

Lehning hier noch einen Nekrolog zu Max Nettlau beigelegt hat, dann sagt das gewiß etwas über die politischen Sympathien aus, die er für diesen Anarchismusforscher und Anarchisten hegt; aber nicht nur dies. Dieser Nekrolog enthält zugleich auch den Dank an jenen Forscher, der für Lehnings Arbeiten überaus wertvolle Vorarbeiten geleistet hat.

Abschließend sei eine kurze kritische Anmerkung erlaubt. Der einleitende Aufsatz »Sources of labour history« ist im Hinblick auf einige der dort genannten Editionsprojekte schon überholt (die Quellen sind inzwischen erschienen). Hier wäre also eine kleine Korrektur vonnöten gewesen; wichtiger aber erscheint mir, daß hier lediglich die zentralen europäischen Archive zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung genannt werden. Das ist zwar dankenswert, doch vermitteln solche Aufzählungen immer etwas von Ausschließlichkeit. Es wäre daher am Platze gewesen, wenn der Verfasser auch auf die noch ungehobenen Schätze in regionalen und kommunalen Archiven hingewiesen hätte, die nach der Erfahrung des Rezensenten für Deutschland gewiß höchst ergiebig sind, insbesondere für die eigentliche Organisationsgeschichte.

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Archives Bakounine-Bakunin-Archiv, publ. pour/hrsg. im Auftrage des Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis par/von Arthur Lehning, A. J. C. Rüter, P. Scheibert, Verlag E. J. Brill, Leiden 1961 – 1967.

Première partie: Michel Bakounine et L'Italie, 1871 – 1872, Textes établis et annotés par A. Lehning, Première partie: La Polémique avec Mazzini, Écrits et matériaux, 1961, LVI, 352 p. Deuxième partie: La Première Internationale en Italie et le Conflit avec Marx, Écrits et matériaux, 1963, LXVII, 500 p.

Deuxième partie: Michel Bakounine et les Conflits dans l'Internationale, 1872. La Question Germano-Slave. Le Communisme d'Etat, Écrits et matériaux, Textes établis et annotés par A. Lehning, 1965, LXVIII, 492 p.

Troisième partie: Gosudarstvennost' i Anarchija – Etatisme et Anarchie, 1873, [Texte russe et français], traduit par Marcel Body, Introduction et Annotations de Arthur Lehning, 1967, XXXII, 465 p.

In the last years of his active political career Michael Bakunin focused much of his attention on two countries, Italy and Germany. From these countries came the two figures against whom he waged his principal ideological campaigns in the 1870's, Mazzini and Marx. In addition, he came to see Italy and Germany as embodiments of the opposing social forces of Europe in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War: political authoritarianism, personified equally in Bismarck and in Marx, and anarchistic social revolution, for which he thought Italy particularly ripe. The writings contained in the four volumes of the *Archives Bakounine* edited by Arthur Lehning date from 1871 to 1873. Most of them take the form of polemics against Mazzini and/or Marx. At first Bakunin concentrated on destroying Mazzini's influence among the Italian radicals and winning them to the cause of international socialism. Then he turned to the less successful campaign to make his version of international socialism prevail over that of Marx. Bakunin's role in these conflicts is considerably illuminated by the materials presented in these volumes. What is even more significant about his attacks on Mazzini and Marx is his use of them as startingpoints for the elaboration of his own program of revolution and social organization.

»Power«, Bakunin wrote, »is an eminently theological, metaphysical and political

principle» (Vol. I, Part II, p. 153). One of the key-notes of his anarchism was his rejection of all the supra-individual abstractions devised by politics, religion and philosophy (a rejection qualified, however, by his own persistent faith in »the people«). It was in the name of such abstractions that the interests of real living beings were always brought to the sacrifice, he maintained. In effect, he accused Mazzini and Marx of seeking to create new forms of theological, metaphysical or political authority over the masses. Thus he attacked Mazzini's idealism, religiosity and emphasis on social harmony, asserting in their place the principles of materialism, atheism and class struggle; and he attacked the »statism« of the Marxists. In the course of his criticism of the Marxists' program for achieving political power, Bakunin developed his anti-political position, one of the principal themes that runs throughout these writings. If political power of any sort is to be exercised, he reasoned, it must be determined who will rule whom. If the Marxists' principles were followed to their logical conclusion, then on a national plane the proletariat, as the most advanced class, would rule over the backward peasantry, while on an international plane the Germans, for the same reason, would rule over the Slavs. (The accusation that Marx, in his own way, was as much of a »Pan-German« as Bismarck was one of the main charges he levelled against his opponent.) In any case, actual power would inevitably fall into the hands of a narrow, self-constituted elite, presumably consisting of the Marxists. The only alternative was the total and immediate destruction of the state, and with it the very possibility of political power; any attempt to seize the state and make use of it would result without fail in a new version of despotism.

A second major theme that emerges from Bakunin's writings of this period is his conception of revolution. Throughout his dispute with Marx, Bakunin continued to praise him as a thinker and proclaim his adherence to Marx's historical and economic doctrines. In fact, however, Bakunin moved away from many of them. In his conception of historical change he stressed subjective feelings, instincts, passions and will much more than objective material forces. Revolution as he visualized it was the product of a spontaneous outburst of the oppressed rather than a product of proletarian class consciousness. Stressing the instinct of revolt instead of revolutionary consciousness, he looked not to the most advanced parts of Europe but to the most backward: to the peasantry of the east and south, and to the most wretched segments of the proletariat. Thus he placed his greatest hopes in the Russian peasants and especially in the laboring classes of Italy, where both the proletariat and the peasantry were deeply impoverished and where social resentments seemed most ready to boil over into revolt. In regard to Italy he stressed the importance of revolutionary interaction between proletariat and peasantry of the sort that was later to occur in the Russian Revolution: »in the proletariat of the towns there is more thought, more revolutionary consciousness,« he told the Italian radicals, »but there is more natural power in the villages« (Vol. I, Part II, p. 245).

By contrast, he expected little from Germany, and as time went on he concluded that submission to authority was an integral part of the German national character. Usually he exempted the proletariat from this accusation, asserting that it was the one social class in Germany that preserved a desire for liberty. But by the time he wrote his last work, *Statism and Anarchy* (1873), his bitterness towards Marx and his fear of Prussian hegemony over Europe were so great that his international proletarian solidarity began to desert him. He now charged the German workers with enthusiastically supporting the Prussian victory over France and the establish-

ment of the German Empire, while he found in the wretched masses of Italy and Russia the only prospects for social revolution.

A third theme that appears in these writings, one which has recently found new expression in certain quarters of the New Left, is Bakunin's conception of the International. Beneath the personal rivalry between Bakunin and Marx for influence within the organization, there was a fundamental disagreement over principles. To Marx the International, in order to be an effective political instrument of the working class, had to be well organized, well disciplined, and centrally directed. To the Bakuninists the International represented not a political instrument at all but an embryo of the new society to come, one in which political power would be abolished for ever. One could not fight fire with fire, they believed, and a centrally directed organization, instead of overcoming the evils of the existing order, would merely perpetuate them. In the words of the Sonvillier Circular adopted by Bakunin's Swiss supporters in November, 1871, »the future society must be none other than the universalization of the organization which the International gives itself [...]. How could a free and egalitarian society issue from an authoritarian organization?« (Vol. I, Part II, p. 406.)

These three fundamental issues – along with many others – recur again and again in Bakunin's writings of the 1870's. In historical perspective they seem astonishingly prophetic and farsighted. Although he was writing primarily about Western Europe, Bakunin anticipated many of the subsequent developments in his own country. The upheaval of 1917 conformed more closely to Bakunin's image of revolution than to Marx's; with chilling foresight he perceived the possible implications for a backward peasant population of a regime committed to the industrial ideology of Marxism; and he raised the question of whether an organization whose primary purpose was the achievement of dictatorial power could ever be persuaded to relinquish it. In addition to their historical importance the issues with which Bakunin concerned himself have considerable bearing on political life today, for a number of his views on social change and revolutionary organization have reappeared in one form or another in the youthful radical movements of our own day.

Arthur Lehning and the International Institute for Social History have made a major contribution to our understanding of the evolution of Bakunin's thought with the publication of the *Archives Bakounine*. Bakunin's literary legacy is highly chaotic and fragmentary, and this has undoubtedly contributed to his neglect as a thinker. He rarely finished anything he began, and even his largest works usually proclaim themselves to be mere introductions to even larger tomes, which never saw the light of day. Thus attention has generally focused on his flamboyant personality and colorful revolutionary career rather than on his unsystematic and elusive thought. As the writings contained in these volumes reveal, Bakunin did not draw a clear line between his theoretical works and his treatments of immediate, concrete issues. Instead, he often used his correspondence, articles on current events, and polemical attacks on his opponents as vehicles for the exposition of larger topics. Therefore his writings, whatever their initial purpose, tended to mushroom in size and scope; eventually the author would run out of time to complete them, and they would break off abruptly. Even his more sustained works, such as *Statism and Anarchy*, exhibit the same quality: instead of adhering to a fixed plan of exposition, Bakunin seems to allow one topic to lead to another as he writes, with much back-tracking and veering off into side-issues. Nevertheless, when brought together these fragmentary compositions show Bakunin reverting again and again to the same central



themes, developing them with greater consistency and purposefulness than might appear at first sight. As he himself recognized, he was far from a match for Marx as an intellect, but his writings are filled with important ideas and serious insights. Interestingly, some facsimiles of pages from Bakunin's manuscripts are reproduced in these volumes, and if one can judge by these few examples they indicate that Bakunin wrote quite easily and quickly. Evidently his pen flowed as freely as his thoughts, for the pages look surprisingly neat and orderly, more so, certainly, than familiarity with Bakunin's habits of mind and behavior might lead one to expect.

This is hardly to deny, however, that Bakunin was a man of extreme contradictions. Should any doubts still exist on this score, they would be quickly dispelled by the documents contained in these volumes. For example, even in the thick of his denunciations of Mazzini and Marx he repeatedly stressed their positive historical contributions and maintained that the principles at issue were more important than the personalities. In this respect he was somewhat more generous than Marx, who never gave Bakunin as much credit for devotion to the cause of socialism, or even for having principles, as Bakunin gave him. And yet, at the same time Bakunin was capable of giving vent to an extremely petty and vulgar variety of anti-Semitism and anti-Germanism in his attacks on Marx – a set of prejudices matched only in part by Marx's anti-Russian bias. Bakunin was enough of a Russian nationalist to resent the dismissal of Russia as a backward and barbaric country, and he argued, with considerable justification, that Prussian militarism posed at least as much of a menace to the freedom and progress of Europe as tsarist despotism. But some of his remarks on the character of Jews and Germans go beyond nationalism and almost verge on racism. This does not detract from the value of his examination of Marxism and some of its implications; one cannot help wondering, however, whether he would have been quite as thorough and persistent in his criticism had his rival not been a German Jew.

The volumes of the *Archives Bakounine* both continue and supplement the six-volume French edition of Bakunin's *Oeuvres* compiled by Max Nettlau and James Guillaume in 1895 – 1913, the most extensive collection of Bakunin's writings published. Except for the fourth, which is devoted to a single work, each volume is organized around a general theme. The first two volumes (rather confusingly designated Volume I, Parts I and II) deal with Bakunin's relations with Mazzini and with Italian affairs in general. The principal text in Part I is *The Political Theology of Mazzini and the International*, originally published in 1871 and presented here along with numerous supplementary fragments and variants. Part II contains a number of shorter articles and letters. The third volume, on the conflict within the International, shows Bakunin shifting his attack from Mazzini to Marx. The texts include several lengthy letters and a fragment intended as a sequel to the previously published *Knouto-Germanic Empire*; in them Bakunin spelled out his ideological differences with Marx in the months before and after the crucial Hague Congress. Much of the material in these three tomes consists of manuscripts from the Nettlau Collection of the IISG which are here published for the first time. Previously published works, where possible, have been collated with the original manuscripts. A series of appendices to each volume provides a great deal of helpful background material. Particularly interesting are the documents illuminating the personal relations between Marx and Bakunin.

The fourth volume is perhaps the most valuable, for it reprints one of the most important of all of Bakunin's writings, *Statism and Anarchy* (*Gosudarstvennost' i*

Anarchija), his last published work. In this final testament Bakunin summed up the themes he had been elaborating in the last few years, bringing together in one more or less integrated work his analysis of European politics in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, his critique of Marxism, and his views on revolution. In addition to its importance as an expression of Bakunin's thought, this work had a direct impact on the Russian revolutionary movement. Unlike most of his works it was written in Russian rather than French, and it had a considerable influence on the young Populists in Russia who were preparing to go »to the people«. The original Russian edition of 1873, modernized and corrected, is presented here, along with an accurate, though somewhat too literal, French translation by Marcel Body. Thus this crucial work has now been made readily accessible both to those who read Russian and those who do not.

The scholarly apparatus which accompanies the series is painstaking and extensive. Nevertheless, the books are not only handsomely and clearly printed but organized in such a way as to make them easy and convenient for the researcher to use. Arthur Lehning, drawing on an impressive fund of erudition, has provided a detailed historical introduction for each volume as well as a thorough set of explanatory notes to the texts. An index of names at the end of each volume is an additional aid to the reader.

In sum, these volumes represent a valuable addition to our knowledge of an important but underestimated figure and of the formative years of the European socialist movement. The appearance of further volumes in this excellent series will be warmly welcomed.

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Petr Kropotkin, *Memoiren eines Revolutionärs*, Insel Verlag, Frankfurt 1969, 615 S., Ln., 28 DM.

Die meisten Nachschlagewerke verlieren über den russischen Anarchisten Fürst Petr Kropotkin erstaunlich wenig Worte. Seine Werke wurden hierzulande überwiegend in den zwanziger Jahren herausgebracht, und heute sucht man sie – abgesehen vom Gegenstand dieser Zeilen – vergeblich auf dem Büchermarkt. Dieses Buch hat aber durch seinen hohen Preis eine Exklusivität, die dem Anliegen des Autors widersprechen dürfte und gerade die soziologisch und gesellschaftspolitisch interessierten und engagierten Kreise ausschließt, denen es wertvolle Geschichtskennntnisse vermitteln könnte und die es dank seiner frappierenden Aktualität zu weiterem Nachdenken anregen sollte.

Kropotkins Erinnerungen beginnen ähnlich Leo Tolstojs autobiographischer Trilogie mit der Schilderung des Lebens in einem wohlgestellten russischen Adelshaus um die Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts. Dabei tritt das Besondere und Anekdotische hinter dem Typischen, hinter der allgemein relevanten gesellschaftlichen Problematik zurück. Die Figur des Vaters ist z. B. Anlaß dafür, das ganze Elend der Leibeigenschaft aufzurollen, die Gefängnisaufenthalte sind Anlaß zu Reflexionen über die ganze Fragwürdigkeit und Brutalität des damaligen Strafvollzugs. Statt introvertierter Selbstbespiegelung bietet uns der erfolgreiche Geograph Kropotkin fesselnde Landschaftsbilder von den Weiten Rußlands, vor allem Sibiriens, und einprägsame Skizzen der geistigen und sozialen Verhältnisse und Prozesse in seinem Lande. Der Leser russischer Romane aus der Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts erhält hier eine sehr wertvolle Ergänzung, ja eine Neuorientierung über den Stellenwert der Literatur und der damals florierenden Literaturkritik.