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**ANARCHO-REFORMISM OF P.A. KROPOTKIN.  
TERMINOLOGICAL ASPECT  
(ON THE RUSSIAN MATERIAL)**

Now the expression "anarcho-reformism" only has started to enter into our scientific language in Russia. However it is used generally by members of various groups in modern anarchism in negative sense at opposition to the "real" anarchists.<sup>1</sup>

In addition the expression has appeared in teaching literature for Institutes of higher education. For example it is in the teaching-methodical learning aids on political science of the Ivanovo State Energy University. Authors, S. Yu. Lisova and E. Yu. Moiseyev, use the term "anarcho-reformism" in the meaning equated to such modern movements as hippie and punks.<sup>2</sup>

But in our opinion this term designates connection of ideas of an anarchical ideal as the purposes and politicians of reforms as way of its achievement in the political plan. We sure that it is necessary to understand Kropotkin's political views exactly in this sense (since the end of XIX century till 1921 year.)

The study of anarcho-reformism in Kropotkin's political views has significant scientific interest so as the system of anarchical views of Kropotkin includes a wide range of problems: from state and society problems to revolution and war problems.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CPC | Анархия и анархизм – единый форум анархистов (дата обновления: 13.06.2005). URL: <http://anarhia.org/forum/viewtopic.php?p=185513> (дата обращения: 13.04.2011). [SRS | Anarchy and anarchism – a uniform forum of anarchists (updating date: 6/13/2005). URL: <http://anarhia.org/forum/viewtopic.php?p=185513> (address date: 4/13/2011).]

<sup>2</sup> Лисова С. Ю., Моисеев Е. Ю. Политология: учебно-методическое пособие / ГОУВПО «Ивановский государственный энергетический университет имени В. И. Ленина». Иваново, 2007. [Lisova S. Yu., Moiseyev E. Yu. Political science: the teaching-methodical learning aids / The Ivanovo State Energy University of a name of V. I. Lenin. Ivanovo, 2007.]

<sup>3</sup> Жуков Ю. В. Политические идеи анархизма П. А. Кропоткина в контексте современности: дис. ... канд. полит. наук. Саратов, 2006; Гарявин А. Н. Культурологические воззрения П. А. Кропоткина // Культура и интеллигенция России в эпоху модернизаций (XVIII-XX вв.) Материалы II Всероссийской научной конференции.

In the last decades two main tendencies were outlined in Russia. There is (1) aspiration to reconsider the settled estimates of activity of Kropotkin<sup>4</sup> and (2) statement of new problems for research of views of Kropotkin.<sup>5</sup> First of all it is connected with detection in his political views of contradictions. We think that they may be removed in many aspects. For this it is necessary to use the methodological approach which is offered in this work considering existence in anarchical views of Kropotkin of the period of anarcho-reformism.

Kropotkin's anarchist theory was traditionally estimated in Russia as radicalism of materialistic, natural-science and positivistic character, it always remained the revolutionary theory.<sup>6</sup> But at the end of the XX century and till 1921 the anarcho-

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Омск, 1995. Т. I. Интеллигенция и многоликость культуры российской провинции. Ляшенко В. В. Идеи П. А. Кропоткина о государстве и праве: автореф. дис. ... канд. юрид. наук. М., 2008; Никульченков Е. И. Проблема эволюции и революции в социально-политической теории П. А. Кропоткина (политико-этический аспект): дис. ... канд. политол. наук. СПб., 1993; Ударцев С. Ф. Политическая и правовая теория анархизма в России: история и современность. Алматы, 1994.

[Zhukov Yu. V. Political ideas of anarchism of Kropotkin in a present context: dissertation... Candidate of political sciences. Saratov, 2006; Garyavin A. N. Kropotkin's culturological views // Culture and the intellectuals of Russia during an era of modernisations (the XVIII-XX centuries) Materials of II All-Russia scientific conference. Omsk, 1995. Т. I. Intellectuals and culture of many faces in the Russian provinces. Lyashenko V. V. Kropotkin's ideas about the state and the law: author's abstract of dissertation... Candidate of jurisprudence. Moscow, 2008; Nikulchenkov E. I. An evolution and revolution problem in Kropotkin's socio-political theory (political and ethical aspect): dissertation... candidate of political sciences. Sankt-Petersburg, 1993; Udartsev S. F. The political and jurisprudence theory of anarchism in Russia: history and today. Almaty, 1994.]

<sup>4</sup> Матюхин А. В. Пути и теории политической модернизации в России: сравнительный анализ консервативных и анархических подходов. М., 2005; Щенникова О. Н. П. А. Кропоткин в контексте истории русского анархизма: дис. ... канд. ист. наук. Барнаул, 2006. [Matiukhin A. V. Ways and theories of political modernisation in Russia: comparative analysis of conservative and anarchical approaches. Moscow, 2005; Shchennikova O. N. P. A. Kropotkin in a context of history of Russian anarchism: dissertation... candidate of historical sciences. Barnaul, 2006.]

<sup>5</sup> Назаров А. А. Эволюция социально-экономических воззрений П. А. Кропоткина: дис. ... канд. экон. наук. М., 1994; Пивовар С. Ф. Анархистские взгляды П. А. Кропоткина в контексте этатистских тенденций на этапе становления украинской государственности // Труды Междунар. науч. конф., посв. 150-летию со дня рожд. П. А. Кропоткина. Москва, Дмитров, С.-Петербург. 9-15 декабря 1992 г. Вып. 2. Идеи П. А. Кропоткина в социально-экономических науках. М., 1995. [Nazarov A. A. Evolution of social and economic views of Kropotkin: dissertation... candidate of economy sciences. Moscow, 1994; Pivovarov S. F. Kropotkin's anarchists views in a context of etatists tendencies at a stage of formation of the Ukrainian statehood // proceedings of Internat. Science conference to the 150 anniversary from the date of burth of P. A. Kropotkin. Moscow, Dmitrov, St.-Petersburg. On December 9-15, 1992 Issue 2. Kropotkin's ideas in social and economic sciences. Moscow, 1995.]

<sup>6</sup> Ситдыкова К. Р. Анархизм П. А. Кропоткина в зеркале оценок и мнений // SCHOLA-200. М., 2000. С. 104. [Sitdykova K. R. Kropotkin's anarchism in a mirror of estimates and opinions // SCHOLA-200. Moscow, 2000. Page 104.]

reformist concept began to prevail in Kropotkin's political views and not anarcho-radicalism. If we shall investigate formation, evolution, manifestations and significance of such rare combination of political currents in views of one person as anarchism and reformism we can arrive at absolutely new conclusions. It will change the rating of anarchical views of P.A. Kropotkin which became traditional and quite settled in Russia.<sup>7</sup>

Many anarchists and researchers of anarchism are of opinion that anarchism is one of the most ancient political currents and there are sources of it in Platon's doctrines and philosophers-Cinics of Ancient Greece.

They find anarchism elements in practice of the free cities of medieval Europe and in the veche republics (with popular assembly in ancient Russia) in Pskov and Novgorod.<sup>8</sup>

There is the word "anarchy" in the well-known Russian dictionary of V.I. Dahl (the 1860-th). It is defined as Greek one by origin and it means "the absence of head, the organized government, the force and an order; there are no authorities, no administration, there is the power of many boyars in the State or a community." And the meaning of "anarchist" is «the defender, the patron, the devotee of anti-guidance, revolts and seditions».<sup>9</sup>

In the Soviet scientific researches the meaning of anarchism is one of versions of socialist political theories.<sup>10</sup> They deemed it was the influential direction existing already two eyelids and without knowledge about it never understand many events of the world and Russian history. And they thought that only in this direction the state

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<sup>7</sup> Талеров П. И. Влияние П. А. Кропоткина и его взглядов на формирование анархистского движения в России в начале XX в. // Харизматические личности в истории России. Сб. науч. тр. СПб., 1997. С. 70-77. [Talerov P. I. Influence of P. A. Kropotkina and his views on formation of anarchist movement in Russia at the beginning of the XX century // Charismatic persons in the history of Russia. Collected science articles. Sankt-Petersburg, 1997. Page 70-77.]

<sup>8</sup> Свобода, нравственность и самоорганизация. С точки зрения революционера (П. А. Кропоткин). От 19.04.01. Дата обновления: 27.06.2006. URL: [http://www.kirsoft.com.ru/freedom/KSNews\\_18.htm](http://www.kirsoft.com.ru/freedom/KSNews_18.htm) (дата обращения 11.01.2008). [Freedom, moral and self-organising. From the point of view of the revolutionary (P. A. Kropotkin). From 19.04.01. Updating date: 6/27/2006. URL: [http://www.kirsoft.com.ru/freedom/KSNews\\_18.htm](http://www.kirsoft.com.ru/freedom/KSNews_18.htm) (address date 1/11/2008).]

<sup>9</sup> Даль В. И. Толковый словарь живого великорусского языка. Т. 1. М., 1989. С. 16. [Dahl V. I. Explanatory dictionary of living great Russian language. V. 1. Moscow, 1989. Page 16.]

<sup>10</sup> Пирумова Н. М. Социальная доктрина М. А. Бакунина. М., 1990. С. 123. [Pirumova N. M. M. A. Bakunin's social doctrine. Moscow, 1990. Page 123.]

opposed to society and so the future development of mankind would not be possible. And the aim of anarchism is the destruction of the State and any political power. They are considered only as bodies of violence and anarchism supports consolidation of individuals in free and voluntary associations of citizens.

In the modern Russian encyclopedic dictionaries there is such a definition of the essence of anarchism: this is one of the types of world-views which are peculiar to the political culture of radicalism.<sup>11</sup> And in many respects the radicalism of the XX century in Russia has ideological sources: the revolutionary theory of Russian anarchism in the Bolshevik and modern variant. Russian anarchists have offered their own strategy, their system of values, their alternative of world development.

In trivial consciousness the anarchist is the person who throws the bombs and commits other crimes. It may be because he is more or less crazy or he uses his extreme political views as a pretext for his criminal actions. Such a representation has been formulated by B. Raccel as early as 1918.<sup>12</sup> It is connected with the use of a combination of words «anarchy and chaos» as the negative characteristic of a social situation. And now the word "anarchy" (from the Greek language «without the power») instinctively is translated as «without an order»

However many anarchists did not think so. For example there was the Russian anarchist contemporary P. A. Kropotkin who was known under the name of V. Volin (it is the pseudonym of Vsevolod Mikhaylovich Eykhenbaum). He and his comrades accentuated as wrong the opinion that the libertarian concept (i.e. without State) would mean the absence of the organization. The problem point is not about the existence of "organization" or "not organization" but about the existence of two essentially different principles of the organization.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>11 Арефьев М. А., Давыденкова А. Г. П. А. Кропоткин и теория классического анархизма // Петр Алексеевич Кропоткин и проблемы моделирования историко-культурного развития цивилизации: материалы международной научной конференции / сост. П. И. Талеров. СПб., 2005. С. 235. [Arefyev M. A., Davydenkova A. P. A. Kropotkin and theory of classical anarchism // Peter Alekseevich Kropotkin and problems of modelling of historical and cultural development of a civilisation: materials of the international scientific conference / gather by. P. I. Talerov. Sankt-Petersburg, 2005. Page 235.]

<sup>12</sup>12 Russell B. Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism and Syndicalism. London, 1966. P. 38.

<sup>13</sup>13 Федотова В. Г. Анархия и порядок в контексте российского посткоммунистического развития // Вопросы философии. 1998. № 5. С. 7. [Fedotova V. G. Anarchy and an order in a context of the Russian postcommunist development // Questions of Philosophy. 1998. No. 5. Page 7.]

Thus the anarchism is not confined only by radicalism. And it is the greatest value of it. There are anarchical ideas such as collectivist solidarity, harmonization of individual and public interests, equality, mutual help and caring for other ones, mutual responsibility, wise statement of purposes etc in our modern world. And they are more demanded than ever in the world where ideas of radicalism give way to reformism.<sup>14</sup>

The reformism is as it has been told in the Soviet philosophical dictionary «a political trend ... which denies the necessity of classes fight and a socialist revolution. It preaches cooperation of classes and it hopes to turn by reforms the capitalism into the society of «general prosperity».<sup>15</sup>

What can be the common between anarchism and reformism – they are two such different political trends? How can it be in the person of the famous leader and the theorist of classical anarchism P. A. Kropotkin? It appears that the communion not only can be but also it is quite harmoniously combined if to set anarchism as strategic aim of development of society and to make reformism as a tactics in achievement of this purpose.

And it is really that P. A. Kropotkin in his social-political views has approached very close to the foregoing definition of reformism. It was both in the period of pre-anarchists and in the anarchists period of his creativity.

But in our article we are mainly interested in Kropotkin's reformism which was combined with his anarchical views. In our opinion such unusual combination brought Peter Alekseevich to absolutely unique direction in his anarchical views: it is anarcho-reformism.

Early reformist period of Kropotkin began in the Page College. Then it continued in Siberia and it lasts during his job in scientific department. It was rather short and in the beginning of a choice of anarchical world-view it has led Kropotkin to a complete negation of a way of gradual reforms of system of the power in political conditions of the Russian Empire of that time.

But when P. A. Kropotkin was in emigration he was not become simple follower sociological-communists direction of V. Godwin's in anarchism and got some principles of M. A. Bakunin. He also adopted the basic postulates of reformist

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<sup>14</sup> Реформизм и социально-политические вопросы. М., [1999]. [Reformism and sociopolitical questions. Moscow, [1999].

<sup>15</sup> Философский словарь. М., 1987. С. 411. [Philosophical dictionary. Moscow, 1987. Page 411.]

anarchism of P. Zh. Prudon. In many cases Kropotkin has adopted postulates and norms of their world-views. (We can see sometimes that he directly used the ideas of his great predecessors). However as we see Kropotkin has added and has built them already in other system of priorities and with other basis.

«Earlier than in other countries the reformism has received a wide circulation in England» where «in labor movement it has arisen at the end of the XIX century».<sup>16</sup> In the London emigration it has made direct impact on Kropotkin. When in England the reformism was formed as the political direction P. A. Kropotkin starts to speak already not so much about opposition. He began to speak about cooperation with contemporary capitalist society. He noted that among countries of Western Europe the new form of society arose. That was the form of equal ones among themselves.

At a turn of centuries under the pressure of the international labor movement the States in Europe (and first of all England) have started to evolve gradually towards the social direction. These changes have allowed P. A. Kropotkin to reject the most radical slogans that had been directed on destruction of the State. He has supported organic reformative progress of contemporary capitalist society into anarchical society. That directly has affected on a whole Kropotkin's political views. From that time we can consider them in the form of the complete concept of anarcho-reformism. This anarcho-reformism in social-politic views of Kropotkin was undergone of multiple-factor influence of West Europe reformism but first of all it was the influence of English reformism.

In the homeland of Peter Alekseevich Kropotkin his ideas of reformism and federalism have not found any support among political movements of new post-revolutionary Russia. Kropotkin's concept conflicted with aspirations of monarchists to restoration the unified and indivisible Russian Empire or attempts of nationalists to demolish the Empire for the purpose of creation of the national States. And, especially these ideas contradicted desires of the majority of anarchists to destroy the State. Kropotkin's concept completely contradicted also to the dictatorship of the Bolsheviks which has constructed totalitarian society and the state under a sign of federation.

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<sup>16</sup> Большая Советская Энциклопедия. Т. 36. М., 1955. С. 333-334. [Big Soviet Encyclopedia. V. 36. Moscow, 1955. Pages 333-334.]

We think that anarcho-reformist position of Kropotkin was his attempt to look more realistic at possible mechanisms and the directions of movement of progress in evolution of state and society.

So Kropotkin was follower of realization of politic and social reforms and his reformist theory of mutual help was evolutionary as a matter of fact. Nevertheless Kropotkin has inserted imminence of anarchical revolution into his theory keeping elements of radicalism in theoretical questions and simultaneously he was remaining on his anarchical positions. And we can see that in his practical political activities and anarchical views P. A. Kropotkin has changed his positions to reformism but at the same time he has persisted the ideological anarchist. It is the reason to identify his social-political views at the end of XIX till 1921 as anarcho-reformism.<sup>17</sup>

Researches in this direction can enable to look absolutely in a different way at apparent settled traditional approaches and appraisals of social-political views as P. A. Kropotkin and of anarchism as a whole world-view system.

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<sup>17</sup> Сайтанов С. В. Анархо-реформизм в общественно-политических взглядах П. А. Кропоткина (1897 – 1921 гг.): дис. ... канд. ист. наук. Иваново, 2012. [Saytanov S. V. Anarcho-reformism in Kropotkin's social-political views (1897-1921): dissertation... candidate of historical sciences. Ivanovo, 2012.]