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Radicalism and Liberalism according to Emma Goldman

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### Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Bakalářská práce se na pozadí historicko-kulturního vývoje americké společnosti na konci 19. a počátku 20. století zaměří na pojetí radikalismu a liberalismu podle americké myslitelky Emmy Goldmanové. V teoretické části se práce pokusí vysvětlit základní pojmy, s nimiž Goldmanová pracuje (např. konservatismus, radikalismus, anarchismus, transcendentalismus), jakož i podat stručný přehled zásadních dobových událostí; analytická část se pak zaměří na samotný rozbor Goldmanových textů (výběr je nechán na autorce), mimo jiné se může soustředit na genesi a proměny Goldmanových postojů, či na to, jak se Goldmanová coby jedna z vůdčích osobností anarchistického proudu ve Spojených státech amerických lišila od ostatních ideově spřízněných myslitelů či myslitelek.

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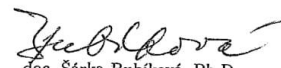
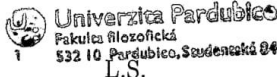
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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

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## **Annotation**

This bachelor thesis deals with the analysis and comparison of radical and liberal views in selected essays of Emma Goldman – primarily in “What I Believe,” “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for,” “Was My Life Worth Living?” and “The Individual, Society and the State.” The theoretical part provides the historical and cultural overview of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century United States, and the theoretical background necessary for the analysis. In the practical part, Goldman’s conception of individual freedom together with her views on the government, property, religion and violence are analyzed. The analysis also focuses on changes in Goldman’s views throughout the years.

## **Keywords**

radicalism, anarchism, liberalism, Emma Goldman, individualism, freedom

## **Anotace**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá rozбором a porovnáním radikálních a liberálních názorů ve vybraných esejích Emmy Goldmanové – především ve „What I Believe,“ „Anarchism: What It Really Stands for,“ „Was My Life Worth Living?“ a „The Individual, Society and the State.“ Teoretická část představuje historický a kulturní přehled konce 19. – počátku 20. století ve Spojených státech a teoretické pozadí nezbytné pro rozbor. V praktické části je rozebráno Goldmanové pojetí svobody jedince a její názory na vládu, majetek, náboženství a násilí. Rozbor se také zaměřuje na změny názorů Emmy Goldmanové v průběhu let.

## **Klíčová slova**

radikalismus, anarchismus, liberalismus, Emma Goldman, individualismus, svoboda

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## **Introduction**

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, life in the United States was changing significantly. The Industrial Revolution brought, on the one hand, new technological discoveries and innovations which made life and work easier; however, on the other hand, it also contributed to the rise of capitalism and materialism in the society. The increasing economic inequality among people, low wages and poor working conditions in factories resulted into conflicts between capitalists and the working class, and subsequently led to workers' demonstrations and strikes.

Besides the economic issues, this period was also characterized by women's struggle for emancipation. The role of a woman in the society and a family started to change gradually from a housewife to an employed independent woman as there was an increasing number of jobs in factories, and also more opportunities of education for women. Consequently, as women were becoming more emancipated, they aimed to gain the same rights as men had – especially the right to vote – and to participate more in a social and political life.

Due to the Industrial Revolution and subsequent urbanization, waves of immigrants were coming to the United States mostly from Europe and Asia, often influenced by the vision of the American dream. In addition, many Jews from eastern Europe came to America in order to escape from pogroms in Russia – one of them was seventeen-year-old Emma Goldman who immigrated to the United States with her sister Helena. Emma has always sympathized with the oppressed, and was determined to fight against any injustice in the society. Therefore, after her coming to the United States, she soon joined the Yiddish anarchist movement which formed in New York City. Influenced by other anarchists, such as Johann Most and Alexander Berkman, Goldman herself started to spread her anarchist views on various issues in her lectures and articles in anarchist magazines. Despite being persecuted for her radical views for most of her life, Goldman has never stopped believing in her ideal, and continued to fight for it relentlessly.

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to analyze Goldman's radical and liberal views by examining selected essays, and to compare her views with those of other representatives of the anarchist movement. The analysis is based primarily on these four essays of Goldman: "What I Believe" (1908), "Anarchism: What It Really Stands for" (1910), "Was My Life Worth Living?" (1934), and "The Individual, Society and the State" (1940). These essays have been selected in such a way that they could demonstrate changes in Goldman's views throughout the years.



The structure of the whole thesis is divided into the theoretical and the practical part. The first chapter of the thesis provides the historical and cultural overview of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century United States which is necessary in order to understand the issues present in the society at that time since Goldman always responded to these issues in her lectures and articles. The chapter covers the noteworthy events and changes in the American society from the end of the Civil War in 1865 until 1940 when Goldman died. The second chapter represents the theoretical background for the analysis as it introduces three different political ideologies – conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism (with the emphasis on anarchism) – and compares their views on the issues presented in the first chapter. The representation of radicalism in the media at that time is also included in this chapter. Lastly, the third chapter provides a brief biography of Emma Goldman, highlighting significant events in her life that influenced her views the most.

In the practical part of the thesis, several aspects of Goldman's views are analyzed and compared to the views of other radical thinkers. Firstly, Goldman's definition of anarchism is introduced, including the methods through which she intended to achieve the reconstruction of the society. Her conception of the individual and individual freedom is then presented, together with the need for man's liberation from the three main sources of oppression – the government, property and religion – which are subsequently analyzed in the following subchapters. The last aspect of Goldman's views analyzed in this thesis is the question of violence. Finally, the change in Goldman's views throughout her life is demonstrated.

# 1. Historical and Cultural Overview of Late 19<sup>th</sup> – Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century America

## 1.1. Noteworthy Events

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century United States was significantly marked by the Civil War (1861-1865) which divided the country into the North – the Union – and the South – the Confederate States. The main cause of the war was the disagreement between the North and the South about the expansion of slavery into new states, followed by the secession of seven Southern states after Abraham Lincoln had won the presidential election in 1860.<sup>1</sup> Eventually, the victory of the Union resulted in the abolition of slavery which was guaranteed for the slaves in the Confederate States by the Emancipation Proclamation issued in 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln, and in 1864 extended to all slaves in the United States by the Thirteenth Amendment passed by the Senate.<sup>2</sup>

The Civil War was followed by the Reconstruction period (1865-1877). The main aims of Reconstruction were to unite the divided state, to reinforce its recovery from the war, and to provide former slaves with civil and political rights. However, while Reconstruction succeeded in restoring relations between the North and the South, it failed to end discrimination against freed African Americans.<sup>3</sup> Terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan still tried to deny former slaves their rights, for example the right to vote. In order to suppress the violence of the Ku Klux Klan, Congress passed three Enforcement Acts between 1870 and 1871. However, in the Southern states, African Americans were further discriminated by laws which limited their access to many public places, such as parks or restaurants.<sup>4</sup>

The era of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in America has been called the Gilded Age after Mark Twain's novel *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*. This term describes the period “glittering on the surface but corrupt underneath” during which a rural and agrarian society changed into an urban and

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<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Hassler and Jennifer L. Weber, “American Civil War,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed December 3, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/event/American-Civil-War>.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mintz and S. McNeil, “The Thirteenth Amendment,” *Digital History*, accessed December 3, 2016, [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3088](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=2&psid=3088).

<sup>3</sup> Ruth A. Behling, “Reconstruction,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: Civil War and Reconstruction 1856 to 1869*, Revised Edition (Volume V), John Waugh and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 326.

<sup>4</sup> Howard Cincotta et al., eds., *An Outline of American History* (S.l.: United States Information Agency, 1994), 174.

industrial one.<sup>5</sup> During this period, the western frontier started to close, gold and silver were discovered in California and other western states, and new railroads were built. The late 19<sup>th</sup> century was also characterized by many technological advances. As a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, cities in the North were growing rapidly, and their population was increasing due to new jobs available in factories. However, with the increasing population, living conditions in cities were often poor and unhealthy, including “noise, traffic jams, slums, air pollution, and sanitation and health problems.”<sup>6</sup>

The population in Northern cities was increasing also due to immigration. Since 1840s, waves of immigrants have been coming to the United States, mostly from Germany and Ireland. The reasons for immigration were various – people emigrated from Europe because of religious or political reasons, in order to find a job in the United States, or to escape from the potato famine from which Ireland and Germany suffered during the 1840s – 1850s.<sup>7</sup> However, immigrants were perceived as a threat by many Americans as they brought their own culture to America, and were also taking jobs from Americans.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, immigration to the United States had to be restricted by several immigration laws such as the Immigration Act of 1924 which established quotas limiting the number of people admitted to the US.

In 1914, the First World War began in Europe. Although the United States at first refused to get involved in the conflict due to their policy of non-interventionism, it eventually declared war on Germany after several US ships had been attacked in April 1917.<sup>9</sup> Many young men lost their lives in the war, and those who survived were often disillusioned with the cruelty of the war and with “what they perceived to be the materialism and spiritual emptiness of life in the United States.”<sup>10</sup> This generation has been called the Lost Generation, and included also writers such as Ernest Hemingway or Francis Scott Fitzgerald who depicted in their works the problems which soldiers faced after their return to a normal life.

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<sup>5</sup> S. Mintz and S. McNeil, “Overview of the Gilded Age,” *Digital History*, accessed December 4, 2016, <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=9&smtID=1>.

<sup>6</sup> “City Life in the Late 19th Century,” *Library of Congress*, accessed December 7, 2016, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/riseind/city/>.

<sup>7</sup> Ruth A. Behling, “immigration,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: Civil War and Reconstruction 1856 to 1869*, Revised Edition (Volume V), John Waugh and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 199.

<sup>8</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 136.

<sup>9</sup> “U.S. Entry into World War I, 1917,” *The Office of the Historian*, accessed December 17, 2016, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/wwi>.

<sup>10</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 253.

The 1920s in the United States have been called the Roaring Twenties or the Jazz Age. This period is primarily characterized by loosening of morals in society, represented for example by flappers – women who smoked and drank alcohol, wore short skirts and hair, and danced the Charleston.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the standard of living was increasing as people were earning higher wages, and this also contributed to the development of entertainment represented by the radio, cinema, etc.<sup>12</sup> However, despite this gradual liberation of society, the government was still significantly interfering in people’s lives by means of various social reforms, such as the prohibition of the production and sale of alcoholic beverages from 1920 until 1933.

During the 1930s, a new danger arose in the form of “the expansionist designs of totalitarian regimes in Japan, Italy and Germany.”<sup>13</sup> In 1939, the Second World War began; the United States, however, entered the war two years later, after the Japanese attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

## **1.2. Economic Issues**

The economy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century United States was booming, especially in the North which by 1860 produced “90 percent of the nation’s manufacturing output.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, these differences between the Northern and Southern economies were even increased by the Civil War and its results. While farming in the industrial North became mechanized, the agricultural South was still dependent on slaves who were used as a workforce on cotton and tobacco plantations. As a result, the South was significantly affected by the abolition of slavery, and remained poor for several decades after the war.

On the other hand, the Industrial Revolution in the North brought – besides agriculture – changes also in transportation and manufacture as new railroads and factories were built. However, low wages and poor working conditions in factories together with long working hours led consequently to workers’ dissatisfaction and to many demonstrations and strikes such as the Great Rail Strike of 1877.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, labor unions started to emerge in order to protect workers’ rights, and to improve their working conditions.

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<sup>11</sup> Ciara Meehan, “1920s America: The Lowering of Morals and Raising of Hemlines,” accessed December 23, 2016, <https://ciarameehan.com/2013/05/23/1920s-america-the-lowering-of-morals-and-raising-of-hemlines/>.

<sup>12</sup> Meehan, “1920s America: The Lowering of Morals and Raising of Hemlines.”

<sup>13</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 265.

<sup>14</sup> Benjamin T. Arrington, “Industry and Economy during the Civil War,” *National Park Service*, accessed January 7, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/industry-and-economy-during-the-civil-war.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 208.

However, after a period of prosperity, the New York Stock Exchange crashed on October 27, 1929, followed by the Great Depression during which many businesses went bankrupt, and millions of people lost their jobs. This consequently led to the change of the government's attitude towards the economy. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States were dominated by the laissez-faire economy, i.e. the policy of the minimal government intervention in the economy. This economy was supported also by "rugged individualism" of President Herbert Hoover who promoted individual freedom and self-reliance of people. He was convinced that poverty and unemployment problems must be solved only by "voluntary organization and community service" instead of governmental programs which in fact "undermine individual character by making recipients dependent on the government."<sup>16</sup> However, after the stock market crash, the government's regulation of the economy was necessary in order to encourage the nation's industry, and to prevent the formation of monopolies.<sup>17</sup> As a result, in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced his program New Deal in order to provide the aid to unemployed people, and to encourage the state's recovery from the Great Depression.<sup>18</sup>

### 1.3. Political Issues

The results of the Civil War affected the two major political parties and the political situation in the United States during the following years as well. The Republican Party which fought for the abolition of slavery gained as a result of the Union's victory "control over the direction of southern Reconstruction as well as the federal government for at least a decade."<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, its opponent the Democratic Party was weakened by the war and divided due to internal conflicts; however, the political gap between them and the Republicans gradually started to close.<sup>20</sup>

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was subsequently marked by great reform and radical activity. Responding to the increasing social inequality and consumerism in the society, radical

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<sup>16</sup> S. Mintz and S. McNeil, annotation to "Herbert Hoover, 'Rugged Individualism' Campaign Speech," *Digital History*, accessed January 7, 2017, [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=1334](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=1334).

<sup>17</sup> The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Laissez-faire," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/laissez-faire>.

<sup>18</sup> John, Louis Recchiuti, "The New Deal," *Khan Academy*, accessed January 8, 2017, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-us-history/period-7/apush-great-depression/a/the-new-deal>.

<sup>19</sup> Philip Papas, "Democratic Party," in *Encyclopedia of American History: The Development of the Industrial United States 1870 to 1899*, Revised Edition (Volume VI), Ari Hoogenboom and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 94.

<sup>20</sup> Papas, "Democratic Party."

movements such as anarchism and socialism started to emerge in the United States. However, as a result of the Russian Revolution of 1917 in which the tsarist government was overthrown by the radical Bolsheviks, “Americans became fearful that, just as a small faction had seized power in Russia, so could a similar group take over the United States.”<sup>21</sup> For this reason, anti-anarchist laws such as the Anarchist Exclusion Act of 1903 were passed, followed by Palmer Raids led by Attorney General A. Mitchel Palmer, the purpose of which was “to arrest foreign anarchists, communists, and radical leftists.”<sup>22</sup> As a result, radicals in the United States were persecuted and many of them were eventually deported, including Emma Goldman.

#### **1.4. Religious Issues**

Religion has always been an important aspect of Americans’ life, with Protestantism as the prevailing religion. However, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the religious diversity in the United States increased significantly due to immigration since the immigrants coming from Ireland or Germany were mostly Catholics. Moreover, many Jews from eastern Europe immigrated to the United States in order to escape from anti-Jewish pogroms in Russia – Emma Goldman was one of them. Many Jewish immigrants eventually settled in New York City where gradually the Yiddish-speaking anarchist movement formed.<sup>23</sup> However, Americans mostly refused to accept immigrants due to their religious and cultural differences, and this subsequently led to the violence represented for example by the reemerged Ku Klux Klan.

Furthermore, there were also other issues which religion in the United States had to face at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With so many changes in the society which was becoming more materialistic and secular, traditional Protestant values such as “hard work, thrift, church, family, and home” were threatened.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, at this period, new interpretations of the Bible appeared, and traditional Christian beliefs were questioned by new scientific discoveries and theories, such as Darwin’s theory of evolution. However, this theory was strongly rejected by conservative Protestants, and in several states, it was even forbidden by law to teach it at public schools.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 248.

<sup>22</sup> Gregory Dehler, “Palmer Raids,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed January 14, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Palmer-Raids>.

<sup>23</sup> Kenyon Zimmer, *Židovští anarchisté v New York City* (Praha: Nakladatelství Anarchistické federace, 2016), 3.

<sup>24</sup> Gary B. Nash et al., *The American People* (New York, HarperCollins, 1996), 507.

<sup>25</sup> Nash, *The American People*, 507.

## 1.5. Gender and Sexual Issues

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the role of a woman in a family and society started to change. In a traditional concept of a family, a man was a breadwinner while a woman stayed at home and looked after children. Until then, it was unusual for women to have jobs outside their homes, and the opportunities of education for women were also limited. However, new technological developments and changes in the society eventually allowed women “to break free of their traditional, domestic constraints and work on a paid basis for the first time,” often in factories.<sup>26</sup>

As women were becoming more independent, they aimed to gain equal rights with men, especially the right to vote which, at that time, was granted only to white men. In 1848, the Declaration of Sentiments was presented at the Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, “demanding equality with men before the law, the right to vote, and equal opportunities in education and employment.”<sup>27</sup> However, despite decades of struggling for emancipation, it was not until 1919 that the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution granted American women the right to vote. Nevertheless, the struggle for women’s emancipation has continued even after women had gained their right to vote as they were still often perceived as inferior to men by society, and were discriminated for example in their jobs.

With this increasing liberation of women during the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, their sexual life was becoming more liberated as well. Until then, it was unthinkable for a woman to lose her virginity before getting married, and sex was perceived only as a means for conceiving a child. Moreover, women at that time were not allowed to make decisions about their reproductive lives since contraceptive devices were hardly accessible, or even illegal as for abortion. In addition, in 1873, the Comstock Law was passed which “made it illegal to promote or even write about contraceptive devices.”<sup>28</sup> However, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – especially during the 1920s – women started to gain more freedom in their sexual lives as society’s attitudes towards sexuality were becoming more liberal due to the first sexual revolution.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Christopher Bates, “science and technology,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: Civil War and Reconstruction 1856 to 1869*, Revised Edition (Volume V), John Waugh and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 343.

<sup>27</sup> Cincotta, *An Outline of American History*, 139.

<sup>28</sup> Nash, *The American People*, 459.

<sup>29</sup> “sexuality,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: The Emergence of Modern America 1900 to 1928*, Revised Edition (Volume VII), Elizabeth Faue and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 322.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Conservatism

The conservative ideology developed mainly during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as a response to political and economic changes following the French Revolution of 1789.<sup>30</sup> The principles of conservatism have been mostly based on Edmund Burke's criticism of the revolution in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, published in 1790. Moreover, conservatism established primarily in Europe – especially in Britain – since in the United States “there was never a monarchy, an aristocracy, or an established church for conservatives to defend.”<sup>31</sup>

Unlike liberals and radicals, conservatives do not believe in individual freedom since they are convinced that people are morally flawed and selfish, and their freedom must be restricted by the authority.<sup>32</sup> For this reason, the purpose of the state and the law is not only to protect the freedom and rights of people, but primarily to provide them with moral principles and guidance – for example by means of censorship which protects people from immorality.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, instead of individualism promoted by liberal and radical ideologies, conservatives particularly emphasize the importance of the community and social groups such as a family, a nation, etc., and prefer collective needs to the individual ones.

In general, conservatives oppose any reforms or changes in society; on the contrary, they aim to preserve traditional values and institutions which are time-tested, and therefore, offer security and stability to people. Conservatives strongly believe in order, authority and discipline, the absence of which would result into chaos. For this reason, conservatives are usually supporters of the strong government. Moreover, they reject abstract ideas, and prefer to base their views on history and experience.<sup>34</sup> Despite their mostly collective beliefs, conservatives, in general, support private property as it provides people with the sense of security. They also believe in the hierarchical structure of society, and claim that the social inequality is inevitable since different classes and functions are in fact needed in society.<sup>35</sup> For this reason, conservatives reject the concept of a welfare state and the redistribution of wealth in order to aid poor people.

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<sup>30</sup> Andrew Heywood, *Politické ideologie* (Praha: Victoria Publishing, 1994), 55.

<sup>31</sup> Kenneth Minogue et al., “Conservatism,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed February 5, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/conservatism#toc281891>.

<sup>32</sup> Minogue, “Conservatism.”

<sup>33</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 64.

<sup>34</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 56.

<sup>35</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 66.



Besides the strong government, conservatives also believe in the authority of the church, and are often supporters of the established church. Moreover, they emphasize the importance of religion as it unites people through sharing of common beliefs and values. In addition, religion also provides people with moral guidance for making decisions in their lives, since conservatives are convinced that people are not capable of making those decisions by themselves.<sup>36</sup>

Regarding the struggle for equality between the sexes, conservatives mostly opposed the movement for women's emancipation and suffrage in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and instead, they promoted the traditional role of a woman in society and a family.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, influenced by their religious beliefs, conservatives mostly reject homosexuality and abortion which they perceive as a murder.

The main representative of conservatism was a British philosopher and politician Edmund Burke for whom authority was represented mainly by tradition and social conventions.<sup>38</sup> Another representative of the conservative ideology was a British philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Although Hobbes is sometimes referred to as a liberal thinker since the liberal concept of the social contract has been based on his work *Leviathan*, Hobbes was in fact a promoter of the absolute power of the government as a guarantee of peace and safety, and claimed that “even an oppressive government is better than no government,” which is incompatible with liberal beliefs.<sup>39</sup> Other conservative thinkers include for example a French political writer Alexis de Tocqueville, or a British politician Benjamin Disraeli.

## 2.2. Liberalism

Liberalism as the ideology developed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe – particularly in England – as a response to the change of the feudal society into the capitalist one. However, liberal views were considered to be radical at that time as they promoted reforms and even revolutionary

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<sup>36</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 64.

<sup>37</sup> Robert A. Nisbet, *Konzervatismus: sen a realita* (Praha: Občanský institut, 1993), 65.

<sup>38</sup> Nisbet, *Konzervatismus*, 50.

<sup>39</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 38, my translation.

changes in the society.<sup>40</sup> In the United States, liberal views dominated primarily from 1815 until 1914; however, since 1870s, anti-liberal movements have also started to emerge.<sup>41</sup>

Liberals, similarly to radicals, promote the freedom of the individual, and question the authority of the government. However, contrary to the anarchist views, liberals do not want to remove the state completely since they recognize its importance as the protector of individual freedom and rights. For this reason, liberals argue that the government should be preserved, but its power must be limited – for example by the constitution – and its intervention in individuals' private lives must be as little as possible.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, liberals oppose coercion used by the government in order to make people obey its authority; instead, they promote the concept of the society based on the social contract, i.e. a voluntary agreement among people to follow certain rules in society – including both laws and moral norms.<sup>43</sup>

However, despite promoting individual freedom, liberals – with the exception of radical liberals – do not believe that individual freedom should be absolute as it could be abused in order to harm other people.<sup>44</sup> For this reason, liberals are, in general, supporters of negative liberty, i.e. the concept that a man is free to such an extent to which no one else interferes in his life or activity, and to which he himself does not violate the freedom of others.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, liberals are promoters of the freedom of speech, and are very tolerant of different views as long as those views are not harmful to other people.

In general, freedom in liberalism is mostly based on the theory of natural law of an English philosopher John Locke. Locke argued that all people – regardless of their race or social status – are free by nature, and they all have natural rights such as “the right to life, liberty, and property.”<sup>46</sup> These rights are superior to any social institutions, and for this reason, they must not be violated by the government or the law.

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<sup>40</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 21.

<sup>41</sup> John Gray, *Liberalismus* (Praha: Občanský institut, 1999), 43.

<sup>42</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 21.

<sup>43</sup> Celeste Friend, “Social Contract Theory,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/>.

<sup>44</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 26.

<sup>45</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *Liberty*, Henry Hardy, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 169.

<sup>46</sup> Alex Tuckness, “Locke’s Political Philosophy,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta, ed., accessed March 5, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/>.

Regarding the economic system, liberalism is mainly associated with a laissez-faire economy which has been based on the views of a philosopher and economist Adam Smith, and was popular primarily during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, liberals – just as conservatives – perceive the social inequality as inevitable since people are simply not born equal. For this reason, liberals argue that the government should not intervene in order to aid poor people, for example through the redistribution of wealth.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, liberals claim that everyone needs to have equal opportunities to develop their skills, and consequently improve their situation.<sup>48</sup>

Due to their tolerance of different views, liberals promote the freedom of religion and the expression of religious faith as long as it does not oppress other people. Moreover, they emphasize that state and church must be separated since religion is a private matter of people into which the government should not interfere. Nevertheless, in general, liberals – unlike anarchists – do not reject religion altogether, and their attitudes to it mostly differ since some liberals oppose religion while others, on the other hand, support religious views.<sup>49</sup>

Regarding gender issues, liberals – as the promoters of freedom and equality of all people – have always been the supporters of women’s struggle for emancipation, and furthermore, they also do not oppose homosexuality. Moreover, liberals also claim that women should be allowed to make decisions about their lives without the intervention of the government, and therefore, they support women’s right to abortion.<sup>50</sup>

All in all, the views presented above form the basis of the liberal ideology. However, liberalism is not a homogeneous ideology, and is divided into two main philosophies – classical and modern liberalism. While classical liberalism developed during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and reached its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, modern liberalism emerged later, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although classical and modern liberals share the same ideology, their views on certain issues – such as the government intervention in the economy – differ. While classical liberals are the supporters

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<sup>47</sup> John, Louis Recchiuti, “Social Darwinism in the Gilded Age,” *Khan Academy*, accessed March 8, 2017, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-us-history/period-6/apush-gilded-age/a/social-darwinism-in-the-gilded-age>.

<sup>48</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 27.

<sup>49</sup> Steven H. Shiffrin, “Liberalism and Religion,” *bepress Legal Series*, Working Paper 1601, published August 22, 2006, accessed March 23, 2017, <http://law.bepress.com/expresso/eps/1601>.

<sup>50</sup> Linda Seger, “How Liberals Think...About Abortion,” *The Huffington Post*, published July 26, 2007, accessed March 23, 2017, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/linda-seger/how-liberals-think-about-\\_b\\_58036.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/linda-seger/how-liberals-think-about-_b_58036.html).

of the minimal state and free economy, modern liberals prefer the welfare state in which the government interferes in the economy to a certain extent, and provides the social aid to those who need it.<sup>51</sup>

The main representative of liberalism was John Locke who primarily developed the concept of the natural law. Unlike Hobbes and other conservatives, Locke opposed the strong government, and argued, that “governments should rule only if they are supported by the people;” otherwise, people have the right to revolt against it, which is a view shared by both liberal and radical ideologies.<sup>52</sup> Other representatives of liberalism include for example American philosophers John Rawls and Robert Nozick, and English philosophers and economists Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill who are predominantly representatives of utilitarianism.

### **2.3. Radicalism**

The term radicalism is defined as “opposition to the dominant economic, political, and social structures of the country,” which advocates significant changes in society.<sup>53</sup> Radicalism, therefore, includes ideologies located far from the center on the political spectrum, such as for example Nazism and fascism located to the right, and communism and anarchism to the left.<sup>54</sup> This thesis is, however, focused predominantly on anarchism since Emma Goldman was a representative of this ideology.

Anarchism – as defined by an anarchist writer George Woodcock – is “a social philosophy that rejects authoritarian government and maintains that voluntary institutions are best suited to express man’s natural social tendencies.”<sup>55</sup> At first, the term “anarchist” was used in a negative sense to describe any radical; however, that changed after a French philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon called himself an anarchist. The anarchist movement developed mostly during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a response to the rise of capitalism and materialism in the society after the

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<sup>51</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 23.

<sup>52</sup> Jonathan Crowther, ed., *Oxford Guide to British and American Culture: For Learners of English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, c1999), 314.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Gordon, “radicalism,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: The Emergence of Modern America 1900 to 1928*, Revised Edition (Volume VII), Elizabeth Faue and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 286.

<sup>54</sup> Jan Charvát, *Současný politický extremismus a radikalismus* (Praha: Portál, 2007), 16.

<sup>55</sup> George Woodcock, “Anarchism,” *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 1967, accessed March 10, 2017, <http://www.ditext.com/woodcock/anarchism.html>.

Industrial Revolution, and it spread primarily in France, Italy and Spain, and later also in the United States and Russia.

In general, anarchists oppose any form of the authority – especially the authority of the government – as it violates the freedom of people. According to anarchists, the state in fact does not guarantee or protect individual freedom and rights; on the contrary, it serves only to oppress poor people in favor of the rich and privileged ones.<sup>56</sup> However, although anarchists aim to remove the government completely, they do not intend to take power themselves. They believe that it is power that corrupts, and for this reason, any form of the government would eventually become coercive since “its very existence is based upon the submission of one class to the dictatorship of another.”<sup>57</sup> Therefore, anarchists instead want to create a society based on self-government and voluntary cooperation among people.

In order to create such a society, anarchists aim to achieve the absolute freedom of every individual. Unlike liberals who promote negative liberty, anarchists prefer the concept of positive liberty, i.e. “the possibility of acting . . . in such a way as to take control of one’s life.”<sup>58</sup> Moreover, they believe that any authority is pointless since people are reasonable and good enough themselves, and do not need to be coerced into cooperating with each other and treating each other with respect. In addition, a British philosopher William Godwin argued that people should act according to “natural justice” and their own reason instead of human laws which are fallible and unjust.<sup>59</sup> However, despite promoting the absolute freedom of people, anarchists claim that this freedom must not be abused in order to threaten or limit the freedom of other people.

Besides individual freedom, anarchists also promote equality of all people, and reject the hierarchical structure of the society. For this reason, they actively fight against oppression and discrimination in the society, and support movements such as anti-racism or the gay rights movement. Moreover, anarchists have always been supporters of women’s emancipation and liberation of a sexual life. Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, anarchists have promoted free love as the

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<sup>56</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 186.

<sup>57</sup> John Most and Emma Goldman, “Anarchy Defended by Anarchists,” *Metropolitan Magazine*, vol. IV, No. 3; October 1896, accessed on March 3, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/mostgold.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/mostgold.html).

<sup>58</sup> Ian Carter, “Positive and Negative Liberty,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta, ed., accessed on March 21, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/liberty-positive-negative/>.

<sup>59</sup> Woodcock, “Anarchism.”

freedom in relationships without any government intervention, represented for example by divorce laws, etc. In general, anarchists are convinced that the government has no right to interfere in “sexual matters such as marriage, birth control, and adultery.”<sup>60</sup> For this reason, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, feminists such as Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger were providing women with information about birth control despite the Comstock Law, and were eventually arrested for this activity.<sup>61</sup>

Regarding the economy, anarchists strongly oppose capitalism which they perceive as the source of oppression and the social inequality which, consequently, are the main causes of crime.<sup>62</sup> However, there are two traditions in anarchism – collectivist and individualist – which differ in the economic system that they prefer. While individualist anarchists prefer free economy and private ownership, collectivists promote cooperation among people, and common property.<sup>63</sup> In addition, collectivist anarchists can be further divided into anarcho-syndicalists and anarchist communists. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States, anarcho-syndicalists were actively supporting workers’ struggle against exploitative capitalists, and participated in establishing radical labor unions.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to the government and capitalism, anarchists also oppose religion and the institution of the church which they perceive only as another form of the coercive authority. According to anarchists, the only purpose of religion is to force people to obey the authority – both God and the church.<sup>65</sup> For this reason, most anarchists are atheists. On the other hand, many anarchists are in fact interested in Eastern philosophies such as Taoism or Zen Buddhism as there is usually no authority or strict moral rules to follow, and moreover, these philosophies are also highly focused on the development and needs of the individual.

Nevertheless, there has always been a disagreement within the anarchist movement regarding violence and methods through which the reconstruction of the society should actually be achieved. Anarchists, in general, are promoters of direct action which “aims to achieve our

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<sup>60</sup> Wendy McElroy, “The Free Love Movement and Radical Individualism,” *The Libertarian Enterprise*, Number 19, December 1, 1996, accessed on March 13, 2017, <http://www.ncc-1776.org/tle1996/le961210.html>.

<sup>61</sup> Marcia M. Farah, “women’s status and rights,” in *Encyclopedia of American History: The Emergence of Modern America 1900 to 1928*, Revised Edition (Volume VII), Elizabeth Faue and Gary B. Nash, eds. (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2010), 388.

<sup>62</sup> Woodcock, “Anarchism.”

<sup>63</sup> Woodcock, “Anarchism.”

<sup>64</sup> Charvát, *Současný politický extremismus a radikalismus*, 116.

<sup>65</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 187.

goals through our own activity rather than through the actions of others.”<sup>66</sup> This direct action can be both violent and non-violent, and includes for example strikes, demonstrations, sabotage, etc. Therefore, while some anarchists perceive anarchism as a peaceful movement, and reject any violence, others use violence in order to spread their views, and to inspire people to revolt against oppression.<sup>67</sup> This use of violence – called “propaganda by the deed” – has often had a form of bomb attacks or assassination attempts on politicians, industrialists, etc. The main promoter of propaganda by the deed was Johann Most, a German anarchist and the editor of the *Freiheit* magazine, who significantly influenced the views of Emma Goldman. On the other hand, anarcho-pacifists oppose any violence, and claim that the reconstruction of the society must be achieved by other means than violence and a revolution. However, despite their different views on propaganda by the deed, all anarchists agree on their opposition to militarism and war which they perceive only as a consequence of the existence of the state.<sup>68</sup>

One of the main representatives of anarchism was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, called “the father of anarchism,” who wanted to create a society based on the self-government of individuals which would be achieved through “the peaceful spread of workers’ associations.”<sup>69</sup> Another representative of anarchism was a Russian philosopher Peter Kropotkin who influenced Goldman by his communist views and his concept of a society based on mutual aid. Goldman also shared her views with an American philosopher Henry David Thoreau who expressed his protest against the government and society by living in a secluded place in woods by the Walden Pond. He also emphasized the importance of the individual, and argued that people should act rather in accordance with their conscience and common sense instead of the law.<sup>70</sup>

## 2.4. Radicalism in Media

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, anarchism was often misrepresented in the mass media, creating prejudice against anarchists among people. As a result, anarchists were perceived as dangerous terrorists who only aim for chaos and destruction. To disprove such misconceptions about anarchism, many anarchists started to publish their own newspapers and magazines which

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<sup>66</sup> Rob Sparrow, “Anarchist Politics & Direct Action,” *Spunk Library*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://www.spunk.org/texts/intro/sp001641.html>.

<sup>67</sup> Heywood, *Politické ideologie*, 200.

<sup>68</sup> Václav Tomek and Ondřej Slačálek, *Anarchismus: svoboda proti moci* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 2006), 114.

<sup>69</sup> Woodcock, “Anarchism.”

<sup>70</sup> Henry David Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience,” 1849, *American Studies at the University of Virginia*, accessed April 7, 2017, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper2/thoreau/civil.html>.

served to spread their views among people. However, due to their reputation, anarchists were often rejected by publishing houses, and had to print and distribute their magazines and pamphlets by themselves. Moreover, they also had to face problems with insufficient funds, police raids or government censorship, and all of this consequently led to the termination of many radical magazines.

One of the most significant anarchist magazines in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century United States was the *Freiheit* magazine published by Johann Most. Another important anarchist magazine was the *Autonomie* published by Most's opponent Joseph Peukert. Emma Goldman contributed to both these magazines, and in 1906, she started to publish her own magazine *Mother Earth* with two purposes – “to voice without fear every unpopular progressive cause, and to aim for unity between revolutionary effort and artistic expression.”<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, the publishing of *Mother Earth* was canceled in 1917 after Goldman had been arrested and deported to Russia. Other anarchist magazines included for example *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, *Free Society*, *Vanguard*, etc.

Besides articles and essays in newspapers and magazines, anarchists also published non-fiction literature in which they depicted their life or prison experiences, such as Alexander Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* or Kropotkin's *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. Moreover, Goldman also emphasized the importance of modern drama which she perceived as “the strongest and most far-reaching interpreter of our deep-felt dissatisfaction.”<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, she also highlighted literary works written for example by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Walt Whitman, George Bernard Shaw, and other writers.

In addition to written works, anarchists also promoted their views at lectures and conferences. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century New York, Yiddish anarchists organized their lectures mostly at Orchard Street no. 56 or at Sachs's café which became “the headquarters of the East Side radicals, socialists, and anarchists, as well as of the young Yiddish writers and poets.”<sup>73</sup> Anarchists also established various groups and organizations, and arranged anarchist congresses, picnics, balls, and other social events in order to spread anarchist views.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Alfred A Knopf Inc., 1931), accessed March 19, 2017, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-living-my-life>.

<sup>72</sup> Emma Goldman, “The Modern Drama: A Powerful Disseminator of Radical Thought,” in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, Second Revised Edition (New York & London: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1911), 247-277, accessed April 1, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/aando/drama.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/aando/drama.html).

<sup>73</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>74</sup> Zimmer, *Židovští anarchisté v New York City*, 30.



### 3. Emma Goldman

Emma Goldman was born on June 27, 1869 in a Russian town Kovno (present-day Lithuania), and grew up in an orthodox Jewish family. Her conservative father disapproved of Emma's studying, and wanted her to get married and stay at home just as every woman was expected to do back then.<sup>75</sup> However, in 1886, Emma, together with her sister Helena, emigrated to the United States. They lived in Rochester, New York, and worked in a clothing factory. In the factory, Goldman met Jacob Kershner and soon they got married; however, this marriage did not last long. Consequently, Goldman realized that a marriage represents only "the loss of self-ownership" – especially for a woman – and has nothing to do with love.<sup>76</sup>

Goldman has always had sympathy for the oppressed, and has rebelled against any injustice in the society. As she was growing up in a revolutionary atmosphere in Russia after the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, Goldman got acquainted with works of various radicals, and gradually, she "became a glowing enthusiast of liberty, resolving, like thousands of others, to devote her life to the emancipation of the people."<sup>77</sup> After coming to the United States, Goldman was disillusioned as people were not as free as she expected. However, the main event that engaged her in the anarchist movement was the Haymarket Square riot in 1886 which Goldman described as "the events that had inspired my spiritual birth and growth."<sup>78</sup>

On May 4, 1886, a mass meeting was organized by labor radicals at Haymarket Square in Chicago in order to protest against police brutality during workers' strike for an eight-hour workday at the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company.<sup>79</sup> After the police had arrived, someone threw a bomb which killed seven policemen and several other people. As a result, eight anarchists were arrested and four of them were hanged, although there was no evidence whether they were really responsible for the bomb. Goldman sympathized with these "Haymarket Martyrs," and became determined to "dedicate myself ... to make their cause my own."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Hippolyte Havel, "Biographic Sketch," in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, Second Revised Edition (New York & London: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1911), 5-44, accessed March 23, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/aando/bio.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/aando/bio.html).

<sup>76</sup> Havel, "Biographic Sketch."

<sup>77</sup> Havel, "Biographic Sketch."

<sup>78</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>79</sup> The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, "Haymarket Riot," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed March 29, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Haymarket-Riot>.

<sup>80</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

In 1889, Goldman moved to New York City where she met Alexander Berkman and Johann Most, and joined the Yiddish anarchist movement. Goldman was fascinated by Most's speeches, and under his influence, she also started to speak at anarchist meetings. Furthermore, she started to attend anarchist lectures, and met many other radicals such as Peter Kropotkin or Max Baginski. Goldman was also often invited to anarchist congresses, and she organized lecture tours throughout the United States and Europe.

Moreover, Goldman became very close to Alexander Berkman with whom she planned an assassination of an industrialist Henry Clay Frick. In 1892, workers in Frick's Carnegie Steel Company started to demand higher wages which led to the closure of the factory. Consequently, workers went on strike resulting in a violent conflict during which several workers were killed by Pinkerton guards.<sup>81</sup> In order to protest against this massacre, Berkman attempted to assassinate Frick, and for this attempt, he was subsequently sentenced to 22 years of prison, from which he eventually served 14 years.

In addition, Goldman has always been a supporter of women's struggle for emancipation although her views differed from the first-wave feminist movement which she perceived only as "bourgeois and exclusive of the real sufferers of society – the working class."<sup>82</sup> Goldman opposed women's suffrage, and on the other hand, she promoted women's emancipation in a social and sexual life. Moreover, while working as a nurse and a midwife, Goldman witnessed horrible practices of women trying to get rid of their unborn children. For this reason, Goldman promoted birth control in her lectures and spread information about contraceptive devices in her pamphlets despite the prohibition.

Due to the persecution of radicals in the United States during the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Goldman was arrested several times, for example for inciting to riot, or distributing information about birth control.<sup>83</sup> Her lectures were often watched by the police, and mass media presented

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Adamczyk, "Homestead Strike," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed March 29, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Homestead-Strike>.

<sup>82</sup> Heidi M. Rimke, "Goldman, Emma (1860-1940)," in *International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*, ed. Immanuel Ness, Blackwell Publishing, 2009, 1411-1414, accessed March 29, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/202768/Emma\\_Goldman\\_1869-1940\\_](https://www.academia.edu/202768/Emma_Goldman_1869-1940_).

<sup>83</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

her as a dangerous woman. As a result of this infamy, Goldman often had problems with finding a place to live or to give her lectures, and sometimes even had to use a false name.

After the First World War had started, Goldman protested against it by giving anti-war lectures, signing the International Anarchist Manifesto Against the First World War, and establishing the No-Conscription League.<sup>84</sup> In 1918, the Immigration Act was passed to banish anarchist immigrants from the United States. As a result, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman – together with almost 250 other radicals – were deported back to Russia on December 21, 1919.<sup>85</sup> In Russia, Goldman witnessed the reality of the Russian Revolution during which the government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks and other radicals. However, despite her initial belief in the success of the revolution, after returning to Russia, Goldman was “shocked by the brutal authoritarianism of the Bolshevik regime, its ruthless repression of anarchists, and its disregard for individual freedom and liberation.”<sup>86</sup>

In 1924, Goldman moved to Britain where she subsequently married an anarchist James Colton.<sup>87</sup> During the following years, she was organizing lecture tours throughout Europe and Canada, and also spent some time in France where she wrote her autobiography, *Living My Life*. In 1936, Alexander Berkman committed suicide. Emma Goldman died in Toronto on May 14, 1940, and was buried in the German Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago, “next to the Haymarket anarchists and other celebrated radicals and revolutionaries.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>85</sup> Rimke, “Goldman, Emma (1860-1940).”

<sup>86</sup> Rimke, “Goldman, Emma (1860-1940).”

<sup>87</sup> Václav Tomek, *Anarchismus v proměnách 20. století: vybrané osobnosti a ideje* (Praha: Manibus propriis, 2012), 537-538.

<sup>88</sup> Rimke, “Goldman, Emma (1860-1940).”

# The Analysis of Selected Essays of Emma Goldman

## 4. Goldman's Views and Rhetoric

### 4.1. Anarchism

For Goldman, anarchism has represented an ideal in which she believed and to which she dedicated her life. She defined it as “the philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.”<sup>89</sup> For this reason, Goldman rejected any form of the government which she perceived only as a source of oppression in society, and instead, she promoted a social order based on liberty of the individual, just as she described in her essay “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for”:

Anarchism stands for a social order based on the free grouping of individuals for the purpose of producing real social wealth; an order that will guarantee to every human being free access to the earth and full enjoyment of the necessities of life, according to individual desires, tastes, and inclinations.<sup>90</sup>

According to Goldman, it is only through anarchism that this social order can be achieved. Moreover, Goldman rejected the proposition that anarchism is “impractical, though a beautiful ideal.”<sup>91</sup> On the contrary, she claimed that it is indeed practical as it aims to destroy everything wrong and unjust in society while at the same time it creates a new order based on equality and freedom of people. In addition, Goldman was convinced that “Anarchism is too vital and too close to human nature ever to die” – on the contrary to any form of the government which is only temporary – and therefore, anarchism is the ideal for which people should fight.<sup>92</sup>

Regarding the methods of fighting against injustice in the society and achieving this new social order, Goldman – just as other anarchists – refused to get involved in a political life in any way since politicians are often corrupt, and only abuse their power. Moreover, Goldman agreed with Henry David Thoreau that involvement in politics is insufficient in order to make changes in

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<sup>89</sup> Emma Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for,” in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, Second Revised Edition (New York-London: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1911), accessed April 9, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/aando/anarchism.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/aando/anarchism.html).

<sup>90</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>91</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>92</sup> Emma Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?” *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, Vol. CLXX, December 1934, accessed on April 12, 2017, [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/pdfs/PublishedEssaysandPamphlets\\_WasMyLifeWorthLiving.pdf](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/pdfs/PublishedEssaysandPamphlets_WasMyLifeWorthLiving.pdf).

society since “even voting for the right thing is doing nothing for it.”<sup>93</sup> For this reason, Goldman emphasized the importance of direct action in everyday life as “the open defiance of, and resistance to, all laws and restrictions, economic, social, and moral.”<sup>94</sup> She stressed that “Anarchists are by no means passive spectators in the theatre of social development;” on the contrary, they actively participate in a social life, and always respond to current issues in society by means of media, demonstrations, art, etc.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, the methods of anarchism should always be altered in accordance with current economic and social conditions of a particular time and place, and with the needs of the individual. However, according to Goldman, all anarchist methods – regardless of their form – inevitably lead to a revolution without which no social change can be achieved.<sup>96</sup>

## 4.2. The Individual and Liberty

One of the most important aspects of Goldman’s views is freedom of the individual – promoted by both liberals and anarchists – and the struggle for this liberty which Goldman perceived as even more important than the actual achievement of it. She was convinced that this striving for freedom and individual needs “develops all that is strongest, sturdiest and finest in human character.”<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Goldman rejected the proposition that most people in fact do not long for freedom. On the contrary, she claimed that since liberty is “the natural right of man,” striving for it is inherent in every human being.<sup>98</sup> For this reason, it is natural for people to rebel against the authority, and to resist any form of oppression, since this innate longing for liberty cannot be suppressed by any authority such as the state, church, etc.

Furthermore, Goldman emphasized the importance of individual freedom because she believed that without it no human progress can be truly achieved. She argued that it is impossible for individuals to reach their greatest potential while their individuality and liberty are oppressed, “whipped daily into submission.”<sup>99</sup> Although Goldman admitted that some people are in fact able to develop their potential through their revolt against unjust social and economic

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<sup>93</sup> Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience.”

<sup>94</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>95</sup> Emma Goldman, “What I Believe,” *New York World*, July 19, 1908, accessed April 15, 2017. [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/goldman/whatibelieve.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/goldman/whatibelieve.html).

<sup>96</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>97</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>98</sup> Emma Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State” (Chicago: Free Society Forum, 1940), accessed April 15, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist\\_Archives/goldman/goldmanindivid.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/goldman/goldmanindivid.html).

<sup>99</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

conditions, she claimed that it is “absurd to argue from this fact that social evils should be perpetrated to make revolt against them necessary.”<sup>100</sup> On the contrary, considering what people can achieve while being oppressed, Goldman was convinced that they would be able to achieve much more under favorable conditions full of opportunities which would stimulate their individuality and creativity. Moreover, besides all these reasons, Goldman believed that civilization is not characterized by the technological or scientific development, but in fact by the extent of individual freedom as she described in “The Individual, Society and the State”:

Socially speaking, the criterion of civilization and culture is the degree of liberty and economic opportunity which the individual enjoys; of social and international unity and co-operation unrestricted by man-made laws and other artificial obstacles; by the absence of privileged castes and by the reality of liberty and human dignity; in short, by the true emancipation of the individual.<sup>101</sup>

From this, it is evident that people must naturally strive for individual freedom which, however, can only be achieved if people free themselves from all sources of the authority and oppression, especially from the government as “the dominion of human conduct,” property as “the dominion of human needs,” and religion as “the dominion of the human mind.”<sup>102</sup> In addition, Goldman claimed that the main obstacle to this liberation from the authority is in fact people’s ignorance since most people simply accept any idea presented to them by the authority such as the government without even thinking about it or questioning it. For this reason, people are easily influenced by prejudice and tend to believe in various misconceptions which are often promoted by the government.

In addition, it is this ignorance of people that the government abuses in order to retain and even strengthen its power. By influencing people’s opinions, the state forces them into uniformity, transforming them into “tax-paying puppets” who blindly follow orders from the authority while at the same time it suppresses and persecutes everyone who dares to differ from the rest.<sup>103</sup> Just as a primitive man felt completely dependent on and obedient to the higher powers, similarly, this motive “*man is nothing, the powers are everything*” occurs in the relation between the individual and the state, degrading the individual into unquestioning obedience and submission.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, according to Goldman, this obedience is so embedded in people, and

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<sup>100</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>101</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>102</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>103</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>104</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

even further reinforced by the state for example through education, that most people do not even try to resist it anymore, and they simply obey without any protest, just as the authority demands.<sup>105</sup> It is, however, only due to this “obedience, submission and unquestioning faith in the wisdom and justice of government” that the state and its institutions can exist.<sup>106</sup> For this reason, the state suppresses any indication of individuality and independence in people, and attempts to prevent people from becoming conscious of themselves and reaching their full potential by imposing “one single mode of life upon all,” regardless of their individual abilities and needs.<sup>107</sup>

Moreover, besides the constituted authority, Goldman argued that it is “social uniformity and sameness that harass the individual most.”<sup>108</sup> By means of public opinion and social conventions, people are forced into a certain way of thinking and behaving, not daring to differ from other people as they are afraid of being consequently rejected by the society. In accordance with this sense of belonging, promoted particularly by the conservative ideology, people rather conform to public opinion than to find “the courage to stand out against it.”<sup>109</sup> As a result, public opinion, together with “the ‘moral indignation’ of the majority against the heretic, the social dissenter and the political rebel,” serves as a powerful means of ensuring people’s obedience and submission.<sup>110</sup>

For all these reasons, Goldman was convinced that in order to fight ignorance in the society, people need to become educated in anarchism which – in accordance with its focus on the individual – does not expect its followers to blindly accept any given rules or dogmas. On the contrary, it stimulates independence of people as it “urges man to think, to investigate, to analyze every proposition.”<sup>111</sup> Moreover, it allows people to become conscious of themselves as it “maintains that God, the State, and society are non-existent, that their promises are null and void, since they can be fulfilled only through man’s subordination.”<sup>112</sup> All in all, it makes people realize their innate individuality – and this is what the authority is afraid of because the more people become aware of their individuality and independence, the more the authority loses

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<sup>105</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>106</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>107</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>108</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>109</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>110</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>111</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>112</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

its power. Therefore, Goldman claimed that people need to realize that “no government can exist without ... [their] consent,” and just as John Locke argued, people have the right to revolt against the government or the law if they find it wrong and unjust.<sup>113</sup> For this reason, anarchism aims to arouse people from their lethargy, and inspires them to revolt against any form of the authority, and consequently to free themselves from any obedience and oppression.

However, despite her individualist views, Goldman – influenced especially by Kropotkin’s concept of mutual aid – recognized also the importance of cooperation among people. In his work *Mutual Aid*, Kropotkin demonstrated that mutual aid is highly beneficial to people since “in the animal kingdom, as well as in human society, co-operation ... has worked for the survival and evolution of the species.”<sup>114</sup> Moreover, this need for cooperation is in fact natural for people, and therefore, they do not have to be coerced into it. For this reason, Goldman was convinced that as soon as “the devices by which men can harm one another, such as private property, are removed and if the worship of authority can be discarded,” voluntary cooperation would arise spontaneously among people on the grounds of genuine solidarity.<sup>115</sup>

Due to this emphasis on cooperation instead of competition, Goldman rejected the concept of Hoover’s “rugged individualism” which she perceived only as “a masked attempt to repress and defeat the individual and his individuality.”<sup>116</sup> Moreover, Goldman claimed that this kind of individualism “has converted life into a degrading race for externals, for possession, for social prestige and supremacy,” as it promoted competition in society based on the principle of “survival of the fittest,” and consequently, it resulted only in the exploitation of the masses.<sup>117</sup>

Furthermore, in her essays, Goldman also focused on the conflict between the individual and society. Throughout history, the individual and society seemed to oppose each other, “each striving for supremacy, because each was blind to the value and importance of the other.”<sup>118</sup> However, on the contrary, Goldman argued that there is no conflict between these two elements as they are in fact closely connected, and need to cooperate with each other instead of competing. Moreover, Goldman claimed that cooperation among people actually strengthens

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<sup>113</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>114</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>115</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>116</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>117</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>118</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”



the individuality of a man instead of suppressing it, and therefore, only if the individual and social instincts are in harmony, individuals will be able to develop to their greatest potential.<sup>119</sup> Finally, according to Goldman, it is anarchism that can liberate a man, and unite the individual and society as it declares “war on the pernicious influences which have so far prevented the harmonious blending of individual and social instincts.”<sup>120</sup>

### 4.3. The Government

The main source of authority and oppression in society that Emma Goldman was opposed to is the government. First of all, Goldman argued that instead of guaranteeing and protecting freedom of the individual, “government, organized authority, or the State is necessary *only* to maintain or protect property and monopoly.”<sup>121</sup> In this respect, the state acts just like a company, striving for profit with “no more conscience or moral mission than a commercial company for working a coal mine or running a railroad.”<sup>122</sup> For this reason, Goldman – together with other anarchists – believed that there is in fact no point of the government in society, and therefore, it should be completely removed.

Furthermore, Goldman opposed the government regardless of its form since it is “power that corrupts and degrades both master and slave,” and therefore, every government eventually becomes coercive.<sup>123</sup> Goldman shared this view with Ralph Waldo Emerson who claimed that “all government in essence ... is tyranny,” which only oppresses and exploits the masses.<sup>124</sup> Moreover, according to Goldman, the government in any form is “by its very nature conservative, static, intolerant of change and opposed to it,” and as a result, in order to maintain its power, the government suppresses any other authority or individuality among people.<sup>125</sup> For this reason, Goldman agreed with a Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin and other anarchists that the state is in fact “synonymous with the surrender of the liberty of the individual or small minorities,” and claimed that as soon as this authority of the government is removed, the individual can be truly liberated from any submission and obedience.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>120</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>121</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>122</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>123</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>124</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoted in Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>125</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>126</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

However, despite all these anti-government views, Goldman disproved the misconception that anarchists reject organization and order altogether. On the contrary, she claimed that they are opposed only to “the compulsory, arbitrary side of organization that would compel people of antagonistic tastes and interests into a body and hold them there by coercion,” such as represented by the government.<sup>127</sup> Moreover, according to Goldman, the only order that the government provides is “order derived through submission and maintained by terror.”<sup>128</sup> On the other hand, the organization in which anarchists believe can arise only as “the result of natural blending of common interests, brought about through voluntary adhesion,” and even reinforced by voluntary cooperation.<sup>129</sup> For this reason, instead of coercion and the government intervention into individuals’ lives, real order can be achieved only through “individual liberty, human well-being and social harmony.”<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, one of the main reasons why Goldman perceived the government as pointless is the fact that the government has never contributed to human progress and achievements in any way; on the other hand, it could not prevent people from doing what they were determined to do either, although it often attempted to. On the contrary, all human progress has always been achieved by the individual himself, “usually in spite of the prohibition, persecution and interference by authority.”<sup>131</sup> Even Goldman herself – together with other significant figures of the anarchist movement – managed to spread her views and to inspire people despite the government’s intervention and persecution. For this reason, Goldman claimed that “whatever is fine and beautiful in the human expresses and asserts itself in spite of government, and not because of it,” and therefore, there is simply no need for the government in human development.<sup>132</sup> Consequently, as soon as people are not limited by the intervention of the government, more progress will be made as people will be able to develop to their full potential.

In addition, Goldman claimed that since the individual is the main source of any human progress, he is in fact superior to the state. For this reason, the individual is not actually obliged to obey the authority of the state since “he does not exist for the State,” but vice versa, the state and society exist for the individual and his needs.<sup>133</sup> Without the individual, “there is no race,

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<sup>127</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>128</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>129</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>130</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>131</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>132</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>133</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

no humanity, no State.”<sup>134</sup> Moreover, the individual is also the main initiator of the liberation from any oppression in society as “it was man, the individual, whose soul first rebelled against injustice and degradation; it was the individual who first conceived the idea of resistance to the conditions under which he chafed.”<sup>135</sup> For this reason, the only purpose of the state and society should be to serve to the needs and aspirations of the individual instead of limiting his individuality and potential.

Moreover, Goldman argued that while the government constantly interferes into daily lives and private matters and relationships of people – for example by means of taxes, tariffs, divorce laws, etc. – on the other hand, it does nothing to actually improve their living conditions as there has been “not even a single reform to ameliorate the economic and social stress of the people.”<sup>136</sup> On the contrary, the government seems to even reinforce these social and economic differences and conflicts in the society in favor of rich and privileged people as it “protects the strong at the expense of the weak, provides courts and laws which the rich may scorn and the poor must obey.”<sup>137</sup> This consequently leads to the increase of inequality among people, causing even more problems and conflicts in the society.

Similarly, Goldman rejected the argument that the state and the law prevent people from committing crime, and therefore, ensure the safety of people. On the contrary, she claimed that despite the existence of numerous laws, the crime rate is still increasing.<sup>138</sup> Goldman argued that the state cannot fight crime as in fact it is the state that creates and reinforces terrible social and economic conditions in which crime thrives, and since “ninety per cent of all crimes are property crimes” caused by economic inequality and injustice.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, Goldman claimed that “the State is itself the greatest criminal, breaking every written and natural law, stealing in the form of taxes, killing in the form of war and capital punishment.”<sup>140</sup>

Consequently, according to Goldman, crime is nothing else than “misdirected energy,” as people “are out of place doing the things they hate to do, living a life they loathe to live,” while

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<sup>134</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>135</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>136</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>137</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>138</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>139</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>140</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

they are oppressed and deprived of their freedom and individuality.<sup>141</sup> Therefore, as long as there are such economic and social conditions in the society and individual freedom is suppressed, people will continue committing crime as they are forced to do by their poor living conditions. For this reason, Goldman claimed that it is primarily necessary to create a more just society based on voluntary cooperation, freedom of the individual, “fellowship, kindness and understanding.”<sup>142</sup>

Moreover, contrary to the conservative belief that people need the authority such as the state to take care of them and to regulate their behavior, Goldman was convinced that there is in fact no need for the authority of any form to intervene in people’s private lives, and to limit their individual freedom. While all the authority and oppression is based on the proposition that “man is evil, vicious, and too incompetent to know what is good for him,” Goldman, on the contrary, believed in the “innate goodness of man”.<sup>143</sup> For this reason, she agreed with Thoreau that it is not the law that makes people just, but their reason and conscience according to which everyone should act instead of human laws.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, in accordance to liberal views, Goldman rather believed in the concept of natural laws – such as “the demands for nutrition, for sex gratification, for light, air, and exercise” – as the natural law “asserts itself freely and spontaneously without any external force, in harmony with the requirements of nature,” instead of human laws which are enforced only by violence and coercion, and are in fact in contradiction to natural laws.<sup>145</sup>

For all these reasons, Goldman promoted the concept of a society in which people would live in small self-governing and self-sufficient communities without any central authority, and would cooperate voluntarily with each other without the need of any coercion or oppression. Furthermore, she shared this concept of communities with other communist anarchists such as Kropotkin and Berkman who claimed that “security and comfort” can be provided only through “mutual need and common interests” shared among people.<sup>146</sup> In addition, Goldman claimed that the source of real social harmony can be found only through “solidarity of interests,” which,

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<sup>141</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>142</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>143</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>144</sup> Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience.”

<sup>145</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>146</sup> Alexander Berkman, “Chapter 21: Is Anarchy Possible?” in *Now and After: The ABC of Communist Anarchism* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1929), accessed April 19, 2017, <https://libcom.org/library/what-is-anarchism-alexander-berkman-21>.

however, cannot exist in “a society where those who always work never have anything, while those who never work enjoy everything.”<sup>147</sup> Therefore, only in a society based on “a **voluntary** association for mutual protection and benefit,” people can live together in harmony in which individuals can enjoy the absolute freedom and many opportunities to develop to their potential.<sup>148</sup>

#### **4.4. Economic Issues**

Besides the government, Goldman also opposed capitalism, which she perceived only as another means of oppressing and exploiting people, and blamed economic injustice and inequality, together with private property, for most of the issues and conflicts in the society. She shared the view of Proudhon who claimed that “property is robbery,” however, as Goldman added, robbery “without risk and danger to the robber.”<sup>149</sup> Moreover, Goldman disproved the proposition that “man does not create enough to satisfy all needs,” since due to mass production resulting from the Industrial Revolution, the production of that period highly exceeded the demand.<sup>150</sup> However, despite this overproduction, people were still striving for greater wealth, and according to Goldman, the main reason for this longing was that “wealth means power; the power to subdue, to crush, to exploit, the power to enslave, to outrage, to degrade.”<sup>151</sup> For this reason, Goldman perceived property only as another means of oppression which needs to be removed together with the government.

On the other hand, according to Goldman, the problem is actually not private property itself, but the fact that it was gained by the exploitation of other people. Before the Industrial Revolution, the production of goods was made by independent artisans who were the owners of both their products and profit. However, with the rise of capitalism and mass production in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century United States, these artisans were transformed into factory workers, “human machines of flesh and blood, who pile up mountains of wealth for others and pay for it with a gray, dull and wretched existence for themselves.”<sup>152</sup> Moreover, while these factory workers were forced to work hard in poor and often dangerous conditions, and to obey

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<sup>147</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>148</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>149</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>150</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>151</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>152</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

their masters, they still remained largely poor as it was in fact their employers that owned workers' work and therefore, received most of the profit.

As a result, factory workers started to lose interest in their work and the products they made since instead of being the owners of their work and profit, they became only parts of a machine, "replaceable at any time by other similar depersonalized human beings."<sup>153</sup> In addition, they did not receive any help from the state, and this consequently resulted to workers' frustration and dissatisfaction, and subsequently even strikes and violent conflicts. Moreover, according to Kropotkin, such production "takes no care of the needs of the community; its only aim is to increase the profits of the capitalist," despite the exploitation of the masses.<sup>154</sup> As a result of this exploitation, according to Goldman, "man is being robbed not merely of the products of his labor, but of the power of free initiative, of originality, and the interest in, or desire for, the things he is making," as he only monotonously creates dull, standardized products.<sup>155</sup>

For this reason, Goldman considered anarchism to be the only solution to these issues as it "points out that man's development, his physical well-being, his latent qualities and innate disposition alone must determine the character and conditions of his work."<sup>156</sup> Therefore, people should have the freedom to choose the work for which they have abilities, and which they find interesting and personally meaningful, instead of being forced into the dull routine work in factories.

Furthermore, Goldman emphasized that the "real wealth consists in things of utility and beauty, in things that help to create strong, beautiful bodies and surroundings inspiring to live in."<sup>157</sup> For this reason, Goldman believed that this current striving for and accumulating of profit should be replaced with longing to create which would consequently "motivate people to give the best that is in them."<sup>158</sup> Only if people love their work and are interested in its products, they can achieve much more than when they are forced to do the work which they hate or find pointless. As a result, due to their focus on the individual and his needs, anarchists aim to "strip

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<sup>153</sup> Goldman, "The Individual, Society and the State."

<sup>154</sup> Peter Kropotkin, "Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles," in *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*, Roger N. Baldwin, ed. (Vanguard Press, Inc., 1927), accessed April 21, 2017, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/petr-kropotkin-anarchist-communism-its-basis-and-principles>.

<sup>155</sup> Goldman, "Anarchism: What It Really Stands for."

<sup>156</sup> Goldman, "What I Believe."

<sup>157</sup> Goldman, "Anarchism: What It Really Stands for."

<sup>158</sup> Goldman, "Was My Life Worth Living?"

labor of its deadening, dulling aspect, of its gloom and compulsion,” and instead, they promote such production that would enable people to fully express their talent and individuality.<sup>159</sup>

However, according to Goldman, such freedom of choice would “be possible only in a society based on voluntary co-operation of productive groups, communities and societies loosely federated together, eventually developing into a free communism.”<sup>160</sup> In such a society, people would voluntarily contribute to the well-being of the whole community and to the gaining of common property as much as they could, and on the other hand, they would be able to use as much resources as they would necessarily need, since – just as Kropotkin claimed – “common possession of the necessities for production implies the common enjoyment of the fruits of the common production.”<sup>161</sup> Only under these conditions, there would be no point in the accumulation of wealth and private property as everyone would have only as much as they would really need while having all their needs met.

#### **4.5. Religion**

The third main source of oppression in society, besides the government and private property, that Emma Goldman opposed was religion – especially Christianity – and the institution of the church. Goldman – as a promoter of atheism – perceived religion only as a “superstition that originated in man’s mental inability to solve natural phenomena.”<sup>162</sup> However, according to Goldman, this superstition is not needed anymore since people have already started to understand themselves and the world around them, mostly due to new scientific and psychological discoveries and technological innovations, together with the focus on the development of the human mind and individuality. For this reason, Goldman claimed that “Atheism in its negation of gods is at the same time the strongest affirmation of man, and through man, the eternal yea to life, purpose, and beauty.”<sup>163</sup>

Moreover, according to Goldman, the church in fact represents only an obstacle to any human progress as it – just like the government – suppresses the freedom of people, and prevents them from expressing their individuality and revolting against this authority.<sup>164</sup> Just as people are

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<sup>159</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>160</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>161</sup> Kropotkin, “Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles.”

<sup>162</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>163</sup> Emma Goldman, “The Philosophy of Atheism,” in *Mother Earth*, February 1916, accessed April 22, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/philosophyatheism.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/philosophyatheism.html).

<sup>164</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

oppressed by the state, they are similarly degraded and forced into submission by religion which claims that “God is everything, man is nothing.”<sup>165</sup> As a result, religion constantly intervenes into people’s private lives, and forces them to obey its authority, and to believe in concepts and dogmas which are not even valid anymore. For this reason, Goldman claimed that people “need redemption from the slavery, the deadening weakness, and humiliating dependency of Christian morality,” which they can achieve only through disobedience and revolt against the authority of religion and the church.<sup>166</sup>

#### **4.6. Violence**

Finally, the last aspect of Goldman’s views analyzed in this thesis is the question of violence. As was already mentioned in the second chapter, violence is quite a debatable issue within the anarchist movement. Although anarchism is in general – mostly due to misconceptions and prejudice reinforced by the government – associated with violence, the views of various anarchists on violence in fact differ.

Regarding Goldman, at the beginning of her career as an anarchist speaker, she was strongly influenced by Johann Most and his propaganda by the deed. Most emphasized the propagandistic effect of revolutionary actions, together with the open declaration of the reasons for the necessity of these actions.<sup>167</sup> At that time, Goldman agreed with this view, and believed that the end justifies the means, i.e. any violence against politicians and other oppressive figures in the society is justifiable if it helps to spread anarchist views and to inspire people to revolt.<sup>168</sup>

Similarly, Goldman’s close friend Alexander Berkman also believed in propaganda by the deed, and acted on this principle when he – with the help of Goldman – attempted to assassinate an industrialist Frick. Moreover, in accordance with the propagandistic purpose of his act, Berkman was determined to “justify his act in court, so that the American people might know that he was not a criminal, but an idealist.”<sup>169</sup> For this reason, after Berkman was imprisoned, Goldman spoke about Berkman’s act in her lectures, explaining and defending his motive which she perceived as even more important than the actual success or failure of the act. However,

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<sup>165</sup> Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.”

<sup>166</sup> Emma Goldman, “The Failure of Christianity,” in *Mother Earth*, April 1913, accessed April 23, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/failureofchristianity.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/failureofchristianity.html).

<sup>167</sup> Johann Most, “Action as Propaganda,” in *Freiheit*, July 25, 1885, accessed April 25, 2017, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/johann-most-action-as-propaganda>.

<sup>168</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>169</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.



while Berkman's assassination attempt was supported by many anarchists, including Peukert's magazine *Autonomie*. Most, whose support Goldman primarily expected, eventually condemned Berkman's act.<sup>170</sup>

Furthermore, in 1901, the US President William McKinley was assassinated by Leon Czolgosz who subsequently claimed to have been inspired by anarchism and Emma Goldman. Although no direct connection between Goldman and Czolgosz has been proved, Goldman was nevertheless arrested. Subsequently, Czolgosz's act has been denounced by many anarchists, including Berkman, since they did not consider Czolgosz to be an anarchist in the first place, and moreover, his act actually harmed the reputation of the anarchist movement. However, despite not being connected to his act, Goldman still sympathized with Czolgosz, and justified his act as inevitable since he was forced to commit it as a result of terrible economic and political conditions, together with oppression, present in the United States.<sup>171</sup>

During her life, Goldman gained – due to her radical views and sympathy for violent acts committed by anarchists – a reputation of a dangerous woman.<sup>172</sup> However, throughout the years, Goldman's view on violence started to change. After Berkman's assassination attempt, Goldman gradually started to lose faith in the efficiency of these acts of violence. Instead of seeing them as an important part of anarchist direct action, she started to perceive them – just as Kropotkin did – only as an inevitable “part of the process of evolution in the direction of individual freedom.”<sup>173</sup> Moreover, Goldman did no longer believe that the reconstruction of the society could be achieved through these acts of violence; instead, she emphasized the importance of “education as to man's place in society and his proper relation to his fellows,” and of an example, i.e. practical exercising of the principles of anarchism in everyday life.<sup>174</sup>

On the other hand, despite the change in her attitudes to violence, Goldman still attempted to understand and to justify the motives for violent acts committed by anarchists. She defended these acts arguing that anarchists did not commit them on behalf of anarchism itself, but only as a result of “the unbearable economic and political pressure, the suffering and despair of their

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<sup>170</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>171</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>172</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>173</sup> Jeff Rigenbach, “Emma Goldman and the End of the First Libertarian Movement,” *The Mises Institute*, transcribed from the *Libertarian Tradition* podcast episode “Emma Goldman,” accessed April 27, 2017, <https://mises.org/library/emma-goldman-and-end-first-libertarian-movement>.

<sup>174</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

fellow-men, women and children,” often at the cost of their own freedom or even life.<sup>175</sup> For this reason, Goldman was convinced that the state is in fact to blame for all the violence as it oppresses lives and freedom of people, and therefore, violence serves only as a means of the protest against this oppression and tyranny.

However, since the beginning of the 1900s, Goldman even started to doubt whether violence could really be justified as a means of protesting against poor social and economic conditions. In 1914, a bomb exploded in a tenement house in New York, killing four people and injuring several others. The bomb, manufactured by several anarchists, was intended for an industrialist John D. Rockefeller as a response for the Ludlow massacre in which striking workers and their families were attacked, and 25 of them were killed.<sup>176</sup> Despite her previous support for Berkman’s and Czolgosz’s acts, Goldman condemned this planned assassination attempt as irresponsible since the lives of innocent people were threatened.<sup>177</sup> Moreover, she rejected her previous view that the end justifies the means, and although she still seemed to believe in “acts of violence committed as a protest against unbearable social wrongs,” she claimed that she “could never again participate in or approve of methods that jeopardized innocent lives.”<sup>178</sup>

On the contrary to the use of violence for propaganda of anarchist views, Goldman’s opposition to militarism has remained constant throughout her life. She believed that “the military spirit is the most merciless, heartless and brutal in existence,” and unlike propaganda by the deed, it cannot be justified in any way.<sup>179</sup> In addition, militarism serves only as a means of oppression and exploitation of any soldier, suppressing his own opinions, and changing him into “a cold-blooded, mechanical, obedient tool of his military superiors.”<sup>180</sup> Subsequently, these soldiers are forced to fight someone else’s war in which they lose their lives for the cause in which they are not personally interested. For this reason, Goldman claimed that militarism “is indicative of the decay of liberty and of the destruction of all that is best and finest in our nation.”<sup>181</sup> However, Goldman claimed that militarism can be stopped as soon as soldiers refuse to blindly follow orders, and to fight for the government anymore.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>176</sup> Gregory Dehler, “Ludlow Massacre,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, accessed April 27, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Ludlow-Massacre>.

<sup>177</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>178</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>179</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>180</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>181</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

<sup>182</sup> Goldman, “What I Believe.”

## 4.7. Goldman's Rhetoric

At the beginning of Goldman's involvement in anarchism, her rhetoric was – just as her views – mostly influenced by Johann Most as Goldman was fascinated by “the rapid current of his speech, the music of his voice, and his sparkling wit” during his lecture.<sup>183</sup> For this reason, she wished to speak like him, and to “reach the masses” just as he did.<sup>184</sup> When Goldman started to give lectures, her speeches were quite emotional as she spoke passionately and with enthusiasm about current topics and issues in society. Goldman's aim was to engage the audience in these issues by means of “her fiery manner, her penetrating logic, and her refusal to compromise with injustice and ignorance.”<sup>185</sup> She was able to capture the audience's attention by using metaphors, rhetorical questions, and especially by making the topics of her lectures and essays interesting and personal to her listeners and readers. However, regarding lectures, Goldman later admitted that she had lost her faith in the spoken word which is in fact insufficient “to awaken thought, or even emotion,” and instead, she focused primarily on the written word, especially in the form of essays and articles in anarchist magazines.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Goldman, *Living My Life*.

<sup>184</sup> Emma Goldman, “Preface,” in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, Second Revised Edition (New York-London: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1911), accessed May 9, 2017, [http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist\\_archives/goldman/aando/anarchism.html](http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/goldman/aando/anarchism.html).

<sup>185</sup> William O. Reichert, “Emma Goldman: ‘High Priestess’ of American Anarchism,” in *Partisans of Freedom: A Study in American Anarchism* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1976), accessed May 9, 2017, <http://www.ditext.com/reichert/partisans/52.html>.

<sup>186</sup> Goldman, “Preface.”

## 5. Changes in Goldman's Views over the Years

During Goldman's life, social and economic conditions in the United States were changing significantly, and therefore, Goldman has always actively responded to the current events and issues in her lectures and essays. Since the beginning of her involvement in the anarchist movement, she continued protesting against any oppression and injustice in society, represented especially by the government, capitalism and religion. In general, Goldman's opinions have remained quite constant throughout the years – with the exception of the issue of violence as was demonstrated in the previous subchapter – as she has never really diverged from anarchist views. On the contrary, her faith in the need for the society based on freedom and equality of individuals and voluntary cooperation grew even stronger with all the changes in the society during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Naturally, Goldman was aware of the changing attitude of the society towards radicalism and individualism since 1900s. She claimed that while in the pre-war time “the whole world was open to his [the individual] longings and his quests,” after the First World War “the world has become a prison and life continual solitary confinement.”<sup>187</sup> During the years after the WWI, Goldman knew that the interest of people in anarchism was decreasing. In addition, she realized that her views could not solve all the problems in society, and that only “the removal of the present artificial obstacles to progress would clear the ground for new conquests and joy of life.”<sup>188</sup> Moreover, while at the beginning many anarchists were inspired by Goldman and shared her views, later she seemed to fight “almost alone for what seems to be a lost cause; contemporary radicals are overwhelmingly opposed to her.”<sup>189</sup>

However, despite the unfavorable situation for American radicals after the WWI, Goldman still remained rather optimistic regarding the future of the radical movement in the United States. She believed that people in America were in fact only beginning to “be ready for advanced ideas,” due to the only recent increase of capitalism and the powerful state.<sup>190</sup> For this reason, Goldman was convinced that people would soon start to realize their power, and their need to resist any oppression in their lives.

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<sup>187</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>188</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>189</sup> The Editors of *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, introduction to “Was My Life Worth Living?” by Emma Goldman, *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, Vol. CLXX, December 1934, accessed on April 29, 2017,

[http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/pdfs/PublishedEssaysandPamphlets\\_WasMyLifeWorthLiving.pdf](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/pdfs/PublishedEssaysandPamphlets_WasMyLifeWorthLiving.pdf).

<sup>190</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

In addition, Goldman especially believed in the young generation which was deeply affected by the experience of the First World War, particularly by “the madness and brutality they had seen, the needless cruelty and waste which had almost wrecked the world made them doubt the values their elders had given them”<sup>191</sup> Moreover, Goldman was aware that as a consequence of the war, people started to question the authority and values of the state, and were “losing faith in the existing institutions.”<sup>192</sup> On the other hand, due to their loss of illusions and values, this young generation also started to incline towards the strong government and dictators who might provide them with new values and security in their lives. However, according to Goldman, “the young generation has not yet learned that the problems confronting them can be solved only by themselves and will have to be settled on the basis of social and economic freedom in co-operation with the struggling masses for the right to the table and joy of life.”<sup>193</sup> For this reason, Goldman believed that the aim of anarchism to make people realize that only they can liberate themselves from oppression and exploitation was even more important and urgent at that time than ever before.

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<sup>191</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

<sup>192</sup> Goldman, “The Individual, Society and the State.”

<sup>193</sup> Goldman, “Was My Life Worth Living?”

## 6. Conclusion

The main aim of this bachelor thesis was to analyze several aspects of Emma Goldman's radical and liberal views by examining selected essays, and to compare her views with those of other radicals. In general, Goldman's opinions were strongly influenced by the issues present in the society of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century United States, as she wished to help people who were struggling against oppression. Although Goldman has always been intrigued by the views of various radical thinkers, the turning point in her life was the Haymarket Square riot which inspired her to dedicate her life to the ideal of Haymarket martyrs. Moreover, after emigrating to the United States, her views were also formed under the influence of anarchists such as Johann Most, Alexander Berkman or Peter Kropotkin.

In general, Goldman's views were mostly based on her emphasis on the individual and individual freedom. She believed that the authority, such as the government or the church, only hinders human progress as it does not allow people to develop to their full potential. Moreover, the authority forces people into submission and uniformity while it suppresses their individuality. For this reason, Goldman strongly opposed the government, private property, and religion, which she perceived as the main sources of oppression. On the other hand, despite her individualist views, Goldman rejected Hoover's "rugged individualism" which, according to Goldman, only encouraged competition among people instead of cooperation.

The first source of authority that Goldman opposed was the government which, regardless of its form, serves only to protect property instead of protecting freedom of the individual. Goldman claimed that the government is pointless, and that people do not need its intervention into their lives. For this reason, she encouraged people to follow their own conscience instead of human laws. Moreover, Goldman claimed that the state cannot ensure the safety of people by fighting crime while in fact it is the state that creates unjust social and economic conditions in which crime thrives. Goldman, therefore, believed that crime can only be diminished as soon as the oppressive government is removed and replaced by voluntary organization of people.

Besides the government, Goldman also perceived capitalism and private property as other causes of issues in society. As a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, independent artisans were replaced with factory workers who had to work hard in poor conditions. However, it was factory owners who received most of the profit which led to workers' dissatisfaction and strikes.

For this reason, Goldman claimed that this striving for profit should be replaced with the longing to create and to voluntarily contribute to the well-being of the whole society, and sharing of common property.

The last main source of oppression that Goldman opposed was religion which, together with the government, only forces people into blind obedience and submission as it suppresses their individual freedom. However, Goldman perceived religion and its dogmas as obsolete since – due to new scientific and psychological discoveries – people no longer need any superstition in order to explain the natural phenomena which they did not understand before.

Finally, the last aspect of Goldman's views analyzed in this bachelor thesis was the question of violence. At the beginning of her involvement in the anarchist movement, Goldman – influenced especially by Most's propaganda by the deed – promoted violent acts against oppressive figures in the society, such as politicians and industrialists. As she supported Berkman's attempt to assassinate an industrialist Frick, and Czolgosz's assassination of President McKinley, Goldman justified these acts as inevitable consequences of poor social and economic conditions in which people lived. However, her views on violence changed throughout the years as she realized that the reconstruction of the society cannot be achieved through these acts, and although she still perceived them as an inevitable part of the fight against oppression, she rather promoted education in anarchist views, and direct action in everyday life.

All in all, Goldman's views – with the exception of the question of violence – has remained quite constant throughout her life. She has always opposed the authority, and tried to inspire people to revolt against it. Moreover, although Goldman was aware of the decreasing interest of people in the anarchist movement after the WWI, she still believed that anarchism is strong enough to survive, and she put her trust in the young generation who might achieve significant changes in the society as soon as they realize their power and individuality.

For all these reasons, Goldman perceived anarchism as the only means of creating a more just society without any oppression or exploitation. Influenced by Kropotkin's concept of mutual aid, Goldman believed in the society based on equality and voluntary cooperation among people living in small communities. This Goldman's concept of the ideal society was based on her belief in the inner goodness of man as she was convinced that once all sources of oppression in society are removed, people will finally achieve individual freedom and social harmony.

## Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce byla analýza radikálních a liberálních názorů americké anarchistky Emmy Goldmanové a následně jejich porovnání s názory dalších představitelů radikálního hnutí. Tato analýza byla provedena na základě rozboru několika vybraných esejí Goldmanové – především „What I Believe“ (1908), „Anarchism: What It Really Stands for“ (1910), „Was My Life Worth Living“ (1934) a „The Individual, Society and the State“ (1940). Eseje byly zvoleny tak, aby kromě názorů Goldmanové na různé aspekty společnosti ukázaly také změny těchto názorů v průběhu jejího života. Bakalářská práce je rozdělena na dvě části – teoretickou část, která představuje historický a kulturní kontext, a také teoretický základ pro následující analýzu, která pak tvoří praktickou část.

Emma Goldmanová žila na přelomu 19. a 20. století ve Spojených státech, a její názory proto byly silně ovlivněny mnoha zásadními změnami v tehdejší společnosti. Konec 19. století byl v Americe poznamenán především občanskou válkou, která vedla ke zrušení otroctví ve Spojených státech, a průmyslovou revolucí, která přinesla mnoho nových vědeckých poznatků a technologických vylepšení. Na druhou stranu však průmyslová revoluce také přispěla k rozšíření kapitalismu a velkovýroby. V důsledku toho se z nezávislých řemeslníků stali dělníci v továrnách, kteří tvrdě pracovali ve špatných a často dokonce nebezpečných podmínkách. Za svou práci dostávali tito dělníci jen málo peněz, zatímco majitelé továren bohatli. Tato vzrůstající ekonomická nerovnost postupně vedla k nespokojenosti dělníků a k častým stávkám a demonstracím, které často vyústily až v násilí.

V této době se také začalo výrazně měnit postavení žen ve společnosti. Zpočátku ženy v 19. století nesměly volit a měly také omezené možnosti vzdělávání a pracovních příležitostí. Zatímco muž byl živitelem rodiny, žena zůstávala doma a starala se o domácnost a děti. Kromě toho ženy nesměly rozhodovat ani o svém sexuálním životě, neboť antikoncepční prostředky byly jen těžko dostupné a jakékoli informace o nich přímo zakázané. Toto postavení žen se však začalo pomalu měnit v období občanské války, kdy bylo mnoho žen nuceno najít si práci například v továrnách, zatímco muži bojovali ve válce. Ženy velmi usilovaly o získání stejných práv jako měli muži, především práva volit. Toto právo však získaly teprve v roce 1919, ale i nadále byly považovány za méněcenné oproti mužům a stále čelily diskriminaci například v zaměstnání.



V důsledku průmyslové revoluce a následné urbanizace začaly na konci 19. století do Spojených států přicházet vlny imigrantů, především z Evropy a Asie. Mnoho Američanů však vnímalo imigranty jako hrozbu, protože přinášeli do Ameriky vlastní kulturu, a zabírali Američanům pracovní pozice, především v továrnách. Kromě kulturních rozdílů však vznikaly také náboženské konflikty, neboť zatímco většina Američanů byli protestanté, mnoho imigrantů z Německa či Irska bylo katolického vyznání. Do Ameriky přicházelo také mnoho židů z východní Evropy, kteří utíkali před pogromy v Rusku – mezi nimi také sedmnáctiletá Emma Goldmanová, která přijela do Spojených států se svou sestrou Helenou.

Emma Goldmanová se narodila v roce 1869 v tehdejší Rusku a vyrůstala v konzervativní židovské rodině. Emma vždy soucítila s utlačovanými lidmi ve společnosti a byla odhodlána jim pomoci. Již od mládí se velmi zajímala o myšlenky radikálních myslitelů, například ruských nihilistů. Důležitou událostí v jejím životě, která ji inspirovala k tomu, aby se sama stala anarchistkou, však byl Haymarketový masakr v roce 1886 v Chicagu. Během demonstrace na podporu dělníků hodil někdo do davu bombu, která následně zabila několik policistů i civilistů a mnoho jich zranila. Osm anarchistů bylo následně zatčeno a čtyři z nich byli popraveni, přestože se nikdy neprokázala žádná spojitost mezi nimi a bombou. Goldmanová, která celý proces pozorně sledovala, byla rozhořčena touto nespravedlností, a rozhodla se proto zasvětit svůj život boji za ideál těchto popravených anarchistů.

Po příchodu do Spojených států se Goldmanová setkávala s mnoha významnými představiteli anarchistického hnutí, například s Johannem Mostem a Alexandrem Berkmanem, kteří se stali jejími blízkými přáteli a také výrazně ovlivnili její názory. Byl to právě Most, redaktor anarchistického časopisu *Freiheit*, kdo Emmu přesvědčil k tomu, aby sama začala přednášet na anarchistických setkáních a psát články do anarchistických časopisů. Goldmanová se brzy stala významnou představitelkou jidiš anarchistického hnutí, které vzniklo mezi židovskými imigranty v New Yorku. V roce 1906 pak Goldmanová začala publikovat vlastní anarchistický časopis *Mother Earth*. Situace ve Spojených státech na přelomu 19. a 20. století však pro anarchisty nebyla právě příznivá. Anarchisté byli v této době převážně odsuzováni společností, která je považovala za nebezpečné teroristy, a byli proto často pronásledováni a zatýkáni policií.

Přesto anarchismus pro Goldmanovou představoval ideál, za který se rozhodla bojovat. Spatřovala v něm především účinný způsob boje proti útlaku a nespravedlnosti ve společnosti. S pomocí anarchismu navíc chtěla dosáhnout společnosti, která by byla založena na svobodě,

rovnosti a spolupráci všech jednotlivců. Z důvodu zkorumpovanosti politiků se však Goldmanová spolu s ostatními anarchisty odmítala jakkoli zapojit do politického života a místo toho raději prosazovala přímou akci a vzdorování veškeré autoritě v každodenním životě.

Celkově vycházely názory Goldmanové především z jejího pojetí svobody jednotlivce. Veškeré její postoje byly založeny na její víře v sílu jednotlivce a jeho svobody, která je však často utlačována autoritou, jakou je například vláda. Goldmanová však byla přesvědčena, že touha po svobodě je přirozená pro každého člověka, a proto nemůže být potlačena žádnou autoritou. Goldmanová proto odmítala jakoukoli autoritu a prohlašovala, že autorita nemá žádný význam pro lidský rozvoj, neboť veškerého pokroku a úspěchů dosáhl člověk navzdory autoritě, nikdy ne díky ní. Goldmanová byla přesvědčena, že autorita naopak potlačuje individualitu a kreativitu jednotlivců tím, že je nutí k naprosté poslušnosti a uniformitě a pronásleduje ty, kteří se odvažují lišit se od ostatních. Pro Goldmanovou proto bylo důležité osvobodit jednotlivce od veškerých zdrojů útlaku ve společnosti – především od vlády, soukromého majetku a náboženství. Takového osvobození však může být dosaženo především vzděláváním se v myšlenkách anarchismu, který podněcuje jednotlivce k nezávislému myšlení a vzdoru vůči autoritě.

Z tohoto důvodu Goldmanová, stejně jako všichni anarchisté, odmítala jakoukoli formu vlády, která se stejně vždy stane zdrojem útlaku, neboť je to právě moc, která korumpuje. Vláda navíc slouží pouze k ochraně majetku, ale nikdy ne osobní svobody. Goldmanová také věřila, že lidé nepotřebují být neustále kontrolováni vládou, která příliš zasahuje do jejich soukromých životů a vztahů. Věřila v dobro člověka a nabádala lidi, aby poslouchali spíše svůj rozum a svědomí než zákony. Goldmanová také odmítala tvrzení, že vláda a zákony poskytují občanům ochranu před zločinci, a naopak byla přesvědčena, že právě vláda vytváří takové sociální a ekonomické podmínky, ve kterých kriminalita vzrůstá.

Na druhou stranu však Goldmanová zcela neodmítala veškerou organizaci a řád, pouze nesouhlasila s organizací, která je založena na útlaku. Goldmanová proto naopak usilovala o vytvoření takové společnosti, která by byla založena na dobrovolné spolupráci, sdílení společného majetku a zájmů a malých samosprávných komunitách bez jakékoli centrální autority. Pouze v takové společnosti by lidé byli skutečně svobodní a mohli by plně rozvíjet svůj potenciál.

Kromě vlády spatřovala Goldmanová další zdroj útlaku v kapitalismu a soukromém majetku. Podle Goldmanové však problémem není majetek jako takový, ale především to, že byl získán vykořisťováním druhých, tak jako majitelé továren vykořisťovali dělníky na konci 19. století. Goldmanová byla navíc přesvědčena, že lidé touží po majetku hlavně proto, aby získali větší moc nad ostatními. Navrhovala proto, aby hromadění majetku a bohatství bylo nahrazeno touhou tvořit krásné věci, které budou lidí těšit, namísto rutinní práce a jednotvárných produktů vytvářených v továrnách.

Další autoritou, kterou Goldmanová odmítala bylo náboženství a církve. Tvrdila, že náboženství lidem sloužilo pouze k vysvětlování a pochopení neznámých jevů a proto, díky mnoha novým vědeckým poznatkům, již není potřeba. Goldmanová také odmítala instituci církve, kterou vnímala pouze jako další zdroj útlaku lidí a překážku lidskému rozvoji, neboť stejně jako vláda pouze nutí lidi k poslušnosti. Místo toho Goldmanová prosazovala ateismus, který naopak zdůrazňoval víru v sílu a nezávislost člověka.

Důležitým prvkem názorů Goldmanové bylo také násilí, což je poměrně sporný aspekt v rámci anarchistického hnutí, neboť názory anarchistů na násilí se často liší. Na začátku svého zapojení do anarchistického hnutí byla Goldmanová silně ovlivněna Mostem a jeho propagandou činem. Most prosazoval použití násilí proti hlavním utlačovatelům ve společnosti, jako byli například politici nebo majitelé továren, především za účelem propagandy anarchistických ideálů. Goldmanová zpočátku obhajovala tyto násilné činy a tvrdila, že jejich příčinou byly především hrozné podmínky, ve kterých lidé museli žít. Goldmanová proto plně podporovala Berkmana, když se v roce 1892 pokusil zavraždit průmyslníka Henryho Claye Fricka a byl následně za tento čin odsouzen na 22 let do vězení. Goldmanová zcela chápala motiv tohoto činu a obhajovala ho na svých přednáškách i v článcích v anarchistických časopisech. Přestože byl Berkmanův čin podpořen mnoha anarchisty, podpory od Mosta se Goldmanová nedočkala, neboť ten, navzdory svým předchozím názorům, Berkmanův čin ve svém časopise *Freiheit* odsoudil.

V roce 1901 byl americký prezident McKinley zavražděn Leonem Czolgoszem, který tvrdil, že byl inspirován přednáškou Goldmanové. Přestože se žádná přímá spojitost mezi Goldmanovou a Czolgoszovým činem nepotvrdila, byla Goldmanová zatčena. I když Goldmanová Czolgosze neznala, obhajovala pro svém propuštění jeho čin na svých přednáškách. Její postoj k násilí se

nicméně začal postupně měnit. Zatímco zpočátku Goldmanová spatřovala v násilí podstatnou část anarchistické propagandy, později ztrácela víru ve smysl a účinnost násilných činů a považovala je pouze za nevyhnutelnou součást boje proti útlaku. Místo násilí raději prosazovala vzdělávání lidí v anarchismu a přímou akci. Ke změně jejích názorů přispěla také událost v roce 1914, kdy v činžovním domě v New Yorku explodovala bomba, která zabila 4 lidi. Tato bomba, konstruována několika anarchisty, byla určena pro průmyslníka Johna D. Rockefellera jako pomsta za Ludlowský masakr, při kterém zahynulo 25 lidí, včetně dětí. Goldmanová následně označila toto jednání anarchistů za nezodpovědné, neboť přípravou bomby byly ohroženy životy nevinných lidí. Přestože Goldmanová nadále chápala důvody anarchistů pro tyto činy, odmítala se již na nich podílet nebo je veřejně obhajovat.

Během svého života Goldmanová vždy reagovala na aktuální změny a problémy ve společnosti dané doby, její názory se však příliš neměnily, s výjimkou otázky násilí, jak bylo uvedeno výše. V období po 1. světové válce vnímala Goldmanová vzrůstající odpor společnosti vůči radikalismu ve Spojených státech a následný úpadek zájmu lidí o anarchismus. Přesto však zůstávala optimistická a věřila, že se Američané teprve začínají zajímat o radikální myšlenky, vzhledem k teprve nedávnému rozšíření kapitalismu a útlaku ve společnosti. Goldmanová věřila především v mladou generaci, která se však v důsledku ztráty iluzí a hodnot během 1. světové války často přikláněla k silné vládě a diktátorům, kteří jim nabízeli nové hodnoty. Goldmanová však tvrdila, že si lidé musí především uvědomit, že jejich osvobození leží zcela v jejich rukou, a právě anarchismus usiluje o to, aby si lidé uvědomili svou vlastní sílu a konečně se osvobodili od veškerého útlaku.

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