



Radosław Antonów

Anarchism Café Racer

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Doctrines and Exhausts: Or, in Lieu of an Introduction

Throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries anarchism has aroused and continues to arouse considerable emotion. The nineteenth century saw it associated with terrorism, but since the mid-twentieth century and continuing into the first years of the new millennium its predominant links have been to youth counterculture and subculture. Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin¹ are among the most prominent thinkers of this nineteenth-century doctrine. In historical sequence, the Frenchman and the two Russians created an unprecedented view of the world, a world in which the institution of the state did not exist, and every man – perceived as basically good – deserved to enjoy completely unrestricted freedom and prosperity.

Every publication, not merely the scientific one, bears an introduction; a harbinger of what will be included (and not included) in one's work. In some senses, this introduction is a Confession² – I am already drawing on the anarchists' oeuvres in evoking the title of one of Mikhail Bakunin's writings – for the Reader, intended to provide a satisfactory explanation as to for what reason and why, at all, should his or her mind be preoccupied with this topic, and what is to be gained from reading the text.

Apart, of course, from the serious fact (this being written with a twinkle in my eye) that I will be the owner of yet another motorcycle, or I should rather say, a custom bike, the aim of my work in biker slang³ is “to build a machine” manifesting – or perhaps it would not be excessive at this point to use the term “exemplifying” – the tenets of the doctrine of classical anarchism with its ideas and attempts that sought to transform those tenets into reality in the mid-nineteenth century.

¹ See R. Antonów *Pod czarnym sztandarem. Anarchizm w Polsce po 1980 roku*, Wrocław 2004, pp. 17–136; idem, *Za wolnością – przeciwko państwu. Poglądy współczesnych polskich anarchistów*, Toruń 2012, pp. 7–67.

² M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź (Confession)*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. I, Warszawa 1965, p. 502 ff.

³ *Biker – a motorcycle rider*, *Dictionary of Biker Slang, Biker Slang: Motorcycle Lingo*, at: <https://axleadict.com/motorcycles/Biker-Lingo> (accessed September 8, 2016); “a biker” in biker slang is a motorcyclist, often a member of a motorcycle gang. See <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/biker> (accessed August 17, 2016).

Another aim of the book, doubtless essential from the scientific standpoint, will be to present, and in some cases even to verify empirically, the anarchists' views on labour, progress, mutual aid, industrial development and the rationale behind the introduction of machines into industry. At this point it ought to be stressed that the author will not merely write a book while designing the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. He will also perform certain technical tasks involved in its actual construction.

Anarchism Café Racer is a disquisition on how the doctrine, which can inspire a man to build a social system in all its minute details – in anarchism, the first precept is to destroy all state institutions and second to create a human-friendly stateless system – can also inspire a man to turn ideas into steel, aluminium, horses, speed and exhausts. *Anarchism Café Racer* is as much a book as it is a motorcycle, a custom bike, a “machine” which visually and technically departs from all the mass-manufactured motorcycles. To be sure, this is the exact opposite of the “silent motor bicycles,”⁴ evoked by David Ogilvy⁵ in his dismissal of billboards erected across the picturesque landscapes of the

⁴ N. Klein, *No Logo. No Space, No Choice, No Jobs*, [Polish edition] Warszawa 2014 p. 37. At this point let me recall Ogilvy's words, for one can discern parallelism between the question posed in the assertion and certain facts reported at the end of the nineteenth century, linked to anarchist activity. In 1963 Ogilvy stated his views as follows: “As a private person, I have a passion for landscape, and I have never seen one improved by a billboard. Where every prospect pleases, man is at his vilest when he erects a billboard. When I retire from Madison Avenue, I am going to start a secret society of masked vigilantes who will travel around the world on silent motor bicycles, chopping down posters at the dark of the moon. How many juries will convict us when we are caught in these acts of beneficent citizenship?” As already mentioned, let me refer at this point to Ogilvy's last sentence or rather a rhetorical question, whether a court conviction would actually be secured for such a criminal act. A certain analogy suggests itself here regarding the events associated with anarchist activity and which took place in Russia in 1878. At that time Vera Zasulich attempted to kill Fiodor Fiodorowitch Trepoff, a Russian general. She was, however, acquitted for her attempt on the life of the “savage satrap,” as he is referred to by Wiesław Sclawus (*W. Sclawus, Królobójcy (King Slayers)*, second supplemented edition, Lviv, 1906, p. 252), for the court found that her motives had been strictly human as she had sought to protect those on whom the general had inflicted pain. The attempt “occurred on the fifth of February 1878 becoming a battle cry for the fight of the red terror against the white terror” (*ibid.*, p. 253). Peter Kropotkin recalled: “A young girl, Vera Zasulich [...] took a revolver, went to the chief of police, and shot at him. Trepoff was only wounded. Alexander II came to look at the heroic girl, who must have impressed him by her extremely sweet face and her modesty. Trepoff had so many enemies at St. Petersburg that they managed to bring the affair before the common-law jury, and Vera Zasulich declared in court that she had resorted to arms only when all means for bringing the affair to public knowledge and obtaining some sort of redress had been exhausted. Even the St. Petersburg correspondent of the London “Times” had been asked to mention the affair in his paper, but had not done so perhaps thinking it improbable. Then without telling anyone her intentions, she went to shoot Trepoff. Now that the affair had become public, she was quite happy to know that he was but slightly wounded. The jury acquitted her unanimously, and when the police tried to rearrest her, as she was leaving the court house, the young men of St. Petersburg, who stood in crowds at the gates, saved her from their clutches.” (P.A. Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, Lwow 1903, p. 444). It is therefore quite plausible that Ogilvy is not that much mistaken in believing that the court might show some leniency in the cases decided on the grounds of legal-natural law, so to speak, overriding the positive but a blind law.

⁵ David Ogilvy, the founder of an advertising agency Ogilvy&Mather, *Confessions of an Advertising Man*, 1963, see N. Klein op. cit., p. 37.

USA. His reflections formed the opening of the first chapter of *No Logo*, Naomi Klein's best-selling work from 2000, hailed by *The New York Times* as "the bible of the alter-globalisation movement"⁶. Anarchism Café Racer is a hard-hitting motorcycle poised to traverse the vast expanses of the city jungle, not dissimilar to the ideas espoused by the nineteenth century anarchism which, one by one, conquered the capital cities of Europe. This is the anarchist idea "come to rest" on the two wheels of a motorcycle, with the motorcycle being one of the very few signifiers of human freedom that can still be truly felt in the twenty first century. Finally, Café Racer Anarchism is also a motorcycle which – in biker slang – dons anarchistic colours. They are what Hunter S. Thompson in his 1966 reporter's novel *Hell's Angels. A Strange and Terrible Saga* characterizes as "the all-important colours... the uniform, as it were, the crucial identity."⁷

Throughout the twentieth century and the early years of the twenty first century the motorcycle was at first perceived as a means of communication and transport, a tool allowing people to travel or do their work, then as an instrument used in competitive sport. After all, we have an impressive history of motorcycle sport which can be traced back to the early years of the twentieth century. Motorcycles also had some role to play in the two World Wars. During the Second World War they were widely used as military equipment. Since the middle of the twentieth century, apart from being used variously as a means of transport, work tool, and military⁸, company and sport vehicles, the motorcycle has also grown to become a symbol of belonging to a particular subculture – usually biker subculture. It has become a symbol of freedom, too. In literature, some authors occasionally draw attention to the links between the motorcycle, or rather some bikers, and anarchism or even anarchy.

From the first to the last page, this book will view the motorcycle solely as the symbol of anarchism, freedom and anarchy. In vain will thus the Reader look here for motorcycle history or an in-depth analysis of the doctrine of anarchism. These issues are dealt with in works concerned with economic history (including automotive industry), military, law, history, political doctrines, sport and the branch of sociology concerned with subcultures, of which the motorcycle subculture is but one.

Anarchism Café Racer is both a text and a bike of the café racer type with the book outlining and reflecting the doctrinal tenets of anarchism and selected episodes of its history. On account of the numerous references to the nineteenth-century doctrine which emerged and developed in the age of steam and electricity, some elements of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer may look deceptively like steampunk, an aesthetic movement of today, embracing technological achievements of the Victorian Age.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ H.S. Thompson, *Hell's Angels. A Strange and Terrible Saga*, [Polish edition] Niebieska Studnia 2016, p. 15.

⁸ See R. Szmyd, *Motocyklowy zwiad w Wojsku Polskim*, Warszawa 1999; T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle II wojny światowej*, Gdańsk 2006; J. Ledwoch, *Motocykle Wehrmachtu*, Warszawa 2008; T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle Wojska Polskiego 1918–1950*, Warszawa 2009; H. Hinrichsen, *Motocykle Reichswehry i Wehrmachtu 1934–1945*, Zakrzewo 2010; A. Jońca, *Motocykle Wojska Polskiego, Wielki Leksykon Uzbrojenia, Wrzesień 1939*, Warszawa 2013.

An Untimely Closure: Or, the Way It Is Bound to End

Anarchism, which over the centuries has come in different guises ranging from dynamite attacks in the dark days to its present ludic nature, is commonly held to be a utopian doctrine.⁹ Numerous attempts seeking to materialize it ultimately and invariably ended up in failure. While the nineteenth-century anarchists tried to stir entire nations to revolt against the state, the anarchists of the twentieth and twenty first centuries have been fairly content with merely cultivating the style of anarchist negation of the state and contestation of its system. Throughout these centuries anarchists have launched countless local initiatives, created innumerable clubs, communes, squats, ecological farms, even an ecological vineyard, and yet they have been perceived purely in symbolic terms, viewed by those who watch them as light-minded or dangerous manifestations of one's attitude towards life. From a wider geopolitical perspective, any attempt at aiming to realize a budding anarchic idea would certainly end up in failure.

The same applies to Anarchism Café Racer, which will emerge as unique and the only one of its kind. One should not hold one's breath expecting a wave of enthusiasm for launching a production line manufacturing motorcycles bearing the name "Anarchism Café Racer," whose image mirrors the nineteenth century doctrine of anarchism. Viewing things from this perspective, the project described in the book is surely bound to end just like anarchism: on a bookshelf bearing a note that reads "Utopia". There will be yet another reason for it becoming utopian: Seeing the project through the lens of the political system already well established in Europe and USA, money is going to be spent which liberal democracy would have either multiplied or if spent, then surely "properly". Properly, that is, according to the latest fashion or cultural trends. Thus, investing time and money in this kind of anarchist experiment will have already been utopian, for in the business vernacular of liberal democracy a utopia is what will neither generate income, nor sell, nor earn its keep. In the case of Anarchism

⁹ See R. Antonów, *Pod czarnym sztandarem...*, *passim*.

Café Racer there is a good chance of just such an economic ending. In a world where beautiful, fast and, above all, fashionable motorcycles are mass-manufactured this is nothing short of driving the wrong way, a kind of utopia which fits perfectly into the utopian concepts of anarchism. If considered in economic terms, the project *Anarchism Café Racer* will thus share the same fate as the doctrine of anarchism. Not understood and incomprehensible, and hence, unreal and utopian.

So far, the conclusions have been rather bleak; yet one reflection emerges that seems important for the discussion that will be conducted in the book; perhaps even most crucial in the twenty first century when it comes to the lofty ideals of Anarchism. *Anarchism Café Racer* and other likewise individualized projects, not infrequently anonymous, epitomize freedom, open mindedness, the search for knowledge, the development of vast skills – from intellectual to technical, including critical reflection on our reality and painstaking inquiry. It is invaluable at a time when the machineries, both those of state and economy, raise people to be task-oriented consumers, expected to work and spend – preferably on a recurring basis – their accumulated funds on consumption, following uncritically the latest developments in thought, fashion and trends.¹⁰ In this respect the project *Anarchism Café Racer* is bound to end successfully. Being individual and very invasive, the project completed and designed to remodel a mass-produced motorcycle, which will allow one to move freely across locales invokes that which nowadays is associated with freedom, and that which can be encapsulated in just one word: THE MOTORCYCLE.

The thoughts of the prominent originators of the doctrine of anarchism: Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin will afford us the prism through which we will be looking at the motorcycle during its remaking.

Anarchism Café Racer is no standard product. A piece of art will be the outcome of the project. This kind of work cannot be accommodated within the standards of large facilities manufacturing products repetitive in their form. This project belongs to the realm of manufactures and craft workshops, now nearly forgotten.¹¹ Almost all components to be fitted to Anarchism Café Racer will also be required to go through a phase of “selective purchasing.” The act of purchasing and work commissioning will be guided by two principles delineated by Klein. First, these components will not be goods produced by corporations which have supported dictatorships in third-world countries; those “which have imported from companies which use child and prison labour in Pakistan and China,”¹² focusing on building their mark rather than on decent working conditions of their employees. Second, all components will be made by local workers, manufacturers, who are free from work and pay exploitation – in line with the anarchist principle of mutual aid, free contracts between two equivalent parties

¹⁰ On the subject of the modern man, his education, professional path and chances of finding his place in the contemporary world at an occupational and social level see M.B Crawford, *Shop Class as Soulcraft. An Inquiry into the Value of Work*, New York 2009, *passim*.

¹¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 112–114.

¹² N. Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 425 ff.

and an exchange affording satisfaction to both parties to a verbal agreement. Small local family businesses will be commissioned to craft all the components of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer that need to be made by hand. Their owners and simultaneously the ones doing the work will put their heart and soul into crafting those elements. Thus, no longer an anonymous product, but one designed for a purpose. These, however, are not the only requirements facing the potential contractors: The author will be building the motorcycle while working together only with those craft workshops whose owners contribute to fostering their local community reputation. For a more vile man is hard to conceive than the one who, born into local community, having drunk its sap of life, knowledge and wisdom, now harms it for his vainglory while climbing up Vilfredo Pareto's carousel. One who destroys the community's natural environment, tarnishes its image and reputation, and disassembles its institutional substance – this being the most ignoble act.

Anarchism Café Racer is a custom bike whose political and technical credentials will be the thoughts of the illustrious founders of the doctrine of anarchism.

The process itself of building Anarchism Café Racer, just like building any other motorcycle, will be a passageway to freedom. To build a motorcycle is to commune with the world around, it is to taste freedom, which, after all, is not unlike Henry Walden Thoreau's (author of *Walden. Life in the Woods*) building his own house.¹³ The freedom of imagination, of thought, albeit not necessarily along the lines suggested by the latest fashionable trends; the freedom of choice, of decision, and lastly, that of writing, acting and producing.

¹³ H.D Thoreau, *Walden: or, Life in the Woods*, [Polish edition], Poznań 2011, p. 65.

Prelude

Having in mind such an elaborate way in which to realize the utopian vision and to transform the knowledge on the subject of anarchist doctrine into a more “practical” vehicle, one has to go through three stages of implementation. The first one concerns choosing well and buying the right motorcycle. The second involves designing Anarchism Café Racer in such a way as to bring humanistic knowledge into alignment with that of technology and its principles; in other words, finding a way to allow for a trade-off between the doctrine of anarchism, the activity of the nineteenth-century anarchists and the skills and knowledge necessary for the building and working of a motorcycle. The third stage will entail the “actual” building of Anarchism Café Racer in accordance with such a, shall we say, “doctrinal” project as described in the book.

Upon Thus Cultivating Science

We live in a liberal democracy. Our twenty first century is an age in which people must closely follow a rapidly changing reality, should they wish to feel safe and keep up with progress. We live in an age in which in-depth scientific exploration could indeed be completed within a timeframe this present and modern object of today's study – after the completion and publication of its findings – could be classified as an object of merely historical relevance. Thus we need to make a choice: will it be gaining insight into all kinds of available literature and studying an issue over a very long time, or will we write a book relying on the elementary knowledge at hand and a Machiavellian audacity. In this book, it will be the latter; however, we will be accompanied by a lawyer. That lawyer is none other than Alexis de Tocqueville, the notable French liberal of the nineteenth century, and an unquestionable authority on American democracy, who already in his work *Democracy in America* dating from 1835 noted the dynamic reality of people living and working in democratic societies. As this great thinker points out:

Nothing is more necessary to the culture of the higher sciences or of the more elevated departments of science, than meditation; and nothing is less suited to meditation than the structure of democratic society. We do not find there, as amongst an aristocratic people, one class that clings to a state of repose because it is well off; and another which does not venture to stir because it despairs of improving its condition. Everyone is actively in motion; some in quest of power, others of gain. In the midst of this universal tumult – this incessant conflict of jarring interests – this continual stride of men after fortune – where is that calm to be found which is necessary for the deeper combinations of the intellect? How can the mind dwell upon any single point, when everything whirls around it, and man himself is swept and beaten onwards by the heady current which rolls all things in its course?¹⁴

According to de Tocqueville:

Men who live in democratic communities not only seldom indulge in meditation, but they naturally entertain very little esteem for it. A democratic state of society and democratic

¹⁴ A. de Tocqueville, *On Democracy in America vol. II*, [Polish edition] Kraków 1996, p. 47.

institutions plunge the greater part of men in constant active life; and the habits of mind which are suited to an active life, are not always suited to a contemplative one. The man of action is frequently obliged to content himself with the best he can get, because he would never accomplish his purpose if he chose to carry every detail to perfection. He has perpetually occasion to rely on ideas which he has not had leisure to search to the bottom; for he is much more frequently aided by the opportunity of an idea than by its strict accuracy; and, in the long run, he risks less in making use of some false principles, than in spending time in establishing all his principles on the basis of truth. The world is not led by long or learned demonstrations; a rapid glance at particular incidents, the daily study of the fleeting passions of the multitude, the accidents of time, and the art of turning them to account, decide all its affairs. In the ages in which active life is the condition of almost everyone, men are therefore generally led to attach an excessive value to the rapid bursts and superficial conceptions of the intellect; and, on the other hand, to depreciate below their true standard its slower and deeper labours.¹⁵

A very interesting and indeed accurate observation made by de Tocqueville is the one with regard to the fact that: “The greater part of the men who constitute these [democratic] nations are extremely eager in the pursuit of actual and physical gratification. As they are always dissatisfied with the position they occupy, are always free to leave it, they think of nothing but the means of changing their fortune or of increasing it.” The twenty first-century people living in liberal democracies desire to see themselves only as decent, noble and just. If they happen to harm somebody, then for sure it would have been in self-defence; if they seize something, this is most certainly their due; well, they may at times speed up the turn of events, but then again, those events would unfold the way they believe they would. The expression “play dirty” is not part of their vocabulary. This – they claim – has disappeared together with Machiavelli. Let us, however, return to de Tocqueville who asserts that:

To minds thus predisposed, every new method which leads by a shorter road to wealth, every machine which spares labour, every instrument which diminishes the cost of production, every discovery which facilitates pleasures or augments them, seems to be the grandest effort of the human intellect. It is chiefly from these motives that a democratic people addicts itself to scientific pursuits – that it understands, and that it respects them. In aristocratic ages, science is more particularly called upon to furnish gratification to the mind; in democracies, to the body.¹⁶

De Tocqueville further emphasizes:

In a community thus organized it may easily be conceived that the human mind may be led insensibly to the neglect of theory; and that it is urged, on the contrary, with

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 50.

unparalleled vehemence to the application of science, or at least to that portion of theoretical science which is necessary to those who make such applications. [...] In the present age the human mind must be coerced into theoretical studies; it runs of its own accord to practical applications; and, instead of perpetually referring it to the minute examinations of secondary effects, it is well to divert it from them sometimes, in order to raise it up to the contemplation of primary causes. Because the civilization of ancient Rome perished in consequence of the invasion of the barbarians, we are perhaps too apt to think that civilization cannot perish in any other manner.¹⁷

Concluding his argument, de Tocqueville says:

Those who cultivate the sciences amongst a democratic people are always afraid of losing their way in visionary speculation. They mistrust systems; they adhere closely to facts and the study of facts with their own senses. As they do not easily defer to the mere name of any fellow-man, they are never inclined to rest upon any man's authority; but, on the contrary, they are unremitting in their efforts to point out the weaker points of their neighbours' opinions. Scientific precedents have very little weight with them; they are never long detained by the subtlety [sic] of the schools, nor ready to accept big worlds for sterling coin; they penetrate, as far as they can, into the principle parts of the subject which engages them, and they expound them in the vernacular tongue. Scientific pursuits then follow a freer and a safer course, but a less lofty one.¹⁸

This last of de Tocqueville's assertions seems convincing enough to issue a judgment on the history of the application of science, encouraging one to experiment with humanities, which have been viewed by many as redundant, especially in an age marked by mass-production and consumerism, an age which appears to have nearly outgrown its capacity for those activities.

Once the decision to proceed with the exploration has been made and the building of Anarchism Café Racer already a fact, we should take a moment to think what sort of science discipline will be suitable here. Drawing on de Tocqueville's experience and thoughts on science in democratic America, let us try and allocate this investigation to one of the three areas of science which he identified; one encompasses "methods of application and means of execution," which is indicated as the third field. Let me recall them: the first one focuses on "the most theoretical principles and those more abstract notions," with the second one consisting of "those general truths which still belong to pure theory, but lead, nevertheless, by a straight and short road to practical results."¹⁹ Bearing those in mind, the building of Anarchism Café Racer will match the third field most precisely. A product: Anarchism Café Racer will certainly be created. Although this is not a practical application of the doctrine, for we draw inspiration

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 46–47.

from its promptings, they will, nevertheless, allow us to give the final shape and appearance of the café racer. One might say – utopia turned into a utopian project. Classical works of anarchism, devoid of the scholars' countless analyses and notes, cut out, welded, forged, ground, repainted in metal and energy, twisted, inundated with oil and petrol, and finally placed on wheels and kick-started by a four-stroke engine.

A book that uses scholarly papers and the so called “topic-related” literature sparingly should correspond to de Tocqueville's observations, who underlines that:

In America the purely practical part of science is admirably understood, and careful attention is paid to the theoretical portion which is immediately requisite to application. On this head the Americans always display a clear, free, original, and inventive power of mind. But hardly anyone in the United States devotes himself to the essentially theoretical and abstract portion of human knowledge. In this respect the Americans carry to excess a tendency which is, I think, discernible, though in a less degree, amongst all democratic nations.²⁰

²⁰ Ibid., p. 47.

Why the Motorcycle and Anarchism?

From the very first pages of the book, the Reader is likely to raise a number of questions as to the author's right to make such interpretations and parallels as those included herein. The first and perhaps most fundamental question is whether anarchists actually ride motorcycles and whether they manage to fulfil the ideas they believe in from the seat of a bike. Secondly, is it possible at all for the motorcycle to be employed in the scholarly research on political doctrines, in particular the doctrine of anarchism? And finally, whether the motorcycle and motorcyclist have anything in common with the anarchist doctrine, and if so, what would that actually be?

In addressing the issue, and following the order of the questions above, one should firstly note that while the by now classical anarchists lived and acted in a "pre-motorcycle" age, the anarchists of today are perfectly aware of its existence and the possibilities it offers, including those of the motorcyclist's outfit. The turn of the twenty first century saw a few cases suggesting that the motorcycle has indeed been used by anarchists in their political operations. What is more, the examples that will be illustrated further on could give substantiation, if not to an entirely new movement, then certainly to a new motorcycle trend taking root in contemporary anarchism. The first and most salient example is that from the year 2012 when a motorcycle club was founded in the city of Athens under the name Athens Anarchist Anti-Fascist Motorcycle Club.²¹ On September 15, 2012, the club's members for the first time patrolled the streets of Athens to protect immigrants from racist attacks.²² This, however, is not just one isolated case where motorcycles have been deployed by today's anarchists. Even before the events of 2012, in 2007, on the website of the Anarchist Information Centre the following was reported:

²¹ See <http://www.greenisthenewred.com/blog/greek-anarchist-motorcycle-club-nazis/6553/> (accessed September 2, 2016); see also "Meet the Real Sons of Anarchy - Greek Anti-Fascist Motorcycle Club Confronts neo-Nazis," <http://anarchistnews.org/content/meet-real-sons-anarchy-%E2%80%94-greek-anti-fascist-motorcycle-club-confronts-neo-nazis>.

²² See "Athens Anarchist Anti-Fascist Motorcycle Club," <https://euro-police.noblogs.org/2012/11/athens-anarchist-anti-fascist-motorcycle-club/> (accessed September 4, 2016).

On early Tuesday morning, December 25, an incendiary attack took place at a facility of the Group 4 company owned by G4S plc, in which 9 patrol vehicles were burnt. The attack was carried out by a group of bikers who drove up to the company's guarded car park and threw Molotov cocktails and incendiary devices at their targets. The incident took place in the Kolonos district of Athens. Police believes that anarchists, who have often carried out such attacks in the past, are responsible for this incident. G4S plc provides security services, cooperating with a number of countries, for instance, in Austria with the Immigration Department, where they conduct operations against illegal immigrants. Owing to its violation of labour rights, the corporation has been targeted by trade union campaigns.²³

Motorcycles have also been used by the Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei. According to John Brady Kiesling,

Conspiracy of Fire Cells (Synomosia Pyrinin tis Fotias – SPF) was an attempt to increase the political impact of anti-authority violence. SPF appeared on January 21, 2008, with a barrage of 12 gas canister attacks against widely dispersed banks, car dealers, and the Public Power Company in Athens and Thessaloniki, during a half-hour period just after midnight. The declared purpose was solidarity with Thessaloniki anarchist Vangelis Voutsatzis, arrested in November 2007 for gazaki attacks.

For the next 20 months, SPF averaged one arson wave a month, usually in Athens and Thessaloniki simultaneously. The number and coordination of SPF's attacks – presumably six or more 4–6-person teams on motorbikes – alarmed police. SPF's retaliatory capabilities were an additional reason for Greek police to think twice about arresting “anarchists” for any but the most blatant and serious crimes.

Solidarity with local and foreign anarchists and hatred of banks, police, prisons, the army, and consumer society are the themes of SPF's 22 (as of 30 October 2009) extant proclamations. SPF is uninterested in class struggle and the quest for a future utopia. The proclamation writers embrace urban warfare not as a means to an end but as an end in itself, resistance as art. Modern consumer society is “slow suicide.”²⁴

The anarchists from the Conspiracy of Fire Cells may have also been linked to a string of arson attacks in 2008:

On Monday night and Tuesday morning, unknown perpetrators targeting the entrances to the Ministry of Culture and two banks in the centre of Athens, threw gas bottles [...] The arson attacks caused considerable material damage. Nobody was hurt. Witnesses reported that the attackers called for the release of their two comrades

²³ “Grecja: Świąteczny prezent od anarchistów dla korporacji G4S plc,” http://cia.media.pl/grecja_swiateczny_prezent_od_anarchistow_dla_korporacji_g4s_plc (accessed September 2, 2016).

²⁴ Prawda2info (an analysis by John Brady Kiesling, a former US officer of diplomatic service, dealing with terrorism), at: <https://prawda2.info/viewtopic.php?t=10788> (accessed August 2, 2016).

arrested in Greece, after which they escaped on their motorbikes. Similar attacks have been carried out in Greece by anarchists. They frequently target various financial institutions, foreign companies and vehicles carrying diplomatic registration plates.²⁵

Lastly, in 2012 anarchists on motorbikes carried out an assassination:

On June 7, 2012 unknown perpetrators on motorbikes shot a young dealer known for selling drugs at Exarchia square. The killing took place at the intersection of Dervenion street and Temistokleus street, located very near the square. According to some local anarchists, the man had been involved in attacks against their comrades. However, no official statement has so far been released as to who carried out the shooting and for what reasons. The local community, together with anarchists, who live in great numbers in this section of Athens, which is known for its rebellious history, have long been trying to clear its district from the mafia. Dealers are attracted to this place by its atmosphere brimming with parties and cafés, as well as the fact that there are no police patrols on foot on account of the anarchists.²⁶

Italy has also seen attacks allegedly carried out by anarchists using motorcycle gear or moving on motorbikes. In July 2009 during the Italian G8 summit there were clashes between anarchists and police. What can be gleaned from the Internet reports is that in their confrontations with police anarchists were wearing motorcycle helmets to protect themselves and hide their identity. According to the reports covering the event:

This incident from Thursday, the second day of the summit, proved considerably less violent (fortunately for the organizers) than what had been expected on Tuesday following the riots in Rome, where relatively well armed bikers (anarchists), wearing black helmets, jackets and trousers took to barricading the streets with burning trash containers where they tested the strength of the police. Furthermore, fearing another earthquake in Abruzzi, a contingency plan was put in place to move the distinguished guest and their meetings to Police Academy located in Italy's capital.²⁷

Moreover, according to the Internet reports of 2012:

The head of the Italian nuclear power company was shot at in Genoa while leaving his home. Wounded in the leg, 53-year old Roberto Adinolfi was taken to hospital. Nobody as yet has claimed responsibility for the attack; however, the local media are

²⁵ "Seria niebezpiecznych podpaleń w Atenach," 08.07.2008, at: <http://fakty.interia.pl/swiat/news-seria-niebezpiecznych-podpaleń-w-atenach,nId,842729> (Accessed September 2, 2016).

²⁶ "Athens: A Shooting of a Dealer Involved in Attacks against Anarchists," (a video), at: <http://grecja-wogniu.info/?p=28483> (accessed September 2, 2016).

²⁷ G. Wasiluk, "Konferencja Grupy Ośmiu (G-8) i Grupy Pięciu czyli nowy, utopijny projekt," <http://www.mojeopinie.pl/konferencja-grupy-osmiu-g8-i-grupy-pieciu-czyli-nowy-utopijny-projekt,3,1-247218901> (accessed September 2, 2016).

suggesting that the attack may have been carried out by anarchists. Roberto Adinolfi is the chief executive of Ansaldo Nucleare, a company linked to Finmeccanica, a giant of the aviation and defence industry. Perpetrators on motorbikes: According to the BBC, Adinolfi was shot on Monday at about 8.30 am, as he left his home. He was approached in the street by a motorbike carrying two people wearing helmets, one of whom fired three shots at him. The bullet fractured his leg above the knee. "If this attack was linked to a political or social dispute, this would be very serious, something unseen for years," said Alesandro Pansa, the Head of Finmeccanica.²⁸

At this point, however, one has to stress that these cases should not prejudice the nature of today's anarchist movement, or the technical preferences of anarchists themselves. Indeed, motorcycles are used sporadically; what underlies the majority of contemporary anarchist movements is ecology and at least the partial Neo-Luddism it evokes, as demonstrated by anarchists' active protests against the construction of large industrial facilities and communication infrastructure. Here, it may be of interest to refer to the protests staged by Polish anarchists who, for instance, effectively opposed the construction of a nuclear plant in Żarnowiec in the early 1990s and blocked the construction of the A4 highway across the area of St. Anne Mountain at the beginning of this century.²⁹ On the other hand, one should note that owning a motorcycle or being a biker, rider or a motorcyclist is not tantamount to being an anarchist, or a person identifying or sympathizing with this doctrine. This, meaning political beliefs, is a highly individual matter for every human being.

With respect to the question of one's right to use motorcycle in the scholarly investigation of political doctrines, I should like to highlight that as early as the 1960s the motorcycle emerged as an instrumentarium (what I have in mind here is not only the motorcycle itself, but also its maintenance, the ability to handle it, the sensation experienced while on the road, its culture, or more exactly, motorcycle subculture). One would not err much in saying that the second half of the twentieth century saw the motorbike ride straight into modern discussions on philosophy, sociology and society, not only with its engine screaming but also with a clear intent to stay there for good. This is evidenced in particular by the following works: Hunter. S. Thompson's *Hell's Angels. A Strange and Terrible Saga*, a novel from 1966 depicting the life of "Hell's Angels" biker gang; *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*,³⁰ Robert Pirsig's novel from 1976 (Polish edition, 1994³¹), the already legendary and one of the most important novels of the American literature of the 1970s³²; *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy*.

²⁸ "Zamach na szefa firmy energetycznej. Anarchiści?" (<http://www.tvn24.pl>) 07.05.2012, at: <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/zamach-na-szefa-firmy-energetycznej-anarchisci,209076.html> (accessed September 2, 2016).

²⁹ See R. Antonów, *Pod czarnym sztandarem...*, p. 136 ff.

³⁰ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. Of Motorcycle Maintenance*, William Morrow & Company 1974.

³¹ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. Of Motorcycle Maintenance* (Polish edition), Poznań 1994.

³² On the subject of the book, see Th. Goodmann, "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values by Robert Pirsig. A Retrospective Roundtable, Forty Years Down the Road.

Full-Throttle Aristotle, edited by Bernard E. Rollin, Carolyn M. Gray, Kerri Mommer and Cynhia Pineo from 2006³³; *Shop Class as Soulcraft. An Inquiry into the Value of Work* by Matthew B. Crawford from 2009, hailed by the *New York Times* as a bestseller, with Francis Fukuyama's referring to it "as a beautiful little book about human excellence and the way it is undervalued in contemporary America."³⁴ *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy: Brains Before Bullets*, edited by George A. Dunn and Jason T. Eberl from 2013³⁵; and *Die Philosophie des Motorradfahrens* by Rainer Otte from 2014.³⁶

With regard to the last and final issue – that is the relationship between the motorcycle and anarchism and that between bikers and anarchists – one should mention that there are a few significant qualities linking the motorcycle to anarchism and bikers to anarchists. Firstly, the motorcycle is regarded as a symbol of defiance and freedom. Similar connotations are undeniably evoked by the doctrine of anarchism. Secondly, emphasis should be put here on FREEDOM, this word of high esteem and written in capital letters. The fundamental ideal of anarchists has always been unrestricted human FREEDOM. Every biker feels free only on the road, riding, more likely than not, with no purpose in mind. Often alone, in changeable weather conditions, covering hundreds or thousands of miles. Thirdly, anarchists have, in fact, never been understood and accepted. Their often desperate actions aimed at bringing to fruition the system of common felicity for people would relegate them to the margins of both society and politics. Bikers are seen by many as a subculture disconnected from society, and as such the desire for their kind of freedom is seldom understood. The roar of engines and the smell of burning tires tend to be associated with vandalism rather than biker culture. Fourthly, the prison would often be the anarchists' home, while escape their reality. In this respect, one can discern analogies with some bikers. Members of

Introduction, *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.Goodmann.html (accessed July 27, 2016); G. Priest, "Reflections on Philosophy and Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.Priest.html (accessed July 23, 2016); C. Bourne and E. Caddick Bourne, "ZAMM and the Art of Philosophical Fiction," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.BourneCaddickBourne.html (accessed July 23, 2016); Ch. Pierce, "Less Zen and More Art of Motorcycle Maintenance," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.Pierce.html (accessed July 23, 2016); B. Coleman, "Drinking (just a little) on the Fault Line," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.Coleman.html (accessed July 23, 2016); A. Schroeder, "ZAMM and the Art of Shelf-Life Maintenance," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Fall 2014, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2014/IJMS_Rndtble.Schroeder.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

³³ See *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy. Full-Throttle Aristotle*, ed. by B.E. Rollin, C.M. Gray, K. Mommer, and C. Pineo, Popular Culture and Philosophy Series Editor: William Irwin, Volume 18, Illinois 2006, *passim*.

³⁴ See M.B. Crawford, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³⁵ See *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy: Brains Before Bullets*, ed. by G.A. Dunn and J.T. Eberl, Chichester 2013, *passim*.

³⁶ R. Otte, *Windpassagen. Die Philosophie des Motorradfahrens*, Berlin 2014, *passim*.

biker gangs, for this is to whom I am referring, with their characteristic contestation of the institutions of power and state, with their attachment to unrestricted freedom and pride derived from being a 1%-er, that is, to put it mildly, a trouble maker³⁷ for those responsible for securing public safety and order, can be put on the same level as anarchists-revolutionaries, who would seek the actualization of their great and lofty social slogans by illegal means. What further attests to the existence of certain analogies between anarchism and the world of bikers are the numerous works originating in popular culture – literature, film, art, music, etc. – that draw their inspiration from real life and satisfy the cravings of mass imagination.³⁸

There can be no doubt as to the picture thus painted: the biker like an anarchist is a young man, a rebel following his own code, often in conflict with the law, at odds with the world as it is, in search of his own way, valuing community and attachment to a group. The biker is also familiar with the terms of anarchy and nihilism (with the latter being, according to Kropotkin, “the bold negation of intellectual slavery and submission to habit and authority,”³⁹) which terms in the nineteenth century were used interchangeably to describe the social phenomena inspired by the views of the then contemporary great anarchist thinkers. It should be further stressed that in our times it is very common to draw on anarchist tradition, anarchy and nihilism in films,⁴⁰ especially where the leading role is taken over by motorcycles, not infrequently by custom bikes and other two-wheelers of different make; loud characters driven by engines. It would seem to suffice to recall *The Wild One*,⁴¹ an American drama from 1953 directed by László Benedek, with Marlon Brando in the title role of the “Wild One”; an Ameri-

³⁷ On this subject see R. McBee, “Here’s Hoping the ‘Hound’ and His Friends had a Good Time”: The Hollister Gypsy Tour of 1947 and the rise of the “Outlaw” Motorcyclist,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 11, ISSUE 1: Spring 2015, at: <http://motorcyclestudies.org/volume-11-issue-1-spring-2015/heres-hoping-the-hound-and-his-friends-had-a-good-time-the-hollister-gypsy-tour-of-1947-and-the-rise-of-the-outlaw-motorcyclist/> (accessed July 25, 2016).

³⁸ See S. Martinez and A. Sanjuán, “Bikes and Movies: A Brief History of Motorcycle in Cinema,” *CINE/ Cinema Journal*, Volume 3.2, 2014:141–163; *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* (IJMS), Volume 4, Issue 1, Spring 2008, L. MacKinney “Mmmm, he’s good-bad, but he’s not evil”: The Shangri-Las, “Leader of the Pack,” and the Cultural Context of the Motorcycle Rider,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2008/IJMS_Artcl.MacKinney.html (accessed July 1, 2016); M. Biberman, “Cold Pastoral: Notes on Becoming a Vincent Owner,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2008/IJMS_Artcl.Biberman.html (accessed July 1, 2016) *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* (IJMS), Volume 4, Issue 2, Fall 2008, E. Vieth, “Take the Trip” Down Under: The Significance of Stone” (1974), at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2008/IJMS_Artcl.Vieth.html (accessed July 1, 2016), L. Lagergren, “Make Way for the Biker: Media and Swedish Motorcycle Culture,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, March 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2007/IJMS_Artcl.Lagergren.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

³⁹ P. Kropotkin, *Nauka współczesna i anarchizm*, Lwów 1920, p. 21.

⁴⁰ See S. Martinez and A. Sanjuán, op. cit.; L. MacKinney, op. cit.; M. Biberman, op. cit.; E. Vieth, op. cit.; L. Lagergren, op. cit.

⁴¹ P. Nagy, “The BRMC and its Humor in *The Wild One*”; J. Willett, “Behaving Like Brando: Transgressing Race and Gender in *The Wild One*”; M.J. Chappell, “Death by Discourse, or The Fate of Jimmy in *The Wild One*,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 2: Fall 2009, at: <http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2009/index.html> (accessed July 23, 2016).

can action series from 2008 *Sons of Anarchy*, featuring a motorcycle gang, directed by Gwyneth Horder-Payton, Stephen T. Kay, Guy Ferland, Paris Barclay, Bill Gierhart, and Terrence O'Hary.⁴² *Hell Ride*, an American action movie from 2007 directed by Larry Bishop, and a drama from 2014 *Anarchia Cymbeline* directed by Michael Almereyda, an adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* from 1609.

In 1998 in New York, the Guggenheim Museum organized an exhibition under the title *The Art of the Motorcycle*.⁴³ The motorcycle was, quite deservedly, viewed as a piece of applied arts, for, as B.E. Rollin has emphasized, the motorcycle preceded the car by 25 years, the airplane by 36 year, representing the first form of mechanized transport.⁴⁴ Tomasz Szczerbicki recollects the story: "It all began in 1885, when Gottlieb Daimler intent on testing a gasoline engine – his brand new invention – mounted it on a vehicle formed from a wooden frame, somewhat akin to our bicycle of today."⁴⁵

⁴² Sons of Anarchy was a hugely popular TV show, which encouraged a doctrinal analysis of a motorcycle club, the rules observed there and psychological profile of the club's members. In the book *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy: Brains Before Bullets* from 2013, American and British scholars (referring to the ideas of a great number of thinkers, creators, prophets, in particular, to Friedrich Nietzsche, Tomas Aquinas, Mengzi, David Hume, Jan Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Hobbes, John Stuart Mill, Xunzi, Josiah Royce, Niccolo Machiavelli, Emil Durkheim, Martin Heidegger, Huber Dreyfus, the Buddha, Sigmund Freud, William Shakespeare, Aristotle, Hannah Arendt, Anette Baier, Giambattista Vico, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, George Santayana, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Emma Goldman, Pyotr Kropotkin, Mikhail Bakunin, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Homer, Plato, Socrates, Immanuel Kant) carried out a political, social and psychological analysis of Sons of Anarchy Motorcycle Club Redwood Original (SAMCRO), a community of the club set in a fictional setting of Charming, California (USA), called by Alex Leveringhaus "a mini-state on the wheels." See "SAMCRO Goes to War," [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 102 ff. See also J.T. Eberl, "Virtue and Vice in the SAMCROpolis. Aristotle Views Sons of Anarchy," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 3 ff.; J.E. Mahon, "Tig Needs an Escort Home Is Loyalty a Virtue?," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 33 and next; R.M. Jensen, "A Saint among the Sons Aquinas on Murder and the Men of Mayhem," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 43 ff.; G.A. Dunn, "SAMCRO versus the Leviathan. Laying Down the (Motor)Cycle of Violence," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 53 ff.; P. Smolenski, "Another Fun-Filled Day in the Six Counties" *The Real IRA-Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?*, [in:] *ibid.*, p. 91 ff.; K. Corn, "The Faith of Our Sons and the Tragic Quest," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 119 ff.; A. Zanin, "Sometimes a Motorcycle Is Just a Motorcycle Freud and Hamlet Come to Charming," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 153 ff.; P.S. Fosl, "Sons of History How SAMCRO Lost and Found Its Way," [w:] *ibid.*, p. 189 ff.; G. Littmann, "Good Old Fashioned Mayhem," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 218 ff.; *idem*, "The Road Out of Mayhem," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 230 ff.

⁴³ See A. Kiciński, "Tendencje w projektowaniu budowli muzealnych u progu XXI wieku. Przykłady z Austrii, Szwajcarii, Londynu i Berlina. Rozwój i kryzys," *Muzealnictwo*, vol. 2004, no. 45, p. 126; D. Ghirardo, *Architektura po modernizmie*, Toruń 1999, *passim*.

⁴⁴ B.E. Rollin, "What Are a Bunch of Motorcycles Doing in an Art Museum?," [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 63 ff. In the USA, the first motorcycle was built in 1893–1895 by E.J. Pennington. In this country, a mass-production of motorcycles was launched in 1898. In Europe this kind of production started in 1894. The first manufacturer was the Hildebrand & Wolfmüller company, where also the word "motorcycle" was born. A German inventor, Alois Wolfmüller was the first to use this name. In 1899 in France the first motorcycle was constructed in the manufactory of Werner brothers from Paris. The motorcycle industry also thrived in Great Britain. In 1905 there were over 25 000 motorcycles registered in this country. See. T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle II wojny światowej...*, p. 12.

⁴⁵ T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle II wojny światowej...*, p. 12.

In this way the invention “made in hell” came into being.⁴⁶ Interestingly, Szczerbicki also mentions Władysław Drucki-Lubecki, a Polish prince whose contribution to the emergence of the first motorcycle was by no means small. As the author notes: “It is a little known fact that Daimler’s work on his new invention, which had taken several years to realize, had also been financed by a Pole, Prince Władysław Drucki-Lubecki, who owned vast landed estates.”⁴⁷ This demonstrates an almost visionary approach espoused by the Pole towards the nascent experimental technological novelties in the field of communication.

The anarchistic connotations of the motorcycle did not go unnoticed by no less than Hunter S. Thompson himself, who in his *Hell’s Angels. A Strange and Terrible Saga* recognizes “the anarchic possibilities of the machines” that the outlaw Hell’s Angels ride; those “social outcasts,” as the author terms them.⁴⁸ In writing these words, Thompson of course had in mind the Harley Davidson make, the heavy duty American motorcycles, and the Angels’ life style – which was very original, no question. The author says point-blank: “To see lone Angel screaming through traffic – defying all rules, limits and patterns – is to understand the motorcycle as an instrument of anarchy, a tool of defiance and even a weapon⁴⁹.” Angels, the “prototypes of the Wild One,” riding their “stripped down to the bare essentials customized dynamos” were seen as motorcycle outlaws.⁵⁰

Nor should we forget that political doctrines entail more than just great thinkers’ oeuvres, parliamentary speeches and correspondence, since literature, art works (sculpture, painting, theatre), architecture, or even an economic model are also their constituents. It is for those reason that the doctrine can inspire man to a very concrete action. It is the theory that provides ground for practice, and thus action. In the case of bikers this activity unfolds on two levels: the first pertains to philosophy and life style, with the latter being linked to the character of their motorcycles. With regard to the first level, the conclusion should be that although bikers do not implement the fundamental postulate of anarchists, that is to abolish the state, they nevertheless live according to their own rules, at times they object strongly to the catalogue of prohibitions and orders devised and passed so diligently by the state authorities. In pursuing their motorcycle passions, they exercise their freedom in four ways. Firstly, by the very courage of having a passion, which corresponds to Kropotkin’s philosophy who asserts: “But as we must recognize that man has other needs besides food, and as the strength of Anarchy lies precisely in that it understands all human faculties and all passions, and ignores none.”⁵¹ Secondly, through the passion of building their own

⁴⁶ Rainer Otte points out that it was how the motorcycle was referred to by the public in the 1950s. R. Otte, op. cit., p. 70.

⁴⁷ T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle II wojny światowej...*, p. 12.

⁴⁸ H.S. Thompson, op. cit., p. 104.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 123.

⁵⁰ Cf. Ibid., p. 131 ff.

⁵¹ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba (Conquest of Bread)*, second edition according to the 14th edition of the original edited by Edward Godwin and with his foreword, Warszawa 1925, p. 84.

motorcycle. For every biker, a custom bike is, in some sense, a piece of art, or at least of applied arts, following the Proudhonian principle: "All poetry, all kinds of art have essentially one sole purpose – to elevate man and nature; their inspiration is invariably the same muse – Liberty. [...] It is unimaginable to draw a distinction line between artisan, manufacturer and artist. Utility – that is the modern beauty."⁵² Thirdly, riding a motorcycle alone or in a group, for a rally, for an outing, in no hurry and with no clear destination is certainly a manifestation of freedom, for as Proudhon notes:

Everything in the world is in motion; it moves forward or backward, following a line or a curve, either in slow or accelerated motion. Everything moves, moved and will move endlessly. Motion is the form of all manifestations of life; it is therefore a fundamental element of liberty; there is no real liberty in stillness. Indifferent liberty is no liberty at all [...] In its very nature, liberty is practical and active; when immersed in Contemplation, liberty declines. So, it keeps moving.⁵³

Lastly, by organizing themselves voluntarily and sincerely in brotherhoods and motorcycle clubs, for in that they follow Kropotkin's model of thematic societies, which he envisioned as encompassing, "authors, composers, printers, engravers, draughtsmen."⁵⁴ While waiting for the motorcycle season, desiring to taste freedom uninterruptedly, and simultaneously taking care of their physical burliness, which is very useful in harnessing horses, bikers service their motorcycles and in doing so they accomplish something that Kropotkin refers to, when asking: "For has he not a gymnasium by way of diversion?"⁵⁵

This book will concern itself exclusively with one specific motorcycle, a work made of steel, aluminium and rubber named Anarchism Café Racer. Here the anarchistic doctrine has become an inspiration to build a motorcycle called Anarchism Café Racer. The common perception of the motorcycle as embodying the idea of freedom and rebellion, with the biker being the rebel has merely encouraged the author to explore the doctrine of anarchism by a means of just such a sophisticated method.

⁵² P. J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele (On Justice in the Revolution and the Church)*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism...*

⁵³ Ibid., p. 337.

⁵⁴ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 84.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

Explication of Anarchism by Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin

The creators of anarchism not only painted the picture of a system governed by freedom, while mapping the roads to its realization, but they also gave their doctrine a name and explained what the name “anarchism” harboured. Proudhon was the first to have used the term anarchism. He declared himself an anarchist and his doctrine anarchism. The thinker affirms: “I am an anarchist. [...] For authority, for politics, I then substituted economy, a synthetic and positive idea, alone capable, in my opinion, of leading to a rational and practical conception of the social order.”⁵⁶

Bakunin, characterizing his stateless system which reflected his doctrine, emphasizes:

In a word, we reject all legislation – privileged, licensed, official, and legal—and all authority, and influence, even though they may emanate from universal suffrage, for we are convinced that it can turn only to the advantage of a dominant minority of exploiters against the interests of the vast majority in subjection to them. It in this sense that we are really Anarchists.⁵⁷

He further argues:

We revolutionary anarchists are proponents of universal popular education, liberation, and the broad development of social life, and hence are enemies of the state and of any form of statehood. By contrast to all metaphysicians, positivists, and scholarly or unscholarly worshippers of the goddess science, we maintain that natural and social life always precedes thought (which is merely one of its functions) but is never its result. Life develops out of its own inexhaustible depths by means of a succession of

⁵⁶ P.J. Proudhon, *Filozofia postępu (The Philosophy of Progress)*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, vol. I, Warszawa 1974, p. 711.

⁵⁷ M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna (The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution)*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, Warszawa 1965, s. 88–89.

diverse facts, not a succession of abstract reflections; the latter, always produced by life but never producing it, like milestones merely indicate its direction and the different phases of its spontaneous and self-generated development. In keeping with this conviction, we have neither the intention nor the least desire to impose on our own people or on any other an ideal social organization that we have drawn from books or thought up on our own. In the belief that the masses bear all the elements of their future organizational norms in their own more or less historically evolved instincts, in their everyday needs and their conscious and unconscious desires, we seek that ideal within the people themselves. Since every state power, every government, by its nature and by its position stands outside the people and above them, and must invariably try to subject them to rules and objectives which are alien to them, we declare ourselves the enemies of every government and every state power, the enemies of state organization of any kind. We believe that the people can be happy and free only when they create their own life, organizing themselves from below upward by means of independent and completely free associations, subject to no official tutelage but open to the free and diverse influences of individuals and parties.⁵⁸

According to Bakunin,

Therefore it took the opposite, or negative, position: anarchy, meaning the free and independent organization of all the units and parts of the community and their voluntary federation from below upward, not by the orders of any authority, even an elected one, and not by the dictates of any scientific theory, but as a result of the natural development of all the varied demands put forth by life itself.⁵⁹

For Kropotkin, anarchism means “non-governmental socialism.”⁶⁰ He believes that as a doctrine:

Anarchism, like Socialism in general, and like any other social movement, has not, of course, developed out of science or out of some philosophical thought.[...] Besides, it must not be forgotten that men of science, too, are but human, and that most of them either belong by descent to the possessing classes, are steeped in the prejudices of their class, or else are in the actual service of the government. Not out of Universities, therefore, does Anarchism come. As Socialism in general, Anarchism was born among the people; and it will continue to be full of life and creative power only as long as it remains a thing of the people.⁶¹

⁵⁸ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia (Statism and Anarchy)*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, pp. 336–337.

⁵⁹ M. Bakunin, *Dodatek „A” do pracy Państwowość a anarchia*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, pp. 339–343.

⁶⁰ P. Kropotkin, *Nauka współczesna i anarchizm...*, p. 19.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* p. 5.

According to Kropotkin, "The ideas of Anarchism in general and of Expropriation in particular find much more sympathy than we are apt to imagine among men of independent character, and those for whom idleness is not the supreme ideal."⁶² He recognizes that

anarchism, consequently, owes its origin to the constructive, creative activity of the people, by which all institutions of communal life were developed in the past, and to a protest – a revolt against the external force which had thrust itself upon these institutions; [...] Anarchism arose from the same critical and revolutionary protest that called forth Socialism in general.⁶³

Anarchism "attacks not only Capital, but also the main sources of the power of Capitalism."⁶⁴ This is the effect of the development of societies, for "every time, then, the anarchist movement sprang up in response to the lessons of actual life and originated from the practical tendencies of events."⁶⁵

About anarchists, Kropotkin writes: "That we are Utopians is well known. So Utopian are we that we go to the length of believing that the Revolution can and ought to assure shelter, food, and clothes to all."⁶⁶ This is what he recalls about himself:

For myself, placed as I was in such favourable conditions, I gradually came to realize that anarchism represents more than a mere mode of action and a mere conception of a free society; that it is part of a philosophy, natural and social, which must be developed in a quite different way from the metaphysical or dialectic methods which have been employed in sciences dealing with man. I saw that it must be treated by the same methods as natural sciences; not, however, on the slippery ground of mere analogies such as Herbert Spencer accepts, but on the solid basis of induction applied to human institutions. And I did my best to accomplish what I could in that direction.⁶⁷

One should emphasize that the anarchists must have been aware of the utopian nature of their convictions considering that what legitimized the political principles underlying the functioning of societies was, after all, a centuries-old tradition. Despite the enmity of virtually every state government, they stood their ground and in their definitions of anarchism they earnestly and overtly presented the fundamental tenets of their thought. Also, they acknowledged openly the term anarchism which in the nineteenth century evoked strong negative connotations.

⁶² P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 37.

⁶³ P. Kropotkin, *Nauka współczesna i anarchizm...*, p. 9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁶ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 44.

⁶⁷ P. A. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty (Memoirs of a Revolutionist)*, Lwów 1903, pp. 431–432.

Political, Social and Cultural Entanglement of the Motorcycle

The motorcycle, whose role at the turn of the twentieth century was solely that of a means of transport, with the advent of cars around the mid-twentieth century and their becoming ever more popular as a means of communication and travel became an aristocrat among mechanical vehicles, and as Bernard Rollin notes, an immortal ever changing icon of culture. According to Szczerbicki: "The beginning of our century saw the motorcycle as a technological innovation, an extravagant hobby, a technical novelty addressed in drawing rooms. The public, with very few exceptions, could not even foresee that it might also serve some useful transport purpose."⁶⁸ The motorcycle was associated with speed, but it was also inscribed with themes ranging from freedom, rebelliousness, wildness, violence, technological progress, gender,⁶⁹ danger,⁷⁰ community and life truly lived,⁷¹ sexual permissiveness, to defiance of consumerism and the middle class values of Western society. The motorcycle gave expression to youthful

⁶⁸ T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle II wojny światowej...*, p. 15.

⁶⁹ Cf. K. Slawinski, "Sex and The Art Of Motorcycle Mechanics: Motorcycles as Personal," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_Artcl.Slawinski.html (accessed July 22, 2016); G. Semack, "What Happened to My Motorcycle Movie?," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_RT.Semack.html (accessed July 22, 2016); S. McDonald-Walke, "Outcast but not Cast Out: The Effects of Marginalisation on the British Motorcycling Community," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2007/IJMS_Artcl.McDonaldWalker.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

⁷⁰ B.E. Rollin, "What Are a Bunch of Motorcycles Doing in an Art Museum?," [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 63 ff.; also see A.R. Pratt, "Motorcycling, Nihilism, and the Price of Cool," [in:] *ibid*, p. 77 ff.

⁷¹ S. Koerner, "Whatever Happened to the Girl on the Motorbike? British Women and Motorcycling, 1919 to 1939," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, March 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2007/IJMS_Artcl.Koerner.html (accessed July 22, 2016.); D. Walton, "Close Encounters of a Deadly Kind... Freedom, Riders, Road Racing and Risk," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 12, Issue 1, Spring 2016, at: <http://motorcyclestudies.org/volume-12-issue-1-spring-2016/close-encounters-of-a-deadly-kind-freedom-riders-road-racing-and-risk-david-walton/> (accessed July 25, 2016).

“escape” from the bleakness of suburban America.⁷² In this context, it signified the return to nature. It was also seen as the embodiment of a nimble steed.⁷³ Moreover, it was viewed as a philosophical tool, a means to enlightenment and even spiritual transformation.⁷⁴ As Alan Pratt notes, the motorcycle was associated with nihilism,⁷⁵ which reflected the rebellious life of American youth, of social outcasts of various colour, and nomads and drifters posing a threat to the mainstream social values of the USA.⁷⁶ At the turn of the twenty first century it became the symbol of opposition against a Western society alienated from itself and from technological reality. According to Randal E. Auxier, a motorcycle is a decision; purchasing it and becoming a biker implies that one has just made a choice as to one’s path in life.⁷⁷ The motorcycle unites people whatever their social class, gender, profession or social standing. One can thus say that what we witness here is a quasi-community of bikers that builds itself automatically. The sensations and dangers involved in riding a motorcycle form the common denominator holding this union together.⁷⁸ Graham Harman draws attention to the fact that albeit a human invention and as such one that should be under his control, motorcycles exert a huge influence on people, their decisions and life. Not only do they create the allure of adventures and an individualistic lifestyle but they also suck one down into the abyss of injuries and death. Although it is a man who steers the motorcycle, the machine’s immense power and manoeuvrability will eventually dominate him.⁷⁹

⁷² K. Benesch, “Our Bikes Are Us: Speed, Motorcycles and the American Tradition of a “Democratic” Technology,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 1, Spring 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2010/IJMS_Artcl.Benesch.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁷³ L. Garber, “The Voice Inside My Helmet: A Trilogy,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 2, Fall 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2011/IJMS_Artcl.Garber.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁷⁴ K. Benesch, *op. cit.*

⁷⁵ Alan Pratt believes that bikers’ nihilism is the result of a trend rather than deep convictions. A.R. Pratt, “Motorcycling, Nihilism, and the Price of Cool,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 77 ff.

⁷⁶ J.R. Stevens, “Easy Riding: The Liberalization of Captain America Through Motorcycle Journey,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/IJMS_Artcl.Stevens.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁷⁷ See R. E. Auxier, “Christ in a Sidecar: An Ontology of Suicide Machines,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 13 ff.

⁷⁸ Compare: Ch.Th. Potter (M.A. University of Northumbria), “Motorcycle Clubs in Britain During the Interwar Period, 1919–1939: Their Social and Cultural Importance,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, March 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2005/IJMS_ArtclPotter0305.html (accessed July 22, 2016); D.W. Russell, “The Dirt Bike and American Off-road Motorcycle Culture in the 1970s,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume, 1 March 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2005/IJMS_ArtclRussell0305.html (accessed July 22, 2016); B. Joans, “GLIB WITH GUTS AND GORE: I Come to Bury HT, Not to Praise Him: The Legend of Hunter Thompson,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2005/IJMS_RT.Joans.html (accessed July 22, 2016); M. Biberman, “Cold Pastoral: Notes on Becoming a Vincent Owner,” Spring 2008, *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 4 (2008), at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2008/IJMS_Artcl.Biberman.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

⁷⁹ Cf. G. Harman, “Easy Rider and the Life of Harleys,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 119 ff.

In this context the motorcycle, in collusion with the outside world changing as the machine speeds on, is what determines the biker's fate. Moreover, motorcycles are the object of aesthetic contemplation, as Craig Bourne claims. They are beautiful, breathtaking, elegant, stunning, marvellous, charismatic.⁸⁰ Finally, in cultural terms, the motorcycle combines the ideas of movement, social acceleration and progress⁸¹. In this sense, it has become not only a medium of defiance, but also a machine reflecting the fundamental values of American society, of which the democratic ones, in particular, stand out: progress, freedom, independence, authenticity, authority. Ultimately, the motorcycle may be viewed as a synonym for contradictory values.⁸² On the one hand, it expresses the boycott directed not only against American but also against the entirety of Western industrial society; on the other hand, however, it epitomizes progress, freedom; values much cherished by the United States as well as by Western Europe.⁸³ Moreover, from the seat of a motorcycle one can form one's view of the world and its political systems, as was the case for Ernesto Che Guevara, whose revolutionary ways changed the political and social reality of Cuba and other Latin American countries.⁸⁴

According to Pirsig, a motorcycle – this materialized machine – has also a personality: “Each machine has its own, unique personality which probably could be defined as the intuitive sum total of everything you know and feel about it. This personality constantly changes, usually for the worse, but sometimes surprisingly for the better, and it is this personality that is the real object of motorcycle maintenance.”⁸⁵ Following the history of political systems, Pirsig compares the motorcycle to a political system and describes its organizational structure:

Finally you see that while I was splitting the cycle up into finer and finer pieces, I was also building a structure. This structure of concepts is formally called a hierarchy and since ancient times has been a basic structure for all Western knowledge. Kingdoms,

⁸⁰ C. Bourne, “From Spare Part to High Art: The Aesthetics of Motorcycles,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 101 ff.

⁸¹ H. Rosa, “Full Speed Burnout? From the Pleasures of the Motorcycle to the Bleakness of the Treadmill: The Dual Face of Social Acceleration,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 1, Spring 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2010/IJMS_Artcl.Rosa.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁸² See D.R. Wolf, *The Rebels. A Brotherhood of Outlaw Bikers*, Toronto, Buffalo, London 1991; *Hell's Angel. The Life and Times of Sonny Barger and the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club*, Ralph 'Sonny' Barger with Keith and Kent Zimmerman, New York 2001; J. Hall, *Riding on the Edge. A Motorcycle Outlaw's Tale*, Minneapolis 2008; T. Reynolds, *Wild Ride. How Outlaw Motorcycle Myth Conquered America*, Kindle edition 2016; A. Venio with E. Gannon, *The Brotherhoods. Inside the Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs*, 3rd Edition, Allen & Unwin 2009; D. Lyon, *The Bikeriders*, Manufactured in Canada 2003; A. Ensanian, *The History. The Culture. The Machines. Discovering the Motorcycle Since 1867*, Equus Potentia Publishing 2016.

⁸³ See K. Benesch, op. cit.; S. Alford, G. Hurm, “Motorcycle: Beschleunigung und Rebellion? Introduction,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 1, Spring 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2010/IJMS_Artcl.AlfordHurm.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁸⁴ A. Clifford, “The Seat of a Revolutionary: A Review of The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey by Ernesto Che Guevara,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_Rvw.Clifford.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

⁸⁵ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 46.

empires, churches, armies have all been structured into hierarchies. Modern businesses are so structured. Tables of contents of reference material are so structured, mechanical assemblies, computer software, all scientific and technical knowledge is so structured... so much so that in some fields such as biology, the hierarchy of kingdom-phylum-class-order-family-genus-species is almost an icon. The box "motorcycle" contains the boxes "components" and "functions." The box "components" contains the boxes "power assembly" and "running assembly," and so on. There are many other kinds of structures produced by other operators such as "causes" which produce long chain structures of the form, "A causes B which causes C which causes D," and so on. A functional description of the motorcycle uses this structure. The operator's "exists," "equals," and "implies" produce still other structures. These structures are normally interrelated in patterns and paths so complex and so enormous no one person can understand more than a small part of them in his lifetime. The overall name of these interrelated structures, the genus of which the hierarchy of containment and structure of causation are just species, is system. The motorcycle is a system. A real system.

To speak of certain government and establishment institutions as "the system" is to speak correctly, since these organizations are founded upon the same structural conceptual relationships as a motorcycle. They are sustained by structural relationships even when they have lost all other meaning and purpose. People arrive at a factory and perform a totally meaningless task from eight to five without question because the structure demands that it be that way. There's no villain, no "mean guy" who wants them to live meaningless lives, it's just that the structure, the system demands it and no one is willing to take on the formidable task of changing the structure just because it is meaningless. But to tear down a factory or to revolt against a government or to avoid repair of a motorcycle because it is a system is to attack effects rather than causes; and as long as the attack is upon effects only, no change is possible. The true system, the real system, is our present construction of systematic thought itself, rationality itself, and if a factory is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government. There's so much talk about the system. And so little understanding. That's all the motorcycle is, a system of concepts worked out in steel. There's no part in it, no shape in it, that is not out of someone's mind [...].

I've noticed that people who have never worked with steel have trouble seeing this... that the motorcycle is primarily a mental phenomenon. They associate metal with given shapes... pipes, rods, girders, tools, parts... all of them fixed and inviolable, and think of it as primarily physical. But a person who does machining or foundry work or forge work or welding sees "steel" as having no shape at all. Steel can be any shape you want if you are skilled enough, and any shape but the one you want if you are not. Shapes, like this tappet, are what you arrive at, what you give to the steel. Steel has no more shape than this old pile of dirt on the engine here. These shapes are all out of someone's mind. That's important to see. The steel? Hell, even the steel is

out of someone's mind. There's no steel in nature. Anyone from the Bronze Age could have told you that. All nature has is a potential for steel. There's nothing else there. But what's "potential"? That's also in someone's mind! – Ghosts. [...]

It sounds insane when you just jump up and say it without reference to anything specific like an engine. But when you tie it down to something specific and concrete, the insane sound tends to disappear [...].⁸⁶

Another aspect to be discerned in motorcycles is their having certain features in common with the attack helicopters deployed by the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. The motorcycle, like the helicopter, is a machine that is mobile, resistant to a whole range of threats and fully equipped for defence and survival in a hostile environment. It is often the last hope of rescue. Like the helicopter, the motorcycle can mediate our life struggle. As we know, helicopters influenced the outcome of the Vietnam War; powerful machines sending a clear message to the enemy. In a sense, the motorcycle is also an intermediary between the biker and the society he lives in. Helicopters have made transport, battle, evacuation and even an escape from the battlefield possible. Likewise, motorcycles have allowed people to engage with society or run away from it.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the motorcycle can act as a deterrent. In embedding it in the context of war, one, however, must not forget that it has also been a valid therapeutic element for those participating in military conflicts. Riding a motorcycle alleviates the stress caused by war. At first it was meant for the veterans of the Second World War, later on, for those returning from the Vietnam War. Today the motorcycle fulfils this role for people who have participated in the war on terror. The Second World War combatants were the first to start motorcycle clubs, with the clubs very clearly demarcated by the hardships endured in war, providing a space in which their members were able to define their identity, place and relationship with society. Further to that, motorcycle clubs offered space in which veterans could feel understood.⁸⁸ This was particularly true for the soldiers of the controversial Vietnam War, as they were more likely to face rejection than praise or gratitude upon their return home.

Today, another parallel that is drawn is one between fast sport motorcycles, commonly called racers, and jet planes. Rainer Otte reminds us that both "play in the same acoustic league." The German journalist and philosopher while highlighting this parallel points, however, to a crucial difference between them: the future is flying the jet and so one is indulgent of it, but those riding motorcycles reside in the present. So a twofold criticism is raised against the latter. For what? Well, first, for daring to emulate acceleration and acoustic effects reserved for the jets, armed and non-armed.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 95–96.

⁸⁷ W. Cummings, "Easy Rider and American Empire: A Postcolonial Interpretation," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_RT.Cummings.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

⁸⁸ Cf. W.L. Dulaney, "A Brief History of "Outlaw" Motorcycle Clubs," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_Artcl.Dulaney.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

Second, for the riders' nerve, occasional sheer recklessness, and for having the cheek to use the full potential of their machines.⁸⁹

The motorcycle has also been perceived as a piece of art. A very specific kind of art, to be sure, considering that, unlike paintings and sculptures, it evinces strong associations with engineering and technical knowledge. The visual characteristics of its design such as colour, type of frame and suspension, fuel tank form, seat or saddle form, graphics decorating the surface of fenders and of fuel tanks are all elements that define the machine's visual narrative.⁹⁰

The motorcycle is recognized as a machine capable of combating social alienation and human estrangement. The weakening of social bonds between people that we have been witnessing since the mid-twentieth century has also been present in the manner of the discord in the relationship between man and the material reality enveloping him. The human mind is increasingly less capable of coping with all mechanical things, their construction and way of functioning all of which have been growing beyond its reach. Already in 1970s Pirsig observed:

Technology is blamed for a lot of this loneliness, since the loneliness is certainly associated with the newer technological devices... TV, jets, freeways and so on... but I hope it's been made plain that the real evil isn't the objects of technology but the tendency of technology to isolate people into lonely attitudes of objectivity. It's the objectivity, the dualistic way of looking at things underlying technology, that produces the evil.

As to overcoming this social condition, Pirsig says:

That's why I went to so much trouble to show how technology could be used to destroy the evil. A person who knows how to fix motorcycles... with Quality... is less likely to run short of friends than one who doesn't. And they aren't going to see him as some kind of object either. Quality destroys objectivity every time.

Or if he takes whatever dull job he's stuck with... and they are all, sooner or later, dull... and, just to keep himself amused, starts to look for options of Quality, and secretly pursues these options, just for their own sake, thus making an art out of what he is doing, he's likely to discover that he becomes a much more interesting person and much less of an object to the people around him because his Quality decisions change him too. And not only the job and him, but others too because the Quality tends to fan out like waves. The Quality job he didn't think anyone was going to see is seen, and the person who sees it feels a little better because of it, and is likely to pass that feeling on to others, and in that way the Quality tends to keep on going.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Cf. R. Otte, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–58.

⁹⁰ S. Chandra and S. Atreya, "The Semantics of Motorcycle Design: A Kansei Engineering Framework," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 1, Spring 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2011/IJMS_Artcl.ChandraAtreya.html (accessed July 23 2016).

⁹¹ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. Of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, pp. 338–339.

All those mentioned reasons have certainly contributed to the fact that motorcycles and motorcycle culture have been given so much attention as demonstrated by an array of scientific,⁹² historical,⁹³ cultural, and sociological studies, even doctrinal research,⁹⁴ including academic teaching,⁹⁵ as well as journalism discussing sport,⁹⁶

⁹² See, for example, academic conferences on the Website of *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* <http://motorcyclestudies.org/conferences/> (accessed July 11–25, 2016); S. Alford and S. Ferriss, “Conference Summary: IJMS Conference, London 2013, *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 2, Fall 2013, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2013/IJMS_Artcl.AlfordFerriss.html (accessed July 23, 2016); also see academic papers on the Website *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, at: <http://motorcyclestudies.org/> (accessed July 11–25, 2016); I. Rabinowitz, “A Generous Imaginary: Contingencies of Value in the South African Charity Run,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, March 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2007/IJMS_Artcl.Rabinowitz.html (accessed July 22, 2016); E. Youngblood, “The Birth of the Dirt Bike: Technology and the Shift in Attitude toward American Motorcyclists in the 1970s,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2007 (at:) http://ijms.nova.edu/July2007/IJMS_Artcl.Youngblood.html (accessed July 22, 2016); G.L. Kieffner, “Police and Harley Riders: Discrimination and Empowerment,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 2, Fall 2009, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2009/IJMS_Artcl.Kieffner.html (accessed July 22, 2016); S. Chandra and S. Atreya, “Lyricism in Design: A History of Motorcycles in India,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 2, Fall 2009, at: <http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2009/index.html> (accessed: 23.07.2016 r.). *Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 2, Fall 2009, at: <http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2009/index.html> (accessed July 23, 2016).

⁹³ See, among others, P. Garson and the Editors of Easyriders, *Born To Be Wild. A History of The American Biker and Bikes 1947–2002*, New York 2003, *passim*.

⁹⁴ See *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, *passim*; M.B. Crawford, *op. cit.*, *passim*; *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, *passim*; R. Otte, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁹⁵ On the topic of academic teaching pertaining to motorcycle issues see universities, subjects, teachers, syllabus: S. Alford, “Teaching Motorcycle Travel Literature,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 2 (2006), July 2006, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2006/IJMS_Artcl.Alford.html (accessed July 22, 2016); Ch. Johnson (PhD Department of History Valdosta State University), “Roundtable on Teaching Motorcycle Studies Emerson and Whitman Were Wild Hogs,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/RTTeaching/IJMS_RT.Johnson.html; G. Farrington (Eastern New Mexico University, Ruidoso), “Roundtable on Teaching Motorcycle Studies. Motorcycle Literature,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/RTTeaching/IJMS_RT.Farrington.html; C.A. Edman (Bostwick Design Partnership), “Roundtable on Teaching Motorcycle Studies. Live to Ride, Ride to Live: Motorcycles and America, Motorcycle Studies. Motorcycle Literature,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/RTTeaching/IJMS_RT.Edman.html; L. Giovannelli (PhD College of Engineering and Applied Science University of Colorado at Boulder), “Roundtable on Teaching Motorcycle Studies. The Motorcycle’s First Century: Materials, Mechanics and Culture, Motorcycle Studies. Motorcycle Literature,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/RTTeaching/IJMS_RT.Giovanelli.html; S.E. Alford and S. Ferriss (Division of Humanities, Nova Southeastern University), “Roundtable on Teaching Motorcycle Studies. Motorcycle Myth and Culture: An Honors Seminar, *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 2, Spring 2012, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2012/RTTeaching/IJMS_RT.AlfordFerriss.html.

⁹⁶ See, for example, *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies* (IJMS), Volume 3, November 2007, at: <http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/index.html> (accessed July 1, 2016); G. Crowther and S. Ferriss, *Introduction*, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.CrowtherFerriss.html (accessed July 1,

travel,⁹⁷ motorcycles⁹⁸ and motoring.⁹⁹ The motorcycle has also been the object of scientific-technological investigation, safety research¹⁰⁰ and – extremely valid in our century – individual bikers’ experiments.¹⁰¹ As Graham Priest comments, the motorcycle has not only been discussed at the level of engineering technology as an autonomous mechanical unit, but also at the intellectual level as a symbol of certain values.¹⁰² The visual image of the motorcycle, the biker’s bearing and his uniform represent a material picture of the values assembled according to the bikers’ world. The motorcycles were also afforded room in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti’s *Futurist Manifesto* from 1909, and in John Dewey’s *Aesthetics*. And finally, in terms of design and aesthetics, the motorcycle approached the architectural forms propagated by the Martin Gropius Bauhaus School.¹⁰³

2016); S. Vaukins, “The Isle of Man TT Races: Politics, Economics and National Identity,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Vaukins.html (accessed July 1, 2016); J.J. Ward, “The Flying “M” on the IOM: The Matchless Name and the Tourist Trophy Races,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Ward.html (accessed July 1, 2016); S. Disko, “The Image of the “Tourist Trophy” and British Motorcycling in the Weimar Republic,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Disko.html (accessed July 1, 2016); Ch. Lamb, “New Zealand and the Isle of Man TT: A History of Kiwi Involvement and Public Perceptions of an Iconic Event,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Lamb.html (accessed July 1, 2016); K. Slawinski, “The Isle of Goose TT: TT-Licious!,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Slawinski.html (accessed July 1, 2016); G. Crowther, “Embodied Experiences of Motorcycling at the Isle of Man TT Races,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Crowther.html (accessed July 1, 2016); P. Philips, “Roundtable Discussion: The TT and the Future of Road Racing,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Rndtbl.TT.html (accessed July 1, 2016); M.A. Duff, “Do You Believe in Fairies?,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Column.Duff.html (accessed July 1, 2016); K. Sutherland, “Writing Man,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Rvw.Sutherland.html (accessed July 1, 2016); M. Gardiner, “Excerpt from Riding Man,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Excerpt.Gardiner.html (accessed July 1, 2016).

⁹⁷ See, e.g. M. Rządkosz, W. Ilkiewicz, *Dzienniki motocyklowe czyli przewodnik podróży dookoła świata nie tylko dla motocyklistów*, Bielsko-Biała 2006; R. Dmowski, M. Harasimiuk, *Motocyklem po Mazowszu, Kielecczyźnie. Lubelszczyźnie i Księstwie Łowickim*, Warszawa 2008; Z. Narojek, *Motocyklem do Ziemi Świętej*, Michałowice 2010; M. Stachowski, *Motocyklem nad Bajkał*, Poznań 2013; W.I. Rudź & K. Rudź, *Pod niebem Patagonii czyli motocyklowa wyprawa do Ameryki Południowej*, Gdynia 2015.

⁹⁸ *Encyklopedia motocykle*. An anthology edited by R. Hicks, Warszawa 2003; A. Schwietzer, *Motocykle MZ od 1950 roku*, Warszawa 2006; C. Heil, *Motocykle. Niezapomniane modele*, Warszawa [n.d.]; T. Szczerbicki, *Motocykle w PRL. Rzecz o motoryzacji i nie tylko*, Poznań 2012; *Samochody, motocykle...*, (Ed.) J. Łoziński, Olszanica 2016; *Motocykle. 100 najwspanialszych modeli w historii*, Warszawa 2012; S. Fennel, S. Šmicić, T. Krämer, *Motocykle z klasą*, Warszawa [n.d.].

⁹⁹ T.A.D. Holmes, “Motorcycle Myth: Rebels Without a Horse,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, March 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2007/IJMS_Artcl.Holmes.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

¹⁰⁰ See E. Rollin, “It’s My Own Damn Head”: Ethics, Freedom, and Helmet Laws,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 133 ff.

¹⁰¹ G.L. Winn, “The Rise of the Vintage Motorcycle Competition Movement in America,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2007/IJMS_Artcl.Winn.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

¹⁰² See G. Priest, “Zen and the Art of Harley Riding,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 3 ff.

¹⁰³ B.E. Rollin, “What Are a Bunch of Motorcycles Doing in an Art Museum?,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 63 ff.

Motorcycle as a Symbol of Freedom and a Machine of its Actualization

In the context of motorcycles, one way of discussing freedom is to approach it through three dimensions. First, as we already know, the motorcycle itself reflects the idea of freedom. Second, the ability to build, rebuild and repair a motorcycle independently constitutes the right to one's own choice, and in this respect, it speaks of freedom. And finally, riding a motorcycle is in itself an individual form of the expression of freedom.

With respect to the first dimension – the motorcycle as a symbol of freedom – one needs to consider the fact that the motorcycle has now been fulfilling this role for several decades. In contrast to the car, it represents a symbol – a means or rather a machine designed for the purpose of allowing an individual to actualize and experience freedom.¹⁰⁴ What is more, freedom thus expressed has had a substantial impact on society and its imagination,¹⁰⁵ with the motorcycle becoming the machine of freedom. Moreover, through its portrayal in the cinema it has emerged as a medium of freedom, a fundamental American value expressed on the American flag.¹⁰⁶ We still recall *Easy Rider* and the flag so clearly exhibited on the fuel tank of the Harley-Davidson, the motorcycle symbolizing American automotive progress.¹⁰⁷ It is for this freedom and the values represented on the American flag that generations of Americans have sacrificed their lives.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Bernard E. Rollin recalls that while in Albuquerque, two Native Americans, who had just been released out of prison, asked him to fire up his Harley-Davidson. They wanted to listen to the noise made by the engine. They justified their request by saying that it would help them realize that they were free people again. See B.E. Rollin, *ibid.* Graham Triest has made similar comments on the meaning of the engine sound. He draws attention to the fact that a motorcycle engine, working in a hypnotic rhythm, interacts with the human brain. See G. Priest, *op. cit.*, p. 3 ff.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. R. Otte, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–42.

¹⁰⁶ L. Lagergren, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁷ Harley-Davidson is one of the greatest American symbols of freedom and invention. See: R.D. McBee, "Harley-Davidson's Future (Abroad)," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 2, Fall 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2011/IJMS_Rndtblc.McBee.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹⁰⁸ M.J. Chappell, "The Failure of the Flag in *Easy Rider*," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, vol 1, November 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2005/IJMS_RT.Chappell.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

As regards building, rebuilding and repairing a motorcycle, one needs to bear in mind that these are machines designed in both a highly sophisticated and yet simple way. This aspect is particularly visible in old motorcycles. Given its specific design, every biker can modify his motorcycle, endowing it with an individual and unique personality.¹⁰⁹ These attributes have allowed it to evade specialization, so ubiquitous in our century, and also within the framework of which the capitalist economy produces vehicles. Consumers buy them, use them and at the end have them scrapped or sold through an authorized car dealer or a professional salesman. This situation either does not occur or hardly ever occurs for motorcycles. A biker either buys a motorcycle or builds his own with parts and components available to him. Mostly, his use of the motorcycle is well informed. Everyone who knows the world of motorcycles is also cognizant of the fact that bikers more or less know their motorcycles; they know how to repair them and if they do not carry out repairs by themselves, then they are very likely to assist their trusted mechanic in doing that very thing. The same cannot be said of car drivers, unless the cars are those classic ones painstakingly restored by their owners. In literature, an aspect that tends to be frequently highlighted¹¹⁰ is a sort of intimate technical relationship existing between man and motorcycle. Consequently, the motorcycle becomes the object of work, a source of gaining insight into technical solutions, a source of reflection, as well as the object used for experimenting and for playing a part in motorcycle subculture.¹¹¹ This approach also manifests a negation of the corporate policy of capitalist specialization of the human being, which – if set beside the automotive industry and its trends– would most likely be articulated by the principle according to which only those of sufficient means would be able to ride motorcycles; their rides would be restricted to times allocated for rest or relaxation, and most preferably to places and by routes determined, for instance, by motorcycle producers, while all kinds of servicing would be conducted exclusively by specialized facilities. In this scenario the special relationship between the motorcyclist and motorcycle would not have a chance to develop. At this point I am choosing the term “motorcyclist” utterly consciously, for the biker would no longer exist.

The motorcycle accentuates its presence with the sound coming out of its exhaust pipes. The noise produced by the revving engine generates unsettling vibrations reverberating through space. These vibrations are what determines, as it were, the personality of the motorcycle and that of the biker; he is either an enthusiast of motorcycle sports, or, with the sound emitted out of its exhaust pipes, the motorcycle will spell out the biker’s social attitude. Those familiar with the world of motorcycles know how to recognize these sounds. A motorcycle pulsating with power awaits its biker whose

¹⁰⁹ K. Benesch, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ E. Miyake, “Deleuzian Motorcycle: Towards a Theory of Motorcycles and the Other,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 11, Issue 1, Spring 2015, at: <http://motorcyclestudies.org/volume-11-issue-1-spring-2015/deleuzian-motorcycle-towards-a-theory-of-motorcycles-and-the-other/> (accessed July 25, 2016).

symbolic domination of the machine comes with the act of sitting astride its saddle, legs against its well-contoured fuel tank.¹¹² In setting out on the road, the biker imposes on society his own vision of existence, life and freedom.

The motorcycle continues to be a vehicle for which the term “parts and repair” have not been replaced by the wide-spread “assistance”. Should you desire to go on a journey towards your own freedom, it is paramount that you listen to and feel your motorcycle. Pirsig is very right in his observation that “the new ones [motorcycles] start out as good-looking strangers and, depending on how they are treated, degenerate rapidly into bad-acting grouches or even cripples, or else turn into healthy, good-natured, long-lasting friends.”¹¹³

The motorcycle also denotes a range of physical and mechanical processes unfolding in front of the biker’s eyes. In this sense it is a break from the present trend of making people dependent on the highly-organized system of supplies and services. The motorcycle is a compilation of different mechanical parts making up the machine designed to move you through spaces. Basically all components are available to the eye; in old motorcycles they are even fully exposed. This allows one to see how the motorcycle is set into motion, which in turn makes one curious and emboldened to maintain and experiment with it. The motorcycles which we can harness without having to approach a specialized service, is yet another facet which allows us the freedom of choice, for it is we who make the decision as to who will be maintaining the motorcycle; will it be me, or am I doomed to asking certain specialized companies providing maintenance services for help?

The motorcycle and the desire to ride it are also responsible for rousing the need to trust another man; in general terms that would be other traffic participants, while more specifically, a mechanic who in maintaining our motorcycle assures us a safe journey. A lack of trust in the mechanic may have tragic consequences, which is also why the mechanic, among other things, feels responsible for the biker’s life.¹¹⁴

The motorcycle and its maintenance have become a symbolic bridge between the traditional way of doing work and our contemporary times. Working on a motorcycle combines thinking, planning and performing work. However, in the twenty first century this principle has been effectively challenged. In a motorcycle shop, what is indispensable is one’s immediate responsibility for the work done¹¹⁵. Working on a motorcycle also provides a sense of freedom in that you can work on it when you want, according to the order and rhythm of your own choice, in full cognizance of what you are doing and why you are doing it. Your inner feeling tells you that you are beginning to gain control over the thing, as you are no longer dependent on it. Equipped with

¹¹² S. Malone, “Objects Vibrating Disobedience: A Phenomenology of the Motorcycle, an Orientation of a Dyke on a Bike,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 2, Fall 2013, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2013/IJMS_Rndtble.Malone.html (accessed July 23, 2016.).

¹¹³ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 46.

¹¹⁴ Cf. M.B. Crawford, op. cit., p. 1 ff.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 31–47.

knowledge of the motorcycle's design and the principles of its functioning, you can foresee its vulnerabilities, eliminate defects, renew worn parts or replace them with good ones, and not necessarily new ones. Should you start building your own motorcycle, you will have the opportunity to introduce innovations. What will individualize you and your machine will be simply the extent of your creativity.¹¹⁶

Old motorcycles require knowledge, work and patience. They give freedom, but in their own way, for they expect you to take on the responsibility of ensuring that their mechanical parts run smoothly. If you do not know your way around bikes, if you are deaf to their sounds, then you do not ride them. The classic motorcycle is the reverse of the maintenance-free cars of today. It gives you the freedom of choice whether to maintain it by yourself or to leave it at a shop to have, for example, the oil levels checked. In the newest cars, you have to go to a service centre for that. Although this is a certain convenience, it is also a constraint.¹¹⁷ Nowadays, people do not get attached to material things, preferring to follow fashionable trends. It is quite the opposite with motorcycles, particularly with the old ones and with those customized. They are a value in themselves; they are what the biker identifies with.¹¹⁸

Finally, riding a motorcycle, this third dimension of articulating freedom, is, above all, experiencing freedom. If the motorcyclist can ride, he becomes a biker who can cope with tough situations he not only encounters on the road but also in life. He is like Thoreau, who living in the woods, immersed himself in a life aligned with nature.¹¹⁹ The biker is resilient, enduring; he knows what the responsibility for other traffic participants implies. If the owner of a motorcycle maintains that he is a biker or a rider, and yet acquired no such skills, this self-endorsement may end tragically for him. The experience of riding is inimitable. It is a condition of freedom, yet it is coupled with the sense of a constant and present danger. In contrast to car drivers, the biker is invariably at risk of death.¹²⁰ It is on the road that the biker feels enlivened with all the decisions that he then makes manifesting his freedom, and yet these are the very decisions which ultimately determine his safety and further existence.¹²¹ Moreover, as Robert Pirsig rightly points out: "You see things vacationing on a motorcycle in a way that is completely different from any other. In a car you're always in

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 47–62.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 57–62.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 62–66.

¹¹⁹ H.D. Thoreau, op. cit., *passim*.

¹²⁰ On experiencing motorcyclists' death see R.B. Shabanowitz, "Hog Heaven: Funeral and Mourning Rituals of an Independent Motorcycle Club," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 1, Spring 2013, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2013/IJMS_Artcl.Shabanowitz.html (accessed July 23, 2016); J.B. Gould, "Make Today Count: Motorcycling as *Memento Mori*," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 1, Spring 2013, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2013/IJMS_Artcl.Gould.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹²¹ E. Price-Davies, "Adventure Motorcycling: The Tourist Gaze," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 1, Spring 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2011/IJMS_Artcl.PriceDavies.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

a compartment, and because you're used to it you don't realize that through that car window everything you see is just more TV."¹²² Pirsig continues:

You're a passive observer and it is all moving by you boringly in a frame. On a cycle the frame is gone. You're completely in contact with it all. You're in the scene, not just watching it anymore, and the sense of presence is overwhelming. That concrete whizzing by five inches below your foot is the real thing, the same stuff you walk on, it's right there, so blurred you can't focus on it, yet you can put your foot down and touch it anytime, and the whole thing, the whole experience, is never removed from immediate consciousness.¹²³

The satisfaction and the sense of freedom arising from riding a motorcycle is very aptly depicted by Fred Feldman, a Harley-Davidson's enthusiast. He sees the motorcycle ride as a freedom expressed through the sound coming out of the exhaust pipes, the wind, the engine vibrations, the unpredictable situations encountered on the road which make you think and react immediately.¹²⁴ Riding a bike is a quest, even a sort of meditation. On the road, immersed in thoughts, the biker contemplates the surrounding reality.¹²⁵ Through the dangers faced on the road, the motorcycle builds human trust in machines, the passenger's trust in the driver. Riding, the man becomes at one with the machine. Another aspect inherent to the motorcycle are the new opportunities it offers in terms of mobility and pleasure to be felt. This is a machine that stimulates human beings to thinking and the human body to exertion. The reward is the delight derived from riding.¹²⁶ According to Crawford, people who ride motorcycles have acquired this knowledge. He describes riding a motorcycle as a royal sport, beautiful, not unlike war. More importantly, riding a motorcycle and maintaining it expands one's thinking horizons and skills, which in turn fosters the betterment of one's life.¹²⁷ Only upon mastering the art of motorcycle riding can the biker enjoy his freedom.¹²⁸

¹²² See K. Benesch, op. cit.

¹²³ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 10.

¹²⁴ F. Feldman, "Harleys as Freedom Machines: Myth or Fantasy?," [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 89 ff.

¹²⁵ See: A. Litton, "Finding the Zen in Motorcycling," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 4, Issue 2, Fall 2008, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2008/IJMS_Artcl.Litton.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

¹²⁶ S. Malone, op. cit.; E. Miyake, op. cit.

¹²⁷ M.B Crawford, op. cit.

¹²⁸ See Richard Hutch "Speed Masters Throttle Up: Space, Time and the Sacred Journeys of Recreational Motorcyclists," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2007/IJMS_Artcl.Hutch.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

Biker

The motorcyclist, the “biker” in the twentieth century, was perceived as a liberated man, one who tended to contest the rules accepted by the society to govern human life and work. This was someone who followed his own version of freedom at a varying speed depending on his perception, knowledge and abilities.¹²⁹ His mobility allowed him to break off instantly whatever social ties he had and withdraw from his local community.¹³⁰ With some bikers’ exhibiting a criminal past, the so called 1%-ers, a biker on a motorcycle was viewed as a rebel, social renegade, his life balancing on the line between the law and outlaw.¹³¹ The first travellers and explorers represented an archetype of the biker.¹³² Bikers were seen as people in search of stimulations, novelties and pleasure, shocking others with their scorn for the success ethic, consumerism and the post-war quiet.¹³³ Not unlike Thoreau, the biker was an “inspector” of the real world.¹³⁴ He was a person not burdened by material goods, both movable and immovable.¹³⁵ While journeying, he lived a Spartan-like life, reducing the necessities

¹²⁹ L. Medovoi, “Marx and McQueen: Racing against Communism in Fordist America,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 1, Spring 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2010/IJMS_Artcl.Medovoi.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹³⁰ R. McBee, “Here’s Hoping the ‘Hound’ and His Friends had a Good Time”: The Hollister Gypsy Tour of 1947 and the rise of the “Outlaw” Motorcyclist,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 11, Issue 1, Spring 2015, at: <http://motorcyclestudies.org/volume-11-issue-1-spring-2015/heres-hoping-the-hound-and-his-friends-had-a-good-time-the-hollister-gypsy-tour-of-1947-and-the-rise-of-the-outlaw-motorcyclist/> (accessed July 25, 2016).

¹³¹ A. Perlman, “The Brief Ride of the Biker Movie,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, March 2007, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2007/IJMS_Artcl.Pperlman.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

¹³² L. Garber, “The Voice Inside My Helmet: A Trilogy,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 2, Fall 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2011/IJMS_Artcl.Garber.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹³³ Cf. L. Phillips (Ph.D. John Carroll University), “Blue Jeans, Black Leather Jackets, and a Sneer: The Iconography of the 1950s Biker and its Translation Abroad,” *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 1, March 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/March2005/IJMS_ArtclPhillips0305.html (accessed July 22, 2016).

¹³⁴ H.D. Thoreau, op. cit., pp. 39–40.

¹³⁵ Cf. Ibid., p. 54 ff.

of the road to a bare minimum.¹³⁶ In the world of bikers, freedom was achieved individually or in a group, it being the motorcycle subculture.

Within the entire community of motorcyclists, we can nowadays identify those who have turned riding a bike into a way of life, sometimes outlawed and murderous; those for whom it is a passion, and finally, the enthusiasts who do not ride. One has to emphasize that among the first group we may encounter bikers who are actually not gangsters, merely using members of motorcycle gangs as their role models. The third lot, who only owns motorcycles and pretends to be bikers, derives pleasure from the sheer act of possessing a bike and a matching uniform. They, however, will not know the real taste of the life and freedom the biker enjoys. Still, we should not forget that they have passion and because of that they deserve to be named mental bikers. Then there are also others, those captured by the spell produced by vivid advertisements, for which I shall use a working title: buy a bike, and you'll be free.¹³⁷ In some sense, these people represent a link between the world of Western consumerism and the biker subculture. Yet ultimately, they are merely those who occupy the last row in the vestibule leading to the biker's freedom.

The analyses conducted so far have served to establish the biker's profile, which although changing constantly does feature certain inherent qualities. What are they? A biker is a man who is proud, brave and fair, with a sense of externally unrestricted freedom, a rebel¹³⁸ in defiance of social norms imposed by society and to which he refuses to subscribe. This is a person who is honest in his relationship with other members of the club and of the community he lives in; not infrequently a former soldier, and as such fit, well versed in military art and prepared to fight, responsible, used to discomfort, a maverick, and at times an anarchist.¹³⁹ Undoubtedly, the biker is a person who knows the taste of manual labour, has technical knowledge and skills. Pirsig emphasizes the latter aspect when writing about biker community: "They value technology. And they're the ones who need it the least. If all technology stopped, tomorrow, these people would know how to make out. It would be rough, but they'd survive."¹⁴⁰ The biker can skilfully read what his motorcycle needs while the machine for a little amount of lubricant, gas and a kind word, will make it up to him with its

¹³⁶ Ibid., pp. 108–110.

¹³⁷ P. Gagné and D.M. Austin, "Playing with the Guys: Women's Negotiations of Gendered Leisure and Space," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 2, Fall 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2010/IJMS_Artcl.GagneAustin.html (accessed July 23, 2016). On the restrictions of freedom see W. Moon, "Riding Half-Naked (Or The Conversion of a Safety Nazi)," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 1, Spring 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Spring2011/IJMS_Artcl.Moon.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹³⁸ Rainer Otte defines the biker as a trouble maker whose personality development stopped at adolescence. See R. Otte, op. cit., pp. 42–58.

¹³⁹ See P.S. Fosl, "Anarchism and Authenticity or Why SAMCRO Shouldn't Fight History," [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 201 ff.; B. De Brito Serra, "Chaos and Order Anarchy in the MC," [in:] *ibid.*, p. 77 ff.

¹⁴⁰ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 47.

toughness and ability to transpose the biker further than his dreams. As Rainer Otte points out, the biker knows intuitively, without having to look at the displays and indicators, when his machine needs help.¹⁴¹ Bikers tend to wear a black leather jacket,¹⁴² while their tattoos also speak of their club membership.¹⁴³ The biker is a man who takes care of his motorcycle,¹⁴⁴ woman,¹⁴⁵ family and his club “brothers.” Riding a bike enables him to become part of the road. Unlike car drivers, the biker while moving is still in touch with the world around him. The act of riding and the screaming engine afford him an escape from his problems and worries.¹⁴⁶ Steven E Alford draws attention to the biker’s bearing a resemblance to the Hobbesian natural man. This is a rebel, isolated, coming from the working classes. He joins a motorcycle club which gives him a sense of community and brotherhood. And yet, he is also a child of nature similar to the man envisioned by Jean-Jacques Rousseau: pure and uncorrupted by the acts of society.¹⁴⁷ He is the alternative to the contemporary vision of a man.¹⁴⁸

The common denominator linking all bikers is their individualism and an inalienable right to be alone, which Otte calls the sovereignty of being on one’s own.¹⁴⁹ The biker understands that his love for riding can lead to situations which can jeopardize his health or even cause his death.¹⁵⁰ In riding fast sport motorcycles the contemporary bikers, as Otte observes, seem to be calling upon the world to cast off the tyranny of the force of gravity.¹⁵¹ On the road, the biker moves across a very specific environment that car drivers can neither access nor comprehend. While riding he is simultaneously on the road which he crosses enveloped by wind, unforeseeable situations, experiences and emotions.¹⁵²

The clubs founded by the first bikers showed a clearly delineated hierarchical structure with plainly defined rules.¹⁵³ What marked the motorcycle club members was their own moral code¹⁵⁴ in which loyalty, sacrifice, reverence and responsibility would be-

¹⁴¹ R. Otte, op. cit., pp. 9–21.

¹⁴² Zob. M. Ahumada and T. Jung, “Once a Biker Slut, Always a Biker Slut Narrative Identity in Charming,” [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 132 ff.

¹⁴³ See Ch. Elsby, “My Skin, My Self SAMCRO’s Ink and Personal Identity,” [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 107 ff.

¹⁴⁴ See M.L. Cappuccio, “SAMCRO and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance,” [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 144 ff.

¹⁴⁵ See L.A. Aarons, “When a Charming Woman Speaks,” [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 168 ff.

¹⁴⁶ See M.L. Cappuccio, op. cit., p. 144 ff.

¹⁴⁷ See J.J. Rousseau, *Emil czyli o wychowaniu*, part 1, Warszawa 1930, *passim*; part 2, Warszawa 1933, *passim*.

¹⁴⁸ S.E. Alford, “Riding Your Harley Back into Nature: Hobbes, Rousseau, and the Paradox of Biker Identity,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 145 ff.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. R. Otte, op. cit., pp. 42–58.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 21–30.

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 30–42.

¹⁵³ Cf. W.L. Dulaney, op. cit.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. A. Perlman, op. cit.

come a social norm.¹⁵⁵ The club's distinctive feature was its power, which was exercised in accordance with the rules expounded by Niccolo Machiavelli in his political treatise *The Prince*, and served to accomplish numerous goals, first and foremost, to maintain the club's unity and to protect the bikers' freedom.¹⁵⁶ Fraternal ties were what connected the members to one another. They were subject to the law of the club which had primacy over state law and whatever social norms in place. Social roles were strictly ascribed to men and women.¹⁵⁷ The biker's participation in the motorcycle community has helped him maintain his balance and resilience in the face of ongoing cultural and social changes and economic shocks. The bikers' community has been conducive to sustaining the group's identity and developing desirable relationships with society.¹⁵⁸

Alex Leverighaus presents an interesting parallel between the motorcycle club SAMCRO from the TV series *Sons of Anarchy* and the institution of state. According to the author, the club occupies a well-defined territory which it controls and organizes in the likeness of the structures of a sovereign state. The club has its "nation," that is, the club members, its territory and the club's leaders who are democratically elected and headed by the club's president. The club's territory is protected by any means possible, including those requiring the use of violence.¹⁵⁹

Jonathan Goldstein draws attention to the evolution of the biker culture. He argues that until the 1970s the community was largely undivided. The motorcycle was a common denominator among all its enthusiasts, swashbucklers riding their bikes in search of freedom. At that time bikers epitomized a unity, they were the brothers on the road. This brotherhood was symbolized by the way in which they greeted and at the same time saluted one another. With a raised fist manifesting their solidarity. Of less importance at that time was what motorcycle a biker rode, for what counted was the fact that he rode a motorcycle, and that sufficed. This situation, however, began to change in the mid 1970s with the advent of the rivalry between automotive products on the market. The motorcycle became a common thing; no longer elitist, but available to everyone, or nearly everyone whatever his skill as a biker, whatever his desire for freedom, his individualism or adventurous spirit. All these elements were attributable to the emergence of the permanent divisions in the world of motorcycle enthusiasts. The raised fist once so common has now been long forgotten, its place taken by the by now traditional hand wave.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ See T. Jung and M. Ahumada, "A Prospect's Guide to Nietzsche," [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 18 ff.

¹⁵⁶ See T.M. Dale and J.J. Foy, "*The Rat Prince and The Prince*. The Machiavellian Politics of the MC," [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. 68 ff.

¹⁵⁷ See L.C. Kolb, "Mothers of Anarchy Power, Control, and Care in the Feminine Sphere," [in:] *Sons of Anarchy and Philosophy...*, p. ff.

¹⁵⁸ G. Crowther, "Sustainable Motorcycling: Rethinking Mobility, Consumption and Market Relationships," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 2: Fall 2011, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2011/IJMS_Rndtble.Crowther.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹⁵⁹ See A. Leveringhaus, op. cit., p. 102 ff.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. J. Goldstein, "What Can Marx and Hegel Tell Us about Social Divisions among Bikers?," [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 47 ff.

The idea of a biker who builds and maintains his own machine, essentially considering it to be his way of life distorts the image of today's modern man perceived as being alienated from technology. The biker has become a free man, endowed with universal abilities, knowledgeable in the arcana of engineering, capable of both intellectual and manual work, of living a normal life, of building and repairing a motorcycle, as well as of surviving on the road and protecting himself. For a contemporary man who embodies mainstream capitalist society to achieve all this an entire infrastructure of services would be required, and as such the assistance of a great number of people engaged professionally in providing services of very narrow specializations relating to life, motorcycle sale and repair, safety and even motorcycle culture. In this sense, the biker represents the portrayal of the Kropotkinian man, universally educated, capable of facing intellectual and physical challenges. For this alone, the biker's life acquires authenticity and freedom.¹⁶¹

The biker's interaction with the motorcycle is through special garments: long trousers, heavy shoes, a motorcycle jacket, a helmet, so controversial among the biker's community, and reinforced gloves.¹⁶² Sitting on a motorcycle the biker invokes the image of a cyborg¹⁶³ which, according to Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*,¹⁶⁴ is a hybrid created by merging machine and organism.¹⁶⁵

And finally, as Randall Auxier argues, bikers are post-industrial and postmodernist pagans.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ K. Benesch, op. cit.

¹⁶² S. Malone, op. cit.; E. Miyake, op. cit.

¹⁶³ Cf. V. Dusek, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii techniki*, Kraków 2011, pp. 167–168.

¹⁶⁴ D. Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," [in:] *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp. 149–181; <http://web.archive.org/web/20110902201055/http://www.stanford.edu/dept/HPS/Haraway/CyborgManifesto.html> (accessed August 21, 2016).

¹⁶⁵ S. Malone, op. cit.; E. Miyake, op. cit.

¹⁶⁶ See R.E. Auxier, "The Biker Bar and the Coffee House: A Paean to the Postmodern Pagans," [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 13 ff.

Black Motorcycle Jacket

The black leather jacket has been inextricably intertwined with the motorcycle and the biker; it has been associated with power, resilience, fieriness, an uncompromising attitude, and the willingness to sacrifice. Its owner is virtually like his leather: a tough man, not to say thick-skinned, akin to an animal in the wilderness. A Hobbesian man prepared to protect his freedom at any cost. The symbolism of the black leather jacket has been extensively discussed in literature. In 2004 a motorcycle jacket became an exhibition object in the Art Museum in Phoenix.¹⁶⁷

In the twentieth century, the image of a man “slouched confidently” on a motorcycle wearing a black leather jacket, a t-shirt visible underneath, and blue jeans came to symbolize rebellion and individualism.¹⁶⁸ As a result he was hailed a renegade and an exile. The twenty first century has seen this image somewhat shifting with the design of the jacket embracing a greater variety of colours to match those of the motorcycle’s, now symbolizing speed and life on the edge. According to Suzanne Ferriss, it is indeed this black motorcycle jacket that signifies power, not only over machine but also over reality. The heavy black jacket underscores the biker’s power. The leather protects him against the elements and occasionally against direct contact with the road surface. Equally important, the heavy leather motorcycle jacket shields the biker from his inner anxieties, filling him with courage.¹⁶⁹

In their symbolic representations, the jackets donned by bikers in the twentieth century invoked the military jackets worn by German flying aces during the Great War. The black leather jacket is, however, predominantly associated, although not exclusively, with totalitarian doctrines such as Adolf Hitler’s Nazism in the Third Reich and Lenin’s and Stalin’s communism of the Soviet era. In the Second World War, it was the German Secret State Police (Gestapo) and the armed wing of SS (Waffen SS) who were

¹⁶⁷ See *American Motorcyclist. Magazine of the American Motorcyclist Association*, Volume 58, Number 4, April 2004, s. 56; *Cycle World. CW 1962–2004 America’s Leading Motorcycle Magazine*, Vol. 43, No. 1, January 2004, p. 31.

¹⁶⁸ See L. Phillips, op. cit.

¹⁶⁹ See S. Ferriss, “Leather-Clad: Eroticism, Fetishism, and other-isms in Biker Fashion,” [in:] *Harley-Davidson and Philosophy...*, p. 157 ff.

clad in black leather coats. In the Soviet Union, black leather jackets were the attributes of the officers of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, Sabotage (VCheka) and the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union (NKVD).¹⁷⁰ At this point it might be worth recalling that one of the items of uniform worn by George Patton, the American general fighting the Nazis in the Second World War, was also a black leather jacket.

Its opposite was the brown jacket of the pilots of the British Royal Air Force (RAF) which symbolized heroism and adventure.

Having said that, we need to bear in mind that although the black motorcycle jacket has been associated with motorcycle subculture, it does not have to be linked to military tradition. Its significance is also, or perhaps predominantly, attributed to an artistic endeavour which the film industry embarked on.

In fusing historical and pop-cultural references, the black leather jacket has come to symbolize masculinity, roughness and courage. It is associated with the power of the machine, whereas by touching the body directly, the leather jacket ascribes it with sexual meanings. Furthermore, it imbues one with a sense of freedom, releases one from stress, allows the boundaries of existing life to be crossed. It is a traditional motorcycle garment, both for men and women, a defining characteristic easily recognizable by society. The jacket is also an element of the bikers' kit, allowing them to feel safe while retaining the proximity of nature. Not only does it afford them the ability to shift between different social roles, but it also enables them to cross the boundaries set by age, gender and lifestyle.¹⁷¹

The aspect that is likely to be highlighted in literature is the display of Nazi attributes on the jackets donned by motorcycle gang members. One can also come across Nazi flags hanging quite visibly in clubs owned by the gangs. Yet the nature of this sort of exhibition is rather to provoke, and if this is not the sole purpose, it is also meant to deter strangers, that is, those who are not part of the group. The same can be said of the jackets. Much as they show similarities to Nazi and Soviet uniforms in terms of colour and material, by wearing them bikers promote neither Nazi nor communist ideologies. Having said that, one should point out that the characteristic feature of motorcycle gangs is a centralized leadership structure whose distinctive facet is that participation in such a group requires absolute subordination, which indeed has been a distinguishing feature of all totalitarian systems.¹⁷²

The biker in a black leather jacket and a helmet becomes an extension of the machine.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Cf. L. Phillips, *op. cit.*

¹⁷¹ M. DeLong, K. Gage, J. Park, M. Sklar, "From Renegade to Regular Joe: The Black Leather Jacket's Values for Bikers," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, Volume 6, Issue 2, Fall 2010, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/Fall2010/IJMS_Artcl.DeLongetal.html (accessed July 23, 2016).

¹⁷² Por.: G.L. Kieffner, "Myth, Reality, and Revenge in Hunter S. Thompson's Hells Angels," *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*, July 2005, at: http://ijms.nova.edu/July2005/IJMS_RT.Kieffner.html (accessed July 22, 2016); A. Perlman, *op. cit.*

¹⁷³ See S. Ferriss, *op. cit.*

Despite the numerous attempts made to find out the meaning behind the colour of the motorcycle jacket, one should refrain from rushing into any symbolic representation other than the one connected with the safety of the biker himself. As a tough and relatively resistant material, leather protects against wind, providing at least ersatz safety during road incidents. What appears to be supportive of this approach are contemporary trends in motorcycle fashion, perceived in its broadest sense. Today, leather motorcycle jackets, with protective armour, in particular those intended for sports riding, only reflect the colour of the motorcycle itself, with the range of such colours as brown and black being in decline.

Why Café Racer?

Anarchists from the mid-nineteenth century tend to be portrayed as bold daredevils, young individualists open to modernity who, as a rule, were active in large cities located in Western Europe, Russia and the USA. Their locations for meetings and for propagating their anarchist ideas included roads, streets, cafés, restaurants and tenement houses. About those times Kropotkin writes: “Our beginnings were ridiculously small. Half a dozen of us used to meet in cafés, and when we had an audience of a hundred persons at a meeting we felt happy.”¹⁷⁴ Moreover, the life of the twentieth-century café racer enthusiasts unfolded after sunset, with motorways, beltways, city streets, car parks, cafés and workshops providing its stage.

One could thus say that the places frequented by the anarchists of the nineteenth century became the meeting places for café racer enthusiasts in the twentieth century. What is more, the former and the latter had their customary meeting places. These were cafés and workshops. The former ones – anarchists, as Kropotkin recalls, would use them as information points about anarchist meetings: “We held many meetings, ourselves distributing our announcements in the cafés and the workshops.”¹⁷⁵ The latter ones – members of the café racer movement designed, built, repaired and maintained their motorcycles. In cafés, on the other hand, they lived their social life and cultivated the principles of the café racer movement. What was then, or actually still is, café racer? The café racer trend originated in England to be later embraced by other Western European countries and by the USA. Its main idea was to customize mass-produced motorcycles in that their design was given a unique character; however, first and foremost, the idea was to add such riding qualities that would enable one to reach the dizzying, as for the mid-twentieth century, speed of a 100 miles per hour (approximately 160km per hour).¹⁷⁶ Young bikers organized illegal races through the streets of London, later on in other huge European and US cities. Not unlike the

¹⁷⁴ P. A. Krapotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, p. 434.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

¹⁷⁶ See *The Café Racer Phenomenon*, Pounbury 2014, *passim*; M. Walker, *Café Racers of the 1960s. Machines, Riders and Lifestyle a Pictorial Review*, Ramsbury, Marlborough Wiltshire 1994, *passim*; *idem*,

Isle of Man TT Races¹⁷⁷ held since 1907, the objective was to cover the predetermined distance as fast as possible and return to the café. All in total: start, race and return would usually take as much time as the length of a song. The races would start and end with hanging out in cafés, drinking coffee and having discussions to the background of sounds emitted from jukeboxes.

In some sense, the café racer enthusiasts from the mid-twentieth century were ahead of the capabilities of the then automotive industry. With their café racers built using as the foundation the best Triumph and Norton engineering solutions of those times, the British bikers not only created as if they were following in the footsteps of the mythical god Triton, but they also carried out engineering and technological changes of their own, thus crafting, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a model of a city sport custom bike available to all enthusiasts of speed. This perspicacity they shared with the nineteenth-century anarchists. They, too, were ahead of their times, painting downright fantastic visions of a world devoid of authority in which harmony, felicity and welfare would rule; where people would have free time enough to cultivate their passions and further their personal growth. Already in the nineteenth century, the anarchists were able to foresee the technological inventions that would become an undisputed feature of the twentieth century.

Café Racers of the 1970s. Machines, Riders and Lifestyle a Pictorial Review, Ramsbury, Marlborough Wiltshire 2011.

¹⁷⁷ Between 28–30 of May 2007, an international academic conference was held on the 100th anniversary of the Isle of Man TT Races. On the conference, lectures and the history of the Isle of Man TT Races see *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies (IJMS)*, Volume 3, November 2007, at: <http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/index.html> (accessed July 1, 2016); G. Crowther and S. Ferriss, op. cit.; S. Vaukins, op. cit.; J.J. Ward, “The Flying “M” on the IOM: The Matchless Name and the Tourist Trophy Races,” at: http://ijms.nova.edu/November2007TT/IJMS_Artcl.Ward.html (accessed July 1, 2016); S. Disko, op. cit.; Ch. Lamb, op. cit.; K. Slawinski, “The Isle of Goose TT!”...; G. Crowther, “Embodied Experiences of Motorcycling”...; P. Philips, op. cit.; M.A. Duff, op. cit.; K. Sutherland, op. cit.; M. Gardiner, op. cit.

Can One Thus Handle the Doctrine of Anarchism?

Actually, there should be no doubt as to the answer being an emphatic yes. Without hesitation we can claim that the three great anarchists were keenly interested in technological novelties. Proudhon was the one who, in some measure, started the anarchists' interest in machines and industry. In his writings we come across "machine and workshop," "railway," "railroad," "transportation by wheels, stage-coaches," "the knitting-machine," "the cylinder-press," "the locomotive,"¹⁷⁸ "steam horses," "locomotives, wagons, rails, ships," "mill spools and stones," "railways, the electric telegraph," "the crane block that lifts weights without shifting its position."¹⁷⁹ The other authors of anarchism showed not only an even greater interest in machines, but also greater trust in them. In his visions of the future, Bakunin went even further than the beginnings of the automotive industry. Apart from the railway, he spoke of an "air-sailing device," which is nothing other than contemporary air transportation. In Bakunin's times that must have been a barely conceivable abstraction.

However, Kropotkin was the one whose interest in technological novelties was the keenest – an enthusiast of the development of all industries. This scholar of anarchism had an extensive and detailed knowledge of new industrial machines and devices. In the *Conquest of Bread* – his work from the last years of the nineteenth century containing undeniably doctrinal considerations – he gives a detailed account of:

Powerful machinery [...] artificial heat [...] glass and hot water pipes [...] those intelligent beings, modern machines [...] tools, machines, means of communication [...] highways and railroads [...] The shriek of the engine [...] railroads and waterways [...] pavement of fire-proof bricks [...] The rivers have been made navigable; the coasts, carefully surveyed, are easy of access; artificial harbours, laboriously dug out and protected against the fury of the sea, afford shelter to the ships. Deep shafts have been sunk in

¹⁷⁸ P.J. Proudhon, *System sprzeczności ekonomicznych czyli filozofia nędzy (System of Economical Contradictions or the Philosophy of Poverty)*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, vol. I, Warszawa 1974, pp. 370–375.

¹⁷⁹ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 300.

the rocks; labyrinths of underground galleries have been dug out where coal may be raised or minerals extracted. At the crossings of the highways great cities have sprung up, treasures of industry, science and art. [...] Every machine has had the same history – a long record of sleepless nights and of poverty, of disillusion and of joys, of partial improvements discovered by several generations of nameless workers,” “every new invention is a synthesis, the resultant of innumerable inventions which have preceded it in the vast field of mechanics and industry. [...] Machines for lace-making [...] iron slaves which we call machines, which saw and plane, spin and weave for us, unmaking and remaking, working up raw matter to produce the marvels of our time. [...] advertisement [...] tools [...] a motor which, with a little iron and a few pounds of coal, gives him the mastery of a creature strong and docile as a horse [...] the most complicated machinery [...] tramways [...] a carpenter’s bench [...] a turning lathe [...] measuring devices [...] printing machines [...] immense furnace, whose flames have a temperature of more than a thousand degrees [...] stampers [...] taps [...] cranes [...] crankshafts [...] machines for brushing glossy or woolly heads of hair [...] the machine for blacking boots [...] a machine for washing up plates, a third for washing linen [...] hot water pipes [...] a common heating apparatus [...] to regulate the temperature you need only turn a tap [...] you can light the gas specially supplied for heating purposes from a central reservoir. [...] a button for light to burst forth [...] Steam, electricity, the heat of the sun, and the breath of the wind, will ere long be pressed into service [...] special wagons [...] ambulances [...] a steam-plough [...] simplest machines for wheeling [...] ropes [...] the automatic valve [...] transatlantic cable [...] a threshing-machine [...] railroads.¹⁸⁰

Who knows, it may very well have been that Kropotkin would have turned his interest toward motorcycles, had they but existed. Nor can one rule out that he would have indicated them as an up-to-the-minute technology, a means of movement, allowing a free man to choose any, well, perhaps almost any, direction in which to go. A vehicle that would have made it possible for a man to ride into the world of anarchy at an even greater speed. Being very meticulous, he may have scrutinized the arrangement and the number of cylinders, engine power, the ignition system, suspension, the number of gears, brakes, and the like, with all this providing him with a basis for choosing one brand over another; naturally bearing in mind human welfare. In this respect one should also remember Proudhon’s contribution, who discerned a certain impact of industry and machines on human fate and on the improvement of interpersonal communication. In his opinion, for instance, which is indeed highly valuable from the present author’s point of view, “the press is an instrument two or three hundred times more potent than the pen; therefore one is two or three hundred times freer to enter into relation with other men when he can spread his ideas by printing than when he can publish them only by writing.”¹⁸¹ With respect to machines, Proudhon believed

¹⁸⁰ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, pp. 1–14, 23–24, 85, 95, 96, 99–102, 114, 123, 144–145, 157, 159.

¹⁸¹ P.J. Proudhon, *System sprzeczności ekonomicznych...*, p. 346.

that “machinery abridges labour”¹⁸², and second: “The last word of machinery is to make man rich and happy without the necessity of labour on his part.”¹⁸³

There should be no doubt that not only were the anarchists creators of the political concept of a stateless system, but they were also very acute observers of the technological and industrial life emerging in front of their eyes. With the classical anarchists’ openness to modernity, it is highly likely that, simply out of sheer curiosity, they would not have despised such a modern and sophisticated (at least for the advent of the twentieth century) means of movement and transport as the motorcycle. It is very likely that they would have used it in their revolutionary activities, as Hezbollah activists do nowadays.¹⁸⁴ Who knows, whether or not, in place of Ernest Che Guevara, the first author of the motorcycle diaries could have been Bakunin, riding across Europe on an old Norton 500, had it but existed at that time. Perhaps then, in his Confession to Tsar Alexander II, instead of saying: “I enjoyed the trip. Now what shall I say to you, Sire, of the impression produced on me by Paris!”¹⁸⁵ we would have read, for instance: “Being in a tremendous hurry, I only stopped to get some gas. My battered iron bike, laden like a donkey – all the rage in the West – drank petrol like a herd of horses. While riding, my aviator hat kept sliding off my temples. Through the goggles obscured by road dirt I could see excited highwaymen gathering along the road. I enjoyed the ride immensely... Paris... Now what shall I say to you, Sire, of the impression produced on me by Paris!”

Have similar analogies already taken place in the past? Has a doctrine or doctrines been used as a base for creating things? Yes and no. With respect to employing philosophy or history, one could name an example, which Klein cites, and which refers to the Saturn, a car reflecting the youth movements of the 1970s, or the fashion parallels of the labour movement struggle in the nineteenth and twentieth century. About the Saturn Klein writes with an indifference: “Saturn, too, came out of nowhere in October 1990 when GM launched a car built not out of steel and rubber but out of New Age spirituality and seventies feminism.”¹⁸⁶ However, she is clearly critical of the fashion ideas that came at the end of the 1990s:

On the other hand, though style-based movements are stripped of their original meanings time and time again, the effect of this culture vulturing on more politically grounded movements is often so ludicrous that the most sensible reaction is just to laugh it off. The spring 1998 Prada collection, for instance, borrowed heavily from the struggle of the labour movement. As “supershipper” Karen von Hahn reported from Milan, “The collection, a sort of Maoist/Soviet-worker chic full of witty period references, was shown in a Prada-blue room in the Prada family palazzo to an exclusive few. [...] Mao

182 Ibid., p. 349.

183 Ibid., p. 373.

184 See H. Jaber, *Hezbollah. Walka i zemsta*, Warszawa 1999, p. 40 ff.

185 M. Bakunin, *Pisma wybrane (Selected Writings)*, vol. 1, edited and introduced by H. Temkinowa, Warszawa 1965, pp. 437–438.

186 N. Klein, op. cit., p. 52.

and Lenin also make an appearance on a Spring 1999 handbag from Red or Dead. Yet despite these clear co-optations of the class struggle, one hardly expects the labour movement of the world to toss on the towel in a huff, give up on their demands for decent working conditions and labour standards worldwide because Mao is suddenly the It Boy in Milan.

And finally, “Che Guevara’s reincarnation as the logo for Revolution Soda (slogan: “Join the Revolution”).¹⁸⁷

Is the project *Anarchism Café Racer* to be laughed off, too? It does not seem so? Why not? Firstly, it is because since the mid-twentieth century the two-wheeled vehicle with an engine, and the motorcycle certainly is that, has represented one of the undisputed cultural synonyms of freedom. Secondly, in speaking about a motorcycle, every motorcyclist and biker thinks and talks about his own limitless possibilities. For some it will be the speed, for others a lifestyle, and still for others a sign of individualism, while for most of them it will be tantamount to an escape from the city. Experiencing the world around. Whatever the idea one is guided by, at that point they all are linked by the common denominator of freedom. Freedom on the road.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 114.

What Will We need?

The answer to a question thus posed can be given with mathematical precision. We will need five elements.

First, gumption will be necessary. As Pirsig rightly notes:

If you're going to repair a motorcycle, an adequate supply of gumption is the first and most important tool. If you haven't got that you might as well gather up all the other tools and put them away, because they won't do you any good. Gumption is the psychic gasoline that keeps the whole thing going. If you haven't got it there's no way the motorcycle can possibly be fixed. But if you have got it and know how to keep it there's absolutely no way in this whole world that motorcycle can keep from getting fixed. It's bound to happen. Therefore the thing that must be monitored at all times and preserved before anything else is the gumption.¹⁸⁸

Pirsig also draws attention to the interdependency between gumption and quality in the relation to the machine and the mechanic:

But there's another kind of detail that no shop manual goes into but that is common to all machines and can be given here. This is the detail of the Quality relationship, the gumption relationship, between the machine and the mechanic, which is just as intricate as the machine itself. Throughout the process of fixing the machine things always come up, low-quality things, from a dusted knuckle to an accidentally ruined "irreplaceable" assembly. These drain off gumption, destroy enthusiasm and leave you so discouraged you want to forget the whole business.¹⁸⁹

According to Pirsig, gumption "is variable, a reservoir of good spirits that can be added or subtracted from."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 288.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

Second, we will need to work with a good mechanic, who, let me use here the term from the motorcycle dictionary, will help us complete the project *Anarchism Café Racer* safely across the horseshoes¹⁹¹ of its implementation. We must be aware that building a motorcycle requires devotion, focus, creativity, and intellectual and emotional commitment.¹⁹² What should the mechanic be like? According to Crawford, he, first and foremost, has to be knowledgeable about motorcycle issues, committed, and attentive, with a considerable sense of responsibility and respect for the rules of engineering.¹⁹³ A mechanic who, while observing the effects of work, can introduce or suggest some innovation. Thus, he can become creative.¹⁹⁴ Pirsig's warning is very much needed:

Not everyone understands what a completely rational process this is, this maintenance of a motorcycle. They think it's some kind of a "knack" or some kind of "affinity for machines" in operation. They are right, but the knack is almost purely a process of reason, and most of the troubles are caused by what old time radio men called a "short between the earphones," failures to use the head properly. A motorcycle functions entirely in accordance with the laws of reason, and a study of the art of motorcycle maintenance is really a miniature study of the art of rationality itself. [...] Talk about rationality can get very confusing unless the things with which rationality deals are also included. We are at the classic-romantic barrier now, where on one side we see a cycle as it appears immediately-and this is an important way of seeing it-and where on the other side we can begin to see it as a mechanic does in terms of underlying form... and this is an important way of seeing things too. These tools for example – this wrench – has a certain romantic beauty to it, but its purpose is always purely classical. It's designed to change the underlying form of the machine.¹⁹⁵

Thirdly, what will be necessary for our endeavour is a classical motorcycle, best if manufactured in the first decade of the second half of the twentieth century, when Western European countries struggled against the youth contestation, terrorist, freedom, and left-wing movements, as well as gangs in all their forms and shades. We will need a motorcycle accessible to the working classes (labourers and middle class) because this is where most of the activists and members of the anarchist movement came from. This cannot be a motorcycle for the chosen few, for then it would never be within the reach of the young rebels from working-class neighbourhoods. In the vast majority, anarchists represented the most impoverished strata of society, possessing

¹⁹¹ Horseshoe – a sharp curve with a large angle of attack. See <http://www.scigacz.pl/Patelnia,181,lw.html> (accessed August 19, 2016).

¹⁹² See M.L. Cappuccio, op. cit., p. 144 ff.

¹⁹³ Crawford touches upon the subject of choosing one's professional path, the process of development, work and responsibility for work using as his example workshop work. See M.B. Crawford, op. cit., pp. 66–108.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Ibid., p. 112 ff and p. 148 ff.

¹⁹⁵ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, pp. 92–93.

nothing or very little, hence their striving for the betterment of their own lot as well as that of all other people. In particular, their concern was for the most impoverished labour stratum toiling for starvation wages, for whom access to any goods was not merely theoretical but in fact utterly impossible. For this reason it is rather unlikely that anarchists would have shown interest in some luxurious goods affordable only to a few chosen representatives of the society. It is rather that they would have built a one-of-a-kind motorcycle by their own labour, embracing the material and parts available to them. By the same token, it must be a mass-produced motorcycle, as this feature affords anonymity. Moreover, its individualism will only be determined in the “café chop” process, in other words, remaking the motorcycle into Anarchism Café Racer. We can already see that building the new motorcycle will not entail building it from scratch but rather reworking one already in existence. A more in-depth rationale for this approach will be given in subsequent chapters.

Fourthly, we will make use of humanistic and technical knowledge as regards designing, building, repairing and operating a motorcycle. With respect to the first area, we will employ the tenets of a political doctrine, which anarchism undoubtedly is. To this end, not only the writings of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin, being the classics of anarchism, will be necessary but also a general knowledge of the doctrine of anarchism will be required, as well as that of anarchists and the activity they pursued.¹⁹⁶ As for technical knowledge, it will not be handbooks and manuals on motorcycle design, building, repair and operation that will prove to be of utmost importance but the mechanic’s knowledge and experience, for these are the two elements that will allow one to avoid traps, shall we say “technical traps,” as Pirsig is absolutely correct in noting:

If the Chautauqua gets into the actual details of fixing one individual machine the chances are overwhelming that it won’t be your make and model and the information will be not only useless but dangerous, since information that fixes one model can sometimes wreck another. For detailed information of an objective sort, a separate shop manual for the specific make and model of machine must be used. In addition, a general shop manual such as Audel’s Automotive Guide fills in the gaps.¹⁹⁷

Fifth, another critical element will be diligence. This will enable us to avoid “gumption traps.” Pirsig warns: “There are hundreds of different kinds of gumption traps, maybe thousands, maybe millions.” He further concedes: “I have no way of knowing how many I don’t know. I know it seems as though I’ve stumbled into every kind of gumption trap imaginable. What keeps me from thinking I’ve hit them all is that with every job I discover more. Motorcycle maintenance gets frustrating. Angering. Infuriating. That’s what makes it interesting.”¹⁹⁸ What type of traps are we likely to

¹⁹⁶ See R. Antonów, *Pod czarnym sztandarem...*, p. 1 ff.

¹⁹⁷ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. Of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 288.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 288–289.

encounter on the road to our materialization of Anarchism Café Racer? Before providing any kind of reply to this question, let's try to assign the traps to certain categories, in line with Pirsig's observations. All the traps that are known and unknown, deadly and those which are merely treacherously arduous Pirsig divides into two categories: "The first type is those in which you're thrown off the Quality track by conditions that arise from external circumstances, and I call these 'setbacks.' The second type is traps in which you're thrown off the Quality track by conditions that are primarily within yourself. These I don't have any generic name for – 'hang-ups' I suppose."

In his view, the first type of traps, that is, the setbacks, we are most likely to face: "the first time you do any major job it seems as though the out-of-sequence-reassembly setback is your biggest worry." When is this situation most likely to occur? Well, let's see:

This occurs usually at a time when you think you're almost done. After days of work you finally have it all together except for: What's this? A connecting-rod bearing liner?! How could you have left that out? Oh Jesus, everything's got to come apart again! You can almost hear the gumption escaping. Psssssssssssss.

There's nothing you can do but go back and take it all apart again – after a rest period of up to a month that allows you to get used to the idea.

There are two techniques I use to prevent the out-of-sequence-reassembly setback. I use them mainly when I'm getting into a complex assembly I don't know anything about.

It should be inserted here parenthetically that there's a school of mechanical thought which says I shouldn't be getting into a complex assembly I don't know anything about. I should have training or leave the job to a specialist. That's a self-serving school of mechanical eliteness I'd like to see wiped out. That was a "specialist" who broke the fins on this machine. I've edited manuals written to train specialists for IBM, and what they know when they're done isn't that great. You're at a disadvantage the first time around and it may cost you a little more because of parts you accidentally damage, and it will almost undoubtedly take a lot more time, but the next time around you're way ahead of the specialist. You, with gumption, have learned the assembly the hard way and you've a whole set of good feelings about it that he's unlikely to have.

Anyway, the first technique for preventing the out-of-sequence-reassembly gumption trap is a notebook in which I write down the order of disassembly and note anything unusual that might give trouble in reassembly later on. This notebook gets plenty grease-smear and ugly. But a number of times one or two words in it that didn't seem important when written down have prevented damage and saved hours of work. The notes should pay special attention to left-hand and right-hand and up-and-down orientations of parts, and colour coding and positions of wires. If incidental parts look worn or damaged or loose this is the time to note it so that you can make all your parts purchases at the same time. The second technique for preventing the out-of-sequence-reassembly gumption trap is newspapers opened out on the floor of the garage on which all the parts are laid left-to-right and top-to-bottom in the order in which you read a page.

That way when you put it back together in reverse order the little screws and washers and pins that can be easily overlooked are brought to your attention as you need them. Even with all these precautions, however, out-of-sequence-reassemblies sometimes occur and when they do you've got to watch the gumption. Watch out for gumption desperation, in which you hurry up wildly in an effort to restore gumption by making up for lost time. That just creates more mistakes. When you first see that you have to go back and take it apart all over again it's definitely time for that long break.

Albeit ultimately deceptive, the second trap is "the reassemblies that were out of sequence because you lacked certain information." This occurs "when the whole reassembly process becomes a cut-and-try technique in which you have to take it apart to make a change and then put it together again to see if the change works." Yet, as Pirsig correctly observes:

If it doesn't work, that isn't a setback because the information gained is a real progress. But if you've made just a plain old dumb mistake in reassembly, some gumption can still be salvaged by the knowledge that the second disassembly and reassembly is likely to go much faster than the first one. You've unconsciously memorized all sorts of things you won't have to relearn.¹⁹⁹

The third problem is "the intermittent failure setback," in that "the thing that is wrong becomes right all of a sudden just as you start to fix it." According to Pirsig, "electrical short circuits are often in this class." Although extremely important, this trap does not seem to be a major threat during the assembly stage of building Anarchism Café Racer. It may, however, occur at any time and be utterly unexpected in that it may happen while taking delight in riding a motorcycle, and a delight this certainly is.

The fourth trap is "parts setback." As we know, the object of our endeavour will be an old motorcycle from the second half of the twentieth century, for which parts are either already unavailable, or worn out or extremely expensive. Who knows what huge setbacks this specific trap may cause and what measures we will have to resort to in order to save our gumption from the cloud of powerlessness.

The fifth trap is a part, which – assuming we will be able to get a hold of it – does not fit. Pirsig is very right when he warns that: "Parts lists always contain mistakes. Make and model changes are confusing. Out-of-tolerance parts runs sometimes get through quality control because there's no operating checkout at the factory." What is to be done in such a situation? We have two paths to take, according to Pirsig: "First, if there's more than one supplier in town by all means choose the one with the most cooperative parts man. Get to know him on a first-name basis. Often he will have been a mechanic once himself and can provide a lot of information you need." Second, when going shopping, "always take the old part with you to prevent getting a wrong part. Take along some machinist's calipers for comparing dimensions." And finally, as

¹⁹⁹ This and the previous quotation, *ibid.*, pp. 290–291.

Pirsig suggests, “you can take up the really fascinating hobby of machining your own parts.” Pirsig, who himself is a great enthusiast of the last solution as regards the issue of wrong parts, writes:

I have a little 6-by-18-inch lathe with a milling attachment and a full complement of welding equipment: arc, heli-arc, gas and mini-gas for this kind of work. With the welding equipment you can build up worn surfaces with better than original metal and then machine it back to tolerance with carbide tools. You can't really believe how versatile that lathe-plus-milling-plus-welding arrangement is until you've used it. If you can't do the job directly you can always make something that will do it. The work of machining a part is very slow, and some parts, such as ball bearings, you're never going to machine, but you'd be amazed at how you can modify parts designs so that you can make them with your equipment, and the work isn't nearly as slow or frustrating as a wait for some smirking parts man to send away to the factory. And the work is gumption building, not gumption destroying. To run a cycle with parts in it you've made yourself gives you a special feeling you can't possibly get from strictly store-bought parts.

I believe that while building Anarchism Café Racer we will have the opportunity to experience this particular kind of satisfaction many a time.

In moving on towards the second category of traps, that is, the internal ones, one should mention three types, which are as follows: “those that ‘block affective understanding’ called ‘value traps’; those that block cognitive understanding called ‘truth traps;” and finally “those that block psychomotor behaviour, called ‘muscle traps.’” Pirsig makes it clear immediately: “The value traps are by far the largest and the most dangerous group.” He continues: “Of the value traps, the most widespread and pernicious is value rigidity. This is an inability to revalue what one sees because of commitment to previous values. In motorcycle maintenance, you must rediscover what you do as you go. Rigid values make this impossible.”

A different situation will occur

If you get caught in this gumption trap of value rigidity, is slow down... you're going to have to slow down anyway whether you want to or not... but slow down deliberately and go over ground that you've been over before to see if the things you thought were important were really important and to – well – just stare at the machine. There's nothing wrong with that. Just live with it for a while. Watch it the way you watch a line when fishing and before long, as sure as you live, you'll get a little nibble, a little fact asking in a timid, humble way if you're interested in it. That's the way the world keeps on happening. Be interested in it.

In both cases, none of the schemes which you have worked out a long time ago will do. The only thing left is a creative improvisation, and sometimes you have to allow things to take their own free course. You need to think and act as if you had never done it before; you need to discover, experiment and wait patiently for a breakthrough. If

then you have managed to overcome the technical hurdles, “you’re no longer strictly a motorcycle mechanic, you’re also a motorcycle scientist.”

The subsequent traps responsible for blocking cognitive understanding come up in the form of an “internal gumption trap of ego,” “anxiety” and “boredom.” The first one boils down to the conclusion whose main thesis is the belief that: “If you have a high evaluation of yourself then your ability to recognize new facts is weakened. Your ego isolates you from the Quality reality. When the facts show that you’ve just goofed, you’re not as likely to admit it. When false information makes you look good, you’re likely to believe it.” The second one “is sort of the opposite of ego. You’re so sure you’ll do everything wrong you’re afraid to do anything at all. Often this, rather than ‘laziness,’ is the real reason you find it hard to get started.” The last trap, boredom, is “the opposite of anxiety and commonly goes with ego problems. Boredom means you’re off the Quality track, you’re not seeing things freshly, you’ve lost your ‘beginner’s mind’ and your motorcycle is in great danger. Boredom means your gumption supply is low and must be replenished before anything else is done.”²⁰⁰ What are the way and methods of handling such traps? Pirsig comes up with a few suggestions in this respect. First, he recommends modesty; second, a self-analysis of what it is that eats you. Here of help might be “to work out your anxiety on paper. Read every book and magazine you can on the subject.” The better we know ourselves, the more we are able to harness anxiety that is tormenting us. Third, Pirsig recommends taking a break: “When you’re bored, stop! Go to a show. Turn on the TV. Call it a day. Do anything but work on that machine. If you don’t stop, the next thing that happens is the Big Mistake, and then all the boredom plus the Big Mistake combine together in one Sunday punch to knock all the gumption out of you and you are really stopped.”²⁰¹

Finally, the last of the traps in this group – “impatience.” It stems from “an underestimation of the amount of time the job will take.” Impatience is “the first reaction against a setback and can soon turn to anger if you’re not careful.” It can be curbed by one method: “Allowing an indefinite time for the job, particularly new jobs that require unfamiliar techniques; by doubling the allotted time when circumstances force time planning and by scaling down the scope of what you want to do.”²⁰²

The next type of traps are “truth and muscle traps.” The first ones pertain to data that have been sorted out and as if compartmentalized. A delusive belief that everything has been identified, and the only thing left to do is to ask this and that question and this and that answer will come. Such an approach is the first step to sinking into this trap ever more deeply. With Pirsig explicating it very extensively, let us cite his line of argumentation:

Truth traps are concerned with data that are apprehended and are within the box-cars of the train. For the most part these data are properly handled by conventional

²⁰⁰ This and the previous quotation, *ibid.*, pp. 295–300.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 301.

dualistic logic and the scientific method talked about earlier, back just after Miles City. But there's one trap that isn't... the truth trap of yes-no logic. Yes and no – this or that – one or zero. On the basis of this elementary two-term discrimination, all human knowledge is built up. The demonstration of this is the computer memory which stores all its knowledge in the form of binary information. It contains ones and zeros, that's all.

Because we're unaccustomed to it, we don't usually see that there's a third possible logical term equal to yes and no which is capable of expanding our understanding in an unrecognized direction. We don't even have a term for it, so I'll have to use the Japanese *mu*.

Mu means "no thing." Like "Quality" it points outside the process of dualistic discrimination. *Mu* simply says, "No class; not one, not zero, not yes, not no." It states that the context of the question is such that a yes or no answer is in error and should not be given. "Unask the question" is what it says.

Mu becomes appropriate when the context of the question becomes too small for the truth of the answer. When the Zen monk Joshu was asked whether a dog had a Buddha nature he said "*Mu*," meaning that if he answered either way he was answering incorrectly. The Buddha nature cannot be captured by yes or no questions.

That *mu* exists in the natural world investigated by science is evident. It's just that, as usual, we're trained not to see it by our heritage. For example, it's stated over and over again that computer circuits exhibit only two states, a voltage for "one" and a voltage for "zero." That's silly!

Any computer-electronics technician knows otherwise. Try to find a voltage representing one or zero when the power is off! The circuits are in a *mu* state. They aren't at one, they aren't at zero, they're in an indeterminate state that has no meaning in terms of ones or zeros. Readings of the voltmeter will show, in many cases, "floating ground" characteristics, in which the technician isn't reading characteristics of the computer circuits at all but characteristics of the voltmeter itself. What's happened is that the power-off condition is part of a context larger than the context in which the one zero states are considered universal. The question of one or zero has been "unasked." And there are plenty of other computer conditions besides a power-off condition in which *mu* answers are found because of larger contexts than the one-zero universality.

The dualistic mind tends to think of *mu* occurrences in nature as a kind of contextual cheating, or irrelevance, but *mu* is found throughout all scientific investigation, and nature doesn't cheat, and nature's answers are never irrelevant. It's a great mistake, a kind of dishonesty, to sweep nature's *mu* answers under the carpet. Recognition and valuation of these answers would do a lot to bring logical theory closer to experimental practice. Every laboratory scientist knows that very often his experimental results provide *mu* answers to the yes-no questions the experiments were designed for. In these cases he considers the experiment poorly designed, chides himself for stupidity and at best considers the "wasted" experiment which has provided the *mu* answer to be a kind of wheel-spinning which might help prevent mistakes in the design of future yes-no experiments. This low evaluation of the experiment which provided

the mu answer isn't justified. The mu answer is an important one. It's told the scientist that the context of his question is too small for nature's answer and that he must enlarge the context of the question. That is a very important answer! His understanding of nature is tremendously improved by it, which was the purpose of the experiment in the first place. A very strong case can be made for the statement that science grows by its mu answers more than by its yes or no answer. Yes or no confirms or denies a hypothesis. Mu says the answer is beyond the hypothesis. Mu is the "phenomenon" that inspires scientific enquiry in the first place! There's nothing mysterious or esoteric about it. It's just that our culture has warped us to make a low value judgment of it.

In motorcycle maintenance the mu answer given by the machine to many of the diagnostic questions put to it is a major cause of gumption loss. It shouldn't be! When your answer to a test is indeterminate it means one of two things: that your test procedures aren't doing what you think they are or that your understanding of the context of the question needs to be enlarged. Check your tests and restudy the question. Don't throw away those mu answers! They're every bit as vital as the yes or no answers. They're more vital. They're the ones you grow on!²⁰³

In writing about "truth and gumption traps," Pirsig also draws attention to "psycho-motor traps," among which "by far the most frustrating gumption trap is inadequate tools" and "bad surroundings". By the latter Pirsig means mainly the lack of adequate lighting: "It's amazing the number of mistakes a little light can prevent."²⁰⁴ Apart from that, there should be an adequate temperature in the place where we commit to work. If it is too cold, we tend to do things quickly, and then "probably make mistakes." If it is too hot we tend to become impatient and "your anger threshold gets much lower." Also, of no little significance is the position in which we embark on our work. Here Pirsig cautions: "Avoid out-of-position work when possible. A small stool on either side of the cycle will increase your patience greatly and you'll be much less likely to damage the assemblies you're working on."²⁰⁵

Also, "muscular insensitivity" is an element "which accounts for some real damage." Pirsig once again expounds extensively on this aspect:

It results in part from lack of kinesthesia, a failure to realize that although the externals of a cycle are rugged, inside the engine are delicate precision parts which can be easily damaged by muscular insensitivity. There's what's called "mechanic's feel," which is very obvious to those who know what it is, but hard to describe to those who don't; and when you see someone working on a machine who doesn't have it, you tend to suffer with the machine.

The mechanic's feel comes from a deep inner kinesthetic feeling for the elasticity of materials. Some materials, like ceramics, have very little, so that when you thread a porcelain fitting you're very careful not to apply great pressures. Other materials,

²⁰³ Ibid., pp. 303–305.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 306.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 307.

like steel, have tremendous elasticity, more than rubber, but in a range in which, unless you're working with large mechanical forces, the elasticity isn't apparent.

With nuts and bolts you're in the range of large mechanical forces and you should understand that within these ranges metals are elastic. When you take up a nut there's a point called "finger-tight" where there's contact but no takeup of elasticity. Then there's "snug," in which the easy surface elasticity is taken up. Then there's a range called "tight," in which all the elasticity is taken up. The force required to reach these three points is different for each size of nut and bolt, and different for lubricated bolts and for locknuts. The forces are different for steel and cast iron and brass and aluminium and plastics and ceramics. But a person with mechanic's feel knows when something's tight and stops. A person without it goes right on past and strips the threads or breaks the assembly. A "mechanic's feel" implies not only an understanding for the elasticity of metal but for its softness. The insides of a motorcycle contain surfaces that are precise in some cases to as little as one ten-thousandth of an inch. If you drop them or get dirt on them or scratch them or bang them with a hammer they'll lose that precision. It's important to understand that the metal behind the surfaces can normally take great shock and stress but that the surfaces themselves cannot. When handling precision parts that are stuck or difficult to manipulate, a person with mechanic's feel will avoid damaging the surfaces and work with his tools on the nonprecision surfaces of the same part whenever possible. If he must work on the surfaces themselves, he'll always use softer surfaces to work them with. Brass hammers, plastic hammers, wood hammers, rubber hammers and lead hammers are all available for this work. Use them. Vise jaws can be fitted with plastic and copper and lead faces. Use these too. Handle precision parts gently. You'll never be sorry. If you have a tendency to bang things around, take more time and try to develop a little more respect for the accomplishment that a precision part represents.²⁰⁶

Writing about gumption traps, one ought to draw attention to yet one more pitfall; however, this one refers solely to the motorcycle emerging, collaterally to the real one, on the pages of this book. This trap has just caught up with the author. You might be wondering what type of a trap this could entail, considering that a book is written and not assembled from parts. With words at hand, what kind of threats may actually be looming over our endeavour. Rightly asked, and yet, an emerging book, just like us, is also dependent on a variety of external factors. In the case of a book, what may pose a threat is the computer (which here plays the role of a typewriter) or, to be more precise, its fickle mode of operating. Trust me I know what I am saying; just while describing the fifth trap from the first category of dangers, my so far reliable and fairly decent computer crashed for no reason at all. As a result, a rather large portion of the text, which had not been covered by the autosave feature, was lost irrevocably. As Pirsig recommends, when something like this happens, it is time either to take a nap or have some coffee. At this point, however, I have to admit that although this was surely a gumption trap of the frustrating sort, after further reflection upon this matter, I have

²⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 307–308.

to say that this setback could still yield something positive. First, in “writing anew” the lost excerpt we can always do it better or differently; second, for a relatively small payment – merely the loss of an excerpt – I received a warning: make a copy, otherwise you might lose the entire text?... Finally, the computer crashed exactly on the day that was devoted wholly to pondering the dangers which may affect, stifle or render the realization of this project impossible. Had the computer given no signal – “I, too, can be dangerous,” in line with the rule: I crash, therefore I am – this excerpt would certainly not have made its home on the pages of this book. We need to bear in mind that there are millions of traps which multiply and clone with every passing day. The only weapon against them is our mind, respect for the world outside, responsibility and working together in partnership with other people.

Finally, to finish the section on gumption traps, we should ask ourselves: if we avoid them diligently, will we still be safe? Will the project *Anarchism Café Racer* be accomplished with no problems at all? In this respect, Pirsig shatters our hopes:

The answer, of course, is no, you still haven’t got anything licked. You’ve got to live right too. It’s the way you live that predisposes you to avoid the traps and see the right facts. You want to know how to paint a perfect painting? It’s easy. Make yourself perfect and then just paint naturally. That’s the way all the experts do it. The making of a painting or the fixing of a motorcycle isn’t separate from the rest of your existence. If you’re a sloppy thinker the six days of the week you aren’t working on your machine, what trap avoidances, what gimmicks, can make you all of a sudden sharp on the seventh? It all goes together.

Writing about gumption traps in the context of motorcycle maintenance, and in our case in the context of designing and building *Anarchism Café Racer*, Pirsig is right in paying attention to the general conscientiousness in our lives which is directly reflected in the quality of work performed on a motorcycle. His caution is quite legitimate:

But if you’re a sloppy thinker six days a week and you really try to be sharp on the seventh, then maybe the next six days aren’t going to be quite as sloppy as the preceding six. What I’m trying to come up with on these gumption traps I guess, is shortcuts to living right. The real cycle you’re working on is a cycle called yourself. The machine that appears to be “out there” and the person that appears to be “in here” are not two separate things. They grow toward Quality or fall away from Quality together.²⁰⁷

The sequence adopted for completion of the five crucial components of *Anarchism Café Racer* was by no means accidental. Indeed, gumption is of utmost importance. It can stand against all challenges; it allows the seed of bold ideas to germinate in your mind and it will support their realization faithfully. Yet gumption itself will not

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 308.

suffice. If we do not have the necessary knowledge, we must look for professional help among other people. That is how the first germ of mutual aid is conceived. Only then can we face any obstacles effectively and strive to turn our project into reality. At this point I must assert that despite the numerous dangers demonstrated on these pages, I am extremely calm. The reason behind this state of mind is the fact that I have been working with one and the same mechanic for many years and his thoroughness and professionalism have never failed me. Genson, for that is his name, has a small motorcycle shop which looks inconspicuous from the outside and yet it sits on solid foundations of professionalism. The way Genson approaches every job is reminiscent of how Guy Martin, a British motorcyclist, Isle of Man TT Race competitor, a mechanic and a TV presenter, describes the way his father, also a motorcyclist, performed his work. Martin recalls:

When I was a nipper, even before I was old enough to start school, I would sit on the end of the work-bench in the chicken shed and watch my dad work on his race bike engines. He'd normally work in overalls, but if there was anything particularly technical to tackle, like cam timing, he would put on what I'd call a smock – it was like a long blue storeman's jacket, made of fabric. The wearing of the smock didn't alter the way Dad worked, but it was a ritual. Dressing this way signified he meant business. He could've worn his overalls, the same way a judge could deliver a verdict in a vest and jogging bottoms, but it wouldn't be the same. Whenever he wore it I'd think, 'Oh, we're in business tonight.'²⁰⁸

I believe that this next collaboration of ours, being simply one of plenty, will give me peace of mind which is a must from the point of view of the future user of a custom bike. As Pirsig foresees:

Peace of mind isn't at all superficial, really [...] It's the whole thing. That which produces it is good maintenance; that which disturbs it is poor maintenance. What we call workability of the machine is just an objectification of this peace of mind. The ultimate test's always your own serenity. If you don't have this when you start and maintain it while you're working you're likely to build your personal problems right into the machine itself. [...] It's an unconventional concept [...] but conventional reason bears it out.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ G. Martin, *My Biography* [Polish edition], Kraków, 2016, p. 36.

²⁰⁹ R.M Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle...*, pp. 155–156.

Why Transformation and not Creation?

For two reasons. The first one is the timeframe and place of birth of anarchism and the then contemporary political and social situation in individual countries and, more globally, in the world. The second one – eponymous identification of Anarchism Café Racer with the café racer trend and subculture.

With its emergence as a doctrine opposed to the absolute monarchies of the nineteenth century in particular and the state in general, as well as its reformist efforts in seeking to educate society for an existence in a country based on a stateless system, and considering that its development took place in the 1840's, anarchism, we could argue, had no other choice but to seek to rebuild what its originators had found, and that was to educate people to live in free societies while at the same time dismantling the institution of the state. We should not forget that anarchism (at that time in the first stages of its development) had just entered the lists against the state whose experience with reformists of every form and shape had been centuries-long. When Aristotle and Plato were deliberating about the state and its systems, nobody thought about anarchism as an offer devised by a political opposition against the state. What is more, an effective formula against just such visionaries would be concocted in the future by Machiavelli in *The Prince*. It was this perception which eventually determined the decision by this book's author to build a completely new motorcycle not from scratch, but to remake one already in existence. In doing so we will provide a symbolic reference to the reality in which the theorists of anarchism found themselves. Just like the anarchists who, while embarking on the creation of their doctrine, functioned within the framework of the state with all the implications thus involved, so will we build on a motorcycle that already exists. Our case is also similar to that of anarchists considering that the idea of building Anarchism Café Racer was conceived many years after the motorcycle – the object of our doctrinal experiment – had been produced and put into service.

Equally clearly, the second reason supports the idea to use an existing motorcycle, and on top of that one that is mass-produced. The essential feature of the café racer trend was modification, and that implies rebuilding mass-produced motorcycles or building one's own fully customized bike, drawing on the best solutions incorporated

in a few selected models offered by various producers. One might say that the way the motorbike was transmuted into a café racer was truly magical.

Moreover, this is a chapter, where we finally have to answer the question why the choice to select a motorcycle only from old – some might say – technologically outdated motorcycles. Café racer trend does not constrain itself exclusively to old motorcycles; what is more, its enthusiasts mainly have modified new machines. The reason behind this is that this is a symbolical endeavour. Why, firstly, like the prominent authors of the doctrine of anarchism, old motorcycles do not befit the times during which they happen to operate. Secondly, these motorcycles are “poor” when set beside the latest technological, aesthetic and visual solutions. This is parallel to the anarchists who continually attempted to inspire societies that had been petrified in statism for centuries to embrace a new life devoid of the state. In some measure, they sought to have the old solutions, such as society, embedded in a new form with no authority and restrictions. And finally, we will give an old and worn out machine a chance of tasting new possibilities. This situation is somewhat redolent of that typifying the most impoverished strata in the nineteenth century. Those whom anarchists mainly addressed were largely uneducated, unaware of their rights, unbecoming for the dynamic reality of capitalist society. One may venture to say: socially impeded, in fact deprived of legal constructions such as the right to vote, to organize, to establish trade union associations, the freedom of speech and that of the press. Only when accompanied by rights and knowledge, and encouraged to activism could the workers’ awareness allow for progress, growth and new possibilities, and that is an informed pursuit of better existence.

Is It feasible? How to Do It?

The answer to these questions can be encapsulated in one word: coordination. One needs to combine two worlds. The first world is one of political doctrines classified as humanistic sciences, whose place for contemplation, apart from universities, is to be found in a library. The second world is a world of machines, devices and specialists in motorcycle mechanics, and whose primary and fundamental place for contemplation, beside universities, is a motorcycle workshop. How can these two places, these two areas be combined? This might appear difficult but only apparently. Knowledge, competences and skills – to apply terms that are very fashionable in modern academic teaching – underlie both of these worlds. Humanistic knowledge underlies the first world, while technical knowledge underlies the second. The former realm stems from the sciences studied at universities, whereas the latter branches out from the sciences developed at technical universities. The first one occupies a place of time-consuming explorations, analyses, thoughts, reflections and an arduous analysis, being a sort of temple of scholarly musings. The second is a place of action, machining, rolling, welding, cutting, grinding, sanding, wrenching, testing. These two seemingly distant worlds have, however, much in common. The first world concentrated in a library, written in large letters, is actually a “Universe,” which, as Jorge Luis Borges emphasizes,

is composed of an indefinite, perhaps infinite number of hexagonal galleries. In the centre of each gallery is a ventilation shaft, bounded by a low railing. From any hexagon one can see the floors above and below – one after another, endlessly. The arrangement of the galleries is always the same: Twenty bookshelves, five to each side, line four of the hexagon’s six sides; the height of the bookshelves, floor to ceiling, is hardly greater than the height of a normal librarian. One of the hexagon’s free sides opens onto a narrow sort of vestibule, which in turn opens onto another gallery, identical to the first – identical in fact to all. To the left and right of the vestibule are two tiny compartments. One is for sleeping, upright; the other, for satisfying one’s physical necessities. Through this space, too, there passes a spiral staircase, which winds upward and downward into the remotest distance. In the vestibule there is a mirror, which faithfully duplicates appearances. [...] Each wall of each hexagon is furnished

with five bookshelves; each bookshelf holds thirty-two books identical in format; each book contains four hundred ten pages; each page, forty lines; each line, approximately eighty black letters. There are also letters on the front cover of each book; those letters neither indicate nor prefigure what the pages inside will say. I am aware that that lack of correspondence once struck men as mysterious. [...] Infidels claim that the rule in the Library is not “sense,” but “non-sense,” and that “rationality” (even humble, pure coherence) is an almost miraculous exception. They speak, I know, of “the feverish Library, whose random volumes constantly threaten to transmogrify into others, so that they affirm all things, and confound and confuse all things, like some mad and hallucinating deity.” Those words, which not only proclaim disorder but exemplify it as well, prove, as all can see, the infidels’ deplorable taste and desperate ignorance. For while the Library contains all verbal structures, all the variations allowed by the twenty-five orthographic symbols, it includes not a single absolute piece of nonsense. [...] To speak is to commit tautologies. This pointless, verbose epistle already exists on one of the thirty volumes of the five bookshelves in one of the countless hexagons – as does its refutation.”²¹⁰

The second world – the motorcycle workshop – is a building that seems austere. For safety reasons, its walls are covered only with plaster, which is traversed by an endless maze of wires harnessed and sorted via numerous switches, switchers, meters, splitters, and sockets. All furnishing is made from metal. Clinging to the walls are heavy metal racks filled with motorcycle parts waiting for their time to come, and work benches armoured with stationary vices. Among those, either free standing or mounted to the walls, looking not unlike ornaments, are welders, TIG welders, semi-automatic welders, gas cylinders and oxygen cylinders, press, drills, grinders, tool trolleys, compressors, cranes, bending machines, cutting-off machines, service trolleys, vacuum gauge, storage containers, chargers and the like. In the middle of the room sits a motorcycle lift, a sarcophagus redolent of a metal table on which, as if on the highest podium, our “objective” – to employ the term used by the intelligence agencies²¹¹ – will stand, that is Anarchism Café Racer. An inherent component accompanying the lift is a roller stool, unadorned and no stranger to the taste of lubricants and petrol, a place for the mechanic’s rest and reflection. Over the lift, a heavy fluorescent lamp usually hangs supine, recollecting the turbulent twentieth century and shedding a bright light on the interior of this industrial space. In a motorcycle shop, a sort of a creative disorder tends to prevail, with tables and the lift covered with dozens of tools of countless shapes and forms, wrenches (box wrench, socket wrench, angle wrench, click wheels, torque wrench, impact wrench, flat wrench, hexagonal socket wrench) ratchet drills, caps, hammers, measures, screwdrivers, spikes, tongs, pliers, calipers, files, drifts, spoons, feeler gauge. The concrete floor is strewn with

²¹⁰ J.L. Borges, *Biblioteka Babel*, Warszawa 1972, after U. Eco, *O Bibliotece*, Warszawa, 2007, pp. 5–8.

²¹¹ See J. Larecki, *Słownik szpiega angielsko-polski – słownik terminologii służb specjalnych*, Warszawa 2006, p. 101.

components of future custom bikes. Besides this room and the room allowing for “satisfying one’s physical necessities” (to employ Borges’s definition), it is very likely that there is one more where the light tends to be more dim, with the room itself being as if cut off from the entire process which involves all the machines and equipment gathered in the main shop. In this room we come across machines which evoke a certain terminological parallel in the mind of a historian of political doctrines: a guillotine, a chain crimping tool and a lathe.

One cannot help but associate the first term with the French Revolution and the time of the rule of the Jacobins, when eighteenth-century France was governed by terror with the guillotine being its attribute; a deadly machine used for beheading – guillotining convicted political opponents. The second term is evocative of a nineteenth-century rigorous imprisonment sentence which consisted in putting prisoners in irons, as was the case for the majority of anarchists, including Mikhail Bakunin himself. Serving imprisonment for many years or for life, anarchists were in shackles welded to chains, which in turn were clamped to the walls of their prison cells. And finally the last device: a lathe, which evokes the Brazilian Revolution, as one certainly associates it involuntarily with our contemporary times on account of the content of one of the chapters of Carlos Marighella’s *Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerilla* from 1969. In the book we can read that: “Experience in metallurgy and on the mechanical lathe are basic skills the urban guerrilla should incorporate into his manufacturing plans for the construction of homemade weapons. This production and courses in explosives and sabotage must be organized.”²¹²

Finally, it is worth noting that the contemporary library, just like the motorcycle workshop, is also equipped in various technological novelties, such as scanners, Xerox machines, computers, lifts. In this respect, Umberto Eco harbours no illusions: “I am convinced that the library will be increasingly on a human scale, and as such it must also be on a machine scale, from a Xerox machine to the reader, and this will have the effect that the responsibilities on the part of schools and public institutions, etc. will also grow when it comes to teaching youth and adults how to use a library.”²¹³

Moreover, specialist literature, catalogues with parts and tools, parameter lists, technical books, manuals of many pages have found their way to contemporary motorcycle workshops, as if they were libraries. It is no longer possible to work without the ubiquitous computer and the Internet.

Libraries, just like motorcycle workshops, can vary. There are good as well as bad ones. Umberto Eco describes, in a nineteenth-bullet-point, a model of a library which is bad, reader-unfriendly, such a “totally ghastly nightmare” for the reader²¹⁴, and which under no circumstances does correspond and could ever correspond to the Kropotkinian vision of the library: “When you go into a public library – not indeed

²¹² C. Marighella, *Minipodręcznik partyzanta miejskiego*, at: https://www.google.pl/?gws_rd=ssl#q=mini-podr%C4%99cznik+partyzanta+miejskiego (Accessed March 13, 2016).

²¹³ U. Eco, op. cit., p. 41.

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 15 ff.

the National Library of Paris, but, say, into the British Museum or the Berlin Library – the librarian does not ask what services you have rendered to society before giving you the book, or the fifty books which you require, and he comes to your assistance if you do not know how to manage the catalogue.”²¹⁵ We also know that in an age of the universal Internet bikers often have to face a considerable problem, which is a lack of good motorcycle workshops. In the shadow of the quests for a good workshop also lurks the question as to the mechanic’s competences, timeliness and reliability. Pirsig paints an extremely accurate picture of a bad motorcycle workshop; writing about mediocre mechanics, he maintains: “The shop was a different scene from the ones I remembered. The mechanics, who had once all seemed like ancient veterans, now looked like children. A radio was going full blast and they were clowning around and talking and seemed not to notice me.”²¹⁶ The first impression, however, did not discourage Pirsig, whose motorcycle was in dire need of repair, and hence we can follow Pirsig’s account of his collaboration with an incompetent motorcycle workshop. It is not hard to imagine why this cooperation kept on deteriorating. Afterwards, Pirsig wondered: “Why did they butcher it so? These were not people running away from technology, like John and Sylvia. These were the technologists themselves. They sat down to do a job and they performed it like chimpanzees. Nothing personal in it. There was no obvious reason for it.” After the fact, analyzing how the job performed by the incompetent mechanics unfolded and examining the reasons attributable to their faulty work, Pirsig asserts:

And I tried to think back into that shop, that nightmare place, to try to remember anything that could have been the cause. The radio was a clue. You can’t really think hard about what you’re doing and listen to the radio at the same time. Maybe they didn’t see their job as having anything to do with hard thought, just wrench twiddling. If you can twiddle wrenches while listening to the radio that’s more enjoyable.

Their speed was another clue. They were really slopping things around in a hurry and not looking where they slobbered them. More money that way... if you don’t stop to think that it usually takes longer or comes out worse.

But the biggest clue seemed to be their expressions. They were hard to explain. Good-natured, friendly, easygoing... and uninvolved. They were like spectators. You had the feeling they had just wandered in there themselves and somebody had handed them a wrench. There was no identification with the job. No saying, “I am a mechanic.” At 5 P.M. or whenever their eight hours were in, you knew they would cut it off and not have another thought about their work. They were already trying not to have any thoughts about their work on the job. In their own way they were achieving the same thing John and Sylvia were, living with technology without really having anything to do with it. Or rather, they had something to do with it, but their own selves were outside of it, detached, removed. They were involved in it but not in such a way as to care.

²¹⁵ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 24.

²¹⁶ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art. of Motorcycle Maintenance...*, p. 28.

Not only did these mechanics not find that sheared pin, but it was clearly a mechanic who had sheared it in the first place, by assembling the side cover plate improperly. I remembered the previous owner had said a mechanic had told him the plate was hard to get on. That was why. The shop manual had warned about this, but like the others he was probably in too much of a hurry or he didn't care.²¹⁷

In discussing bad motorcycle workshops and the mechanics' faults, Pirsig also highlights the mechanics from the "photographic mind" school. Of them he writes:

Everything lying around everywhere. Wrenches, screwdrivers, old parts, old motorcycles, new parts, new motorcycles, sales literature, inner tubes, all scattered so thickly and clutteredly you can't even see the workbenches under them. I couldn't work in conditions like this but that's just because I'm not a photographic-mind mechanic. Bill can probably turn around and put his hand on any tool in this mess without having to think about where it is. I've seen mechanics like that. Drive you crazy to watch them, but they get the job done just as well and sometimes faster. Move one tool three inches to the left though, and he'll have to spend days looking for it.²¹⁸

We will leave aside further reflections on the subject of bad libraries and motorcycle shops with our focus being now only on their positive or desirable qualities. In both cases two aspects are of import and these are availability and the possibility of searching; in the case of workshops, it is for parts, solutions, ideas, especially those which may prove of value while building Anarchism Café Racer. In a library, the availability of books is what matters. For as Eco stresses: "The library notion is based on a misunderstanding, namely that one goes to the library to find a book of which one does not know the title. It is true that it often happens, but the main function of the library is to discover books that one did not suspect they existed and also to discover that they are for us of the utmost importance."²¹⁹ As in the motorcycle workshop – the parts from the shelves inspire one to search and act. An ideal workshop should be similar to the library "tailored" according to Eco's principles. A library of which Eco writes the following:

I can decide to pass a whole day there [the library] in bliss: I read the papers, take the books down to the bar, then I go to look for some more. I make my discoveries, having gone into work on say British Empiricism; I start to follow commentaries on Aristotle instead. On getting the floor wrong, I find myself in an area, I hadn't thought to enter, on medicine, but then I suddenly find works on Galen and hence complete with philosophical references. In this sense the library becomes an adventure.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 30–31.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

²¹⁹ U. Eco, op. cit., p. 28.

²²⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

Show me a biker who would not enjoy behaving like this in a motorcycle shop. Moreover, Eco notes that the library should be:

[...] on a human scale, and, I would remind you, a human scale also means a light-hearted scale, with the chance of a coffee, even with the chance for two students to sit down on a couch of an afternoon and, if not to indulge in indecent behaviour, at least enjoy the continuation of their flirtation in the library as they take down or replace some books of scientific interest from their shelves. In other words, a library that people feel like going to, one that is gradually transformed into a great edifice devoted to leisure time, like the Museum of Modern Art where you can go to the cinema, take a stroll in the garden, go to look at the statuary or eat a full meal. I know that UNESCO agrees with me: 'A library [...] should be easily accessible, and its gates open to all members of the community, who can make use of it freely, regardless of race, skin colour, nationality, age, gender, faith, language, marital status and level of education.

It is a revolutionary idea. Making a reference to the level of education also suggests a proposition to undertake some educational, advisory and preparatory measures. And just one more thing to mention: "The building housing the library should be located in the centre, where it would be easily accessible, also to the disabled, and with opening hours that are convenient to everyone. The building itself and its furnishing should be aesthetic, comfortable and cosy, with the essential issue being that of readers enjoying access to the library shelves."²²¹

The same applies to motorcycles, and in particular to the café racer or custom bike types. Bikers perceive them as a manifestation of their individuality; they want to participate actively in their building, repair or maintenance. They can talk about their machines for hours on end, discuss their every detail while recalling the experiences from their journeys. They would surely expect from motorcycle workshops the same as Eco desires for the readers and guests of libraries and that is a bar, comfortable sofas, good coffee, strong or less strong alcoholic beverages for those who are building a café racer or custom bike with no intention of setting out on the road; and finally, a place where they could admire magnificent machines until the wee hours in the morning. Also, a place with a huge car park capable of containing hundreds of machines, just like the Ace Café in London. Not to continue this line of thought forever, one can only quote the question asked by Eco at the end of his reflection on the Library: "Can we transform utopia into reality?"²²²

²²¹ Ibid., pp. 48–48.

²²² Ibid., p. 48.

On Using Machines in Building Anarchism Café Racer

Anarchism Café Racer could not have been created without the use of specialist equipment in the form of machines and devices. Most of the components of the café racer required precise intervening and machining using a machine or other special equipment, such as, power tools. From the author's point of view, the actuality of having to use machines was no reason to entertain any doubt. The decision was very clear: we either allow the assistance of machines and tools or we do not build Anarchism Café Racer. It is not the fact that the machines facilitated the work on the motorcycle and relieved the mechanic as well as the author, but the fact that it was only on their account that the precision work, which allowed the café racer to be built, could be performed. Why am I writing about it? Because from the twenty-first-century perspective the presence of machines in a workshop does not raise such extreme emotion as it did in the nineteenth century. At that time machines were both admired and feared. The belief was that progress, which would relieve workers of much of their toil, and productivity growth would follow in the footsteps of the machines. These observations had clearly positive associations. Still, there were many who voiced their doubts, who linked the machine to the then new causes of unemployment and its future increase. The concern was that lightening the toil of men by the machine would ultimately lead to the elimination of man entirely from the manufacturing process and to his labour being supplanted solely by machines; the less pessimistic scenario envisioned man as playing a subservient role to the machine. Thus, one can say that people's rapture over the machine mingled with voices full of anxiousness and concern about the future plight of craftsmen, workers and their families.

Anarchists' thoughts mirrored those doubts perfectly. On the one hand they were appreciative of the power of machines and the relief they would offer to workers in their hardest labour, yet, on the other hand, they were very explicit in drawing attention to the threats relating to their use in the production process.

It was mainly Proudhon who devoted considerable attention to these two issues, as one who both appreciated and warned against the machines.

First, he emphasizes that “the first, the simplest, the most powerful of machines is the workshop.”²²³ Proudhon also provides a definition of the machine. In his clearly philosophical considerations on the subject of machines, the thinker observes:

In society the incessant appearance of machinery is the antithesis, the inverse formula, of the division of labour; it is the protest of the industrial genius against parcellaire and homicidal labour. What is a machine, in fact? A method of reuniting divers particles of labour which division had separated. Every machine may be defined as a summary of several operations, a simplification of powers, a condensation of labour, a reduction of costs. In all these respects machinery is the counterpart of division. Therefore through machinery will come a restoration of the parcellaire labourer, a decrease of toil for the workman, a fall in the price of his product, a movement in the relation of values, progress towards new discoveries, advancement of the general welfare. As the discovery of a new formula gives an new power to the geometer, so the invention of a machine is a abridgment of manual labour which multiplies the power of the producer, from which it may be inferred that the antinomy of the division of labour, if not entirely destroyed, will be balanced and neutralized. No one should fail to read the lectures of M. Chevalier setting forth the innumerable advantage resulting to society from the intervention of machinery; they make a striking picture to which I take pleasure in referring my reader. Machinery, positing itself in political economy in opposition to the division of labour, represents synthesis opposing itself in the human mind to analysis; and just as in the division of labour and in machinery, as we shall soon see, political economy entire is contained, so with analysis and synthesis goes the possession of logic entire, of philosophy. The man who labours proceeds necessarily and by turns by division and the aid of tools; likewise, he who reasons performs necessarily and by turns the operations of synthesis and analysis, nothing more, absolutely nothing. And labour and reason will never get beyond this: Prometheus, like Neptune, attains in three strides the confines of the world.²²⁴

According to Proudhon, the machine is, above all, a reflection of human intelligence: “Labour, then, after having distinguished capacities and arranged their equilibrium by the division of industries, completes the armament of intelligence, if I may venture to say so, by machinery.”²²⁵ He also maintains that “the last word of machinery is to make man rich and happy without the necessity of labour in his part. Since, then, natural agencies must do everything for us, machinery ought to belong to the State, and the goal of Progress is communism.”²²⁶ Second, Proudhon discerns a positive impact of machines on the liberty of men: “With the introduction of machinery into economy, wings are given to LIBERTY. The machine is the symbol of human liberty, the sign

²²³ P.J. Proudhon, *System sprzeczności ekonomicznych...*, p. 365.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 337–339.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

of our domination over nature, the attribute of our power, the expression of our right, the emblem of our personality.”²²⁷

Proudhon’s admiration for machines is accompanied by a shadow of doubt. In his rapture over the machine, he, nevertheless, keeps warning: “From the very fact that machinery diminishes the workman’s toil, it abridges and diminishes labour, the supply of which thus grows greater from day to day and demand less.”²²⁸ He continues:

The ruinous influence of machinery on social economy and the condition of the labourers is exercised in a thousand of ways, all of which are bound together and reciprocally labelled: cessation of labour, reduction of wages, over-production, obstruction of the market, alteration and adulteration of products, failures, displacement of labourers, degeneration of the race, and, finally, diseases and death.²²⁹

Proudhon explains his theses and provides evidence for their support:

Accuse me, if you choose, of ill-will towards the most precious invention of our century, – nothing shall prevent me from saying that the principal result of railways, after the subjection of petty industry, will be the creation of a population of degraded labourers – signalmen, sweepers, loaders, lumpers, draymen, watchmen, porters, weighers, greasers, cleaners, stokers, firemen, etc. Two thousand miles of railway will give France an additional fifty thousand serfs; it is not for such people, certainly, that M. Chevalier asks professional schools.²³⁰

He also observes: “A railroad suppresses all along its line conveyances, stages, harness-makers, saddlers, wheelwrights, inn-keepers.”²³¹ Moreover, he writes:

With machinery and the workshop, divine right – that is, the principle of authority – makes its entrance into political economy. Capital, Mastership, Privilege, Monopoly, Loaning, Credit, Property, etc., – such are, in economic language, the various names of I know not what, but which is otherwise called Power, Authority, Sovereignty, Written Law, Revelation, Religion, God in short, cause and principle of all our miseries and all our crimes, and who, the more we try to define him, the more eludes us. It is, then, impossible that, in the present condition of society, the workshop with its hierarchical organization, and machinery, instead of serving exclusively the interests of the least numerous, the least industrious, and the wealthiest class, should be employed for the benefit of all?²³²

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 342.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 349.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 362.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 370.

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 373–374.

²³² Ibid., pp. 370–371.

According to Proudhon,

The concentration of forces in the workshop and the intervention of capital in production, under the name of machinery, engender at the same time overproduction and destitution; and everybody has witnessed these two scourges, more to be feared than incendiarism and plague, develop in our day on the vastest scale and with devouring intensity. Nevertheless it is impossible for us to retreat: it is necessary to produce always, produce cheaply; otherwise, the existence of society is compromised. The labourer, who, to escape the degradation with which the principle of division threatened him, had created so many marvellous machines, now finds himself either prohibited or subjugated by his own works. Against this alternative what means are proposed?²³³

What is more,

Machines do not go all alone: to keep them in motion it is necessary to organize an immense service around them; so that in the end, man creating himself and amount of work proportional to the number of instruments with which he surrounds himself, the principal consideration in the matter of machinery is much less to divide its products than to see that it is fed, – that is, to continually renew the motive power. Now, this motive power is not air, water, steam, electricity; it is labour, – that is, the market.²³⁴

In summing up his disquisition on the subject of machines, Proudhon claims:

Whatever the pace of mechanical progress; though machines should be invented a hundred times more marvellous than the mule-jenny, the knitting-machine, or the cylinder press; though forces should be discovered a hundred times more powerful than steam, – very far from freeing humanity, securing its leisure, and making the production of everything gratuitous, these things would have no other effect than to multiply labour, induce an increase of population, make the chains of serfdom heavier, render life more and more expensive, and deepen the abyss which separates the class that commands and enjoys from the class that obeys and suffers.²³⁵

Bakunin and Kropotkin show decisively more confidence in machines. In his characteristic abstract style, the former writes:

The time will come when states will exist no more – and all the efforts of the social-revolutionary party in Europe are being bent to their destruction. The time will come when on the ruins of political states there will be created, in complete freedom and organized from below upwards, a voluntary fraternal union of voluntary productive

²³³ Ibid., pp. 371–372.

²³⁴ Ibid., pp. 373–374.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 375.

associations, communes, and provincial federations, embracing without distinction, because they embrace freely, people of every language and nationality. Then all will have equal access to the sea – coastal dwellers directly, and those who live far from the sea via railroads free of all state supervisors, taxes, tariffs, restrictions, regulations, prohibitions, permissions, and applications. Even then, however, coastal inhabitants will have a number of natural advantages, not only of a material nature but intellectual and moral, too. Direct contact with the world market and with the progress of world life in general is developing to an extraordinary degree, and however much relations may be equalized, inhabitants of the interior, deprived of those advantages, will live and develop at a slower and lazier pace than those on the coasts. That is why aviation will be so important. The atmosphere is a boundless ocean, its shores are everywhere, so that all individuals, even those living in the most out-of-the-way places, are without exception coastal dwellers. Until aviation replaces seafaring, however, coastal inhabitants will be advanced in every respect and will constitute a kind of aristocracy of the human race.²³⁶

Kropotkin, on the other hand, was predominantly fascinated with railway infrastructure:

We know that Europe has a system of railways, 175,000 miles long, and that on this network you can nowadays travel from north to south, from east to west, from Madrid to Petersburg, and from Calais to Constantinople, without stoppages, without even changing carriages (when you travel by express). More than that: a parcel thrown into a station will find its addressee anywhere, in Turkey or in Central Asia, without more formality needed for sending it than writing its destination on a bit of paper.²³⁷

In his writings he underscores the toil of man: “You must have spent time in a factory, known the fatigues and the joys of creative work, forged metals by the vivid light of a blast furnace, have felt the life in a machine, to understand the power of man and to express it in a work of art.”²³⁸ He therefore noticed and valued technological development and the spirit of invention.²³⁹ They were to lighten the toil of men. He asserts: “What is certain is that with present machinery they no doubt manage to manufacture an incredible amount of goods,”²⁴⁰ and also predicts: “Steam, electricity, the heat of the sun, and the breath of the wind, will ere long be pressed into service.”²⁴¹ Kropotkin envisioned a future and free world as one in which:

²³⁶ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia. Walka dwóch partii w Międzynarodowym Stowarzyszeniu Robotników*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, edited and annotated by H. Temkinowa, Warszawa 1965, pp. 282–283.

²³⁷ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, s. 105.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

²³⁹ P. Kropotkin, *Etyka. Pochodzenie i rozwój moralności (Ethics: Origin and Development)*, Łódź 1949, p. 10.

²⁴⁰ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 79.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 62.

Then we shall have vast institutes supplied with motor-power and tools of all sorts, immense industrial laboratories open to all inquirers, where men will be able to work out their dreams, after having acquitted themselves of their duty towards society; where they will spend their five or six hours of leisure; where they will make their experiments; where they will find other comrades, experts in other branches of industry, likewise coming to study some difficult problem, and therefore able to help and enlighten each other, the encounter of their ideas and experience causing the longed-for solution to be found.²⁴²

Moreover, he saw the possibilities entailed in the utilization of machines in a household: “Machines of all kinds will be introduced into households, and the distribution of motor-power in private houses will enable people to work them without muscular effort.”²⁴³ In his view, these kinds of machines were to be, in the first place, tools designed to clean shoes, to wash dishes or “machines for brushing [...] hair.”²⁴⁴

With the benefit of hindsight, we may actually conclude that Bakunin’s and Kropotkin’s fascination with mechanical, technical and engineering novelties, and their belief in the social purpose of those developments was entirely legitimate, while Proudhon’s concerns were not wholly justified and too categorical. The advance of technical and technological sciences has contributed, no doubt directly, not only to an immense progress, but equally important to the betterment of human life and alleviation of people’s toil. As Rainer Otte notes, the machine can be conceived of as a tool designed to complement or even to supplant men. Not only has the machine expanded human activity and perception, but above all it performs activities, and, by inference, it converts energy just like human muscles do; nowadays, however, the machines controlled by the human mind have unimaginable power. In this sense, Otte stresses, they help men to the extent that they enable the human mind to interfere with biological phenomena.²⁴⁵

Another issue, however, is the manner in which men utilized all those technical and technological conveniences. When looking at the age of steam and electricity, it is not that difficult to understand Proudhon’s anxiety, as he discerned the discord between the various social strata growing at an alarming rate. He watched the disastrous impoverishment of the working classes as the propertied ones grew richer on no less than a Byzantine scale through their predatory exploitation of workers. In no way can one blame the machine for that. Let us focus on the very machines, for they should be freed of any charges of ill treatment of men, of depriving workers of their jobs and of closing-down craft trades so sought after in the twenty first century.

With a view to describe the role which machines and tools played in the creation of Anarchism Café Racer, let us draw on the conceptual framework and philosophical

²⁴² Ibid., pp. 90–91.

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 100.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 99.

²⁴⁵ R. Otte, op. cit., pp. 9–21.

conclusions of Martin Heidegger, a twentieth-century German philosopher and the author of works on the subject of technology, that is, machines and tools.²⁴⁶ By no means was he a proponent of anarchism, and the reasons for presenting his views in this book lie solely in the philosopher's thorough analysis of machines, their essence, and the function and role they have had in the life of men and society. At this point it must be stressed that were it not for technology, Anarchism Café Racer could not have been created. It is a "man-made means to an end."²⁴⁷ Indeed, this "*instrumentum*" became a means to an end, which was to design and build Anarchism Café Racer. One might thus say that machines and tools assisted the author not in the "discovery," but certainly in the "revealing" of the doctrine of anarchism in steel and aluminium. For the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer, machines and tools, in other words, technology contributed to revealing anarchism on a technological level. Materials such as hard steel and ductile aluminium, also man-made inventions, became the carriers of this idea. One may say that anarchism was "discovered" and "revealed" by a new technological method. By the method designed in the book, the anarchists' views were "unlocked," "transformed," "stored," "distributed" and "switched." In this context, the machines and tools enabled anarchism to be brought to light by means of "an art" made of steel, aluminium, horses and exhausts.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, what needs to be stressed is that this "revealing" would not have been possible if not for our application of technology, here understood as a set of rules and applied science. In the first case this implied the application of "the patterns of means-end relationships"²⁴⁹ involved in technology; and with respect to the latter case, "the systematic application of scientific or other knowledge to practical tasks,"²⁵⁰ as perceived by the economist John Kenneth Galbraith. In both cases anarchism as a doctrine and political activity determined the direction of the work performed on Anarchism Café Racer, the choice of machines, tools and materials. There was only one aim: the employment of the doctrine of anarchism in building the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer.

²⁴⁶ See V. Dusek, op. cit., p. 36 and 40.

²⁴⁷ M. Heidegger, *Budować. Mieszkać. Myśleć. Eseje wybrane*, edited and introduced by K. Michalski, Warszawa 1977, p. 225.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Ibid., pp. 225–255.

²⁴⁹ V. Dusek, op. cit., p. 41.

²⁵⁰ J.K. Galbraith, *The New Industrial State*, New York 1967, after: V. Dusek, ibid, p. 41.

The Year 1979

The first step is the choice of a suitable motorcycle. Seemingly, an easy task. As we know, I am looking for an old, at least 20 years old, mass-manufactured motorcycle, at a moderate price, with the motorcycle being easy to transform, to tweak and to modify. Here I would like to mention the type, models and makes among which the search will be taking place, and after making the final choice – this being an extremely difficult task – it would be quite natural to take pride in oneself on finalizing the purchase. Alas, nothing of the kind, for I realized that in demolishing this motorcycle over the subsequent chapters, dismantling piece by piece its identity, its look, make and finally to impose on it the political line of the doctrine of anarchism I am at risk of facing potential negative ramifications and claims on the part of the manufacturer. I do not know whether the materialization of a utopia will be to his liking or disliking. Eventually, it takes me as many as several weeks, or perhaps only several weeks, of intensive search before I choose and buy the motorcycle. At this point I will disregard my considerations concerning the technical parameters of the machine. Were I to discuss the model, code, the motorcycle category, maximum power, compression ratio, bore, stroke, the number of valves per cylinder, timing drive, cooling system, the number of gears, transmission, the weight of the motorcycle, the tire size, the type of brakes, maximum speed, fuel tank capacity, number of strokes and cylinders in the engine and their system I would virtually be providing the name, model and manufacturer of the motorcycle. What information shall I then provide? In fact, the one which the title of the chapter implies. The year 1979 corresponds to the only piece of information I decided to make public as regards the object of my remaking, and that is the manufacture year of the motorcycle. Albeit this may sound a little as if drawing inspiration from George Orwell's *1984*, that is not so. Why am I being so cautious? Heeding the warning from Naomi Klein's *No Logo*, I am afraid that the act of demolishing a mass-manufactured motorcycle may be interpreted as an attack on the brand not only by the corporation's Board of Directors but also by a huge number of lawyers who are at its service. Nor am I quite certain how a particular company would respond to the news that a motorcycle manufactured in its production halls is now a "rolling anarchism" emitting the fumes of anarchist doctrine. Having said that, I must confess

that I know one manufacturer whom I highly respect personally and who might actually find this idea very much to his liking. Still, judging by the contemporary lines and curves showcased by motorcycles, they are designed to be beautiful; but is anarchism so designed? The idea may indeed be noble, but the method of its realization raised justifiable objections. Moreover, the impression one gets is that the creations of the contemporary automotive industry are expected to be cool, safe and politically correct. Its design should be such as not to disturb the well-established order of consumerism. Has anarchism been like that? I sincerely doubt it.

Why then the year 1979? After all, the history of motorcyclism²⁵¹ is long, dating back to the turn of the twentieth century. As we remember, the first bikers emerged just after the end of the Second World War. War veterans, who were perfectly capable of utilizing the potential of heavy military machines, would organize themselves in clubs and traverse the roads and unbeaten tracks of America. It was at that time that the motorcycle became a synonym for brotherhood, freedom and also defiance. Furthermore, the 1% label was established denoting this infamous one percent of motorcycle enthusiasts who manifested their freedom not infrequently in a hard-hitting manner, and by violating the law,²⁵² to put it mildly. From this time on, motorcycle gangs began to come into existence, with their history becoming the subject of today's scholarly investigation. In 1947, in the wake of the event which took place during the Gipsy Tour motorcycle rally in Hollister, USA the American Motorcyclist Association issued a statement, referring to the riotous behaviour of some bikers during the rally, in which it stated that intemperance, vandalism and violence within the world of bikers pertained only to one percent of the lovers of the two-wheelers. Since then, the label 1% has been incorporated in motorcycle dictionaries as a symbol of freedom, rebel, outlaw, contestation, and even violence, according to the principle that 99% of motorcyclists are law-abiding citizens while the last one percent stood aside from them. This was the one percent that included an individualist, a "bad-ass," a common name for an uncompromising, yet honourable man, who would often balance on the line between law and outlaw. Moreover, the 1950s saw the emergence of young motorcycle enthusiasts in the British Isles who in their vast majority came from working communities; a movement which was coupled with the development of the economy and the automotive industry. Their ambition was speed and their objective to break the speed of a 100 mile per hour while taking part in dangerous street races. This numerous

²⁵¹ This term is commonly used by Jarosław Gibas. See J. Gibas, *Motocyklizm. Droga do mindfulness. Wolność. Radość. Motocykle*, Gliwice 2016, *passim*.

²⁵² On the subject of motorcycle gangs see: *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs USA Overview*, State of California Department of Justice Bureau of Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence, [n.p, n.d.], *passim*; D. Shields, *The "Infamous "One Percenters": A Review of the Criminality, Subculture, and Structure of Modern Biker Gangs,* *Justice Policy Journal*, Volume 9, Nr 1, Spring 2012, pp. 2–30; *Organized Crime in California. 2010 Annual Report to the Legislature*, Kamala D. Harris Attorney General, California Department of Justice Division of Law Enforcement. Bureau of Investigation and Intelligence, pp. 18–24; M. Lauchs, A. Bain, P. Bell, *Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs: A Theoretical Perspective*, London 2015, *passim*.

group of young people clad in leather jackets made up the café racer subculture, with the London Ace Café (still open at the North Circular Road, although not without interruptions) becoming their already iconic meeting place. This enthusiasm continued uninterrupted over subsequent decades, with the 1980s, 1990s and the start of the twenty first century witnessing an unabated development of the automotive industry and the ever growing popularity of motorcycles.

It was not a mere coincidence, however, that the choice fell on the last year of the decade. From the standpoint of the project *Anarchism Café Racer*, 1979 is a symbolic year. On the global political and cultural stage, a number of completely unrelated events occurred, which to some extent exert an impact on the anarchist nature of our *Anarchism Café Racer*. The first thing to note is the outbreak of the war in Afghanistan, which in fact is still ongoing. At first it was the Soviet war which ended in 1989. Next a civil war broke out whose end brought upon the country Taliban dictatorship. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 the USA and its allies began to wage a war in Afghanistan against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime, which supported the terrorist organization. From the point of view of anarchism, it being our main interest, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 carries a symbolic meaning. It is precisely the year in which Osama bin Laden, the future leader of the international terrorist organization Al-Qaeda, arrives. Why is it important from the point of view of anarchism? The reason lies in the fact which John Gray rightly points out in his book *Al-Qaeda and What It Means to Be Modern* from 2003 arguing that “Al Qaeda’s closest precursors are the revolutionary anarchists of late nineteenth-century Europe.”²⁵³ However, as the author emphasizes, “There are differences between Al-Qaeda and European revolutionary anarchism. Late nineteenth-century anarchists targeted public officials, not civilian populations. They used terror sparingly. In contrast, Al-Qaeda aims to inflict mass civilian casualties.” Gray is very right in his assertion that “If Osama bin Laden has a precursor, it is the nineteenth-century Russian terrorist Sergei Nechaev,”²⁵⁴ who, let us recall, collaborated with Bakunin. Moreover, the year 1979 marks the outbreak of the Iranian revolution which ended with the seizure of power by Ayatollah Khomeini, whose politics exerted, after all, a substantial impact on the relations between the West and the Islamic world, and fostered considerably the growth of terrorist activity which drew on leftist ideology, including that of anarchism.

Certain notable cultural events among which was the film adaptation of a Broadway musical *Hair* (1967) were the second reason behind choosing 1979. The year 1979 saw the release of Miloš Forman’s famous musical drama film bearing the same title. As we recall, the film’s storyline is about freedom, love, pacifism, the hippy movement from the second half of the twentieth century and the protest against the Vietnam War waged between 1957 and 1975. Anarchist connotations are easily discernible in this work. And finally, the same year saw the opening of the Kate Sharpley

²⁵³ J. Gray, *Al-Qaeda and What it Means to Be Modern*, [Polish edition] Warszawa 2006, p. 8.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.

Library in London, an anarchist library whose collection encompasses ten thousand publications on anarchism in the British Isles and North America.²⁵⁵

It is therefore plausible to say that 1979 was a symbolic year from the perspective of anarchism in which the link between classical anarchism and its contemporary reflection was bridged. On the one hand, there was the emergence and growth of the seed of global terrorism drawing on the infamous tradition of late nineteenth-century anarchism. On the other hand, the cultural events showcasing that which anarchists from the second half of the twenty century valued: alternative freedom manifesting itself in informal movements, such as the protest against the War in Vietnam and the recording of the identity of anarchist movements.

²⁵⁵ <http://www.rozbrat.org/kultura/bibliotekoznawstwo/2464-biblioteki-anarchistyczne-na-swiecie> (accessed March 8, 2016).

The Joy of Destruction Is Also the Joy of Creation

The motorcycle has been bought. It is time to commence work on the materialization of the idea of Anarchism Café Racer. We have three paths to choose. The first one follows Pierre Joseph Proudhon's views and consists in an evolutionary, slow and less invasive transformation of the bike into a café racer. The second path which corresponds to Peter Kropotkin's views involves a more invasive and decisive, although still somewhat controlled, interference in the structure of the motorcycle with a view to force upon it the café racer character. Finally, the third path, characterized by Mikhail Bakunin's ideas, consists in demolishing the existing construction headfirst and building upon its scrap a completely new motorcycle – a café racer. All three methods need to be considered carefully. The first one is safe. With no dramatic changes, one can transform a motorcycle into a café racer in a way that is almost akin to an evolution. Still, firstly, it will be a long process; secondly it will require considerable outlay of funds, and lastly, the trade-off that will have to be achieved between the existing manufacturing solutions and our vision of the individualized café racer will feature strongly in the motorcycle. Moreover, one has to bear in mind that these will not be spectacular and irrevocable alterations. The basic shape of the motorcycle will actually remain intact. The second method, the Kropotkinian way is clearly more radical than the one just mentioned. It can, however, be harnessed; it is not a method where something might get out of hand. In this method, not unlike in a complex mechanism, everything should be planned beforehand and then carried out in a manner that is determined and unhesitating. This is a well-thought out and meticulously planned revolutionary method. In the process of its implementation, a faulty or archaic technological solution, or a faulty or worn out part will certainly have no chance of surviving. And finally, the third method – Bakunin's way. In this method, undoubtedly the most elemental way, there is time neither for previous planning nor any belief in the legitimacy of this planning. One makes short work with the motorcycle just purchased; its hasty devastation is carried out. Plastic components yield to the force applied by the tools; with clatter, screws are falling prey to angle grinders, fenders are falling off together with parts of the frame

that are still hot after being attacked by a burner. The engine, the wheels, the seat, the lamps are leaving the frame in a hurry. The last act involves settling accounts with the frame. In short, the motorcycle has been wrecked. Only on its ruin will Anarchism Café Racer rise. In adopting this approach, we will be able to use all that has managed to survive the violent attack on the motorcycle. Moreover, the time for planning will not come before the clatter of the electrical tools deployed in the demolition ceases to ring in the ears; when the smell of the cut metal evaporates; when the dust, raised by components falling off the motorcycle, falls back on the concrete floor. The time for thinking and building will follow the time of destruction and rest.

It is time we chose the method. Looking at the history of nineteenth-century anarchism which, no question, was imbued with dynamite shocks, let us choose between the last two methods. Our approach to building Anarchism Café Racer will be revolutionary. We will arm Bakunin's slogan: "The joy of destruction is also the joy of creation" with Kropotkin's evocative assertion: "The bold thought first, and the bold deed will not fail to follow."²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, s. 63.

A Controlled Destruction or a Creative Construction

Destruction

The motorcycle moved on into the phase of dismantling. In order to create Anarchism Café Racer, well-thought out and radical actions are necessary. First, what is indispensable is to dismantle all the assembled elements and accessories. In fact, beside the engine, all other components have to be more or less stripped down with some of them being either disassembled or even destroyed. Some of the components such as the exhaust system, the speedometer and tachometer, commonly called “clocks,” together with the accessories, casings, luggage carriers, fenders, centrestand, seat, handlebars, mirrors, blinkers, tail lamp, plastic casings and fairings have been removed once and for all. Second, the engine must be removed from the frame and stored securely; it will undergo tests before potential remake. Third, the motorcycle frame, which is rather large, has to be reduced in size. Its rear part will be cut off. The passenger foot pegs will be removed as well. Fourth, one has to limit excessive wirings and electronics. This measure will allow for constructing a motorcycle that is less prone to failure. The removal of all the above mentioned components is most certainly evocative of the concepts devised by Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin in which they called for the removal of selected legal and public institutions and for the simplification of the state system.

Construction

The sight of the devastated motorcycle, especially its stripped down frame, cut using an angle grinder with a corundum wheel grinder is not an encouraging sign. Unless properly secured, the parts which are lying everywhere will be subject to an irrevocable destruction or will be simply lost. To bring the motorcycle back to its original state using the dismantled parts, components and units which were cut just a moment ago

is actually no longer possible. The only way to save the project from a complete failure is to stick to the action plan devised earlier. Bakunin's method would have ended in a disaster already at this stage of the project. A total nihilism would have descended. The chance of transforming the motorcycle into Anarchism Café Racer lies now solely in rebuilding the machine according to the plan which has already been thoroughly devised and meticulously prepared. The hope for Anarchism Café Racer lies now only in the Kropotkinian revolutionary planning which evinces propensity towards the Proudhonian reforming or modernizing.

At this stage a few things need to be done. Firstly, by utilizing manual work, we have to build the following elements: the handlebars, the rear section of the motorcycle, the seat, front and rear fenders, a front and rear lamp mount, a registration plate mount, an exhaust pipe and a filter mount. Secondly, Anarchism Café Racer has to be equipped with new mirrors, new tires, new rear and front lamps, a speedometer which bears no manufacturer's logo with a 160km/h scale, which is about a 100 miles per hour. Thirdly, the mutilated frame has to be given new expression and a new character which would ring true for café racer motorcycles. The mounts of the motorcycle's rear suspension will have to be remade. Moreover, the frame will have to be strengthened for the two following reasons: the first one is related to its venerable age which requires intervention and regeneration; the second reason refers to the sports nature of the motorcycle which demands that the frame be more resistant to G-forces. Fourthly, Anarchism Café Racer must be assembled completely in, shall we say, a "raw" state. The engine will have to make its home in the rebuilt frame, for only then can we carry out its proper and final diagnosis, and possibly its regeneration. Fifthly, our café racer will have to undergo technical tests for its stability, handling and safety. This stage will require plenty of corrections, adjustments, additions, and even alterations. Sixthly, Anarchism Café Racer as a ready, albeit still in a "raw" state, motorcycle will be disassembled; however, this time it will be done slowly, evolutionally and clearly in the rhythm of the Proudhonian recommendations. In the penultimate seventh stage, the café racer will be given the colours of anarchism. Some of the motorcycle's components will be transported to a paint shop, others will be subject to polishing treatment. Finally, using the spray-painted and polished components of the "raw" Anarchism Café Racer, the ultimate Anarchism Café Racer will be assembled manually, becoming a naked bike, that is, a motorcycle of a rather sports urban nature; no stranger to the urban hassle and bustle: in other words, the natural environment for anarchism.

From No Logo to New Logo

Slowly and consequently, the bike is being deprived of its brand identification. The tank has been enveloped in murky black and covered with the attributes of Anarchism Café Racer. The engine covers have also lost all signs of belonging to the original brand. In the places where the manufacturer's logo was embossed permanently and deeply, now there is a rectangular aluminium textured sheet, five centimetres long and two centimetres wide, which is joined with the cover by a thick, lazy and yet precise weld stitch using the TIG welding technique. Some components, for instance the clocks, which could clearly suggest the motorcycle's affiliation to a specific make were replaced by clocks manufactured by cottage-industry, by a workshop or were supplanted by unbranded elements. This gave the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer a unique character, with the machine perhaps becoming thus the only one-of-a-kind outsider among café racers or custom bikes. Stirner's Unique²⁵⁷ among the multitude of individualized café racers and custom bikes.

Why did we deprive the motorcycle of its brand identity? For three reasons.

The brand is a product in its own right. Considering the building of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer at the levels of technology, consumerism and advertisement, the conclusion is that we are not building a new brand, similar to those which are characteristic for the contemporary capitalist economy. We therefore do not compete with the brands already present on the market. It is a symbolic endeavour aimed at shedding light on the space in which nineteenth-century anarchist concepts functioned. The originators of this doctrine did not seek to create a competition for the state. Their goal was to defy the centuries-long tendency among people to unite themselves in organized societies within a state, with the thinkers aspiring to create an entirely new social organization where there would be no institution of the state. Thus, the anarchists' goal was to contest and then to destroy the brand which was what the state certainly was at a social and political level. Consequently, at the level of internal and external politics, anarchists pursued a stateless and uncertain future while calling into question the reality of their times. Furthermore, at the turn of the twenty first

²⁵⁷ See M. Stirner, *Jedyny i jego własność*, Warszawa 2012.

century, as Klein observes, “the logo grabbed centre stage” of many companies, especially those operating internationally, while products themselves have been turned into “empty carriers for the brands they represent.”²⁵⁸ Thus, bearing this reason in mind we will not compete against any brand nor will we refer to any brand directly while building the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. Brands are largely boycotted by contemporary anarchists, anyway.

Secondly, the reason is to eschew – let me refer once more to Klein’s words from the chapter “Brand Bombing. Franchises in the Age of the Super-brand” – “this assault on choice” of the reader. Everyone following subsequent pages of this book in his mind, or perhaps in reality, will choose components and elements as he sees fit, without being led by the author’s choice.

Finally and thirdly, wishing to build a motorcycle on the foundation of the units of brand motorcycles we may risk facing negative implications, according to the rule: “If you are not on the team of a company large enough to control significant part of the playing field, and can’t afford your very own team of lawyers, you don’t get to play.”²⁵⁹ Who knows whether or not the anarchism emanating from Anarchism Café Racer would be politically correct and acceptable for the corporations that own the facilities manufacturing motorcycles which can later be used with the intention of rebuilding them. For what can be gleaned from the documents gathered by Klein is “a picture of corporate space as a fascist state where we all salute the logo and have little opportunity for criticism because our newspapers, television stations, Internet servers, street and retail spaces are all controlled by multinational corporate interests.”²⁶⁰

Anarchism Café Racer can compete with mass-produced motorcycles only at a level of social perception. As Klein observes, the brands are “as experience, as lifestyle.”²⁶¹ On the level thus constructed, the brand of Anarchism Café Racer is the doctrine of anarchism, and therefore, it is a doctrine that dictates a unique lifestyle and real freedom, not only from authorities and the state, but, above all, from corporations. Employing the language of advertisement and commerce: the doctrine of anarchism branded the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. Within this area, we have shifted from a corporate-consumption-capitalist negation of logo, and as such from no logo, to the political-anarchist logo, i.e. a new logo.

²⁵⁸ N. Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

The Engine

The 29th of March 2016 did not portend anything unusual. The post-Easter idyll and the memory of a fairly big procession of motorcycles in various shades and forms which I saw the day before on the route Międzylesie–Syców was interrupted by the telephone ringing. My mechanic announced in a cheerful voice that the engine not only had been ready to start but it fired on the first kick starting to rev up easily. The only necessary thing was to adjust the carburettors, replace filters and exchange oil, but we knew for sure that the regeneration of a thirty-seven-year old engine would not be needed. I had worried about some problems concerning new parts, in particular, new seals for the cylinders. These stopped being manufactured a long time ago. Neither were they to be had in warehouses with spare parts.

It is time to leave the study and go to the workshop to listen to the sound of the mechanical heart of this anarchist machine. We set the date for this evening. The already venerable engine, provisionally embedded in the raw, unpolished and unfinished frame looks inconspicuous before firing up. In fact, it fails to make a good impression at the first glance. Only after the engine has been fired up it does it look its part. Indeed, it fires up with one touch and works smoothly. A new handmade single steel exhaust made of one pipe of 30mm in diameter which services two cylinders through its bent shape makes the engine acquire a new feisty sound. From this pipe enclosed in a wire gauze and mounted high over the tank, a backfire and exhausts shoot forth from time to time, just like from the scrambler. With the engine revving, the opening of the exhaust pipe, which is reminiscent of a volcano waking up from a long slumber, epitomizes Bakunin's apocalypse: Fire, smoke, uproar, anxiety, excitement, rising temperature, hot and viscid air, vibrations and tremors palpable everywhere. It is there where we can see everything that accompanies a great destruction, Bakunin's fundamental idea, who, as Kropotkin discerned, was "applying his wide and clear understanding of the philosophy of history to the criticism of present institutions, 'built up while he was demolishing.' But all that was preparatory work only."²⁶² This also holds true for the engine. Firing the motor is in itself merely a fraction of the work, a preparatory work which still has to be put into the building of Anarchism Café Racer.

²⁶² P. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, p. 366.

Two Sections: Headlight and Rear End

In the front section of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer, the headlight and the speedometer clock have been bedded in a structure made from crude ribbed reinforcing construction steel bar of 12mm in diameter. Two bars come out directly from the upper triple clamp of Anarchism Café Racer, making a bold arc facing downwards to encircle the speedometer clock and to embrace the headlight in a steely grip, at the same time placing it behind a half loop made from the same material and shaped like a sad icon, with two parallel bars descending lazily from the half loop towards the fender and dividing the headlamp light into three more or less equal parts. Below the lamp, enclosing the front wheel, a fender is mounted made from aluminium sheet whose edges and the whole structure securing the fender to the front suspension fork have been made from the same material as the one holding the headlight and the clock. Aluminium sheathing covering the fender has been bolted to the fender structure with six clearly visible wing screws.

The rear section maintains a similar material aesthetic to the front one, with one enhancement in the form of a steel chain. The rear-end (in motorcycle slang a description of the rear section)²⁶³ is made in the form of a quasi-wedge with a rearward facing-point. The structure of the rear-end consists of a U-shaped reinforcing bar with its open part welded across the café racer into the ends of the frame, just behind the biker's seat, thus forming a sort of a seat backrest. The clearance within the structure was filled with aluminium sheet. Onto the tangent points of the seat backrest another and larger U-form has been welded at a right angle, made from a chain whose links had been appropriately arranged and welded to one another. Both U-forms are enclosed from above with two naked bars which at first run parallel to the coagulated links of the chain and then abruptly go downwards, parallel to each other, towards the boundary delineated by the chain arc. These two bars separated from each other by a distance of 10cm create a safe haven for the rear lamp. Underneath the saddle (another term for the seat), at the borderline of the frame and the rear end, a fender has been mounted. Its forepart reaches up to the upper section of the swingarm, while its

²⁶³ See <http://www.scigacz.pl/Zadupek,295,lw.html> (accessed September 11, 2016).

end – to the border of the chain contour at the rear end. This fender represents a space for free thought in the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. It is a sort of a Speaker's Corner and off topic fused in one. This is an empty space where a postulate, a demand can be written, or where one can simply paint anything that bothers the biker. The book's strand prompts one to put there that which disturbs an anarchist about the institution of the state and in politics. The fender which is a place without slogans or any permanent content is an outcome of changing trends in politics and in anarchist activity. For while in the nineteenth century anarchists uncompromisingly rejected the state as such, in the twenty first century they have accepted it as an established fact, and as a rule do not fight for its abolition; they are rather concerned with building an alternative life that is independent of the institution of the state. Hence, anarchists take part in social life and raise topical, constantly changing and most pressing issues relating, for instance, to people, freedom, government policy, international policy, labour, environmental protection, globalization or corporations. At one time it can be a slogan referring to government measures, another time to an issue of international nature, pertaining to the environment, or something completely unrelated to those mentioned earlier, in line with the principle of a freedom that is totally unrestricted. The fender – a place of reflection, a place to write on, to paint on, to paste with something, to arm with the anarchist's thoughts and troubles – is invariably at the rear while on the road.

The crude ribbed reinforcing steel bar of 12mm diameter and the chain were not used merely by chance. First, they recall the dark history of the repercussions arising from embracing the nineteenth-century anarchist propaganda of the deed. For their activities, anarchists often received the most severe sentences. The steel bar was to symbolize the bars of fortresses and prisons, while the chain the very rigorous imprisonment. Secondly, ribbed reinforcing steel bars symbolize a construction that is about to begin, for they are an inherent element of every modern building process. They ensure the durability of the supporting structures of buildings. Moreover, they determine the durability of foundations, ceilings and the stability of a roof. Employed in the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer, the bars, to some extent, symbolize the building of a new system or the intention to build it– a system of common felicity, with no state coercion, where unrestricted human freedom will rule and where the rights of all people will be respected.

Punishment

In the dark prison history of the anarchist movement, it was Bakunin who was at the top of the long list of convicted anarchists and whose death sentence had been proclaimed three times. First he was given the death penalty by Prussia, then by Austria and finally by Russia. None of those sentences was carried out. Bakunin's life in prison is depicted by Antoni A. Kamiński, whose account of the anarchist's trials and tribulations in an Austrian prison is given below:

At night on the 12th-13th of June 1850, he was wakened, clapped in irons and under strong escort delivered to Peterswald (Petrovice) on the Austrian border. Here the commissar Franz Dederer had already been expecting him and subsequently delivered the prisoner to the barracks in the former monastery of St. George in the Hradčín in Prague [...] The Austrian authorities were itching to get Bakunin and were only waiting for the right opportunity to crack down on him severely?. [...] Another investigation started, this time on his participation in fomenting the rebellion in Prague [...] After eight months Bakunin was transferred from Prague to Olomouc for which transfer the highest precautions had been taken. He was put in a wagon with metal sheets nailed to it as if he were 'a wild beast' – recalled Joseph Barsi, one of those who witnessed Bakunin's transportation. The officer escorting the prisoner sat with a cocked pistol which he was ordered to use unhesitatingly upon any attempt of escape. The troop convoy numbered as many as twelve grenadiers and two corporals, for it was feared that Bakunin might be rescued. [...] In Olomouc immediately after arrival Bakunin's legs were shackled. A detailed account of how it was done was given by Antoni Lange, who arrived at the fortress shortly after Bakunin: 'a blacksmith was called for and we were brought into a corridor where irons and a stove lid for heating the nails had already been set ready. The shackles were fastened on our legs in such a way that each leg was enclosed in an iron ring, with the two rings being joined by eleven links of a chain half an inch thick. The rings were chosen to fit very tightly so the prisoner could not slip his foot out, and then the blacksmith hammered them with hot rivets in such a way that these irons could only be taken off after the prisoner was set free and again only by a blacksmith. As a particularly dangerous prisoner, Bakunin was also

chained to the wall. He was lodged in a cell between the seventh and eighth tower, watched day and night by a dozen or so guards.”²⁶⁴

On the 17th of May 1851 after a long-lasting process Bakunin was first sentenced to death, which sentence was then commuted to life imprisonment by an act of clemency, and afterwards he was surrendered to Russian authorities, where:

In Michalowice located at the border, colonel of gendarmerie Raspopov and twenty Cossacks had already been waiting for Bakunin for several weeks. On the night following the verdict Bakunin, escorted by ten soldiers, was sent to Ostrava by train, and then was taken in a special carriage to Cracow via Cieszyn, Wadowice, and Mogilany, where he arrived at ten o'clock in the evening. The transfer took place on the following day on the morning of the 17th May 1851 in Michalowice near Cracow. The Austrian officer who escorted Bakunin demanded that the shackles be returned as they were an Imperial and Royal property.²⁶⁵

A similar fate of imprisonment and banishment, albeit not so dramatic, was shared by the other originators of the doctrine of anarchism. Proudhon, who was the least persecuted, still had to face justice on several occasions. Eventually he was convicted and sent to Sainte-Pelagie prison. Proudhon described its conditions in his letter of 1849 to Maurice:

At Sainte-Pelagie, I feel rather well, considering that one is, after all, in a prison. I occupy a square room, 5 meters to each of its sides, with two windows affording me a view of a poorhouse and a botanic garden. Such a good location I did not even have at Mazarin Street, when I served as a Member of Parliament. I eat prison bread, which is not bad at all; in the morning they give me broth, fat twice and thin five times a week. Other food they bring from a restaurant. The administration provides me with wine at 12 sous per one liter; and it is indeed better than the one sold at 1,50 franc a bottle. I receive visitations. I am allowed to have pamphlets and newspapers delivered. I made them bring my old stuff to me, so now all my possessions are locked here with me. Albeit it is a sorry thing to be behind bars, and to be sure plenty of bodily and moral inconveniences arise on this account, I wish for nothing else but to remain where I am for at least 18 months.²⁶⁶

While in prison he was entitled to leave his cell “three times a month for a few hours to go to the town.” This period, however, could not have been too harsh considering that he used “one of such ‘days off’ to get married.”²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ A.A. Kamiński, *Michaił Bakunin. Życie i myśl. Podpalacz Europy (1848–1864)*, vol. 2, Wrocław 2013, pp. 134–136.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

²⁶⁶ P.J. Proudhon, A letter to Maurice dated 20 X 1849, after J. Garewicz, *Proudhon*, Warszawa 1970, pp. 55–56.

²⁶⁷ J. Garewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

And finally, Kropotkin, who eventually managed to escape from a tsarist prison, thus described his imprisonment:

This was, then, the terrible fortress where so much of the true strength of Russia had perished during the last two centuries, and the very name of which is uttered in St. Petersburg in a hushed voice. Here Peter I. tortured his son Alexis and killed him with his own hand; here the Princess Tarakánova was kept in a cell which filled with water during an inundation, – the rats climbing upon her to save themselves from drowning; here the terrible Minich tortured his enemies, and Catherine II. buried alive those who objected to her having murdered her husband. And from the times of Peter I. for a hundred and seventy years, the annals of this mass of stone which rises from the Nevá in front of the Winter Palace were annals of murder and torture, of men buried alive, condemned to a slow death, or driven to insanity in the loneliness of the dark and damp dungeons. Here the Decembrists, who were the first to unfurl in Russia the banner of republican rule and the abolition of serfdom, underwent their first experiences of martyrdom, and traces of them may still be found in the Russian Bastille. Here were imprisoned the poets Ryléeff and Shevchénko, Dostoévsky, Bakúnin, Chernyshévsky, Písareff, and so many others of our best contemporary writers. Here Karakózoff was tortured and hanged. Here, somewhere in the Alexis ravelin, is still kept Necháieff, who was given up to Russia by Switzerland as a common-law criminal, but is treated as a dangerous political prisoner, and will never again see the light. In the same ravelin are also two or three men whom, rumour says, Alexander II., because of what they knew, and others must not know, about some palace mystery, ordered imprisoned for life. One of them, adorned with a long gray beard, was lately seen by an acquaintance of mine, in the mysterious fortress. All these shadows rose before my imagination. But my thoughts fixed especially on Bakúnin, who, though he had been shut up in an Austrian fortress, after 1848, for two years, chained to the wall, and then handed over to Nicholas I., who kept him in the fortress for six years longer, yet came out, when the Iron Tsar's death released him, fresher and fuller of vigour than his comrades who had remained at liberty. "He has lived it through," I said to myself, "and I must, too: I will not succumb here!"²⁶⁸

Kropotkin managed to escape from the tsarist prison thanks to the efforts of a group of trusted comrades who also secured his safe passage to the western part of Europe.

In the nineteenth century anarchist activity was considered a crime. Developing anarchist views and propagating them was a crime, too. The consequence of such interpretation was not only that thousands of anarchists and nihilists were either executed or sentenced to many years of imprisonment but the great theorists and practitioners of anarchism also had to face and experience the realities of prison. Most acutely was this reality felt by Bakunin for whom it was his doom, with Kropotkin being only a little more fortunate in this respect. For Proudhon fate proved to be much more benign. The prison experiences, however, did not curb the will of the creators of the doctrine to continue the fight for their ideals so as to turn them into reality.

²⁶⁸ P.A. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, p. 366.

Prospects

With respect to yet another symbolism contained in the ribbed steel bars (commonly used in the building process), which is building the future system of unrestricted freedom, one has to note that in their political and legal doctrines the main visionaries of this ideal created quite different visions which eventually were to actualize a stateless system where people could find freedom, dignity, the meaning of life, happiness and wealth.

All theorists of anarchism painted, with varying precision, optimistic distant future horizons. It was Proudhon who was the first to look boldly into the future and to make his political and social profession of faith. He writes: "No more parties; No more authority; Absolute liberty of the individual and the citizen."²⁶⁹ In such a world "instead of a million laws, a single law will suffice. What shall this law be? Do not to others what you would not they should do to you: do to others as you would they should do to you. That is the law and the prophets."²⁷⁰ According to Proudhon, "The new system, based upon the spontaneous practice of industry, in accordance with individual and social reason, is the system of Human Right. Opposed to arbitrary command, essentially objective, it permits neither parties nor sects; it is complete in itself, and allows neither restriction nor separation."²⁷¹ The French anarchist's view is that in a future system which will be filled with human liberty the most important forms of division would include: "a) Division of labour [...] b) Collective power, the principle of workmen's associations in place of armies, c) Commerce, the concrete form of contract, which takes place of Law; d) Equality in exchange; e) Competition; f) Credit, which turns upon interests [...]; g) The equilibrium of values and of properties."²⁷² Putting emphasis on numerous occasions on his dislike of any kind of authority, Proudhon thunders:

²⁶⁹ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty (Confessions of a Revolutionary)*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, vol. I, Warszawa 1974, pp. 455–462.

²⁷⁰ P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku (General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century)*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, vol. I, Warszawa 1974, p. 604.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 653–654.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 653.

We have no trouble in answering.

It is industrial organization that we will put in place of government, as we have just shown.

In place of laws, we will put contract. – No more laws voted by a majority, nor even unanimously; each citizen, each town, each industrial union, makes its own laws.

In place of political powers, we will put economic forces.

In place of the ancient classes of nobles, burghers, and peasants, or of business men and working men, we will put the general titles and special departments of industry: Agriculture, Manufacture, Commerce, &c.

In place of public force, we will put collective force.

In place of standing armies, we will put industrial associations.

In place of police, we will put identity of interests.

In place of political centralization, we will put economic centralization.

Do you see now how there can be order without functionaries, a profound and wholly intellectual unity?

You, who cannot conceive of unity without a whole apparatus of legislators, prosecutors, attorneys-general, custom house officers, policemen, you have never known what real unity is! What you call unity and centralization is nothing but perpetual chaos, serving as a basis for endless tyranny; it is the advancing of the chaotic condition of social forces as an argument for despotism – a despotism which is really the cause of the chaos.²⁷³

In his vision of the future stateless society, he claims: “We have shown that the industrial system is the harmony of interests resulting from social liquidation, free currency and credit, the organization of economic forces, and the constitution of value and property.”²⁷⁴ The French anarchist while designing the future system highlights his basic demands as regards unrestricted freedom: “The individual alone has the right to judge himself, and, if he thinks expiation would be good for him, to demand punishment. Justice is an act of conscience, essentially voluntary [...]”²⁷⁵

Education of people Proudhon saw as a key role on the road to the realization of a future stateless system. This would be the task of teachers selected responsibly by members of a community. The education system would be set free of any superior authority and would be closely linked to apprenticeship.²⁷⁶ Then, in such a political reality:

If [...] science, and no longer religion or authority, is taken in every land as the rule of society, the sovereign arbiter of interests, government becoming void, all the legislation of the universe will be in harmony. There will no longer be nationality, no longer fatherland, in the political sense of the words: they will mean only places of birth. Man,

²⁷³ Ibid., pp. 655–656.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 683.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 669.

²⁷⁶ Cf. Ibid., pp. 691–692.

of whatever race or colour he may be, is an inhabitant of the universe; citizenship is everywhere an acquired right. As in a limited territory the municipality represents the Republic, and wields its authority, each nation on the globe represents, humanity and acts for it within the boundaries assigned by Nature. Harmony reigns, without diplomacy and without council, among the nations: nothing henceforward can disturb it.

What purpose could there be for entering into diplomatic relations among nations who had adopted the revolutionary program:

No more governments,
No more conquests,
No more custom houses,
No more international police,
No more commercial privileges,
No more colonial exclusions,
No more control of one people by another, one State by another,
No more strategic lines,
No more fortresses?²⁷⁷

Another architect of anarchism – Bakunin, as we know a fervent revolutionist, was a proponent of federalism. In his vision of the future, the primary emphasis is on the liberty of people to create a social system. In his view, the process of creation or building a future system and the effects of such efforts are all marred by ignorance and unpredictability, of which he writes:

When we speak about creation, what we have in mind is something different: a complex set of an infinite number of various, great and minor, causes of which some are known, and yet the vast majority remains unknown; what creates a particular phenomenon is their combination which emerged at a certain specific moment, surely not without a reason but with no plan previously devised nor the intervention of some purposeful factor.²⁷⁸

He also cautions against an absolute implementation of prerevolutionary tenets irrespective of who their author is:

Therefore no scholar can teach the people or even define for himself how they will and must live on the morrow of the social revolution. That will be determined first by the situation of each people, and secondly by the desires that manifest themselves and operate most strongly within them – not by guidance and explanations from above and not by any theories invented on the eve of revolution.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 703.

²⁷⁸ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm (Federalism, Socialism, Anit-Theologism)*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. I, Warszawa 1965, pp. 292–294.

²⁷⁹ M. Bakunin, *Dodatek „A” do pracy Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 339–343.

In handing over to the people this fundamental right on the road to freedom, which the unconstrained creation of future certainly is, Bakunin, however, draws attention to a few tenets which a free society should actualize for its own good. In terms of building the future, Bakunin followed two parallel paths: on the one hand, as we know, he attempted to abolish the state in a revolutionary manner, and on the other hand, he called on the authorities of the state to carry out reforms, simultaneously offering his own concept of how to organize a society within a stateless system.

With respect to the reforms that he demanded from the state, one has to acknowledge that Bakunin actually focuses on the proposition to abolish the law of inheritance. He argues:

The only thing we believe the State can and should do is to change the law of inheritance, gradually at first, until it is entirely abolished as soon as possible. Since the right of inheritance is a purely arbitrary creation of the State, and one of the essential conditions for the very existence of the authoritarian and divinely sanctioned State, it can and must be abolished by liberty – which again means that the State itself must accomplish its own dissolution in a society freely organized in accordance with justice. This right must necessarily be abolished, we believe, for as long as *inheritance* is in effect, there will be *hereditary* economic inequality, not the natural inequality of individuals but the artificial inequality of classes – and this will necessarily always lead to the hereditary inequality of the development and cultivation of mental faculties, and continue to be the source and the consecration of all political and social inequalities. Equality from the moment life begins – insofar as this equality depends on the economic and political organization of society, and in order that everyone, in accordance with his own natural capacities, may become the heir and the product of his own labour – this is the problem which justice sets before us. We believe that the public funds for the education and elementary schooling of all children of both sexes, as well as their maintenance from birth until they come of age, should be the sole inheritors of all the deceased.²⁸⁰

He warns, however, that should states implement the reform which he demanded, what would be necessary is

their radical and complete transformation so that, ceasing to be powers centralized and organized from the top down, by violence or by authority of some principle, they may recognize – with absolute liberty for all the parties to unite or not to unite, and with liberty for each of these always to leave a union even when freely entered into – from the bottom up, according to the real needs and the natural tendencies of the parties, through the free federation of individuals, associations, communes, districts, provinces, and nations within humanity.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, pp. 277–278.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 355–357.

A proponent of equality, Bakunin seeks to give every man an equal start in life. In his view, societies should focus on justice and on cooperation, with the next step involving association of all societies in Europe. Of justice he conceives as follows:

When we speak of justice we do not thereby mean the justice which is imparted to us in legal codes and by Roman law, founded for the most part on acts of force and violence consecrated by time and by the blessings of some church, Christian or pagan and, as such, accepted as an absolute, the rest being nothing but the logical consequence of the same. I speak of that justice which is based solely upon human conscience, the justice which you will rediscover deep in the conscience of every man, even in the conscience of the child, and which translates itself into simple *equality*. This justice, which is so universal but which nevertheless, owing to the encroachments of force and to the influence of religion, has never as yet prevailed in the world of politics, of law, or of economics, should serve as a basis for the new world. Without it there is no liberty, no republic, no prosperity, no peace! It should therefore preside at all our resolutions in order that we may effectively cooperate in establishing peace. This justice bids us take into our hands the people's cause, so miserably maltreated until now, and to demand in its behalf economic and social emancipation, together with political liberty. We do not propose to you, gentlemen, one or another socialist system. What we ask of you is to proclaim once more that great principle of the French Revolution: that every man is entitled to the material and moral means for the development of his complete humanity – a principle which, we believe, translates itself into the following mandate: *To organize society in such a manner that every individual endowed with life, man or woman, may and almost equal means for the development of his various faculties and for their utilization in his labour; to organize a society which, while it makes it impossible for any individual whatsoever to exploit the labour of others, will not allow anyone to share in the enjoyment of social wealth, always produced by labour only, unless he has himself contributed to its creation with his own labour.*²⁸²

On the issue of cooperation, Bakunin writes: “Cooperation in all its forms is undeniably a rational and just mode of future production. But for it to achieve its objective – liberation of all the workers and their full compensation and satisfaction – all forms of land and capital must become collective property.”²⁸³

Moving onto the political model of the future, it has to be noted that “the future social system,” according to Bakunin, should

be organized from bottom to top through a free organization or federation of workers, first into associations, then the associations into communes, provinces, nations and ultimately into a great international and world federation. Only then will a true and

²⁸² Ibid., pp. 275–276.

²⁸³ M. Bakunin, *Dodatek „A” do pracy Państwowość a anarchia...*, p. 343.

enduring order filled with liberty and common felicity materialize, in which the interests of individuals will not be contradictory but harmonious.²⁸⁴

Societies thus educated should begin the process which would seek to unite all European societies. Bakunin concludes: "There is but one way to bring about the triumph of liberty, of justice, and of peace in Europe's international relations [...] and that is the formation of the *United States of Europe*."²⁸⁵ He emphasizes

That all members of the League should [...] bend all their efforts toward reconstituting their respective countries, in order to replace their old constitution – founded from top to bottom on violence and the principle of authority – with a new organization based solely upon the interests, the needs, and the natural preferences of their populations – having no other principle but the free federation of individuals into communes, of communes into provinces, of the provinces into nations, and, finally, of the nations into the United States of Europe first, and of the entire world eventually.²⁸⁶

Finally, the creation of a future stateless system was also an issue to which Kropotkin dedicated himself. In his writings, the thinker examines the shortcomings of the previous statehood, as well as presents a vision of the future:

Our main activity, however, was in working out the practical and theoretic aspects of anarchist socialism, and in this direction the federation has undoubtedly accomplished something that will last. We saw that a new form of society is germinating in the civilized nations, and must take the place of the old one: a society of equals, who will not be compelled to sell their hands and brains to those who choose to employ them in a haphazard way, but who will be able to apply their knowledge and capacities to production, in an organism so constructed as to combine all the efforts for procuring the greatest sum possible of well-being for all, while full, free scope will be left for every individual initiative. This society will be composed of a multitude of associations, federated for all the purposes which require federation: trade federations for production of all sorts, – agricultural, industrial, intellectual, artistic; communes for consumption, making provision for dwellings, gas works, supplies of food, sanitary arrangements, etc.; federations of communes among themselves, and federations of communes with trade organizations; and finally, wider groups covering all the country, or several countries, composed of men who collaborate for the satisfaction of such economic, intellectual, artistic, and moral needs as are not limited to a given territory. All these will combine directly, by means of free agreements between them, just as the railway companies or the postal departments of different countries cooperate now, without having

²⁸⁴ M. Bakunin, *Przedmowa do drugiego zeszytu imperium knuto-germańskiego*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, Warszawa 1965, pp. 154–155.

²⁸⁵ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, p. 242.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 243–244.

a central railway or postal government,—even though the former are actuated by merely egotistic aims, and the latter belong to different and often hostile states; or as the meteorologists, the Alpine clubs, the lifeboat stations in Great Britain, the cyclists, the teachers, and so on, combine for all sorts of work in common, for intellectual pursuits, or simply for pleasure. There will be full freedom for the development of new forms of production, invention, and organization; individual initiative will be encouraged, and the tendency toward uniformity and centralization will be discouraged. Moreover, this society will not be crystallized into certain unchangeable forms, but will continually modify its aspect, because it will be a living, evolving organism; no need of government will be felt, because free agreement and federation take its place in all those functions which governments consider as theirs at the present time, and because, the causes of conflict being reduced in number, those conflicts which may still arise can be submitted to arbitration. None of us minimized the importance and magnitude of the change which we looked for. We understood that the current opinions upon the necessity of private ownership in land, factories, mines, dwelling-houses, and so on, as the means of securing industrial progress, and of the wage-system as the means of compelling men to work, would not soon give way to higher conceptions of socialized ownership and production. We knew that a tedious propaganda and a long succession of struggles, of individual and collective revolts against the now prevailing forms of property-holding, of individual self-sacrifice, of partial attempts at reconstruction and partial revolutions, would have to be lived through, before the current ideas upon private ownership would be modified. And we understood also that the prevalent ideas concerning the necessity of authority—in which all of us have been bred—would not and could not be abandoned by civilized mankind all at once. Long years of propaganda and a long succession of partial acts of revolt against authority, as well as a complete revision of the teachings now derived from history, would be required before men would perceive that they had been mistaken in attributing to their rulers and their laws what was derived in reality from their own sociable feelings and habits. We knew all that. But we also knew that in preaching reform in both these directions, we should be working with the tide of human progress.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ P.A. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, pp. 425–428.

The Colours of the Motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer

The colours of Anarchism Café Racer are delineated in black and red. The frame is red with all other components, for instance, the wheels, the tank, the lamp being black. At this point a few words of explanation are due as to why such an arrangement obtains and not the reverse in which the frame would don black while the remainder would be attired in red or another colour, since that is clearly the case for the vast majority of mass-produced motorcycles; or why not a combination of colours as can be seen among sports motorcycles of today, which after all are what café racers are modelled on. The choice is not merely by chance. Anarchist flags display only two colours: it is precisely either black or red or black and red applied in equal proportions, where the boundary between the upper black and the lower red is marked by an invisible diagonal running from the lower corner of the flag to the upper one encircling the pole of the flag.

The choice of the component of Anarchism Café Racer to which the colour red, here presented as a combination of two shades: red and crimson was to be ascribed, was like the choice of the colours, not unintentional. The frame, for I am referring to it, constitutes a production component of every motorcycle. Anarchism Café Racer is not different in this respect. It is the frame that has to bear not only the weight but also the individualism of the biker. The frame is also what ultimately bears the burden of harnessing the vibrations of the engine and the G-forces generated at speed. It is then a structure that has to rein in horses; here it is the ground from which the idea of Anarchism Café Racer sprouted, or to use Marxist terminology, the frame provides the base for all other components which are its superstructure. The frame, one might say, is bare, devoid of any unnecessary elements, shortened and strengthened. After being thoroughly sandblasted, and coated with paint, it received the red colour.

The inspiration for the frame's red colour was the history of the origins and the development of the anarchist movement. The red flag²⁸⁸, a symbol of the labour movement which in the nineteenth century bravely and with hope carried anarchist slogans

²⁸⁸ The red colour of the anarchist flag has symbolized the right to rebellion, already well-established in history starting with the Middle Ages. The colour was used, for example, by Normans, later by

of freedom and equality against the rifles and bayonets aiming straight at the hearts of demonstrators, was the original attribute of the doctrine of anarchism. Anarchism grew largely from workers' movements and it was they who carried the greatest burden of spreading its doctrine. It is the same red which appears in Bakunin's writings, who, while giving an account of the Paris revolutionary events of 1848 in his *Confession* to Tsar Alexander II, writes the following:

This huge city, the centre of European enlightenment, had suddenly been turned into the wild Caucasus: on every street, almost everywhere, barricades had been piled up like mountains, reaching the roofs, and on them, among rocks and broken furniture, like Lezghians* [A tribe of the Caucasus Mountains] in ravines, workers in their colourful blouses, blackened from powder and armed from head to foot. Fat shopkeepers, épiciers* [Grocers] with faces stupid from terror, timidly looked out of the windows. On the streets and boulevards not a single carriage. And the dandies, young and old, all the hated social lions with their walking sticks and lorgnettes, had disappeared and in their place MY NOBLE OUVRIERS in rejoicing, exulting crowds, with red banners and patriotic songs, revelling in their victory!²⁸⁹

Moreover, Kropotkin dedicated considerable attention to this red. In *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* his eminent focus was on the symbolism associated with the red colour of the flag. This is what he writes about the workers' manifestation in Bern:

We all took part, that year, in a manifestation with the red flag at Bern. The wave of reaction spread to Switzerland, and the carrying of the workers' banner was prohibited by the Bern police, in defiance of the constitution. It was necessary, therefore, to show that at least here and there the workers would not have their rights trampled underfoot, and would offer resistance. We all went to Bern on the anniversary of the Paris Commune, to carry the red flag in the streets, notwithstanding the prohibition. Of course there was a collision with the police, in which two comrades received sword cuts and two police officers were rather seriously wounded. But the red flag was carried safe to the hall, where a most animated meeting was held. I hardly need say that the so-called leaders were in the ranks, and fought like all the rest. The trial involved nearly thirty Swiss citizens, all themselves demanding to be prosecuted, and those who had wounded the two police officers coming forward spontaneously to say that they had done it. A great deal of sympathy was won to the cause during the trial; it was understood that all liberties have to be defended jealously, in order not to be lost. The sentences were consequently very light, not exceeding three months' imprisonment.

However, the Bern government prohibited the carrying of the red flag anywhere in the canton; and the Jura Federation thereupon decided to carry it, in defiance of

pirates, mutinous English sailors on the Thames, defiant coal miners in Wales, radical Frenchmen during the Revolution 1789, participants of the Paris Commune of 1871.

²⁸⁹ M. Bakunin, *Pisma wybrane* [*Selected Writings*], vol. 1, pp. 437–438.

the prohibition, in St. Imier, where we held our congress that year. This time most of us were armed, and ready to defend our banner to the last extremity. A body of police had been placed in a square to stop our column; a detachment of the militia was kept in readiness in an adjoining field, under the pretext of target practice,—we distinctly heard their shots as we marched through the town. But when our column appeared in the square, and it was judged from its aspect that aggression would result in serious bloodshed, the mayor let us continue our march, undisturbed, to the hall where the meeting was to be held. None of us desired a fight; but the strain of that march, in fighting order, to the sound of a military band, was such that I do not know what feeling prevailed in most of us, during the first moments after we reached the hall,—relief at having been spared an undesired fight, or regret that the fight did not take place. Man is a very complex being.²⁹⁰

What does the red on anarchist banners symbolize? It is the colour of revolution and of blood that has been shed. Hence the union of red, which invokes sacrifice, aggression, revolution, passion, and the shade of crimson which one associates with blood. The colour of the frame of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer is the colour of the blood shed by workers in their social revolutions, the colour of sacrifice, passion and Bakunin's power of destruction which accompanied the changes brought about by those events. Finally, it is a colour – symbol, elevated to this status by the Swiss anarchists in the song *La drapeau rouge* from 1877 for which Paul Brousee wrote the lyrics.

Since the end of the nineteenth century when workers from socialist and Marxist parties appropriated red for their flags, anarchists also began to manifest themselves under a black flag. This colour has invariably accompanied the anarchist movement throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is the colour in which the other components of Anarchism Café Racer have been painted. Thus, all the other parts of the café racer wear black, for example, the wheels, the tank, the lamp, the rear-end or ribbed construction bars. This colour made its home in the anarchist movement as its second colour, and it is undeniably associated with the present-day anarchist movement. Hence it was ascribed to those components of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer which were either borrowed from our times, for instance, the speedometer clock, or were crafted using today's knowledge and technology. What does anarchist black symbolize? In the twentieth century the black on the flag was commonly viewed as a symbol of anarchy, and that is still so nowadays. Not only does the colour denote a negation of the flags of all countries worldwide, but it is also “a lament over the crimes, the grief over its million victims,” the crying over those who steal and murder. The protest against mass murders. The lament not only over the death of the body but also the death of the spirit. The black flag signifies negation, anger, abuse, weeping over the injustice of the modern world. Yet it is not solely a symbol of opposition. The anarchist black is also endowed with a positive meaning. It is the colour of

²⁹⁰ P.A. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, pp. 423–428.

determination, resolve and endurance. It speaks of hope for a better life and better relationships among people. It is therefore to be seen as a symbol of the struggle against the evil ruling over today's world, as well as of the hope for a better life to come that is free of violence, hunger and exploitation.²⁹¹

The components made from the ribbed steel bar were painted in a such a way as to expose the essence of the material to its fullest. The aluminium components, on the other hand, were only polished before their final assemblage.

²⁹¹ More on the symbolism of the black flag see in *Reinventing Anarchy. What are Anarchists Thinking these Days?*, ed. by H.J. Ehrlich, C. Ehrlich, D. DeLeon, G. Morris, London–Boston–Henley 1979, p. 172 ff.

Mirrors: a Desire for Luxury

Anarchism Café Racer has been equipped with two café racer mirrors, drag custom. Their housing is made from a metal with a perfect chromium finish. The spherical glass of the mirrors is in the shape of a circle, a perfect disc of eight centimetres in diameter, enabling the biker to observe everything that is going on at the rear of Anarchism Café Racer. The mirrors have been mounted directly inside the tube of the handlebar on both sides. The housings have been placed and perfectly expanded inside the open ends of the handlebars in such a way as to allow the visible elements of the mirrors to become an unquestionable embellishment of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. This luxury in the form of mirror glass fastened below the line of the handlebars, which have been mounted four centimetres below the upper triple clamp of the front suspension, enhances not only the biker's confidence but also the character of the motorcycle itself. It is a minor exception to the rule which maintains that Anarchism Café Racer is to be bare, entertaining no thoughts of lavishness. These costly attributes of individualism were actually mounted in accordance with Kropotkin's observations, who kept stressing that every man, whatever his level of affluence, would invariably strive for having in his possession even the minutest item of luxury. For the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer it is the mirrors which demonstrate the biker's attachment to luxury, even if it be ersatz luxury. Without mirrors, Anarchism Café Racer would be fully prepared and adapted for the road. In this sense, the mirrors represent some form of adornment of a raw and radically stripped down motorcycle. Would it have been possible to do without this decoration? Yes, to be sure; and yet without the mirrors or similar attributes, Anarchism Café Racer, although ready to set out on the road, would have been deprived of the ersatz satisfaction to be derived from so called anarchist artistic desires. Let us recall what Prince Kropotkin has to say on the issue of desire for luxury:

Man, however, is not a being whose exclusive purpose in life is eating, drinking, and providing a shelter for himself. As soon as his material wants are satisfied, other needs, of an artistic character, will thrust themselves forward the more ardently. Aims of life vary with each and every individual; and the more society is civilized, the more will

individuality be developed, and the more will desires be varied. Even to-day we see men and women denying themselves necessities to acquire mere trifles, to obtain some particular gratification, or some intellectual or material enjoyment. A Christian or an ascetic may disapprove of these desires for luxury; but it is precisely these trifles that break the monotony of existence and make it agreeable. Would life, with all its inevitable sorrows, be worth living, if besides daily work man could never obtain a single pleasure according to his individual tastes?²⁹²

On the subject of luxury, Anarchism Café Racer has not been equipped with blinkers, which – just like mirrors – could undoubtedly provide the café racer with some sort of embellishment. These, however, in line with the anarchist principle of freedom, would imply the requirement of having to explain to other traffic participants one's intention as to one's desired direction. A free man does not have to signal in advance what he intends to do nor in which direction he wants to go. Anarchists believe that a free man is sufficiently set with free will and inherent propensity to make sensible decisions considering not only one's own good but also that of others, which in this case would be other traffic participants. A glance in the mirrors, a resolute hand wave and a turn manoeuvre safely performed should simply suffice. As such, the blinkers would not have been a luxury in the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer as they would have represented a reminder of the laws of the state with its obligations and restrictions, whose elimination anarchists so demanded as they saw them as a source of enslavement.

²⁹² P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, p. 81.

Tank

The fuel tank, colloquially called a “tank,” represents an important place in every motorcycle. It is not only a metal container filled with fuel but also a surface for exhibiting the make and the model of a motorcycle. It is not different in Anarchism Café Racer. Here the tank is of great significance, for on its sides a symbol of anarchism is displayed: a commonly known capitalized letter “A” placed within a circle. However, I carried out a certain modification to this symbol in that the lines and the crossbar which make up the capitalized form of the letter “A” are constructed from the three crucial, from the standpoint of the doctrine of anarchism, words: State, Revolution, Freedom. The “State” and the “Revolution” create the hairline and the line, respectively, with “Freedom,” as a fundamental slogan of anarchism, being exhibited in the crossbar. On the thus constructed majuscule “A,” I put two strokes and a cross stroke making up the letter in such a way that the hairline finds itself in the baseline of the word “State;” the other line I placed along the mean line of the word “Revolution,” with the crossbar placed in the baseline of “Freedom.” My next step was to shift the capital thus created to the left-hand side to reach the point at which the stroke was at the mean line of the word “State,” while the other stroke and the crossbar were along the baselines of the words “Revolution” and “Freedom.” These two majuscules of the same letter which were thus placed on each other reveal ultimately a picture in which the word “State” is crossed out while “Revolution” and “Freedom” are underlined.

Why this and not any other symbol? The reason lies in the fact that from the very onset of the development of the doctrine three issues were paramount. Firstly, the state which has been associated with all evil; evil that must be wiped out, annihilated – hence the crossing out of the word. Secondly, the revolution associated with a path which was supposed to enable people to achieve the anarchist ideal, it being a happy stateless society. Thirdly and finally, individual freedom which constituted the overriding and ultimate goal of all creators of the doctrine of anarchism. Moreover, the symbol of anarchism coupled with its most important slogans made by hand and placed on the sides of the tank represent the “artillery fired in a war between the street and the establishment,”²⁹³ to paraphrase Norman Mailer’s simile. Anarchism

²⁹³ After N. Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

Café Racer traversing urban streets will be not unlike a mobile wall sprayed with paint by graffiti artists. It is nothing else but mobile quasi-branding of streets and city districts across which the biker will be riding Anarchism Café Racer. Finally, it is also an urban guerrilla, a competition for administration, in other words, the state-like attributes of the street, such as, for instance, its name, or the public institutions and offices located along the street. It is a scampering competition for stationary advertisements of huge brands owned by present day corporations.

With its adherence, shall we say, “design adherence,” to the doctrine of anarchism, the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer – following the pattern evinced by spontaneous actions carried out by the Reclaim the Street movement (RTS)²⁹⁴ involving a downright theatrical blockade of major axes of urban communication which at that very moment are being transformed into a never-ending party zone of thousands of youth – could also appropriate symbolically a parking spot at any city street, thus “reclaiming” it for the ideal of absolute freedom. Who knows, perhaps a few passers-by taking interest in the sight would stop to discuss the doctrine pronounced so visibly on the motorcycle. If so, then a micro-place could really be reclaimed for anarchist freedom, a sort of anarchist zone, even if only for a very brief moment, where the good intentions from anarchists’ political programs could find their home: a sense of freedom, belief in the inherent goodness of human nature, mutual aid. Perhaps in this very place a thread of unselfish, and therefore authentic understanding, would be established between those who otherwise would be strangers.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 333 ff.

The State

In their views, the three great theorists of anarchism all agreed that what must be abolished was the enslavement tandem: the state and authority standing guard over the endurance of the state. In their writings – although their intentions were the same – their ways of formulating objections and their lines of argumentation differed. Proudhon's major focus was on the critique of the institution of government, which he actually identified with the state. For him, the fact of being governed, and that implied being subjugated, was the fundamental problem of a nineteenth-century man. Being governed was tantamount to "being enslaved." One could argue that this kind of critique by Proudhon has a purely philosophical dimension. Bakunin, another of the prominent anarchists, with the "most extremist" (to employ Stanisław Kempner's words²⁹⁵) passion, devoted himself to attacking relentlessly – not only verbally but also in action – the state. His voice was undeniably impulsive and destructive, actively orientated, first and foremost, if not exclusively, towards a revolutionary bloody disassembly of the hateful state; the process which he desired at any cost, if not to start, then surely to finish with the Russian Empire. Finally, Kropotkin, the last anarchist, who was not only outstanding but above all one who endowed anarchism with a scientific aspect and like his predecessors condemned the state and government. Likewise, he sought to annihilate those institutions in a way similar to that of Bakunin's; at this point my employment of the plural form is quite intentional, for Kropotkin, unlike his predecessors, made a distinction between these two institutions, ascribing them with offences against man which he very precisely defined. Applying a very scientific and yet very intelligible method, Kropotkin showed how the faults of the state and of government had unfolded over the past centuries. The state he likened to death, while people in authority he attributed with the most vile qualities.

Each of the theorists of anarchism remained in an anti-state strand within which he condemned the state, authority and called for their abolition, with each of them using to this end their own individual rhetoric. Proudhon – a Frenchman, in seeking evolutionally changes predominantly attacked the institution of authority and its

²⁹⁵ S.A. Kempner, *Indywidualizm najkrańcowszy. Szkic socjologiczny*, Kraków 1905, *passim*.

consequences – subjugation. Bakunin – a Russian, a supporter of a bloody revolution demanded an immediate, spectacular, nihilistic, today we might say terroristic, annihilation of the states, with a despotic monarchy being first on his list – the Imperial Russian State and its pillars – the authority of an all-powerful tsar and those at his service: law, administration, police, army and religion. And finally, Kropotkin, also a Russian and also a supporter of a revolution but one that was controlled and harnessed; if possible, less bloody and less nihilistic. Kropotkin sought to abolish the state through building in a revolutionary way a stateless system, where the first rule would involve wide-spread expropriation; the second would be to educate people to live in freedom; and finally and crucially, an unrestricted freedom of people and a life lived in prosperity. In contrast to Bakunin, instead of blowing up the state Kropotkin wanted to force it out of society and to extirpate it out of the human mind using rifles and bayonets to this end. Contrary to Bakunin, he did not want to wait for subsequent generations to build on the ashes of the state a future stateless system filled to the brim with felicity and freedom; what he strongly desired was for the anarchist system to be realized during his lifetime.

For each of these anarchists, the state was associated with any form of authority or – as for Kropotkin – the state as well as government, were, if not the sole, then certainly the fundamental cause of evil thriving in nineteenth-century societies. Fomented by the state apparatus, it was the source of human serfdom. In their writings, the anarchists made absolutely clear that the state and authority, which was inextricably linked to it and deployed by the ruler, by the government, the parliament and the judiciary, conceived of and viewed either jointly or separately, should be transformed, eliminated, annihilated instantly. The differences with respect to their views refer merely to the manner in which to conduct the destruction of the state and thereby the institution of authority, administration and law, all intrinsically linked to the existence of the state.

The first one to condemn the state is Proudhon. He sees the state as an economic oppressor which by the means of law has been exploiting and enslaving men. Proudhon comments: “The State does not bargain with me: it gives me nothing in exchange: it simply practises extortion upon me.”²⁹⁶ Still, as he does not wish to be an advocate of clearly extreme views – while considering the issue he puts demands on those in authority – in a sense, the thinker throws a gauntlet at the state, when saying: “I am ready to bargain, but I want no laws. I recognize none of them: I protest against every order which it may please some power, from pretended necessity, to impose upon my free will.”²⁹⁷ Were it not for a clearly articulated critique of authority itself, one might have inferred that Proudhon entertained the possibility of keeping the “reformed” state, or at least its ersatz. However, such thesis cannot be advanced considering that on the occasion of discussing the state, Proudhon was not only predominantly critical of the state but he was absolutely critical of authority itself and the mechanisms

²⁹⁶ P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 602.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 603.

of its enforcement, by which Proudhon ultimately declared himself against the state, any state. He claims: "He who lays his hand on me to govern me is a usurper and tyrant; my declared enemy."²⁹⁸ In analyzing the history of exercising authority and the mechanisms controlling it, his dislike of the state and of government continues to intensify. According to Proudhon, "Humanity has had to live, and civilization to develop, for six thousand years, under this inexorable system, of which the first term is Despair and the last Death."²⁹⁹ This system from its very inception has been based on the institution of government whose driving forces have been politicians and those in power. The French anarchist states:

So that government and party are reciprocally to each other cause, end and means, beginning middle and end; and, thou shall not do this, thou shall not do that, has been the sole education of man by governments from the time of Adam and Eve; but when mankind shall have arrived at years of discretion, parties and governments will disappear; thus liberty will grow out of authority, as we have seen Socialism result from absolutism, philosophy out of religion, equality out of inequality.³⁰⁰

While criticizing authority, Proudhon indicates those whom he addresses. Certainly, they are rulers, members of the government and all the political families seeking to take over power, and as such they were heads of state, members of the government and politicians of every name and shape. These very few members of society Proudhon blames for enslaving the remainder, with the enslavement growing deeper the lower the social standing of man. He believes that the reason for such development is because: "the prince [...] instead of ensuring and developing the social Power, creates for himself through the army, the police force and the tax, a particular force, able to resist any attack from the interior and to compel the nation to obedience at need, it is this princely force which will be called from now on power."³⁰¹ With respect to the others guilty of this situation, that is those who govern and play politics, Proudhon firstly argues that, "the aim of government is not to harmonize antagonistic interests, it admits that it is quite incompetent to do this; but to keep order in society, despite the conflict of interests."³⁰² Meanwhile, those who pursue politics he finds guilty, since "all parties, without exception, as they affect power, are varieties of absolutism, and there will only be liberty for the citizens, order for society, union among the workers, when the renunciation of authority will have replaced in the political catechism faith in authority."³⁰³ Finally, according to Proudhon, "In the eyes of reason, governments and parties are merely the *mise en scène* of the fundamental concepts of society,

²⁹⁸ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty jako przyczynek do historii rewolucji lutowej*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, vol. II, Warszawa 1974, p. 452.

²⁹⁹ P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 652.

³⁰⁰ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty...*, p. 454.

³⁰¹ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 208.

³⁰² P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 633.

³⁰³ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty jako przyczynek...*, p. 455.

a realization of abstractions, a metaphysical pantomime, from which the direction is LIBERTY.”³⁰⁴

For him, “Governments are the scourges of God to discipline the world.” Quite puckishly he claims that “government is the best which comes nearest to making itself useless.” Moreover, he poses a rhetorical question: “Do we want parasites to labour or priests to speak to God? neither do we want representatives to govern us. “The institution of government itself he also identifies with slavery and judgment:

The exploitation of man by man, someone said, is theft. Well! the [sic] government of man by man is servitude; and all positive religion, leading to the dogma of papal infallibility, is itself nothing other than the worship of man by man, idolatry. Absolutism, blending at once the power of the altar, of the throne, and of the strongbox, has multiplied, as a network, the chains of humanity. After the exploitation of man by man, after the government of man by man, after the worship of man by man, we still have:

The judgment of man by man,
The condemnation of man by man,
And to finish the series, the punishment of man by man!³⁰⁵

The monopoly of the state to create and exercise law, a law that was legitimate only from the perspective of those few in power, had the effect that man, who was free and conscious already in a pre-state system, gradually became enslaved by the law imposed by the state. The conduct of man which was determined along the lines of orders and prohibitions established by the law kept depriving him step by step of his instinctive freedom and a sense of conscious responsibility afforded by this instinct. About this kind of relationship between man and the state, Proudhon writes: “Man has thus deprived himself of his moral character, and of his judicial dignity, and he has cast away his right of initiative; by this loss of his powers he has made himself the poor slave of impostors and tyrants.”³⁰⁶ On the subject of delivering justice, this individualist asserts with full confidence:

It is above all on account of political, economic and social movements, and the ineluctable imperfection of the law that Justice, which at first was created by common sense, then formulated by legislator, and eventually sanctified by religion, must be permeated with faults and soon perceives that it can no longer keep pace with life. As a result, the state, its system, its institutions, its traditions, its authorities, categories, cults and tribunals become false, an empty façade. If one does not know that then one surely feels that the entire apparatus conceals errors, lies, acts of injustice. And when faith starts faltering, contempt takes the place of respect. The outcome is easy to foresee: when doubt, awoken secretly in the souls of men, afflicts Justice; when man in looking

³⁰⁴ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty...*, pp. 455–462.

³⁰⁵ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty jako przyczynek...*, pp. 455–462.

³⁰⁶ P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 683.

at laws and institutions begins to see only bonds imposed on him by force or necessity, failing to strike roots in his consciousness; when in the face of social suffering a lack of faith threatens religion – then we witness the end of society; it begins to fall and can rise again only through revolution.³⁰⁷

In abolishing the view well established in the nineteenth century, stating that “the Government fills the part of father in Society,” Proudhon unabashedly retorts, “he does not rob his children; he supports them by his labour.”³⁰⁸ According to Proudhon, authority over society consists in maintaining “order in society, by consecrating and sanctifying obedience of the citizen to the State, subordination of the poor to the rich, of the common people to the upper class, of the worker to the idler, of the layman to the priest, of the business man to the soldier.”³⁰⁹ In justifying his objection to religion and the centralization of administration, Proudhon writes: “As a State religion is the rape of the conscience, so a State political administration is the castration of liberty. Deadly devices, wrought by the same madness for oppression and intolerance; whose poisonous fruits show their identity. State religion produced the Inquisition; State administration produced the police.”³¹⁰ While investigating the issues related to administration, that is, to governing society, he draws attention to the source of its unwavering functioning – finances, which are to the state what “a hayrack is to the ass.” Further to that, he says: “Suppress the political machine and you will have left an administration of which the sole object is to procure and distribute subsistence.”³¹¹ Proudhon argues that another sin committed by the state has been to deprive man of his dignity, the act which the state pursues as if it was a planned policy. The French anarchist observes:

In charge of the business of the Department and the State, officer of the judicial, intermediary and plenipotentiary police, instructor, director, initiator, inspector, supervisor, estimator, controller, censor, reformer, redresser, corrector, guardian, commander, superintendent, aedile, judge – that is the prefect, that is the Government. And you tell me that a people that will submit to such a rule, a people thus held in leading strings, [...] is a free people! [...] No, no, such a people is less than a slave; it is nothing but a war-horse. Before freeing it, it must be raised to the dignity of a man, by reconstructing its understanding.³¹²

Proudhon also devotes his attention to some political systems. Democracy he views as abolishment of all kinds of authority: spiritual and temporal, legislative and judicial, authority arising from ownership.³¹³ Moreover, dictatorship is for him “the

³⁰⁷ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, pp. 352–353.

³⁰⁸ P.J. Proudhon, *Mysł ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 602.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 651.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 680.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 698.

³¹² *Ibid.*, p. 682.

³¹³ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty...*, pp. 455–462.

secret dream of some lunatics.”³¹⁴ In summing up his multifaceted arguments on the subject of government, firstly he maintains, “If there is anything today which seems improper, sacrilegious, a direct attack upon liberty of Reason and of Conscience, it is a government.”³¹⁵ Secondly, “the prince [...] instead of ensuring and developing the social Power, creates for himself through the army, the police force and the tax, a particular force, able to resist any attack from the interior and to compel the nation to obedience at need, it is this princely force which will be called from now on power.”³¹⁶ Thirdly,

Authority had no sooner been inaugurated in the rest of the world, when it became the object of universal competition. Authority, Government, Power, State, – these words designate the same thing; – everyone had there seen the means to oppress and exploit his fellow man. Absolutists, doctrinaires, demagogues and socialists, incessantly turned their eyes toward authority as to their unique pole.”³¹⁷

And fourthly and finally, “power by its nature is alien to law, as it implies force.”³¹⁸

Mikhail Bakunin, in a similar vein as Proudhon, is very outspoken in his condemnation of the state. For him: “The state is in no wise an immediate product of nature. Unlike society, it does not precede the awakening of reason in men.”³¹⁹ Bakunin believes that “the State is the negation of liberty of individuals; it deprives them of liberty in the name of liberty, or in the name of some universal law. Where the state begins, individual liberty ceases, and vice versa.”³²⁰ Moreover, the state for him “in its separate existence and isolated concentration [...] would be too narrow to embrace, to contain the interests and therefore the morality of all mankind.”³²¹ This Russian anarchist observes:

The State, therefore, is the most flagrant, the most cynical, and the most complete negation of humanity. It shatters the universal solidarity of all men on the earth, and brings some of them into association only for the purpose of destroying, conquering, and enslaving all the rest. It protects its own citizens only; it recognizes human rights, humanity, civilization within its own confines alone. Since it recognizes no rights outside itself, it logically arrogates to itself the right to exercise the most ferocious inhumanity toward all foreign populations, which it can plunder, exterminate, or enslave at will.³²²

³¹⁴ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 230.

³¹⁵ P.J. Proudhon, *Mysł ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 675.

³¹⁶ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 208.

³¹⁷ P.J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty jako przyczynek...*, p. 453.

³¹⁸ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 201.

³¹⁹ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, p. 345.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

³²² *Ibid.*, p. 352.

For Bakunin, just as for Proudhon, the institution of the state is the same as slavery: “Slavery, therefore, is the necessary consequence of the very existence of the State. Slavery may change its form or its name – its essence remains the same. Its essence may be expressed in these words: to be a slave is to be forced to work for someone else, just as to be a master is to live on someone else’s work.”³²³ According to this anarchist, a fundamental flaw of a nineteenth-century nation is the lack of faith in man, which he expresses as follows: “The State, like the Church, starts out with this fundamental supposition, that men are basically evil.”³²⁴ People, he continues, “in order to assure and safeguard this security, sacrifice, or renounce more or less of their own liberty, and, to the extent that they have sacrificed liberty for security and have thus become citizens, they become the slaves of the State.” Bakunin stresses: “We are therefore right in affirming that, from the viewpoint of the State, the good is born not of liberty but rather of the negation of liberty.”³²⁵ He further declares, “We today conclude in favour of the absolute need of destroying the states,”³²⁶ for “the State is nothing but this domination and this exploitation, well regulated and systematized,”³²⁷ while people are “absolute slaves to these laws.”³²⁸ About the society living in the state he writes concisely:

The State is the representative of [...] bourgeoisie³²⁹ and “in the name of the lie that goes under the name of ‘the public good’ though, self-evidently, it represents only the interest of the ruling class. In this manner the State appears to us an inevitable negation and annulment of all Liberty and every interest whether personal or general.”³³⁰ What is more, according to Bakunin,

The modern State is by its very nature a military State; and every military State must of necessity become a conquering, invasive State; to survive it must conquer or be conquered, for the simple reason that accumulated military power will suffocate if it does not find an outlet. Therefore the modern State must strive to be a huge and powerful State: this is the indispensable precondition for its survival.

He demonstrates this issue using Poland as an example, a nation oppressed by three occupiers: Russia, Prussia and Austria. Comparing a nineteenth-century state to his contemporary prototypes of present day corporations, he writes:

The modern state is analogous to capitalist production and bank speculation (which ultimately swallows up even capitalist production). For fear of bankruptcy, the latter

³²³ Ibid., p. 358.

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 359.

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 360.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 363.

³²⁷ Ibid., p. 371.

³²⁸ M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna*, [in:] idem, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, Warszawa 1965, p. 79.

³²⁹ M. Bakunin, *Przedmowa do drugiego zeszytu imperium knuto-germańskiego...*, p. 153.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 156.

must constantly broaden their scope at the expense of the small-scale production and speculation which they swallow up; they must strive to become unique, universal, worldwide. In just the same way the modern state, of necessity a military state, bears within itself the inevitable ambition to become a worldwide state. But a world-wide state, which obviously is unrealizable, could in any event exist only in the singular; two such states, side by side, are a logical impossibility.³³¹

Concluding, Bakunin emphasizes: "The State has brought and can bring nothing but evil to people"³³² His lack of confidence in the state he sums up in the following words: "We detest monarchy with all our hearts; we do not ask anything better than to see it overthrown all over Europe and the world, and like you we are convinced that its abolition is the indispensable condition of the emancipation of humanity."³³³

The critique of state policy and denial of humanism is what underlies Bakunin's negation of the state. With regard to the first issue he notes:

This explains why, since the birth of the State, the world of politics has always been and continues to be the stage for unlimited rascality and brigandage, brigandage and rascality which, by the way, are held in high esteem, since they are sanctified by patriotism, by the transcendent morality and the supreme interest of the State.³³⁴

In his arguments, he draws on Niccolo Machiavelli's work *The Prince*:

The great Italian political philosopher Machiavelli was the first to use these words, or at least the first to give them their true meaning and the immense popularity they still enjoy among our rulers today. A realistic and positive thinker if there ever was one, he was the first to understand that the great and powerful states could be founded and maintained by crime alone – by many great crimes, and by a radical contempt for all that goes under the name of honesty. He has written, explained, and proven these facts with terrifying frankness. And, since the idea of humanity was entirely unknown in his time; since the idea of fraternity – not human but religious – as preached by the Catholic Church, was at that time, as it always has been, nothing but a shocking irony, belied at every step by the Church's own actions; since in his time no one even suspected that there was such a thing as popular right, since the people had always been considered an inert and inept mass, the flesh of the State to be moulded and exploited at will, pledged to eternal obedience; since there was absolutely nothing in his time, in Italy or elsewhere, except for the State – Machiavelli concluded from these facts, with a good deal of logic, that the State was the supreme goal of all human existence, that

³³¹ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 181–182.

³³² Listy Bakunina do Hercena, Ogariowa i innych osób (Letters of Bakunin to Herzen and Ogarev), [in:] M. Bakunin, *Pisma wybrane*, vol. II, Warszawa 1965, p. 431.

³³³ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, p. 239.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

it must be served at any cost and that, since the interest of the State prevailed over everything else, a good patriot should not recoil from any crime in order to serve it. He advocates crime, he exhorts to crime, and makes it the *sine qua non* of political intelligence as well as of true patriotism. Whether the State bear the name of a monarchy or of a republic, crime will always be necessary for its preservation and its triumph. The State will doubtless change its direction and its object, but its nature will remain the same: always the energetic, permanent violation of justice, compassion, and honesty, for the welfare of the State.

Against the state policy thus perceived he sets respect for the rights and dignity of man, on which he writes as follows:

We are the children of the Revolution, and from it we have inherited the religion of humanity, which we must found upon the ruins of the religion of divinity. We believe in the rights of man, in the dignity and the necessary emancipation of the human species. We believe in human liberty and human fraternity founded upon justice. In a word, we believe in the triumph of humanity upon the earth. But this triumph, which we summon with all our longing, which we want to hasten with all our united efforts – since it is by its very nature the negation of the crime which is intrinsically the negation of humanity – this triumph cannot be achieved until crime ceases to be what it now is more or less everywhere today, *the real basis of the political existence of the nations absorbed and dominated by the ideas of the State*. And since it is now proven that no state could exist without committing crimes, or at least without contemplating and planning them, even when its impotence should prevent it from perpetrating crimes, we today conclude in favour of the *absolute need of destroying the states*. Or, if it is so decided, their radical and complete transformation so that, ceasing to be powers centralized and organized from the top down, by violence or by authority of some principle, they may recognize – with absolute liberty for all the parties to unite or not to unite, and with liberty for each of these always to leave a union even when freely entered into – from the bottom up, according to the real needs and the natural tendencies of the parties, through the free federation of individuals, associations, communes, districts, provinces, and nations within humanity.³³⁵

To this end, one has to reject everything that affirms the essence of the state: “In a word, we reject all legislation – privileged, licensed, official, and legal—and all authority, and influence, even though they may emanate from universal suffrage, for we are convinced that it can turn only to the advantage of a dominant minority of exploiters against the interests of the vast majority in subjection to them.”³³⁶

According to Bakunin, “In politics, just like in religion, people are merely a tool in the hands of exploiters. But the robbers and the robbed, oppressors and the oppressed

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 355–357.

³³⁶ M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna...*, pp. 88–89.

live side by side, ruled by a minority of those who are the true exploiters. Those are the individuals who, freed of any political and religious superstitions, consciously harm and oppress."³³⁷ He claims that

One would have to be an ass, an ignoramus, or a madman to imagine that any kind of constitution, even the most liberal and democratic, could change this relationship of the state to the people for the better. It might worsen it, it might make it even more onerous and ruinous, perhaps, though that would be difficult, since the evil has been taken to such an extreme. That it might liberate the people and improve their situation – that is just nonsense! As long as the empire exists, it will victimize our people. The only kind of constitution that would be useful for the people is the destruction of the empire.³³⁸

Bakunin does not believe that the existence of the state has any purpose, even should the state be democratic. He writes:

But, one might say, could the State, the democratic State, based upon the free suffrage of all its citizens, be the negation of their liberty? And why not? That would depend entirely on the mission and the power that the citizens surrendered to the State. A republican State, based upon universal suffrage, could be very despotic, more despotic even than the monarchical State, if, under the pretext of representing everybody's will, it were to bring down the weight of its collective power upon the will and the free movement of each of its members.³³⁹

Besides, Bakunin leaves no doubt as to the issue of the state. A wise and reasonable society will ultimately need no state, while from the standpoint of the state, it is best when society is not excessively enlightened. Firstly, he argues:

If we are to maintain the fiction of the free state issuing from a social contract, we must assume that the majority of its citizens must have had the prudence, the discernment, and the sense of justice necessary to elect the worthiest and the most capable men and to place them at the head of their government. But if a people had exhibited these qualities, not just once and by mere chance but at all times throughout its existence, in all the elections it had to make, would it not mean that the people itself, as a mass, had reached so high a degree of morality and of culture that it no longer had need of either government or state? Such a people would not drag out a meaningless existence, giving free rein for all its instincts; out of its life, justice and public order would rise spontaneously and naturally. The State, in it, would cease to be the providence, the guardian, the educator, the regulator of society. As it renounced all its repressive power and sank

³³⁷ M. Bakunin, *Przedmowa do drugiego zeszytu imperium knuto-germańskiego...*, p. 163.

³³⁸ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, p. 239.

³³⁹ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, p. 348.

to the subordinate position assigned to it by Proudhon, it would turn into a mere business office, a sort of central accounting bureau at the service of society.

Looking at the “good state,” Bakunin draws attention to the true intentions of those in authority:

There is no doubt that such a political organization, or rather such a reduction of political action in favour of the liberty of social life, would be a great benefit to society, but it would in no way satisfy the persistent champions of the State. To them, the State, as providence, as director of the social life, dispenser of justice, and regulator of public order, is a necessity. In other words, whether they admit it or not, whether they call themselves republicans, democrats, or even socialists, they always must have available a more or less ignorant, immature, incompetent people, or, bluntly speaking, a kind of *canaille* to govern. This would make them, without doing violence to their lofty altruism and modesty, keep the highest places for themselves, so as always to devote themselves to the common good, of course. As the privileged guardians of the human flock, strong in their virtuous devotion and their superior intelligence, while prodding the people along and urging it on for its own good and well-being, they would be in a position to do a little discreet fleecing of that flock for their own benefit. Any logical and straightforward theory of the State is essentially founded upon the principle of *authority*, that is, the eminently theological, metaphysical, and political idea that the masses, *always* incapable of governing themselves, must at all times submit to the beneficent yoke of a wisdom and a justice imposed upon them, in some way or other, from above.³⁴⁰

Moreover, he points out that people living in a pre-state condition “in order to assure and safeguard this security, sacrifice, or renounce more or less of their own liberty, and, to the extent that they have sacrificed liberty for security and have thus become citizens, they become the slaves of the State.” By inference, he argues that “from the viewpoint of the State, the good is born not of liberty but rather of the negation of liberty.”³⁴¹ According to Bakunin, the state with the government could not safeguard every man’s interests, with liberty being nothing but a lie in such an institution.³⁴² In the spirit of this negation, he continues: “Thus it follows that no external legislation and no authority are necessary; for that matter, one is inseparable from the other, while both tend toward the enslavement of society and the degradation of the legislators themselves.”³⁴³

And finally the last of the great theorists of anarchism, Peter Kropotkin. In the state, he sees a machinery designed to exploit society by a stratum which, although small in numbers, controls the capital and exerts a huge impact on the state governance at the level of administration, government as well as religion. Kropotkin writes: “The State

³⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 367–369.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 360.

³⁴² Cf. M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, p. 233.

³⁴³ M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna...*, p. 84.

appears to us as a society for the mutual insurance of the landlord, the warrior, the judge, and the priest, constituted in order to enable every one of them to assert his respective authority over the people and to exploit the poor.”³⁴⁴ In exploring the historical aspects from a scientific point of view as regards the state and people’s tendency to cooperation, Kropotkin maintains: “We see it in the Institution, developed in the history of human societies to prevent the direct association among men to shackle the development of local and individual initiative, to crush existing liberties, to prevent their new blossoming – all this in order to subject the masses to the will of minorities.”³⁴⁵ At the very onset of his considerations concerned with the state, Kropotkin observes that the state represents “an obstacle to the social revolution, the greatest hindrance to the birth of a society based on equality and liberty.”³⁴⁶ It is merely one of the forms “assumed by society in the course of history.”³⁴⁷ Kropotkin makes a very clear distinction between “state” and “government,” showing them as two separate institutions:

On the other hand the State has also been confused with Government. *Since* there can be no State without government, it has sometimes been said that what one must aim at is the absence of government and not the abolition of the State. However, it seems to me that State and government are two concepts of a different order. The State idea means something quite different from the idea of government. It not only includes the existence of a power situated above society, but also of a territorial concentration as well as the concentration in the hands of a few of many functions in the life of societies.³⁴⁸

What is then the state for Kropotkin? This institution, he explains, is a ruling minority which seeks to “make these free men into serfs, into subjects.”³⁴⁹ According to him, “the States’ wars had as their objective the destruction of these [individual] liberties, the submission of the individual, the annihilation of the free contract, and the uniting of men in a universal slavery to king, judge and priest – to the State.”³⁵⁰ For the Russian anarchist, the state means the power of a king, the application of law by courts, and religion, whose observance is guarded by the priest. In his arguments he draws on history:

In the course of the sixteenth century, the modern barbarians were to destroy all that civilization of the cities of the Middle Ages. These barbarians did not succeed in annihilating it, but in halting its progress at least two or three centuries. They launched it in a different direction, in which humanity is struggling at this moment without knowing how to escape. They subjected the individual. They deprived him of all his liberties,

³⁴⁴ P. Kropotkin, *Nauka współczesna i anarchizm...*, p. 71.

³⁴⁵ P. Kropotkin, *Państwo i jego rola historyczna*, Warszawa 1924, p. 55.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

they expected him to forget all his unions based on free argument and free initiative. Their aim was to level the whole of society to a common submission to the master. [...] And who are these barbarians? It is the State: the Triple Alliance, finally constituted, of the military chief, the Roman judge and the priest – the three constituting a mutual assurance for domination – the three, united in one power which will command in the name of the interests of society – and will crush that same society.³⁵¹

According to Kropotkin, the state dominated over the village, took control of trade and economically oppressed towns. In his conclusion he writes: “the spirit of initiative and free association was dying out and making way for the spirit of discipline, and pyramidal authoritarian organization.”³⁵² Kropotkin stresses that what affirms the essential features of the state are the rules governing “subordination and discipline.” In his view, the state is the first and the last bastion of slavery. “Historians are unanimous in declaring that extreme poverty exists everywhere. In those places where serfdom had been abolished, it is reconstituted under a thousand new guises; and where it had not yet been destroyed, it emerges under the aegis of ancient slavery or worse.”³⁵³ Elsewhere on this subject he further explicates: “The State demands from its subjects a direct, personal submission without intermediaries; it demands equality in slavery; it cannot admit of a State within a State.”³⁵⁴ According to Kropotkin, in the footsteps of slavery there went the destruction of social activity brought about by the centralization of the previous economic individualism of citizens and by embedding all human endeavours within the framework of legal and administrative decisions. This is what he writes about this dark side of the state:

The role of the nascent State in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in relation to the urban centres was to destroy the independence of the cities; to pillage the rich guilds of merchants and artisans; to concentrate in its hands the external commerce of the cities and ruin it; to lay hands on the internal administration of the guilds and subject internal commerce as well as all manufactures, in every detail to the control of a host of officials – and in this way to kill industry and the arts; by taking over the local militias and the whole municipal administration, crushing the weak in the interest of the strong by taxation, and ruining the countries by wars.³⁵⁵

To see the repercussions of these acts committed by the state, in Kropotkin’s view, one need not wait long. In analyzing several centuries of the existence of the state, the Russian sums up the damages the state has inflicted on human population. He asks and replies:

³⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 29–30.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 35.

³⁵³ Ibid., p. 41.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

Where were those turners, those watchmakers, those fitters who had made Nuremberg one of the glories of the Middle Ages for precision instruments? Talk about it to James Watt who two centuries later spent thirty years in vain, looking for a worker who could produce a more or less circular cylinder for his steam engine. Consequently his machine remained at the project stage for thirty years because there were no craftsmen able to construct it. Such was the role of the State in the industrial field. All it was capable of doing was to tighten the screw for the worker, depopulate the countryside, spread misery in the towns, reduce [millions of human] beings to a state of starvation and impose industrial serfdom. And it is these pitiful remains of the old guilds, these organisms which have been battered and over-taxed, these useless cogs of the administrative machine, which the ever scientific economists are so ignorant as to confuse with the guilds of the Middle Ages.³⁵⁶

Apart from this destructive intervention of the state in the financial, social and economic relationships between people, Kropotkin also discerns how the state, utterly conscious in its doing so, burdens man with the costs of its functioning. The taxes, for I am referring to them, Kropotkin associates with an excessive fiscal burden placed on man which is then followed by such a distribution of the state budget as to render it impossible to eliminate the disproportions in wealth among the social strata. On those issues, Kropotkin writes: "Observe next taxation – an institution originating purely with the State – this formidable weapon used by the State, in Europe as in the young societies of the two Americas, to keep the masses under its heel, to favour its minions, to ruin the majority for the benefit of the rulers and to maintain the old divisions and castes."³⁵⁷ However, it is not taxes that Kropotkin finds the most egregious. This anarchist, who undeniably conducted a very thorough analysis of statism, makes the starkest indictment of the existence of the state not in its levying taxes but in the model of state education. He writes the following: "And finally what is even worse than all that has just been enumerated, is the fact that the education we all receive from the State, at school and after, has so warped our minds that the very notion of freedom ends up by being lost, and disguised in servitude."³⁵⁸ According to Kropotkin, "With our minds already narrowed in our youth, enslaved by the past in our mature age and till the grave, we hardly dare to think. If a new idea is mentioned – before venturing on an opinion of our own, we consult musty books a hundred years old, to know what ancient masters thought on the subject."³⁵⁹

In concluding his arguments on the subject of social damages caused by the very existence of the state, Kropotkin recalls what the state is and indicates what constitutes its aim. On the subject of the first issue, apart from the already quoted arguments stating the state's negative effects, he writes: "And we know an institution which has

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 51.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 53.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

³⁵⁹ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobycie chleba...*, s. 186.

a long past going back several thousand years cannot lend itself to a function opposed to history for which and by which it was developed in the course of history.”³⁶⁰ Moreover, Kropotkin believes that from its very inception, the aim of the state has been focused on one thing and that is “to crush freedom, to crush the individual, to establish oppression on a legal basis, to create monopolists, to lead minds astray by accustoming them to servitude.”³⁶¹ In his writings the Russian anarchist does not hesitate to compare the state to death itself, to the end, if not of man, then of any meaning to his existence. He is very critical while giving his summary of the centuries of statism: “[...] The State asserts itself, grows, destroys all culture and ... it is death.”³⁶² In predicting the future, he says that man has to face the choice of either living in a state with all its dark implications or living in a society of free individuals. He writes:

Either the State for ever, crushing individual and local life, taking over in all fields of human activity, bringing with it all its wars and domestic struggles for power, its palace revolutions which only replace one tyrant by another, and inevitably at the end of this development there is ... death!

Or the destruction of States, and new life starting again in thousands of centres on the principles of the lively initiative of the individual and groups and that of free agreement.

Leaving the decision to the man himself, he concludes his argument in just a few words: “The choice lies with you!”³⁶³

As one can see, all the thinkers of anarchism espoused a very negative approach to the state. We know that in taking this course Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin were prompted by various reasons. Each of them focused on a different – negative – factor associated with the existence and operations of the state. Indeed, one can say that each of the great anarchists indicated different, I shall call them “mortal sins” of the state, which determined why they espoused such views and not others. Proudhon mentioned several reasons which had prompted him to call for the abolition of the state. For this anarchist what above all contributed to the flawed nature of the state had been state religion, the centralization of administration and deprivation of man’s dignity. For Bakunin the state’s mortal sins were eminently the following: the policy of those in authority rooted in the “guidelines” which Niccolo Machiavelli devised for his prince; restriction of freedom and negation of humanism. And finally Kropotkin for whom the worst evil of the state was state education, closely followed in this ranking by the restrictions imposed on free development of society; the centralization of most of the aspects of human life, with those aspects being supervised by the state administration; restriction of liberty; and the special arrangement between those in authority and the affluent social strata which supported this authority.

³⁶⁰ P. Kropotkin, *Państwo i jego rola historyczna (The State: Its Historic Role)...*, p. 55.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

Revolution

All theorists of anarchism, with none being an exception, were permeated with the idea of revolution. However, they defined it differently. Proudhon sought a revolution that would unfold in human minds, a moral and social rebirth of man to freedom and inner responsibility. The revolution that Bakunin craved was real, international, bloody and nihilistic. Moreover, Kropotkin in preparing himself thoroughly for it considered two courses: peaceful and revolutionary. Eventually he inclined towards the latter. He envisioned it to be more of an armed and enlightened revolution than a nihilistic uprising of demons and devils.

Proudhon was the first to voice his views on the revolution; in his writings he calls for a bloody revolutionary dismantling of useless state and public institutions. He pushes for “the complete, immediate, abolition of courts and tribunals, without any substitution or transition.” He asserts that it is one of “the prime necessities of the Revolution.”³⁶⁴ About the revolutionary act itself he writes as follows:

What then is the Revolution, completed abroad as well as at Home? Capitalistic and proprietary exploitation stopped everywhere, the wage system abolished, equal and just exchange guaranteed, value constituted, cheapness assured, the principle of protection changed, and the markets of the world opened to the producers of all nations; consequently the barriers struck down, the ancient law of nations replaced by commercial agreements; police, judiciary, administration, everywhere committed to the hands of workers; the economic organization replacing the governmental and military system in the colonies as well as in the great cities; finally, the free and universal comingling of races under the law of contract only: that is the Revolution.³⁶⁵

Proudhon maintains:

The people no longer want this coin of monarchy: they understand that, whatever phraseology is used, feudal system, governmental system, military system, system of

³⁶⁴ P.J. Proudhon, *Myśl ogólna rewolucji w XIX wieku...*, p. 674.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 700.

police, laws and tribunals, and system of exploitation, corruption, lying and poverty, are all synonymous. Finally they know that in doing away with rent and interest, the last remnants [sic] of the old slavery, the Revolution, at one blow, does away with the sword of the executioner, the blade of justice, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the customs officer, the erasing knife of the bureaucrat, all those insignia of government which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel.³⁶⁶

This great individualist also predicts the stages of revolution. In enumerating them, he asserts that “the most decisive result of the Revolution is, after having organized labour and property, to do away with political centralization, in a word, with the state, and as a consequence to put an end to diplomatic relations among nations, as soon as they subscribe to the revolutionary compact.”³⁶⁷ His arguments and demands are for a revolution in which there is: “No authority, no government, not even popular, that is the Revolution.”³⁶⁸

On the subject of revolution, Bakunin is of a different mind. In this context, this natural destroyer writes: “I am a supporter of the Paris Commune, which, for all the bloodletting it suffered at the hands of monarchical and clerical reaction, has nonetheless grown more enduring and more powerful in the hearts and minds of Europe’s proletariat. I am its supporter; above all, because it was a bold, clearly formulated negation of the State.”³⁶⁹ In *Confession* to Tsar he writes:

I was no longer myself, the demon of destruction was in me; the will, or perhaps self-will, was growing in strength as the difficulties kept multiplying; the countless obstacles not only failed to terrify me but instead inflamed in me the desire for the Revolution, the delirium of tireless activity. I was doomed, I felt it and embraced it with joy. Already then life had been hard on me.”³⁷⁰ In the context of an armed revolution Bakunin gives thought to just one issue, in a sense a personal question: “Would I have enough strength of character and enough anger – I am not saying to commit– but to begin the murderous deed.”³⁷¹ Moreover, on the act of destruction itself, he writes the following: “For there can be no revolution without widespread and passionate destruction, a destruction salutary and fruitful precisely because out of it, and by means of it alone, new worlds are born and arise.”³⁷² This infinite anarchist while “loving and caring for human liberty,”³⁷³ argues that “only revolt and struggle can save us.”³⁷⁴

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 707–708.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 706.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 594.

³⁶⁹ M. Bakunin, *Przedmowa do drugiego zeszytu imperium knuto-germańskiego...*, p. 145.

³⁷⁰ M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź...*, p. 547.

³⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 502–503.

³⁷² M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 203–204.

³⁷³ M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna...*, p. 78.

³⁷⁴ M. Bakunin, *Dodatek „A” do pracy Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 361–365.

Bakunin's revolution is not the first step to a better life. It is not a revolution during which a happy and prosperous future would be created for man. About himself and those like him he writes: "We are called upon to destroy not to build; the building will be done by others who are better cleverer and fresher than we."³⁷⁵ So, what kind of revolution was it supposed to be? Above all, it was to be a "Social Revolution" written in capital letters, which would not constrain itself only to a single nation but would become "an international revolution."³⁷⁶ Bakunin believes that it should be "decisive" and "radical,"³⁷⁷ "with a fiery red propaganda," "horrifying, unprecedented, although more against things than people," such as to "permeate the blood and life of a nation."³⁷⁸

He is convinced that in order to foment a revolution,

We must link together the best peasants of all the villages, districts, and, if possible, regions, the progressive individuals, the natural revolutionaries of the Russian peasant world, and, where possible, create the same vital link between the factory workers and the peasantry. [...]

We must convince them that an invincible force lives in the people, which nothing and no one can withstand, and that if it has not yet liberated the people it is because it is powerful only when it is concentrated and acts simultaneously, everywhere, jointly, in concert, and until now it has not done so.³⁷⁹

In addition,

That requires a popular ideal, which always develops historically, from the depths of popular instinct, an instinct nurtured, broadened, and illuminated by a series of significant events, painful and bitter experiences – it requires a general conception of one's rights and a profound, passionate, one might say religious, belief in those rights. When such an ideal and such a belief are found in a people together with a poverty that drives them to desperation, then a social revolution is inevitable, it is imminent, and there is no force that can prevent it.³⁸⁰

Bakunin is certain that for the revolution to succeed one needs to "carry revolutionary propaganda from the cities to the villages, to convince the peasants to join the movement so that the revolution could sweep the entire nation gaining thus on impetus; it will no longer be merely a city revolution so easy for others to squash."³⁸¹

³⁷⁵ M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź...*, pp. 501–502.

³⁷⁶ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, p. 235.

³⁷⁷ M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź...*, pp. 529–530.

³⁷⁸ M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź...*, pp. 529–530.

³⁷⁹ M. Bakunin, *Dodatek „A” do pracy Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 367–370.

³⁸⁰ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, pp. 209–210.

³⁸¹ M. Bakunin, *Spowiedź...*, p. 573.

In the madness of destruction, Bakunin wanted “to expel the whole nobility, the whole of the hostile clergy, after confiscating without exception all landed estates. I wanted to distribute part of these among the landless peasants in order to incite them to revolution, and to use the rest as a source of additional financing for the revolution.” About his revolutionary experience in Chechia he writes:

I wanted to destroy all castles, to burn all files of documents in all of Bohemia without exception, including all administrative, legal, and governmental papers, and to proclaim all mortgages paid, as well as all other debts not exceeding a certain sum [...]. All clubs, newspapers, and all manifestations of an anarchy of mere talk were to be abolished, all submitted to one dictatorial power; the young people and all able-bodied men divided into categories according to their character, ability, and inclination were to be sent throughout the country to provide a provisional revolutionary and military organization. The secret society directing the revolution was to consist of three groups, independent of and unknown to each other: one for the townspeople, another for the youth, and a third for the peasants.³⁸²

Kropotkin also follows a revolutionary road, albeit different than the one espoused by Bakunin. Seeking to eliminate the state by an almost visionary and constructive method, Kropotkin focuses first and foremost on having a successful revolutionary undertaking and not, like Bakunin, on a spectacular power of destruction. This is what he says:

It is to put an end to these iniquities that we rebel. But we expect more from the Revolution. We see that the worker compelled to struggle painfully for bare existence, is reduced to ignorance of these higher delights, the highest within man's reach, of science, and especially of scientific discovery; of art, and especially of artistic creation. It is in order to obtain these joys for all, which are now reserved to a few; in order to give leisure and the possibility of developing intellectual capacities, that the social revolution must guarantee daily bread to all. After bread has been secured, leisure is the supreme aim.³⁸³

Kropotkin does not believe that stirring a revolution aimed at abolishing the state will be difficult, but he is aware of the problem involved in keeping it under control, so that it would not degenerate into revolutionary terrorism and state terror. His primary goal is an ultimate triumph of a well-organized revolution devised in such a way as to make it possible to bring into reality the happy and prosperous future of people in a stateless system from the very first day on. To be sure, it is a creative and constructive process which will commence on the first day of the revolution and which will require not only well-organized armed actions but also building a future for a free man

³⁸² Ibid., pp. 530–533.

³⁸³ P. Kropotkin, *Zdobywie chleba...*, pp. 81–82.

living in a free stateless society. If we were to ask Kropotkin, why he had chosen such a method, his answer would be “a revolution is more than the destruction of a political system. It implies the awakening of human intelligence, the increasing of the inventive spirit tenfold, a hundredfold; it is the dawn of a new, science – the science of men like Laplace, Lamarck, Lavoisier. It is a revolution in the minds of men, more than in their institutions.”³⁸⁴

The revolutionary elements germinated in anarchist thought from its very first days. Apart from Proudhon (whose proposal we could define today as all-embracing transformations leading from the state to an anti-state, and which would unfold in a peaceful or perhaps even democratic way, after assuming control over the state) there is this palpable state of revolutionary fever in the other two anarchists. Bakunin wreaked havoc in the mind, in his works, in the salons of Europe and on barricades. Also Kropotkin wanted revolution, yet what held him back and induced him to restraint were his concerns about the disastrous ramifications of the nihilism embodied by the demons and devils. He deluded himself that revolution could be programmed, controlled, and if need be, suppressed. Nothing could be more erroneous. Revolution is a condition. Once on the move, it becomes a self-driving *perpetuum mobile* which can only be stopped by an even greater destruction and power. One way or the other, revolution will swallow not only its children but also its protectors. Both Proudhon and Kropotkin knew that and so did Bakunin but, weakened by inaction, he abandoned any scruples about unleashing the passion of destruction.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 167.

Freedom

All the creators of the doctrine of anarchism believe that freedom is the highest gift and an inalienable human right. Proudhon stresses that “it is might which comes from the synthesis of all human qualities”³⁸⁵ and “it is the great arbitrator, the highest judge of human fate.”³⁸⁶ For him, liberty is an absolute right. He writes:

Liberty recognizes no law, no motive, no principle, no cause, no limit, no end, except itself... Placing itself above everything else, it waits for a chance to escape ... all laws but its own, to insult everything but itself, to make the world serve its fancies and the natural order its whims. To the universe that surrounds it it says: no; to the laws of nature and logic that obsess it: no; to the senses that tempt it: no; to the love that seduces it: no; to the priest's voice, to the prince's order, to the crowd's cries: no, no, no. It is the eternal adversary that opposes any idea and any force that aims to dominate it; the indomitable insurgent that has faith in nothing but itself, respect and esteem for nothing but itself, that will not abide even the idea of God except insofar as it recognizes itself in God as its own antithesis. And yet despite such a critical and destructive attitude, liberty constitutes the power of affirmation in equal measure as negation, equally of creation as destruction.³⁸⁷

Liberty thus perceived is for Proudhon

The faculty of acting and of not acting, which, through any choice or determination whatever [...] abandons its indifference and becomes will [...] liberty, like intelligence is naturally, unformed faculty, which gets its value and character later from external impressions – a faculty, therefore, which is negative at the beginning, but which gradually defines and outlines itself by exercise, – I mean, by education.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁵ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 257.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 274–275.

³⁸⁸ P.J. Proudhon, *System sprzeczności ekonomicznych...*, p. 344.

Freedom for Proudhon also implies the right to be good and evil. For as he notes: “Depending on what path he chooses, man can use his liberty to endow his form, his thoughts, his language, his deeds, customs and creations with features which are either those of great poetry or of villainy; and this is what separates him more than intelligence itself from other beings and manifests his power over himself.”³⁸⁹

He asserts:

The function of liberty will thus be to place a free human being apart from any kind of manifestations, aims and the laws governing matter, as well as life and spirit; it is to afford him, as it were, a character that is supernatural. Hence, man, who is guided solely by his free will, will be able, if this is his wish, to become different from what nature has made him; he will be the one to determine whether to change, improve, or transform; and should his wish be to surrender his liberty and intelligence to his lusts, he is free to disgrace his person, debase himself and sink to the level of his purely beastly nature³⁹⁰

For Proudhon, freedom is then a free resolve of man, or a “collective force arising from having combined in one being an organism, life, intelligence and all thus engendered feelings, passions and ideas that emerge out of this combination.”³⁹¹ He is confident that

Man does not want evil. He dreams of lofty and beautiful things. With all the energy of his freedom, he searches for that which is ideal. He endeavours to realize this ideal always proportionately to his knowledge; first he realizes it in himself through Justice, then in objects through art. This is how liberty contributes to metaphysics, theology, poetry, visual arts, politics, social economy, science and industry³⁹²

For Proudhon “all people are equal and free,” and for this reason he is so adamant in rejecting the state and government, it being its ineluctable consequence. Speaking in the “spirit of negation of the government,” Proudhon, as we know, characterizes in three words his vision of the future where absolute liberty would replace parties and authority.³⁹³ According to this anarchist, the primary source of man’s well-being is “the education of intelligence and liberty.”³⁹⁴ The road to welfare he describes as follows:

Man can attain welfare only in proportion as his reason and his liberty not only progress in harmony, but never halt in their development. Now, as the progress of liberty,

³⁸⁹ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 258.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 258–259.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 286–287.

³⁹² P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 362.

³⁹³ P. J. Proudhon, *Zwierzenia rewolucjonisty...*, pp. 455–462.

³⁹⁴ P.J. Proudhon, *System sprzeczności ekonomicznych...*, p. 343.

like that of reason, is indefinite, and as, moreover, these two powers are closely connected and solidary, it must be concluded that liberty is the more perfect the more closely it defines itself in conformity with the laws of reason, which are those of things, and that, if this reason were infinite, liberty itself would become infinite. In other words, the fullness of liberty lies in the fullness of reason: *summa lex summa libertas*.³⁹⁵

Proudhon believes that in principle “Man is free, he cannot cease to be such, precisely because he is composed; because the law of any compound is to produce a resultant which is its own power.”³⁹⁶

Bakunin sees the essence of freedom in the same vein as Proudhon. This subject of tsar believes that “freedom within the state is a lie.”³⁹⁷ He therefore advocates the abolition of the state and the realization of freedom only on its ruins. What is more, for this Russian anarchist if there is no freedom, “there is no intelligence, no justice, no prosperity, no humanity.”³⁹⁸ According to him, “liberty should be conceived of, most comprehensively and most broadly, as the goal of human historical progress.”³⁹⁹ The freedom enjoyed by nineteenth-century American society Bakunin sees as a model to follow. He writes:

North America alone is still largely an exception to this rule. Yet far from disproving the rule, this exception actually serves to confirm it. If the workers in that country are paid more than those in Europe, and if no one there dies of hunger, and if, at the same time, the antagonism between classes hardly exists there; if all its workers are citizens and if the mass of its citizens truly constitutes one single body politic, and if a good primary and even secondary education is widespread among the masses, it should no doubt be largely attributed to that traditional spirit of freedom which the early colonists brought with them from England. Heightened, tested, strengthened in the great religious struggles, the principle of individual independence and of communal and provincial *self-government* was still further favoured by the rare circumstance that once it was transplanted into a wilderness, delivered, so to speak, from the obsessions of the past it could create a new world – the world of liberty. And liberty is so great a magician, endowed with so marvellous a power of productivity, that under the inspiration of this spirit alone, North America was able within less than a century to equal, and even surpass, the civilization of Europe.⁴⁰⁰

That is why Bakunin argues with full determination: “In the name of this liberty – which we recognize as the only basis for, and the only legitimate creator of, any

³⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 349.

³⁹⁶ P.J. Proudhon, *O sprawiedliwości w rewolucji i Kościele...*, p. 255.

³⁹⁷ M. Bakunin, *Państwowość a anarchia...*, p. 233.

³⁹⁸ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, pp. 247–248.

³⁹⁹ M. Bakunin, *Przedmowa do drugiego zeszytu imperium knuto-germańskiego...*, pp. 156–157.

⁴⁰⁰ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, pp. 253–254.

organization, economic or political – we shall always protest against anything that may in any way resemble communism or state socialism.”⁴⁰¹ For him a free man in a liberated society is an individual freed from religious beliefs, for as he observes: “If God exists, man is a slave; but man can and must be free, therefore God does not exist.”⁴⁰² For Bakunin, “The last phase and the supreme goal of all human development is liberty.”⁴⁰³ Hence, he seeks to create “the kingdom of freedom”⁴⁰⁴ for man whom he perceives “as the most individualistic being on earth.”⁴⁰⁵ On the subject of the limits to liberty he is intransigent: “Liberty is indivisible; one cannot curtail a part of it without killing all of it.” He goes on to say: “This little part you are curtailing is the very essence of my liberty; it is all of it. Through a natural, necessary, and irresistible movement, all of my liberty is concentrated precisely in the part, small as it may be, which you curtail.”⁴⁰⁶ For this thinker, “The liberty of man consists solely in this: that he obeys natural laws because he has himself recognized them as such, and not because they have been externally imposed upon him by any extrinsic will whatever, divine or human, collective or individual.”⁴⁰⁷ Man himself is for Bakunin a rational being who listens to people of authority. He is convinced that man should make decisions only by himself. In drawing on specific examples, the Russian revolutionist suggests the course of action through the prism of his own person. He writes:

Does it follow that I reject all authority? Far from me such a thought. In the matter of boots, I refer to the authority of the bootmaker; concerning houses, canals, or railroads, I consult that of the architect or engineer. For such or such special knowledge I apply to such or such a savant. But I allow neither the bootmaker nor the architect nor the savant to impose his authority upon me. I listen to them freely and with all the respect merited by their intelligence, their character, their knowledge, reserving always my incontestable right of criticism censure. I do not content myself with consulting authority in any special branch; I consult several; I compare their opinions, and choose that which seems to me the soundest. But I recognize no infallible authority, even in special questions; consequently, whatever respect I may have for the honesty and the sincerity of such or such an individual, I have no absolute faith in any person. Such a faith would be fatal to my reason, to my liberty, and even to the success of my undertakings; it would immediately transform me into a stupid slave, an instrument of the will and interests of others.

If I bow before the authority of the specialists and avow my readiness to follow, to a certain extent and as long as may seem to me necessary, their indications and even their directions, it is because their authority is imposed upon me by no one, neither by

401 Ibid, pp. 277–278.

402 Ibid., p. 283.

403 Ibid., p. 315.

404 Ibid., p. 334.

405 Ibid., p. 343.

406 Ibid., pp. 347–348.

407 M. Bakunin, *Imperium knuto-germańskie a rewolucja społeczna...*, p. 81.

men nor by God. Otherwise I would repel them with horror, and bid the devil take their counsels, their directions, and their services, certain that they would make me pay, by the loss of my liberty and self-respect, for such scraps of truth, wrapped in a multitude of lies, as they might give me. I bow before the authority of special men because it is imposed upon me by my own reason. I am conscious of my inability to grasp, in all its details and positive developments, any very large portion of human knowledge. The greatest intelligence would not be equal to a comprehension of the whole. Thence results, for science as well as for industry, the necessity of the division and association of labour. I receive and I give – such is human life. Each directs and is directed in his turn. Therefore there is no fixed and constant authority, but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary, and, above all, voluntary authority and subordination. This same reason forbids me, then, to recognize a fixed, constant, and universal authority, because there is no universal man, no man capable of grasping in that wealth of detail, without which the application of science to life is impossible, all the sciences, all the branches of social life. And if such universality could ever be realized in a single man, and if he wished to take advantage thereof to impose his authority upon us, it would be necessary to drive this man out of society, because his authority would inevitably reduce all the others to slavery and imbecility. I do not think that society ought to maltreat men of genius as it has done hitherto; but neither do I think it should indulge them too far, still less accord them any privileges or exclusive rights whatsoever; and that for three reasons: first, because it would often mistake a charlatan for a man of genius; second, because, through such a system of privileges, it might transform into a charlatan even a real man of genius, demoralize him, and degrade him; and, finally, because it would establish a master over itself. To sum up. We recognize, then, the absolute authority of science, because the sole object of science is the mental reproduction, as well-considered and systematic as possible, of the natural laws inherent in the material, intellectual, and moral life of both the physical and the social worlds, these two worlds constituting, in fact, but one and the same natural world. Outside of this only legitimate authority, legitimate because rational and in harmony with human liberty, we declare all other authorities false, arbitrary and fatal. We recognize the absolute authority of science, but we reject the infallibility and universality of the savant. In our church – if I may be permitted to use for a moment an expression which I so detest: Church and State are two bêtes noires – in our church.⁴⁰⁸

In describing himself as “an impassioned seeker of the truth,” he writes:

I am a fanatical lover of liberty. I consider it the only environment in which human intelligence, dignity, and happiness can thrive and develop. I do not mean that formal liberty which is dispensed, measured out, and regulated by the State, for this is a perennial lie and represents nothing but the privilege of a few, based upon the servitude of the remainder.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 84–87.

Ultimately, this anarchist expresses his desires. About this value he holds in the highest esteem, he writes:

No, I mean the only liberty worthy of the name, the liberty which implies the full development of all the material, intellectual, and moral capacities latent in every one of us; the liberty which knows no other restrictions but those set by the laws of our own nature consequently there are, properly speaking, no restrictions, sine these laws are not imposed upon us by any legislator from outside, alongside, or above ourselves. These laws are subjective, inherent in ourselves; they constitute the very basis of our being. Instead of seeking to curtail them, we should see in them the real condition and the effective cause of our liberty – that liberty of each man which does not find another man’s freedom a boundary but a confirmation and vast extension of his own; liberty through solidarity, in equality. I mean liberty triumphant over brute force and, what has always been the real expression of such force, the principle of authority I mean liberty which will shatter all the idols in heaven and on earth and will then build a new world of mankind in solidarity, upon the ruins of all the churches and all the states.

Bakunin also makes his views known on the matter of economic preferences. He asserts:

I am a convinced advocate of economic and social equality because I know that, without it, liberty, justice, human dignity, morality, and the well-being of individuals, as well as the prosperity of nations, will never amount to more than a pack of lies. But since I stand for liberty as the primary condition of mankind, I believe that equality must be established in the world by the spontaneous federation of communes, to replace the domineering paternalistic State.⁴⁰⁹

On the issue of liberty of not only a single nation but of all nations, he writes the following: “Recognition of the absolute right of each nation, great or small, of each people, weak or strong, of each province, of each commune, to complete autonomy, provided its internal constitution is not a threat or a danger to the autonomy and liberty of neighbouring countries.”⁴¹⁰

A decisive opponent of the law of inheritance, Bakunin has limitless faith in man: “Only man has the ability to think abstractly, a faculty which he has developed over centuries by exercising his mind.”⁴¹¹ Still, he is of the opinion that people should receive education:

A truly excellent education would have to be much more individualized than it is today. What we mean is that it should be based on the principle of free development

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 141–143.

⁴¹⁰ M. Bakunin, *Federalizm, socjalizm i antyteologizm...*, p. 245.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 307.

of individuals and on respect for the liberty of those whom we educate. The same holds for children. Upbringing should not serve to tame their nature, mind and heart; it should instead ensure a free development of all the powers of spirit, foster their spontaneous activities. The only aim of upbringing and education should be to realize the principles of liberty; upbringing and education cannot be based on any other cult but the cult of liberty, on any other moral principles but the liberty of an individual and of all people, not on the justice spoken of by lawyers but on ordinary human justice; education should not draw on the authority of theology and metaphysics, but only on the authority of an ordinary mind and science; it should develop respect for labour, both intellectual and manual, while labour should be the obligation of all people, the only fundament of liberty, the only source of human dignity and people's rights. In a system in which economic and social relations would be completely in accord with the principles of justice, this kind of education would lead to disappearance of the allegedly natural differences between people, were it to encompass all men and women.⁴¹²

The last of the great anarchists, like his predecessors, also advocates absolute freedom for man. For Kropotkin, for I am referring to him, "Freedom remains still the wisest cure for freedom's temporary inconvenience."⁴¹³ He associates freedom with the lack of fear. In his view, "A man forced to think over the question: 'I have to renounce pleasure because of the fear of punishment,' is not a free man. We claim that mankind can and should free itself from the fear of punishment; that it can organize such a system, where anxiety about receiving punishment, or even resenting punishment will disappear."⁴¹⁴ As such, freedom for this anarchist means "the possibility of acting, free of the fear of social punishment (physical coercion, fear of starvation, and even a reprimand, as long as it is not given by a friend)."⁴¹⁵

Kropotkin considers freedom from various perspectives. He writes:

Leaving aside unconscious acts, let us consider only those carried out consciously (law, religion and penal systems attempt to affect only such acts). Every act committed consciously is preceded by some sort of discussion in one's mind, where various thoughts compete with one another, e.g. "I will go for a stroll" ..."But no, I can't, I am already seeing a friend," or "My wife and children won't be happy having to stay alone at home," or, for that matter "I will lose my position if I don't go to work." The last of those examples, as we can see, comes from the fear of punishment, while the other two involve only the man himself, his habit of being reliable or his affection.⁴¹⁶

The theorists of anarchism approached freedom with an almost mathematical precision. Allowing no fractions, they focused solely on the whole. This notion, not

⁴¹² Ibid., pp. 392–393.

⁴¹³ P. A. Kropotkin, *Wspomnienia rewolucjonisty...*, p. 429.

⁴¹⁴ P. Kropotkin, *Spolnictwo a socjalizm wolnościowy*, Warszawa 1930, p. 23.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

unlike the Holy Grail, was an attainable dream for which they were willing to sacrifice everything: to destroy the state, start a revolution, to extinguish one's life, to have faith in man. Being aware, after all, of what human characters could be, anarchists assumed *a priori*: the state is to be blamed and declared: human nature is one and unchangeable; basically it is good and inclined to all these behaviours which appear to be so desirable today, and yet they have almost been forgotten.

Moreover, anarchists had great expectations with respect to freedom. They saw it as a cure for all kinds of political and social ailments which they had to face in the nineteenth century. To the nations oppressed by absolute power they offered freedom, not unlike one would offer somebody a prohibited drug. In exchange they wanted only one thing: rebellion and action. The oppressed they comforted and supported; however, they strongly advised against striking for national independence. They maintained that freedom could not have rivals. Bakunin went the furthest in these views as he believed that either all, and that implied every man in the world, would be free, or no man would ever enjoy the delights that freedom affords.

On Doing the Emblems on the Tank

As we know, a motorcycle (especially older ones which were mass-produced) typically has the emblems of its make placed symmetrically on both sides of the tank. The information coming from them allows one to decipher quickly the make of a motorcycle. It is the same with Anarchism Café Racer. On both sides of the tank the emblems with the graphic name were placed, which was indicated and extensively delineated in the previous chapter. However, the emblems were made differently than those used by motorcycle manufacturers, which usually apply a printing technology.

First, the emblems of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer, like a descriptive plaque, were made from an aluminium sheet of 2mm thickness. Two identical equilateral triangles were cut out of a larger aluminium sheet with the assistance of the already familiar guillotine. The future emblems assumed the shape of an equilateral triangle of nine centimetres by nine centimetres and by nine centimetres. At each corner of the two triangles holes were drilled, which implied that we needed to drill as many as six holes, three to each emblem. The aluminium bases thus prepared were just the beginning, or the first stage, of the work on the emblem of Anarchism Café Racer.

The subsequent stage the author approached together with his Father Antoni, also a motorcycle enthusiast and the owner, to begin with, of a heavy-duty motorcycle M-72 with a sidecar, then an SHL M11 motorcycle from 1962, which currently is not only meticulously restored and fully operational but most importantly is exhibited in the home of this book's author. It is the centrepiece of the living room, undeniably a perfect adornment.

On the aluminium triangles thus prepared, I drew, together with my Father, using a ruler and a pencil, a line at right angles extending from each side of the triangles towards their centre. To the intersection point of these three lines, we applied a compass and drew a circle with its maximum radius stretching up to the border line of the aluminium plate representing the future emblem. Next we performed the same action, but this time drawing a circle with a radius 5 millimetres smaller than the previous one.

Considering that there was not one tool among those we own which would be capable of giving the emblems their final shape in an aesthetic way, we initially created a tool by ourselves, just as Pirsig did, which would allow us to squeeze while

simultaneously protecting the aluminium triangle against any kind of damage or deformation. The new tool was made out of wooden components and a steel plate. Its purpose was firstly to limit the shifting of the aluminium triangle during its final machining, and secondly to prevent its springing during further machining. The aluminium plate placed on a wooden block could deform at the application of any pressure. Next, armed with a letter stamp, we embossed, one letter after the other, the full word name of Anarchism Café Racer on each aluminium plate between the contours of the external and internal circle that had been drawn with a pencil beforehand. Looking at the emblem, the word Anarchism was in its upper part, with the words Cafe and Racer being arranged symmetrically at its bottom section. The next step involved embossing three words: State, Revolution and Freedom inside the circle in the manner designed above. During the penultimate stage of the work, we used a makeshift chisel (which had been crafted previously in a locksmith's workshop) for the purpose of underlining and crossing out the words on each emblem, according to the design. The process was carried out by three hammer strikes with the chisel for each emblem. The aluminium plates thus prepared were polished and then bolted, with small wing screws through the holes already drilled in them, into the previously painted tank. Each of the six screws going through the finished emblems was driven into the sleeve that had been made by the mechanic from a steel bar, with the sleeve being drilled, threaded and welded to the tank. All the six sleeves have the same thickness, length and diameter. The emblems thus fastened maintain a one and a half centimetre distance from the tank. This manner of spatial arrangement allows the name Anarchism Cafe Racer to be even more highlighted.

Saddle

The seat, colloquially known as a saddle or a double seat, originally was to be made from an artificial material. One might say, the choice of the fabric was consistent with the idea espoused by animal rights activists with whom present day anarchists identify, cooperate and whose philosophy they share. The seat was to consist of an aluminium seat base, of hard thin flat foam and black and white imitation leather, with a backrest integrated into the rear end, where the four-centimetre-high sides were to be white, while the upper part of the double seat was to be made from black imitation leather stitched with white thick thread alongside the seat, with a three-centimetre-distance between those stitches. The black and white colours were to separate the black keder placed alongside the edge of the seat, following the pattern used for the seats in old motorcycles from the mid-twentieth century. A saddler whose work I have known for years was to be commissioned with crafting the saddle of such design.

Eventually, however, the saddle was given a different shape and look. Making a symbolic reference to the stark lives of anarchists of the nineteenth century – applying a terminology specific to the crafting of a saddle for horse riding – it assumed the shape of a hard aluminium seat with its cantle integrated into the rear end. All the edges of the seat were finished with a thick slouchy and unadorned weld stitch suggesting a permanent fusion between the frame and the rear end. The welds, whose application to a two-millimetre-edge of metal sheet required a considerable effort on the part of the mechanic, give the impression of the saddle having been made from an aluminium sheet that is at least half a centimetre thick. The weld also creates the impression as if the saddle was cut out of a thick metal sheet with an acetylene welding torch, although in fact it was done with precision with the guillotine.

The saddle is fastened to the frame with six wing screws. The first screw is bolted into the middle of the cantle at the back of the saddle at the rear end. The screw is bolted forward-facing and parallel to the line of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. It fastens the cantle to the motorcycle's rear end. The second screw is bolted in the middle at the front of the seat, perpendicularly to the line of Anarchism Café Racer. Its purpose is to join permanently the aluminium pommel with the frame. This wing screw, slipped through a longitudinal belt (of which I will write in a moment) and through

the pommel (under which a three-centimetre open sleeve was welded) is screwed into a threaded sleeve welded onto the frame of Anarchism Café Racer, which is the same sleeve on which the handle of the fuel tank rests. The firmly tightened front wing screw shall ensure that the longitudinal belt, the pommel and the tank are securely fastened to the frame of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. The seat is also bolted into the sides of the frame. Moreover, aluminium flat bars, gravitating downwards, creating the impression as if they were hanging down inertly, were welded on each side of this more or less biker-unfriendly place into both ends of the saddle on each of its sides, with the flat bars fastened at a four-centimetre-distance from the corners of the saddle at the front and at a ten-centimetre distance from the corners at the back. Each flat bar is seven centimetres long with an opening made in the middle, four centimetres below the base of the seat. The flat bars were originally designed and made incorporating additional aluminium double loops similar to those used in horse harnesses. However, eventually the role envisioned for the loops was taken over by four wing screws which were bolted into the sleeves, fused with the frame and located exactly in the clear openings drilled in the aluminium flat bars.

Why as many as six wing screws to fasten the seat?

For two reasons.

Firstly, it will allow for a rain cloak, a mini tool pouch and the book *Anarchism Café Racer* to be strapped to the double seat with sackcloth straps. Those items will prove perfect for the following occasions: the first item in fitful weather, the second for fixing a minor failure, should it occur, and the third during a break for coffee at some unplanned car park or gas station. Who knows, it is perhaps then that the last page will be filled with valuable notes which might provide a canvas for further conclusions or ponderings.

There are three sackcloth straps – one longitudinal and the other two crosswise. The longitudinal strap is fastened using a special hook ring mounted in the pommel two centimetres above the seat. At the front, the strap is fastened with a wing screw responsible for fastening the pommel to the tank and the frame. The transversal straps have penetrations allowing the longitudinal strap to be slipped through them. After being fastened, the straps make the impression as if they had just been cut out from a sackcloth safety net used in a transport aircraft. Abandoning the idea of loops and using in their stead wing screws will eliminate the future risk that the straps might get loose, which could surely happen, for instance, when braking abruptly. Furthermore, leaving out the loops allowed for a shortening of the time needed to unfasten the straps and retrieve the stuff placed beneath them, or to take down the entire saddle.

Secondly, the wing screws represent the method of joining the saddle with the frame of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. In addition, each of the four wing screws, bolted this time across the motorcycle, fuses, with each and every of its clockwise turns, transversal straps with the aluminium flat bar and drives them towards the surface of the sleeve welded onto the frame of Anarchism Café Racer while tightening them onto the steel grate of one-by-one-centimetre openings, whose shape is reminiscent of an isosceles triangle, while a steel bar of three millimetres in diameter

finishes its edges. The sleeves welded across the motorcycle come out through the openings of the grate and stop exactly at its surface. There are two grates placed symmetrically on each side of the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. At their bottom part, where the two arms of those two nose-diving triangles intersect, there are two more wing screws, one for each grate. These screws are fitted in a similar way as the four other screws fastening the saddle, but with the only exception being that their sole function is to fasten the bottom parts of the grates to the frame of Anarchism Café Racer. Behind the “bars” an accumulator and two air filters fused with the carburettors are imprisoned.

The First Technical Reflection

It is 21 April of 2016. Considering the time of year, the weather is quite bearable. It is 5.15 a.m. – I am setting out to see my mechanic; today is an important day: the first test drive. When I arrive, the raw Anarchism Café Racer is still on the motorcycle lift. The last preparations for the test drive are still being made; adjustments to the angle of the handlebars position, collecting, tying temporarily and securing tens of installation wires, hanging down carelessly, which at the moment run with no purpose in sight. Many components are still lacking in the café racer, so there is no headlight, rear lamp, or seat. But to be sure, the engine is there, settled in the bare frame fitted with the fuel tank, with the frame suspended a few centimetres above the ground thanks to a new structure. We take the motorcycle out of the workshop. Genson fires the engine which immediately rushes to be tested on the road. The first trial will come in a second. We check the brakes. They work very well. The preparations are over. Anarchism Café Racer whirls away across an asphalt road on its first test drive. I am watching the vanishing point, listening intently to the gears changing. The slowing down, return and I watch the mechanic letting the handlebars go a dozen or so meters before the workshop gate. He checks the traction. Then he stops the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer on the street, pushes down the side stand out, or as Thompson says, lays “the bike over on the kickstand”⁴¹⁷ and we talk about our first impressions. It is wicked. There are also some remarks. The engine “fires on one pot” (cylinder) – which in (Polish) motorcycle slang means that it does not work smoothly. It still needs some adjustment. We are in no doubt that the motorcycle which has not been used since the mid 1980s has every right to behave like this. The gear box, on the other hand, works very well. The modification of the frame seems solid. Anarchism Café Racer handles very well. All in all the first test drive is a success. There are also nice first touches referring to the way the motorcycle has been re-made. A passing cyclist stops and praises the machine unceremoniously: “A nice café racer.” A moment passes, “What colour will it have?” I reply, “Red and black.” The cyclist comments, “Nice.” I am wondering: Considering that it was so easy to recognize the style in which the mass-manufactured motorcycle was rebuilt, I am curious whether another onlooker will also recognize so easily what the anarchist colours of the café racer refer to. We will see.

⁴¹⁷ H.S. Thompson, *Hell's Angels. "Anioły Piekła"...*, p. 88.

The First Theoretical Reflection

24 September 2016. The work on the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer is coming to an end. We discuss details.

At some point Genson asks, “Counsellor (for many years that has been my name for befriended bikers), didn’t you think about painting the front (he points towards the front section of Anarchism Café Racer) red, just for breaking the colours up?”

Immediately, firmly and unhesitatingly I reply: “No.” The red colour corresponding to the original colour of the anarchist flag has already got its place and should not be used again on some insignificant component of the entire machine. I must have sounded adamant, for Genson acknowledges briefly, “I see, you know what’re doing.”

This episode made me realize that this aspect might be worth repeating in the book, for having a thorough knowledge of anything that we want to design is paramount. It pertains above all to professional and political life. Applying a spontaneous approach, the trial-and-error method and experiments is not advisable for a whole range of issues. In this particular case, we are talking about a doctrine pertaining to politics. One needs to remember that it was quite recently that not only in the mindset but also in the concepts of a quite striking number of visionaries who were building the contemporary model of education political doctrines or history, in its broad sense, found themselves on the index among other disputed, not to say forbidden, subjects of academic teaching. Students should learn practical aspects, we have heard behind the reasons justifying the numerous projects designed to cut down on or even eliminate certain curriculum. The lack of a thorough basic knowledge which exerts an influence on a positive evolution of views, of solutions and of actions to be undertaken, has the effect that man, society and government start to experiment. The results of this experimenting will not always be satisfactory to those to whom such measures are addressed or to the architects themselves of those designs. More importantly, the legacy left by this experimenting may prove very painful to its successors. Thus, in order to be able to act with a clear purpose and effectively, one has to have the knowledge which will allow for making creative and positive designs. Let us ponder for a moment: Will a lawyer lacking a thorough doctrinal, historical and theoretical knowledge be able to create, interpret and apply the law correctly? Will a politician lacking

a thorough doctrinal, historical and theoretical knowledge be able to build a sound and well-functioning state? In either case the answer is: “No, they won’t.” It is on account of this knowledge of doctrines, in other words, the original and detailed concepts of the state, law and society, which have developed over centuries, that we can talk about informed and well thought out planning. What is more, only a design thus envisioned will determine whether or not actual progress is taking place. For in analyzing that which was, in other words, the history, in line with Machiavelli’s recommendations, and in planning wisely what is to come we have a chance to steer clear of mistakes (in particular, those acutely painful, since they tend to be repeated) and of any other traps of various shades and colours.

For Anarchism Café Racer, the progress will be the motorcycle shown on the pages of this book. In the twenty first century, a century that has undeniably seen engineering and technological progress, and the already wide-spread 3D printing of things such as, for instance, weapons, houses, cars, food and even human tissues or prostheses, we have gone a step further. For the motorcycle “written” on the pages of this book is a thing that one can print through his own imagination at any moment and place, without having to resort to any complicated computers, printers and with no worries whatsoever as to where to find an electric socket.

The Second Technical Reflection

Anarchism Café Racer – finished in a bare state. Technically fit, but still expecting to be entrusted into the skilful hand of a sprayer. Indeed, each of the components bears traces where power tools intervened. Relics left by the angle grinder and welder will disappear for good only after sandblasting, pretreatment and spraying. Still, Anarchism Café Racer is already attracting the glances of guests and clients frequenting Genson's workshop. Their reactions vary, with curiosity being the prevailing one, and the question hanging in the air as to what kind of a motorcycle this is. There is no doubt that Anarchism Café Racer gives some food for thought, making people wonder. In a world of increasingly more repetitive actions it is undeniably a desirable development.

On the 30th of September 2016 we start dismantling the individual components of the motorcycle. We split them into three groups. The first one is made up of the components which stay in the workshop. It includes, among other things, the engine, tires and mirrors. The second group consists of those which will be subject to the process of sandblasting; this refers in particular to the frame, the swingarm and wheels. The third group is comprised of aluminium components and the aluminium elements of the fenders. The components of Anarchism Café Racer thus organized are then transported to the relevant craft workshops elected in accordance with the rules indicated in the book. After two days the sandblasted components are brought to the sprayer, while the polished aluminium parts which await assembly are secured and given a safe place on the shelves of Genson's workshop.

The Third Technical Reflection

On the 1st of October 2016 we are coming ineluctably to the last stage of building the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. I pick up the frame painted in the colour of *Le drapeau rouge* and other components covered in the blackness of anarchist flags. All the components, those brought in and those still waiting, I lay out together with the mechanic in the workshop. After their arrangement, silence falls for a moment. While staring at the ready components of Anarchism Café Racer, we accelerate in our mind, as it were, in our own distinctive ways the building of the motorcycle, imagining the already assembled machine. In a sense, we are already printing it in our thoughts.

We embark on assembling the components. We start with the frame which we arm in the first place with the front and rear suspension and set on the wheels (these after being sprayed were brought first to a vulcaniser's where they were armed with tires and made ready for the road). Next, the frame is entrusted with the components in the following sequence: the handlebars, the engine with the gear box, the front and rear section with both lamps, the fenders. We assemble the wiring and an accumulator. We bolt the saddle with the covers onto the frame. The only thing that still remains is to mount the mirrors, arming the saddle with the rain cloak, the tool kit, a pencil and the book *Anarchism Café Racer*, and bolting the emblems to the tank. On either side of the tank I fasten the emblems of the motorcycle which look deceptively like the Resurrection Stone and the Cloak of Invisibility, two of three fictional items symbolizing the Deathly Hallows in the seventh volume of Harry Potter's adventures.

The Last Technical Reflection

The 3rd of October 2016: After eight months of work Anarchism Café Racer has been built. The doctrinal custom bike stands in the driveway fired up. The engine is running smoothly. Since the 21st of April it has been through quite a few tests and tunings. New filters and oils have helped. All welds have been solidly made and checked many a time, with every screw tightened, with the critical ones being secured with a counter-nut. The mechanic's skilled hand has done its job.

For a fraction of a second I wonder what kind of a motorcycle it is from a technical point of view. I have no doubts that it is a machine well re-built and thoroughly checked. I am peaceful, for I trust my mechanic and this is the sole determinant of whether a motorcycle is good or bad. As Pirsig has already noticed, a motorcycle

can't be right or wrong. Molecules are molecules. They don't have any ethical codes to follow except those people give them. The test of the machine is the satisfaction it gives you. There isn't any other test. If the machine produces tranquillity it's right. If it disturbs you it's wrong until either the machine or your mind is changed. The test of the machine's always your own mind. There isn't any other test.⁴¹⁸

I am putting on my riding kit: a black motorcycle leather jacket and black leather trousers, an outfit that recalls my university years. Incidentally, the goods custom made by a leather crafter running his small workshop, often upholding family traditions, are far and away more useful than those mass-produced. They age with dignity. Now only two more things to do. The first: I wrap around the handlebars on the brake fluid container a red and black scarf; a symbol of the Spanish Civil War⁴¹⁹ and the "post-conference material," a memory of the Third Academic Conference on the History of Anarchism held in 2016 in the town of Szczecin under the title: "On the 80th

⁴¹⁸ R.M. Pirsig, *Zen i sztuka oporządzania motocykla ...* pp. 155–156.

⁴¹⁹ See, for example, F. Ryszka, *W kręgu zbiorowych złudzeń. Z dziejów hiszpańskiego anarchizmu 1868–1939*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1991, *passim*.

Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.”⁴²⁰ The second: I mount the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer, put on an open face motorcycle helmet and gloves. Finally I gently rev up the anarchist machine, click first, second gear, I listen intently to the Anarchism’s engine working and then set off...

⁴²⁰ *III Konferencja Naukowa "Z dziejów anarchizmu". W 80-lecie wybuchu wojny domowej w Hiszpanii, Szczecin 2-4 czerwca 2016, Instytut Historii i Stosunków Międzynarodowych Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, at: <http://www.hist.us.szn.pl/attachments/article/2652/Z%20dziej%C3%B3w%20anarchizmu%20III.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2016).*

How Was the Book Written?

Actually, on the road. On the continual road between my secluded study and the motorcycle workshop, and occasionally between these places and a bazaar with motorcycle spare parts, a so called "motobazaar," or between the addresses, found on the Internet, of sellers offering already unique motorcycle parts. The need to buy them was such that it continued to prevail over common sense arguing that it was nonsensical to travel a dozen or so kilometres just to fetch some part, losing money and time in the process. This work, as we know, was conducted in defiance of the tenets of liberal economics.

In which role did the author feel the best? Was it while writing the book or building the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer? If thus posed – not an easy question to answer. The writing itself was fascinating, and yet the sight of a doctrine, and as such of an idea, being forged into Anarchism Café Racer (that is a material thing), the smell of exhausts and the roar of a tuned engine would at times override the writing and then – to paraphrase the words of Włodzimirz Rydzewski, who speaks of Bakunin as feeling the best with "a rifle rather than with a pen, on the barricade rather than at a desk"⁴²¹ – the author must admit that there were moments when he felt better with wrenches in hand in the workshop than sitting at the desk in front of the computer keyboard, among books. Anyway, these wrenches as the work on the book was progressing, emigrated, not unlike the motorcycle components, from the workshop to the quiet study filled with books. As the work on subsequent pages of *Anarchism Café Racer* moved on so the ties between the books and other components of the emerging Café racer tightened. Also, what was gradually becoming a natural sight was that of the heavy mechanical motorcycle components which kept reminding the books that theirs was actual existence, and not only some imaginary or theoretical subsistence.

If we were to venture and think about one term that would encapsulate the work on the book, it would undoubtedly be Joy. Why? Because building a motorcycle means progress, a quest for new technological solutions contributing to overall development. Secondly, the work on a motorcycle is a tangible work, its effect is immediately

⁴²¹ W. Rydzewski, *Powrót Bakunina. Szkice o „rosyjskiej idei” i mitach lewicy*, Kraków 1993, p. 22.

discernible, and this is what affects our self-esteem. One could at this point ask: In the consciousness of how many people does the question about the meaning of what they do professionally germinate and live? How many people can say on a daily basis: “Today I did this and that and this is what it has brought into my life...” I am a lawyer, so I will provide an example taken from my walk of business: I wrote a letter – let’s say a letter to the court – and I sent it on behalf of my client. Asked by the principal what effect the letter would have, I eventually answered, wishing not to appear hollow, that predicting clearly the effect was difficult at that moment. Let us wait for the answer or the procedure. It is an example of repetitive actions performed within the framework of one’s profession. In this kind of work one is required to wait for months, for years even, to complete something one embarked upon. People who are dependent on long-term and multi-level business decisions, or decisions entangled within the machinery made up of administration, judiciary and state lose, over time, a sense of value of the work which they carry out, as well as the belief in work itself. Their work is arduous, often unvalued and unappreciated. In this respect the motorcycle as well as the work performed on it is the very opposite of the contemporary work model. While working on a motorcycle we are likely to hear: “Today I’ve finished repairing the engine,” let’s say, for example, the Shovelhead. “It took me a week but I wish you could’ve seen the owner’s face when I fired up the machine.” In the light of this reflection, the work on the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer reminds us that there are two kinds of labour. There are professions in which work is conducted for months with no specific results or even with no results at all. This situation engenders frustration on the part of client, claimant as well as worker. This is why people identify increasingly less frequently with the work which is dependent on the economic, administrative and state machinery, and why they do not want to take emotional responsibility for their own powerlessness. Still, there are professions which, once a particular piece of work has been completed, bring the expected effect and satisfaction to both workman and client. What is more, the effects of the work performed are attributed to very specific people and not to some anonymous teams of employees. Artisanal jobs involving manual work, which people still fail to appreciate, are among such professions.⁴²²

⁴²² See. M.B. Crawford, op. cit., *passim*.

About the Cover

At the end of the book, the author decided to describe in a few words the way in which the material placed on the cover and on the title pages had been designed and made. What speaks for including this brief chapter in the book is the fact that the cover, just like the motorcycle itself, was made by hand. Instead of taking advantage of computer technology, the author chose to subject the cover to the process similar to that which Anarchism Café Racer had undergone. So how was the cover crafted? The first page depicts a picture of an already battered cylinder with a piston sitting among countless wrenches and tools, with the cylinder being taken out from an Evolution engine, which in the 1990s powered Fat Boy, a motorcycle coming from the Harley-Davidson stable. How was the picture made? To the cylinder mentioned a piston was inserted (at a height approximately one centimetre below the cylinder's surface) which had been polished and engraved by a local clockmaker-jeweller mirroring the literal and graphic arrangement of the information designed in the book and embossed on the emblem placed on the tank of Anarchism Café Racer. The cylinder thus prepared was placed on one of the assembly benches surrounded by the countless wrenches and tools necessary for building and maintaining the motorcycle Anarchism Café Racer. The picture was taken in Genson's motorcycle workshop, where Anarchism Café Racer was born. The picture of the composition thus arranged was taken by the author. This picture depicting the assembly bench with the cylinder filled with the engraved piston, wrenches and tools was used in the subsequent editorial process. Ultimately the cylinder together with the engraved piston inside dominated the first page of the cover. Moreover, the photos of the machines and tools indispensable in the process of building Anarchism Café Racer were placed on the title pages, as well as a picture of an electric box, now permanently appropriated by contemporary anarchists, taken by the author on one of the streets of Dubrovnik. The picture of the electric box was taken in summer 2016 while on a journey across Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

In Lieu of the End

So this is it. The work has been completed. *Anarchism Café Racer* has been written. *Anarchism Café Racer* is good and ready. The aims included in the chapter “An Untimely Closure: The Way It Is Bound to End” have finally been realized. The red and black or the black and red custom bike is ready to set off.

If any biker were to choose to ride it, two more things will have to be done. The first one involves checking the tires, for, as we know, they are extremely important. The second thing is to write a slogan, proposition or an important issue in chalk on the rear fender. According to the nineteenth-century anarchists, the last of those enumerated was the right to freedom.

After that the only thing left would be to take the side stand up and kick the kick-start lever. We have to remember that the engine from the twentieth century is fired up by the power of our muscles and some considerable effort is required here before setting off. Which destination? It does not matter. Following Laozi’s philosophy it is only the way that counts. It is worth remembering though that riding a motorcycle is a delight, yet one involving various risks. Indeed, while on the road every biker, if I may draw on Machiavelli already mentioned here, should be both a fox and a lion, the sly and the fierce. Not only should he predict and eschew risks but he should also keep a cool head when facing a danger coming from other traffic participants and the elements so that he could emerge – which is important – unscathed. Also, luck should be a permanent companion, and Fortuna, as Machiavelli writes, favours the young. Yet we know that every biker is either young in age or young in spirit. So Fortuna should favour them all. However, it goes hand in hand with Virtù, which is man’s inner power: mind and knowledge; and they, unlike Fortuna, depend solely on the biker.

Your Password: For Those Who Want to Build a Motorcycle

Dear Reader, very soon the last page will appear – a blank page. It is meant for you if you want to build a motorcycle. Should you want, you can write on it your own slogans taken from your real or imaginary front and rear fenders, those which will be ahead or behind you during the “ride.”

Think when designing and building your bike. I am sure you are well grounded. You know the tastes of life, of failure, of real dangers, of successes, of changing weather and that of human nature. On the front fender write or paint the goal you are pursuing, onto the rear fender throw all that is in the past. In your heart, keep the good times, and remember that whatever motorcycle you ride, whatever motorcycle you build, what you are ultimately shaping is yourself. See the front fender as your future. The rear fender burden with the past and cultivate there what’s good in it. Remember the rest and embrace it. You know perfectly well that if you really want something, there is nothing that you could not design nor build. If you choose so, you can become a designer and manufacturer of a unique motorcycle. You can also become a designer and builder of your own life. Custom bike and custom life are within the reach of your hand, you only need to really want it; to truly learn, think, work and act, and to remember what Pirsig says about gumption traps. You have already read that on page 67: “The real cycle you’re working on is a cycle called yourself. The machine that appears to be ‘out there’ and the person that appears to be ‘in here’ are not two separate things. They grow toward Quality or fall away from Quality together.”⁴²³ Remember that the motorcycle does not forgive cheating. If you opt for a fast pace and not for quality, disregarding the rules consciously, you may still set out, perhaps even quite spectacularly, but you will reach the existential finish line – assuming that you even manage that – unnoticed, utterly forgotten, surrounded by a bland mass of cheaters like you, or even worse, you will eventually end up ridiculed. Remember too, if you build your motorcycle based on subunits of poor quality, stinting on true effort,

⁴²³ R. M. Pirsig, *Zen i sztuka oporządzania motocykla...*, p. 308.

on work, on reliability and responsibility, constantly tripping over gumption tramps, then, even if your bike fires up and moves, you will never acquire peace of mind. Most importantly, remember that if designed, crafted and treated badly and ultimately ignored, the motorcycle tends to be extremely dangerous. Thus, if you want to build a safe and a durable machine for yourself or somebody else, you'd better get ready for a labour that is long, tough, demanding, difficult and arduous. If you are not ready for this, leave the bike in peace.

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“The book by Dr Radosław Antonów of the Department of Political and Legal Doctrines at the University of Wrocław, which represents a modified version of the book published in Polish (2017), is certainly a work that reflects the author’s considerable scholarship and yet in doing so it is rather unusual or even somewhat exceptional. The book is not purely scholarly, for in it the scholarly intersects with the popular discourse, while showing some features of a literary study. Dr Anto-nów interweaves interesting thoughts on anarchism as a doctrine (in which he is an expert) presented in a general manner and equally interesting disquisition on the motorcycle, its meaning and even its technical design, revealing the author’s vast knowledge in this respect. At first sight this sort of arrangement may seem odd and surprising, but it surely encourages further thought and reflection. Reading the book, to which the author brought great scholarly passion, makes these doubts disappear while providing answers to a number of questions concerned with the issues discussed in the book. What was the argument that the author followed and why did he choose to link anarchism with a café and a race? How was it even possible for this kind of intellectual provocation to come to the author’s mind? When we get immersed in the book, we will find out that the author puts forward deft arguments in support of his own, not infrequently very original, views on this subject. There is no other option then but to get acquainted with this truly compelling work, as it will afford you an unusual way of looking at anarchism and the motorcycle. In a broader sense, the book will let you discern the links between political, legal and social doctrines, and the developments in technology, civilization and culture. For those who seek answers to difficult questions about the world this book will undoubtedly prove to be a riveting and intriguing thought game which I highly encourage you to play.” **Prof. dr hab. Marek Maciejewski, University of Wrocław**

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