

Pragmatic Anarchism

By Herbert Read

... while it is true that the conclusion of a syllogism follows from the premisses in quite a different sense from that in which a knee-jerk follows from the doctor's tap, it seems reasonable to say that, just as I cannot help jerking my knee once I have been tapped, so I cannot help assenting to the conclusion once I have grasped the premisses.

D. H. MONRO: *Godwin's Moral Philosophy*

THE APPEARANCE of a comprehensive collection of writings on the anarchist tradition¹ gives me an opportunity to review my own anarchist convictions, which have now lasted for more than fifty years. I date my conversion to the reading of a pamphlet by Edward Carpenter with the title *Non-Governmental Society*, which took place in 1911 or 1912, and immediately opened up to me a whole new range of thought—not only the works of professed anarchists such as Kropotkin, Bakunin and Proudhon, but also those of Nietzsche, Ibsen, and Tolstoy which directly or indirectly supported the anarchist philosophy, and those of Marx and Shaw which directly attacked it.

I use the word "conversion" to describe the experience because it was undoubtedly quasi-religious; I was at the same time slipping away from the Christian faith I had acquired from a pious family background. And yet my new beliefs were not idealistic—in spite of all appearances to the contrary, I am not an idealist, but rather, in the sense defined by Unamuno, a quixotist, and a practical rather than a speculative or meditative quixotist. Unamuno tells us

that "the philosophy of Don Quixote cannot strictly be called idealism: he did not fight for ideas. It was of the spiritual order; he fought for the spirit." In exactly the same way the type of anarchist I am does not fight for ideas: he is not an ideologist of any kind, but rather a pragmatist. The editors of *Patterns of Anarchy* recognise this: "The positive goal of anarchism, then, can be regarded as a consistently individualised pragmatism." Philosophically anarchists are nearer to deflators of idealism such as John Dewey and Karl Popper than to Utopian socialists such as Karl Marx or Lenin. All forms of historicism are profoundly repugnant to the true anarchist.²

Nevertheless, anarchism is a social or political philosophy, and the editors of this anthology, as they proceeded, became "more and more amazed at how many perceptive social theorists have spoken in the anarchist tradition." They present 57 selections from 41 writers, including 8 critics of anarchism. There are many other writers they might have quoted, including some who have made important contributions to anarchist thought, such as H. B. Brewster, Gustav Landauer, and Martin Buber, and they perhaps rightly exclude those many writers who have expressed an anarchist philosophy though they may never have used the word anarchism—Zeno, Lao Tse, Chuang Tse, Thoreau, Shelley, Nietzsche, Morris, Ibsen, Gandhi, Vinoba, Wilde, Camus, Silone, A. S. Neill, and Lewis Mumford. Personally, just for the fun of it, I would have included Marx's famous statement about "the withering away of the state."

THERE IS PERHAPS only one belief on dogma common to all professed anarchists, the fundamental one that is indicated by the word itself in its literal meaning—a way of life *without government*. But this is a negative definition, a fact from which the movement has always suffered, though its critics should have recog-

¹ *Patterns of Anarchy*, edited by Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry (New York, Anchor Books).

² Bakunin made this clear in his criticism of Marx's "idealism." The only universal law in human history, said Bakunin, is the struggle for existence. Historicism arises from the fallacy that thought is prior to life, and abstract theory prior to social practice.

nised that the assertion of a negation always implies, not only a prior thesis, but a leap forward to a synthesis, which in the case of anarchism is the "consistently individualised pragmatism" mentioned by our anthropologists. This positive doctrine requires far more explanation than will be found in *Patterns of Anarchy*, and my present intention is to contribute to such further explanation. But before doing so I would like to mention some legitimate points of difference among anarchists, all of which, however, are resolved in the final synthesis.

THE ANARCHIST is committed to the decentralisation of power in the political sense. Does this also imply decentralisation in the economic sense, the reversal of those processes that have led to the big city, the giant factory, the multiple store, and other concentrations of human activity? I believe it does, for reasons not essentially anarchist, reasons which are given in one of the contributions to *Patterns of Anarchism*, namely, that such a tendency is

much more in consonance with the basic trends of modern technics than the centralised State economics of the Marxists.... Specialisation of industry and gigantic units are a liability under conditions demanding flexibility and ease of adaptation. And they will become superfluous with the growing mobility of power, its wider distribution from central energy stations.

The writer ("Senex") gives many other reasons which favour this process of decentralisation, and in this respect architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, sociologists such as Lewis Mumford, and contemporary planning experts generally, have come to conclusions similar to those that have always been advocated by anarchists.

But do anarchists accept what is in effect a technological civilisation, or are they, as so many people suspect, instinctive Luddites, opposed to the whole concept of mechanisation, yearning for a return to a more primitive pattern of life?

There is a certain justification for this suspicion if one confuses anarchism with the medievalism of William Morris and the romantic distributivism of Catholics such as Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton. But actually most of the leading anarchists have been scientific in their outlook—Kropotkin, who did so much to establish anarchism as a political philosophy, notably so. For Kropotkin (as Krimerman and Perry point out) the justification of anarchism is primarily an empirical task,

to be carried out by close and comprehensive observation of such facts as might be gathered by a biologist or anthropologist. Human culture

manifests an evolving pattern and direction, which it is the function of the anarchist philosopher to record, much as celestial motions and patterns are recorded by the astronomer. And when this is accomplished, so Kropotkin maintains, it will be clear that anarchist communism is the conclusion towards which all the data of biology, anthropology, and history are directed.

As political "gradualism" this seems to lag behind even the extreme Fabianism of Karl Popper. Kropotkin's ultimate appeal as a scientific anarchist, according to Krimerman and Perry, is not to what ought to be, but to what is or what is steadily evolving. Kropotkin himself renounced all forms of utopianism. The following extract from one of his little-known pamphlets makes this clear:

The anarchist thinker does not resort to metaphysical conceptions (like "natural rights," the "duties of the state," and so on) to establish what are, in his opinion, the best conditions for realising the greatest happiness of humanity. He follows, on the contrary, the course traced by the modern philosophy of evolution.... He merely considers society as an aggregation of organisms trying to find out the best ways of combining the wants of the individual with those of co-operation for the welfare of the species. He studies society and tries to discover its *tendencies*, past and present, its growing needs, intellectual and economic, and in his ideal he merely points out in which direction evolution goes. He distinguishes between the real needs and tendencies of human aggregations and the accidents (want of knowledge, migrations, wars, conquests) which have prevented these tendencies from being satisfied. And he concludes that the two most prominent, although often unconscious, tendencies throughout our history have been: first, a tendency towards integrating labour for the production of all riches in common, so as finally to render it impossible to discriminate the part of the common production due to the separate individual; and second, a tendency towards the fullest freedom of the individual in the prosecution of all aims, beneficial both for himself and for society at large. The ideal of the anarchist is thus a mere summing-up of what he considers to be the next phase of evolution. It is no longer a matter of faith; it is a matter of scientific discussion....

THIS DOCTRINE MIGHT NOT seem to differ in any respect from the aims of *laissez-faire* liberalism or democratic socialism, but the anarchist differs profoundly from these political parties in his conception of means. Any form of government, and particularly representative government, he sees as a perpetuation of class-rule, and therefore as conflicting with the necessary evolution of the individual towards greater potentialities of consciousness and fullness of life—what Kropotkin called "the natural growth of altruism."

tic feelings, which develop as soon as the conditions of life favour their growth." That this prospect involved profound problems of ethics and individual psychology was evident to Kropotkin: his last work, unfinished, was a treatise on ethics. Its purpose was to demonstrate that "the moral sense is a natural faculty in us like the sense of smell or of touch." This moral sense arises in the course of evolution, even within the animal kingdom, and can be expressed by the one word *solidarity*, that instinct without which, in times of danger, society would perish.

Kropotkin's insights into the origins of morality have been powerfully reinforced by the scientific observations of Dr. Konrad Lorenz, one of the most distinguished of contemporary ethologists. The following passage from his most recent book, *On Aggression* might have been written by Kropotkin:

Left to itself, reason is like a computer into which no relevant information conducive to an important answer has been fed; logically valid though all its operations may be, it is a wonderful system of wheels within wheels, without a motor to make them go round. The motor power that makes them do so stems from instinctive behaviour mechanisms much older than reason and not directly accessible to rational self-observation. They are the source of love and friendship, of all warmth of feeling, of appreciation of beauty, of the urge to artistic creativeness, of insatiable curiosity striving for scientific enlightenment. These deepest strata of the human personality are, in their dynamics, not essentially different from the instincts of animals, but on their basis human culture has erected all the enormous superstructures of social norms and rites whose function is so closely analogous to that of phylogenetic ritualisation.

The phylogenetically determined principle of mutual aid has been perverted again and again in the course of history, always in the name of some abstract principle—"the abstract trinity of law, religion, and authority." The anarchist recognises the danger of all such abstractions. I repeat, he is a pragmatist, or more specifically, a pragmatic realist. He does not believe in any philosophical or political doctrine (not even in anarchism) except in so far as it results in actions that are in accordance with the creative or positive tendencies in human evolution. Ideas and knowledge are instruments in the service of a communal solidarity: aspects of mutual aid. Mutual aid is the only "phylogenetically

adapted mechanism of behaviour" (Lorenz) of a progressive and self-preservative tendency in an evolutionary situation that otherwise is predatory and destructive. It is the predatory tendency, regressive from an evolutionary point of view, that is expressed in the capitalist and *laissez-faire* philosophies of politics.

ANARCHISM, nevertheless, is highly critical of the scientific attitude as it is usually expressed in politics, which is seen as a threat to liberty. A distinction is made, already by Bakunin, between the exact or natural sciences and "such sciences as history, philosophy, politics, and economic science, which are falsified by being deprived of their true basis, natural science." With uncanny prescience Bakunin saw the future development of a State in which the scientist would be enthroned as a despot far more restrictive of the people's liberties than any military despot of the past. "A scientific body entrusted with the government of society would soon end by devoting itself not to science but to quite another interest. And that, as in the case with all established powers, would consist in its endeavour to perpetuate itself in power and consolidate its position by rendering the society placed in its care even more stupid and consequently ever more in need of being governed and directed by such a body." In this connection Bakunin makes an interesting comparison of science and art:

Science cannot go outside the realm of abstractions. In this respect it is vastly inferior to art, which, properly speaking, has to do with general types and general situations, but which, by the use of its own peculiar methods, embodies them in forms which, though not living forms in the sense of real life, none the less arouse in our imagination the feeling and recollection of life. In a certain sense it individualises types and situations which it has conceived; and by means of those individualities without flesh and blood—and consequently permanent and immortal—which it has the power to create, it recalls to our minds living, real individuals who appear and disappear before our eyes. Science, on the contrary, is the perpetual immolation of fugitive and passing, but real life on the altar of eternal abstraction.³

Much that Bakunin wrote about science seems to anticipate Orwell's 1984. He accepted science, but he feared scientism, which he saw as almost a branch of Marxism. "So long as it forms a separate domain, specially represented by a corporation of savants, this ideal world threatens to take the place of the Eucharist in relation to the real world, reserving for its licensed representatives the duties and functions of priests." This danger could only be avoided

³ Bakunin's writings are not easily accessible in English. Unless otherwise stated my quotations come from the excellent anthology compiled and edited by G. P. Maximoff: *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism* (Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1953).

"by means of general education, equally available to all, to dissolve the segregated social organisation of science, in order that the masses, ceasing to be a mere herd, led and shorn by privileged shepherds, may take into their own hands their historic destinies." But writing in 1871 Bakunin did not foresee the immense distance that, nearly a hundred years later, would separate any conceivable form of general education from the specialised arcana of modern science. The sinister combination of scientism and statism can now be broken only by the abolition of the state.

In spite of Bakunin's deep interest in science Kropotkin remains the greatest exponent of a scientific anarchism, but since Kropotkin's time his ideas have been immensely reinforced by the development of individual psychology. To appreciate the relevance of this psychology to anarchism we must return to the philosophical foundations of anarchism and to certain "stated or assumed premisses" of anarchism. They occupy "a pivotal position" in the Krimerman-Perry anthology, and they are nothing less than the perennial problems of ethical and political philosophy.

THESE PROBLEMS—questions of what sort of life men *ought* to live and the sort of society that will permit them to live a life that is both morally imperative and intrinsically desirable—all resolve into the one question of personal freedom. (Questions of rights and duties, of authority and coercion, are all subordinate to this one concept.)

Our anthologists begin by pointing out that Hobbes' definition of liberty as the absence of external impediments would not be acceptable to the anarchist thinkers they present in this section of their book (they include Godwin, Kropotkin, Max Stirner, Nicholas Berdyaev, Adin Ballou, and Stephen Pearl Andrews). The anarchist standard of what is ultimately desirable, and of what society should preserve,

resides in a more constructive ideal which they alternatively designate as "the sovereignty of the

⁴ A translation by Steven I. Byington was originally published in 1913. It was reprinted by the Libertarian Press, New York, in 1962.

⁵ A new work on Stirner has been published in Germany: *Die Ideologie des anonymen Gesellschaft*, by Hans G. Helms (Cologne, Dumont Schauberg Verlag). It runs to more than 600 pages, including a bibliography of 90 pages. Helms sees in Stirner an "apostle of the middle classes" and a forerunner of fascism, a point of view which can be maintained only by ignoring what is most fundamental in Stirner—his rejection of every kind of ideology. A more balanced view of Stirner's significance may be found in Martin Buber's *Between Man and Man* (Collins, Fontana Library, 1961), pp. 60–108.

individual" (Andrews), "personality" (Berdyaev), "independent judgment" (Godwin), "self-ownership" (Stirner), and so on. Correct or not, this unanimous rejection of the Hobbesian notion of freedom for a more positive chief good provides a unifying theme in anarchist thought.

None of the writers quoted in this section of the anthology is specifically a psychologist, unless Max Stirner's deep and original analysis of the ego is to be called psychological (Freud may have owed something to it). *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (*The Ego and his Own*⁴) is a work of considerable power and originality. Marx was so impressed by its threat to his position that he devoted hundreds of pages in *The German Ideology* to its refutation. His attack was so effective that the work has been unjustly neglected ever since, except in Germany (in the margin of Marxist studies) and in France where Victor Basch devoted a comprehensive study to it and, more recently, Albert Camus paid tribute to it in *L'homme révolté*.⁵ Stirner attacks all ideologies, all concepts and abstractions, all of which without exception demand a surrender of the individual will. The state, of course, above all, for whatever its constitution it is always a despotism, above all when it assumes power in the name of "the people." Even freedom is a delusion. "Who is it that is to become free?" Stirner asks. "You, I, we. Free from what? From everything that is not you, not I, not we.... What is left when I have been freed from everything that is not I? Only I; nothing but I. But freedom has nothing to offer to this I himself." Why not proclaim your own identity without further ado? "Freedom" merely awakens your *rage* against everything that is not you; "egoism" calls you to *joy* over yourself, to self-enjoyment. "Freedom" is and remains a *longing*, a romantic plaint, a Christian hope for unearthliness and futurity; "ownness" is a reality, which *of itself* removes just so much unfreedom as by barring your own way hinders you. What does not disturb you you will not want to renounce; and, if it begins to disturb you, why, you know that "you must obey yourselves rather than men!"

AGAIN WE SEE the realism, the anti-idealism that is at the base of the anarchist position. Stirner's attack on the State, which is fierce and sustained (and the source of Nietzsche's similar attack) is motivated by this intense feeling that it establishes and legalises a mythical entity that deprives the individual of his uniqueness, of his very self.

What is called a State is a tissue and plexus of dependence and adherence; it is a *belonging together*, a holding together, in which those who are placed together fit themselves to each other;

or in short mutually depend on each other; it is the *order* of this *dependence*. . . . The State seeks to hinder every free activity by its censorship, its supervision, its police, and holds this hindering to be its duty, because it is in truth a duty of self-preservation. The State wants to make something out of man, therefore there live in it only *made* men; every one who wants to be his own self is its opponent. . . .

What remained in Stirner an affirmation of selfhood and a stubborn opposition to the State in all its collective and repressive aspects has now become a characteristic of the good bourgeois. The modern anarchist tends to ignore the State as an anachronism which, powerful and intrusive as it is, is destined not so much to wither away, but to become the obvious and indefensible instrument of tyranny, and in this sense it is no longer worth arguing about. The millenary statist, the scientific "experts," the professional economists and career politicians, will continue to support it and to extend its powers, but by the people at large the State is now universally hated and from the State's point of view we are all impenitent criminals, tax-evaders and delinquents, or witless citizens waiting to be penned in various social categories or houses of correction—municipal estates, comprehensive schools, hospitals, defence corps, peace corps, collectives of every kind. Against this conception of man has arisen (or rather, has been revived, for in the East it is an ancient doctrine) the conception of man as an individual who becomes whole and even "god-like" by deliberate dissociation from the collective psyche.

THE LITERATURE of individual psychology is now immense, and none of it, from Freud and Adler to Jung, Piaget, Rank, Burrow and Fromm can be neglected if we would arrive at an appreciation of its range, its therapeutic pretensions and its effectiveness. It would serve no purpose to discuss here the therapeutic aspects of individual psychology; what is relevant is the description of the personal psyche in relation to the collective psyche, and the distinction which Jung in particular makes between the undifferentiated ego instincts and the achieved personality or "Self." For the sake of simplicity I shall take Jung's description of the process of "individuation," which is that part of individual psychology that has most relevance to a philosophy of anarchism.

The individual has, of course, always stood in opposition to the group—to the family group,

the environmental group, the tribe, and the nation. All psychologists agree that most if not all of the individual's troubles come from maladjustment to one or more of these groups, and psycho-therapy has been concerned largely with techniques of reconciliation.

In one direction an extreme maladjustment leads to complete alienation and narcissism; in the opposite direction to loss of identity and participation in various forms of mass hysteria. The ideal to be achieved is not so much an uneasy balance between these two tendencies as the achievement of a separate indivisible unity or "whole," with firm foundations in education and creative activity.

Jung is the best guide to the process because his knowledge is the most eclectic and his exposition the most detailed. An acceptance of the hypothesis of the unconscious (which is the basis of all contemporary psycho-analytic theory and practice) is of course necessary, but the evidence for this is so manifest (in dream activities, for example) and has for so long been the common assumption of all religions and philosophies that we need not pay particular attention to those few mechanists or behaviourists such as H. J. Eysenck who deny its realities. I believe it could be shown that they are merely using a different language to describe identical phenomena.

Jung wrote many (not always consistent) descriptions of the individuation process. The following,⁶ long as it is, is the shortest that gives an adequate account of it:

For the development of personality, then, strict differentiation from the collective psyche is absolutely necessary, since partial or blurred differentiation leads to an immediate melting away of the individual in the collective. There is now a danger that in the analysis of the unconscious the collective and the personal psyche may be fused together, with, as I have intimated, highly unfortunate results. These results are *injurious both to the patient's life-feeling and to his fellow men*, if he has any influence at all on his environment. Through his identification with the collective psyche he will infallibly try to force the demands of his unconscious upon others, for identity with the collective psyche always brings with it a feeling of universal validity—"god-likeness"—which completely ignores all differences in the personal psyche of his fellows. (The feeling of universal validity comes, of course, from the universality of the collective psyche.) A collective attitude naturally presupposes this same collective psyche in others. But that means a ruthless disregard not only of individual differences but also of differences of a more general kind within the collective psyche itself, as for example differences of race. This disregard for individuality obviously means the suffocation of the single individual, as a consequence of which

⁶From *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, trans. by R. F. C. Hull, §240. New York (Bollingen Series); London (Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1953.

the element of differentiation is obliterated from the community. *The element of differentiation is the individual. All the highest achievements of virtue, as well as the blackest villainies, are individual. The larger a community is, and the more the sum total of collective factors peculiar to every large community rests on conservative prejudices detrimental to individuality, the more will the individual be morally and spiritually crushed, and, as a result, the one source of moral and spiritual progress for society is choked up.* Naturally the only thing that can thrive in such an atmosphere is sociality and whatever is collective in the individual. Everything individual in him goes under, i.e., is doomed to repression. The individual elements lapse into the unconscious, where, by the law of necessity, they are transformed into something essentially baleful, destructive, and anarchical. Socially, this evil principle shows itself in the spectacular crimes—regicide and the like—perpetrated by certain prophetically-minded individuals; but in the great mass of the community it remains in the background, and only manifests itself indirectly in the inexorable moral degeneration of society. *It is a notorious fact that the morality of society as a whole is in inverse ratio to its size; for the greater the aggregation of individuals, the more the individual factors are blotted out, and with them morality, which rests entirely on the moral sense of the individual and the freedom necessary for this.* Hence every man is, in a certain sense, unconsciously a worse man when he is in society than when acting alone; for he is carried by society and to that extent relieved of his individual responsibility. Any large company composed of wholly admirable persons has the morality and intelligence of an unwieldy, stupid and violent animal. The bigger the organisation, the more unavoidable is its immorality and blind stupidity (*Senatus bestia, senatores boni viri*). Society, by automatically stressing all the collective qualities in its individual representatives, puts a premium on

⁷ Indeed, Jung sometimes seems to echo Stirner's very words—e.g.: "Individuation means becoming a single, homogeneous being, and, in so far as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self. We could therefore translate individuation as 'coming to selfhood' or 'self-realisation.'" (*Two Essays*, §266.) The similarity is, of course, all the more striking in the original German of both writers.

It is also interesting to observe that Kropotkin used the word "individuation" (or "individualisation") long before Jung. Man in an anarchist society, he wrote, "would be enabled to obtain the full development of all his faculties, intellectual, artistic, and moral, without being hampered by overwork for the monopolists, or by the servility and inertia of mind of the great number. He would thus be able to reach full *individualisation* which is not possible either under the present system of *individualism*, or under any system of state-socialism in the so-called *Volksstaat* (popular state). . ."

mediocrity, on everything that settles down to vegetate in an easy, irresponsible way. Individuality will inevitably be driven to the wall. This process begins in school, continues at the university, and rules all departments in which the State has a hand. In a small social body, the individuality of its members is better safeguarded; and the greater is their relative freedom and the possibility of conscious responsibility. *Without freedom there can be no morality. Our admiration for great organisations dwindles when once we become aware of the other side of the wonder: the tremendous piling up and accentuation of all that is primitive in man, and the unavoidable destruction of his individuality in the interests of the monstrosity that every great organisation in fact is.* The man of today, who resembles more or less the collective ideal, has made his heart into a den of murderers, as can easily be proved by the analysis of his unconscious, even though he himself is not in the least disturbed by it. And in so far as he is normally "adapted" to his environment, it is true that the greatest infamy on the part of his group will not disturb him, so long as the majority of his fellows steadfastly believe in the exalted morality of their social organisation.

I have italicised three passages in this long quotation which seem to have a particular relevance to anarchism—indeed, they might have come from the writings of an anarchist, as might many other passages in Jung's works.⁷ There are just one or two further points that need emphasis if we are to understand the process of individuation.

FOR EXAMPLE, the emancipated individual cannot wholly escape from the collective psyche, nor is it desirable that he should. Jung confesses that he is always astonished to find how much of so-called individual psychology is really collective—"so much, indeed, that the individual traits are completely overshadowed by it. Since, however, individuation is an ineluctable psychological requirement, we can see from the superior force of the collective what very special attention must be paid to this delicate plant 'individuality' if it is not to be completely smothered." But this is just to admit that the process of individuation is a long and severe discipline.

Secondly, it should be emphasised that individuation does not imply isolation. Jung himself has said: "Since the individual is not only a single entity, but also, by his very existence, presupposes a collective relationship, the process of individuation does not lead to isolation, but to an intenser and more universal collective solidarity." This brings us back to Kropotkin and to mutual aid (and to Martin Buber and his concept of "dialogue"). The ego, we might say,

achieves his own in order to offer it, in mutual trust to "the other."

THE PSYCHOLOGIST (more particularly the psycho-therapist) thinks in terms of a situation that needs correction: his concern is "the cure of souls." From a more general sociological point of view the anarchist must think of the process of individuation as an educational one. Krimerman and Perry recognise that anarchism has distinctive and revolutionary implications for education and, indeed, assert that "no other movement whatever has assigned to educational principles, concepts, experiments, and practices a more significant place in its writings and activities." Tolstoy is seminal in this respect, but the eleven extracts on education make the most impressive of all the contributions to this anthology, from Godwin to Paul Goodman.

Education has been my own particular concern. It is not often realised how deeply anarchist in its orientation a work such as *Education through Art* is and was intended to be. It is of course humiliating to have to confess that its success (and it is by far the most influential book I have written) has been in spite of this fact. I must conclude that I did not make my intention clear enough, but I still hope that the message has been most effective in the degree that it has been most innocently received. My stress in that book was precisely on the individuation of a self—a whole chapter was devoted to "Unconscious Modes of Integration" and in the first chapter I stated that in my view an answer to the question: *What is the purpose of education?* could only be given within the terms of a libertarian conception of democracy. (I should have said "of socialism," for democracy implies a governmental exercise of power.) I then went on to define this purpose as the concurrent development of the "uniqueness" and the "social consciousness or reciprocity" of the individual. "As a result of the infinite permutations of heredity the individual will inevitably be unique, and this uniqueness, because it is something not possessed by anyone else, will be of value to the community." Uniqueness, I declared, has no *practical* value in isolation. "One of the most certain lessons of modern psychology, and of recent historical experiences, is that education must be a process, not only of individuation, but also of *integration*, which is the reconciliation of individual uniqueness with social unity."

I STILL BELIEVE that individuation must proceed *pari passu* with integration, and that an anarchist philosophy must include this concept

of reconciliation. Both processes are implicit in Kropotkin's concept of mutual aid, and in Buber's concept of reciprocity (the instinct for communion, *Verbundenheit*). Stirner would have rejected a word like *Verbundenheit*, with its implication of a bond, of a chain on the ego's liberty. Anarchism owes much to Stirner's realism, and we feel that his philosophical importance has been ignored. (Krimerman and Perry point out that it offers "a possible, and largely ignored, approach to the philosophical problem of free will. . . . If a man does not own the acts he performs, can these be counted as voluntary actions or are they simply responses to factors over which he himself has no control? Can one be held to account for conduct which stems from beliefs and goals, or ideals and interests, of which one is not the owner?") Nevertheless, we must recognise that the individual is inexorably compelled to find a place in society and undergo some process of integration simply because otherwise he will lapse into schizophrenia. The individual may possess his self, become his "own," only to find that the result is an intolerable sense of isolation.

ALL OBJECTIONS to anarchism reduce to the one of impracticality. But none of its critics has considered anarchism as a long-term process of individuation, accomplished by general education and personal discipline—that is to say: from a socio-psychological point of view. I have already noted that Krimerman and Perry come to the conclusion that anarchism must now be regarded as a *consistently individualised pragmatism*, and objections on the score of innate human depravity or selfishness are thus obviated by the anarchist's insistence on reformatory education and environmental transformation.

The new interpretation of anarchism now put forward may not seem to differ much from the rational liberalism of Karl Popper, but I think it does so in two ways. In the first place, the anarchist cannot abandon the revolutionary myth, much as he may realise with Popper that revolutionary *methods* can only make things worse. Rebellion, as Camus has said, is still today "at the basis of the struggle. Origin of form, source of real life, it keeps us always erect in the savage formless movement of history." But rebellion, Camus argued, always demands, defends and re-creates moderation. "Moderation, born of rebellion, can only live by rebellion. It is a perpetual conflict, continually created and mastered by the intelligence." We cannot do without that tension, that dynamic equilibrium.

In the second place, anarchism differs profoundly from liberalism in its attitude to in-

stitutions. The liberal regards institutions as the safeguard of personal liberty. Popper points out, quite truly, that Marxists have been taught to think in terms not of institutions but of classes. "Classes, however, never rule, any more than nations. The rulers are always certain persons. And, whatever class they may once have belonged to, once they are rulers they belong to the ruling class." True enough. But what guarantee do we have that the same persons will not exercise a stronger and more tyrannical power under the cover of institutions? Is not that precisely the kind of tyranny we are experiencing now, the tyranny of "the back-room boys," the faceless "experts" who control our institutions, our civil service departments, merchant banks, economic councils. Institutions in the modern world are megalomaniac, self-perpetuating, and viviparous. They do not protect personal liberty: they legalise tyranny and spread its invisible tentacles into every cell of life.

That is why anarchism, however much it may have changed its methods or strategy, remains committed to the non-governmental prin-

ciple, which implies the breakdown of all centralised institutions—of nations, of federations, of constitutions, of conglomerations of every kind. Not only does the anarchist believe that that government is best that governs least; he does not accept any form of external coercion that prevents the free development of the fully integrated personality.

My own belief is that such a development of the personality will never conflict with what Popper calls "the authority of objective truth." But finally I must insist with Paul Goodman ("no other contemporary anarchist rivals Paul Goodman in imagination and scholarship") that freedom is not the same thing as *laissez-faire*. Freedom must be understood in a very positive sense: "it is *the condition of initiating activity*. . . . The justification for freedom is that initiation is essential to *any* high-grade human behaviour. Only free action has grace and force." But free *action*! There is nothing in the anarchist philosophy to justify indifference, complacency, or anything but a pragmatic activity patiently and consistently directed to a revolutionary end.

Gathering Sticks

Snow in the wind and pinesmoke blown back
Down the awkwardly patched-up chimneystack
On her house that's at home by the wood.
Gathering sticks in the frosty dell
I stop to watch that smoke I know well
Which has come from the fire of her mood.

Sticks will be chopped and new water drawn
From the spring in the side of a winter dawn
By others, that's understood.
But will they turn back with cleaner hearts
Through snow and wind to where the smoke starts,
And with better fire in their blood?
Perhaps they'll just turn, as I turn now,
Not knowing why, and not caring how,
With a love that does no one much good.

Robert Nye