

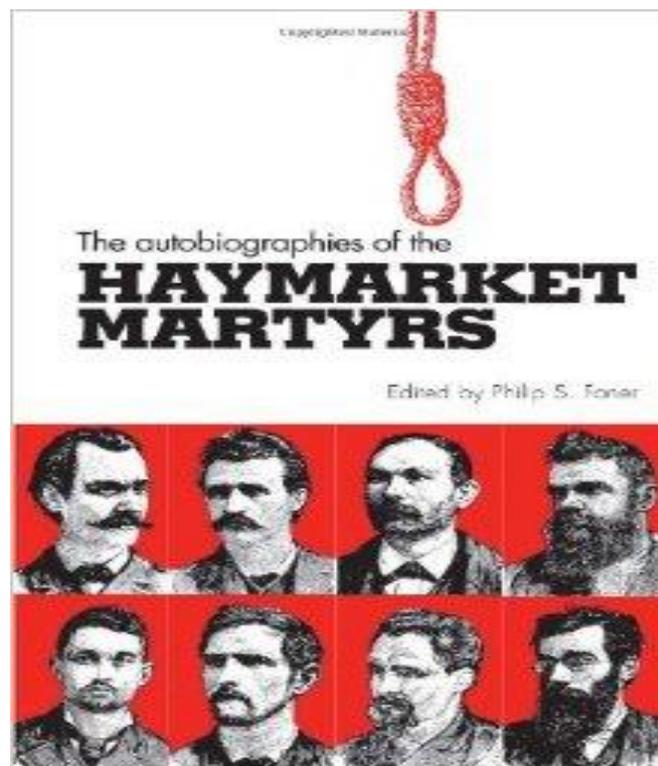
FINE Chloé

Book Report on:

The Autobiographies of the Haymarket

Martyrs

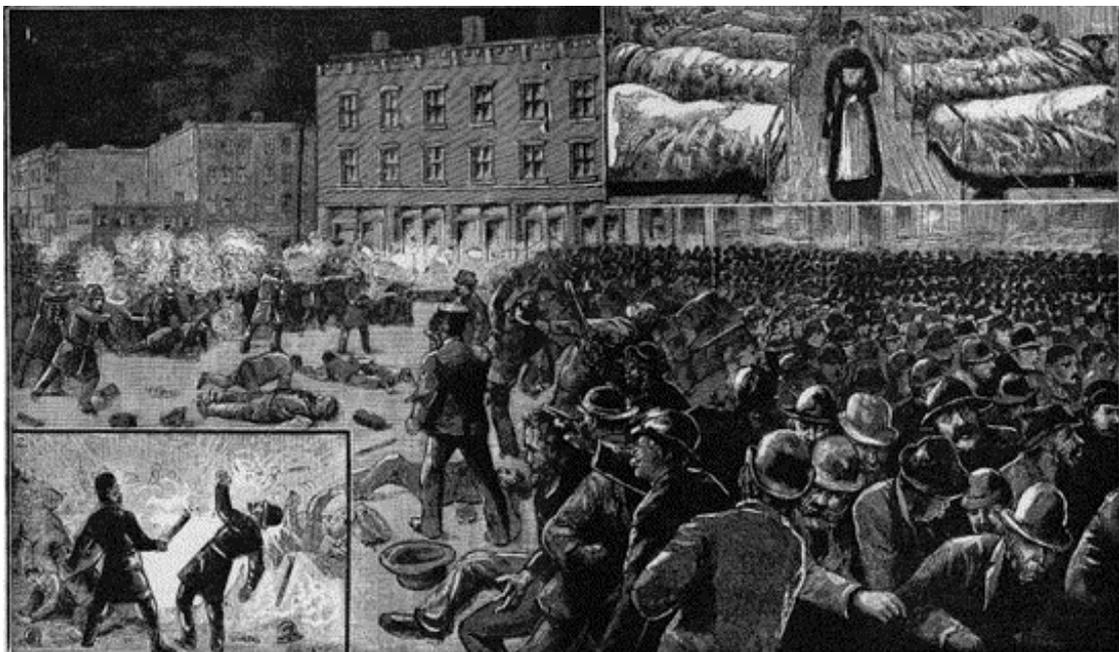
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US Labor History Class
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The explosion, the riot and the aftermath (May 4, 1886)

INTRODUCTION

During the 1880s labor protest was very much present in the American landscape. In 1886, Chicago was the main center of labor agitation. A large number of immigrants and working people lived there and directly suffered from unfair treatments in their daily jobs. Social struggles grew; capitalism became more intense. On May 4, a strike occurred near Haymarket Square. Different classes had joined the movement demanding rights such as the eight-hour workday. These classes were socialists, communists, anarchists, working class people, and women and so on. They also believed the capitalist system was a destructive force and thus should be eliminated. During the strike, an individual threw a bomb into a group of policemen. One of them immediately died and others died later. The police counterattacked to the invisible person and shot the strikers. Several died and at least two hundred were wounded. The police arrested eight radical labor activists who were in fact anarchists. They were “Albert R.Parsons, August Spies, Samuel J.Fielden, Michael Schwab, Adolph Fischer, George Engel, Louis Lingg and Oscar Neebe” (p1).

The Establishment found in them an opportunity to discredit and dismantle this powerful labor unrest. Indeed they were leaders of it, thus the impact would be striking in the workers' mind. Their trial was devoid of evidence. The Establishment never identified a real culprit and many believed the man had been hired by worried capitalists. They affirmed the man was a paid labor agitator hired to launch a false attack on the police. They enhanced the idea of a conspiracy. Seven of the eight anarchists were sentenced to death and Oscar Neebe spent fifteen years in jail.

These autobiographies written from prison by the eight men re-transcribed their political commitment, the ideas and convictions concerning labor, the terrible capitalist industry and the merciless society without any tolerance toward freedom of speech and opinion. Those men were condemned because of their ideas and social struggles. It was an astonishing verdict for the “land of the free”.

To what extent do these autobiographies criticize the present society and offer a new alternative system called anarchism?

First we shall focus on the lives and testimonies of two convicted anarchists, Albert R.Parsons and Oscar Neebe. Then we shall study the powerful criticism of society and finally, we shall notice a call for the destruction of the system through solidarity and anarchism.

Short Book Presentation

Book Title	The Autobiographies of the Haymarket Martyrs
Author	Philip S. Foner
Editor	Pathfinder Press
Date	1969
Number of pages	260
Plot	On May 4, 1886, a labor protest arose in Chicago. A bomb was thrown by an unseen person and killed several policemen. Eight leaders of the labor movement were arrested and condemned. These autobiographies offer them a last chance to give their version of the facts and to express their political opinions.
Book Format	Paperback

I) Focus on two men: Albert R.Parsons and Oscar Neebe

1) Personal Lives

Among these eight autobiographies I chose to focus on two men, Albert R.Parsons and Oscar Neebe. Indeed the book report would have been too long if I had had to describe each anarchist. I thought it was more interesting to underline less themes but in a more detailed and specific way. Albert R.Parsons was one the most famous and important leaders of the labor movement. Oscar Neebe may be less known to the public and that is why I decided to study his life and deeds.

First we shall see how their personal lives are shown in this book. As it can be expected from an autobiography, we can read about their childhood, family and relationships. Albert R.Parsons was born in 1848, in the city of Montgomery. He started his tale by mentioning his parents and their religious life. For instance regarding his father he said, “public spirited, philanthropic man” (p27) and his mother “great spirituality, intelligent and truly good woman”. It shows Parsons was narrowly linked to the Church (that could explain why he decided to criticize religion later). He was not objective toward his relatives, of course he cannot be, and he was too close to them and thus

was emotionally committed. He seemed very proud of his ancestors, “have taken an active and useful part in all the social, religious, political and revolutionary movements in America” (p27). The strength of his family is enhanced. He kept on giving precise details about his childhood. The reader learns he had “nine brothers and sisters” (p27). Concerning Oscar Neebe, he also began by talking about his childhood and family. He was born in 1850. His family was very important to him. For example he followed his brother's advice about his professional projects.

They both mentioned their wives. Parsons married a “charming young Spanish Indian maiden” (p30). This was quite unusual and could be badly seen at that time. It proves the already exiting rebellion and refusal of conventions from Parsons. Furthermore he was very proud of her and offered an extreme meliorative description of this woman. He respected her very much. Neebe also referred to his wife but in a more tragic way. We learn that his wife died because of “the weight of anguish and trouble weighing on her tender heart” (p167). Her death seemed to be the result of an oppressive injustice on Neebe and his relatives. The system killed his wife. He made a strong accusation against the Establishment. Both anarchists suffered from terrible hardships because of the Haymarket trial. Neebe was “cut off from his children” (p167) during “these long fifteen years” (p167). Thus he considered himself “doubly orphaned” (p167). Neebe also knew economic problems. He met unemployment, precariousness and poverty, “could not find work” (p161). He sold everything he had but was evicted from his accommodation and had to sleep “in open air” (p161). His health was not so great and prevented him from working sometimes, “give it up on account of pains in my chest” (p 161). Finally, they were well-learned men. Neebe described himself as a “great friend of learning and have studied the history of all nations and the world in general”. This can sound a bit pretentious to the reader. It is as though Neebe knew everything and had the right to judge and criticize everything because of his superior education. Parsons appeared more modest even if he went to the Waco University for six months and “received all the technical education” (p29).

2) Professional Lives and Political Commitment

They both traveled a lot because of their jobs. This could explain why they were able to criticize society and to point at many of its defects throughout the United States. They used to meet lots of different people (from different states and from diverse social and religious backgrounds). They also got their professional labor experiences from their great variety of activities. Neebe entered the “gold and silver beating trade” and later worked in a milk industry. Parsons was a traveling correspondent and a chief deputy collector for instance. They were truly among the working class. In their autobiographies we can observe the evolution of their political commitment. They are

linked to the press. Indeed in 1868, Parsons founded a “weekly newspapers in Waco, named the Spectator” (p29). It defended the colored people and the abolition of slavery. Later he became a member of *The International Working People's Association* which struggled for the rights of majorities and minorities. Parsons was a very committed man. In 1880 Neebe became the manager of Arbeiter Zeitung. It was a German radical newspaper. Both men used the press to transmit their opinions and to speak to the American workers. They supported freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The reader discovers they began being politically committed at their arrival in Chicago. At that time Chicago was the center of the labor protest. They joined diverse unions before asserting their belonging to anarchism. They were both supporters of the eight-hour movement. Neebe joined the communists in 1877, “from which I took an active part in it until 1880” (p165). He also played a strong role in *The Central Labor Union*. He underlined his personal sacrifice by claiming “I had done my utmost to increase its membership and today it is the best labor organization in Chicago, with over 10,000 members” (p167). He wanted to prove his efficiency by giving positive and striking results. As for Parsons, the arrival in Chicago was very significant. When he started to work for the Times in 1874 he became interested in the “Labor Question”. He saw the efforts from the workingmen to apply the “Relief and Aid Society”: “I found the complaints of working people against society were just and proper”. Moreover he spoke of similarities between “the poor people and the newly enfranchised slaves” (p30). As we learned, Parsons defended black people. He evoked “Aunt Ester” (p29) who was a slave of his brother's family. He was very close to her and was “practically raised” by her. That is why he knew the conditions of the black in a broad way and was very attached to them. He later encountered socialists: “the only people who at that time had made any protest against or offered any remedy for the enforced society” (p31). From that day Parsons started to criticize the system. Finally in 1875 he joined *The Social Democratic Party of America*. There Parsons showed his will to defend the working people and his ideas no matter the price. We notice that they did not expose the conditions of working women. It could have been interesting and bring gender balance in this study.

Parsons became a leader and an orator: “a powerful impulse possessed me to place myself right before the people by defining and explaining the objects and principles of *The Workingmen's Party*” (p31). He desired “enlightening his fellow men”. In my opinion, it is a bit exaggerated, it is as though he knew the ultimate truth and presented himself as a god. Of course he had great and advanced ideas but he was perhaps too “possessed” by his political awakening. He also joined *The Knights of Labor* in 1877. However we can notice his despair and discouragement in front of its internal divisions and tensions among its members. He was very passionate but it was not enough. He started losing confidence in politics: “I realized the hopeless task of political reformation” (p36) and gave up *The Labor party* in 1880. Here we could point at the beginning of his anarchism and

his complete rejection and criticism of society. Like Neebe, Parsons lacked of objectivity and defended himself by claiming he fully supported the working class and did the best he could: “the past ten years of my life to ameliorate, to emancipate my fellow wage-slaves from their hereditary servitude to capital” (p55). This last sentence illustrates the beginning of the rejection of capitalism.

3) The Strike and the Trial

In his autobiography, Parsons gave a testimony of the strike's events and the trial of the anarchists. He learned the very same day that there was meeting at Haymarket for the “eight-hour boom and to protest against police atrocities” (p48). He did not even speak during this gathering because he had to give another speech at another place. This is a proof he was not responsible of the bombing. He offered a description of his speech with details to justify his honesty and innocence. The reader can feel the violence and the suddenness of the riot “several shots whizzed” (p49). He described the injustice of this riot “many innocent people who were not even present at the meeting were being dragooned and imprisoned by authorities” (p49). The verb “dragoon” shows the absence of liberty, the obligation to obey the Establishment, the powerlessness of the strikers. Parsons fled from the city because he knew he was culprit in the eyes of the police. However Parsons remained honest, he decided to return to Chicago to face the trial because he wanted to defend his innocent comrades and himself. He was courageous and a believer. Then Parsons narrated the judicial process. They all “plea no guilty” (p50). It points at the solidarity between the anarchists.

There is a sum up of the Haymarket tragedy. The antithesis “peaceably versus violence of the police” reveals the class allegiance of the author. According to him, the police violence was nothing but a “slaughter”, “pains and penalties of death” (p50). In his report, he established all the groups that played a role in this affair. He exposed the unity and energy of the Establishment through “the ruling class shout in chorus” (p51). Parsons tried to persuade the reader it was a conspiracy against the eight-hour movement. He depicted his anger by the absence of justice during the trial “to put innocent men to death” or “every law and order tyrant” (p51). He kept on emphasizing the stupidity and uselessness of it by giving proof such as “six of the condemned men were not present at the meeting at the time of the tragedy” (p51). He accused Inspector Bonfield of greedy motives and thus of being responsible and opportunist. In his eyes, they gave a “horrible example of the anarchists” (p51) to scare the people and to prevent them from rioting in the future. Parsons chose to be a representative of the people, “to speak for the people, the ruled” (p51). The Haymarket tragedy was but a way to crush the eight-hour movement from the monopolists, corporations and privileged class “who rule and rob the working people” (p52). Of course, the reasons were chiefly money and power. If the workingmen worked less, the rich would lose millions of dollars. This judgment highlights the terrible sentence for the people, “the suppression of free speech, free press

and the denial of the right to self-defense” (p51). He also denounced the capitalist press which did not hesitate to support both the police and the Establishment “the strike is very disagreeable in a variety of ways... to indict for conspiracy every man who strikes and summarily lock him up” (p53). This sentence explores the control of some powerful organs of the society by the capitalists and the manipulation over the masses. The result of this riot was harsh and efficient - the eight-hour movement was crushed everywhere in the country. They never found the person who threw the bomb on the policemen but they used it to oppress and calm down the working men's unrest. The trial was a harsh sentence against anarchism and freedom. To sum up, we could say that the judicial system was completely corrupted and invaded by capitalists. Their weapon was money.

They also denounced the police. Indeed the police violence is visible through this strike as we have already talked about just before. The police used the shock-and-force strategy to subdue the people. They also presented the McCormick strike where strikers were killed. It happened just before the Haymarket strike. The first arrest of Parsons also perfectly illustrated those facts. In 1877 during the “great railway strike” (p31), Parsons delivered a speech there and thus was arrested. The chief of police told him that his “life was in danger” (p33) and that it would be better for him to leave Chicago. Parsons was also threatened by a gun and he heard people say “hang him, lynch him, lock him up...” (p32). Parsons became firmly conscious of the power of the Establishment and its determination to erase all the undesirable elements of its system - he “became conscious that they were powerful to give or take one's life” (p33). The Establishment tried to frighten him because he was now a famous labor protestor and thus a danger for the present elitist system. Capitalists worked with the police and encouraged violence.

II) A Powerful Criticism of the Society

1) The Denunciation of Capitalism

These autobiographies clearly present capitalism as an evil to get rid of. First of all what is capital? “Capital is property, the accumulated savings of past labor”. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 gave birth to a new market of manufactured goods and thus capitalism. The nineteenth century saw the rise of mass production, the prototype of the modern corporation and a new industrial form. Capitalist agriculture stressed obedience and long hours. Religion was a powerful element of capitalism. Since then, the culture of individuality has dominated society. After this, Parsons immediately implied the negative connotation of capitalism. Its definition is “to appropriate and confiscate the labor product of the propertyless”. There are the notions of wealth and theft. Unfortunately, they seem intrinsically linked. According to the manifesto of the Pittsburgh Congress, capitalism implies exploitation and absence of respect. It shows the direct consequences of it:

poverty and crime. The real culprits are the capitalist and the owners of property. They are killing people. Sadly, capitalism is the dominant system in the developed countries. It is about investments, private decisions, profits, consumption and economic inequality. Private property must be abolished. It has monopolized the earth, destroyed liberty and equality. Parsons conveyed without any reservation his total hatred toward capitalism. The Haymarket tragedy had in a sense positive results. Indeed it “exposed to public view the hideous enormities of capitalism and the barbarous despotism of government” (p55). The system is totally criticized. He was strongly against the ruling class, corporations and the government. They are the ones who “degraded and enslaved” (p56) humanity. Only a few controls the earth and owns wealth. The majority is blind or submitted. He spoke for the victims who are “the untold millions, the men, women and children of toil and the proletariat” (p56). He was clearly not objective. Parsons may sound a bit too tragic because of his way of transmitting his sadness and hopelessness. He used numerous antitheses to emphasize his opinion: “liberty transformed into slavery, life into death, the fair earth into a den of thieves and murderers”. The consequences seemed overwhelming, they are “deprived of their lives, their liberties and their happiness” (p56). Parsons talked of a violent and murderous government. “The government enslaves the governed” (p44). William Harper was a jurist and political theorist from South Carolina supporting slavery. He claimed that the principle “all men are born free and equal” is false. In his view, human beings live in a binary system such as: power/subjection and knowledge/ignorance. It is necessary that a general rule exists on the subordinate. Privileges are not natural but settled by conventions for good and safety of the society. He confirmed that “men are born to subjection”. The nature of man would be to domineer or be subservient. He added that every government should deprive man of life and liberty for offenses against society for the security and lives of members. These anarchists affirmed that government cannot exist without force and inequality. Even in a so-called democracy, such as China nowadays, citizens are deprived of fundamental rights such as the access to the internet, the freedom of speech, the freedom of cult and so on. In the United States, there are still states where gay discrimination is tolerated. Thus sexual freedom is completely broken. We live in countries that make us believe we are free, we are lucky comparing to other nations (such as North Korea). A democracy is a form of society in which the right of revolution is lost. However, those governments are worse than others. They lie, they spread ghostly ideals and, they transmit “the American Dream”. But they are only words. When actions will replace those sentences and written principles in forgotten documents, we will be able to consider the possibility of a useful and respectful government. Capitalism is exploitation. It condemns offenses such as “vagabondage, prostitution and suicide” (p39). However isn't it responsible for them? If poverty did not exist, would the poor commit crime? Would women sell their bodies to buy bread for their starving children? Would the poor take the risk to go to prison

because they stole food in a store? Of course not, we reject this capitalist society which creates its own culprits and uses them to spread fear and dependence on its citizens. But can they even be called citizens? Does the right of ballot enable them to choose freely their representatives? Are we really the masters of our society because of a vote?

These autobiographies are a testimony to the working class allegiance. Neebe used his jobs to study the sociological question of the working class. It was a “chance to see and study the life of the working people” (p162). He first got interested in the solidarity between workers. We could think it existed. His testimony is striking. Because of competition and individualism created by capitalism, the “older hands do not like to learn the younger ones” (p161). It is the terrible devise “every man for himself”. Workers were not even aware of the manipulation exerted upon them. They should unite to be stronger. He also witnessed children workers. It left a deep impression on him. He saw them in terrible sanitary conditions: “the cut off fingers and mangled bodies” (p163); “work like slaves” (p163). It was staggering but everybody accepted it because of the threat of hunger. He also alluded to the device of blacklisting. Anyone who joined an union or expressed opinions in the opposite interests of his company could be fired. His name was sent to other companies so that he would not be able to be hired elsewhere. He would be considered as “a labor agitator” (like Parsons). Neebe was fired because he “stood up for the right of the workmen and afterwards could not receive any work” (p165). Workers were blackmailed. They could complain but if they did so, they would be deprived of their jobs and thus, would live in great precariousness. Like during the Pullman strike of 1894, strikers were blacklisted. They were punished because of their desire to improve the working conditions. As a child, Neebe saw America as “the Land of the Free” (p161). This is the paradox of the American Dream. There was no more official slavery. However adult and children workers were treated as slaves without any liberty. Neebe represented this contrast in a striking sentence: “a free citizen of US can work or starve in a glorious free country” (p161). The US are a lie, the irony is strongly displayed.

2) The Criticism of Education and Religion

In their autobiographies both anarchists chose to denounce several organs of the society such as the government and the press. Here we shall focus on the criticism of education and religion. According to them education of this system was useless and kept the people ignorant. Neebe claimed “you expected to raise children and citizens for this glorious free country” (p165). However the educational system will create “idiots and prisoner”. Idiots were spreading because the official institutions were the ones which decided of the contents in schools. Pupils would not learn things

which would give them the desire to rebel and destroy this system. For instance, in France it was very late before textbooks gave information about the Algerian War (1954-1962). The French government knew it had committed atrocities and acted in many vicious ways. It decided to hide these actions to preserve the unity in the country and to prevent its citizens from losing confidence in its rulers. It was to maintain trust and cooperation between the different actors of the society. Ruling over ignorant people is easier than ruling over educated and well informed people. Ignorant people will believe their rulers because they know they are not able to choose for themselves, they do not have the skills to take decisions and rule a group – at least that is what they think. Schools are corrupted too, “they serve for the purpose of furnishing the offspring of the wealthy to uphold their class domination” (p41). There are two types of schools: the school for the elite and the school for the people. This distinction enables the system to be perpetuated. The elite learn how to rule and get a maximum of profits from the poor. The poor learn basic skills in the aim of finding a job and be able to survive among this mass of beings. The rich learn to live and exploit; the poor learn to survive like simple preys in the dangerous animal kingdom.

Regarding religion, they both criticized it. Neebe saw it as manipulative. He experienced a kind of awakening and “became a free thinker” (p165). He used to be a Christian. In his view, heaven and hell were concepts created by the ruling class to control more easily the ignorant people. It was a way to reassure them about their situation. They recognized they suffered but thanks to their faith and their lifetime efforts, they would deserve a place in heaven at the end of their lives. They did not suffer for nothing. This binary dimension was for the poor. Religion was made “so that the poor man should not think for himself” (p165). Religion was an organ of the Establishment to educate its people and transmit the required values and principles. It confirmed the basis to be ruled and oppressed by stronger beings by promising a relief after death. As for Parsons, he suggested that “church finally seeks to make complete idiots out of the mass and to make them forgo the paradise on earth by promising a fictitious heaven” (p41). The Church was here to hide the reality of their miserable lives. In my opinion, religion has been invented by men who sought power and strength. They used it to transmit false ideals and representations. They abused the people's superstition and genuineness to scare them and thus enslave them. They seemed to them very strong and with superior knowledge. But they were only people with great knowledge in manipulation and management. Religion is a tool. No reasonable man can ever claim he knows the truth about humanity and its creation. Religion has killed millions of men; it cannot be seen as a positive thing which improves men's lives. Parsons lived in a very religious family that is why he could judge it and reject it - he literally lived it. Religion is a device to gather people and calm down their minds. It is a series of various tales about values that men should obtain and defend according to the Establishment to become honorable men. Men do not need religion to have aims and principles in

their lives. They can be their own masters. It is made to find solace and relief. Men must face reality and stop trying to reassure themselves by thinking some god will save them. Instead of respecting and honoring gods, men should respect human beings and most of all, the earth.

II) The Destruction of the Society through Solidarity and Anarchism

1) The Definition of Anarchism



These eight men were recognized anarchists. They directly addressed the reader to create a powerful connection. First of all, what is anarchism? It comes from two Greek words, “an” (which means no) and “archo” (which means government). Anarchism signifies no government, “no king, emperor, president or ruler of any kind” (p43). No group of people is allowed to rule over other groups. Anarchy is liberty, equality and independence. Throughout these two autobiographies we study, anarchism is positively described. It is opposed to government which aim is to “maintain economic subjection of the man of labor” (p37). Anarchy wants to get rid of obedience, submission and exploitation. Anarchism views every man as an intelligent and free individual, a self-responsible person which does not need the ruling of a so-called “superior” mind. As Parsons greatly clarified, “an anarchist is a believer in liberty. Anarchy is perfect liberty and absolute freedom of the individual.” (p46). In the introduction of this book, W.P. Black introduced the basis of anarchism too. He added this movement was in favor of the abolition of privileges. It was built in the aim of ending the class war. Anarchism exists to “prevent private accumulations” (p23). This means anarchism desires stopping the increasing of private wealth and private property such as: lands, possessions, capital goods and so on. It is for the balance of resources among human beings. Anarchism finds its very essence because of this existing unfair political system. It rejects any form of hierarchical authority and looks for a cooperative system and self-management. Anarchists refuse to force someone to do something. Free will and respect are the key words. Its basic ideas contain horror of the State and hostility to bourgeois democracy. According to the Anarchist Federation of Grenoble, anarchism is the freedom of speech, the absolute right to unite to any one or any group and the abolition of the wages system. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon the first person to declare himself an

anarchist, claimed that “government was responsible for disorder and believed that only a society without government could restore the natural order and re-create social harmony.” Anarchism exists because of capitalists and owners. They want to eradicate it because it threatens their power and ruling. “The government of man by man is servitude”, added Proudhon. Governments originated in force and continued by force without the consent of the governed. They are aware of the misery of people and live thanks to it. Their wish is to destroy any sense of rebellion. And rebellion comes from unity.

2) **Anarchism as the Next Stage of Human Evolution**

Is anarchism a utopia? Is it necessarily violent? According to W.P. Black, it is not. “The anarchist is not responsible for the disorder and, violence”(p23). Violence will be present only if it is necessary to defend. As we have underlined, the essence of this movement is respect. However the working men should not allow the ruling class to beat them and exploit them anymore. The time has come for a libertarian revolution. The need for organization is important. Parsons exposed his theory: it was not impossible to live without government. “The ballot” (p45) or the right to vote must be abolished. All members of any government are corrupted and thus, not able to govern the people. We can allude to the present Socialist French President, François Hollande. He presumably belongs to the left-wing. However the El Khomri Law is strongly in favor of employers. It tends to suppress several employees' rights and increase the rich's profits by offering them more freedom and power. Even a socialist president openly betrays his citizens. No man can be given the right to rule over a majority. According to the two anarchists, anarchism is the utmost remedy to this system. The system has to be destroyed and rebuilt. They were radical reformers. Several times they launched a solidarity call toward the people such as “liberty is a growth, it is also a birth that will come through travail and pain, through bloodshed and violence” or “in the line of evolution, anarchy is next in order” (p46). In their eyes, anarchism was not utopian. The people could reach this goal through unity and management. The rich try to convey wrong ideas and stereotypes about anarchism to make it ridiculous and discredit it. Many individuals are against the reformation of society. For instance, George Fitzhugh was a South polemicist in favor of slavery. He saw revolution as evil. He took the example of the social revolution in the United States (the American Civil War, 1861-1865) and portrayed it as full of mischief, blood and human misery. The manifesto of the Pittsburgh Congress depicted the necessity of revolution: “their duty (the people) is to throw off such government” (p38). They end their manifesto by the following terms “FORCE!”, “organization and unity” (p41). For the sceptics, revolution never goes backwards.

When I was a teenager, I did not hate anarchists. However I did not know what they were looking for, why they struggled against the State. I saw them as curious and violent people trying to frighten the people. But why? Perhaps because my parents are capitalist and love this unfair system. They have always loathed the poor, the unemployed and the socialist. My parents are members of the working class but they have been manipulated so much by our political leaders and this terrible society of consumption that they have become blind and insensitive to our comrades' misery. I have never been racist and capitalist. I have always seen my parents as strange individuals who lacked education and open-mindedness. They are victims of our society. But I think we are human beings and thus, we have the ability to think and decide what we support or not. I have tried to defend my parents and many of my friends with the same ideas. But it has become more and more difficult. I have changed because of my professional experiences, my different stays in different cities and countries. I have friends from various social backgrounds. I try to listen to people and be sympathetic. I try to understand from where they come, why they act in such ways and, what did what they are today. I want to study people and transmit my will of an egalitarian society devoid of subordination and exploitation.

Since last summer I have met several anarchist people who have become my friends. I started to open my mind and received their ideas more easily. This year I have become more and more interested in alternative ways of thinking and movements. I read socialist and communist authors and, these autobiographies. They have increased my desire for a new society. They have given me hope. They have also worried me; they have made me cried because I have become more and more aware of human misery and stupidity. I support the earth and love. I reject all form of hierarchy. I am against ignorance and hatred. I do not say violence is necessary because I have never liked it. In my opinion, if anarchists decide to use it, we will start losing control and discredit us. It has to be previously thought and discussed. We have to act as a unity. Some people will use the anarchist revolution as a way to free their impulsive and violent urges. They will like blood and death. Thus they will not be members of anarchism. Anarchism is love. Anarchism is future. Anarchism is life.

CONCLUSION

Because of a will to improve the workers' conditions, eight radicals were convicted. Because of a desire for freedom, equality and respect they were used to frighten the American people. Because of their denunciation of the oppressive capitalist system they were excluded from the rest of society. As long as one does not threaten the Establishment's interests, one can live or at least survive. As soon as he begins to realize the terrible truth of the system and wishes to escape from it or destroy for the most courageous minds, one's life is in danger. Many strikes have been put down such as the Pullman Strike. It occurred in 1894; workers demanded higher wages. It was the first time that the federal government obtained an injunction to break the strike. The Paris Commune which happened in 1871 in France was the first time working people took power. It was a socialist working class uprising. Some soldiers refused to shoot on the workers and joined them. It lasted two months. More troops arrived and killed around 30,000 workers. The majority had succeeded in organizing itself without support from the State. It proved a new society could be created. However it shows once more the almost absolute power and intolerance of the Establishment.

Everything is possible. One never dreams too big; it is the others' bitterness and greed that convey this idea to make one suffer like them. We have to unite and help each other. Our enemy is not the beggar on the pavement, or the African American woman with her three children who do not have enough money to feed them. Our enemy is capitalism; our enemy is the government and its allies. Our enemy is the police. On many occasions during the French strikes against the El Khomri law, the police beat and threw tear gas at many innocent and peaceful strikers. Theoretically we have the right to express our discontent and show it in the streets. Nevertheless our freedom is still restricted as in 1886. We have to fight again and again. We have to share our experiences or the Establishment will keep on hurting those who are different. Anarchism could be an alternative. We have to inform people about this current. Anarchism is still widely seen as a violent and rash ideology. Why? Because the Establishment diffused prejudices against it in order to manipulate the people. We have to stir men and women's consciences, each member of the earth, without any distinction. It is our duty.

We have to hope and fight for a near possible change. We do not have to give up and think the State will always be stronger.

“Rise like lions. Shake your chains.

Ye are many, they are few!” claimed the British poet Shelley.

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