

THE BOLSHEVIK ILLUSION:
A CASE STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS
AND BOLSHEVIKS IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA, 1917

A Thesis

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Abstract
of
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The revolutionary semblance between anarcho-syndicalism and Bolshevism, amplified by the reemergence of populist ideals among factory workers, engendered a temporary alliance between Russia's anarcho-syndicalists and Bolsheviks at various times during 1917 and the Civil War. Lenin's vague and politically elusive concepts of revolution and social organization persuaded some anarcho-syndicalists to join the Bolshevik vanguard. Many of Russia's anarcho-syndicalists fell victim to the Bolshevik illusion, which necessitated the revolution's success upon the unification of Russia's revolutionary forces, either to overthrow the Provisional Government or defeat the Whites in the Civil War. The cooperation between anarcho-syndicalist and Bolshevik revolutionaries not only highlights Lenin's pragmatism at this moment but also the sudden importance of anarchists, both with and against the Bolsheviks, in the making of early-Bolshevik Russia. This thesis provides a modern interpretation of anarcho-syndicalism in revolutionary Russia through a prosopographical approach. An examination of the lives of three noted anarcho-syndicalists will illustrate the

development of a distinct relationship between Russia's anarcho-syndicalists and Bolsheviks, as well as reveal three similar, yet divergent, anarcho-syndicalist responses to Bolshevism. The cases of Vladimir Shatov, Volin (Vsevolod Eikhenbaum), and Grigorii Maksimov not only represent different anarcho-syndicalist perceptions of Bolshevism during the summer and fall of 1917 but also illustrate the transnationalism of Russian-anarcho-syndicalism.

_____, Committee Chair
Dr. Aaron Cohen

Date

DEDICATION

For my father John Brislan. Your wisdom, guidance, and love opened my eyes to the wondrous possibilities that life has to offer. Your passion for history and all of its intricacies undoubtedly led me down this road. May my work be a continuous demonstration of your dedication to those whose voices have gone unheard.

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The faculty of the Department of History at California State University, Sacramento were instrumental in the development of this project. To Drs. Paula Austin, Christopher Castañeda, Aaron Cohen, Jeffrey Dym, Rebecca Kluchin, Katerina Lagos, Anne Lindsay, Brendan Lindsay, Jim Rose, Mona Siegel, and Michael Vann, thank you. Your knowledge and guidance not only challenged me to be a better historian, writer, and teacher but also inspired me to tell the story of those unknown. I want to distinctly thank Dr. Kluchin, whose guidance as program advisor made my time in the program less stressful and more productive. Her wisdom undoubtedly prevented me from overextending myself. The work presented here is the product of their program and their endless passion for history and education.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Drs. Cohen and Castañeda. Dr. Castañeda introduced me to the field of history which forever altered my path as a historian. His courses on anarchism and transnational radicalism compelled me to delve deeper into understanding how social constructs and conventions engender radical cultures. The mentorship and guidance of Dr. Cohen ultimately made this thesis possible. His persistent

support pushed me to examine new aspects of Russian anarchism previously overlooked, and allowed me to offer a new and insightful view into understanding the lives of Russia's anarchists and the transnational forces that shaped their anarchism. This thesis would be nonexistent without them.

Last, it would not only be thoughtless but also selfish of me to not acknowledge the loving support of my family, who have continuously championed my every endeavor. As I struggled into the late hours of the night reading, translating, and writing, their words of encouragement revitalized me. To my younger brother Zach: your constant dedication to bettering yourself and the people surrounding you has been an inspiration, showing me that hard work engenders great results. To my mother Janet: your endless love, support, and encouragement has led me down this momentous path; I could not have done it without you and the sacrifices you made to get me here. Finally, I wish to express my sincerest gratitude and thanks to my best friend and wife Jami Brislan, whose passion for learning and knowledge rivals mine, compelling me to dig deeper into the radical world of Russian anarchism. To my wife: thank you for everything; for the late-nights, rereading the countless revisions, and your amazing love. The world is ours.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MRC	Military Revolutionary Committee
RWA	Russian Workingmen's Association
SD	Socialist-Democrat
SR	Socialist-Revolutionary
UORW	Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The role of non-communist revolutionaries in the October Revolution vanished as the architects of Soviet memory after 1917 sought to authenticate the Bolsheviks by placing them at the vanguard of the broader Russian revolutionary tradition. Vladimir Lenin's fundamental antipathy to anarcho-syndicalism, in his words "the twin brother of opportunism," omitted anarchist participation in the October coup d'état.¹ Yet as he sought to establish his vanguard in the summer of 1917, Lenin engaged Russia's anarchists for the expected revolution. At that time, his ideas and preference for direct action attracted revolutionaries from various economic, political, and social backgrounds, including anarcho-syndicalists, and his rhetoric reflected an amalgam of various left-wing political theories supported by consistent opposition to the Provisional Government. Lenin's vague and politically elusive concepts of revolution and social organization persuaded some anarcho-syndicalists to join the Bolshevik vanguard. Russian anarcho-syndicalism, a transnational movement created by European-monarchial oppression and molded by the polarity of industrial market capitalism, therefore played an important role in the October Revolution. The cooperation between anarcho-syndicalist and Bolshevik revolutionaries not only highlights Lenin's pragmatism at this moment but also the sudden importance of anarchists, both with and against the Bolsheviks, in the making of early-Bolshevik Russia.

¹ Vladimir Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 40.

Traditional historical interpretations of the revolution depicted Lenin and the Bolsheviks as ruthless, unpopular usurpers who seized power through unyielding willpower and political treachery in October 1917, painting a picture of revolutionary maliciousness. Yet, modern historical interpretations of the Bolshevik Revolution illustrate a multitude of economic, social, and political forces which shaped Russia in 1917 and allowed for a successful Bolshevik political coup, all of which highlight the profound impact of popular thought during this period, as public support for the Bolshevik ascendancy to political power shaped Soviet success in late 1917 and early 1918. Victoria Bonnell, Alexander Rabinowitch, Donald Raleigh, and S. A. Smith's research on popular culture among the peasantry and working classes in late-Imperial Russia not only demonstrates a distinct divorce between the tsarist regime and lower classes but also illustrates their revolutionary nature on the eve of revolution and, thus, their willingness to employ the Bolsheviks as their agents of change.

Modern historiography not only challenges the notion of an unaided Bolshevik Revolution, but also conveys the various phenomena which led to the rise of the Soviet state. Traditional interpretations of the revolution placed heavy emphasis on Bolshevik willpower, overlooking the importance of popular thought and how it shaped revolutionary programs socially, politically, and economically. Indeed, while Lenin's pragmatism and Trotsky's organization undoubtedly molded 1917 Russia, Bolshevik success hinged upon the radicalization of the Russian peoples. While the drastic impact of World War I on the radicalization of the working classes should not be underestimated, as Rabinowitch demonstrates that the Provisional Government's decision

to continue the war in favor of the evolving revolution adversely shaped public opinion regarding the nascent government, public disillusionment with the state during the war did not explicitly radicalize the people.² As Bonnell explains, the government's vacillation regarding labor organization and workers' rights before and after the 1905 Revolution (see chapter 2) generated a working-class mentality that ultimately rejected the social and economic necessity of the state.³ While Russia experienced a downturn of revolutionary sentiment after 1905, police repression beginning in 1907, increased working-class activism beginning in 1910, and the socioeconomic impact of WWI resulted in the revival of revolutionary thought in fall 1915. To Raleigh, a legacy of negative interaction with the government engendered a distinct divorce between the government and people, as constantly shifting legislation continuously reshaped Russia's structural relations, engendering a public image of a precarious autocracy.⁴ While the socioeconomic impact of World War I led to public disenchantment with the autocracy's war aims, modern historiography conclusively demonstrates that the radicalization of Russia's lower classes occurred over a longer time-span. To anarchists, social revolution, the radical restructuring of society's economic, political, and social conventions and institutions, required public support; Nicholas II's inability to establish a distinct political

² Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come To Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1976), xxvi.

³ Victoria E. Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organizations in St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1900-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 150, 435.

⁴ Donald J. Raleigh, *Experiencing Russia's Civil War: Politics, Society, and Revolutionary Culture in Saratov, 1917-1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 23.

or economic interconnection between the government and working classes proved fatal, as the unfavorable conditions of Russian life in 1917 reinvigorated revolutionary sentiment among Russia's lower classes in February.

While the failures of Nicholas II and his Imperial regime undoubtedly engendered a distinct public disenchantment with the monarchy, cultural conventions based upon the legacy of the Russian revolutionary tradition also shaped Bolshevik success in October. Radical discourse, which looked for its origins in the revolutionary movement of 1905, bred ideological homogeneity, as revolutionaries from various social, professional, and ethnic backgrounds united with common revolutionary hopes. Unlikely allies formed revolutionary coalitions as all sought the dissolution of the old order.

Although the desire for political and social change prevailed among revolutionaries, concepts of revolution drastically differed after February. The broad working classes overlooked the political and economic intricacies of state politics and revolution. Workers were concerned with labor reform and improved socioeconomic conditions more so than socialism and political revolution.⁵ The social revolution envisioned by the working classes hardly mirrored the political revolutions advocated by Russia's bureaucrats and revolutionaries. Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and right-winged Bolsheviks sought to either work with the Provisional Government or, at the minimum, retain a distinct form of state power. Left-wing Bolsheviks desired complete Soviet control (which also assumed a variety of connotations later discussed). Russia's anarchists, regardless of their internal programmatic differences, advocated for the

⁵ Bonnell, *Roots*, 264-265.

complete dissolution of the old order and abolition of the state, church, and private property. While the popular conception of revolution prevalent among the lower classes echoed anarchist and particularly anarcho-syndicalist doctrine, Russia's anarchists failed to develop a distinct working class or peasant following. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Paul Avrich discussed the subtle impact of anarchism in revolutionary Russia, arguing that, while anarchists provoked and incited revolutionary movements in Russia, "anarchism never became a creed of the mass of peasants and industrial workers."⁶ The lack of an explicit anarchist party in Russia—a formal entity to receive public support—propelled Russia's working classes into the only other political party whose program mirrored the workers' demands: the Bolshevik Party.

Modern historiography illustrates multiple reasons for the Bolshevik success in obtaining popular support. To Rabinowitch, the Bolsheviks internal party structure engendered a democratic, tolerant party which was able to respond appropriately to the evolving public opinion, ensuring the Bolshevik program consistently mirrored popular thought.⁷ According to Bonnell, a shift in 1913 to support trade unions and factory committees led to the mass induction of radical revolutionaries into preexisting working-class organizations, as the Bolshevik program began to reflect the social, political, and economic ambitions of the working classes. While both Bonnell and Rabinowitch depict an ever-expanding working-class support for the Bolsheviks, Smith challenges the theory

⁶ Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 5, 253.

⁷ Rabinowitch, 311.

that political parties or radical revolutionaries exclusively shaped the workers' movement in revolutionary Russia. Instead, he contends that the working class did not heedlessly adopt the Bolshevik interpretation of workers' control and revolution. Although the Bolsheviks were later appointed to key leadership positions within the factory committees, their ascendancy in the labor movement did not denote the working class' endorsement of the Bolshevik Party, as individual reputation often outweighed political affiliations in factory-committee elections.⁸ The Bolsheviks did not control the labor movement in the summer of 1917; yet, the party managed to establish working-class support by appropriating the economic and social programs of the working classes. Many factory workers advocated for anarchist and syndicalist concepts as well but to deem the factory committees anarchist or syndicalist entities would be a gross exaggeration, as workers were far more concerned with local economic reformation than social revolution.⁹ The general promise of revolution outweighed specific political differences or ideologies for many people who wanted the revolution immediately; those who thought more tentatively or were more passive seemed almost paralyzed as the country collapsed around them.

This unique situation cultivated a relationship between Russia's anarcho-syndicalists and Bolsheviks. Both sought the immediate dissolution of the tsarist state, but they differed in their specific understanding of social revolution and post-

⁸ S. A. Smith, *Red Petrograd: Revolution in the Factories, 1917-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 161.

⁹ Smith, 258.

revolutionary social organization. While anarchists wanted the immediate destruction of the state and its institutions, Lenin and his followers considered it necessary to establish a temporary socialist state led by armed worker-revolutionaries who directed the masses as they restructured society until the state became inessential and, eventually, withered away.¹⁰ The two groups also clashed in their interpretation of workers' control. Although the Bolsheviks advocated for a proletariat-controlled economy, workers' control of the factories was technically subsumed under the proletarian state in the Bolshevik program. For anarcho-syndicalists, this concept was unacceptable, as they interpreted workers' control as complete factory autonomy of production, distribution, and consumption, managed and operated solely by the industrial-working class. However, the Bolshevik tactical appropriation of popular revolutionary slogans and ideas, some of which emanated from syndicalists, some from ordinary people, solidified an unlikely cooperation between the two groups for a short time. The need for immediate revolution prompted many anarcho-syndicalists to join with other radical elements such as the Bolsheviks; ideological affinity to immediate revolution led the two groups down similar revolutionary paths, ultimately culminating in a distinct but short-lived anarcho-syndicalist-Bolshevik convergence in October 1917.

This thesis seeks to provide a modern interpretation of anarcho-syndicalism in revolutionary Russia through a prosopographical approach. An examination of the lives of three noted anarcho-syndicalists will illustrate the development of an anarcho-syndicalist-Bolshevik relationship and reveal three similar, yet divergent, anarcho-

¹⁰ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 94.

syndicalist responses to Bolshevism. While Vladimir Shatov joined the Bolshevik vanguard on the eve of revolution, his comrades Volin (Vsevolod Eikhenbaum) and Grigorii Maksimov refuted the Marxists and their political revolution.¹¹ Maksimov enlisted in the Red Army after October despite his rejection of Bolshevism. Only Volin continuously repudiated Bolshevism and its revolutionary politics. The cases of Shatov, Volin, and Maksimov not only represent different anarcho-syndicalist perceptions of Bolshevism during the summer and fall of 1917, they also illustrate the transnationalism of Russian-anarcho-syndicalism.

Russian anarchism in the early-twentieth century was an amalgam of various Western political and social ideas as its founders, Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin, developed their interpretations of the radical ideology abroad. Like the broader anarchist movement, Russian anarchism emerged as a reaction to the polarity of society engendered by the industrial revolution. In the cases of Bakunin and Kropotkin, their experiences with revolutionary events in England, France, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States offered further insight into the world of political revolution and social organization. Moreover, they discussed their revolutionary politics with other noted European philosophers such as Karl Marx, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and Alexander Herzen, further supplementing the transnationalism of their anarchism. Most of Russia's anarchists in 1917 learned their anarchism abroad, often in exile in England, France, and the United States, as anarchism was neglected in Russia in favor of agrarian socialism

¹¹ Vsevolod Eikhenbaum was, and still is, more commonly known by his pseudonym, Volin, also spelled Voline.

and Marxism. As revolutionary anarchists returned home in 1917, they introduced foreign concepts to Russian revolutionary culture. While anarchism in Russia contained a distinct Russia hue, Russian anarchism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was innately a transnational construct.

The revolutionary semblance between anarcho-syndicalism and Bolshevism, amplified by the reemergence of populist ideals among factory workers, engendered a temporary alliance between the two groups with different revolutionary values at various times during 1917 and the Civil War. Many of Russia's anarcho-syndicalists fell victim to the Bolshevik illusion, which necessitated the revolution's success upon the unification of Russia's revolutionary forces, either to overthrow the Provisional Government or defeat the Whites in the Civil War. In the end, some permanently joined the Bolsheviks, as Lenin's revolution appeared most promising; some temporarily aided the Bolshevik vanguard, as the promise of revolution outweighed political differences; and some refuted the Bolshevik revolution entirely.

CHAPTER 2

A HISTORY OF ANARCHISM IN RUSSIA, 1905-1917

While Russian anarchists undoubtedly shaped the Bolshevik revolution, anarchism “was virtually unknown in Russia before 1917.”¹² Many of Russia’s leftist political organizations and most of the lower classes disregarded the political theories of Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin as individuals looked towards Karl Marx or Alexander Herzen for concepts of social organization. Nevertheless, anarchist concepts dominated popular thought among urban workers after the February Revolution. In 1917, laborers sought to establish a collective commonwealth without the state and its institutions of oppression. While Lenin and the Bolshevik Party historically have received unconditional credit for the success of the October Revolution, anarchism shaped the coup’s outcome, as economic and social concepts previously proposed by anarchist theorists united workers and revolutionaries during a period of heightened revolutionary fervor. Russia’s anarchists also placed their trust in the Bolsheviks as the semblances of revolutionary discourse blurred ideological heterogeneity, convincing many that Lenin sought an anarchist revolution. However, by April 1918 the Bolshevik government betrayed the anarchists as the regime began its first wave of political oppression via government suppression. Regardless of the anarchist’s support in October, anarchism was deemed counter-revolutionary during the Civil War. By 1922, the Bolsheviks secured their political power as Russia’s remaining anarchists either fled to avoid execution or

¹² Volin, *The Unknown Revolution* (New York: Free Life Editions, Inc., 1974), 115.

fell victim to the unbridled Cheka guillotine. The anarchists' temporary alliance with the Bolsheviks ultimately led to their dissolution.

The nineteenth century witnessed the introduction of political theories that not only challenged the morality and effectiveness of capitalism but also the necessity of standard political conventions. Political theorists, philosophers, and revolutionaries responded to the socioeconomic inequality engendered by industrial capitalism by proposing alternative concepts of social organization which restructured society to fit the needs of all. To anarchists, social stratification illustrated the manifest failings of capitalism. Instead of reforming the current political system, anarchists sought to destroy the bourgeoisie state altogether; only a clean sweep could fix the social problems innate to statism and capitalism.

The abolition of the state, church, and private property remained central to all anarchists. The institutionalization of modern anarchism occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. Beginning with the works of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in 1840, anarchism posited a life free from all forms of authority.¹³ To anarchists, the state and church embodied authoritarian oppression: the state expropriated social freedoms through bureaucratic deception and coercion, while the church, an ally of the state, used religion “as a means of keeping men in ignorance and as a safety-valve for human misery and frustration.”¹⁴

¹³ For a detailed interpretation of early anarchism, see Proudhon's *What is Property*.

¹⁴ Andrea Burbidge, “Anarchism and the Russian Revolution: An Investigation of the Anarchist Movement in the Russian Revolution, 1917-1921, and Its Portrayal in Western History” (PhD diss., Queens University, 1991), 18; Paul Avrich, *The Anarchists in the Russian Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 38.

Anarchists envisioned a collective commonwealth where volunteers established and administered social institutions autonomously.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, Russian revolutionary theorists contributed to European anarchist thought, establishing a distinct Russian interpretation of the political theory. Mikhail Alexandrovich Bakunin first Russified the radical ideology. Born of a noble family, Bakunin first encountered the works of Herzen, Hegel, and Fichte while living in Moscow in 1835. In 1840, he went to Berlin to continue his philosophical studies; there he joined the Young Hegelians and local socialist movement. After Berlin, Bakunin studied the social sciences in Zurich, Geneva, Brussels, and Paris. In Paris, he consorted with noted anarchist Pierre Joseph-Proudhon and communist Karl Marx (Bakunin temporarily established a newspaper, the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher*, with the latter) and later participated in the Revolutions of 1848. Arrested in 1849 for participating in the Dresden Uprising in May, he spent the next eight years incarcerated, six in the Peter and Paul Fortress.¹⁵ Upon his release in 1861, Bakunin began formulating his own political theory, which diverged from his socialist education and ultimately sought to mobilize Proudhon's anarchism.

Bakunin's interpretation of revolution and social organization diverged from the contemporaneous Marxist thought that predominated socialist thinking during this period. Bakunin rejected Marx's materialist interpretation of history, repudiating the notion that revolution was dependent upon preconceived laws of historical evolution; to Bakunin, scientific socialism prevented actual social change. Influenced by previous failed

¹⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 20.

revolutions in France and Russia, Bakunin desired an all-embracing social revolution (as a proletarian revolution appeared futile in an ever-expanding industrial world) that abolished the state outright, as he considered it ludicrous to replace one government with another, even if the temporary government was a proletarian dictatorship. Divergent from Marxism, Bakunin's revolution employed all of the downtrodden masses: the proletariat, peasants, *lumpenproletariat*, intelligentsia, outlaws, bandits, and unemployed. With a successful revolution, Bakunin envisioned a federation of autonomous factories and agriculture collectives which controlled society's economic and social institutions and rewarded individuals in proportion to their societal contributions.¹⁶

Bakuninism ultimately redefined anarchism. While Proudhon proposed the idea of establishing a community without authority or private property, anarchism in the early-nineteenth century remained within the realm of philosophical politics. Driven by his desire for immediate action (as Bakunin continuously sought to participate in revolution) Bakunin popularized the radical ideology by remolding the theory into a sociopolitical movement. He established a new political party to end all politics but failed to publish or write an explicit or coherent anarchist doctrine before his death. Bakunin's anarcho-collectivism contained a distinct communist hue, providing the theoretical model for anarcho-communism, later expanded upon and popularized by Peter Kropotkin.

Peter Alekseyevich Kropotkin was born into nobility in 1842. A descendant of the Rurik clan, Kropotkin experienced an early life of education and state service. Kropotkin was a respected geologist and social scientist within the academic community and was

¹⁶ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 21-25.

offered the position of president of the Russian Geographical Society.¹⁷ While his profession offered him a prosperous future, Kropotkin's research, which predominately focused on rural villages in Siberia, led him down an alternative path, as his experiences in Siberia not only highlighted the social inequality of Russian society but also illustrated the flaws of Russia's sociopolitical structures.

Inspired by his research in Siberia, Kropotkin traveled to Western Europe to study workers' movements in 1872. In the Jura Mountains of Switzerland, watchmakers who had established an autonomous cooperative collective under the guidance of Bakuninism, introduced Kropotkin to Bakunin's anarcho-collectivism. While Kropotkin was familiar with the works of Herzen, Bakunin's instinctive socialism challenged the scientific logic of previous political theories, which based their understanding of social evolution on preconceived notions of historical progression. Kropotkin considered Bakunin's moral socialism more logical than its philosophical predecessors.¹⁸

After Switzerland, Kropotkin returned to Russia, where he joined the radical Tchaikovsky Circle. His participation in the organization led to his arrest in 1874. While imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, he fell ill and was transferred to the prison's hospital. By chance, he managed to escape. He returned to Switzerland and then sailed to England, where he resided temporarily before returning to Switzerland the next year. He remained in Switzerland for several years until the Swiss government expelled him after

¹⁷ Peter Kropotkin, *Anarchism: A Collection of Writings Revolutionary Writings*, ed. Roger N. Baldwin (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2002), 18.

¹⁸ Peter Kropotkin, *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets: A Collection of Writings*, ed. Roger N. Baldwin (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970), 14-17.

the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. Kropotkin relocated to France, where he participated in a demonstration in Lyon that led to his imprisonment in the Clairvaux prison for three years. After his release, he migrated back to England, where he remained until the revolutions of 1917.¹⁹ Kropotkin published his most noted works regarding anarcho-communism and mutual aid while living in England. Kropotkin's revolution was significantly more humane than Bakunin's.

Approaching anarchism from the viewpoint of applied ethics, Kropotkin formalized the radical ideology, developing a distinct anarcho-communist political theory—a theory that dominated popular thought within the anarchist community for much of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Bakunin based his violent revolt in the historical assumption that social evolution required conflict, like Marxism, but Kropotkin contended that cooperation, not confrontation, was the key to mankind's social apogee. To Kropotkin, Bakunin's revolution was too violent to engender positive social change. Bakunin advocated for individual reward based upon societal contributions, but Kropotkin contended that Bakunin's collectivism was nothing more than an alternative form of wage slavery. According to Kropotkin's anarcho-communism, as the revolution abolished the social constructs of a capitalist society, mutual agreement would replace laws as individuals began working together of their own free will "in view of a common object."²⁰ Mutual aid and cooperation were paramount to society's progress; society must

¹⁹ Kropotkin, *Revolutionary Pamphlets*, 13-30.

²⁰ Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1906), 29.

reward members based upon their needs, regardless of their social and economic contributions.²¹

Russian anarchism, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, was innately a transnational construct. It blended various European and Russian constructs. Both Bakuninism and Kropotkinism emerged as products of extended European sojourns and were shaped by English, French, German, Russian and Swiss philosophers, as well as the multifarious sociopolitical climates of Western Europe, where the Revolutions of 1848 recently challenged conventional nation-state politics.

Anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-communism, and individualist anarchism emerged as the dominant anarchist schools of thought in the twentieth century. Although anarchists universally sought the dissolution of the state, they differed in their ideas of social organization. Anarcho-syndicalists supported industrialization and mechanization; they believed that society needed to be organized around industrial production. Antagonistic towards the anarcho-syndicalists, anarcho-communists advocated for agrarianism. They imagined a society of collective, autonomous communities which rewarded members according to their specific needs. Individualist anarchists rejected both anarcho-syndicalism and anarcho-communism, contending that all forms of social organization were susceptible to coercion and corruption.²² Most anarcho-syndicalists despised other anarchist interpretations, contending that non-syndicalist methods were

²¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 27-31.

²² John Walter Copp, "The Role of the Anarchists in the Russian Revolution and Civil War, 1917-1921: A Case Study in Conspiratorial Behavior During Revolution" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1993), 13.

too slow to incite change. Other anarchist factions (primarily anarcho-communists) asserted that syndicalists were narrow-minded and that the establishment of a working-class dictatorship would only replace the bourgeoisie elite.²³ Undoubtedly, ideological rifts plagued the anarchist community as philosophical discrepancies prevented the unification of the radicals.

Anarcho-syndicalism was a combination of anarchism, Marxism, and trade unionism.²⁴ Syndicalists argued for the abolition of government and establishment of a cooperative commonwealth based upon workers' production. They asserted that justice for the working class "can only come from the organised efforts of the working class themselves."²⁵ Modernization ultimately offered a unique opportunity for revolution without economic regression. For syndicalists, the social revolution was not achieved through the unification of the lower classes and violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie but through the general strike. The execution of a national general strike would halt the economy and end the bourgeoisie's control of production and distribution. Syndicalism offered anarchists a more immediate result for their collective actions as no longer was it pivotal to wait for the masses to coalesce. Anarchists and workers could unite not only to generate labor reforms but also social and political changes on a national and, later, global level. According to the anarchist Manuel Komroff, this ideology "place[d]

²³ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 72-75, 82, 247; Manuel Komroff, *The Russian Problem and Its Solution* (Shanghai: The China Press, 1918), 15.

²⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 75.

²⁵ Komroff, *Russian Problem*, 15.

Industrial Unionism first and politics second” and was naturally attractive to the anti-political anarchists.²⁶

Anarchism was on the fringes of Russian revolutionary culture in the nineteenth century. Analogous to Western Europe and the United States, agrarian socialism, Marxism, and populism were the dominant political theories within Russia’s radical tradition. First noted by Alexander Herzen, Russia’s slow economic modernization engendered a unique socioeconomic situation, making Russia theoretically capable of establishing an agrarian socialist society. Disenchanted with the Great Reforms, revolutionary terrorists sought to reform the state, either through direct action or violent revolution, and introduce agrarian socialism. This populism remained the dominant radical ideology in Russia until 1917. As the industrial revolution reshaped the stratification of society, creating an industrial-working class, Marxism and its proletarian revolution became another prominent theory within the revolutionary community.

The original political programs of Russia’s radicals were remolded by a new generation of revolutionaries. Beginning in the late-nineteenth century, explicit revolutionary-political parties emerged within Russian political culture. In 1883 Georgii Plekhanov founded the first Socialist-Democratic organization. The Marxists Social-Democrats (SDs) sought a proletarian revolution and focused on uniting and radicalizing Russia’s nascent industrial-working class. The Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) was founded in 1898. While the party lacked initial success, as most members resided in exile abroad, Marxism became a prominent revolutionary ideology among the

²⁶ Komroff, *Russian Problem*, 15.

working class beginning in 1905. Analogous to the SDs, the Socialist Revolutionaries (SR) emerged circa 1900. While the SRs were influenced by Marxism, the party focused more on radicalizing the peasantry than industrial-working class. To the SRs, Russia needed agrarian socialism, as the theory's concepts of social organization aligned with Russia's social conventions and agrarian culture. By 1905, this modernized interpretation of 1870s populism dominated radical and revolutionary thinking, and the SRs became the most influential radical group within Russian revolutionary culture. Anarchism failed to take hold in Russia as the political programs of the SDs and SRs mirrored the social, political, and economic aspirations of the lower classes and offered explicit party support in achieving revolutionary dreams. The anarchists' self-exclusion from formal politics and subsequent refusal to establish an anarchist political party, a formal entity to receive public support, hindered their ability to develop a popular following.

Russians, however, did develop a distinct anarchist ideology that blended anarchism with syndicalism. Their ideas differed from Western counterparts in that Russians often overlooked the theories of William Godwin, Max Stirner, and Proudhon; only later, after Bakunin and Kropotkin Russified the ideology, did Russians begin to embrace the radical notion of a state-less society. "Filtered through the prisms of Bakuninism, Kropotkinism, and native Populism," writes Avrich, anarchism in Russia undoubtedly acquired "a distinctive Russia hue."²⁷ Russian anarchists who advocated for syndicalism sought to distance themselves from foreign theorists and to make their idea compatible with already existing Russian revolutionary culture. As Avrich argues, they:

²⁷ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 4.

adopted the name ‘Anarcho-Syndicalists’ rather than the French term ‘revolutionary syndicalists’ partly to emphasize their distinctly Russian character, partly to indicate that they were all *anarchists* (many of the revolutionary syndicalists in France had Marxist, Blanquist, and other radical affiliations), and partly to distinguish themselves from the Anarchist-*Communists*, who were not as exclusively concerned with labor movement as they were.²⁸

Syndicalism in Russian culture first emerged around 1903. And by 1905 its ideological tenets had attracted a noticeable number of factory workers in the large industrial cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow.²⁹ Anarchists praised workers for their revolutionary actions in 1905, but anarchism “had a relatively minor impact on the course of the uprising.”³⁰

The 1905 Revolution was a critical moment in Russian revolutionary history. Poor economic conditions exacerbated by the strains of war with Japan engendered a dissatisfied Russian proletariat. In December 1904, workers at the Putilov metalworks factory in St. Petersburg presented a list of economic demands to the factory’s managers. Factory owners refused the request and quickly fired the individuals who developed the list.³¹ Infuriated by the managers’ actions, the Putilov factory workers decided to strike. A chain of strikes subsequently roiled Russia, culminating with the development of a formal petition to be presented to the Tsar at his Winter Palace. Father Georgii Gapon, a police informant and Orthodox priest working as a labor leader, drafted a petition

²⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 77.

²⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 76-78.

³⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 4.

³¹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 71-72; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 41.

detailing the “sufferings of the people.”³² Gapon, with the assistance of his followers, disseminated the petition to the various workers’ sections “to communicate it to the mass of the population and to organize the march toward the Winter Palace.”³³ On 22 January 1905, workers and their families led by Gapon marched towards the Winter Palace, only to be met by a mobilized Imperial Guard. The Winter Palace demonstrators merely sought to petition the tsar peacefully, but the Guards fired on the crowd. Riots and demonstrations plagued the capitol and its outskirts until Tsar Nicholas II attempted to meet the protestor’s demands by publishing the October Manifesto of 1905.

The immaturity of Russia’s anarchist movement hindered the political impact of anarchism during the 1905 Revolution.³⁴ To anarchists, 1905 illustrated the public’s desire for social change. They rejoiced as workers challenged the autocracy’s power, believing that the theories of Bakunin and Kropotkin was irrevocably manifested, and many joined the revolutionary violence. Disorganization, however, plagued Russia’s nascent anarchist community and hindered its ability to forge powerful institutions. Russia’s scattered anarchist factions lacked coordination and, therefore, resorted to haphazard direct action.

The outcome of 1905 forced many anarchists to emigrate. The tsarist regime either arrested, executed, or exiled revolutionaries who participated, and many revolutionaries sought refuge in Western Europe or the United States. European and

³² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 73.

³³ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 73.

³⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 4.

American anarchists welcomed Russian refugees, but their respective states did not. Political exiles who fled tsarist tyranny in Russia were met with comparable forms of state oppression in their new homelands. Conventions of Russian revolutionary culture developed under tsarist tyranny fused with immigrants' new ideas and experiences in their immigrated country and produced new variants of anarchism with distinctive Russian shades. After 1905, Russian anarchism became an amalgam of transplanted ideas and socioeconomic discontent shaped both by tsarist tyranny and the pressures of industrial market capitalism. As exiles returned to Russia to support the revolution in 1917, they introduced new transnational interpretations of anarchism to the revolution.

Russia's social instability created a thriving environment for anarchism, and the February Revolution gave birth to a distinct Russian anarchist movement.³⁵ The prospects for a Russian anarchist-led revolution before 1917 was bleak at best. Before February, anarchist organizations had sometimes emerged in Moscow and Petrograd, but Russia had no national anarchist movement.³⁶ Continued government oppression coupled with drastic economic failures engendered by World War I quickly reshaped Russia's anarchist movement. The incompetency of Nicholas II led to growing food shortages which evolved into demonstrations, riots, strikes, and, ultimately, revolution. By March 1917, the Kronstadt, Krasnoiarsk, Kharkov, Moscow, and Petrograd Soviets all contained

³⁵ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 179.

³⁶ Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (Oakland: PM Press, 2010), 470.

anarchist representatives.³⁷ By the summer, “at least one anarchist was found on most factory committees and at factory committee conferences.”³⁸ At the end of 1917, anarchists had seven representatives in the Soviets and one on the executive committee.³⁹

Anarchism appealed mostly to factory workers, but anarchist activists did little to shape popular thought among Russia’s factory workers. S. A. Smith’s examination of popular thought among Russia’s laborers illustrates the development of a distinct working-class mentality by the summer of 1917 that sought the establishment of autonomous factories and permanent labor laws. Factory workers desired factory standardization; they sought to establish standard work hours and wages, better working conditions, employment procedures, and workplace dispute protocols.⁴⁰ Rapid industrialization and urbanization led to the social dislocation of Russia’s industrial proletariat, creating an alienated working class which sought to establish its own place within Russia’s social stratum. The political vacillation of the state, coupled with the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda by embedded radical workers, generated a working-class desire to reverse Russia’s social order. Anarchism naturally appealed to such industrial workers who sought to “take control of their working lives.”⁴¹ Although factory workers demanded reforms that mirrored anarchist ideals their concepts of social

³⁷ Copp, 130.

³⁸ Burbidge, 47.

³⁹ Burbidge, 137.

⁴⁰ Smith, 120.

⁴¹ Smith, 4.

and economic organization were organic reactions to their current situation. It would be unfitting to deem the factory committees or workers' organizations anarchist or syndicalist entities as the workers' actions, according to Smith, were "motivated more by practical than ideological considerations."⁴²

Radical activists offered political coherence for the working class' revolutionary ideas.⁴³ While growing revolutionary sentiment naturally increased anarchist membership, returning political exiles, primarily from the United States and Western Europe, boosted the anarchists' ranks: one in ten Russian anarchists were former émigrés.⁴⁴ Consisting of only two hundred members at the beginning of 1917, remigrants, in combination with native support, boosted the anarchists' membership to ten thousand by the beginning of 1918.⁴⁵ From May to July 1917, anarchists led multiple armed revolts, demonstrations, and illegal property seizures. In May, they organized two armed demonstrations advocating for the overthrow the Provisional Government.⁴⁶ On 5 June, fifty anarchists temporarily seized the printing press plant of the newspaper the *Russian freedom (Russkaia volia)*.⁴⁷ After a few hours, troops sent by the Provisional Government disbanded the occupation.⁴⁸ On 18 June, anarchists merged with a pro-

⁴² Smith, 258.

⁴³ Bonnell, *Roots*, 449.

⁴⁵ Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 143.

⁴⁶ Copp, 140.

⁴⁷ Copp, 142-143.

⁴⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 130.

Bolshevik demonstration in Petrograd during the “June days.” Soldiers, rioters, and anarchists stormed the jail in the Vyborg district and freed seven political prisoners.⁴⁹

Anarchist activity increased into July. On 3 July, soldiers, Kronstadt sailors, workers, anarchists, and Bolsheviks orchestrated a rebellion in Petrograd. The rebels demanded that the Petrograd Soviet seize power from the Provisional Government.⁵⁰ This rebellion was brief, for the Petrograd Soviet refused to take power, and two days later, the army quelled the uprising. While anarchists participated in the rebellion, it would be erroneous to deem the event an anarchist phenomenon. The government blamed Lenin for the “July days,” but he did not organize or endorse it.⁵¹ They were a general attack on the Provisional Government from leftist oppositionists.

Russian anarchism grew to include a combination of different social and ethnic groups. John Copp’s sample of anarchist ethnic and socioprofessional groups in 1917 provides detailed insight into the rapid expansion of anarchism during this period. The working class dominated the anarchists’ ranks, with 54.5% of all anarchists identifying themselves as laborers.⁵² Russia’s anarchist community consisted of students (14.4%), intelligentsia (11.1%), peasants (10.2%), members of the middle classes (4.2%), bureaucrats (1.8%), hereditary nobles (0.9%), with the remaining (3%)

⁴⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 131-132; Copp, 149.

⁵⁰ Paul Avrich, “The Anarchists in the Russian Revolution,” *The Russian Review* 26, no. 4 (1967), 345.

⁵¹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 58.

⁵² Copp, 50.

uncategorized.⁵³ Ethnically, anarchism in Russia reflected the ethnic nature of the empire: Russian 57.5%, Jewish 27.5%, Ukrainian 10%, and a mixture of Belarusians, Georgians, Poles, Armenians, and Italians comprising the balance.⁵⁴ Women represented 12% of Russian anarchists.⁵⁵ In larger industrial cities, anarchism primarily appealed to the working class and was the dominant political thought among skilled workers.⁵⁶ The anarcho-syndicalist movement, Av finds, “exercised a significant influence among the bakers, river transport, dock and shipyard workers, Donets miners, food industry workers, postal and telegraph workers, and to lesser extent, metal and textile workers, printers and railwaymen.”⁵⁷ Laborers, peasants, students, members of the middle classes, and the intelligentsia, as well as small groups from the bureaucracy and the nobility, all supported anarchist doctrines on some level.

The growing anarchist presence in the summer months led to a unique anarchist-Bolshevik collaboration by the fall. Anarchists assumed multiple roles during the planning and execution of the October Revolution. Four anarchists participated in the planning of the October coup d'état: the anarcho-syndicalists, Vladimir “Bill” Shatov and Khaim “Efim” Yarchuk, the anarcho-communist Bleikhman, and one unaffiliated anarchist, G. Bogatskii.⁵⁸ Shatov not only assisted with planning the coup but personally

⁵³ Copp, 50. Percentages add up to 100.1% due to rounding.

⁵⁴ Copp, 59-60.

⁵⁵ Copp, 57.

⁵⁶ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 124-125; Copp, 248.

⁵⁷ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 68.

“led the attack on the Winter Palace in Petrograd.”⁵⁹ The anarchist Dvinsk Regiment supported the Bolsheviks in Moscow, as anarchists Gratchov and Fedotov led the attack on the Kremlin.⁶⁰ Female anarchists supported the barricades and assisted with schools and day-care centers. While anarchists assisted in the preparation and execution of the October Revolution, the lack of recorded anarchist experiences and rewriting of history in favor of the Bolsheviks make it difficult to just their impact. Harold Goldberg contends that the anarchists exaggerated their leadership.⁶¹ But Volin gave them significant credit: “the Anarchists, few in numbers and badly organized, yet very active, did everything they could to support and encourage the action of the masses against Kerensky.”⁶²

Some anarchists collaborated with the Bolsheviks throughout 1917 as Lenin persuaded many revolutionaries to join the Bolshevik vanguard. Many were optimistic after the abdication of Nicholas II and temporarily disregarded political differences to unify for the greater good of the revolution. Lenin’s writing and devotion to direct action attracted many anarchists to the Bolshevik cause. The semblance between anarchism,

⁵⁸ Kenyon Zimmer, “Premature Anti-Communists? American Anarchism, the Russian Revolution, and Left-Wing Libertarian Anticommunism, 1917-1939,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 6, no. 2 (2009),” 49; Copp, 181-182.

⁵⁹ Manuel Komroff, “Red Days and Nights,” Manuel Komroff Papers, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York, 190-201; Grigorii Maksimov, *Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution* (Anarchists Communist Federation of North America, 1979), 8, BRO 4221-15, IISH.

⁶⁰ Harold Joel Goldberg, “The Anarchists View the Bolshevik Regime, 1918-1922” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1973), 48.

⁶¹ Goldberg, 47.

⁶² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 163.

specifically anarcho-syndicalism, and Lenin's ideas during this period are to be found in writings such as *State and Revolution*, published in August 1917.

Lenin aimed to rectify the theoretical falsities developed by opportunists-Marxists, but his theoretical concept of state and revolution in *State and Revolution* deviated from orthodox Marxism and his previous writings. While Lenin formally discounted anarcho-syndicalism as “the twin brother of opportunism,” he consistently argued in *State and Revolution* for the abolition of the state and development of a common collective.⁶³ He presented a utopian alternative of Marxism that blended the ideology with various tenets of anarchism and syndicalism. Lenin's rhetoric became politically amenable to many revolutionaries as he sought to establish his revolutionary vanguard, particularly towards anarchism, as the two ideologies maintained a “common ground” regarding the abolition of the state.⁶⁴ Indeed, Lenin aimed to disassociate his interpretation of Marxism from other ideologies, but his rhetoric and revolutionary positivism could potentially convince many anarchists that Lenin truly envisioned a stateless society.

Lenin's plea to destroy the state and its institutions harmonized with the anarchists' concept of revolution. He insisted that his vanguard revolution differed from the anarchists, as anarchists “want[ed] the complete destruction of the state within twenty-four hours,” while Marxists “recognize[d] that this aim can only be realized after

⁶³ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 40.

⁶⁴ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 46.

the abolition of classes by a Socialist revolution.”⁶⁵ Lenin did not seek to dissolve the state immediately after the revolution. He believed in the “need for a state and for state power in the period of revolution in general, and in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism in particular.”⁶⁶ But his aspiration to orchestrate an immediate and violent revolution echoed anarchist popular thought during this period, which called for a second revolution shortly after February. To anarchists, the revolution in February engendered the “most favorable conditions for the realization of the ultimate goals of the class-conscience proletariat,” as the abdication of Nicholas II set the stage for “the second Russian revolution” and subsequent dissolution of the state.⁶⁷ Only the Marxist political program of the Bolsheviks harmonized with the anarchists’ plan.

Lenin’s suggestion that the revolutionary state involved ordinary people, not state bureaucracies, subtly echoed anarchist ideals. In the “Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party,” Lenin claims that the revolution would engender a “*higher* type of democratic state, a state which in certain respects, as Engels put it, ceases to be a state. . . . This is a state of the Paris Commune type, one in which a standing army and police divorced from the people are replaced by the direct arming of the people themselves.”⁶⁸ After the revolution, during the first phase of communism, armed workers would seize the state

⁶⁵ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 40.

⁶⁶ Vladimir Lenin, “The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution: Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party” (Priboi Publishers, 1917) in vol. 24 of *V. I. Lenin: Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1960-70), 68.

⁶⁷ *Golos truda*, 16 March 1917, 1.

⁶⁸ Vladimir Lenin, “Tasks of the Proletariat,” 68.

and its institutions and reshape them in a manner conducive to establishing a communist society; working-class revolutionaries would replace the bourgeois bureaucrats, dissolve the police and army, and seize control of the economy. As the state withered away, scattered revolutionary militias would converge into a universal people's militia, which maintained and self-policed the new communist society, a concept supported by anarchists.⁶⁹ While Lenin's revolution temporarily retained the state, contradicting anarchism, anarcho-syndicalists supported the concept of a worker-controlled society. Lenin's call for the eventual withering away of the state theoretically could reassure anarchists that Lenin ultimately sought an anarchist-type society.

Lenin's rhetoric depicted a quick transition from socialism to communism, setting him apart from other non-anarchist revolutionaries. This argument, in combination with a series of pro-labor statements by Lenin (for example, "either the Soviets would . . . die an inglorious death, or all power must be transferred to them") made it seem that Lenin's revolution was fundamentally anarchist and that his vision of post-revolutionary Russia was based upon syndicalist concepts of social organization.⁷⁰ Shatov, a noted anarcho-syndicalist and Bolshevik supporter, insisted that Lenin's socialist state was necessary as it strengthened the revolution in Russia.⁷¹ Lenin portrayed a swift revolution which

⁶⁹ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 80-83.

⁷⁰ Vladimir Lenin, "One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution," *Rabochii put'*, 14 September 1917, in vol. 25 of *Lenin: Collected Works*, 367.

⁷¹ Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*, vol. 2 (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1931), 729.

would lead to the expeditious withering away of the state, a concept that anarchists like Shatov found convincing.

Lenin's emphasis on workers' rule could also persuade anarcho-syndicalists to join the Marxists. Unlike the anarcho-communists, Lenin envisioned a socialist society built upon worker-controlled institutions immediately after the revolution. These institutions were to be organized and governed by trained revolutionaries who would guide the masses towards full communism, or, according to Lenin, the higher phase of communist society.⁷² In Lenin's socialist state, armed workers controlled the state and its institutions and "all citizens are here transformed into hired employees of the state, which is made up of the armed workers;" to Lenin, "from the moment all members of society, or at least the vast majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*. . . . the need for government of any kind begins to disappear altogether."⁷³ While this is not an explicitly syndicalist concept, the notion of a worker-controlled society had the potential to appeal to syndicalists to collaborate with the Bolsheviks.

For anarcho-syndicalists, the Bolshevik appropriation of the popular slogan "All Power to the Soviets" demonstrated the Bolshevik dedication to the working class. In September 1917, Lenin interpreted "All Power to the Soviets" as "all power in the state, from the bottom up, from the remotest little village to every street block of Petrograd . . . [would] belong to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants'

⁷² Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 78.

⁷³ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 83.

and other Deputies.”⁷⁴ To Lenin, workers’ control entailed a socialist state led by armed revolutionary-workers who would “demand the strictest control, by society and by the state.”⁷⁵ Although revolutionary fervor compelled some anarchists to overlook their political differences with Marxism, anarcho-syndicalists interpreted the slogan differently to mean that the state would be dissolved promptly and entirely after an anarchist revolution.⁷⁶ Workers’ control implied the “organization of production according to the principles of socialization and decentralization, on the basis of social labor control over the socialized means of production” as “the anarchist idea [was and] is to transform the economic and social bases of society without recourse to a political state, to a government, or to a dictatorship of any sort.”⁷⁷ To anarcho-syndicalists, Lenin’s concept of state and revolution “impressed the workers, peasants, and soldiers with the idea that a Soviet Republic is an Anarchist Federation of many thousands of Communes-Soviets scattered throughout the vast expanses of Russia, and that this republic is a full democracy, developed to its logical end—the extinction of the state.”⁷⁸

Lenin’s revolution offered Russia’s anarchists and other revolutionaries who had no revolutionary institutions of their own an immediate path to direct action and social

⁷⁴ Vladimir Lenin, “Speech delivered at a meeting soldiers of the izmailovsky regiment on April 10, 1917,” in vol. 24 of *Lenin: Collected Works*, 107.

⁷⁵ Lenin, *State and Revolution*, 80.

⁷⁶ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 14.

⁷⁷ Grigorii Maksimov, *Program of Anarcho-Syndicalism* (Chicago: *Golos truzhenika*, 1927), 13; Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 175.

⁷⁸ Grigorii Maksimov, *The Guillotine at Work: Twenty Years of Terror in Russia (Data and Documents)* (Chicago: The Chicago Section of the Alexander Berkman Fund, 1940), 23.

revolution that would lead to the dissolution of a central state. The Bolsheviks' image of organization compelled most anarchists to collaborate with the Marxists as they offered them an opportunity for revolution. Without a structured organization, the anarchists were unable to compete with the Bolsheviks and had lost many of their comrades to the promise of revolution. The Marxists appropriation of popular revolutionary slogans convinced Russia's anarcho-syndicalists that Lenin truly sought to give "All Power to the Soviets." The Bolshevik promise undoubtedly engendered radical harmony in revolutionary Russia, and radical discourse bred ideological homogeneity.

While Lenin's revolution appealed to many, some anarchists, particularly militant anarcho-communists, repudiated Bolshevism and the "Social-vampires."⁷⁹ Few anarchist groups resorted to active terrorism against the Marxists in 1917 (such as the Underground Anarchists) as the promise of revolution kept many busy; instead, anarchist opposition to Bolshevism predominately resided in the social sphere of revolutionary society.⁸⁰ Anarchists who supported the Bolshevik vanguard were not only held in contempt by their anti-Bolshevik counterparts but also given the antagonistic title of Anarcho-Bolshevik and, later, "Soviet anarchist."⁸¹ A disunited anarchist community further divided as anarchist support for the Bolsheviks increased in 1917 and 1918.

⁷⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 196.

⁸⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 196.

⁸¹ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 197, note 82. Avrich explains that "the 'Anarcho-Bolshevik' epithet was used in 1917 and 1918, while 'Soviet anarchist' came into vogue during the Civil War."

While many anarchists like Shatov and Maksimov succumbed to the Bolshevik illusion in the quest for revolution, Volin did not. Volin's anarcho-syndicalism not only did not make him susceptible to joining the Bolsheviks; it prevented him from participating in the revolution. Volin's return to Russia in 1917 sheds new light on understanding why anarchists—more specifically, anarcho-syndicalists—worked with the Bolsheviks on the eve of revolution. Even Volin claimed that Lenin “arrived at an almost libertarian conception of the revolution, with almost Anarchist-slogans—except, of course, with regard to the fundamental point of demarcation—the taking of power and the problem of the State.”⁸²

The Bolshevik ascendancy to political power transformed Russia into a state of civil war as Bolshevik Reds battled counter-revolutionary Whites for control of the Russian state. Forced by circumstance, Russia's anarchists either assisted the Bolsheviks in stopping the counter-revolutionary loyalists from reestablishing the old order or challenged the Soviet regime and its vision of a socialist state. Lenin's revolutionary theory evolved as Bolshevik power solidified in 1918 as he now sought to control the revolution via state coercion. As Lenin abandoned his previous promises for the revolution, he abandoned his tolerance of anarchists, leaving them to either challenge the rapidly-expanding Red Army or continue their Bolshevik alliance built upon ideological affinities. Most chose to fight alongside the Red Army, ensuring that a counter-revolution never reached the capital. Some, however, decided to challenge both the Reds and Whites. Anarchists who opposed Bolshevik power were consequently subsumed within

⁸² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209.

the category of counter-revolutionary. The government began to suppress the anarchist movement beginning April 1918, forcing the anarchists to flee their homeland.⁸³

As growing anarchist influence threatened Bolshevik power, the nascent Soviet regime ended their anarchist alliance. While Lenin insisted that “anarchists, left socialist revolutionists, and even Mensheviks were cooperating” with the new government, anarchism was unofficially subsumed within the category of counter-revolution.⁸⁴ The Bolsheviks deemed the anarchists’ anti-communist, anti-statist rhetoric a threat to the revolution. Ordered by Lenin and, on occasion, by Trotsky, the Cheka arrested, exiled, or executed most of Russia’s remaining anarchists by the end of the Civil War.⁸⁵ In 1918, anarchist refugees migrated to the Ukraine to establish new revolutionary organizations. There they sought to defend the revolution from both the Bolsheviks and the anti-Bolshevik Whites, as both now threatened the anarchists’ cause.

The Bolsheviks considered all anarchists and their organizations a threat to Bolshevik power. The new regime deemed anarchism a primitive revolutionary political theory from “the distant past.”⁸⁶ Bolshevik propaganda in 1918 claimed that “the Soviet government does not have in mind the persecution of ideological anarchism” but opposed those who showed “criminal and obviously counter-revolutionary elements.”⁸⁷ Despite

⁸³ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 222; Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 38; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 159.

⁸⁴ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 806.

⁸⁵ For a detailed description about the Bolshevik’s oppression of the anarchist movement, see the chapter “The Downfall of Russian Anarchism” in Paul Avrich’s *The Russian Anarchists*.

⁸⁶ “Ob anarkhizme,” *Pravda*, 21 April 1918, 1.

⁸⁷ “Bol’sheviki i anarkhisty,” *Delo naroda*, 14 April 1918, 5.

this difference, noted anarchist intellectuals who deplored violence (even violence for the sake of revolution) experienced political persecution in both Russian and the Ukraine. The Cheka terrorized the anarchist community, particularly anarcho-syndicalists, who experienced frequent detainment and imprisonment after October as anarcho-syndicalist concepts of economic and social organization continued to thrive among the working class after the October Revolution. The fragile nature of the Bolshevik hold on power and a specific fear of an anarchist uprising compelled the Bolshevik regime to eliminate all threats to Bolshevik power, both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary.

Disenchanted with early-Bolshevik policies, particularly the party's support for the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Russia's anarchists openly defied the nascent regime beginning in the spring of 1918. As Russia's anarchists refuted early-Bolshevik policy, they not only challenged the party's legitimacy during a period of political and civil unrest but also publicly disputed the Bolsheviks' political power. In the wake of continuous anarchist political subversion, the Bolsheviks terminated their anarchist association beginning on the night of 12 April 1918.⁸⁸ Ordered by Bolshevik leadership, the Cheka raided twenty-six anarchist houses in Moscow. While most anarchists surrendered, anarchists in the Donskoi Monastery, Tzettlin house, and Kupechesky Club ardently resisted Cheka arrest, resulting in the deaths of about forty anarchists and a dozen Cheka agents.⁸⁹ As the Cheka imprisoned over five-hundred anarchists and

⁸⁸ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 356.

⁸⁹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 356; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 184. According to Maksimov, anarchist resisters who were awoken by the Cheka from their sleep assumed that the invaders were counter-revolutionaries and, therefore, naturally refused to cooperate.

shutdown noted anarchist periodicals such as *The Voice of Labor* and *Anarchy* (*Anarkhiia*) the following days, Russia's remaining anarchists fled south to the Ukraine.⁹⁰

Anarchist runaways established the *Nabat* Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of the Ukraine in Kharkov in 1918.⁹¹ The *Nabat* Confederation was the largest anarchist organization in the Ukraine which opposed the new Bolshevik government. They advocated for “a unified Anarchist movement (based, theoretically, on a sort of Anarchist ‘synthesis’) and to rally all the active Anarchist forces in Russia, without regard for [specific] tendency, into a general organization.”⁹² The confederation sought to unite the previously-disorganized anarchists, which would theoretically allow them to defeat the White Army, overthrow the Bolshevik government, and maintain the true revolution. A united anarchist front ensured the anarchists not only developed a united plan to defeat the Reds and Whites but also prevented ideological differences from impeding upon their revolutionary agenda. By fall 1918, the *Nabat* Confederation spread throughout the Ukraine with branches in “Kiev, Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, and other major cities.”⁹³ Despite this initial success, the organization failed to establish a united anarchist movement, for many anarchists deemed the concept of united anarchism an “ineffectual formula of unification,” as many believed that the anarcho-communists, the largest

⁹⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 184-185.

⁹¹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 268; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 204.

⁹² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 268.

⁹³ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 204.

anarchist community, would dominate the organization and negate the egalitarianism of its internal structure.⁹⁴

Other anarchists joined the revolutionary army of Nestor Makhno. Makhno, born in 1889 in Guliai-Pole, initially organized a small group of armed partisans who, “under the black flag of anarchism, launched a series of raids” upon counter-revolutionary troops in Guliai-Pole in July 1918.⁹⁵ The *Makhnovsty* at first collaborated with the Bolsheviks to defeat the White Army in early 1918. Makhno fought to establish an autonomous region in the Ukraine where the people “were free to organize their lives as they saw fit.”⁹⁶ His success invigorated the Ukrainian anarchist movement as Ukrainian peasants supported Makhno and his mission, which sought to guarantee peasant communes absolute political and economic autonomy; Makhno’s army swelled as he battled Whites throughout the south. Makhno’s military tactics and heralded leadership repeatedly led the *Makhnovtsy* to victory and, from January to May 1919, the Guliai-Pole region was free from both Red and White forces.⁹⁷ Fearful of Makhno’s growing popularity among the peasantry, the Bolsheviks abandoned their alliance with the *Makhnovsty* and attempted to assassinate Makhno in May 1919.⁹⁸ Faced with Denikin’s invading White Army, Makhno and the Marxists overlooked their differences and joined forces once again in another temporary

⁹⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 205.

⁹⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 211-212.

⁹⁶ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 218.

⁹⁷ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 213.

⁹⁸ Paul Avrich, “Russian Anarchists and the Civil War,” *The Russian Review* 27, no. 7 (1968), 301.

alliance that lasted throughout 1919 and most of 1920 until November, when the Red Army arrested Makhno's supporters in the *Nabat* Confederation, captured the *Makhnovsty* headquarters, and executed most of Makhno's commanders.⁹⁹ Makhno managed to escape to Paris, but "the downfall of Makhno marked the beginning of the end of Russian anarchism," according to Paul Avrich.¹⁰⁰

By 1921, increased state oppression, the cessation of the *Makhnovsty* and *Nabat* Confederation, and the death of Peter Kropotkin marked the end of anarchism inside Russia. Anarchists enjoyed a glimmer of hope during the Kronstadt Rebellion in March 1921, when rebels challenged the dominion of Marxists and their "commissar-state."¹⁰¹ As the Red Army suppressed the rebellion, the Bolshevik regime instituted a new wave of political arrests and censorship, focusing on remaining anarchists. With the Kronstadt Rebellion put down, Russia's anarchist movement dissolved.

Historians argue that the anarchists' failure to discern between the people's revolution and the Bolshevik revolution led to the death of Russia's anarchist movement.¹⁰² Events in Russia during 1917 had led to an increased support of anarchism and escalating anarchist membership, yet the anarchists were unable to form a political alternative to the Leninists until after the October Revolution. A mistaken trust in the intentions of the Bolsheviks at this critical moment ultimately led to the anarchists'

⁹⁹ Avrich, "Anarchists and the Civil War," 301-304.

¹⁰⁰ Avrich, "Anarchists and the Civil War," 304.

¹⁰¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 229.

¹⁰² Goldberg, 256.

failure. Ninety percent of those Russian anarchists who returned from abroad died in the political violence of the Revolution and Civil War.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Zimmer, "Premature Anti-Communists," 53.

CHAPTER 3

VLADIMIR SERGEYEVICH SHATOV

*The “Danton of the Revolution”*¹⁰⁴

An upsurge of revolutionary sentiment among Russia’s workers, peasants, and soldiers took place in the summer of 1917. The desire for revolution blurred ideological differences; revolutionaries united for the approaching revolution and dismissed their political disagreements for the greater good of society. For many Russians, revolution constituted the reversal of Russia’s old order and dissolution of its bourgeois democracy. However, some radicals merely sought a revolution regardless of any ideological basis. Western and Soviet memoirists from this period have portrayed Russia’s revolutionaries as political and social heroes who devoted their lives to the social revolution.¹⁰⁵ They have depicted men and women of extraordinary commitment, people who were unfaltering in their beliefs, willing to die for the revolutionary movement. While some anarchists, such as Grigorii Maksimov, ultimately realized the true political agenda of the Bolshevik Party and discontinued their temporary alliance with the Bolsheviks, others accepted Vladimir Lenin’s vision of revolution and society. Vladimir Shatov was one.

Vladimir Sergeyevich Shatov, once an ardent anarcho-syndicalist who participated in the 1905 Revolution, joined the Bolsheviks in the summer of 1917 and

¹⁰⁴ Komroff, “Red Days,” 153.

¹⁰⁵ For examples, see Emma Goldman’s discussion with Shatov in chapter 52 of *Living My Life*, and Grigorii Maksimov’s *Syndicalists in The Russian Revolution*.

became an official party member by early 1918.¹⁰⁶ This chapter explores the life of Vladimir Shatov to understand why he and other anarcho-syndicalists joined the Bolshevik Party on the eve of revolution. It seeks to answer the question: did radical discourse, coupled with heightened revolutionary fervor, blur ideological heterogeneity or did the ideological semblance between anarcho-syndicalism and Bolshevism compel Russia's anarcho-syndicalists to join the Bolshevik vanguard? An examination of Shatov's life will ultimately reveal this anarcho-syndicalist's interpretation of revolution and how it shaped his decision to join the Bolsheviks. It illustrates how Russia's socioeconomic conditions in 1917 influenced some Russians to adopt new ideologies.

Born in 1887 into a Jewish family from Kiev, Shatov, like many other Jewish Russians, became a revolutionary at a young age.¹⁰⁷ He completed Gymnasium and later attended a Technological Institute.¹⁰⁸ Shatov was probably first introduced to anarchism at the institute. Despite the illegality of disseminating anti-Tsarist propaganda in late-nineteenth-century Russia, the country's intelligentsia often introduced young idealists to unorthodox ideologies while they attended institutions of higher education.¹⁰⁹ His

¹⁰⁶ Maksimov, *Program*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ M. K. Kozybaev, ed., *Alma-Ata entsiklopediia* (Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, 1983), 574; Henry Kittredge Norton, *The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923), 184; Morris Ganberg, interview by Paul Avrich in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 374. On page sixteen of *Immigrants Against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America*, Kenyon Zimmer explains that a predominate number of anarchists were Jewish Russians.

¹⁰⁸ Norton, 184. There is no documentation stating that Shatov graduated from the Technological Institute, merely that he attended a school of higher education.

¹⁰⁹ Both Maksimov and Volin confess to being introduced to anarchist rhetoric in academia.

introduction to anarchism in his early years ultimately led to his participation in the 1905 Revolution.

For Shatov, the events of 1905 not only shaped his understanding of revolution but also resulted in his temporary relocation to the United States. The outcome of the 1905 Revolution compelled thousands of Russians to emigrate. For many revolutionaries, participation in the events of 1905 often led to arrest. For fear of imprisonment or, worse, death, many immigrated to the United States or Western Europe.¹¹⁰ His decision to immigrate to the United States in 1906 further propelled him into the anarchist movement; this ten-year sojourn provided him with new experiences that reshaped his anarchism and interpretation of revolution.¹¹¹

Shatov quickly established himself within the American anarchist and labor movements. He developed relationships with prominent radicals such as Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, and “Big” Bill Haywood, became a member of the Anarchist Red Cross in New York, and a regular lecturer at the Ferrer Center at 107th East Street in New York City.¹¹² Employed “as a labourer, longshoreman, machinist, and printer”

¹¹⁰ Norton, 185.

¹¹¹ Kozybaev, 574. Emma Goldman claims that Shatov arrived in the United States in 1907 (*Living My Life*, 595). Paul Avrich also asserts that Shatov emigrated from Russia in 1907 (*The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States*, 120). However, the official Soviet encyclopedia states that he emigrated in 1906. Considering Shatov was later employed by the Soviet government, this study will continue to assert that he arrived in the United States in 1906.

¹¹² Leonard D. Abbott, “The Fourth Anniversary of Ferrer’s Death,” *Mother Earth*, October 1913, reprinted in *Mother Earth Bulletin 1913-1914*, vol. 8, no. 1 (New York: Greenwood Reprint Corporation, 1968), 238.

during his time in the United States, Shatov “was familiar with the hardships, insecurity, and humiliation that characterize[d] the existence of the immigrant toiler.”¹¹³ Goldman considered Shatov “a splendid organizer, an eloquent speaker, and a man of courage.”¹¹⁴ He was a familiar face within America’s radical circle in Greenwich Village. Shatov established the largest anarchist organization in the country’s history, the Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada or UORW (*Soiuz russkikh rabochikh Soedinennykh Shtatov i Kanady*).¹¹⁵

While noted anarchists Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman asserted that Shatov was indeed an ardent anarchist, others in the American-anarchist movement challenged this notion. Many critiqued Shatov’s love for alcohol and women, often claiming that he used the movement to further his own agenda.¹¹⁶ The wife of anarchist Ginsbursky stated that she knew Shatov in Kiev and that “he had been an ordinary criminal there, not an anarchist expropriator.”¹¹⁷ She claimed that he did not care about the anarchist movement but only acted “for his personal gain.”¹¹⁸ These accusations highlight a critical obstacle innate to anarchist movements and illustrate Shatov’s

¹¹³ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 595.

¹¹⁴ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 595.

¹¹⁵ Edgar B. Speer, “The Russian Workingmen’s Association, sometimes called the Union of Russian Workers (What It Is and How It Operates). [A Bureau of Investigation Internal Report]” (Pittsburgh: Bureau of Investigation, 8 April 1919), 1-3.

¹¹⁶ Abraham Blecher, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 352; Ganberg, interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 374.

¹¹⁷ Ganberg interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 374.

¹¹⁸ Ganberg interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 374.

character and dedication to anarchism. Malefactors plagued anarchist organizations by camouflaging their criminal intentions with ideological justifications. Before his immigration to the United States, Shatov's anarchism appears to correlate more so with his personal desires than political dogma.

Shatov's experiences in Russia most likely prompted him to advocate for the establishment of an anarcho-communist society. In 1907, Shatov "formed a Russian Anarchist Group" in New York City, the Russian Workingmen's Association (RWA), with three other radicals.¹¹⁹ Within six months, the group welcomed a dozen members and established its official print organ, *The Voice of Labor (Golos truda)*.¹²⁰ This newly-established Russian-American anarchist group advocated for the establishment of an anarcho-communist collective.¹²¹ Anarcho-communist societies are theoretically built around agrarian industries and often refute the necessity of industrialization and factorization. Unlike the United States, Russia was late to industrialize; most immigrant Russians therefore came from the countryside. Even after the rapid industrialization of Russia's major cities, many factory workers continued to retain cultural, social, and economic ties with their native villages. According to Victoria Bonnell, some factory workers even wanted to return to their former agrarian professions but were unable to because of financial reasons.¹²² For Shatov, and many radical Russians, anarcho-

¹¹⁹ Speer, 1.

¹²⁰ Speer, 1.

¹²¹ For a further description of anarcho-communism, see Paul Avrich's article "The Anarchists in the Russian Revolution."

communism not only promised the creation of an egalitarian society but also a return to the life with which many were familiar.

American industrial-market capitalism created a distinct Russian-American anarchist movement and shaped Shatov's interpretation of revolution. In Russia, revolutionaries discussed the mobilization of the masses, as the empire was industrially immature and considered unfit for a social revolution. However, the United States theoretically embodied the capitalist stage of Marx's theory of history. For immigrating anarcho-communists, American capitalism had, in theory, produced a working class eager for a proletarian revolution. Yet anarcho-communist immigrants encountered a system considerably different than their expectations. The reality of the American labor movement, combined with new experiences in the United States, forced Shatov to reexamine the practicality of anarcho-communism and reassess its applicability.

Shatov's anarchism was also influenced by French syndicalism. In 1912, he and the RWA hosted an anarchist convention in Philadelphia, where anarchists from around the world gathered.¹²³ Among them was Muchin, a delegate from the anarcho-syndicalist community in Paris.¹²⁴ Influenced by Muchin and French syndicalists, Shatov and, subsequently, the RWA abandoned anarcho-communism and began to advocate anarcho-syndicalism. They contended that the change was necessary, "being that America was not

¹²² Victoria Bonnell, *The Russian Worker: Life and Labor Under the Tsarist Regime* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983), 160.

¹²³ Speer, 2.

¹²⁴ There is no indication in the war department's report rather Muchin was a sobriquet or the individual's actual name.

yet ripe for Communism, and that the conditions of the working men could be taken care of by syndicalism better than communism.”¹²⁵ The presence of Muchin and the French syndicalists at this meeting does not appear coincidental. Shatov’s reasoning for adopting anarcho-syndicalism insinuates that he sought to establish, at first, a communist collective and, later, a syndicalist society organized around labor unions.

The unofficial switch to anarcho-syndicalism did not go unnoticed by other Russian-American anarchists. According to a report filed by the U.S. War Department, the outcome of the Philadelphia convention caused a rift in the organization. While some anarchists joined Shatov in his new anarcho-syndicalist venture, others (particularly in Philadelphia) remained loyal to anarcho-communism.¹²⁶ Shatov began publishing anarcho-syndicalist articles in *The Voice of Labor*. The dichotomy between the two groups was highlighted in the newspaper’s September issue. In a letter sent to the newspaper’s print staff, anarchists from Seattle and Victoria, British Columbia, outlined multiple ways that Russian anarchists could work together to achieve their revolutionary endeavors. They reminded the paper’s readers that the “main goal of the united organizations is the struggle with capital and power.”¹²⁷ Nevertheless, the organization split. The insurrectionist wing of anarcho-communists retained the title of Russian Workingmen’s Association, while Shatov and his fellow anarcho-syndicalists established

¹²⁵ U.S. War Department, War College Division, *Russian Workmen’s Association*, report by the Office of the Chief of Staff (Pittsburgh, 15 April 1917), microform, 4-5.

¹²⁶ U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen’s Association*, 5-6.

¹²⁷ “Ko vsiem russkim organizatsiiam soed. Shtatov i Kanady,” *Golos truda*, 1 September 1912, 7.

a new organization—the Union of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada.

Shatov's ideological shift in 1912 challenges the notion that he was a committed ideological anarchist as Goldman and Berkman believed. While Shatov clearly advocated the establishment of an anarcho-communist collective in 1906, he had changed his beliefs after immigrating to the United States. His ideology at this time was an amalgam of transplanted ideas created by socioeconomic discontent. Monarchical oppression in Russia and France and the pressures of industrial market capitalism in the United States ultimately shaped his understanding of society and history. His experiences as a Jew in Russia and as an immigrant in the United States undoubtedly led him to believe that only a violent social revolution could engender change.

This change shows that he was not absolute in his political outlook and that his concept of revolution changed as his environment did. Shatov did not seek to establish an anarchist commonwealth; instead, anarchism provided him with the ideological justification to use violence. Employing either communism or syndicalism as his agent of social organization, Shatov applied anarchism as his vehicle of revolution. His writings in 1912 and 1917 demonstrates a distinct desire for the direct use of violence, a concept that was anathema for Marxists and syndicalists, who contended that terrorist actions only hindered the revolutionary cause. While Shatov's radical proselytization illustrates his continued desire for revolution, his vacillating ideology demonstrates his malleable political dogma. This characteristic Shatov retained throughout his life.

As soon as Shatov received word of the February Revolution and abdication of

the Tsar, he made it his sole purpose to return to Russia.¹²⁸ The Provisional Government began funding the mass remigration of thousands of expatriates.¹²⁹ In the United States, Russian Consul George Tchirkow organized a committee to assist returning immigrants.¹³⁰ Established on 28 March 1917 at 534 East 5th Street in New York City, the national repatriation committee was a mixture of anarchists, socialists, and communists led by Shatov.¹³¹ Managed by the UORW and Russian Socialist Federation, the committee formed multiple sub-committees in large industrial cities to support the mass repatriation of Russian immigrants.¹³² Funded by the Russian Consul via Provisional Government, committees assisted Russian-Americans with completing immigration paperwork and on rare occasions even supplied counterfeit passports.¹³³ According to the Bureau of Investigation and American Russian Consul, a majority of the

¹²⁸ Norton, 185.

¹²⁹ Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Monad Press, 1932), 1:276; Boris Yelensky, *In the Struggle for Equality: The Story of The Anarchist Red Cross* (Chicago: Alexander Berkman Aid Fund, 1958), 34.

¹³⁰ U.S. War Department, War College Division, *Russian Workmen's Association, Anarchistic Organization*, report by John R. Dillon (Pittsburgh: Office of the Chief of Staff, 25 May 1917), microform, 1.

¹³¹ New York State Senate, Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps Being Taken and Required to Curb It* (Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1920), 1: 628-629; Morris Greenshner, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 378-379; Goldman, *Living My Life*, 595.

¹³² The main repatriation committees were established in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and New York City.

¹³³ U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen's Association*, 1; Komroff, "Red Days," 5. According to Komroff, Shatov personally provided a false passport to a radical Irishman who was fleeing North America to escape arrest. The passport Shatov provided was not counterfeit but belonged to a different Russian-American that did not return to Russia.

returnees were anarchists.¹³⁴ Shatov was at the forefront of the remigration following the February Revolution and managed to relocate thousands of immigrants back to Russia in collaboration with the UORW, Anarchist Red Cross, and Provisional Government.¹³⁵

Returnees traveled through a complex transportation network. Beginning in their adopted American hometowns, remigrants first travelled to Vancouver. Travelers then embarked on an eleven-day sea voyage to Yokohama, Japan. Once in Yokohama, they boarded another ship that ferried them to Vladivostok. To reach Petrograd, travelers entrained a special locomotive that made its way to the country's capital on the Trans-Siberian railroad. According to Komroff, this train was solely reserved for returning political exiles.¹³⁶ Last to leave, Shatov, with his wife, Anna, the entire *The Voice of Labor* printing staff, and two hundred of their radical compatriots (including Leon Trotsky), departed the United States in June and arrived in Petrograd in July 1917.¹³⁷ Returning Russians increased the number of revolutionaries in the country and reinvigorated revolutionary sentiment after the failure of the June days.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ U.S. War Department, *Russian Workmen's Association*, 1.

¹³⁵ Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143; U.S. Department of Commerce, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1919, Forty-Second Number*, by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1920), 90, 93. The U.S. Government reports show that 6,393 Russians departed the United States by June 1917. Historian Kenyon Zimmer estimates that "funds provided by the provisional government and the Anarchist Red Cross . . . paid for the return of at least four hundred Russian revolutionaries between March and June 1917" (Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143).

¹³⁶ Komroff, "Red Days," 2-8; Manuel Komroff, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 202.

¹³⁷ Komroff, "Red Days," 102; Komroff interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 202; Norton, 185; Yelensky, 35; Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 143; Copp, 134, 149.

In the summer of 1917, Shatov did not support the Bolsheviks or their political agenda. In Petrograd, he began to reestablish himself within the radical community. Shatov's friend, journalist, and fellow anarchist Manuel Komroff, who lived with Shatov and his wife at the time, depicts Shatov's busy life during the summer of 1917 in the unpublished manuscript "Red Days and Nights." Komroff's work presents an extremely active Shatov household comprised of anarchists, syndicalists, and socialists who constantly debated Russia's socioeconomic condition.¹³⁹ Komroff claimed that these discussions were amicable and nonpartisan, but he explicitly stated that all of Shatov's colleagues rejected Marxism and Lenin's interpretation of revolution.¹⁴⁰ Some contended that Marxism was economic utopianism, while others highlighted the inaccuracies of Marx's theory of historical evolution.¹⁴¹

At this time, Shatov no longer described himself as an anarchist but as a syndicalist.¹⁴² This language indicates that his interpretation of syndicalism was intertwined with the tenets of anarchism. In a conversation with Komroff about counter-revolution, for example, Shatov clearly supported direct action: "If they [the counter-revolutionaries] want street fighting, then we are ready for the barricades. If they want horror, then the gutters will run with blood. If they want terror, then let them recall the

¹³⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 131-132. The June Days were a pro-Bolshevik protest that broke out in Petrograd on 18 June 1917.

¹³⁹ Komroff, "Red Days," 43-66.

¹⁴⁰ Komroff, "Red Days," 67-75.

¹⁴¹ Komroff, "Red Days," 70.

¹⁴² Komroff, "Red Days," 43-44, 122.

guillotine in France and let them count once more the number of heads which fell in the basket.”¹⁴³ While Shatov claimed to be a syndicalist, his willingness to use violence opposed syndicalist doctrine, which held that justice for the working class “can only come from the organised efforts of the working class themselves.”¹⁴⁴ For syndicalists, the social revolution was not achieved through the unification of the lower classes and violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie but was accomplished through the general strike.¹⁴⁵

Shatov’s desire for social revolution propelled him further into Russia’s revolutionary movement in the summer of 1917. Not only was he elected to the Petrograd Soviet, he was also recruited to speak at factories, workers’ meetings, and the Smolny Institute on multiple occasions.¹⁴⁶ Fellow anarchist Grigorii Maksimov contended that Shatov was also highly active within the factory committees during this period and often advocated for the dissolution of trade unions and permanent establishment of the factory committees.¹⁴⁷ Shatov’s efforts to solidify the role of factory committees resulted in his election to the Central Council of Petrograd Factory Committees.¹⁴⁸ In August 1917, Shatov supported syndicalism and its vision of an industrially-centered commonwealth.

By the end of September, however, Shatov’s political allegiances shifted again.

¹⁴³ Komroff, “Red Days,” 132.

¹⁴⁴ Komroff, *Russian Problem*, 15.

¹⁴⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 72-75.

¹⁴⁶ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 89, 150-156.

¹⁴⁷ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 8; Smith, 221. Shatov considered Russia’s trade unions “living corpses” (Smith, 221).

¹⁴⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 146.

Sometime in mid-September, he accompanied his comrade Bocha to meet Lenin in Finland.¹⁴⁹ While there is lack of information that details why Shatov wanted to meet Lenin (or if Lenin wanted to meet Shatov), the two discussed Russia's current state and the need for political, economic, and social change. Growing Bolshevik influence during this period may have persuaded Shatov to meet the "prophet of Marxism."¹⁵⁰ According to Komroff, "there was only one group which was not intimidated, which seemed to know just what it wanted and that was the Bolsheviks."¹⁵¹ Shatov returned later in the month with noted journalist John Reed to continue his conversation with Lenin.¹⁵² Shatov's second meeting with Lenin ultimately led Shatov down a revolutionary path that joined him to the Bolsheviks and their vanguard revolution.

Komroff details Shatov's decision to join the Bolsheviks in the chapter "Shatov's Confession." Shatov believed that joining forces with the Bolsheviks would ultimately lead to a successful revolution but would require "compromise."¹⁵³ Shatov described the change as one in which he gave up his beliefs to bet upon a winner: "I'm forced to surrender and I do so willingly . . . and unwillingly. Willingly because I know it is the

¹⁴⁹ Komroff, "Red Days," 53-54, 121. Bocha's official name was David Leven. He later changed his name to David Levenboch. This paper asserts that the meeting occurred in mid-September because Komroff states that Shatov did not meet Lenin until after the Kornilov Affair, which occurred from 10 to 13 September 1917.

¹⁵⁰ Komroff, "Red Days," 74. Komroff asserts that Shatov and his comrades deemed Lenin the "prophet of Marxism."

¹⁵¹ Komroff, "Red Days," 118.

¹⁵² Komroff, "Red Days," 122.

¹⁵³ Komroff, "Red Days," 122.

best thing to do. Unwillingly because I must set aside what I believe in.”¹⁵⁴ In confidence, Shatov explained to Komroff that the lack of anarchists and syndicalists in Russia would prevent them from generating change and, therefore, the revolutionaries “must bury [their] differences deeply.”¹⁵⁵ Joining the strongest side would protect the revolution: “If we [the revolutionaries] joined together then no one could trample over us.”¹⁵⁶ He insisted that he and the syndicalists had “no other choice, they needed to “join . . . Lenin and the Marxists.”¹⁵⁷ However, he believed that the “union [would] not last forever” and that he would “remain a Syndicalist” but, “because of dire necessity,” the syndicalists “must work with the Bolsheviks.”¹⁵⁸

Others apparently thought in similar terms, for Shatov managed to convince some of his closest friends to join the Marxists.¹⁵⁹ While their reasons for joining varied, the syndicalist faction in Petrograd united with the Bolsheviks for the social revolution. According to Komroff (who remained an anarchist during this period), “For many this move was acceptable but for others it was not an easy one. Zhuk, as usual, was silent. He did not seem to mind joining the ranks of his former ‘enemies.’ The Professor considered it temporary and expedient. Moski went along without protest. Bocha was silent. But for

¹⁵⁴ Komroff, “Red Days,” 121.

¹⁵⁵ Komroff, “Red Days,” 123.

¹⁵⁶ Komroff, “Red Days,” 123.

¹⁵⁷ Komroff, “Red Days,” 125.

¹⁵⁸ Komroff, “Red Days,” 124-125.

¹⁵⁹ Komroff, “Red Days,” 119.

Bill Shatov it meant complete surrender.”¹⁶⁰

Shatov’s decision to join the Bolshevik Party was not particularly unique for anarchists during this period. Paul Avrich points out that Russia’s anarchists “adopted a variety of positions [regarding the Bolsheviks], landing from active resistance to the Bolsheviks through passive neutrality to eager collaboration. A majority, however, cast in their lot with the beleaguered Soviet regime.”¹⁶¹ Many anarchists fell victim to Lenin’s reasonings during this period, which were designed to attract non-Marxist revolutionaries.

Shatov clearly believed that only a radical coalition committed to revolutionary action would engender a successful social revolution. Before the First All-Russian Conference of Factory Committees on 19 October 1917, Shatov insisted that all peasants, workers, and bureaucrats needed to ignore their political differences: Russia’s lower classes “must organize as a class and not become divided into political parties.”¹⁶² His approach did not coincide with the Bolshevik political agenda during this period. Instead, he advocated for “the seizure of the means of production” and asserted that “political power can give . . . nothing.”¹⁶³ Nonetheless, his advocacy for radical unity echoed Lenin’s implicit argument in *State and Revolution*. By October 1917, Shatov was

¹⁶⁰ Komroff, “Red Days,” 119.

¹⁶¹ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 20.

¹⁶² *Oktiabr’skaia revoliutsiia i fabzavkomy: materialy po istorii fabrichno-zavodskikh komitetov* (Moscow: Publishing House of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, 1927-1929), 2:165-166.

¹⁶³ *Oktiabr’skaia revoliutsiia*, 2:165-166.

collaborating with the Bolsheviks. He and three other anarchists, the anarcho-syndicalist Khaim “Efim” Yarchuk, the anarcho-communist, Bleikhman, and one unaffiliated anarchist, G. Bogatskii, joined the Bolshevik-led Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) that orchestrated the October coup d’état.¹⁶⁴ Shatov ultimately became the MRC chairman.¹⁶⁵ He not only assisted with planning October, he personally “led the attack on the Winter Palace in Petrograd.”¹⁶⁶

Shatov’s anarchist comrades no longer considered him an anarchist or a syndicalist by October.¹⁶⁷ Others labelled him an anarcho-Bolshevik.¹⁶⁸ Maksimov, for example, asserted that “Shatov became in fact a Bolshevik from the very moment when the capital was moved to Moscow early in 1918.”¹⁶⁹ Goldman insisted that Shatov “had not joined the Communist Party” by the winter of 1919,¹⁷⁰ while the journalist Henry Norton claimed that Shatov was a member in 1921.¹⁷¹ Anarchists who joined the

¹⁶⁴ Zimmer, “Premature Anti-Communists,” 49; Copp, 181-182.

¹⁶⁵ *Oktiabr’skoe vooruzhennoe vosstanie v petrograde: dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1957), 235. In a Soviet document that appointed a new Reserve Cavalry Regiment Deputy, the signing authority, Secretary Latsis, signed the document “For the Chairman, V. Shatov.”

¹⁶⁶ Komroff, “Red Days,” 190-201; Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 8.

¹⁶⁷ Komroff, “Red Days,” 153-154.

¹⁶⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 197, note 82.

¹⁶⁹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 351; Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 8. Vladimir Lenin moved the capital to Moscow in March of 1918.

¹⁷⁰ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 351.

¹⁷¹ Norton, 187.

Bolsheviks were no longer considered anarchists but redefined as Bolsheviks, regardless if they had joined the party or adopted Marxist political views.

While Shatov's role during the October Revolution solidified his position within the Bolshevik government, he did not support the nascent regime unconditionally. In less than two decades, Shatov advocated for anarcho-communism, anarcho-syndicalism, syndicalism, and Bolshevism. While Shatov's continuous political shifts are atypical, his decision to support the Marxists on the eve of revolution was not. During the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions held in Petrograd in January 1918, Shatov rejected the Bolshevik policy to establish trade unions under a central political party.¹⁷² He deemed trade unions to be "living corpses" and contended that society should focus on the development of factory committees, urging the working class "to organize in the localities and create a free, new Russia, without a God, without a Tsar, and without a boss in the trade union."¹⁷³ When Shatov refuted the notion of state-sponsored workers' control, he demonstrated that he could be both supportive of the Bolshevik Party and, yet, loyal to his syndicalist ideals. Maksimov explicitly labels Shatov as an ex-anarcho-syndicalist who joined the Bolsheviks and credits Shatov for his commitment to the factory committees.¹⁷⁴

Shatov nonetheless continued to be an avid supporter of the Bolshevik Party as

¹⁷² Maurice Brinton, *The Bolshevik's and Workers' Control: The State and Counter-Revolution* (London: Solidarity, 1970). The meeting occurred from 7 January to 14 January 1918.

¹⁷³ Brinton.

¹⁷⁴ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 8.

they solidified their political power. He was appointed Chief of Police of Petrograd in March 1919.¹⁷⁵ Not only did Shatov accept a position within the Bolshevik government, he disregarded a fundamental tenet of both anarchism and syndicalism, as both ideologies disapproved of the police generally. While Shatov claimed that “he would leave the Bolsheviks as soon as the counter-revolution in Russia ended,” his actions as Chief of Police certainly implied otherwise.¹⁷⁶ His appointment ultimately led to his unofficial reign as the “virtual governor” of Petrograd.¹⁷⁷ Louise Bryant describes Shatov’s depravity as Petrograd’s Chief of Police. Bryant personally supported the Bolsheviks and their political agenda, and her depiction of Shatov’s behavior sheds light on his character and his relationship with the Bolshevik government. For Bryant, the “former-anarchist” Shatov became Petrograd’s judge, jury, and executioner to save the revolution from “the most difficult of all groups,” the anarchists.¹⁷⁸ Shortly after Shatov became the Chief of Police, Petrograd experienced a high number of robberies. According to Bryant:

One night Bill Shatov arrested every so-called Anarchist in town. He held them two weeks without trial. In those two weeks, not a single robbery took place in Petrograd! . . . When the trial came up, Bill had a novel way of trying cases. He put each man through a sort of Anarchist’s catechism. All those who knew their litany he released—the others he held.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ Authur Ransome, *Russia in 1919* (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1919), 231; U.S. Department of Justice, “Department of Justice Press Release on the Mass Arrest Campaign Against the Union of Russian Workers” (8 November 1919).

¹⁷⁶ Ransome, 231.

¹⁷⁷ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734.

¹⁷⁸ Louise Bryant, *Mirrors of Moscow* (New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1923), 66.

¹⁷⁹ Bryant, 65-66.

Shatov “claimed that a lot of loafers and thieves had joined their [anarchist] organizations just to have an excuse not to do any work;” his actions, to Bryant, were “novel.”¹⁸⁰ Not only were Shatov’s actions as the Chief of Police of Petrograd antithetical to the anarchist dogma he had so ardently advocated for in the past but, according to Petrograd’s anarchists, they ultimately led to his informal dismissal by the end of the year.¹⁸¹ The anarchists of Petrograd contended that Shatov’s actions in the police exposed his true character as a betrayer of the anarchist revolution. They claimed that Shatov and his “*bourgeois cronies*” conducted “shady manipulations” and offenses against the people and that “Shatov ruled Petrograd with an iron hand.”¹⁸²

Shatov had continuously challenged the necessity of the government, contending that individuals had no masters, yet he supported the establishment of the Bolshevik regime in its violent establishment. In autumn of 1919, the Bolshevik government assigned Shatov command of the Tenth Red Army.¹⁸³ As commanding officer, he organized and led the defense of Petrograd against General Iudenich in October.¹⁸⁴ While many of his former comrades refused to join the Bolshevik Red Army, Shatov contended that his actions were necessary to prevent a counter-revolution. To Shatov, the Bolshevik state “was an unavoidable evil. . . . to save Russia from the reactionary elements which

¹⁸⁰ Bryant, 65.

¹⁸¹ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734.

¹⁸² Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734-735.

¹⁸³ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 20; Brinton.

¹⁸⁴ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 20.

are separately fighting to come back to power.”¹⁸⁵ While he continuously maintained that he remained an anarchist throughout the ordeal, his opposition to Bolshevik policy faded as the party solidified its power and institutions. By the end of the year, the Bolshevik regime appointed him Minister of Transport of the Far Eastern Republic.¹⁸⁶ While Henry Norton speculated that Shatov’s history as a labor organizer compelled the Bolsheviks to appoint him Minister of Transport, Shatov told Goldman that “he had fallen into disfavour with the Government and was being sent to Siberia into virtual exile.”¹⁸⁷ She claimed that he had “become a ‘Sovietsky’ anarchist. . . . That is why Lenin . . . saved him from the Cheka and . . . exiled him to Siberia instead.”¹⁸⁸

Despite virtual exile to Siberia, Shatov continued to work for the Bolshevik government in the Far East. The Bolsheviks appointed him to command armies on the Amur front in the summer of 1920, where he was instructed to negotiate peace with the Japanese.¹⁸⁹ Shatov signed the Gongota Agreement for Russia, which established an armistice.¹⁹⁰ The Bolshevik government then recalled him “to Chita in September, 1920, to assume the arduous duties of Minister of Transport and reorganize the shattered

¹⁸⁵ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734.

¹⁸⁶ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 20-21.

¹⁸⁷ Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia* (Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1923), 14.

¹⁸⁸ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 734.

¹⁸⁹ Norton, 185.

¹⁹⁰ Dal’nevostochnaia Respublika, *Japanese Intervention in the Russian Far East* (Washington, D.C.: The Special Delegation of the Far Eastern Republic to the United States of America, 1922), 125; Norton, 185.

railways of the Far East.”¹⁹¹ Hoping that his abilities as a labor organizer could resolve the labor disorder in Siberia, he was put “in charge of the construction of the Turkish Railroad.”¹⁹² Journalist Henry Norton speculated that Shatov’s history with the UORW and the Industrial Workers of the World led the Bolshevik government to believe that Shatov could fix their labor problems.¹⁹³

Shatov’s history indicates that his desire for revolution outweighed any specific revolutionary ideology. While Shatov claimed to support the anarchist cause, he switched political associations on multiple occasions. Shatov lacked a consistent political opinion, as his revolutionary agenda solely focused on revolution. While Grigorii Maksimov’s anarcho-syndicalism indeed made him susceptible to supporting the Red Army during the Civil War, it is unlikely the same case for Shatov. His history as a radical revolutionary indicates that Shatov joined the Bolsheviks because they were the only organization to act aggressively in favor of revolution amid the chaos of 1917; they were the only organization to offer Shatov his revolution.

Shatov supported Bolshevik despotism despite having argued against such institutions in the past. Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman had returned to Russia in 1918 to witness the world’s first successful social revolution, and there they met with their old comrade Shatov. During his time with Goldman, Shatov continuously supported

¹⁹¹ Norton, 185.

¹⁹² Raymond H. Anderson, “Americans Played Role in Early Economic Development of the Soviet Union,” *New York Times*, 1 November 1967, accessed 10 February 2017, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁹³ Norton, 184, 187.

the Bolshevik political agenda, asserting that “it was necessary for all the revolutionary elements to work with the Bolsheviki Government.”¹⁹⁴ He admitted, that “of course, the Communists had made many mistakes” but defended their actions, insisting that “what they did was inevitable” and “imposed upon them by Allied interference.”¹⁹⁵ The Bolsheviks were the opposite of the anarchist ideal, yet their power and success gave them legitimacy. To Shatov:

the Communist State in action is exactly what we anarchists have always claimed it would be—a tightly centralized power, still more strengthened by the dangers to the Revolution. Under such conditions one cannot do as one wills. One does not just hope on a train and go, or even ride the bumpers, as I used to in the United States. One needs permission. But don’t get the idea that I miss my American ‘blessings.’ Me for Russia, the Revolution, and its glorious future!¹⁹⁶

Shatov believed that a centralized police state subsumed under a central party was necessary for the social revolution. He recognized the emergence of a Bolshevik authoritarian state and supported the nascent regime regardless. While Shatov may have felt remorse for his actions, his history as a revolutionary contradicts this notion. For Shatov, revolution outweighed all. Politics, allegiances, and morals resided on the periphery of the revolution, as only the eradication of the state and its institutions of oppression could curb his revolutionary yearning.

¹⁹⁴ Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 145.

¹⁹⁵ Zimmer, *Immigrants*, 145.

¹⁹⁶ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 729-730.

CHAPTER 4

GRIGORII PETROVICH MAKSIMOV

“Only those that do not bend of their own will are made to bend by force, and only those are persecuted who do not submit and who keep on rebelling.”¹⁹⁷

Many revolutionaries succumbed to Lenin’s promises and supported the Bolshevik vanguard on the eve of revolution in October 1917. But the Bolshevik reactions to counter-revolution and world war exposed Lenin’s rhetorical distortions. As anarchists reevaluated their support of a political coup d’état by committed statist, they sought to reclaim their revolution. Yet counter-revolution posed a bigger threat to the anarchist cause. Forced by circumstance, anarchists were ideologically compelled to refute Bolshevik policies while simultaneously begrudged to prevent a counter-revolution. For the greater good of the revolution, many anarchists who had detested Bolshevik cooperation joined the Red Army following October. Among the temporary Soviet anarchists was Grigorii Petrovich Maksimov.

Convinced that tsarist loyalists would send Russia into a state of retrogression, Maksimov joined the Red Army despite his opposition to Lenin’s concepts of revolution and social organization. As Bolshevik political power strengthened, he refused to aid Russia’s new elite and deserted his post when the government expanded its persecution of anarchists in 1918. This chapter explores the life of Grigorii Maksimov and his vacillating relationship with the Bolsheviks. The case of Maksimov illustrates how Russia’s sweeping revolutionary fervor shaped the broader revolutionary movement, and

¹⁹⁷ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 335.

it challenges the notion that anarcho-syndicalists joined the Bolshevik Party because of the ideological semblance between the two political theories.

Like many of his fellow Russian anarchists, Maksimov read the works of Bakunin and Kropotkin at an early age. Born in the Russia village of Mitushino in the province of Smolensk on 10 November 1893, he was originally destined to become a priest.¹⁹⁸ Upon completing his elementary education, his father sent him to the theological seminary in Vladimir.¹⁹⁹ Although Maksimov completed his religious studies, he “realized that he was not fitted for that vocation.”²⁰⁰ After graduation, he enrolled in the Agricultural Academy at St. Petersburg University, where he first encountered the theories of Alexander Herzen, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels. Maksimov thoroughly studied the political theories of these prominent communists and socialists, yet it was Kropotkin’s idea regarding the dissolution of the state in favor of a collective commonwealth that attracted Maksimov to anarchism.²⁰¹ After Kropotkin, Maksimov stumbled upon Bakunin and his theory of collectivist anarchism that foresaw the complete abolition of the state and private property through a popular social revolution. Maksimov ultimately found that Bakunin’s theory best reflected his own personal inclinations and aligned most with his social credo.²⁰² By 1915, Maksimov was an educated agronomist who sought the demise

¹⁹⁸ Rudolph Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists in the Russian Revolution*, by Maksimov, n. p.

¹⁹⁹ Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists*, by Maksimov, n. p.

²⁰⁰ Rudolph Rocker, introduction to *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Grigorii Maksimov (New York: The Free Press, 1953), 25.

²⁰¹ Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 25.

of imperialism and capitalism through an anarchist revolution.²⁰³

The tides of war prevented Maksimov from joining the St. Petersburg anarchist movement after graduating from the Agricultural Academy. Shortly after he completed his agrarian studies, the Imperial Russian Army drafted him “to serve in the[ir] ‘imperialist struggle,’” in the words of Avrich.²⁰⁴ Maksimov never found himself entrenched in on the front lines, for he returned to Petrograd in the early months of 1917. Why or how Maksimov escaped his military service remains unknown, but his actions were not uncommon during this period, as many Russian soldiers abandoned the war for various moral, ideological, and practical reasons. In Petrograd, Maksimov found himself at the heart of the revolution and quickly established himself within Russia’s revolutionary movement. Before strikes broke out, he was producing secret anarchist propaganda and disseminating it among “students in St. Petersburg and the peasants in the [surrounding] rural regions.”²⁰⁵ He apparently participated in the February riots.²⁰⁶

The February Revolution ultimately reshaped Maksimov’s understanding of Russia’s revolutionary movement. Maksimov’s anarchism contained a syndicalist hue by February. Despite the lacking anarchist presence in February, he contended that the revolution was an organic anarcho-syndicalist movement which sought the economic

²⁰² Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 26.

²⁰³ Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists*, by Maksimov, n. p.; Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384.

²⁰⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 139.

²⁰⁵ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 1.

²⁰⁶ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 139.

decentralization of Russian society. He sought to replace the current bourgeoisie state with a decentralized society built around the nascent factory committees. Maksimov believed the factory committees were “to become the nuclei of the new social order gradually emerging from the inchoate elemental life of the revolution.”²⁰⁷ To Maksimov, the “revolutionary bodies immediately pushed to the front by the course of revolution were Anarcho-Syndicalist in their essential character.”²⁰⁸ After February, Maksimov abandoned direct action and instead sought to educate Russia’s workforce on the ideals of anarcho-syndicalism. In other words, he became a philosophical anarchist. He limited his revolutionary activity afterwards to ideological propaganda.²⁰⁹

Maksimov focused on organizing Russia’s labor movement during the summer months of 1917. He lectured at various workers’ gatherings, factory meetings, and the Cirque Moderne (an assembly hall commonly used for political rallies during this period).²¹⁰ In June, he joined Shatov as an elected member of the Central Council of Petrograd Factory Committees.²¹¹ To Maksimov, the masses preferred the decentralization of anarcho-syndicalism to the Bolsheviks’ state socialism, as anarcho-syndicalism mirrored the workers’ vision of an autonomous economy.²¹²

²⁰⁷ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 6.

²⁰⁸ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 1.

²⁰⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 139.

²¹⁰ Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 26; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 140.

²¹¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 146.

²¹² Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 6.

As Russia's industrial proletariat expanded their interpretation of revolution into the economic sphere of society, Maksimov sought to give coherency to the public's revolutionary dreams by means of education. In August, he joined the *Voice of Labor* at the age of twenty-three as the staff's youngest member and contributor.²¹³ The newspaper offered him a new opportunity to advocate for anarcho-syndicalism in an unprecedented manner. He became one of the newspapers most prolific contributors; either under his actual name or pseudonym, M. Sergven, Maksimov published multiple articles in the fall of 1917 which entreated the working class to ignore the Marxists, dissolve the trade unions, and rebuild society around the factory committees.

To Maksimov, revolution began with the factory workers who would unite and seize control of the economy by means of a general strike, hence the concept of workers' control was central to Maksimov's revolution. The anarcho-syndicalist interpreted workers' control as the complete autonomy of individual factories; factory workers directly administered Russia's economy through a federation of factory committees. While Lenin and the Bolsheviks called for a workers' revolution, Maksimov claimed that the Bolsheviks "were quite vague as the meaning of the term 'workers' control,' leaving it undefined, and making into a handy tool of demagogic propaganda . . . [and] were forced by the course of events to assume a position toward the Factory Committees which differed but little from that of Anarcho Syndicalists." Instead of establishing a federation of factory committees, the Bolsheviks sought to bring the trade unions and factories

²¹³ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 139.

under state control until the dissolution of the state.²¹⁴ In August, he criticized the trade unions and their blind devotion to political parties, whose policies rarely represented the demands of the people. He insisted that “the influence of the parties on the unions [was] so strong that the unions merely imitate[d] the parties, without attempting to create something new of their own.”²¹⁵ As he challenged the necessity of trade unions, Maksimov sought to solidify factory committees as formal economic and social institutions, which were “revolutionary, militant, bold, energetic and powerful” when compared to the “older, cautious . . . [and] complacent” trade unions.²¹⁶ Only the factory committees were capable of dealing “a mortal blow to the reign of capitalism.”²¹⁷

Until Bolshevik power threatened the actuality of the revolution, Maksimov limited his revolutionary endeavors to ideological pursuits. He remained dedicated to anarcho-syndicalism as a staff member and contributor for *The Voice of Labor* until the newspaper’s dissolution in 1918. Maksimov consistently opposed Marxism and the Social-Democrats, but the threat of counter-revolution compelled Maksimov to join the Bolsheviks after October, for he viewed the Whites as the greater threat to the social metamorphosis of Russian society than Bolshevik policy.

²¹⁴ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 349-350.

²¹⁵ Grigorii Maksimov, “O professional’nykh soiuzakh i zavodskikh komitetakh,” *Golos truda*, 11 August 1917, 4.

²¹⁶ Maksimov, “O professional’nykh soiuzakh,” 4.

²¹⁷ Maksimov, “O professional’nykh soiuzakh,” 4.

As counter-revolutionary sentiment spread among tsarist loyalists and anti-communists, circumstance presented Russia's anarchists with a unique dilemma: they could assist the Bolsheviks, which would undoubtedly aid the Marxists solidification of a Soviet dictatorship; or they could fight the White army independently, leaving the possibility of a successful counterrevolution; or they could remain neutral, consequently leaving the revolution to fate.²¹⁸ Heightened revolutionary fervor compelled most anarchists to join the Red Army, for "however critical they were of the Soviet dictatorship, . . . [they] considered the Whites an even greater evil."²¹⁹ But while Shatov accepted permanent positions in the Bolshevik regime, Maksimov's allegiance to the Marxists was fleeting. By the end of 1917, Maksimov somehow managed to escape his arrest, desert the Red Army, and return to Petrograd, where he continued to challenge Bolshevik actions.

Maksimov's military sojourn provides an alternative understanding of why anarcho-syndicalists joined the Bolsheviks. Anarchists that initially opposed the Bolshevik vanguard felt it necessary to still support the revolution, as evident from *The Voice of Labor* article printed on the day of the political coup d'état. Regardless of Bolshevik policy, Russia's anarchists considered it their "duty always to participate in such movement[s], seeking to communicate our meaning, our ideas, our truth."²²⁰ Some anarchists counted among the ranks of the Bolshevik vanguard and Red Army in 1917

²¹⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 195-196.

²¹⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 207.

²²⁰ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 219.

and 1918 did not support the Bolshevik revolution or Soviet state but merely sought to aid the social revolution. Many found themselves aiding the Marxists as the promise of revolution offered hope for a future anarchist revolution. Shatov claimed that Bolshevism “was an unavoidable evil;” although his justification for Bolshevism supported the establishment of a temporary socialist state, it also reinforces the notion that some anarchists viewed the Bolsheviks as a necessary component of the Russian Revolution.²²¹ Maksimov’s dedication to the revolution undoubtedly outweighed his personal desires as the revolution required sacrifices from all.

Maksimov resumed his position at *The Voice of Labor* by the end of 1917. It was during the period between 1918 to 1921 that Maksimov was most active in his opposition to the Bolshevik state. He declared the Bolsheviks unfit to lead the revolution, as their policies contradicted the desires of the people who sought freedom through autonomy. While Russia’s anarcho-syndicalists supported the Bolsheviks in their endeavor to eradicate the state, early Bolshevik policies were unacceptable. Lenin sought to retain the state and its power, merely replacing the previous bourgeois class with new Soviet elites. By December 1917, Maksimov refused to aid the distorted Bolshevik revolution. He entreated Russia’s anarchists to do the same:

Our aid to the Bolsheviks must end at the point where their victory begins. We must open a new front, for we have fulfilled the demands of progress . . . We will go with the Bolsheviks no longer, for their 'constructive' work has begun, directed towards what we have always fought and what is a brake on progress -- the strengthening of the state. It is not our cause to strengthen what we have resolved to destroy.²²²

²²¹ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 731.

While anarchists responded to the revolutionary “demands of progress” the previous year, Lenin’s retention of the state was intolerable, as they considered the state “the sum of negations of individual liberty.”²²³

Maksimov deemed the Bolsheviks betrayers of the revolution and considered them incapable of leading it.²²⁴ He insisted that Lenin had abandoned his previous revolutionary vision in lieu of controlling state power. To Maksimov, the elimination of the state and its oppressive institutions was essential to the revolution’s survival, as “once the revolutionary force aspires to domination, it becomes stagnant and repressive because it strives to hold on to its power, allowing nothing and no one to limit it.”²²⁵ He believed the allure of state power coerced most of the Bolsheviks to betray the revolution:

This is why the Bolsheviks, before their victory over Menshevism, defensism, and opportunism, were a revolutionary force. But they have now become, in keeping with the laws of progress, a force of stagnation, a force seeking to restrain the revolutionary pressures of life, a force striving to squeeze life into the artificial framework of their programme, with the result that they have given rise to a new force, progressive and revolutionary, that will seek to destroy this framework and to widen the sphere of revolutionary activity. Such a force, at the present moment, is anarchism.²²⁶

²²² Grigorii Maksimov, “Sovety rabochikh, soldatskikh i krest’ianskikh deputatov i nashi k nim otnoshenie,” *Golos truda*, 22 December 1917, reprinted in Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 104.

²²³ Maksimov, ed., *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 209.

²²⁴ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 2.

²²⁵ Maksimov, “Sovety rabochikh,” 104.

²²⁶ Maksimov, “Sovety rabochikh,” 104.

While Maksimov credited the Marxists for originally seeking a social revolution, he contended that politicians, even revolutionary ones, were inherently susceptible to succumbing to the attraction of political power; anarchism was the only viable option for saving the revolution, as anarchists not only refuted politics comprehensively but also relentlessly sought the destruction of the state and its institutions. To Maksimov, then, “it was no longer possible, in good conscience to support the Soviets.”²²⁷

Bolshevik political oppression ultimately led to the closure of *The Voice of Labor* in May 1918.²²⁸ After the dissolution of *The Voice of Labor*, most of the staff parted ways, as they each sought to reclaim the revolution they had lost in their own manner. Forced by various circumstances, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper, Volin, fled to the Ukraine. Maksimov decided to remain in Petrograd, hoping to continue his subversion of the Bolshevik dictatorship. With “the left wing of the ‘*Golos Truda*’ group,” he established a new anarcho-syndicalist newspaper in Petrograd, *The Free Voice of Labor* (*Vol’nyi golos truda*) in August 1918.²²⁹

Maksimov and *The Free Voice of Labor* strove to expose the Bolshevik illusion and their revolutionary treachery. The staff refuted Bolshevik policies, which “had

²²⁷ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 181.

²²⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 185. *The Voice of Labor* temporarily reemerged and published a single issue in 1919. Afterwards, the print organ relocated to Buenos Aires, where it remained until its permanent dissolution.

²²⁹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 353.

introduced ‘state capitalism’ rather than proletarian socialism.’²³⁰ The Bolsheviks betrayed the revolution, and they betrayed the people:

The proletariat is gradually being enserfed by the state. The people are being transformed into servants over whom there has risen a new class of administrators -- a new class born mainly from the womb of the so-called intelligentsia. Isn't this merely a new class system looming on the revolutionary horizon? Hasn't there occurred merely a regrouping of classes, a regrouping as in previous revolutions when, after the oppressed had evicted the landlords from power, the emergent middle class was able to direct the revolution towards a new class system in which power fell into its own hands?²³¹

To Maksimov, the Bolshevik coup d'état was not a revolution, as the Bolsheviks replaced Russia's old elites with political ideologues and “the so-called intelligentsia.” This new breed of Marxist elites ensured the Soviet state moved not “towards socialism but towards state capitalism.”²³² He maintained that the retention of the state would not only prevent the emancipation of the lower classes but ultimately engender a new ruling class.

While the staff of *The Free Voice of Labor* condemned the Bolsheviks and their state capitalism, Maksimov moderated his criticism of the early-Bolshevik state. In the same article that denounced Bolshevik statization, Maksimov insinuated that the evils of political power allured the Bolsheviks from their original revolutionary intentions: “We do not mean to say that this inequality and these privileges are arbitrary, or that the Bolshevik party set out to create a new class system. But we do say that even the best

²³⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 191.

²³¹ M. Sergven, “Puti revoliutsii,” *Vol'nyi golos truda*, 16 September 1918, 1, reprinted in *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, by Avrich, 123.

²³² Sergven, “Puti revoliutsii,” 124.

intentions and aspirations must inevitably be smashed against the evils inherent in any system of centralized power.”²³³ Maksimov was sympathetic to the Marxists who were forced by circumstance to support Lenin’s vanguard. He credits the Marxists for uniting the masses, and he believed that Lenin truly sought an anarchist revolution.

Maksimov and *The Free Voice of Labor* also emphasized the necessity of establishing a united anarcho-syndicalist organization. After witnessing the effectiveness of Bolshevik party organization in October, Maksimov entreated Russia’s anarcho-syndicalist movement to establish an All-Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists. He believed that “there was an urgent need for systematic organization and for the coordination of activities” among anarchists, as disorganization and a lack of public anarchist leadership prevented the anarcho-syndicalists from seizing their revolutionary moment: “the Revolution looked for this but too few elements were aware of the necessity and the possibility of federalist organization. And the Revolution, not finding it, threw itself into the arms of the old tyrant, centralized power.”²³⁴ Maksimov’s wish was temporarily granted at the Second All-Russian Conference of Anarcho-Syndicalists. However, his greater dream never actualized, for he failed to gather members for the organization.²³⁵

Anarcho-syndicalism remained the only option for Maksimov. In 1917 he had reevaluated his anarchist dogma, and by 1918, he had expanded his anarchism beyond the

²³³ Sergven, “Puti revoliutsii,” 124.

²³⁴ Sergven, “Puti revoliutsii,” 125.

²³⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 195.

sphere of labor reformation, emphasizing its distinct differences from Bolshevism. Maksimov realized the importance of establishing a formal anarchist organization which the lower classes could publicly and physically support. But he did not broaden his interpretation of anarchism to encompass all anarchist schools of thought. He retained his belief that industrialization and the factory committees were the future of Russia. The Bolshevik regime shut down the presses of *The Free Voice of Labor* shortly after its establishment. In its fourth issue, Maksimov, under his pseudonym M. Sergven, condemned the them for becoming the “new dam before the waves of our social revolution.”²³⁶ The Bolshevik government deemed the article and newspaper “provocative, counter-revolutionary, [and] anti-Soviet.”²³⁷ *The Free Voice of Labor* was the last anarchist newspaper to appear in Russia at the end of 1918.²³⁸

Maksimov’s “anti-Soviet” rhetoric in *The Free Voice of Labor* led to his recategorization as a counterrevolutionary and, as radical elements within the labor force adopted his ideas regarding the decentralization of labor, his subsequent incarceration. Even though Bolsheviks dominated the ranks of the trade unions, factory committees, and workers’ organizations by 1918, the workers “were [still] carrying out the anarchist idea.”²³⁹ Paul Avrich asserts that the working class’ adoption of anarcho-syndicalist ideals

²³⁶ Sergven, “Puti revoliutsii,” 124.

²³⁷ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 353.

²³⁸ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 357. One group briefly established an anarcho-communist newspaper in 1919 but, after its sixth issue, it too was censored and shutdown.

²³⁹ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 9.

was so vast that, by 1921, “Lenin had become sufficiently alarmed by the revival of syndicalist tendencies among the factory workers and among the intellectuals of his own party to take further measures to curb them.”²⁴⁰ Maksimov’s actions, coupled with his anarchist reputation, led to his arrest on six different occasions, ultimately culminating in his imprisonment in the Taganka prison in Moscow in 1921.²⁴¹ At the beginning of the Kronstadt Rebellion, the Cheka arrested Maksimov along with his comrade Khaim Yarchuk on 8 March 1921. The Soviet dictatorship imprisoned the two in the Taganka prison thereafter, where they joined their comrade Volin for the next seven months.²⁴²

Maksimov shared his prison cell with various leftists—individuals the Bolshevik regime deemed a threat to the revolution—including socialist-revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and other anarchists.²⁴³ To Maksimov, being condemned to a Russian prison “was like being sentenced to be shot or to be sent to the front trenches,” as they were “unspeakably filthy and . . . hardly heated, or sometimes not heated at all, in the winter. The food was way beneath the lowest physiological minimum, and the inmates lived at the expense of the accumulated fats of their organism or on whatever their friends or relatives could spare from their wretched food rations” (Maksimov’s wife, Olya, brought

²⁴⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 225.

²⁴¹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 132.

²⁴² Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists*, by Maksimov, n. p.

²⁴³ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 483.

spare food twice weekly for the anarchists).²⁴⁴ Even if prisoners survived the harsh environment, Cheka torture surely brought forth a welcomed death.

Maksimov participated in the Taganka hunger strike to demand “the reason for their imprisonment,” as the Bolshevik government and Cheka refused to provide them with any information or bring any formal charges.²⁴⁵ He demanded to know why anarchists—loyalists to the revolution—were unlawfully detained by their fellow revolutionaries. The Cheka insisted that “‘there were not anarchists in Soviet prisons.’ There were only bandits and Makhnovsty.”²⁴⁶ He was released seven months later on 17 September 1921. Forced by the conditions of his release, Maksimov, with his wife Olya, Volin, and their respective families resided in the residence of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman until their deportation in January 1922.²⁴⁷

Maksimov abandoned the Russian revolution after his deportation in 1922. He realized his vision of revolution had become quixotic as Bolshevik power solidified with the suppression of the Kronstadt rebels and Whites. He now sought to save the lives of Russia’s imprisoned anarchists, as he knew very well the trials and tribulations they experienced. The anarchists failed to achieve their revolution, and his role no longer focused on the dissolution of the state but on the emancipation of his fellow radicals. He

²⁴⁴ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 141; Goldman, *Living My Life*, 926.

²⁴⁵ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 907-908.

²⁴⁶ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 910.

²⁴⁷ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 496. Maksimov and his family were deported on 5 January 1922.

abandoned his goal of reorganizing Russia's anarcho-syndicalist movement and concentrated on uniting anarcho-syndicalists internationally.

Maksimov at first decided to go to Berlin, "where there was a strong and healthy anarcho-syndicalist movement."²⁴⁸ He and his family arrived sometime after February.²⁴⁹ There Maksimov parted ways with Volin and his theory of united anarchism and started a new anarcho-syndicalist organization and newspaper, *Labor's Path (Rabochii put')*, which advocated for an anarcho-syndicalist federation.²⁵⁰ He remained extremely active in the International Working Men's Association.²⁵¹ After a few years in Berlin, Maksimov temporarily relocated to Paris in 1924.²⁵² He resided in Paris for six or seven months before departing for the United States, where he remained until his death.²⁵³

In Chicago, Maximov returned to his previous occupation of editor, supporting the IWW's Russian periodical *The Laborer's Voice (Golos truzhenika)* until its closure in 1927. Afterwards, he joined the staff of *Labor's Cause (Delo truda)* and remained there until his death.²⁵⁴ Maksimov's writings during this period illustrate an evolution in his

²⁴⁸ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 499.

²⁴⁹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 497-499.

²⁵⁰ Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384; Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists*, by Maksimov, n. p.

²⁵¹ Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384.

²⁵² Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 247.

²⁵³ Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 26.

²⁵⁴ Rocker, preface to *Syndicalists*, by Maksimov, n. p.; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 249. *Labor's Cause* merged with the Detroit anarchist newspaper *Awakening (Probuzhdenie)* in 1940. Maksimov stayed on as editor after the merger.

anarchism, which had been remolded by his experience in Russia. While he remained an anarcho-syndicalist, Maksimov now argued for intercommunity anarchist cooperation. He understood that “it is not possible to propose some kind of Anarcho-cooperativsm, but neither can one deny the usefulness of cooperatives.”²⁵⁵ Maksimov sought to reconcile the various anarchist groups by relating his theory of community cooperation to Bakuninism, highlighting that the international anarchist community “should also remember the viewpoint of Bakunin . . . that cooperatives contain the essence of the future economic structure” of an anarchist society.²⁵⁶ To Maksimov, the Russian Revolutions demonstrated that “anarchism ha[d] ceased to be a theory and [had become] a program.”²⁵⁷ He worked tirelessly, publishing *My Social Credo* in 1933 and *The Guillotine at Work* in 1940, while maintaining his contributions to anarchist print organs such as the *Labor’s Cause*. He sought to enlighten his comrades about the anarchists’ failure during the October Revolution, the necessity of an organized anarchist movement, the innate hindrances plaguing the anarchist community, and the political persecution of anarchists occurring in Russia at the time.

His ideas after 1924 not only illustrates the radical’s consequent interpretation of anarchism but also his understanding of the revolution, Bolshevism, and the relationship between Russia’s anarchists and Bolsheviks. He understood that intra-community

²⁵⁵ Grigorii Maksimov, “My Social Credo,” 18, 26 June 1951, Folder 11, G. P. Maksimov Papers, ARCH00852, IISH.

²⁵⁶ Maksimov, “Social Credo,” 18.

²⁵⁷ Maksimov, “Social Credo,” 14.

disputes plagued anarchists as ideological differences continuously prevented them from collaborating. By the 1930s Maksimov's anarchism was an amalgam of anarcho-syndicalist and anarcho-communist ideals. In his attempt to unite the two anarchist factions, he published *My Social Credo*, which detailed his personal interpretation of the ideology. His dogma, according to Avrich, "closely-resembling the pro-syndicalist variety of Anarchist-Communism advocated by Kropotkin and his school:"²⁵⁸

Agricultural cooperatives were to serve as transitional forms during the gradual evolution towards communism, . . . while industrial management would be turned over to workers' committees and federations of labor. Eventually . . . courts of law would be supplanted by voluntary arbitration boards; prisons would be abolished and their functions absorbed by the schools, hospitals, and institutions of public welfare; and professional armies were to be disbanded and the mission of defense assigned to a people's militia.²⁵⁹

Syndicalism was now the revolutionary vehicle for establishing a communist society, while anarchism provided the fundamental basis for revolution and social organization. Maksimov sought to reconcile the ideological disagreements within the anarchist community by subsuming the ideology's various interpretations into a single anarchist concept. The Bolshevik betrayal haunted Maksimov, who now asserted that Lenin disguised his true revolutionary intentions, which deviated from orthodox Marxism, and the party's originally political program. To Maksimov, Lenin deceived members of his own party in addition to the revolutionary masses who supported his vanguard.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 248.

²⁵⁹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 248.

²⁶⁰ Maksimov, "Social Credo," 26.

Maksimov had abandoned his previous moderate critique of Lenin to deem him a swindler. Lenin had always envisioned a police state and merely hid his true intentions from the Bolshevik Party and Russian people.²⁶¹ As Maksimov argued, Lenin's was not a revolution but a revolutionary deception:

The ideas advocated by Lenin in 1917—that is, the ideas of 1917—were viewed by him only as mere propaganda, that he did not believe in them. . . . Lenin's pre-October propaganda, which reduced itself to the development of the ideas and principles of the Paris Commune, was nothing but a hoax and mere chicanery . . . Lenin had in mind something altogether different. . . . His aim was 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'—a dictatorship of the Party and that his own person, a centralized 'Workers' State' as a monopolist, that is, an absolute totalitarian state which governs by means of violence and terror.²⁶²

Maksimov's accusations provide an alternative interpretation of the relationship between Russia's anarchists and Bolsheviks in 1917. He implies that the anarcho-syndicalist—and broader anarchist—relationship with the Bolsheviks was not based upon ideological semblance but was instead the product of Lenin's subterfuge and guile. Maksimov believed that most Russians would have rejected Lenin's original concepts of revolution and social organization, which is “why [Lenin] developed and popularized not the ideas of the ‘*Communist Manifesto*’ but those of the ‘*Civil War in France*.’”²⁶³

Maksimov's belief in the fundamental tenets of anarchism, the dissolution of all forms of authority, endured. Anarchism remained the only answer to fixing the problems engendered by the growing world capitalist system, and anarcho-syndicalists were

²⁶¹ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 26.

²⁶² Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 26-31.

²⁶³ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 21.

ultimately “better Marxists than the Mensheviks or the Bolsheviks.”²⁶⁴ To Maksimov, anarchism was more than a utopian dream, it was his *leit-motif*.²⁶⁵ After the Bolsheviks either exiled or executed Russia’s remaining anarchists, Maksimov knew the end of Russian anarchism was near. But the revolution would survive as anarchists fled to various parts of the world and continued to fight for their social cause. For Maksimov, “The Revolution [was] dead, long live the Revolution!”²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 2.

²⁶⁵ Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maksimov, 27.

²⁶⁶ Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 506.

CHAPTER 5

VSEVOLOD MIKHAILOVICH EIKHENBAUM (“VOLIN”)

“If someday you learn that I, Volin, tempted by politics and authoritarianism, have accepted a governmental post, have become a ‘commissar,’ a ‘minister,’ or something similar, two weeks later, comrades, you may shoot me with an easy conscience, knowing that I have betrayed the truth, the true cause, and the true Revolution.”²⁶⁷

For many of Russia’s anarcho-syndicalists, Lenin’s vision of a worker-controlled society solidified their decision to enlist in the Bolshevik vanguard revolution. Not only did Lenin’s advocacy in 1917 for “All Power to the Soviets” echo anarcho-syndicalist doctrine, but the concept of an industrially-centered society organized by the working class resembled the anarcho-syndicalists’ vision of a syndicalist society. Lenin convinced many anarcho-syndicalists that revolutionary unity was paramount to the success of the social revolution. However, some remained true to their anarchist beliefs and refused to collaborate with the Bolsheviks. Among the Bolshevik rejectionists was Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum, more commonly known by his pseudonym Volin.²⁶⁸

Volin continuously refuted Lenin’s concept of revolution, asserting that any revolution built upon a political act would fail. While his comrades Vladimir Shatov and Grigorii Maksimov fell victim to the Bolshevik illusion, Volin remained true to his credo. Volin’s ideological integrity resulted in his persecution on multiple occasions, but he continued to challenge the Bolsheviks’ power until his deportation from Russia in 1922.

²⁶⁷ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 230.

²⁶⁸ Grigorii Maksimov, “Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum, ‘Volin’,” 2, n.d., Vol. 1, Folder 3, Volin Papers, ARCH01575, IISH.

This chapter explores the revolutionary life of Vsevolod Eikhenbaum and his continuous opposition to the Bolsheviks. It seeks to shed new light on the anarchist-Bolshevik relationship in 1917 by clarifying the questions: were anarcho-syndicalists inherently susceptible to adopting Bolshevism or did their intrinsic revolutionary desire to incite social change compel them to overlook ideological differences? The case of Eikhenbaum illustrates the fundamental theoretical differences between anarcho-syndicalism and Leninism, and it challenges the notion that anarcho-syndicalists joined the Bolshevik Party because of the ideological semblances between the two political theories.

Volin enjoyed a life of education and opportunity.²⁶⁹ He was born on 11 August in 1882 into a Jewish family of doctors in Voronezh. At an early age, Volin's parents hired governesses to educate him and his brother Boris in French and German, according to his friend Rudolph Rocker.²⁷⁰ Volin completed his formal education in Voronezh and then attended St. Petersburg University, where he studied jurisprudence.²⁷¹ His friends considered him "a real intellectual and poet."²⁷²

Volin first encountered libertarian concepts of social organization as a student at St. Petersburg University in 1901. The following year, he began advocating for Russia's labor movement and workplace reforms.²⁷³ Over the next few years, Volin "was engaged

²⁶⁹ Rudolph Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9; Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384; Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 3. According to Maksimov, both of Volin's "parents were medical doctors, who lived in comfortable circumstances" (3).

²⁷⁰ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9.

²⁷¹ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 3; Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9.

²⁷² René Shakshak, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 325.

in cultural and educational work among St. Petersburg workers.”²⁷⁴ Despite his privileged upbringing, Volin recognized the social inequity prevalent in Russian society. His desire to enact social, political, and economic change motivated him to join the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in 1905.²⁷⁵ Volin’s dedication to the social revolution compelled him to assist the revolutionary labor movement in 1905, a decision that ultimately led to his exile two years later.²⁷⁶ He never completed his studies at St. Petersburg University.²⁷⁷

An advocate of labor reform, Volin offered his services and educational background to the 1905 labor movement. He read Gapon’s petition to thousands of workers the day before the march.²⁷⁸ On the morning of the ninth of January, Volin, along with “an enormous crowd,” “lined up, arm in arm” and marched towards the Winter Palace to join forces with Gapon.²⁷⁹ The group never joined Gapon’s movement, for they were stopped by military forces while trying to cross the Neva at the Trinity Bridge.²⁸⁰ Volin details his participation in the events of Bloody Sunday, but there is less

²⁷³ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9.

²⁷⁴ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 92.

²⁷⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 137.

²⁷⁶ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 90; Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9; Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3.

²⁷⁷ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3.

²⁷⁸ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 95.

²⁷⁹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 96.

²⁸⁰ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 96.

information on his activities afterwards. He was arrested later that year.²⁸¹ In 1907, a tribunal convicted him for his participation in the uprising of 1905, and he was “banished to Siberia for his radical activities.”²⁸² He escaped, fled Russia, and found refuge in France.²⁸³ In Paris, the heart of the international anarchist movement, he was introduced to Lenin’s theories.

In France, Volin found himself surrounded by revolutionaries, but a different type of revolutionary: the anarchist. Volin continued to “study and weigh the various schools of the Socialist movement and the many-sided aspects of the social problem” while in Paris.²⁸⁴ In exile, he withdrew his membership from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party; by 1908, he insisted that he did “not belong to any political party.”²⁸⁵ He became acquaintances with noted libertarians Sebastian Faure and A. A. Kareline.²⁸⁶ Persuaded by Karelin and the Parisian anarcho-communist community, Volin abandoned the socialist movement, adopted an anarcho-communist dogma, and joined the Brotherhood of Free Communists, “an anarchist circle of Russian exiles” in Paris, in 1911.²⁸⁷ While

²⁸¹ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9. For a more detailed account of Bloody Sunday, see Paul Avrich’s chapter “The Terrorists” in *The Russian Anarchists*.

²⁸² Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 9; Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384.

²⁸³ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3.

²⁸⁴ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

²⁸⁵ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 21.

²⁸⁶ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 21.

²⁸⁷ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 137, 175; Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3.

fellow anarchist Grigorii Maksimov claimed that Volin did not adopt anarchist doctrine in 1911 but merely left the socialist movement, both historian Paul Avrich and anarchist Rudolph Rocker insist that Volin “converted to anarchism” in 1911 in Paris.²⁸⁸ As the scare of German imperialism cast its shadow across Europe, Volin became further intertwined within the French anarchist movement. In 1913, he joined the Committee for International Action Against War.²⁸⁹ According to anarchists, “the cause of wars . . . rests solely in the existence of the State.”²⁹⁰ For this reason, Volin, along with his fellow comrades, undertook the task of educating the public on the futility of war, which many anarchists contended was a product of “the present social system.”²⁹¹

It was during this period that he first encountered the political theories of Lenin, as the outbreak of war compelled many intellectuals and ideologues to voice their opinions regarding war, imperialism, and the state. Not only did Volin base his opposition to Lenin’s theory ideologically, he cautioned all who believed in Lenin’s attitude regarding revolution. While Volin highlights Lenin’s ideological affinity to anarchism, observing “a perfect parallelism between his ideas and those of the Anarchists,” Volin explicitly refuted Lenin’s ideas, as Lenin’s concept of revolution

²⁸⁸ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 137; Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

²⁸⁹ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 137-138.

²⁹⁰ *International Anarchist Manifesto on the War* (London: The International Anarchist Movement, 1915), 2.

²⁹¹ *International Anarchist Manifesto*, 1.

included the preservation of the state, a notion that anarchists wholeheartedly rejected.²⁹² To Volin, Lenin's "understanding, recognition, and prediction [of revolution] seemed to me already very dangerous for the *true* cause of the Revolution."²⁹³ Volin repudiated Lenin's concept of revolution, as it ideologically conflicted with his anarchist interpretation of social organization.

As early as 1914, Volin implicated Lenin as a traitor to the true social revolution. After reading and interpreting Lenin's rhetoric, Volin stated that he knew people would "blindly follow" Lenin and his revolution and that Lenin would ultimately "deceive the masses and mislead them into an evil course."²⁹⁴ Volin recognized the appeal of Leninism, as it was an amalgam of various social theories capable of attracting radical revolutionaries from multiple ideological backgrounds. Volin's opinion of Lenin and his revolution ultimately remained unchanged throughout Volin's life, as he continuously refuted Lenin's concept of state and revolution.

In addition to his rejection of Leninism, Volin continued to renounce the atrocities of World War I during this period, resulting in his informal expulsion from France in 1916. By 1915, Volin's anti-war actions led to his arrest in Paris.²⁹⁵ The French government wanted "to intern him in a concentration camp until the end of the war and

²⁹² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209.

²⁹³ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209.

²⁹⁴ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209-219.

²⁹⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 138.

then banish him” afterwards.²⁹⁶ Fortunately for Volin, his fellow anarchists warned him about the government’s intentions and “with the help of some French comrades” he managed to escape to Bordeaux before being processed into a concentration camp.²⁹⁷ In Bordeaux, Volin adopted a false identity as a store-keeper. Using his alias, he managed to secure passage to the United States.²⁹⁸ After correspondence with the anarcho-syndicalist staff of the Russian-American anarchist newspaper *The Voice of Labor*, Volin decided to immigrate to New York.²⁹⁹ Forced to abandon his wife and four children, Volin departed for the United States on 6 August 1916.³⁰⁰ Volin’s American sojourn not only altered his understanding of anarchism but, ultimately, reshaped his revolutionary dogma and interpretation of social revolution.

A preestablished Russian anarchist community not only offered Volin a new home to continue his struggle for social change but presented him with an alternative interpretation of anarchism. In the United States, Volin quickly connected with the local Russian-American anarchist community in New York.³⁰¹ He joined the anarcho-

²⁹⁶ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3; Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

²⁹⁷ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

²⁹⁸ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

²⁹⁹ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3. During his time in Paris, Volin sent multiple letters to the editor of *Golos truda*, A. Rode, for publication.

³⁰⁰ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 3. Volin was married twice. Both of his wives died before him. His wife at the time of his immigration to the United States died en route to join Volin in New York. There is a paucity of information detailing the cause of her death, merely that she died attempting to rejoin Volin. Volin’s second wife died under mental duress in 1940. Many assumed that her mental state was in direct relation to the impact of the First World War.

³⁰¹ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 30.

syndicalist organization UORW and was hired as a staff member for its periodical, *The Voice of Labor*.³⁰² Like Vladimir Shatov, Volin joined the Anarchist Red Cross.³⁰³ In France, Volin was an ardent anarcho-communist, but the Russian-American anarchists in the UORW introduced him to another variant of anarchism: anarcho-syndicalism.

Volin's educational background, combined with his unyielding passion to enact social change, made him a formidable force within the American anarchist movement. His education afforded him multiple opportunities within the UORW and *The Voice of Labor* staff. His ability to speak fluent Russian, French, and German allowed him to edit articles for *The Voice of Labor* and conduct lectures and speeches for the UORW. The anarchist community in New York praised Volin for his oratorical skills; Grigorii Maksimov claims that Volin "spoke with a simple elegance that painted an animated and colored picture."³⁰⁴ While the UORW membership respected the organization's founder, Shatov, and appreciated his dedication to the organization and movement, few considered him a "spiritual leader."³⁰⁵ Volin was "far superior" in this capacity.³⁰⁶ Some UORW members believed that Volin was the leader the organization truly needed.

Volin's time in the United States, and with the UORW, was short lived, as the contemporaneous events occurring in Russia prevented him from fully assimilating. The

³⁰² Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 11.

³⁰³ Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 318.

³⁰⁴ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 4.

³⁰⁵ David Babich, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 365.

³⁰⁶ Babich interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 365.

February Revolution in Russia drastically impacted the Russian-American anarchist community. Political exiles who sought refuge in the United States now wanted to return home and assist with the advancing revolution. While Shatov and many of *The Voice of Labor* staff were preparing to leave for Russia, Volin was left to publish the organization's weekly paper. Within months after joining *The Voice of Labor* staff, Volin accepted the position of editor-in-chief of the anarchist newspaper.³⁰⁷

As editor-in-chief of *The Voice of Labor*, Volin published anarchist theories relating to the events occurring in Russia, and in the process challenged other revolutionary ideas—particularly socialist concepts. He continuously opposed the necessity of the state and the need for political power during a social revolution. In May, Volin refuted socialism in his article “The Trump card of the revolution.” He asserted that anarchists have continuously disputed “the childish idea of organizing a ‘socialist state,’ . . . with the help of the political power seized by the party.”³⁰⁸ As an anarcho-syndicalist, political power was inessential for the revolution, which would be organized and executed by the workforce. After a successful revolution, the state would also become inessential, for anarcho-syndicalists believed that the working population would be fully capable of assuming the various administrative state roles. For Volin, the spread of socialist ideas in Russia was dangerous, as the sustainment of any type of state or political power would lead to the continued oppression of the people.

³⁰⁷ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 4.

³⁰⁸ Volin, “Glavnyi noz'yr' revoliutsii,” *Golos truda*, May 1917. This article was reprinted on page 3 of the 25 August 1917 publication, after *Golos truda*'s relocation to Petrograd.

Lenin's return to Russia in April led to a swift dissemination of socialist ideas. Lenin's ideas, combined with the Trotskii's organizational skills, propelled the Bolshevik Party to the forefront of the revolution. A lack of political competition further assisted the Bolsheviks, as no other political party wanted to lead the revolutionary movement and the disorganization of the anarchist movement prevented them from being a legitimate threat to Bolshevik political ascendancy. For Volin, familiar with Lenin's theories, Bolshevik power threatened the success of the true social revolution. He increased his anti-socialist, anti-Bolshevik rhetoric, hoping that the working class would realize that only a non-political revolution could truly liberate them from oppression. Shortly after his appointment to editor-in-chief, Volin, along with the remaining *The Voice of Labor* staff, decided to relocate the newspaper to Petrograd, the center of the revolution.

Volin departed for Petrograd in June 1917, arriving in late July with Vladimir Shatov, Boris Yelensky, Leon Trotsky and *The Voice of Labor* staff.³⁰⁹ It was during his time in Russia that Volin was most active in both the anarcho-syndicalist and anti-Bolshevik movements. While he spent most of his time writing and editing articles for *The Voice of Labor*, he spoke at the Cirque Moderne and various workers' gatherings on multiple occasions.³¹⁰ His primary goal focused on educating the workforce about alternative revolutionary options often overlooked by the Marxist Social-Democrats.

Using *The Voice of Labor* as his instrument of change, Volin sought to enlighten the industrial workforce to detract people from the Bolshevik movement. Shortly after

³⁰⁹ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 4; Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 185.

³¹⁰ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 5.

arriving in Petrograd, he sought to quickly reestablish the paper.³¹¹ As one of the “primary writers for the newspaper,” Volin continued to print articles which compared anarcho-syndicalist and socialist ideals. In particular, he discussed alternative acts of revolution that challenged the efficaciousness of the Bolsheviks’ vanguard revolution.³¹² Seeking to capitalize upon the amplified desire for social change that was prevalent among the lower classes during this period, Volin wanted to educate the working class on both anarchism and revolution.³¹³ Although the Bolsheviks succeeded in acquiring a sizable following, the working-class’ concept of social organization more so resembled anarchism than Leninism.

As the sole publication of Russia’s anarcho-syndicalist movement, *The Voice of Labor* primarily discussed labor-related issues.³¹⁴ Funded by the Union of Anarcho-Syndicalist Propaganda, the newspaper specifically targeted Petrograd’s factory workers, who, according to anarcho-syndicalists, would be at the forefront of the revolution.³¹⁵

According to historian Paul Avrich:

The principle goal of the *Golos Truda* group was a revolution ‘anti-statist in its methods of struggle, syndicalist in its economic content, and federalist in its political tasks,’ a revolution that would replace the centralized state with a free federation of ‘peasant unions, industrial

³¹¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 138.

³¹² Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 5.

³¹³ For a detailed description of the working-class’ social theories during this period see S.A. Smith’s *Red Petrograd: Revolution in the Factories, 1917-1918*.

³¹⁴ *Golos truda*, 11 August 1917. The first issue of *Golos truda* appeared in Petrograd in August of 1917.

³¹⁵ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 139.

unions, factory committees, control commissions, and the life in the localities all over the country.³¹⁶

The staff's interpretation of anarcho-syndicalism blended multiple variants of both political theories. Contrary to the American interpretation of syndicalism, which refuted the concept of subsuming all labor organizations under a single-national federation, the staff of *The Voice of Labor* adopted the French concept of syndicalism after its remigration to Russia. While *The Voice of Labor* championed the general strike during its time in the United States, it now advocated for the seizure of Russia's industrial production and distribution.

Volin retained the title of editor-in-chief after the newspaper's relocation and continued to dispense anti-Bolshevik propaganda through *The Voice of Labor*.³¹⁷ In *The Voice of Labor's* first issue printed in Russia, he published an article titled "Impasse of the revolution," in which he adamantly opposed "the programs and tactics of our socialist parties and factions (the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks, the New Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.)."³¹⁸ According to Volin, "the social revolution could never be realized by means of political power," for a revolution engendered by a political action was no longer a social revolution but merely a coup d'état. Volin stressed that "once organized and armed, the Bolshevik power, while admittedly as inevitably impotent as the others, would be infinitely more dangerous for the workers and more

³¹⁶ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 140.

³¹⁷ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 152.

³¹⁸ Volin, "Tupik" revoliutsii," *Golos truda*, 11 August 1917, 1.

difficult to defeat.”³¹⁹ Instead of abolishing the root of social inequality, Lenin’s revolution retained the state and its power. For Volin, “the installation in power of a political party, even on the extreme left, and the building of a State, whatever its label, will lead to the death of the Revolution.”³²⁰ He sought to preserve Russia’s revolutionary movement before its untimely demise by highlighting the theoretical infeasibility of Lenin’s revolution. Unlike Shatov, Volin did not believe Bolshevik propaganda or seek a revolution by any means. He sought a true anarcho-syndicalist revolution, a revolution organized and executed by the working class.

Bolshevik propaganda propelled the party into the workplace. Masters at guiding the avenues of communication, the Bolsheviks excelled at disseminating their ideas throughout Russia’s proletariat. According to Volin, the Bolshevik ability to spread their revolutionary concepts led to the rise of the Bolshevik state instead of an anarchist collective. The Bolshevik adoption of the slogan “All Power to the Soviets” convinced both revolutionaries and workers that Lenin strove to establish a society based upon anarchist ideals. Blind to the Bolsheviks’ true intentions, workers admitted party members into their organizations. While Volin agreed that Russia’s workers should be in control of their own lives, he refuted the concept of a proletariat dictatorship. Any type of dictatorship, even a dictatorship of the proletariat, would ultimately become corrupt because it retained the power of the state—the power to take away the freedom of others.

While the Bolshevik-led MRC planned the coup d’état, Volin and *The Voice of*

³¹⁹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 225.

³²⁰ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 226.

Labor staff entreated the working class to organize a revolution that suited the working-class' demands and adhered to their ideas. On the morning of 25 October, *The Voice of Labor* printed a detailed article discussing the Bolshevik plan to unseat the Provisional Government and rejected the revolutionary plot, as the staff did "not believe in the broad perspectives of a revolution which begins with a political act." To Volin and the staff of *The Voice of Labor*, Lenin's subversion was not a revolution, as its origins emerged from the "political goals and . . . control of a political party."³²¹ While many anarchists supported the Bolshevik vanguard, the staff of *The Voice of Labor* could not, under good conscience, "support the present movement."³²²

The Voice of Labor staff expressed their opposition to the Bolshevik plot and declared their support for the working masses. After explicitly protesting the Bolsheviks at the beginning of the article, these anarcho-syndicalists still supported the masses:

Nevertheless, if the [proposed] action by the masses should commence, then, as Anarchists, we will participate in it with the greatest possible energy. For we cannot put ourselves out of touch with the revolutionary masses, even if they are not following our course and our appeals, and even if we foresee the defeat of the movement. We never forget that it is impossible to foresee either the direction or the result of a movement by the masses. Consequently, we consider it our duty always to participate in such movement, seeking to communicate our meaning, our ideas, our truth, to it.³²³

Volin refused to aid a false revolution. He decided to go for a walk and only learned

³²¹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 219.

³²² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 219.

³²³ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 219.

about the Bolshevik success from a leaflet he found late that night.³²⁴

Volin, an historical Bolshevik oppositionist, naturally contested the early-Bolshevik state's policies and actions. In his opinion, Russia's workforce yearned for a more syndicalist-oriented society, but the Bolsheviks began the statization of Russia's industries. Although the people wanted to abandon the war in Europe entirely, the Bolshevik government negotiated an armistice with the German Empire. Bolshevik actions in 1918 prompted him to arms later that year.

Volin's anti-authoritarian beliefs, combined with his anarcho-syndicalist dogma, compelled him to fight before surrendering to German imperialism. Disputing the armistice, Volin asserted that "the whole task is to hold. To resist. Not to yield. To fight. To wage relentless partisan warfare—here and there and everywhere. To advance. Or falling back, to destroy. To torment, to harass, to prey upon the enemy."³²⁵ The government's decision to sign the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk devastated Volin, who saw the treaty as a sign of the revolution's failure: a Bolshevik state ignored the voices of the people. After the treaty, Volin resigned from his position with *The Voice of Labor*.³²⁶ He believed that the time for words had passed and that it now was the time to "fight against the foreign invaders and their Russian supporters."³²⁷ The decision to enter an armistice

³²⁴ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 227. Volin states that some individuals threw the leaflet out of an armored car late that night.

³²⁵ Volin, "Narod," *Golos truda*, 26 February 1918, reprinted in Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 106.

³²⁶ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 6.

³²⁷ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 12.

with the Germans, in combination with the dissolution of *The Voice of Labor*, compelled him to leave Petrograd.³²⁸

In the spring of 1918, Volin fled to the Ukraine to reestablish the anarchist movement. He believed “the time ha[d] come where it [was] . . . necessary to put the feather aside and grab the rifle.”³²⁹ There he sought to fight the counterrevolutionary movement, which for Volin meant both Whites and the Reds, as both loyalists and Bolsheviks threatened the success of the revolution. In the Ukraine, Volin became a central member of the *Nabat* Confederation and the Makhno movement, led by noted anarchist Nestor Makhno. During this time, he began to shed his anarcho-syndicalist dogma in favor of a united anarchism mentality.

Volin stopped temporarily in his home town Voronezh en route to the Ukraine. There he worked as a “co-supervisor” in charge of popular education for the local Soviet.³³⁰ From Voronezh, he travelled to Kharkov, where he assisted with the establishment of the *Nabat* Confederation of Anarchist Organizations.³³¹ As a member of the confederation, Volin sought to unite all anarchist factions, regardless of ideological differences, under the black banner of anarchism. His educational and revolutionary background undoubtedly aided the endeavor, as many looked to him for guidance

³²⁸ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 181-182.

³²⁹ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 6.

³³⁰ Maksimov, “Vsevolod,” 6.

³³¹ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 12; Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 204-205.

regarding their revolutionary situation. Indeed, many considered Volin “the key man” of the *Nabat* Confederation.³³²

In 1919, when the Bolshevik government increased its persecution of anarchists, Volin joined the *Makhnovshchina*, who sought to free the people from both the revolutionary Reds and counter-revolutionary Whites.³³³ Volin, not a soldier, became the head of cultural education and enlightenment.³³⁴ He was in charge of a “special department to enlighten the people and prepare them for a new social order, based on common ownership of the land, home rule of communities, and federative solidarity.”³³⁵ With anarchists Peter Arshinov and Aaron Baron, Volin disseminated leaflets in the Ukraine that outlined “the aims of the [*Makhnovshchina*] movement,” which included the concept of developing a united anarchist front under the *Nabat* Confederation.³³⁶

Volin’s time in the Ukraine as both an educator and member of the *Nabat* Confederation led him to adopt a new anarchist school of thought: united anarchism. For Volin, the multiple anarchist schools of thought ultimately hindered the growth and unification of the anarchist community in the twentieth century. Anarchist disorganization in 1917 was the movement’s greatest weakness, as the people desired an

³³² Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 383.

³³³ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 12.

³³⁴ Emma Goldman explicitly highlights that Volin was “in no way a participant in the military operations of Makhno,” he was “an educator” for the movement (Goldman, *Living My Life*, 786).

³³⁵ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 12.

³³⁶ Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 133.

anarchist society but lacked an actual organized anarchist movement to support them. This inability to cooperate and consolidate was inimical to both the Russian and larger anarchist movements. He began to advocate for the unification of all anarchists, regardless of their ideological differences.³³⁷ For Volin, anarchism became an amalgam of the ideology's three primary schools of thought: anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-communism, and individualist anarchism.³³⁸ He asserted that anarchists "must be simultaneously of these three conceptions. It must be simply and only 'anarchist'."³³⁹ His concept of united anarchism entailed the development of "a single organization embracing Anarchist-Communists, Anarcho-Syndicalists, and individualist anarchists" that would guarantee "a substantial measure of autonomy for every participating group and individual."³⁴⁰

Volin's advocacy for a united anarchist movement ultimately failed, as many of his comrades "considered 'united anarchism' a vague and ineffectual formula of unification."³⁴¹ Moreover, he was unable to continue his campaign for united anarchism, as the Red Army arrested him.³⁴² In December 1919, Makhno's Military Revolutionary Council asked Volin to depart for Krivoi Rog to educate the local populace on

³³⁷ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 205.

³³⁸ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 7.

³³⁹ Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 7.

³⁴⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 205.

³⁴¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 205.

³⁴² Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 13.

counterrevolutionary propaganda. In transit, Volin “was stricken with typhoid fever and had to remain in the cottage of a peasant.”³⁴³ Sick with typhus, he was ultimately captured by “military agents of the Moscow Government” on 14 January 1920.³⁴⁴ For the next two years, Volin experienced multiple arrests, imprisonments, and prison transfers that led to his deportation from Russia in 1922.³⁴⁵

Volin was originally to be executed by the order of Leon Trotsky. However, Emma Goldman, along with every anarchist present in the capital, signed an appeal to prevent Volin’s execution.³⁴⁶ The Bolshevik government hesitantly accepted the anarchists’ demands and, instead of executing Volin, relocated him to a Moscow prison in March 1920. The Bolshevik government released him in October, only to re-arrest him in Kharkov in July the following year. This time, Volin joined his fellow radicals in the Taganka prison in Moscow, where he, Maksimov, and eleven other anarchists orchestrated an eleven-day hunger strike to protest both their conditions and treatment, as well as the Bolshevik persecution of the anarchist community.³⁴⁷ Despite anarchist and syndicalist opposition to the imprisonment of Volin and the Taganka anarchists, Lenin “did not care if all the politicals perished in prison;” but “he would consent, however, to

³⁴³ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 12.

³⁴⁴ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 13.

³⁴⁵ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 13; Goldman, *Living My Life*, 787, 920; Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 163, note 3.

³⁴⁶ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 786.

³⁴⁷ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 13; Maksimov, *Guillotine*, 480-487.

have the imprisoned anarchists deported from the country, on pain of being shot if they should return to Soviet soil.”³⁴⁸ While the Bolsheviks promised to release the prisoners if they ceased their hunger strike, they were not released until 17 September 1921.³⁴⁹

Despite Volin’s continued dedication to the social revolution in Russia, the Bolsheviks forced him to, once again, leave his homeland. He spent most of this time imprisoned in Russia, avoiding execution, enduring an eleven-day hunger strike, and surviving continuous maltreatment. Lenin agreed to release him, along with Grigorii Maksimov and a few other anarchists, if he left Russia immediately.³⁵⁰ After his release in September, Volin was “placed under the strictest surveillance, forbidden to associate with . . . comrades, and denied the right to work, although informed that [his] deportation would be delayed.”³⁵¹ In January 1922, Volin and the others departed for Berlin, where Volin continued to advocate for a united anarchist front.³⁵²

Volin’s time in the Ukraine had solidified his anarchist dogma. The anarchists’ failure to collaborate in Russia led him to believe that unification would fix the anarchist movement’s problems. Although most anarchists refuted Volin’s theory, deeming it utopian, Volin’s concept of a united anarchist front may have assisted the anarchists in

³⁴⁸ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 910.

³⁴⁹ Goldman, *Living My Life*, 920.

³⁵⁰ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 223. Lenin contended that Volin’s lack of criminal record and his disdain for violence implied that he was not a true danger to the revolution and was thus allowed to be freed (Avrich, *Anarchists in the Russian Revolution*, 158).

³⁵¹ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 233; Goldman, *Living My Life*, 920-921.

³⁵² Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 233.

establishing a greater following during the period of revolutionary fervor. While many anarchists clung to virtually any movement that offered them social change via revolution, Volin retained his anarchist views. The rise of the Bolshevik government solidified Volin's dedication to the anarchist movement, as he no longer advocated for a specific anarchist school of thought, but instead sought the most basic goal of anarchism, freedom for all, regardless of political opinion.

After being deported from Russia, Volin abandoned the notion of directly participating in the Russian anarchist movement and instead focused on expanding his united anarchism theory. Many of Volin's anarcho-syndicalist comrades refused to assist him, as they opposed the concept of a united anarchist front.³⁵³ Nevertheless, Volin, along with his friend Peter Arshinov (a former member of the *Nabat* Confederation), established a new monthly united-anarchist newspaper *The Anarchist Herald* (*Anarkhicheskii vestnik*).³⁵⁴ Volin and Arshinov's work ultimately inspired noted anarchist Victor Bondarenko to establish the Union of United Anarchists (*Souiz edinykh anarkhistsov*) in 1922.³⁵⁵ Volin's friend Mark Mratchny explained in an interview with historian Paul Avrich that Volin "rejected anarcho-syndicalism as too narrow" by this period.³⁵⁶ According to Volin, only an organized united anarchist front could engender a true social revolution. Volin and his family resided in Berlin for approximately two years.

³⁵³ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 239.

³⁵⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 238-239.

³⁵⁵ Victor Lynn, interview by Paul Avrich, Avrich, *Anarchist Voices*, 368.

³⁵⁶ Mratchny interview, *Anarchist Voices*, 384.

He then “received an invitation from Sebastian Faure to settle with his family in Paris. . . . Faure was occupied with the preparation and publication of his *Encyclopédie anarchiste* and needed a man who was familiar with foreign languages as a regular contributor.”³⁵⁷ Thus, in 1924, Volin, his wife, and four children moved to Paris, where he died in 1945.

Volin managed to finish his manuscript for his book *The Unknown Revolution (La révolution inconnue)* before his death. *The Unknown Revolution* is Volin’s detailed explanation of Russia’s revolutionary history that sought to challenge the Soviet government’s interpretation of the October Revolution and Civil War. While he offers insightful knowledge about the October Revolution and Russian Civil War, Volin’s unique interpretation of the anarchist movement during this period sheds light on the relationship between anarcho-syndicalists and Bolsheviks in 1917 Russia. Volin thoroughly examines the anarchist movement and its inability to establish an anarchist collective. He contends that the movement was too small to influence the events in October; unlike the Bolsheviks, the voice of anarchism was too weak to attract the masses.³⁵⁸ According to Volin, the Bolsheviks’ ability to disseminate their revolutionary concepts throughout the lower classes led to the rise of the Bolshevik state instead of an anarchist society. Volin’s critique of Bolshevism proved true, as “the Bolshevik party, once in control, installed itself as absolute master. . . . as a privileged caste.”³⁵⁹

³⁵⁷ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, 15.

³⁵⁸ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 157.

³⁵⁹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 157.

As an anarcho-syndicalist in 1917, Volin primarily focused on Bolshevism's semblance to anarcho-syndicalism. By juxtaposing the political theories, Volin highlights multiple similarities between the two ideologies. His interpretation of Lenin's speeches confirms the notion that Lenin's rhetoric echoed the tenets of anarchism and, more specifically, anarcho-syndicalism. The Bolshevik appropriation of the slogan "All power to the Soviets" convinced many anarcho-syndicalists that Lenin strove to establish a syndicalist federation and persuaded some anarcho-syndicalists to join the Bolsheviks in their revolutionary endeavor.³⁶⁰ Volin explains the differences between the two ideologies. Although anarcho-syndicalists supported the Bolshevik concept that all power should be transferred to the Soviets, most rejected Lenin's concept of state and power.³⁶¹

Lenin's concept of revolution retained the state and its institutions, merely substituting the elite bourgeoisie class with an elite proletariat. Adopting Bolshevism or collaborating with the Bolsheviks was never an option for Volin, as their concept of revolution was antithetical to his beliefs:

The Bolshevik idea was to build, on the ruins of the bourgeois state, *a new "Workers' State" to constitute a "workers' and peasants' government," and to establish a "dictatorship of the proletariat."* The Anarchist idea [was and] is to transform the economic and social bases of society *without having recourse to a political state, to a government, or to a dictatorship of any sort. That is, to achieve the Revolution and resolve its problems not by political or statist means, but by means of natural and free activity, economic and social, of the associations of the workers themselves, after having overthrown the last capitalist government.*³⁶²

³⁶⁰ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 216.

³⁶¹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209.

³⁶² Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 175.

To Volin, the Bolshevik revolution was not a true revolution that would lead to the establishment of a libertarian society but nothing more than a political coup d'état that replaced one privileged caste with another. He insisted “no political power [was] capable of solving effectively the gigantic constructive problems of the Revolution,” as “all political power inevitably becomes a source of other privileges, even if it does not depend on the bourgeoisie;” only the people can free themselves from the oppression of the state and its institutions.³⁶³ Like all revolutionaries, Volin sought political, economic, and social reformation, but unlike many, not at the cost of his beliefs.

³⁶³ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 249-250.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The cases of Shatov, Maksimov, and Volin offer a new view of the relationship between Russia's anarcho-syndicalists and Bolsheviks. Their reactions to the events of 1917 paint a contrasting picture of anarchism during this period. For many, Lenin's vanguard was the only logical path to revolution. Others viewed Lenin's revolution as merely a political coup d'état meant to replace the old order with a new elite class of revolutionaries. The heightened revolutionary sentiment prevalent among Russia's radicals blurred ideological lines for some as the greater good of the revolution overshadowed political differences and ideological discrepancies.

Both anarchists and Bolsheviks advocated for a society based on the working class. To anarcho-syndicalists, Lenin's rhetoric in 1917 seemed to echo anarchist doctrine, convincing many that the prophet of Marxism sought the immediate dissolution of the state and its oppressive institutions.³⁶⁴ As demonstrated by the story of Shatov, some anarcho-syndicalists were attracted to Lenin's ideas and leadership. After October, the threat of counterrevolution impelled Soviet anarchists like Shatov to retain their temporary alliance with the Marxists. Despite their contrasting politics, the two groups united in the face of a growing White Army, as the cases of Maksimov and Shatov show. But the course of the revolution placed the anarcho-syndicalists at an impasse: either support the Bolsheviks and risk the creation of a new police state or abandon the Marxists

³⁶⁴ Avrich, *Russian Anarchists*, 127.

and jeopardize the revolution entirely. While radical discourse undoubtedly shaped relations among revolutionaries, the emergence of a distinct anarcho-syndicalist-Bolshevik alliance appears likely after October as the forces of revolution entwined the anarchists with the Bolsheviks. Yet in the Civil War it became clear that revolutionaries had to be Bolsheviks and could not maintain an independent existence. Shatov joined, while Maksimov and Volin resisted and were in turn arrested and exiled.

The phenomena of 1917 persuaded “Bill” Shatov to join the Bolshevik vanguard for the imminent social revolution. Shatov’s history as a revolutionary does not indicate that his anarcho-syndicalist ideas necessarily made him susceptible to adopting Bolshevism, as his ideological proselytization in Russia and the United States denotes an individual who adapted his politics to his environment rather than seeking to change the environment to match his politics. Shatov was an opportunistic radical who allied with the most advantageous revolutionary organization at the time. His affinity for revolutionary violence and actions as Petrograd’s Chief of Police signify an individual without a concrete ideology that adapted his politics to the ever-changing sociopolitical environment. He did not join the Bolsheviks because of any ideological affinity but because they afforded him the opportunity to participate in a revolution. Shatov was interested in revolution, not ideology.

The rise of Stalin, combined with Shatov’s anarchist past, most likely led to his execution as the Great Purges unwound the old revolutionary elites of the Soviet Union. Shatov was transferred to Siberia, where he most likely remained until his death sometime in the early 1940s. He remained with the Ministry of Transport throughout the

1920s and early 1930s. An index of visitors to the Kremlin states that he met with Joseph Stalin twice, on 16 January 1929 and 6 December 1931, as Deputy People's Commissar for Railway Construction Management.³⁶⁵ Many of Shatov's old comrades assumed he never returned from Siberia. Maksimov claimed that Shatov "was arrested and probably shot without trial during the purges in the late 1930s."³⁶⁶ Raymond Anderson suggested in 1967 that Shatov "was arrested in 1937 and died in a labor camp in 1942."³⁶⁷ The official Soviet encyclopedia states that he died in 1943.³⁶⁸

Maksimov's temporary support of the Bolsheviks provides yet another permutation of the anarcho-syndicalist-Bolshevik affair. For Maximov, the Civil War further compelled Russia's anarchists to support the Bolshevik regime; these considered the threat of counterrevolution far worse than the dangers of a socialist state. Maksimov's story challenges the notion that all "Soviet anarchists" were Bolshevik loyalists. Instead, it appears more suitable to deem Maskimov a loyalist anarchist: an individual loyal to the social revolution when it seemed under threat and willing to help fight for it even though it was not an anarchist revolution. Although Maksimov joined the Red Army, his anarcho-syndicalist dogma did not make him susceptible to adopting Bolshevism, as

³⁶⁵ *Istoricheskie materialy*, "Imennoi alfavitnyi ukazatel' posetitelei kremlevskogo kabinetu I. V. Stalina (1924-1953 gg)," accessed 8 December 2017, <http://istmat.info/node/2594>.

³⁶⁶ Maksimov, *Syndicalists*, 8.

³⁶⁷ Raymond Anderson, "Americans Played Role in Early Economic Development of the Soviet Union," *New York Times*, 1 November 1967, accessed 10 February 2017, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

³⁶⁸ Kozybaev, 574. The encyclopedia fails to mention how Shatov died.

Shatov had. When the Bolshevik state ordered him to join the Communists, he deserted the Red Army and reassumed his old position as editor of *The Voice of Labor*.

Maksimov remained an ardent anarchist and anti-Communist until his death in 1950. He never returned to Russia, as the rise of the Soviet regime would have led to his reimprisonment or execution. He remained in the United States, where he continued to advocate for the imprisoned anarchists in Russian prisons. He died in Chicago on 16 March 1950 due to heart problems.³⁶⁹ There his friends considered him “not only a lucid thinker but a man of stainless character and broad human understanding.”³⁷⁰

The story of Volin demonstrates that while many anarchists fell victim to Lenin’s revolutionary promises, others continued to refute his concept of revolution and social organization. Volin’s anarcho-syndicalism not only prevented him from joining the Bolsheviks but from participating in the revolution entirely. He opposed on moral and ideological grounds the idea that temporary state-socialism was necessary for the greater good of society. For him, a successful revolution always eliminated the state and its institutions and its social and political conventions.³⁷¹ This led him to reject any revolutionary activity that retained the state, even a revolutionary state. The continuous upsurge of radical ideals among Russia’s lower classes in 1917 compelled Volin not only to continue his advocacy of anarchism, but to expand his ideology. His experiences in Russia and the Ukraine opposing the Bolsheviks did not drive Volin away from

³⁶⁹ Rocker, preface to *Unknown Revolution*, by Volin, n. p.

³⁷⁰ Rocker, introduction to *Philosophy of Bakunin*, ed. by Maskimov, 27.

³⁷¹ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 209-216.

anarchism; it strengthened his belief in the theory to which he dedicated his life. He sought to unify the anarchist movement so that, when the time was right, they would be able to organize and guide the masses during the next social revolution.

Volin's dedication to anarchism came at a great cost; he lost friends and experienced horrendous sufferings; he was imprisoned, exiled, deported, and almost executed. While Volin lived a life of adversity and persecution, many of his former comrades joined the Bolshevik Party and, later, assumed positions within the Soviet government. He remained in France, first in Nimes and then Marseille, until his death in 1945. In July 1945, he planned to visit Paris, despite having contracted tuberculosis. Due to his physical condition, he was hospitalized shortly after arriving. Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum died in Paris on 18 September 1945. His family and friends cremated his body at the Père-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris on 23 September "in the presence of more than 250 friends and comrades of the movement."³⁷²

The histories of Shatov, Maksimov, and Volin shed new light on the anarcho-syndicalists and their susceptibility to Bolshevism and illustrates how sociopolitical conditions influenced individual beliefs during a period of heightened revolutionary sentiment. For some, revolutionary fervor, supplemented by expanding Bolshevik support, led to their abandonment of anarchism. For others, the Bolshevik coup d'état forced them to reexamine the practicality of their ideology. In less than two decades, for example, Shatov moved from anarcho-communism to anarcho-syndicalism to syndicalism and finally, in revolution, to Bolshevism. The sociopolitical conditions

³⁷² Maksimov, "Vsevolod," 2.

engendered by the Russian Revolution also reshaped the politics of Volin and Maksimov. Their ideological conversions remained within the realm of anarchist thought, however, while Shatov embraced an entirely new concept of revolution.

Bolshevik success in October highlighted the intrinsic problems of the anarchist movement. The anarchists failed to engender an anarchist revolution for multiple reasons. To Russia's anarchists, their inability to unite and organize was their greatest fault. The ideology's various theoretical interpretations hindered the anarchists' ability to develop a distinct anarchist movement in 1917 Russia. While Russia's working class sought a revolution anarchist in nature, a lack of anarchist leadership defaulted lower-class revolutionary support to the Bolsheviks, who appeared to be the only political party "which looked toward the Social Revolution without fear, the only which promised, if it were given power, a speedy and happy solution for all the existing problems."³⁷³ Thus, shaped by experience, anarchists such as Volin and Maksimov altered their anarchism to be more inclusive of alternative anarchist schools of thought.

Despite their losses between 1917 and 1922, Russian anarchists did not abandon their endeavor for revolution. They learned from their mistakes and sought to remedy the innate problems of the anarchist community. The end of Russian anarchism marked the beginning of a new anarchist movement: united anarchism. Russian anarchists such as Volin and Maksimov focused on the unification of anarchists; they sought to reconcile the ideological differences which plagued the anarchist community in 1917. The Russian Revolutions reshaped Russian anarchism, as anarchists learned from their mistakes and

³⁷³ Volin, *Unknown Revolution*, 156-157.

subsequently modified their ideas so that they could emerge victorious when the next opportunity arose. The transnational nature of Russian anarchism closed a circle: developed and learnt abroad, Russian anarchists returned home to form a revolutionary movement in 1917; their revolutionary experience reshaped their understanding of anarchism and revolution, as their temporary relationship with the Bolsheviks taught the Russian anarchists who remained anarchists that the communist revolution was as statist as the capitalism it replaced; rejected by the Soviet state, they then introduced their transnational ideas of social organization, which were forbidden in the Soviet Union, to the world as Russian anarchists in exile. The Russian Revolutions thus reshaped the transnationalism of the radical ideology, for after the rise of the Soviet Union, Russian anarchism became an international anarchism as anti-communist as it was anti-capitalist.

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