

4.

“A NEW CONCEPT OF EGOISM”

The Late-Modernism of Ayn Rand

‘It stood on the edge of the Boston Post Road, two small structures of glass and concrete forming a semicircle among the trees: the cylinder of the office and the long, low oval of the diner, with gasoline pumps as the colonnade of a forecourt between them.’¹ The writer goes on to describe this modernist petrol station in terms that recall the rapture of Marinetti, recounting the car-crash that launched Futurism; or of Le Corbusier, encountering the titanic reawakening of Parisian traffic that led him to develop his Voisin Plan, a new approach to urban-planning formulated specifically in order to facilitate a free movement of automobiles. ‘It looked like a cluster of bubbles hanging low over the ground, not quite touching it, to be swept aside in an instant on a wind of speed; it looked gay, with the hard, bracing gaiety of efficiency, like a powerful airplane engine’.²

But this building is designed neither by Mies van der Rohe nor Arne Jacobsen. It is the creation of Howard Roark, hero of Ayn Rand’s novel *The Fountainhead* (1943) – and it is worth underlining how strange this ought to seem. A declared Romantic (who favored Victor Hugo over the sort of innovators who never used capitals, never used commas and wrote poems that neither rhymed nor scanned) Rand must appear an unlikely champion of modernism in architecture. Indeed, Rand’s egoist philosophy presents a perfect example of that mistrust of grand narrative now recognized to be central to the ‘cultural logic of late-capitalism’, post-modernism. In place of ‘all the variants of modern collectivism (communist, fascist, Nazi, etc.), which preserve the religious-altruist ethics in full and merely substitute “society” for God as the beneficiary of man’s self-immolation’, Rand proposes a new social order geared to the individual: ‘a free, productive, rational

system that rewards the best in every man, and which is, [as Frederic Jameson rather feared it might be] obviously, laissez-faire capitalism'.³

In fact, Rand's philosophy has had a role equal or greater than that of Milton Friedman or F.A. Hayek in shaping a contemporary neo-liberal consensus, having had an avowed impact upon theorists such as George Gilder, whose *Wealth and Poverty* (1981) has been called the "bible" of the Reagan administration, and Charles Murray, who launched an early, influential attack on the welfare-state in *Losing Ground* (1984). Rand's philosophy is regularly cited as an inspiration by a new breed of industrialists based in California's Silicon Valley, where the IT and business-models that powered the neo-liberal experiment were first developed. Influential public figures on the American right Rush Limbaugh, Rick Santelli and Paul Ryan have recently endorsed Rand's work. And, as is now well known, Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve between 1987 and 2006, and perhaps the primary architect of our highly deregulated and globalised financial order is her protégé.⁴

And yet, there is clearly no discrepancy between Roark's modernist practice and his "post-modernist" philosophy. The fact is that Rand presents readers with a total philosophy for living – in a period supposedly wary of the great modernist passion for system building. 'Weary from Communism, fascism, and two world wars intellectuals were above all uninterested in ideology,' writes Jennifer Burns in her biography *The Goddess of the Markets* (2009): 'Rand's Objectivism, a completely integrated rational, atheistic philosophical system delivered via a thousand-page novel, was simply not what most established intellectuals were looking for in 1957.'⁵ No doubt one could argue Rand is a transitional figure in the great twentieth-century paradigm shift. Equally disregarding the extravagant claims made for her work by her acolytes and the blanket dismissal of ideological opponents, one might conceivably characterize Rand as a right-wing counterpart to Aldous Huxley: a resolutely middlebrow writer, who chose to apply ideas and techniques pioneered by modernists without being of that movement, and again like Huxley (or Robert Graves) eventually to enjoy untimely success with the rise of a later generation, in the sixties. To some extent this is clearly correct. But, I suggest, this analogy only serves to underscore the inadequacy of the theoretical terms coined in that first, heroic attempt to describe theories and practices that

had no place in what was then universally agreed to constitute the modernist movement: neither in the (radical) empiricist tradition that inspired Marcel Proust's *La recherche du temps perdu* and Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*, nor in the mainstream of (Hegelian) Idealism, wherein one might place the inter-subjectivity of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, nor yet in any tradition representing the admixture of these, the cultural logic of late capitalism seemed to possess no obvious precedent: and was therefore declared to be post-modernist. I suggest this is a mistake.

In this article I propose to show that Rand's Objectivism must be recognized as a late modernism: – an untimely contribution to a body of discourse produced (for the most part) immediately prior to WWI – which itself constituted a belated response to the insurrectionary egoist philosophy of the renegade Hegelian Max Stirner. Though the impact of Stirnerian Egoism has been examined in the work of individual writers, sporadically, over the past four decades, by critics Michael Levenson, Bruce Clarke, John F. Welsh, and Michel Rabaté, this body of writing has never been considered together: and understood to constitute a modernism possessing a philosophical basis distinct from that of the mainstreams. I argue that, through Ayn Rand primarily, the modernism of radical subjectivity survived well beyond the point thought to mark its extinction post-WWI; that the cultural logic of late capitalism is based, to a significant degree, upon this modernist interpretation of Stirnerian Egoism. The political urgency of the reappraisal undertaken in this essay need hardly be spelt out. Endeavors to engage with a contemporary hyper-modernist transformation of our city-spaces, with the slow perversion of our social and economic systems, must remain ineffectual as long as an understanding of the cultural logic underpinning the grand “neo-liberal” insurrection is distorted by a terminology as yet inexact.

I.

THE FOUNTAINHEAD

Disavow the immediate past. The gesture is characteristically modernist – and in this respect Howard Roark is entirely typical. ‘I inherit nothing’, he says. ‘I stand

at the end of no tradition. I may, perhaps, stand at the beginning of one.’⁶ Rand, his creator, was to make similar claims. ‘The only philosopher she acknowledged as an influence was Aristotle’, writes her most recent biographer, Jennifer Burns. ‘Beyond his works, Rand insisted that she was unaffected by external influences or ideas.’⁷ Her oeuvre presents readers with what appears to be a self-enclosed system of thought; if Rand requires an authoritative opinion she will often cite one of her own fictional characters, as though these were real people. ‘When I am questioned about myself,’ she wrote in 1945, ‘I am tempted to say, paraphrasing Roark: “Don’t ask me about my family, my childhood, my friends or my feelings. Ask me about the things I think”.’⁸ In the eyes of her many fans, Rand is a sort of phoenix, possessing no context save her own creativity, the fountainhead that produced the universe they inhabit, *ex nihilo*. ‘It is the content of a person’s brain, not the accidental details of his life, that determines his character. My own character is in the pages of *The Fountainhead*. For anyone who wishes to know me, that is essential. The specific events of my private life are of no importance whatever. I have never had any private life in the usual sense of the word. My writing is my life.’⁹

As political scholar and libertarian theorist Chris Matthew Sciabarra remarks, Rand’s self-portrait ‘verges on the reification of her intellect as a disembodied abstraction ... this is strange as Rand herself often paid close attention to context in her analysis of philosophical and cultural trends’.¹⁰ In *Ayn Rand: The Russian Radical* (1995), Sciabarra suggests that an assessment of her philosophy cannot be complete without a contextual and developmental basis. ‘Rand was notorious for maintaining that her intellectual debt to other thinkers was very limited. And yet in my own research, I discovered similarities between Rand’s approach and the dialectical approach of Hegelians and Marxists.’¹¹ While noting that Rand would have denied such a link vehemently, Sciabarra believes that at some point in her intellectual development Rand had absorbed, perhaps unwittingly, crucial aspects of a specifically dialectical method of analysis: that is to say, the attempt to overcome formal dualism and monistic reductionism, to uncover assumptions shared by apparent opposites, to achieve a transcendent perspective that insists on the integrity of the whole. ‘Rand’s revolt against formal dualism is illustrated in her rejection of such “false alternatives” as materialism and idealism,

intrinsicism and subjectivism, rationalism and empiricism', observes Sciabarra. 'Moreover, Rand always views the polarities as "mutually" or "reciprocally reinforcing," "two sides of the same coin"'. According to Sciabarra, this is no mere technique. 'Rand was the first to admit that a writer's style is a product of his or her "psycho-epistemology" or method of awareness'.¹²

Sciabarra traces Hegelian elements in Ayn Rand's fiction and philosophy back to her time in St. Petersburg. His pioneering book was the first to suggest that Rand's studies in the years immediately following the Russian Revolution must be taken into account in any serious assessment of her philosophical work. During her time at the Stoiunin Gymnasium and later in the Department of Social Pedagogy at the University of Petrograd, Rand would have encountered the most highly-regarded Hegelians of that era, the most significant of these being N.O. Lossky, who held a position in pre-WWI Russian philosophy comparable to that of his contemporary F.H. Bradley in England. Creator of a distinctively Russian variety of Hegelianism that fused Slavacist politics and mystical elements derived from Russian Orthodox tradition, Professor Lossky had lectured at the Stoiunin Gymnasium on Fichte, Hegel and Schelling in the years that Rand was a student there and, though the State Scientific Council had compelled him to retire from his university post in the year Rand enrolled, he might have provided unofficial tuition to students on the history of ancient thought. In conversations with her first biographer Barbara Branden, Rand described Lossky as a 'distinguished international authority on Plato' – though this was not his primary area of expertise – and recalled with pride that Lossky had praised her forthright rejection of Platonism.¹³ The passage is suggestive, Sciabarra points out: the one teacher whose approval ever seems to have counted for anything with Rand, Lossky is not recognized as a Hegelian – so might be the means whereby Rand acquired a dialectical method of analysis without being aware that she was doing so. Sciabarra's theory has met with mixed responses. While biographer Jennifer Burns reserves judgment, another recent biographer, Anne C. Heller endorses Sciabarra, stating that Rand 'learned from Lossky an intensely dialectical method of thinking – "thinking in principles", she called it – which helped her to construct a worldview that was radically individualistic and seemingly Western but in some ways Russian to the core.'¹⁴

But Rand was far from short on teaching material that set out the background to historical materialism – and so one really has to question how Rand could have failed to recognize critical procedures taught by Lossky / other Hegelians at the university for what they were. In semi-autobiographical novel *We the Living* (1936), Rand lists the lectures her character Kira is forced to attend, satirizing the proportion of pro-Bolshevik material on the syllabus: ‘Proletarian Women and Illiteracy,’ ‘The Spirit of the Collective,’ ‘Proletarian Electrification,’ ‘The Doom of Capitalism,’ ‘The Red Peasant,’ ‘The ABC of Communism,’ ‘Comrade Lenin and Comrade Marx’ and ‘Marx and Collectivism’.¹⁵ Rand later complained that her university degree program ‘began with Plato, whom the regime claimed as the forerunner to historical materialism, then went to Hegel, then to Marx.’¹⁶ ‘For the rest of her life,’ writes Barbara Branden, ‘Alice knew that she understood the theory of dialectical materialism – and had on her body and spirit the scars of its practice – as few Americans would; she did not bear with equanimity the remarks of anyone who ventured to tell her “what communism really was all about”’.¹⁷

But if Rand *knew she understood* the theory of dialectical materialism one must really struggle to explain the paradox that is ‘For the New Intellectual’ (1960): an essay that performs the very ‘triple somersaults’ Rand ridicules in the moment she criticizes the ‘plain Witch-doctory of Hegel’.¹⁸ If not the result of ignorance nor bad faith, might this apparent discrepancy between the values expressed and procedures employed indicate that Rand’s dialectical procedure was derived from a source she had good reason to regard as anti-Hegelian? The historical overview provided in ‘For the New Intellectual’ certainly bears an astonishing resemblance to that offered by renegade Hegelian Max Stirner in the second part of *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*: that historical progression from 1) the initial tyranny of physical facts – through 2) the religious or ideological tyranny of shaman / priest / humanist – which finally culminates in 3) freedom for living Ego.¹⁹

The three ‘contestants’ described in Rand’s essay precisely correspond to a specifically Stirnerian application of the dialectical method. First, there is *Attila*, ‘the man who rules by brute force, acts on the range of the moment, is concerned with nothing but the physical reality immediately before him, respects nothing

but man's muscles, and regards a fist, a club or a gun as the only answer to any problem'.²⁰ Next, *the Witch Doctor*, 'the man who dreads physical reality, dreads the necessity of practical action, and escapes into his emotions, into visions of some mystic realm where his wishes enjoy a supernatural power unlimited by the absolutes of nature.'²¹ And though these two figures – the man of force and the man of faith – might appear to be opposites, they share 'a consciousness held down to the *perceptual* method of functioning,' which Rand glosses as an 'awareness that does not choose to extend beyond the automatic, the immediate, the given, the involuntary, which means: an animal's "epistemology"'. According to Rand, 'Man's consciousness shares with animals the first two stages of its development: sensations and perceptions; but it is the third state, *conceptions*, that makes him man'.²² As in the writings of Dora Marsden and Wyndham Lewis before her, Stirner's third stage in the history of mankind is identified with this capacity for integrating perceptions into conceptions by a process of abstraction; that is to say, reason or thought.²³ In Rand's philosophy, only an egoist can think for himself – can realize an innate potential for being human, a Rational Animal: 'while animals survive by adjusting themselves to their background, man survives by adjusting his background to himself'.²⁴ Like Marsden and Lewis, Rand stresses this capacity of the ego to transform that which is given into that which is its *own*: the man of reason, is *the Producer*.²⁵ And, like Marsden, Rand distinguishes between two categories – broadly corresponding to the traditional Sciences and Humanities. 'The professional businessman', argues Rand, 'is the field agent of the army whose commander-in-chief is the *scientist*', while 'The professional intellectual is the field agent of the army whose commander-in-chief is the *philosopher*'.²⁶ And once again, the achievements of the first group are held up as a reproach to the latter, Rand suggesting (like Marsden some years earlier) that philosophers have proven either unwilling or incapable of moving beyond phase two.²⁷ 'His twin brother, the businessman, has done a superlative job and has brought men to an unprecedented material prosperity', concludes Rand. 'But the intellectual has sold him out – has betrayed their common source – has failed in his own job and has brought men to spiritual bankruptcy'.²⁸ As in *Time and Western Man*, Idealist and Empiricist represent a relapse to earlier, non-rational modes of being – Witch Doctor and Attila, respectively – two "false alternatives"

persisting upon this second – more sophisticated – tier of the Stirnerian dialectic.²⁹

We know for a fact that Rand and her immediate circle (who ironically called themselves The Collective) were familiar with Stirner by the Sixties, as Nathaniel Branden mentions the philosopher (in the course of correcting a misconception that egoism is doing whatever one wants) in his essay ‘Counterfeit Individualism’ (1962): ‘Nietzsche and Max Stirner’, he writes, ‘are sometimes quoted in support of this interpretation.’³⁰ But the reasoning behind this rejection of Nietzschean / Stirnerian egoism is entirely consistent with the way in which Stirner’s thought had been developed earlier in the century by leading Modernist writers working within a Stirnerian framework. Lewis, for instance, condemns Henri Bergson in exactly the same terms in *Time and Western Man* – arguing that the emphasis placed upon the subconscious implies a subordination of the individual to some impersonal system that must compromise the integrity of the Self.³¹ If we choose to take Stirnerian egoism in a wider sense – as a counterpart to Marxism, a living body of discourse, open to reinterpretation and modification, rather than a dead letter – the extent to which Rand’s philosophy of rational self-interest differs from Stirner ‘whim-worship’ presents no fundamental obstacle to our regarding the former as an off-shoot of the latter, part of this one tradition / anti-tradition of radical thought.

Put simply, *The Ego and His Own* and ‘For the New Intellectual’ have far more in common than can pass for chance; and Rand’s moral philosophy (the bedrock for her subsequent Capitalist politics and “Objectivist” epistemology) possesses a peculiarly Stirnerian flavour too. ‘The social theory of ethics substitutes “society” for God’, states Rand, echoing Stirner’s critique of early Socialism, ‘and although it claims that its chief concern is life on earth, it is *not* the life of man, not the life of an individual, but the life of a disembodied entity, *the collective*, which, in relation to every individual, consists of everybody except himself.’³² The egoism that provided the initial impetus for Rand’s project has sometimes been likened to that of Nietzsche, but the particular thrust of her attack, in passages like this from *The Virtue of Selfishness* (1964), is distinctly *Stirnerian* in form and content, is on occasion near word for word: ‘since there is no such entity as “society”, Rand insists, ‘since society is only a number of individual men – this means that

some men (the majority or any gang that claims to be its spokesman) are ethically entitled to pursue and whims (or any atrocities) they desire to pursue, while *other* men are ethically obliged to spend their lives in the service of that gang's desires.'³³

This (by now familiar) moral insight can also be seen to produce similar (and equally startling) political conclusions in the writings of both Stirner and Rand. Unlike his early Anarchist admirers, Stirner did not push for the abolition of the State, imagining that statism would inevitably wither away as more and more egoists opted to withdraw their creativity from the system, forming in its stead *the Union of Egoists* – a voluntary association, for a free trade in properties and powers, bound together only by the self-interest of each individual participant, a perpetual insurrection. Stirner was vague on how a Union might work, reserving the right to change his mind to suit himself. Having dispensed with this crucial liberty, Rand is more forthcoming – and, in the business community that retires to Galt's Gulch in *Atlas Shrugged* we have a fantasy that is closer than anything produced before or since to what Max Stirner may have meant. 'Here,' Ellis Wyatt tells Dagny, 'we trade achievements, not failures – values, not needs. We're free of one another, yet we all grow together.'³⁴ Indeed, Rand's prime innovation consists in her recognition that Stirner's proposal for a bartering system without State intervention is already there in the laissez-faire capitalism of Adam Smith. 'Capitalism is based on self-interest and self-esteem', wrote Greenspan in 1963; 'it holds integrity and trustworthiness as cardinal virtues and makes them pay off in the market-place, demanding that men survive by means of virtues, not of vices. It is this superlatively moral system that the welfare statist propose to improve on by means of preventive law, snooping bureaucrats, and the chronic goad of fear.'³⁵

II.

THE HOUSE OF DEAD TRUTHS

But how to account for these parallels? We have evidence to prove that Rand knew of Max Stirner by the beginning of the Sixties – but is the influence of that

philosopher merely a late development, or is it still possible to conclude that these unlikely “Hegelian” components in Rand’s system of thought were acquired far earlier, during her formative period, in Soviet Russia, as Sciabarra suggested? The available evidence would seem to suggest that Rand did not possess *first-hand* knowledge of Stirner until the sixties (and perhaps not even then). ‘These are the vague beginnings of an amateur philosopher’, writes Rand, in her ‘First Philosophic Journal’, on April 9, 1934. ‘To be checked with what I learn when I master philosophy – then see how much of it has already been said, and whether I have anything new to say, or anything old to say better than it has already been said.’³⁶ – Subsequent entries indicate that Rand worked through a reading-list consisting of some of the key radical right-wing texts of the era, but Stirner had again fallen into utter obscurity, and the only name that Rand could put to the body of ideas she had carried with her, on leaving Russia for the New World, remained that of Friedrich Nietzsche.

According to Barbara Branden, Rand first discovered this philosopher while at university, when a cousin said to her, grinning with a touch of malice, ‘Here is someone you should read, because he beat you to all your ideas.’ Intrigued, Rand began reading *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. In Nietzsche, Rand believed she had found a writer ‘who felt as I did about man, who saw and wanted the heroic in man; here was a writer who believed that a man should have a great purpose, a purpose which is for his own sake, for his own happiness and his own selfish motives.’³⁷ His books would have a profound impact. ‘The seventeen-year-old Rand immediately seized upon his ideas,’ writes Anne C. Heller, ‘including his call to discard old values and create new ones, his condemnation of altruism as a slave morality, his argument for the inviolate rights of the gifted person, whose only obligation is to refine and use his gifts as he sees fit.’³⁸ From the first, Rand later claimed, Nietzsche’s defense of psychological determinism had troubled her, and so too various statements concerning the exercise of power. ‘I believed that the superior man could not be bothered enslaving others, that slavery is immoral, that to enslave his inferiors is an unworthy occupation for the heroic man.’³⁹ According to Barbara Branden, when Rand read further in Nietzsche and found in *The Birth of Tragedy* he was ‘statedly anti-reason’, her early enthusiasm began to abate. ‘He said that reason is an inferior faculty,’ remembered Rand,

‘that drunken-orgy emotions were superior. That finished him as a spiritual ally.’⁴⁰

Rand is here somewhat misleading. It is precisely those aspects of Nietzschean thought she later professed to have immediately disliked which loom largest in her earliest fictional writing. In detailed plans for a novel to have been called ‘The Little Street’, Rand models her anti-social hero Denis Renehan on the child-murderer William Edward Hickman. Had this book ever been completed it would have resembled something approaching a cross between *The Outsider* by Albert Camus and Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* – a supremely amoral modern novel that would have forever put its author into a very different category of American literature. Nietzschean elements persist in the original version of *We the Living* too. In a passage cut from later editions, a Communist called Andrei tells the hero Kira that he knows what she is going to say: she admires Bolshevik ideals, but loathes their methods. ‘I loathe your ideals’, Kira replies, ‘I admire your methods. If one believes one’s right, one shouldn’t wait to convince millions of fools, one might just as well force them. I don’t know, however, whether I’d include blood in my methods.’⁴¹ Finally, early drafts for *The Fountainhead* indicate that Rand initially conceived of even her exemplary egoist-as-creator, Howard Roark as a Nietzschean Superman, an amoral force like Denis Renehan in ‘The Little Street’, or Lev Manovich in *We the Living*. (That is to say, rapist and terrorist). Elements of this characterization persist in the finished novel: Roark (notoriously) remains a rapist, and, of course, ultimately dynamites a housing estate. But, fortunately, Nietzschean traces such as these are obscured by lyrical passages celebrating Rand’s new (Stirnerian⁴²) concept of egoism as rational self-interest. Though her contempt for the masses resurfaces to disastrous effect in *Atlas Shrugged*, it is this emphasis on the creative potential of the individual, together with her celebration of loving and resilient social-networks (as creators unite to work on projects such as the Stoddard Temple) for which Rand is best remembered.

Having noted that there are these Nietzschean elements in Rand’s early fiction is it possible to accept these represent a distortion of a preexisting egoism? Rand insists that this is the case, but suggests that this insight was personal and owed nothing to education or environment: for how could an egoist owe anything to a land as unrelentingly hostile to the individual as Russia? ‘My feeling toward

Russia [is] simply an intensified feeling that I've had from childhood and from before the revolutions,' Rand recalled. 'I felt that this was so mystical, depraved, rotten a country that I wasn't surprised that they got a Communist ideology, and I felt that one has to get out and find the civilized world.'⁴³

In Thomas Masaryk's classic history *The Spirit of Russia* (1919) we find that Subjectivism was resisted, fiercely in fact, by a vast majority of Russian thinkers through the nineteenth century: but, significantly, this Subjectivism 'was looked upon chiefly as the doctrine of Stirner'.⁴⁴ Aleksei Homjakov, Vissarion Grigorevic Belinskii, Aleksandr Herzen, Mihail Bakunin, Dmitry Pisarov, Fyodor Dostoevskii, some of the greatest writers in the extraordinary renaissance that took place in Russia during the latter half of the nineteenth century, were struggling with a specifically Stirnerian variety of subjectivity. Neither Europe nor the United States could have presented a young woman with greater scope for encountering something of Stirner at secondhand. We know Rand read novels by Dostoevskii, for instance, presenting inversions, in her own work, of arguments derived from that novelist's denunciation of egoism in *Brothers Karamazov* (1880). 'For a long time, I studied his plots carefully,' she told B. Branden, 'to see how he integrated his plots to his ideas.'⁴⁵ And in the nihilist philosophy of Pisarev, Rand would have found (had she cared to look) an interpretation of Stirner that anticipated her own much-vaunted emphasis upon a *rational* egoism. 'He preached radical individualism,' writes Masaryk, 'understanding by this term the struggle for the emancipation of the individuality, a struggle that for him embodied the essential meaning of civilization.'⁴⁶ Toward the end of his great survey of Russian thought, Masaryk would note the increasing influence of Stirnerian Egoism on Anarchist thinkers in particular at the time he was writing (WWI). 'The already great vogue of Nietzsche, Stirner and Ibsen continually increases ... A number of recent writers have adopted anarchist views under the influence of these and other European exemplars. I may refer to F. Sologub with his solipsist paroxysms; and to L. Sestov, an imitator of Stirner and Nietzsche...'⁴⁷

This state of affairs in the period preceding the revolution has been obscured by Soviet propaganda. 'Consult any history of the Russian avant-garde', Allan Antliff observes, 'and you read that the artistic left pledged allegiance to the "October Revolution," i.e. the Communist Party coup of 1917 and subsequent

dictatorship.’⁴⁸ As he and Nina Gurianova have discovered, in groundbreaking studies of anarchy and art, what this narrative misrepresents is a ‘messy history’ of artistic rebellion on the part of many in the Russian avant-garde in the first years of the Revolution: ‘when anarchism, not Marxism, was the *raison d’être* of their art.’⁴⁹ As Masaryk could have told us, the years between 1917 and 1919 were in fact the third in a series of three waves in the history of Russian political anarchism. The first of these in the 1870s produced a wide spectrum of different types of anarchism (e.g. the anarcho-christianity of Leo Tolstoy). The next took place between 1905 and 1907, during the first of the revolutions against the Tsarist regime. And significantly, according to Gurianova, ‘The situation at the beginning of the century helped to promote different forms of anarcho-individualism, rather than anarcho-syndicalism or anarcho-communism.’⁵⁰ This final wave of insurrection happened to coincide with the publication of *six* translations of Stirner’s book (between 1906 and 1910).⁵¹ As a direct result, an anarcho-individualist sensibility emerged in Russia, which drew heavily upon the writing of Max Stirner.

In his presentation of Russian anarchist tendencies at the International Anarchist Congress in 1907, for instance, anarcho-communist Vladimir Ivanovich Zabrezhnev (Fedorov) singled out Stirner’s philosophy for criticism, observing that the philosophy was proving popular – not with the factory-workers and revolutionary youth – but with an intelligentsia that ‘tried to keep away from revolution.’ According to Fedorov, these Russians ‘naturally preferred Stirner’s ideas and contradictory theory, [because these] allow any arbitrary conclusions’. He concluded these groups had no knowledge or understanding of anarchism as an integral philosophy: ‘anarcho-individualists, Mystical Anarchists and ... sexual perverts grow out of Stirner’s ideas.’⁵² Unhappily for Fedorov, these ideas would in fact provide the next generation of Russian Modernists with their ideological motivation. Though not widespread in Russia, individualist-anarchism possessed an intense appeal throughout the early twentieth century in the great metropolitan centres for the small circles of writers and artists that constituted the “intelligentsia”.⁵³ In 1913, Ivan Ignatiev, for instance, became chairman of the Intuitive Association of Ego-Futurism, a group that included poets such as Vasilik Gnedov, Shirokov, and Dmitrii Kriuchkov. ‘He used wordplay to name the group,

in allusion to the most recent psychoanalytical concept of “ego”, and after Max Stirner’s individualist hero of *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (*The Ego and Its Own*), a book that had an immense influence on Russian culture, from Apollon Griegoriev and Dostoevsky to the Futurists’, explains Gurianova. ‘Ignatiev and Gnedov made direct references to anarcho-individualist ideas in their writings, for example, in Ignatiev’s manifesto “Ego-Futurism,” he praises Ego-Futurism as *egovyi* anarchism’.⁵⁴

Such groups would acquire greater prominence with the last and strongest period of anarchist revival that began in 1917. While charismatic Nestor Makhno fought under the Black Flag in the Ukraine, on multiple fronts, against White and Red, the Moscow Federation of Anarchists was running twenty-five anarchist clubs across the capital, and distributing rifles, pistols and grenades to a militia known as the “Black Guard”.⁵⁵ According to Antliff, these clubs were more than meeting-places; they were radical cultural institutions. ‘For example, the “Dom Anarkhiia” (House of Anarchy), where the federation’s official paper *Anarkhiia* was published, also featured a library and reading room, “proletarian art printing” facilities, a poetry circle, and a large theater hall in which plays were performed and lectures held’.⁵⁶ The radical writers and artists that frequented these clubs include many of the most significant names in the period, including painter Aleksandr Rodchenko, Kazimir Malevich (the leader of the Suprematist school of painters), sculptor Vladimir Tatlin, and poets Vladimir Mayakovski and Vasili Kamenski.

In the present context “Rodchenko’s System” is of particular interest. An effort to upstage Malevich and Tatlin, Rodchenko wrote this manifesto to accompany a series of paintings called *Black on Black* (1919). Rejecting the transcendental ego posited by Suprematism as merely another iteration of that mystical abstraction (or “spook”) Humanity, Rodchenko insisted upon an ego that would be a nothing, perpetually negating each new affirmation of his own from moment to moment. As we will see, it is in fact on this point that Rand breaks with Stirner and with all previous Modernist writers in this “Stirnerian” tradition. In a document that opens with passages from *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*, Rodchenko announced that the downfall of all “isms” in painting must mark the beginning of his ascent.

Note that the artist insists on Stirnerian *analysis* rather than Hegelian *synthesis* as the motive power of individual creativity:

To the sound of the funeral bells of color painting, the last “ism” is accompanied on its way to eternal peace, the last love and hope collapse, and I leave the house of dead truths. The motive power is not synthesis but invention (analysis). Painting is the body; creativity, the spirit. ... I am the inventor of new discoveries in painting.⁵⁷

III.

SECOND-HAND RAND

Is there evidence to suggest that Rand engaged with this extraordinary moment of Stirnerian anarcho-individualism in politics and art? – Rand is known to have joined an underground network of writers’ clubs in St. Petersburg, participating in a subversive discourse that drew heavily on these theories. Heller notes that Rand never publicly acknowledged the influences that seem to enter the writing she produced at this time, but that these are evident nonetheless – ‘stories and novel of a few then-famous Russian futurist and surrealist [sic] writers who lived in St. Petersburg in the early 1920s and made their names by envisioning the utopian, and anti-utopian, potential of the decade’s new machines.’⁵⁸ Rand makes (rather vague) reference to this modernist material in interviews with Barbara Branden thirty years later. ‘There were a couple of modern novels by Russian writers that were semi-anti-Soviet or thinly veiled anti-Soviet that I liked for that reason, but that was minor’, she insisted. ‘I don’t even remember the authors’ names.’⁵⁹ While most accept this dismissal, Heller notes that Rand’s sci-fi novel *Anthem* (1938) ‘clearly reflects their influence’.⁶⁰

Rand would recall she got the idea for this book in her school days, ‘in Soviet Russia, when [she] heard all the vicious attacks on individualism, and asked [herself] what the world would be like if men lost the word “I”.’⁶¹ Though Soviet Russia is only credited with raising the question, Branden hints that Futurist Russia offered her the answer. In her official biography (based for the most part upon recorded conversations with Rand) Barbara Branden remarks that the idea of projecting such a dystopian society was not new, being part of the intellectual

ferment of the twenties. – ‘Yevgeny Zamyatin wrote his novel *We* in 1920-1921: it could not be published in Soviet Russia but was read to writers’ groups and widely discussed throughout Petrograd.’⁶² Though published in English in 1924, the book was not nearly as famous as it has become in the years since Branden published her biography: and so it is quite possible that this final obscure detail relating to how writing was circulated (through *Samizdat*) during the Soviet era is taken from Rand. In any event, the parallels are indeed striking and pervasive.

Each book consists of a series of diary-entries presenting readers with a future in which individualism is eradicated and there is only a collective: a totalitarian society where deviance is punished by death. In each case the story hinges upon a moment of crisis when the altruism that hold the society together is threatened by a resurgent egoism: the writer of each journal has begun to love a specific woman above the all, thereby reactivating an “atavistic” ego that can never again be at one with the rest. In the context of this essay, the single most interesting parallel between the stories of D-503 and Equality 7-2521 is the representation of socialism in Stirnerian terms, as merely the reiteration of Christian altruism, part of the spiritual (or Shamanist) phase in the history of humanity’s moral development. D-503 recognizes that his society is based on an idea ‘understood by the Christians, our only (if very imperfect) predecessors: Humility is a virtue, pride a vice; *We* comes from God, *I* from the devil’.⁶³ And this insight is reflected in the religious language Equality 7-2521 adopts in the early pages of his journal. ‘By the grace of our brothers are we allowed our lives. We exist through, by and for our brothers who are the State. Amen.’⁶⁴

But as Shoshana Milgram points out, the many similarities between *We* and *Anthem* (such as the regimentation of life, the world-wide state, the replacement of names by numbers, and the first-person narrative by a rebellious protagonist) provide no basis for assuming a causal relationship. There is nothing in *Anthem* that Rand could not have taken from half-a-dozen utopias in circulation during the twenties. (Many of these actually put into print by Zamyatin while working as an editor for the World Literature Publishing House.⁶⁵) As Milgram points out, the moral purpose underpinning the two Russian texts is not especially unusual either, but pervasive in work of writers who did not immediately follow the path of proletarian culture. Writers such as poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, for instance,

expressed contempt for a proletarian school that believed it could achieve a new collectivism by effecting the abolition of the “I”.

The Proletcultists never speak / of “I” / or of the personality.
They consider / the pronoun “I” / a kind of rascality. . . .
But in my opinion / if you write petty stuff, you /
will never crawl out of your lyrical slough /
even if you substitute We for I.⁶⁶

Shoshana Milgram is clearly right to suggest that there is no case for insisting upon a causal relationship between *We* and *Anthem*: and for the matter in hand this hardly matters. The evidence compiled by Randian scholars for and against has simply served to underline one hugely significant point. – That Rand was a product, typical in every respect, of this specific time and place, an intellectual milieu saturated by radical subjectivity. It is now possible to understand how a precocious undergraduate might have come to assimilate the key premises and methodological procedures at *second-hand* never knowing of their provenance. The writing of Ayn Rand can now be recognized as a belated contribution to that extraordinary moment in the history of First Wave Modernism when writers and artists across Europe explored the creative and political potential of Stirnerian insurrection.

IV.

2+2=4?

This new context must subtly alter a sense of the nature of Rand’s achievement. As we have seen, Rand believed that the thing that put her work in a place apart from previous writing in the individualist tradition was the emphasis placed on reason. ‘The advocacy of individualism as such is not new’, writes Nathaniel Branden in ‘Counterfeit Individualism’. What is new is the definition of an individualist as a man who lives not merely for his own sake but *by his own mind*. ‘An individualist is, first and foremost, a *man of reason*.’⁶⁷ – And this assessment of the Objectivist contribution to individualism appears particularly self-evident

in those critical pieces that consider *Anthem* in relation to the nineteenth and twentieth century history of the literary utopia.

By far the most comprehensive evaluation of this kind is that of Shoshana Milgram, who compares Rand's novel to Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, *The Sleeper Wakes*, *A Modern Utopia*, John W. Campbell's 'Twilight', E.M. Forster's 'The Machine Stops', Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Stephen Benet's 'The Place of the Gods', and George Orwell's *1984*. In this context the rationalist turn highlighted by Nathaniel Branden, the break with 'irrational' forms of egoism, is unarguably the most distinctive aspect of Rand's intervention. For her work emerges as the first to challenge the conviction that the future most to be feared is the tyranny of Reason. The city of glass in Zamyatin, for instance, 'this extremely transparent and permanent crystal', is an imaginative projection of the Crystal Palace described by Dostoevsky; the regimentation of One-State makes real the possibility of a 'mathematical table' to regulate desires imagined by the Underground Man.⁶⁸ But as Heller points out, 'Rand concluded – long before most others – that totalitarianism *doesn't* work, because the independent motivation indispensable to economic and social progress cannot survive in an atmosphere of intimidation, coercion, and lack of individually earned rewards.'⁶⁹ Consequently, the collective in Rand's *Anthem* neither live in crystalline housing complexes nor manufacture anything like D-503's interstellar rocket-ship (called the INTEGRAL). The abolition of the "I" is instead shown to have resulted in a physical as well as spiritual degradation. The candle is the most sophisticated invention to have been produced by her Committee of Scholars – and this is said to have taken fifty years. Milgram concludes that where the Underground Man had turned on mathematics as the fundamental quality of the Crystal Palace at which he wished to hurl stones, Rand rejects this unwarranted assault on reason and technology: – 'reason is an individual act, a volitional act, and is thus anything but the enemy of freedom.'⁷⁰ In line with this shift, Rand imagines that individual rebellion against any form of collective oppression must necessarily manifest itself in thinking for oneself, rather than being driven by subconscious impulses. In *Notes from Underground*, the narrator asks, 'What do the laws of nature and arithmetic have to do with me, if for some reason, I don't happen to

like those laws and that twice two is four?’⁷¹ In *Atlas Shrugged*, Galt replies, ‘the noblest act you have ever performed is the act of your mind in the process of grasping that two and two make four.’⁷²

But what remains a seismic shift within the genre of utopian fiction is nothing of the sort within the context of egoism more generally, where this move toward reason had been anticipated by a series of modernists working on the Stirnerian basis that Rand herself either began with or later adopted. Dmitry Pisarev, Dora Marsden, James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis – had all promoted the idea that selfhood requires the practice of reason; the latter two had even attempted something resembling that peculiar fusion of egoism and Aristotelian Thomism that Rand took such particular pride in: ‘In philosophy I can only recommend the Three “A”s, ‘ she would often say; ‘Aristotle, Aquinas and Ayn Rand!’ The move toward reason is clearly not the most distinctive aspect of Rand’s philosophy, though it may be the most interesting – and appealing.

In fact, the true break with previous writing in this Stirnerian and Modernist tradition is a consequence of her refusal to question a key premise underpinning the subjectivist rebellion against utopia; her originality within the new context that has been established in this essay is the direct result of an unquestioning acceptance of the assumption that *whim* is a characteristic of the subconscious. ‘To the irrationalist,’ Nathaniel Branden explains, ‘existence is merely a clash between *his* whims and the whims of *others*; the concept of an *objective* reality has no reality for him.’⁷³ – The consequences that must result from this attempt to amputate *whim*, the desire for an ‘independence from reality’, are spelled out by Rand’s contemporary, the anarchist Murray Rothbard in a letter to his friend Richard Cornuelle, written in 1954, when he claims: ‘she actually denies all individuality whatsoever!’ His reason for saying so would have provoked nothing but scorn from Rand, for he is clearly adopting the subjectivist or irrationalist position when he states that individuality consists in emotions and in instinct. But this in no way invalidates his point: to assert men are ‘bundles of premises’, in the way that Rand does, before proceeding to outline *what* the premises *ought* to be for *a man of reason*, is to effect a negation of the individual self – because the individual self is thereby rendered interchangeable with any other individual self – only provided the latter is sufficiently rational enough. ‘There is no reason

[therefore] whatsoever, why Ayn, for example, shouldn't sleep with Nathan', Rothbard concludes.⁷⁴ The faculty of reason has been set up above and beyond the self – in a totalizing system that must refuse to accept as fully human anyone that refuses to conform to what is deemed reason. The rational self is rendered impervious to any further *analysis* (αναλυωα: "I unravel") – Stirner's perpetual negation of the posited *persona*. This is the point whereon Rand differs most from earlier writers in the Stirnerian tradition. Not on reason *per se* – but on whether being a *man of reason* is compatible with your believing that you might change your mind to suit yourself – on whether you have the right to assert your independence from objective reality through continuous mercurial self-renewal.

In fact, over the course of her long life Rand was, of course, capable of the most breathtaking feats of self-reinvention (not least when a young Russian called Alyssa Rosenbaum transformed herself into the American Rand) disorientating those around her with sudden, unacknowledged reorganizations of her personal history. That Rand possessed this capacity for *ecstasy* or *ek-stasis*, for *standing forth* from her given situation, is only surprising if one accepts her Objectivist philosophy. In fact, 'it is our very incapacity ... to constitute ourselves as being what we are', remarks Sartre, 'which means that, as soon as we posit ourselves as a certain being, by a legitimate judgment, based on an inner experience or correctly deduced from *a priori* or empirical premises, then by that very positing we surpass this being – and that not toward another being but toward emptiness, toward *nothing*.'⁷⁵ The point we lose this *nothing* that separates *us* from *what we are* is the very moment of death. No longer is there this *nothing* between our selves and our past: we become our past, fixed forever, an empirical fact. But like Marx and Engels, a century earlier, Rand would eventually condemn this Stirnerian '*Reification of the Zero*' – as mere 'juggling tricks on the tight-rope of the objective'.⁷⁶

It consists of regarding "nothing" as a *thing*, as a special, different kind of *existent*. (For example, see Existentialism.) This fallacy breeds such symptoms as the notion that presence and absence, or being and non-being, are metaphysical forces of equal power, and that being is the absence of non-being. E.g., "Nothingness is prior to being." (Sartre) – "Human finitude is the presence of the not in the being of man." (William Barrett) – "Nothing is more real than nothing." (Samuel Beckett) – "*Das*

Nichts nichtet” or “Nothing noughts.” (Heidegger). “Consciousness, then, is not a stuff, but a *negation*. The subject is not a thing, but a *non*-thing. The subject carves its own world out of Being by means of negative determinations. Sartre describes consciousness as a ‘noughting nought (*néant néantisant*). It is a form of being other than its own: a mode ‘which has yet to be what it is, that is to say, which is what it is, that is to say, which is what it is not and which is not what it was.’”⁷⁷

However, even Rand could not sustain an existence that could proceed as though such “concept-stealing” were not inevitable – live in a way that might vindicate her identification of the rational subject with his/her objective reality. In calling for this equation to take place, Rand condemned herself, and her disciples, to Bad Faith.

Curiously, Rand once toyed with calling her philosophy *Existentialism* (until told the name was taken). Chosen to reflect a definitive break with Subjectivism, her refusal of solipsism, Rand’s turn toward *Objectivism* perfectly describes what her system became. Where Stirner had preempted the Existentialists in asserting that the ego possessed a continual capacity for ecstatic disavowal, Rand’s Subject must try to live as though one with its conception of a rational Self, to live being its own Object. If the consequences are not sufficiently clear, read Nathaniel Branden’s harrowing account of trying to break off a *perfectly logical* affair with Rand. If this peculiar brand of Egoism does continue to work as a defense against the depredations of external authority, it can no longer do anything to protect the individual from forms of self-oppression, tyrannies far worse than anything that might have been imposed from outside because all-pervasive, internalized. Where Stirner resolved to become his own cause and to set this cause upon nothing, Rand relinquished the capacity for self-analysis that alone guaranteed the freedom of the ego – and thereby lapsed from egoism into mere chauvinism, that is to say, the subordination of the self to a cause that appears to require no sacrifice (as in altruism) because the cause is ones own, but which for all that means the ego is no less a slave to a cause – the cause is merely ones own persona, ones status as an object. In short: *Objectivism* is no philosophy for living but for those who would choose to be living dead.

V. CONSEQUENCES

In 'The Lesbian Session', his famous essay on Rand in *Lacanian Ink*, Slavoj Žižek has observed that 'although it is easy to dismiss the very mention of Rand in a "serious" theoretical article as an obscene extravaganza – artistically, she is of course, worthless – the properly subversive dimension of her ideological procedure is not to be underestimated.'⁷⁸ In fact, Žižek then goes on to suggest, 'Rand fits into the line of over-conformist authors who undermine the ruling ideological edifice by their very excessive identification with it.'⁷⁹ Having traced the development of Rand's ideas in considerable detail, we are now in a position to establish the precise nature and extent, of this properly subversive dimension.

Developed in one of the three most oppressive autocracies of nineteenth-century Europe, Stirnerian egoism was designed to effect wholesale destruction, to poison any political system into which it was introduced, to render the altruist morality required to sustain a collective enterprise impossible through perpetual insurrection or general strike, a withdrawal of properties and powers on the part of those resolved to put no cause before their own freedom for creative negation. Rand's philosophy, though differing in certain respects, is at one with the original in its political intent. No one who reads *Atlas Shrugged* can be under any illusion on this point. Rand is clear on the consequences that must follow for the United States if only a sufficient number of Americans began to participate in a political insurrection of the sort she imagines. John Galt really does stop the motor of the World.

Yet every day brings new stories of insurrection on the part of those rich and powerful no longer prepared to sacrifice themselves to a political system based on altruism. As Žižek has remarked, in a caustic op-ed for *The Guardian*, we now know precisely who John Galt is: 'John Galt is the idiot responsible for the 2008 financial meltdown, and for the ongoing federal government shut down in the US.'⁸⁰ Having persuaded her readers that 'Big Business' is 'America's most persecuted minority', Rand prevents any further act of self-appraisal that might prevent such selfishness from ossifying into a pursuit of fixed ideas that eventually begin to work against their own self-interest. Having bought the Rand

line on insurrection, these readers are “locked into the product” right to the end. Let us be quite clear on this point. If the Union of States established by the American Revolution collapses this will be because those with the most to lose from such a scenario have consciously adopted and consistently promoted a radical Hegelian philosophy that is fundamentally hostile to the Lockean political principles that underpin the system upon which they depend. (A fact not often noted in relation to Rand’s last novel: even millionaires living in a ‘Utopia of Greed’ are compelled, having effected the collapse of civilization, to muck out their own pigs by hand.) Might the unrelenting insurrection of the Super-Rich actually constitute the most monstrous self-abnegation? This is your wakeup call. Good morning, America!

- ¹ Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (1943). Penguin Books: London, 2007; 156.
- ² *Ibid.*, 156.
- ³ Rand, 'Introduction' (1968), *The Fountainhead*, xi and ix.
- ⁴ For an overview of the impact Rand has had up on politicians and economists in the years since her death, see Gary Weiss, *Ayn Rand Nation: The Hidden Struggle for America's Soul* (New York: St. Martin's Press: 2012).
- ⁵ Jennifer Burns, *Goddess of the Market* (OUP, 2009), p.179.
- ⁶ Rand, *Fountainhead*, p.24-5
- ⁷ Burns, p.2.
- ⁸ Rand, 'To the readers of The Fountainhead' (1945).
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ Chris Matthew Sciabarra, *Ayn Rand: The Russian Radical* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 67.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.
- ¹² Sciabarra, p.17.
- ¹³ Barbara Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand* (Anchor: New York, 1987), p.42.
- ¹⁴ Anne C. Heller, *Ayn Rand and the World She Made* (Anchor: New York, 2010), 41.
- ¹⁵ Rand, *We the Living* (Signet: New York, 1996), 134
- ¹⁶ B. Branden, 42.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.* 42.
- ¹⁸ Rand, *For the New Intellectual* (Signet: New York, 1961), p.33.
- ¹⁹ Max Stirner, *The Ego & His Own*, Book II. Trans. Steven T. Byington, (New York: Dover, 2005).
- ²⁰ Rand, *For the New Intellectual*, p.14.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p.14.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p.15.
- ²³ Dora Marsden's Egoism has attracted the attention of Levenson, Clarke, Welsh and Rabaté. Paul Edwards touched upon Wyndham Lewis' interest in Stirner briefly in his biography of that artist. Full appraisals by the current writer are currently in progress. A preliminary version of the essay on Lewis can be found at www.intercapillaryspace.blogspot.co.uk
- ²⁴ Rand, *For the New Intellectual*, 15.

²⁵ 'The more instinct with life a living unit the more empowered it is to change its present World into a fuller and more definite World'. – Marsden, *The Egoist*, 1 April 1915, 51. 'Human individuality is best regarded as a kind of artificial godhead ... no Absolute need be ashamed of the feelings or thoughts of what we call a great artist or a great poet.' – Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, ed. Paul Edwards (Black Sparrow Press: Santa Rosa, 1993), 372-6.

²⁶ Rand, *For the New Intellectual*, 26-27. Compare Marsden's assertion that to fulfill the potential of the human ego necessarily means being Scientist or Artist: 'If science is the knowledge gained by applying to non-vital phenomena, a method of accurate description as opposed to that of imaginative interpretation, art is the product of the same method applied to vital (and mainly humanly vital) phenomena.' – Marsden, *The New Freewoman*, 1 November 1913; 182.

²⁷ While science has made tremendous advances over the past three centuries, 'because during this period it has trusted to the results of unprejudiced observation of the "thing", art, on the other hand, remains 'in a position analogous to that in which science was, when astronomy was astrology, chemistry alchemy, and mathematics witchcraft...' – Marsden, *The New Freewoman*, 1 November 1913, 182; 15 October 1913, 166.

²⁸ Rand, *For the New Intellectual*, 29.

²⁹ Having insisted that art is the civilized substitute for magic, Lewis accuses his contemporaries of wishing to lead us back by means of art, to the plane of magic, to Shamanism: to retransform both of them [i.e. artist *and* scientist] into the primitive magician from which they both equally sprang...' – Lewis, *TWM*, 188.

³⁰ Nathaniel Branden, 'Counterfeit Individualism', Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness: A New Concept of Egoism*, 158.

³¹ 'It is in "our Unconscious" that we live in a state of common humanity. There are no individuals in the Unconscious because a man is only an individual when he is conscious.' – Lewis, *TWM*, 301.

³² Rand, 'The Objectivist Ethics' (1961), *The Virtue of Selfishness* (New York: Signet, 1961), p.38.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.15.

³⁴ Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (New York: Penguin 2007), 722.

³⁵ Alan Greenspan, 'The Assault on Integrity' (1963). Republished in *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal* (Signet: New York, 1967), 130.

³⁶ Rand, 'First Philosophic Journal' (1934), David Harriman, ed. *Journals of Ayn Rand* (Plume: New York, 1999), 66.

³⁷ B. Branden, 45.

³⁸ Heller, 42.

³⁹ B. Branden, 45.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴¹ Rand, *We the Living* (Cassell: London, 1936), p.41. This passage was removed from subsequent editions in line with her post-Nietzschean approach to egoism.

⁴² In the sense earlier defined: as a tradition of thought. – Reading Stirner apart from this tradition may not leave one with the impression that the self-interest he advocates is rational.

⁴³ Rand. Recorded biographical interviews, 1960-61.

- ⁴⁴ Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, *The Spirit of Russia*, Vol.II. Trans. Eden and Cedar Paul. (London: George Allen and Unwin 1919, 1955), 473
- ⁴⁵ B. Branden, 45.
- ⁴⁶ Masaryk, Vol.II, 53.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 392.
- ⁴⁸ Allan Antliff, *Anarchy and Art: From the Paris Commune to the Fall of the Berlin Wall* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2007), 71.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 71.
- ⁵⁰ Nina Gurianova, *The Aesthetics of Anarchy: Art and Ideology in the Early Russian Avant-Garde* (University of California Press, 2012), 57.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 308.
- ⁵² Fedorov. Quoted in Gurianova, 309.
- ⁵³ Gurianova, 57.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 155.
- ⁵⁵ Antliff, 73
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 73
- ⁵⁷ Aleksandr Rodchenko, 'Rodchenko's System', *Tenth State Exhibition*; translated by John E. Bowlst, ed. *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde*, 149-151.
- ⁵⁸ Heller, 48.
- ⁵⁹ Biographical interviews (Ayn Rand Archives).
- ⁶⁰ Heller, 48.
- ⁶¹ Rand, 'Questions and Answers on Anthem', in *The Ayn Rand Column*, second edition, ed. Peter Schwartz (New Milford, CT: Second Renaissance, 1998), 123.
- ⁶² Branden, 143.
- ⁶³ Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We* (1924). Trans. Clarence Brown (New York: Penguin, 1993), p.124.
- ⁶⁴ Rand, *Anthem* (New York: Penguin, 1995), 21.
- ⁶⁵ Shoshana Milgram, 'Anthem in Manuscript: Finding the Words', *Essays on Ayn Rand's Anthem*, ed. Robert Mayhew (New York: Lexington Books, 2005), p.136.
- ⁶⁶ Vladimir Maiakovskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaja literature, 1957), Vol. IV, 122.
- ⁶⁷ N. Branden, 'Counterfeit Individualism', 159.
- ⁶⁸ Milgram, 141.
- ⁶⁹ Heller, 104.

⁷⁰ Milgram, 145.

⁷¹ Fyodor Dostoevskii, *Notes from Underground* and *The Double*. Trans. Ronald Wilks. (London: Penguin, 2009), 12.

⁷² Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, 1058.

⁷³ N. Branden, 'Counterfeit Individualisms', 160.

⁷⁴ Murray Rothbard to Richard Cornuelle, August 11, 1954, Rothbard Papers.

⁷⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (1943). Trans. Hazel E. Barnes. (London: Routledge, 2003), 86.

⁷⁶ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (1847). *Collected Works Vol. 5*. Trans. Clemens Dutt, W. Lough, and C.P. Magill. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976), 266

⁷⁷ Rand, *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology* (1969-1971). Ed. Harry Binswager and Leonard Peikoff. (New York: Meridian, 1979), 60-61.

⁷⁸ Slavoj Žižek, 'The Lesbian Session', *Lacanian Ink* 12, Summer 1997.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Žižek, 'Who is responsible for the US Shutdown? The same idiots responsible for the 2008 meltdown'. *The Guardian*, Friday 11 October, 2013.