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Anarchism in the Fiction of Zamyatin, Huxley and Le Guin

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Contents

Abstract

This Thesis will explore the anarchist philosophies of three authors of dystopian and utopian fiction: Yevgeny Zamyatin, Aldous Huxley and Ursula K. Le Guin. It argues that all three thinkers should be associated with anarchism. The thesis will argue that all three authors employ a view of human nature, and the relationship between the human subject and power, which is very similar to that of classical anarchism. Taken broadly this means that the authors each regard human beings as comprising a multitude of faculties which contain within them significant positive and negative, moral and immoral potential. The State and power are then seen as suppressive of the positive facets of human nature and exaggerative of the negative, in line with classical anarchism. It will also argue that the authors reach their anarchist conclusions via a logic similar to that of Tolstoy. Tolstoy developed a form of anarcho-pacifism, that adhered to a staunch deontological ethics based on a belief in the immanence of God within human beings and nature. Likewise, each authors shows an aversion to violence, whilst Huxley and Le Guin are both influenced by Eastern philosophy, and a belief in a form of divinity inherent in nature and human beings, which in turn, constitutes a part of their anarchism. Lastly the thesis will contend that each of the authors display some aspects of postmodernism in their analysis of power, which could be consistent with 'postanarchism'. Though the thesis rejects the notion that the authors should be considered postanarchists, and instead argues that their analysis of power is accommodated within a broad classical anarchist framework.

Introduction

This thesis seeks to explore the anarchist philosophy inherent in the fiction of three selected authors of utopian and dystopian fiction: Yevgeny Zamyatin, Aldous Huxley and Ursula K. Le Guin. In doing so, the thesis also advances an argument that all three of the authors bear significant similarities to established anarchist thinkers, however, rather than attempting to label the thinkers as a particular variety of anarchist, the thesis instead treats the authors as individuals, and deals with clusters of ideas instead of definitions. Additionally, the thesis offers a unique interpretation of each author and argues that the three authors all share a number of commonalities in their political and philosophical thought.

Chapter 1 begins with a theoretical framework and sketch of a number of strands of anarchist thought but focuses primarily on classical anarchism. The framework will make the case that the three main classical anarchist thinkers (Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin) follow a broad Rousseauian structure, and argues that they each embraced a multifaceted view of human nature, containing a multitude of conflicting and wide-ranging faculties and impulses. On this basis, it argues that classical anarchism was not deterministic, but thought that a moral society could exist, should the society nurture the positive impulses within human nature. Inevitably, the state and capitalism, for the classical anarchists, were incompatible with this goal. Section 1.2 will then give an outline of the pacifistic 'Christian anarchism' of Tolstoy, and argues, against common interpretations, that there is a mystic element to Tolstoy's thought. It argues that Tolstoy's conception of divinity immanent in all of nature and humanity constitutes a unique anarchist logic, that leads to a deontological ethic.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 then address each of the fiction authors in turn, and in chronological order. The thesis will focus on four major works of the authors as central to the analysis: Zamyatin's *We*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Island,* and Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*. However, the thesis intends to give a systemic account of each author's political thought, and so will also rely on evidence from other fictional and non-fiction works. The thesis will make four central claims. First, each of the authors was operating within a broadly classical anarchist framework especially with respect to human nature and the stifling effects of power. Second, the thesis argues that each author preferred non-violence and considered violence a vicious cycle, similar to the anarcho-pacifism of Tolstoy. Third, with respect to Huxley and Le Guin, it argues for a significant connection between their interest in Eastern philosophy and their anarchism, which can again be associated with Tolstoy's pacifism and the idea of perennial divinity in nature and

beings. Finally, the thesis argues that each of the authors had a conception of power similar to the ideas found in ‘postanarchist’ literature. Zamyatin and Le Guin both included a critique of scientific dogma, whilst Huxley displays concern for the ubiquity of power down to the level of discourse and social relations. However, the thesis contends that this expansive view of power is still accommodated by a classical anarchist view of human nature, and thus the authors should not be considered postanarchists.

Chapter 1 - Theoretical Framework

1.1 Classical Anarchism

This section will address some of the strands of thought associated with classical anarchism. Classical anarchism most commonly refers to four thinkers: Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin. For simplicity, this section focuses on the last three in that list. Rather than provide an exhaustive description of the classical anarchist canon, this section focuses on drawing out four points, for which it suggests that the classical anarchists are in broad agreement, and which will be relevant for the selected utopian authors.

The first is to suggest that the classical anarchists all followed a (very broadly) Rousseauian framework. Rousseau has been acknowledged as a forerunner to anarchism and a clear influence on Godwin, Proudhon and Kropotkin[1]. Classical anarchism is often presumed to have an overly optimistic or deterministic view of human nature[2]. This section, however, suggests that, like Rousseau, the anarchists embraced a non-deterministic political theory, that saw both a potential for good and evil within human nature. Second, it suggests that the classical anarchists all saw value in both reason and instinct within human nature, in other words, both the conscious and unconscious mind. This goes against interpretations that regard classical anarchism as espousing a purely rationalist and enlightenment philosophy. Third, it addresses the anarchists' critique of state power and capitalism and emphasizes that the anarchists all critiqued the regimentation of humanity that power structures bring about. Fourth, it briefly addresses some principles that the anarchists believed would be inherent in a just society, stressing the need for cooperative structures, for fluidity and changeability and the need to accommodate the greatest range of individuality possible. These four points are selected on the basis of them being broadly consistent within the classical anarchist canon, and for their relevance to the selected fiction authors.

Rousseau

Central to understanding Rousseau's political project and its relevance to anarchism is his (often misunderstood) view of human nature. Rousseau begins his discourse on the origin of inequality with a description of humankind in the State of

[1] Peter H. Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (London: Harper Collins, 1992), 124,125.

[2] This critique is advanced by the 'postanarchist' thinkers, Todd May, Lewis Call and Saul Newman. Their critiques are laid out in section 1.3 of this chapter but dismissed based on the interpretation given in this section.

Nature. Rousseau's natural man possesses only simple emotions of pity and amour de soi (self-love).

Humankind goes from the solitary state of nature to society by way of what Rousseau calls the 'faculty of self-improvement' within human nature that allows humankind to manipulate the natural environment around them, to achieve greater security and material conditions[3]. Self-improvement or 'perfectibility', Rousseau says 'by the help of circumstances, gradually develops all the rest of our faculties, and is inherent in the species as in the individual'[4]. Rousseau's description here foreshadows a central component of classical anarchism, which emphasized the importance of society in encouraging the development of the individual's capacities. Rousseau describes this distinguishing faculty of humanity as 'almost unlimited'[5].

The fall of humanity from innocence into evil occurs with the establishment of private property. As Rousseau says: 'The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying This is mine… was the real founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch'[6]. Inequality ignites in humanity a new sentiment, amour-propre, an egoistic desire for comparative esteem over one another, or in Rousseau's words 'devouring ambition, the burning passion to enlarge one's relative fortune.'[7]

The picture so far would suggest that Rousseau maintains a view of an inherent goodness of humankind. Yet this is not quite accurate. As Nicholas Dent points out, utilizing extensive quotations from *Emile*, amour-propre in society represents an 'inflamed' condition and is therefore not entirely divorced from nature[8]. It is rather an offshoot of self-love or amour de soi, exaggerated by society's structures. To corroborate this, the distinguishing and essential characteristic of humanity, the faculty of self-improvement, despite its positive potential, Rousseau says 'is the source of all [humanity's] misfortunes'[9]. Evil has therefore emerged from human nature rather than being completely divorced from it.

Once power and inequality have cemented in society, human faculties then cease to have any positive component. Rousseau for example, critiques the state

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[3] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England ; New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Penguin Books, 1984), 88.
[4] Rousseau, 88.
[5] Rousseau, 88.
[6] Rousseau, 109.
[7] Rousseau, 119.
[8] N. J. H. Dent, *Rousseau: An Introduction to His Psychological, Social, and Political Theory* (Oxford, UK ; New York, NY, USA: B. Blackwell, 1989), 70.
[9] Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, 88.

for its capacity to turn human beings into purveyors of mass violence: 'at length men massacred their fellow creatures without so much as knowing why, committing more murders in a single's days fighting… than were committed in the state of nature throughout entire centuries' [10]. Perfectibility has then ceased to have a component of natural good but works for the cynical ends of those in positions of power to humanity's detriment. As Wokler summarizes: Rousseau 'joined together a highly optimistic idea of human potentialities with a deeply pessimistic vision of man's worldly accomplishments.'[11]

Power not only encourages the worst facets of human vice to emerge but is also suppressive of the positive. The deprived individual in society is never given the opportunity to develop their moral faculties. The poor, for Rousseau, require the 'assistance' of the rich, which creates a condition of dependency and by extension, domination, which Rousseau asserts is to 'take away all morality from [their] actions'[12]. An individual who is languishing in dependency is then unable to develop their innate moral capacities, yet the individual does witness, and internalize, the cutthroat competition for power and domination over others that power systems create.

The point Rousseau seems to be trying to make is not a rosy conception of human nature corrupted by an unnatural society, but rather that human faculties are sufficiently malleable and corruptible to allow grave evil. Depravity, inequality and evil therefore has its basis in nature, even if it is fully brought out by society. Yet, on the flip side there is a denial of human depravity by nature, and thus the hope for a moral, free social order. It will be argued that this is the general framework within which the classical anarchists also operate.

Rousseau's proposed solutions to these problems, given principally in *The Social Contract* were not anarchistic. Rousseau proposes a form of radical direct democracy, which appears to leave little room for the individual due to its emphasis on unanimity, and further maintains a belief in a homogenous and united national community. Yet Rousseau's analysis of power and human evil is a useful framework within which to frame the classical anarchist view.

Proudhon

The first thinker to refer to themself as an anarchist was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Proudhon's views on human nature were perhaps the most pessimistic

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[10] Rousseau, 123.
[11] Robert Wokler, 'A Reply to Charvet: Rousseau and the Perfectibility of Man', *History of Political Thought* 1, no. 1 (1980): 89.
[12] Jean-Jaques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. H.J. Tozer, Classics of World Literature (Ware: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1998), 10 Book 1 Chapter:4.

of the anarchists. He regarded human beings as principally self-interested and rejected the notion of an innate innocence of humankind. Hence there are already two significant distinctions between Proudhon and Rousseau's thought. Proudhon clearly believed in a more substantial notion of human nature than Rousseau, rejecting the simple amoral picture Rousseau paints of humanity's original condition; and he further displays a much greater pessimism.

However, humanity's selfish nature, for Proudhon, did not necessarily entail the inevitability of evil. He stated that 'man is by nature a sinner, that is, not essentially ill-doing, but rather, ill-done' [13]. Proudhon defended a notion of immanent justice, arguing that human beings have a concept of human rights and an instinctive sense of justice within human nature. Hence human nature is simply multifaceted. Proudhon states that 'dissidence and harmony of human faculties' are simply 'the two faces of our nature'. However, Proudhon did maintain a notion of 'perfectibility', or 'self-improvement', stating that the human faculties of 'intelligence and liberty… are susceptible of indefinite development and improvement'[14]. With this, Proudhon proclaims a staunch rejection of any absolute dogma, and forcefully asserts that it is humanity's duty to perpetually improve[15]. Thus, although Proudhon offers a more pessimistic view of human nature, he shares with Rousseau a multifaceted view of human nature and a belief in the far-reaching potentialities of human faculties, both positive and negative[16].

Proudhon thought that ethics were largely derived from instinct[17]. He thought, however, that the key to progress in society and humanity lay in the capacity of reason. Reason, for Proudhon, serves the function of discovering 'laws of nature'[18], namely penetrating deeper into our own human nature and the principles of justice embedded therewithin.

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[13] Pierre Joseph Proudhon, *System Of Economical Contradictions V1: Or The Philosophy Of Misery*, trans. Benjamin Tucker, vol. IV, The Works of P.J. Proudhon (Benj. R. Tucker, 1888), 434 Ch:VIII.
[14] Pierre Joseph Proudhon, 'The Philosophy of Misery, by Proudhon 1847', accessed 11 June 2024, https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/economics/proudhon/philosophy/ch08.htm.
[15] P.-J. Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. John Beverley Robinson (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1969), 294 Epilogue.
[16] *K. Steven Vincent reaches a similar conclusion with regard to Rousseau and Proudhon in:* K. Steven Vincent, 'Rousseau and Proudhon: Human Nature, Property and the Social Contract', in *Thinking with Rousseau: From Machiavelli to Schmitt*, ed. Helena Rosenblatt and Paul Schweigert (Cambridge New York (N.Y.): Cambridge University press, 2017), 255, 256, 266, 267.
[17] Alex Prichard, 'The Ethical Foundations of Proudhon's Republican Anarchism', in *Anarchism and Moral Philosophy*, ed. Benjamin Franks and Matthew J. Wilson (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 104, 105.
[18] Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, 294 Epilogue.

Proudhon agrees with Rousseau that this moral progress is impossible under unjust and unequal conditions[19]. He, however, went further than Rousseau with respect to his critique of both private property and the state. Of private property, Proudhon (like all the classical anarchists) shared the Marxist or socialist critique of capital and property. Hence, his famous phrase equating property to theft was primarily intended as a critique of alienation. Of the state, Proudhon regarded it as a rapacious bureaucracy that only regimented and degraded humanity. As he famously proclaimed: 'To be GOVERNED is to be kept in sight, inspected, spied upon, directed, law driven, numbered, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, estimated, valued, censured, commanded'[20].

Proudhon is known as the founder of mutualism, a philosophy which proposes a market system without capitalism, in which the workers will own an equal share of their workplaces.

Bakunin

Bakunin is known as an anarchist firebrand and a great popularizer of anarchist thought. Yet, his thought did largely proceed along the same broad Rousseauian framework. Bakunin describes human nature as a collection of 'faculties and dispositions', which are either developed or suppressed by society[21].

Bakunin nonetheless recognizes some essential facets of human nature that offer positive potential, such as the existence of 'conscience' inherent in 'every man, and even in that of children'[22]. Hence, there is a universal intuition within human nature that Bakunin calls a 'moral law', which he says simply equates to freedom and equality for all[23]. He also thought human beings were made for society, that liberty depends on social relations, and that human beings are made for work[24]. Hence, the individual and the collective, for Bakunin, can be reconciled once the individual recognizes, that their liberty, like everyone else's depends on a society of mutual respect[25].

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[19] William H. Harbold, 'Progressive Humanity: In the Philosophy of P. - J. Proudhon', *The Review of Politics* 31, no. 1 (1969): 31.
[20] Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, 294 Epilogue.
[21] Mikhail Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism.*, ed. G.P. Maximoff, 1st ed. (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1953), 155.
[22] Bakunin, 156.
[23] Bakunin, 156.
[24] Bakunin, 87.
[25] Mikhail Bakunin, *Selected Writings*, ed. Arthur Lehning, Writings of the Left (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973), 147.

Bakunin echoes Rousseau in his analysis of power, stating that: 'The best of men… will always inevitably be corrupted' by the 'habit of commanding'[26]. Hence, Bakunin understands very clearly that 'to make men moral it is necessary to make their social environment moral'[27]. As he states elsewhere: 'Do you want to prevent men from ever oppressing other men? Arrange matters such that they never have the opportunity.' This would be achieved, Bakunin says, by the 'organization of the social environment, so constituted that while leaving each man to enjoy the utmost possible liberty it gives no one the power to set himself above others or to dominate them'[28]. Hence, Bakunin's argument is not based on a deterministic view of human nature, but rather that a society without power is the best means with which to control humanity's worst impulses.

The state, for Bakunin, was something outside of nature entirely, regarding the state as 'in essence only a machine ruling the masses from above'[29]. It is Bakunin's acuity in recognizing the true nature of the state that constitutes the crux of Bakunin's famous disagreement with Marx, for which he is most famous still to this day. While Marxists were imagining the possibility of a proletarian state, Bakunin saw the state as necessarily a mechanized, bureaucratized tyranny which in turn creates society in its image, treating the proletariat as a contemptuous 'regimented herd'[30] and condemning the proletariat to rule 'by decree and to obedience, stagnation and death'[31]. For Bakunin the only good forms of organization were those that 'reflect life itself in all its aspects and complexity'[32], and the state and capitalism are clearly incompatible with this notion.

Like Proudhon, Bakunin also adhered to a flux philosophy associated with Heraclitus, which he however reached through a left-Hegelian (also known as Young Hegelian) framework[33]. From this logic, Bakunin remained steadfastly committed to revolution. Bakunin has been associated with the idea of constant destruction of established order and the belief that the 'ends justify the means', ready 'to commit any crime, any treachery, any baseness to bring about the destruction of the existing order.'[34]

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[26] Mikhail Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchy*, ed. Sam Dolgoff (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), 145.
[27] Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism.*, 155.
[28] Bakunin, *Selected Writings*, 155, 156.
[29] Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchy*, 338 Chapter: IV.
[30] Bakunin, 331 Chapter: IV.
[31] Bakunin, *Selected Writings*, 169 Chapter: VII.
[32] Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchy*, 325 Chapter: IV.
[33] Tony Burns, *Political Theory, Science Fiction, and Utopian Literature: Ursula K. Le Guin and the Dispossessed* (Blue Ridge Summit, UNITED STATES: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2008), 64–66.
[34] Paul Avrich, 'The Legacy of Bakunin', *The Russian Review* 29, no. 2 (1970): 138, 139.

Kropotkin

For Kropotkin, evolution has endowed human beings with an 'instinct of human solidarity and sociability'[35]. This, he calls mutual aid, which compels us to cooperate and act in solidarity with one another and is evolutionarily necessary for the survival of the species. Yet once humankind has fulfilled its material needs, 'other [psychological] needs, which generally speaking may be described as of an artistic character, will thrust themselves forward'[36]. His belief in the evolutionary role of mutual aid and the creative leads him to suggest that 'solidarity… increases man's energy and creative forces a hundredfold'[37]

Despite this apparent optimism, taken holistically, Kropotkin's writings on human nature do not, in fact, proclaim an essentialist view. A look beyond mutual aid reveals that his philosophy of human nature was multifaceted. In *Anarchism: its Philosophy and Ideal*, Kropotkin describes human nature as: 'a multitude of separate faculties, autonomous tendencies, equal among themselves, performing their functions independently, balancing, opposing one another continually. Taken as a whole, man is nothing but a resultant, always changeable, of all his diverse faculties, of all his autonomous tendencies, of brain cells and nerve centers.' *In Modern Science and Anarchism* he states: 'at all times two tendencies were continually at war in human society', the cooperative and creative masses and the 'sorcerers, prophets, priests, and heads of military organizations, who endeavored to establish and to strengthen their authority over the people.'[38] The latter worked together in a Machiavellian way, and eventually coopted the organically emergent institutions. The overall philosophy is much more multifaceted than Kropotkin's critics would claim. Humans are a collection of faculties, which can emerge in a variety of different ways. They are also driven by instinct and pleasure, which motivates both their moral actions and their descent into pleasure and vice. Finally, Kropotkin clearly believes there is a will to power inherent in at least some human beings.

Mutual aid was therefore not intended to be an all-encompassing description of human psychology, but rather one of many impulses within nature. Kropotkin therefore does understand the need to foster an 'atmosphere in society as would

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[35] Petr Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (New York: McClure Phillips and Co., 1904), xiii.
[36] Petr Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings*, ed. Marshall Shatz, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 94.
[37] Kropotkin, 197.
[38] Petr Kropotkin, 'Modern Science and Anarchism', in *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*, trans. Roger N. Baldwin (Toronto: Dover Publications, 1970), 146, 147.

produce… entirely by impulse, those actions which best lead to the welfare of all'[39]. However, as Brian Morris points out, Kropotkin seeks to forge a 'synthesis', between selfish and selfless impulses, in which the individual would recognize that their fullest development occurs in a cooperative societal context[40]. Individual and collective interests can thus be reconciled, in Kropotkin's view, should society offer the individual avenues for fulfilling work and individual expression.

Kropotkin's view that the free pursuit of our artistic interests produces the best results for the individual and society led him to suggest that a healthy society would accommodate the greatest level of individualism possible[41]. To this end, Kropotkin explored in *Fields, Factories and Workshops* practical means by which society could encourage all individuals to engage in what he termed 'brain work' and 'manual work', work of the mind and work of the body. Yet, Kropotkin was careful to remain true to anarchist principles, always maintaining that the revolution is a 'work in progress as much as a cataclysmic event'[42]. Sandberg has associated Kropotkin with 'process' or flux philosophy on the basis of his pamphlet *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal*[43].

Kropotkin's imagined future anarchist society was anarcho-communist in nature. He believed that production could work for the well-being of all, whilst maintaining individual freedom, with all engaging in 'free and voluntary union' with one another, a 'living organism' of free federations[44].

Summary

This section has sought to associate the classical anarchists with Rousseau and has suggested that the anarchists did not hold an idealistic view of human nature, but rather a multifaceted one. The anarchists did believe in a human nature with positive potential, and that human beings are best suited for society. Yet the principal determinant of the human subject's morality was the social environment they were raised in. The anarchists, like Rousseau, saw the state, capitalism and power structures as suppressive of the positive facets of human nature and

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[39] Petr Kropotkin, *Ethics: Origin and Development* (Chalmington, Dorchester, Dorset: Prism Press, 1979), 26 Chapter: II.
[40] Brian Morris, 'Kropotkin's Ethical Naturalism', *Democracy & Nature* 8, no. 3 (November 2002): 426.
[41] Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings*, 94.
[42] Ruth Kinna, 'Fields of Vision: Kropotkin and Revolutionary Change', *SubStance* 36, no. 2 (2007): 82.
[43] Ole Martin Sandberg, '"Everything Changes in Nature": Kropotkin's Process Philosophy', *Anarchist Studies* 31, no. 2 (1 October 2023): 19, 20, https://doi.org/10.3898/AS.31.2.01.
[44] Ya'Acov Oved, 'The Future Society According to Kropotkin', *Cahiers Du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 33, no. 2/3 (1992): 306, 313, 305.

exaggerative of the negative. As George Woodcock summarizes: 'man may not be naturally good, but he is… naturally social.'[45] The anarchists wanted a human society above all, respecting all human faculties, and emphasizing a partnership between reason and instinct[46] and adhered to a Heraclitean conception of the universe, albeit whilst maintaining a view of an unchanging instincts and faculties within human nature.

It will be later argued that the crucial points outlined here are echoed throughout the novels of the three authors. In particular, all of the authors embraced a multifaceted view of human nature and its potentialities. Simultaneously each of the authors display an analysis of power that stifles their characters, whether it be the regimented automaton in Zamyatin, the dulled and infantile subjects of Huxley's World State, or the victimized scientist in Le Guin. Each of the authors maintained a belief that a more moral future was possible, and saw power structures as hindering that end.

1.2 Anarchism, Pacifism and Mysticism in Tolstoy's Thought

Tolstoy is sometimes placed within the classical anarchist tradition[47]. It is certainly true that Tolstoy reached many of the same conclusions as the classical anarchists, in regard to the State and the inherent exploitation of capitalism. Tolstoy however differs from the classical anarchists in his staunch and absolute pacifism, and consequently his theory of resistance[48]. This section will explore the elements to Tolstoy's 'Christian anarchism', within which Tolstoy espouses a unique anarchist philosophy that reaches a conclusion of the necessity of anarchism and pacifism on the basis of divinity inherent in nature and all living things. It will later be argued that the three authors of this study follow a similar logic to Tolstoy in this regard, especially Le Guin and Huxley.

In *The Kingdom of God is Within* You, *The Law of Love and the Law of Violence* and *What I Believe* Tolstoy articulates a theory of what George Woodcock has called

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[45] George Woodcock, 'Anarchism: A Historical Introduction', in *The Anarchist Reader*, A Fontana Original 4011 (London: Fontana/Collins, 1977), 18.

[46] An obvious exception to this is William Godwin. Godwin did emphasize the primacy of reason and argued for a strictly utilitarian conception of ethics. William Godwin, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[47] Ruth Kinna, *Kropotkin: Reviewing the Classical Anarchist Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 9.

[48] Elizabeth Frazer and Kimberly Hutchings, 'Anarchist Ambivalence: Politics and Violence in the Thought of Bakunin, Tolstoy and Kropotkin', *European Journal of Political Theory* 18, no. 2 (April 2019): 259–80; Morgan Gibson, 'Anarchism, Violence and Social Transformation', *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2014 These article covers the difference between the anarchists' attitudes to violence and resistance. Since it will be argued that each of the fiction authors are most similar to Tolstoy in this regard, a detailed discussion of other anarchists' views on resistance are left out of this framework.

'Christian anarchism'[49]. Tolstoy takes the teachings of Jesus as found in the Sermon on the Mount as representing the essence of Christianity. In particular, he pays attention to the final two commandments, which Tolstoy quotes as 'resist not him that is evil' and 'the law of love'[50]. From these two commandments Tolstoy derives a deontological, pacifistic ethic. He resolves that Christ intended to teach that violence is always wrong, whether as an act of revenge or self-defense. 'Resist not evil' Tolstoy also takes to mean to 'do good to those that even smite and abuse you'[51]. 'The law of love' Tolstoy takes to mean to show love to, and consequently never dehumanize those different from oneself[52], essentially equating to 'love thine enemies'[53]. These two laws Tolstoy takes as necessary for the 'transformation' of society and human relations[54]. Tolstoy's reasoning behind this is simple. Violence is simply a vicious cycle which only provokes more and more violence in an endless cycle of revenge[55].

With this established, Tolstoy goes on to link his pacifism to his anarchism more explicitly. He states: 'To affirm that the Christian doctrine refers only to personal salvation, and has no bearing upon state affairs, is a great error' as the criminality and violences of states forces the individual 'to choose between the laws of God and the laws of man.'[56] Tolstoy argues that capitalism and the state are inconsistent with the laws of God, on the basis of worker alienation from labour, and the state's demands for 'senseless passive obedience', which causes men to 'kill without knowing why or wherefore'[57]. Thus, as long as the state exists, the law of love and the full acceptance of individuals can never be reality.

Since Tolstoy regards violence as merely a vicious cycle, he developed a different theory of resistance to traditional anarchism. Instead of violent revolution or direct or collective action, Tolstoy advocated for a withdrawal from participation in unjust structures. He advocated for disobedience, such as refusal to pay taxes, rather than violent resistance to the state. Unlike Kropotkin and Bakunin, Tolstoy

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[49] George Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertanian Ideas And Movements*, New ed (London, England: Penguin Books, 1986), 192.
[50] Leo Tolstoy, *The Law of Love and the Law of Violence*, trans. Mary Koutouzow Tolstoy (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 27 Chapter:7.
[51] Leo Tolstoy, *What I Believe*, trans. Constantine Popoff (New York: William S. Gottsberger, 1886), 11 Chapter:II.
[52] Tolstoy, *The Law of Love and the Law of Violence*, 27 Chapter:7.
[53] Tolstoy, *What I Believe*, 14 Chapter:II.
[54] Leo Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: The Cassell Publishing Co., 1894), 253 Chapter:X.
[55] Tolstoy, 14 Chapter:I.
[56] Tolstoy, *What I Believe*, 21 Chapter: III.
[57] Tolstoy, 45 Chapter:IV.

therefore sees humanity's salvation, and the state's ultimate demise, in the ethical revolution of each individual, rather than in collective action. To this end, Tolstoy sees art as an important mechanism of revolutionary action. In *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, he outlines the responsibility of those who have attained spiritual and moral truth to influence public opinion in their work and activities[58].

All that has been addressed so far demonstrates that Tolstoy followed a rationalist logic to reach his pacifist conclusions. As Woodcock says, Tolstoy's religion is a 'religion without mysticism, a religion without even faith… he bases his beliefs on reason and submits them to the test of truth.'[59] Woodcock's judgement clearly has a significant degree of merit, as evidenced by Tolstoy repeatedly and explicitly distancing himself from the dogmatism of the Church[60]. However, it does not seem correct to suggest that Tolstoy's philosophy is entirely devoid of mysticism, but rather that there is a mystic element to his thought, albeit a mysticism grounded in nature and material reality. Tolstoy regards human beings and nature as being inherently divine and worthy of the utmost respect on that basis. As he says in *Confession* 'To know God and to live come to one and the same thing. God is life'[61]. Tolstoy appears to be espousing a philosophy similar to what Aldous Huxley calls *The Perennial Philosophy*, which Huxley defines as: 'the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds'[62]. On this basis, Tolstoy's spirituality starts to bear more resemblance to Eastern philosophy.

From this logic, Tolstoy conceived of a new way of looking at the meaning of life. As he says in *Kingdom*: 'The true, the rational life is only possible for man according to the measure in which he can participate, not in the family or the state, but in the source of life —the Father ; according to the measure in which he can merge his life in the life of the Father.'[63] The 'Father', as established, equating to nature, life and humanity as a whole. There is little doubt that Tolstoy reached this conclusion via contemplating death. For example, he says in *Confession*: 'Is there any meaning in my life that will not be destroyed by my inevitably approaching death?'[64]. His only way out of this anguish was to conceive of himself as a larger and greater whole. Tolstoy thinks that this process will lead to the greatest happiness within the individual and have normative benefits for society. Hence Gel'fond makes

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[58] Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, 235–39 Chapter: X.
[59] Woodcock, *Anarchism*, 189.
[60] Leo Tolstoy, *What I Believe*, 6 Chapter: I.
[61] Leo Tolstoy, *Confession*, trans. David Patterson, 1st ed (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), 74 Chapter: XII.
[62] Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1947), 1.
[63] Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, 95 Chapter: IV.
[64] Tolstoy, *Confession*, 35 Chapter: IV.

a convincing argument that Tolstoy is 'the creator of a new, impersonalist humanism' [65], one that sees the full development of reason resulting in the individual's spiritual union with a divine whole.

Following this, Tolstoy developed a growing interest in asceticism, and a belief that the individual ought to renounce their ego and self-hood, and situate themselves within the broader collective whole. 'In order to live according to the ways of God', Tolstoy says in *Confession* 'we must renounce the sensual pleasures of life; we must labor, suffer, and be kind and humble.'[66] He displays an increased interest in Eastern philosophy in his final major work *A Calendar of Wisdom*, as evidenced by his extensive use of quotations from Buddha and Lao Tzu[67]. His later works, one example being the novella *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, presents the story of a man so attached to his societal esteem and institutional positions, he causes his family dismay through his anger and behaviour, and in reaching the final moments of his life, he learns that true happiness would have come from living for his family's sake, rather than his own esteem[68]. Here, Tolstoy is espousing a view similar to classical anarchism and Rousseau, that the greatest happiness comes from the useful employment of one's talents. Yet the thoughts here also elucidate Tolstoy's growing belief in the moral necessity of asceticism, and the diminishing of ego within the individual.

Summary

The conclusions reached by Tolstoy are, in many respects, very similar to the other classical anarchists. Anarchism has always held a belief in 'the inherent moral value of the individual' and the 'continuity between ends and means'[69] However, Tolstoy provides a good precedent for a form of anarchism reached by a spiritual logic. It is an anarchism which emphasizes a deontological ethic, of both pacifism and self-denial, predicated on a belief in the perennial divinity of humanity and nature.

This thesis takes Tolstoy's unique brand of 'Christian anarchism' to have relevance to all three selected authors: in particular, Le Guin and Huxley. There are three crucial points to emphasize regarding Tolstoy's thought. Le Guin and Huxley

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[65] Mariya L. Gel'fond, 'Was Lev Tolstoy a Humanist?', *Russian Studies in Philosophy* 59, no. 5 (3 September 2021): 359.
[66] Tolstoy, *Confession*, 77 Chapter: XIII.
[67] Leo Tolstoy, *A Calendar of Wisdom: Daily Thoughts to Nourish the Soul*, trans. Peter Sekirin (New York, NY: Scribner, 1997).
[68] Leo Tolstoy, 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich', in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich and Other Stories* (Hertfordshire, England: Wordsworth Editions, 2004), 77–130.
[69] Gibson, 'Anarchism, Violence and Social Transformation', 5.

were both pacifists and were both influenced by Eastern philosophy, resulting in a logic that resembles the Christian anarchism of Tolstoy. Zamyatin lacked the mysticism, but did however embrace an individualist theory of resistance, which both placed importance on the value of art as a means to change minds, and advocated for non-violent withdrawal from power structures.

1.3 'Postanarchism' and the Critique of Classical Anarchism

With the emergence of post-structuralist and postmodernist philosophy, literature fusing postmodernism with anarchism has also emerged. The main authors associated with this strand of anarchist thought are Todd May, Lewis Call and Saul Newman. They each wanted to fuse the classical anarchist critique of the state and capitalism with postructuralist and postmodern philosophy, yet each of them also critiqued what they saw as deficiencies in classical anarchism, its view of human nature and of power. For simplicity, this section will use the term 'postanarchism' to collectively refer to the three delineations. This section will briefly go over the critiques of classical anarchism advanced by these three authors, but rejects their critiques as a misreading of classical anarchism on the basis of the interpretation of classical anarchism given in section 1.1. This section does however suggest that the postanarchists' give a view of the ubiquity of power, beyond the state and capitalism that does have some relevance for the three authors.

A principal critique levied at classical anarchism by the postanarchists relates to human nature. Todd May says classical anarchism is 'imbued with a type of essentialism', maintaining that human nature is 'naturally good'[70]. Lewis Call regards human nature as possessing 'no metaphysical, pre-social essence', and argues that classical anarchism is flawed in predicating its philosophy on a concept of 'the unified and rational self' of 'post-enlightenment philosophy'[71] .Likewise, Saul Newman describes classical anarchism's view of human nature as within 'moral and rational enlightenment'[72]. Following this critique, the postanarchists advocate an entirely fluid picture of human subjectivity. Lewis Call, for example, utilizes Nietzsche to argue for an 'anarchy of the subject' and by extension and 'anarchy of pure becoming', which in turn leads to a society with 'no teleology, no destination'[73].

Another way in which the postanarchists proclaim themselves to differ from classical anarchism is in their analysis of power. The postanarchists critique classical anarchism on the basis that claim that power is to be found everywhere,

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[70] Todd May, *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1994), 40.
[71] Lewis Call, *Postmodern Anarchism* (Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2002), 13.
[72] Saul Newman, *The Politics of Postanarchism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 6.
[73] Call, *Postmodern Anarchism*, 50.

it 'run[s] through the social body' and is 'intensified within institutions like the prison, hospital, factory, school, military barracks and asylum, as well as in various discourses of truth and rationalities of government.'[74] Classical anarchists, the postanarchists claim, focus entirely on the state and capitalism, and therefore 'obscure the more intricate, capillary workings of power.'[75] For the postanarchists, the classical anarchist framework cannot understand these dimensions of power.

The postanarchist critique of classical anarchism falls flat, as it is predicated on a misreading of its target. As the prior discussion of human nature in the first section of this chapter outlines, the classical anarchists embraced a multifaceted view of human nature, which neither privileged rationality, nor articulated any form of determinism. It does seem true, as Todd May suggests, that classical anarchism does embrace a kind of 'naturalism'[76], in that classical anarchism saw within human nature a great ethical potential. However, it is not true that the classical anarchists exclusively focused their analysis of power on the state and capitalism. Taking Proudhon as an example, Kinna and Prichard point out that Proudhon discusses 'in all his major works shows how our conscience and our ideas of rationality are structured, shaped and directed by society'[77].

Nonetheless, postanarchism will still be useful for the purpose of this thesis. Its emphasis on the ubiquity of power, down to the level of everyday discourse and its does represent a shift in emphasis from that of classical anarchism, and opens up the prospect for more far-reaching analysis of power. Yet, this section concludes there is no contradiction between the classical anarchist view of human nature and a postanarchist analysis of power. The classical anarchist view of human nature and human changeability is sufficiently multifaceted to accommodate a postanarchist analysis of power.

Summary

Whilst the critiques levied at the classical anarchists by the postanarchists are unconvincing, it is fair to assert that postanarchism is unique with respect to its emphasis on the ubiquity of power. Yet, the postanarchists had to rely on a strawman of classical anarchism's view of human nature to make their case.

The framework outlined in this section will prove relevant to all the authors in this study. Zamyatin, Huxley and Le Guin all incorporate and anticipate aspects of

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[74] Saul Newman, 'Postanarchism and Power', *Journal of Power* 3, no. 2 (1 August 2010): 264.
[75] Newman, 264.
[76] May, *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism*, 40.
[77] Ruth Kinna and Alex Prichard, 'Anarchism: Past, Present and Utopia', in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, ed. Randall Amster (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 274.

the postanarchist critique of power in their fiction. It will be argued however that none of the thinkers are operating within the postanarchist logic, or rather, denial of human nature; but instead embrace a multifaceted view of human nature, containing both significant positive and negative potential. They therefore are able to accommodate a wide view of power whilst remaining broadly within the theoretical bounds of classical anarchism.

Chapter 2 – Anarchism in Zamyatin's *We*

2.1 Introduction

Yevgeny Zamyatin is often acknowledged as a forefather of the genre of dystopian fiction. *We*, written in 1920, presents a terrifying picture of collectivist totalitarianism and dogmatical rationalism taken to its absolute logical conclusion. The One State's rule, in Zamyatin's dystopia, presents a totalitarian state, ruled by an all-powerful 'Benefactor'. It has brought about the almost total regimentation of humanity and reduced the individual to the level of machine. Its citizens are treated purely as cogs in a grand rationalist machine, and all are seen as an undifferentiated collective. The narrative follows D-503, an engineer who is steadfastly loyal and supremely captured by the One State, and is working on a spacecraft named *The Integral*. He falls in love with another number, I-330, who is a secret revolutionary and lives a savage lifestyle in nature, beyond the One State's grasp. She manipulates D-503 via lust into joining her cause.

Zamyatin's dystopia is acknowledged as an influence on Orwell's *1984* and is often claimed to have influenced Huxley's *Brave New World*; however, Huxley denies having read the book until much later in his life[78]. This chapter will argue that Zamyatin's thought is best understood as anarchist in nature. To do so, this chapter will rely on Zamyatin's dystopian classic novel *We*[79], as well as his essays collected in *A Soviet Heretic*[80].

Section **2.2** begins with a sketch of Zamyatin's dystopian society and argues that it echoes a central anarchist concern regarding the regimentation of humanity. It also notes that Zamyatin's conception of power bears some similarities to postmodern and postanarchist philosophy, by critiquing the use of rationality and scientific truth as modes of power. Building on this, section **2.3** extrapolates via the

[78] Christopher Collins, 'Zamyatin, Wells and the Utopian Literary Tradition', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 44, no. 103 (1966): 351.
[79] Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (New York: Avon Books, 1987).
[80] Yevgeny Zamyatin, *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

novel's protagonist, D-503, some of Zamyatin's views on human nature, as comprising both a rational and irrational component.

Section **2.4** discusses Zamyatin's metaphysics and his view of revolution. There is little doubt that Zamyatin was clearly heavily influenced by Marxism, potentially Hegelianism and the dialectical tradition and that he himself adhered to a dialectical view of the universe and history. He was a revolutionary and member of the Bolshevik party in 1905[81]. He came to view the universe as in constant flux, as consistent with dialectics, and extrapolated this logic to human beings and society. This chapter argues, however, that Zamyatin's dialectical view of the universe is best associated with anarchism, due to its wholesale rejection of utopianism and his support for a truly permanent revolution that denies even the possibility of an end.

Zamyatin was not entirely logical or systemic in his thought. Thus, his works have invited a number of wide-ranging interpretations. Among them, are those who argue against understanding Zamyatin as a humanist and suggest instead that Zamyatin's theory of revolution leads inevitably to nihilism. The final two sections, sections of this chapter disagree with these judgements. Section **2.5** will argue that Zamayatin was a proponent for non-violent resistance, similar to Tolstoy, and that he thought the individual should free themselves from unjust structures, rather than engage in direct resistance. Finally, section **2.6** argues that Zamyatin had a humanistic ethics that entailed a deep respect for all human faculties. The section broadly agrees with Zamyatin scholar Alex Shane's judgement, who describes Zamyatin's ideology as 'a mixture of uncompromising individualism and idealistic humanism.' [82] This chapter suggests that Zamyatin had, in equal part, an individualist and social impulse, which shares commonalities with classical anarchism.

2.2 Totalitarianism and Regimentation

Zamyatin's dystopia presents a world governed by perfect mathematical rationality. The One State has fully regimented its citizens according to logic and has thus largely deprived them of fundamentally human characteristics. This often-quoted passage from the start of the novel demonstrates aptly what has become of the lives of the One State's citizens:

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[81] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'Zamyatin About Himself', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 10.

[82] Alex M. Shane, *The Life and Works of Evgenij Zamjatin* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1968), 49.

‘Every morning, with six-wheeled precision, at the same hour and the same moment, we-millions of us— get up as one. At the same hour, in million-headed unison, we start work: and in million-headed unison we end it And, fused into a single million-handed body, at the same second, designated by the Table, we lift our spoons to our mouths At the same second, we come out for our walk, go to the auditorium, go to the hall for Taylor exercises, fall asleep…’[83].

Zamyatin’s dystopia represents the total death of individuality and complete regimentation of the human race. The One State’s triumph over humanity represents ‘the victory of *all* over one, of the *sum* over the *individual*’[84], to such a degree that each citizen of the One State has no name, they are merely a number. Hence, D- describes individual numbers as ‘parts’ of a greater ‘Machine’[85]. The society depicted in the One State resembles significantly, the vitriol critiques of industrialism and state bureaucracy found in classical anarchism. The connection between Zamyatin’s critique of the state and anarchism has been noted by Gorman Beauchamp, who points out that the representation of the state as an impersonable, bureaucratic machine resembles anarchism’s and specifically, Bakunin’s critique of statehood and power[86]. Bakunin had disagreed with Marx on the possibility of a proletarian state, seeing the state not as a neutral and temporary entity, but as a ‘machine’ that would merely become a new form of oppression[87]. Zamyatin, writing during the early years of the Soviet project, is in effect making the same prediction regarding the fate of a supposed ‘proletarian state’. Yet Zamyatin’s portrayal of state power has relevance to all the classical anarchist thinkers, speaking to a common anarchist concern of the regimentation of humanity, and taking it, in *We*, to its extreme conclusion.

The One State is predicated on a utilitarian rationalism that sees happiness and freedom as opposed to one another. A central theme in *We* is the dichotomy between freedom and happiness. The One State is premised upon the notion that humankind must choose between ‘happiness without freedom, or freedom without happiness’[88], hence D- describes the condition of freedom as ‘primitive’. In a similar vein, the One State’s claim to power is predicated on a discourse of absolute scientific and mathematical truth. It claims, for example, to have achieved ‘perfect

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[83] Zamyatin, *We*, 12 Third Entry.
[84] Zamyatin, 46 Ninth Entry.
[85] Zamyatin, 14 Third Entry.
[86] Gorman Beauchamp, ‘Zamiatin’s We’, in *No Place Else: Explorations in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction*, ed. Eric S. Rabkin, Martin Harry Greenberg, and Joseph D. Olander, Alternatives (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), 65.
[87] Bakunin, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism.*, 208.
[88] Zamyatin, *We*, 65 Twelfth Entry.

mechanical efficiency'. Zamyatin's critique of power therefore bears resemblance to postmodernism, and by extension, the postanarchist critique of power, which emphasized the role of scientific truth in perpetuating power. This same point is made by Tony Burns[89], who goes on to make an argument for associating Zamyatin with postmodernism in excruciating detail. This chapter disagrees with this overall judgment, as the final section in this chapter will argue for a conception of Zamyatin as a humanist, with an ethics that did not wholly reject the rational. Burns is, however, certainly correct to associate Zamyatin with the postmodernist critique of rationalism and power.

Zamyatin clearly represents the One State and its workings as totally separate to nature. This is represented clearly by the Green Wall, an 'impregnable, eternal'[90] glass structure that encompasses and contains the city and protects it from the disorderly, unpredictable world of nature on the outside. In this, Zamyatin is drawing a clear line between the rationalist society of the One State and nature. As D- says 'Man ceased to be a savage only when we had built the Green Wall, when we had isolated our perfect mechanical world from the irrational hideous world of trees, birds, animals.'[91] A comparison to classical anarchism can once again be drawn here, as the classical anarchists saw power, once solidified and bureaucratized, as something quite separate to nature and human nature.

Thus, Zamyatin is clear that the machine people in *We*, are *almost* totally inhuman, in the sense that they no longer live in accordance with human nature. In an essay entitled *On Literature, Revolution and Entropy* Zamyatin introduces a concept of 'dead-alive' people, those who resemble machines, who may 'write, walk, speak, act' but nonetheless they 'make no mistakes, and they produce only dead things.'[92] Hence, upon the destruction of human nature Zamyatin's One State has purged any potential for human creativity to produce any genuine human good.

2.3 The Irrational in Human Nature and the Lie of Perfect Ratio

Yet despite the One State's success in suppressing its citizen's humanity, it has not, as of the start of the novel, been able to fully suppress its citizen's humanity. The One State still reluctantly permits its citizens some 'personal hours', in which the citizens are permitted a modicum of privacy and free time[93]. D- repeatedly shows, through his actions and words, that he is not the cold rationalist that the One

[89] Tony Burns, 'Zamyatin's We and Postmodernism', *Utopian Studies* 11, no. 1 (2000): 68, 69.
[90] Zamyatin, *We*, 5 Second Entry.
[91] Zamyatin, 95 Seventeenth Entry.
[92] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'On Literature, Revolution and Entropy, and Other Matters', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 110.
[93] Zamyatin, *We*, 12 Third Entry.

State has sought to make him but is beaming with emotion and appreciation of his society. D- for example, describes machines as beautiful precisely because it is choreographed, 'unfree motion'[94]. He repeatedly expresses his love for the beauty of order and mechanization. Meckier has pointed out that, for all the One State's rhetoric regarding perfect rationality, it has not abolished art or poetry, but instead subjugates art and poetry to the state's interests[95]. Thus, the stated ideology of the One State appears to be a lie.

We therefore tells us much regarding Zamyatin's view of human nature, as containing both a rational and irrational component. At one point in the novel, D- recalls a childhood memory, the first time he was taught about 'irrational numbers' and the square root of minus one ($\sqrt{-1}$). 'The irrational number', D- says 'had grown into me like something foreign, alien, terrifying. It devoured me— it was impossible to conceive, to render harmless, because it was outside ratio.'[96] The terror D- associates with his first conception of the irrational sinks deep into his psyche, unable to be purged. This theme appears first when D- meets I-330 (henceforth I-), at the start of the novel who, unbeknownst to D- at the time, is a revolutionary. I- is described by D- as 'a certain strange irritating X, which I could not capture'[97]. She exudes a mysteriousness and aliveness that cannot be quantified in D-'s mechanical worldview.

Nor is the One State able to suppress love. D- embarks on a spiritual journey with I- that leads him to be enthralled by her. His falling in love has a number of unhappy consequences for the novel's rationalist narrator. He begins to unlock a capacity of imagination and starts having dreams[98]. He bemoans his discovery that he has a soul[99]. His love leads him ultimately into disobedience from the One State he was previously steadfastly loyal to.

This irrational instinct and romantic impulse that characterizes D- after his introduction to I- is only able to be stamped out by the end of the novel, and the 'Great Operation'[100] that D- is subjected to by the One State. The operation removes the individual's imaginative capacities, and D- is finally turned into the inhuman machine he had always wanted to be. He then watches the execution of his love, I-, and feels nothing. This certainly demonstrates that love, the emotional and the

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[94] Zamyatin, 4 Second Entry.
[95] Jerome Meckier, 'Poetry in the Future, the Future of Poetry: Huxley and Orwell on Zamyatin', *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 28, no. 1 (January 1984): 21.
[96] Zamyatin, *We*, 39 Eight Entry.
[97] Zamyatin, 6 Second Entry.
[98] Zamyatin, 33 Seventh Entry.
[99] Zamyatin, 87 Sixteenth Entry.
[100] Zamyatin, 178 Thirty-first Entry.

irrational are extremely powerful facets of human nature for Zamyatin, only able to be tamed with the physical destruction of the individual.

The analysis thus far demonstrates the beginnings of an anarchist philosophy. Zamyatin advances a critique of technology and totalitarianism that bears resemblance to classical anarchism's critique of industrialism and capitalism. A critique that sees power as treating the individual as merely a number, a cog in the machine and subjugating all the individual's interests to the collective. Zamyatin arguably takes this critique to its fullest conclusion, by showing the trajectory of the state as inching ever closer to destroying humanity itself. He also maintains a view of humanity is multifaceted, containing both a rational and irrational, conscious and unconscious component. With this established, the following sections will explore Zamyatin's anarchistic view of society and revolution, and subsequently offer an interpretation of Zamyatin's philosophy as combining elements of individualist and social anarchism.

2.4 Revolution and the Rejection of a 'static' Utopia

The purpose of this section is to outline Zamyatin's theory of revolution as a cosmic and social law and to show how this necessarily leads to a total rejection of any kind of static society. This establishes Zamyatin's metaphysics as anarchistic and an advocate for total and permanent revolution. It is necessary to establish Zamyatin's metaphysics before discussing his ethics in the final two sections.

Zamyatin, true to his Marxist roots, embraces a dialectical view of change and history. As Zamyatin states 'Yesterday, the thesis; today, the antithesis; and tomorrow, the synthesis.' [101] In the essay *On Literature, Revolution, Entropy* Zamyatin describes what he sees as the 'cosmic law' of revolution as: 'Two dead, dark stars collide with an inaudible, deafening crash and light a new star: this is revolution. A molecule breaks away from its orbit and, bursting into a neighboring atomic universe, gives birth to a new chemical element: this is revolution.'[102] In this, Zamyatin is offering a scientific conception of 'revolution' by suggesting the universe is in a constant state of flux, energy constantly flows and changes the universe's overall makeup. The idea is found in Nietzsche, who Zamyatin was clearly inspired by[103], and in Hegelian dialectics; but can also be found in Kropotkin's *Anarchism: its philosophy and ideal*, in Proudhon's repeated rejection of the absolute, and perhaps most relevantly, in the left Hegelian dialectics of Bakunin.

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[101] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'Tomorrow', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 51.
[102] Zamyatin, 'On Literature, Revolution and Entropy, and Other Matters', 107.
[103] Zamyatin, 110.

The phenomena described here, Zamyatin associated with the force of 'energy'. The converse of energy is 'entropy', which occurs in a social context once dogma is solidified and society ceases to move forward. Zamyatin describes 'Dogmatization in science, religion, social life, or art' as 'the entropy of thought.'[104]

Zamyatin extrapolates this logic and applies it to society and social phenomena. Hence, society is also subject to the 'cosmic' law of revolution. The ideas found in *Literature* are represented in *We* by I- and the Mephi, the revolutionary group beyond the Green Wall she is associated with. I- says 'There are two forces in the world— entropy and energy. One leads to blissful quietude* to happy equilibrium; the other, to destruction of equilibrium, to tormentingly endless movement.' [105] On this binary, the One State with its emphasis on perfect mathematical rationality, and its supposed 'immutable' and 'eternal' laws[106], is representative of pure 'entropy'. The One State believes it has achieved the end of history, that no advance can be made beyond its mathematical governance, and consequently, its dogma, propaganda and regimentation of humanity prevents any movement or change. Zamyatin seems to agree with the anarchist critique of states as defenders of the status quo, desiring no movement which may threaten its power.

Once dogma is solidified and entropy engulfs society, someone must come along and restore the force of energy. These people, Zamyatin calls, 'heretics'. The heretic for Zamyatin, is those 'who cannot tolerate any settled existence, any catechism'[107]. The heretic keeps the world alive by relentlessly rebelling against the established order and the established doctrine of the present day. The heretic, therefore, contrasts with the 'dead-alive', walking machines that Zamyatin loathes, and are instead 'alive-alive' which Zamyatin describes as being 'constantly in error, in search, in questions, in torment.'[108] In a 1918 essay, Zamyatin gives the 'Scythian', a historical nomadic tribesman, as a foremost example of a heretic. The Scythian is 'an eternal nomad. Today he is here, tomorrow, there.' [109] With a 'love for true, untamed freedom', the Scythian, Zamyatin says, works 'only for the distant future', and remains steadfastly committed to 'eternal movement forward' [110] and thus proclaims 'an eternal "Down with!"'[111]. The revolutionary spirit Zamyatin describes

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[104] Zamyatin, 108.
[105] Zamyatin, *We*, 165.
[106] Zamyatin, 45 Ninth Entry.
[107] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'H.G. Wells', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 284.
[108] Zamyatin, 'On Literature, Revolution and Entropy, and Other Matters', 110.
[109] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'Scythians?', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 21.
[110] Zamyatin, 21,22.
[111] Zamyatin, 22.

in the Scythian appears to reject any order, any dogma, and therefore static utopianism in any form it appears. It also must be noted that Zamyatin appears to embrace a philosophy of pure becoming, as evidenced by the Scythian's focus on the future.

Zamyatin's theory of revolution is framed explicitly in the tradition of dialectics, which suggests strongly that his theory of revolution is influenced by his Marxism. Yet Zamyatin understands Marxism in its more libertarian form, involving the eventual withering away of the state. In an essay written in 1926, Zamyatin criticizes that Soviet regime on the basis that it has lost sight of its job to 'rule temporarily… in order to cease ruling as soon as possible - in order to free mankind of the yoke of any state and any rule.'[112] Victoria Rooney points out, however, that Zamyatin breaks from Orthodox Marxism by rejecting the idea of a final revolution[113]. If Saul Newman is correct to assert that 'revolutionary forms of socialism and Marxism – aspire, consciously or unconsciously… to be a kind of anarchism – even if understood only in a utopian sense'[114], then Zamyatin's rejection of utopianism and embrace of permanent and endless revolution is best associated with anarchism.

2.5 Universal Brotherhood and The Ends and Means of Revolution

The outline of Zamyatin's theory of revolution given above places him firmly within some form of anarchism. However, the scientific 'cosmic' form of revolution he espouses has invited criticism for its lack of humanism, and associations with Nietzsche and moral nihilism. Tony Burns has argued that Zamyatin should be viewed within the bounds of 'Nietzschean… anarchism', which 'rejects… the ideals of the Enlightenment' and 'is associated with radical individualism, anti-rationalism, scepticism, nihilism and relativism.' [115] Barratt argues that Zamyatin's heretic resembles Nietzsche's 'superman', meaning the heretic 'rests on a profoundly undemocratic conception of mankind'[116]. Beauchamp associates Zamyatin with Bakunin and suggests that Zamyatin shares Bakunin's reverence of Satan-like figures and the commitment to 'rebellion of the human spirit against all imposed limits.'[117] This judgement clearly has a significant degree of merit, and certainly

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[112] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'The Goal', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 127.
[113] Victoria Rooney, 'Nietzschean Elements in Zamyatin's Ideology: A Study of His Essays', *The Modern Language Review* 81, no. 3 (1986): 678.
[114] Newman, 'Postanarchism and Power', 259.
[115] Burns, 'Zamyatin's We and Postmodernism', 81,80.
[116] Andrew Barratt, 'Revolution as Collusion: The Heretic and the Slave in Zamyatin's My', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62, no. 3 (1984): 18.
[117] Gorman Beauchamp, 'Zamiatin's We', 66.

captures the tone of Zamyatin's anti-utopian idea of revolution. However, although Beauchamp is not denying Zamyatin's humanism, he is still arguing for a conception of Zamyatin's revolution as destruction for destruction's sake, describing Zamyatin's views as 'apocalyptic anarchy'[118]. Contrary to these judgements, the final two sections of this chapter will argue that Zamyatin did embrace a form of humanistic anarchism. This section will argue, in accordance with Eichholz's[119] judgement, that D- should be understood as the true revolutionary of *We* rather than I-, and on this basis, argues for an interpretation of Zamyatin as espousing an individualistic and non-violent form of revolution, somewhat similar to that of Tolstoy.

The first important point to stress here is that Zamyatin clearly embraced a philosophy of brotherly love for all people. Zamyatin describes 'the fundamental, the best, the greatest qualities of the Russian soul' as 'the Russian nobility of spirit, the Russian tenderness and love for the lowliest human being, the least blade of grass', these are, for Zamyatin, the 'best qualities of the Russian soul that underlie the unquenchable Russian longing for peace, for all mankind.' Zamyatin, as a Marxist, also desired to see a truly classless society.

Zamyatin also showed a particular aversion to violence and seems to associate violence largely with state and power structures. He critiques states actors as those 'who have covered Russia with a pile of carcasses, who are dreaming of socialist-Napoleonic wars'[120]. In an essay entitled *Tomorrow*, written shortly after the Russian revolution and one year before *We*, Zamyatin critiques the Russia of the day for its devaluing of human life. He says: 'Wars, imperialist and civil, have turned man into material for warfare, into a number, a cipher.'[121] Here there is an obvious parallel to the One State in *We*, and its reduction of the human individual to a mere number. On the other hand, the types of revolutionary resistance he actually encourages are peaceful. In *Tomorrow*, Zamyatin proclaims: 'The only weapon worthy of man — of tomorrow's man — is the word. With the word, the Russian intelligentsia, Russian literature, have fought for decades for the great human tomorrow. And today it is time to raise this weapon once again.'[122] Zamyatin also makes clear that he considers the two most effective methods of revolution to be a combination of love and literature. He says great art ought to 'infect the

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[118] Gorman Beauchamp, 69.
[119] Patrick Eichholz, 'Double-Edged Satire in Zamyatin's We', *Extrapolation* 56, no. 3 (January 2015): 267–86.
[120] Zamyatin, 'Scythians?', 25.
[121] Zamyatin, 'Tomorrow', 52.
[122] Zamyatin, 51.

reader… arousing him with pathos or irony'[123]. Yet he maintains that 'Genuine literature will come only when we replace hatred for man with love for man.'[124]

Zamyatin was not a total pacifist, in the way that Tolstoy, and as will be shown later, Huxley and Le Guin were. However, it is entirely plausible that Zamyatin embraces a form of individualist resistance that mirrors that of Tolstoy, a resistance of withdrawal from the unjust system. Eichholz argues, quite persuasively, that, when the Mephi revolution occurs in the One State and D- withdraws to complete his manuscript, that this is in fact 'the novel's true revolutionary act'[125]. There is considerable evidence to support this judgement, for example, D- proposes that he and I- forget the violent revolution and go live together peacefully, beyond the wall[126]. Arguably, even the Scythian, Zamyatin's truest heretic, embodies this individualist ethic. The Scythian: 'if in his wild gallop he should chance upon a fenced town, he will give it a wide detour.'[127] The Scythian therefore does not tear down the wall of the fenced town as I- would have it, but prefers D-'s option of simply availing himself of the unfreedom. In this way, Zamyatin starts to sound more like Tolstoy, and the individualist, largely non-violent forms of resistance he espoused. It is possible that Zamyatin was directly influenced by Tolstoy's philosophy as he repeatedly praises Tolstoy as a heretic[128] as well as a literary genius[129]. Given the revolutionary potential of literature in Zamyatin's thought, D-'s actions still hold revolutionary potential even after the end of the novel, as the literature may survive and provoke future resistance. On the other hand, I-'s attempted revolution dies with her.

Understanding D- as the true revolutionary in *We*, as opposed to I- changes fundamentally how the novel and secondary literature is understood. Barratt for example correctly points out that 'I-330's attempt to convert D-503 is founded on a paradox', as in trying to arouse 'a love of freedom' in D-, she instead enslaves him, by manipulating his love and lust. Barratt concludes from this that Zamyatin's 'undemocratic' view of humanity means that D- and by extension, the masses, are simply too weak to be free, they must remain a slave to someone[130]. The interpretation here shows how mistakenly taking I- as the true revolutionary of the novel associates Zamyatin with violence and chaos, and thereby obscures

[123] Zamyatin, 'The Goal', 130.
[124] Zamyatin, 127.
[125] Eichholz, 'Double-Edged Satire in Zamyatin's We', 267.
[126] Zamyatin, *We*, 168 Twenty-Eight Entry.
[127] Zamyatin, 'Scythians?', 21.
[128] Zamyatin, 'Tomorrow', 51.
[129] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'Anatole France: An Obituary', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 296.
[130] Barratt, 'Revolution as Collusion', 355, 356.

Zamyatin's humanism. Understanding that I- is not the heroine of the novel means that Zamyatin is not endorsing her manipulative qualities, but instead encouraging the disengagement from power that D- comes to embrace. Eichholz points out that I-'s violent revolution (and by extension, her enslavement of D-) treats human beings as mere numbers, and a means to her ideological ends, in the same way the One State does and in the same way that Zamyatin critiqued in *Tomorrow*[131].

This all fits well with Zamyatin's assertion of the revolutionary power of literature and love. D-'s manuscript represents the revolutionary potential of literature that will lie latent after the end of the novel. Arguably there lies another possibility for revolution against the One State that lingers beyond the novel's final page. O-90, D-'s former state-mandated lover who was illegally impregnated and has fled beyond the Green Wall to have her child, beyond the One State's grasp, offers the potential for future change[132]. Love, the other revolutionary force Zamyatin mentions in his essays therefore finds its representation in *We* as well.

Seeing D- as the true revolutionary gives way to an individualistic conception of revolution, with an aversion to violence, similar to Tolstoy. The latter interpretation seems more likely given that it takes into account Zamyatin's humanistic and non-violent statements in his essays, and his critique of state structures devaluing human life. It is telling that by the end of the novel there remain only two potentialities for future revolution; one being the loving relationship between O-90 and D-'s child, beyond the wall. The other D-'s manuscript. Zamyatin's philosophy of revolution, with its commitment to universal brotherhood and an aversion to violence, bears significant resemblance to the Tolstoyan anarcho-pacifist view of resistance.

2.6 'Romantic' anarchism, Respecting and Maximizing all Human Faculties

Zamyatin opens his essay *Scythians?* with the following passage:

'A solitary, savage horseman — a Scythian — gallops across the green steppe, hair streaming in the wind. Where is he galloping? Nowhere. What for? For no reason. He gallops simply because he is a Scythian, because he has become one with his horse, because he is a centaur, and the dearest things to him are freedom, solitude, his horse, the wide expanse of the steppe.'[133]

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[131] Eichholz, 'Double-Edged Satire in Zamyatin's We', 281.

[132] As has also been noted by Phillip Wegner in: Phillip E. Wegner, 'On Zamyatin's We: A Critical Map of Utopia's "Possible Worlds"', *Utopian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1993): 111.

[133] Zamyatin, 'Scythians?', 21.

The picture Zamyatin paints is a romantic one. The Scythian is not merely the eternal revolutionary as the last section outlined, but rather is a 'spiritual revolutionary' [134]. The dichotomy speaks to a significant romantic strand to Zamyatin's thought. As Shane points out from an unpublished lecture, Zamyatin associates romanticism with 'negation with regard to today and... aspiration to unending movement forward' meaning that he regards 'any true living artist as inevitably a romanticist' [135]. A revolutionary, for Zamyatin, is therefore also a romanticist. This section intends to argue that what Zamyatin means by 'romanticist', and thus by extension, a 'heretic' or revolutionary is they who push the boundaries of human experience and human faculties. Hence, it argues for a humanistic conception of the 'heretic' against Zamyatin's critics.

Although Zamyatin's metaphysics appears to deny any final scientific truth, he nonetheless refers to lived experience as truth. For example, in an essay entitled *The Day and Age* Zamyatin opens with an analogy: 'To the female sparrow it undoubtedly seems that her gray little mate does not twitter, but sings — and sings not a bit worse than the nightingale: that, in fact, he can put the best of nightingales to shame.' Yet despite the fact the sparrow is positively not a nightingale, he nonetheless describes the little sparrow's song as 'above all, *truthful'* because of the feeling it produces[136]. He therefore affords emotion and experiences a special category of truthfulness that he is unwilling to give to scientific or dogmatic truth. It may be presumed then that the Scythian who gallops around for 'no reason', does not require any particular justification for his freedom. His experiences are justification in themselves. This romantic conception of truth is apparent throughout *We*. Of his love for I-, D- comes to acknowledge it as 'a stupid, ridiculous human truth!'[137]. Zamyatin's commitment to 'untamed' freedom does not seem to stem from an abject nihilism, as would be found in Nietzsche, but from this romantic conception of truth, that displays a deep respect for life and human experience.

It does not, however, seem correct to assert that Zamyatin completely rejects the rational and embraces unrestrained instinct. Peter Doyle has pointed out that D-'s igniting passion for I- as giving way to violent impulses[138]. For example, after D- learns that I- has slept with another man, he resolves to 'kill her', a prospect which gives him 'a strange sensation of something sickeningly sweet in the

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[134] Zamyatin, 22.
[135] Alex M. Shane, *The Life and Works of Evgenij Zamjatin*, 52.
[136] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'The Day and Age', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 113.
[137] Zamyatin, *We*, 211 Thirty-fifth Entry.
[138] Peter Doyle, 'Zamyatin's Philosophy, Humanism, and *We* : A Critical Appraisal', *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 28, no. 1 (January 1984): 16.

mouth'[139]. In *Tomorrow* Zamyatin warns against the rise of unrestrained instinct in Russia, 'The proud Homo erectus is dropping to all fours, is growing fangs and fur; the beast takes ascendancy in man'[140], and he makes clear that he sees literature as serving a civilizing function against this tendency. As he states: 'Man ceased to be an ape, vanquished the ape, on the day when the first book was written.'[141] His concern for literature also reveals a concern for culture and the development of human creativity and faculties.

Rather than completely rejecting the rational, as Zamyatin's critics would claim is his aim; Zamyatin, like a true dialectician, in fact seeks a synthesis between the rational and irrational. The point is made by D- after he travels past the Green Wall and learns that I- plans to wage war upon the One State with use of the Integral. D- describes the One State citizens still within the Green Wall 'the half we have lost' and draws the analogy of water: 'H_2 and O'. He then argues that 'in order to get H_2O— streams, oceans, waterfalls, waves, storms— the two halves must unite.'[142] In other words, between the dogmatic rationality of the One State and the irrationality of the Mephi, D- proposes, quite literally, a *synthesis*. Zamyatin's personal belief in dialectical philosophy would suggest he agrees with D- here.

It is also apparent throughout the novel that D-'s experiences with I- are causing him to develop a true individual identity. Eichholz has noted that D-'s 'records undergo a stylistic shift as our narrator begins to conceive of himself not as a character in someone else's completed narrative, but as an author of a work in progress.'[143] In this, he comes to identify with his authorship more than his duties to the One State and the collective. However, it is not merely the love that D- experiences that awakens within him new ways of looking at himself and the world. When I- asks D- to name the final number[144], she appeals to his mathematical reason, and undermines the One State's logic for claiming it has achieved the end of history.

The point is further reinforced in Zamyatin's essays and lectures. In *The Psychology of Creative Work*, for example, Zamyatin distinguishes between 'major art and minor art… creative work and… craft'. Major art, or creative work, he likens to Beethoven writing *Moonlight Sonata*, whilst minor art, or craft, he likens to learning to play Beethoven's compositions. Major art, Zamyatin says, is organic and

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[139] Zamyatin, *We*, 205 Thirty-fifth Entry.
[140] Zamyatin, 'Tomorrow', 52.
[141] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'A Piece for an Anthology on Books', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 131.
[142] Zamyatin, *We*, 163.
[143] Eichholz, 'Double-Edged Satire in Zamyatin's We', 272.
[144] Zamyatin, *We*, 175 Thiry-first Entry.

therefore 'is not possible to teach'[145], whilst craft, concerning logic and form, can be taught. Nevertheless, Zamyatin concludes that 'Craft — minor art — is inevitably a component of major art.'[146] In other words, both the rational and the irrational, the organic and the inorganic play a part in generating great literature. Another example appears in Zamyatin's obituary for Anatole France. He contrasts France and Tolstoy as 'the spiritual poles of two nations' who are opposites in that 'Tolstoy is the absolute, emotion, faith (even if it refracts in the form of faith in reason), France is all relativism, irony, skepticism.' Nonetheless, Zamyatin concludes that 'the same energy of revolution animates these two poles'[147]. The irrational and the rational, the instinctive and the measured, therefore both contain within them revolutionary potential.

It may be presumed then that unlike the assertions of Barratt and Zamyatin's detractors, *We* instead simply suggests that dogmatical adherence to either the rational or the irrational, at the expense of the other, obscures true revolution. Here we approach the heart of Zamyatin's revolutionary project, which is simultaneously romantic, humanistic and anarchistic in character. Zamyatin wants to see all people live life to the fullest, and eternally push the boundaries of human experiences and faculties. Consider Zamyatin's statement in *Tomorrow*: 'Yesterday there was a tsar, and there were slaves; today there is no tsar, but the slaves remain; tomorrow there will be only tsars. We march in the name of tomorrow's free man — the royal man.'[148]. The use of these descriptives 'Tsar' and 'Royal Man' suggests not only a classless society, but an elevation of all people to a higher level as opposed to a dragging down. He wants all people to become heretics, to become the 'alive-alive' people he praises, living and producing 'alive' things. Here Zamyatin displays another break with Marxism that brings him closer to an overarching concern associated with anarchism, the acceptance and maximal development of human innate faculties.

Reading Zamyatin in this way brings together in totality his philosophy as it appears in *We* and his essays. His dialectical approach that seeks to combine rationality and instinct suggests a respect for all of humanity's faculties. Zamyatin's theory of revolution invites a charge of nihilism, as it offers no conception of the Good, yet this is explained by his fundamentally romantic temperament, which treats human beings and human experiences as justifications in themselves. Combining these thoughts together suggests that what Zamyatin wants more than

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[145] Yevgeny Zamyatin, 'The Psychology of Creative Work', in *A Soviet Heretic*, trans. Mirra Ginsburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 159.
[146] Zamyatin, 160 Twenty-ninth Entry.
[147] Zamyatin, 'Anatole France: An Obituary', 268.
[148] Zamyatin, 'Tomorrow', 51.

anything is a fundamentally *human* society. Thus, the 'heretic', who accepts and follows the 'cosmic law' of revolution is one who lives in step with nature, including human nature. *We* demonstrates that living in total conformity and dogma entails a denial of human nature. Hence, to live in the One State, D- must deny his irrational and imaginative side. This is therefore another reason why Zamyatin chooses to embrace individualist revolution, as he sees society as continually drawing the individual into conformity, and thereby, demands the denial of an aspect of self.

Zamyatin, therefore does not fit into the category of classical or social anarchism. He does not seem to say much regarding free cooperation and organization as one would find in Kropotkin. As already mentioned, Zamyatin also sees the greatest literature developing when the individual detaches themselves from dogma and becomes a 'heretic'. The solitary nature of Zamyatin's heretic contrasts with the classical anarchists that tended to emphasize equality and the individual's place within the collective whole.

Paradoxically, however, there are certainly elements to Zamyatin's philosophy that do resemble classical anarchism. Clearly, via his dialectical approach, Zamyatin sees literature as developing in a social context, and progress relying upon a multitude of writers building upon one another's work. Zamyatin says that although literature contains great revolutionary potential for society, the field of literature itself develops by 'evolution' rather than 'revolution', meaning that 'all new achievements are based on the utilization of everything that has been accumulated below'[149]. Cultural context is then what enables the heretic to express their individuality to the fullest, even if, as a heretic, they are necessarily breaking with the current order.

The picture that emerges from these seemingly contradictory strands of thought is an equal concern for the assertiveness of the individual, and their social context. Zamyatin wants to see the full realization of the human, the individual and their creative capacities but recognizes that this must occur within a collective and cultural context.

As is typical of dialectics, Zamyatin sees the world as a collection of contradictions, which nonetheless interact and depend on one another. Zamyatin therefore seems not to be privileging one aspect of humanity over another, but rather associates revolution, and 'progress' with fully living, experiencing, accepting and balancing all aspects of human experience. This is what Zamyatin means by both a 'romanticist' and a 'heretic' or revolutionary. Through his romantic sensibilities, Zamyatin reaches a conclusion that, as the following chapters will

[149] Zamyatin, 'The Psychology of Creative Work', 160.

show, is similar to what Le Guin and Huxley reach through mysticism, and furthermore, a conclusion that is fundamentally anarchistic. The idea that all the facets of humanity and the individual should wholly be accepted and expressed is a view that appears throughout the anarchist canon, and also appears in Le Guin and Huxley.

Chapter 3 - Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Island*: Mystic Anarchism

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the anarchist elements to two of Aldous Huxley's novels: his dystopian masterpiece *Brave New World*[150] (Henceforth: BNW. Originally Published 1932), and its utopian counterpart, the alternative society of Pala depicted in his final novel *Island*[151] (1962). To better elucidate the anarchism in these two novels, this chapter will also rely on several non-fiction texts, such as some of his earlier essays in: *Proper Studies*[152] (1927) *Music at Night*[153] (1931), as well as his later spiritual works and essays found in: *Ends and Means*[154] (1937) and *The Perennial Philosophy*[155] (1945) *BNW revisited*[156] (1958).

BNW tells the story of a totalitarian society, in which consumption, mindless promiscuity and drug taking are enforced by the state, for the end of maintaining stability. Human beings are produced by a process of eugenics on a factory line and conditioned for certain societal roles. The narrative follows Bernard Marx and his friend Helmholtz, two members of the alpha class who are dissatisfied with life in the World State. *Island*, on the other hand, tells the story of Will Farnaby, an American journalist who shipwrecks on the Island of Pala, a communitarian society that combines Buddhist and Western principles. He is given a tour by Dr Robert and is taught about the Island's philosophy and politics.

David Bradshaw's edited volume of Huxley's essays entitled The *Hidden Huxley*, details a period of Huxley's political thought between 1919 and 1937 in which he simultaneously held 'contempt and compassion' for the working class,

[150] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Vintage Classics (London: Vintage, 2007).
[151] Aldous Huxley, *Island*, Vintage Classics (London: Vintage Books, 2005).
[152] Aldous Huxley, *Proper Studies* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957).
[153] Aldous Huxley, *Music At Night*, 1st ed. (Chatto & Windus, 1931).
[154] Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization.* (London, England: Chatto and Windus, 1946).
[155] Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, 1.
[156] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, Originally published: New York : Harper&Row, 1958 (London: Vintage, 2004).

recognizing their oppression whilst taking a thoroughly elitist view, supporting eugenics and resolving that the intelligentsia should 'dominate' the lower classes[157].

The later Huxley abandoned his elitism and hence openly supported more cooperative societal arrangements. Huxley writes in a 1946 foreword to *BNW* that the ideal society would be 'decentralized' and politically 'Kropotkinesque'[158] It is generally argued that Huxley's political thought shifted around 1937, with his spiritual awakening and friendship with historian and writer Gerald Heard, five years after the publication of BNW. Flaherty, who reads Huxley as a 'social anarchist' who 'anticipated aspects of postanarchism', dates Huxley's anarchism to 1937 with the publication of *Ends and Means*[159]. Anarchist historian David Goodway has a chapter on Huxley in his book *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow* which corroborates Flaherty's judgement, detailing a libertarian shift in his thought around 1937[160].

This chapter does not disagree with dating Huxley's anarchism to 1937 but does seek to argue that much of Huxley's later anarchism is foreshadowed in the pages of BNW. Thus, whilst Huxley was not strictly an anarchist at the time of writing BNW, a close look at BNW and some of his essays written at the same time reveal some anarchist strands of thought, which foreshadow his later, more refined anarchist philosophy.

David Goodway asserts that Huxley's interest in mysticism is 'greatly to be regretted', as it detracted from his focus on 'alternative technology, for achieving independence in a co-operative community' and 'the practical realization of philosophical anarchism'[161]. Contrary to Goodway, this chapter sees Huxley's mysticism as an integral component to his anarchism, with many practical implications. As outlined in Ends and Means and Island, Huxley sees fostering 'non-attachment' within the individual as both being a necessary precondition for genuine psychological freedom, and as having significant normative benefits for designing a harmonious anarchist society. In Island Huxley designed a society that follows an anarcho-pacifist logic, with a steadfast commitment to accommodate individual psychology and to never dehumanize an adversary.

This chapter proceeds along the following structure. Section **3.2** will lay out Huxley's view of human nature, which it suggests accords with classical anarchism.

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[157] David Bradshaw, *The Hidden Huxley: Contempt and Compassion for the Masses 1919-1937,* Main edition (David Bradshaw, 2002).

[158] Huxley, *Brave New World*, xliii.

[159] Seamus Flaherty, 'Aldous Huxley: Social Anarchist', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 27, no. 2 (4 May 2022): 5,3.

[160] David Goodway, *Anarchist Seeds beneath the Snow: Left-Libertarian Thought and British Writers from William Morris to Colin Ward* (Liverpool: Liverpool university press, 2006), 212–37.

[161] Goodway, 231,232.

The next two sections discuss *BNW* and suggests that Huxley echoes some anarchist critiques of power. Section **3.3** suggests that the state in *BNW* maintains stability by impoverishing human faculties. Section **3.4** then goes on to link this impoverishment with a critique of capitalism and utilitarianism, by drawing on numerous essays written by Huxley at roughly the same time as *BNW*. Section **3.5** then moves on to discussion of the post-1937 Huxley and discusses his pacifistic and deontological ethic motivated by his belief in *The Perennial Philosophy*. The final two sections discuss his utopian novel *Island*, with section **3.6** laying out the means by which the Islanders maximize human innate capacities. Section **3.7** discusses Huxley's theory of the ubiquity of power, and relates it to postanarchism, and goes on to the discuss the methods Huxley proposes to attempt to diminish the effects of power.

3.2 Human Nature

Huxley's views on human nature share similarities with the anarchist theoretical framework outlined above. Human nature, for Huxley, contains 'a great many potentialities of a desirable kind, of course, also of an undesirable kind.' But the psychological condition of humankind is, just as for the anarchists, dependent on society, its structures and its collective consciousness. As a result, Huxley resolves that humanity's 'potentialities for rationality, for affection and kindness, for creativity, are still lying latent' [162] within us. Human nature is therefore simply multifaceted. Just as we all have 'the power to respond to reason and truth', we too have a 'tendency to respond to unreason and falsehood'[163]. This view of the inherent potentialities of human faculties was articulated by the later post-1937 Huxley, but the general principles were the same earlier in his life, before *BNW*'s publication. Writing in 1927, Huxley states: 'Heredity gives us, not a complete personality, but the materials out of which a personality can be made, and the power to make one.' These materials with which a human being could become something more Huxley designated as 'a set of instincts and the capacity to feel, to imagine, to reason.'[164]

Already, Huxley's interest in Eastern and mystic philosophy constitutes a part of his anarchist philosophy. In the opening pages of his *Perennial Philosophy*, Huxley states that 'as the individual grows up [in society] his knowledge becomes more conceptual and systematic in its form… but these gains are offset by a certain deterioration in the quality of immediate apprehension, a blunting and a loss of

[162] Aldous Huxley, 'Realizing Human Potential', The Library of Consciousness, accessed 12 June 2024, https://www.organism.earth/library/document/realizing-human-potential.
[163] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 44.
[164] Aldous Huxley, 'Personality and the Discontinuity of the Mind', in *Proper Studies* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), 230.

intuitive power'[165]. Here Huxley mirrors Rousseau's description of the dulling of natural compassion in conjunction with the ascension of reason and perfectibility, as well as Kropotkin and Proudhon's belief in the instinctive nature of morality and action. His mysticism, and belief in perennialism, meaning the idea of divinity in all matter of things, therefore informs a view of human nature that bears resemblance to Rousseau and the anarchists.

It is from this framework that Huxley approached his fiction. Hence, as the following two sections will show, Huxley's dystopia portrayed in *BNW* rests upon a suppression of humanity's desirable capacities.

3.3 Psychological captivity in Brave New World

In his 1946 foreward to *BNW*, Huxley remarks that the main theme of his dystopian masterpiece is 'not the advancement of science as such; it is the advancement of science as it affects human individuals.'[166] Huxley's dystopian masterpiece shows the destruction of autonomy and any human positive potential through technological, and drug-induced psychological sedation. The World state has preserved stability and order indefinitely by conditioning its citizens to love meaningless consumption, promiscuous sex and hedonistic drug use. It does so for the end of continued stability and order, as 'Stability' is the 'primal and ultimate need'[167].

Human beings in Huxley's World State are manufactured with use of Eugenics and 'Bokanovsky's process', allowing the World State to produce 'ninety-six human beings... where only one grew before'[168]. The World State intervenes to ensure its citizens' psychological captivity through 'neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopaedia' and 'conscription of consumption' the children are taught to repeat 'I do love flying, I do love having new clothes' and 'ending is better than mending'[169]. The technology in BNW plays on 'man's almost infinite appetite for distractions'[170] to maintain order and servitude, preventing the emergence of any positive characteristics. From the moment of a child's decantation, the state works to dull the child's mind. Immediately a nurse appears to satiate the new-born, to ever reduce 'the interval of time between desire and its consummation'[171] The sedating effects of state-prescribed hedonistic drugs, known as soma, and meaningless

[165] Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, 2.
[166] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, New ed.], (London: Vintage, 2007), xliv.
[167] Huxley, 36.
[168] Huxley, 3,4.
[169] Huxley, 43,41,42.
[170] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 47.
[171] Huxley, *Brave New World*, 37.

consumption are designed to fundamentally suppress the citizen's human capacities. As Mustapha Mond, the World State controller magnanimously explains to some students: 'no pains have been spared to make your lives emotionally easy – to preserve you… from having emotions at all'[172]. Zhamurashvili points out that the World State indoctrinates its citizens to remain infantile into adulthood, as a mechanism to ensure they remain obedient, uncurious and good consumers[173]. Hence, throughout the novel the characters continue to repeat the juvenile rhymes they are taught as children. At one point in the novel Lenina and Henry are described as 'twin embryos gently rocking together on the waves of a bottled ocean of blood-surrogate.'[174] The metaphor is intended to show the suppression of the character's psychological capacities, that although they are grown in body, in mind they remain juvenile and underdeveloped.

Another illustrative example is the character of Helmholtz. Helmholtz is a member of the Alpha Plus social class, meaning he is conditioned for intellectually challenging work and possesses superior intellectual capacities. Yet despite his prowess, Helmholtz is fundamentally unable to actualize his desires. He feels as though he has some 'extra power' which is 'just waiting… to come out'[175], however his conditioning and the psychologically sedating effects of the soma drugs and vice prevent its emergence. Helmholtz is not physically coerced in the way he might be in Orwell's 1984, but rather he is a 'psychological captive'[176].

In a very similar manner to Zamyatin, Huxley is taking a typical anarchist concern to its extreme logical conclusion. He imagines a society in which power has almost totally suppressed all quintessentially human traits. The World state is based on, as Firchow argues, 'the deliberate impoverishment of human nature'[177]. As the character of Helmholtz demonstrates, the positive potentialities of human nature lie latent below the surface. In *BNW*, power seeks to suppress these potentially positive characteristics for its own desired ends of stability.

3.4 Utilitarianism, Capitalism and Industrial Society

There is little doubt that the ideology that governs Huxley's World State is one of utilitarianism, which Huxley clearly saw as derogating the individual and subduing

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[172] Huxley, 37.
[173] Lela Zhamurashvili, 'Dehumanized Society in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.', *Humanities and Social Sciences Review* 3, no. 2 (2014): 143.
[174] Huxley, *Brave New World*, 67.
[175] Huxley, 59.
[176] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 144.
[177] Peter Edgerly Firchow, *Modern Utopian Fictions from H.G. Wells to Iris Murdoch* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 16.

any individual assertion or expression. Hence, the World State prevents the development of human faculties, simply because it does not consider them socially useful[178]. The ideology is pervasive, as demonstrated by a conversation between Henry and Lenina, as they watch a crematorium factory equipped with 'phosphorous recovery', to which Henry remarks 'Fine to think we can go on being socially useful even after we're dead. Making plants grow.'[179] The psychologically captured citizens of the World State have come to think even of their own deaths in terms of its utility for the collective.

This oppressive utilitarianism that demands the total submission of individuality, Huxley also clearly associates with capitalism. Thus, the trends of dehumanization described in the previous section are, to a large extent, descriptive of trends Huxley saw in his day, which has led Peter Firchow to convincingly argue that BNW should be best understood as a satire, rather than a futuristic novel[180]. A look at Huxley's essays written at the same time as BNW, and an analysis of the presentation of consumerism and industrialism in BNW reveals more about Huxley's developing anarchism, which eventually gives way to an anarchist philosophy in Island.

Huxley began to develop views on capitalism and mass production in the late 1920s and early 30s which could broadly be described as anarchist. The citizens of *BNW* have no religion in the traditional sense, but they do almost deify Ford, a reference to the car manufacturer and pioneer of mass production. The citizens date their civilization using before and after Ford, to delineate the ushering in of the age of perfect mechanical efficiency. The reference to one of capitalism's greatest entrepreneurs underpins that Huxley saw the capitalism of his day as trending toward a *BNW*-like future.

Huxley's critique of capitalism was underpinned by a particular concern for the fate of the unique individual. He describes Fordism as both a 'philosophy of industrialism' and a 'dreadful religion' which 'demands that we should sacrifice the animal man… not indeed to God, but to the machine' leaving no place 'in the factory, or in that larger factory which is the modern industrialized world, for animals on the one hand, or for, artists, mystics, or even, finally, individuals on the other'[181]. Huxley

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[178] Huxley, *Brave New World* In Chapter XVI, page 193, Mustapha Mond explains that the World State has banned 'high art' as it threatens happiness and stability. Same with scientific advancement: pg. 198.
[179] Huxley, 63 Chapter V.
[180] Peter E. Firchow, 'The Satire of Huxley's "Brave New World"', *Modern Fiction Studies* 12, no. 4 (1966): 451–60.
[181] Aldous Huxley, 'To The Puritan All Things Are Impure', in *Music At Night*, 1st ed. (Chatto & Windus, 1931), 159,160.

therefore clearly shared the view of Zamyatin as well as that of anarchism that industrialized capitalism was leading to the regimentation humanity that threatened the very existence of the individual.

At the time *BNW* was written, Huxley was also coming toward a critique of technology and the liberal idea of constant progress. In a 1931 essay entitled *Obstacle Race* he writes: 'now machine is our master and we are compelled to live, not as we would like to live, but as it commands'[182]. All of the technological terror embodied in present day capitalism and the future society represented in *BNW*, results from 'the apocalyptic religion of Inevitable Progress'[183]. The march forward of technology was not increasing the scope of freedom, as it promised, but represented the further and further regimentation of the human race. The deification of Ford in BNW suggests that Huxley seems to associate this idea with capitalism. The use of 'oh my Ford' to replace oh my God suggests a similar idea that can be found in Forster's *The Machine Stops*; that 'progress had come to mean progress of the machine'. Huxley therefore shares similarities to the anarchist critique of liberal progress when combined with the impersonable forces of capitalism.

At the same time, was also beginning to critique capitalism on the basis of its incompatibility with human nature. In *Obstacle Race*, Huxley frames the mass consumption and instant gratification of capitalism as a removal of obstacles leaving only a flat surface. Without any obstacles to overcome, humankind 'cannot be spiritually healthy' they 'feel bored and ill when they take to flat racing'[184]. In other words, there is an inherently creative element to human nature that craves challenges, that capitalism suppresses, and some emotional toil is a necessary component to overcoming an 'obstacle' or challenge.

The analysis so far has shown that the earlier, pre-1937 Huxley held a critique of capitalism similar to that of the anarchists, with an emphasis on a eudaimonic conception of humankind and a pronounced concern for the fate of the individual. The later Huxley would go on to more forcefully articulate an anarchist critique of capitalism and regimentation. He concludes in 1958: 'any culture which, in the interests of efficiency or in the name of some political or religious dogma, seeks to standardize the human individual, commits an outrage against man's biological nature.'[185]

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[182] Aldous Huxley, 'Obstacle Race', in *Music At Night*, 1st ed. (Chatto & Windus, 1931), 151.
[183] Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, 91 Chapter:4.
[184] Huxley, 'Obstacle Race', 150.
[185] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 28, 29.

Elsewhere, Huxley describes capitalism as 'organized lovelessness', and by exploiting one another and nature, 'we advance to lovelessness… in art'[186]. Labour then ceases to work for the good of humankind, or to have any component of pleasure for the labourer. Further, by suspending the 'idiosyncrasies', organization and industrial labour 'transforms men and women into automata, [and] suffocates the creative spirit' [187]. The logical conclusion of these tendencies are clearly displayed throughout BNW. The society has abolished love itself and leaves no space for creative endeavour.

In BNW revisited, Huxley also expands on some of his concerns regarding humanity's inching toward totalitarianism. His first two concerns are 'overpopulation' and 'over-organization'. Here, Huxley outlines a view similar to that of Marxist and anarchist critiques of capitalism. Overpopulation demands 'mass production', and evermore efficient machinery which concentrates capital in a few hands. In turn 'the Little Man, with his inadequate stock of working capital… loses his money and finally his very existence as an independent producer; the Big Man has gobbled him up'[188]. BNW shows us the complete dispossession of the lower classes, even from self-hood, until all that remains is the world controllers. The anarchist critique of capitalism of the later Huxley was clearly foreshadowed in BNW.

3.5 Post-1937: Pacifism and *The Perennial Philosophy* as a Deontological Anarchist Ethic

This section now turns to the positive elements of Huxley's anarchism. In many ways, the anarchist ethics developed by the later, post-1937 Huxley was the opposite of the systems and ethics depicted in BNW. Thus, moving far away from the utilitarianism of his dystopia, this section will argue that the later Huxley embraced a staunch deontological ethic similar to that of Tolstoy.

This is demonstrated foremostly by his conversion to pacifism in the mid-1930s. Huxley's pacifism can be summarized by the simple doctrine that: 'the end cannot justify the means, for simple reason that the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced'[189]. The idea of violence as a self-perpetuating cycle obviously appears in Tolstoy, but also anarcho-pacifism philosophy in general.

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[186] Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, 93.
[187] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 30.
[188] Huxley, 26.
[189] Huxley, *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization.*, 6.

As alluded to in chapter 1, Huxley and Tolstoy both adhere to a similar belief system: what Huxley has called *The Perennial Philosophy*, defined as: 'the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds' [190], Tolstoy seemed to reach a similar conclusion via his understanding of Christianity and the law of love. Like Tolstoy, Huxley also had spiritual and rational reasons for reaching his pacifistic and deontological conclusions. He cites acceptance of the Perennial philosophy as necessary to putting an end to 'The reign of violence'[191], echoing Tolstoy's call for humanity to adopt his notion of the Christian ethic. This deontological ethic and equation of ends with means, for Huxley, must also be applied to society's organization. As Huxley remarks in *BNW Revisited* 'to give organizations precedence over persons is to subordinate ends to means.'[192]

The ethical society, Huxley says helps each individual pursue 'man's Final End, the unitive knowledge of the immanent Tao or Logos, the transcendent Godhead or Brahman.'[193] Yet, what Huxley means by this relates closely to the goals of classical anarchism. A just society must work to maximize individual faculties, and to bring out the positive potentialities within human nature, to maximize all facets of living. Or as Huxley puts it in *Island*, the 'ambition to become fully human'. Hence Huxley's task in *Island*, is to foster a community in which each respects the deontological ethic of *The Perennial Philosophy*, while everyone's spiritual development is maximized.

3.6 Realizing Human Potential via Mysticism in *Island*.

The moment the protagonist, Will Farnaby, awakens from on the island of Pala, he is greeted by a mynah bird crying 'attention' and 'here and now, boys'[194]. The cry of mynah bird exemplifies the Islander's resolve to always live in the present moment, pay attention to their emotions and surroundings. The Eastern and Buddhist philosophy of the island seeks to restore the desirable aspects of human beings in the State of Nature, the 'intuitive power' that is lost in society. At one point in the novel a Palanese Child explains to Will that a capacity to experience beauty and stillness is always present and always attainable but is often lost when the mind reaches for distractions and emotional suppression[195]. The same kind of emotional

[190] Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, 1.
[191] Aldous Huxley, 229 Chapter:12.
[192] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 35.
[193] Huxley, *Brave New World*, xliii.
[194] Huxley, *Island*, 1, 3.
[195] Huxley, 241.

suppression that characterizes *BNW*, and thus, by extension, modern capitalist society.

Hence, Huxley demonstrates a respect for all facets of human nature, much like the classical anarchists. Yet, he nonetheless recognizes that to achieve an advanced and functional society that respects all facets of human nature requires careful cultivation. This is achieved by what Huxley calls 'education for freedom'[196]. The goal of which, Huxley explains in *Ends and Means* is to create the 'ideal man' who will be 'non-attached'[197]. To be non-attached is to be 'freer… for avarice and the love of possessions constrain their victim to equate themselves with mere things'[198]. The influence of mysticism in Huxley's thought is therefore an integral part of his views on freedom and autonomy, and integral to the maintenance of a successful anarchist community.

These two principles of non-attachment and attention to the here and now, also help to bring out the best of human faculties. It both allows humanity to recapture the beauty and instinct lost upon exiting the State of Nature and to foster human perfectibility and love of labour. Non-attachment, in allowing true attention and awareness fosters the creative spirit inherent in human beings. 'Be fully aware of what you're doing, and work becomes the yoga of work, play becomes the yoga of play, and everyday living becomes the yoga of everyday living.'[199] Huxley therefore shares the anarchist vision of the potential of a society in which work is enjoyed by all, though he adds a spiritual and psychological component that serves an important practical function.

A final, crucial, point to address is Huxley's stated goal, of achieving a 'Kropotkinesque' politics in Palanese society. Pala is technically a monarchy. It has a Raja (meaning King), but the monarchy is largely a relic of the past. The society is instead organized as 'a federation of self-governing units' leaving 'plenty of scope for small-scale initiative and democratic leaders, but no place for any kind of dictator at the head of a centralized government.'[200] Organized by 'mutual aid' and cooperation without competition[201], the Palanese have successfully cultivated an anarcho-communist society, and hence, they side step the ego-inducing effects of competition for property or comparative wealth. Yet, as the next section shows, for Huxley, this is not enough to solve the problem of power.

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[196] Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*, 2004, 143.
[197] Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for Their Realization.* (London, England: Chatto and Windus, 1946), 3.
[198] Huxley, 3, 4.
[199] Huxley, *Island*, 149.
[200] Huxley, 146 Chapter: 9.
[201] Huxley, 145.

3.7 Power as Pervasive, and Psychologically Controlling Power in *Island*

The other major function by which Huxley's 'education for freedom' ensures the preservation of a free, anarchist community, is by guarding against the will to power. Huxley appears to mirror the idea in Kropotkin, that a small group at any given time in human history, are predisposed to desire power. Dr. Robert distinguishes two types of people and calls them 'Muscle people and Peter Pans'[202], predetermined by their size and psychology to seek power. The former is treated with therapy and the latter with pills. The solutions here appear authoritarian but the project Huxley is espousing is still fundamentally anarchistic. The point is to abolish all forms of power, even those that exist in the mind. Yet, power, for Huxley is a much greater problem, it 'confronts you on every level of organization... from national governments down to nurseries and honeymooning couples.... There are... millions of small-scale tyrants and persecutors.' Non-attachment and the yogas are 'devices for dealing with the problems of power'[203], ensuring a detachment from ego that may lead an individual to try and dominate.

Huxley's analysis of power here, is also clearly mirroring the postanarchist view of the ubiquity of power, and thereby resembles the postanarchists in emphasizing the complex psychological dimensions of power, that must be addressed to ensure a free community[204]. As Dr. Robert explains to Will, 'the power problem' cannot be solved merely by 'good social arrangements', but also requires 'prevention on the individual level'[205]. Huxley therefore does display a significant break from the classical anarchists, who had largely assumed that the will to power within individuals could be contained merely by the quality of social organization. More generally, Huxley clearly does not, however, fit firmly into the postanarchist framework. He more closely resembles classical anarchism in terms of his view of human nature, with an emphasis on both rationality and instinct, rather than an embrace of complete 'anarchy of the subject' or a rejection of rationality.

A small-scale tyrant has the ever-present potential to create the next large-scale tyrant. Huxley demonstrates this by way of the novel's villain, Murugan. Murugan is Pala's next in line to become the Raja. He is manipulated by his mother to loathe Palanese society, and to attempt to restore the power of the monarchy once he takes power, in order to pursue a militaristic policy of relentless technological progress, and oil commerce. As such Murugan hates the pacifism and

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[202] Huxley, 151.
[203] Huxley, 149.
[204] A point also addressed by Flaherty: Flaherty, 'Aldous Huxley: Social Anarchist', 179–81.
[205] Huxley, *Island*, 155.

the strict control of technology practiced by the Palanese. Yet the Islanders' treatment of Murugan throughout the novel underscores their deontological ethic, commitment to never dehumanize an adversary, and to remain steadfast in opposing all forms of power. There is never an attempt, nor even the thought, of stopping Murugan by force, but rather the Palanese continually seek to educate him in the way of non-attachment. Ends and means are important to the Palanese for a coercive solution to an individual will only lead to greater coercion in the future. It also shows Huxley's commitment to respecting individual psychology, that no one individual can be left behind by society, but rather must be accommodated. As Dr. Robert MacPhail explains to will, the few criminals on Pala are dealt with not by prison time, but by 'group therapy'[206].

A further example of this can be found with one of the most innovative aspects of Palanese society. In recognizing the potentially oppressive and corrupting nature of the nuclear family, the Palanese devise a Mutual Adoption Club (MAC), an institution organized along the lines of mutual aid, which allows children and couples alike to 'adopt' one another. As such, during times of conflict in their homes, the children of Pala are free to 'escape'[207], to visit another set of loving adoptive parents and will thus gain exposure to a wide variety of personalities and people. Toward the end of the novel Will witnesses the MAC put to good use, as one Palanese child, built naturally large and therefore inclined to dominate his peers, is shown by way of example, that physicality can be valued without the need to dominate. As Dr. Robert remarks, a child predisposed to power is given 'innumerable alternatives--to the pleasure of being the boss.'[208] The Palanese are committed to the accommodation of individual psychology into society rather than its dehumanization or suppression.

The conclusion of Huxley's final novel is a pessimistic one. It ends with an invasion of Pala by Colonel Dipa of the neighbouring island of Rendang, and the execution of Dr. Robert. The ending reiterates Huxley's central point regarding power and that it must be controlled. It may be impossible for a community such as Pala to exist in the world, as it is now, populated by states with imperial interests. Yet Huxley's overall philosophy bears significant resemblance to classical anarchism in a number of areas and also supplements it in others. He believed in a multifaceted human nature and human psychology, capable of a good many positive and negative potentialities. With religion and spirituality, he sought to recapture some of the desirable traits of natural man, lost in society, whilst

[206] Huxley, 156.
[207] Huxley, *Island*.
[208] Huxley, 152 Chapter: 9.

simultaneously guarding against the will to power. Finally, his pacifism and ethical theory underscores a fundamentally anarchist morality; that human beings are capable of living together peacefully, but only when their individuality is respected.

Chapter 4 – Anarchism and Taoism in the Thought of Ursula K. Le Guin

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the anarchist philosophy of Ursula K. Le Guin. Le Guin's novel *The Dispossessed* has been become a classic of utopian fiction and has been widely studied due to its sober portrayal of an anarchist society, and its contribution to anarchist ethics. This chapter will focus principally on *The Dispossessed* (Henceforth: TD, originally published 1974)[209], though to substantiate the claims made regarding TD, it will also draw on her other novels such as *The Left Hand of Darkness* (LHD, 1969)[210], her translation of the *Tao Te Ching*[211] (1997) and her essays appearing in *The Language of the Night*[212] (1979) and various literary journals.

TD presents as the subtitle suggests 'an ambiguous Utopia', a functioning anarchist society on the planet of Anarres, which has succeeded in creating an organized stateless society. The narrative centers around Shevek, a physicist from Anarres seeking to combine 'Sequency' and 'Simultaneity' theories of time into a 'General Temporal Theory'. He finds his creativity stifled by the dogma his planet has come to embrace, and thus, travels to the capitalistic planet of Urras. His spiritual and creative development culminates in his return and reconciliation with his home planet, and his becoming a revolutionary in his own anarchist society, who attempts to return his society to its original, founding, anarchist principles.

Le Guin clearly associates herself and TD with classical anarchism. She, in fact, suggests that TD is her attempt to 'embody' anarchism[213] TD only came about after 'a good years reading' of 'Goodman and Kropotkin and Emma [Goldman] and the rest.'[214] Interestingly, however, Le Guin repeatedly and explicitly likens classical

[209] Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, SF Masterworks (London: Gollancz, 1999).
[210] Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness, SF Masterworks* (London: Gollancz, 2018).
[211] Lao Tzu, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Jerome P. Seaton, *Tao Te Ching: A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way* (Boulder: Shambhala, 2019).
[212] Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*, ed. Susan Wood, 1st U.S. ed (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992).
[213] Ursula K. Le Guin, 'The Day Before the Revolution', in *The Wind's Twelve Quarters: Short Stories* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1981), 156.
[214] Larry McCaffery and Sinda Gregory, 'An Interview with Ursula Le Guin', *The Missouri Review* 7, no. 2 (1984): 80.

anarchism to Taoism[215]. Le Guin is also clear that Taoism and specifically the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu was a formative influence on her thinking, from the age of twelve[216]. This chapter will explore the connection between Le Guin's Taoism and her anarchism

A connection between Taoist and anarchist thought has long been established and was noted briefly by Kropotkin in his definition of anarchism, originally published in 1905 in *The Encyclopedia Britannica*[217].

Section **4.2** addresses Le Guin's views on human nature and suggests that it is multifaceted and resembles classical anarchism. Section **4.3** then briefly outlines some of the successes the Anarresti anarchists have achieved, including fostering a culture of mutual aid and cooperative existence. **4.4** moves on to discussing the ossification of bureaucracy and dogma on Anarres. Le Guin presents power as a kind of utilitarianism, and shows power as discursive in a similar manner to the postanarchists. Le Guin's attempt to 'embody' anarchism thus includes the honesty that no society can be perfect, especially those conceived by one person. Section **4.5** goes on to discuss the connection between Le Guin's Taoism and her anarchism. It suggests that Shevek is demonstrative of a Taoist-anarchist ethic, and the paradoxical unity between 'being' and 'becoming' within Le Guin's thought. Finally, section **4.6** suggests that Le Guin also adheres to a deontological pacifistic ethic, and that via Taoism, she also regards nature and human beings as divine in some respect, similar to Tolstoy and Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy*.

4.2 Human Nature

The subtitle of Le Guin's masterpiece *The Dispossessed*, written from an anarchist perspective is notably *an ambiguous utopia*. Such underscores Le Guin's steadfast commitment to portray the idiosyncrasies of life, and the rejection of the possibility of any perfect state of human society (more on this later). Ambiguity, is however, a central feature of all of Le Guin's science fiction. The society presented in Karhide in *The Left Hand of Darkness* has eradicated war and has no patriarchal or gender domination to speak of; yet it is ruled by an unstable King and undergoes political turmoil. Framing these dynamics within the tradition of anarchism, the pervasive ambiguity in Le Guin's science fiction is first and foremost an expression of what she saw as a fundamentally multifaceted and contradictory nature of humankind.

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[215] McCaffery and Gregory, 80.
[216] McCaffery and Gregory, 83, 84.
[217] Petr Kropotkin, 'Anarchism-Encyclopedia Britannica Article', in *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*, trans. Roger N. Baldwin (Toronto: Dover Publications, 1970), 287.

In TD Le Guin shows some affinity with the classical anarchists' and Rousseau's views on human nature. When Shevek first visits Urras, he is shocked to see a functioning society of vast structures and farmlands, as 'he had assumed that if you removed a human being's natural incentive to work – his initiative, his spontaneous creative energy… he would become a lazy and careless worker'. He finds however, that 'compulsion of profit' and coercion works just as well[218]. Le Guin clearly believes in the perfectibility of humankind, associated with Rousseau and all the classical anarchists, and an inherent creative drive, whilst also maintaining that perfectibility may be co-opted by immoral structures.

In an introduction written for *The Left Hand*, Le Guin makes clear that she considers science fiction to be descriptive and that she is not 'predicting' or 'prescribing'. She is therefore not announcing that human beings 'ought to be androgynous', but rather 'if you look at us in certain odd times of day, in certain weather, we already are.'[219] However, this denial of essentialism does not entail a denial of a concept of human nature. Le Guin maintains committed to the idea that 'we all have the same general tendencies and configurations in our psyche'[220], and therefore a concept of human nature. She merely holds that human nature contains many facets and faculties which can emerge in different ways in particular environmental contexts. However, as will be mentioned later, Le Guin's Taoist anarchism does have some resemblance to postmodern views of power, which also appears in areas of her science fiction.

This multifaceted view of human nature is essential to understanding the anarchist thought in Le Guin's science fiction. In an essay entitled *Why are Americans Afraid of Dragons?* Le Guin writes: 'I believe that all the best faculties of a mature human being exist in the child, and that if these faculties are encouraged in youth they will act well and wisely in the adult, but if they are repressed and denied in the child they will stunt and cripple the adult personality'[221]. As will be shown, it is a combination of anarchism and Taoism that Le Guin sees as bringing about the best of human nature, preserving both the child-like spirit whilst fostering adult responsibility.

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[218] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 70.
[219] Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness, SF Masterworks*, xx.
[220] Ursula K. Le Guin, 'The Child and the Shadow', *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 32, no. 2 (1975): 141.
[221] Ursula K. Le Guin, 'Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?', in *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*, 1st U.S. ed (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992), 39.

4.3 The Anarchist society on Anarres

In Le Guin's attempt to 'embody' anarchism, she presents a society that has succeeded in creating a functioning anarchist society. The inhabitants of Anarres organize themselves along the lines of anarcho-communism, showing particular similarities to the ideas of Kropotkin.

The syndicate on Anarres, Shevek explains to the confusion of a group of Urrasti scientists, 'do[es] not govern persons' and has no authority to command, but merely serves an administrative function[222]. All productive work is therefore voluntary and undertaken on the basis of free association. The Urrasti scientists are equally shocked when Shevek makes clear that, in answering to no government, his own will 'is the only initiative I acknowledge'[223].

There is a significant degree of truth to Libretti's judgement that the cultural institutions on Anarres 'foster the impulse to mutual aid as opposed to the will to dominance'[224]. It has, for example, created its own language 'Pravic' which has totally abolished possessive pronouns.

Via the philosophy of Odo (Laia in *The Day Before the Revolution*), a historical revolutionary figure who played an instrumental role in establishing the anarchist society on Anarres, the Anarresti have achieved a society that nurtures brotherhood. The society on Anarres is organized by the principle of 'mutual aid'[225], which successfully sees them through a famine. Dan Sabia has pointed out that Odonianism deliberately espouses 'a relatively small number of basic principles', so as to better accommodate individual autonomy and choice[226]. In this way, Odonianism gives no strict prescriptive statements about how people should live or necessarily how society should organize, but confines itself to principles and moral values.

4.4 Power, Bureaucratization and its Effect on the Human Subject

Yet despite the Anarresti's remarkable success, and Le Guin's obvious sympathy for anarchism as a political theory, Le Guin begins the novel with the ominous phrase 'There was a wall', and an act of violence which results in a death[227]. With prior knowledge of Le Guin's anarchist sympathies, the reader may be

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[222] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 65.
[223] Le Guin, 67.
[224] Tim Libretti, 'Dispossession and Disalienation: The Fulfillment of Life in Ursula LeGuin's The Dispossessed', *Contemporary Justice Review* 7, no. 3 (September 2004): 306.
[225] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 53.
[226] Dan Sabia, 'Individual and Community in Le Guin's The Dispossessed', in *The New Utopian Politics of Ursula K. Le Guin's The Dispossessed*, ed. Laurence Davis and Peter G. Stillman (Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2005).
[227] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 5,8.

surprised by this opening to the novel, clearly displaying a disparate society, and a wall signifying division. As many have suggested, there are good philosophical reasons for Anarres' portrayal in this way. Le Guin is attempting to embody the anarchist idea of progress, that conceives of revolution as an ongoing process and denies that a perfect state of society can ever be truly reached. Toward the end of the novel, Shevek quotes Odo: 'The Revolution is in the individual spirit, or it is nowhere... If it is seen as having any end, it will never truly begin.'[228] The idea that society should never be static, that human creativity will bring about endless ways to improve humanity's condition, is one of the most fundamental aspects of classical anarchism. The connection has been noted by Philip E. Smith in relation to Kropotkin[229].

Anarres, over time has become increasingly bureaucratized and dogmatic. As Bedap, Shevek's principled and outspoken anarchist friend, remarks to Shevek: 'Education, the most important activity of the social organism, has become rigid, moralistic, authoritarian. Kids learn to parrot Odo's words as if they were *laws*'[230]. The sentiment resonates with Shevek as he recalls his unique opinions of science being described as 'merely egoising' by a teacher earlier in the novel[231]. Hanson argues persuasively 'that Anarres' move toward stems largely from how Odo and her ideas are collectively remembered.'[232] Dogma and power in discourse then gives rise to the 'authoritarian impulse', and ironically, the ego, inherent in human nature but fully brought out by society.

The majoritarian power of public opinion on Anarres also has the effect of mechanizing individuals, suspending spontaneity and frustrating progress and change. As Bedap says: 'The social conscience isn't a living thing any more, but a machine, a power machine, controlled by bureaucrats!'[233] Le Guin, like Zamyatin, mirrors the vitriol critiques of institutionalized bureaucracy found particularly in Bakunin, by representing institutionalized power as separate to human nature, despite emerging from it. It is an impersonable machine which grows rigid and suspends change, in contrast, 'only the individual, the person, had the power of moral choice – the power of change, the essential function of life.' [234] This

[228] Le Guin, 296.
[229] Philip E. Smith, 'Unbuilding Walls: Human Nature and the Nature of Evolutionary and Political Theory in The Dispossessed', in *Ursula K. Le Guin*, ed. Joseph D. Olander and Martin Harry Greenberg, 1st ed, Writers of the 21st Century (New York: Taplinger Pub. Co, 1979), 84.
[230] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 140.
[231] Le Guin, 28.
[232] Carter F. Hanson, 'Memory's Offspring and Utopian Ambiguity in Ursula K. Le Guin's "The Day Before the Revolution" and The Dispossessed', *Science Fiction Studies* 40, no. 2 (2013): 262.
[233] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 139.
[234] Le Guin, 274.

conception of power bears obvious resemblance to Zamyatin, the association between power and machine, and the contrast drawn between the machine and the human spirit. The latter being the one capable of elasticity and therefore affecting societal change.

Le Guin also associates this effect of power with utilitarianism. Shevek remarks that his society 'is practical. Maybe too practical, too much concerned with survival only. What is idealistic about social cooperation, mutual aid, when it is the only means of staying alive?' [235] Shevek's scientific creativity is scolded and suppressed by his teacher on the basis of its lack of use to the collective. The effect of power therefore, like Huxley and Zamyatin, is not only to draw human beings into conformity, but to largely eliminate the most valuable facets of human nature, associated with creativity and spontaneity.

It is worth mentioning that the fact that it is discourse and dogma that alienates Shevek from himself does bear significant resemblance to the postanarchist analysis of power, incorporating a critique of discourse and scientific and moral dogma. This assertion is also made by Lewis Call who correctly points out that that in TD 'language is equivalent to power'[236], however, Lewis Call goes so far as to argue that Le Guin should be thought of as a 'postmodern' thinker[237], and hence associates her with his own, delineation of anarchism: 'postmodern anarchism'. However, given postmodernism holds, in Call's words, that 'humans possess no metaphysical, pre-social essence' [238], clearly Le Guin is not a postmodernist thinker. She is not denying a concept of human nature. Rather, like both Zamyatin and Huxley, she is illustrative of the fact that the classical anarchist framework can accommodate a wide view of the concept of power as consistent with postmodern/postanarchist analysis. The rejection of moral dogma also finds its precedent in the thought of Kropotkin and Proudhon and Le Guin's views on human nature suggests that she is operating within the same classical anarchist framework.

Le Guin sees great potential for a society that fosters solidarity and creativity. She also recognizes that although power does originally emerge from an impulse in human nature, once it is institutionalized it becomes something quite different, regimenting humanity and suppressing our most desirable characteristics. Building on this, the following sections will explore the connection between Le Guin's

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[235] Le Guin, 113, 114 Chapter:5.
[236] Lewis Call, 'Postmodern Anarchism in the Novels of Ursula K. Le Guin', *SubStance* 36, no. 2 (2007): 99.
[237] Call, 103.
[238] Call, *Postmodern Anarchism*, 49.

anarchism and Taoism and will argue that Le Guin sees normative benefit to embracing a Taoist-anarchist ethic. It also argues that Le Guin's Taoism reveals more about how she views human nature and the good life, as well as the reconciliation of the individual with society.

4.5 Taoist Anarchism and Shevek in *The Dispossessed*

This section seeks to establish some of the Taoist principles and their place in Le Guin's anarchist thinking. It argues for a unity between the concepts of 'being' and 'becoming' within Le Guin's Taoist thought. As such this section hopes to clear up some misconceptions regarding Le Guin's interpretation of Taoism within the academic literature, and to . TD's protagonist, Shevek, arguably embodies a Taoist-anarchist ethic and is instructive as to the connection between Le Guin's Taoism and anarchism and the normative benefits of Taoism. Peter Marshall has a chapter on Taoism and Buddhism and its connection to anarchist thinking in which he goes into greater detail as to the anarchistic nature of original, ancient Taoist thinking[239].

Scholars of Le Guin have typically viewed being and becoming, doing and not doing, or yin and yang, as opposites. This has led some to conclude that Taoism, with its emphasis on 'being', is inconsistent with anarchism, a philosophy committed to change and activism. Tony Burns, for example, quotes from Le Guin as saying 'new is strange… new is bad' of Lao Tzu's philosophy, and consequently argues that Le Guin cannot be considered 'unequivocally a Taoist.'[240]

Contrary to these assumptions, Le Guin, much like Huxley, sees the distinction between 'being' and 'becoming' is a false dichotomy. Instead, Le Guin, following Taoism, believes that pure being and pure becoming are one in the same, in paradoxical unity with one another. In essence, it is by 'being' that the individual becomes something new. The nature of the universe, for the Taoist, is change[241]. In this way Taoism can be associated with Heraclitus, Zamyatin and Nietzsche and the idea of constant flux in the universe. Yet it is only through 'being', meaning acceptance of reality as it is, without seeking to project your own vision upon it, that the individual 'becomes' something new. As Lao Tzu says: 'being and nonbeing arise together… complete each other… depend on each other'[242]. Another important concept, 'Wu wei', Le Guin describes as "doing without doing"[243]. It is not simply existing, or 'not doing', Essentially it is very similar to the concept of non-attachment

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[239] 'Taoism and Buddhism', in *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*, by Peter H. Marshall (London: Harper Collins, 1992), 53–65.
[240] Burns, *Political Theory, Science Fiction, and Utopian Literature*, 55.
[241] 'Taoism and Buddhism', 54.
[242] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, *Tao Te Ching*, 4.
[243] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, 21.

that Huxley spoke of. It is a detachment from meaningless possessions, status, or fictitious future goals, and a refusal to equate oneself with external things.

Elsewhere, in an essay on Carl Jung, Le Guin provides statements in support of this interpretation. Drawing on the aforementioned shadow analogy, she suggests that the individual must accept the evil within themselves: 'The less you look at it, the stronger it grows'. Further, acceptance of oneself as a whole, good and bad is what allows the individual to grow 'toward true community, and self-knowledge and creativity.'[244] The theme recurs in Le Guin's fantasy series Earthsea, when Ged, the protagonist, fights his shadow. He finds the only way to defeat it is to name it, and he names it Ged: himself, and the shadow is then vanquished[245].

However, when the Taoist objects to the 'new' they are objecting to changing nature and its inherent balance, or human nature, both of which are considered sacred. Of human nature, Le Guin interprets Lao Tzu as saying the 'uncut, unearned, unshaped, unpolished, native, natural stuff is better than anything that can be made out of it.'[246] Hence, as discussed, Le Guin does not seek to change human beings but rather awaken certain facets and faculties within human nature.

Both Le Guin and Lao Tzu are also quite clear that this idea of Wu wei is actually the basis of true action. Lao Tzu repeatedly likens the Way to emptiness and formlessness. For example, he states: 'Hollowed out, clay makes a pot. Where the pot's not is where it's useful.'[247] The same theme is repeated regarding discussions of mind and human nature, and further appear throughout Le Guin's novels. As Faxe succinctly states in LHD 'ignorance is the ground of thought. Unproof is the ground of action.'[248] To put it into Western patterns of thinking, Le Guin places a good deal of value on the unconscious mind, and its potential. She repeatedly associates her art with the unconscious and even suggests the intellectual side of her work, dealing with 'ideas' comes from her subconscious[249]. Therefore, paradoxically, true action comes from being rather than 'doing'. The ideas here, in conjunction with Le Guin's rejection of moral dogma discussed previously, suggest that Le Guin may reach a similar conclusion to Rousseau and Kropotkin, embracing a kind of 'ethical naturalism' and reliance on instinct for ethical choices.

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[244] Le Guin, 'The Child and the Shadow', 143.
[245] Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, Puffin Modern Classics (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 227–29 Chapter: 10.
[246] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, *Tao Te Ching*, 69.
[247] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, 14.
[248] Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness, SF Masterworks*, 70.
[249] Ursula K. Le Guin, 'A Response to the Le Guin Issue (SFS #7)', *Science Fiction Studies* 3, no. 1 (1976): 44; Le Guin, 'The Child and the Shadow', 143.

So, when Le Guin interprets Lao Tzu as hating the new, it is not the case that this concept is somehow in conflict with the idea of dynamism and change, or even necessarily the idea of 'progress'. Action instead has to be measured against its effect on the balance of nature as a whole. In fact, Lao Tzu repeatedly emphasizes the importance of remaining changeable. He states: 'True goodness is like water… It goes right to the low loathsome places, and so finds the way.'[250] To be non-changeable would be to deny the nature of the universe, and to therefore fail to adapt to changing circumstances.

The individual does experience change, and therefore does undergo the process of 'becoming', yet becoming for the Taoist should be considered getting closer to what you are in fact, rather than reinvention into something completely new. It is the rejection of fictitious notions in the mind of status or ego, and the comparative embrace of fundamental human characteristics which constitute a component of the whole, the cosmos, the Tao.

What is interesting is the connection between the anarchism in TD and Taoism. Particular elements of Le Guin's Taoist anarchism are to be found in the novel's protagonist and hero, Shevek, who comes to criticize his society for its authoritarian and static elements that have developed through dogma and discourse. Dena C. Bain has pointed out that Shevek embodies the concept of Wu wei because he has no desire to compete with others or to impose his will on anyone else. He therefore acts without acting[251]. Shevek also embodies the Taoist concept of the 'invisible leader', which Le Guin describes as 'uncompetititve, unworried, trustful accomplishment'[252]. For example, in chapter 11, whilst addressing an Urrasti crowd, Shevek realizes 'We cannot come to you. You will not let us… You would rather destroy us than admit our reality, rather than admit there is hope. We cannot come to you. We can only wait for you to come to us.'[253] His effectiveness as a revolutionary and as a scientist comes paradoxically from his 'unlearning'. As the last line of the novel indicates, as he returns to Anarres: 'his hands were empty, as they had always been.'[254] Just as Anaressti society embodies anarchism, Shevek embodies the anarchist. This can be demonstrated by the fact that Shevek, as a child, literally grows nauseous when locking his friend inside a prison cell. Yet the

[250] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, *Tao Te Ching*, 11.
[251] Dena C. Bain, 'The "Tao Te Ching" as Background to the Novels of Ursula K. Le Guin', in *Ursula K. Le Guin*, ed. Harold Bloom, Modern Critical Views (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), 213.
[252] Lao Tzu, Le Guin, and Seaton, *Tao Te Ching*, 17.
[253] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 288.
[254] Le Guin, 319.

Taoist element to Shevek's nature suggests that Le Guin sees the anarchist and Taoist ethic or way of being as one and the same.

Shevek, in accordance with Odonian philosophy, conceives of his work as his 'cellular function', meaning 'the work he can do best, therefore his best contribution to society.'[255] Already the imagery of a cell bears obvious resemblance to Taoist philosophy, the individual plays a constituent part of a larger whole. Of his work, detested by his Anarresti peers, Shevek ultimately concludes that 'Sacrifice might be demanded of the individual, but never compromise'[256].

Most commentators have focused on this theme as Le Guin addressing the age-old question of the potential for reconciliation of the individual and the collective. Huntington has argued that a central theme throughout Le Guin's novels is the balancing on public and private moral imperatives[257]. Dan Sabia argues that TD deals with 'how to reconcile individual autonomy and agency with both the inevitable rules and demands of social units, and the inevitable duties and responsibilities individuals incur'[258].

However, Le Guin appears to be going even further and suggesting that the individual and the collective can be entirely reconciled and brought together in a paradoxical unity. Once Shevek resolves 'to be', to live in accordance with himself rather than pay attention to the opinions of others, he then comes to an interesting realization in relation to his society. He concludes that although his refusal to compromise on his General theory of physics sets him at odds with the opinions of his fellow Anarresti, it nonetheless 'engaged him with them completely'[259]. Shevek, in having a thoroughly 'Odonian conscience' realizes that his individual and social ethic both constitute parts of himself. The separation of individual and societal interests is therefore a false dichotomy, they are, once again, brought together in a paradoxical unity. The diminishing of ego and the fostering of brotherhood and mutual aid that Odonianism demands means that the individual's personal moral imperatives become aligned with society, even if society at large does not believe it.

There is a clear Taoist element to this conception of society and individual, but also an obvious anarchist element as well. The commitment to 'never compromise' is not merely an attempt to preserve the moral autonomy of the individual, but rather it is a commitment to recognize the whole, to refuse to live in

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[255] Le Guin, 274.
[256] Le Guin, 274.
[257] John Huntington, 'Public and Private Imperatives in Le Guin's Novels', *Science Fiction Studies* 2, no. 3 (1975): 237–43.
[258] Sabia, 'Individual and Community in Le Guin's The Dispossessed', 111.
[259] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 275.

denial of any aspect of oneself. His revelation is accompanied by his will growing stronger, as 'The less he had, the more absolute became his need to be.'[260]

Shevek, by the end of the novel, 'becomes' what he is in fact. He becomes by being. What he is, once dogma, ego and discourse are stripped away, is a scientist, with a creative urge to change physics and improve society by doing so. He is also an Odonian, and a citizen of Anarres. Through Taoism, Le Guin reaches a view similar to that of the classical anarchists, that the individual and society's interests can, at least in theory, be totally reconciled. Shevek's Odonianism, and his place in Anarresti society has become an extension of his being. She also, like Huxley, sees value in Eastern philosophy as a necessity to preserving a cohesive society between individuals, as it is Shevek's Taoist anarchist ethic that leads him to reconciliation with his society.

4.6 The Equation of Ends and Means and Breaking Down 'Walls' in The Dispossessed and The Left Hand of Darkness

In his book on Le Guin, Tony Burns distinguishes between four different kinds of anarchists. The third and fourth kinds are of interest here. The third is a kind of anarchist who rejects 'ethical consequentialism' and the question of ends and means, but instead treats anarchism as a "way of life" espousing 'no political objectives, or ends at all' and are orientated toward only 'the present, and the question of how we ought to live now.'[261] The fourth kind of anarchist ascribes 'importance to *both* ends and means' but resolves that ends should only be pursued 'by the use of appropriate… morally acceptable means'[262]. Accordingly, he suggests Le Guin should be associated with the latter.

The problem here seems to be the separation of ends and means as distinct categories, which, from a Western perspective seems entirely logical, but is nonetheless not as Le Guin sees it. Shevek's pursuit of a General Temporal Theory of time, for example, could be seen as pursuing a particular 'end'; however, as already noted Le Guin repeatedly associates Shevek's pursuit of science with his 'being'. The General Temporal Theory is then not an 'end' as such, meaning an external goal, but rather a manifestation of Shevek's being, what he is. The concept of the 'invisible leader' is again relevant here. Shevek never seeks to impose his will upon others, nor does he have any fictitious prescriptions or ideas to impose upon the world. Shevek summarizes all this succinctly in a speech on Urras: 'You cannot buy the Revolution. You cannot make the Revolution. You can only *be* the

[260] Le Guin, 274.
[261] Burns, *Political Theory, Science Fiction, and Utopian Literature*, 219.
[262] Burns, 220.

Revolution.'[263] (emphasis added). The idea is similar to the paradox of hedonism as espoused by Sidgwick, that seeking pleasure or happiness as an end will inevitably make it elusive.

In this way Shevek's work as a revolutionary has no 'end' as such, but rather he *is* the revolution. Just as by 'being', the Taoist 'becomes', living by means alone does not preclude the production of some kind of 'end', even if there is never an ultimate end to the revolution or anything in the universe. Neither does it preclude having a vision of a future society, but said vision, just as with the minimalistic nature of Odonianism, should confine itself to values rather than grand prescriptions.

The equation of ends and means in Le Guin's thought has much greater significance for her anarchist thought than is often assumed. Returning, for example, to Le Guin's analysis of power as associated with some kind of rationalist utilitarianism, power is then at odds with treating people as ends in themselves rather than means to an end. Shevek's science being shut down on the basis of lacking utility for the social unit, portrays power treating the individual as a means to an end. Furthermore, treating the revolution as an 'end' will merely lead to the entrenchment of some kind of power, whether it be the dogma of Anarres or the authoritarian communism of Thu.

Taoism and the equation of ends with means also leads Le Guin to an anarcho-pacifist ethic, similar to Huxley and Tolstoy. The ethic that Shevek comes to embrace in relation to his work, namely acceptance of his whole being and refusal to 'compromise', extends to every individual and to the world and nature at large. As Qian suggests, to unify Yin and Yang 'the uniqueness and difference of every single thing [must be] accepted and respected'[264].

This point can further be demonstrated by the role of love and communication in Le Guin's novels, and the resultant breaking down of 'walls'. Shevek conceives his science and revolutionary work on Anarres as 'unbuilding walls'. The 'walls' on Anarres, Bedap points out, exist in Anarresti thinking. 'Walls' here can be associated with the dogma that Odonianism has become and ego, a refusal to accept different ways of thinking or being.

As has been pointed out by a number of scholars, Le Guin's characters often fall in love as a result of shared suffering[265]. Shared suffering, giving way to love also

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[263] Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*, 248.

[264] Li Qian, 'Taoism as Ethics, Science as Background: On the Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin', *International Journal of English and Literature* 7, no. 11 (30 November 2016): 171.

[265] Laurence Davis, 'Love and Revolution in Ursula Le Guin's Four Ways to Forgiveness', in *Anarchism & Sexuality: Ethics, Relationships and Power*, ed. Jamie Heckert and Richard Cleminson, Social Justice (London Abingdon, Oxon New York: Routledge, 2012), 108.

repeatedly results in a form of revolution of self within the characters. It fosters the attitude, even within disparate and very different characters, that beneath the surface is a shared humanity, a capacity to suffer that is inherent within all humanity, which ultimately leads to the characters' whole acceptance of the other, their idiosyncrasies and their differences.

Arguably the plot of LHD also illustrates this point. On a foreign planet of androgynous human-like aliens, Genly Ai is at first suspicious of his happenchance companion, Estraven. Yet as they journey together, he begins to accept their physiological and psychological differences. As Elizabeth Cummins argues, Ai's 'experiences enable him to break through the barriers he has erected between himself and the Gethenians'[266]. It also represents a return to simplicity and nature, and a move away from power. The love between Ai and Estraven develops outside of society, and as Huntington has noted 'the two sub-plots advance in opposite directions: in the love story Ai begins suspicious of Estraven and learns to trust him; in the political story he beings naively trusting both King Argaven and the Commensales of Orgoreyn and learns to suspect them and be cunning.'[267] The dichotomy speaks to the idea that institutionalized power is outside of human nature and therefore offers no hope for harmonious existence. Love, and a return to recognition of a common humanity, on the other hand, does offer positive potential.

In this way, love in Le Guin's works can also be understood as a diminishing of ego. In accepting the differences of others to oneself the individual will no longer seek to change that which is different to themself. As Cummins states, as his capacity to love grows, Ai becomes 'less dependent on the certainty of his beliefs'[268]. He is then able to accept Estraven as he is, without attempting to impose his ideas of being or living upon him.

With this, we can say that a Taoist-anarchist ethic has the effect of bringing out the best of human faculties and sociability. Organized power, encouraging ego, violence and conformity offers no hope of reconciliation or brotherhood. On the other hand, a return to nature, and 'being' offers the chance of a mutual recognition of a shared humanity. For Le Guin, like Huxley, this entails a diminishing of ego and an equation between ends and means. This also demonstrates the connection between Le Guin's Taoism and her adherence to classical anarchism. The refusal to dehumanize those who are different to oneself is very anarchistic and particularly

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[266] Elizabeth Cummins, *Understanding Ursula K. Le Guin*, Rev. ed, Understanding Contemporary American Literature (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 79.
[267] Huntington, 'Public and Private Imperatives in Le Guin's Novels', 239.
[268] Cummins, *Understanding Ursula K. Le Guin*, 79.

Tolstoyan in nature, whilst it also enables the full expression of the individual within a societal context.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that the three authors share a number of affinities with anarchist political thought. At the heart of all three authors' fiction is a concern that power is suppressive of humanity's innate faculties. Such is a concern that has been central to anarchist thought and constitutes a major anarchist critique of state power and capitalism. In particular, Zamyatin and Huxley see power as culminating in the complete regimentation of the individual, taking the anarchist critique of power to its extreme conclusion, whilst Le Guin was cautious to show how dogma could ossify, even in an anarchist society. Nonetheless, each of the authors also maintained faith in the potential of human faculties, and a recognition of a multifaceted human nature, comprising a rational and irrational component, consistent with classical anarchism.

By way of the three selected authors, this thesis has also shown that classical anarchism is a broad tradition, comprising and accommodating a wide range of views within its general framework. Each of the authors in the selected novels show an analysis of power that incorporates aspects of postanarchism, yet this thesis maintains that they remain within the bounds of classical anarchism particularly regarding their views on human nature, and the goals of a truly just society. For example, the authors were able to incorporate aspects of postanarchism's critique of rationality and discursive power into their fiction, without, however, rejecting rationality altogether.

This thesis has also attempted to make a unique contribution to understanding the connection between spiritual and Eastern philosophy with anarchism. It has argued that Huxley and Le Guin's anarchism were both heavily influenced by Eastern philosophy, and a conception of humanity and nature as possessing 'divine' qualities, which thereby demands respect for the individual and for nature. It has also suggested that Tolstoy represents a similar view which he came to by way of his 'Christian anarchism'. Huxley and Le Guin both reach a conclusion that Eastern philosophy and practices could help to solve the tension between the individual and community, and thus facilitate a successful anarchist community. Simultaneously, Zamyatin's philosophy on the other hand was not influenced by the East but was animated by a deep respect for human faculties. He questioned the truth of scientific dogma but maintained a belief in the fundamental truth of human experiences, and thus, he desired to see a society in which all human faculties are respected.

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