

Inquiry: Anarchists and the War in Ukraine

Saturday 27 January 2024, by [PIOTROWSKI Grzegorz](#), [SLAČÁLEK Ondřej](#), [TOMEK Miroslav](#) (Date first published: 17 January 2024).

with answers from [Zosia Brom](#), [Boyevaya organizatsiya anarkho-kommunistov \(BOAK; Combat Organization of Anarcho-Communists\)](#), [Davyd Chychkan](#), [Maria Rakhmaninova](#), [Max Ščur](#), [Ratibor Trivunac](#), [Belarusian Anarchists in Warsaw](#), [Anatoly Dubovik](#), [Volodymyr Ishchenko](#), [Konfederatsiya revolyutsionnykh anarkho-sindikalistov \(KRAS-MAT; Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists\)](#), [Oleksandr Kolchenko](#), [Saul Newman](#), [Wayne Price](#), [Aleksander Łaniewski](#)

The war in Ukraine has divided anarchists. Some struggle against the Russian invasion by supporting Ukrainian society (and, at least to some extent, the Ukrainian state); others profess a principled opposition to both sides in the conflict. Some mobilize historical parallels; others explain differences in political positions by referencing differing regional experiences. In order to capture and understand the variety of anarchist positions, and to reflect on points of agreement and disagreement among them, during summer and early autumn 2023, we posed the following questions to a selection of activists, theorists, scholars of anarchism, and researchers of anarchist movements:

What have we learned from the reactions of Ukrainian, Russian, Belarussian, and international anarchist movements?

Do we know anything now that we did not know before?

Do the differences among anarchists have deep-seated causes?

Will these differences endure and have long-term effects?

Has the war changed elements of the anarchist point of view?

Zosia Brom, originally from Poland, is an economic migrant and anarchist. She is currently developing a workshop around issues of class and migration for the Class Work Project. In the anarchist movement, Zosia is mainly known as a former editor at Freedom Press, an occasionally controversial writer (the author of the article “Fuck Leftist Westplaining” in February 2022), and an organiser of the Anarchist Bookfair in London.

“Anarchists do not stand aside from popular struggle, nor do they attempt to dominate it. They seek to contribute practically whatever they can, and to assist within it the highest possible levels of both individual and group solidarity.”

Stuart Christie

Divisions within the anarchist movement are nothing new and in fact, “[insert topic of the day] has divided anarchists” would serve as a good sentence to begin a text about pretty much any moment of contemporary anarchist history. I don’t consider this attitude a problem of anarchism: after all, it is a movement without leaders, a movement of many diverse flavors, one where any position of

authority can be questioned. A movement lacking dogmatism, on paper at least.

Thus it was predictable that there would be many approaches to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. This would not be a problem by itself, and the discussion could have been carried on with respect to various diverse interpretations of what is anarchism, as well as the diversity of the lived experiences of anarchists from different parts of the world, the general history of anarchists in armed conflict, as well as the respect for the actual reality we all live in and the ambition to come up with politics matching it. This, however, is not how it went, and instead we saw a rather ugly show of Western supremacy coming from some parts of Western anarchism, combined with a narrow, religious even, interpretation of what anarchism is, delivered with no regard for the diversity of the anarchist movement and the complexity of the world. To achieve this goal, the anarchist Western supremacists came up with a whole set of tactics. One of them was wilfully ignoring what the vast majority of their East and Central European comrades were trying to explain to them. Another one was gatekeeping the very term of *anarchism* and assuming the position of the decisive, unquestionable authority on all things relating to it and as such only enforcing the impression of them coming from a supremacy position. Another one was displaying extreme levels of hostility towards Eastern European anarchists attempting to engage in this discourse, and often dismissing them in a borderline conspiracy theorist way, by, for example, implying that they are CIA agents, undercover fascists, and so on.

It is, however, unfair to say that all, or indeed a majority, of Western anarchist groups reacted in the above way. While this attitude was displayed by a small yet vocal minority of the movement was very disturbing to witness and experience, many others instead offered unquestionable solidarity and material assistance to their Ukrainian, Russian, and wider Eastern European comrades. This ongoing assistance is one of the more impressive projects I've seen anarchists undertaking in recent years, and it is made even more commendable by the fact that I am aware that in many cases, it comes despite the discomfort of sacrificing some aspects of one's beliefs and politics in the face of a humanitarian crisis and war crimes committed by the Russian army, together with the drive to show solidarity to their Eastern European comrades.

This attitude of anarchist groups makes them distinguishably different from most other parts of the Western radical left, and it is the aspect of anarchism I consider the most hopeful for the future, with all its complex problems that call for non-dogmatic, out-of-the-box solutions. I think it is difficult to say what will change from the anarchist point of view in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian war, for the simple fact that there are many anarchist points of view. But what will make a lasting impact is a core of true anarchist politics: judging things for what they are, listening to the people directly affected, doing what we can to help others with their struggle with an oppressive power, and contributing practically by whatever we can. If we can get it right, we will have a chance at becoming a significant power. If we can't, we will become - or in some cases remain - a social club for people who like reading old books.

Boyevaya organizatsiya anarkho-kommunistov (BOAK; Combat Organization of Anarcho-Communists) *as part of the Belarusian and Russian partisan movement, has existed since 2020; since February 2022, BOAK has claimed responsibility for actions designed to disrupt the logistics of the Russian Army in the Russian Federation and in Belarus.*

From the position where we are standing, war doesn't really change anarchists' point of view. But rather it makes the differences between groups clearer. We heard the same arguments and discussions in 2014, when some 'anarchists' were stating that people in Maidan in Kyiv were not anarchists, and that's why we shouldn't take part in this struggle. And the same voices during the 2020-2021 Belarusian protests said: "This isn't an anarcho protest; it's just a protest. We shouldn't take sides with these people. The time for our revolution hasn't come yet."

And here is what we have to say to this: this is just bullshit from people who aren't ready to fight and would never be ready to fight the state.

In times of struggle – and especially wars – you can't stay away from battle. The best you can do is try and create your own force, fighting for the anarcho ideals. But if you can't create such force and you choose to stay away from the battle, to be "against both sides of conflict" by doing nothing, you actually begin acting in favor of one of the sides. Not acting against the bigger evil, not trying to stop it – that means helping it. And just to have possibility to fight lesser evil - you need to stop bigger evil first. Even if to stop the bigger evil you need to in some way cooperate with the lesser evil.

And we believe that through this conflict, the anarcho-movement will become clearer, without "talking heads" and "passengers" doing nothing but talk about how "both sides are bad and therefore we should do nothing". Because people – inside and outside the movement – will see, in such extreme times, what's true anarchism and what's just comfortable lifestyles in times of peace.

Davyd Chychkan is Kyiv-based artist and anarchist activist; from 2010–2016 he was a member of the Autonomous Worker's Union (Ukraine); since 2014 he has been a member of the libertarian organization Black Rainbow; in 2014, he launched the research initiative LCUD (Libertarian Club of Underground Dialectics), which explores the philistine, widespread dimensions of right-ideology in Ukraine.

Russian anarchists are divided into those who oppose the war and those who directly support Ukraine. The Belarusian movement of anarchists and anti-fascists all support Ukraine, and a significant number of them are fighting in the Ukrainian defense forces. Polish and Czech anarchists from the federation also support us, but we did not feel any support from anarcho-syndicalists, namely support for Ukrainians who are fighting the occupiers. Instead, we hear from them about their dislike of NATO, and about how Ukraine is a NATO puppet. I was upset by the French, Spanish, Italian, and Greek anarchist movements. As it turned out, many of them got their information from *Russia Today*.

We didn't learn anything new from this war, but we saw that anarchists today are not as ready to clearly take sides as they were during the First and Second World Wars, and the civil war in Spain between them. Bakunin and Kropotkin easily took sides, Polish anarcho-syndicalists took part in the Warsaw Uprising, the interbrigades fought in Spain... But now anarchists were not unanimous in their support even for Rojava in Syria (Syrian Kurdistan).

The war did not in the least change the point of view of Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian anarchists. We have all known that Russia is an imperialist and fascist empire, that Lukashenko's pro-Kremlin dictatorship in Belarus is fascist, and that Ukraine is an island of freedom among the countries of the former USSR. In the 30 years since the collapse of the USSR, Russian imperialists have pursued aggressive policies in Ichkeria, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Syria, African countries, etc. If the global anarchist movement does not understand that bad democracies are better than fascist dictatorships, there will be a line of division between those who defend freedom and those who are intoxicated by dogmas, because their ideological uncertainty is infantilism, as are their calls for Ukrainians to lay down arms to end the war. I never thought I would see the day when the international left would sing in unison with the far right in favor of Putin's dictatorship and the Kremlin's savage imperialism.

Translated by Max Ščur.

Maria Rakhmaninova is a Russian philosopher and artist; until March 2022 professor at Saint

Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, she lost her position because of discussions with students about the war in Ukraine; a specialist in social and political philosophy especially in anarchism, protest movement, and feminism; in 2019 she founded the web magazine Akrateia (<https://akrateia.info>).

Ribs of War: Lessons for Anarchists

Since 2014, Russian aggression in Ukraine has revealed many hidden trends in recent history, both in the post-Soviet space and far beyond. Their analysis seems productive both for modernity as a whole and for comprehending the state of contemporary anarchism – including on a planetary scale.

The first and most obvious among these tendencies is the latent but inexorable inertia of empire and the imperial worldview, which permeates even anarchist discourses: Like many key figures of early twentieth-century Moscow anarchism, who retained an imperial colonial understanding of planetary space – including an understanding of Ukraine as the South of Russia, and did not take its liberation struggle seriously – many of the contemporary metropolitan anarchists have clearly inherited a Russian-imperial optic (ultimately often paradoxically coinciding with the Kremlin's). This happens to them even despite their articulated political rejection of the USSR: perhaps unbeknownst to themselves, they fully reproduce its epistemology, which promises them the position of a Cartesian subject “2.0” – perfectly neutral, perfectly normal, perfectly objective and devoid of specific properties, and therefore claiming to speak on behalf of some universal international anarchist subject who can see all facets of truth and freedom.

Calling any deviations from their own image “harmful and annoying concreteness that sows discord in the ranks of workers” (referring to both regional, gender, and many other experiences), they actually insist on the priority of some abstract anarchism in an ideal theoretical vacuum over reality, and they see themselves as priests of these sacred spaces, untainted by brute reality and tedious empirical details (well, isn't this what the empire tempts all its inhabitants to do?). To date, this originally philosophical problem has taken on a radically political character, as both the practices of inclusion-exclusion and the unity-disunity of the entire anarchist movement, as well as what its energies are directed towards – including in matters of solidarity and struggle – are turned away from it. All this points to how vulnerable to the inertia of systems of power the discourse on anarchist resistance proves to be, insensitive to philosophical registers.

This is not surprising, however: post-Soviet anarchism, represented predominantly by historians (articulately skeptical of philosophy and therefore not prone to philosophical-political reflection and self-criticism), has not really bothered to adopt at least a foreign philosophical perspective on reflection on power, and has therefore largely confined itself to unviable cosplay of anarchists of the past or vaguely abstract anarchists of the ideal world (as they appear to the inhabitants of the Metropolis). However, the narrow historical discourses of the empire quite predictably turn out to be untrue to history itself: the classic anarchist, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, directly supported the national liberation struggle of Ukrainians (Cossacks) against Polish colonization; M. Bakunin defended the independence of Galician Ukrainians from Russia and Poland both in his Panslavist period and already being an anarchist and insisting on the idea of national self-determination of “small nationality”; and Kropotkin advocated the right of anarchists to participate in the national liberation movement (“but do not deny nationalist movements”), and to support nationalities that rise up against national oppression, because only by getting rid of external national oppression can a nation finally fully take the path of social revolution and fight for its further liberation from oppression by the national bourgeoisie, with which the proletariat of a certain nation will no longer have to ally for the sake of fighting against the “common enemy”. Such views were held by many theorists and practitioners of anarchism: Emma Goldman, Grigorii Maximov, Alexei Borovoi, and others [1]. Thus, even purely historically, the greatest theorists and practitioners of anarchism did

not stand on the positions from which the view of the war professed by the modern anarchists of the metropolis would be possible today – either equating Russia and Ukraine as bourgeois states, or even being more loyal to the empire as “the lesser evil” – on the principle that “if a state is evil, then one state is quantitatively better than many”. It is characteristic that in the current war, these zealots of “true anarchism” are not at all in favor of Esperanto being established on both sides (however, even this would be less fantastic than the demands they actually voice): given this, we can say that when the Russian world devours everything different from itself, whoever remains silent is no longer neutral but is clearly on the side of the aggressor.

The second obvious trend revealed by the Russian military invasion is that not only citizens and beneficiaries of the Russian/Soviet/post-Soviet empires are vulnerable to the inertia discussed above, but also all those who uncritically inherit the automatism of global political representations (mostly Western), trying to evaluate them from the spaces of cozy everyday life, for which any global catastrophes look so distant (moreover, equidistant) that they are always almost purely theoretical. This is what the Stalinist camps looked like to the French intellectuals of the 1950s. This is what war in modern Ukraine for many activists of the First World looks like.

In fact, in this case, we are also talking about the epistemological inertia of power, but at the other pole. After years of ignoring the SOS signals from the post-Soviet abyss and, in general, the problems of the Second World, which is lost in the indistinguishability of its own allegedly unimportant existence, the First World woke up abruptly with the beginning of a full-scale invasion and – according to its grandfatherly (modern) habit of making an “objective” judgment based on metaphysical constructions that had been ingrained in its contented and sleepy space for centuries – found nothing better than to reapply Cold War optics to the new catastrophe. And it is not a big deal that in these optics there was no place for Ukrainian society as a political subject capable not only of political will, but also, as we have seen, of defending its foundations and imperatives.

By presenting the Russian war in Ukraine as an old confrontation of the bipolar world, many anarchists and leftists of the First World – out of the usual lordly clumsiness – found it possible to neglect such a “trifle” as the specifics of the current confrontation (in Latin America, where such sentiments are, alas, just as strong, they are at least explainable: on the one hand, there is its own struggle, on the other – the real remoteness from what is happening in Ukraine and Russia).

Meanwhile, it is obvious that a global authoritarian state – with a nightmarish biography, with a growing dictatorship built on repression, torture, arbitrary rule by oligarchs, strongmen, and corruption – has attacked and is committing genocide in a neighboring autonomous state. It is possible to imagine this confrontation as a conflict between two equal sides only from afar, but in fact it is even crazier than to imagine it as a conflict between the workers and the bourgeoisie: at least the workers outnumber the bourgeoisie. To urge today’s Ukraine – in the spirit of patriarchal “wisdom” to “set a good example” and “renounce militarism” by laying down arms – is the same as urging the victim not to resist the torturer and to give him everything he needs. The fact that both Russia and Ukraine are formally in the same position as states does not make their specific situations equal: especially in light of everything that has already happened in the past year and a half.

All the more so because the confrontation with NATO clearly serves the Putin regime only as a legitimate and purely decorative screen for its arbitrary behavior in Ukraine: otherwise, it would hardly allow such an unprecedented approach of NATO to Russia’s borders as it did as a result of Russian military aggression. Thus, the epistemological inertia of power systems lies not only in the foundations of Putin’s empire. It is also contained within the worldview of the privileged First World – and originates in the inertia of the former Western narcissism, which is insensitive to the reality of the Second World but is not ready to give up its claim to a final and true judgment about it (no

matter how far it is from reality). This is true both for the right (which gives Russia the ability to resist the “corrupt callousness” of the Decline of Europe) and for the left (from which voices are heard in support of the supposed “People’s Republic” of Donbass and the malignant “People’s Republic of the DPR and the so-called malignancy of neoliberalism”). [2]

The third problem posed in a new way by the Russian war in Ukraine is the deep problematic nature and weak elaboration of the philosophical opposition between universalism and localism/regionalism. At the same time, the very existence of this opposition in contemporary anarchism (including the fact that it is not realized articulately) is problematic. Thus, if, in the spirit of metropolitan anarchists, we think of the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine as a confrontation between (altermodern Soviet) universalism and (national liberation) regionalism, we cannot avoid many uncomfortable questions. For example: is life without Putin, the Kremlin, and Soviet inertia (against which Ukrainian society is heroically fighting today) exactly “regionalism”? Such a false dilemma can be used only by the Kremlin, which speculates on the notion of “neo-Nazism”, naming everything that does not want to be absorbed and dissolved to the point of indistinguishability. Meanwhile, even problematic from the point of view of anarchism and its criticism of capital, Ukraine’s European integration would actually mean nothing more than its joining a broad federation of other European nations (as opposed to Russia, a somewhat more plausible federation), with the prospect of resolving language, social policy, and other problems through a European legal procedure – undoubtedly more humane than those envisioned in Russia.

In this sense, it would be correct to say that it is Ukraine that finds itself in the field of universalism – inheriting the conquests of European modernity (including its epistemological universalism), while Russia, on the contrary, finds itself in the position of aggressive imperial regionalism – both inside and outside imposing the Russian world, the Russian language, and an ugly golem of Russian values, crookedly glued together by bureaucrats on their knees and from someone else’s memory. Thus, it is obvious that the existing opposition of regionalism and universalism is not so simple, and it requires closer scrutiny, taking into account the current level of development of humanitarian knowledge. In all likelihood, we should talk about the need to develop fundamentally alternative ways of thinking about planetary space and of interacting with it (this is how anarchist geography sets one of its tasks today). This imperative seems all the more important in light of the cynical hijacking of decolonial rhetoric by federal Russian discourses – which claim that Russia is fighting the colonizing states (the United States) and liberating (not exploiting, as we might think) African, Asian, Latin American societies, as well as its own indigenous societies. By labeling reactionary, exploitative, and destructive practices as “decolonial”, the Russian regime, through its rhetoric and its arbitrariness, unwittingly sheds light on the problem of conflating the decolonial and the conservative as such. Subsequently, this problem may also confront post-war (victorious) Ukraine. It is worth remembering that decoloniality is only an optic equipped with a system of methods and approaches.

Without an anti-state, anti-hierarchical, and emancipatory core, it risks slipping into a monstrous conservative order like the Taliban. The primary task of contemporary anarchists is to provide decolonial discourses with a coherent and properly developed anarchist perspective. In developing this perspective, a careful reflection on philosophical dichotomies – in particular regionalism/universalism, etc. – is necessary. These are some of the most obvious problems manifested by the Russian war in Ukraine, which require a close reflection of both contemporary anarchism and contemporary society in general.

Max Ščur is a Belarusian writer and translator living in the Czech Republic, he edited and translated an anthology of radical Buddhism, *Radikální buddhismus: malá čítanka (nejen) pro anarchisty* (Radical Buddhism: A Little Reader [Not Only] for Anarchists), 2019.

The Russian war against Ukraine is the key part of Putin’s (and Lukashenko’s) project of restoration

of the Russian-Soviet (allow me to say Knuto-Soviet) empire. Everyone familiar with the history of this Empire (Tzarism, Stalinism, Brezhnevism, and now Putinism) and of its colonized nations, or who, like me, was even born in the Empire, has every reason to freak out and to do everything imaginable to prevent its restoration (or, even better, to be instrumental in its disintegration). More so, this time the Empire is totally stripped of any shadow of a progressivist social ideology, which has been replaced by a Russian nationalist-chauvinist-revanchist-traditionalist-sexist (that is, classic right-wing) trash of a discourse. This, combined with Russia's natural and human resources and nuclear weapons, makes this ideology by far the most dangerous form of present-day fascism, which every sound leftist is morally obliged to fight – albeit sometimes in an unpleasant alliance with one's political adversaries, which was also the case in WWII.

The fact that the Empire dresses itself up (for the Western intellectuals) as a colony fighting Western colonialism is a genuinely funny moment in the history of propaganda. However, a similar rhetoric was previously used by the Nazi (and the Japanese) imperialists. Just as the Nazis blamed the collapse of the Knuto-German empire on Jews, not on their own Prussian WWI militarism, the Russian fascists blame the collapse of their Knuto-Soviet empire on the “collective West”, not on their own bankrupt state capitalism (or state fossil capitalism, to be precise). In both cases, we are dealing with a form of historical identity crisis, delusion of grandeur, and denial of a painful reality. In both cases, we have a big nation pretending to be not just a part of the Western world (which both Germany and Russia undoubtedly are), but a full-scale “civilization” with their own “peculiar, authentic, non-decadent” values. Well, it was a propaganda myth serving the elites in the German case, and it is a propaganda myth serving the elites in the Russian one.

As for the two main anarchist approaches to the war, the anti-Western and the pro-Ukrainian, I think that the core problem here is actually the very definition of imperialism. To my knowledge, the anti-Western approach is historically based on the Marxist-Leninist concept of imperialism as “the last stage of (liberal) capitalism” which is somehow “inherent” only to the West; and the pro-Ukrainian one draws from the Bakunist critique of imperialism(s), for example, in *Statism and Anarchy* (1873). Unless there will finally be a serious anarchist deconstruction of Marxist theory, there will always be a Marxist tendency in anarchism, especially in the West, where Marxism never was a state ideology, unlike in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet countries. Besides, as the heir of the Knuto-Soviet empire, the Russian fascist state traditionally supports and will always support (directly or indirectly) Western Marxist proponents of Lenin's definition of *imperialism*, using them as “useful idiots” (another Lenin phrase) in its hybrid war for world domination, regardless of whether or not they call themselves anarchists.

Ratibor Trivunac is a Serbian political activist, anarchist, publisher, and one of the founders of the *Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative (ASI)* – the Serbian section of the *International Workers' Association (AIT)*; he is also active in the *Center for Libertarian Studies* – Belgrade.

The response of the international anarchist movement to the inter-imperialist war in Ukraine has shown that the majority of the (working-class based) and (organized) anarchist movement is still capable of maintaining principled anti-militarist positions, even in a situation of strong nationalist, capitalist, and imperialist pressure for us to abandon our ideals and turn to warmongering, or even to get us directly involved in ruling-class conflict on an international scale. Only a few relevant organizations, for the time being, have abandoned these principles and have fallen for the nationalist and chauvinist politics of the capitalists. On the other hand, it confirmed yet again that the segments of the international anarchist movement which are not founded in working-class politics and/or are based on unorganized and informalist traditions are much more prone – as Malatesta noted during WWI – to forgetting our principles, when this is a more convenient and comfortable position to take. Just like the social democrats and some of the noted anarchists during WWI – to which the current conflict between NATO and Russia in Ukraine has many similarities due to the inter-imperialist

nature of the ongoing war - many of those claiming to be anarchists from these traditions have found themselves on the social-chauvinist, nationalist, and pro-imperialist positions.

Even if it is clear that pure experience, without an ideological and argumentative framework to interpret it, is not enough for comprehending the situation in its totality, and therefore insufficient for understanding the whole truth about the issue that is being investigated, the experience of some of the Ukrainian soldiers who like to identify themselves with anarchism is sometimes used to justify political alignment with one of the imperialist sides in this war. The same so-called experience, which on the ideological level amounts to nothing more than repetition of nationalist and chauvinist phrases, is used to silence the voices of those elements of the anarchist movement which reject this kind of downfall of our movement into nationalist reaction. Very often, these kinds of emotional pleas, garnished with the claims of the exclusiveness of Eastern European insight, albeit totally empty on the theoretical level and without any foundation in our principles and ideology, have a political effect due to the lack of comprehension of the phrases used and a deeper understanding of the events that are being presented. This is painful to watch, especially to some of us anarchists from the ex-Yugoslavian region of Eastern Europe who are unlucky enough to have personally lived through and remember the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. We ourselves have directly witnessed civil war, nationalist bloodshed, imperialist aggression, sanctions, anti-war movements, colored revolution, brutal transition to neoliberal capitalism, mass impoverishment of the working class, retraditionalization, and the general lowering of the civilization level in our societies. Especially we anarchists from the Republic of Serbia, apart from the above-mentioned things, had the experience of a proxy war during the Yugoslav civil war. Slobodan Milošević, the former leader of Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), which was not an official participant in the war in Bosnia and Croatia, had been arming, training, organizing, and directing Serbian forces in those places in the 1990s, as the USA and EU are doing today with Ukraine. We have experience living with the so-called territorial defense units, and we are aware that those units, despite their ambiguous name, are in fact controlled by state armies, but also that a majority of the war crimes in Yugoslav wars were committed exactly by those types of units. This kind of experience of ours, which is hindering attempts of political fishing in the troubled waters, and which is coupled with our strong adhesion to basic principles of our ideology, is leaving those who have fallen for nationalist and imperialist tricks in the situation to misinterpret our positions, accuse us of supporting other imperialist power, or even question anti-militarism from the positions that we have seen all states employ during wartime.

It is undeniable that these circumstances and the division that arises from them are distinctly marking structural elements that not only determine the relationship of anarchist movement with imperialist conflicts, but also many other crucial issues of the present era, thus defining the fundamental components of anarchist strategy and tactics for the future. The uniqueness of global events, as with the previous world wars and with the current conflict in Ukraine (and possibly other inter-imperialist conflicts between AUKUS and China in Taiwan), is that they enable the entire global population, and specifically international political movements, to define positions towards the events that affect us all. Those are the situations in which the crystallization of ideological positions occurs and in which chasms that until that point might have existed under the same banner become unbridgeable. Therefore, there is no doubt that this divide, especially if the imperialist conflict intensifies itself and war more clearly takes the character of the world war, by moving from proxy-inter-imperialist to openly inter-imperialist conflict, will have long-term consequences for the global anarchist movement. The demarcation lines will be strongly drawn between those of us who are maintaining class-orientated, internationalist, and anti-militarist positions, and those who are a colorful addendum to the rainbow imperialism, those who have capitulated to nationalism and chauvinism and placed themselves at the disposal of imperialist bandits.

What we could have learned from these recent events and debates within the movement and its

gathering places is how irrationalism, positivism, and emotional blackmailing are often and easily – and sometimes successfully – used in attempts to justify the betrayal of our movement’s ideals by those who have placed themselves in the service of capitalist armies. This will warrant not only a fierce struggle for the preservation of our movement in the days to come and a detailed scrutiny of segments of our movement’s praxis, but also, parallel to that, a deep reassessment of elements of our theoretical and methodological apparatuses. I feel that in the theoretical realm a strong and conscious rejection of Kropotkin’s positivism, which has led us time and time again into a political dead end, is desperately needed, with a necessity for a vehement return to Bakunin’s revolutionary dialectical and materialist approach to understanding of the world.

Belarusian Anarchists in Warsaw is a group of Belarusian anarchists who had to leave Belarus because of the persecutions. They prefer to remain anonymous. One participator in the group is the author of the Russian-language podcast *Dogma: Uneasy Talks About War*.

In our opinion, the war has highlighted how much anarchists are products of their own local capitalist and geopolitical environment. Specifically, we have seen that colonialism manifested itself in divisions along its usual lines. It is the West (First World) against the East (Second World). People – and anarchists – in the West think that they know better; they predominantly don’t ask their comrades who are clashing in the frontlines about what they think and what motivates them, because they have readymade answers. This is the product of a long-term tradition in which the East was oriented to the West in the anarchist movement – we cannot teach Western anarchists anything, we can only copypaste what already exists there and try to apply it in our contexts. This status quo was for a long time convenient for the Western comrades. Now that we suddenly have our own opinion and choose controversial tactics, they are confused.

It is also interesting, that just like the Ukrainian state is completely dependent on the Western “democracies” for resources and arms, so are the Ukrainian, Russian, and Belarusian anarchists who have to go around wealthier Western anarchist places to ask for money to continue their work.

We have also seen that international solidarity is an empty declaration. All anarchists expressed their position against the war and for the people, the working class, and the oppressed, but what did that mean in material terms? We are wondering how many of the oppressed in Ukraine felt any of that solidarity. How many collectives in the West, understanding that they didn’t want to support the armed participation in the war, tried to negotiate with the Ukrainian comrades about how else that cooperation could look, if not buying helmets?

The same can be said about the reaction of the Russian movement, which basically remained silent about the war, which started in 2014, and was cautious about trying to build connections with their Ukrainian comrades. It’s now the second year of the full-scale invasion, and we still do not see any attempts to create a common antiwar front in the post-Soviet region.

Another thing that is not so clear, and might seem a bit conspiratorial to some, is the power that the “reds” (authoritarian communists) have on the anarchist discourse. The war has shown that it is huge. We can see how in countries like Germany, where there is no clear division between anarchists and communists, the “general left” repeats the old Soviet and now Russian myths of “the West against Russia” and “capitalists against socialists”. The absolute lack of socialism in the Bolshevik USSR was discussed by anarchists, such as Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, as early as 1925 or so. But the Soviets, and then the authoritarian left parties sponsored by them, who survived in some form until now were much more successful in selling their own version of reality and propagating “oppression by the West”. In most Southern European countries, this discourse is clearly connected to the “reds” propaganda, but is hailed by the anarchist movement, just because it’s convenient.

This war will leave a big schism in the movement for a longer time. The anarchist East stopped blindly taking for granted what is said or done by some of the Western comrades. And it will take a long time to build back the trust and the real international solidarity in our movement.

Anatoly Dubovik is a *Ukrainian anarchist from Dnipro; a member of the Association of Anarchist Movements (1990-1994) and the Nestor Makhno Revolutionary Confederation of Anarchists-Syndicalists (1994-2014); since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine (2014), he has been actively engaged in the defense of Ukraine.*

For almost 10 years now, the biggest and bloodiest war in Europe in more than 70 years has been going on. For me personally, the reaction to what is happening on the part of anarchists outside of Ukraine has only confirmed the sad conclusions that my comrades and I came to long ago: not only is the anarchist movement in crisis, not only does it lack serious power and influence in society, but it cannot and does not even want to get out of this state. The only serious attempt I know of to analyze the current events and formulate conclusions – seemingly obvious conclusions! – was made by the Czech Federation of Anarchists. The other anarchist organizations were incapable of doing even that. (We are talking specifically about organizations, not individuals or informal groups of friends within organizations.) For many anarchists, as it was 10-20 years ago, anarchism and anarchist action remain a struggle for the rights of this or that “minority”, a philanthropic movement to help the homeless, a faction within the ecological or vegetarian movement, and so on – anything but a revolutionary movement to change society on the principles of freedom and solidarity.

I apologize for the banality: we are not democrats, and our goal is not the improvement of the state by democratic (or any other) methods, but the elimination of any state. At the same time, it is obvious that the degree of freedom – or, if you like, the starting conditions for the implementation of our program – varies from state to state. We, who started anarchist activity in the USSR (or in the Eastern European countries subordinate to the USSR), know it well from personal experience. There are states in which we anarchists have the opportunity to legally disseminate our ideas (the other question is how we use this opportunity). There are states in which anarchist beliefs themselves are punishable by prison. And there have been states in which the punishment was death.

When an authoritarian fascist state attacks a democratic state, it is necessary to defend the latter. At least for the sake of self-preservation.

When authoritarian, practically fascist modern Russia attacks relatively democratic Ukraine with the aim of destroying it and its people – and is *already* destroying it (by mass executions in the occupied territories, total bombing of frontline cities, constant rocket attacks on civilian objects in the rear) – one has to defend the relative freedom that exists here and which Russia hopes to break and replace with the fascist “Russian world”.

Ukrainian anarchists had to become temporary, situational allies of the Ukrainian state – against the common enemy.

A paradox? Yes. The same as Makhno's alliance with the Bolsheviks against White reaction. Or the alliance of the FAI-CNT [3] with the Spanish state against Franco. Or the alliance of Spanish, French, Polish, and other anarchists with different governments against Hitler.

Surprisingly, we need to explain this to many anarchists outside of Ukraine.

Surprisingly, it seems that nowhere in the world have anarchists tried to think: what should their groups and organizations do if something like the war in Ukraine starts in their country?

Something new? I now know in practice what I used to know only in theory – and what I have said

above. There are situations when anarchists have to ally even with the state against a worse common enemy. This is not something that you can be happy about; it is unpleasant, but it may be unavoidable. The main thing is not to forget who we are and what we want.

For me and my comrades, the war changed nothing about our anarchist convictions. All the elements of our worldview have remained in the same place.

It is difficult for me to comment on the question of disagreements among anarchists about the ongoing war. There are no disagreements among Ukrainian anarchists. Disagreements are somewhere out there, far away. They cause us annoyance and even irritation ("Why don't these people understand such simple and obvious things?!"), but also an unexpected relief: we have no such disagreements, we are united in recognizing the need for self-defense, in recognizing the need to defend our people.

Disagreements between anarchists will, of course, remain. As a historian of the anarchist movement, I know that there have always been disagreements between anarchists. As a practical participant in the anarchist movement, I hope that these disagreements will lead to a division.

In the short term, it will be a division between those who recognize the need to protect people from imperialist fascist aggression and a touching conglomerate of pacifists, abstract anti-militarists, and just big fans of anything with the label "Made in Russia".

In the long term, it will be the restoration of an ideological, organized, socially active class anarchism – which will get rid of the ballast of "lifestyle anarchists" and of, let me call them "anarchists of one idea" (those fighting for animal rights, feminism, legalization of marijuana or same-sex marriage, "anarcho-punks", and so on).

Translated by Max Ščur.

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The Russia-Ukraine war has undoubtedly fractured the anarchist movement, reflecting broader transformations within contemporary anarchism and leftist politics. Over the last half-century, anarchists, and the radical left in general, have witnessed the erosion of their once-distinct class base. This shift has not only profoundly affected their theoretical frameworks – the shift from broadly Marxian class theories to a broadly Foucauldian poststructuralism – but has also hindered their capacity to effectively analyze and respond to current international events. Instead of engaging in strategic hegemonic politics, they often find themselves navigating the fluid terrain of hyperpolitics, characterized by extreme politicization but with limited political consequences, as recently articulated by Anton Jäger. [4]

One consequence of this evolving landscape is the challenge that anarchists and the broader left face in comprehending the material underpinnings of the Russia-Ukraine war. Fundamentally, the war arises from a class conflict between post-Soviet political capitalists on one side and the professional middle-class aligned with transnational capital on the other. [5] The working class, in this conflict, is divided and lacks an independent ideological articulation and political representation. The arguments regarding the war prevailing among the radical left tend to be

idealistic and superficial, built on crude notions of imperialism.

These simplistic references extend to classical debates about supporting national liberation movements, often leading to ahistorical and even obscurantist comparisons between the Russia-Ukraine conflict and Third World national liberation struggles. Unlike the latter, which were tightly intertwined with processes of social revolution and modernization, possessed universal appeal (for example, Cuba and Vietnam), and were based on class alliances involving peasantry, workers, revolutionary intelligentsia, and national bourgeoisie, contemporary Ukraine lacks these elements. It lacks the social-revolutionary momentum that could challenge the dominant capitalist order, primarily striving for a comprador peripheralizing integration instead of developmental modernization, all grounded in a fundamentally different class alliance and articulating not universalist ideologies but particularistic nationalist identity politics (Ishchenko, 2022b). [6]

In light of drastically transformed material circumstances, the national question within anarchism and contemporary leftist theory and strategy needs to be reevaluated. The uncritical celebration of “self-determination”, “subjectivity”, and “agency”, divorced from materialist analysis and class politics, and pursued to its logical extreme, is indistinguishable from the fringe right-wing utopias, such as far-right national-anarchism or libertarian anarcho-capitalism. In the current conjecture, this has resulted in a disconcerting lack of criticism, particularly concerning the ethnonationalist transformation of the contemporary Ukrainian state and society. The international community’s failure to intervene in the complete ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh, largely overlooked by the left, serves as a stark reminder of the potential future if military reconquest were to occur in Crimea and Donbas, further underscoring the moral and political bankruptcy of these ideas.

Similarly, an abstract and superficial analysis is evident on the opposite side of the divide in the radical left, particularly in their unqualified rejection of weapon supplies without consideration of their possible use. For instance, this includes the vital need for anti-air defense systems to protect Ukrainian civilian infrastructure and lives.

Especially from anarchists, one might expect a greater ability to differentiate between support for the Ukrainian population and support for the Ukrainian state and its comprador elite. It would be necessary to have a more nuanced stance on the weapons question, a more articulated and coherent opposition to ethnonationalist assimilationist policies regardless of the side implementing them, and greater sensitivity to the diversity of Ukrainian society, divided by frontline and borders. Reviving class analysis and politics is pivotal for anarchists and the radical left to provide more appropriate responses to the international conflicts in the coming decades of geopolitical strife.

Konfederatsiya revolyutsionnykh anarkho-sindikalistov (KRAS-MAT), or *Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists (CRAS-IWA)*, is the Russian section of the *International Workers’ Association (AIT)*, founded in 1995.

First of all, it should be borne in mind that we are not talking about opposing the position of “all anarchists in Russia” in favor of the position of “all anarchists in Ukraine”. As in most other so-called “countries” (and in fact, territories currently controlled by various states and their ruling cliques), both in Russia and Ukraine, there are anarchists who take anti-war and anti-militarist positions, as well as people who call themselves anarchists but support one side or the other in a war between states. Unfortunately, this is nothing new. This was the case during the First and Second World Wars, and during many other wars in the history of the 20th and 21st centuries. There are those who follow the anarchist principles of internationalism (proletarian cosmopolitanism) and anti-militarism – and there are those who support the ideas of “lesser evil”, “democracy”, “national liberation” and so on. As early as 1915, internationalist anarchists (Malatesta, Emma Goldman, Alexandra Berkman, comrades from Spain, etc.) called these latter people who “forgot their principles”.

Do we now know something new? Only one thing is new: unfortunately, there are more such “anarchists who have forgotten principles” than one would like to think and believe. This makes us think seriously about the question of the crisis of the anarchist movement. Has not a significant part of it been torn away from its roots, from that fundamental thing that, in fact, makes anarchism exactly anarchist?

We are in the Russian section of M.A.T. [7] We do not believe that in this war we have encountered something fundamentally new, which has never happened before and which should force anarchism to abandon the most fundamental foundations of its own system of views. We have always believed and continue to believe that in the anarchist system of views, there is a “solid core” that cannot be abandoned without destroying the very essence of anarchism. Anti-militarism and denial of nations and national interests, refusal to support any states, and any alliances with the ruling classes – this is part of such a “hard core”.

Do the differences among the anarchists have long-term sources? Yes, this is part of a long and deep process that unfolded after the Second World War. The old, traditional proletarian anarchism is being eroded and often gives way to “multi-class” and reformist neo-anarchism, which tends to accept the logic of the “lesser evil”, “democracy”, and compromises with the state and “less reactionary” capital. The “new” anarchism borrowed too much from the statist, the Identitarians, and the adherents of “national liberation”. We think it’s time to differentiate and return to the roots of the “old school”, uncompromising social revolution – once and for all.

Oleksandr Kolchenko is *Ukrainian political activist and anarchist; shortly after the annexation of Crimea, he was detained, tortured, and falsely accused of being a member of the far-right group Right Sector and of preparing terrorist acts in a mock trial and sentenced to 10 years. Now, he actively takes part in the fight against the Russian invasion.*

Despite the deep fragmentation of the anarchist movement in Ukraine, Ukrainian anarchists began to prepare for a full-scale invasion sometime before February 24, 2022: they determined who would take up arms and who would volunteer. One way or another, the vast majority of them put aside their quarrels and disagreements on certain issues and stood up in defense of freedom. Remaining true to my anarchist and anti-fascist beliefs, I initially avoided participating in an organized anarchist movement to resist Russian aggression, because I was concerned that discussions on ideological issues, quarrels, and squabbles would take up time that could be used for training, education, and direct participation in combat operations – or more broadly, in something useful and constructive. (It is worth noting that from the moment I was released from prison until the full-scale invasion began, I participated in the anarchist movement only sporadically. First of all, there was a lack of time: work and everyday life took up all my time. But no less important was the anarchist movement’s lack of any clear position on the Russo-Ukrainian war.)

I did not delve too deeply into the position of the Belarusian anarchist movement; I am not competent in this matter. But emigrants from everywhere from Belarus to Poland support Ukraine, and some Belarusian anarchists are fighting in the Ukrainian Defence Forces.

On the contrary, I can write a lot about the Russian anarchist movement. I have already written about it in one of my Facebook posts. And even to this day, despite the number of civilian and military casualties, entire cities wiped off the map, genocide, and ecocide, little has changed in their position in this regard. So I’ll quote myself:

I am very grateful to my Russian friends from the movement for their support throughout my imprisonment. I will never forget this and will try to support them as much as possible. But I cannot remain silent (and I am very sorry) about the fact that Russian anarchists, after the start of Russian

military aggression, have not been able to launch a large-scale campaign against their state's imperial aggression against the rebellious Ukraine. (Either in the form of calls for a general anti-war strike or attacks on military facilities or defense industry enterprises. In any case, neither before prison nor in prison did I know about any such thing).

From the very beginning of the war in 2014, the KRAS sect (Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists) called the Russian aggression a "civil war" and took a so-called "equidistant" position – condemning both sides. The opportunity to have such a position is a privilege on the part of those who are in a safe (or relatively safe) place, who do not go to bed every night thinking: "Will a missile hit my house or someone else's house?"

On February 25, 2022, the day after the full-scale invasion began, KRAS released an "anti-war" statement. I will allow myself to analyze a few quotes from it:

"We demand an immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of all troops to the borders and lines of separation that existed before the war began." But there is not a single word about what KRAS considers to be the starting point of the war: if they consider February 22, 2022, to be the starting point, then this is a direct play along with the Kremlin, the Russian state, because the territories that were occupied by Russia from 2014 to February 2022 remain outside the brackets; if they propose to withdraw "all troops to the borders" by 2014, then this is a demand *exclusively* to Russia.

"We call on soldiers sent to fight not to shoot at each other." If Russian soldiers put down their weapons, the war will end. If the Ukrainians put down their weapons, Ukraine will be conquered, and the war will not end but will continue – only in this case, Ukrainians will be forcibly mobilized by Russia for war with Europe (after all, Russian politicians and propagandists have repeatedly threatened other countries with war and missile attacks). The key to peace in Ukraine is not in Ukraine, but in Russia.

In March 2022, the anarchist women's group Moiras from Spain interviewed a Russian representative of the KRAS (as a non-imperialist [*sarcasm*]) about the events in Ukraine. In this interview, the representative of KRAS excluded the vast majority of Ukrainian anarchists from anarchists (again, what a non-imperial position [*sarcasm*]). In the same interview, the KRAS representative talks about the numerous anti-war protests in Russia. As you know, practice is the criterion of truth. However, I would like to remind you that the war is still going on – a year and a half after that interview. And all this time, Russians have been going to military registration and enlistment offices at the first call, when there were no criminal or administrative penalties for failing to report to the military registration and enlistment office; many went on their own initiative.

As for the other anarchist organization, Autonomous Action, they barely managed to issue a cautious condemnation of Russian aggression on the eve of the full-scale invasion. I find their "no to the war" position, which they use in their campaign materials, extremely pathetic. Because, in my opinion, any position that does not include the goal – most importantly – of contributing to the military defeat of Russia and the victory of Ukraine, is pathetic. They publish materials in memory of those anarchists who fought in Ukraine against Russia. But, for example, an article by a great "analyst" Vladimir Platonenko about Dmitry Petrov has a lot of loud pathetic words and phrases, but the factual side is distorted. Take the phrase: "Nevertheless, the Ecologist [8] did not merge with the supporters of the Ukrainian state. It is no coincidence that he was not in the army, but in the home defense forces." According to the author's logic, it turns out that standing in the ranks of the army is something shameful and unacceptable for an anarchist. I have to disappoint him, because at the very least, the home defense is an integral part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the army. I sincerely feel sorry for those who read such analytics. I was also surprised by a section in the news editorial of

Autonomous Action called "Trends of Order and Chaos: Our Russian World". If this were a joke, it would be quite cringey. But no, they write: "Belonging to the culture that has formed around the Russian language is not something to be 'canceled' or ashamed of. The 'Russian world' is a concept that should be wrested from the Kremlin crooks. In the process of overthrowing the regime, we will definitely succeed in it." I don't know whether it is worth explaining to our Western comrades how this "Russian world" was historically created. In a nutshell, it was created by colonizing "non-Russian" lands, by genocides and deportations. "Russian" identity is not ethnic, but cultural, which they themselves admit in their text. "Russian culture" is imbued with imperialism. That is, it is an identity that can be acquired and that can also be abandoned. They don't want to give up their imperial "Russian" identity, but want to carry this imperial cultural heritage into the future. Well, I'm not on the same road with such "comrades".

I would also like to mention BOAK (Combat Organization of Anarcho-Communists). A few years ago, this organization wrote a text called "Anarchist Solution for Crimea", which made me very angry because I lost my home and served more than five years in prison due to the occupation of Crimea. So I will quote my other post from FB, this one from August 4, 2020, with my response to this article:

Instead of condemning the Russian aggression and the Kremlin's imperial ambitions and the repressions that followed in the occupied territories (it is also worth noting that 2014 served as a turning point within Russia itself - from that time on, the level of repression only increased; As Aleksey Polikhovich noted when describing the situation, "We were serving prison time in a still-democratic country"); instead of condemning the growing military budget in a country where people permanently live like beggars, these anarchists found nothing better to do than to speculate about the status of Crimea. It takes so much nerve to refer to the "will of the majority of the territory's inhabitants" after six years of terror and repression in the occupied territory, annexed as a result of a "special military operation" launched on February 20(!), 2014, forgetting to mention how the public opinion of Crimeans was prepared for the so-called "referendum" by the state propaganda and kidnappings, how the "Russian World" supporters were brought in from Russia, how the "referendum" itself and the vote count were conducted, and that the observers were friends of Russia from European far-right organizations and parties! I would not even be surprised if these "anarchists" call the armed conflict with Russia in eastern Ukraine a "civil war".

A truly anarchist solution for Crimea would be an economic and armed struggle against the police state and tyranny, and a preparation for an uprising - so that those who are now in prison on trumped-up criminal cases, as well as those who were forced to leave the peninsula for a variety of reasons (from economic reasons to the threat of criminal prosecution), could return home and "jointly, equally, and in solidarity govern their home". However, as can be seen from the published reports on the activities carried out, the main activity of those who send reports on the actions is concentrated in Kyiv and the Kyiv region. And it would be more logical to suggest that "building ties with neighboring and distant regions" should be offered to Russian regions. "Federalization of relations between communities and regions is one of the main elements of the political concept of the revolutionary anarchist movement." I cannot but agree with this. Let the Far East, Siberia, Ural, Karelia, the North Caucasus, the Kuban, the Don, and other regions build "their own ties with neighboring and distant regions. Some of them may be closer to Russia, others to Ukraine." Perhaps Königsberg is closer to Germany, and Karelia to Finland. After all, the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation (which is super-centralized and is not actually a federation), in addition to being expensive for taxpayers (all those who produce wealth), also poses a threat to (not only) neighboring countries and liberation movements in them (including anarchist ones).

However, it is worth noting that since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, BOAK has, not only with words but also with deeds, joined the resistance to Russia's imperial war of aggression, both domestically through guerrilla actions and in Ukraine. Here, it is worth mentioning once again

Dmitry Petrov, who was one of the organizers and leaders of the BOAK, and who joined the Ukrainian Defence Forces from the first days of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Unfortunately, he was killed near Bakhmut. He left behind a rich legacy of deeds, texts, and memories from his comrades. He also left a message in the event of his death, in which he talks about his views and motivation to take up arms and join the Ukrainian Defence Forces. However, even in this message he is not free from the myth of a "free Russia"; he writes about the liberation of Russia from oppression – which is an oxymoron, because Russia itself is oppression for the people/peoples who inhabit it, as well as a constant threat and headache for its neighbors. Literally: "I did it for the sake of justice, for the protection of Ukrainian society, and for the liberation of my country, Russia, from oppression." If he were alive, after Ukraine's victory, we could discuss this with him over a glass of beer. Because, although I think he was wrong, he remained a comrade who chose a side in a difficult time, and did not sit on two chairs in a leg-split, did not teach from a safe place what was right and what was wrong.

So, to briefly summarize: the Russian anarchist movement, despite its declared internationalism, has unfortunately, by and large, failed the test of real internationalism – except for anarcho-partisans (who are bringing the end of the war closer, to the extent of their strength and resources) and except for several individuals (some of whom have left Russia, some of whom have stayed). But, despite all this, I am glad that I still have comrades from Russia who really sympathize with us and wish Russia to be defeated and Ukraine to win.

I have not studied the position of the international anarchist movement on Russian aggression in Ukraine. I know that the anarchist movement in southern countries is more dedicated to repeating anti-NATO rhetoric and Russian myths about supposed "Ukrainian Nazism". I know that comrades from Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, and the British left support us and help us. For which I thank them very much. We will not forget it.

It is obvious to me that there has been no united left movement since the First International and the disputes between Marx and Bakunin. Which, in addition to purely personal grievances and purely political ambitions within the organization and the international socialist movement as a whole, were also of a fundamentally irreconcilable nature – both on the methods of fighting for socialism and on what is considered socialism. Even then, Bakunin warned of the danger and threat posed by statist, authoritarian versions of "socialism". It seems to me that, unfortunately, in those countries that were not under the occupation of the USSR, there is a greater belief in leftist unity – a greater level of tolerance for the Reds, for hammers and sickles, etc. And historical experience does not teach contemporaries.

As for me personally, since the first days of the full-scale invasion, I have only become more convinced of the vitality of the immortal popular anarchist element, which awakens at critical historical moments, in times of great ordeals. People were lining up at military recruitment offices – they were motivated not by the defense of the state, but by the defense of freedom. There were a lot of grassroots volunteer initiatives aimed at reducing each other's suffering and inconvenience: helping the army, helping evacuated IDPs (internally displaced persons), and helping those who remained in frontline settlements. There is no way to list them all, as there is a large kaleidoscope of grassroots initiatives. Large fundraisers for equipment and transport were closed in a matter of days, sometimes even hours.

As for the disagreements and discussions in the contemporary anarchist movement, they are inherent in the multicolored anarchist movement and have accompanied it throughout its existence. But after being lectured by nobodies, after the dismissals of the anarchist movement by armchair scholars, after the anti-NATO rhetoric and criticism of supplying Ukraine with weapons so desperately needed to repel the aggression of fascist Russia, after the justification of Russian

aggression and its crimes in Ukraine, after shifting the responsibility to Ukraine – whether because of “Nazism” in Ukraine or something else – on the part of some European anarchists, I became a little disappointed in the modern anarchist movement, for reasons I outlined in my answers to the previous questions. And to be honest, after that, all these discussions began to disgust me. So I stopped following them closely. Because regardless of the opinions of anarchists from other countries, I firmly believe that this war is existential, and our physical existence depends on its outcome. However, despite all these sad circumstances, international solidarity still exists, and this is very encouraging.

Translated by Max Šćur.

Saul Newman is a British political theorist and professor at Goldsmiths, University of London, Newman is the author of several books on radical political theory, as for example *From Bakunin to Lacan: Anti-Authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power (2001)*, *The Politics of Post Anarchism (2010)*, and *Political Theology: A Critical Introduction (2018)*.

The conflict in Ukraine is no doubt a difficult situation for anarchists to confront. On the one hand, many anarchists feel a moral and political obligation to support Ukrainian civil society against this totally unjustified Russian aggression. Everything must be done to resist this imperial expansion on the part of a neo-fascist Russian regime. Putin’s justifications for the war – that it is a war of defense against neo-Nazis in Ukraine – are absurd. On the other hand, in supporting Ukraine, anarchists also find themselves in an awkward position, on the same side as a corrupt government supported by NATO and the United States. The cost of the conflict to both sides has been disastrous, and there seems to be no end in sight. So, anarchists find themselves amidst a war fought between two competing power blocs with rival geopolitical and military ambitions. As always, it is the ordinary civilians and soldiers who suffer. There are no easy answers here. Anarchists have always faced dilemmas of this kind. In the First World War, Peter Kropotkin supported the Allies against what he saw as German militarism and imperialism, and, in so doing, found himself on the side of the British, French, and Russian Empires. Some anarchists have resisted war altogether – seeing war as never justifiable – whereas others have taken up arms against fascism (for instance in the Spanish Civil War). I have no insights to offer here, and there is nothing new to be learned from this conflict. Each anarchist must wrestle with his or her own conscience and decide whether to join the fray of battle or take a position of principled conscientious objection to war. Both positions are politically significant, and each involves enormous courage and brings great personal risk. I think it is important for anarchists to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and with the people of Russia who are suffering as a result of Putin’s megalomania and who – increasingly – are prepared to disobey. All we can hope for is for the war to end and for Putin’s system of tyranny to crumble.

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National Self-Determination and Anarchism in the War in Ukraine

From the start of the Russo-Ukrainian war, the main issue has been the self-determination of the Ukrainian people. Many anarchists reject the concept of the national self-determination of oppressed peoples such as Ukraine. Yet it has been advocated by anarchists since the birth of revolutionary libertarian socialism.

By “nations” I mean the same as “peoples” or “countries” or “nationalities” or “national communities.” Whether people – such as the Ukrainians – are an independent nation is something for themselves to determine, rather than outside observers or invading imperialist armies. The same goes for deciding what sort of political and economic system they want. That is self-determination. In

1991, the Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly for independence from Russia, and so did most Russian-speakers.

National self-determination began as part of the bourgeois-democratic program developed in the age of capitalist democratic revolutions. This included the English Revolution of the 1640s, the American Revolution of 1776, the French Revolution of 1789, the South American and Caribbean revolutions, and other rebellions around the world. The bourgeois-democratic program included freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, land to the peasants, the right to bear arms, equality of all before the law, the election of officials... and the right of nations to self-determination.

The capitalist class has never lived up to its program, not consistently or fully. It has had to be forced, by the struggles and blood of the people. Now in the epoch of its decline, it is decreasingly able to maintain its democratic façade. The struggle for rights, even those of the bourgeois-democratic program, can only be fully won through the overthrow of capitalism and the state by the working class and all oppressed people.

For this reason, the struggle for national self-determination has become identified not with liberalism but with revolutionary socialism. Ignorant anarchists often claim it was invented by Lenin. Lenin indeed used it as a slogan, but the problem with Lenin was not that he was too democratic! For him, national self-determination (like other democratic demands) was a device to win support for his party's rule from the working people of oppressed nations.

Lenin's goal was a centralized state, ruling a centralized economy, and ruled by his centralized party. Support for national self-determination, he believed, would lead peoples eventually to voluntarily merge into a homogeneous world. On the contrary, anarchists, while internationalists, are also decentralists, regionalists, and pluralists. They aim for a world of free peoples, without states or borders, tied together through networks and free federations. Anarchist belief in national self-determination is based on a very different goal than Leninism's.

Anarchists Supported National Self-Determination

From the beginnings of revolutionary anarchism, leading anarchists have supported national self-determination (without necessarily using that term). Mikhail Bakunin, often regarded as one of the "founders" of anarchism, declared:

Nationality... denotes the inalienable right of individuals, groups, associations, and regions to their own way of life... the product of a long historical development... And this is why I will always champion the cause of oppressed nationalities struggling to liberate themselves from the domination of the state.

By "state" he means, here, the foreign state which dominates the oppressed nationality.

Peter Kropotkin is also often regarded as a "founder" of anarchist-communism. He wrote, "True internationalism will never be attained except by the independence of each nationality... If we say no government of man over man, how can [we] permit the government of conquered nationalities by the conquering nationalities?"

Kropotkin supported all national movements against foreign oppressors, such as the Indians and Irish against Britain, the Balkan peoples against Turkey, and the Poles against Russia. Unfortunately, he did not make a clear distinction between wars of oppressed people against their oppressors, and wars among imperialist powers. This led to his supporting France and its allies against the Germans in inter-imperialist World War I. A large majority of anarchists strongly disagreed with him.

The Italian anarchist, Errico Malatesta, was a comrade of Bakunin and Kropotkin. He thought that Kropotkin was completely wrong to take sides in World War I, supporting one imperialist group over another. Malatesta wrote polemics against the minority of pro-war anarchists.

Yet he strongly supported wars of oppressed nations against imperialist domination. Malatesta supported the Libyan Arab fight against Italy's colonization and the Cuban war for independence from Spain. "Anarchists, being the enemies of all governments and claiming the right to live and grow in total freedom for all ethnic and social groups, as well as for every individual, must necessarily oppose any actual government and side with any people that fight for their freedom."

It is also worth noting what Nestor Makhno and his Ukrainian movement thought about national self-determination. This should be seen in the context of the Insurgent Army fighting off nationalist armies, as well as fighting for independence from the Austrians, Poles, and, of course, the Russians.

The Makhnovist movement declared (in October 1919):

Each national group has a natural and indisputable entitlement to... maintain and develop its national culture in every sphere. It is clear that this... has nothing to do with narrow nationalism of the "separatist" variety... We proclaim the right of the Ukrainian people (and every other nation) to self-determination, not in the narrow nationalist sense... but in the sense of the toilers' right to self-determination.

I have been citing the views of "classical" anarchists, but anarchists have continued to support the struggles of oppressed nations from then to the present time. The claim that (all) anarchists do not support national self-determination is false.

Self-Determination is Not Nationalism

Anarchist opponents of self-determination for oppressed peoples confuse it with "nationalism." But nationalism is only one program for achieving self-determination. It advocates the unity of the nation behind the national ruling class, denying class and other divisions within the country. It aims to set up a new state.

Anarchists do not support nationalism. Instead, they say that real, full, national independence can only be achieved through class struggle, linked up with the international revolution of the working class and all oppressed people. Nationalists and revolutionary anarchists only have a negative agreement: opposition to the dominating imperialist state (in this case, Russia). But their positive programs - what they want to build to replace the invader - are entirely different.

Anti-self-determination anarchists say that this program means supporting national states. Yet being in solidarity with a people does not have to mean supporting their state. But in most cases (so far) the people have supported (or at least accepted) a state. Anarchists have not (yet) been able to persuade them otherwise. This is their choice. Libertarian socialists do not refuse to support an oppressed people in struggle because they still have a state. Perhaps they will learn from their statist experiences over time, with the encouragement of the anarchists.

Ukrainian anarchists give no political support to the government. They do not vote for Zelensky nor support his party nor urge others to vote for the regime. Their opposition to the state is made clear. Meanwhile, they support workers who resist the neo-liberal, anti-union, austerity government, and business policies. They spread anarchist propaganda wherever possible.

Militarily, it would be optimal if the Ukrainian anarchists could have independent militia or guerrilla forces. Unfortunately, they are far too weak. Only one force was able to organize a fight back against

the invaders: the state's official army. While Ukrainian anarchists have many reasons to oppose their state and its army, they should not oppose one thing about them: namely that they are resisting the Russian invasion. For anarchists to tell Ukrainians not to fight against the Russians because the Ukrainian army is the instrument of a capitalist state – would sound to most Ukrainian workers like a call to surrender!

Some Ukrainian anarchists have joined the army while others organize food distribution and other services, all with the long-term goal of eventually overturning all states. That is a tactical question. Strategically, in one way or another, anarchists give practical support to the Ukrainian armed forces against the Russians. This is for the sake of the national self-determination of the Ukrainian people and the goal of international anarchism.

PS: The above was written before the breakout of the latest stage in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The same basic methodology applies to that war as to the Russo-Ukrainian War. The Palestinian people are oppressed by the Israeli state. Anarchists should support them in their struggles for national self-determination. This does not mean support for the reactionary politics of Hamas and certainly not for its reactionary tactics. But Hamas' atrocities are no excuse for the massive atrocities and war crimes being committed right now by the Israeli state. The Palestinian people have right and justice on their side.

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Resistance and mutual aid rather than doctrinarism and defeatism

Anarcho-pacifism

In classical anarchist doctrine, the attitude towards armed conflicts between states was always negative. The war was perceived as a competition between states, elites, and capitals. Through wars, states spread patriotic sentiments that fuelled chauvinism, with the proletariat of individual countries quarreling among themselves and blocking the path to the development of internationalism. Militarism was one of the most important points in the anarchist's critique of states (including empires). Being a reflection of power, hierarchy, and centralism, it created the greatest obstacle to human freedom. The mass and organized murder of people, according to anarchists, should have met with resistance from the proletariat. Anarchists have consistently taken up anti-military – and less often, pacifist – positions.

Among the leading anarcho-pacifists, we can mention: Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis and Bartholomeus de Ligt, E. Armand and Louis Lecoin, Ernst Friedrich (with his famous book *War against War!*) [9], as well as those who oscillate on the borderline of anarchism, such as Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi. During World War I, "The International Anarchist Manifesto against the War" was published and signed by over 30 influential European and American anarchists, including Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Errico Malatesta, Saul Janovsky, and Juda Grossman-Roshchin. During World War II, the slogan "Neither fascism nor anti-fascism" was pushed by anarcho-syndicalist organizations in Latin America, mainly in Argentina and Uruguay, and the Bulgarian Anarcho-Communist Federation, as well as some groups in England and France. The French anarcho-pacifism of the time took absurd forms, expressing itself in the slogan "better slavery than war!" More recently, the American intellectual Noam Chomsky could be called the leading anti-war anarchist activist.

At present, the banners of pacifists display the slogan "Peace at all costs!" which is frequently

reiterated by left-liberal intellectuals from Western countries, including professor of linguistics, activist, and journalist Medea Benjamin, political scientist Hall Gardner, and others. For the veteran of Polish anarchism, Jarosław Urbański, “An immediate end to the conflict, regardless of the geopolitical context, is necessary to avoid further bloodshed.” [10] These slogans entail a closer association with various communists, Marxist, Trotskyist, and Maoist ideologies, which, ensnared in outdated doctrine, reduce their own dogmatism to slogans such as “No war but class war”, “Neither Ukrainian nor Russian!” or “Neither NATO nor Putin!” In Russia, this attitude is represented by the leaders of the Confederation of Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists – the International Workers’ Association (KRAS). Anatoly Dubovik, a Ukrainian anarchist, has argued that the leaders of KRAS (professional historians) are anarcho-Putinists.

Doctrinairism of these forces, hidden under the blanket of “classical international internationalism”, oddly enough leaves no room for international solidarity with Ukrainian anarchists and Ukrainian society; it is blind to the living, not mythical, anti-fascism that confronts the brutal imperialism of the Kremlin. Pacifism is good when it tries to prevent war, but not during war. Unfortunately, some “ideologically pure” comrades are stuck in rigid concepts detached from reality. But is it stupidity, cowardice, or plain defeatism? Our life is not black and white and does not stand still. There is no perfect purity in this world, except perhaps the laughter and tears of children. And Ukraine is flooded with these tears.

Anti-militarism

Fortunately, pacifism has never been the dominant current in the history of the anarchist movement, which is saturated with rebellions and uprisings. Anarchism is known for its direct action tactics, propaganda by deed, revolutionary terror, illegalism, and finally insurrectionism, which prove that violence and radicalism have always been equal parts of libertarian theories and practices. Anarchists, with weapons in hand, took part in the Paris Commune, in both World Wars, as well as in smaller armed conflicts, including national liberation struggles on different continents (e.g., in Ireland, Korea, Cuba, and India). They formed military formations during the civil war in Russia (e.g., the Makhnovist movement), in the Spanish Civil War, in the French Resistance, etc.

The most famous conflict over the attitude of anarchists to participation in the war became the *Manifesto of the Sixteen* (1916), signed, among others, by Peter Kropotkin, Jean Grave, Christiaan Cornelissen, Varlam Cherkezishvili, Charles Malato, and Paul Reclus. Thus, they gained the name of “anarchopatriots”, “anarchomilitarists”, or, to use the words of Errico Malatesta, “pro-government anarchists”. Despite the mythology surrounding the views of Kropotkin and his followers on war, I am inclined to share the view that it was not a break with anarchism or a betrayal of libertarian ideals. In my opinion (and that of Ruth Kinna [11]) the position of the “prince of anarchy” was a consistent reaction to the situation. The reaction of an anarchist and anti-militarist, Errico Malatesta, who wrote to Maria Goldsmith in 1897 that anarchists must stand by people opposing the oppression of both personality and economic, religious, and “all the more national” oppression. In turn, at the beginning of World War I, in the article “Anti-militarism: Was it properly understood?”, published in the pages of *Freedom*, he declared:

It being so, the question arises: How is anti-militarist propaganda to be conducted?

The reply is evident: It must be supplemented by a promise of direct action. An anti-militarist ought never to join the anti-militarist agitation without taking in his inner self a solemn vow that in case a war breaks out, notwithstanding all efforts to prevent it, he will give the full support of his action to the country that will be invaded by a neighbor, whosoever the neighbor may be. Because, if the anti-militarists remain mere onlookers on the war, they support by their inaction the invaders; they help them to make slaves of the conquered populations; they aid them to become still stronger, and thus

to be a still stronger obstacle to the Social Revolution in the future. [12]

This quote has not lost its relevance to this day.

During the Second World War, several sections of the International Workers' Association (the Poles, Italians, Spaniards, Swedes, and French) agreed that "Fascism and Nazism must be crushed wherever they appear and at all costs. This is one of the most important tasks at the moment." [13] Well-known anarcho-syndicalist activists, such as Rudolf Rocker and Grigory Maksimov, were of a similar opinion. In Europe, here and there, anarchists fought against the Nazis; let us recall, for example, the Poles who took part in the Warsaw Uprising as part of the Syndicalist Brigade. Today, anarchists are militarily supporting the Kurds fighting in Rojava against Assad and the Islamists.

Kropotkin's above words are understandable for those, who, unlike pacifists, do not disagree with anarchists from Ukraine, Belarus, or Russia to fight for freedom in the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine; for those who do not hide the fact that Russian imperialism is as unrestrained as Western imperialism; for those, for whom solidarity is not an empty sound, who support the right of Ukrainians to their own geopolitical choice, to self-defense, to fighting the invader, who brings regression, fascism, violations of even minimal rights and civil liberties, genocide, dictatorship, camps, rape, political murders, torture of prisoners, forced removal of children, etc. This is the opinion of the anarchists associated with the Resistance Committee, fighting and dying on the front lines, such as the Russian Dmitry Petrov from the Combat Organization of Anarcho-Communists, the Belarusian Zhvir, the American Cooper Andrews, or the Irishman Finbar Cafferkey - and those who are involved in helping, such as the Solidarity Collectives, ABC Dresden, ABC Czarna Galicja, Good Night Imperial Pride, and a number of other groups and unaffiliated anarchists from around the world, maliciously called "trench anarchists".

The myth of anti-fascist Russia and Nazi Ukraine

Opinion pluralism is desirable even in the libertarian environment, but imposing doctrinal formulas on everyone, especially on Ukrainian anarchists, is at least out of place. Instead of asking the Ukrainian libertarian movement directly what help the Western left, and some anarchists, need, building hierarchies in the global anarchist movement (the West knows better), they repeat the myths of the Kremlin propaganda about "Nazi Ukraine".

But what about the aggressor state?

It is Russia that is rapidly becoming a neo-fascist state, which, combined with its imperial military policy, poses a greater threat to Ukraine than the USA, EU, or NATO. (Do these structures pose a threat to Ukraine at all?) Putin is a reactionary, he is taking his own country backwards in its development, he is trying to impose a regression on other countries, and he is also sending masses of Buryats, Dagestanis, Kalmyks, and Tuvans for slaughter... He only recognizes the language of force, he multiplies the repression of his own citizens, and he denies the right of other nations to independence. The cult of violence, hierarchy, and militarism in Russia is instilled from kindergarten, through state ceremonies, mass culture, and politics of memory. Moscow appropriated the right to be the center of world anti-fascism. The powerful propaganda apparatus, both internal and foreign, creates a myth in which Russia won Nazism, in which there is no question of neo-Nazi militias fighting in Ukraine, such as Rusich, Ratibor, and the Imperial Legion, not to mention the degenerates from the Wagner Group. Didn't the Militant Organization of Russian Nationalists (with ties to the presidential administration) murder the well-known lawyer Stanislav Markelov and the young journalist Anastasia Baburova in Moscow, near the Kremlin? Winston Churchill was wrong about many things, but he was right about one thing: "The fascists of the future will call themselves

anti-fascists.”

Ukraine is not and has never been a fascist state. Despite some actions in the field of historical politics, as in every country, the ultranationalists have never managed to dominate the Supreme Council of Ukraine. In fact, there were various parties, even pro-Russian ones (!). There are elections and a rotation of power. Has anything like this happened in Russia over the last 20 years? Zelensky, who has Jewish roots, spoke Russian on a daily basis and did business with Russia. The Azov Assault Brigade, consisting of a multitude of nationalities with different views (e.g., former commander Denis Prokopenko is a Karelian), showed incredible heroism during the defense of Azovstal. In addition, it officially condemned Nazism and Stalinism, undergoing an ideological transformation unlike the couch-potato anarchists.

Who among the current critics of Ukraine visited Ukraine and when was the last time? As a person with family ties to Ukraine and a regular visitor to Ukraine before the war, I have never encountered discrimination because of my the Russian language. I know the pros and cons of this society. And yet Ukraine does not impose anything on anyone, does not occupy, does not attack other countries. It has a dynamically sprouting civil society, strengthening after regular social upheavals (the Revolution on Granite 1990, the Orange Revolution 2004, Euromaidan 2013-2014) and giving grounds for spreading direct democracy.

Every form of imperialism and colonialism has been and is bad. But the world does not begin and end west of Warsaw. The Western scientific and activist perspective seems to have forgotten what the largest country in the world is and what its history is. It is Russia, ruled by a former KGB/FSB official who misses the days of Russian imperial greatness and is personally responsible for numerous murders and attempted political assassinations. It is surprising, therefore, that Russian imperialism, which is rooted in the culture and political tradition of Russia (tsarist, Bolshevik, Putinist), is not noticed. The faces change, the essence remains the same. Chechnya, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Ukraine. In fact, Belarus is under the imperial dome of the Kremlin. *Russkiy mir* (Russian world), wishing to restore its former imperial power, will not stop at Kyiv. In the Kremlin's vision, places such as Moldova and Transnistria, the Baltic states, Kazakhstan, and perhaps Poland and the countries of Central Europe all belong to Russia's imperial reach. The boots of Russian soldiers have been on the heels of Russian “culture” for centuries.

The fight against Putinism, which is a priority for the inhabitants of our region, does not require worshipping NATO or Western imperialism (or any other group). The victory of Russia will enslave Ukraine, purges will begin, camps will be established (which is already taking place in the occupied territories), and repression will reach unprecedented proportions. Europe will be plunged into uncertainty and international structures that would not function without it will falter. Belarus, with thousands of political prisoners (including about 30 anarchists), will lose its chance of liberation.

Anarchism

Anarchism is not a closed doctrine, imagining the world in rigid terms of a black-and-white dichotomy, but rather it contains a more complex range of ideas, sometimes naïve and utopian, sometimes realistic and pragmatic. The latter includes helping Ukraine, through which anarchists try to find a common language with reality.

Anarchists do not need to reinvent the wheel. In a situation of war, instead of the repeated mantra of “No war but class war”, one should turn to mutual aid, solidarity, internationalism, and the right to self-determination and self-defense. We should reject pacifism and the push for “peace at all costs” through diplomatic negotiations between the US and NATO on the one hand and the Kremlin on the other, and Ukraine's subjectivity should be defended in this conflict. Just as Kropotkin said about the

armed conflict of imperial Prussia and the Entente, that it was “a war not of armies alone, but a war of nations”, so today it is a war of nations, not imperialisms. A war of values, not alliances.

Anarchism is a practical philosophy; it is about action and critique of dogma. The “trench anarchists” do not have any illusions about Zelensky and his corrupt party, Servant of the People; they are not fighting for the Ukrainian state. Despite this, they see huge differences between the political culture of Russia and Ukraine. So-called “anarcho-militarists” are aligned with the people of Ukraine; they experience its fate and, unlike the Western supporters of “peace” and the proletariat, they have the right to speak on its behalf. Ukraine’s victory may offer a chance for further changes in society, for the development of direct democracy, for the liquidation of the oligarchic system, and finally for the nation to regain its own country. The dignity of society, which they trade in the West, has never been taken away from the Ukrainians, which is clearly evidenced by the heroic defense of the country in the first phase of the war and queues for territorial defense units. After winning freedom, the time will come to fight for land, jobs, and self-governance. An armed nation will no longer be a pawn in the great game of politicians and oligarchs. Ukraine’s victory may also contribute to potential changes in Russia, which in its current state is a constant threat to the world.

One could multiply quotes from the classics and theoreticians of anarchism, but what dictates life itself is the superior value. I will end with one quote from the Belgian anti-militarist Frans Verbelen: “Reality blows away the most beautiful theories as a storm the sand in the desert.” [14] Let’s try to be like stone, not sand. Anarchists after the war will have a lot of work to do: reorganizing and rebuilding the movement, focusing on extremely important ecological issues, fighting for labor and social rights, building trade unions, confronting right-wing organizations and new authorities, etc. Then, as now, the material help of Western comrades, their experience and ideas will be needed. Is the “solidarity” written on our banners just an empty word? We must finally bridge the gulf between Eastern and Western anarchism. It is up to us whether we can bring about the future we dream about. In this undertaking, Ukraine is an opportunity and a test for us.

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P.S.

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Footnotes

[1] Today this is rightly pointed out by anarchists in Ukraine, e.g., see Denis Khromoy’s new text: “Vadim Damier’s Myth of ‘Classical Anarchist Internationalism’”. Миф Вадима Дамье о “классическом анархистском интернационализме” - Прамень (pramen.io)

[2] There is no doubt that this exists – the West has indeed traded with Putin to the last, closing

its eyes and plugging its ears – but it manifests itself much more in the inertia of thinking than in political intentionality.

[3] CNT-FAI, Federación Anarquista Ibérica – Confederación Nacional del Trabajo.

[4] Anton Jäger, *Hyperpolitik: Extreme Politisierung ohne politische Folgen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2023).

[5] Volodymyr Ishchenko, “Behind Russia’s War Is Thirty Years of Post-Soviet Class Conflict”, *Jacobin*, October 3, 2022, <https://jacobin.com/2022/10/russia-ukraine-war-explanation-class-conflict>; Volodymyr Ishchenko, “The Minsk Accords and the Political Weakness of the ‘Other Ukraine’”, *Russian Politics* 8, no. 2 (2023), pp. 127–146, <https://doi.org/10.30965/24518921-00802002>; Volodymyr Ishchenko, “Class or regional cleavage? The Russian invasion and Ukraine’s ‘East/West’ divide”, *European Societies* (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2023.2275589>.

[6] Volodymyr Ishchenko, “Ukrainian Voices?”, *New Left Review*, no. 138 (2022), pp. 1–10, <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii138/articles/volodymyr-ishchenko-ukrainian-voices>.

[7] Editor’s note: Международная ассоциация трудящихся (Meždunarodnaja asociacija trudjaščichsja) or International Workers’ Association.

[8] Editor’s note: “Ecologist” was one of the pseudonyms of Russian anarchist and environmental activist Dmitry Petrov (1989–2023).

[9] Ernst Friedrich, *Krieg dem Kriege! Guerre à la guerre! War against war! Vojnu vojně!* (Berlin: Freie Jugend, 1926).

[10] Jarosław Urbański, “Rzeź w Ukrainie trwa. Dziesiątki tysięcy zabitych i inwalidów wojennych po obu stronach konfliktu”, *Rozbrat*, August 4, 2023, <https://www.rozbrat.org/publicystyka/walka-klas/4862-rzez-w-ukrainie-trwa-dziesiatki-tysiecy-zabitych-i-inwalidow-wojennych-po-obu-stronach-konfliktu>.

[11] See, e.g., Ruth Kinna, *Kropotkin: Reviewing the Classical Anarchist Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016).

[12] Errico Malatesta, “Anti-militarism: Was it properly understood? (To the Editor of Freedom)”, *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchist Communism*, Vol 28, No 308, December 1914, 90.

[13] Vadim Damjer, *Zabytyj Internacional: Meždunarodnoe anarho sindikalistskoe dviženie meždu dvumja mirovymi vojnami*, Vol. 2: Meždunarodnyj anarho-sindikalizm v uslovijah “Velikogo krizisa” i nastuplenija fašizma: 1930–1939 gg. (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2007), p. 605.

[14] Frans Verbelen, “Why Belgian Anarchists Fight”, *Freedom: A Journal of Anarchist Communism*, Vol 28, No 307, November 1914, 87.