opinion that suits him, or to those associations into which he has freely entered by means of a specific contract of voluntarily limited duration

The cosmopolitical principle, which the human beings will demand to govern the world when they want to open their eyes, is this: neither the place of birth or dwelling, nor the ancestral origin must bind either the life or certain essential liberties of individuals to the wills and decisions of the political rulers, whether they be the rulers of the nation of which they are citizens or which they inhabit, or those of any other nation.

Peace will only truly reign when, as COSMOPOLIS wants, the notion of a minimum of individual-universal rights, not only of the *conscience*, but also of the human interest, is created, spread, and inflated until it sweeps away all resistance, against political and national institutions.

### Civilisation

Humanity has never been civilised. Let us not confuse civilisation with certain industrial, scientific, intellectual, and even moral developments of humanity. There have been many attempts at *civilisation*, always stifled by *militarisation* and *politicisation*. Now, in the 20th century, we are witnessing the most recent and perhaps the most definitive and harmful manifestation of this phenomenon.

Civilisation is and can only be the product of all the free individual initiatives on the face of the earth, and of the universal exchange of services, which is the consequence and manifestation of their freedom.

A civilisation in which the best representatives of intelligence, talent, and virtue, admit that the function of discerning and crowning

their titles to attention is devolved to politicians and state bureaucrats, still has a great deal to learn.

### **Competition**

Let us not confuse the economic formula of *the struggle for the best life* with the political formula of *the struggle for life*. It is a very partial and incomplete life that equates the *relative* selection produced by the various degrees of success in the effort for *betterment* with the *absolute* selection produced by the struggle for *being*.

### **Economic Competition**

The great socialist error, which has poisoned all modern conceptions of Economics, is to believe that competition, *when free and fair*, crushes the weak under its rule.

Competition enables the strong to arrive in greater numbers; but as the strong can only rise in the service of the weak, who are infinitely more numerous, and with their help, they are obliged to let them benefit from the advantages which they themselves derive from competition.

### **Democracy**

Democracy? As an instrument of defence against the parasitism and tyranny of the strong, yes. But on condition not to put in its place the tyranny and parasitism of the weak.

### **Exchanges**

People who want to preserve their own character have no better

way of guaranteeing themselves against foreign infiltration of *individuals* than to open their doors wide to the exchange of *products*.

The natural tendency is to value the service they render higher than the service they receive. Nevertheless, all exchange is profitable. The discussion concerning the basis of the exchange, which sometimes makes it seem like a struggle, is only the necessary preliminary. It is not an act of antagonism; it is the preparation for an act of union and solidarity.

Only Bastiat revealed the nature of Economics in a striking way by defining it: the science of exchange. He alone has revealed the nature of value in a striking way by defining it as the ratio of two services.

It is in the light of these definitions that we will understand how, by multiplying exchanges, and by substituting money with a universal common denominator which balances with maximum stability the evaluation of the services they provide, wealth will be able to increase continuously.

The abolition of customs borders is not a question of "organisation", but a question of individual rights.

The so-called liberal economists were entirely right in thinking that freedom of trade would suffice to pacify the world, which is their excuse for not even fighting against nationalisms and conceiving the cosmopolitical doctrine in germ in the teachings of some of them.

The Freedom of Trade is enough for everything materially, just as the Freedom of Thought and of the expression of Thought is enough intellectually and morally. But the latter will only be obtained, as the former has, more or less, been obtained, by claiming it, not as an *abstract collective value*, but as a *concrete right due to each of us*.

## Economy

The Economy, i.e., the incessant adaptation and readjustment of production to consumption and vice versa, is not an affair of the State, but a matter of free and fair trade.



There is no such thing as a "liberal economy". There is the economy, the fruit of freedom, and the anti-economy, the fruit of constraint.

Since 1914, the world economy has been in a state of decomposition. It will only recover its normal forms, in conformity with the natural laws of evolution and the experimental progress of humanity, by the affirmation, recognition and safeguarding of certain rights, both individual and universal, which must take precedence over any political or legal laws or institutions, national or international, which oppose them or which may oppose them in the future.

Nothing can work properly in society if economic concerns are confused with philanthropic concerns. The best way for all interests to be well defended, those of the workers as well as others, is for each one, ceasing to rely on the anonymous and parasitic State, to practice mutual aid, alone or in association with other co-interested individuals.

## Harmony

Human harmony, like all harmonies, is not a problem of homogenization, but of coexistence in diversity and differentiation.

The two great obstacles to human order and progress are the particularistic spirit and the egalitarian spirit. At the bottom of all social disharmonies, one can be sure to find one or the other.

## Individualism

*Definition: Individualism is the doctrine that considers the individual as the only social means.*

No individual can isolate himself from the species. He is only a moment in the life of the whole of which he is a part, just as he is only a moment in the cells which compose it. But it is, in the eyes of our understanding and our will, the essential moment, both determined and determining.

Trilogy of individualistic principles, essence of social truth:

- Freedom: the simple fact of not being constrained by others.
- Responsibility: the simple fact of not running away from the consequences of one's actions.
- Sincerity: the simple fact of bringing one's thoughts, words, and actions in syntony as much as possible to one another.

The political programme of the individualists is criticised for not being positive, for calling mainly for cancellations. How could it be otherwise? The role of the state, being seen as ensuring a free environment, can only be negative. The positive of politics consists in removing everything that hinders the positive of non-politics.

All prevailing conceptions, whether traditional or reformist, tend to crystallise the individual in the ethnic, political, social, or professional group to which he belongs. Natural order and progress, on the contrary, consist in making him independent of all groups, insofar as he does not himself set or freely accept the limits of his solidarity with them.

The great vice of all collective leadership, whether political, trade unionist, co-operative, soviet, or other, will always be the same: to foster the fear and hatred nurtured by mediocrities towards all individual values, of fanaticisms towards all free spirits, and thus to break the essential springs of all human evolution.

It is possible, as one publicist says, that an individualist society "favours the bold and the rascal" at the expense of the apathetic and the foolish who are incapable of organising their own defence.

But a socialist (or socialomaniac) society favours the lazy and wasteful at the expense of the hard-working and far-sighted, who act for the good of all in pursuit of their own good. Thus an individualistic society is much more *social* than a socialist society.

An English thinker, Auberon Herbert, preached "voluntary taxation". The two words seem to contradict each other.

Yet, can we not admit that in a society whose individuals had freed

themselves from the need for guardianship and had lost the habit of coercion, they would feel socially obliged to participate in the common burdens, just as they feel obliged today to go out decently dressed and to comply with a host of conventions to which the law does not oblige them?

## **World**

Nations have not yet understood their absurdity, when they seek both to enlarge and to close their borders, while free trade would be the annexation of the world and their mutual annexation by each other!

The United States of the World?

Watch out! It would be very convenient to oppress the individuals under a uniform plan. But the Individuals of the World united above the States, in order to defend themselves against the excesses committed by the States, this is something that is, at the same time, quite urgent, effective, and harmless.

## **Militarism**

Militarism and protectionism go hand in hand. When militarism has caused disasters in a country, it is protectionism that creeps in to support it. Protectionism is a swindle of public wealth, just as militarism is a swindle of public life. Like all scams, they need murky water.

## **Nations**

From time immemorial the human beings have disregarded their universal, permanent, and superior interest, which is an interest of cooperation, and have sacrificed it to particular, temporary, and inferior interests, in the form of armed struggle or competition for material

power. This is the only origin of the nation; this was and still is to some degree its only *raison d'être*.

To reshape the borders of nations? What a puerile anachronism! Only one thing matters: to make nations more and more, solely, associations for the administration of certain common interests and less and less governmental apparatuses absorbing human personality and oppressing it for the benefit of its parasites.

Since conflicts between nations arise solely from national claims, it is strange, to say the least, that one should hope to have them fairly settled by Courts of Arbitration, whose members depend on the favour of the national governments, more or less disposed in favour of one or the other litigant. How can the most elementary common sense not show the people that the dangers of national policies can only be averted by individuals who have nothing remotely to do with them, i.e. who have abdicated all national and political feeling and claimed the quality of cosmopolitics?

Even if they are a tiny minority, nationalists will always exert an influence in all countries out of all proportion to their numbers, until the notion that their nationality can, in certain circumstances, take precedence over their humanity, is destroyed amongst them.

Peace, order and prosperity will not reign permanently in the world until men in sufficient numbers, or men with sufficient influence, have repudiated all solidarity with what the governments, parties and press of every country call "national interests.

A nation has no interests. It is only the arbiter of those interests which its nationals, as constituents or traders, *cannot* adjust to each other with the nationals of other nations. In those which they can adjust, it has nothing to do. And in neither case does it have the right to involve the uninterested.

People who, while believing themselves, in good faith, to be

peaceful or at least enemies of war, practice or admit the cult of "national interests" are like sick people or doctors who deplore the symptoms of an infection without ceasing to nourish its source.

### Politics

Politics, which claims to dominate the world, is nevertheless one of its most inferior activities, driven by the most simplistic spirit. Nothing is more typical of it than the democratic egalitarian fetishism in education, which the centralised state naturally uses to strengthen its influence everywhere.

The universal political absurdity consists in expecting more virtue from institutions and laws than the individuals who make and apply them possess.

Peoples, like individuals, live by what unites them and die by what divides them. *But their parasites live by what divides them and die by what unites them.* Hence the obstinacy of politicians, diplomats, propagandists, and the monopolists of finance and industry in setting national *cults* against the *religion* of humanity.

### Society

The whole secret of social wealth and harmony is to develop in each individual, in each environment, the desire to be *different from others*, by abolishing the desire to be *more than others*. It is to dispel what is *particularistic* by respecting what is *particular*.

The social problem is a problem of libertarian and autonomous institutions for individuals capable of initiative and responsibility, and of tutelary institutions for individuals who cannot do without tutelage.

The producers who receive a small or big salary (let's avoid the word "worker") will gain access to the ownership of the instruments of labour and to the direction of economic enterprises all the more quickly if the law avoids giving in to the injunctions of their political

representatives, who aim only to put them under their own self-interested and incompetent tutelage.

### Variety

To the chimerical idea of an ideal and messianic regime universally applicable, someone opposes the vague idea that "the best regime is the one which, at a given time and in a given environment, best suits the conditions of this or that society".

The truth is that the only regime suitable for all times and environments, the only one that can be modelled on the essential conditions of development of all societies, is the one that leaves the door open to all experiments without imposing or stifling any of them.

If our society has become singularly complicated, this very complexity, which it is vain to hope can be mastered and managed by the directing capacity of governments, requires the recognition and application of great principles that are as simple as possible.

The law must be only the means for realising the *diversity of uses* of freedom, within the *unity of the guarantees* of freedom.

### Truth

Humanity rarely accepts a new truth from the start, or the rejuvenation of an old, neglected, or unnoticed truth, because the men who influence it have for the most part adopted, by temperament, by interest, by tradition, by education, contrary conceptions which it is costly for them to abandon, especially if they have contributed by their own effort to acquire them. But sooner or later they have to resign themselves to the fact that this truth has acted on a certain number of brains that are still evolving.

**GEORGE SANTAYANA****MANY NATIONS IN ONE EMPIRE (1934)**

This text appeared in September, 1934, in an ephemeral review called *The New Frontier*. It is interesting to find in this article that George Santayana was in favour of a territorial governance as a way to solve problems of cohabitation amongst different cultural groups. Unfortunately the reality that has dominated social organization, especially during the 20th century, has been characterized by what might be called national apartheid, where every national group has tried to become the exclusive master of a territory and has ruled (by way of control, exploitation, expulsion, or even extermination) on every minority group that happened to live in that territory. This situation must now change unless we are prepared to accept the worst consequences of never-ending wars, with the use of the most terrible weapons at the disposal even of small groups of people.

Source: *The New Frontier*, 1934



A fatal difficulty for the law-giver wishing to establish a perfect society lies in the treacherous character of his material, which is a nondescript

mass of human beings inhabiting a given territory.

Not all these beings can possibly be of one mind; not all can possibly sincerely aspire to the same virtues, or recognise the same hierarchy of excellences. There will not only be sluggishness or error in doing one's part, there will not only be ineradicable vices ; there will also be ineradicable virtues and aspirations contrary to the prevalent public ways. The legislator will therefore be assuming the character of an odious tyrant, in respect to these natural heretics and virtuous rebels; and unless he can thoroughly suppress them or banish them for ever (which is difficult in this crowded world) he will find his work always spoilt and poisoned at its roots, by the existence of that contrary drift in the souls of his people ; while they, the discontented minority, will regard his exemplary discipline as sheer oppression, and themselves as martyrs.

So insidious is this native treachery in human nature that even if a few chosen saints were conveyed to some uninhabited island, and there established a sacred city, in which all heartily rejoiced, yet in the next generation trouble would begin. Some of those children, so strictly nurtured, would be atavistic; they would put their thumbs to their noses at those holy things; and the very need of correcting, or at least insulating, such wickedness would corrupt the original regimen, which had come to fulfill human nature and not to suppress it.

A solution to this difficulty suggests itself at once: Why not divorce moral societies from territorial or tribal units, so that membership in these moral societies, as in a free Church, should be voluntary, adopted only by adults with a full sense of their vocation for that special life, and relinquished, without any physical hindrance, as soon as that vocation fagged, or gave place to some other honest resolution?

The case of free Protestant Churches shows how such voluntary association is possible, and may foster an inner life not without sweetness and depth, and not without notable influence on the community at large. At the same time we see that in becoming free, in abandoning theocratic ambitions, these bodies have become marginal and secondary even for their most zealous members ; for they supply only a nook for quietness and a Sabbath refuge, feeble in thought, null in organisation, animated by little more than traditional or censorious



sentiment to be applied to current opinion and in the conduct of lay life. This yields us, then, a moralising society, but not a moral one: the world is to be served and if possible purified; but it is the world, and not the free conventicle, that remains the home and training ground for the spirit, and the real moral society to which the free Christian belongs.

This illustration suggests the difficulty, but does not exhibit it in its nakedness, because in a Protestant household there may be as strict a discipline and as stifling an incubus of authority as in an ancient Roman family or in a convent school. A Baptist minister will not christen his children until they are grown up and have experienced a personal conversion ; but he will have brought them up in the way they should go, and the shadow of those withering parental disapprovals and precise expectations may remain all their lives long a cause of secret constraint and unhappiness. So that in reality the influence for good or evil exercised by a free Church is due to the absence of freedom within it. That influence is strong only because a definite austere tradition has been imposed by Authority. Had there been simply spiritual liberty and a rational concurrence of adult minds, all that moralising force, would have vanished.

Even Royal Academies and Masonic Lodges, if they are more than convenient clubs, exist to dominate the mind and not to express it. We know beforehand in what direction all those sheep will be shepherded. A liberal regimen requires many such voluntary associations to perform the social functions not assumed by a liberal government. These associations arise and disappear easily ; they fill many an afternoon with meetings. Meetings of Societies having ancestral traditions and substantial backing may keep alive a certain moral and social rigidity; but in general they are entertainments rather than powers. The waters that the conduit of official authority rejected waste themselves in this sand.

Spirit has and can have no other consistency than that of its organ: if the organ is fluid or ephemeral, the thought and feeling that belong to it will drift like a cloud. When, on the contrary, the organ finds a firm lodgement in the body politic, when the free association takes root in society, the government may disregard the thing officially, but the

private body will become in fact a second government, a part of that officious social order which really dominates mankind. If the free organism is harmless, and can cohabit with the legal establishment, the latter need not take alarm, although its importance and authority will be diminished. So with the many colleges privately founded in the United States; so too, everywhere, with sports in the last half century: they have become the chief free and spontaneous interest of the young and have even enlisted a sort of mock patriotism, very like that required for waging wars. If on the contrary, the free organism seems a rival or enemy of the ruling system, like the Catholic Church in France during the Third Republic, the ruling system may feel obliged to forget its principles in order to maintain its existence, and many proceed to stamp out the liberties it professes to favour. Thus, in the face of free organisations, a government must daily become either less and less dominant or less and less liberal.

Another way of making room, in a great nondescript empire, for various definite moral bodies, was accepted long ago in the East and may have a great future. A Cyrus might conquer vast regions; he would upset only their rulers, substituting his own satraps and slender garrisons ; but this domination remained superficial, and little more than tribute levied, and perhaps richly repaid, in view of the protection secured against further invasion or tyranny. The Romans adopted the same system, and afterwards the British in their conquests, as distinct from their settlements.

Under such a Roman Peace, as we call it, a further development is possible. Not only may each nation, within its territory, preserve its language and laws and religion under the imperial insurance, but where different nations have intermingled, as often happens in great cities or in provinces vaguely open to any immigrant, each may preserve all its moral idiosyncrasy, its speech, dress, and domestic life, side by side with the most alien races. Far from mingling, these different nations may abound in hatred and contempt for one another ; and they would undoubtedly come to blows till at last only one should remain in the field. But the imperial forces impose peace; and perhaps some division into quarters or villages, each pure, renders it possible

for the orthodox of every sect to meet in the market place without contamination.

The Jews are a most wonderful instance of a people preserving its moral identity for two thousand years without any territorial possessions. Their fate has been hard, and the sentiment they have aroused in their gentile neighbours has not been kindly. The prejudice against them, however, has been religious rather than political ; and even the difficulty they have encountered in establishing a « National home » in Palestine was due largely to the fact that their Holy City is also a Holy City for Christians and Moslems, with the two latter in possession, and at first alone disposing of military force.

But suppose these circumstances had been different. Nothing would have then prevented the Israelites, scattered all over the world, from maintaining everywhere their religion and language, and preserving in Jerusalem a sanctuary where all the ceremonies of their Law might have been carried out. Round this sacred nucleus of race and religion, a complete body of arts and sciences, manners and domestic laws might then have grown up ; and this without army or navy or police or local jurisdiction. It would have sufficed that the common law, in whatever other countries they lived, should have allowed them possession, as private property, of enough land for their synagogues and dwelling houses; and especially licence to educate their children in their own schools, in their own language, up to the highest studies which they should wish to pursue. And I do not think a truly imperial authority, preserving a Roman Peace all the world over, would have any reason for denying any nation these moral liberties.

**KARL HESS****ANARCHY WITHOUT HYPHENS (1980)**

Karl Hess (1923-1994) was an American writer and libertarian activist. He joined the Libertarian Party and was the editor of its newspaper from 1986 to 1990. This short text first appeared in the magazine "The Dandelion" in 1980. It stresses the position already highlighted by a theoretician of the anarchist movement, J. A. Maryson that anarchy means freedom and voluntary self-organization and no one in the anarchist movement should be interested in prescribing which of the various "isms" (capitalism, communism, mutualism, collectivism, syndicalism, individualism, etc.) every anarchist should follow. This message is very relevant now that the interest for anarchy is growing and that some people, who profess to be anarchists, are battling in order to promote very vigorously (and in some cases trying to impose) their own brand of anarchism, either anarcho-communism or anarcho-capitalism. To all of them the message from Karl Hess is: neither anarchist-communist nor anarchist-capitalist, because "there is no hyphen after the anarchist."

Source: *The Dandelion*, 1980



There is only one kind of anarchist. Not two. Just one. An anarchist, the only kind, as defined by the long tradition and literature of the position itself, is a person in opposition to authority imposed through the hierarchical power of the state. The only expansion of this that seems to me to be reasonable is to say that an anarchist stands in opposition to any imposed authority.

An anarchist is a voluntarist.

Now, beyond that, anarchists also are people and, as such, contain the billion-faceted varieties of human reference. Some are anarchists who march, voluntarily, to the Cross of Christ. Some are anarchists who flock, voluntarily, to the communities of beloved, inspirational father figures. Some are anarchists who seek to establish the syndics of voluntary industrial production. Some are anarchists who voluntarily seek to establish the rural production of the kibbutzim. Some are anarchists who, voluntarily, seek to disestablish everything including their own association with other people, the hermits. Some are anarchists who deal, voluntarily, only in gold, will never co-operate, and swirl their capes. Some are anarchists who, voluntarily, worship the sun and its energy, build domes, eat only vegetables, and play the dulcimer. Some are anarchists who worship the power of algorithms, play strange games, and infiltrate strange temples. Some are anarchists who only see the stars. Some are anarchists who only see the mud.

They spring from a single seed, no matter the flowering of their ideas. The seed is liberty. And that is all it is. It is not a socialist seed. It is not a capitalist seed. It is not a mystical seed. It is not a determinist seed. It is simply a statement. We *can* be free. After that it's all choice and chance.

Anarchism, liberty, does not tell you a thing about how free people will behave or what arrangements they will make. It simply says that people have the capacity *to* make arrangements.

Anarchism is not normative. It does not say how to be free. It says only that freedom, liberty, can exist.

Recently, in a libertarian journal, I read the statement that libertarianism is an ideological movement. It may well be. In a concept of freedom, it, they, you, or we, anyone has the liberty to engage in any ideology, in anything that does not coerce others, denying their liberty.

But anarchism is not an ideological movement. It is an ideological statement. It says that all people have the capacity for liberty. It says that all anarchists want liberty. And then it is silent. After the pause of that silence, anarchists then mount the stages of their own communities and history and proclaim their, not anarchism's ideologies - they say how they, how they as anarchists, will make arrangements, describe events, celebrate life and work.

Anarchism is the hammer-idea, smashing the chains. Liberty is what results and, in liberty, everything else is up to the people and *their* ideologies. It is not up to THE ideology. Anarchism says, in effect, there is no such upper case, dominating ideology.

It says that people who live in liberty make their own histories and their own deals with and within it.

A person who describes a world in which everyone must or should behave in a single way, marching to a single drummer, is simply not an anarchist. A person who says that they prefer this way, even wishing all would prefer that way, but who then says all must decide, may certainly be an anarchist. Probably is. Liberty is liberty. Anarchism is anarchism. Neither is Swiss cheese or anything else. They are not property. They are not copyrighted. They are old, available ideas, part of human culture. They may be hyphenated but they are not in fact hyphenated. They exist on their own. People add hyphens, and supplemental ideologies.

I am an anarchist. I need to know that, and you should know it. After that, I am a writer and a welder who lives in a certain place, by certain lights, and with certain people. And that you may know also. But there is no hyphen after the anarchist.

Liberty, finally, is not a box into which people are forced. Liberty is a space in which people may live. It does not tell you how they will live. It says, eternally, only that we can.

**CARL WATNER****FUNDAMENTALS OF VOLUNTARYISM (2006)**

One of the best presentations of the idea of voluntaryism. To be read many times and to be put into practice all the time.

Source: <https://voluntaryist.com/>

**Introduction**

Voluntaryism is the doctrine that relations among people should be by mutual consent, or not at all. It represents a means, an end, and an insight. Voluntaryism does not argue for the specific form that voluntary arrangements will take; only that force be abandoned so that individuals in society may flourish. As it is the means which determine the end, the goal of an all voluntary society must be sought voluntarily. People cannot be coerced into freedom. Hence, the use of the free market, education, persuasion, and non-violent resistance as the primary ways to change people's ideas about the State. The voluntaryist insight, that all tyranny and government are grounded upon popular acceptance, explains why voluntary means are sufficient to attain that end.

### **The Epistemological Argument**

Violence is never a means to knowledge. As Isabel Paterson, explained in her book, *The God of the Machine*, "No edict of law can impart to an individual a faculty denied him by nature. A government order cannot mend a broken leg, but it can command the mutilation of a sound body. It cannot bestow intelligence, but it can forbid the use of intelligence." Or, as Baldy Harper used to put it, "You cannot shoot a truth!" The advocate of any form of invasive violence is in a logically precarious situation. Coercion does not convince, nor is it any kind of argument. William Godwin pointed out that force "is contrary to the nature of the intellect, which cannot but be improved by conviction and persuasion," and "if he who employs coercion against me could mold me to his purposes by argument, no doubt, he would.. He pretends to punish me because his argument is strong; but he really punishes me because he is weak." Violence contains none of the energies that enhance a civilized human society. At best, it is only capable of expanding the material existence of a few individuals, while narrowing the opportunities of most others.

### **The Economic Argument**

People engage in voluntary exchanges because they anticipate improving their lot; the only individuals capable of judging the merits of an exchange are the parties to it. Voluntaryism follows naturally if no one does anything to stop it. The interplay of natural property and exchanges results in a free market price system, which conveys the necessary information needed to make intelligent economic decisions. Interventionism and collectivism make economic calculation impossible because they disrupt the free market price system. Even the smallest government intervention leads to problems which justify the call for more and more intervention. Also, "controlled" economies leave no room for new inventions, new ways of doing things, or for the "unforeseeable and unpredictable." Free market competition is a learning process which brings about results which no one can know in advance. There is no way to tell how much harm has been done and will continue to be done by political restrictions.



### **The Moral Argument**

The voluntary principle assures us that while we may have the possibility of choosing the worst, we also have the possibility of choosing the best. It provides us the opportunity to make things better, though it doesn't guarantee results. While it dictates that we do not force our idea of "better" on someone else, it protects us from having someone else's idea of "better" imposed on us by force. The use of coercion to compel virtue eliminates its possibility, for to be moral, an act must be uncoerced. If a person is compelled to act in a certain way (or threatened with government sanctions), there is nothing virtuous about his or her behavior. Freedom of choice is a necessary ingredient for the achievement of virtue. Whenever there is a chance for the good life, the risk of a bad one must also be accepted.

### **The Natural Law Argument**

Common sense and reason tell us that nothing can be right by legislative enactment if it is not already right by nature. Epictetus, the Stoic, urged men to defy tyrants in such a way as to cast doubt on the necessity of government itself. "If the government directed them to do something that their reason opposed, they were to defy the government. If it told them to do what their reason would have told them to do anyway, they did not need a government." Just as we do not require a State to dictate what is right or wrong in growing food, manufacturing textiles, or in steel-making, we do not need a government to dictate standards and procedures in any field of endeavor. "In spite of the legislature, the snow will fall when the sun is in Capricorn, and the flowers will bloom when it is in Cancer."

### **The Means-End Argument**

Although certain services and goods are necessary to our survival, it is not essential that they be provided by the government. Voluntaryists oppose the State because it uses coercive means. The means are the seeds which bud into flower and come into fruition. It is impossible to plant the seed of coercion and then reap the flower of voluntaryism. The coercionist always proposes to compel people to do some-thing,

usually by passing laws or electing politicians to office. These laws and officials depend upon physical violence to enforce their wills. Voluntary means, such as non-violent resistance, for example, violate no one's rights. They only serve to nullify laws and politicians by ignoring them. Voluntaryism does not require of people that they violently overthrow their government, or use the electoral process to change it; merely that they shall cease to support their government, whereupon it will fall of its own dead weight. If one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself.

### **The Consistency Argument**

It is a commonplace observation that the means one uses must be consistent with the goal one seeks. It is impossible to "wage a war for peace" or "fight politics by becoming political." Freedom and private property are total, indivisible concepts that are compromised wherever and whenever the State exists. Since all things are related to one another in our complicated social world, if one man's freedom or private property may be violated (regardless of the justification), then every man's freedom and property are insecure. The superior man can only be sure of his freedom if the inferior man is secure in his rights. We often forget that we can secure our liberty only by preserving it for the most despicable and obnoxious among us, lest we set precedents that can reach us.

### **The Integrity, Self-Control, and Corruption Argument**

It is a fact of human nature that the only person who can think with your brain is you. Neither can a person be compelled to do anything against his or her will, for each person is ultimately responsible for his or her own actions. Governments try to terrorize individuals into submitting to tyranny by grabbing their bodies as hostages and trying to destroy their spirits. This strategy is not successful against the person who harbors the Stoic attitude toward life, and who refuses to allow pain to disturb the equanimity of his or her mind, and the exercise of reason. A government might destroy one's body or property, but it cannot injure one's philosophy of life. Furthermore, the voluntaryist rejects the use of political power because it can only be exercised by

implicitly endorsing or using violence to accomplish one's ends. The power to do good to others is also the power to do them harm. Power to compel people, to control other people's lives, is what political power is all about. It violates all the basic principles of voluntarism: might does not make right; the end never justifies the means; nor may one person coercively interfere in the life of another. Even the smallest amount of political power is dangerous. First, it reduces the capacity of at least some people to lead their own lives in their own way. Second, and more important from the voluntarist point of view, is what it does to the person wielding the power: it corrupts that person's character.

**YVES PLASSERAUD****CHOOSE YOUR OWN NATIONALITY OR THE  
LONG-FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF CULTURAL  
AUTONOMY (2000)**

The idea of personal autonomy was developed especially during the decades before the First World War in the regions of Central Europe, some of them part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many of the thinkers and writers came from Austria and so it would not be inappropriate to group them under the label of the *Austrian School of non-territorial federalism*. These very original ideas, aimed at introducing rights of cultural autonomy and extraterritoriality, were completely erased and obliterated following the nationalistic frenzy of the World Wars and the imposition/acceptation everywhere of the monopoly of territorial sovereignty of the central state, one and indivisible.

This essay by Yves Plasseraud represents a very interesting contribution to the discovery of those forgotten conceptions and provides useful indications for carrying on the exploration of a theme extremely relevant for the solution of current conflicts everywhere in the world.

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Source: Yves Plasseraud, *Choisir sa propre nationalité ou L'histoire oubliée de l'autonomie culturelle*, Le Monde Diplomatique, Mai 2000



*The Balkans, Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, the Caucasus, Africa, Indonesia, etc.: the conflicts that characterise the current period are increasingly concerned with the question of minorities and their rights. In the absence of a satisfactory response, they often lead to a demand for secession. Is there no other solution than this proliferation of states, which leads to instability and therefore to a chain of confrontations? Personal autonomy is undoubtedly a model with great potential for the future. The history of Europe offers many examples of this, which are worth reflecting on.*

## **Introduction**

THE INTERMINGLING of different peoples has always existed, but it has become particularly numerous at the end of the 20th century and in the beginning of the 21st century, because of the millions of refugees, displaced persons and migrant workers scattered around the world. There are countless ethnic and cultural entanglements. Under these conditions, even where there is a genuine political will to find a solution, it is becoming increasingly unrealistic to claim to ensure even a minimum of cultural rights for all. In particular, how can we provide access to education in their own idiom to individuals scattered among different ethnic groups?

A few years ago, we saw the difficulties of such an undertaking in Bosnia, where all the projects - even the so-called "cantonisation" projects, i.e., the creation of separate cantons - came up against the impossibility of fitting in with the dispersal of the people concerned. Ideas have been circulating for a long time, and it is not without interest to examine some of them here. As a matter of fact, the concept of a personal status for each individual, irrespective of his or her possible movements, is very old.

After the great invasions of the fifth century, in central Europe [1], the Germanic customary laws of the new arrivals coexisted for several centuries with Roman law. When the various groups eventually became sedentary, a unified private law emerged. The idea of the

personality of the laws was perpetuated for a long time in the form of a system of self-administration by certain populations, with strong specific characteristics. In 1486, the Saxons of Transylvania (in present-day Romania) obtained from the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus a system of autonomy for their "nation". The Transylvanian constitution being based on the union of the three nations: *unio trium nationorum* [2].

In Europe in the late Middle Ages, rulers sometimes granted guarantees to Jews, which could be revoked without notice, as the interests of the moment dictated. The status of Polish Jews in the early days of Ashkenazi immigration illustrates such a policy. Upon arrival in the Vistula Kingdom (Poland at that time), Jews were granted several benefits that were deemed to correspond to those they enjoyed in their country of origin. The terms of the statute granted on his lands in 1264 by Duke Boleslav of Kalisz, on the model of the Edict of Magdeburg [3], are emblematic in this respect. They were to serve as a model for several later statutes.

Because of its religion and "ethnic origin", the Jewish community was recognised as a special social body organised in communes (in Hebrew *kehilot*) with internal autonomy. Any attack on a Jewish person or property, considered as property of the prince (*servi camerae*), was considered as an attack on the sovereign's patrimony.

In 1334, King Casimir III (Casimir the Great) extended this regime to the whole kingdom. In 1388, Vytautas of Lithuania [4] followed the same example. This technique of attracting immigrants was not without ulterior motives, as exploitation of the "protégés" was commonplace. The ultimate refinement of the "sponge method" was to officially attract persecuted Jews elsewhere with widely publicised benefits and guarantees. When the community in question had prospered and become solvent, it was expelled, thus dispossessing it of its property and interests. Afterwards, the Jews were offered to return by buying back the property and benefits they had been stripped of...

Another response to the issue of religious minorities was the Ottoman system of *millets* (a community of people of a religion other than Islam). In a Muslim world where religion and civil society were one and the same, the authorities in Constantinople, under constant pressure from the Western powers, had to find an acceptable regime

for non-Muslim Ottoman subjects who belonged to the 'People of the Book'. Since, according to Koranic law, Muslims had a personal status that could not be altered by any displacement, it was only natural that a similar status be granted to the protégés of Islam, the *dhimmis*. This status, according to the so-called "capitulation" regime, made Christians, especially from the 18th century onwards, the beneficiaries of special legal regimes operating under the aegis of Western states.

Let us return to Central Europe and, in the context of the revolutions of 1848, to the thinking of the man who has been called the 'Hungarian Tocqueville', Jozef Eötvös (1813-1871). Minister of the Hungarian democratic government of 1848 and future architect of the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867. This enlightened baron was a precursor of Western thought concerning the concrete applications of the principle of nationalities. He was one of the first, if not the first, to think of the system of personal autonomy.

In his book *The Question of Nationalities* (1856), which inaugurated the parallel between religion and nationality, he envisaged membership of a nationality (identified by a language) as a purely individual right of a subjective nature. In the context of the time, however, this secularisation of the state did not lead the Hungarian author to propose a constitutional system based on this recognition. It was only later, in Vienna, that these ideas were put into practice in a political context.

### **"Proletarians have no fatherland"**

For Karl Marx and even more so for Friedrich Engels [5], the national question is far behind that of belonging to a class. The nation, a supposedly temporary formation corresponding to a given phase of the development of capitalism, could only be subordinated to the historical interests of the world proletariat: proletarians, as we know, have no fatherland!

Despite this conviction, the founders of Marxism could not help being dragged into the debate on the national question. But their

approach was essentially instrumental. The struggle for national emancipation was seen at best as a contribution to the awakening of mass consciousness. They distinguished between large "nation-states" that were considered "viable" and small "nations without history" (*Geschichtslose Nationen*) that were doomed to disappear, such as the Czechs, the Bretons, or the Balts. They saw advantages only in the existence of large central European states (first and foremost Germany) insofar as the construction of a unified capitalist market constituted, in their eyes, a prerequisite for the emergence of revolutionary conditions.

As the tactical objective was the destruction of the "hotbeds of reaction", and in particular of the Russian and British empires, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were nevertheless sometimes led to support "small" nationalisms in Russia (Poles, Balts), and, towards the end of the 19th century, Engels recognised that the autonomy, or even independence, of national units was often the prerequisite for effective revolutionary action. This view became, at the cost of a certain doctrinal vagueness, that of the Second International, founded in Paris in 1889.

Due to the multi-ethnic structure of the Empire and a certain climate of Danubian intellectual freedom, the Austro-Hungarian socialists were the earliest to study the relationship between social and national issues. Article 19 of the imperial constitution, based on a draft dating from 1849, declared that: "All the peoples in the state are equal in rights, and each people has the inalienable right to cultivate its nationality and idiom" [6]. It was therefore not surprising that the "Austro-Marxists" should develop quite soon a distinctive approach to the national question.

The first social democrat to produce a theoretical work of the national question was the Austrian Karl Kautsky (1854-1938) in 1887. Unlike the "founding fathers", he formulated his thesis mainly on his observations of the British case. He adopted a pragmatic position, halfway between the intransigent internationalists and the supporters of national independence. But the most important figures in this field are Karl Renner and Otto Bauer.

The Moravian jurist Karl Renner (1870-1950) gave a prominent place to the nations, deploring the fact that, unlike the churches, they



had no legal existence of their own within the dual monarchy and had to organise themselves into political parties. Turning his back on the prevailing 'atomistic-centralist' doctrine [7], he proposed dividing the Austrian Empire into several provinces corresponding as closely as possible to ethnic boundaries and in which the dominant national element would have precedence over other groups in matters of language.

*"The internal distribution of nationalities - Karl Renner emphasises - should naturally be carried out according to the density of population: the inhabitants of a local diocese or district would form a national commune, i.e., a corporation under public and private law, with the right to issue decrees and to levy taxes, and endowed with specific funds. A certain number of communes linked by territory and culture would form a national district with the same corporate rights. All the districts would form a nation. It too would be a subject of public and private law"* [8]. Within this *Nationalitätenbundesstaat* (A Federal State composed of Nationalities), the minorities, constituted as 'national associations' of individuals, would enjoy 'personal extraterritorial cultural autonomy' [9].

Ignoring Renner's linguistic determinism, the sociologist Otto Bauer (1880-1938) extended the potential scope of the system to "nations without history" and even to uprooted proletariats. He was particularly concerned with the culture of the "proletarian minorities" created by the internal migration of the working masses, opposing any forced assimilation. However, like Renner, Bauer vigorously dissociates himself from "separatists", particularly Czech and Jewish ones, which in his view convey an anti-assimilationist ideology contrary to the unity of the working class.

Despite its considerable influence, Austro-Marxism always remained a minority trend within the Socialist International. Lenin was resolutely hostile to what he called "parochialism" - although one of his concerns was to reconcile the Russian proletariat with that of the peoples of the empire in the struggle for their liberation [10]. In 1898, at the congress of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (RSD-WP), he opposed those who were to become the Mensheviks [11], who advocated cultural autonomy for minorities and recognised their right to self-determination. At the Russian Social Democratic Congress

(1903), which marked the split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks [12], burying the hopes of the extraterritorialists, Lenin had the principle of the right to territorial self-determination (point 9) adopted as a basic principle of the party [13].

### The Jewish question

Jewish working-class political consciousness developed, until the last decade of the 19th century, as a reaction to the prevailing racism of the surrounding society and to the growing influence of Zionism. The aim was to obtain "normal" social rights for Jewish workers. However, some people were quick to denounce the utopian nature of the assimilationist dream. As early as 1894, Martov (Yuri O. Tserdbaum) was the first to show the pitfalls. For the Jews, he concluded, the social struggle and the fight for national liberation had to go hand in hand, insofar as the nature of the relations of production in the Jewish world of eastern Europe could never give rise to a complete social structure with a real working class [14].

How to create a revolutionary situation? There are two conflicting theses. For the *Territorialists*, the condition is the existence of a national territory, and therefore self-determination and the creation of a Jewish state. For the *Bundists* and other "extraterritorialists", the creation of a Jewish territorial state is entirely unrealistic because the Jews are entrenched in the field of the "nations without history" and that they, as a whole, do not envisage expatriation. Since, for the Jews, nationality is intermingled with language and culture, this is the direction in which they have been moving since 1905 (third congress of the RSDWP): culture will be the a-territorial homeland of the Jews, and Yiddish, the idiom of the masses, the lever of their national struggle.

The Austro-Marxist doctrine of extraterritorial cultural autonomy seemed likely to provide a legal solution. Unfortunately, according to Renner himself, his system is not suitable for diasporas and scattered minorities. Renner's doctrine would have to be modified to suit the people of Yiddishland. The leaders of the Bund and the Jewish Socialist

Workers' Party (Serp) set about this task [15], calling for the foundation of a multinational party and the federalisation of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP) on a national basis. Other organisations, notably the Armenian Social Democratic Workers' Organisation, were operating in the same direction. In the eyes of the Bund leaders, Russia should, like the Austro-Hungarian Empire, become a federation of autonomous peoples, although autonomy should be limited to the multi-ethnic provinces.

The nationalism of the Bundists and other Jewish militants, "territorialists" or not (Poale Zion, Serp), will always make them be regarded with suspicion by the leaders of the International. Their ideas were, on the other hand, rather well received by the rank and file insofar as their claim was in fact based - and this is perhaps the fundamental contribution of the Jewish socialists of Russia to the Austro-Marxist doctrine - on a religious and social culture forged by centuries of autonomy within the *kehilot*. It is precisely these elements, which the Austro-Marxists had not thought of, that should make it possible to apply the principles of personal autonomy to Jewish communities.

It was in 1916 that, integrating the work of the Austro-Marxists with the "Russian" contributions of Simon Dubnov, Vladimir Medem formulated the doctrine of the Bund in a synthetic manner:

"Let us consider the case of a country composed of several nationalities, for example: Poles, Lithuanians and Jews. Each of these nationalities should create a separate movement. All citizens belonging to a given nationality should join a special organisation which would hold cultural assemblies in each region and a general cultural assembly for the whole country. The special assemblies should have special financial powers, with each nationality having the right to levy taxes on its members, or the state distributing a proportional share of its budget to each of its nationalities from its general fund. Each citizen of the country would belong to one of these national groups, but the question of which national movement he or she would belong to would be a matter of personal choice, and no one would have any control over his or her decision. These autonomous movements would operate within the framework of the general laws laid down by the Parliament of the

country; but in their own spheres they would be autonomous, and none of them would have the right to interfere in the affairs of others" [16].

Turning his back on the traditional confusion between state and nation, Medem proposed a national federalism for the regions of mixed settlement based on the autonomy of social institutions. He sees Russia divided into "national associations" bringing together individuals on the basis of free personal choice. Once the dispersed national groups had been self-organised around a "national register", he imagined the constitution of "corporations of public law", legal persons with their proper institutions and competences.

Membership of a national group would thus be recognised as a "subjective public right". The nation itself would become "a legal person under public law". This multinational state - which the French law professor Stéphane Pierré-Caps has called the multination [17] - would retain responsibility, in accordance with the usual principles of federalism, for defence, foreign relations, the economy and finance. The management of national affairs (in practice essentially cultural) would be the responsibility of the 'national corporations'.

For areas of homogenous population, the theorists of personal federalism return to the classical approach of the correspondence between state and national administration (principle of territorial self-determination), with the district council being the sole authority. This mixture of personal and territorial federalism is the originality of the principles we are dealing with here.

From 1925 onwards, several prominent figures, including the German-Baltic Paul Schiemann, became ardent propagandists for cultural autonomy within the *European Congress of Nationalities* (a partner of the *League of Nations*). Great progress was made, but from 1933 onwards, the rise of nationalism ruined all hopes for minority rights [18].

## Brave but fleeting attempts

The critics of personal autonomy are always quick to dismiss it as utopian. However, an unfortunately largely forgotten history argues for a re-examination of these doctrines. In Russia, during the empire and after the triumph of the Bolsheviki, the ideas of personal autonomy were totally obliterated. In Austria, on the other hand, the thinking of the Austro-Marxists found attentive ears, even on the right, among those who were concerned about the survival of the permanent miracle that was Austria-Hungary. Heinrich Lammasch, the last Chancellor of the Empire, saw that the only way for the Empire to survive was to recognise the principle of free association of nationalities.

Some beginnings of implementation took place before the First World War. Thus, in 1905-1906, a system of personal autonomy was partially introduced in Moravia, where a national electoral register was created for the election of two national curias (German and Czech) to share the Brünn (Brno) Diet. As the arrangement proved successful, it was later extended to the school sector.

Cultural autonomy was then experimented with, again successfully, in Bukovina [19] in 1910 between Germans, Jews, Poles, Romanians and Ruthenians [20]. In 1914, it was to be introduced in Galicia (Poland), but its introduction was prevented by the outbreak of war. Nevertheless, it resurfaced at the end of the conflict. On 3 January 1918 the short-lived Ukrainian Central Rada Parliament) - influenced to a considerable extent by Ber Borokhov's leftwing Zionist party, Poale Zion - granted personal autonomy to the Jewish, Polish and Russian peoples. And the following year the Hungarian Soviet Republic, led by Bela Kun, established a commissariat for German affairs. The same ideas can be found in the project presented by the Hungarian delegation to the Peace Conference on 20 February 1920, with a view to reducing the trauma caused by the inevitable partition of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

In the inter-war period, the most interesting events took place in the Baltic States. The first episode concerns Lithuania. In the troubled period of the new Lithuanian state, the pre-existing *kehilot* were able to organise themselves according to the principle of personal autonomy

on the basis of a law of 21 October 1920. Unfortunately, this system was to disappear with the establishment of authoritarian power in Kaunas in 1926 [21].

These same principles were claimed by the great German-Baltic essayist and politician Paul Schiemann in Riga at the beginning of the century. Like the Austro-Marxists, he believed that, if religious tolerance and the separation of church and state had once calmed people's spirits, the separation of state and nation should put an end to nationalism. He proposed a comprehensive administrative system for the German community in Latvia, which was essentially based on the principles described above [22]. Organised as a corporation under public law, it was thus called upon to manage its own cultural matters. Domestic political developments and the international context of the Baltic Republic (USSR, Nazi Germany) did not allow the system to be implemented [23].

The third Baltic Republic, Estonia, is credited with having established and operated a comprehensive and functioning regime of personal cultural autonomy. The law of 12 February 1925 allowed those minorities who wished to do so to join together locally to be represented at the state level by a central cultural council of each nationality - the threshold was set at three thousand members to allow Jews to benefit. An original feature was that, in regions where they were territorially in the minority, the ethnic Estonian population could organise themselves according to this principle. One of the fathers of the Estonian law, Dr. Ewald Ammende, was also the founder of the *European Congress of Nationalities*. This system worked well for Germans and Jews; unfortunately, despite the efforts of another author of the law, Professor Mikhail Anatoliavich Kurchinsky, the Russians never managed to organise themselves in such a way to benefit from it [24].

One may ask why a concept as rich as personal autonomy seems so forgotten by contemporary politicians. The answer is simple: it originated in medieval Europe and after the First World War was suppressed by the omnipresence of Soviet-style 'real socialism'. In the West, the question of national minorities was disposed of by turning attention to individual human rights, and hardly anyone has taken the

trouble to dig around in the untranslated archives of central European societies [25]. Recent events, from the Caucasus to Bosnia, have given new relevance to the doctrines relating to dispersed minorities.

As Aviel Roshwald wrote in his contribution to the book *Cultural Autonomy in Contemporary Europe* about the challenges of territorial autonomy:

*“Extra-territorial cultural autonomy can be seen as a promising alternative that circumvents some of these problems and can arguably be presented as situated at the golden midpoint between Balkanization and banalization. It offers minorities the option of substantive cultural self-determination without linking it to territorial autonomy, with all the centrifugal tendencies the latter may awaken. First proposed as a possible formula for reconciling ethnic diversity with political-territorial unity within the frameworks of pre-1914 Europe’s multinational empires, it may have newfound relevance in the context of a globalization process that appears to be calling into question the feasibility of holding on to the classic nation state’s close identification of territorial with cultural boundaries.”* [26]

## Conclusion

Even if we should not expect miracles from personal autonomy, this concept and practice does not deserve to be put aside and forgotten, as it has been in the past. Together with the right to self-determination, the various forms of territorial federalism and the right to assimilation, it represents one of the components of the panoply of instruments for tackling, on a juridical level, the situations in which minorities find themselves in the contemporary world [27].

## Notes

[1] See Istvan Bibo, *Histoire des petites nations d'Europe centrale*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1993.

[2] The other two nations were the Hungarians and the Szeklers (a large minority in Romania, also known as the Sicules).

[3] The capital city of the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt. In 962 Magdeburg became the seat of an archbishopric devoted to evangelising the Slavs. The edict of 1188 regulated the status of the Jews by granting them several privileges.

[4] On the Polish system of citizenship see Jerzy Kloczowski, "Les traditions de citoyenneté en Pologne et dans la République polono-lituanoruthène", in Chantal Delsol and Michel Maslovski, eds., *Histoire des idées politiques de l'Europe centrale*, PUF, Paris, 1998, p. 229 et seq.

[5] See Georges Haupt, Michael Löwy and Claudie Weill, *Les marxistes et la question nationale, 1848-1914*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1997.

[6] On the nationalities regime in the dual monarchy, see Jean-Paul Bled, "L'Autriche-Hongrie : un modèle de pluralisme national", in André Liebich and André Reszler, eds., *L'Europe centrale et ses minorités : vers une solution européenne*, PUF, Paris, 1993, p. 25 et seq.

[7] As in France, where there is no intermediate level between the individual and the state.

[8] Claudie Weill, *L'Internationale et l'autre ; les relations interethniques dans l'Europe de l'Est*, Arcanthere, Paris, 1987, p. 94.

[9] This idea had already been put forward in 1899 at the Brno congress by the Slovene, Kristan Etbin. Many years later, in 1918, Renner, having become the first chancellor of the Austrian Republic,



instructed the distinguished lawyer, Hans Kelsen, to draw up a constitution based on these principles. The project was never followed up.

[10] See Andreas Kappeler, *La Russie, empire multiethnique*, Institut d'études slaves, Paris, 1994.

[11] In opposition to the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, the Mensheviks advocated revolution in two stages. The social democrats should first hasten the fall of the Tsar and establish a legal socialist infrastructure on the western model, including trade unions and regional associations. The socialist movement would then educate the working class and develop the class consciousness needed to carry out a socialist revolution.

[12] The majority of the Bundists then moved over to the Menshevik side.

[13] On the Austro-Marxists in general, see George Haupt, Michael Löwy, Claudie Weill, *op. cit.*

[14] In place of which a passive, servile *lumpenproletariat* would develop.

[15] Vladimir Medem published his seminal work, *Sotsialdemokratiia i natsional'nyi vopros* (*Social democracy and the national question*) in 1904, before Otto Bauer's famous book, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (*The Question of Nationalities and the Social Democracy*), which came out in 1907.

[16] Henri Minczeles, *Histoire générale du Bund*, Austral, Paris, 1995, pp. 279-280.

[17] Stéphane Pierré-Caps, *La multination. L'avenir des minorités en Europe centrale et orientale*, Odile Jacob, Paris, 1995.

[18] Jozsef Galantai, *Trianon and the protection of minorities*, Corvina, Budapest, 1992, p. 119 et seq.

[19] Western branch of the Ukrainian people. Ruthenia belonged in turn to Hungary, Czechoslovakia (1919), Hungary again (1938) and the Soviet Union (1945).

[20] A region of northern Romania. Austrian in 1910, it was divided between Ukraine, Romania and Austria in the interwar period and now straddles Ukraine and Romania.

[21] See Michael Garleff, "Die kulturelle selbstverwaltung der nationalen Minderheiten in den baltischen Staaten", in Boris Meissner, ed., *Die baltische Nationen, Estland, Lettland, Litauen*, Markus Verlag, Cologne, 1991, p. 87 et seq.

[22] Anders Henriksson, *The Tsar's Loyal Germans. The Riga German Community. Social Changes and the Nationality Question*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1983.

[23] See H. Kause, "Die Balten und ihre Zeitgeschichte: Zu Schiemanns 100. Geburtstag am 29 März 1976", in *Jahrbuch des Baltischen Deutschtums 1976*, Lüneburg, 1975, and the work of John Hiden of the Baltic Research Unit at Bradford University, forthcoming.

[24] David Smith, *Retracing Estonia's Russians: Mikhail Kurchinskii and Interwar Cultural Autonomy*, Nationalities Papers, Vol. 27, No. 3, September 1999, p. 445 et seq.

[25] Except for rare polyglots like Claudie Weill.

[26] Aviel Roshwald, *Between Balkanization and banalization: Dilemma of ethno-cultural diversity*, op. cit. in David, J. Smith & Karl Cordell, eds., *Cultural Autonomy in Contemporary Europe*, Routledge, New York, 2008, p. 37

[27] For an overall view of the matter: Nimmi, E. Osipov, Smith, D., eds., *The challenge of Non-Territorial Autonomy. Theory and Practice*, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2013.

## MORITZ SCHLICK

### THE STATE (1952)

This extract is from a booklet (*Natur und Kultur*) written probably during the 1920s and published in 1952 after Schlick's tragic assassination on the steps of Vienna University.

In this text the author puts forward the proposal of non-territorial states to which people decide to belong on a voluntary basis. In other words, the re-proposition of the idea of Panarchy by one of the most brilliant minds of the 20th century.

Source: Moritz Schlick, *Natur und Kultur*, Part Two, Chapter 3: Der Staat, 1952



Why is the territorial expansion of a nation something valuable to a people? Not in itself, but because the resources of the dominated lands contribute to raise the standard of life, as was the case with the Romans, and as is today with the British Empire.

But it is clear that the political domination of a territory could be, at best, a sufficient condition for the exchange of goods or resources which one people is able to give to another; however it cannot be a

necessary condition for the exchange of values among peoples, or of a country with another. But the same end can be attained through a process of mutual agreement. And, after all, this path goes much further, leading to the understanding of all individuals in all regions and can allow contacts without dominance. The less "artificial" are the borders and the government of the countries, the more exchanges and communications take place, and above all, they are most effective when they occur between individuals and small groups.

The erection of borders between countries makes our present life so hard, it prevents this exchange and each state, on its own, must seek to compensate by artificial commercial agreements for the damage done. The situation is so bad that invisible barriers are often even drawn against intellectual exchange by growing internal opposition against the admission of "foreigners" or even "racially alien" ideas. Things like that are unique to our time. At the time when Schiller wrote, "It is a very poor ideal to write only for one nation," few imagined that the state would one day attempt to limit in space the diffusion of thought. We must be grateful to those countries that do with other so-called "cultural agreements" and establish institutions for the cultivation of intellectual relations between neighbouring peoples. But the fact that such measures are necessary at all, that the stream of ideas does not flow freely and easily across political boundaries, is not a good sign of the times.

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When the simple fact of living on the same territory is made the principle of unity, it is likely that this causes all the evils that lead to conflicts that beset the world, fragmented into many states. For it is primarily territorial questions from which the discord arises. Mineral resources, raw materials, the fertility of the land, the advantages of its geographical position: these are the factors that determine, in a strong way, the relations between peoples, and on which war and peace depend.

Which principles of togetherness exist in addition to the physical space? The most effective in history seem to be the following: common

origin, common activities, and common convictions, especially in the political and religious fields.

It is the racial origin that gives rise to the principle of the racial state; the common practical activity is the principle of the civil state; political beliefs are the principle of the rule of political parties; and the common religious belief leads to large organisations called churches.

The division of mankind into races is accompanied, with a few noteworthy exceptions, by regional isolation. To a lesser degree this is true of the separation according to a creed. The various classes and parties always live completely mixed; associations and political parties generally try not to separate spatially their members. In these last two cases we are dealing also with purely internal principles of separation and togetherness. Here we can examine the effects.

One cannot simply ask: which people should join? The question makes sense only if the purpose of the grouping is made clear. It could in fact be - and it really is - that different groupings are needed for different purposes, so that the boundaries of the groups must overlap. Two people can very well be in an association for the protection of animals while they cannot stand each other in a political association.

Our question was, however: which people should unite to form a state? But what does that mean? What is the purpose that is at stake here? Clearly it depends on the purpose of the state itself. The goal we gave was that of peace and security. According to which principle should the group form itself so that this end will be reached? If it should turn out that other aims require other groupings that contradict those of the state, it would immediately follow that the state cannot take it upon itself to make those other ends its own. They must be left to other organisations, otherwise the state would come into conflict because of the impossibility to pursue, with its means, ends that are entirely irreconcilable with its highest aim: peace. The means and the ends of the state can be defined as political, and distinct from all other means and ends. It follows, and I hold this sentence under all circumstances, that the highest aim of politics is Peace.

What are the principles that should govern the political union of individuals so that the purpose of the state, peace on earth, may be achieved? I have no reason to play hide and seek with the reader or to

make him first receptive, by careful preparations, to the truths I have to say. So now forthwith I declare that none of the principles of association listed here seems suitable to be the basis of the natural state. Race, religion, political conviction, interest, and occupation, none of these is right for being the foundation of great peace, but the only reliable basis is the character of the individuals, their ethical qualities (not "convictions").

People of character, the kind and peaceful, naturally belong to the same group, form the invisible *Civitas Dei*, the Community which is over the states, over the nations, over the confessions and parties. The bonds that are forged between the characters, resulting from sympathy, are stronger than those arising from customs, education, religion, so-called blood and all the others. Will I not a thousand times more willingly do things with a Chinese who I believe reliable and of kindly disposition, than with a European insincere and selfish? What matters if the white man has the same habits of mine, did the same studies, and belongs to the same religion? And what does it matter that the yellow man lives in a completely different way and thinks differently from me and dresses and eats differently? The divide between he and I is much thinner, and I get along with him better than with the one who outwardly has so much more in common with me.

Since every war is immoral, except when it is directed against immorality, one must never fight a political party as such, but what is immoral about it. And if this happens, the struggle of the parties is not a conflict between parties but a struggle of groups that no longer coincide with the parties but are defined quite differently from their political goals. In other words: the moral position would mean the dissolution of political parties. Or it would lead to the formation of new parties which can be distinguished from each other based on their moral stances. This would bring us to the real opposites, which must be reconciled on a higher level.

Our idea of the state is: union for the protection of all the common necessities of life. With this definition, it remains entirely open whether the boundaries of the state, that is the perimeter of the citizens who belong to it, are determined by local cohabitation in a physical space, or whether the separation is made on the basis of another principle. So,

not only countries or groups of countries deserve the name of state, but it could also be given to quite different organisations, provided only that they serve the purpose of common protection. Clearly this does not apply, for example, to the Church; we cannot reduce it to the principle of the state, although of course it is possible that it will develop into a state, assuming those purposes and uniting those principles with its own.

The closest possibility to achieve state-building through a non-spatial principle, seems to be unification according to political convictions. At first glance, this is a very natural process since the political is the state-forming element. As mentioned, the principles related to this are found in the party-based states, but they are only beginnings because, generally, the parties are not states within the state. They lack the traditional means of power that are needed for internal and external protection, which remain prerogatives of the country and its government. If, however, they were able to get the means of power, be it by secret armaments or by persuading some sections of the army or the police, then the tensions will soon be discharged into a revolution or civil war. As scary as such events might be, it should however be noted that they tend to be incomparably less bloody and involve fewer losses of human lives than wars between spatially separated states, that is, between hostile countries. This again speaks for the fact that opposing tendencies, if they already exist, should not be spatially separated from each other, but that the opponents should mix with each other. Then, the inevitable settlement takes place with disasters of a more limited scale. If the opponents and supporters of slavery in the United States had not also been geographically separated into northern and southern states, the civil war could not have assumed dimensions so devastating.

Let us imagine that the division according to political convictions would replace the division into territorial states. Then, there would not be countries in the usual sense but there would be political organisations whose members would have their residences scattered over all the continents and regions of the world. Each of these invisible communities might have its own laws, its own customs, its own administration of justice and government, and also its form of state.



There might be invisible republics and monarchies, but the presidents and princes would not rule over territories but only people who voluntarily belong to their state. And, because the beliefs of an individual may also change, then inherent in this principle is the possibility of switching from one organisation to another at any time.

However, such a situation would clearly be sustainable only if there are also special rules for mutual relations of members of different organisations (I intentionally do not say: between the organisations themselves).

There should therefore be agreement on a certain minimum basis of law or supranational or inter-states right, and, if one wishes, one can say that this would lead precisely to the establishment of a single world state. But the boundaries between a very extended state and many small states bound together by rules, are always fluid. The "world state", when you think of it, would be very light, and would be made up of relatively simple rules that will probably be limited to the aspect of arbitration. To give an example, it could be determined that disputes between two members of different parties would be settled by a court composed of various members of other parties, who would also have to monitor the implementation of decisions through a common police power.

It should not be at all difficult to make such statutes world-wide (or rather to apply them, because it is always easy to set them up). In fact, when one sees the minimum of international rules existing nowadays for the states to coexist quite well in normal times, then one realises that these very general rules tend to function autonomously because the common interest for their existence is great.

They might temporarily hinder or appear bad only to small groups or individuals, but they would have against them the will of the majority that counts, and to which they must submit.

The essential condition is always that the members of the groups live intermingled, because as soon as a spatial separation occurs, new interests and complications arise. The effectiveness of our criminal law is also based on the fact that criminals are people who live separately or in small groups within human society. If they were to come together in tens of thousands to form, for example, their own city, we would no

longer be able to get by with the usual laws and measures. Spatial segregation generally reduces or eliminates the need to be considerate of each other. Interests are isolated and each group can pursue its own interests undisturbed - or at least believes that it can do so, whereas in reality sooner or later there is contact with the others, from which a hostile opposition soon develops.

Conflicts between states, that plague humanity today, are born precisely from the fact that we have territorial states, separated by territorial borders. This is why each state believes it has the right to say: "This is an internal affair, and no one else has the right to interfere with it." If purely internal, spiritual divisions were to take the place of territorial divisions, there would no longer be any "internal" affairs - or, which would amount to the same thing - all affairs would be "internal". Interests would not accept to be isolated; those who think differently would always be close by; what we do will always concern them, all plans would have to be formulated with them in mind from the outset, antagonisms could not escalate into conflicts between people.

The unnatural aspect concerning our states are their borders. Each physical border is artificial because there is never a sensible reason why on one side should be called good what on the other side is called bad. Originally, when there was still a lack of means of transport, peoples were separated by seas and mountain ranges, they could not come together and therefore could not adapt to each other. Then people thought: borders must be there because they even exist in nature, and separator lines were built where there were none. People have learned to overcome mountains and seas, but one thing which seems impossible to break are the borders created by humans.

Currently, it is common to make a platonic complaint about the existence of borders, especially economic ones. But people do not see how deep the source of evil is; it is in the reality of the state itself. And this needs to be changed; only then will borders disappear.

The borders between countries cannot simply be erased through agreements because they are the real and more evident result of human activity. When we pass from Italy to Switzerland, from Germany to France, then we find that this side of the border is really different from the other side. Borders can fall naturally if these differences will disap-

pear, as the dividing line between two colours of a surface no longer exists when the two sides become the same colour.

The ignorant and limited believe that through such mixing the colourful diversity of the earth, which I am praising, would be transformed into monotony. On the contrary, with the mixture of individuals, ever new individual differences arise, and it is these that are important for the progress of culture. A people that wants to grow only by itself renounces an important factor of renewal and overcoming of its own monotony. Through mixing, the individual diversity becomes greater, but the spatial distribution more uniform. A uniform distribution of people in the space with the greatest possible individual differences does not mean monotony, but the maximum of variety.

The question was: according to which principle should people unite in society to be able to protect themselves against external enemies, considering that the individual cannot provide security on his own and will need the combined forces of many? That the space-geography factor must certainly have a role derives already from the concept of the "external" enemy. The "association" must then refer always to the space. So the question is: under what principle should people live together? Would it be good to form a state including all those who, by chance, have established their residence in a geographically defined district (peninsula, space between two mountain ranges, etc.)? Or it would be a good thing that in such a space only those who adhere already to another principle can settle themselves?

When do people belong together by nature? When they are of such a nature that they understand, tolerate, and promote each other. But when does this happen? Perhaps, when they all support the same idea? But if the very idea is that they belong together, then they are caught up in the tragic circle of a senseless nationalism. Are there genuine ideas that really unite? Religions? They, too, have failed the test, for they have not only united the faithful, but have kindled the bloodiest wars against the infidels. Christianity, too, was unable to fulfil the great hope that Dante and Campanella placed in it: it has not united European humanity. Modern attempts to make the people (the "blood") itself the object of religious veneration and to increase national embers through religious fire seem like a declaration of war against any union

of peoples through religion. If such attempts succeeded, national antagonisms would always be religious ones as well; the idea of a supranational religion would be made as ridiculous as that of a humanity that unites people.

To this idea of universal humanity, has it ever been given the chance to express all its power? If we did it, we would not need to seek a further brighter star. In fact, the idea of humanity is, at the same time, the moral idea, and the only true core of all religions. To our question "What individuals are part of a community?" we must respond "the good people". The good will is the only guarantee of a mutual understanding and development. And when *Homines bonae voluntatis* (men of good will) struggle against all the others who do not want peace, this is the only war which carries a justification in itself, the only one for which even the philosopher can carry the flag, the only reasonable and natural war. The good will, alone, can be the principle of association. The state that results from it is the true city of God (*Civitas Dei*) and all other forms of states which are based on different principles are the cities of the Devil (*Civitates Diaboli*).

To desire separation and isolation prevents the development of a state of peacefully coexistence; it prevents the emergence of a morality between the people. Morality is always the product of a life in common. If people lived completely separated from and closed off from one another, there would be no good and evil in action, but only the useful and the harmful in the most crass way; there would not be goodness or justice or respect; no one would be affected by the acting of each solitary person because no one would know anything about it. Whoever wants to have his own law, must physically isolate himself and create barriers. In the case of the states, this is called "autarky". Autarky prevents morality between states. For the development of morality, it is necessary that each individual comes into daily contact with many other individuals. Unceasing intercourse and reciprocal action form the prerequisite for the processes that lead to the formation of conscience and respect for the rules of coexistence.

There is only one true durable foundation of the state, and that is morality. Look no more! If you do not want to govern the world with goodness and justice, then you shouldn't govern it at all, because you

would be the origin of the struggle and discord that would lead to the destruction of your work.

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Does the state protect the individual against external enemies? Does it not happen often enough that it creates new ones? Moreover, is it not true that it becomes the enemy of the individual, by taking a position of power and coercion? And sometimes it becomes so bad that the individual would prefer to be confronted with a larger uncertainty of dangers from the outside rather than endure the tyranny of the state, which constantly pursues him with its threats and thereby robs him of more of his freedom than an external enemy could do. Impairment of freedom, however, is present wherever, what is permitted "before God", is forbidden (many moral things are still best expressed in theological language).

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It is perfectly true that the interests of the individual, the nation and of all humanity ultimately converge. But just as the individual is most happy when he cares for others and does not directly pursue only his own ends, so humanity is not best served when we do everything only for the nation, but we serve the nation in the best way when we keep our eyes fixed on the ends of humanity.

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Suppression of freedom of conscience must ultimately be a danger for any state power. The danger for the state is to appear like a fool, and the more it does so, the less fear it will provoke. The politician who wants to impose on the citizen a particular world view (for this is where the control of the expression of opinions easily degenerates) is indeed a comic figure. Who is he that presume to decide which, among all philosophies, is the only true one?

For no ruler should be able to allow himself the cynicism of

declaring to his subjects: "I'm not sure that the ideology that I demand from you is right, but I expect you all to follow it".

Experience teaches that a state can do quite well for a while if no citizen is allowed to express an opinion that differs from that of the government - but it is still a colossus with feet of clay, because a state that deliberately does without the intelligence of its citizens renounces a vital vitamin.

If the moral decisions of the individual are usually presented under the beautiful image that his "conscience" stands against his selfishness and overcomes it, then groups of people - parties and states - also need a conscience if a supra-individual morality is to develop. The representatives of groups and peoples who meet in national and international parliaments should be the conscience of their clients, and not the expression of their egoism. So far, they almost always represent only the latter, especially in international negotiations. They are mandated to defend the "interests" of their constituents or of their state, but they should be mandated to look after the interests of humanity, regardless of whether this will lead, or not, to some sacrifice for their own people. But a diplomat or a representative of the people would be considered an incompetent idealist if he decided, for once, to speak and vote for a higher interest than that of his own people. In the end, however, he would not harm the people at all, because, eventually, they could only benefit from the harmony that would arise from these higher principles.

Certainly it is difficult to look to the good of all and only to that when somebody has been brought up in a certain circle or in a country where he is confronted with the principle of not opposing people's ideas and of serving their particular good.

There should therefore be an international school for diplomats which would not be under the direction of a single state and in which the pupils would have to study the views and wishes of all peoples, equally, in an objective manner. Every country should be required to send the best young minds; there they would be removed, for years, from any partisan influence; for example, they should be sent to a beautiful island far away; and only those who finished this school would later be appointed diplomatic representatives of their country,

and their capacity would be expressly recognised by the International Forum of the school. Of course, it would not only be a question of knowledge, but also of character, of love for humanity and incorruptibility of judgement. I would even advocate that not only the diplomats who represent a nation to the outside world should attend this school, but also the rulers who are at the head of their own peoples. For I believe that only those who have come to know and understand the needs of all peoples can lead and protect them well.

You cannot expect to receive generally such an “hearty” understanding from the history that is taught in schools and universities. Historians succumb so terribly to the domain of prejudice. Someone who is used to breathing in an atmosphere of pure mathematics and natural sciences must be shaken by such an impression when he casts a glance at the works of most historians who deal with the issues of their day, or of their people. Great figures like Ranke and Gibbon are rare. Many are almost more politicians than historians. Just look at a man like Treitschke!

For this reason there should also be International Universities where History, Literature and especially Law should be taught with true objectivity. Thank God, medicine, natural sciences, and mathematics are already inherently objective and do not require protective measures.

**WILLIAM ROSS ASHBY**  
CYBERNETICS AND REQUISITE VARIETY (1956)

These are passages from Ross Ashby masterful book *An Introduction to Cybernetics* (1956).

The main purpose of this extract is to stimulate the reading of the full text (or of other relevant books on cybernetics) and to familiarize everybody with the *Law of Requisite Variety*.

This is a central law for the proper functioning of every mechanical and biological entity. It has been totally ignored by the social scientists and their patrons, the state elite, because it constitutes a refutation of the pretended absolute necessity of concentrating power in a central apparatus (the state) as the only way to solve problems (or, in general, to deal with reality) in a complex society.

In fact, the law expresses the exactly opposite view, declaring, with the support of logical reasoning and empirical evidence, that only variety can master variety, reducing disturbances and promoting harmonious order.

Regulation is then possible only if the regulating system is as various and flexible (responsive to changes) as the system to be regulated.

This principle then disposes of the myth (still cherished by journalists and sociologists in search of easy popularity) that extraordinarily



complex situations demand the concentration of extraordinary powers in a central entity.

Once we get rid of that myth we are ready to explore all the rich implications of the *Law of Requisite Variety* and we, as individuals, can advance greatly towards finding real and appropriate solutions for the (supposedly) intractable problems of contemporary life.

Source: William Ross Ashby, *An Introduction to Cybernetics*, 1956



## Cybernetics

1/1. Cybernetics was defined by Wiener as "the science of control and communication, in the animal and the machine" - in a word, as the art of *steermanship*. Co-ordination, regulation and control will be its themes, for these are of the greatest biological and practical interests.

1/2. Cybernetics deals with all forms of behaviour in so far as they are regular, or determinate, or reproducible.

1/3. Cybernetics stands to the real machine - electronic, mechanical, neural, or economic - much as geometry stands to a real object in our terrestrial space.

1/6. There are two peculiar scientific virtues of cybernetics, that are worth explicit mention.

One is that it offers a single vocabulary and a single set of concepts suitable for representing the most diverse types of systems. Until recently, any attempt to relate the many facts known about, say, servo-mechanisms to what was known about the cerebellum was made unnecessarily difficult by the fact that the properties of servo-mechanisms were described in words redolent of the automatic pilot, or the radio set, or the hydraulic brake, while those of the cerebellum were described in words redolent of the dissecting room and the bedside - aspects that are irrelevant to the *similarities* between a servo-mechanism and a cerebellar reflex. Cybernetics offers one set of concepts that, by having exact correspondences with each branch of science, can thereby bring them into exact relation with one other.

It has been found repeatedly in science that the discovery that two branches are related leads to each branch helping in the development of the other. The result is often a markedly accelerated growth of both. The infinitesimal calculus and astronomy, the virus and the protein molecule, the chromosomes and heredity are examples that come to mind. Neither, of course, can give proofs about the laws of the other, but each can give suggestions that may be of the greatest assistance and fruitfulness. Here I need only mention the fact that cybernetics is likely to reveal a great number of interesting and suggestive parallelisms between machine and brain and society. And it can provide the common language by which discoveries in one branch can readily be made use of in the others.

1/7. The complex system. The second peculiar virtue of cybernetics is that it offers a method for the scientific treatment of the system in which complexity is outstanding and too important to be ignored. Such systems are, as we well know, only too common in the biological world!

In the simpler systems, the methods of cybernetics sometimes show no obvious advantage over those that have long been known. It is chiefly when the systems become complex that the new methods reveal their power.

Science stands today on something of a divide. For two centuries it has been exploring systems that are either intrinsically simple or that are capable of being analysed into simple components. The fact that such a dogma as "vary the factors one at a time" could be accepted for a century, shows that scientists were largely concerned in investigating such systems as *allowed* this method; for this method is often fundamentally impossible in the complex systems. Not until Sir Ronald Fisher's work in the '20s, with experiments conducted on agricultural soils, did it become clearly recognised that there are complex systems that just do not allow the varying of only one factor at a time - they are so dynamic and interconnected that the alteration of one factor immediately acts as cause to evoke alterations in others, perhaps in a great many others. Until recently, science tended to evade the study of such systems, focusing its attention on those that were simple and, especially, reducible. In the study of some systems, however, the complexity could not be wholly evaded. The cerebral cortex of the free-

living organism, the ant-hill as a functioning society, and the human economic system were outstanding both in their practical importance and in their intractability by the older methods. So today we see psychoses untreated, societies declining, and economic systems faltering, the scientist being able to do little more than to appreciate the full complexity of the subject he is studying. But science today is also taking the first steps towards studying "complexity" as a subject in its own right.

Prominent among the methods for dealing with complexity is cybernetics. It rejects the vaguely intuitive ideas that we pick up from handling such simple machines as the alarm clock and the bicycle, and sets to work to build up a rigorous discipline of the subject. For a time it seems rather to deal with truisms and platitudes, but this is merely because the foundations are built to be broad and strong. They are built so that cybernetics can be developed vigorously, without the primary vagueness that has infected most past attempts to grapple with, in particular, the complexities of the brain in action. Cybernetics offers the hope of providing effective methods for the study, and control, of systems that are intrinsically extremely complex. It will do this by first making out what is achievable, and then providing generalised strategies, of demonstrable value, that can be used uniformly in a variety of special cases. In this way it offers the hope of providing the essential methods by which to attack the ills - psychological, social, economic - which at present are defeating us by their intrinsic complexity.

### THE LAW of Requisite Variety

8/1. ... "variety", a concept inseparable from that of "information".

9/19. It must be noticed that *noise is in no intrinsic way distinguishable from any other form of variety*. Only when some recipient is given, who will state which of the two is important to him, is a distinction between message and noise possible.

10/1. The quantity of regulation that can be achieved is bounded by the quantity of information that can be transmitted in a certain channel.

11/2. The subject of regulation is very wide in its applications,

covering as it does most of the activities in physiology, sociology, ecology, economics, and much of the activities in almost every branch of science and life. Further, the types of regulator that exist are almost bewildering in their variety. However, we shall be attempting to get at the core of the subject - to find what is common to all.

11/11. The Law of Requisite Variety ["Only variety can destroy variety."] enables us to apply a *measure* to regulation.

Let us reconsider what is meant, essentially, by 'regulation'.

There is first a set of disturbances  $D$ , that start in the world outside the organism, often far from it, and that threatens, if the regulator  $R$  does nothing, to drive the essential variables  $E$  outside their proper range of values.

Of all these  $E$ -values only a few ( $\eta$ ) are compatible with the organism's life, or are unobjectionable, so that the regulator  $R$ , to be successful, must take its value in a way so related to that of  $D$  that the outcome is, if possible, always within the acceptable set  $\eta$ , i.e. within physiological limits.

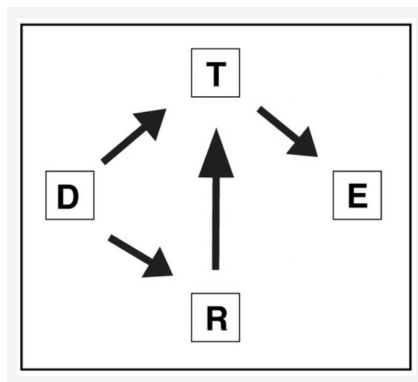
We can now show these relations by the diagram of immediate effects:

T = exTernal world

D = Disturbances

E = Essential variables

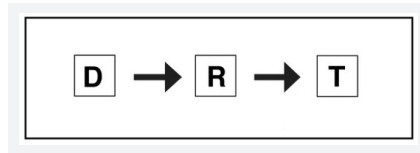
R = Regulator



The arrows represent actual channels of communication. For the variety in D determines the variety in R; and that in T is determined by that in both D and R. If R and T are in fact actual machines, then R has an input from D, and T has two inputs.

We can now interpret the general phenomenon of regulation in terms of communication. If R (Regulator) does nothing, i.e. keeps to one value, then the variety in D (Disturbances) threatens to go through T (exTernal world) to E (Essential variables), contrary to what is wanted. It may happen that T, without change by R, will block some of the variety and occasionally this blocking may give sufficient constancy at E for survival. More commonly, a further suppression at E is necessary; it can be achieved only by further variety at R.

We can now select a portion of the diagram, and focus attention on R as a transmitter:



The law of Requisite Variety says that *R's capacity as a regulator cannot exceed R's capacity as a channel of communication.*

In the form just given, the law of Requisite Variety can be shown in exact relation to Shannon's [1] Theorem 10, which says that if noise appears in a message, the amount of noise that can be removed by a correction channel is limited to the amount of information that can be carried by that channel.

Thus, his "noise" corresponds to our "disturbances", his "correction channel" to our "regulator R", and his "message of entropy H" becomes, in our case, a message of entropy zero, for it is *constancy* that is to be "transmitted". Thus the use of a regulator to achieve homeostasis and the use of a correction channel to suppress noise are homologous.

11 / 13. The law now enables us to see the relations existing between

the various types of variety and information that affect the living organism.

A species continues to exist primarily because its members can block the flow of variety (thought of as disturbance) to the gene-pattern, and this blockage is the species' most fundamental need. Natural selection has shown the advantage to be gained by taking a large amount of variety (as information) partly into the system (so that it does not reach the gene-pattern) and then using this information so that the flow via R blocks the flow through the environment T.

This point of view enables us to resolve what might at first seem a paradox - that the higher organisms have sensitive skins, responsive nervous systems, and often an instinct that impels them, in play or curiosity, to bring more variety to the system than is immediately necessary. Would not their chance of survival be improved by an avoidance of this variety?

The discussion in this chapter has shown that variety (whether information or disturbance) comes to the organism in two forms. There is that which threatens the survival of the gene-pattern - the direct transmission by T from D to E. This part must be blocked at all costs. And there is that which, while it may threaten the gene-pattern, can be transformed (or re-coded) through the regulator R and used to block the effect of the remainder (in T). This information is useful, and should (if the regulator can be provided) be made as large as possible; for, by the law of Requisite Variety, the amount of disturbance that reaches the gene-pattern can be diminished only by the amount of information so transmitted. That is the importance of the law in biology.

In its elementary forms the law is intuitively obvious and hardly deserving statement. If, for instance, a press photographer would deal with twenty subjects that are (for exposure and distance) distinct, then his camera must obviously be capable of at least twenty distinct settings if all the negatives are to be brought to a uniform density and sharpness.

Where the law, in its quantitative form, develops its power is when we come to consider the system in which these matters are not so obvious, and particularly when it is very large. Thus, by how much can a

dictator control a country? It is commonly said that Hitler's control over Germany was total. So far as his power of regulation (in the sense of blocking the flow of variety) was concerned, the law says that his control amounted to just 1 man-power, and no more. (Whether this statement is true must be tested by the future; its chief virtue now is that it is exact and uncompromising). Thus the law, though trite in the simple cases, can give real guidance in those cases that are much too complex to be handled by unaided intuition.

**NOTE**

[1] Claude Shannon (1916-2001) mathematician and engineer, expert in communications. He is considered the father of information theory to which he made a masterly contribution through his article (1948) that became, the following year, a book entitled *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*.

## ANONYMOUS

DEMOCRACY WITH A SMALL "D" (1962)

### **Note by John Zube**

This is an article that introduces the basic panarchistic idea very well. The original article was printed in "THE REGISTER", Drawer 1318, Santa Ana, California USA, an Independent Freedom Newspaper, January 12, 1962. Their policy is thus expressed:

"The Register believes each and every person would get more satisfaction in the long run if he were permitted to spend what he earns on a voluntary basis rather than having any part of it distributed involuntarily."

Remark: The names of politicians of the 1960s have been replaced by those of politicians of the 21st century.





"In the political democracy only the votes cast for the majority candidate or the majority plan are effective in shaping the course of affairs. The votes polled by the minority do not directly influence policies. But on the market no vote is cast in vain. Every penny spent has the power to work upon the production processes. ... The decision of a consumer is carried into effect with the full moments he gives it through his readiness to spend a definite amount of money."

(Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action*)

There is much confusion in this nation over the term 'democracy'. The word comes from the Greek and in its structure means 'rule of the people' or possibly 'rule by the people.' But when the word is not capitalized its actual functional quality relates to marketplace rather than to political activities. When it is capitalized, as it usually is in this country, the concept changes.

In a Democracy, majorities make decisions which are binding upon all people. When the democratic concept is employed in the market place each individual makes decisions which are binding only upon himself and those others directly involved. The democratic process (small 'd') does not suppose control of some by others; it supposes control of each by each.

Let's see how it works.

In the market place you go into a store and buy a can of beans. You are bound by your decision. You have, for reasons known only to you, decided to purchase a can of beans put out by X company. Its name is on the label.

You don't know there will be beans in the can. You can't see the beans. But, partly because of the label, and partly because of experience, you trust the company. You exchange your money for the can. This is a ballot cast in the market place. This is your vote in favor of the company you patronized.

It is binding upon you. You must pay for the beans the price quoted. You don't have to buy it at all. But if you do buy it, you must pay for it. You may pay for it later if the storekeeper will give you credit. If he does, it is because he trusts your label. He believes, either through experience or through long practice in reading labels, that he

will eventually get paid. He could be wrong. But he won't be wrong many times.

You might be wrong. The can might contain marbles, soup or mashed potatoes. But you won't be wrong many times, either. If you buy a can from X company and it does not contain what it says it contains, you will be mighty reluctant to patronize that company again.

But let us see what happens as a result of your ballot cast in the market place. Your vote is tabulated by the storekeeper either at the end of the day or the end of a few days of marketing. He will find, when he does his tabulations, that some (like yourself) have voted for X brand. He will know this because he will have to re-order X brand.

He will also find that some others have voted for Y brand. Still others will have voted for brands Z, ZXY, XX, YYYY. He will re-order these brands too in precisely the quantity he thinks necessary to take care of his customers in the future.

What happens at the various companies which process these beans? The vote comes in, each time numerically different for each firm. Each firm is encouraged by each vote cast. Such encouragement leads it to continue the process by which it pleased you or others.

Let us suppose that X brand, the kind you voted for, was the most popular. Let us suppose that this brand got 100 votes, each of the other brands getting fewer than 100. If we had Democracy (capital D) in the market place, this would mean that an order would be issued which would say in effect, 'Only X brand need be processed any more, The voters have clearly shown that X brand is the best bean. Therefore, all other brands are hereby discontinued.'

But we don't have capital D Democracy in the market place. We have small d democracy. Therefore, even though X brand proved to be the most popular, others were popular enough to encourage them to some degree. So, all firms which were voted on favorably enough continue to produce their product. Your action in buying X brand does not compel us to purchase X brand. Personally, let us suppose, we happen to like YYYY brand. We cannot prevent you from buying X brand. You cannot prevent us from buying YYYY brand.

This is true democracy. It is the process wherein each governs each.

This process is always moral and provides the greatest food, the greatest variety, the lowest prices for the largest number.

#### MAJORITY BECOMES MONOPOLY CONTROL

In the foregoing we have attempted to show how democracy (small d) works in the market place. But the argument perpetually arises, this is not the same thing as politics. In government two men will run for office. Both of them can't possibly hold that office. Thus, the votes through the majority process select the one best suited. He will hold the office. The other one will not.

What is wrong with this?

The same thing is wrong with it as would be wrong if you went into a store seeking to buy X brand of beans and you were informed that because more people only liked YYYY brand, that would be the only kind of beans you could buy.

Further, you would be told that you could not solve the problem for yourself simply by abstaining from buying beans. You must buy them. And you must buy brand YYYY. Further, you must eat the beans. At this point democracy would have been capitalized. And this is what we have done in government in this country.

Let us suppose that two men run for the presidency. Let us further suppose that one of them, brand YYYY, is Mr. Biden. Let us further suppose that the other one of them, brand X, is Mr. Trump. Mr. Biden gets more votes than Mr. Trump. But the voters who voted for Mr. Trump do not obtain their choice. They wanted Mr. Trump to run their affairs. They got Mr. Biden. They are frustrated.

Of course, those who voted for Mr. Biden are delighted. Not only do they get the man to run their affairs, they get a man who is now empowered to run every one's affairs.

But there is always a third category of people, those who want neither Brand X nor Brand YYYY. There may be those who wanted Brand Z. There might even be those who don't want any brand at all. They want to run their own affairs entirely without having a Trump, a Biden or a ZZZZ to run them.

But by the majority process, all of them regardless of their personal wishes or convictions, must now pay for brand YYYY. And they are

bound to use brand YYYYY even if they'd rather not. Suddenly, we see what has happened to our support of Democracy: we have moved away from the concept of rule by the people. Instead, we now have monopoly rule. All minorities, regardless of their interests, desires or whatever, are compelled to go along with the monopoly.

Now if we practised small d democracy in this country, those who voted for Trump would have him running their affairs; those who voted for Biden would have him; those who voted for someone else to regulate their lives would have him. And those who didn't want anyone to run their affairs for them would be left without anyone running their affairs.

This would be moral: Each would then get to pay for what he himself voted that he wanted. The man who refused to participate would not have the 'advantages' he would have gained had he done so. Perhaps he would regret this later.

But that is his business. Just as it is your business to refuse to buy beans and to suffer from hunger if that is what happens.

We can virtually hear the cry of alarm: 'But this would mean that we would have many presidents? at least two. And how could we get everyone to go along on a given policy in that case?'

The answer is that you could not. But would this be bad?

The concept of representation is essentially a concept of agency. Someone is to act for you. But how can someone act for you if that someone is completely committed to actions contrary to your own best interests? To suppose that he represents you because others have chosen him is to suppose a lie. He can only represent you if you select him, and then, if he confines himself to your interests.

It is capital D Democracy that is doing us in. Men who are opposed to your own best interests obtain power over you through actions taken by others; Democracy (capital D) means majority control of all. Majority control of all means monopoly. And it always results in monopoly control in the hands of a minority. This is never moral, nor is it necessary.

**ROBERT A. HEINLEIN**  
PANARCHY ON THE MOON (1966)

After the revolution, Professor Bernardo de la Paz advises not to copy the institutions that exist elsewhere. Then he suggests ways to take decisions that are appropriate for everyone. All that is much in synphony with panarchy.

Source: Robert H. Heinlein, *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, 1966



**The speech of Professor Bernardo de la Paz in front of the General Assembly**

Comrade Members, like fire and fusion, government is a dangerous servant and a terrible master. You now have freedom - if you can keep it. But do remember that you can lose this freedom more quickly to yourselves than to any other tyrant. Move slowly, be hesitant, puzzle out the consequences of every word. I would not be unhappy if this convention sat for ten years before reporting - but I would be frightened if you took less than a year.

Distrust the obvious, suspect the traditional ... for in the past mankind has not done well when saddling itself with governments.

For example, I note in one draft report a proposal for setting up a commission to divide Luna into congressional districts and to reapportion them from time to time according to population.

This is the traditional way; therefore it should be suspect, considered guilty until proved innocent. Perhaps you feel that this is the only way. May I suggest others? Surely where a man lives is the least important thing about him. Constituencies might be formed by dividing people by occupation ... or by age ... or even alphabetically. Or they might not be divided, every member elected at large - and do not object that this would make it impossible for any man not widely known throughout Luna to be elected; that might be the best possible thing for Luna.

'You might even consider installing the candidates who receive the least number of votes; unpopular men may be just the sort to save you from a new tyranny. Don 't reject the idea merely because it seems preposterous - think about it! In past history popularly elected governments have been no better and sometimes far worse than overt tyrannies.

'But if representative government turns out to be your intention there still may be ways to achieve it better than the territorial district. For example you each represent ten thousand human beings, perhaps seven thousand of voting age - and some of you were elected by slim majorities. Suppose instead of election a man were qualified for office by petition signed by four thousand citizens. He would then represent those four thousand affirmatively, with no disgruntled minority, for what would have been a minority in a territorial constituency would all be free to start other petitions or join in them. All would then be represented by men of their choice. Or a man with eight thousand supporters might have two votes in this body. Difficulties, objections, practical points to be worked out - many of them! But you could work them out ... and thereby avoid the chronic sickness of representative government, the disgruntled minority which feels, correctly! - that it has been disenfranchised.

But, whatever you do, do not let the past be a straitjacket!

I note one proposal to make this Congress a two-house body. Excellent - the more impediments to legislation the better. But, instead of

following tradition, I suggest one house of legislators, another whose single duty is to repeal laws. Let the legislators pass laws only with a two-thirds majority ... while the repealers are able to cancel any law through a mere one-third minority. Preposterous? Think about it. If a bill is so poor that it cannot command two-thirds of your consents, is it not likely that it would make a poor law? And if a law is disliked by as many as one-third is it not likely that you would be better off without it?

But in writing your constitution let me invite attention to the wonderful virtues of the negative! Accentuate the negative! Let your document be studded with things the government is forever forbidden to do. No conscript armies . . . no interference however slight with freedom of press, or speech, or travel, or assembly, or of religion, or of instruction, or communication, or occupation ... no involuntary taxation. Comrades, if you were to spend five years in a study of history while thinking of more and more things that your government should promise never to do and then let your constitution be nothing but those negatives, I would not fear the outcome.

What I fear most are affirmative actions of sober and well-intentioned men, granting to government powers to do something that appears to need doing. Please remember always that the Lunar Authority was created for the noblest purposes by just such sober and well-intentioned men, all popularly elected. And with that thought I leave you to your labors Thank you.

*Gospodin [Mister] President! Question of information! You said "no involuntary taxation" - Then how do you expect us to pay for things? Tanstaaf! [There Ain't No Such Thing as a Free Lunch].*

Goodness me, sir, that's your problem. I can think of several ways. Voluntary contributions just as churches support themselves ... government-sponsored lotteries to which no one need subscribe ...or perhaps you Congressmen should dig down into your own pouches and pay for whatever is needed; that would be one way to keep government down in size to its indispensable functions whatever they may be. If indeed there are any. I would be satisfied to have the Golden Rule be the only law [i.e. the principle of treating others as one's self would wish to be treated]; I see no need for any other, nor for any method of

enforcing it. But if you really believe that your neighbors must have laws for their own good, why shouldn't you pay for it? Comrades, I beg you - do not resort to compulsory taxation. There is no worse tyranny than to force a man to pay for what he does not want merely because you think it would be good for him.



**JOHN GALL****THE PRINCIPLE OF HEGEMONIC  
INDETERMINACY (1975)**

During the '70's, when Systems Theory was very much in the ascendancy, this booklet came out to remind people that large systems are prone to failure and that is no use to rely on bigger and bigger systems to solve bigger and bigger problems as they are, very likely, the product of those very systems.

Towards the end of that booklet, John Gall introduces the brilliant idea that, in order to avoid the concentration of power the best way is not the diffusion of power (as power has the habit to re-concentrate itself in the long run) but the diffusion of the targets of power, i.e. of the citizens of this world. To allow so he advocates the introduction of two new Freedoms:

- The Free Choice of Territory ( Distributional Freedom ).
- The Free Choice of Government ( Principle of Hegemonic Indeterminacy ).

These two freedoms show remarkable similarities with the idea of Panarchy. Considering that many other voices have put forward the idea of Aterritorialism and Free Choice of Government, it seems then that, whatever the name used (the Principle of Hegemonic Indeterminacy or Panarchy or Polyarchy) we are dealing with a recurring basic aspiration and it is time that those still indoctrinated by the territorial

states take notice of it because it is something that is not going away; the alternative being the continuation of innumerable conflicts and clashes right up to full-blown so-called “civil” wars.

Source: John Gall, *Systemantics*. How Systems Work And Especially How They Fail, 1975



Students of General Systemantics will have apprehended by now that General Systemantics does not offer ready-made formulas for the solution of Systems-problems, even of such pressing problems as Warfare between Nations or Governmental Oppression. The Axioms are too fundamental for direct application to practical situations, and the intervening methodology has in any case not been worked out. At most, one may derive a clue to a method of approach whereby the *Intrinsic Difficulty* is specified as precisely as possible, so that daring and imaginative correctives may be tried. The risk of failure or even of catastrophe is very high, and the undertaking should be begun only where the present evil is very clear and the consequences of miscarriage are judged to be no more unbearable than a continuation of the original unsatisfactory situation.

With these reservations, we may permit ourselves a bit of harmless speculation on the Government System. Government Systems, acting in accordance with the Law of Growth, Tend to Expand and Encroach. In encroaching upon their own citizens, they produce Tyranny, and in encroaching on other Government Systems, they engage in Warfare. If one could correctly identify the Intrinsic Difficulty with the Government System, one might be able to curb or neutralize those two tendencies, to the benefit of the Mankind System.

What is the Intrinsic Difficulty with the Government System? Previous reformers, identifying the core problem as the *concentration of power* in a few hands, have attempted to improve things by diffusing that power. This works temporarily, but gradually (Systems Law of Gravity) the power becomes concentrated again.

A breakaway group of General Systemanticists, starting from the

principle that it is very difficult to unscramble eggs, have proposed that the core problem is not the concentration of power but the concentration of governed in one place, where the government can get at them. They have proposed not the diffusion of power, but the diffusion of the targets of power - the citizens themselves.

They would achieve this by providing citizens with *two new freedoms*, in addition to the traditional Four Freedoms [\*]. These two new freedoms, appropriately designed as the Fifth and Sixth Freedoms, are:

(5) Free Choice of Territory (Distributional Freedom)

(6) Free Choice of Government (Principle of Hegemonic Indeterminacy)

Under Free Choice of Territory, a citizen of any country is free to live in any part of the world he chooses. He remains a citizen of the government he prefers, to which he pays taxes and for whose officers he votes. However, as the term Free Choice of Government implies, he may at any time change his citizenship and his allegiance from his present government to another government that offers more attractive tax rates, better pensions, more interesting public officials, or simply an invigorating change of pace (Common courtesy would seem to require two weeks' advance notice; the standard notice any employer would give an employee).

With these two new Freedoms in effect, one would expect that after a short period of equilibration, citizens of any nation would be distributed amongst the citizens of all other nations - not necessarily at random, but sufficiently so for our purpose, which is to remove them effectively from the grip of their own government. A government can hardly put any large number of its own citizens in jail if it has to send halfway around the world for them, one by one, and persuade other governments of the justice of the proceedings. Raising armies would become administratively impossible. Furthermore, wars of any government against another would become impractical, since large numbers of the "enemy" would be distributed all over the world, including the territory of the home government.

The net result of the two new Freedoms would be to break up the Concentration of the Governed, to divide and distribute them throughout other governments, a principle which we shall call the

*Comminution of Hegemony.* If practiced on a world-wide scale it could lead to revolutionary changes in the relationship of citizens to their governments, reversing the traditional polarity and making governments fearfully dependent upon the favor or even the whims of their citizenry rather than vice versa. In keeping with the revolutionary aspects of this proposal, we hereby broach the solemn question:

*World Comminution: Threat or Promise?*

## Note

[\*] The Four Freedoms were formulated by Franklin D. Roosevelt when he was President of the United States, on January 6, 1941. In an address also known as the *Four Freedoms speech*, FDR proposed four fundamental freedoms that human beings ought to enjoy, everywhere in the world:

1. Freedom of speech and expression
2. Freedom of religion
3. Freedom from want
4. Freedom from fear

**LE GRAND E. DAY****THE THEORY OF MULTIGOVERNMENT (1969-  
1977)**

Multigovernment will present to every individual the right to expand the choice of options in every aspect of his lifestyle. It will introduce a new dimension of freedom not yet experienced by mankind.

Not only is Multigovernment workable, but with the advent of sophisticated atomic weapons, it is necessary to save civilization as we know it. (Note by the Author)

**PREFACE**

I have written notes, outlines, and syllabuses on Multigovernment since the idea came to me in 1967. They have been Xeroxed, mimeographed, hectographed, and printed twice. They were originally designed for teaching in experimental colleges and for giving lectures on Multigovernment.

The only major change in the theory of Multigovernment from the earlier writings is the concept that the echelon above the Geographical Democracy is a Judicial Republic and not a "confederation of world states," as first recorded. Much thought and study on the subject convinced me that beyond the basic local government, man does not

have to be governed at all. Of course, he may join any choice government voluntarily.

The method of explaining Multigovernment, other than a verbal description, has been going over and over in my mind for the last eight years. I am finding it difficult, with my limited capacity, to be technically correct and at the same time to make it understandable and interesting to the average reader.

In the future, I will clear up misunderstandings, perfect the method and description, and answer the critics of Multigovernment.

Let it be clearly understood that this system must work and grow within the legal means of the already-established governments. The tools needed to bring about multigovernment are communications, not bloodshed; education, not violence; persuasion, not revolution. There is nothing in this thesis that advocates, suggests, or implies the overthrow of any existing government by force or violence.

Le Grand E. Day,  
(Sunland, California May, 1977)

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A slight revision of the first printed works on Multigovernment in 1969. The original title was "Outline of the Theory of Multigovernment."

### **A New Dimension of Freedom**

### **Introduction**

Need for a Change

Simply because an institution, a custom, or a social condition exists,

its existence or its acceptance does not make it the right, the best, or the only choice.

That vague identity called the state (that indivisible chain that holds people together like ants or bees), in a modern world, exists for apparently two fundamental reasons: (1) to give continuity to its own existence, and (2) to maintain order and discipline.

The criteria to obtain leadership or for upward mobility in the state or any of its protected institutions suggest the possession of talents with questionable ethics. The political system itself is neither fair nor equitable.

Other than a long, slow process, there are only two ways to change the nature of the state: by invasion from another state or by revolution from within.

I suggest, without enlarging upon the inadequacies of the existing states, that if the members of society believe that they have the best alternative, they are naive and uninformed.

To change a system that will self-destruct in time anyway would be an act of mercy and compassion. But to disintegrate a system you already have, you must replace it with something better. Through evolution, not revolution, we introduce and suggest a change to a superior system: Multigovernment.

#### Philosophy of Multigovernment

The advocates of Multigovernment believe that the only legitimate purpose of a compulsory government is to provide adequate protection (fire and police) and fair and enforceable judgments.

They also believe that each individual should have the opportunity to have as much freedom as he desires, without the infringement of others. It is obvious, without argument, that each individual's wants and desires are different.

Multigovernment therefore suggests that society should cater to man's differences by allowing the creation of many or multigovernments, to not subdue him to a mythical norm, an average, or one government - and this one government expected to be all things to all people.

It is, therefore, proposed that a new political system be introduced, and we suggest that it replace the present power structure.

### Geographical Democracy

Multigovernment suggests there be one compulsory government for each land area. It should be divided by population density and the will of the people. City-states should be created in metropolitan areas. City-states will replace city, county, state and, eventually, federal government. Territorial governments will grow in the farming, rural and forest areas, also replacing the above overlapping governments.

The advocates of Multigovernment suggest it is only logical that, since all people living in the specified area must belong to this government, it be a democracy! Complying with the doctrine of Multigovernment, any services offered by this government other than those of geographical necessity should be voted on by 85 percent of all registered voters.

All policies instituted by local government should be voted on by the eligible voters. Only the operational decisions should be exempt from majority rule. Democracy must prevail by the nature of the government itself at this echelon of Multigovernment.

### Judicial Republic

The compulsory echelon above the geographical democracy in the Multigovernment system is not a government; that is, it does not govern. It goes under the name of "Judicial Republic." It works as follows: There will be a pyramid of courts with judges at each level. On the bottom will be the local and regional courts and judges housed with, but not connected with, the local geographical governments. The chain then continues through the appellate court, supreme court (suggested for each continent), and finally to the upper supreme court.

The method of selecting judges should be a matter of policy as well as division of work. For instance, it might be practical to have one appellate court for individual rights, another for disputes among choice governments (yet to be explained), and one for criminal justice, etc. The number of judges at each level should also be a policy matter.

The judges themselves should adhere to the criteria of fairness and follow the doctrine of Multigovernment in matters of governmental dispute. Judges themselves should make policy concerning the structure and running of the judicial republic with a workable people's initiative for checking purposes.



### Choice Governments

The choice government concept is the backbone of Multigovernment systems. Our descriptions up to this point have been of compulsory organizations; that is, the citizens have to belong to the geographical democracy and be subject to the rulings of the judicial republic. It is a philosophy of Multigovernment that when governments are compulsory, only those government functions absolutely necessary should be performed.

Compensating for the vacuum of services not performed by traditional government, Multigovernment suggests that governments be created to meet the different needs of men, so any man can find the exact, or almost perfect, government for him. Man, if he so desires, may belong to no government at all except the above compulsory governments with the bare necessary functions. Those who belong to no government are called "free agents."

The free agents will be living as the conservative (right-winger, libertarian, etc.) would like to live today; that is, conforming to their idea of freedom: freedom from government intervention. The weakness of present-day conservatism is that they do not take into account those who cannot exist, or do not wish to exist, in the conservatives' version of freedom.

On the other side of the coin, the weakness of liberalism (left wing, collectivism, etc.) is that they all want government services but in different ways. In other words, what, where, who, and how much. Each faction has its own idea about which direction government should go. The crux of the Multigovernment idea is that governments and organizations coexist and fulfil each faction's idea of good government. Then each person can choose from among the competitive governments, the government he wants to belong to.

Multigovernment will present to every individual the right to a broader choice of options in every aspect of his lifestyle. It will introduce a new dimension of freedom not yet experienced by mankind.

Multigovernment will eliminate wars. If government's ideology is built around the individual and not land-mass occupation, who are the conquerors going to conquer?

The Multigovernment system will cause all revolutions to cease. If you don't like the government you have, you can quit and join another.

Multigovernment makes the observation that no one system or form of government is best for all people. One government cannot be all things to all people. All individuals have a right to belong to the government that suits them best. The only answer is to allow organizational and social systems and governments to exist simultaneously, within the same location.

Multigovernment asserts that not only is the above described governmental method workable, but it is necessary to save civilization as we know it.

True Freedom cannot exist unless the individual can choose the exact form and amount of government he wants. Government structure must be created for that end and not to justify its own existence.

True Liberty can exist only when:

- Only protective functions are compulsory.
- There is fair and equitable judgment.
- Government functions of human welfare are voluntary.
- Necessary government functions that must be performed and cannot be handled on a profit or volunteer basis are handled with utmost efficiency.

Therefore, summarizing the basic structural theory of Multigovernment:

- The only compulsion level of government is a Geographical Democracy.
- The justice level is a Judicial Republic.
- The volunteer level is the Choice Government.

#### Schools, Districts and Departments

Necessary government functions not covered by the above are in three categories and are handled as follows:

##### Schools

Multigovernment believes in a voucher system in order to guarantee all children an education and freedom of choice of schools. The students, with their guardians, should choose the schools they want by

their needs and personal preference. They should not be placed by geographical assignment.

#### Districts

Districts would provide ongoing functions that cannot be performed by volunteers or for profit. Each service has a district of its own so its function can be closely scrutinized and its existence justified periodically. The district is created by, and under the direction of, the judicial republic or the geographical democracy, if appropriate.

#### Special Temporary Districts

Special temporary districts are set up on a temporary basis to handle temporary problems. When the problem or condition ceases to exist, so does the district. Special projects or problems brought about by economic conditions are among the functions of this category.

### **The Basis of the Theory of Multigovernment**

The theory of Multigovernment envisions the creation of coexisting governments within the confines of existing countries. Governments will exist for their function - serving people - not by virtue of the fact that they occupy land mass. These coexisting sovereigns motivated by competition, will represent the most efficient organizations devised by man.

Theory is defined as a direction of action based on principles verified by observation and thought. Each group of individuals has common concepts that hold them together. All states are guided by a political theory. The fact that a theory has never been developed, or accepted, is obviously no criterion that it will not work.

The theory of Multigovernment is based on six principles:

1. Each man's needs and desires for government are different.
2. The individual should decide for himself the government he wants to serve him.
3. Where man lives (geographical boundaries) should not be the determining factor of which government he belongs to.
4. Various governments can, and ought to, coexist in the same location.

5. Governments compete for membership with services, economies, or ideologies.

6. Man may belong to no government at all.

#### PRINCIPLE 1. EACH MAN'S NEEDS AND DESIRES FOR A GOVERNMENT ARE DIFFERENT

The fact that each man has different needs and desires for government is a foregone conclusion. Each man is different by background, religion, language, culture or heritage; different by chance or different by choice. The world is already a multi-diversified society, with numerous cultures and subcultures. It is undesirable - in fact, impossible - to mold the entire world into one culture, one religion, or even one country.

Behavioral scientists have made impressive advances, including the research and utilization of the principles of classification and stratification of peoples. These demographic concepts have been exploited by merchants all over the globe.

Government has also capitalized on this research. Government, however, has not considered how best it can serve, but how effectively it can persuade, manipulate, and control people.

As the worldwide trend moves to ever-increasing and advancing social legislation, discontent grows because of the diversified and individualized nature of man-kind.

Individuals who rebel against these social changes fall in two basic categories:

- Those who neither desire nor appreciate these changes and are capable of living in peace and happiness without them.
- Those who want extra government benefits that are of a different nature or quantity than those offered by the state.

Any government that wishes to exist in the future must take into consideration these characteristics of humanity and compensate for it. The purpose of the existence of government is to serve people. The government should adjust to the people, not the people to the government.

Multigovernment offers an effective solution to the individual difference problem.

PRINCIPLE 2. THE INDIVIDUAL SHOULD DECIDE FOR HIMSELF THE GOVERNMENT HE WANTS TO SERVE HIM

Due to the superior quality and quantity of education, the world is enjoying the highest intellectual achievements in history. The masses are becoming enlightened and more aware of the social and political conditions. This superior knowledge enlarges the individual's ability to make rational political decisions. People are insisting on participating in the political decision-making process. Thus, knowledge becomes power.

Democracy exists in enlightened periods of world history because the backbone of democracy is the capability of people to understand the issues and to make intelligent judgments. Individuals are more qualified to decide what is best and good for themselves than are bureaucrats. The natural step in political evolution is from the majority deciding policy to the individual deciding his own policy.

Added to the freedoms, privileges, and rights man now enjoys, he is now responsible enough and willing enough to guide his own destiny.

Man has now intellectually advanced to the point that he should have the right to choose his own government

PRINCIPLE 3. WHERE MAN LIVES (GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES) SHOULD NOT BE THE DETERMINING FACTOR OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HE BELONGS TO

Multigovernment suggests that land mass is not a legitimate claim or even a condition of national sovereignty. Political boundaries are unquestionably accepted by the population due to centuries of conditioning.

Some functions of government, by the nature of land-people relationship, must be performed by territorial government. However, most government functions can be performed better by people-oriented governments. It is ridiculous to assume that all phases of government administration must be administered by territorial government.

Every war that was ever fought, whatever the ideological excuse, was fought for land mass, and the national self-interest and power advantage the conquered territory offered the aggressor.

The fact that man must adhere to the policy of his government,

whether he likes it or not, is the cause of all revolutions. Revolutions are bred by the assumption that every person born in a monarchy is a monarchist, in the boundaries of communism is a communist, and those in a socialist state adhere to the principles of socialism.

Civilization has now evolved to the point where political boundaries should be reevaluated. The legal claim to land mass is based on one or more of three conditions:

- A piece of paper (treaties, constitutions, etc.)
- Historical precedent
- Status quo

These conditions assert that on one side of an imaginary line is one country, and on the other side is another country.

In the course of events, if a sovereign gains enough elements of power to overthrow his neighbour, all such legal claims become void. Then new papers are signed, another historical precedent created, and the status quo is changed. The stage is set for the drama to reenact itself in the future.

If man must group together - and some must - Multigovernment would suggest that it be done on the individual's own terms, be it ideological, religious, language, or even for ethnic reasons. Each individual should be allowed to choose, regardless of political boundaries, the type of government he wants to serve him.

Multigovernment offers man his natural right to choose his government, regardless of where he lives.

**PRINCIPLE 4. VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS CAN, AND OUGHT TO, EXIST IN THE SAME LOCATION**

Man must provide for himself the greatest individual potential growth by offering to his fellow human beings the largest possible variety of governments, so that he may exercise a broader option in his choice of government - one that fits his wants and needs.

The only feasible way this can be accomplished is to allow for many governments to exist in the same territory. These governments should be created with enough sovereignty to govern but without the power to compel.

Jewish kibbutzim, Catholic monasteries, and other organizations prove that tight organizations can exist on a volunteer basis within the

established government. Many religious and fraternal societies, too numerous to mention, support the position that organizations can exist on a less militant basis.

There should be coexisting governments with various amounts of services offered, so that man may choose from among them the government he desires.

Multigovernment offers a logical basis where man can exercise his choice of government.

#### PRINCIPLE 5. GOVERNMENTS COMPETE FOR MEMBERSHIP WITH, SERVICES, ECONOMIES OR IDEOLOGIES

Competition, man's greatest individual and collective growth factor, should be utilized to create better governments as it has been used to make better automobiles, moon shots, and soccer teams.

The motivation factor that would help to establish and maintain the best possible governments would be competition. The idea is to create fair government rivalry by allowing the several governments to compete for their constituents.

If man does not like the government he belongs to, he would have one of three choices:

- Resign and join another government that fits his needs.
- Resign and join no government at all.
- Resign and create a government that will fit his needs.

Multigovernment utilizes competition - man's greatest expansion factor.

#### PRINCIPLE 6. MAN MAY BELONG TO NO GOVERNMENT AT ALL

In every culture, in every society, throughout the pages of history, there have existed those nonconformist, free, independent souls, called by some, antisocial or rebellious individuals. These people provide mankind with most of the artists, writers, and thinkers. Impending social changes cramp their style, lessen their productivity, and make them miserable. These people, too, must live so that they are completely free except for basic protection of the law.

If a man so desires, he has a right to be free from all unnecessary governmental social enactments and restrictions.

Multigovernment offers more freedom than any existing government for those who really want it.

Governments will exist by virtue of the services they offer their constituency and how well they govern. In the past, governments existed by what the designs and accidents of history and geography have left them in the forms of land mass. For the first time in human history, governments will be created and stay in existence for the purpose of serving man.

### **A new dimension of freedom**

The individual in America is now burdened with four and sometimes more governments (i.e., town or city, county [or parish], state, and federal). All of these have cohesive and enforcement powers. This is a useless duplication of effort - a limitation of freedom.

Multigovernment suggests that only one territorial government be established for each area, hereinafter called "Territorial Governments." The boundaries of the Territorial Governments to be placed on the map in such a way as to allow for density of the population as well as the wishes of the inhabitants. This government will be responsible for police and fire protection.

To fill the vacuum of services now performed by the five governments, it is presupposed that a variety of organizations be created or existing governments be used for that purpose (service organizations, churches, etc.). These organizations will hereinafter be called "Choice Governments."

It is further presupposed that these Choice Governments will fall into four basic categories:

1. Private Institutions - Designed under the free enterprise system to meet the needs of the people.
2. Special Districts - Set up for a special service for which the individual only is taxed.
3. Collective Governments - Designed to give complete services, protection, and security for its members.



4. Limited Governments - To meet particular needs of certain persons.

If, for instance, an individual should choose the Collective Government (the third category), such as a kibbutz, a monastery or a socialist commune, he would probably not need the services of another government.

If, on the other hand, he should belong to a Limited Government furnishing only his housing, he could use the private institutions for his medical, his insurance, and a special district for his children to be educated, or he could send them to a parochial school.

A third individual could be completely free from all governments except the essential basics provided by Territorial Governments and belong to a Special District expressly designed (e.g. for medical purposes).

It must be understood at this point that the so-called free enterprise system would prevail overall and the Choice Government would act as a unit in its dealings like a corporation. It is asserted that free individuals can live in the same geographical location as choice governments.

This should satisfy the individualist as he can live free from government intervention. This should satisfy the socialist-oriented person as he can belong to a socialist choice government. There will be a government or a set of governments that will satisfy everyone's exact needs or wants from government, and he will still belong to less than the five mandatory governments we now belong to.

The conservative will have his notion of freedom: free from all but necessary government functions. The collectivist will have his freedom from want in his choice of collective societies. The moderate, the religious man, etc., will all have their choices of government. There will exist a new dimension of freedom.

A Multigovernment advocate believes the individual has the implied right to choose one's own government, whatever his geographical location.



# ACT VI

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE

*Where the theoretical and practical contours of the proposal are specified and, at the beginning of the new millennium, the idea is launched into the mare magnum of worldwide communication*



33 - (1989) Carl Watner, *The Exit Option*

34 - (1989) David Taylor, *For Panarchy*

35 - (2005) Richard CB Johnsson, *To the Monopolists of All Parties*

36 - (2005) Gian Piero de Bellis, *Panarchy, Polyarchy, Personarchy*

37 - (2009) Michael Rozeff, *Liberty in the Choice of Governance*

38 - (2009) Dwight Johnson, *The End of Modern Serfdom*

39 - (2009) Arnold Kling, *Exit, Voice, and Freedom: An Example*

40 - (2013) Max Borders, *The Real Social Contract*

41 - (2013-2014) Paul Bonneau, *Reflections on Panarchy*

42 - (2017) Thomas Knapp, *Breaking up is Hard to do. Or is it?*

43 - (2017) Aviezer Tucker, *Panarchy: the State 2.0*

**CARL WATNER**  
THE EXIT OPTION (1989)

A lucid and reasoned plea for *no borders* and the *exit option*, everywhere and for everyone. This also means the end of territorialism (state monopolistic sovereignty) that is what the supporters of panarchy advocate.

SOURCE: *The Voluntaryist*, number 37, April 1989



THE IDEAL OF AN OPEN WORLD, one without political borders or passports, was once described by Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, in 1946:

"A diplomat asked me in London one day what the aim of my foreign policy was, and I said, 'To go down to Victoria Station, get a railway ticket, and go where the hell I liked without a passport or anything else'."

Voluntaryists can certainly concur with his sentiment. The more

collectivized and controlled a society is, the more political restrictions hamper freedom of movement and the right to travel. In this paper, we shall discuss the concepts of citizenship, passports and international travel as they relate to the free and the not-so-free society.

History teaches that the last resort of the individual against tyranny is the ability to escape from the tyrant. The Jews fled Egypt and the Pharaohs when things got too hot for them in Biblical days. The Separatists left Holland and England for the New World during the 17th Century. Large numbers of Jews and intellectual dissidents left Nazi Germany as they saw signs that World War II would break out. The very existence of the Berlin Wall demonstrates the threat that the communists fear from those who desire to escape.

Monetary exchange controls and restraints on the export of capital act in the same way as travel restrictions on the individual. Both the right to travel and the right to move one's money or capital around the world are forms of property rights.

As Charles Fried wrote in an article on *the borders of freedom*, « since most people do not have a unique and transportable talent, money represents the concrete expression of their effort, talent and good luck. To hold a man's money in while letting his person out seems liberal principally to the intellectual who imagines that he carries his fortune in his head. For most people, however, what they have earned is in some sense the precipitate of who they are and have been. »

The *exit option*, as Fried labelled it, is the last resort of those who reject collective authority. No one leaves their place of birth and home without great amounts of forethought.

To leave expresses exasperation and dissatisfaction with one's community and the way it is governed. It is the next to last gesture of a free man; the last being, as Seneca noted, the exit option of suicide.

Would a stateless world exist without travel restrictions? The only voluntaryist history we have to draw upon is the experience of the American colonists and pioneers in migrating and settling this country. Until 1856, there was no federal legislation governing the granting of passports, and until World War I no passport was required for entrance into or for residence in the United States (a temporary exception was made during the Civil War whereby all Americans and foreigners had

to present a passport on entering the country). Although the World War I regulations requiring passports were not in effect during the 1920s and 30s, the visa requirements of many other nations made the possession of a passport a practical necessity for American travelers. Since 1941, the federal government has required every American citizen who leaves the United States to have a valid passport (with certain exceptions as to destination).

Until World War I, passports issued to American travelers were primarily certificates of citizenship and a guarantee that diplomatic agents abroad would extend protection to its bearer.

Early passports were often issued by the Secretary of State in Washington, D.C., but also by consuls, governors of the states, other local authorities (the mayor of New Orleans issued passports as late as 1899), and even by notaries. It was not uncommon for peddlers in the larger cities in the United States to issue passports or "certificates of legitimation," that passed as passports to the unwary.

Given the experience of a nearly passport-less society for two and one half centuries (1650-1900), there seems little reason to believe there would be any legitimate market demand for routine international identification papers in a world without States.

After all, even today, we don't need a passport to cross local state borders or take up residence in a new state. If the system works domestically, it could work internationally.

If there were a demand for internationally recognized identification papers, private agencies or service bureaus, operating as adjuncts to insurance companies or defense services, would undoubtedly spring up to furnish them. They would probably issue certificates, something akin to the statist passport of today — a document featuring the photograph of the bearer, as well as his name and address. Such a certificate might have its authenticity guaranteed by the signature of one of the officers of the issuing agency, much as signatures are guaranteed today in commercial transactions and on contracts, by a signature guarantor at a bank.

The one thing that private passport agencies could not do would be to use their documents to restrict travel privileges, which is how nation-states have used the compulsory passport during most of the

last four hundred years. Passports were instituted in France prior to the Revolution in order to control the movement of certain classes of people, like vagrants, to whom they were issued in order to enable them to return to their country of origin. They were also issued to French artisans who wished to leave the country. Those who conceivably could carry off trade secrets were denied them.

In the German states, special passports were required for those citizens who were capable of military service (in order to prevent desertion and enlistment in foreign armies), for those leaving quarantined areas during epidemics, and for Jews traveling throughout the country. Soon after the Revolution in France (1792), a strict system of passport control was instituted, even though the Constitution of 1791 declared complete freedom of transit as one of the natural rights of man. The menace of political emigration, of desertion from the army, and flight abroad led the National Assembly to prohibit all persons without passports from traveling in France, and entering or departing the country. Subsequent laws of 1793 and 1795 confirmed these prohibitions and soon all the countries of Europe, with the exception of England, Sweden, and Norway, adopted the French system.

It was in this manner, that the passport, which originally was a « discretionary document granted at the request of travelers in order to insure their protection, or at most, a document required only of certain classes of people, was transformed into a compulsory official paper limiting individual freedom and imposed upon all solely in the interest of the State. »

Behind the idea of the passport and citizenship is the concept of allegiance. According to the State, each and every citizen has obligations: to obey the law, to pay taxes, and to serve militarily as required by law.

The roots of American citizenship may be traced back to English feudal law. The ancient English tradition — "Once an Englishman, always an Englishman!"—was known as the doctrine of perpetual or indelible allegiance. As it prevailed in the 17th and early 18th centuries, this ideology was in many ways one of the most powerful and totalitarian expressions of the nation-state in the West. As far as



the individual Englishmen was concerned, he was considered to owe allegiance from the moment of his birth.

In England, a person could not renounce his citizenship except by permission from the king in Parliament. It was the basis of all rights and duties and extended to the person in question the privilege of owning real property. Property ownership was not an inherent right as evidenced by the fact that aliens residing in England could not own land, and what land they did acquire or use was held only at the sufferance of the king.

In the United States, the development of citizenship and allegiance largely followed English law, though disputes arose as to whether British subjects could discharge their allegiance by becoming American citizens. This was one of the causes of the War of 1812. British seamen, due to the rigors of the Royal navy, increasingly sought the protection of the American flag by taking out naturalization papers in the United States. Although Britain never claimed the right to impress native-born Americans or to search American-flagged vessels, there were numerous instances of British captains forcibly kidnapping « deserters » off American ships. From 1809 to 1811, between 750 and 1000 men each year were captured by the Royal navy. Some of these men held dual citizenship, having been born British and then undergone U.S. naturalization. The issue was not ultimately resolved until the British naturalization Act of 1870, by which British subjects were able to renounce their citizenship, apart from an act of Parliament.

Are voluntaryists citizens of the United States of America? What are the requirements and obligations of citizenship? The last act of an alien before acquiring United States citizenship is the recitation of the following oath:

*I hereby declare on oath that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen, that I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the U.S.A. against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms in behalf of the U.S. when required by law; or that I will perform non-combatant service in the armed forces of the U.S. when required*

*by law; or that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; So help me God!*

Could you, in good conscience, accept these demands?

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**DAVID TAYLOR**  
FOR PANARCHY (1989)

The author spells out very lucidly the reasons why we should overcome national-statism. In order to do so it is necessary not only to believe that there are alternatives to national statism but also to want to explore and test whether some alternatives work better in satisfying our needs. After that, the road for Panarchy would be wide open.



THE FUNDAMENTAL EVIL which lies at the root of the most serious problems which today beset the human race is the institution of the territorial Nation-State which violently monopolizes political power within national boundaries over the entire face of the habitable earth.

The Nation-State is an inherently violent institution, born out of violence and surviving only by continued violence.

The inherent violence of National-Statism has finally led to the creation of massive nuclear arsenals and other weaponry with which the human race is now threatened with total extinction.

Throughout its devastating career National-Statism has been able to masquerade as the friend of humanity while slaughtering millions, but now it has been fully unmasked as humanity's most dangerous enemy,

for it has shown that it is prepared to annihilate the entire human race in a last desperate defence of its territorial dominion.

This threat to the very survival of the human race demonstrates not only the evil, but the complete and utter impracticality of the institution of National-Statism. It is now abundantly clear that we do not need such Nation-States to protect us; rather, we need to be protected from them!

In the American Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson maintains that the only just powers of a government are derived from the consent of the governed.

Governments which use violent and coercive means to impose their dominion, i.e., all territorial Nation-States, are no better than criminal-terrorist organizations.

Indeed, they are much worse, because they monopolize the surface of the earth and there is no escape from their tyranny.

The main methods by which Nation-States finance their continued existence are the criminal activities of robbery (taxation) and counterfeiting (inflation).

Taxation without consent is nothing short of robbery, and inflation, which is the flooding of the economy with worthless paper-money, is nothing less than counterfeiting.

PANARCHY (pan-archy: many chiefs; multi-government) is a system of competing, co-existing governments which conduct their operations within the same geographical territories without making any claims to those territories, and whose only powers derive from the consent of those they govern, i.e., those who voluntarily agree to submit to a particular government.

These voluntary governments are constituted and operate on the basis of contractual personal law rather than the coercive territorial law of the Nation-State.

The PANARCHIST principle does not impose any particular political ideology or regime on anyone.

Rather, it proposes to complete the liberation of humanity by establishing and institutionalizing political freedom, so that every-

body can live under the political regime of their choice. Only this final triumph of liberty can secure world peace and the future of the human race.

Everybody has different ideas on how they would like to be governed; some want governments that do a lot of things for them, others want governments that do very little. Since we will never get complete agreement on the subject, it would be best to let everybody have the government of their choice so they can be governed as they wish to be.

Choice of government, or PANARCHY, once implemented, would speed up the political enlightenment and progress of the human race immensely by allowing the most enthusiastic supporters of the different political theories to put their theories into practice among their voluntary followers.

The quickest learning is achieved by way of practical experience and demonstration, and it is certain that the success or failure of a particular political theory in practice would be extremely hard for anyone to ignore.

Before the idea of PANARCHY, or multi-government is dismissed as being too "impractical", let it be noted that only a few short years ago it was considered to be too "impractical" to allow freedom of religion to all the citizens of a State; but now it is realized by all sensible people that it is the only practical solution to the religious question.

It was finally seen to be impractical to convert everybody to the one faith either by peaceful persuasion or by force, so the disastrous and futile attempt was abandoned, and religious tolerance was extended to all.

We will eventually come to realize that the same applies in the political and economic spheres (if we are not firstly annihilated by territorial National-Statism).

It is eminently impractical to convert everyone to the same political and economic beliefs, not to mention the injustice of any attempt to impose such beliefs by force.

To try to impose one set of beliefs - whether these beliefs be religious, economic, or political - on everybody living within a particular

national territory, by means of political coercion and violence, is essentially totalitarian and anti-human.

Perhaps it may be thought that the PANARCHIST idea is impractical because it has so few adherents and proponents at present. But this is true of every new idea in its beginning and can quickly change as more and more people are attracted to it.

New ideas are precisely what we need at the present crisis-point in human history. The Statist idea has proved to be a dangerous delusion and must now be destroyed before it destroys us. We must cast it aside as a relic of our primitive past, and replace it with the new ideals of human freedom which are essential to the progress and survival of the human race.

The only thing that PANARCHY requires from each one of us is that we respect the right of each other to have the government of our choice. Until this right comes to be recognized as a fundamental human right, war will be inevitable, and we may finally bring down upon ourselves the "war to end all wars" which will also end all of us.

The genius of the idea of PANARCHY is that when it is fully grasped by minorities and minority groups, they will have the power to realize it, because all societies are composed entirely of minorities and are even ruled by minorities.

We can have self-government immediately. All that we have to do is to give up any desire to impose our own systems and theories on everybody else.

Then we will have more friends than enemies. Indeed, who would want, or dare, to be our enemy?

**RICHARD CB JOHANSSON**

TO THE MONOPOLISTS OF ALL PARTIES (2005)

This essay makes very clear that territorialism, i.e., state monopolistic territorial sovereignty, has not always existed in the past and so is not an inevitable fixture of social organization. And this should be kept in mind when confronted with the ravages and mass murders that state territorial rulers have committed, especially in the course of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when national territorial states were and are still dominant.

**Territorial vs. Non-Territorial Governance**

THE GUIDING principle behind the system of governance we have today, worldwide, we can refer to as 'territoriality' or 'territorial governance.' This means that the territorially sovereign states of today claim absolute political authority within their respective fixed territories. Wherever you are in the world today, you basically have to yield to the laws of that particular territory, regardless of their contents or whether you approve of them or not.

We could contrast the current system with a system of ‘non-territorial governance.’ In such a system, the laws don’t follow the territory, but rather the person. Thus, in one and the same place, it is possible for people to submit to various systems of laws. It is also possible for an individual to change system, i.e. the systems are in a way competing in best serving people’s needs, or start a new in case desired.

It seems that the guiding principles behind this system of non-territorial governance is so distinct from the present system of exclusive territorial governance that, in fact, the two systems cannot be regarded as anything else but opposites, mutually exclusive, or principally totally different in nature.

As I have written elsewhere, there was a time when the kind of territorially sovereign governments we see today were unknown. As one reporter from the past tells us, ‘it often happens that five men, each under a different law, would be found walking or sitting together.’ We can even see the remnants of this system in the consular jurisdictions, embassies, and how ships entering foreign harbors still carry and submit to the chosen flag.

### **Non-Territorial Tolerance in Ancient Times**

THERE ARE records of this system of non-territorial governance available from ancient Greece, Sparta, Egypt and Rome. For example, the ‘perioeci’ enjoyed Spartan protection as well as the right to manage their own communities. In Greece, special magistrates, ‘*xenodikai*’, were instituted for trying cases in which non-citizens were involved. In the Roman republic as well as in the early empire, there was a similar magistrate, *praetor peregrinus*. The ‘*peregrine*’, were not true foreigners; they were free inhabitants and subjects of Rome but neither citizens nor Latins. Thus, there were people that had the right to manage their own communities and live by their own laws within the same territory.

The examples are abundant. One important ingredient of Muslim laws (Sharia), originating in the Quran [1], is the so-called ‘*dhimmi*’ system, or later, in the Ottoman Empire, the ‘*millet*’ system. There is also evidence of Muslim non-territorial rights in ninth-century China.



In Rome, the system of non-territorial governance was abandoned as citizenship was extended to all people within Roman territories. After the fall of Rome, however, the system flourished. It was at this time that Bishop Agobard (779-840) filed a report to us about those five men sitting peacefully together at one spot while living under different laws. Romans, Lombards, Goths, Franks, Burgundians, Alemanns etc. all lived by their own laws for centuries, regardless of where they happened to be geographically. People could and did change their allegiance to laws. This is often referred to as the Personality of Laws.

This system was also present in the great Mediterranean trading cities, like Pisa, Venice and Genoa, and these places are often referred to as the cradle of our modern wealth creation.

### **Barbarian Tolerance**

EDWARD GIBBON, in his tome *The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire* (ch. 38), wrote the following in reference to the 'Laws of the Barbarian' of the fifth and sixth centuries:

"[T]he laws of the barbarians were adapted to their wants and desires, their occupations and their capacity; and they all contributed to preserve the peace, and promote the improvements, of the society for whose use they were originally established. The Merovingians, instead of imposing a uniform rule of conduct on their various subjects, permitted each people, and each family, of their empire freely to enjoy their domestic institutions; nor were the [remaining] Romans excluded from the common benefits of this legal toleration."

In a footnote to this section, Gibbon argued with our friend Bishop Agobard, saying that he "*foolishly* proposes to introduce an uniformity of law as well as of faith" (emphasis added).

Indeed, it seems just as foolish to propose uniformity of law as uniformity of faith. For how come tolerance is good in one sphere of life, and not in others? Why indeed stop at religious tolerance? Just as religious tolerance rejects uniformity of faith, the medieval kind of

non-territorial governance rejected the uniformity of laws (and thus also uniformity of faith). After all, it remains to be explained how tolerance can be good only one sphere of life, and not in others. Non-territorial governance does not stop at religious tolerance but extends it to all spheres of life; while this was a tolerant feature of the so-called barbarian laws, it seems to be a missing feature of the territorial monopolies of today.

### Conflict Solving

ONE INTUITIVE CONCERN in relation to non-territorial systems of laws would be how cases of conflict between members of different laws are to be treated. It turns out that conflicts were treated according to the principle of *actor sequitur forum rei* [i.e. plaintiff follows forum of the case, that is, the law of the defender or accused, not that of the accuser].

This principle has assumed a different meaning under the territorial governance of today than under non-territorial. Today, the territory in which the conflict arises, and its exclusive laws, determines the competent court for the case. This means that the plaintiff must bring suit against the defendant in the state of his domicile, habitual residence, or principal place of business. Thus, in line with territorialism, this has become a territorial principle. However, under non-territorial governance, and most likely according to the original meaning, the accuser follows the defendant into his court, i.e. the defendant is judged according to the laws he adheres to.

This seems to be both a natural and tolerant solution to conflicts. Simply imagine the opposite and this becomes evident - it would imply that other people are demanded to follow the way of living that you prefer, a demand not very tolerant and contradicting the personality of laws. However, for really serious crimes, like murder, "the law of the slain, not that of the slayer" would most likely indicate the competent forum. Exactly what crimes are to be regarded as serious enough to nullify the principle *actor sequitur forum rei* could be agreed

upon or stipulated in advance else be open to arbitration (this is also a reason for why those old laws were so concrete when it comes to crimes and punishment). Another way this used to be solved was by the use of mixed courts, i.e. courts capable of handling disputes between different laws.

### **Why Did Such Rights Exist?**

Now, when one thinks of it, the origins of non-territorial governance perhaps aren't that strange at all. For most of our common history, people have lived as nomads in small hunter-gather societies or in territorially dispersed communities of low average population density where strict borders were not claimed or upheld. In such societies they developed their own set of moral standards and laws (but perhaps mostly not yet written but memorized legislation). It became only natural that the laws followed the persons, not the territory. When encountering people from other such non-territorial communities, it would seem only natural to expect that those others lived by different moral standards and laws. To avoid conflict, it would be best not to try to impose one's own moral standards and laws on those others. To avoid that others try this, it only seems natural to abstain from it oneself. In case conflict arises, the best way to avoid further conflict would be to let the defendant be judged by his laws. Hence, the common question on a stranger's origins related to his law and customs, not only to his place of birth and ethnicity. Non-territorial governance thus presents itself as the tolerant and peaceful solution.

There are abundant written traces of non-territorial systems of governance in Africa, Europe, and Asia. Most likely, the system is as old as mankind and has existed everywhere. One thing is clear, such worldwide non-territorial rights did not originate in late European Imperialism or because of poor foreign judicial systems, as is often believed. These were later ingredients, imposed by already territorially sovereign, often European, governments in a very imperialist manner indeed.

## The Rise of Territorial Intolerance

BUT WHEN, how and why did these territorially sovereign states arise? It seems that the year 1648 is important in this regard. This was the year of the Peace of Westphalia, that ended the Thirty Years War. In these treaties the idea of exclusive territorial sovereignty basically replaced the theory of the personality of laws as the fundamental principle of international intercourse. However, the race for colonial possessions and similar territorialism had already started. Thus, territorialism didn't follow from the peace treaties but instead the idea of territorialism seems to have been an important reason for the Thirty Years' War to begin with.

How was non-territorial governance technically replaced by territorial sovereign states? There were six major ways: (1) by passing under the sovereignty of States which do not recognize or grant the right of exemption from local jurisdiction; (2) by passing under the temporary jurisdiction of such a State; (3) by breaking off from a State in which the extraterritorial system exists; (4) by becoming a protectorate of a State which does not concede rights of extraterritoriality; (5) by unilateral cancellation; and (6) by diplomatic negotiation leading to a mutual agreement on the abolition or preliminaries to it.

The technical details of each and every case in which extraterritoriality was abolished are very interesting, but what's really interesting are the reasons put forward why territorial sovereignty was to be preferred. This makes the last two categories of special interest, since they involve statements defending the changes. For example, we have the treaty between Turkey and Soviet Government in Russia in 1921, ending the non-territorial rights in Turkey:

"The Government of the R. S. F. S. R. considers the Capitulatory régime [i.e. the non-territorial rights] to be incompatible with the free national development and with the sovereignty of any country; and it regards all the rights and acts relating in any way to this régime as annulled and abrogated" (Liu 1925, p. 185, citing the Soviet/Turkey treaty). [2]

It seems non-territorial governance indeed is incompatible with 'free national development' and territorial state sovereignty. We all know the results of 'free national development' in Leninist Russia and Turkey of that time. Another example involved Persia and the Soviet government:

"[T]he R. S. F. S. R. formally affirms once again that it definitely renounces the tyrannical policy carried out by the colonizing governments of Russia which has been overthrown by the will of the workers and peasants of Russia.

Inspired by this principle and desiring that the Persian people should be happy and independent and should be able to dispose freely of its patrimony, The Russian Republic declares the whole body of treaties and conventions concluded with Persia by the Tsarist Government, which crushed the rights of the Persian people, to be null and void" (Liu 1925, p. 198, citing the Soviet/Persia treaty). [2]

The quote makes sense only if one replaces 'the people' by 'the people in power', i.e. those running the territorially sovereign state. Power of the state seems to have been the words of the day. Is there really much difference today?

Often the non-territorial rights were said to give rise to 'governments in the Government' (or 'States within States' as is a more common expression), whereas the truth is that various kinds of governments peacefully coexist in the same territory. That's indeed a problem for a Government seeking to be a territorially sovereign monopolist. It dislikes the competition and obviously tries to abolish it, perhaps by picturing itself as some kind of mother-government with numerous wild children running around wildly - not very convincing, nor very true.

### **Territorialism, Major Warfare and Mass-Murder**

TERRITORIALLY SOVEREIGN MONOPOLIST governments have two terrible habits. First of all, they tend to create disputes with other territorial

monopolists. Now, the creation of disputes is far from only a territorialist notion. However, what makes disputes between territorial sovereigns so dreadful is that it becomes very easy to make people believe that the people living on the other side of the border are really different from people on this side of the border. The monopoly on the legal right to use force makes it easy to suppress any nonconformists, dissidents and opponents - and provide the false impression of unity. This ends any discrimination between the really bad guys and ordinary people. This allows for total war involving whole populations. It provides motives, targets, finance, conscripts, and 'culprits' according to the principle of 'collective responsibility'. All those taxed, conscripted or otherwise victimized by a government are all supposed to be its supporters.

Thus, territorial claims are a major source of war, especially large-scale war. Just think of the fighting at WWI Verdun, with 700,000 casualties, mostly conscripts, in a territory of not even ten square miles. Just think of the indiscriminate killings of hundreds of thousands of civilian innocents in Hiroshima, Nagasaki or Dresden, or those elsewhere that simply are referred to as 'collateral damage'. 'All Germans are bad and must be bombed, all Japanese are bad and must be bombed'; who are the true barbarians when such savage acts are committed?

Secondly, territorially sovereign monopolist governments have also the terrible habit of waging war on its own population, or selected parts of it. The monopoly on the legal right to use force makes it easy to persecute people without meeting any major resistance. Genocide committed by territorially sovereign states like in Soviet Russia, National-Socialist Germany, China, Cambodia, etc., could reach terrible proportions, with some 170 millions killed in the twentieth century alone, mainly because those governments could carry on their misdeeds without meeting any strong domestic counter forces.

Modern major warfare and mass-murder is essentially a consequence of territorially sovereign governments. We should, however, not be led into believing that non-territorial governance would eliminate all abuses; everything can be abused and those 'good-old-days' of non-territorial governance perhaps weren't all too good. Non-territo-

rial governance can be established in both tolerant and intolerant ways, as history clearly shows. It is also a fact that former and in some regards more tolerant non-territorial governance was transformed into more intolerant territorial authoritarianism. Nevertheless, by eliminating any claims to territorial sovereignty, or curbing any early seeds to such claims, the major warfare and mass-murder of territorialism seem far less likely to occur again, while at the same time this would instigate a move towards greater tolerance.

### **Qua lege vivis?**

THUS, to the monopolists of all parties, there is a new message: It is time to reject the monopolist government indoctrination and learn about our past! The idealistic, naïve and intolerant territorialists have had their say - they have been the true utopians. It is time to reject the mother of all monopolies, and its warfare, mass-murders and political intolerance. It is time to once again consider the non-territorial tolerance.

Maybe one day we will once again have a system of governance where each and every one has the full political freedom of choosing and having the desired government, with as much economic freedom as desired. This is not naïve or utopian, but rather a very tolerant, humane and civilized. Maybe one day it will once again be perfectly natural "that five men, *each under a different law*, would be found walking or sitting together."

Maybe one day it will once again be perfectly natural, on the encounter of a stranger, to ask: *Qua lege vivis?* According to what law are you living?

### **Endnotes**

[1] From Quran, Sura cix: "Say: O ye unbelievers! // I worship not what ye worship, // And ye are not worshippers of what I worship;

// And I am not a worshipper of what ye have worshipped, // And ye are not worshippers of what I worship. // To you your religion; and to me my religion."

[2] The full reference is: Shih Shun Liu (1925), *Extraterritoriality: Its Rise and Its Decline*, New York. Columbia University Press, 1925



**GIAN PIERO DE BELLIS**

**PANARCHY - POLYARCHY - PERSONARCHY**  
(2005)

A group of individuals, deeply dissatisfied with the dominant mental attitudes and material practices based on compulsory conformity to the majority and the restriction of personal choices, have drafted a series of principles that they intend to present to everybody interested in finding a way out of the present individual subjection and apathy.



THE PRINCIPLES ARE PRESENTED under the name of

**Panarchy - Polyarchy - Personarchy**

Panarchy, Polyarchy and Personarchy indicate that what is aimed at is:

- a worldwide open framework free from territorial sovereignties.
- a variety of voluntary systems of personal and social organization, like parallel autonomous societies, even within the same territory.
- full freedom of association, circulation and action for each and every human being.

The principles have been sketched under the following headings:

1. Aterritorialism
2. Self-rule
3. Freedom of association - freedom of disassociation
4. Voluntary engagements - voluntary contributions
5. Personal liberties - personal responsibilities
6. Freedom to act (enterprise)
7. Freedom to interact (exchange)
8. Choices (utilities - services - agencies)
9. Variety - optionality - discretionality
10. Cosmopolitanism - localism - personalism

### **1. Aterritorialism**

A territory comprises a vast and various set of natural and human-made resources that constitute the so-called world common heritage. This ought to be like an open resource for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations, i.e. of all people from all lands.

Territorial sovereignty or territorialism is the pretence of the rightfulness of exclusive sovereignty (e.g. national state sovereignty) by some entity.

Aterritorialism means the non-recognition of any claim to territorial dominance by any power, whether institutional or not.

According to aterritorialism, no so-called sovereign power can rightfully appropriate a whole continent, country or region and dictate rules that are binding for all the people living on the same territory, nor can it deny the use of or access to a land, a river, a thoroughfare or any territorial resource, part of the common heritage.

At the same time, nobody should infringe the property rights of individuals or groups. The use of and access to their properties (e.g. a building, a specific tract of land, a cultivated field, etc.) is regulated directly by the owners (individuals, communities) and the rules affect only the owners and those who have been granted use-access. These property rights and property rules are valid only in so far as they do not become impositions spreading out into the common heritage.

The only general rules acceptable and desirable in a territory belonging to the common heritage are norms of expediency (e.g. driving on the left or on the right) and health regulations (e.g. standards of hygiene).

The aim of those advocating aterritorialism is to achieve, in due time and through a voluntary process, the overall extinction of every territorial sovereignty and the promotion of self-rule.

## **2. Self-rule**

A rule is generally a command by or to a person. The basic rules of social interaction are usually internalized at an early age by a human being as long as the commands are sympathetic to human nature and to the protection/promotion of the human being.

It is almost impossible for basic rules to be fairly and successfully imposed from the outside. Imposed rules are likely to generate continuous frictions leading, sooner or later, to bloody clashes.

The healthy condition (ethical and rational) is either that of self-rule (self-determination) or one leading to self-rule.

Self-rule means that it is not for a king or a majority (through an elected assembly) or anybody else to decide about social and economic issues but it is up to individuals through their free choices and continuous-voluntary adjustments to reality. The despotism of one or the despotism of many (even a large majority) can generate identical negative results: the subjection of the individual and his moral misery and personal helplessness.

Self-rule, by contrast, is the way most conducive to true personal development (moral, mental, material) and full social acceptance (universal reciprocal respect).

The concept and practice of self-rule include, clearly, also the option of appointing elected rulers (as in a representative democracy) for those who prefer to be exempt from the process and effort of decision-making. The only difference with current representative democracy, albeit a substantial one, is that in the case of genuine self-rule the decisions taken by the elected representatives will affect only those who have elected them and will not concern those who have chosen other representatives for their voluntary communities or those

who want to take autonomous decisions without any delegation of power.

Self-rule should then make room for all possible forms of social and political representation or non-representation and people should consider legitimate, and be bound only by, the decisions of whatever political, social, philosophical group or other they might be members of.

The aim is to stop political intolerance that imposes on everybody the will of the majority (or of a strong ruler or a strong minority) in the form of state policy. This is the same mass opium and oppression that once appeared as religious intolerance in the form of a state religion.

Presently, self-rule is allowed in some societies only in regard to some very personal matters like religious practices or sexual orientations.

For the rest the tyranny of the majority dominates, that is, largely, the power of pressure groups and vested interests prevailing over manipulated masses, isolated minority groups and individuals.

Self-rule means in essence that:

- the norms affecting primarily the life of an individual (education, health, work, travel, insurance, retirement, etc.) are
- the norms regulating primarily the life of the individual within a community and between communities are directly established and administered by the individual members of the community affected by those norms, or by representatives voluntarily

An essential pre-condition for the compliance by the individual with communitarian norms concerning his social life is the existence of personal freedom of association with or disassociation from any community.

### **3. Freedom of association - freedom of disassociation**

Freedom of association means that any reasoning individual can freely decide of which societal group/groups he/she wants to be a member.

The freedom of association cannot be separated from the freedom of disassociation. That means that every person can opt out of the community he has joined whenever he wishes to do so, after having

absolved himself from any existing contractual obligation previously voluntarily accepted.

However, if the individual has been victimized by the community or essential contractual obligations towards him have been broken, the member can disassociate from the group without any delay or charge and join or establish a new community.

Everybody should also be free to live as quite autonomous human beings bound only by their contractual engagements and by respect for the rights and liberties of others.

To no one should be automatically ascribed any nationality or religion or membership of any institution (state, church, guild) or be attributed any role or status (like in a caste or class system) without his prior individual choice and consent.

The automatic ascription to a national group under national rulers is the equivalent, in our time, of the attribution of the status of servant under the feudal master for the newborn within the feudal domain.

The realization of these two freedoms (association - disassociation) would, at long last, dispose of any feudalist and absolutist remnants still operating under territorial statism.

The extensive use of the technologies of communication and transport is already making a mockery of any pretension or illusion of forcibly restricting the associations of individuals belonging to territorial groups under the control of the so-called nation state.

The necessary complement to the freedom of association - disassociation, and a more dynamic implementation of it, consists in the voluntary engagements - voluntary contributions to the group(s) of which one is member.

#### **4. Voluntary engagements - voluntary contributions**

Voluntary engagements and voluntary contributions mean active involvement and active support for the group or community chosen by an individual.

The implementation of these two principles should lead to the extinction of any forced demand on the part of any power, as for instance compulsory enrolment (e.g. military conscription) or compulsory exaction (e.g. fiscal impositions).

In other words, compulsory involvement and compulsory taxes are to be replaced by voluntary engagements and voluntary contributions.

Nobody should be forced to do anything or contribute to anything he/she does not approve of, beyond the respect of voluntarily agreed contracts. Even the group to whom one has associated oneself cannot ask compulsorily for engagements and contributions unless those were pre-conditions for membership. In that case the individual who no longer wants to fulfil those obligations can disassociate from the group.

Voluntary engagements and voluntary contributions are the centre-pieces of communities based on individuals who decide the degree and type of power that the community can exert on them (from total voluntary submission to personal unrestricted autonomy).

The focus is then not on the group (the collective will), as in the feudal or neo-feudal (i.e. statist) society, but on the individual (the personal will).

For this reason, whatever decisions the individual takes concerning his personal and social sphere (from full autonomy = voluntary independence, to full heteronomy = voluntary submission) paramount importance has to be attributed to personal liberties (of choice) and personal responsibilities (for consequences).

### **5. Personal liberties - personal responsibilities**

The true essence and the rightful expectations of every human being are to be free from impositions and limitations unless they are voluntarily and willingly accepted.

This means also that nobody may infringe anybody's choices whenever they are compatible with anybody else's freedom. External interventions are not acceptable even if they are made (or said to be made) in the name of the so-called public interest or on behalf of the person's hypothetical well-being. Every adult human being should be the arbiter of his own interest and well-being.

The other side of personal liberty is personal responsibility for the decisions undertaken by each individual. This means that the consequences (success or failure) of an individual's actions or omissions fall on him/her alone and cannot be forcibly shared with or imposed upon somebody else.

The practice of personal liberties (of choices) and personal responsibilities (for consequences) is the only known way to initiate and achieve a sound learning process for human beings.

There is no rational reason or historical experience that should convince any human being to abdicate his own liberties and responsibilities. As the ancients said, every human being is the maker of his own fortune (or misfortune).

Contrary to all this, territorial statism acts according to the principles of limited freedom and collective responsibility. They arose from the delegation of decisions to a few men in power, generating on one side general irresponsibility and on the other side unjustifiable collective responsibility for the actions of these few leaders.

This is the same ill-logic or sick logic implemented by terrorist groups when they strike against unarmed individuals (in New York, Madrid, Paris, Moscow, etc.). This ill-logic is also extensively practiced by many states that act as the worst terrorist groups when they drop bombs on a population (in Coventry, Dresden, Hiroshima, Grozny, and in so many other places) that happens to live on the "wrong" side of a supposed divide.

The reality that animates personal liberties and underlies personal responsibilities can be summarized in the social and economic sphere by two basic principles of civilization: the freedom to act (enterprise) and the freedom to interact (exchange).

## **6. Freedom to act (enterprise)**

Freedom to act means that there are no external interferences of any type (positive or negative) on the enterprising activities of anyone by anyone. In other words, no one can get in the way of any producer unless it is for the purpose of preventing damage or securing compensation.

Individuals (singularly or collectively) are very capable of looking after or willing to learn how to look after their own interests, if institutional restrictions and manipulations do not render this ability and effort useless and vain or even outlaw such self-help endeavours.

One of the most blatant restrictions is in the form of occupational licensures introduced by the state (in direct furtherance of feudal prac-

tices) in order to perpetuate a caste or class system. These feudal remnants are kept with the deceitful excuse of protecting producers and consumers but in reality with the aim of favouring the strong (organised lobbies) and exploiting the weak (isolated citizens).

For this reason the entry into an institutional register of producers (workers, professionals) should be left to the free decision of the interested parties and should not be a pre-requisite for getting a job or practicing an activity. All that is necessary is the availability of all sorts of relevant information concerning producers and products (goods and services).

Freedom to act, then, requires getting rid of all compulsory state interventions, which lead only to a condition of sectorial favouritism and general dependency, besides damaging enterprising producers and thrifty consumers.

The necessary complementary principle to the freedom to act (enterprise) is the freedom to interact (exchange).

### **7. Freedom to interact (exchange)**

Freedom to interact means the abolition of every state manufactured barrier (tariffs, quotas, passports, visas, censorship, etc.) to the freedom of movement by individuals and the freedom of exchanges among individuals and groups of goods, services, and ideas.

Freedom of exchange is achievable only through:

- full freedom of information and communication, making it possible for everybody to participate unhampered in a flow of images, sounds and concepts.
- full freedom of trade and full freedom for volunteers to experiment with their own exchange media, value standard, clearing and credit systems.
- full freedom of movement, because the world's common heritage belongs to all living beings and should not be monopolized by nation states and divided into national or supranational territorial cages.

The freedom to interact is compatible with the existence of secluded enclaves of people who do not want to mingle with anybody and who prefer to live in a closed society. Closed communities and communities which want to keep to traditional life styles do have the right not to be



disturbed and trampled on. Nobody should interfere in the decisions voluntarily assumed by the members of those communities.

What should eventually be overcome is the fixing of borders by any power, affecting, indiscriminately, large populations or concerning spaces that are the common heritage of all living creatures. For this reason, closed societies and cultural or economic protectionism cannot extend to areas so big as to forcibly include people who do not share these views and practices.

Any imposition of political, economic and social apartheid (to be distinguished from voluntary separateness) is not only a crime against humanity; it is also an act totally at odds with current technology (of transport and communication) and, especially, with the natural desire of exploration and self-improvement that has always characterized the human being.

In order that every individual be allowed to shape his life according to his own views we need a full range of choices with respect to all kinds of utilities, services and agencies, especially those so far monopolized by territorial states.

### **8. Choices (utilities - services - agencies)**

Individuals and communities should be free to organize for themselves or to choose among freely competing providers, concerning:

- utilities: gas, water, electricity, telephone, etc.
- services: educational, medical, for retirement, etc.
- agencies: for protection, for justice, etc.

Only in recent times has the way been opened for a free choice in utilities providers, with unquestionable benefits for the consumers. There is no sensible justification for not continuing the process, finally reaching all sorts of services and agencies still under state monopoly.

In societies characterized by choices, everybody should be committed to pay only for the services he wants and uses or for the package deal of services that he and the community of which he is member have contracted for. Further contributions should be made only on a voluntary basis, according to the assessments and preferences of the individual.

The sooner we realize that self-help and free choice between

different providers in every field can produce better services at a better price, the sooner we will put an end to the mental and material hold that states have exerted on the provision of (quite often appalling) services, compulsorily financed by everybody irrespective of their quality and desirability.

One of the central aspects of free choice is the setting up and running of voluntary protective agencies for assisting in providing security and resolving conflicts.

The course of history has shown over and over again that when individuals rely for their protection on territorial monopolistic organizations (the army, the police, the judiciary) over which they have either minimal control or no control whatsoever, their security and freedom is at great risk.

For this reason individuals and communities will replace the monopolistic state agencies with a number of different protective agencies, with very limited and circumscribed power and under the control of the individuals, in the same way as people control the performance of a utility provider and can change it if unsatisfied.

These protective agencies, to which everybody could contribute in various ways, are meant to provide help and facilitate self-help for the safeguard of life, the respect of contracts and the prevention of any infringement of personal freedom.

Apart from that, anything goes, that is variety, optionality, and discretionality.

### **9. Variety - optionality - discretionality**

The basic principles here advocated characterizing the life of individuals and communities are those of:

- variety (many different life styles and forms of social, economical and political organization).
- optionality (existence of many actual and potential choices in all fields).
- discretionality (individual free-will and personal power of decision).

These principles can be fully implemented only after the abolition of all monopolistic territorial powers and in the presence of free

competition and cooperation in political, social and economic communities and activities.

Competition and cooperation are two sides of the same coin; they strengthen those who practice them (producers, performers, etc.) and benefit those who enjoy the results of them (e.g. consumers, spectators, etc.). Cooperation in total absence of competition means a rigged game and a static society because it would block the emergence of competence and competent people as a result of competition; competition in total absence of cooperation means paranoiac behaviour and a destructive society, suspicious of everything and everybody.

An essential condition for the proper interplay of competition and cooperation is the freedom of movement of individuals, ideas, goods and services.

At the same time, as already pointed out, the principles of variety - optionality - discretionality demand that everybody accept and respect also those communities whose members voluntarily decide to live in a way that does not allow, internally, for the free movement of individuals, ideas, goods and services.

The solution, as usual, is to accommodate every possible type and style of life in every kind of political, economic and social community of free members (variety), enhancing the range of choices of individuals (optionality) and accepting the autonomous decisions of each and every one concerning their own lives (discretionality).

This leads to the parallel development of cosmopolitanism, localism and personalism.

### **10. Cosmopolitanism - localism - personalism**

Cosmopolitanism, localism and personalism are views and ways of life that are variously shared by all human beings.

We should accept every possible mix or lack of mix by every individual as long as it results from his/her own voluntary, i.e. not imposed, choices.

In other words, acknowledging the existence of a multiplicity and variety of communities and individuals, each free to develop specific distinctive features, means accepting and respecting every possible type and style of freedom.

This includes also, for reasons of logical and factual consistency, the freedom not to be free, e.g. the freedom to choose to be under a protective master or to live within restrictive barriers.

Love of freedom and fear of freedom must both find expression at a personal level and through political and social organizations (i.e. parallel societies within the same territory), with nobody imposing one or the other upon dissenters but everybody accepting or realizing only for himself what he thinks most suitable and desirable.

In other words:

**To each the government or non-governmental society  
of his/her choice**

For every human being, freedom consists only in acting according to his own inclinations and desires without being coerced or manipulated by anybody and without coercing or manipulating anybody. For some, freedom can be the acceptance of voluntary servitude or seclusion in the name of a faith or belief or for any personal conviction and motivation.

The only aspect that is not acceptable is to forcibly subject unwilling individuals, even if this is presented under the deceitful labels of democracy, public interest, national sovereignty or, alas, the promotion of personal freedom and welfare.

The individuals imbued with the ideology of territorial statism believe, consciously or unconsciously, that it is acceptable and highly desirable to force all people in a territory to be identically free or equally un-free.

This is the source of every irrational, intolerant and incapacitating behaviour.

We should allow full development to variety, optionality and discretionality, i.e. the plurality of forms and ways of thinking and behaving according to one's own desires and choices.

This would result in the flourishing of cosmopolitanism, localism, and personalism to suit every human being.

Only then will we achieve a long overdue aspiration:

**To each according to his/her own will - desires  
From each according to his/her own evaluations - decisions**

In a not so distant past many considered religious freedom for the dissenters and social emancipation for the powerless as a sure way towards immorality and chaos.

Presently some or many hold the same views with regard to the freedom of individuals from territorial state sovereignty and the attainment of universal personal empowerment.

On the contrary, we think that it is not only desirable but also advisable that the principles of religious tolerance should be extended to include, especially, political tolerance. The acceptance of many different churches within the same territory should be paralleled by the acceptance of many co-existing governments and non-governmental communities, each one managing and caring for those who have chosen them and feel represented by them. Given the fact that the basic rules of civility are universal (i.e. not based on or determined by territorial governments) and are likely to continue prevailing amongst civilized individuals, and that any individuals who commit crimes can still be dealt with by the various communities through their various aterritorial governments and protective agencies, there seems to be no reason why experiments of political freedom cannot be undertaken with the same success as the ones that promoted religious freedom. The only obstacles are in the furrows of our own mind and the blinkers we put around our own eyes.

For all these reasons, if you have an open mind and your mental and perceptual eyesight is strong and sharp, you should explore and contribute to the principles and practices of

**Panarchy - Polyarchy - Personarchy**

**MICHAEL S. ROZEFF**

LIBERTY IN THE CHOICE OF GOVERNANCE  
(2009)

Throughout this essay Michael Rozeff keeps repeating in various ways the same message, namely: liberty to choose one's governance. The fact that such a simple and reasonable request (already contained in the Declaration of Independence: "government ... deriving their just power from the consent of the governed") should be so insistently reiterated makes someone wonder in which type of crazy world we live nowadays. Then it is sufficient to remember the familiar slogans: War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength, and we immediately understand that we are still in State Oceania in permanent conflict with State Estasia and State Eurasia.

That is why essays like this are necessary in order to accelerate the moment when Big Brother (the monopolistic territorial state) is erased from the face of the earth and the ghastly nightmare that it has engineered is finally gone.

SOURCE: LewRockwell.com, February 17, 2009



WHAT IS GOVERNMENT? It is an organizational vehicle by which people hope to guide certain of their interactions. It is the framework and means by which they obtain governance. Governance, or the regulation of certain of their interactions, is the basic good they seek when they institute a government.

Liberty in the choice of governance has its roots in liberty of a person to decide the course of his or her own life. I regard liberty in the choice of governance as good in itself and as instrumentally good, both for persons and groups of persons. The basic political idea of panarchism that relates to government is that a person consents to his or her governance. Panarchism's ideal is governance of one's choice. Liberty in the choice of governance is the root of panarchism, as opposed to tyranny, or being forced to live under a government.

Ideas of force differ among different persons. There exists the possibility of a vast range of modes of governance, and history shows a number of different realizations. One person's compulsion may well be another person's liberty. Panarchy contemplates a variety of different and co-existing modes of governance.

The moment that an observer makes claims about what a government's structure is or how it is to be formed, he is expressing a personal view with which others can differ. If John Adams should say that we need a constitution for Massachusetts and write one, or that it should be voted on using majority rule, or that it should guarantee certain rights, or that it should be perpetual, or that a particular set of people should vote on it, and so on, he is narrowing the possible frameworks and also their evolution over time. He is deciding in advance who the relevant persons are that will be in the group deciding the matter and even how their votes shall count. This runs counter to panarchism.

The panarchist does not seek to impose a form of governance for others, although she may certainly argue that some forms are preferable to others, not only for herself but for other persons. I call myself an anarchist (as well as a panarchist) because my personal preference is for no government-as-we-know-it. I want governance. I think governance cannot be avoided wherever people live together. The form of it, in my opinion, should be so decentralized and open to personal choice

that it will hardly be recognized for being government. My anarchist opinions are not my views on panarchism. Panarchism takes precedence by far, for it is a general social theory. It logically precedes the choice of a particular form of governance.

Speaking as an anarchist, I have frequently criticized government-as-we-know-it. I still do. That is the voice of someone demanding liberty and seeking to persuade others of the same. But I wish to distinguish clearly my preferences from those who favor this government that we share. Since I am forced to live under a government, I do not regard it as government at all. I do not wish to be tyrannized by words. So I say that what we call "government" today I do not dignify by that term, inasmuch as it is tyrannical. People who feel that they are living under tyranny are prevented from choosing their form of government. For them, the "government" is not government at all: it is a whip and a chain and a jail. It is a power that robs them of their humanity. I define government as only being government when it is legitimated by consent of those governed. Being "ruled" by a gang or by a dictator or by a tyrant, without one's consent, has nothing in common with legitimate government. It is a contradiction in terms to say that one is governed by a tyrant. One is not ruled by a tyrant. One is pushed around. The English language, unfortunately, lacks this distinction in the single word "rule." One can have certain social affairs managed by governance without being ruled by a sovereign power. To be controlled by force is not the same as being ruled by a legitimate form of government. One is a criminal endeavor, the other a peaceful and consensual matter. Confusing these two relations dulls the moral sense and places them on the same plane where they do not belong. This manner of thinking is an inheritance from Aristotle, perpetuated to this day. Let us bury it.

How does panarchism differ from anarcho-capitalism? Since anarcho-capitalism is a form of anarchism, it expresses a personal preference for a particular form of governance and government. It is too great a digression and task to discuss what anarcho-capitalism is or is not. For current purposes, I use a quote from Wiki: "Anarcho-capitalism (also known as free-market anarchism) is an individualist anar-



chist political philosophy that advocates the elimination of the state and the elevation of the sovereign individual in a free market."

If the state were solely a tyranny, as I believe some prominent supporters of anarcho-capitalism see it and define it, then there would be agreement between panarchism and anarcho-capitalism on that score. However, the state is not solely a tyranny. It has many supporters. Many people vote for it and its programs. There exists a certain amount of consent and support for the state and what it does. There is a demand for states of various kinds, and we see this throughout the world and in history. The very variety of states indicates varying demands. We see this variety of demand in that some of those dissatisfied with the large governments of the present wish to go back to the smaller governments of the past. To advocate elimination of the state, as this quote suggests the anarcho-capitalist does, is to advocate the imposition of one's own preference for a form of governance on others. Not everyone wants free markets in everything or the elimination of the state in its entirety. A panarchist does not advocate the elimination of the state as a general matter, even if as an anarchist that is his personal preference or even if he tries to persuade others to prefer living with a vastly reduced state or even no state.

The panarchist does not advocate elevating the sovereign individual in a free market. You may personally want a society with social relations of a particular kind, as may I, but a panarchist is not intent on making this happen for others, only for himself in conjunction with willing others.

The panarchist advocates liberty in the choice of governance.

Nowhere have I mentioned territory. It is implicit in the idea of panarchy that territorial borders that have been made by some men, more or less arbitrarily or by force of arms and other such means and not by legitimate means such as working the land, cannot be a basis for classifying and grouping people together against their wills or without their consent. In fact, no arbitrary criterion can be imposed from an external source and still maintain liberty in the choice of governance. Territory is one such criterion but there are others such as tribe, color, religion, ethnicity, class, population density, age, sex, and so on.

The anarcho-capitalist who advocates no state is implicitly

assuming that all persons in a given territory that the state has proclaimed its own form a people that should be freed from that state and all its operations and programs. The libertarian who advocates the liberty to use any drug is implicitly assuming a territorial domain for this freedom. The expert on money who proposes a gold standard is implicitly assuming a territorial domain for its operation. Similarly, when John Adams proposes a constitution for Massachusetts, he is thinking about all the people within certain borders. In all these cases and more, the advocate of liberty is injecting her personal preferences. She is actually pointing out how she prefers to live and how she thinks others should live, and she is labeling this preference as liberty. Naturally, this approach is rejected by those who want certain features of the state. There are those who want drugs prohibited or abortion prohibited or who want social insurance through government. The "liberty" advocated by the libertarian or anarchist is compulsion from their viewpoint. It threatens their preferred way of life.

In trying to achieve liberty for all, the libertarian or anarchist is his own worst enemy. He alienates all those who feel threatened by some aspects of his liberty program that they dislike. Furthermore, he argues interminably with his fellow libertarians and anarchists over the 25 percent of issues over which they disagree.

The panarchist, by advocating liberty in the choice of governance, by implication does not place governance for others on a basis of anything necessarily territorial, religious, ethnic, or any other criterion. Those who create their own governance may willingly choose such a criterion, but the panarchist idea does not include any such basis in its assumptions.

If those who favor liberty are ever to make significant headway in gaining a greater degree of liberty, they cannot allow their personal preferences for living in liberty to override the fact that panarchy is the only logical ideal that is consistent with all kinds and stripes of personal preferences.

There will never be a successful liberty movement until there is agreement on a single overriding ideal; to be divided is to be conquered. Liberty in the choice of government is such an ideal. The problem of unifying has to do with what liberty means. Libertarians,

anarchists, and panarchists cannot succeed unless they unite under one banner or one demand, which, as it now seems to me, is liberty to choose one's governance. It means liberty to form a group (or associate) anywhere on earth, including dispersed over the earth's surface, and within that group to have consent of the governed.

There are numerous libertarians in America, perhaps the majority of them, that want to change the Constitution or restore it or any number of other similar attitudes, or else they want to change the laws we live under. In seeking these changes, they assume that they will be bettering the lot of others by giving them liberty. They then run into enormous resistance, the reason being that there exists a vast range of personal preferences that cannot be worked out under any one form of government, including the libertarian form that brings its version of liberty to all. All of this effort seeks to work out our collective destinies within a single and same framework of governance. This can only be tyrannical insofar as many object to that framework and do not consent.

If the program for liberty were elevated to one overriding aim - liberty to choose governance - these difficulties would melt away. If all those who seek liberty made it clear that they only seek to govern themselves by their own consent and to let others govern themselves by their own consent, they'd be closer to the idea of the colonists in separating from Great Britain. They'd be united. They'd have a far greater chance of realizing an improvement in liberty. They'd no longer threaten others, and the resistance of others would have the ground cut out from beneath it. They'd have the high moral ground, for who can justifiably criticize someone who wants to have the liberty to choose his governance? Who can dispute that a government should have the consent of the governed? If these principles are conceded, then the only reservations and criticisms become practical ones. People will wonder how can this be done? How will it work? Those matters can always be worked out once the principle, which is all-important, is conceded. That principle is this: Liberty in the choice of governance. Liberty in the choice of governance without an imposed territorial restriction or any other imposed criterion, while celebrating the liberty for persons to group themselves on any basis of their choosing, or none at all.

**DWIGHT JOHNSON**

THE END OF MODERN SERFDOM (2009)

A beautiful and down to earth presentation of the very sensible idea of Panarchy.



What is a serf?

A serf is a kind of slave, someone who works for another involuntarily.

I am a serf.

When I moved to Cherry Hill a few years ago, I was expected (forced, actually) to pay taxes to the township, the public school system, and the fire district. I wasn't invited to, or asked to.

As a resident of the township, I was expected to, no questions asked, or else. In return, I was provided services of various types from the town and the fire district, and I got to pay for the education of other people's children. I also got to vote for members of the town council, and to vote on tax increases for the schools and fire district.

Not once did any one I voted for make it to town council. Not once did the vote for school and fire budgets go the way I desired. I'm not alone in this situation. In the last election for town council, four

Democrats were elected, and zero Republicans. This has been the way elections go here, at least since I arrived in this town. But the elections are rather close. The highest vote-getter among the Democrats got 10,597, while among the Republicans the highest count was 9,506, a difference of only 1,091, or just over 10%. That means that nearly half those people who bothered to vote in that election have no one representing them on the council, and haven't for many years. We are without a voice there. But, because we live here, we must work to pay the taxes.

That is modern serfdom. For most of my fellow serfs, life here is not odious. But we are still serfs. For a person raised on the idea that we Americans are a free people, the realization that I am really a serf chafes a bit.

There is a solution to this sad situation, one that would be not terribly disruptive to my fellow serfs, but would lift the stigma of serfdom from my own neck, and from the necks of those who feel equally unfree by our state in life.

Just in the last year I came across the concept called panarchy.

Panarchy is not a form of government, but a philosophy that changes the way we look at the role of government in society. Governments everywhere in the world today are basically the same. They are monolithic and monopolistic. While they may have two or more active political parties involved, they are still territorial monopolies that claim jurisdiction over all people within their territories.

Decisions made by congresses, executives, and bureaucrats in these governments are unary, that is, they always involve imposing a single way of doing things on all the inhabitants of the territory. If I disagree with any of these decisions, I can complain, and I can threaten to vote for someone who agrees with me (and a lot of good these two things have done me). If I really disagree, I can skip town or leave the country. What I cannot do is remain in the place where I am and redirect my taxes away from that which I disagree with, and place them with people who would use them to do something far closer to what I actually want done with them. The more I think of this situation, the more absurd it seems to me.

I don't want to stop paying taxes. I want to be able to direct my

taxes to groups that will do with them things I personally agree with. Don't you?

Now you may be among the 10,597 people in this town that are more or less happy with how your taxes are being spent. But perhaps you are among the 9,506 who, like me, are more than a little unhappy about how some of your taxes are being spent.

I think it is time that we unhappy serfs figure out how to become more happy. I think it is time for the unhappy serfs to develop a new way for taxes to be gathered and dispersed, so that every serf has a government they can believe in, no matter where they live. In fact, I think that we clever if unhappy serfs can actually find a way to disconnect the fact of where we live from the deterministic distribution of our taxes, eventually leading to the breaking of the final shackle of serfdomhood.

Who is with me?

**ARNOLD KLING****EXIT, VOICE, AND FREEDOM: AN EXAMPLE  
(2009)**

This short text is the result of an exchange of ideas between Will Wilkinson and Arnold Kling on the subject of the right of exit and the right of vote. The position of Arnold Kling is that the right of exit (and so the absence of any monopolist, also in the sphere of politics) is the true mark of freedom, while the right to vote does not really express the freedom of choice of the individual.

The beauty of this writing, besides its appealing scenario, is that it refers to a reality that already exists (the foreign embassies and the diplomatic corps with their extra-territorial status); for this reason not only it is easy to understand the hypothetical case here presented but it is also easy to rebut any objection about its viability. If this reality is good for diplomats there is no reason while it cannot be extended to other individuals, according to their choices. The only objection might be that the State is a Mafia group made of people with exclusive privileges while we, the common people, are their captive servants whose only illusory "right" is to vote them (the rulers) in power, once every few years. And perhaps, they (the State rulers) are quite right ... for the time being ....

Source: EconLib.org, August 13, 2009



Let me try to offer a hypothetical example of freedom without democracy.

Here's the deal: Suppose that a new non-territorial state is created. Call it *Liberista!* To become a citizen of *Liberista!*, you just pay an annual fee. You pay no taxes to the state. As a citizen of *Liberista!*, you can live anywhere that *Liberista!* has an embassy compound. *Liberista!* leases compounds in countries all over the world. *Liberista!* embassy compounds are as ubiquitous as Hiltons, but many of them have space for large sections of single-family homes, office parks, and so on.

Living in an embassy compound as a citizen of *Liberista!*, your status with respect to the host country is comparable to that of a diplomat. You can travel freely within the host country, but you are exempt from income and property taxes. However, the government of *Liberista!* will expect you to pay your traffic tickets and to otherwise not abuse your diplomatic status. Services like utilities, water, and trash collection must be purchased from providers in the host country. Perhaps you contract for these as an individual citizen, or perhaps you allow *Liberista!* to contract on your behalf and collect a fee from you.

*Liberista!* is managed like a hotel chain. As a citizen, you have no more right to vote than does somebody who patronizes a Holiday Inn. You can, of course, make suggestions and register complaints.

Of course, there may be competing transnational enterprises, each with franchises - er, embassies - all over. Such a world is described in *Snow Crash* [\*] and I make no claim to originality.

If there were a *Liberista!* franchise close to where I live, I would move there. But moving to Virginia would be a loser for me, because my wife spends a lot of time taking care of her mother in Baltimore, and the last thing we need to do is lengthen that commute.

I am not saying that one could not shoot all sorts of holes in this model of citizenship in competing transnational entities. But I think we ought to think outside the box of territorial monopoly government. In my view, once we get outside that box, then exit becomes a plausible alternative to voice.

If you value freedom, then I think that exit comes out way ahead of



voice as a mechanism by which people can express their preferences. Of course there may be other values, apart from freedom, that you think have a sufficiently high priority that you want to force people to live under governments that have large territorial monopolies. But that is a different argument.

## References

[\*] Neal Stephenson, *Snow Crash*, Bantam Spectra Book, 1992

**MAX BORDERS****THE REAL SOCIAL CONTRACT. A CHALLENGE  
TO PARTISANS: WHAT IF YOU REALLY COULD  
HAVE YOUR CHOSEN SYSTEM? (2013)**

This essay, that presents beautifully the challenge put forward by Paul-Émile de Puydt in 1860, has first appeared in the web site of the *Foundation for Economic Education*, September 2013.



Even the wisest and best of governments never functions with the full and free consent of all its subjects. There are parties, either victorious or defeated; there are majorities and minorities in perpetual struggle; and the more confused their notions are, the more passionately they hold to their ideals. — P. E. de Puydt

You're a died-in-the-wool Democrat. No? A staunch Republican? My mistake. Democratic Socialist?

Most daily readers of this publication would say they are "none of the above."

Most, but maybe not all. If you're a political partisan, I have a challenge for you.

Have you dreamed of a day when your favored party could finally

implement every plank in its platform? Seriously. What if it were possible? What if you could live in your favorite system of government—and keep all those idiots in that other party from obstructing your plans?

## The Challenge

We can imagine such a possibility, only with a twist. But first I want to take you back in time—to Belgium. It's 1860. By the way, I thought I was the first to come up with the challenge. But my friend Gian Piero de Bellis told me about the work of a Belgian named Paul-Émile de Puydt who proposed this great partisan challenge more than 150 years ago...

In each community a new office is opened, a "Bureau of Political Membership". This office would send every responsible citizen a declaration form to fill in [...]

**Question: What form of government would you desire?**

Quite freely you would answer, monarchy, or democracy, or any other.

Anyway, whatever your reply, your answer would be entered in a register arranged for this purpose; and once registered, unless you withdrew your declaration, observing due legal form and process, you would thereby become either a royal subject or citizen of the republic [or a Democrat, or Republican]. Thereafter you would in no way be involved with anyone else's government [no more than an American is with Canadian authorities]. You would obey your own leaders, your own laws, and your own regulations. You would pay neither more nor less, but morally it would be a completely different situation.

Ultimately, everyone would live in his own individual political community, quite as if there were not another, nay, ten other, political communities nearby, each having its own contributors too.

See the challenge?

In short: You can live under any political system you like without leaving your driveway. Instead of joining a party, you join a political association and agree to live under its auspices—rules that track with

your sense of the right and the good. A real “social contract.” The only cost of this quantum leap forward is this: You cannot force anyone to join your chosen association.

So, would you do it? If not, why not?

### **Some Worries**

Could it be that you’re concerned about how people would resolve disagreements? De Puydt says:

If a disagreement came about between subjects of different governments, or between one government and a subject of another, it would simply be a matter of observing the principles hitherto observed between neighboring peaceful States; and if a gap were found, it could be filled without difficulties by [appeal to] human rights and all other possible rights. Anything else would be the business of ordinary courts of justice.

While we may agree that “human rights” is an ambiguous term, we assume given de Puydt’s liberal commitments that he means people should be protected from involuntary servitude.

Maybe you’re worried all the rich people would flee your chosen association or form their own association—leaving less wealthy, less greedy members of your association to care for the poor. Wealthy Americans can already leave the United States (and some do). But most do not. If the voting patterns of the wealthy are any indication, plenty of rich people in America tolerate higher taxation rates and support government systems intended to help the poor. Those who don’t support these policies overwhelmingly believe that delivering aid to the poor through the State is particularly ineffective and inhumane; while they oppose State welfare, it isn’t because they have no interest in relieving distress.

In any case, why not let the best system win?

## The Dilemma

For the statist the dilemma becomes: why the territorial chauvinism? In other words, does something as arbitrary as geography determine your right to exit from some system of government? As I have written elsewhere:

For the statist— i.e., one who believes in the ultimate authority of the State—there seem to be two possible responses:

X: If they could get their hands on me—my body and/or my wealth—whether in Sweden, or down there on my secret island, they would be justified. There is really some objective, global justice, the ends of which justify their means of getting to me; or

Y: Considerations of pragmatics and citizenship mean that once I'm in another jurisdiction, so long as I haven't broken any laws in the old jurisdiction, I'm no longer your concern. Because I am living in another place, under different auspices, you have no right to bother me there—whatever your concept of justice.

I think fair-minded statisticians will stick to Y.

Whatever your worry, doesn't it say a lot about a system if it turned out that system's very existence depended on forcing people to be members?

## Common Interests

What about common interests affecting all the inhabitants of a certain area—whatever their political allegiances? De Puydt says:

Each government, in this case, would stand in relation to the whole nation roughly as each of the Swiss cantons, or better, the States of the American Union, stand in relation to their federal government. (Note: ironically, this was published one year before the U.S. Civil War. The Swiss system has held up better and remains far more decentralized.)

I would add that such "issues" must be linked specifically to territory. That is, most issues taken up by our national governments are not

relevant to questions of territory per se, but are laws attached to history's contingencies—e.g., to national boundaries drawn after the ends of wars. In other words, people in Washington get to decide what health-care system you live under, and for most people that is because your mother gave birth to you on a certain patch of soil. De Puydt's panarchy helps shed that arbitrariness.

## Upgrading DOS

Still have concerns? Whatever your objection to de Puydt's challenge, is it so great that you're willing to continue in this wasteful, unsatisfying game of partisan tug-of-war? Are you so blinkered by the status quo that you just can't imagine people joining their own political associations and living by their own rules? Or does your bias boil down to the idea that your political preferences are best, so you think your political party should dominate all others? It's not like there's much good in the blur of politics.

Democracy is a system that leaves us all at the whim of mob rule. It may be formalized mob rule — and that mob has to share power with representatives captured by corporate interests. But at the very least de Puydt's proposal should prompt us to think what kind of human social arrangements are possible beyond democracy.

If you're opening your mind to de Puydt's proposal, you have come a long way. And if you have taken the challenge and come out of the other side convinced, then you are probably ready to upgrade DOS (our "Democratic Operating System"). Under DOS you have two apps: the red app and the blue app. And that's not much of a choice for anyone these days.

Wouldn't it be better if politics was more like choosing from apps on an iPad? We're stuck in a social technology that no longer makes sense. Democracy is not a system designed to grant us our political wishes. It is a system in which, at best, random clustered preferences of others get mixed together—bizarrely, as a feature of the system. And the rules we have to live under are arbitrary with respect to our real political preferences.

When you go to the voting booth, you might as well be sending your prayers up to Washington. But how many times do those prayers get answered? Even if your guy gets elected, he doesn't give you the policies you'd like to see. Hardly anyone is happy with the sausage that gets produced in our legislatures. Only an ignoramus who thinks of politics as a kind of team sport is happy two months after Election Day, whether he wears a red or blue jersey.

### **Power to the People**

Belgian statesman Charles de Brouckère commented just before his death,

M. P.-E. de Puydt [has furnished] an outline of a system that would have the advantage of submitting the industry of security production, otherwise known as governments, to a competition as complete as that in which manufacturers of fabrics, for example, engage in a country under free trade, and achieves this without having recourse to revolutions, barricades, or even the smallest act of violence.

If democracy is a way of transferring power without bullets, de Puydt's "panarchy" is a way of distributing power among the people. Here's de Brouckère again:

If society were to adopt the system proposed by M. de Puydt, each citizen would be able change governments at least as easily as a tenant changes furnished apartments in a large city; because he would need to commit himself for only one year to follow the laws of the government of his choice and to defray expenses at rates discussed in advance. At the end of this year's trial, the citizen would be free to subscribe, for his consumption of security and other public services, to the establishment that produced these things in the manner most congruent with his tastes and for the amount that he desires to devote to this expense.

Instead of a game in which the red team and the blue team fight

over who gets to make and enforce the rules, why don't we have an honest competition in which associations compete for members by offering better systems with better rules—as determined by those members?

### **Please Share**

The next time you hear someone lazily toss out a reference to the “social contract,” send them this article.

Indeed, now that you've taken the challenge, I encourage you to send this to your most partisan friends. If nothing else, this great partisan challenge is an interesting way to infuriate your in-laws and Facebook contacts. (And notice the similarities between de Puydt's system and Facebook itself.)

With this challenge, we can go a long way in exposing the fact that politics is just another sort of religion — a religion that is fundamentally about forcing others to live the way we want them to. (And that's so twentieth century.)



**PAUL BONNEAU**

## REFLECTIONS ON PANARCHY (2013-2014)

Paul Bonneau is an American anarchist who advocates panarchy. In these two essays, collected under the same title, the author reiterates the theme recurring in this anthology, namely that freedom of choice, beyond the specific ideologies to which a person may refer, is the common thread that unites all those who do not wish to impose their will or accept the impositions of others. This is, in essence, the line that unites all civilised human beings. That is why, as the author says, «panarchy is good for everyone, not just for anarchists.»

Source: Paul Bonneau, *Panarchy, not Anarchy Is the answer*, 2013 - *The advantage of Panarchy*, 2014.

**Panarchy, Not Anarchy, Is the Answer**

Anarcho-capitalism is a good answer - for anarcho-capitalists. Not so good for, say, communitarians, though; nor for liberals, conservatives, or even anarcho-other-than-capitalists.

It's *an* answer, not *the* answer.

It's not even a perfect answer for me, since my eyes start rolling whenever an-caps go on about religious notions such as "rights." I'm not religious. However, I am quite religiously tolerant; so yeah, I could live pretty well in an an-cap community.

Anarchists like to think of themselves as *avant-garde*, and I suppose in the current political world we are, pretty much. But one old-fashioned notion that is often found among them, is that anarchism is the political philosophy for everyone. To paraphrase Churchill, "Anarchy is the worst form of government (or non-government) except all the others that have been tried." There's always that good old value judgment. *Yay, team!*

Panarchists, on the other hand, tend to refrain from making value judgments. It's hard to see how they could, since "anything goes" in panarchy.

The Wikipedia definition of Panarchy shows multiple possible interpretations for it, but to me it means two particular things: 1) A panarchist believes in whatever political philosophy it pleases him to believe, and operates politically, only within that polity; 2) A panarchist rejects coercion of those outside his own polity.

A natural corollary of these two characteristics is that a panarchist is naturally reticent to criticize polities different from his own, in the same exact way a modern Catholic would be reticent to publicly, at least, condemn the Lutheran or Baptist religions, and vice-versa. It's not polite. It also stirs up unnecessary conflict and aggression.

Of course coercion *within* a polity remains perfectly permissible - depending on the polity.

One other characteristic that is usually included with panarchism is that of *extraterritoriality*. In other words, people of different polities live all mixed up together, again similar to people of modern religions. I don't find this entirely prescriptive of panarchy, though, since people can live where they please, and inevitably there will be concentrations of one polity or another. It's just easier, living with one's own kind. I described that notion long before I knew about "panarchy". It might be thought of as "fine-grained panarchy" (living in polities all mixed up) vs. "coarse-grained panarchy" (polities with some separation). I

suspect coarse-grained panarchy will predominate at first, and later that things will become more fine-grained, particularly in the big cities.

Now, I have little doubt that anarcho-capitalism will gain tremendously large numbers of converts once people can see it operating in the open. I have lots of doubt, however, that it will convert everyone, or even just a majority.

If that is assumed to be a given, it seems to me that anyone who becomes an anarchist must simultaneously become a panarchist, since an anarchist rejects coercion. But there are a lot of anarchists apparently resistant to the idea of panarchism. They have turned into evangelists, as happens to many new converts, and can't abide by the notion their solution doesn't work for everyone. I suppose that without coercion left as a tool, their brilliant argumentation and passion is supposed to convert the ignorant and suspicious masses. Such notions are hard to take seriously. Isn't it just easier to stop attacking others' beliefs, relax, and become a panarchist? Not only easier, but also more productive, I'd argue.

Anyone can be a panarchist, but all anarchists *must* be - otherwise, they aren't really anarchists. Perhaps someone can try to refute this statement--that is, explain how one can reject coercion without rejecting coercion. Or the alternative, explain how every person on Earth can be converted to anarcho-capitalism with no coercion.

Now, some like to make the somewhat semantic argument that a person of any polity automatically becomes an anarchist (what kind?) by dropping interpolity coercion from his set of approved tools, with everything else left unchanged. I don't know if this semantic argument adds much to the discussion; after all, people remain capable of doing that (rejecting only interpolity coercion) no matter what you want to call them. Intrapolity coercion remains, remember. They can coerce each other to their heart's content. Panarchy does not prescribe total elimination of coercion.

By the way, I have no delusions about interpolity coercion simply vanishing into thin air forever, with the advent of widespread panarchy. There is no panarchist utopia; humans ain't got it in 'em. There will always be "backsliding," and particular polities will have to maintain a credible defensive posture. It's something to shoot for, though.

There is always room for improvement. I'll bet a lot of conservatives and liberals (for example) are getting tired of bashing each other to no good end. Well, now they can stop.

If I may be permitted, *Yay, panarchy!*

Just to head off any misinterpretation, I am not suggesting that alternative polities are equally correct, equally fair or decent. I think anarcho-capitalism is superior to all others. It's just that I'm unwilling to impose it.



### **The Advantage of Panarchy**

THE CRUCIAL ADVANTAGE of Panarchy is that it converts aggressive violence into defense.

Most people on the Internet tend to “stick with their own kind”; for example, liberals read only sites like Daily Kos. However, when they venture out and run into those of different persuasions, you always see a battle of competing arguments, and the participants are quite earnest about it. There is a reason for this.

Persuasion is the preferred tool, but behind every utterance is the implied threat: “If I can’t persuade you of the validity of my preferred worldview, I will impose it on you, or help others impose it on you.” They all grab for the cudgel of political power. Every persuasion hides - but not very well - the threat of plunder and oppression.

Needless to say, everyone perceives this latent threat, at least subliminally. That is why such conversations go nowhere. The participants are not about to seriously entertain the arguments of their opponents when aggressive violence is in the offing.

The above applies even to advocates of Liberty, who have not yet deduced that they must also be proponents of Panarchy. Yes, they will say things like, “Liberty is not an imposition, but the removal of impositions,” trying to make the case that they should not be threatening to others. But I can assure you, visions of Libertopia where everybody must conform to the Non-Agression Principle certainly can be threat-

ening to others. How else to explain the concerns about anarchy, or the unwillingness to let anarchists give it a try?

The advantage of Panarchy, again, is that it converts aggressive violence into defense. That is, anyone who argues from a position of Panarchy *cannot* be taken as someone trying to grab that cudgel of power. There is no latent threat behind the argument, especially when an advocate of Panarchy states (and should state if he has any sense) that liberals should get what liberals want, conservative should get what they want, and so forth. How can anyone be threatened by the statement, that they should get what they want?

No one else says such things.

Of course, liberals and others may immediately realize that with Panarchy, some may escape the plunder they intend (e.g., "Who will feed the poor if the non-poor can't be plundered?"). But there are two important things about that: 1) They may also, themselves, escape the plunder and oppression that their opponents intend for them, and 2) That the position of Panarchy is a defensive one, and people naturally take the side of defenders over aggressors - not consistently of course; but it takes a lot of propaganda to swerve them from their natural tendency.

Defense is a much better position to, well, defend. It turns everyone against it, into obvious aggressors. Now, looting and oppression must be justified; and that is difficult to do.

Panarchy is good for everyone, not just for anarchists. It makes you a defender rather than an aggressor, and puts you on the side of the angels - in everyone's eyes, not just your own.

**THOMAS KNAPP**

BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO. OR IS IT? (2017)

The need to introduce panarchy in the United States presented in a simple and beautiful way.

Source: *Counterpunch*, August 25, 2017



“A cliché is haunting America — the cliché of a second civil war,” writes Jesse Walker (August 20, 2017) in the Los Angeles Times. Pundits left and right wax ominous over the prospect of a permanent break in American society along partisan Republican/Democratic lines, citing outbreaks of street fighting a la Berkeley and Charlottesville.

But, as Walker points out, “[i]f you flip quickly between small violent clashes and big political disagreements, those big disagreements will look bloodier. But that’s an optical illusion.” The fighting at the extremes, and between wings of the mainstream political class, doesn’t reflect the gooey, ever-shifting political center where most Americans live.

Elections are centrifuges which temporarily spin that center out

into two halves (with a small remainder of third party voters), after which the people involved go back to living with each other in relative peace. Which is why, as Walker writes, “a near-future war with two clear sides and Gettysburg-sized casualty counts is about as likely as a war with the moon.”

Another reason to doubt predictions of such clear-cut conflict is geography.

Even in America’s last Civil War, the lines of demarcation weren’t quite so clear as we like to see them in retrospect. The status of Missouri, Kentucky, eastern Tennessee and western Virginia *vis à vis* Union and Confederacy were very much up in the air through much of the war.

Today, the lines are even more blurry. “Red” states abut “blue” states and “purple” is a thing too. Purple Colorado is surrounded by a sea of red. The reliably Democratic west coast states are across the country from most of their partisan sister polities. “Live free or die” New Hampshire borders the effectively euro-socialist enclave of “Taxachusetts.” We’re too mixed up to break up.

So, if we can’t get along and we can’t separate, why not just abandon the notion of geographic state monopolies and let people choose the kinds of governance they want *in situ* at a more granular level?

It’s called panarchy, defined by John Zube as “[t]he realization of as many different, autonomous and voluntary communities as are wanted by members for themselves, all coexisting non-territorially, side by side and intermingled ...” (*The Gospel of Panarchy*, 1986)

Sound complicated? It really isn’t. All any of us owes his neighbor is justice. Outside that general principle, there’s no particular reason that you, me and the person across the street all need answer to the same rulers or get our “public” services from the same providers.

Would an interlocking framework of autonomous, voluntary, non-territorial communities give rise to novel difficulties? Sure. But there’s no reason to believe those difficulties would be any worse than those we face now in our one-size-fits-all political system. And we’d be freer to find solutions.

**AVIEZER TUCKER**

PANARCHY : THE STATE 2.0 (2017)

It is time to move to new forms of organizations based on de-territorialized states and the freedom of everyone to choose and join the community that best represents and implements each individual wishes and aspirations.

Source: *unsere zeit*, 14/8/2017



The dominant “Westphalian” model of the state, based on sovereignty over territory with borders and monopoly of violence over the people who happen to live in the territory, is obsolete. It fits seventeenth-century technology and pre-global societies when geographical distances could not be traversed easily and information took months to travel the globe. Instead, states may be founded on social contracts rather than sovereignty, service to citizens instead of monopoly over the use of violence in a territory. Panarchy, a political theory of non-territorial states founded on social contracts, introduced in 1860 by Belgian botanist and economist Paul-Émile de Puydt, offers an alternative. It proposes that citizens may literally sign a social contract, a



constitution, with a state, and may change their states without moving, just as customers can change their insurance policies. Explicit and voluntary social contracts have several advantages over standard social contract theories: they are neither mythical nor hypothetical, but explicit and actual, voluntary and reversible.

Panarchy allows political agents to make reversible political mistakes and then exit and join another state. In Panarchy, the incentive for political innovation and improvement comes from competition between states over citizens-customers. Politics would then develop its own version of creative destruction, when failed states disappear and are replaced by better managed ones, generating a general progressive trend.

### **Why Are Non-Territorial States Better?**

The current Westphalian international political system is based on regional territorial monopolies, nation states. Each state (except for the Knights of Malta and governments in exile) has a monopoly over a territory and its inhabitants. Immigration possibilities and democracy decrease the monopoly power of the state and increase competition. But immigration is limited by territorial monopolies that cannot handle the increasing demand for their services. Democratic change of government does not increase the efficiency of the state. Modern nation-states face increases in demand for public services: Welfare, education, urban development, crime control, health service, and so on. Facing this increased demand, states behave as monopolies that cannot supply an increase in demand without an increase in marginal price (as expressed in many cases in higher taxes and debt). The modern nation state is stagnant and inefficient. It has too few competitors or substitutes that may either force it to find new solutions or supply the increase in demand themselves. Instead, some “live on credit,” borrow capital for operational costs.

From the consumer’s perspective, the degree of monopoly depends on individual mobility and choice: how easily can an unhappy citizen choose to migrate to a different state? The chances for migration from one territorial monopoly to another can be described as the degree of mobility in a political marketplace. Territorial monopolies that may

come under increased demand under conditions of increased consumer mobility move to limit such mobility or elasticity in demand through immigration controls. For this reason states, oddly in comparison to firms, reject most of their prospective new customers. For a normal company that mass produces products, marginal customers are cheaper because of economies of scale. The more customers it has, the lower the price of their product can be, and the more competitive is the firm.

### **Exit and Voice**

A different intellectual route that leads to similar conclusions is through Albert Hirschman's exit and voice dichotomy. Albert O. Hirschman (1915-2012) in his short 1970 book *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, offered a dichotomy of voice vs. exit: the less "voice" people have in their social unit, the more they try to exit it. Voice creates loyalty. This simple formula can be applied to explain the relations between individuals and social units, from marriage where the partner who has no voice may exit to citizenship where lack of voice in authoritarian societies leads to emigration. It also explains declines in memberships in civil organizations and firms that do not give voice to their members or customers. The emigrants who head first for the exits are also the ones who would have been most vociferous in pressing for reform. Authoritarian regimes which do not want to reform encourage exit. Yet, exit from all political associations in a world of territorial sovereign states is difficult and expensive even when possible. Only a small, often privileged, minority is able to exit. Voice, the ability to influence the management of the state, has a wide range of models within a democracy. As Hirschman analyzed, when the quality of service of an organization like a state deteriorates, managers are under pressure to improve it when faced with a massive exit of their customers. They can also attempt to dissuade exit by branding it "desertion, defection and treason," or in politics, secessionism. Alternatively, they may be forced to listen to the voice of the disgruntled customers. But if there is no exit option, or it is difficult or expensive, there is no incentive for managers to improve service or give voice (democracy) to their customers.

From this perspective, Panarchy is a radical facilitator of exit. The Exit-option is particularly useful for victims of conflicts in places like the Middle East. Irrespective of how such conflicts begin, they are sustained by the absence of mass exit options. Panarchy gives everybody a credible exit option. If 18-year-olds had the choice to sign a social contract with several states, how many would choose exactly those states that are engaged in war and have conscription?

### **Panarchy and Global Prosperity**

Panarchy is highly likely to generate massive upper mobility for the global poor in the context of a high global rise in productivity and wealth creation. It would open the globe to an economically rational distribution of human resources. In Panarchy, people can move around the globe following opportunities, jobs, capital, and resources. Current customers of political territorial monopolies fear increased pressure on the limited production capabilities of nation-states (government services and welfare). This encourages xenophobia and racism to legitimize immigration limitations, even when this is clearly irrational for the receivers of government services, e.g. European pensioners who would benefit from young taxpaying workers, especially cheap immigrant nurses and other care personnel. Without borders, geography is disconnected from political affiliation. Rational economic agents will move geographically to maximize their returns, freedom, and opportunity. The economic results would create the kind of global economic productive boom that would surpass that of globalization during the 19th century.

Current immigration restrictions unbalance the world economy. We live in a world where ideas travel to most places freely and instantly. The movement of capital across borders is nearly as free. The movement of goods, trade, is not nearly as free as that of ideas, but the trend, especially since the end of the Cold War, has been towards greater liberalization of trade. Yet, though human and labor movement has become both faster and cheaper than at any other historical period, political barriers to the movement of people and to their ability to work in multiple geographical locations that originated in the destructive and pathological era following the First World War and contributed to

the Great Depression of the thirties are still in place. This creates global imbalances when people cannot chase capital and production where they are, though they know where the capital is and have a good idea about the benefits geographical movement may bestow on them. For example, capital flows often move from riskier to less risky, first world, political environments. But workers from countries that generate this capital flight cannot follow capital to where it is. Vice versa, production shifts to areas with lower labor costs, often from the first to the third world. But first world workers cannot follow; American workers cannot go to work in Mexico. Barriers to human movement generate imbalances, unemployment, low returns on investment, and scarcity of qualified labor.

### **Panarchy and Human Dignity**

Immigration restrictions in the last hundred years participated in causing ethical catastrophes, most notably genocide, by trapping victims in territories they urgently needed to exit. For example, undoubtedly without immigration restrictions prior to the Second World War the scope of the Holocaust would have been far more limited. The current political international system of sovereign states is responsible for global poverty that could have been overcome had people been able to move according to their opportunities and interests. The misery of a great number of people who would have had happier, more decent, and more fulfilling lives had they been able to migrate to better places has political rather than economic reasons. The history of immigration to the United States indicates just how much innovation, economic progress, scientific discoveries and cultural contributions are prevented today by closed or insufficiently porous borders. Heroic, brave, and entrepreneurial individuals, a vanguard of economic rationality and prosperity, who attempt to cross borders to improve their lives and the lives of others, are prevented by borders from realizing their potential. Thousands of migrants who die every year of drowning, thirst and exposure crossing the Mediterranean in rickety boats or the deserts of Texas and Arizona in the United States, and the women who are trafficked into the first world to be sold as prostitutes would have had more decent lives if they were not

prevented by sovereign states from simply walking over and finding a job or starting a business.

Apart of irrational tribal self-destructive xenophobia, one reason for politically blocking migration are fears that migrants may make demands on the welfare system that as a monopoly it could not supply, causing a decline in the quality of public services for all. Panarchy can eliminate such fears because geographical migrants are not political migrants. In a world without sovereignty, domicile does not affect access to welfare. States that are not territorial monopolies would react to increases in demand as commercial companies do, by expanding production and supply to maximize profits, or by creating franchises.

Development through Foreign Direct Investment in underdeveloped, poorer, parts of the world is currently limited by insecurity and corruption. Had investors been able to secure their investments with their own security forces and legal and judicial institutions and frameworks, there would have been far more development and less poverty. Panarchy, a world of competing non-territorial states, would lift current sovereign barriers to development. Currently, pensioners from the north can move to warmer and more affordable global neighborhoods, but they cannot bring their state services with them, especially personal security and medical benefits. Non-territorial states may be able to offer such services globally.

Moral arguments against Panarchy are likely to resemble moral objections to conditions of free competition between private insurance companies in health care; many believe that political services are essential. From the individual's point of view, the need for political, like medical, services is often sudden and unpredictable. Since the state should provide services that protect life, political services, like medical services, may be interpreted as a human right. Arguably, the level of political services, like medical services, should not depend on income.

If political services are a human right, territorial political monopolies hardly guarantee them. Just like medical insurance, political services are denied now to most of the human race. Most of the denizens of our planet have no medical insurance and no state that defends their interests. Most people reside in the territories of illiberal and undemocratic despotic states that do not care for their interests

and exploit them. They are prevented by the international system of sovereign states from access to purchasing improved political services, available elsewhere. Supporters of “universal” health coverage usually mean national health coverage for citizens of advanced industrial states, excluding non-citizens, and only for services that do not cost too much. The current system of territorial political monopolies ensures neither universal distribution of political services, nor efficiency in their supply. Political monopolies are neither capable of nor have an interest in improving the quality of their services, nor reach optimal efficiency in the price and scope of their services.

Is it likely that class distinctions would replicate themselves on a political level in a panarchy, each class occupying its own state? Rich people will have an incentive to leave communities that have extensive redistribution systems, while prosperous communities are likely to turn away poorer applicants who wish to join them. These political behavior patterns happen in the present system of sovereign states when rich people seek tax shelters and poorer folks are denied the right to immigrate to wealthy social democracies. But in a free political market, the rich actually have an interest in contracting the kind of states that also serve the poor, states that offer basic services and cost little. The rich do not need many services while the poor cannot afford them. Exclusive class based states for rich people will have security problems. A state with few rich citizens would be a juicy target for poorer states with much larger populations. To supply protection to its customers, such a state would have to rely on foreign mercenaries, an expensive and historically risky strategy because mercenaries can easily turn on their wealthier masters who are dependent on them, or sell their services to a higher bidder. It would be cheaper and much safer for rich folks to join a state with a wider customer base.

The poor cannot organize an advanced health service for themselves because they lack the capital and know-how. The poor have been able effectively to organize themselves politically to create militias and political parties. If no state is willing to serve the poor, the poor may found their own state, and there are plenty of historical precedents for political self-organization by poor and discriminated

against communities. States can work on varying scales and capital investment levels.

Panarchy is highly likely to generate massive upper mobility for the global poor irrespective of their political associations because Panarchy is likely to have massively positive collateral effects on the world economy. The massive reduction in global poverty in the last generation following freer trade and globalization is just a harbinger of the kind of progress we could make with free movement. It may well be that as much as the poor can afford now for the first time not to be hungry and to have basic health care, they will all be able to afford the services of some state.

### **The Nation State as Technologically Obsolete**

The rise of the nation state in the 19th century coincided with and was facilitated by several technological and business innovations: railways united national territories through transportation; the post office and the telegraph united the national territory through information transmission; universal basic education united the various dialects of national languages and allowed a unified national bureaucracy, education system, and newspapers. Today, airplanes are faster, cheaper and safer (if less convenient and glamorous) than trains and they created a global transportation system. Electronic communications have been replacing letters and have not just made the post office obsolete, but also unified the globe through the internet and satellite communications that are immediate and do not distinguish between the geographically distant to the proximate. English has become the universal language of science, the internet, and global television channels. For better or worse, apart of a thin global elite of polyglots, native English speakers tend to be monolingual, while everybody else speaks their mother tongue and learn English. The rise of global mega-cities and regions like the North East of the United States from Washington DC to Boston, Northern California, London, Paris, Berlin, and Hong Kong where many people with diverse origins, political identities and allegiances live and work together have made the nation-state obsolete in the sense that New York and London communicate with each other and are affected by each other far more than, say, London and

Manchester or Belfast. People who live in megacities have more in common with each other than with rural compatriots. Consequently, territoriality, geographical location, can matter much less than at any other time in history as supply chains and commercial networks span the globe irrespective of geography. The non-territorial and global communities of inventors, entrepreneurs, and futurist visionaries, who are used to innovation and its implementation, naturally expand their horizons to the political realm and come up with innovative political ideas that come close to Panarchy.

Though technological and social prerequisites for Panarchy have been accumulating, they may not be sufficient. A hundred years ago the steam engine and the telegraph also facilitated globalization, but these inventions were followed by the most horrendous and murderous anti-global phase in human history that left global trade disrupted, parts of the globe isolated, and the worst territorial wars and destruction of human life in European history with effects that lasted for at least seventy years. From a contemporary perspective, and I must add also from a nineteenth-century liberal or enlightenment perspective, the two world wars seem anachronistic and pointless since land matters little for prosperity and natural resources can be a curse for other sectors of the economy and for democracy. The fact that technological facilitators and prerequisites for Panarchy have accumulated does not imply that the potential will be actualized, only that it can be actualized.

### **Panarchy and Information Technology**

The growing capacity of the Internet to transmit information, and of computers to process it, reduce the cost and difficulties of running global states. Computers can fulfill some of the traditional functions of government to the extent that they coincide with the operations of credit card and insurance companies; they collect and distribute resources according to a contract. The latest innovations allow computers to enforce contracts through decentralized contracts and issue currency and set monetary policy through cryptocurrencies. For example, Estonia has been at the forefront of the digitalization of government that allows it to be as exterritorial as the internet. Estonia



offers anybody in the world the option of becoming an Estonian “e-resident.” In return for paying taxes to Estonia, its e-residents can register their companies there and execute contracts through e-signatures according to Estonian and EU laws and regulations. Estonia pioneered the digitalization of government whereby much of the interaction between citizens and the state is electronic and so can take place anywhere. Two innovations facilitate this process: e-signatures that are safer than ink on paper and electronic identity cards. Estonia, a country of little more than a million residents, expects to have a ten-fold e-residency. Whether or not ten million global citizens become virtual residents of Estonia is not as important as the ability through computerization to increase exponentially the number of citizens without increasing significantly the number of government employees.

Public services and relations that involve funds and information can be transmitted and exchanged electronically; other services can be ordered locally via the internet, like concierge services offered by major credit cards. Health and education could be supplied locally by contractors, but more significantly and controversially, so could security. The last couple of decades have witnessed a rise of private security companies and the historical return of mercenary armies. Corporations and NGOs like World Vision and Save the Children hire security firms to protect their employees. Such security companies can have the same corporate structure as that of any services company with local branches; they can become embryonic states.

The rise of virtual social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, Academia.edu and so on, has led Silicon Valley academic and venture capitalist Balaji Srinivasan to suggest that political communities are losing their geographical characteristics and migrating to “the cloud,” to storage in computer servers spread all over the globe without any particular geographic location, just like states can be. The relevant distance between people is not geographical anymore, but geodesic, the shortest social line on a social network between people. Cloud formations can lead later to geographical face to face proximity. “Emigrants would be moving within or between nation states to become part of a community, not to strike out on their own... Unlike so-called secessionists, the specific site of physical concentration would be a

matter of convenience, not passion; the geography incidental and not worth fighting over. Today, one of the first and largest international reverse diasporas has assembled in Silicon Valley, drawn by the internet to the cloud capital of technology; in fact, an incredible 64% of the Valley's scientists and engineers hail from outside the U.S., with 43.9% of its technology companies founded by emigrants."

Srinivasan outlined the political implications of the new technologies: "as cloud formations take physical shape at steadily greater scales and durations, it shall become ever more feasible to create a new nation of emigrants." Srinivasan approached the idea of de-territorializing the state but did not quite cross the threshold. Seasteading, the creation of floating towns off the territorial waters of California, is a recent attempt to create new states with freer entry and exit. If creative political entrepreneurs could not find a territory on earth, they could move to the sea and prosper there, away from any sovereign limits on immigration, labor and trade. However, in addition to technical material issues, such communities would be territorial rather than global. Without a military, they would be easy targets for nation states who could occupy them merely by blocking the shipping lanes that would be their lifeline. The cause of such action can be anything from drug-trafficking to alleged tax evasion. Panarchy offers all the benefits of such new states, without having to move anywhere, let alone to the sea or to Mars, ideas that even if technologically feasible and affordable only reiterate the old model of the sovereign territorial state, instead of creating a new and improved model of the state – the state 2.0.

# GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

## PANARCHY: THE PERSONAL CONTRACT AND THE A-TERRITORIALIST VOLUNTARY COMMUNITIES

Reading all or part of the documents presented in this anthology should have clarified your ideas about panarchy.

This appendix is only meant to be a kind of quick summary and further clarification of the subject. It consists of four points:

- What panarchy is
- What panarchy is not
- What panarchies could be
- What panarchies might be.

### **What panarchy is**

The felt need to clarify what Panarchy is, stems from the fact that, as more and more individuals become familiar with the notion, it would be good if we could avoid two contrasting pitfalls that seem to affect any concept once it reaches a wider audience.

The pitfalls are:

- **Dogma.** The idea is frozen, and no experimentation is possible

unless it is approved by some high priests who have managed to appropriate the conception to suit their own aims and interests.

- **Magma.** The conception is flimsy, and any experimentation is accepted, and this includes contradictory ideas, irrational formulations and even the surreptitious negation of the original basic principles.

This has happened in the past with reference to capitalism (turned into corporatism), socialism (smothered in statism), liberalism (turned upside down into dirigisme); and all this has been possible because the spin-doctors of dogma & magma have succeeded in appropriating the terms and manipulating the concepts for their own ends.

This is why the scientific definition and appropriate use of a term/concept is a never-ending task, which consists of preserving the original formulation (the genial spark) and applying it consistently to current reality (the genuine commitment). If the application is not feasible or is carried out in such a way as to negate the original formulation, that formulation and the related term must be abandoned; otherwise, we would find ourselves in a situation like the one in which corporatism, statism and dirigisme are still defined and considered as capitalism, socialism, liberalism.

With reference to Panarchy, a consensus among its advocates and practitioners might coalesce around the following principles/aspects, namely that Panarchy is:

- **Personalistic.** The concept of the individual (the *person*) plays a fundamental role in Panarchy. In fact, Panarchy is aimed at replacing the *age of the masses*, characterised by politics and by the clashes between opposing ideologies and antagonistic factions (states, parties, classes) in which the single person is often a mere pawn, with the *age of the individual* and his/her specific choices that, even when not shared or approved by others, should always be respected by all as autonomous decisions that concern and affect only the person who makes them.

- **Voluntaristic.** The emphasis on the individual does not mean that groups and communities are not also relevant in the context of Panar-

chy, but only that they come into being as the result of personal choices of membership and free contribution. Except for the family to which a person is related for natural causes, Panarchy does not envisage groups or collective bodies to which the individual is automatically ascribed, against his or her will. Voluntarism declares an end to any monopolistic claims and uphold always a supreme respect for the will of the individual to be a member or not of any community of his/her choice.

- **Universalistic.** Panarchy is a conception that possesses an extremely high level of general applicability and strong coherence, and for this reason can be seen as a practical universal framework that is acceptable and valid for everyone, everywhere, in whatever situation a person lives and operates.

The disregard of any of these three principles/aspects should be reason enough to warn us that somebody is misusing the term Panarchy.

Usually, the misuse stems from the fact that to Panarchy are attributed wrong features and improper functions by those who have not fully grasped the meaning and implications of the idea.

That is why, to better understand what Panarchy is, it is also useful to point out what Panarchy is not.

### **What panarchy is not**

The first thing that needs to be emphasised very clearly is the fact that panarchy is not at all a new political ideology. In fact, panarchy, as already pointed out, is the overcoming of the *age of politics* characterised by the manipulation of the masses and the beginning of the *age of persons* characterised by choices freely and voluntarily made by each individual.

The etymology of the term *politics* helps us to clarify this. The root of *politics* is *polis*, the city-state of ancient Greece, and the term was originally used with reference to the administration of a specific terri-

tory, namely the *polis*. The main characteristics of politics are thus a specific territory, combined with the exclusive dominion (sovereignty) that a certain apparatus (the city magistrates, the feudal lords, the state machine) exercised and continues to exercise over a given territory.

This is why panarchy is totally at odd with politics. It goes beyond territorialism (in fact it supersedes it) and advocates forms of personal and social organisation that are not based on the notion of territorial sovereignty. The direct inspiration of panarchy are not some political conceptions of the past but the ideas and practices known under the expression *laissez-faire laissez-passer*. Or, even further back in time, the practice of religious tolerance extended to all spheres of social life.

This aspect concerning the erroneous attribution of political connotations and functions to panarchy is reminiscent, in a way, of the controversy between Marx as an advocate of political struggle leading to the conquest of state power, and the Anarchists (especially the exponents of the Jura Federation) who rightly identified the authoritarian aspects inherent in that strategy and were therefore in favour of a process of workers' self-emancipation through direct personal action in the various spheres of life.

Those who see panarchy as a new political instrument are also inclined to use the term panarchism, perhaps in the sense of a new ideology that will supersede all others.

Here again it is necessary to be extremely frank and explicit. Panarchy is not at all an ideology (as, for instance, Socialism or Communism have become) for the simple reason that it accepts all ideologies if they are freely and voluntarily implemented just by those who advocate them.

Granting that panarchy is by no means a political ideology (old or new), the qualification of panarchy as a "civil rights movement" put forward by one of its advocates (Dwight Johnson, personal communication, 2009) is very appropriate. Indeed, this formulation very aptly characterises and emphasises the basic aim of panarchy, which is that everyone should have/enjoy the civil right to freely and voluntarily choose the government or self-government that best meets his/her needs and aspirations.

After avoiding these misinterpretations or artfully created distor-

tions (panarchy as politics and panarchism as ideology) a person is ready to overcome even minor misunderstandings such as narrowing the conception to specific aspects to the exclusion or compression of others.

In this sense, it is necessary to emphasise that panarchy is not just:

- **The proposal in favour of many governments.** The existence of many parallel non-territorial governments, and the voluntary choice in favour of one of them, in no way excludes the option of non-government or self-government. With panarchy, people are not forced to choose a government out of fear of being ostracised or branded as extravagant oddballs. In this respect, we are faced with a situation like that promoted by the advocates of religious tolerance, who did not pressure people to adhere to a religion but also accepted individuals without a religious faith.

- **The proposal in favour of personal law.** Advocating the existence on the same territory of many legal systems amongst whom a person chooses which one to adhere to, should not obscure the fact that panarchy relies also, firmly, on universal principles that have been developed and refined over centuries and are now part of the Human Civilisation. Without *Universal Principles* (e.g., the non-aggression principle) implicitly accepted by all, coexistence between different panarchies would not be possible.

- **The proposal in favour of extraterritoriality.** Extraterritoriality as currently practised by territorial states (e.g., regarding foreign diplomats) means that certain persons/groups receive a special treatment according to their personal status. Panarchy, on the other hand, sees extraterritoriality only as a first step towards a situation of complete aterritorialism, i.e., the end of all monopolistic territorial power and claims, for everyone and everywhere.

Having expressed what panarchy is, is not or is not just, it could be interesting to perform a mental simulation and first see what might make panarchies sprout and then what panarchies might be/become.

### **What might make panarchies sprout**

No one knows what will happen in the future and how new personal and social experiences will develop, but knowledge of the past can offer us some indications and some footholds on which to build our future.

The originator of Panarchy, Paul-Émile de Puydt, explicitly refers to the spread of religious tolerance as a precedent from which to draw inspiration for the introduction of political tolerance (i.e., tolerance towards any political conception voluntarily practised by its proponents). This would result in the existence of various governments in the same territory competing for the support of the people, just as different churches compete for the membership of the faithful. And just as religious tolerance put an end to the so-called religious wars and religious persecutions, so it is highly likely that political tolerance will do the same regarding wars and persecutions that have their origin in political beliefs that some want to impose on everybody. At the same time, just as the conception of religious tolerance (advocated by Erasmus, Locke, Voltaire, and others) was not intended to be a new religion, so the conception of political tolerance (panarchy) is not intended to be a new political ideology, as pointed out previously.

The craft of highlighting convincingly the strong parallelism between religious tolerance (now accepted in many parts of the world as an entirely foregone fact) and political tolerance (still now ignored or even regarded as a strange proposition that is completely unfeasible) might be the way to introduce doubts and perplexity as to the eternity and indispensability of the current system based on a monopolistic territorial power.

Moreover, by digging into history we might be led to discover, within religious faiths and cultural traditions, some ideas, and principles hitherto obliterated or ignored. Making this fully visible might lead to the formation of a vast network of people favourably disposed to change, who may find within their own beliefs the roots of panarchy (tolerance, freedom, openness to variety).

In fact, with reference to the religions professed by Muslims, Catholics, and Jews, we have three powerful pillar-principles on which



it is possible to build bridges across faiths and towards panarchy. These pillars-principles are:

- **Extraterritoriality** (Muslims). In the Islamic world, during the Middle Ages and even afterwards, extraterritorial rights were granted to non-Muslims (e.g., foreign merchants) This meant the existence of parallel systems of jurisdiction in the same territory, as advocated by panarchy.

- **Subsidiarity** (Catholics). One of the social precepts of the Catholic Church (reaffirmed by Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, 1891) is that of subsidiarity, which states that, to foster the development of the human person, the functions of power should always be exercised by the lowest level competent to carry them out. This principle puts an end to the notion of monopolistic territorial states in which all or most power is concentrated at the top.

- **Personal autonomy** (Jews). Cosmopolitan Jews, scattered in various parts of the world, have repeatedly pleaded the case for personal autonomy, i.e., the freedom to organise their lives and communities according to their own traditions and rules. This demand, rejected by the monopolistic territorial states, and erased even through the physical extermination of entire communities, represents something to be taken up and recognised as an entirely natural and totally just aspiration.

If we add to this the principle of Solidarity that animates all religions and spiritual beliefs, we have the theoretical foundation for a post-statism - post-territorialism reality, to which many people might easily adhere and identify.

Another set of ideas and practices to rely on is that of classical liberalism, as developed by Bastiat, Lord Acton, von Mises, Hayek, and others.

What is unfortunately absent from such ideas is the full expression of the principle of aterritorialism. In any case, the constant reaffirmation of *laissez-faire* that has contributed, to some extent, to the overcoming of state monopolies in the utilities sector (electricity, gas, telephones) could be seen as one of the components of a strategy

towards aterritorialism. The task now is to take those ideas and practices (*laissez-faire laissez-passer*) to a broader level, beyond national or federal barriers (Europe, USA). Freeing entrepreneurs and consumers from territorial restrictions is a fascinating undertaking that will absorb the minds and efforts of many creative people, especially in the monetary sphere, and is fully part of the development of the liberal conception and panarchy.

The anarchist conception, the one without ideological additives, is the current of thought most in tune with panarchy. In fact, it could be argued that the invention of panarchy would not have been necessary if the liberals had been logical to the end (*laissez-faire* in the economic **and** political spheres), and all anarchists had been consistent with their conception based on freedom and voluntary choices instead of launching anathemas against those who thought differently (e.g. the anarcho-communists against the anarcho-individualists) trying to push through and impose, often violently, one vision as superior and preferable to all others.

Another road to panarchy is the global information and knowledge scene. In this field, the future looks very promising, with territorially bound media (e.g., national newspapers) in full crisis, and non-territorial means of instant communication such as the Internet or the devices for personal use (the mobile phone, the reading tablet) on the rise. In this field, the individual can already put an end to territorialism by becoming a cosmopolitan producer and user of information-knowledge, limited only by the wealth of languages, forms of expression (music, video, cartoons, drawing, text) and skills that he/she masters.

In essence, it is likely that in the years to come a vast network of individuals, some of them totally or partially unaware of the existence of a conception called panarchy, will germinate the seed of panarchies through various projects and experiments that will have their basis in religious, economic, cultural, or other aspirations and tendencies.

Michael Rozeff's cry: "let me out of the barrel!" (*Why I am a panarchist*, January 2009) is already being answered, every day, by all those who want to express themselves, without impositions. When ideas come into sharper focus, energies grow stronger and connections between pro-freedom people deepen, then the sardine barrel (i.e., the

mental and material barriers that imprison us all) will begin to open and empty.

In problem solving, as pointed out by the cognitive scientists, sometimes the solution comes as a sudden illumination after the breaking of a mental block, the jump beyond a restriction introduced by the individual without rational justifications, only because of emotional prejudices and conventional biases.

That may well be the moment when we will stop talking about political tolerance (as we don't usually talk about religious tolerance), and we start practicing it without even being aware of it.

### **What panarchies might be**

Emotional prejudices and conventional biases are likely to be active when someone, on initial examination of panarchy, rejects it as having either one or the other of these two flaws:

- (a) Uniformity: panarchy requires everyone to become a panarchist.
- b) Fragmentation: panarchy will generate separate ghettos inhabited by identical populations.

To counter these criticisms, it might be useful not only to respond specifically to these objections but also to try to portray what panarchies could be/become if people's creativity and initiative is left free to express itself. By offering a hint of possible panarchies we could clear the field of these two objections that derive from a way of thinking dominated, without the critics being aware of it, by the uniformity and fragmentation they attribute to panarchy.

#### **a) Uniformity: Everyone should become a panarchist**

A panarchist, if we really want to use this term, is nothing more than a human being who is inclined to make his own personal choices about his own life (whatever that may mean in concrete terms) and is also convinced that everyone else has the same right. In other words, a

panarchist (or polyarchist or voluntarist or whatever you want to call him) is neither a tyrannical overlord nor an involuntary servant but simply a reasonable and decent person who wants to be left undisturbed/unmolested and who intends to behave similarly towards others. If this is considered an out-of-this-world proposition, then this means that we are altering the classical idea of what it means to be human (i.e., a free and responsible human being) and that we intend to put in its place a meddling, unpleasant, overbearing individual. But nobody, unless suffering from profound mental pathology, wants to be considered or be associated with a meddling, unpleasant, overbearing being. From this it follows that we all implicitly assume that if someone wants to play the game of life made up of decent-fruitful relationships between people, he/she must become a human being, whatever term is used in a certain historical period to qualify him as such (e.g., stoic, humanist, rational, enlightened, civilised, etc.). Thus, to reproach the advocates of panarchy for expecting everyone to become panarchists is like reproaching a tolerant and civilised person for expecting everyone to behave in a tolerant and civilised manner.

**b) Fragmentation: panarchies will generate ghettos**

The current situation is characterised by the existence of national or federal cages that are, in some cases, impermeable to access from outside. The Western world, so critical of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, has erected concrete walls and electrified barbed wire barriers. For instance, Europe has been turned into a fortress, to exclude people from other regions. The United States guards the border with Mexico by means of a barrier a thousand kilometres long (May 2011). The state of Israel has built a wall (438 Km by July 2011) that disrupts and destroys Palestinian communities. So, when people say that the proposal to abolish territorialism and introduce political tolerance will generate ghettos, it is legitimate to ask whether they really know what they are talking about, unless they are referring to the current reality of territorial nation states with their stifling territorial cages. With panarchy, exactly the opposite would happen since, with the abolition of the constricting NETs (National Enclosures Territories) of the monopolistic territorial states, people would be able, as in

a forgotten past, to move, connect and mingle freely on the basis of their personal desires and affinities. The likely result would be the end of the very notion of segregation and ghettos that unfortunately are still there due to the existence of the monopolistic state sovereignty.

In fact, panarchy will see the development of three aspects that go in the exact opposite direction to the shortcomings attributed to it:

- **Variety:** no material barriers to movement and mixing, allowing cosmopolitanism and localism, dispersion and concentration, homogeneity and heterogeneity, according to personal desires and plans.

- **Originality:** no political barriers to social experimentation, leading to a rich reality made up of a continuous series of projects promoted by individuals in all spheres of life.

- **Harmony:** no personal barriers forcing individuals to endure an external, extortionist power and thus no reason for rage (what for?) or rebellion (against whom?).

Based on what has been said so far, it is now possible to try to imagine what panarchies could be/become.

It is very unlikely that most of them will be governments like the ones we have now, with a president, a prime minister, many ministers, a crowd of bureaucrats, although this cannot be ruled out. The main difference, however, would be that, in that case, the cost would be borne entirely by those who want this. Most panarchies, on the other hand, could be a sort of integrated and flexible sets of:

- Service providers
- Support agencies.

In this respect, the history of co-operative associations and mutual aid societies, which existed in Europe until the First World War, may offer interesting hints as to what might happen in the future. Other clues are offered by scholars who foresee the transition to a *support economy* based on freely chosen collaborative relationships between individuals and groups playing different roles (Shoshana Zuboff and James Maxmin, *The Support Economy*, 2002).

It could be that a person is a member of one panarchy, receiving/giving services and supports, or of many panarchies, such as being

a member of different clubs (Peter Leeson, *Government, Clubs, and Constitutions*, 2011). Referring again to the current reality, joining a church neither excludes nor restricts the possibility of belonging to other organisations.

At this point, it is necessary to shatter an entirely unfounded expectation that might settle in someone's imagination. And that is that, while the general conception of panarchy is something extremely beautiful and fruitful, it is more than likely that some panarchies will be organisations that some people, with different moral and cultural orientations, will consider as quite unsavoury entities. Indeed, it is highly probable that some panarchies will also be set up by individuals seeking positions of leadership, the kind of people who want to be the head of a new sect. With the multiplication of voluntary communities, as advocated by panarchy, they will certainly find followers willing to submit to their strong personalities.

When this happens, some will say that panarchy is no better than other forms of social organisation that give rise to tyranny. However, in thinking in this way, they deliberately forget one of the basic tenets of panarchy and that is the voluntariness of choices whereby those who freely enter a panarchy and voluntarily submit to a leader are also free to leave that panarchy (if it is indeed a panarchy, i.e. a non-territorial and non-monopolistic organisation) and join a completely different type of panarchy or even to become completely autonomous beings (self-management).

In this regard, to those who wave the flag of freedom as a sacred object to the point that they want to force it down everyone's throat, it is necessary to point out that, despite what it may appear by the use of terms, imposing freedom on everyone is a real act of tyranny compared to leaving an individual free to choose to be a servant or not. In the first case the person will never practise freedom except as a charade and will always be in fear of being left without guidance. In the second case, the voluntary choice to serve leaves the person truly free and his serving could cease at any time if he/she so wished.

The level of freedom present in any panarchy will be in relation to the demand of its members and this is not only the beauty of this concept but also the necessary reminder of reality. Panarchy does not

invent a mythical world populated by altruistic humans (the elected representatives working for the good of all) and selfish monsters (the common person concerned only with his or her own petty interests).

Panarchy is based on actual reality and real human beings and lets everyone have their due (*unicuique suum*: to each his own).

We could say that panarchy is the full realisation of the aspiration for universal tolerance present in the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment and summarised in Voltaire's statement:

"What is tolerance? It is the result of being human. We are all fragile individuals and prone to error; let us forgive each other our follies - this is the first law of nature." (*The Philosophical Dictionary*, Tolerance, 1765).

## Summary

In essence, panarchy is:

- A **method** for problem solving (the way for a permanent and harmonious resolution of conflicts).
- A **standard** of living for the individual (the instrument for autonomous decision-making).
- A **praxis** of social intercourse (the instrument for choosing voluntarily to be part of any group).

When this method, standard and praxis become the common heritage of humanity through a process of awareness concerning what means to be a *human being*, then the term panarchy will probably disappear. At that point, most human beings will take as a foregone fact that they are rightfully responsible for their own lives (and only their own lives) instead of being, pretending or accepting that everybody must be, even against their will, the servants of a monopolistic sovereign, the territorial state.

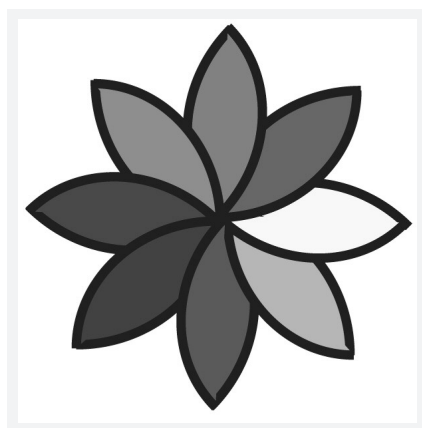
As pointed out earlier, in tackling problems, the solution may come not only from the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, but also

from the ability of the researcher to go beyond conventional assumptions that restrict, without valid reasons, the area of the solution. Once these restrictions are dropped, the mental and material blocks that hinder the discovery of a solution disappear. Similarly, panarchy can become a reality when a cognitive revolution succeeds in setting aside the unreasonable and completely unnecessary restrictions represented by territorialism and monopolism in political and social organisation.

This is why we should disseminate **information** regarding the existence of panarchy or other similar conceptions based on freedom, voluntary choices, and the end of territorialism. This growing information will then gradually be organised into structured forms of **knowledge** (hypotheses, propositions) that will produce practical proposals and experimental projects. If these are successful, new attitudes will emerge in favour of variety, originality, and harmony, and they will become part of the **wisdom** of the time, a world-wide-wisdom.

There is nothing extraordinary about this; on the contrary, it is something of quite ordinary humanity. And being/becoming bearers of humanity is indeed the proper task and purpose of all human beings.





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