

Overcoming the preachers of death: Gustav Landauer's reading of Friedrich Nietzsche

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Over the past 80 years, the German anarchist Gustav Landauer's (1870-1919) reading of Nietzsche's philosophy has been assessed in a number of different ways. Two voices at each end of this timespan should make us aware of its significance. First, there is Max Nettlau (1865–1944), who, in his time, was the most knowledgeable historian of anarchism. Looking back from the 1930s to the turn of the century, when the *Übermensch* and similar ideas were in vogue and felt most acutely both inside and outside of anarchist circles, Nettlau remarked that Landauer was someone who “knew Nietzsche much better than any of us.”¹

When we fast forward to the timespan's other end, we encounter the assessment of Canadian sociologist Richard J. F. Day, which he lays out in his 2010 preface to the latest English language translation of Landauer's writings. Here, the German anarchist is said to have developed a discursive understanding of the State and capitalism, supposedly thanks to Nietzsche's influence. While clearly having Landauer's most famous passage in mind – “The state is a social relationship; a certain way of people relating to one another. It can be destroyed by creating new social relationships; i.e. by people relating to one another differently”² – Day unfortunately does not provide any credible evidence of Nietzsche's influence on Landauer's conceptualization. Instead, Day pushes the point further, revealing that the purported appropriation of Nietzsche struck him as remarkable enough to label Landauer as “one of the first post-anarchists.”³ Similarly, Saul Newman welcomes him as a precursor to post-anarchism, because Landauer's “immediate”⁴ utopianism entails meaningful political action outside of the traditional sphere of the State while simultaneously eschewing essentialist prescriptions for a future society. Newman adopts this stance as his own in pursuit of what he calls “the anti-political imaginary,”⁵ though he overlooks the fact that Landauer himself had already worked as an “Antipolitiker” (i.e., an “anti-politician”) in the late 1890s.⁶ Moreover, by confronting the psychological phenomenon of “voluntary servitude,” Newman credits Landauer with a “‘micro-political’ understanding”⁷ of oppression, yet without properly tracking down the theoretical foundation of this understanding within Landauer's work – namely, the French humanist Étienne de La Boétie (1530–1563), whose reception by Landauer shall be explored more fully in my discussion of anti-politics below.

In light of these shortcomings, this paper attempts to contextualize Day and Newman's post-anarchist claims and to show that, in denominating a Nietzsche-reading anarchist as their forebear, they have failed to produce a qualified evaluation of Landauer's positions for want of a close analysis of his texts. From the perspective of intellectual history, we require much more historical and philological evidence in order to evaluate the Nietzsche-Landauer-Post-anarchism lineage.

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Otherwise, we run the dual risk of distorting anarchist intellectual traditions and of making post-anarchism appear more innovative than it actually is. Thus, a secondary aim of the paper is to clarify the origins of Landauer's relational conception of the State as part of a more general investigation of Landauer's reading of Nietzsche.

The traces of Nietzsche's philosophy in the German anarchist's writings are many, but they are scattered throughout his oeuvre, a difficulty which has been recognized before (e.g., by Eugene Lunn, the author of the first extensive Landauer biography in English).⁸ Scholarly works such as Steven E. Aschheim's *The Nietzsche legacy in Germany* and R. H. Thomas's *Nietzsche in German politics and society 1890–1918* have relied almost exclusively on Lunn's research and, as a result, the full scope of Nietzsche's influence on Landauer's political thought remains incomplete.⁹ In seeking to address this shortcoming, we need to avoid overestimating that influence or else reducing Landauer's philosophy to a "Nietzschean anarchism."¹⁰ His work is too multifaceted, not least because the strong Tolstoyan impulse is as much a part of it as is the Christian mysticism of Meister Eckhart and Landauer's revived interest in the Jewish tradition, as mediated by his close friend Martin Buber (1878–1965).¹¹

While Lunn's biographical study is certainly an important resource, future research needs to incorporate the body of new source material that has recently become available – for example, the long overdue publication of Landauer's collected works in 2008, nearly 90 years after his violent murder.¹² Building upon other studies,¹³ the following analysis systematically identifies the key Nietzschean elements in Landauer's philosophy, incorporating the previously overlooked ones and, finally, providing a more coherent picture of Landauer's engagement with the German philosopher.¹⁴ In addition to Landauer's main works such as *Der Todesprediger* (1893), *Skepsis und Mystik* (1903), and *Aufruf zum Sozialismus* (1911), several of his articles, particularly those he wrote for his own periodical *Der Sozialist* (1893–1899, 1909–1915), will be taken into account alongside unpublished manuscripts.

A Nietzsche novel against nihilism

Gustav Landauer published his first novel *Der Todesprediger* in 1893. Its title recalls "The Preachers of Death" episode from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Although it received little critical acclaim, the *Todesprediger* was the first novelistic adaptation of Nietzsche's philosophy, long before the publication of other literary attempts such as Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947).

The *Todesprediger*'s plot revolves around Karl Starkblom, whose conquest of nihilism becomes the overarching theme. He lives through extreme phases of despair and joy. As a young man, he shows great interest in philosophy, but eventually settles for a career in jurisprudence to satisfy his parents. Shortly after starting a family of his own, his wife and three children die unexpectedly, causing a massive personal crisis characterized by "psychological pain, philosophical distress and social hardship."¹⁵ Starkblom increasingly feels disgust with the bourgeois occupation, with his "dreary life" and with "people who don't have the time to ask, why?" He is frustrated with those who, instead of realizing "Greatness," carve out a miserable existence for themselves, constantly driven into economic competition with others. This is why he "sees no other purpose in life, but death."¹⁶ Only by discovering the ever more powerful Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Karl Marx's works does Starkblom reach a turning point. He devotes himself to socialism with all his energy, but quickly withdraws from it again, because of the influence of certain radicals on the fringes of the party apparatus.

Starkblom reveals his political estrangement in a Nietzschean fashion. He condemns socialism as a "cause for mediocre and ordinary characters." Negating the idea of solidarity, he further rails against those who believe in a world shared by all of humanity, claiming that these people are "completely under the spell of stale custom, the Judeo-Christian moral law and its variations."

Socialism, in his experience with the social democrats, is derided as “childish” and “pathetic”; it is a “lie, because it talks about the future,” and a mere “superstition, because it deems itself a science.” Continuing in this Nietzschean vein, Starkblom pleads for the “highest human,” admiring only those who aspire to be true individuals by ridding themselves of all ideological “Isms.”¹⁷

Halfway through the novel, a life-negating nihilism commands all of Starkblom’s actions and thoughts: “Let’s kill ourselves [...] quickly though, as soon as possible, right now; this eternally recurring nonsense is terribly boring!”¹⁸ Far from being a mere metaphor, this suicidal credo is subsequently pursued on a mass-scale when Starkblom literally transforms into the Preacher of Death, finding ever more like-minded disciples who voluntarily take their own lives in a collective apocalypse.¹⁹ Curiously enough, Landauer’s protagonist himself does not practice what he preaches. Instead, a woman from Paris named Marguerite enters the story, determined to dissuade Starkblom from his missionary zeal. She succeeds in convincing him of the meaning of life; they fall in love and Starkblom enthusiastically reads to her from his favourite book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

What has read up to this point like kitsch narrative then develops into a literary case for libertarian socialism by way of the life-affirming philosophy of Nietzsche.²⁰ One day, Marguerite’s previous lover appears on their doorstep. Only at this point in the story do we learn that this man is Johannes Starkblom, the protagonist’s brother, who now rages over the new couple’s relationship even though he had been apprised of Marguerite’s plan to rescue Starkblom from his nihilistic outlook. Nevertheless, a friendly conversation develops, climaxing in a debate over a document that Johannes brought with him from France – the fiery defence speech delivered in court by the infamous assassin Ravachol (1859–1892) shortly before he was sentenced to death. The speech, it should be noted, had earlier been reprinted in *Der Sozialist*, in order to highlight Ravachol’s critique of an unjust social order, but not to mount a defence of the violent methods used by the self-declared anarchist.²¹

Landauer’s protagonist Starkblom, highly impressed by the speech, asserts, “I can’t get away from it [...] from Socialism. I believe in it.”²² His life was filled with meaning again: “Writing utopias [...] that may be a task I could rise to [...].”²³ Levelling a severe, Nietzschean indictment against the “bourgeois souls,” Starkblom echoes the *Zarathustra* episode “On the Three Metamorphoses” and exclaims:

Therefore, staring at you with my piercing gaze, I want to ask you, you sceptics and immoralists, who follow me to lonely elevations, taking many a trail and agreeing to a many a negation: How can you live? How can you stand not taking your own life, despite your ability to fully enjoy yourself? And I ask you, reluctantly and hesitatingly uttering your name: I ask you, you *Christians*, how can you bear your existence in joy and well-being? You have no faith, and you others have no worldly faith – I ask you and I implore you: answer me, if only with stammer: you know on what your life and your comfort rests, you are aware that millions of poor rotting slaves are working for you, enabling you to exist as you do – how can you bear life? You sceptics, you are no lions, don’t lie, you are neither *Untermensch* nor *Übermensch*, you don’t believe that it is possible to change it, you honestly deem to know that misery and wretchedness are ineradicable, and you are not ashamed to be alive?²⁴

This reveals the core message of Landauer’s Nietzsche novel: Overcoming nihilism must be a permanent activity, undertaken by life-affirming and value-creating human beings who actively strive to change social conditions instead of passively enduring the old order. Referring to the “lion,” Starkblom allegorizes the three metamorphoses of the spirit as further illustrated by yet another two animals from the same episode. This process of self-discovery leads from the first stage, “the camel” (representing meekness and servility), to the second stage, “the lion” (representing the will to unrestrained freedom and to the destruction of the old order, but also the incapability of creating a new one), to the final stage, “the child” (representing innocence, creativity and

a chance for a new beginning).²⁵ Rhetorically, Starkblom wonders: If the passive “bourgeois souls” do not even equal the lion, why should they go on living at all and continue their existence based on the exploitation of others? His visionary response lies in the dormant utopian potential within all individuals to give birth to a new social order. Thus the final allusion to Marguerite’s pregnancy.

Code for dissidence within Germany’s orthodox social democracy

Landauer’s reception begins as part of a controversy among socialists within the German Empire, a rivalry between those who aligned themselves with the SPD leadership and those who sympathized with their left-wing internal opposition, called the *Jungen* (Young Ones). In the spring of 1891, Landauer returned to Berlin from his studies at the University of Strasbourg. He had spent the last winter term there, devouring the works of Nietzsche,²⁶ probably following an inner urge to deepen his knowledge of this new philosopher, whom he had publicly mentioned only once before.²⁷

Since at least 1892, Landauer had been in close contact with several people in the artists’ colony Friedrichshagen, an eastern suburb of Berlin that was renowned as Imperial Germany’s main hub for intellectual activity. Among the more famous writers connected to this place were the poet Wilhelm Bölsche (1861–1939), the brothers Heinrich (1855–1906) and Julius Hart (1859–1930), the brothers Bernhard (1867–1942) and Paul Kampffmeyer (1864–1945), and the bohemian Bruno Wille (1860–1928). From the same milieu also emerged the shoemaker Max Baginski (1864–1943), who, working as a German-American cultural mediator after his emigration, openly promoted Nietzsche’s works in New York’s anarchist circles together with Emma Goldman (1869–1940).

Following the State’s repression of the political left under Otto von Bismarck’s anti-Socialist laws of 1878, the SPD experienced two “waves of secession.”²⁸ Johann Most (1846–1902) led the first wave immediately after the laws came into effect. After the termination of those laws 12 years later, the *Jungen* picked up and carried the second wave. They articulated their critique of the party’s leadership at conventions and in the press. Bruno Wille, for instance, accused the leaders of centralizing power in the hands of a few, quashing internal opposition. A factional dispute over the future strategy and goals of the Socialist left in general ensued. While the social democratic leadership, convinced of its members’ support, opted for a reformist course via parliamentary politics, many on the side of the *Jungen* aimed for a “complete transformation of the current political and social conditions.”²⁹

The *Jungen* strongly advocated federalist and anti-authoritarian ideas. For many of them, “Nietzsche was the ideal champion for the critique of party mindlessness and conformity which stifled all possibilities of creative expression.”³⁰ Thus, it comes as no surprise that the SPD’s official historian, Franz Mehring (1846–1919), condemned Nietzsche as the “philosopher of advanced capitalism.”³¹ As Steven E. Aschheim has aptly summarized, Mehring considered the German philosopher “both symptom and spokesman of an irrationalist post-Hegelian philosophy that reflected the interests of the bourgeoisie and capitalism in its most aggressive forms. Totally ignorant of scientific socialism, he was the great enemy of the proletariat.”³² From the reformists’ wing, Eduard Bernstein (1850–1932) joined the row, claiming that:

Whoever allowed himself to be lectured by Nietzsche, was already lost [...] Indeed, it was only to some malcontents that Nietzsche, with his teaching of “herd animals,” has provided a decorous pretence or a convenient catchphrase to justify their divorce from the grand fighting party. Had those few “Independents” truly been converted by Nietzsche, they would have turned away from socialism altogether.³³

Bernstein denigrated the *Jungen* as irrational deviants from the official party line, ridiculing them for their alleged inability to uphold a consistent dissident stance. What he implied, of course, was that their behaviour should lead them to abandon Socialism entirely.

Faced with this kind of hostility against the influence of Nietzsche, one would have expected Landauer to position himself accordingly, that is, by defending the German philosopher. Even though Landauer had replied to Bernstein's review, he avoided any direct confrontation on this issue and gave a more appropriate response in a very different essay on the dramatist Gerhart Hauptmann:

The name *Friedrich Nietzsche* became ever more popular and the gourmands who were fed up with realism, found in the hymns of Zarathustra an exceedingly piquant dish, while a fresh and upward striving youth went into raptures over this wonderful language, unheard of in the German-tongue, as well as over the dauntless negation of all things in existence. They felt the keen revolution in the sphere of morality and, with delight, they let themselves get carried away to the land of the future of rich fantasy by this exquisite spirit. Surely, some utilized this opportunity to pit Nietzsche against socialism, but more and more it was recognized – although Nietzsche didn't understand anything about the material manifestations of life and in many cases heatedly battled socialism – that one could very well reconcile the admiration of Nietzsche with socialism, that what the poet and the prophet Nietzsche had dreamed of in exuberant and burning colours, was what socialism wants to turn into reality.³⁴

To a certain degree, Landauer even agreed with the accusation made by the social democratic advocates of *Realpolitik*, knowing that Nietzsche found no use in historical materialism. Nevertheless, Landauer makes unmistakably clear the widely held view among the *Jungen*, according to which an admiration of Nietzsche does not necessarily contradict anarchist–socialist ideas. Landauer expresses this most clearly in his articles for the periodical *Der Sozialist* from 1893 onwards. In the same year, he took over the editorship and turned it into the “most important periodical of the German-speaking anarchists.”³⁵

Following the biographer Eugene Lunn, Aschheim, too, characterizes the periodical's new orientation: “No one worked out the bases of this Nietzschean anarchism more radically than the one-time editor of *Der Sozialist*, Gustav Landauer.”³⁶ Even non-anarchist contemporaries recognized this specific undertone in the periodical's pages. For example, the economics professor Georg Adler (1863–1908) displayed an awareness of this development in an article written for a prestigious handbook for governance and public policy. In the entry on “Anarchism,” Adler remarked about Landauer's editorship:

Most articles including the translations were written by a staff of young and academically educated anarchists, loosely connected to the editorial board. They had come to anarchism on a detour via – Nietzsche; here, anarchism was the bastard child of the unnatural pairing of democratic radicalism and the teaching of the vigorous individual, which, high-handed, respects neither the law nor the right.³⁷

Regardless of Adler's disdainful tone, his entry further confirms Nietzsche's role in fostering non-conformism among the left-wing radicals. Nietzsche's thought and his vocabulary became a publicly perceived code for dissidence within the SPD's opposition movement.

Subversion of Marxist dogmas: progress, determinism and scientism

For Landauer, Nietzsche's philosophy presented an intellectual tool to subvert orthodox Marxist dogmas such as economic determinism, especially the underlying belief in the necessity of technological progress to advance social progress as well as the corresponding glorification of science

and the positivist approach to all spheres of life. Landauer also refused the commonly held view that historical materialism offered a superior vantage point for an accurate analysis of contemporary society:

If the mechanical “law” of the materialist view of history was correct, then every bourgeois would have bourgeois thoughts, every craftsman craftsman’s thoughts and every proletarian servant’s thoughts and nothing more. *Free* thoughts would be impossible altogether in this world, and where within this capitalist society, socialist thinkers would come from, can in no way be explained by such crude materialism.³⁸

Adopting Nietzsche’s primacy of culture over politics, which we will come to consider below, Landauer stressed how “free and brave human beings arise from every class, because next to or rather above the world of economic activity, there also exists a world of spirit and of culture.”³⁹ While a vast number of articles in *Der Sozialist* criticized Marxism along these lines, we find only Landauer drawing upon Nietzsche’s historico-philosophical method to support the thrust of the argument. Because Marx and Engels’ sociological analysis had assigned superiority to the economic sphere, they created a “dogma of politics” that disregarded the individual along with her or his personality. Thus, Landauer ridiculed the two as “popes of science”⁴⁰ and quoted the following passage from Nietzsche’s *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* (1873):

But he who has once learned to bend his back and bow his head before the “power of history” at last nods “Yes” like a Chinese mechanical doll to every power, whether it be a government or public opinion or a numerical majority, and moves his limbs to the precise rhythm at which any “power” whatever pulls the strings. If every success is a rational necessity, if every event is a victory of the logical or the “Idea” (with the Marxists, the “economic development” [Landauer’s insertion – DM]) – then down on your knees quickly and do reverence to the whole stepladder “success”! [...] And what a school of decorum such a way of contemplating history! To take everything objectively, to grow angry at nothing, to love nothing, to understand everything, how soft and pliable that makes one [...].⁴¹

Originally directed at Hegel, Landauer used this excerpt, to intensify his strife with the SPD. Besides their focus on seizing the power of the State, the party leadership maintained that society must pass through certain stages before communism can develop out of capitalism’s demise. Such a view seemed too cruel for Landauer to accept. He notes:

There is nothing which Nietzsche opposed more furiously and scornfully than those progressivists, those half-and-halves as well as those who radically aspire a rule of the rabble. Exactly this was Nietzsche’s fear, that the development was to be towards such “progress,” that not the *Übermensch* might be the goal, but rather the run-of-the-mill sort of person. [...] Nietzsche did not bother with the masses and their slow progress, and so he was more of an evil opponent of socialism, in which he found too much levelling, too little profoundness.⁴²

Landauer continues the theoretical struggle with Marxist theory in his 1911 *Call to Socialism*. Despite the absence of Nietzsche’s name from this treatise, his influence pervades this major work, not least because of the constant references to the themes discussed above. The text repeatedly evokes the *Philister*, a familiar German term from the works of Nietzsche. As Gabriel Kuhn, one of Landauer’s English translators, explains, “philistine [...] must be understood as a term for scholars bereft of soul and spirit, however, not as a term indicating mere lack of education, culture, or taste.”⁴³ Accordingly, Landauer was unimpressed by the Marxist conception of historical change, because he believed it robbed the individual of its political agency: “Marxism is philistine and therefore the friend of everything mass-like and comprehensive.”⁴⁴

Anti-politics: countering the logic of *Ressentiment*

Landauer described his commitment to the anarchist movement around the turn of the century with the term “anti-politics.” Siegbert Wolf was the first to draw attention to this self-description, which features in various sources (e.g., in *Kürschner’s Deutscher Literatur Kalender*) from 1898 onwards.⁴⁵ Wolf claims that the term itself derives from Nietzsche’s *Ecce Homo* (written in 1888/89).⁴⁶ This, however, is implausible since the book was not published until 1908. Even then, the editorial malpractice of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche resulted in the removal of the crucial sentences from “Why I Am So Wise-3.”⁴⁷ In an earlier draft of this very chapter, Nietzsche had indeed speculated that he might be the “last *antipolitical* German,”⁴⁸ which did not mean an apolitical attitude, but denoted his opposition to the manifestations of politics under the conditions of modernity, namely republican democracy, liberalism and socialism. Against these traditions of political thought, Nietzsche favoured an aristocratic model, in which a noble few would be able to lead a life unhampered by the masses he so disdained.⁴⁹

How, then, did Landauer reconcile Nietzsche with anarchism, a political creed evidently derived from the Enlightenment? For instance, he shared his aversion to Bismarck’s attempt at forming a powerful state, which fuelled the growth of nationalism within the united German Empire. Wolf’s aforementioned claim makes more sense in relation to *Twilight of the Idols* (1889), for it is here that Nietzsche expresses contempt for this development. He considered “culture and the state” to be “antagonists,” maintaining that “[a]ll great cultural epochs are epochs of political decline: that which is great in the cultural sense has been unpolitical, even *anti-political* [...].”⁵⁰ Assigning primacy to culture over politics, this is precisely where Landauer could chime in. Still, he needed to connive at the aristocratic thrust present in Nietzsche’s thought, for otherwise he would have been unable to appropriate the notion of anti-politics in order to signify the anarchist struggle against capitalism and the State.

On the term’s first occurrence in February 1898, Landauer implicitly fleshed out some ideological core qualities of an *Antipolitiker*.⁵¹ As such, one refuses to participate in parliamentary politics and scoffs at occupying oneself with the intricacies of hierarchically organized decision-making processes, because, in Landauer’s view, people would not gain the slightest advantage from involving themselves in “the internal dirty intrigues of the ruling class.”⁵² To a reader unfamiliar with the anarchist stance of *Der Sozialist*, the semantic sense of “anti-politics” might have come across as rather reductionist, limiting its antonym “politics” to the sphere of the State. If politics was confined to this institution, what, then, would be the adequate term for the collective process of debating matters of public interest as well as implementing collective action?

Landauer provides us with no immediate answer. But we can find evidence to suggest that his term involves a twofold process, first, a negation of the old order and second, an affirmation of alternative models of politics. For this, we need to recall Landauer’s relational conception of the State, which I contend stems not from Nietzsche, but from La Boétie. By translating and publishing large portions of the *Discours de la servitude volontaire* (c. 1549) between 1910 and 1911, Landauer rescued the text from oblivion in Germany and in the global anarchist movement more generally.⁵³ Incidentally, Landauer’s conception appeared for the first time during this very same year. We could dismiss this fact as mere coincidence, were it not for the conclusive remarks found in a letter to Max Nettlau. Note how the initial phrasing resembles the better-known quotation above (see introduction):

The state (and the same goes for capital) is a relationship between human beings; it is a form of (active and passive) doing and enduring that has been passed down from generation to generation. Etienne de La Boétie has explained this once and for all. I refuse to divide people into those who are the masters of the state and those who are the state’s servants. Human relationships depend on human behavior. The possibility of anarchy depends on the belief that people can *always* change their behavior.⁵⁴

Far from presenting mere circumstantial evidence, Landauer's classic treatise *Die Revolution* (1907) further supports my claim that Landauer's took his cue from the little-known La Boétie, this remarkable sixteenth-century thinker and his insight into the substructures of any ruler's power.⁵⁵ La Boétie's argument rests on one pivotal socio-psychological observation: a ruler's capacity to exert his will over his subjects emanates not simply from his physical strength or divine legitimacy. More importantly and not related to any kind of external coercion, the ruler's power rests upon people's submissiveness:

How can he [the tyrant] have so many eyes with which to control you if you do not lend him your own? How can he have so many hands to hit you if you do not provide them? How can he ever have power over you if not through you? How can he persecute you if you do not allow him to? What can he do to you if you are not the dealer of the thief who robs you, and the helper of the murderer who kills you? What can he do to you if you are not your own traitor?⁵⁶

Landauer approvingly cited this and other passages from the *Discours*, referring to the essay's main argument as the "microcosm" of all revolutions, for it expresses the inner readiness of each individual to withdraw their support of the ruler. People should join with others, in order to create new social bonds "without domination: an-anarchy."⁵⁷ To be sure, the political and economic regimes of early twentieth-century Europe differed vastly from those of sixteenth-century France, yet the need for understanding the mechanism of voluntary servitude persisted, considering the prevalence of authoritarianism found in the Prussian glorification of the army, the nationalistic idolization of the Kaiser, or the social democratic appeal to party discipline in parliament. As Landauer stressed:

Even if future revolutionary struggles will focus less on certain individuals and more on the institution of the absolute state, only few of La Boétie's words will need to be altered in order to thoroughly understand this new revolutionary phase.⁵⁸

Non-cooperation with capital and the State was only the first (negative) step towards utopia. Self-organized individuals and groups should take a second (positive) step, which involves the voluntary formation of entirely new social arrangements. Landauer hoped that these responsible arrangements would gradually establish an anarchist order. His *Sozialistischer Bund* (1908-1915) represents such an attempt to put his oppositional politics – or non-state politics – into action.⁵⁹ Thus, anti-politics builds up an ethically motivated, public counter-power, interested in politicizing the people by way of practical examples, yet deliberately disinterested in seizing the State apparatus. In this sense, the term reflects the rejection of political action, a position reaffirmed by Landauer and other anarchist delegates at the London congress of the Second International in 1896.⁶⁰

Landauer nowhere resolves the ambiguous meaning of the term itself. Such accusation might seem unfair considering his generally nuanced accounts of contemporary events (e.g., the Dreyfus affair in "Der Dichter als Ankläger," the very article, which introduced the *Antipolitiker*-profession). Yet the fact that Landauer would occasionally switch the original positive connotation of anti-politics to a negative further illustrates the semantic issue. His controversial essay "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism" (1901/1902) exemplifies this well. He criticized the virulent assassinations of leading representatives of the State and Industry around the turn of the century.⁶¹ Here and elsewhere, Landauer's critique of the terrorist methods deployed by a few isolated anarchists exhibits a remarkable Nietzschean streak.⁶² Without explicitly returning to Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment*, Landauer identifies corresponding psychological dispositions within the assassin's mindset – among them weakness, vengefulness, projection of guilt onto others, and an inability to create a new vision. In their "craving for recognition," the assassin secretly seeks to imitate "the big political parties," but since he lacks the strength to convey his message, he indulges in

“destruction.” The assassin “engages in a new kind of suicide,” “filled with cold hatred against the conditions that have ruined him” and is ultimately dominated by a “demonically seductive idea [...] that is, to at least take one of the top brass down with him while ostentatiously killing himself before the eyes of the world, via a detour through the courtrooms.”⁶³

Landauer intends to show an escape route away from the *ressentiment*-driven logic of the assassins. Perhaps Landauer sensed that this logic of violent discontent and hatred feeds off a purely reactive attitude, in constant need to define itself against something, incapable of any creative action – an attitude, which Nietzsche himself, his utter ignorance towards anarchism aside, once diagnosed in Mikhail Bakunin (1814–1876).⁶⁴ In order to go beyond a politics grounded in *ressentiment*, Landauer invokes Nietzsche’s Zarathustra and echoes the figure’s rather spiritual appeal to all people “to recreate the original chaos in themselves.”⁶⁵ Landauer thus implied that every individual interested in true anti-politics, should be concerned with “the urge to give birth to himself, to recreate his being, and [...] his environment and his world.”⁶⁶ Recovery of new meaning from the nihilist void of modernity, a motif that we had encountered in the *Todesprediger*, returns. For Landauer, only the voluntaristic individual may induce social change towards a “higher form of human society.”⁶⁷

On morality after the death of God

How should society deal with the eroded foundations of morality resulting from the act of killing God by means of reason? An obvious response to this crisis of meaning was Landauer’s search for the anarchist implications of Nietzsche’s critique of morality. He seemed to find answers in its liberating anti-essentialism and drew on it to show the untenability of punishment.

What he generally valued in Nietzsche was his “historical approach,” which revealed that one could only talk about morality in the plural, that is, time-bound “moralities.” Adopting this approach, one would reach, “strictly speaking, not an extra-moral, but an impartial and understanding point of view.”⁶⁸ This perspectivist way of looking at multiple moralities would open up an awareness for human creative potential, capable of wrestling down nihilism, whilst undermining the validity of outlived worldviews. One would have to recognize that there is no “eternal natural necessity” for current moral standards.⁶⁹

Landauer resisted a strong essentialist view of human nature. Take, for instance, his attacks on his contemporary Social Darwinists, who he accused of evoking a biological “struggle of each against all” in order to justify capitalist competition as natural behaviour among humans. From early on, he repeatedly opposed such assumptions, exposing the Social Darwinists’ tendency to mistake “current systems of exploitation and oppression” for a “law of nature.”⁷⁰ In later years, Landauer also reminded his readers of a recent advancement in evolutionary biology put forth by Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) in his book *Mutual Aid* (1902). Having published his own translation of it under the title *Gegenseitige Hilfe* (1904), Landauer underscored how he was in full accord with Kropotkin’s observations on the existence of a natural sociability among animals and humans. However, Landauer never elevated this tenet into an ontological premise, which would explain, let alone prescribe, all human behaviour. On the contrary, he even defended the Russian scientist against the accusation of committing to an essentialist position in the sense of a simplistic mirror image of Social Darwinian arguments, since there is “no *explanation* of what nature allegedly wants or must do [...], but merely a *description* of what is unmistakably found in nature.”⁷¹

Landauer’s work does not detail the practical applications of a new morality operating on such observations, except for his conclusion that old-fashioned systems of punishment for social misbehaviour would be out of the question, because “anarchism, frowning upon coercion of all kinds, refuses to establish an inexorable moral law.”⁷² With regard to the problem of universal norms, he

interpreted Nietzsche's idea of Eternal Recurrence as an ethical guideline, predating a very similar reading by renowned sociologist Georg Simmel (1858–1918) by six years.⁷³ Landauer declared:

The world has no meaning, there is no world-purpose and no world-morality for us. Let us humans therefore be strong and creative; let us create this meaning and this purpose; let us create values! Let us live, so that we may wish to live again and again in all eternity! This categorical imperative of Nietzsche has nothing to do with Kant's bloodless, pure categories of reason; it is categorical just as the exulting cheer of a warrior is categorical, before charging into the turmoil of battle.⁷⁴

Nietzsche remained an important influence over the years, but Landauer was increasingly reluctant to consult him on moral philosophy. For example, he would come to consider the *Übermensch* as too narrow a vision for any real restoration of meaning because, according to him, it lacked a communal element. By 1907, Landauer had ceased to see the *Übermensch* as a symbol for humanity's overcoming of the State. He now dismissed this motif as an "insignificant stand-in" and permanently replaced it with the notion of "spirit" under the influence of Spinoza.⁷⁵

Individuality, not egoism

The growing enthusiasm for Friedrich Nietzsche from 1890 onwards was initially accompanied by the revival of another German thinker, Max Stirner (1806–1856). In Germany and abroad, this radical Young Hegelian's defence of philosophical egoism, presented in his *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (1844), now prompted many contemporaries to contrast his ideas with those of Nietzsche. Intense arguments regarding the originality of each thinker erupted, lasting for more than two decades after the turn of the century. As the philosopher Karl Löwith remarked at the end of the 1930s: "Stirner has often been compared with Nietzsche, to the point of asserting that Stirner was the 'intellectual arsenal' from which Nietzsche derived his weapons."⁷⁶ This comparison has stimulated inquiries until well into the twenty-first century.⁷⁷

For the anarchists 100 years ago, this issue was particularly delicate, since it was Stirner, not Nietzsche, who was lodged in the canon of anarchist thought, most prominently by writers such as the arch-individualist John Henry Mackay (1864–1933) and the German academic Paul Eltzbacher (1868–1928).⁷⁸ Stirner's thought impressed Landauer for some time, too, but he tried – in vain – to avoid being drawn into the contemporary quarrel between communist and individualist factions over which of the two philosophers would be more adequate for anarchist purposes. He saw relative value in both contributions to the struggle for autonomous individuality. Though doubting Nietzsche's presumed familiarity with Stirner, Landauer nevertheless compared their methodologies:

Stirner always proceeds from the most modern, Nietzsche almost always from the ancient. Their individualism, too, is very different: it is formal with Stirner, content-related with Nietzsche, logical with Stirner, artist-like and arbitrary with Nietzsche. Stirner wants to prove the right of egoism; Nietzsche wants to praise the beauty of individuality. Stirner is decidedly revolutionary and rebellious in his thoughts and above all adamantly consistent; Nietzsche is always inconsistent; and higgledy-piggledy mixes old and new together, because he receives everything from second-hand: he is no man of action, only an admirer of men of action. And he only praises those deeds, which are in harmony with his philosophy and his enthusiasm for art. Stirner needs reasons, because he wants to expand on a single sentence systematically all the way to the end. His account is thus dull and without any vividness. Nietzsche, who does not want to prove anything but show something, requires no reasons, but examples. His depiction is thus always gleaming and full of luminous clarity.⁷⁹

Landauer nowhere expresses his eclectic reading of both authors more concisely than in this essay. Nevertheless, he cautioned against an apotheosis of the unrestrained individual, potentially

leading to the neglect of solidarity. The anarchists, he advised, should not erect “the new Idol of the Ego-idea” to supplant God or any related metaphysical entity.⁸⁰ Whether he used Zarathustra’s catchphrase intentionally remains unclear, but in this instance, Landauer indirectly played out Nietzsche against Stirner – a strategy which communist-anarchists such as Max Baginski employed on both sides of the Atlantic when criticizing their individualistic rivals.⁸¹ The same is true *vice versa*: the names of Nietzsche and Stirner became ideologically charged markers.

From language-scepticism to mystical becoming

The year 1903 saw the publication of *Skepsis und Mystik*, another milestone of Landauer’s anarchist approach to Nietzsche.⁸² His evaluation of the German philosopher now underwent the critique of language inspired by his friend, the philosopher Fritz Mauthner (1849–1923). In *Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache* (1901/1902), Mauthner elaborated on the epistemological assertion that an objective knowledge of the world and everyday life is impossible due to the limitations of language. Even though we may use language as a means of communication about our subjective perception, we will never achieve an objective and universal ontology. Individual experiences and utterances, coupled with the inherent imprecision of language, would inhibit any mutual understanding over truth as such. On these grounds, Mauthner doubted the possibility of *a priori* judgements postulated by Immanuel Kant.

As Aschheim correctly observes, Landauer shared such a “sceptical epistemology” in his *Skepsis und Mystik*.⁸³ But how much this position actually converged with Nietzsche’s critique of language may either have never been brought to Landauer’s attention or it had simply been an unwitting transference of Mauthner’s own reading of the German philosopher to his friend. Whichever it was, the first part of Nietzsche’s posthumously published *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense* is remarkably congruent with Landauer’s critique of knowledge and language.⁸⁴

Notwithstanding the philosophical overlap with Mauthner, Landauer criticized his friend, but even more so Nietzsche, for ignoring the far-reaching consequences of their philosophical assaults. Such a radical critique of language necessitated not only freeing oneself from the notion of “God” but also entailed a radical critique of society and culture. For instance, the anthropocentric worldview promulgated through Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* overlooked the epistemological problem of language contained in the highly subjective meaning of the word itself. Instead of positing humans as the crown of creation, Landauer maintained, we should strive to reconcile nature and human existence by creating mystic experiences.⁸⁵

Reclaiming the meaning of life for the individual who suffered from the pressures of modernity and felt “lonesome in the world, forsaken by God,” would only be possible by means of human creativity. Landauer therefore saw the communal experience of music, poetry and art as the means to restore a mutually shared meaning in the world which could not be achieved through the use of language. Again, Nietzsche’s emphasis on creation proved crucial:

Tangible materiality, causality and matter should be replaced by intensity, flow and psyche; space should be replaced by time. Spatial qualities are merely figurative relations of numbers that represent infinitely differentiated qualities of time. Being must be transformed into becoming, as Nietzsche says in “The Will to Power” [...].⁸⁶

Here, Landauer alluded to the primacy of “becoming” over “being” according to ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus’s formula “*pantha rhei*” (everything flows), which Nietzsche upheld against Plato’s theory of ideas. According to Heraclitus, ideas or entities do not possess an immutable substance; they do not contain an archetype or an eternally true character, but undergo constant change.

Nietzsche agreed with this assumption, declaring that Heraclitus “will always be right in this, that being is an empty fiction. The ‘apparent’ world is the only one: the ‘real’ world has only been *lyingly added* [...].”⁸⁷ Landauer accepted this type of Heraclitean “becoming,” because he feared an epistemological impasse, caused by the one truth and resulting in petrified dogmas. Roughly 100 years later, the historian Lewis Call would draw on this concept, referring to his postmodern enterprise as an “Anarchy of Becoming,”⁸⁸ seemingly unaware of Landauer’s earlier reflections on the matter.

Drawing a line: anti-humanism, elitism and “hardness”

Already at the outset of his intellectual career, Landauer identified those aspects in the works of the German philosopher which he abhorred on a personal level and seemed incompatible with anarchist theory and praxis. This incompatibility is of interest to us, because it demonstrates that Landauer did not succumb to the turn-of-the-century cult around Nietzsche. Instead, he fundamentally rejected the philosopher’s anti-Humanism:

All due respect to Nietzsche, but there is nothing worthwhile in his malice. I cannot do it. Benevolence, great infinite benevolence – this is necessary for us, and it wants to flow out of me, full of warmth, into the world.⁸⁹

Five years later, Landauer would still maintain this benevolent attitude against Nietzsche, who extolled “hardness” as the “proudest human virtue” in order to dissociate himself from Arthur Schopenhauer’s ethics of compassion.⁹⁰ This critical trend intensifies, the deeper one dives into Landauer’s late work. The brutality of the First World War further aggravated this trend. More than ever before, Landauer now uncompromisingly defended the freedom of the individual, committing himself to the theoretical principles of Kropotkin, or, as Landauer himself phrased it in 1916, to a “community of love, a society of voluntariness and of the Bund.”⁹¹

Evaluating the will to power from an anarchist stance, Landauer elsewhere maintained that the early Nietzsche had only been interested “in the overflowing of his own individuality” while praising “the Dionysian, which he had secretly attributed to Hellenism.” Later, however, when Nietzsche developed the will to power more fully, this very concept conjoined with the idea of “the domination of people.”⁹² The book *Beyond Good and Evil*, Landauer nevertheless insisted, proves that Nietzsche had stayed a true enemy of Bismarck’s power politics and the ensuing nationalism: “This entire new-German development of power was anathema to the frail and sensitive disciple of science and art, and it remained so even when he had become a master.”⁹³ The will to power rested on “a poetical and untrue idealization of the past,”⁹⁴ Landauer argued, assuring his readers that this was without a doubt a trace of the influence of Nietzsche’s mentor at the University of Basel, Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897). Burckhardt’s studies of the Italian Renaissance and ancient Greece left a lasting impression on the young professor. Consider, for instance, the assertion that “power is of its nature evil, whoever wields it. It is not stability but a lust, and *ipso facto* insatiable, therefore unhappy in itself and doomed to make others unhappy.”⁹⁵ Echoing Burckhardt’s stance, we find the early Nietzsche, too, pondering the “nature of power” as “always evil.”⁹⁶ Similarly, the later Nietzsche polemicized against his compatriots after the founding of the German Empire: “Coming to power is a costly business: power *makes stupid*.”⁹⁷ Both of these judgements are concerned with the use of power in the political realm, but contrary to Burckhardt, Nietzsche went one step further. He postulated an anthropological drive for power inherent in every human being, which is to be cherished as a natural symptom of vitality, and may only be properly understood in the wider context of his project of *Selbstüberwindung*. According to Jacob Golomb, this term describes the individual’s capacity to sublimate a variety of instincts “into a unified and authentic powerful whole.”⁹⁸

At least to a certain degree, Landauer was right about the ambivalence within Nietzsche's notion of power as well as about Burckhardt's influence on him. It is true that some affinities existed between the political views of the mentor and the student – such as an elitist attitude towards mass society, or their conviction of an inherent antagonism between the State and the sphere of culture – and their historical interests – such as their shared fascination with the Borgia and Medici families. In this regard, Landauer proves to be a connoisseur of both men's writings, yet he tended to gloss over their substantial differences on the question of the ethical limits of the use of power. For instance, Burckhardt, commenting on *The Gay Science*, accused Nietzsche of "leaning towards tyranny in certain circumstances."⁹⁹ Burckhardt was, as Richard Sigurdson demonstrates, "rather embarrassed by Nietzsche's use of his portraits of Renaissance tyrants as prototypes for the *Übermensch*."¹⁰⁰ Landauer for his part wasted no ink on the subtlety of this particular case and instead opined that Nietzsche's judgement of the present was clouded, because he

[...] occasionally refers to commerce, if understood and performed correctly, as a noble profession, because the only thing that matters here is the self-confidence of the individual human being. So long as the merchant is a person, who thinks of himself as magnificent, who is driven by a will to power, by a desire to feel as master and arbiter, Nietzsche does not really see him as justifiable, but considers him a superior human, whom he reveres. For Nietzsche just as for Burckhardt, this presents merely a change in the self-consciousness, a modified point of view, not a change in the conditions of society. Whoever has made it to the top and is conscious of it, is their man. Nietzsche despises modern capitalism by and large, but not because it is brutal, but on the contrary, because it is not actively conscious of its brutality. Nietzsche also fights the state not because of its oppressive power, which it exerts, but because this power is an impersonal and shrouded one.¹⁰¹

Of course, Landauer knew quite well that Nietzsche was not an anarchist and that there existed, at most, a superficial affinity between certain attitudes, which would immediately disappear once the ideological impetus behind them came to the fore. Admittedly, Zarathustra had propagated one of the most powerful anti-state metaphors in modern political philosophy, that is, the State as the "the coldest of all cold monsters."¹⁰² This metaphor may be understood as an implicit assault on the omnipotent *Leviathan* if read in conjunction with Nietzsche's generally low opinion of Thomas Hobbes elsewhere.¹⁰³ In spite of that, Nietzsche never opposed the State on principle, let alone domination, neither in his early phase when writing *The Greek State* (1871/1872), nor in any of his later works. Landauer also correctly hints at the difficulties with Nietzsche's seemingly anti-capitalist sentiments, although he refrains from elaborating on them. Scholars have long pointed to a related peculiarity in Nietzsche's thought: from his conservative contempt for the Socialist movement, it does not follow that he was a defender of economic exploitation. Instead, throughout Nietzsche's works we can detect what Henning Ottmann has termed an "ambiguous anti-capitalism"¹⁰⁴ or, as Urs Marti has shown, that there are certain motifs of a "romantic anti-capitalism" present in Nietzsche's writings.¹⁰⁵

According to Nancy S. Love, the analyses of capitalism put forth by Marx and Nietzsche ultimately contradict each other, because of their irreconcilable perspectives on the problem of labour, flowing from Marx's socio-economic approach as opposed to Nietzsche's socio-psychological approach.¹⁰⁶ At best, Nietzsche indirectly bolstered Marx's critique of capitalism insofar as he condemned the culturally destructive consequences of the division of labour, the loss of pleasure time and the emergence of a highly ascetic work ethic. At worst, the "romantic" side of Nietzsche's critique generated hopelessly reductionist remarks about the economic sphere, which were all part of a conservative cultural criticism, as Marti has accurately observed.¹⁰⁷ Despite an ostensibly progressive sounding critique of the drudgery of repetitive work routines under capitalism, the anti-capitalist sentiments held by Nietzsche most often amount to little more than commonplaces.¹⁰⁸ This predominantly applies to his early writings, where antisemitic connotations permeate certain

passages, for instance, when he complains about “those truly international, homeless, financial recluses [...], who, with their natural lack of state instinct, have learnt to misuse politics as an instrument of the stock exchange, and state and society as an apparatus for their own enrichment.”¹⁰⁹

Landauer chided Nietzsche not for disseminating sentiments against capitalism and the State, but because these were saturated by the ideal of hardness and devoid of any meaningful sociological dimension. Related to his warning about the potentially oppressive interpretations of the will to power, Landauer also worried about the elitism present in Nietzsche’s moral philosophy. At the same time, however, he felt a certain need to defend the ambiguous motifs because of their immanent value for the creation of anarchist subjectivity. For instance, not even when Nietzsche “seems to praise war and the hardness within the statesman, or exalts the ‘blond beast’,” does he adopt a fixed political creed, but rather acknowledges psychological strength and determination *vis-à-vis* weakness and impotence. Thus, from an anarchist’s point of view, Landauer searched for ways of emancipation from the condescending implications of slave morality:

But what happens [...] when the slaves embrace this noble “master morality”? When the slaves begin to honour everything that they feel within themselves – except for the condition, in which they find themselves in against their will – when within them awakens the awareness of abundance, of power, of fortune to a greater measure? When even the slaves begin to become *hard*, when they learn to hold themselves in esteem? When the slaves become nobler, when they are fed up with being the fools? And couldn’t it happen that such a time might arrive, in which certain slaves are needed, because they have been educated and schooled to operate certain advanced technology and because of this, a slave revolt might ensue, by slaves, who have internalized the “master morality.”¹¹⁰

Appropriating Nietzsche’s two morality types, Landauer virtually envisioned a double “slave revolt,” one in the realm of politics, the other in moral psychology. The political “slave revolt” would then equal struggles at the workplace (strikes etc.) which might lead to a general uprising against the system of modern wage slavery. Incidentally, such framing of the workers’ uprising in Nietzschean vocabulary might also have aided the process of popularizing the German philosopher within anarchist circles – a rhetorical strategy that Landauer most likely employed during his public lectures.¹¹¹

The anarchist interpretation of the moral-psychological “slave revolt,” so Landauer’s reading suggests, could shield its supporters against Nietzsche’s famous allegation of *ressentiment*.¹¹² In the original account of the “slave revolt in morality,” the oppressed turn against their oppressors, too, but because they remain powerless, they content themselves with a secret craving for revenge. If we apply this to a stereotypical worldview of the political left, the proletariat would define itself as “good” and the capitalists as “evil.” Such a personification of power relations is dangerous because, “*ressentiment* itself,” according to Nietzsche, “turns creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of those beings who, denied the proper response to an action, compensate for it only with imaginary revenge.”¹¹³ Only when people create values in the absence of *ressentiment*, that is, values independent of their negative, would master morality succeed.

Making the latter mechanism transparent to anarchist philosophy is what Landauer had in mind. He aimed at creating new social relations without the simple-minded logic of being-against-something. Master morality would then rather match “the fortitude of the intelligent human being, who has the courage to make the world anew.”¹¹⁴ Landauer thereby eschews the prevalent elitist tendencies of the master morality concept. His interpretation culminates in the programmatic motto “Through Separation to Community,”¹¹⁵ signifying a process that prepares for communal life free of domination. He did not expect many to commit themselves to such a cause, because he thought that life in alienated mass society continually undermines most people’s willingness to cooperate with one another. Thus, thematically echoing the Zarathustra episode “Of the Flies of the Market-Place,”¹¹⁶ Landauer mistrusted the mass mind and put all his hopes into small groups of volunteers, ready to forge ahead and pave the way towards an anarchist community.

Conclusion

Landauer's objections to Nietzsche's anti-humanist ideals best illustrate how the philosopher's influence on the anarchist's political thought decreased over time. Therefore, we should distinguish between Nietzsche's influence on Landauer's early writings in particular and on his entire oeuvre in general.

Of course, Landauer could not possibly have intended to pave the way for post-anarchism. However, insofar as he integrated the aforementioned elements from Nietzsche, post-anarchism now appears much less original, much less "post-." Post-anarchists, instead of nominally claiming Landauer as one of their first representatives, would rather benefit from contemplating the nuances of his engagement with Nietzsche, the very figure who himself looms large as an intellectual trailblazer within their own post-structuralist heritage. Only at this point would it seem legitimate to recognize the Nietzschean elements within Landauer's thought as a moderate step towards later theories.

Nietzsche's allegation that the anarchists are driven by slave morality, because they allegedly put their hopes of redemption into a Day of Judgment (motivated by Christianity) or into the revolution (motivated by Socialism), crumbles in the face of Landauer's dynamic notion of revolutionary change, because he never assumed that social upheaval would immediately bring about the paradise of utopia.¹¹⁷ A scientifically prescribed society as envisioned by orthodox Marxism simply seemed absurd, a view, which Landauer owed to Nietzsche's celebration of life. Landauer's did not found his notion of revolution upon any naively optimistic progressivism, but rather upheld a constant warning that, at any moment, society may fall back into "Topia" or regress into even worse conditions – a prophecy sadly proven true by all totalitarianisms of the twentieth century.

The Nietzschean elements integrated into his thought prevented the political logic of *ressentiment* from taking root in Landauer's thought. For example, voluntaristic individuals would resist the "herd mentality," and, so he thought, such people would attempt to begin a new culture in the here and now, without waiting docilely for teleological preordained events to happen. A conscious creation of non-authoritarian values alongside a moral renewal likewise begins with a few individuals who form new communities that initially coexist with, but ultimately go beyond capitalist economy and its fetishized state.

Taking all of these aspects together, Gustav Landauer's reading of Friedrich Nietzsche presents us with the most profound appropriation of the German philosopher within the historic anarchist tradition. Max Nettlau's assessment was therefore correct.

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Notes

1. Nettlau, *Geschichte der Anarchie*, 216. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the German are mine.
2. Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings*, 214.
3. Day, "Preface: Landauer Today," 8.
4. Newman, *The Politics of Postanarchism*, 162–3.
5. Day, "Preface: Landauer Today," 8.
6. Landauer, "Der Dichter als Ankläger," 62.
7. Newman, *The Politics of Postanarchism*, 163.
8. Cf. Lunn, *Prophet of Community*.

9. Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics and Society*, 48–61; Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, 170–2.
10. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, 170.
11. Buber was another prominent Nietzschean, who committed himself to the emerging Zionist movement. See Mendes-Flohr, “Zarathustra as a Prophet of Jewish Renewal.”
12. Dr Siegbert Wolf (Frankfurt am Main) is the editor of Landauer’s work.
13. Holste, “Nietzsche vu par Gustav Landauer”; Delf, “*Nietzsche ist für uns Europäer.*”
14. This should also rectify the limitations of a very recent attempt (Diethe, “Gustav Landauer”) within the field of Nietzsche scholarship.
15. Landauer, *Der Todesprediger*, 38.
16. Ibid., 16f.
17. Ibid., 79–83.
18. Ibid., 87.
19. Ibid., 94ff.
20. For a detailed analysis of Landauer’s literary kitsch, see Lamberecht, “Die schöpferische Prosa Gustav Landauers.”
21. See the issue of *Der Sozialist*, 20 August 1892.
22. *Todesprediger*, 127.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 130.
25. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 16–17.
26. Lunn, *Prophet of Community*, 30.
27. The earliest reference to Nietzsche is found in Landauer’s lecture “Religion,” delivered on 18 December 1890 at the Neuphilologische Verein at Heidelberg. See, Landauer, *Ausgewählte Schriften* vol. 5, 89ff.
28. Linse, *Organisierter Anarchismus*, 40–66.
29. Ibid.
30. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, 170.
31. Cit. *ibid.*, 164.
32. Ibid., 165.
33. Bernstein, “Besprechung.”
34. Landauer, “Gerhart Hauptmann,” 97 (emphasis in the original).
35. Wolf, “Einleitung.” In Landauer, *Ausgewählte Schriften* vol. 2, 10f.
36. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, 170.
37. Adler, “Anarchismus,” 318.
38. Landauer, “Die geschmähte Philosophie,” 123f.
39. Ibid.
40. Landauer, “Friedrich Engels und die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung,” 176f.
41. Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, cit. *ibid.* Translation from Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, 105.
42. Landauer, “Friedrich Nietzsche und das neue Volk,” 179.
43. Kuhn, “Editor’s Note,” in Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings*, 14.
44. Landauer, *Aufruf zum Sozialismus*, 69.
45. Landauer, “Landauer, Gust,” 747.
46. Wolf, “Einleitung,” in Landauer, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 9.
47. On the editorial issues, see Sommer, *Historischer und kritischer Kommentar*, 324–639 (371f.).
48. Nietzsche, *Kritische Studienausgabe*, vol. 14, 472 (emphasis in the original).
49. For an in-depth analysis of Nietzsche’s political thought, see Ottmann, *Philosophie und Politik bei Nietzsche*; Ansell-Pearson, *An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker*.
50. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 74 (emphasis in the original).
51. Landauer, “Der Dichter als Ankläger.”
52. Ibid., 62.
53. Landauer’s translation was published in his periodical *Der Sozialist* (Berlin), 2nd year, 1910, No. 17, 130–4; No. 18, 138–40; No. 19, 146–8; No. 21, 162–4; No. 22, 170–1; 3rd year, 1911, No. 1, 2–4.
54. Landauer to Max Nettlau, 7 June 1911. In Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings*, 309–11 (emphasis in the original).
55. Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings*, 155–60.
56. La Boétie, cit. *ibid.*, 156f.
57. Landauer, *Revolution and Other Writings*, 160.
58. Ibid.

59. On the Bund's history and its aims, see Wolf, "Einleitung." In Landauer, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 3, part 1, 9–57.
60. On the London congress, Landauer's role in the latter, and the row between the Marxists and the anarchists over the issue of political action, see Cole, *A History of Socialist Thought*, 11, 18 and 29–35.
61. Landauer, "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism."
62. Cf. Landauer, "Ein paar Worte über Anarchismus."
63. Landauer, "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism." Translation by Gabriel Kuhn and my own.
64. Nietzsche, *Kritische Studienausgabe*, vol. 7, 580f.
65. Landauer, "Anarchic Thoughts on Anarchism."
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Landauer, "Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte," 120f.
69. Landauer, "Die unmoralische Weltordnung," 144.
70. Ibid., 146.
71. Landauer, "Vorwort," 70 (emphasis in the original).
72. Landauer, "Der Anarchismus in Deutschland," 47.
73. Simmel, "Nietzsche und Kant."
74. Landauer, "Friedrich Nietzsche und das neue Volk," 176.
75. Landauer, "Volk und Land. Dreißig sozialistische Thesen," 113.
76. Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, as quoted in Paterson, *The Nihilistic Egoist*, 148.
77. Glassford, "Did Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) Plagiarise?"; Brobjer, "Philologica: A Possible Solution."
78. Cf. Mackay, *The Anarchists*; Eltzbacher, *Anarchism*.
79. Landauer, "Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte," 118.
80. Landauer, "Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Individuums," 64.
81. See, for example, Baginski, "Stirner."
82. Landauer, *Skepsis und Mystik*, 46.
83. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy*, 217.
84. Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense."
85. Landauer, *Skepsis und Mystik*, 99.
86. Ibid., 96.
87. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 46 (emphasis in the original).
88. Call, *Postmodern Anarchism*, 31–60.
89. Landauer, "Aus meinem Gefängnis-Tagebuch," 319.
90. Landauer, "Friedrich Nietzsche und das neue Volk," 168.
91. Landauer, "Friedrich Hölderlin in seinen Gedichten," 259.
92. Landauer, "Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte," 116f.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Burckhardt, *Force and Freedom*, 184.
96. Nietzsche, *The Greek State*, 167 (emphasis in the original).
97. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 71 (emphasis in the original).
98. Golomb, "Will to Power," 527.
99. Burckhardt, quoted in Sigurdson, *Jacob Burckhardt's*, 205.
100. Ibid., 212.
101. Landauer, "Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte," 120.
102. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 34–6.
103. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 183, 218.
104. Ottmann, *Philosophie und Politik bei Nietzsche*, 294–7.
105. Marti, "Motive des romantischen Antikapitalismus," 489.
106. Love, *Marx, Nietzsche and Modernity*, 169–94.
107. Marti, "Motive des romantischen Antikapitalismus," 494, 502.
108. See, for instance, aphorism §329 of *The Gay Science*.
109. Nietzsche, *The Greek State*, 171.
110. Landauer, "Friedrich Nietzsche und das neue Volk," 171 (emphasis in the original).
111. Landauer lectured on "Friedrich Nietzsche und die neue Generation" on 20 January 1901 at the Berliner Architektenhaus where the commune Neue Gemeinschaft held a celebration. See Landauer, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 5, 205, fn. 348.

112. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 48.
113. Ibid., 20.
114. Landauer, "Friedrich Nietzsche und das neue Volk," 173.
115. Landauer, "Durch Absonderung."
116. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 78–81.
117. See for Nietzsche's allegation, *Twilight of the Idols*, 97f.

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