

Mikhail Bakunin

Father of Anarcho-Collectivism

(1814 - 1876)

Description : The originality of his ideas, the imagery and vehemence of his eloquence, his untiring zeal in propagandism, helped too by the natural majesty of his person and by a powerful vitality, gave Bakunin access to all the socialistic revolutionary groups, and his efforts left deep traces everywhere... (From : The Torch of Anarchy)

Tags : anarchist, russian, collectivist, revolutionary, first international, social anarchist, socialist, emigre, anarcho-syndicalist, theorist.

Quotes :

"What would be the main purpose and task of the organization? To help the people achieve self-determination on a basis of complete and comprehensive human liberty, without the slightest interference from even temporary or transitional power..." (From : "Bakunin to Nechayev on the Role of Secret Revolutionary Societies," by Mikhail Bakunin, June 2, 1870.)

"The capitalists are by no means philanthropists; they would be ruined if they practiced philanthropy." (From : "The Capitalist System," by Mikhail Bakunin. This pamphlet is an excerpt from The Knouto-Germanic Empire and the Social Revolution and included in The Complete Works of Michael Bakunin under the title "Fragment".)

"The great bulk of mankind live in a continual quarrel and apathetic misunderstanding with themselves, they remain unconscious of this, as a rule, until some uncommon occurrence wakes them up out of their sleep, and forces them to reflect on themselves and their surroundings." (From : "The Church, the State, and the Commune," by Mikhail Bakunin, from: Bakunin's Writings, Guy A. Aldred Modern Publishers, Indore Kraus Reprint co. New York 1947.)

"Individual liberty - not privileged liberty but human liberty, and the real potential of individuals - will only be able to enjoy full expansion in a regime of complete equality. When there exists an equality of origins for all men on this earth then, and only then ... will one be able to say, with more reason than one can today, that every individual is a self-made man." (From : "Essay from Egalite August 14, 1869," by Mikhail Bakunin, from: Egalite, (Geneva) August 14, 1869.)

"...we seek a unification of society and equality of social and economic provision for every individual on this earth." (From : "Essay from Egalite July 31, 1869," by Mikhail Bakunin, from: Egalite, (Geneva) July 31, 1869..)

"You taunt us with disbelieving in God. We charge you with believing in him. We do not condemn you for this. We do not even indict you. We pity you. For the time of illusions is past. We cannot be deceived any longer." (From : "God or Labor: The Two Camps," by Mikhail Bakunin, translated by "Crastinus" from Bakunin's preface to his pamphlet refuting Mazini's theistic idealism. This work was published in the year 1871.)

"What is permitted to the State is forbidden to the individual. Such is the maxim of all governments." (From : "The Immorality of the State," by Mikhail Bakunin.)

"The principle of political or State morality is very simple. The State, being the supreme objective, everything that is favorable to the development of its power is good; all that is contrary to it, even if it were the most humane thing in the world, is bad. This morality is called Patriotism." (From : "Marxism, Freedom, and the State," Translated and Edited with a Biographical Sketch by K. J. Kenafick, First published in 1950 by Freedom Press, chapter 3.)

"The State is the authority, the rule, and organized power of the possessing class, and the make-believe experts over the life and liberty of masses. The State does not want anything

other than the servility of the masses. At once it demands their submission." (From : "The Organization of the International," by Mikhail Bakunin, 1869, from: Bakunin's Writings, published by Modern Publishers, Indore Kraus Reprint Co. New York, 1947.)

"The revolution, in short, has this aim: freedom for all, for individuals as well as collective bodies, associations, communes, provinces, regions, and nations, and the mutual guarantee of this freedom by federation." (From : "Revolutionary Catechism," by Mikhail Bakunin.)

Biography :

Mikhail Bakunin By J. M. W., Published by the Torch.

Three of the most notable types of the revolutionistic innovators of this century are Mazzini (1808--1872), Proudhon (1809--1865), and Bakunin (1814--1876). All three were essentially "men of 48." The culmination of their teaching was then first attempted to be put in practice. But they were so much in advance of their time, that it may still be generations ere the seed they sowed shall ripen into fruit. The three were alike in restless daring, and noble aspiration. But the Italian was the refined and passionate idealist, the Frenchman the intrepid thinker, and the Russian the sturdy man of action. It is with Bakunin, as the least known in England, that I propose at present to briefly deal.

Bakunin, the founder of Russian Nihilism, was born at Torshok, in the department of Tver, in 1814. He came of an aristocratic family and was educated for military service at St.Petersburg. Even in these early years he seems to have seen that soldiers were serfs bribed by pay and decorations to keep down their fellow serfs. The artillery branch, in which he was, in common with the most favored aristocracy, had greater freedom, of thought and research than any other branch of the service, and the powerful mind of Bakunin was stimulated towards philosophy. Hegelianism was then rising in vogue, and he obtained permission to study in Germany. He visited Berlin, Dresden and Leipsic, mastering the Hegelian philosophy, which he afterwards characterized as the "Algebra of Revolution," but already inclining to the heterodox school which produced men like Ludwig Feuerbach and David Friedrich Strauss. Bakunin himself put forward several notable philosophical essays under the nom de guerre of "Jules Elisard." In 1843 he visited Paris and became

acquainted with Pierre Joseph Proudhon, who in that year published his profound work on *The Creation of Order in Humanity*. The Russian became, a disciple of the French Anarchist, and the next few years of his life were devoted to making the Social Democratic movement also anarchist and international. His permission to reside abroad, which had only brought on him the suspicion of being a Russian spy, was rescinded by the Russian Government. Instead of obeying the order to return to Russia he issued an address to Poles and Russians to unite in a Pan-Slavonic revolutionary confederation. Ten thousand rubles were offered for his arrest, and the French government expelled him. But the revolution of February 1848 brought him back to Paris, whence he rushed as a torch of revolution to Prague to stir up the Congress of Slavs. Soon after we find him in Saxony, where he became a member of the insurrectionary government. Forced to fly from Dresden he was captured, sent to prison, and condemned to death in May 1850. His sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. He contrived to escape into Austria, was again captured and sentenced to death, but eventually was surrendered to Russia. He was kept for several years in a dungeon in the fortress of Neva, and at length was deported to Siberia. He spent many years amid the horrors of penal servitude, but his spirit was unvanquished. He finally succeeded in escaping and walking eastward over a thousand miles, under extreme hardship, and at last reached the sea and obtained passage to Japan. From there he sailed to California, thence to New York, and in 1860 appeared in London. He had suffered innumerable hardships and adventures, had mixed with all sorts and conditions of men, from the rulers of Europe to the wild hairy Ainus, and had everywhere found that government was tyranny. He threw himself into revolutionary schemes with redoubled enthusiasm. With Herten he published the *Kolokol*, or *Tocsin of Revolution*. His demand for the abolition of the State drew him more and more into conflict with the Marxian wing of the revolutionary Socialist party, and in 1872 he was expelled from the Congress of the International Association, carrying however, thirty delegates with him. Meanwhile he had helped to build up the Nihilist party in Russia on the basis of undoing, present injustice without seeking to hamper, or even to guide, the natural evolution of the future. Switzerland was his only safe center of operations, and here, with hands, heart and brain full of revolutionary schemes, he died on July 1st, 1876.

Carlo Cafiero and Élisée Reclus, in their preface to Bakunin's *God and the State*, say: "In Russia among the students, in Germany among the insurgents of Dresden, in Siberia among his brothers in exile, in America, in England, in France, in Switzerland, in Italy among all earnest men, his direct influence has been considerable. The originality of his ideas, the imagery and vehemence of his eloquence, his untiring zeal in propagandism, helped too by the natural majesty of his person and by a powerful vitality, gave Bakunin access to all the socialistic revolutionary groups, and his efforts left deep traces everywhere, even upon those who, after having welcomed him, thrust him out because of a difference of object or method." Bakunin, it is evident, was rather the stimulator than the organizer. He wrote wonderful letters, arousing the torpid and nerving the timid. Fertile in suggestion, his writings were of the nature of fragments cast off red-hot from the fiery furnace of his mind. "My life," he used to say, "is but a fragment." Most notable of the aforesaid fragments is his booklet on *God and the State*, in which those twin instruments of oppression are attacked with equal vehemence and vigor. It is on the pretense of divine authority that human authority is founded, and Bakunin, "apostle of destruction" as he was called by the Belgian economist Lavaleye, looked forward to the time when "human justice will be substituted for divine justice." Bakunin shows that the superstitions and stupidities of religious belief are the natural outcome of ignorance and oppression, with only the dram-shop and the church, debauchery of the body and debauchery of the mind, as the relief to a life of serfdom. But the work is accessible to all, and to those who like to come into contact with a vigorous mind I say:--"Read it; and if you do not like it, Read it again."

From : "Mikhail Bakunin," By J. M. W., Published by The Torch of Anarchy.

Works :

Author of *Appeal to My Russian Brothers* (November 30, 1895)

Author of *Integral Education I* (July 31, 1869)

Author of *Founding of the First International* (November 30, 1952)

Author of *God and the State* (November 30, 1915)

Author of *The Immorality of the State* (December 31, 1969)

Author of *Integral Education II* (August 14, 1869)

Author of *Marxism, Freedom and the State* (November 30, 1949)

Author of On Rousseau (November 30, 1971)

Author of The Organization of the International (November 30, 1868)

Author of The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State (November 30, 1870)

Author of Policy of the International (November 30, 1868)

Author of Power Corrupts the Best (November 30, 1866)

Author of Rebuke of Nechayev (June 02, 1870)

Author of Recollections on Marx and Engels (November 30, 1868)

Author of The Red Association (November 30, 1869)

Author of Revolutionary Catechism (November 30, 1865)

Author of Stateless Socialism: Anarchism (November 30, 1952)

Author of The Two Camps (November 30, 1868)

Author of What is Authority? (December 31, 1969)

Author of Solidarity in Liberty (November 30, 1866)

Author of The Class War (November 30, 1869)

Author of The German Crisis (November 30, 1869)

Author of Workers and the Sphinx (November 30, 1866)

Author of The Policy of the Council (November 30, 1868)

Author of Where I Stand (November 30, 1946)

Author of God or Labor (November 30, 1946)

Author of The Social Upheaval (November 30, 1946)

Author of Politics and the State (November 30, 1870)

Author of The Commune, The Church & The State (November 30, 1946)

Author of Fragment of a letter From Bakunin to Herzen and Ogareff (November 30, 1860)

Author of Letter from Bakunin to Herzen and Ogareff, from San Francisco, October 3, 1861 (October 03, 1861)

Author of Letter to Herzen and Ogareff, August 17, 1863 (August 17, 1863)

Author of Letter from Bakunin to Herzen 1862 (November 30, 1861)

Author of Letter To Herzen Oct 3, 1862 (November 30, 1861)

Author of Polish Declaration (November 30, 1895)

Author of Letter from Bakunin to the Comrades of the Jura Federation, 1873 (November 30, 1872)

Author of Letter From Bakunin to Elisée Reclus, Feb. 15, 1875 (February 15, 1875)

Chronology :

May 30, 1814 : Mikhail Bakunin's Birth Day.

July 01, 1876 : Mikhail Bakunin's Death Day.

November 12, 2016 : Mikhail Bakunin's Added to

<http://www.RevoltLib.com>.

March 12, 2018 : Mikhail Bakunin's Last Updated on

<http://www.RevoltLib.com>.

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- **Anarchist Library: Mikhail Bakunin**

<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/category/author/mikhail-bakunin>

- **Wikipedia: Mikhail Bakunin**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikhail_Bakunin

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