

# **Anarchism**

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There is a considerable amount of confusion, even among Socialists, as to the real meaning of words that run off the end of our tongues every time we speak of the revolutionary movement. Take, for instance, the words Socialist, Communist, Collectivist, Social Democrat, Anarchist, and collect the opinions of the first half dozen men you meet as to what they understand by them, and you will hear as many interpretations as replies. Yet amidst this seeming confusion it is quite possible to gather the general lines of tendency expressed in these disputed terms (*Freedom*, Vol. 2, No. 17 (December 1888), 1).

## INTRODUCTION

ANARCHISM is amongst the most difficult of the ideologies to identify and explain precisely. Emma Goldman began her noted introductory essay on anarchism with John Henry McKay's poetic observation that anarchism is: 'Ever reviled, accursed, ne'er understood' (McKay quoted in Goldman 1969: 47). More recently, the analytical political philosopher Paul McLaughlin (2007: 25), following John P. Clark, has questioned whether it is possible to provide a satisfactory definition of anarchism. David Miller (1984: 3), after considering the range of differing accounts of anarchism, argues that there are no common features ascribed to anarchism, and as a result it can barely be recognized as a political ideology. This perception is further enhanced by anarchism's rejection of the main interest of orthodox political scientists, namely the gaining control of the state, and shaping policy decisions. As a result, anarchism's rejection of statist politics is misconceived as a rejection of politics in the widest sense (the influencing of one's own and others' realities) and therefore as irrelevant.

'Anarchism' can be something of an empty signifier, at best used simply to indicate disapproval or self-consciousness abrasiveness (e.g. Moran 2008). This widening of the application of the term 'anarchist' to obscure its more precise theoretical underpinnings is sometimes the result of a deliberate strategy by opponents. By associating their ideological competitor with any number of social ills, the aim is to discredit it. Ruth Kinna lists various groups and thinkers, from Goldman's close comrade Alexander Berkman to more contemporary advocates like Donald Rooum and the Cardiff-based Anarchist Media Group, who lament these pernicious misrepresentations of anarchism. These distortions include presenting anarchism as being concerned with 'bombs, disorder or chaos', advocating the 'beating up [of] old ladies' or 'government by marauding gangs' (Kinna 2005: 9).

Despite the confusion as described in this essay's initial quotation from *Freedom*, an early British anarchist newspaper, activists as well as theorists have identified some relatively stable constellations of anarchist principles. However, there is division between these commentators as to which principles are the core ones, so that it is more suitable to discuss 'anarchisms' rather than 'anarchism'. In addition, there are a number of different formations of anarchism, many of which share the same principles, although in different contexts different principles take priority. For instance: anarchist communisms and anarcho-feminisms reject gender discrimination, but anti-sexism is more central to most anarcho-feminist practice than figuring in the selection of anarchist communist tactics. The most significant, but contested, division is that between social anarchisms on the one side—which are broadly within the socialist political tradition—and that of individualist anarchism on the other. However, this demarcation is itself contested, and there are constellations often identified as the latter that are in most contexts largely socialistic.

Nonetheless there is a significant division between the main social and individualist libertarian traditions. There are also other distinctions within anarchism, these are best explored using a form of Michael Freeden's (1996, 2003) conceptual approach to analysing ideologies.

## IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND ANARCHISM

Freeden's 'conceptual approach' to investigating ideologies identifies them as relatively settled structures of mutually defining principles (Freeden 2003: 32), which alter over time or in different contexts (Freeden 1996: 78–81) and intersect with other ideological structures (Freeden 2003: 63–4). Such assemblages of principles legitimize and encourage particular forms of political behaviour and ways of thinking about social problems, and simultaneously discourage and delegitimize others (Freeden 1996: 77; 2003: 55). The main ideologies have certain ineliminable core concepts, principles without which they cease to be recognizable as that particular ideology (Freeden 1996: 87–8; 2003: 61–2). Such identifications are not metaphysically ordained but the result of 'sustained empirical, historical usage' (Freeden 2003: 62). Freeden's approach is thus sympathetic to the anti-foundationalism common to post-anarchism (May 1994; Newman 2001), and found also in older anarchist epistemologies and meta-ethics (Bakunin 1970: 54–5; Cohn and Wilbur 2010). However, many, questionably, regard anti-statism as the irremovable, universal principle at the core of anarchism (McLaughlin 2010: 25; See also Kinna 2005: 14).

A slight alteration of Freeden's model employs a greater emphasis on the role of resources and institutions. Institutions are the collection of linked individual practices. Practices, to borrow from the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, are constituted out of material resources that operate according to particular structures of evolving norms, and engage specific types of agent and produce particular types of internal and external good (MacIntyre 2006: 152, 187–8, 222–3). The analysis offered here places greater stress on the ways different resources will influence the structure of ideologies and their impact on audiences, though this approach is consistent with Freeden's method. Although Freeden concentrates on written texts, he too identifies that different ideologies operate through distinctive media. Radical forms of socialism, plus certain constellations of feminism and environmentalism, operate through the apparatus of public protest, whilst others, like conservatism, are largely antipathetic towards public demonstration (Freeden 2003: 2). Moreover, many contemporary ideologies operate through the institution of the democratic-political party (2003: 78–9), whilst other ideologies, like anarchism, oppose them.

MacIntyre makes clear in his practice-based account of virtue ethics that different principles require particular types of materials in order to operate: justice needs some form of arbitral structure, as well as linguistic resources in order to articulate and defend legal judgments (MacIntyre 2006: 67–8; 152–3). Repeating Giambattista Vico, MacIntyre concludes that all principles and concepts can only be expressed and recognized through institutional activity, that is to say, through the way that they shape the inter-personal and the material world (2006: 265). So, as alluded to by Murray Bookchin, and anarchists like Colin Ward and Paul Goodman, anarchisms, like other ideologies, are best understood through the everyday practices they embody and shape (Kinna 2005: 24, 142–3). The concepts that construct ideologies have greater impact if they involve more resources, and the ones that have greatest influence are those that have the largest effect on shaping the social world. The media through which concepts are expressed therefore help form the ideological structure.

Arguments carried through the medium of popular newspapers will have a different impact from similar arguments that are shouted on street corners; and they will differ again from those expressed on television or on an internet blog. The media is not the whole message, to paraphrase Marshall McLuhan (2001), but the choice of medium nevertheless impacts on the type of sign produced and its reception. Even in the simplest form of ideological utterance, greater material resources can allow for greater amplification and impact. The type of medium can twist a message, such that certain peripheral features become pushed to the fore at the cost of some core principles. It is the institutional arrangements which embody the different structures of concepts that distinguish, in particular, social anarchisms from individualist anarchisms, and also help to identify the differences between, and links amongst, the other constellations of anarchism.

## **SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHISMS**

Whilst Freedman's (1996) major text on ideology, *Ideologies and Political Theory* does not subject anarchism to sustained analysis, it does however note that anarchism 'straddles more than one ideological family' (1996: 311), namely liberalism and socialism. Indeed, some activists and theorists like Rudolf Rocker (1988) and George Woodcock (1975: 40) regard anarchism as a conjoining of liberal individualism with socialist egalitarianism. Others like Murray Bookchin (1995) argue that there is a substantive distinction between social and individualist wings of anarchism, with the first being genuine anarchism and the other being a form of oppression. Anarcho-capitalists Chris Cooper (n.d.) and Brian Micklethwait (n.d.) argue the opposite. Bob Black (1997), amongst others, disputes Bookchin's division and regards social anarchism to be old-fashioned and 'played out' and other forms of individualism, though not anarcho-capitalism per se, as being more appropriately anarchist (141 and 147). Laurence Davis (2010, 70–73) is similarly critical of Bookchin's division, rightly pointing to the idiosyncratically diverse collection of theorists that Bookchin collapses into the lifestyle, individualist camp. This is a category which includes not just anarcho-capitalists like Benjamin Tucker, and Stirnerites who place their egos and other enlightened egoists in a privileged section above the mere masses, but also those influenced by the revolutionary Marxian artists and provocateurs, the Situationist International (Bookchin 1995: 7–11).

This division does, however, predate Bookchin's flawed but influential polemic. Kropotkin (2005: 77), for instance, contrasts the morally limited concept of the self found in egoistic anarchism with the more sophisticated contextual notion of the human agent found in social anarchism. Kropotkin left *The Anarchist* newspaper to set up a rival anarchist communist publication, *Freedom* (quoted above), when the former moved into an individualist direction that made co-operation impossible (Woodcock 1975: 419). Berkman (1987: 31–2), too, demarcates individualist and mutualist anarchisms from communist anarchism.

Whilst there are some differences between Kropotkin's and Berkman's taxonomy, they identify largely similar movements as being on either side of the individualist–socialist divide. There are variants of anarchism that clearly have a socialist morphology, and others that adopt conceptual arrangements more in keeping with the intersection of liberalism and conservatism (right-libertarianism). The fact that both versions share a core concept of 'anti-statism', which is often advanced as the ground for assuming a commonality between them (see for instance Heywood 1998: 188–91), is insufficient to produce a shared identity. This apparently critical core feature is not sufficient because the surrounding principles, theoretical canons, and institutional forms

are distinct, such that the concept of state-rejection is interpreted differently despite the initial similarity in nomenclature.

### **Individualist Anarchisms**

There are many different types of individualist anarchism. Philosophical anarchism, following Robert P. Wolff (1976), captures many of the core features of individualism: an absolute prohibition on coercion in order to protect the negative rights of the rational individual, with only consensual agreements providing legitimate bases for human interaction. As the state *de facto* acts without individual consent, it is illegitimate, though legitimate government is possible, albeit highly unlikely for Wolff (1976: 24–7). In addition, there are the more existential versions of individualist anarchism posited by L. Susan Brown (2003: 107–8, 115) who has similar concerns about coercion, but views the individual as more socially-connected, requiring a rejection of property rights as these restrain self-development. In contexts where those concepts are prioritized these apparently individualist anarchisms have more in common with the social forms. Where the existential anarchisms prioritize a form of self-development predicated on the domination or exclusion of others, they tend away from social forms of anarchism. Nonetheless, the main individualist anarchisms have been largely anarcho-capitalist in content, and in some areas, such as more privileged academic circles in the United States and Britain, especially in the 1980s, this constellation became synonymous with ‘anarchism’.

Anarcho-capitalism is contemporarily associated with figures such as Murray Rothbard and David Friedman and can be traced back to the American individualism of Lysander Spooner, Josiah Warren, and Tucker (Long and Machan 2008: vii; Machan 2008: 60), though with a more consistent approach to property rights (Rothbard 2008). In anarcho-capitalism individual freedom is predicated on absolute negative rights over the body and these negative rights are extended to private property. Anarcho-capitalism is in conflict with the right-libertarianism of Robert Nozick and Ayn Rand’s Objectivism primarily over the issue of the minimal state (Nozick 1974: 24–5; Johnson 2008: 157; Machan 2008: 59 and 67). Many canonical anarcho-capitalists and their disciples are found in right-wing think tanks and professionally tiered lobby groups in the USA such as the Cato Institute, Mises Institute, Heritage Foundation, and Libertarian Party and, in the UK, the Libertarian Alliance, Adam Smith Institute and Institute of Economic Affairs.

The ‘state’ for individualist anarchists of this form is a coercive state of institutions that illegitimately disrupt private contractual arrangements and impinge on individual rights over one’s own body and private property. Thus the main targets of anarcho-capitalist ire are state legislation that restricts self-ownership such as the imposition of minimum health and safety regulations, paternalistic prohibitions on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco and the compulsory wearing of seatbelts, or that impinges on rights over private property by ‘destructive’, redistributive welfare policies (e.g. Micklethwait 1992, 1994; Lester 2007; Myddleton 2008). By contrast, the main social anarchists reject this primacy of property rights, especially those over productive resources. Social anarchists argue that institutions based on absolute property rights are a product of, and generate, hierarchies of power. Such inequalities produce and maintain structures of domination to protect the power of the wealthy from the impoverished and dispossessed (Bakunin 2005: 48; McKay 2008: 159–69; Proudhon 2011: 155–6; Kropotkin 2013 [1910]).

For individualist anarchists anti-statism is conjoined with the rejection of coercion, which is linked to the concept of the individual as a self-reliant and self-serving entity. Principles such as

equality or contestations of hierarchy and solidarity are, as Charles Johnson (2008: 169–74) notes, rarely associated with anarcho-capitalism, and indeed are subject to much hostility. By contrast, social anarchism's critique of the state is predicated on the concepts rejected, or pushed to the very margins, by anarcho-capitalism. Consequently, what is meant by the 'state' and 'liberty' differs significantly between the two groups.

## **Social Anarchisms**

Social anarchists are identified by four key concepts that have remained consistently core and stable since the late nineteenth century, as they can be found in the founding statements of the earliest left libertarian newspapers such as *The Anarchist* (1885), prior to its drift into individualism. These principles can also be found more contemporaneously in the aims and principles of contemporary movements, such as the Anarchist Federation (2009). These four principles are: (i) the aforementioned rejection of the state and state-like bodies, which distinguishes anarchism from social democracy; (ii) a rejection of capitalism as a hierarchical and coercive set of norms and practices, which distinguishes it from anarcho-capitalism; (iii) a fluid concept of the self in which one's identity is inherently linked to socio-historical context and relationships with others, which distinguishes it from forms of egoism; and finally (iv) a recognition that the means used have to prefigure anarchist goals, which demarcates anarchism from the consequentialism of orthodox Marxism (see for instance Seymour 1885: 2; Anarchist Federation 2009: 28; see also Franks 2006: 12–13, 17–18).

These principles are expressed in the concept of 'direct action' (Franks 2003; Kinna 2005: 149–52; AFAQ 2008b) and can be re-articulated as a continual process of contesting hierarchy by the oppressed themselves in the pursuit of internal (or immanent) social goods rather than external goods (such as exchange values). Priority is given to the direct or unmediated role of the oppressed in controlling their forms of contestation rather than relying on representatives, such as a vanguard who will guide the masses to liberation. Thus, part of the anarchist critique of the hierarchical nature of Leninism is based on this suspicion of mediation (see Weller 1992; Graeber 2007). In contrast to individualism and other forms of socialism, social anarchisms have different sets of principal thinkers (though, in keeping with anarchism's scepticism towards authority, none is taken as wholly authoritative) including Michael Bakunin, Emma Goldman, Peter Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, and Rudolf Rocker. Social anarchisms also have distinctive sets of organizations, often with methods designed to flatten hierarchies and prevent fixed leadership using tactics that would be largely antipathetic to individualist anarchisms.

In social anarchism anti-statism is understood in relation to core principles of contesting, reducing, or evading hierarchy and in developing mutually beneficial rather than purely self-serving relationships. As a result, 'anti-statism' takes a different form and has a different meaning from that ascribed to it by individualist anarchism. Individualists locate anti-statism next to a possessive, abstract view of the self, and a foundational belief in the absolute autonomy of the individual, but with no critique of inequality. Thus, for individualists the state refers to any agency unjustly interfering with property rights (including the property of the body), whilst for social anarchists the state is a particular form of hierarchical institution, which is self-serving but also acts to police property boundaries and thus limits self-development by the oppressed. On occasion, state action is preferable to other, grosser forms of economic hierarchy, such as those of unregulated capitalism. Thus social anarchists like Chomsky (2007) or the Solidarity

Federation (2007) are not inconsistent in preferring state-provided welfare, health provision, and statutory health and safety regulation over simple market arrangements that would leave the already socio-economically weak worse off.

Social anarchists consequently reserve their criticism of the state for when it primarily functions to support the property relations that support economic inequality, maintained by a coercive apparatus of oppressive practices, such as the judiciary, policing, and prisons. It is these functions that min-archists (minimal or ultra minimal statist) accept from the state, whilst anarcho-capitalists support these functions and practices so long as they are carried out by private enterprise (Friedman n.d.; Lester 2009: 4). Even the apparently shared characteristic of ‘anti-statism’, which is supposed to unify the two types of anarchism, actually divides them.

## SYNTHESIS

The concept of ideological synthesis is not unusual in analyses of conceptual structures, having been used as a conceptual tool for analysing the development of fascism (Marsella 2004), movements within the inter-war Labour Party and latterly New Labour (Nuttall 2008). As Iain McKay (2008) documents in his and the Anarchist Frequently Asked Questions editorial team’s (AFAQ) monumental hard copy and online resource *An Anarchist FAQ*, there have been not only various attempts to synthesize distinctive forms of anarchism, but also different interpretations of what a ‘synthesis’ would mean for anarchism. For Sébastien Faure, the strength of a synthesis lies in maintaining the different perspectives whilst finding areas of commonality between rival anarchisms. However, for Voline (the pseudonym for Vsevolod Eichenbaum), whilst the ‘emergence of these various tendencies was historically needed to discover the in-depth implications of anarchism in various settings’ it was important to find, and concentrate on the united features (Voline 2005, 487; AFAQ 2008c). The desire for unity was strengthened by the particularly precarious position of anarchists at that time, caught between Bolshevik suppression and the White Army’s counter-revolution. The difficulty for the synthesizers was in finding sufficiently significant commonality and methods of agreed decontestation for a synthesis to take place.

Synthesis takes many forms. The combination of the different elements can produce hybrids that in most contexts are a minor variant of one or other of the original ideological parents. The main forms of contemporary social democratic or left-Zionism might be such an example. Here, the privileging of the nation-state, aligned to the security of specific ethno-religious groups, has pushed more mainstream egalitarian and cosmopolitan socialist ideas to the margins. A synthesis might be the construction of a whole new ideology that has a coherent set of principles distinct from its constituent parts. Jeremy Nuttall (2008: 13) points to the claims of New Labour as providing an original singular coherent ideology that can identify cogent policy solutions to social problems. The existence of conflicting principles need not undermine an ideology if the competing principles can assist in mutual clarification, are structured in such a way that they indicate a way to prioritize goals and actions (2008: 14–15). However, it is possible that the synthesis is so wholly unstable because the combined elements are so contradictory that it provides, at best, an alignment that is only very localized and temporary.

Ideologies can be a product of intentional hybridization. Here ideological players recognize limitations or absences within an existing political structure and attempt to overcome them with the addition of key principles and methods from alternative ideologies. Alternatively, engineered



hybrids might be a more disingenuous effort to co-opt support from an ideological rival, rather than engaging in any significant transformation, thereby remaining a minor variant on an existing conceptual morphology. An example of the latter might be found in Rothbard's attempt to synthesize anarcho-capitalism and social anarchism through the magazine *Left and Right: A Journal of Libertarian Thought*.

This magazine initially seems to embrace more than one type of synthesis, allowing for the continued separation of distinctive theoretical positions but also finding 'new dimensions' through their interaction (Editor 1965: 3). However as Rothbard's and the anonymous editor's arguments are framed solely in accordance with free market solutions, it looks more as though the synthesis was merely an attempt to bring in some of the discourse and membership of the New Left over to the free market right (see for instance Rothbard 1965a, 1965b; Editor 1966). So whilst finding common areas of action, such as anti-Vietnam war protests, free speech movements, and criticism of Soviet Marxism, the problems are primarily identified because they contest market relationships and the solutions are advanced based on private, enforceable contracts. The New Left contribution is admired only when it conforms to anarcho-capitalist's ideological structure.

The New Left are moving, largely unwittingly but more consciously in the work of some of its advanced thinkers, toward a vision of the future that is the fullest possible extension of the ideals of freedom, independence and participatory democracy: a free market in a free society (Rothbard 1965b: 67).

Given the differences between the two, a stable rapprochement with an organization sharing similar tactics was unlikely. Fusions of libertarian left with right usually end up just being a subset of the dominant one, which in terms of resources and institutional power is invariably the libertarian right version.

Increasingly, academic analysis has followed activist currents in rejecting the view that anarcho-capitalism has anything to do with social anarchism (see for instance, Jennings 2000: 147; Kinna 2005: 26; McKay 2008: 478, 481). More usually the combinations of social anarchism with individualism occur when the latter are either ambivalent or reject private property. A rare exception is provided by Johnson (2008: 179), who sees right-libertarian principles of individual autonomy as providing the basis for '*voluntary mutual aid between workers*, in the form of community organisations, charitable projects and labour unions'. Johnson (2008: 179–80) rightly points to the mutual aid societies that provided welfare outside of the state and independent unions, like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), that operate consensually.

However, there are problems with Johnson's account. First, some of the praised institutions, such as benevolent societies, are antipathetic to the social solidarity he admires, as they excluded the most desperate who were financially unable to join or maintain membership. Second, in the case of institutions based on social solidarity they have governance principles that differ significantly from those of anarcho-capitalism. The IWW includes in its operations the social principles excluded by individualism, such as the commitments to contestations of hierarchy and to the freedoms of others as being intimately connected to their own self-conceptions, hence their popular slogan 'An injury to one is an injury to all'. Consensual agreements, especially those that are the result of economic inequality, are not inviolable for the IWW. The IWW acts aggressively towards those union members who kept their contract of employment and broke strikes because the strike-breaker was assisting managerial hierarchies and leaving their colleagues in a far worse

economic state. In addition, the goals of anarcho-capitalism are to retain and extend private property relationships, while for anarcho-syndicalists the objective is to transcend them.

Others, too, have suggested that the division can be transcended. Davis (2010: 75) indicates that many of the activities derided as ‘individualist’ by social anarchists, such as Bookchin, share a commitment to contesting capitalist social relations and developing anti-hierarchical forms. Davis’ point is a good one. Too frequently innovative forms of anarchic activity are dismissed by longer-standing groups, often more overtly working class in form, as ‘liberal’, ‘individualist’, or ‘lifestylist’, such as squatting, climate, and anti-roads activism (Davis 2010: 78–9). However notwithstanding the particular weaknesses in Bookchin’s account of the distinction between ‘lifestyle’ and social anarchism, there are still distinctive morphological structures that make most forms of individualism incompatible with social anarchism. Individualisms that defend or reinforce hierarchy such as economic-power relations of anarcho-capitalism, or the implied elitism within Stirnerite egoism where the non-egoists are available for exploitation (see Brooks 1996: 85; Stirner 1993: 189–90) are incompatible with the practices of social anarchism that are based on developing immanent goods that contest such inequalities.

Kinna (2005: 15) and McKay (2008: 76–7) describe the efforts of Voltairine de Cleyre and Ricardo Mella to construct an ‘anarchism without adjectives’, that is to say an account of anarchism that can unify the distinctive divisions that are part of the histories of this movement (see too Williams 2009: 192), but note that these efforts inevitably fail. The broad range of conceptual structures that have had the epithet ‘anarchism’ applied to them is too wide to find a commonality. Even apparently shared concepts have radically different meanings when placed into contrasting conceptual frameworks. Instead, anarchism here is best understood as a range of different sub-groups which frequently come together into alliances of differing degrees of stability and fecundity.

## **ANARCHISM WITH ADJECTIVES**

Numerous variants of anarchism can be identified by concentrating on analyses of the main social forms of anarchism, which historically have had the largest numbers of organized adherents. These share a largely similar morphological structure, but differ with respect to often peripheral, but identifiable, characteristics. Consistent with Freeden’s (2003: 62–3) approach, these differences in apparently marginal concepts, in particular contexts, can redefine core principles and lead to radical shifts between apparently similar ideological forms. For over a century, the main forms of social anarchism have been anarchist communism and anarcho-syndicalism, and whilst groups that identify with these traditions tend to work together, differences have occurred, which have highlighted divisions over sites of struggle, revolutionary agency, and modes of organization.

### **Anarchist Communism and Anarcho-Syndicalism**

Anarchist communism is historically associated with figures like Errico Malatesta, Kropotkin, and, in the UK, with Kropotkin’s *Freedom* group and the closely aligned Yiddish anarchist group *Der Arbeiter Fraind* (The Workers Friend) (see Fishman 1975). Today, anarchist communist groups are found across the world including the Anarchist Federation, formerly the Anarchist Communist Federation (UK), the Northeastern Federation of Anarchist Communists (North America),

the main sections of *Alternative Libertaire* (France), and Zabalaza Anarchist Communist Front (South Africa). Anarcho-syndicalism is most often associated with Émile Pouget (2005), Rocker (1988) and Lucy Parsons through her work in the revolutionary syndicalist IWW, which included socialists and non-aligned members although its principles are largely consistent with anarchism. In the recent era Noam Chomsky (2005) is perhaps the most famous advocate of anarcho-syndicalism and is reputedly a member of the IWW. Anarcho-syndicalist groups are found on four continents; many of the most active are united into, or associated with, the Industrial Workers Association (IWA), which includes the UK's Solidarity Federation, Russia's *Konfederatsiya Revolyutsionnikh Anarkho-Sindikalistov*, and most famously Spain's *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT) which was active in the civil war against Franco. The IWA groups are explicitly anarchist but identify closely with the IWW (SolFed Collective 2001: 10).

These groups largely share the same principles of privileging the oppressed themselves in shaping forms of opposition to hierarchical social relations, through methods that attempt to avoid replicating oppressive social forms. The similarities between these anarchist-communist and anarcho-syndicalist groups are so great that many theorists associated with one have also been staunch advocates of the other, such as the aforementioned Kropotkin (1997), Parsons (2004a: 103), and Rocker (Fishman 1975: 230–312). Like Fernand Pelloutier (2005: 413), they saw industrial organization as a basis for building an anarchist communist revolution. Individuals are often members of both types of group, or drift between them, depending on which is more active in their area.

However, there are occasions when distinctions arise, although these differences might not lead to hostility. On other occasions, once-peripheral concepts can shift towards the core re-defining key principles, and thus generate considerable morphological differences within social anarchism. For instance, anarcho-syndicalists, especially in Spain, are associated with the economic system referred to as collectivism. Each worker or collective is rewarded in terms of their labour time. By contrast, anarchist communism promotes free and equal access to goods and productive mechanisms. As Augustin Souchy Bauer notes, some of the peasant collectives in Aragon pushed in the direction of anarchist communism in contrast to the collectivism of the industrial syndicates:

Everyone, whether able to work or not, received the necessities of life as far as the collective could provide them. The underlying idea was no longer 'a good day's pay for a good day's work' but 'from each according to his (sic) needs'.

Herein lay a difference between the peasant collectives in Aragon and the industrial and commercial collectives in Catalonia [a CNT stronghold] and other parts of Spain (Souchy Bauer 1982: 21–2).

In practice disputes rarely arise on this issue as, unlike in revolutionary Spain, the central concern is with contesting the dominance of capitalism rather than implementing its immediate replacement. Another strategy for limiting areas of difference is to de-emphasize the importance of deciding upon future, post-anarchist economic arrangements (AFAQ 2008a). Others decontest the difference by viewing collectivism as a transitional stage towards anarchist communism (McKay 2008: 64; AFAQ 2008a). Donald Rooum (2001: 18) considers that the issue of rival economic alternatives is no longer of contemporary relevance as few adhere to collectivism or mutualism. Rooum's view is challenged by advocates of Participatory Economics, such as Michael Albert, who promote distribution on the basis of an individual's contribution of essential labour hours and thus borrow from economic collectivism (Albert 2000).

Other differences arise between anarchist communists and syndicalists, which are in most contexts marginal, but can shift to more prominent positions. For instance, the concentration in anarcho-syndicalism is on exploitation at the point of production (Woodcock 1975: 304). Anarcho-syndicalism as a result concentrates on the industrial syndicate as the most suitable form of counter-organization, and the industrial worker as the potentially revolutionary agent of change (McKay 2008: 64–6; see too the Confederation Generale du Travail 1906). By contrast, anarchist communists regard exploitation as taking place throughout social locations and not just at the point of production. Thus, anarchist communists place greater emphasis on community groups and consequently reject the centrality of the labour organization. These differences become particularly acute at times of especially low or especially high industrial militancy. A degree of accommodation is often found, according to McKay (2008: 65), as both share a commitment to anti-hierarchical organization based on a discourse of overcoming class oppression. However, this area of similarity leads to a further problem for anarchist communists and syndicalists alike: namely, that the concentration on class can lead to the marginalization or exclusion of other oppressions—and subjugated identities—such as those based on gender, ethnicity, or sexuality.

### **Anarcha-Feminism, Black Anarchism, and Queer Anarchism**

The intention in including feminist, black, and queer anarchisms in a single heading is not to assume a common identity amongst them; although many (but not all) black, queer, and feminist critics share a partial critique of those socialist movements that regard all oppressions as being centrally and wholly economic in origin. It is inaccurate to regard feminist, racial, and sexual issues as new or marginal issues for anarchism. Goldman (1969: 177–239) and Parsons (2004b: 92, 2004c: 101–3, 2004a: 103), for instance, address issues of women’s oppression in domestic, social, economic, and sexual arenas. The libertarian socialist Edward Carpenter (1930) saw the democratic impulse in loving relationships within as well as between the genders. Anarchism also has long traditions, sometimes brutally curtailed, throughout the non-occidental sections of the planet (see for instance Anderson 2006; Adams n.d.; Drilik 1991).

The application of anarchist principles to the differing contexts of oppression based on gender, ethnicity, or sexuality, produces distinctive primary agents of change, and sometimes results in distinctive forms of organization and contestation. Anarcha-feminist movements developed strategies to limit often overlooked forms of organizational domination (Freeman 1984; Levine 1984), to seek new ways to identify, examine, and confront or evade subjugation that male activists overlook (Leeder 1996: 143–4; Kornegger 1996: 159) and to develop mutually fulfilling social practices (Kornegger 1996: 163–6). Similarly, anarchists of colour seek structures that allow them to develop their own forms ‘where we can meet as people from oppressed backgrounds and not only share our experiences and how they are relevant to each other’, without feeling patronized or dominated by those from dominant ethnic groups with their own forms of knowledge (Ribeiro 2005) who act like a vanguard. Gavin Brown (2011) describes recent experiments in generating autonomous queer spaces that operate on, and encourage, anarchist ethical principles of mutual-aid, anti-hierarchy, and self-organization as opposed to those based on commercialism or fixed and privileged sexual identities (see too Heckert, 2004).

Such movements that prioritize agents based on gender or ethnicity rather than class have drawn some hostility from some social anarchists, such as Martin Wright (1980: 2) and indeed the Black female activist Parsons (2004d: 54). They were critical of those who view patriarchy

or white-skin privilege as the main source of oppression and thereby marginalize or ignore, and thereby sustain, class oppression. However, an anarcha-feminist reply to Wright argues that patriarchy is not the sole form of oppression and that different and diverse organizations are required to deal with different forms of subjugation (Anonymous 1980: 9). Where patriarchy is a major force then feminist modes of organization are the most consistent with anarchist principles. Pedro Ribeiro (2005) from the Furious Five Revolutionary Collective and former Black Panther, turned anarchist, Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin (n.d.) defend autonomous Black organizations on similar grounds, arguing that such structures do not preclude the development of other structures and the creation of different alliances to deal with particular types of oppression.

## **Environmental Anarchisms**

As many commentators have noted, environmental themes have been significant features of anarchism from the late nineteenth century given the impact of the geographical interests of leading figures like Elisée Reclus and Kropotkin (Ward 2004: 90; Kinna 2005: 90; McKay 2008: 65). The privileging of environmental principles within anarchist practices has altered depending on historical and social context. Dana Williams (2009: 201–7) notes that regional factors, such as the presence of threatened ecologically-desirable landscapes and distinctive organizational histories, might impact on the degree to which anarchist movements consciously adopt ecological principles. Problematically, Williams sets up a binary opposition in which social anarchism is defined against green anarchism, though he recognizes that presenting them as 'discrete ideologies excludes social green anarchisms such as green syndicalism' (2009: 207).

There are a number of significant features that anarchism shares with ecologism: one is a united recognition of the artificiality of the borders of nation-states and the identification of the human subject as part of, rather than separate from, the biosphere. Links, too, can be made with anarchism's rejection of the capitalist *telos* of ever greater productivity to generate increasing profit, with environmentalism's post-materialism. In addition, environmentalism's organic view of society as a complex web of interlinked systems is inconsistent with anarchism's commitment to fluid non-centralized social organization. However, as Elissa Aalota (2010) identifies, the selection of principles from anarchism and environmentalism and the ways in which they are structured generate a range of green anarchisms and sub-currents, some of which come into conflict not just with other forms of anarchism but also with rival forms of green anarchism.

The three main green anarchisms are (i) variants of deep ecology, which influenced groups like the US sections of Earth First!; (ii) primitivism associated with John Zerzan (1994, 2002); and (iii) Bookchin's social ecology. All of these green anarchisms share certain common characteristics: namely a rejection of capitalism, and the principle that other species and eco-systems have a value which is irreducible to their exchange value. Given this substantive similarity, the different variants co-existed in radical ecological movements around *Fifth Estate* and *Green Anarchist*. Green-tinged anarcho-capitalism is an exception, as it takes a wholly anthropocentric view of the environment, views ecological problems as one of improperly defined and enforced property rights, and considers that a flourishing capitalist economy provides the resources for dealing with any ecological threat (Morris 2005).

However, deep ecology's and primitivism's ideological structures place concern for the biosphere at their core, and locate human interests in a more peripheral position. Deep ecology and primitivism, though distinct, also share a substantive critique of enlightenment scientism, but

replace it with an ungrounded mysticism and irrationality (Aalota 2010: 173–4; Bookchin 1997: 55–6). Social ecologists regard environmental problems as a product of oppressive human interactions that stands in contrast to primitivism, which blames a ‘Dead Zone’ of undifferentiated human civilization as a whole (Zerzan 1994: 144; Bookchin 1997: 77–86). As a result, different types of institutions and tactics are identified within the different forms of green anarchism. Bookchin (2005: 83) prioritizes holistic social institutions to undo ecological damage. Primitivists look at the inherent self-destructiveness of existing social institutions and prefer individualized responses to recreating what is for them the inherently alienating problems of collective civil action (Green Anarchist 2002: 12 and 18).

Aalota (2010: 173–4) recognizes that some critics identify environmentally centred direct action organizations with deep ecology and more individualist, albeit destructive, forms of contestation with primitivism. Social ecology, by contrast, promotes more sophisticated and complex structures to generate social change (2010: 172–3). As these institutions tend to identify the vast, diverse but economically oppressed masses as those most capable of generating the values and practices capable of contesting the social relations that devalue nature, so too do these ideologies tend closer to social anarchist forms. The syndicalist Graham Purchase (1995), for instance, argues that as a sustainable environment is necessary for human flourishing, this requires coordination and planning, especially to reverse the destruction that has already occurred. The only way to achieve that in a humane and fulfilling manner is by democratic participation in all productive and distributive areas of social life, which consequently requires anarcho-syndicalist types of organization.

## **Post-Anarchism**

Post-anarchism (or postanarchism) is one of the most recent variations within anarchism. It, too, is subject to numerous competing interpretations, depending on geography and social context. Post-anarchism is viewed as extending the range of anarchist concerns to the contemporary postmodern cultural arena, or as supplementing the absences within standard anarchist theory with conceptual tools developed from post-structuralism, or as transcending the limitations of standard or classical anarchism, representing a significant reordering of anarchist theoretical principles and their inter-relation.

The key theorists of post-anarchism are Todd May (1994), Newman (2001, 2010) and Lewis Call (2002), Richard Day (2005), and Süreyya Evren (2011) (see too Call 2009: 123). There are significant links, theoretical and historical, between anarchism and politically engaged poststructuralism. For instance, they are both theoretically diverse and have a shared interest in identifying power that pervades not just the economy but all social institutions. Such similarities are not surprising given that the major poststructuralist figures, such as Jean Baudrillard and Jean-François Lyotard, were initially engaged with left-libertarian groups (Plant 1992: 5).

Post-anarchists identify certain epistemological, ontological, and meta-ethical weaknesses within the traditional anarchist canon—including a commitment to benign essentialism—with a reductive, methodological analysis of political problems. However, critics like Jesse Cohn and Shaun Wilbur (2010) argue that this account of the difference between post-anarchism and its earlier precursors is inaccurate, with significant earlier anarchists rejecting essentialism and scientific reductivism. Even where these are present, they are more peripheral than significant structural features of anarchist practice.

Other criticisms of post-anarchism come from activists who fear that post-anarchism, with its unfamiliar discourse, is impregnated with concepts derived from those with social, especially educational, capital (see the exchanges at Libcom 2010). Post-anarchism is regarded as representative of the interests and needs of a particular (and often materially advantaged) section of the workforce—academics. The danger is that post-anarchism, whilst providing useful insights into anarchist practice, might dominate public understandings of anarchism, associating it with particular educationally privileged locations at the cost of less favoured groupings. However, the strength of post-anarchism may lie in its ability to express types of anti-hierarchical critique and promote forms of action that are appropriate to this limited domain.

## CONCLUSION

In analysing anarchism as an ideology, it is more appropriate to consider it as separate, multiple arrangements. One of the main divisions is between individualist and socialist constellations, though some that have been identified by Bookchin as individualist are actually closer to a socialist structure. Attempts at finding a singular account, through a synthesis of the main currents of individualism and socialist anarchisms, are invariably unsuccessful because the structure of their conceptual arrangements is so distinct that even apparently shared concepts, like anti-statism, have radically different meanings.

Because social anarchism prioritizes a necessarily malleable and variable conception of the political agent, it is particularly prone to hybridization. It also influences and is influenced by other ideologies based on contesting forms of oppression. Some hybrids, however, are particularly unstable, especially those that attempt to synthesize individualisms such as anarcho-capitalism with anti-market social anarchisms. Social anarchism prioritizes an unmediated and prefigurative contestation of hierarchies; as oppression takes different forms in different contexts, it generates specific agent identities, distinctive forms of organization and tactics. This produces diverse forms of (adjectival) anarchism, which provide links to other radical social movements.

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