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REVIEWS

Pancho McFarland, *Toward a Chican@ Hip Hop Anti-Colonialism*

London: Routledge, 2018; 66pp; ISBN 9781138551893

The road of return to Aztlán – the south-western borderlands of the United States, a point of indigenous ancestral reconnection – is paved with hard-hitting lyrics and rhymes, raising consciousness and shattering capitalist conceptions of race, sex, society, and power. But the road is not smooth at all: it's a steep climb toward a new horizon, one that includes the variety of expressions that comprise Chicanismo, without which the revolution cannot be.

It is through its efforts to recuperate spaces and reconnect with ancient indigenous roots that Chicano hip-hop ups the ante on capitalism, in a battle of words, images, and attitudes. From the pinto poetry to the 'life on the "sick side"' (p48), there is hope in building up a dignifying indigenous identity capable of insulating Chican@s from the excesses of the modern day coloniser.

Unfortunately, much like mainstream hip-hop, misogyny prevails, and the Chicano version also falls prey to references to women through a mirror of capitalist reflection. Yet such objectification is countered and fought against with the rise of Xicanas. Precious 'cabronas', Xicanas are also 'beautiful', 'princess-like', 'goddesses' (p51), and remain 'indominables' (p53), determined not to be dominated or victimised. They have not stayed silent either: they have raised their voices and spelled out loud and clear their demands and dreams, their hopes and aspirations.

Pancho McFarland reminds us that the plight of Chicanos and Chicanas isn't new: it's a centuries-old struggle. As such, its insidiousness has permeated every aspect of Chican@ life. The circumstances under which Chican@s live and struggle today have condemned them, as much as Black people, to criminal profiling and a sense of fatal destiny looming over the youth, as if prison, drugs, and a life on the margins were the only options left for them. But it is through the recovery of urban spaces, a new-found connection to their indigenous roots, and the verbalisation of their plight and life experiences through a decolonial aesthetics that they have been regaining a sense of pride, self-respect, and dignity – elements that are critical to the creation of a revolutionary path.

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Chicano hip-hop not only attempts to raise awareness and be a call to action, but also to educate, inform, and create inquiring minds. The incorporation of native languages, visual interpretations of what an ancient homeland could have been, and customary indigenous musical instruments to the heavy bass lines, drum beats, and sharp, critical lyrics creates a vivid image that is hard to ignore. What is more important, however, is the sense of belonging and identity inflamed in that prose, a narrative that no prison wall or abject living conditions can vanquish.

Born at the dusk of the twentieth century, Chicano hip-hop has developed as an act of resistance, a clash against capitalism, uniting peoples across borders and racial distinctions. In *Toward a Chican@ Hip Hop Anti-Colonialism*, McFarland proposes that Chican@ street hop and Xican@ hip-hop represent an anti-authoritarian, anti-colonial, alterNative worldview, with an emphasis on identity and place.

Chicano indigeneity relies heavily on the *mestizaje* that takes its roots from a blending of Southwestern United States native peoples and urban, consumerist, American, Spanish, Anglo-European cultures, along with African diasporan elements. Thus, the re-territorialisation of indigenous homelands takes place, referencing *la tierra* and a *maíz* narrative, or place-based identity.

As a whole, Chican@ hip-hop acts as a harbinger of the revolution. Through its rejection of oppression, the state, private property, the disinformation media, the (mis)education system, and capitalism – in short, its anti-authoritarianism – it exudes anarchism. Yet for this revolutionary message to succeed, it must – as McFarland clearly asserts and reminds us throughout his work – include other perspectives and acknowledge what women, GLBTQ, two-spirited, and 'la jotería' have to say in an engaging discourse to a dignified rage.

Toward a Chican@ Hip Hop Anti-Colonialism is a scholarly study on the Chicano expression of hip-hop, following the line of previous works on the subject but enriching it with its own profound insights. It is also a bold introduction into the world of Chican@ hip-hop and its representation as instrumental in the struggle for liberation from modern-day colonialism.

Luigi Celentano

Paul Avrich, *An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre*

Oakland & Edinburgh: AK Press, 2018; 264pp; ISBN 9781849352680

AK Press has yet again rejuvenated a classic of anarchist scholarship to be made widely available for a new generation of readership. Originally published in 1978,

this fortieth anniversary edition of Paul Avrich's biography of Voltairine de Cleyre has been faithfully reprinted with a new forward by Robert P. Helms. Avrich's *An American Anarchist* has stood the test of time to re-emerge as an example of solid radical scholarship, making abundant use of archival records and first-person accounts to elucidate the life and work of Voltairine de Cleyre, her numerous recognisable associates, and the circles in which she was involved. Clearly well-versed in anarchist theory and history through an abundance of primary source material, Avrich's biography successfully navigates the intricate twists and turns of the life of Voltairine de Cleyre.

An American Anarchist is comprised of ten chapters detailing the major life periods of Voltairine de Cleyre. Many of the chapters are place-based, detailing de Cleyre's childhood in Michigan, her education in Sarnia, Ontario, her move to Philadelphia, where she lived among and taught Jewish working-class immigrants, and her final years in Chicago. Interspersed among this cartography of de Cleyre's life are chapters dedicated to the evolution of her radical philosophy, including a well-done chapter on 'Anarchism without Adjectives', reminding readers that no radical individual, even one with as firm convictions as de Cleyre, remains static in her beliefs. Others detail her relationships with other well-known radical icons. On reading the chapter 'The Broad Street Riot', even readers familiar with de Cleyre might be surprised to learn of de Cleyre's long-standing support (in emotional and editorial labour) of Alexander Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* (1912), a classic of the prison abolition movement. Avrich's use of primary source material, mostly letters between de Cleyre and Berkman, reveal the traumatic effects of Berkman's incarceration and de Cleyre's 'self-care' prescription. De Cleyre tells Berkman in a 1906 letter, 'if what you feel most like doing is lying on the grass and watching the ants, do it [...] Don't worry about constructing the book, till the thoughts fill you again' (pp198-199). Berkman did, of course, finish and publish *Prison Memoirs*, and according to Avrich, edited de Cleyre's posthumous *Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre* to repay the favour.

In addition to the ten chapters that comprise the body of the text, AK Press has reprinted Avrich's helpful chronology and bibliography. The bibliography is a gold mine for any de Cleyre scholar because it clearly outlines the locations of primary source materials and lists all known works by and about de Cleyre. Unfortunately, it seems that AK Press's faithful reprint is exactly that – the bibliography has not been updated or appended with post-1978 archival material locations, post-1978 recoveries of primary materials, or the publication of many collections and articles about de Cleyre.

Robert P. Helms' new Forward to the edition is a credit to the volume. One of

the most qualified living scholars to write this section, Helms provides a vignette of Avrich and situates his scholarship of de Cleyre in the 1970s. Avrich was uniquely qualified to research and write de Cleyre's biography because of his fluency in several languages, which gave him access to the various non-English sources both by and about de Cleyre. Helms, however, notes the careful crafting of de Cleyre's life that was done by both Avrich and by Joseph Ishill, whose collected materials about de Cleyre Avrich frequently references. For example, Helms points to Avrich's skirting of de Cleyre's syphilis and an abortion in 1897 as examples of the way narratives of de Cleyre have been slightly massaged to conceal what Helms calls 'painful items in her story' that may have been upsetting to still-alive relatives and friends in 1978 (pxv).

I highly recommend *An American Anarchist* to any reader who has an interest in nineteenth-century American and trans-Atlantic radicalism. In fact, I would also highly recommend ordering AK Press's recent reprint of *Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre* as a companion volume. Both volumes together will leave an indelible mark on the intellectual and idealistic imaginations of their readers.

Michelle M. Campbell, Duke University

René Berthier, *"Science & Society", Mr. A.H. Nimtz & Bakunin*

Cercle d'études libertaires Gaston-Leval, 2017; 96pp; ISBN 9780224407780

Rene Berthier, in his book, puts forth his critical 'comment', as he refuses to call it a 'response' or 'answer', to August H. Nimtz's article, 'Another "Side" to the Marxism Versus Anarchism "Story"'. The book serves as an apologia for Mikhail Bakunin attempting to rectify some of the 'pre- and misconceptions' (p9) pertaining to Bakunin's ideas that have over the years clouded the judgment of thinkers and scholars, particularly Marxist. The 'Marx-Bakunin debate', which according to the author was never really a debate, is the central theme based on which Berthier seeks to dismiss the long-standing 'antiquated communist argument on the relations between Marx and Bakunin' (p8). Berthier writes that the 'debate' was indicative of a 'personal dispute' rather than a strictly 'political confrontation' (p65).

An uncritical analysis of the differences between the Marxist and anarchist ideologies within Marxist circles has therefore, often led to the vilification of Bakunin and the assertion of the supposed superiority of Marx as a political thinker. Berthier vociferously argues against the 'stereotyped and frozen' (p84) Marxist arguments related to Bakunin's supposed fragmented and poor theorisation of anarchism,

and the apparent richness of Marx's political philosophy. In Marxist scholarship on Bakunin however, there have been persistent efforts to prove that it was Bakunin's anarchism that eventually faded away into 'oblivion' (p153), leaving the international working-class movement with only one option – Marxism.

Misinterpretation of Bakunin's ideas with regard to organisation of working-class movements and the abstention of the working class from politics has led Marxists to argue that he advocated inaction. Berthier underscores that Bakunin did not limit his understanding of 'political struggle' to 'electoral politics' or bourgeois politics. For Bakunin, the International was to be the model for the future social organisation of the working class that would bring about their economic and social emancipation, which Marx thought, was an absurdity. Bakunin's urge on the need to conquer social power instead of political power was essentially 'the heart of the debate' (p48). Marx, according to Berthier, was '"structurally" incapable of understanding the federalists' point of view in the International based on the notion of workers' autonomy' (p56).

The unwillingness on the part of both anarchists and Marxists to accept the points of convergence of both the doctrines has often led to a truncated understanding of the points of divergence between the two political theories. This is a 'gap' that, according to Berthier, needs to be bridged (p87). How Marx and Bakunin envisaged the organisation of the International and the future stateless society were important questions that resulted in the 'debate'. While Bakunin underscored the need to form trade unions in order to organise the working class, Marx, according to Berthier was more intent on creating 'political parties' within the International. Berthier underscores that it was a 'matter of opposition between two models of society of which neither Marx nor Bakunin were inventors' (p87). Taking into consideration the varied currents of working-class movements in Europe one has to dig deeper into their dynamics, their objectives and the nature of revolutionary struggle determined by the equation between state and the working class. The essence of the 'debate' should have been in trying to address one basic question, 'what would be the most effective way for this working population to collectively take over all the machinery of society and make them work so that they meet the needs of the entire population?' (p90) which neither the Marxists nor the anarchists did. Marx-Bakunin differences, according to Berthier, were probably related to the larger question 'concerning international policy and the definition of the "centre of reaction in Europe" – Germany or Russia' (p47).

Barring some occasional typographical errors in the book like the words 'Congress' that appears as 'Congess' (p34), the book is a crisp encapsulation of the main issues that are involved in the so-called Marx-Bakunin 'debate'. The book

revives interest in the Marx-Bakunin debate, drawing attention to the relevance of its study and analysis in the light of contemporary political and ideological developments, and brings to the fore the 'libertarian' perspective of Bakunin's Anarchist doctrine. Marxists and anarchists have, over the years, engaged more in a sort of blame-game rather than an in-depth analysis or a 'constructive synthesis' (p90) of what both currents of Socialism essentially entail. Such a synthesis would facilitate a coherent understanding of what Anarchists and Marxists seek to achieve through revolution as well as the language of libertarian socialism in the twentieth century.

Saptadeepa Banerjee, Gurudas College, University of Calcutta

Ramȯn A. Feenstra, Simon Tormey, Andreu Casero-Ripollés and John Kean, *Refiguring Democracy: The Spanish political laboratory*

London: Routledge, 2017; 128pp; ISBN 9781138063686

Refiguring Democracy is a concise book written by four noted authors with overlapping expertise in Spanish radical politics, anti-capitalism and the evolution of democratic ideas and institutions. There is much in the text that anarchists will disagree with but it nonetheless a useful one with which to engage. The book outlines and defends the arguments for the turn to electoral politics by members of social movements in the wake of Spain's tumultuous 15M uprisings of 2011.

The authors, some of whom actively participated in 15M and supported the constitutional turn, defend the route from street protest and direct action to radical social democracy: 'substantial political change would have to go hand in hand with a clear commitment to elections, parliaments and institutions [in] the current circumstances' (p93). It, thus, follows the trajectory of 15M with its broad and sometimes innovative forms of political action, communication and organisation, which initially rejected participation in the representative state and concentrated on direct action (blockades of mega-projects, obstruction of evictions and disruption of parliamentary activity) to developing participatory parties using the model of community assemblies. These generated parties contesting national and European elections such as *Partiso X* and especially *Podemos* and locally with the likes of *Ahora Madrid*, *Barcelona en Común*, *Castellón en Moviment* and *Zaragoza en Común*. What time has demonstrated, since the publication of the book, is that these new parties have largely reduced political participation back into electoral activism and a return to hierarchical, elitist and largely ineffectual social democracy.

Nevertheless, the reasons for reorienting such an influential movement back

into corrupting state structures is useful and informative. Four main grounds are provided. First, a background assumption that the vested powers were so powerful only the state could overcome them – and second, correspondingly there was increasing disquiet that purely horizontalist methods were ineffective: 'Autonomous initiatives and alternative lifestyles' clash with the reality of international, institutionalised economy '"multilevel" governance' (p16). This might point to some initial lacunae in the 15M movement, at least as described in *Refiguring Democracy,* as there is little acknowledgement of linkages with other forms of pre-existing anti-hierarchical organisation. For instance unions – anarchist or otherwise – are barely mentioned. Even in discussing a revitalised form of democracy, industrial democracy is noticeably absent.

Third, there is great play made of the media strategy and the influence of social media in terms of monitoring elites, publicising initiatives independently of corporate mass media, organising opposition in anti-hierarchical forms independently and influencing the political agenda. With the benefit of hindsight such an optimistic technocratic view of ICT looks naïve. Electronic communication is no longer the preserve or indeed dominated by horizontalist movements having been successfully co-opted by powerful hierarchs to track subversion, influence mainstream media, manipulate publics and mobilise reaction. Finally, alongside the authors' enthusiasm for the radical participatory potential of ICT and the institutions that maintain it, there is misplaced optimism that the virtue of participants would prevent incorporation back into representative-hierarchical logics, even when *Podemos* aped some of the worst excesses of leader-worship.

There are one or two niggling errors. The November 1999 Seattle protests were against primarily targeting the World Trade Organisation not NATO (p54) and the authors state at one moment 15M activists 'wanted to speak for their entire protest as a single group' (p73) whilst other accounts and much of the rest of that chapter indicates a resistance to monolithic representationalism.

Few books written in the midst of tumultuous political events, as this one is, avoid the chastening reproach of later outcomes. Nonetheless, this is an important book for anyone who wants to understand Spain's contemporary political landscape, applications of radical political communication and those interested in anti-hierarchical constitutional experimentation, even if such hybrid forms collapse back into the dominant parent of capitalist, social democracy.

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Markus Lundström, *Anarchist Critique of Radical Democracy: The Impossible Argument*

Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018; 103pp; ISBN 9783319769769

In *Anarchist Critique of Radical Democracy: The Impossible Argument*, Lundström tackles a dual challenge: aiming to look critically at the idea of radical democracy from an anarchist perspective, namely to 'theorize a social conflict embedded in democracy itself' (p2), and to analyse democratic conflict in the Husby suburb of Stockholm, Sweden in 2013. This is an ambitious goal to combine important theoretical discussion with a careful event study. The author looks at these questions through the frames of anarchist thought widely, and also historically, from classical anarchist *critique* to post-classical anarchist *reclamation,* and finally contemporary *reclaimed critique*. Combining this with Jacques Rancière's thoughts where two functions of democracy are distinguished – democratic state (institutions) and democratic life, of which the latter is an internal threat to the former (especially from critical perspective) – the author brings the analysis to contemporary debates. Concerning the anarchist traditions, Lundström specifically sees Emma Goldman's and Errico Malatesta's theorisation and critique as focal to understanding the problems of democratic processes.

Lundström's review of anarchist perspectives is exceptionally clear, if occasionally rather basic and thus lacking detail that would have intrigued the reader. However, the author is able to scrutinise how different anarchist schools have seen democracy in general, and how contemporary anarchism sees the relatively new idea of radical democracy (advanced by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe), and the often outsider claims that anarchy would fit perfectly together with radical democracy and that anarchists should promote it as an inevitable path towards anarchy. This description is a basic overview but recaps the problematic relation between the overlooked complexity of anarchist thought and the wider history and theory of democratic governance through one single existing form of democracy. Lundström calls this 'The impossible argument', claiming that anarchism – if it can be generalised – in principle starts from different premises whether theorising a desired society or action.

The central problem for the book is that Lundström does not connect anarchist theorisations and views on radical democracy to the Husby case. Hence, the book remains in this sense disunited – including an interesting case description of Husby events, and separately a firm and clear review of different anarchist views over time on the idea and meaning of radical democracy. The intersections and contradic-

tions between the *democratic state* and the *democratic life* remain unclear. If the case were to be used only as an illustrative example, it should have been maintained throughout the book.

One important task of the book is to overcome the media-driven picture of the Husby 'Riots'. At various points the author takes a stance – both theoretically and empirically – on how 'riot' as a choice of wording aims to build illegitimacy over the events. Similar language is repeatedly used by the media without the plausible aim to understand the details of events, such as Husby's controversial housing project and the general social exclusion and segregation in the area. The author aims to cover the long-term reasons behind oppression and stigmatisation experienced in the discriminated areas of urban hubs. Policing has a central role in Husby's resident's experiences: the strong distrust of the police is widespread and deserves this kind of careful study of those who have to face police violence and repression. What is publicly often framed as threat to democracy, is actually defending an authentic democracy at a grassroots level as the last resort. Hence, it would have been intriguing to read more in-depth analysis of the research material as it seems that there are contradictions in Husby's history and contemporary situation that would illuminate the concrete, material reality of radical democracy.

The Impossible Argument is a beautifully organised book, recapitulating fine distinctions between how major anarchist thinkers and doers have seen authority, the path of development to anarchy, and whether or not that path has to include direct, participatory, and radical democracy. The author also offers a discreet, implicit, critique of consensus at the same time aiming to offer constructive options. This is not a groundbreaking book in terms of arguing against state authority as it sometimes manifests, but it uniquely clarifies anarchism's great variety of approaches to the issue. The author has illuminated a very interesting and especially important case.

Maarit Laihonen, Aalto University

Federico Ferretti, Gerónimo Barrera de la Torre, Anthony Ince, and Francisco Toro (eds), *Historical Geographies of Anarchism: Early Critical Geographers and Present-Day Scientific Challenges*

London: Routledge, 2018; 239pp; ISBN 9781138234246

As we continue our decades-long 'spatial turn' in the social sciences, anarchism is perhaps an obvious but overlooked tool for the incomplete postmodern project

to disrupt the traditional disciplinary conflict between history and geography, and to better recognise and intervene in the politicisation of time and space. Collectively, the authors of *Historical Geographies of Anarchism: Early Critical Geographers and Present-Day Scientific Challenges* work to position anarchist theory and approaches within both historical and present-day scholarship on a variety of sociopolitical and spatial themes including transnationalism, social justice movements, degrowth, environmental exploitation, and decolonisation. The volume simultaneously boosts the visibility of potential anarchist roots across these themes but also proposes potential interdisciplinary alliances and opportunities for anarchist praxis to enrich these areas of scholarship; suggesting new, and not so new ways forward.

Though brought together under the title of *Historical Geographies of Anarchism* and as a collection of the proceedings of the sessions under the same title organised by the Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers Annual International Conference, the chapters vary sometimes quite drastically in their positioning within, and relationship to history, geography, and anarchism. By contributing to the difficult work of undisciplining space, time, and politics, the collected volume begins to reinforce overlapping networks of intersecting concepts and practices between these title keywords. Institutional and statist agendas are challenged, deconstructed, and side-lined while several chapters aim to reground work and knowledge in models of mutual aid and reciprocity, and to open spaces of anarchist possibility and conciliation with non-Western epistemologies. This occasionally leads to rather strong tension between the more conservative history of the anarchist canon presented in some chapters and more diverse intersections and allyship with present-day radical, critical, and decolonising praxis.

This tension between the authors and their varied perspectives and approaches was occasionally frustrating and disorientating. However, rather than positioning these as competing views, the editors do not seem to shy away from presenting a less than coherent narrative, agenda, and world view. While failing to satisfy conventional expectations to provide clear take-aways, it is satisfying to see space made for multi-vocal and dialogical exchange. The chapters are more or less self-contained and rarely speak directly to one another, however there is great benefit to reading through the entire collection and uncovering common threads. Though not entirely free of the traditional format, the collected works offer a space where authors and audience might build from and with the work of others rather than promoting the competitive territorial claims to knowledge frequently promoted by academic and publishing industries.

It is okay for academic texts to sit uncomfortably next to one another in the same space. This was certainly my experience with reading 'Part II: Early Anarchist geographies and their places'. I personally and politically have little patience for rallying behind making space for 'white dudes' who have been denied their place in the canon. When we consider whose knowledge has been perpetually ignored, effaced, and undermined in the history of geography (and yes, even in anarchism), I feel we have greater injustices to address and more revolutionary ideas to make space for. So, I was uncomfortable with the chapters by Toro and Ferretti along with their efforts at revealing what they frame as the under-appreciated genius and under-utilised works of Dragomanov, Kropotkin, and Reclus. Both authors make claims that the work of these early critical geographers anticipated and should continue to inspire contemporary ideas of degrowth, transnationalism, and anti/de-colonisation.

In the concluding chapter of Part II, Siegrist's frank and thoughtful deconstruction of 'Historicising "anarchist geography"' echoed my concerns and challenges the reader to consider what conclusions one might reasonably draw from Toro and Ferretti and the canon of male, Eurocentric anarchist scholars who were embraced by their contemporaries and institutions. I am, however, indebted to Siegrist for her generosity and ability to untangle disciplinary, and in my case political, points of view. She manages to counter or at least nuance some of the historicising claims and cautions against conveniently ignoring or reframing problematic positions and theories. Rather than disputing the relevance of the contributions made by the anarchists featured in the preceding chapters or the analyses offered by Toro and Ferretti, by undermining their strictly historical significance, Siegrist brings them into sharper focus and recommends leaning into the uncomfortable spaces where historical anarchism and geography clash with the present-day.

The final chapter of the volume by Barrera-Bassols and Barrera de la Torre, 'On "Other" geographies and anarchism', is a great example of leaning into the uncomfortable spaces of anarchism and geography, both past and present. The authors 'are interested in anarchism's blindness to other possible world understandings, and moreover the omission of "Other" geographies in the growth of anarchist geographies' (p195). They point us to the failure of anarchists to acknowledge their Western colonialist position. Even in moments where anarchists speak against colonisation, they frequently do so by participating in colonialist epistemologies. Integration of non-Western histories by anarchists are frequently acts of assimilation and not true conciliation or acknowledgment of the 'Other'. Barrera-Bassols and Barrera de la Torre remind us that the difficult work ahead rests in part on

exploring 'synergies, discrepancies, and critical solidarities' (p204) and in our 'openness to "Other" experiences' (p206).

Overall, the volume wanders between geographies of anarchist movements, the anarchism of early critical geographers, the geography of early anarchist scholars, and as Siegrist cautions, occasionally risks slipping into historicised anarchist geography. Collectively, the contributing authors and editors offer the reader a variety of tools, steps, perspectives, deconstructions, and reminders of the ways we have historically and the ways we continue to perform anarchist geographies. Consider Crouch's reflections on Colin Ward's social anarchy and the 'potentiality of every human being to contribute to the value and meaning of their lives' (p153); Ince and Barrera de la Torre 'decentering the state from our ontologies and narratives of political organisation' (p180); and Brigstocke exploration of 'humour's essential link with cruelty and violence [and] the creative potential of humour's 'cruelty' (p67). Radical geography, that is to say the radical connection between space, time, politics, and people is nothing new. It has deep roots that we can build from, deep social interconnections we must continue to foster, and problematic internal hierarchies we need to face.

Sarah Gelbard, McGill University

Danny Evans, *Revolution and the State: Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*

London: Routledge, 2018; 229pp; ISBN 9781138063143

Since it ended some eighty years ago, narratives recounting the role anarchists and anarchism played during the Spanish Civil War have been mired in controversy. One of the best known of these historiographical disputes has to do with the decision taken by a certain number of prominent anarcho-syndicalists at the beginning of the conflict to break with the movement's anti-statist tradition by agreeing to participate in government. Their reasons for doing so have been amply clarified in the post-war memoirs of well-known figures like Abad de Santillán, Federica Montseny, and Juan García Oliver, all of whom have attempted to justify their wartime commitment to a policy of collaborationism on the grounds that the 'realities of the moment' demanded that they join other republican parties in a collective effort to defeat international fascism.

Challenging this top-down version of events, the British scholar Danny Evans has written a lucid and incisive account of anarchism's relationship with the state

from the point of view of the radicals who resisted what they perceived as the anti-revolutionary drift of their movement. Another revisionist aim of this study is to de-centre the role 'high politics' played in thwarting the Spanish revolution. Following scholars who have argued that 'Cold War' histories of the civil war have been unduly focused on how the PCE dominated republican affairs, Evans wants to argue that the fate of Spain's libertarian movement was determined more by the complex and often contradictory processes of state reconstruction facilitated by the anarcho-syndicalists themselves than by the political agendas being advanced by the communists and their allies.

In his introductory chapters, Evans tells us that the interplay between three well-defined currents – which he labels as gradualist, voluntarist, and purist – shaped anarchist activities during the Second Republic (1931-1936). According to him, one of the most significant developments of this period was the rise to prominence of an elite group of anarchist 'notables' who, in the words of the author, had 'privileged access to public platforms'. Evans explains that, due primarily to frequent cycles of government repression and persecution of the grass-root cultural and organisational forms of the CNT and FAI, 'big name' theoreticians and activists managed to exercise considerable influence over the strategy of the movement as a whole. As a result, he contends that the 'pronouncements of *notables'* contributed to a pattern of anti-democratic decision-making that would continue into the civil war period (p27).

The outbreak of civil war in July, 1936 gave rise to chaotic and confusing circumstances that had the effect of throwing into sharper relief the major fault-lines of Spain's libertarian movement. In Catalonia, the epicenter of the popular revolution, notables like the 'voluntarist' Juan García Oliver and the 'gradualist' Abad de Santillán anointed themselves as the leaders of the popular revolution centred in Catalonia by negotiating with Lluis Companys, president of the *Generalitat*, the terms for anarcho-syndicalist participation in a provisional government body called the Central Committee of Antifascist Militia (CCMA).

At a hastily convened Regional Plenum of the CNT, the majority of representatives – including 'voluntarists'– agreed to approve anarchist participation in the CCMA. According to Evans, the overwhelming support shown for 'collaboration' was largely due to the fact that executive powers were delegated to the *comités superiores* (committees of the different branches of the CNT-FAI). In practice, this meant subordinating rank-and-file radicals and lower-ranking activists of the CNT-FAI to the authority of the more pragmatic-minded leadership, a relationship that proved impossible to reverse once the reconstruction of the state was well advanced.

The CNT-FAI's ad hoc acceptance of a pro-statist strategy in July (and later in September when anarchist notables accepted portfolios in a reconstituted national government) did not prevent the revolution from throwing down roots in the republican zone. Drawing upon a variety of primary and secondary sources – including the memoirs of key activists who represented the purist wing of the libertarian movement – Evans illustrates how robust the anarcho-syndicalists' collectivisation and socialisation efforts were even after the policy of collaboration had been formally adopted. In chapters focused on the war years, he recounts with insight and empathy the ideological positions and activities of groups like *Mujeres Libres*, *Los Amigos de Durruti*, and mid-level activists who developed an effective grass-roots opposition to the CNT-FAI's pro-statist policies by agitating for revolution inside of unions, affinity groups, and defence committees.

The author's account of the notorious May uprising of 1937 speaks to both the strengths and weaknesses of the explanatory model he uses to interpret this and other pivotal events. His detailed examination of the inner workings of the libertarian movement illuminates the process by which the so-called 'bureaucratic' and more disciplined elements of the CNT-FAI managed to rein in on the militants who wanted to use the power struggle unleashed by the May crisis to impose their own radical program. But while this analysis enriches our understanding of the dynamics that were driving the anarcho-syndicalists' behaviour at this crucial juncture of the war, it conveniently ignores a discussion of the wider political context within which these developments occurred. As a result, the reader can easily come away with the misleading impression that the internecine conflicts being played out between anarchist factions during the May events were not crucially related to the highly effective counter-revolutionary machinations of the communists and other republican parties.

Revolution and the State will most likely be more useful to the reader who has a solid grounding in the history of the civil war rather than to the uninitiated. But despite its limited appeal, the historiographical issues raised by the author should not be ignored either by civil war specialists or students of modern European revolutions. By drawing our attention to the various ways in which anarchist radicals challenged pro-statist elements in their own movement, the author has ably defended one of his working assumptions, namely that such resistance was more substantial and coherently expressed than previous historians have allowed for in their analysis of republican affairs.

George Esenwein, University of Florida

Colin Holmes and Anne J. Kershen (eds), *An East End Legacy: Essays in Memory of William J. Fishman*

London: Routledge, 2018; 246pp; ISBN 9781138123182

Bill Fishman is best known as the author of *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875-1914* (1975), his prize-winning history of the Whitechapel radicalism culminating in the ascendancy of *Der Arbeiter Fraint* and Rudolf Rocker. He was also famous for his walking tours of the area: I was privileged to be taken alone on one as early as 1967 when he was Principal of Tower Hamlets College of Further Education in Stepney. He had recently enjoyed a Schoolmaster Fellowship at Balliol College, Oxford, and was about to publish his first book, *The Insurrectionists* (1970), a study of the tradition of Jacobin conspiracy from Babeuf to Lenin. He then managed to carve out a full-time post at Queen Mary College, University of London, also situated appropriately in the East End – although living to his chagrin in Kenton (north-west London) – until his retirement in 1986. He was to die in 2014, aged ninety-three.

A *festschrift*, *Outsiders & Outcasts*, was published in his honour in 1993; and now this memorial volume has appeared – they somewhat oddly share a co-editor, Colin Holmes, and four additional contributors. It makes, though, for a collection of consistent interest, ranging over Bill Fishman's biography; the changing cartography and demography of Tower Hamlets; the eugenicist Jewish Health Organization; Jewish crime; the mythology of the cowardice of the Jewish civilian population during the world wars; the Battle of Cable Street; the Yiddish Opera House; synagogues; and heritage and tourism.

Regrettably, for readers of this journal, it is the two chapters on explicitly anarchist topics that are the least satisfactory. Michael Berkowitz in 'Anarchism, Jews, Relief – and Photography? Behind the Lens and behind the Scenes, 1892-1946' asserts that not only did Jews revolutionise visual culture in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century 'yet almost nobody noticed' (p32) but believes that anarchist photographers were especially prominent – and that their work was pivotal in sustaining the much diminished international movement during the interwar years. He is much impressed by the Russian American Nahum Luboshez, 'truly brilliant and endlessly imaginative in applications of photography' (p33). He claims that Luboshez was responsible for a much reproduced portrait photograph of an elderly, extremely full-bearded Kropotkin (for which see p36), suspects he was life-long supporter of anarchism, but admits he has found no direct proof. This is all suggestive, certainly appealing, yet ultimately unconvincing.

Wayne Parsons's 'The East End and the Moral Foundations of Bill Fishman's

Libertarian Socialism' also disappoints. Parsons knew Bill exceptionally well – they were colleagues at Queen Mary – and considers that Bill's anarchism drew on three fundamental sources: Kropotkin, above all *Mutual Aid*; Charles Dickens and particularly his debunking of utilitarianism in *Hard Times*; and his grandfather. Bill's grandfather was a rabbi and Parsons has no doubts that it was his moral precepts drawn from the *Torah* and rabbinical literature that had the greatest impact on his grandson. Simple though this is, it is persuasive, amounting to an attractive cluster of influences for a deep, strongly felt and passionately maintained radicalism, although spread over twenty pages Parson's exposition wears thin and is undoubtedly repetitive.

For many years Parsons taught a course on socialist thought with Bill. One of Bill's first students was Peter Hain, then a Liberal anti-apartheid activist and only later a Labour politician, who recalls that he was inspired by Bill's 'enthusiasm and verve' to see himself as 'libertarian not a state socialist' (p71). Another student at Queen Mary was Ruth Kinna, who has recently explained that when she first became interested in anarchism:

> I had never come across anarchism before that. Virtually everything was defined by Marxism, in one way or another. All the literature was about determining what kind of Marxist you were. Some unusual courses were starting to come into universities, like feminism … Then, I did a couple of courses. One was on modern Spain, it looked at the origins and the outbreak of the Spanish civil war and revolution. That's when I first came across the anarchist movement, and I had never seen anything like it … and that's when I started reading anarchist literature.
>
> Most of my interest was in political ideas and political theory so before that, I had done the conventional Machiavelli-to-Marx course, but in my final year I took an optional course on political [thought] and texts. It was run by a man called William J. Fishman, who had been teaching it for many years, and he was an anarchist. He was friends with Fermin Rocker, who was the son of … Rudolf Rocker … The course was a critique of socialist and Leninist politics. We looked at all sorts of literature that I had never heard of. That's when I was introduced to Peter Kropotkin and Mikhail Bakunin. I started going to the Freedom Bookshop and buying those books, and gradually I became hooked.
>
> https://fivebooks.com/best-books/anarchism-ruth-kinna/

In 'Winning the Battle, But What About the War? Cable Street in Context' Daniel Tilles argues persuasively that the Battle of Cable Street resulted in the British Union of Fascists increasing its support significantly in East London. It was only when the anti-fascist organisations began to ignore the BUF that, starved of publicity and victimhood, it began to decline. Bill Fishman, warm, garrulous, knowledgeable, is a constant presence throughout the chapters of *An East End Legacy*. Tilles begins his with Bill attending the confrontation of 1936 as a fifteen-year-old. Also at Cable Street was George Rudé, ten years older, already a member of the Communist Party, who was to become a renowned Marxist historian of the revolutionary crowd. Tilles claims that the two shared an 'immigrant background' and 'similar ... careers' (p135). But this is incorrect. Rudé's Norwegian father was an engineer and inventor, his British mother the daughter of a lieutenant colonel, later a banker; and he himself was educated at a leading public school (Shrewsbury) and then Trinity College, Cambridge. In contrast, Bill's parents were both born in the Ukraine and his father a tailor. He had to work as a clerk before the Second World War, on demobilisation was able to take the emergency one-year course to train as a teacher, and only took a degree at the LSE in his late thirties.

David Goodway

Anthony Ince and Sarah Marie Hall (eds), *Sharing Economies in Times of Crisis: Practices, Politics and Possibilities*

London: Routledge, 2018; 194pp; ISBN 9781138959415

The idea of disruptive industries strategically employing digital media technology is what dominates mainstream discourse of that which constitutes 'the sharing economy'. However, as Clive Barnett notes in his insightful forward to *Sharing Economies in Times of Crisis*, there are different meanings of 'sharing'. This book investigates what different understandings and practices of sharing reveal about underlying assumptions about care, public life, society and citizenship, beyond a simple privileging of the collective over the individual. Perhaps the most significant difference among them is the nature of the social interaction amongst those who are 'sharing'. In this excellent collection, Anthony Ince and Sarah Marie Hall have curated twelve papers by twenty-one authors that remind and educate us that sharing practices and economies are complex: their deep history, their relationship to precarity, their rootedness in community relationships.

For this volume, scholars from the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have contributed essays on a wide range of topics: seed swapping, house sharing (in multiple forms), practices of reciprocity, alcohol consumption, commodification and public invasion of the private sphere, second-hand economies, food banks, and Indigenous land claims. There are investigations at the scale of the household/family, the community, and the nation. Some explicitly position sharing as an alternative to consumerist models of the economy, particularly in times of austerity. They draw on financial, social, political, logistical, moral/ethical and emotional aspects.

The chapters are gathered into three broad themes, each of which is nicely prefaced with a few framing paragraphs: 'Sharing in and through crisis'; 'Sharing, the economy and sharing economies'; and 'Alternative sharingshapes'.

A strong introduction by Ince and Hall sets a foundation with the ever-necessary reminder that 'the political economy does not exist in a vacuum' (p1), and here they wish to emphasize 'a contemporary period of crisis and turbulence' (p2). Sharing might counter and offer alternatives to capitalist crises, but it could equally accommodate them. In some arrangements, sharing may even exacerbate precarity and crisis. We must always consider the sharing economy in its plurality. As they write, 'The chameleon-like character of *the* sharing economy can be one of empowerment or exploitation. The chameleon-like character of *the* sharing economy thus belies its superficially unified and coherent identity' (p4).

The 'time of crisis' we inhabit also refers not only to austerity budgets in the wake of the global financial crisis, but also to the climate crisis, which is noted by several authors. These crises are also something we share.

Sharing happens inside and outside of commodified market relationships. Even market relationships are diverse: some extract profit and some do not. I particularly like the way the book incorporates examples of economic practices that bring people together to share in non-economic practices, noting the specific geographies of different sharing practices. These include places of consumption that bring people together, and there is consideration of the physical place and social functions of markets in all their public and private forms, including the pub and the club. As Nicole Gombay observes in her chapter, 'value does not inhere only in things. *Relationships* associated with those things are also crucial in the composition of value' (p165). These include relationships with and obligations to land and non-human beings, as well as other people.

The eco- in economy is the same root as the eco- in ecology, from the Greek *oikos*, meaning house or dwelling. Although it never explicitly makes such a declaration, this book advocates for an expansive understanding of economy as all the

many systems through which we manage and distribute resources. As such, the book is inherently anti-hegemonic in its approach. This is a welcome intervention, and the diversity of examples and angles provide much food for thought.

This interdisciplinary collection will be of use and interest to many scholars, from economic geographers to social theorists. If you study the economy from any angle, it should be on your shelf. It would be especially suitable for courses in alternative economics or business and society programs, as well as for Philosophy courses as a complement to readings from Rancière, Derrida and Nancy.

Patricia Burke Wood, York University

Kirwin R. Shaffer, *Anarchists of the Caribbean: Countercultural Politics and Transnational Networks in the Age of US Expansion*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020; 322pp; ISBN 9781108489034

Kirwin Shaffer has written a masterful work on Caribbean anarchism as a transnational phenomenon unequalled in any other region of Latin America. He casts anarchists as the first to resist the spread of global capitalism and the growing imperial presence of the United States and to critique the republican nationalist project in newly independent Caribbean societies following the Spanish-American-Cuban War of 1898. In promoting anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist agendas these movements laid the groundwork for their spread to other sectors of the Latin American left, which seldom recognises this filiation. Shaffer's analysis is pioneering in its methodological embrace of the local and the national spheres where anarchists lived, worked and organised, and their regional linkages through 'nodal cities' such as San Juan, Havana and Panama City, port cities where he traces the movement of sailors, workers, intellectuals and refugees, in turn linking them to localities such as Bayamón in Puerto Rico, Cruces in Cuba and Gatún in the Panama Canal Zone. He establishes an 'anti-authoritarian topography' (p36) of the movement that while it focuses on Cuba, Puerto Rico, Florida and Panama, extends its influence to the Yucatán peninsula of Mexico, the Central American states of Guatemala, El Salvador and Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, and New York City, and explores the work of anarchists with West Indians in Cuba, Panama and Philadelphia.

Whereas in Florida and Cuba migrants from Italy, Spain and Latin America complemented home-grown activists, anarchism in Puerto Rico was almost entirely native, and conversely, in Panama, exclusively made up of migrant

workers and activists who flocked to the Canal Zone. The book chronicles the influence of 'celebrity anarchists' such as the Italian Errico Malatesta's arrival in Havana and the Catalan Pedro Esteve's travels between New York and Tampa to help establish a branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). He then gives examples of 'rank-and-file' anarchists who travelled across borders, such as the Cuban-based activist Miguel Albuquerque who raised support for his country's independence struggle in Ecuador and participated in the movement there. Shaffer notes that Spanish was the *lingua franca* of the overlapping networks that linked the Caribbean with anarchists in the United States, Latin America, and Spain, but that Italian speakers also led movements in Florida and Panama, and English-language speakers reached out to Anglo and African-American workers in Florida and West Indian workers in Panama. In the process of creating a 'counter-culture' or 'geopolitical imaginary' in all of these areas, they wrote poetry, plays, and novels, extending their influence beyond societies and unions to the broader Caribbean public. Newspapers were the 'central cortex' of the transnational movement, 'key to perceptions, consciousness, communication and memory retention' (p30).

The movement of Caribbean anarchism was transnational from its birth beginning in the labour movement in Havana and Key West in the 1870s and 1880s, which saw constant flows of workers and militants between them. In 1892 the Cuban *Junta Central de Trabajadores de la Región Cubana* (JCTRC) issued a manifesto calling for independence from Spain, and in Tampa, the newspaper *El Esclavo* (founded in 1894) became a key player in rallying support in both countries for José Marti's *Partido Revolucionario Cubano* (PRC). Most Cuban anarchists supported the war against Spain, and from Tampa, Italian anarchists Guglielme Petriccione and Orestes Ferrera led military expeditions to the western part of the island. Others, however, such as Pedro Esteve and Cristóbal Fuente distrusted republicanism and urged neutrality. Shaffer also details the intriguing anarchist connections of Puerto Rican nationalist Ramón Emeterio Betances, who had befriended *communards* in France such as Élisée Reclus, Louise Michel and Charles Malato and who served as the chief diplomat for the Cuban independence cause in Paris.

More broadly, he argues that the war of 1898 catapulted the anarchist network between Havana and Tampa to the fore, and was instrumental in sowing the seeds of the movement in Puerto Rico. It taught Caribbean anarchists the importance of internationalism and multiethnic organising, and positioned them to adopt anti-neocolonial positions in the newly liberated territories, while drawing them into competition with republicans and, in the case of Florida and

Puerto Rico, with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the syndicalist IWW – both of which included anarchists in their rank-and-file. In Puerto Rico, where the *Federación Regional de Trabajadores* (FRT) led by Santiago Iglesias allied first with the Socialist Labor Party in the United States led by Daniel de León, then with Samuel Gompers' AFL, anarchists remained active in radicalising the movement. Shaffer also documents the rise of the IWW in Tampa and growth of the network's connections in New York City, from which many of its Puerto Rican activists hailed.

An interesting sidebar is the case of Cuban anarchist Manuel María Miranda, who was, like countless rebels before him, deported in 1896 to the Spanish island of Fernando Póo (now Equatorial Guinea), where he undertook the study of the native African Bubi population and sought to raise interest among his comrades in the libertarian, communal and anti-private property characteristics he ascribed to them. Miranda's story exemplifies the transnational histories upon which the movement built, and which Benedict Anderson identified as part of the legacy of the transoceanic Spanish Empire. From the topic of anti-colonial activism Shaffer moves to the discussion of race, noting that Spanish and Cuban workers were shocked to learn that authorities in the Panama Canal Zone did not regard them as 'white'. While they worked alongside Black West Indian migrants, Spaniards and Cubans – who helped found the anarchist movement in the isthmus – did not incorporate them on a large scale. This wasn't, Shaffer argues, because of any inherent anti-Black racism, but rather an outcome of language divisions, an aversion to Christian religious denominations, and the physical segregation of workers by employers along ethnic lines. Finally, while the denial of explicitly Black forms of community and activism was a feature of the Cuban republican tradition, anarchists, who shared the universalist ideal of cooperation between racial groups, frontally attacked republicanism as a foil for US expansionism.

Shaffer's book is very strong in its analysis of Caribbean anarchists' enthusiastic embrace of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, linking the transnational network of the US –Mexico Borderlands to the Havana-based Caribbean network through the city of Mérida in Yucatán. He also documents the importance of the Russian Revolution in the Caribbean network, particularly in Puerto Rico, where anarchists Antonio Palau, Juan Alicea, and Emiliano Ramos founded an anarcho-Bolshevik '*Grupo Soviet de Bayamón*' and others collaborated with the IWW and the American Communist Party in New York. Following the intense repression that accompanied the Red Scare in 1919-1920, Caribbean anarchists were weakened, but Panamanian activists still managed to plan a hemispheric-wide congress, ultimately stymied by US counterintelligence, alongside Latin American organisers such as

Mexico's José Valadés of the *Confederación Obrera del Trabajo* (CGT) and Julio Díaz of the *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* (FORA).

The book scaffolds the many local, regional, national and transnational dimensions of this vast revolutionary circuit, and weaves its cultural heritage into the broader narrative of its role in forging an independent tradition of anti-statist and anti-imperialist labour-based activism among diverse workers over long distances. Shaffer skilfully intertwines the rise of US expansionism and global capitalism and the forging of working-class counter-cultural solidarities, leading up to the rise of pan-Latin Americanist and socialist or communist-inspired movements in the hemisphere in the 1920s and 1930s. His research is a model, in scope, method, breadth and detail, for future research on the Andean and Brazil/Río de la Plata regions.

Geoffroy de Laforcade, Norfolk State University

Julien Besançon (ed.), *The Walls Have the Floor: Mural Journal, May '68*

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018; 224pp; ISBN 9780262038027

This translated collage of nearly 600 graffiti messages gathered from the Paris walls of occupied buildings in May 1968 seeks to evoke the charged subversive atmosphere of that period of climactic worldwide insurgency.

Certain graffiti addresses immediate issues that first fuelled the French conflict: the ossified French educational system, working class conditions, and the Gaullist regime's police violence. (For example: 'For a democratic school in a classless society; for a classless school in a democratic society'; 'The proletariat are those who have no power over the use of their lives and who know it'; and 'Professors, you're as old as your culture, your modernism is just the modernization of the police'.)

Though such discourse also implies themes of oppression applied to other hierarchical realms, the collection contains conspicuously very few explicit statements on racism, sexism, and the war in Vietnam. Yet racism (given the large North African immigrant population and the recent Algerian war) and significant French anti-imperialist opposition to the US war were important contemporary issues. A French second-wave feminism was also just emerging.

Many wall slogans proclaimed exemplary tactics and broader strategies for individual and social liberation, including some that echoed or explicitly quoted traditional anarchist approaches as well as Mao, Breton, St Just, Artaud, Marx and

others. (For example: 'The aggressor is not the one who revolts but the one who maintains'; 'Prohibiting prohibited. Freedom begins with a prohibition: that of interfering with the freedom of others'; and 'Long live the power of the workers' councils extended to all aspects of life'.) As well, the collection editor sees graffiti itself as the essence of free speech.

The most abstract level, famed for Situationist and surrealist slogans, proclaimed a liberated consciousness beyond single realm grievances and movement strategy. (For example: 'A single nonrevolutionary weekend is infinitely bloodier than a month of permanent revolution'; 'One must still have chaos within oneself to give birth to a dancing star [Nietzsche]'; and 'The more I make love, the more I want to make Revolution. The more I make Revolution, the more I want to make love'.)

Especially, it is these deeper assertions – subverting daily 'reality' – that by most accounts typified the experience of large numbers of those who participated in the May 1968 upheaval. Similar appeals of countercultural or poetic politics proliferated in much of the Western underground press and music in the late 1960s, but the intensity and depth of personal and social transformation in France was all the greater because of the condensed period of time in which various movement struggles came simultaneously to a head.

With university and lycée campuses shut down and occupied, with street battles and barricades evoking the Paris Commune and similar revolutions, with over ten million workers (one-fifth of the total population) in the West's greatest-ever wildcat strike, with the sudden weakening or collapse of traditional social barriers of communication and intimacy, with constant discussion and alternative horizontalist experiment in workplaces, campuses, and neighbourhoods, and with a government desperately in retreat, indeed large numbers in France more than in any other Western country experienced weeks of euphoria and generalised release from daily 'reality' that made the loftiest aspired 'politics of desire' feel temporarily attainable. Profound repercussions of this brief intense social explosion and the experience of alternative community emerged in subsequent French cultural and political struggles over the next decade in realms such as women's and gay liberation, prisoner and disability patients' rights, ecology, worker self-management, reform of educational institutions and pedagogy, and refusal of traditional parental control within the family.

Readers of this book (like Parisians in 1968) confront a simultaneous broad myriad of messages of political issues, strategies, and countercultural/poetic seduction, replicating the constant, intense chaos and competition of daily liberatory discourse experienced everywhere in the West in the late 1960s and early 1970s – in

personal conversation, movement debates, underground media, music, and drug revelations. In other words, this book provides a rapid flashback kaleidoscope for those who lived it and less dramatic but still useful evocation of that time for those of later generations.

Foreword writer Tom McDonough stresses the importance of graffiti as a new form of revolutionary 'literature' in itself, supplementing the traditional gathering of posters, flyers, and manifestos, let alone lengthier participant writings, to capture and celebrate the energy and ideals of past revolutions. The afterword writer Whitney Phillips offers as well a brief interesting comparison of protest graffiti and digital political commentary, images, and memes.

David Porter, SUNY Empire State College

CrimethInc. Ex Workers' Collective, *The Russian Counterrevolution*

Bristol: Active Distribution, 2018; 168pp; ISBN 9781909798540

Over the past decade, conferences, workshops, special editions of journals, edited collections and book series such as *Russia's Great War and Revolution* have sought to reassess the temporality, geography, and nature of the Russian Revolution. Researchers have long since transcended the dichotomies of the Cold War and turned to explorations of culture and societal experience. At the same time, the events of 1917 continue to inspire activists, providing a sense of political and moral certainty. And so, one hundred years on from 1917, the spectre of what might have been continues to haunt our present.

The Russian Counterrevolution, a small volume produced by the activist collective CrimethInc, seeks to understand the failed idealism of the Russian Revolution through an anarchist lens. Readers of this volume, it seems, will likely already be well familiar with some of the key figures and events of the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless, the first part of the book offers an engaging narrative, if one following a well-trodden path. Those well acquainted with the history of Russian anarchism, and the work of historians such as Paul Avrich, are unlikely to find much new here. Yet, at the same time, for a wide spectrum of readers it does offer some insights into the Russian Revolution which are remarkably geographically broad, as well as transnational, in approach.

Small, but visually striking, the book's design is one of its most appealing features. The artwork draws explicitly on the Russian avant-garde and, like the mythical soul of 1917, the book mourns the loss of this artistic spirit. The use of

quotations from a wide range of sources creates the cacophony of voices that reflect anarchism's varied forms. As such, as a piece of anarchist art and as a collection designed to inspire, it must surely appeal to activists.

A book of two halves, the first part of *The Russian Counterrevolution* is a retelling of the events of 1917 and beyond through an anarchist lens, one which blames the statist interventions of the Soviet Union and communist parties across the globe for the rise of fascism and the global inequality of the present day. If the New Left of the 1960s and 1970s saw Stalinism as an aberration of Leninism, this anarchist collective sees Vladimir Lenin as the 'butcher of the working class' (p28). Instead, they place their faith in the moment of 1917 as a decentralised, anti-statist, popular revolution. However, perhaps what this book misses from an ideological point of view is the fluidity and interconnectedness of revolutionary organisations and politics in the early years of the twentieth century. The work of Anna Geifman demonstrated this lack of concern for ideological purity in her work on revolutionary terrorism. The certainty of ideological and moral purity embodied in the Russian anarchist movement seems to jar a little with the realities of anarchist activism of the period.

In its second part, the book is at once both critical of and deferent to personality. Activists are both limited by and transcend their class backgrounds (evident in the contrasting responses to Lenin and Peter Kropotkin). While this volume certainly reflects the influence of some of the intellectual trends that have shaped the histories of anarchism and the Russian Revolution in recent years, its choice of individuals to profile seems less innovative. The selection of non-Russian figures to explore anarchists' responses to the events of 1917 is homogenous: generally white and male. As a result, this volume comes across as rather conservative in its construction of anarchist history. For example, of the named individuals profiled in the second part, only three are women. If the volume's purpose is to inspire, then there is certainly space to expand on the global histories of anarchists and the Russian Revolution.

Nevertheless, while one might question its choice of anarchist heroes and debate the utility of seeing the Russian Revolution as a lost ideal, there is a place for anarchist movements to re-evaluate their heritage. As this review comes to its conclusion, in a time when mutual aid groups and campaigns against state violence are flourishing, this book may play a role in debates as to the shape of the future.

Lara Green, University of Durham

Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva, *The Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth-Century London*

London: Bloomsbury, 2018; 232pp; ISBN 9781474258494

Amid a growing tilt towards transnational perspectives in the histories of labour and popular politics this survey of foreign political publishing in London between the 1810s and the 1920s will be an invaluable resource to a broad array of historians. Recognising both the crucial role the exile press played in 'the construction and dissemination of political ideas and identities' in London and abroad and 'the status of London as a hub of transnational politics' (p2) throughout the nineteenth century, Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva have assembled a collection of studies that will likely succeed in its intention of being an 'early milestone for further works' (p12) on exile political communities and transnational print culture.

The first four chapters of the book focus on the publications of Spanish, Portuguese, and Iberian American émigré communities, and these chapters demonstrate the clearest thematic and comparative links. In Chapter One, Karen Racine outlines how between 1808 and 1827 the 'community of exiled patriots' from Spanish America in London formed 'a newsprint nation'. In Chapter Two, Daniel Muñoz Sempere outlines the foreign political press of the Spanish Liberal emigration between 1810 and 1841, and particularly the ideological divisions that developed amongst this community. In Chapter Three, Isabel Lustosa and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva discuss the role of the English press and London society in Hipolito da Costa's development of Brazilian identity, and in Chapter Four Daniel Alves and Paulo Jorges Fernandes discuss the role of the press in the divisions amongst Portuguese exiles. The following five chapters deal with the second half of the century, and although more eclectic have socialism and anarchism as a clear thread: in Chapter Five Thomas C. Jones and Constance Bantman provide an overview of fifty years of French exile publishing, in Chapter Six Pietro Di Paola documents the Italian anarchist press, in Chapter Seven Daniel Laqua overviews and outlines the divisions amongst the German socialist and anarchist newspapers in London, and in Chapter Eight Charlotte Alston outlines the Russian political press from 1851 to 1921, focussing chiefly on the liberals and socialists who after 1918 transposed into opposition to the Bolsheviks. Chapter Nine stands out as the only study of a British colony, as Ole Birk Laursen discusses the Indian nationalist press, outlining its disputes and its occasionally troubled relationship with British radicals. Throughout the book there are useful tables detailing the names and publishers of exile publications, while there is also a substantial biographical appendix.

Taken as a whole, the book is particularly enlightening about the role of the exile press in the construction of national identity, the importation of schism into émigré communities (and the development of new ones), and the consequences and limits of the 'liberal' policies of the British state towards refugees and exiles before 1905. Many chapters will be of interest to historians of British politics seeking to explore transnational and international links: chapter four highlights divisions between Portuguese émigrés influenced by British constitutionalism and a more democratic French republicanism that parallel divisions within British radicalism, while chapter five underscores the importance of French republican exiles in the post-1848 British labour movement, a presence often overlooked. The material on Anarchism in chapters five, six, and seven elucidates some instances of British influence on these exile communities, such as the impact of labour militancy amongst London's dock workers on Errico Malatesta (p116), and of organisational links, such as the publishing of *L'Internazionale* in the Freedom Bookshop (p124). Nevertheless, while these communities were transnational ones committed to internationalism they appear largely fixated upon internal disputes and the domestic politics of their lands of origin, a conclusion reached in chapter five and outlined in some detail in the emergence of anarchism amongst the exile German socialist community in chapter seven.

Many of the book's limitations are acknowledged in the introduction: there are few examples of women's participation evident in the chapters, and no work on transnational feminism, anti-slavery, or pacifism, while London's politically vibrant émigré Jewish community is also absent (p12). To add to this, chapter nine's interesting discussion of the complex relationship between competing Indian Nationalists, the British government, and British and Irish leftists suggests that more examples of communities from British colonies would have been fruitful, while a more thematic rather than chronological organisation of the chapters would likely have allowed some of them to be more forensic. Although the influence of British newspapers on Spanish and Portuguese exile editors is demonstrated, this is less true of the later chapters even though they deal with the 1880s onwards, an innovative period for British print; there is therefore perhaps less in this book for historians of the materiality and culture of print than political and labour historians, although there is a lot of valuable detail about the logistics of transporting publications and evading censors. In all these cases, however, the book provides a wide and viable foundation for future research, thereby fulfilling its stated goals by delivering a valuable collection of studies.

Tom Scriven, Oxford Brookes University

A.W. Zurbrugg, *Anarchist Perspectives in Peace and War, 1900-1918*

London: The Merlin Press, 2018; 209pp; ISBN 9780850367416

Zurbrugg's erudite book – the first in a series of four – on anarchist perspectives on peace and war in the first two decades of the twentieth century offers a refreshing account of the anarchist movement from within. Including many lesser known voices, Zurbrugg emphasises anarchism's evolving definitions, arguing that 'Anarchism, then, was not a fixed and eternally valid set of opinions, but rather a set of critical thinkers and thought, evolving as ideas and struggles interacted, refashioned and refocused over the course of time, inevitably, arguing, disputing and rethinking priorities and directions' (p4). A real strength, this also means that Zurbrugg's book is generous and inclusive rather than conservative and foreclosing. Taking into account various strands of anarchism – syndicalism, libertarianism, anarcho-communism – Zurbrugg is not afraid to bring some of anarchism's most eloquent proponents into conversation with other socialists, e.g. Keir Hardie and Rosa Luxemburg, which grounds the anarchist movement as central to socialist debates during the early twentieth century rather than situating it as marginal.

Structured chronologically and geographically around certain organisations such as the IWW, the book focuses primarily on Latin America, France, Spain, and Germany, but also broader international events, including the Amsterdam Congress of 1907, and Part 2 is devoted entirely to the First World War. Drawing on an impressive range of primary material, Zurbrugg stresses that anarchism was not the result of some a priori theory, although no doubt revolutionaries were certainly influenced by several past theories; rather 'anarchism' evolved and was defined in practice by the choices women and men made to join this or that workplace movement, or protest, stressing certain choices and perspectives. It was not one immutable doctrine, it was a set of mixed and agitated conversations, encounters, debates, reflections and synthesis, coming together at one moment and evolving (p6).

Offering ample examples of these evolving practices – discussing issues of trade unionism, strikes, sabotage, propaganda by the deed, pacifism, exile, migration, race, and women's issues – this is a persuasive argument throughout the book. As Zurbrugg examines in Part 2, these mixed and agitated conversations divided the anarchist movement with the outbreak of the First World War. Indeed, covering some of the most turbulent times in global history, Zurbrugg's examination of anarchists' approach to the First World War exemplifies exactly anarchism's commitment to internationalism and anti-militarism, as opposed to

the predominantly patriotic stance of Second International Social Democrats. However, Zurbrugg could have devoted more attention to those within the anarchist movement – *viz* the Malatesta vs Kropotkin debates – who adopted a similar line and supported national war efforts. Such minor criticisms aside, the book sits well next to Matthew S. Adams and Ruth Kinna's *Anarchism, 1914-1918* (2017) and broadens our understanding of the impact of the First World War on global left politics.

Another major strength of the book is its focus on press history, especially the exile anarchist press, and how publications such as *La Protesta* (Argentina), *Freedom* and *Arbeter Fraint* (Britain), *Les Temps Nouveaux* and *Le Libertaire* (France), *Le Reveil/Il Risveglio* (Switzerland), and *Industrial Workers* and *Mother Earth* (USA), each in their own way, were crucial to the development of a transnational anarchist consciousness. Distinguishing transnational anarchism from mainstream socialism, Zurbrugg argues that, 'If the press is a good guide, socialism and anarchism had differing profiles: socialists were more often professionals and privileged workers, anarchists were more often in less skilled occupations' (p22). However, the book's focus on Europe, North America, and Latin America ignores a wider global tradition of anti-authoritarian thoughts and practices that flourished in the colonial world alongside and in conversation with these Euro-American traditions. Including voices and stories from the colonial world – and even Japan – would have given a more nuanced vision of anarchism's revolutionary potential in the early twentieth century.

Nevertheless, that should not detract from appreciating the book's many finer observations and acknowledging its contribution to the historiography of anarchism. Indeed, written in clear and accessible prose, the book will not only be of value to historians and scholars but for anyone interested in anarchism's long and varied history and its relevance for today. If this book is any guide, we should look forward to the next instalments in Zurbrugg's planned four-volume history of the anarchist movement.

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William L. Remley, *Jean-Paul Sartre's Anarchist Philosophy*

London: Bloomsbury, 2018; 277pp; ISBN 9781350126695

In this work, the author seeks to demonstrate that Sartre's philosophy is properly situated within the anarchist tradition. He contends that when the great exis-

tentialist proclaimed, 'I have always been an anarchist', he was depicting his own thought quite accurately.

The first half of the book introduces the reader to anarchist political thought through an overview of the tradition. It begins with Godwin and Stirner, and then undertakes a more detailed discussion of the 'Golden Age', represented by Bakunin, and, especially, Proudhon. The second half of the book makes the case for Sartre's anarchism, as exhibited both in his early works and in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason*. Along the way, we are given background information on French social and political history from 1815 to 1870, and from 1914 to 1960.

I was looking forward very much to this book and began reading with nothing but sympathy for its project. I was very excited about the appearance of an entire book investigating Sartre's anarchism, which is an important theoretical topic that has been unduly neglected. However, the book turns out to be a great disappointment, both because of its theoretical limitations, and because the publisher did both the author and reader a great disservice by publishing it without competent editing.

The analysis of anarchist political theory in the work is uneven. It is difficult to see the rationale for the details on Godwin and Stirner, since they inhabited such a different theoretical world from that of Sartre. The more extensive treatment of Proudhon and Bakunin is useful in depicting 'classical anarchism', but much of the discussion seems superfluous. The crucial ideas credited to Proudhon are shared by many anarchist theorists. Instead of four chapters on these specific thinkers, one or two good survey chapters on anarchist thought in general would have been more helpful.

On the other hand, the extensive discussion of certain major themes in Sartre's thought is quite relevant to anarchist concepts of freedom and domination. This is true of topics such as activity and passivity, the practico-inert, the pledged group, the group-in-fusion, and institutionalisation. This aspect of the book makes a definite contribution to anarchist studies and the history of ideas. However, it would have been even more useful had the often-cursory analysis been expanded and deepened theoretically.

The sections on historical background are only tenuously connected to Sartre's anarchism. This is perplexing, since the author decided to ignore the philosopher's quite significant relationship to the historical anarchism of the last twenty years of his life. This period included the crucial May '68 events, his most direct encounter with the anarchist milieu, and his most explicit affirmation of his own anarchist dimensions. Remley explains that the task of relating Sartre to anarchism 'is only exasperated' by an attempt to explore this history. Yet, more than one reader will be exacerbated by this decision.

In fact, the book contains a stunning number of errors related to spelling, punctuation, number, syntax, omitted words, and such grammatical problems as confusion of plural and possessive, misplaced clauses, and vague use of modifiers. Incorrect words sometimes appear, as, for example, 'disciple' for 'discipline' and 'dialects' for 'dialectics'. The term 'dominate class' is used repeatedly for 'dominant class'.

There are also errors concerning the history of anarchism. To mention one misleading claim, the author asserts that the tendency of the working class toward violent uprisings 'can only be labelled' as 'anarchistic' (p132). Yet, this tendency is at most *potentially* anarchistic, and is certainly, at times, *non-anarchistic*. Remley unconsciously makes exactly this point by associating it with the 'Jacobin tradition', a tradition that is often attacked by anarchists as statist, centralist and authoritarian.

Finally, it might be noted that there is little exploration of Sartrean anarchism in relation to the creation of liberatory institutions here and now. Thus, one seldom finds the kind of concreteness concerning topics such as self-management and revolution that is exhibited in the autonomy project of Castoriadis, a major left libertarian contemporary of Sartre on the French philosophical and political scene.

On the other hand, it must be recognised that few anarchist theorists have examined fundamental philosophical issues of selfhood, agency and alienation as deeply as Sartre has, and exploration of his thought can certainly enrich anarchist theory in these areas. This work, in undertaking groundbreaking investigation of Sartre's anarchism, paves the way for wider, deeper, and more critical discussion. For this, at least, we can be grateful.

John Clark

Jeffrey A. Johnson, *The 1916 Preparedness Day Bombing: Anarchism and Terrorism in Progressive Era America*

London: Routledge, 2018; 197pp; ISBN 9781138672833

Intended as a teaching tool, Jeffrey Johnson's 2018 publication, *The 1916 Preparedness Day Bombing: Anarchism and Terrorism in Progressive Era America*, attempts to contextualise the 1916 San Francisco bombing, and the subsequent trial of Warren Billings and Tom Mooney, by exploring the history of class conflict that punctuated the preceding decades. Part of the Routledge series 'Critical Moments in American History', Johnson's work makes it clear that US history cannot be explained without a deeper accounting of the anarchist

movement. However, this accounting is not what we get in Johnson's publication. Rather we are presented with a narrative that, despite a sincere effort to teach students about the often-overlooked history of class conflict in America, ends up pairing anarchism and terrorism in a manner that leaves the central crux of the book's events under-explained.

Despite dedicating four of his seven chapters to contextualising the 1916 bombing, Johnson only dramatizes violent acts of working-class defiance not the bloody reality of industrial capitalism that motivated the anarchists. This approach results in the familiar image of the crazed, radical, extremist terrorist/anarchist lashing out in inexplicable ways. For example, chapter one starts with a vivid description of Alexander Berkman's famous attempt to assassinate steel magnate Henry Clay Frick. Because Berkman's biography is not explored until later in the book, the reader is left with a sensationalist impression based on mainstream press accounts of the event. The chapter could have begun with a vivid scene of Frick employing Pinkerton violence that would have made Berkman's act understandable. Instead Johnson dramatizes spectacular acts of anarchist resistance without exploring why the 'radicals' were so angry or what they hoped to achieve. Later in the chapter, when Johnson surveys working-class social organisations, he completely ignores anarchists as a mass-movement or social network; preferring groups with more traditional organisational structures and histories, such as: the Knights of Labor (whose decline he blames on the Haymarket anarchists), the American Federation of Labor, the Socialist Labor Party, the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World. In chapter two he finally turns attention to the anarchists, but he superficially explores it as an abstract political philosophy. The result of Johnson's framing and omissions is a one-sided history that positions the anarchists (understood as isolated extremist-followers of a violent ideology) as (possibly) the real cause of the 1916 bombing.

Perhaps Johnson never intended to contribute to anarchist historiography. But he is sympathetic to working class figures like Tom Mooney, the book's tragic central protagonist. Chapter three does a good job of exploring some instances of owner violence, highlighting for example the Western Federation of Miners and Industrial Worker of the World (IWW) founder Bill Haywood's fight with private detectives and corrupt judges in a manner that effectively foreshadows the Mooney case. Chapter four then zooms in to survey local battles waged in San Francisco between the workers and the bosses just prior to the bombing. These chapters essentially argue that Mooney and his fellow union men suffered the negative consequences of the violent actions taken by the evil anarchists. This thesis is driven home in Chapters five through seven, when Johnson finally reaches

the Preparedness Day Bombing and subsequent man hunt, trial, and fight for justice. These final chapters deliver the most useful material for both scholars and educators. Johnson's coverage of the Mooney Trial itself is an excellent demonstration of the historian's craft – both concise and clear – providing ample fodder for discussion.

Given the relative poverty of any teaching texts that explore this history, educators could find this publication quite useful; but I recommend they approach it with caution and encourage their students to read it with a critical eye. Anarchist scholars or those interested in the history of the anarchist movement will, however, find a disappointing text which further maligns the libertarian-socialist movement and reproduces many of the old stereotypes with which anarchists have been branded for well over one-hundred years.

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Shane Burley, *Fascism Today: What It Is & How To End It*

Edinburgh: AK Press, 2018; 180pp; ISBN9781849352949

To militant anti-fascists, a book with the title *Fascism Today: What It Is & How To End It* would seem to offer either a new analysis or a previously undiscovered antidote to the far right. Sadly, this book provides neither. What it does provide is an overview of twentieth-century fascist movements and, more usefully for the European reader at least, an introduction to the complexities of the American far-right, its relationship to 'Classical Fascism' and how it connects with Donald Trump and the Alt. Right.

Part 1 anatomises the cage rattling obsessions of the bomb-building hedge-dwellers: extremist Christians, Ku Klux Klan and 3rd Positionists, all seething with nastiness about feminism, racism, the 'Volk', Islamic fundamentalism and esoteric Judaic conspiracies (why are neo-Nazi nutjobs the only ones who know about these global Zionist subterfuges and economists, political analysts and researchers don't?) Burley writes that in 2016, as Trump was heading for the Presidency, ultra-nationalists, populists and the Alt. Right were already flourishing, as they were in Europe at street level, in the mainstream media and increasingly in governments, gaining support and encroaching on the political space of parliamentary democratic parties.

Burley discusses Antifa throughout the book but does not mention the black bloc, although there are shared characteristics, operating as they do on autonomist or anarchist principles. It is also clear that the far right and mainstream media do

not understand either because they both operate as autonomous mobilisations; there is no leadership or subscription; there is no affiliation to any political party, no vote chasing or electoral ambition to damage; and any negative coverage of violence is irrelevant.

There is also diversity in both Antifa and black bloc mobilisations: many get involved through college/university, workplace struggles, union activity, community action or are from LGBT or animal rights groups. Not all Antifa are anarchists.

Burley emphasises the increased use of social media in Euro-American political discourse, and it is here that many people come across neo-Nazi fetishists, aggressive online racists or Alt. Right propaganda. It is also in the digital realm that anti-fascists can win people over by being vigilant and countering spurious 'facts' about migration numbers, being 'out-bred' or claiming that 'all Muslims support terrorism'.

Veterans of street battles with the far right may see Twitter or Facebook as remarkably tame compared to violent confrontations and police hassle but it is an area where far right ideas and ideologues flourish, remaking fascist narratives in new forms. It may seem trivial but the amount of 'likes' comments and ticks, whether genuine or purchased can create an aura of legitimacy. Social media users and militant anti-fascists who often come across the far right need to diligently maintain informative, accessible and oppositional websites and blogs, update profiles on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest etc., to counter that presence. In the 2010s migrants have been criminalised, over-sexualised, and subjected to violence and abuse in the UK, France, Germany, Greece, amongst many others, and the idea that removing an alien body will quickly solve economic, housing and employment problems has taken hold with many, as reflected in the dismal Brexit vote. It is also indicative of disappointment and scepticism towards traditional parliamentary parties. Trump has tried to capitalise on similar fears of migrant carnage to secure funds for his magical border wall that will stop drug-crazed-terror-rapists from stealing US jobs.

Burley's pro-Antifa book is one of several to be published in the last eighteen months and it is vital that militants control their own history. Anti-fascism in the 2010s has had a heightened media profile with militants in the UK, Germany, and Greece battling the far right at street level while anti-fascism in America since Charlottesville has received a lot more attention.

Two questions need answering: are anti-fascists fighting fascists? And if not, who are we up against? Breitbart, Steve Bannon and the Alt. Right may reek of racist extremism but they are neither fascist nor neo-Nazis. In the UK, the dissolute remnants of the EDL and its equally fractious alter-egos are not fascist in the

classical twentieth-century sense – although neo-Nazis have been spotted on their demos. Austria's Freedom Party, Germany's AfD, and Golden Dawn share many things but have an individual national flavour and approach to politics. It follows that if anti-fascists are not fighting actual fascists, then who are *we*? Anti-racist is an overtly broad liberal handle and even moderate conservatives would describe themselves as anti-racist. Anti-fascists need to understand what attracts people and then we need to work how to address them.

M. Testa