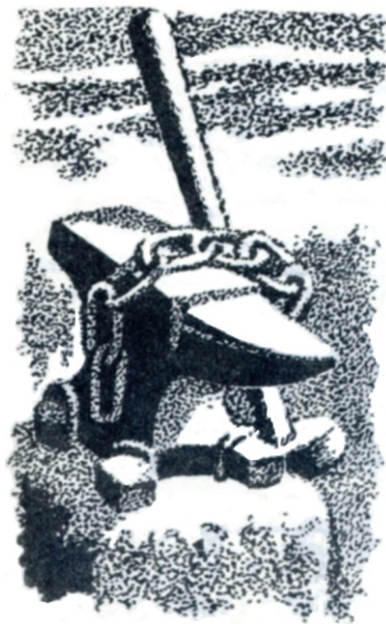


**Why does  
Anarchism  
progress so  
slowly?**

*by Pierre Ramus*



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# Preamble

In our endeavours to find more material to transpose onto the digital world the written words of the anarchist ideology through reproducing classical writings or translating works from other languages we have been fortunate enough whilst doing a search through our archives to find the *MAN! Pamphlet No. 1.*, which was published in San Francisco, California in 1935. <sup>(1)</sup>

Should my memory not fail me, this pamphlet reached our possession through a compañero from Tasmania in either the late 1960's or very early 1970's, whom in turn got it from the editors of "The Match" in Tucson, Arizona.

The subject matter of this pamphlet was written by Rudolf Grossmann, who was better known by his nom de plume Pierre Ramus. Although we do not have the original manuscripts we do suspect that the text would have been originally written in German and then translated into English by Pierre Ramus himself. On appraising the pamphlet the reader will observe that there are irregular grammatical

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(1) MAN! Was a Journal of the Anarchist Ideal and Movement with a monthly publishing existence of seven and a half years (*from 1933 until 1940*), its editor Marcus Graham was born in 1893 in the Rumanian city of Dorohoi. And, as Stuart Christie so eloquently describes him in his introduction to the book published in 1974 by Cienfuegos Press -*MAN! An anthology of anarchist ideas, essays, poetry and commentaries*- Marcus was "an indefatigable anarchist propagandist, one of that strange breed that has never received its due acknowledgement in the history of the class struggle".

structures and expressions which we have refrained from rectifying as we risked to misrepresent the intentions of the message presented, we prefer the reader to make their own interpretation.

It must be confessed that the few surviving members of this editorial group, are also guilty of similar grammatical errors of expression with the English language. When we first arrived in Australia and re-established our propagandistic endeavours within these shores in early 1967 by producing flyers denouncing the atrocities committed in Spain by Franco's fascist regime, these too were full of linguistic blunders. The author to this preamble can vividly recall when the older members of our collective (*Juan Beneito Casanova, Antonio Burgos Visedo, Cesáreo Quiñonez Garcia, Vicente Ruiz Gutiérrez and others...*) would write in spanish the material to be published, we, the younger members whom everyone presumed we were somewhat proficient with the english language would tackle the unimaginable challenges of translation. One of the many encounters of exiled life, the need to master another language within a very short period of time.

Having done some research it is our suspicion that the pamphlet "Why does anarchism progress so slowly?" was only published in English.

It is with the greatest of satisfaction that we have revived this classic writing by one of the best known representatives of Austrian anarchism.

*Acracia Publications*

# Biography of Pierre Ramus

Pierre Ramus, alias of Rudolf Grossmann, (1882-1942). He was born on 15 April 1882 in Vienna, Austria and died on 27 May 1942 whilst crossing the Atlantic.

He was an activist and theorist of anarchism and pacifism. He is considered the most important representative of the anarchist movement in Austria.

Rudolf Grossmann was the son of merchants Samuel Grossmann from Hungary and Sofie Polnauer from Moravia, he also had three sisters. In 1898, he was expelled from high school for social democratic propaganda and fought with his parents, as a result he was sent with his relatives to the United States at age 16.

He attended lectures at Columbia University in New York and was a journalist at the Social Democratic “New Yorker Volkszeitung” (1898-1900), from 1899 he also wrote in the Social Democratic opposition “Gross-Newyorker Arbeiterzeitung”. He turned to anarchism in 1900 under the influence of Johann Most and Emma Goldman, he wrote for Johann Most’s “Freiheit” magazine, and became a respected speaker at anarchist meetings.

At the age of 18, he published his first monthly newspaper “Zeitgeist” with the humoristic supplement “Der Tramp” in New York. He also wrote articles for the Chicago newspaper “Workers’ Newspaper” and was editor of the Chicago newspaper “The Torch” (1902-1903).

In 1902, he was sentenced to five years in prison as an alleged strike leader in a silk weaver strike in Paterson, New Jersey,

United States. He then fled under the pseudonym of Pierre Ramus (in honour of the French humanitarian Petrus Ramus, 1515-1572) to England.

From 1904 he continued his activities as a publisher and speaker in anarchist circles in London. At the same time he attended economics and law conferences at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Using the pen name of Pierre Ramus he wrote for Rudolf Rocker's weekly "The Worker's Friend", the literary magazine "Germinal", the anarchist weekly newspaper "The Free Workers World" (London 1906), "The Free Worker" (Berlin 1904-1907), the monthly syndicalist paper "The Free Cigarettes" and he contributed every month in "The Free Generation".

In 1927 he edited and published the magazine "Der Anarchist". Under the influence of Peter Kropotkin, he converted to communist anarchism. Whilst in Kropotkin's circle in 1903 he met his wife, Russian anarchist Sophie ("Sonja") Ossipovna Friedmann (1884-1974), with whom he had two daughters and married in 1916.

In 1907 he was the Austrian delegate at the International Anarchist Congress in Amsterdam. He made conference tours to Bohemia, France, England, Switzerland and in 1908 to numerous cities in Austria. He founded the group of non-authoritarian and non-violent socialists (Kropotkinians and Tolstoians), the Federation of Anarchist Trade Unions of Lower Austria (1908-1911) and the Federation of Free Trade Unions (1911-1914).

In 1914, after Austria's declaration of war on Serbia, he was arrested twice for espionage and high treason. He was under house arrest until the end of the war. He lost his political and anarchist contacts, but was able to maintain his pacifist contacts.

It was during this period that he wrote his three most important investigative works: "The Heresy and Ignorance of Marxism in the Arena of Socialism" (1919), "The Recreation of Society by



Communist Anarchism” (1920) and the “Warrior of Peace in the interior” (1924).

In 1919 he founded the League of Princely Socialists with the magazine “Insight and Liberation”.

In period between the wars from 1918 to 1932, he evolved his intransigent adherence to non-violence, his anti-militarism during the “Austrian Revolution” and later on his open opposition to the Social Democrats and Communists. After 1918, he represented anarchists on the Vienna Workers’ Council, participated in the peace movement, and in various autonomous settlement projects.

Ramus fled in 1938 due to his Jewish origin as well as his anarchist convictions after the Austrian Anschluss. His escape took him through Switzerland, France, Spain and Morocco.

He died in 1942 on the ship, which was to take him to his family who had previously fled to Mexico.



## Eugen Relgis visits Pierre Ramus.

. . . I accompany Saueracker<sup>(1)</sup> to the nearby forest. We lie on the grass and he spoke to me about his pilgrimages, his eyes were fixed on the blue sky. We stayed there for an hour or two in this sunny clearing, with damp smells whilst we spoke about Pierre Ramus.

A sociologist, whose polemic verb is rough and inexhaustible. He is the promoter of the anarcho-communist group of Austria. Erkenntnis und Befreiung (Knowledge and Liberation), the title of the newspaper he runs, is both a slogan and a method. He is influenced by Kropotkin's ideas, but also by Tolstoism and Gandhism. Christian non-violence and Indian active resistance, adapted to the mentality of the atheist and revolutionary European. Social revolution, not political. Non-authoritarian socialism that rejects the political commitments of the socialist government parties and the tyrannies of state organization.

Ramus's written works are many, both theoretical and combative. He has described the life of an anarchist during the Great War in a novel, it is almost an autobiography. Ramus has refused to enlist. He has come out of prison to be always spied upon. But his voice booms formidably in the Rathaus square, as in "clandestine" gatherings. His active faith puts on guard the masses attracted by demagogues. He confronts Justice in the rooms guarded by the gendarmes: the daily press incitation and practices of "provocation". When I believed him to be in Vienna, he would send me, like a battle banner, a poster of his propaganda tours through Westphalia.

In London, during the Congress of "The War Resistants", he strongly fought against the possibilities of pacifism being dragged away by dubious political actions, even from the left ... I have heard him in a room in a London neighbourhood, speaking in English to an auditorium accustomed to quiet debates. Solidly, he underlined his words with gestures of a day labourer who lifts sacks and iron bars.

Congested, he would allow his sweat run down his face - and the vowels would explode from his mouth well above the audience who were fascinated by his eloquence. Sometimes the room was shaken by the fragrances of their rebellious flavour. Walking the length and width of the

stage, Ramus appears to be possessed by a dramatic force, by a volcanic energy, unmasking the false shepherds of the people, fighting the mistakes made by the socialist and communist “brothers”, to save precisely the true mission of socialism. . .

Max Nettlau is a thinker and a historian: his actions radiate, like a beacon in the distance of the social waves. Pierre Ramus on the other hand enters the crowd: he is an agitator who confronts “the monster of Authority”. His rich culture does not hinder his movements. To the contrary, it provides him with categorical arguments and replies. In between a contradictory debate and the painstaking work of writing his newspaper, he writes studies that baffle fanatical reformers and hero-worshippers of the revolution. *Die Irrelehre des Marxismus* (The False Teachings of Marxism) has opened as a new path in the jungle so thick of historical materialism. A work of clarification and delimitation. Marxism, social democracy, Bolshevism and anarchist currents are examined not only from the economic and political point of view, but also from the point of view of the superior interests of culture. Ramus has discovered antisocial elements in the evolution of Marxism. The kinship ties between authoritarian socialism and national fascisms seem evident to him, despite the divergences of the objectives pursued. Bolshevism, by its method of political government, can also be interwoven with fascism.

Both dictatorship and totalitarianism make the distress of different social formations no matter how diverse they may be and unfortunately identical, as terribly experienced by many nations. Ramus wants the purification of socialism from all the heresies accumulated by both its followers and its adversaries. He demonstrates the permanent significance of true socialism. His anarcho-communist ideal is a society freed from the state dictatorship, but also from the dictatorship of the common people (*the mistakes and violence of the masses reside in those magic words that a minority of political demagogues, white or red, construe in their thoughts*). Above all, well-being for all: this means individual freedom within the framework of the common interests of humanity. By defeating fanaticism and political oppression, moral oppressions will also disappear.

-But Ramus's intolerance! - The compañero suddenly exclaimed.

-I know. It is his passion for an active ideal, which is more honourable than the abject commitments of political hunters. It may be that Ramus, like other anarchists of different outlook, is the kind of eternal opponent. Those commotions are needed to remove the stagnant waters of opportunism ... as persistently done by the most faithful of socialists such as, Nettlau, Rocker, Malatesta, B. de Ligt and so many others... Anarchists are more numerous than what you may think. They do not really like breaking through the crowd to get their membership cards. ..

-Do you want to meet them? This afternoon there is a meeting of the anarcho-communist group. I can't take you there myself. I don't feel well now. Always struggling with this fever -a memento of Kemal's Turkey, which has brought down many heads, but has failed to destroy the Ankara mosquitoes- Saueracker pronounces with a pale smile.

I left with the apprentice-shoemaker. It is a long way to the urban train station. We have to go across to the other side of the city.

-Around Vienna -says the apprentice- there are colonies for all ... sorts. Our Eden is almost primitive. We have only just begun to build it. The *compañeros* of the old guard have already settled in modest neighbourhoods or in rustic parks. In Klosterneuburg, as an example. On the green covered slopes with winding paths there are villas that could be mistaken as summer residences of the Vienna bourgeoisie. There reside the intellectuals, the teachers, the artists. A quiet environment for those who want to meditate, create, dream ...

-I also went there five years ago...

It was then I saw Ramus, in his plum garden behind his one-story chalet, next to a table stuck in the ground. Stones placed on sheets of paper, prevented them from being blown away by the warm gentle wind. He worked tirelessly, taking a sunbath in a T-shirt. I allowed him to "finish" his newspaper. I laid down under a tree, very happy to be able to rest after a night of railroad travelling ... In the neighbouring gardens, separated only by some wires, more solitary people, naked as if at the beach. One was sitting in front of his easel: he painted. A woman strolled

through the tall grass, a thoughtful nymph, seeming indifferent to the call of a Pan flute. A hammock among the branches: someone was reading, rocking...

When Ramus had finished his newspaper, he ushered me into the house. In the library, under the roof attic, tidy, with files and catalogues, I was able to document myself immediately on the matter that interested me. Downstairs a strictly vegetarian lunch awaited us. His partner, Sonia, reading the newspaper. The daughters, studying. A home environment I desire for all idealists, the social fighters for whom family life is a comforting refuge, and not a petty harassment or a comfortable ailing, as in so many more or less wealthy marriages...

We have reached Molardstrasse. The headquarters of the Bund is in an old building, between uniformed greyish blocks. A *compañero* guarding the entrance opens the door for us: sometimes officers and policemen show their suspicious faces. A hallway, one more door, a cobbled courtyard, framed with rooms. Another *compañero* guarding the way. He shows us the narrow staircase: it descends into the basement, skimming the walls. But you have to enter a certain corner and then go up another staircase, dark, spiral, like in medieval castles. And here we are, in a hall where other *compañeros* make us enter a low room, whitewashed with lime.

The eyes are fixed upon us, the newly arrived. It is sufficient for Ramus to start shaking hands in order to win everyone's trust. A room filled with workers, artisans, self-taught people and "vagabonds". This latter group are the propagandists who go from factory to factory, from city to city, always harassed, persecuted, and defending their freedom like the beasts in the jungle. But they are all peaceful, pleasant, and fraternal. They are united not only in their ideal, but also in their everyday life... On the walls, allegorical drawings and portraits: Ferrer, the Chicago Martyrs, Tolstoy, Gandhi, Kropotkin. And posters with slogans, words of struggles...

Ramus begins to expose the latest social unrests and political events. Then he evokes the Sacco and Vanzetti process. In the crowded room, his voice often has explosive, metallic resonances. The floorboards creak

under his heavy walk. You can sense the windows vibrate and the room wavering like a ship's bridge. Ramus stimulates his compañeros. He charges them with that electricity that calms souls, which gives thought, the clarity and strength to penetrate the social arenas, where the great adversaries, the privileged classes, are protected by machine guns and gendarmes on horseback...

But these contentious workers have no weapons in their hands only pride. It is his will that constitutes his protective covering. And his word is the bullet that does not kill but that pierces brightly, the walls between which thousands of workers lie exhausted awaiting salvation. Salvation that not many are anticipating to achieve, in a society where the new false "saviours" hurry to climb the throne of the masters expelled by them.

Following the meeting, in a corner of the empty room, I had a long conversation with Pierre Ramus about "the present and future of the social problems". For him, the social problem is unitary, no matter how many conflicting aspects the struggle presents. Of his very clear and firm answers to my questions which were also published in two issues of "Erkenntnis und Befreiung" <sup>(2)</sup> - I transcribe here under two of his comments, concerning the future.

*Do you not think that the egalitarian pressures upon socialism will trigger, as a reaction, a greater impulse towards anarchism?*

More than likely, any violent and unnatural equalization through the exercise of authority and oppression causes a counter-action. In the sense of reaction, this counter-action is fascism; in the sense of freedom and progress, which accord equal rights to all and do not in any way imply an adjustment through the use of force by the authorities the counter-action is anarchism. Due to the fact that, within the parallelogram of evolutionary trends, the forces of anarchism were too weak to restrain the tendency towards a state dictatorship, which would subjugate the entire political and economic domain -as Marxism wishes- this tendency gave birth to fascism both within the bourgeoisie and within the proletariat. This is a natural reaction against the apparent pressure of adjustment, from both democ-

racy and dictatorship. Fascism can never be defeated by Marxism, only by anarchism in the sense of Tolstoy and Gandhi, because anarchism embodies a cultural phase of the evolution of humanity. Completely different to fascism or Marxism which are diverse forms of expression of the same principle of authority, oppression and domination.

*But, what perception do you have about the social revolution and the future of humanity?*

For me, the social revolution is a new notion in the historical archives of revolutions. Whilst until today every revolution has used violence and came to be through the political revolution itself, the social revolution will use, for the first time, exclusively non-violent means.

She has to do so, because she hides within herself a new cultural value that is the full liberation of the human personality from all the chains of violence. This goal cannot be achieved by any violent method ... For me, the social revolution only means the transformation of society, which will make any institution founded on violence disappear from its bosom and thus bring the liberation of all humanity, especially saving the workers from the slavery of monopoly and authority.

This can only be achieved through anarchism, in a stateless society, that is, in an anti-authoritarian structure -in anarchy- which represents a social organization of non-violence. This could only be done if humanity utilised, in order to obtain it, only the methods that take it out of its slavery and not those procedures that unleash violence and authority again... As regards the immediate future of humanity, I am of the opinion that humanity either carries out a social change towards non-violence, or considering its components today, it will crumble in a new world war. . <sup>(3)</sup>



## Notes

(1) The Austrian anarchist Alfred Saueracker wrote two little-known anarchist brochures in the early 1920s: one that criticized Christianity and one against the widespread of anti-Semitism. He was part of the anarchist milieu of the 1920's in Vienna, and was involved with the "Eden" settlement project. He is the descendent of a family of generals and dignitaries of the imperial court, rebelling against this opulent status he turned to utopian ideals strongly influenced by an anti-militarist outlook. Saueracker was a missionary for peace completely opposed to any form of violence. The guardians of wars, of nations and of religions have always persecuted him with such hatred that he was always reported to the authorities. Whilst exiled in Bucharest following the First World War he was able to spend some time with me up to the moment he was expelled from Rumania. Travelling through minor Asia he finally found refuge in Ankara until he got ill. He eventually returned to Vienna, but some years thereafter this city was invaded by the Nazis and Saueracker contacted me to see if I was able to assist him in any way. I made contact with some friends in England and they were able to extract him together with his family from the nazi nightmare. A year later he was able to relocate to the United States and settled in California. Under the new name of Alfred W. Parker he established the International Humanitarian Service, he continued promoting and defending the anarchist ideals: promoting Esperanto, collectivism, vegetarianism, humanism not only as a philosophy but as part of his daily life. That is why I had to make a reference of this exemplary man filled with fraternity and humanity...

(2) No. 49 and 50, 1931, Vienna.

(3) And the man who so prophetically spoke to me years ago about the Second World War, has also paid with his life. Pierre Ramus, after many adventures, was able to save himself from Hitler's Vienna. Fleeing through Switzerland, France and Spain, he was then interned in a refugee camp in Morocco. He obtained his visa for Mexico, but whilst crossing the Atlantic, he succumbed to an embolism, on May 27, 1942. His last very moving letter, from Casablanca, was published in "Le Monde Libertaire", Paris, October, 1956.

Extracted from "Doce Capitaes - Peregrinaciones Europeas" by Eugen Relgis,  
Published by Ediciones "Humanidad", Montevideo January 1961 p. 143-151

*Translated from Spanish into English by Vicente Ruiz (hijo)*

**Why does  
Anarchism  
progress so  
slowly?**

Many are puzzled by this question, knowing that the ideas of anarchism are the maximum of what is wholesome to humanity as well as to society.

Anarchism aims at the abolition of all governmental authority over humanity; this aim it wishes to achieve because authority is the foundation of all economic monopolies, therefore of exploitation and enslavement, which; as a whole, must vanish if the basis-authority, violence, -i.e., the state, government of man over man- is to be overcome.

That such a profound fundamental idea is not easily comprehended by an enslaved world population, by the workers, who have been brought up since centuries, nay since thousands of years in thralldom, ought to be understood. At the same time - it must be made very clear that no other movement however large the multitude of its followers may grow, is going to liberate the workers, except the anarchistic movement.

All other movements only pretend to free the individual and society whilst in reality, when coming to power, they exploit and enslave both anew. Therefore all efforts tendered to them to achieve their purpose, however large masses they may gain, *is wasted strength*; and it stands to reason that such *non-anarchist* movements will, although they have a large following, not overcome any crisis or emergency, not possessing the right principles for this task.

On the contrary, we can objectively observe that, although being mass-movements of largest dimensions, viz., social democracy, bolshevism, pure and simple trade unionism, even co-operation, all reform - quackeries, they are failing to solve any one pressing problem, in spite of the fact that they are large parties, or have been such, and have reached political power, as they call it.

Just therein lays the real strength and invincibility of anarchism the positive certainty that it will in the future reach its goal, if progress of mankind is not to cease altogether.

As to the people, they stand in the dark presence as a mass of folks with a very little clear horizon of intellectual capacity. Eighty years of marxism have brought the workers a sole gain, only the stupid illusion to believe that when they are ruled, exploited and fleeced, even led into the

perdition of the bestial battlefield, by mutual suicidal wars, that all this is not bad, if it is represented, concocted and justified by workmen-leaders having become workmen-statesmen .... The workers allowed themselves to be dawdled by marxism into the fallacy that only as a big majority they can come into their own, and that for this purpose it was necessary to utilize that what keeps them eternally immature:-the ballot-box.

With what result?

That social-democracy has, just in those countries where it counted millions of adherents, been smashed first by the much smaller fascist organizations; that bolshevism, from the very inception of its gaining political power, becoming the “proletarian state”, became the forerunner and teacher of fascism, has not only not solved the social problems, not overcome the economic crisis, but gives an example to the whole capitalist world to what extent one can subdue and fleece the *worker by the worker*, if one labels the latter “socialist statesman”, “communist commissioner of the people”, or “soviet-commissionary”, “workers-council”.

Not only have these movements in no way overcome the world-crisis, but they, together with trade-unionism, have created a world crisis for the entire workers-movement, by having brought the workers so far as to adapt themselves to the needs of monopoly, instead of teaching them how to overcome monopoly, which latter aim only anarchism offers. Knowing, as it does, that only monopoly, not any natural causes, create the world-crisis for the workers.

The overcoming of the world-crisis were no hard task at all, were the workers only without any awe before authority. They need only, as a mass-minority, *to start in to work without the consent of the employer and for themselves*, instead of for capitalism and government.

Anarchism thus grants alone the solution of the great problem of today. But just this is not offered, it is combatted, by all the powerful parties. And the workers do not do the only rational thing, hut beg for a “dole” or believe in the fraud of a “New Deal”.

It is not the fault of anarchism or its pioneers that the workers have made no headway. Since 1842 Proudhon, since 1862 Bakounine, and later on through the International Alliance of Brotherhood, within and outside the first International Workingmen Association, still later, from 1872 onwards, by the Jura-Federation in Switzerland and other countries, foretold the workers their doom if they did not heed the tenets of anarchism. Unheard of sacrifices were brought by the anarchist movement of every country for the real enlightenment of the workers. Yet, they did not heed, they believed the dishonesties of the marxian politician or in the bargaining of trade-unionism with the master for “a fair wage” - not seeing that within the governmental money-monopoly and by the monopolization of the means of production, all wage-betterment must prove illusionary, just like “social reform-laws”, only given or denied according to circumstances, solely in order to side-track the worker in his intelligence and in his fighting capacities.

The only “fault” I can find with the anarchist movement and propaganda is, that it is imbued by an overflow of pure idealism, should this be a fault, I deny it.

As a whole the anarchist underestimates the sluggishness of human nature, the power of prejudice, ignorance, and the density of corruption, by which factors the present system is upheld, and which are not only prevalent within the circles of the powerful ones and the exploiters, but alas, also within the ranks of the subdued and abused workers. Although the anarchist very certainly rejects the marxian formula of the class-struggle, in its aim of erecting a dictatorship of the proletariat, (tantamount with a dictatorship of proletarian upstarts over the proletariat, through proletarian tools; the S. S. and S. A.- gangster-organizations of Hitler -himself a former worker- are in their rank and file all proletarians...) still even the anarchist clings yet also to an undue idolization of the proletariat. One does not clearly perceive that all government violence is perpetrated and its authority, as well as capitalist exploitation, upheld by the vast majority of the proletariat. (For which reason it is nonsense to speak of an existing or historical “class-struggle”, as Marx taught it; unfortunately, the marxians keep on to reiterate this phrase, in spite of 1914 till 1918, and while the workers of diverse countries are standing before a second world-war which, if not impeded and prevented by anarchistic anti-militarism, is going to play the marxian “class-struggle” by bringing not only the proletariat of a would-be “socialist” (Germany)

and a would-be “communist” (Russia) country against each other's throats and gas-poisoned lungs... In reality the worker as such is not fighting in any class-struggle for his interests; he is either fighting for the interests of liberty, which is tantamount with mankind and humanity, or he is the very pillar and instrument of tyranny and monopoly.

If the worker, from his own point of view and interest, wants to consider fairly the social problem and his present situation within it, he must soberly confess to himself:

*“Anarchism alone has told me the truth for the past and present, while all other movements have told me only lies, have misled me; as a worker I am today poorer and more enslaved than ever before, on account of the fallacies of marxian and “dialectical”, metaphysical demagoguery of its political spokesmen, who are by no means more honest than the fascistic ones.”*

It is a wrong notion to believe that because anarchism has different factions, groups of elements who constantly debate against each other, thus therein lays a source of weakness. This would only be the case if such polemics are not based upon honest convictions and in spite of divergence, all uniting within anarchy, the social order without any centralized violence, in other words they secretly serve other aims and objectives, bickering in a callous, slanderous and dishonest way. People who are so acting are not anarchists, even if they wear its mask, to use an expression by Shelley, the immortal genius of anarchistic poetry. Such elements are of that sort which comrade Anatole Gorelik has branded in one of his excellent articles as follows:

To discuss ideas, to converse about the tactics and methods for the realization of these ideas, study the happenings and acts which produce themselves within our ideological movement, this is necessary and useful. To discuss ideas and study phenomena is one thing, but to soil and slander comrades and movements, this is quite a different matter ...

There are some who want to introduce a certain political tendency into the anti-political movement and direct it according to their will and caprice. And all those who do not agree

with them, they criticize, insult and condemn. The tyranny of such men is unbearable and terrible. They demoralize the weakest and destroy the good that had been done by the best anarchists and idealists...

The way to put a stop to such phenomena within libertarian circles is to educate the human personality within every one, awaken in people their noble and humanitarian sentiments and elevate their ideological and moral standard. Because in order for real comradeship to flourish and occupy the place which it ought to occupy within the ranks of the anarchists, it is necessary that the human personality be conscious and consistent of our ideas. When people are conscientious and morally noble then vanity, envy and hypocrisy will disappear by itself.

*(Quoted from "Problemas del Anarquismo moderno: El Compañerismo" by Anatole Gorelik in "La Revista Blanca," Barcelona, May 24th 1935.)*

Despicable elements are, of course, within every popular movement. But the anarchist movement has to fear them the least, because it safeguards free discussion and thereby develops an independent self-determined conception within its adherents about every controversial problem. What concerns the latter, I consider it to be the strength and value of the anarchist movement not to be dogmatic, but to give each individual the opportunity of free expression. If it is honest in purpose and aim, the parties to the polemic will meet, sooner or later, within the intellectual realm of anarchy; however, whichever side, does not agree to come together to a friendly resolution, history and mature experience will carry the day.

This process of clarification by the pressure of time proves itself, by the way, also in the quite burning problem of late years, whether it is compatible with anarchism to stand for the slogan and aim "All power to the worker's-councils" or not? The peculiar view that it is compatible was taken by the German syndicalists, under the leadership of Erich Muehsam and others: remarkable enough it is even at present still upheld by the syndicalist IWA. (see their journal "*Die Internationale*", Amsterdam. 1934, No. 2).

With a feeling of profound satisfaction I perceive that our French con-

temporary "TERRE LIBRE" (June 1935) has taken up this problem. It has by no means suppressed the viewpoint of Erich Muehsam, whose horrible and bestial assassination by the Nazi-gangsters of Germany does not give anybody the right to make believe that Muehsam's intellectual opinion was in conformity with anarchism. "Terre Libre." therefore brought at full length the more coinciding views of Muehsam with Marxian ideas on the above topic. At the same time and in the same number of the journal it refuted them editorially most excellently:

"To divide up the political -or economical- functions between representative organisms of abstract elements in society -or deposit them with certain exclusive keepers of certain interests- means to restore the state, either under its parliamentary or under its corporative form, it means to negate federalism and to betray the social revolution."

Intellectual, not malicious controversy, within a movement of ideal aims is always a sign of health and inner progress. Where else if not within anarchism, which is the cardinal idea against all dogmas, should there be free exchange of controversial views for the common good of the idea?

In fact this is absolutely necessary that anarchism should not have to fear similar breakdowns, in the time of its realization, through the lack of clarity of its own adherents, as was the case with marxism, suppressing all intellectual opposition and arguments, thereby not testing all the social problems.

Looking very attentively upon the international anarchist movement it is not to be denied that, while it has the great mission of enlightening the working people foremost, and freeing the people from the cobwebs of the authority-veneration-insanity, it has also the great task before itself of elucidating its aims and means for its own adherents. Both activities are distinctly necessary. Speaking for myself, I dare not decide which one is the more necessary. Because, while it is important to enlighten the masses - of what use is it if the anarchists themselves, who will always be the pioneers of social-revolutionary activity, are vacillating in definitions of their aim, are not clear as to immediate ways and means in the question of emancipation?

That the masses would and could not grasp the idea of anarchism easily



is hardly true. But why underestimate the fact that no other idea has to overcome as many obstacles in order to reach the ears of the masses, in the same way as anarchism. The simple truth is that it has until now, never not even once, as yet been able to really reach the masses. In order to achieve this, one needs wealth, the large circulation of the press, the cinema -and broadcasting- facilities, at one's command. When and where did anarchism ever have such opportunities?

Only as long as anarchism can only reach small minorities the powers to be will allow it free expression. As soon as the danger approaches that this perilous ideal, namely, -for the undermining of authority- can reach the ear of the broad populace, then at once all rights of expression are suppressed by the government, then going frankly over to fascism. It proves the consciousness of moral perversion and the indefensibility by which our enemies, the rulers by force, by laws, jails and hangmen, are permeated. They can only risk to allow anarchism to be heard when it is a weak voice, or badly represented, never daring to face its problems at the free podium and forum of speech, using freely the printed word or the ether-waves, in free discussion with it. Not even when social-democracy had great power in Austria was it possible for the anarchists, although they were willing to pay for it, to make use of the radio, to make known their point of view to the most contemporary questions. Government, the state, authority knows that it is impotent in front of the science, common sense and truth of anarchism; it can only assert itself by strangling the possibilities of free expression.

Is this condition of anarchism a reason to despair? Not at all.

As a movement anarchism has as its main task to create and uphold everywhere a staunch federation of autonomous groups exclusively of its own principles for propaganda and direct action in face of every social, economical and political emergency. The people must always feel that there are anarchists amidst it. Thus anarchism will be ready from within for the social revolution. The latter will be brought about; by the matured initiative of the people, the intelligent and dissatisfied, against misery and wrong; by the repeated experiences of disappointment from the promises of government, by its fraud, injustice, by its expression of life-crushing annihilation whose monopoly, rulership and war-interests of the "powers

to be", bequeath upon the masses of the population. An anarchist has to, without tiring, constantly bring to the attention of the people all displays of governmental slavery. It is not important whether the message reaches many or not; the importance is to continuously expose the conditions of injustice, violence, legal robbery and exploitation. The population has to feel outraged, exasperated, in constant wrath, wanting to protest; and thereby the moral and psychological basis of the present system will be undermined, and we could surmise that people will instinctively become more anarchistic than ourselves, the conscious anarchists. Before the French revolution, how small was the circulation which the Encyclopedians had at their disposal during a period when the majority of the French population was illiterate! Yet how wonderful did in 1789 all those ideas realize themselves to which the Encyclopedians had given spirit decades before? The downfall of the French revolution in 1791 is due to the very insufficiency of the general ideas dominating the revolution. This proves that just the proper ideas are of supreme importance before any revolution.

For the anarchists the main and fundamental thing is: to be and remain as clear as possible in their sole aim: anarchy. So long as the different groups of sincere followers of this principle are themselves not clear about many very important ways and means are not the fundamentals and fulfilment of the ideas of anarchism - do not let us be too impatient of desiring a too great headway, do not let us compromise in order to cater to the whims of "masses"! We might gain them but thereby loose our principles, and a too swift headway might be, if on the path of immaturity of our own minds, one immediate perdition, as was also the case with other parties which have grown in numbers swiftly at the cost of conviction and clarity of aim.

However ardently every single one of us must wish a speedy realisation of our ideal, still, we must not be blindfolded to the fact that, as Errico Malatesta very correctly once wrote in "Le Reveil-Il Risveglio" (Geneva) : *We anarchists wish to conquer, but only by the realization of our principles, not by something which is against them!*

The latter is inevitable if we were catering to gain the masses at the cost of our principles. Let us be clear about one thing: The masses will thereby not gain anything, loose again and again everything, remain

befuddled, and we would become accomplices of all that! Do not allow the anarchist cause to be abused in this way. Let us voice our clear, truthful ideas, the negation of all government of man over man - and let the masses make their inevitable sad experience, until they find the sentiment and spirit of anarchism, the only harbinger of their salvation.

We anarchists are no church-missionaries in telling the people that we can "save" them from the dire mistakes they must make, that they must turn turn towards anarchism. No man, no people can be saved from the doom who do not save themselves. All we have as a solemn duty to accomplish, is to save the purity of the ideas of anarchism for the workers, the people at large, because thereby alone the opportunity of saving themselves, is not lost, the only salvation in which we anarchists believe.

It would the greatest misfortune for mankind should anarchism compromise itself with any of the non-anarchistic movements of our time, with any of the factions: (like, for instance, the "Trotsky"-group etc...), by combining with any authoritarian group of marxian democracy or proletarian dictatorship, whatever its name. Those who advise thus wrongly to do so, forget that the demagogy of authority (social-democracy, etc.) has had its day and is smashed to pieces, like in Germany, Italy, Austria and so forth, never to come again. It has been superseded by Authority, without demagogy, which is going to stay, until conquered by non-authority, anarchism.

Now to combine with any of the marxian factions would be more than the criminality it was in 1919 and afterwards when some "anarchists" combined with bolshevism; it would be sheer folly. Because marxism is bankrupt in all aspects forever; it would mean that the anarchists have either to struggle in order to bring it into power, or to struggle for it that marxism should regain its power. In both cases this would mean suicide for anarchism.

Let no one believe that in front of the international reaction it might be necessary to unite with the marxians, in order to avoid the victory of fascism. The awful experience of the dictatorship in Russia proves that the conquest of power by marxism means nothing short of a red fascism, annihilating anarchism still more so than the white fascism. (In Italy,

Malatesta was at least allowed to live: in bolshevik Russia all our leading comrades have been assassinated.)

The mission of anarchism in the present period is to save itself from the onslaughts of authority, to fight against the very principle of authority which never before has dared as frankly to take all the responsibility for the capitalist-governmental criminality of things as they are now, a responsibility which was until hitherto slyly veiled by marxism in all its forms. In this historical moment, anarchism has to combat nothing else than its arch-enemy, the cardinal foe of a free, well-to-do mankind - viz.. Authority. And nothing short of Anarchy it has to cast into the hideous face of all curacies, whatever name they may wear. Never before has such a grand opportunity existed for the anarchists, and just because the danger of doing it has greatly increased, it is the solemn duty of the anarchists to be worthy of the hour of time and history. Let anarchists beware of being misled by side-issues, by palliatives, by reform-quackery of all calibre, which also tends to encroach the activities of our government by various methods. . . Nothing short of our only one issue: anarchy, have we as anarchists, to promote in these days. Only then will mankind emerge from the present crisis more clear-minded and nearer to final emancipation: only then can we expect the turmoil of reaction that will have perished in its failures, to be the great and only conceived conscience for the workers, who will then recognize that only under the guidance of the anarchistic ideas they can achieve liberty and welfare for all.

Only if we are constantly combatting every advent of marxism toward power or recapturing it, just as we have to combat any other authoritarianism, only then can we expect that the unfortunate, misled and sacrificed followers of marxism will turn to us, as far as they are honest and bright-minded, and come to our ranks with the splendid veracious words of that former "communist", the ex-secretary of the Belgian Communist Party and one of the founders of the now self-exposed and compromising "Third" International, with the words of Eduard (War) Van Overstraeten, as follows:

The anarchist movement... has a precise economical, social and political platform.

...From it alone can come our salvation...

The sincere communists, those socialists finding the way out of

their reformist illusions, they should strengthen the anarchist movement, which is solid, has a real basis, is living, and is the only social current being likely to make the social revolution.... Only the anarchists have not betrayed the cause of the workers. They have struggled and fought where they had to struggle and fight. May all real revolutionists bring to them their help, exert themselves with all their strength to make disappear the weakness of the anarchist movement, so that the ever growing wave of fascism can be conquered and, instead of it, inspire anarchist communism to be established.

Action is a very good thing, most important, but only if it serves a clear aim. Action for an unclear, mischievous thing leads to a miscarriage however well meant the action may have been.

The anarchist movement cannot accelerate the natural course of time and the process of maturity; it can only accelerate, increase the clarity of the thinking intelligence there is within society. Actions growing out of this will come when the times are mature for them. And only then will they be of lasting duration and usefulness in their effects.

It seems as though the biological process of life does not want the swift and rapid realization of ideas, however impatient we may individually be about it. One could sociologically reproach anarchism for its slow process of development, only if other groups within the social movement would solve these problems quicker than what anarchism is able to solve. But the bare fact is that other organizations do not solve their own radical problems, nor any others, quicker; on the contrary, they only complicate the real problems more. And in as much as they all concertedly combat, slander, malign anarchy and the anarchists, it is rather grotesque to demand of anarchism, just on account of these others to find a swifter and very desirable headway, to "do the job".

Let us be clear about one thing: All the other movements offer, with the aid of government, to its leaders very positive emoluments and material benefits. Of course, at the cost of the bleeding, suffering masses. Only anarchism has nothing to offer its spokesmen, short of the realization of the ideal. Is it then any great wonder if so few leaders of thought dare to come openly to it, when they have to lose materially by it very much

now a days; or is it to be marvelled at the fact that many workers of superior capacities, instead of aspiring to be elected -I perceive, even Upton Sinclair lets himself be carried away by this mean and to the workers most harmful ambition- and hoodwinking their fellow-workers, or instead of getting fat trade-union-jobs, by keeping the organized workers in the bondage of capitalism, are not rather coming to us? Expecting this from men as they are mostly in the present time and system, would be folly on our part. Let us make no mistake about it.

So long as the workers are still dumbfounded and believe in leaders (to which pernicious belief marxism has “educated” them, fascism gladly taking over the inheritance) - they are not mature yet for self-responsibility: They will be abused, suffer by this lack of reasoning-capacity. But this is not the fault of anarchism which teaches them constantly, not to believe in leaders, nor entrust them with any power.

Anarchism needs idealism, self-determined, sacrificial spirit and fortitude of character. Is it to be blamed that the present corrupt system, crowning with corruption and meanness, does not endow many individuals with these sterling moral qualities, needed to become anarchists? Not at all. Only minorities have, in the course of history, been able to gather these characteristics within themselves, and still they, the minorities, have alone moved history and even evolution, as far as they went until now. The main thing is that those who have become anarchists remain true to their faith and work for it with endurance and energy.

Anarchists have their spiritual gain unto themselves. It is absolutely wrong to maintain that anarchism has not achieved anything. Did Free Thought not achieve anything because there are still Churches in existence? The corroboration of the principles of freedom, by sparing its followers from the doom to which authority and marxism condemn their followers, this is an inner blessing and the source of highest inspiration which only anarchism offers and affords.

How many of our powerful opponents have, in the time of the breakdown of the strongest social-democracy and practically all the “communist” parties of Europe, withstood the ambush of governmental violence as

strong as anarchism has? While the tenets of all other parties have been disproved by history and experience, only the banner of anarchism is floating boldly today! It is no exaggeration, if I say:

*Only anarchism and active anti-militarism, imbued by the former, are presently as yet feared by government, knowing them to be their implacable foe, never to be overcome, because resting in the individual decision and action of the anti-governmental personality, which cannot be robbed of its conscience by nationalistic and patriotic delusions!*

Capitalism and militarism also know that only the anarchistic idea is now-a-days the ever present danger for them, impossible to overcome by all the powers of government. Only recently the "Gestapo" (Secret State Police Department in Germany) has had to publicly confess that the explosion of the huge murderous armory-industrial plant and factory at Reinsdorf, in the month of June 1935, was due to the action of anarchist-communist-anti-militarist elements, being absolutely opposed to any war whatsoever (not only to an "imperialistic" one, like the marxians....). If, in America, the pure and simple Federation of Labour must use in its demagoguery the slogan of a "General Strike" at least as a threat who, if not the anarchists, were the first apostles of this economic action, becoming now the slogan of even the not as yet anarchistic masses, forcing the leaders to make use of the very name of this mass-action! If workers in fascist Poland and other countries do not leave the factories but take possession of them - is this not the unconscious spirit of anarchism, manifesting itself? If we see everywhere that evermore individuals refuse to obey the state when calling upon them to enlist for the mass-murderous purpose of war, we therein witness a tremendous spread of the ideas of anarchism, although only in a part-field expressing itself as yet. And against whom, if not solely against the feared anarchist, do practically all governments decree laws of heavy penalties against the sabotaging, destruction and damaging of war-implements of mass-murder during war? No marxians were ever taught such anti-militaristic actions. Not even syndicalists have taught it to their adherents. The governments know fully well that only from anarchists they have to fear such actions. And is not the very fact of fascism an incontrovertible proof that the governments, democracy, had no other resort and refuge from the fear of anarchy than in fascism, its dictatorship being made easy to the governments, seeing that marxism of the bolshevik dye leads to a glorification

of the most dastardly form of authority, namely dictatorship, if only implanted by upstart-workers and intellectual schemers of the people! And why must governments hypocritically mask and veil their real armory-business-interests in militarism and war with “peace” phrases, by the constant claim that all they do is for the “welfare of the people”, were it not for the fear of anarchism, for the fear that the mind of the masses can easily be awakened to the fact and assertion of anarchism: *that all governments are the quintessence of violence and the very social evil!*

Thus it is wrong and misleading to say, that anarchism is not able “to do the job” of solving the social problems. I maintain to the contrary, that if anarchism is not going to do it, then no other idea, party or slogan will save the workers before their doom! It is up to them to speed evolution and turn it into the social revolution. Anarchism gives them the thought, the method and aim. If they do not make use of all these possibilities, it is their own fault if they go down, not the fault of the only liberating message, which liberates at once the individual from the thralldom of superstition and self-enslavement, giving the masses the ever ready way towards emancipation.

Herbert Spencer, surely one of the greatest philosophers and scientists for centuries to come, has very properly laid it down that mankind can only reach its goal of progress when it has learned “to deduce from the biological laws of life and the conditions of existence what kind of action necessarily tend to produce happiness and what kind produce unhappiness”.

Only anarchism teaches how to resolve the social problem, and the workers as well as mankind at large will reach emancipation only when they will have satisfactorily determined - what tends to produce happiness and what produces unhappiness.

There is no event in the history of our time, there is no sequence of happenings, may they be good or bad, that does not adduce new blows to authority-i.e., the vanity of its attempts to cope with the social problems;



and which does not put forward new proofs as to the authenticity of anarchism, being the only solution out of the turmoil of today. How is it that this is not grasped quickly by society?

Because even in the whole of nature we perceive changes not performing themselves swiftly and straightforward, but from the lower to the higher, as well as passages from the higher to the lower, at least temporarily. Thus Herbert Spencer like Elisee Reclus have shown that evolution is impossible without the latter phase, called by Spencer, by the name of "DISSOLUTION". Mankind must therefore, out of cosmic biological, sociological basic principles, undergo a positive and a negative evolution, a progressive and a regressive one, in order to reach an ever higher standard of social life.

Anarchism therefore does not need to fear the present period of regressive evolution. It is germinating already tremendously many elements of the coming progressive phase of evolution. The present reaction is against its own will, removing many obstacles for anarchism, and is proving its own incapacities as well as of those other ones who are our enemies, the foes of liberty.

Thus even the reaction is freeing the field in many free aspects for that eternal spirit of anarchism which is indomitable. It makes the way free for that next phase of progressive evolution in which only anarchism will be the harbinger of the social-revolution - annihilating the basis of violence, thereby establishing the society without centralized crime, -viz.. Without government.



