Political Culture, Translation, and the Emergence of Anarchism in Romania at the Turn of the 20th Century

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The Canonical Approach to Classical Anarchism

IN AN article published in 1892 and dedicated to anarchism, the critic Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea noted that "writing about anarchism, especially about theoretical anarchism, is as difficult as it gets. The reason is that you don't have a starting point, you don't know who and what to start with."[1] Published during the "propaganda by the deed" period,[2] when a series of bombings and assassinations attributed to anarchists stirred heated political debates across Europe, the article was an attempt to demonstrate, from a Marxist perspective, the overall irrationality and dangerousness of anarchist ideas. The heteroclite aspect of libertarian practices and concepts, the overall difficulty of a comprehensive theoretical systematization, deeply dissatisfied the illustrious critic. While Gherea admitted to the existence of a "specific way of thinking, characteristic of anarchism in general,"[3] he strongly denounced its lack of structure and its inherent ideological indiscipline, concluding that anarchism could not be expounded in a scientific way. The Romanian critic's position mirrored, in fact, some of the classical Marxist arguments against anarchism, considered a nebulous, contradictory and primitive doctrine. For Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Max Stirner's individualist philosophy and Ravachol's bombs represented the synopsis of libertarian ideas and practices. It was a caricatural, yet commonplace, representation of anarchism, recalling Engels's famous sarcastic depiction of Stirner calmly "sipping beer, and later blood, like water!"[4] or the popular portrayal of anarchists as bomb throwers.

Over half a century later, historian Eric Hobsbawm reached a comparable (if more nuanced) verdict when analyzing the 19th century anarchist peasant movements in Andalusia, whom he included, alongside brigands, urban mobs, secret societies and religious sects, in his list of "primitive rebels." Their "utopian" resistance to the capitalist modernity, as well as their unwavering faith in the advent of a world of justice and liberty, argued Hobsbawm, imprinted a definite millenarian and pre-modern character to their movement. At the same time, Andalusian peasants passionately embraced "science, progress and education, . . . rejecting religion and the Church" and aspiring towards "a new moral

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world"[5] based on knowledge and reason. The Marxist historian nevertheless concluded that classical anarchism[6] was "a form of peasant movement almost incapable of effective adaptation to modern conditions,"[7] doomed to inexorably fail because of its political and historical inadequacy.

Both Dobrogeanu-Gherea and Eric Hobsbawm viewed anarchism as a primitive, amorphous and, essentially, irregular body of thought and praxis. Their arguments concentrated on two different, although related, aspects. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, on one hand, was disconcerted by the peculiar aspect of libertarian theories, by their seemingly chaotic proliferation, in the absence (and often in spite of) a clearly defined ideological center. This, he argued, made anarchism unintelligible and "unscientific" as a whole. On the other hand, Eric Hobsbawm insisted on the spontaneity, lack of organization and "millenarian" character of anarchist movements, which amounted, in his opinion, to a form of "political Luddism"[8] and backwardness. While we could rightfully say that Dobrogeanu-Gherea's and Hobsbawm's conclusions were to a large extent influenced (and informed) by a certain 'traditional' Marxist mistrust of anarchism,[9] they also reveal a series of difficulties common to many studies on anarchism.

First and foremost, anarchism's protean qualities, the fragmentary aspect of its expressions, whether intellectual, political or social, as well as its far-reaching influences in art, science, literature, made it somewhat difficult to define it in a comprehensive and totalizing manner. Approaching the anarchist tradition from different directions, historians of anarchism have tried, nevertheless, to map the 'anarchist invariant' (or, rather, constellation) and to determine its core characteristics, relations and ideological sources.

George Crowder, one of the prominent historians of anarchist ideas, saw anarchism as an eminently modern and European movement, having its intellectual roots in the Enlightenment tradition, and its political origins in the revolutions that shaped the 19th century. The British historian's mapping of the core anarchist concepts relied mainly on the survey of Godwin's, Proudhon's, Bakunin's and Kropotkin's works, considered to be the primary repositories of classical anarchism. The common theme shared by all these thinkers was, in his assessment, the idea of "an ordered society without coercive government."[10] Echoing Crowder's analyses, Saul Newman defined classical anarchism as a form of anti-authoritarian philosophy, embedded in the rationalist, scientist and humanist tradition, expressing a radical rejection of the government principle, and the aspiration towards a society "established voluntarily and without coercion."[11] Both Crowder's and Newman's analyses can be included in the "canonical" tradition of anarchist historiography, inspired by Paul Eltzbacher's analysis of anarchist ideas and thinkers.[12]

The idea of an "anarchist canon" has not escaped, however, critical scrutiny. Matthew S. Adams noted that the reduction of anarchist history to a series of hagiographical accounts and conceptual taxonomies, mainly attributable to "the disciplinary dominance of political theory in anarchist studies,"[13] risked obscuring the rich social and intellectual history of anarchism, as well as the broader context of its emergence. At the same time, the commentaries centered on a specific (and relatively narrow) number of voices, tended, as Ruth Kinna pointed out, to obscure the fact that anarchism "extended well beyond the activities of a handful of activists in western Europe and that it was transnational from the beginning."[14]

The Kropotkinian Turn in Anarchist Historiography

THERE ARE, however, other, equally influential (and established) approaches to anarchism—owing principally to Pyotr Kropotkin's evolutionary account of anarchist history (and pre-history)—that suggest different pathways into libertarian history. While he didn't deny the role that certain intellectual figures had in articulating the core principles of anarchism, the Russian anarchist did not connect the genealogy of the "libertarian idea" to particular texts or personalities, but rather to the diffuse legacy of anti-authoritarian popular organizing, which exceeded, he argued, the historical, geographical and even ideological framework of classical anarchism.

In an article published in 1910 in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Pyotr Kropotkin defined anarchism as "a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government."[15] Starting from this working definition, he distinguished between two great social conceptions which, in his opinion, traversed and shaped human history: one inspired by the social and ethical ideal of "anarchy," egalitarian and communal in its outlook; and the other tributary to the authoritarian model. Kropotkin placed anarchism firmly within the popular tradition, and in opposition to the hegemonic strand, best illustrated by the centralized and hierarchical structures of the state.[16] From this perspective, anarchism did not represent a mere transitory historical (or political) phenomenon. Instead, it pointed to a constant tendency in society, albeit elusive and protean in its manifestations. Its roots were to be found in "the constructive, creative activity of the people, by which all institutions of communal life were developed,"[17] and not necessarily in the "philosophers' cabinets."

Needless to say that Kropotkin's definition, and especially the way in which he traced the course of the "anarchist idea," had a significant echo, especially among other libertarian historians, inclined, as one can easily guess, towards a similar understanding. Murray Bookchin spoke, for instance, of a "legacy of freedom" that he opposed, in a Kropotkinian fashion, to the "legacy of domination." Moreover, Bookchin added, anarchism was not to be understood as a fixed doctrine, but rather as a wide spectrum of principles, ideas and movements that formed a distinctive historical current visible "in the daydreams of humanity, in the great ideals and movements—rebellious, anarchic, and Dionysian—that have welled up in all great eras of social transition."[18]

George Woodcock, the author of a comprehensive history of anarchism,[19] criticized this approach, and especially its tendency towards what he interpreted to be the mythologization of anarchism. Born at the crossroads of different historical eras, revolutions and currents of ideas, anarchism was essentially a synthesis, hence the impression of incoherence and heterogeneity, but perhaps also the temptation, suggested Woodcock, to credit it with a far too generous historical and ideological scope, as Kropotkin did.

Notwithstanding its potential flaws, the vision proposed by Kropotkin effectively revolutionized the understanding of anarchist history, inspiring different alternatives to the canonical approach.

Firstly, his emphasis on the popular, collective dimension of anarchist tradition shifted the focus from the pantheon of representative thinkers to the contexts in which ideas

developed, thus opening the way for social and cultural histories of anarchism. Secondly, the idea of a pervasive and enduring "libertarian legacy," permeating geographies, historical periods and contexts, challenged the Eurocentric outlook typical of canonical interpretations, bringing to light anarchism's fundamentally global and transnational dimensions.

Equally important is the fact that, for Pyotr Kropotkin, anarchism was more than a mere political doctrine. It was a "scientific method," a comprehensive system of knowledge seeking the complete reconstruction of social, economic and politic relations. Therefore, the libertarian universalism outlined by Kropotkin in his historical analyses was to be understood in relation to the idea of anarchism as a "synthetic philosophy,"[20] embracing the totality of material and social phenomena, as well as science, art or literature.

Kropotkin's insistence on the convergence between anarchism and modern science and literature, his constant emphasis on "how closely anarchism is connected with all the intellectual movement of our own times,"[21] were meant to show that anti-authoritarian ideas and practices were not reactionary, atavistic outbursts of "political Luddism," but viable alternatives to the dominant narratives of progress and modernity.

Anarchism, suggested Kropotkin, was not anti-modern or opposed to "civilization." On the contrary, anarchists actively and consciously articulated a different conception of progress (and of politics), equally inimical to the statist and to the capitalist world systems. They affirmed their own views on social renewal and transformation, while at the same time mounting a thorough criticism of the implicit (or explicit) assumptions that shaped the dominant understanding of what progress meant. In doing so, they did not reject technology, education, mass-media, art and literature, or the latest scientific theories, normally associated with the modern. Instead, as Sho Konishi observed, "they gave these elements new meaning and created new forms of expression in accordance with their anarchist concepts of progress and civilization."[22]

It is impossible to think of classical anarchism, for example, without acknowledging its role in the dissemination and popularization of science or literature. A case in point is the emergence, during the last decades of the 19th century, of the first anarchist circles in Romania and their role in disseminating the latest scientific notions, such as Darwinism or evolution.[23] Equally illustrative is the complex and close relationship that developed during *La Belle Epoque* period in France between avant-garde artistic and literary milieus and anarchist militants, groups or publications. However, anarchists succeeded in mobilizing more than the support of a few avant-garde writers or publications. Much of the popular and proletarian culture of the Parisian *faubourgs*, including here the culture of Montmartre cabarets, was also imbued with anarchist ideas and practices.[24]

Classical Anarchism and the Cultures of Non-Domination

Anarchists did not see the participation in formal structures of political power as a suitable means of achieving meaningful social change. Unlike their Marxist counterparts, they were highly skeptical that social revolution could be achieved by engaging in bourgeois and state politics, which they actually saw as a way of reinforcing the status quo. For libertarians, the goal was not the conquest of power through (electoral) politics, but the complete emancipation of the proletariat from the system of domination as such, epitomized by the state and capitalism. This had been one of the main points of contention between anti-authoritarian socialists and Marxists during the First International, and one of the fractures that eventually lead to its dissolution.

Anarchists saw domination as a set of institutions, discourses and practices designed to sustain, reproduce and justify social inequalities in all aspects of life. The fact that libertarians were, generally, detached from electoral or state politics, directed them towards culture as a suitable means of disseminating their ideas. By advocating cooperation, mutual aid, creativity and individual autonomy, anarchists sought to encourage the emergence of "cultures of non-domination." They believed, as David Weir pointed out, that "widespread social changes could only occur in the context of some kind of counterculture"[25] that would present a challenge (and an alternative) to the prevalent bourgeois "cultures of domination," a term coined by Ruth Kinna.[26] This also explains the prominent role that knowledge sharing and education played in anarchist circles. The classical libertarian tradition included an impressive number of educators and pedagogical innovators: from Paul Robin and Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia (the founder of the famous "Modern School") to Sébastien Faure or Henri Roorda. At the same time, the establishment of free, popular schools, the encouragement of non-repressive pedagogical practices, as well as the free circulation of skills and knowledge were some of the preferred methods put in place by anarchists in order to counter the "cultures of domination."

If anarchism, as Kropotkin had argued, was a "scientific method," an intellectual and practical template aimed at demystifying authority and reconfiguring the totality of social and economic relations, then we could rightfully conclude with Jesse S. Cohn that, what at first seemed to be a mere political theory was also a theory of meaning, a reflection on language, notions and narratives, and, most importantly, on the way they were produced and circulated.[27] Anarchist politics, therefore, cannot be understood solely in political (theory) terms, but needs to be placed into a broader cultural and discursive context.

Counter-Publics, Transnational Networks and the Political Culture of Anarchism

During the second half of the 19th century, a pervasive anarchist cultural field started to take shape, as anarchists developed their own discursive spheres and practices, based on anti-authoritarian values and principles. These distinctive anarchist spheres—which Kathy E. Ferguson suggestively described as "anarchist counterpublics"[28]—were laboratories and, at the same time, vehicles of anarchist ideas. Anarchist counter-publics were articulated through public speeches, lectures and direct agitation, through popular songs, poetry, theatre, or the printing of books, pamphlets and other publications. However, the main and "the most visible and the universal institution of anarchist movements"[29] remained the anarchist press. Citing historians Jean Maitron and Alain Droguet, Constance Bantman identified "three key functions for the anarchist press: spreading political views, arguing for revolutionary change and—a less usual role, more specific to anarchism—serving as an organization, a party."[30]

Anarchists generally rejected centralized, hierarchical organizations, favoring looser, quasi-informal, network-type structures. As a consequence, publications became centers (or nodes) for anarchist organizing and the spread of libertarian literature. They ensured a certain continuity, serving as "correspondence bureaus," while also functioning as discursive arenas, where ideas were circulated and debated. Anarchist periodicals thus "played a decisive role in the cultural construction of anarchism as an identity, an ideology and a movement."[31]

Migration and the broad social composition of anarchist milieus favored, on the other hand, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural exchanges. Fleeing political repression, or simply migrating in search of work, anarchists spread their ideas around the globe, constantly changing geographies, identities, languages, or social status. An extensive network of publications followed the migration paths of militants. The abundance of anarchist literature and its built-in transnational character can also explain the broad radiation of anarchist ideas and practices at the time, all over the globe, from Japan, to Russia, and from Romania, to France, the US or Argentina. At the same time, it is important to point out the role that translation played in the creation and proliferation of transnational anarchist networks and counter-publics.[32]

Taking into consideration the cultural dimension of classical anarchism, as well as its transnational character and specific (counter)discursive functioning, current studies of anarchism have generally departed from the canonical framework of interpretation, adopting broader scope and methods.

Critically reassessing the canonical interpretation, Matthew S. Adams reflected on the need to reconceptualize the way we approach anarchist ideas and history, advocating for studies informed by recent methodological developments in cultural and social history. Political theory alone cannot offer, he argued, a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the complex and, sometimes, ambiguous tradition of anarchism. While still "taking anarchist ideas as worthy objects of historical study,"[33] Adams proposed a contextualist history, which would take into account the specific symbolic and embodied

practices underpinning the growth of ideas, and the attempts by anarchists "to fashion a distinctive political culture."[34]

In his compelling study of Italian anarchism as a transnational movement, Davide Turcato challenged interpretations of anarchism that represented it as an amorphous, incoherent and essentially primitive movement. Turcato pointed out that the issue of discontinuity and incoherence, also brought up by historians in relation to Italian anarchism, was essentially related to the limiting analytical framework adopted—predominantly national in scope—and to a certain opaqueness peculiar to anarchist movements in general, which had been misread by historians, and driven to secretiveness by state repression. Therefore, in order to reveal "the more complex patterns of how anarchists organized and provided continuity to their movement,"[35] Turcato proposed a broader, transnational approach to the study of Italian anarchism. It was precisely in these patterns and specific discursive practices, he suggested, that we might find the 'anarchist invariant' and coherence, rather than in the abstract convergence of ideas. Turcato also adopted a network-based analysis, focusing on "the most densely and continuously connected nodes" in this transnational network: the anarchist press, playing the role of an informal institution, on one hand; and, on the other, the life and activity of Errico Malatesta, a prominent figure in the Italian anarchist movement.[36]

This methodological approach favored by Turcato is similar to Constance Bantman's biographical, print-based and transnational study of French anarchism,[37] combining the description of the various militant networks with a detailed analysis of Jean Grave's activity and role as a libertarian editor; or to Benedict Anderson's mapping of the complex exchanges between anarchism, anti-colonial and national movements in the Philippines during the late 19th century.[38] Anderson's analysis emphasized the crucial role played by the print media in the constitution of global political communities and the dissemination of ideas, while closely following the biographies of three key intellectual figures of the period.

Anarchism in Romania: An Ignored History?

ALTHOUGH ANARCHISM has never inspired a significant popular following in Romania, as it did, for example, in Spain, and didn't have the literary and political breadth of the French movement, or its global outreach, the penetration and spread of anarchist ideas had not been completely insignificant or echoless in Romania. Nonetheless, a typical assumption had been for a long time that "we did not have a proper militant movement or anarchist theorists."[39]

Mostly ignored or forgotten, the history of anarchism in Romania suffered from the same "opaqueness" that Davide Turcato touched upon in relation to Italian anarchism. There were a series of both external and internal factors at play in this process of historical invisibilization. At a scholarly level, the focus on political theory and methodological nationalism, and, frequently—as in Hobsbawm's case—the historian's own political biases; at a historical level, the repression against anarchists, which was a recurrent theme

in all anarchist histories. Lastly, the lack of formal, durable anarchist institutions, as libertarians preferred to organize in informal structures and loose networks, frequently based on personal affinities, made it difficult for historians to draw comprehensive, stable pictures of the movement.

There have been several attempts at outlining the contours of the classical period of anarchism in Romania.[40] The earliest ones are: Max Nettlau's list of periodicals, pamphlets, translations and other anarchist publications published in his *Bibliography of Anarchy*[41] in 1897; Eugen Relgis' pamphlet "Libertarians and Pacifists from Romania," published initially in France in 1951;[42] and Vladimiro Muñoz's anthology from the 1970s, *The Rumanian Libertarians*, dedicated to some of the prominent figures of the movement: Joseph Ishill, Panait Muşoiu, Eugen Relgis etc.

Two details stand out in relation to these initial surveys of Romanian anarchism. First of all, they all belonged to authors with definite libertarian leanings. Secondly, they were published outside of Romania and remained generally unknown there. These two details point to the fact that anarchism in Romania was not an exclusively local or "national" phenomenon. Anarchists such as Panait Muşoiu, for example, occupied a marginal—political as well as cultural—position at home. They participated nevertheless in wider, transnational revolutionary networks, and held a distinct place in this parallel political and discursive landscape. This, in turn, made them more susceptible to be recognized by an international anarchist audience than by a national one, hence the relative "abundance" of international libertarian sources on Romanian anarchists.

A more recent contribution is Călin Cotoi's excellent overview of the emergence of social modernity in Romania during the 19th century.[43] His analysis, inspired by Benedict Anderson's work on *fin-de-siecle* transnational anarchist networks, and also anchored in a biographical approach, marks a turning point in the historiography of Romanian anarchism. Cotoi follows the life (and political) trajectories of three 19th century anarchists—Nicolae Russel, Nicolae Codreanu, and Zamfir Arbure-Ralli—trying to map the complex personal, intellectual and ideological landscape they travelled through. The study is illustrative for their formative role in the emergence of a local progressive cultural and political sphere. *Contemporanul*, the famous literary and scientific magazine that appeared in Iassy during the 1880s, was a telling example in this respect. The group publishing it had been initially under the influence of "Bakuninist" ideas and figures, such as Nicolae Russel, and even claimed at some point their adherence to anarchist principles.[44] At the same time, the constitution of a distinct (counter)discursive sphere was intimately linked to the practice of translation, as numerous texts by Reclus, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Jean Grave or Jules Vallès, were translated and circulated within small study and discussion circles, inspired by the revolutionary circles in Russia.

Apart from its cultural and discursive dimensions, another equally important element defining the *narodnik* period of anarchism in Romania, which Cotoi amply discusses, was its basic transnational character. The anarchists' involvement on a local level did not prevent them from continuing to be actively involved in various revolutionary projects, extending from France to Switzerland, Romania, and Russia. Romania thus became one of the main transit points for the smuggling of subversive literature into Russia, and part of a wider, transnational network that linked revolutionaries from all over Europe.

Panait Muşoiu and *Revista Ideei*: A Case-Study

It is this *fin-de-siecle* political and cultural landscape, infused with socialist and anti-authoritarian ideas, that engendered a durable and distinct anarchist movement in Romania.

The "heyday" of Romanian anarchism is closely linked to the figure of Panait Muşoiu and to his activity as a publisher, translator and editor, a period stretching roughly from the last decade of the 19th century until the First World War. In 1900, after being involved in a series of short-lived editorial projects, he founded the most important anarchist publication in Romania, *Revista Ideei* (Idea Review), published under his careful guidance until 1916. By its endurance and continuity, but first and foremost by its wide reach, nationally and internationally, and its broad thematic coverage, *Revista Ideei* became one of the most important vehicles for the dissemination of socialist literature and revolutionary ideas in Romania. Muşoiu's paper thus gained an almost institutional status, much like other well-known anarchist publications at the time, *Freiheit*, *Freedom*, *Les Temps Nouveaux* etc.

Taking Constance Bantman's relational and biographical approach to French anarchism as a methodological guide and focusing primarily on the particular role played by the anarchist press (namely, *Revista Ideei*) in the development of the local libertarian movement, I would like to briefly outline some of the most relevant aspects related to its publication and circulation.

Quite atypically for other anarchist publications of the period, which usually published passionate manifestos calling for social revolution, the program announced in the first issue was, actually, an extensive program of translations, as *Revista Ideei*, wrote Muşoiu, aimed at "enriching Romanian literature with all the best works from foreign literatures."[45] While the relatively mild tone adopted by the paper can also be explained by Muşoiu's wish to deflect any unwanted attention by the police, it also reveals the pivotal role that the practice of translation and the popularization of translated texts had in the emergence of the local anarchist circles.

Panait Muşoiu's collection included a large number of titles, mostly translations from authors such as Chernyshevsky, William Morris, John Stuart Mill, Bertrand Russell, or Maeterlink. A sizeable part of his publications were nevertheless dedicated to the "classics of anarchy": Bakunin, Kropotkin, Stirner, Sébastien Faure, Malatesta, Henry David Thoreau etc. *Revista Ideei* thus contained the most comprehensive collection of anarchist literature in Romanian. Also worth mentioning is the fact that some of the translations published by Panait Muşoiu were the first editions to appear in Romanian. A case in point is Thoreau's *Walden*, a text that he translated from a French edition and published in 1936. Another example is Nikolay Chernyshevsky's influential novel *What Is to Be Done?* that Muşoiu translated in 1896, also after a French version. Last but not least, Mikhail Bakunin's, *God and the State*, one of the most influential texts of classical anarchism, was also translated and published by the indefatigable anarchist editor in 1918.

Panait Muşoiu's extensive program of translations was not only a means of importing foreign literature, but principally a form of participation in the broader, transnation-

al anarchist network, as *Revista Ideei* became one of its important "nodes." Moreover, Mușoiu's editorial efforts cannot be detached from the personal relationships that he often developed over time with other libertarian militants, writers or publishers. Many of the texts Mușoiu published in his paper were taken, for example, from *Les Temps Nouveaux*, the most important anarchist publication in France at the time, edited by Jean Grave, one of his long-standing and constant correspondents.

Les Temps Nouveaux was not the only source of anarchist texts for *Revista Ideei*, which had numerous connections with other notable libertarian publications: *Freiheit*, *Arbeiter Freynd*, *Freedom*, *Mother Earth*, *Tierra y Libertad*.

At the same time, Mușoiu's paper functioned as an organ for the Romanian anarchist movement, and acted as a liaison and organizational hub. This did not mean, however, that its scope was strictly local; quite the contrary. *Revista Ideei* gained numerous subscribers and correspondents in the United States, mostly among Jewish anarchists who had emigrated from Romania at the turn of the 20th century. They were some of the most active and dedicated contributors to the paper, sending regular correspondences to Mușoiu for publication. Some of them, like the interesting group from Leclaire, Illinois, even edited their own "intimate paper" called *La Coș/The Wastebasket*. These groups of workers generally remained involved in the local anarchist movement, which they supported financially and by contributing regularly to its periodical. In a reply to a letter send by a Nathaniel Finkelstein from Colorado, Panait Mușoiu admitted that *Revista Ideei* was not strictly a local organ, but was "meant to inspire all those who know Romanian, wherever they may be in the world."[46] Thus, *Revista Ideei*, similarly to other popular anarchist papers at the time, had a global outreach, with readers and contributors from Switzerland, France, Hungary, Great Britain, Italy, Bulgaria or the United States.

Conclusions

The spread of anarchist ideas in Romania was accompanied by an intense activity of popularization of science and an increasingly important literary and editorial production, including numerous translations. For the early anti-authoritarian socialists, as well as for Panait Mușoiu later on, translation was an important political and cultural strategy. It played a crucial role in the formulation of an anarchist (counter) discursive sphere.

Translation was part of a wider "culture of circulation" (as Kathy Ferguson called it), highlighting the transnational pattern of emergence and development of classical anarchism in general. A pivotal role in sustaining anarchist counter-publics and transnational networks was played by the anarchist press, and, in a broader sense, by the circulation of anarchist literature. We could thus say that the practice of translation was embedded from the start into anarchist politics and culture.

All in all, the benefits of a transnational (and translational) approach that, quoting Constance Bantman, "integrates ongoing research into personal and political networks with the substantial historiography exploring the cultural politics of anarchism,"[47] are

undisputable when trying to trace the contours of less known anarchist expressions and figures that would hardly find their way into the "canon" of anarchist history, and which are normally excluded from local literary or cultural accounts. It also the case of anarchism in Romania, a minor movement which developed, nevertheless, broad transnational ramifications, while also engaging in wider dialogues with local writers, artists and cultural figures, still to be uncovered and explored.

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Notes

1. C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, "Anarhia cugetărei," in *Anarhism și Socialism: Anarhia cugetărei. Deosebirea dintre anarhism și socialism* (Iași: Editura Revistei "Viitorul Social," 1908), 3.
2. See Jean Maitron, *Ravachol et les anarchistes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973).
3. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, 4.
4. Victor Roudine, *Max Stirner* (Paris: Henri Fabre, 1910), 69.
5. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 82.
6. There is, generally, a broad consensus regarding the emergence and development of "classical anarchism," a period overlapping to a great extent with what historians, including Eric Hobsbawm, have called "the long nineteenth century."
7. Hobsbawm, 92.
8. Hobsbawm, 119.
9. For a more detailed discussion regarding the Marxist-anarchist polemic, see Ann Robertson, "The Philosophical Roots of the Marx–Bakunin Conflict," *What's Next*, December 2003, accessed 28 October 2021, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/bakunin/bio/robertson-ann.htm; ead., *Marxism and Anarchism: The Philosophical Roots of the Marx–Bakunin Conflict* (St. Paul, MN: Workers International League/Wellred, 2011).
10. George Crowder, *Classical Anarchism: The Political Thought of Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 1.
11. See Saul Newman, *The Politics of Postanarchism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 17.
12. Paul Eltzbacher, *Anarchism*, translated by Steven T. Byington (New York: Benj. R. Tucker, 1907). Originally published in German, in 1900, the book was also translated in Romanian and published as a series of studies in *Revista Ideei* by Panait Mușoiu. See Paul Eltzbacher, "Ce-i anarhismul," *Revista Ideei* (Bucharest) 8, 71–72 (1908).
13. Matthew S. Adams, "The Possibilities of Anarchist History: Rethinking the Canon and Writing History," *Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies* 1 (2013): 38.
14. Ruth Kinna, *The Government of No One: The Theory and Practice of Anarchism* (London: Pelican, 2019), 39.
15. Pyotr Kropotkin, "Anarchism," in *The Encyclopædia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information*, 11th edition, vol. 1 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 914.
16. "Throughout the whole history of our civilisation, two traditions, two opposed tendencies, have been in conflict: the Roman tradition and the popular tradition; the imperial

tradition and the federalist tradition; the authoritarian one and the libertarian one." See Peter Kropotkin, *The State: Its Historic Role* (London: Freedom Office, 1898), 41.
17. Peter Kropotkin, "Modern Science and Anarchism," in *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets: A Collection of Writings by Peter Kropotkin*, edited with Introduction, Biographical Sketch and Notes by Roger N. Baldwin (New York: Dover Publications, 1970), 149.
18. Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (Palo Alto, CA: Cheshire Books, 1982), 42.
19. George Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (Cleveland–New York: World Publishing Company, 1962).
20. Kropotkin, "Modern Science and Anarchism," 150.
21. Kropotkin, "Anarchism," 915.
22. Sho Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA–London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013), 11.
23. Cosmin Koszor-Codrea, *Science Popularization and Romanian Anarchism in the Nineteenth Century* (n.p. [Cluj-Napoca]: Pagini Libere, n.d. [2019]).
24. See Richard D. Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).
25. David Weir, *Anarchy and Culture: The Aesthetic Politics of Modernism* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 127.
26. Kinna, 60.
27. Jesse S. Cohn, *Anarchism and the Crisis of Representation: Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, Politics* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2006), 80.
28. See Kathy E. Ferguson, "Anarchist Counterpublics," *New Political Science* 32, 2 (2010): 193–214.
29. Davide Turcato, "Italian Anarchism As a Transnational Movement, 1885–1915," *International Review of Social History* 52, 3 (2007): 411.
30. Constance Bantman, "Jean Grave and French Anarchism: A Relational Approach (1870s–1914)," *International Review of Social History* 62, 3 (2017): 471.
31. James Yeoman, "Print Culture and the Formation of the Anarchist Movement in Spain, 1890–1915," apud Bantman, 471.
32. "Anarchist cultures of circulation were further enhanced by vigorous grassroots commitments to translation. . . . Multilingual anarchist communities made each other's writings available through creative labours of circulation. The interlocking networks of printers, translators, and publications helped sustain the 'ongoing life' of anarchist publics." See Ferguson, 205.
33. Adams, 52.
34. Adams, 62–63.
35. Turcato, 410.
36. Turcato, 413.
37. Bantman, 454.
38. Benedict Anderson, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination* (London–New York: Verso, 2013).
39. N. Petrescu, "Anarhismul," in *Doctrinele partidelor politice: 19 prelegeri publice organizate de Institutul Social Român* (Bucharest: Cultura Naţională, 1923), 198.
40. See Adrian Tătăran, "Anarhismul în România: istoriile uitate ale unei istorii uitate," *Anuarul Muzeului Naţional al Literaturii Române Iaşi* 11 (2018): 7–24.

41. See M. Nettlau, *Bibliographie de l'anarchie*, foreword by Élisée Reclus (Bruxelles: Bibliothèque des Temps Nouveaux; Paris: P.-V. Stock, 1897), 202–203.
42. A Romanian translation of the text has been published in 2019. See Eugen Relgis, "Libertari şi pacifişti din România," *IDEA artă + societate* 54 (2019): 154–159.
43. Călin Cotoi, *Inventing the Social in Romania, 1848–1914: Networks and Laboratories of Knowledge* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Brill/Schöningh, 2020).
44. See Adrian Tătăran, "Anarhismul şi vechea mişcare socialistă din România," *IDEA artă + societate* 54 (2019): 149–153.
45. Panait Muşoiu, "Un plan de lucru," *Revista Ideei* 1, 1 (1900): 8.
46. Panait Muşoiu, "Scrisoare din America," *Revista Ideei* 5, 46 (1905): 93.
47. Bantman, 455.

Abstract

Political Culture, Translation, and the Emergence of Anarchism in Romania at the Turn of the 20th Century

The aim of this paper is threefold. Firstly, it discusses the various approaches to anarchist history, arguing that the canonical framework of interpretation, based on political theory and the history of ideas, is limiting. At the same time, it explores methodological alternatives to the canonical approach, advocating for studies informed by recent developments in cultural and social history, with an emphasis on transnational, biographical and relational analyses. Secondly, it outlines some of the characteristics of anarchist political culture, taking into account the role played by translations, print and transnational networks in the emergence of global and anarchist political communities. Lastly, it tries to illustrate the cultural and transnational dimensions of classical anarchism by focusing of *Revista Ideei*, the most important anarchist publication in Romania at the time.

Keywords

anarchist studies, political culture, transnational networks, translation, *Revista Ideei*