

# Brill's Companion to Anarchism and Philosophy

*Edited by*

Nathan Jun



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## Anarchism and Libertarianism

*Roderick T. Long*

### Introduction

“Libertarianism,” understood as a term for a specific political ideology, originated as a synonym for anarchism, and more precisely the communist anarchism of Joseph Déjacque (1821–1864), whose use of “*libertaire*” in this sense dates to 1857<sup>1</sup>—though individualist anarchists soon picked up the term as well.<sup>2</sup> Nowadays, however, the term “libertarianism” is frequently associated, particularly in English-speaking countries, with a movement favoring free markets, private property, and economic *laissez-faire*, generally resting either on the efficiency of the price system in coordinating individuals’ plans,<sup>3</sup> or else on an ethical principle of self-ownership or non-aggression<sup>4</sup> which is taken to define individuals’ rights against forcible interference with their persons and (justly acquired) property. This is the sense in which the term “libertarian” will be employed here. (Today French actually has two words corresponding to the English libertarian: “*libertaire*,” meaning an anarchist, particularly a left-wing anarchist, and “*libertarien*,” for the free-market advocate.) It is with the relation of libertarianism (in the free-market sense) to anarchism that this chapter is concerned.

While sometimes considered a form of conservatism, libertarianism differs from typical versions of conservatism in endorsing a broad range of social liberties, and thus opposing, *e.g.*, drug laws, censorship laws, laws restricting consensual sexual activity, and the like. (Libertarians usually, though not always, differ from typical conservatives in opposing military interventionism

1 Joseph Déjacque, *De l'être-humain mâle et femelle: Lettre à P.J. Proudhon* (New Orleans: Lamarre, 1857). Déjacque began publishing his own journal *Le Libertaire* in 1858.

2 The individualist use of the term was common among the writers for Benjamin R. Tucker's journal *Liberty* (1881–1908); see, *e.g.*, Tucker's “A Want Supplied,” *Liberty* 3, no. 13 (15 Aug. 1885): 4.

3 See, *e.g.*, F.A. Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society,” *American Economic Review* 35, no. 4 (Sept. 1945): 519–530.

4 R.T. Long, “Nonaggression Axiom,” in *The Encyclopedia of Libertarianism*, ed. R. Hamowy (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 2008), 357–360.

as well.) Libertarians see their support for social freedom and their support for free markets as two sides of the same principle: the individual's freedom to do as she chooses with her own life and property, so long as she respects the right of others to do likewise with their own.

Most libertarians favor a minimal or "night-watchman" state, with functions limited to the protection of individuals' negative rights against interference, and consequently are known as "minarchists." But a large and increasingly prominent minority of libertarians favor dispensing with the state entirely, leaving the function of rights-protection instead to the competitive market. These libertarians usually claim the title of anarchist, and specifically "anarcho-capitalist" (sometimes "an-cap" for short).<sup>5</sup> Their relation to the broader anarchist movement is fraught with controversy, since that movement has traditionally opposed capitalism, and sometimes even seen opposition to capitalism as an essential component of anarchism. Social anarchists in particular are strongly inclined to deny anarcho-capitalism's status as a form of anarchism; libertarians are often eager to return the favor, denying the term "libertarian" to anyone who rejects free markets.

### Can Libertarians be Anarchists?

Many of the leading grounds on which social anarchists question anarcho-capitalism's anarchist *bona fides* are usefully collected in the popular internet resource *An Anarchist FAQ*, edited by Iain McKay.<sup>6</sup> The principal charges are two. The first is that anarcho-capitalists are only pseudo-anarchists because they do not truly reject the state—since the competing protection agencies they usually favor are just so many mini-states. Anarcho-capitalists would deny this on the grounds that a state has to be a territorial monopoly; but many social anarchists

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- 5 Many free-market anarchists, though not all, repudiate electoral politics in favor of education, direct action, and building alternative institutions. U.S. Libertarian Party presidential candidates have included both anarchist and minarchists (as well as individuals who were arguably neither). Free-market anarchist ideas, of both capitalist and anti-capitalist varieties, have been dramatized (both favorably and otherwise) in science-fiction stories and novels by Eric Frank Russell, Robert A. Heinlein, C.M. Kornbluth, James Hogan, L. Neil Smith, J. Neil Schulman, Vernor Vinge, Neal Stephenson, Ken MacLeod, and Naomi Kritzer, among others.
- 6 I. McKay, ed., *An Anarchist FAQ*, Version 13.4 (2010), <http://www.infoshop.org/AnAnarchistFAQ>. See in particular "Section F: Is 'Anarcho'-Capitalism a Type of Anarchism?" and "Section G: Is Individualistic Anarchism Capitalistic?" A hard copy of an earlier version of the FAQ has been published as I. McKay, ed., *An Anarchist FAQ*, 2 vols. (Oakland, Calif.: AK Press, 2008–2012).

would respond that a non-territorial protection agency is still enough like a state to be condemnable on the same grounds.

The second charge is that even if anarcho-capitalists do count as anti-government, anarchism is “more than just opposition to government,” but also involves “opposition to capitalism.”<sup>7</sup> More fully, John Clark describes the “essence of anarchism” as “not the theoretical opposition to the state, but the practical and theoretical struggle against domination,” which “does not stop with a criticism of political organization” but further condemns “the authoritarian nature of economic inequality and private property, hierarchical economic structures, traditional education, the patriarchal family, class and racial discrimination, and rigid sex-and age-roles.”<sup>8</sup> While anarcho-capitalists likewise typically oppose more than the state (since they oppose all violations of the non-aggression principle, whether by state agents or private individuals), they have ordinarily—though not without exception—taken the forms of domination in Clark’s list as legitimate, either in the weaker sense of not being rights-violations and so not permissible targets of forcible interference, or in the stronger sense of not being problematic even in terms of private morality.

The strategy of exclusion-by-definition faces a problem, however. Many of the features of anarcho-capitalism to which social anarchists point as grounds for exclusion from the anarchist ranks appear to be shared by individualist anarchists generally—including Benjamin Tucker (1854–1939) and Lysander Spooner (1808–1887), doyens of the 19th-century American individualist anarchist movement. While social anarchists have many disagreements with the individualist anarchist tradition, they generally do not wish to read individualist anarchists out of the movement, and they do usually regard Tucker and Spooner in particular as genuine anarchists. And most of the individualist anarchists resemble libertarians in their enthusiasm for private property and free markets. (Max Stirner, the supposedly paradigmatic but actually fairly peripheral exemplar of individualist anarchism, is an exception.)<sup>9</sup> Indeed, individualist anarchism is one of the two principal influences on

7 Ibid., “Section F: Is ‘Anarcho’-Capitalism a Type of Anarchism?”

8 J. Clark, *The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1983), 70, 128.

9 Max Stirner (1806–1856) defends “property” only as a kind of Hobbesian liberty-right which generates no correlative duties in others. Despite Stirner’s reputation in some circles as the “exemplary advocate of individualist anarchism” [S. Sheehan, *Anarchism* (London: Reaktion Books, 2003), 40], his influence on the individualist anarchist movement is overstated; in North America, for example, most of the major individualist anarchist thinkers owed nothing to him, while even the most prominent American Stirnerite, Benjamin Tucker, had already largely developed his individualist anarchist system before ever discovering Stirner.

anarcho-capitalism (the other being classical liberalism); and many anarcho-capitalists consider themselves part of the individualist anarchist tradition.

Although social anarchists are quick to distinguish between anarcho-capitalists and individualist anarchists, their grounds for excluding the former often seem to apply to the latter. Thus as regards the charge that competing protection agencies are so many states, many of the individualist anarchists to whom social anarchists do grant the title of “anarchist,” including Tucker and Spooner, also favored some form of competing protection agencies<sup>10</sup> and even Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), inspiration to social anarchists and individualist anarchists alike, called for the private provision of police services.<sup>11</sup> If such positions don’t disqualify these thinkers’ anarchism, it can be asked why similar positions should disqualify the anarchism of the anarcho-capitalists.

The social anarchists’ answer, typically, is that whether such institutions are consistent with anarchism or not depends on whether they are conceived as being implemented in a capitalistic context or an anti-capitalistic one.<sup>12</sup> The first charge (anarcho-capitalists don’t reject the state) thus turns out to rest on the second (anarcho-capitalists don’t reject capitalism, whereas individualist anarchists do); and so to the question of what counts as anarchist is added the question of what counts as capitalist.

What, then, is capitalism? Most anarcho-capitalists regard the term “capitalism” as interchangeable with “free market”;<sup>13</sup> by contrast, individualist anarchists (those acknowledged as anarchists by social anarchists, anyway) have generally favored what they called the “free market” while opposing what they called “capitalism.”<sup>14</sup> To what extent, then, is the “capitalism” favored by the former the same thing as the “capitalism” opposed by the latter? Presumably

10 See, e.g., Benjamin R. Tucker, *Instead of a Book, By a Man Too Busy to Write One: A Fragmentary Exposition of Philosophical Anarchism* (New York: B.R. Tucker, 1897); Francis D. Tandy, *Voluntary Socialism: A Sketch* (Denver, Colo.: F.D. Tandy, 1896); and Lysander Spooner, *An Essay on the Trial By Jury* (Boston: Hobart & Robbins, 1852).

11 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Idée générale de la révolution au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: choix d'études sur la pratique révolutionnaire et industrielle* (Paris: Garnier, 1851).

12 McKay, *An Anarchist FAQ*, “Section F: Is ‘Anarcho’-Capitalism a Type of Anarchism?”

13 “[C]apitalism, in the classical liberal tradition, means ... a free market based on free people, i.e., voluntary exchanges of value between free individuals.” Per Bylund, “The Trouble With Socialist Anarchism,” *Mises Daily* (30 Mar. 2006), <http://mises.org/library/trouble-socialist-anarchism>.

14 “[I]f a man has labor to sell, he has a right to a free market in which to sell it ... Now, such a market has constantly been denied ... to the laborers of the entire civilized world. And the men who have denied it are the Andrew Carnegies [and the] Capitalists ... [T]ell the capitalists that the laborer is entitled to a free market, and that they, in denying it to him,

no tradition should be excluded from anarchism merely over a difference of terminology; hence it is vital to determine which differences between the groups are terminological and which are substantive—recognizing that there are likely to be some of each (as *purely* terminological disputes and *purely* substantive ones are both rare in ideological disputes), and that the precise mix between the two may vary from one individual thinker to another.

The *Anarchist FAQ*'s section on anarcho-capitalism defines "capitalism" at one point as "exploitation and private property"; at another as "interest, rent and profits"; and at another as an "an economy marked by wage labor, landlords, banking and stock markets and so hierarchy, oppression and exploitation." These definitions are by no means equivalent; moreover, none of them is going to draw a clean line between the two groups in the desired manner. The anti-capitalist individualist anarchists, too, defended private property in some form; some of them, like Tucker, adopted an occupancy-and-use standard of land ownership, and opposed interest and rent,<sup>15</sup> but others, like Spooner, took a more Lockean view of landed property, and defended interest and rent.<sup>16</sup> The anti-capitalist individualists favored banking, too—not in its current form, to be sure, but then anarcho-capitalists generally oppose banking in its current form as well. Anti-capitalist individualists opposed the wage system (i.e., a social order in which one class has no choice but to serve as hired labor for another class), but not necessarily wage labor *per se*;<sup>17</sup> and there are anarcho-capitalists who have opposed the wage system too.<sup>18</sup> Nor do all anarcho-capitalists favor

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are guilty of criminal invasion." Benjamin R. Tucker, "The Lesson of Homestead," *Liberty* 8, no. 48 (23 Jul. 1892): 2.

15 Tucker, *Instead of a Book*.

16 Lysander Spooner, *Poverty: Its Illegal Causes and Legal Cure* (Boston: Bela Marsh, 1846); Lysander Spooner, *The Law of Intellectual Property* (Boston: Bela Marsh, 1855).

17 "If the men who oppose wages—that is, the purchase and sale of labor—were capable of analyzing their thought and feelings, they would see that what really excites their anger is not the fact that labor is bought and sold, but the fact that one class of men are dependent for their living upon the sale of their labor, while another class of men are relieved of the necessity ... Not to abolish wages, but to make *every* man dependent upon wages and to secure to every man his *whole* wages is the aim of Anarchistic Socialism." Benjamin R. Tucker, "Should Labor be Paid or Not?" *Liberty* 5, no. 19 (28 Apr. 1888): 4.

18 See, e.g., S.E. Konkin III, *New Libertarian Manifesto* (Long Beach, Calif.: Anarchosamisdat Press, 1980), chapter 3, n. 8; D. Friedman, *The Machinery of Freedom: Guide to a Radical Capitalism*, 2nd edition (Chicago: Open Court Press, 1989), 144–145. Friedman is a self-described anarcho-capitalist; Konkin did not use the term, but given his intellectual influences—Ludwig von Mises, Ayn Rand, Murray Rothbard, etc.—he would no doubt be considered one by social anarchists.



protection agencies of the standard sort, since some are pacifists who reject even defensive force.<sup>19</sup> Anarcho-capitalists of various kinds may be seen defending common property,<sup>20</sup> recognition of indigenous land claims,<sup>21</sup> and worker takeover of privileged corporations.<sup>22</sup> It's difficult to find any criterion that unambiguously sorts pro-market anarchists into sheep and goats in the manner that social anarchists seek.

This is not to deny that on the whole, those who call themselves anarcho-capitalists or who are embedded in that tradition are likelier to endorse hierarchical features of existing economies, including oligopolistic labor markets, than are the individualist anarchists to whom social anarchists point as genuine anarchists. Indeed, if social anarchists tend to exaggerate the distance between anarcho-capitalists and anti-capitalist individualists, the anarcho-capitalists for their part tend to understate it. Recall John Clark's list of the forms of domination that true anarchists oppose: "the authoritarian nature of economic inequality and private property, hierarchical economic structures, traditional education, the patriarchal family, class and racial discrimination, and rigid sex-and age-roles." While anti-capitalist individualist anarchists would generally disagree with private property's inclusion on that list,<sup>23</sup> most of them would agree in opposing the other listed phenomena, whereas most self-described anarcho-capitalists would not.

All the same, the disagreement between anarcho-capitalists and anti-capitalist individualists seems to run deeper for social anarchists than it does for the anti-capitalist individualists themselves. In an early work by Voltairine de Cleyre (1866–1912) and Rachele Yarros (1869–1946), both at that time identifying as individualist anarchists, the authors acknowledge that their position,

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- 19 See, e.g., R. LeFevre, *The Nature of Man and His Government* (Caldwell, Id.: Caxton Printers, 1959); R.P. Murphy, "On Pacifism (Part III of III)," *Free Advice* (6 May 2011), <http://consultingbyrpm.com/blog/2011/05/on-pacifism-part-iii-of-iii.html>. Murphy is a self-described anarcho-capitalist; LeFevre did not use the term, but is generally considered one.
- 20 R.G. Holcombe, "Common Property in Anarcho-Capitalism," *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 19, no. 2 (2005): 3–29.
- 21 M.N. Rothbard, *The Ethics of Liberty* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1982), chapters 10–11.
- 22 M.N. Rothbard, "Confiscation and the Homestead Principle," *Libertarian Forum* 1, no. 6 (15 Jun. 1969): 3–4.
- 23 It may be objected that an occupancy-and-use theory of land tenure does not countenance "private property" in the relevant sense. Perhaps not, but not all anti-capitalist individualists have been occupancy-and-use theorists; indeed, Spooner's views on property in land do not differ significantly from those of most anarcho-capitalists. (And on the issue of intellectual property, Spooner is if anything *more* "capitalistic" than many anarcho-capitalists.)

despite its opposition to the capitalist class's monopoly of the means of production, will still look to anarcho-communists like "capitalistic anarchism" (probably the earliest occurrence of such a phrase), and they answer that they have no objection to having their position so labeled, regarding mere terminology as "indifferent."<sup>24</sup> Benjamin Tucker, for his part, predicted that anarchism would undermine capitalist exploitation, but he saw the connection between the two as causal rather than definitional, and acknowledged that if he had to choose between individual liberty and a more equitable distribution of wealth, he would choose liberty—since what anarchism does for liberty is sufficient to justify it, apart from its economic effects, although the latter are needed to make it fully inspiring.<sup>25</sup> Or, in his more succinct phrasing elsewhere: "*Equality if we can get it, but Liberty at any rate!*"<sup>26</sup> While opposing interest, Tucker noted that he had "no other case against interest than that it cannot appear (except sporadically) under free conditions," and that he would cease to oppose interest if he could be convinced "that interest can persist where free competition prevails."<sup>27</sup>

And just as Tucker expected and predicted that genuinely free markets would *undermine* capitalist institutions, but did not make his support for *laissez-faire* conditional on the accuracy of this prediction, so most anarcho-capitalists expect and predict that capitalist institutions will *persist* under genuinely free markets, but likewise do not make their support for *laissez-faire* conditional on the accuracy of this prediction. For example, anarcho-capitalist Stephan Kinsella writes: "if we set up a private property order, and your mutual aid societies, coops, whatever succeed—fine by me. I just don't think they will."<sup>28</sup>

When two schools of thought agree on abolishing the state and enshrining individual liberty, with one expecting this to abolish capitalist institutions, but willing to accept it if it doesn't, and the other expecting this to maintain and extend capitalist institutions, but likewise willing to accept it if it doesn't, it's difficult to interpret their disagreement as one between anarchists and non-anarchists, rather than between one anarchist school and another.

24 Rosa Slobodinsky and Voltairine de Cleyre, "The Individualist and the Communist: A Dialogue," *The Twentieth Century* 6, no. 25 (18 Jun. 1891): 3–6. "Rosa Slobodinsky" was the pseudonym of Rachele Yarros, whose husband Victor S. Yarros (1865–1956) was a frequent contributor to *Liberty*.

25 Benjamin R. Tucker, "Why I Am An Anarchist," *The Twentieth Century* 4, no. 22 (29 May 1890): 5–6.

26 Benjamin R. Tucker, "Neglected Factors in the Rent Problem," *Liberty* 10, no. 16 (15. Dec. 1894), 4.

27 Benjamin R. Tucker, Editorial, *Liberty* 10, no. 16 (15. Dec. 1894): 4.

28 S. Kinsella, "Left-Libertarians Admit Opposition to 'Capitalism' is Substantive," *Libertarian Standard* (22 Apr. 2010), <http://libertarianstandard.com/2010/04/22/left-libertarians-admit-opposition-to-capitalism-is-substantive>.

Acknowledging individualist anarchism's continuity with classical liberalism, Tucker called himself and his colleagues "unterrified Jeffersonian Democrats," and their program "the logical carrying out of the Manchester doctrine"—albeit charging the Manchester liberals with being "inconsistent" in championing "liberty to compete with the laborer in order to reduce his wages," but not "liberty to compete with the capitalist in order to reduce his usury."<sup>29</sup> Tucker also hailed antistatist classical liberal thinkers like Auberon Herbert (1838–1906), Wordsworth Donisthorpe (1847–1914), and Gustave de Molinari (1819–1912)—the forerunners of today's anarcho-capitalists—as fellow anarchists, despite their largely "capitalistic" views on rent, profit, interest, and the wage system.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the only antistatist thinkers Tucker refused to recognize as fellow anarchists were the anarcho-*communists*,<sup>31</sup> though most individualist anarchists have happily not followed him in this reverse exclusion.

On the contrary, contemporary anti-capitalist individualist anarchists such as Kevin Carson draw readily on both free-market libertarian thinkers like anarcho-capitalist Murray Rothbard (1926–1995) and minarchist Chris Matthew Sciabarra, and anti-market social anarchist thinkers like Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) and David Graeber. While agreeing with Iain McKay that "mainstream anarcho-capitalism is a pretty radical departure from classical anarchism," Carson opposes going "so far as to say an-caps can't be anarchists by definition," since "anarcho-capitalism isn't a hard and fast category," the "boundaries between an-caps and other anarchists are pretty blurry," and there are "leftish-leaning anarcho-caps ... influenced by anti-capitalist strands of classical liberalism."<sup>32</sup> While defending an occupancy-and-use standard of land tenure, Carson believes that a more Lockean approach, even the provisoless Lockeanism favored by Rothbardian anarcho-capitalists, would, if consistently applied, still produce a drastic reduction in the power of landlords.<sup>33</sup>

29 Benjamin R. Tucker, "State Socialism and Anarchism: How Far They Agree, and Wherein They Differ," *Liberty* 5, no. 16 (10 Mar. 1888): 2–3, 6.

30 Benjamin R. Tucker, "Auberon Herbert and His Work," *Liberty* 3, no. 10 (23 May 1885): 4; Benjamin R. Tucker, "A Prophecy in Course of Fulfillment," *Liberty* 5, no. 18 (14 Apr. 1888): 7; S.R. [S.H. Randall?], "An Economist on the Future Society," *Liberty* 14, no. 23 (Sept. 1904), 2. Randall's piece on Molinari appeared in a section of Tucker's periodical *Liberty* that Tucker explicitly reserved for articles with whose "central purpose and general tenor" he was in personal agreement.

31 Tucker, "State Socialism and Anarchism."

32 K.A. Carson. "You Will Be Assimilated: Resistance is Futile," *Mutualist Blog* (9 Aug. 2006), <http://mutualist.blogspot.com/2006/08/you-will-be-assimilated-resistance-is.html>.

33 K.A. Carson, "In Defense—Such As It Is—of Usufructory Land Ownership," *Bleeding Heart Libertarians* (26 Apr. 2012), <http://bleedingheartlibertarians.com/2012/04/in-defense-such-as-it-is-of-usufructory-land-ownership>.

Another contemporary anti-capitalist individualist anarchist, Anna Morgenstern, maintains that the view that “anarcho-capitalists aren’t really anarchists because anarchism entails anti-capitalism” is “actually backwards,” since inasmuch as they “genuinely wish to eliminate the state,” anarcho-capitalists “are anarchists, but ... aren’t really capitalists, no matter how much they want to claim they are”—because without the state, “mass ... concentration of capital is impossible,” and so consequently is “wage slavery,” without which “there’s nothing most people would recognize as ‘capitalism.’”<sup>34</sup> Accordingly, contrary to the social anarchist practice of placing the “anarcho” in “anarcho-capitalism” in scare-quotes, Morgenstern places the “capitalism” in scare-quotes instead.

Whether one regards a given thinker as a mere heretic or an actual infidel—i.e., a dissident within the fold or an outsider to the fold—generally depends on that thinker’s degree of distance or deviation from one’s own position. Since anti-capitalist individualists fall between social anarchists and anarcho-capitalists in terms of doctrinal similarity, it’s not so surprising that (a) social anarchists should be inclined to treat anti-capitalist individualists as erring comrades and anarcho-capitalists as outsiders; (b) anarcho-capitalists should likewise be inclined to treat anti-capitalist individualists as erring comrades and social anarchists as outsiders; and (c) anti-capitalist individualist anarchists should be inclined to treat both social anarchists and anarcho-capitalists merely as erring comrades, not outsiders. Given my own sympathies with the anti-capitalist individualist anarchist position, my preference for (c) is unsurprising.

But even social anarchists have not always been as hostile to free-market libertarianism as are McKay and his *Anarchist FAQ*. Murray Bookchin (1921–2006), for example, declared in 1979 that all those who “resist authority” and “defend the rights of the individual,” be they “anarcho-communists, anarcho-syndicalists, or libertarians who believe in free enterprise,” represent the “true left,” to whom he felt “much closer, ideologically,” than to “totalitarian liberals and Marxist-Leninists,” adding that what anarcho-capitalists advocate is in fact “not capitalism.”<sup>35</sup> (Bookchin’s attitude toward anarcho-capitalists was somewhat less friendly later in life; but then his attitude toward anarchists of virtually all varieties was somewhat less friendly later in life.)

Noam Chomsky’s attitude toward anarcho-capitalism lies somewhere between McKay’s and Bookchin’s. Chomsky regards “free contract” as impossible

34 A. Morgenstern, “Anarcho-‘Capitalism’ is Impossible,” *Center for a Stateless Society* (19 Sept. 2010), at <http://c4ss.org/content/4043>; cf. A. Morgenstern, “Anarchism And Capitalism—A Revisitation,” *Center for a Stateless Society* (3 Feb. 2014), <http://c4ss.org/content/24289>.

35 L.J. Newman, Interview with Murray Bookchin, *Reason* (Oct. 1979), 34–39.

under conditions of corporate power and extreme socioeconomic inequality, and so considers that anarcho-capitalism, “if ever implemented, would lead to forms of tyranny and oppression that have few counterparts in human history”; nevertheless, he notes that “[n]o one owns the term ‘anarchism,’” acknowledges that he is “in substantial agreement with people who consider themselves anarcho-capitalists on a whole range of issues,” and “admire[s] their commitment to rationality.”<sup>36</sup> (Of course an anti-capitalist individualist anarchist would argue that the socioeconomic inequality and corporate power to which Chomsky points are on Chomsky’s own showing largely the product of state intervention rather than free markets, and so should not be expected to feature in any realistic implementation of anarcho-capitalists’ ideals, whatever the anarcho-capitalists themselves expect.)<sup>37</sup> And David Graeber, who is extremely dismissive of libertarianism, and convinced that an anarchist society would have no wage labor and not much resembling a market, nevertheless notes, in somewhat Tucker-like spirit: “But who knows, maybe I’m wrong. I am less interested in working out ... the detailed architecture of what a free society would be like than in creating the conditions that would enable us to find out.”<sup>38</sup>

If the anti-capitalist individualist anarchist position is correct, then anarcho-capitalists’ tendency to assume that genuine free markets would be dominated by familiar capitalist institutions like corporate power and the wage system (a tendency, it must be noted, often shared with social anarchists) is a failing, and their tendency toward complacency about this purported result (a tendency *not* shared with social anarchists) is a failing too. But are such failings so much greater than, e.g., Proudhon’s misogyny, anti-Semitism, and homophobia, that they license shutting anarcho-capitalists, but not Proudhon, out of the anarchist movement? Are all the complications and nuances of the relevant theories to be flattened out into a wall of separation between two caricatures? And are social anarchists, rather than individualist anarchists, to claim the authority to decide what is or is not a variety of individualist anarchism—like a Muslim trying to convince Episcopalians not to recognize Mormons as true Christians?

36 T. Lane, “On Anarchism: Noam Chomsky Interviewed,” *ZNet* (23 Dec. 1996), <http://www.chomsky.info/interviews/19961223.htm>.

37 R.T. Long, “Chomsky’s Augustinian Anarchism,” *Art of the Possible* (4 Sept. 2008), <http://praxeology.net/aotp.htm#2>.

38 D. Graeber, *The Democracy Project: A History, a Crisis, a Movement* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2013), 193.

John Clark writes (in another context, but I find his words applicable here, whether or not Clark himself would):<sup>39</sup>

The idea that there is an “unbridgeable chasm” between two viewpoints that share certain common presuppositions and goals, and whose practices are in some ways interrelated, is a bit suspect from the outset ... Whereas nondialectical thought merely opposes one reality to another in an abstract manner, or else places them inertly beside one another, a dialectical analysis examines the ways in which various realities presuppose one another, constitute one another, challenge the identity of one another, and push one another to the limits of their development. Accordingly, one important quality of such an analysis is that it helps those with divergent viewpoints see the ways in which their positions are not mutually exclusive but can instead be mutually realized in a further development of each.<sup>40</sup>

In my view, anarcho-capitalism is best understood a subset of individualist anarchism, which in turn is a subset of both libertarianism (in the free-market sense) and anarchism.<sup>41</sup>

### Libertarian Anarchism Through the Nineteenth Century

The viability of a stateless society emerges as a theme in classical liberalism at least as early as John Locke’s (1632–1704) *Second Treatise of Government* in 1689.<sup>42</sup> Defenders of absolute monarchy such as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) had maintained that a society without a state would be so chaotic that virtually any state, no matter how bad, is better than none, with the upshot that rebellions against established authority, given the danger they pose of triggering

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39 Clark’s words quoted above about the essence of anarchism suggest that he might not.

40 J. Clark, *Bridging the Unbridgeable Chasm: On Bookchin’s Critique of the Anarchist Tradition* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Anarchist Studies, 2008).

41 More fully, libertarianism divides into minarchism and individualist anarchism; individualist anarchism divides into anarcho-capitalism and various anti-capitalist forms of individualist anarchism; and anarchism divides into individualist anarchism and social anarchism. Thus individualist anarchism (at least in its usual market-friendly form) represents the intersection of free-market libertarianism with anarchism.

42 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* [1689], ed. P. Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

state collapse, are to be strictly avoided.<sup>43</sup> Locke, a defender of and partial participant in just such a rebellion (the English Revolution of 1688), argued in response that a stateless society, while severely suboptimal, could be expected to exhibit enough security and order to be preferable to absolutism, making rebellion against an absolute government less risky than Hobbes had supposed. A century later, in his 1776 *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith's (1723–1790) “invisible hand” account of the emergence and maintenance of social order via market incentives without top-down direction helped to bolster the case for the viability of statelessness.<sup>44</sup> Thus Locke and Smith, major precursors to today's libertarian movement, both helped to open the door to a private-property version of anarchism, even if neither was prepared to walk through it.

We also find Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) speculating, in 1787, that a society “without government” might well be the “best” if only it were not “inconsistent with any great degree of population”;<sup>45</sup> here the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712–1778) *Second Discourse*<sup>46</sup> may also be operative, though in his attitude toward commerce Jefferson was closer to Locke and Smith than to Rousseau (as is shown by Jefferson's enthusiasm for the *laissez-faire* economist Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836), recently described as the “first libertarian,”<sup>47</sup> two of whose works Jefferson had personally translated).<sup>48</sup>

In 1792 the door to market anarchism was pushed still farther open by Thomas Paine (1737–1809) in Part 2 of his *Rights of Man*; drawing on both Locke and Smith, Paine developed a more optimistic picture of the stateless society than either. Most of the “order which reigns among mankind,” Paine maintains, is “not the effect of government,” but instead arises from “the principles of society and the natural constitution of man,” maintained by a combination

43 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* [1651], ed. R. Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

44 Adam Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776], 2 vols., ed. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner (Indianapolis, In.: Liberty Fund, 1982).

45 Thomas Jefferson, Letter to James Madison (30 Jan. 1787), [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Letter\\_to\\_James\\_Madison\\_-\\_January\\_30,\\_1787](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Letter_to_James_Madison_-_January_30,_1787).

46 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Amsterdam: Marc Michel Rey, 1755).

47 J.T. Levy, “The Continuing History of Bleeding-Heart Libertarianism,” *Bleeding Heart Libertarians* (23 May 2012), <http://bleedingheartlibertarians.com/2012/05/the-continuing-history-of-bleeding-heart-libertarianism>.

48 Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy, *A Commentary and Review of Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws*, trans. Thomas Jefferson (Philadelphia: W. Duane, 1811); Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy, *A Treatise on Political Economy*, trans. Thomas Jefferson (Washington, D.C.: Joseph Milligan, 1817).



of “reciprocal interest” and “social affections.” The “safety and prosperity of the individual and of the whole” depends far more on the “unceasing circulation of interest” than on “anything which even the best instituted government can perform,” since “society performs for itself almost everything which is ascribed to government.” Thus “government makes but a small part of civilized life,” and the “more perfect civilization is, the less occasion has it for government”; indeed, social order “existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished”<sup>49</sup>—in support of which claim Paine points to the successful maintenance of order in the American colonies during the Revolution, when the British governments were suspended and the home-grown ones not yet well-established.<sup>50</sup> Paine did not walk through this door either, regarding government as needed to “supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent”; but he certainly made the prospects of a stateless, market-based social order look attractive and practicable, and indeed exercised a major influence on William Godwin (1756–1836), often described as the first modern anarchist—even if Godwin did not share Paine’s emphasis on market incentives.<sup>51</sup> (Godwin had in fact helped get *Rights of Man* published.)

In the same era, another classical liberal, David Hume (1711–1776), was likewise making arguments from which an anarchist moral could be drawn, even if he had no interest in drawing one himself. In “Of the Original Contract,”<sup>52</sup>

49 Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* [1791–1792], ed. H. Collins (New York: Penguin, 1984), 163–165.

50 Ironically, Paine’s nemesis Edmund Burke (1729–1797) had made the same point in his 1775 speech on *Conciliation with the Colonies*: “Anarchy is found tolerable,” as Massachusetts has “subsisted in a considerable degree of health and vigor, for near a twelvemonth, without Governor, without public Council, without Judges, without executive Magistrates.” Edmund Burke, *Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq., on Moving His Resolutions for Conciliation with the Colonies* (London: J. Dodsley, 1775), 36. Burke himself had written a youthful defense of anarchism, though purportedly with satirical intent: *A Vindication of Natural Society: Or, a View of the Miseries and Evils Arising to Mankind from Every Species of Artificial Society* (London: M. Cooper, 1756). On Burke’s probable motivations in writing the *Vindication*, see I. Kramnick, *The Rage of Edmund Burke: Portrait of an Ambivalent Conservative* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

51 William Godwin, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, and Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness*, 2 vols. (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1793). Godwin’s anarchism is difficult to categorize; in his moral condemnation of private property he sounds like an anarcho-communist, while in his insistence that private property not be forcibly interfered with he sounds like an individualist.

52 David Hume, “Of the Original Contract” [1758], in *Essays Moral, Political, Literary*, ed. E.F. Miller (Indianapolis, In.: Liberty Fund, 1987), 465–487.



Hume argues that no actual government has ever rested on a social contract. His aim is to disparage social-contract theory, but his conclusions could instead have the result of casting doubt on the legitimacy of all existing governments. Likewise, in “Of the First Principles of Government,”<sup>53</sup> Hume revives (perhaps unknowingly) the argument of Renaissance radical Étienne de la Boétie (1530–1563)<sup>54</sup> that, inasmuch as the rulers in any society are vastly outnumbered by those they rule, all political power ultimately rests on popular acquiescence rather than force. Unlike La Boétie, Hume is seeking to show the non-necessity of revolution rather than its ease; but his arguments could easily be turned (as they in fact were by Godwin, who explicitly cites Hume on this point)<sup>55</sup> to establish that since popular opinion rather than governmental force is what maintains social order, the institution of government is dispensable.

It is in the 19th century that the radicalization of classical liberal ideas in a market anarchist direction comes into its own. Jean-Baptiste Say (1767–1832), France’s leading *laissez-faire* economist, speculated that market mechanisms might one day replace the state entirely, though he offered few details.<sup>56</sup> Three of Say’s adherents—Charles Comte (1782–1837), Charles Dunoyer (1786–1862), and Augustin Thierry (1795–1856), editors of the radical liberal journal *Le Censeur* (1814–1815) and its successor *Le Censeur Européen* (1817–1820)<sup>57</sup>—led the libertarian wing of the so-called “industrialist” movement, which looked forward to the establishment of a society based on what they called *industrial* relations, i.e. production and trade, rather than on parasitism and force.<sup>58</sup> The *Censeur* group developed a theory of class struggle according to

53 David Hume, “Of the First Principles of Government” [1758], in *Essays Moral, Political, Literary*, 32–36.

54 Étienne de la Boétie, *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire ou Le Contr’un* [1574], ed. C. Ovtcharenko (Chicoutimi, Qué: Bibliothèque Paul-Émile-Boulet, 2009).

55 Godwin, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, I, 98.

56 A. Gabriel, “Was Jean-Baptiste Say a Market Anarchist?” *Mises Daily* (28 Mar. 2007), <http://mises.org/library/was-jean-baptiste-say-market-anarchist>.

57 The essential study of the *Censeur* group is David M. Hart, “Class Analysis, Slavery and the Industrialist Theory of History in French Liberal Thought, 1814–1830: The Radical Liberalism of Charles Comte and Charles Dunoyer” (Ph.D. dissertation, King’s College Cambridge, 1994).

58 The movement’s more authoritarian wing was led by Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825) and Auguste Comte (1798–1857)—the latter no relation to Charles. Both wings viewed existing states as systems of unjust expropriation of an industrial class (a group including both capitalists and workers) for the benefit of a parasitic class. But despite initial collaboration, the groups soon diverged, as the authoritarian wing favored replacing the parasitic rulership with representatives of the industrial class, while for the *Censeur* side

which differential access to state power, rather than differential access to the means of production, is the key to class rule, so that state power itself is what must primarily be opposed if class rule is to be overcome. (Karl Marx points to Thierry's work in particular as a precursor of his own class theory.)<sup>59</sup> While these authors never called explicitly for the abolition of the state apparatus, their language skirted the edges of such a position; Thierry, for example, looked forward to the day when "[f]ederations will replace states" and the "tendency toward government ... will cede to the free community,"<sup>60</sup> and Dunoyer referred to the nation-states of his day as "monstrous aggregations ... formed and made necessary by the spirit of domination," prophesying that the "spirit of industry will dissolve them" and thereby "municipalize the world," as "centers of actions ... multiply" until the entire human race constitutes "a single people ... bound together without confusion and without violence by ... the most peaceful and the most profitable of relationships."<sup>61</sup>

The first thinker to use "anarchist" as a label for his own view rather than a term of abuse, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon called for voluntary associations of workers to replace both capitalist firms and the state, and envisioned a mutual bank whereby workers could provide credit to one another at cost rather than relying on privileged banks. While he crossed dialectical swords with the *Censeur* group, his possible debt to them may be seen in his call for the "dissolution of government in the economic organism,"<sup>62</sup> echoing their call for governmental relations to yield to industrial ones.

Does Proudhon count as an individualist anarchist? An inspiration to social anarchist and individualists alike, Proudhon fits comfortably in neither category.<sup>63</sup> Unlike most social anarchists, Proudhon defends market

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the problem was not the personnel in power but the power hierarchy itself, and a truly "industrial" social order demanded a flatter, more decentralized, and more voluntaristic form of social organization.

59 Karl Marx, Letter to Joseph Weydemeyer (5 March 1852) and Letter to Friedrich Engels (27 July 1854), in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works: 1852–1855*, vol. 39 (New York: International Publishers, 1983), 58, 472.

60 Augustin Thierry, Review of Destutt de Tracy, *Commentaire sur l'Esprit des lois de Montesquieu; suivi d'Observations inédites de Condorcet, sur le vingt-neuvième livre du même ouvrage* (Liège: J.F. Desoer, 1817), in *Censeur Européen* VII (27 Mar. 1818): 191–260. Translation mine.

61 Charles-Barthélemy Dunoyer, *L'Industrie et la Morale considérées dans leurs rapports avec la liberté* (Paris: Sautlet, 1825), 366–367. Translation mine.

62 Proudhon, *Idée générale de la révolution*, 277.

63 R.T. Long, "Anarchism," in *Routledge Companion to Social and Political Philosophy*, eds. F. D'Agostino and G. Gaus (London: Routledge, 2012), 220. By far the best English-language

competition. To be sure, he opposes private property; but Proudhon distinguishes two forms of private ownership, a more absolutist form that he opposed (“property”) and a less absolutist form that he defended (“possession”);<sup>64</sup> hence in labeling *property* theft, he is not calling all *private ownership* theft. On the other hand, at least in Proudhon’s early writings possession is even less absolutist than the occupancy-and-use holdings championed by self-described Proudhonians like Tucker (e.g., being subject to redistribution with changes in population). But while initially defending possession as a dialectical synthesis of the mutually opposed concepts of *property* and *communism*, Proudhon in later years becomes convinced that opposites must be balanced against one another rather than synthesized, and so makes room in his theory for “property” in the formerly pejorative sense as a counterweight to the organized power of society.<sup>65</sup>

More directly in the line of intellectual descent from Say and the *Censeur* group was the Belgian-born economist Gustave de Molinari (1819–1912).<sup>66</sup> Molinari is the first thinker to describe, in 1849, how private security companies competing on a free market could replace the security functions of the state, rendering a territorial-monopoly state unnecessary<sup>67</sup>—a model later developed in more detail by both anarcho-capitalists and anti-capitalist individualists. Molinari conceived the ability on the part of consumers to switch security providers without relocating geographically as a more effective check on the growth of power than the ballot under a democratic state. Though declining to call himself an anarchist, Molinari did describe the process by which

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collection of Proudhon’s writings is I. McKay, ed., *Property is Theft! A Pierre-Joseph Proudhon Reader* (Oakland, Calif.: AK Press, 2011). The volume does tend, however, to stress those aspects of Proudhon’s thought that are most congenial to social anarchists rather than individualist anarchists. See S.P. Wilbur, Review of Iain McKay, ed., *Property Is Theft!*, in *Libertarian Labyrinth* (2014), <http://library.libertarian-labyrinth.org/items/show/3154>.

64 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Qu’est-ce que la propriété? ou Recherche sur le principe du Droit et du Gouvernement* (Paris: J.-F. Brocard, 1840); Proudhon, *Système des contradictions économiques ou Philosophie de la misère*, 2 vols. (Paris: Guillaumin, 1846).

65 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Théorie de la Propriété* (Paris: Librairie Internationale, 1866).

66 The two chief studies of Molinari’s thought are D.M. Hart, “Gustave de Molinari and the Anti-Étatiste Liberal Tradition” (B.A. thesis, Macquarie University, 1979) and G. Minart, *Gustave de Molinari (1819–1912): Pour un gouvernement à bon marché dans un milieu libre* (Paris: Institut Charles Coquelin, 2012).

67 Gustave de Molinari, “De la production de la sécurité,” *Journal des Economistes* (Feb. 1849): 277–290; Gustave de Molinari, *Les Soirées de la Rue Saint-Lazare: Entretiens sur les lois économiques et défense de la propriété* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1849).

government could be replaced by market mechanisms as the “diffusion of the state within society,”<sup>68</sup> a clear echo of Proudhon. While not an opponent of the wage system, Molinari did regard workers as subject to an unfair disadvantage in bargaining power *vis-à-vis* capitalists, and advocated a system of voluntary labor-exchanges to redress the imbalance by fostering greater mobility of labor.<sup>69</sup>

One thinker possibly influenced by Molinari is his fellow Belgian Paul-Émile de Puydt (1810–1891), who coined the term “panarchy” for his proposed system of competing political regimes within a single territory.<sup>70</sup> Another is Anselme Bellegarrigue (1839–c. 1869),<sup>71</sup> whose ideas resemble an amalgamation of Proudhon, Molinari, and Stirner, and whose 1850 publication *Anarchy: A Journal of Order* appears to be the first anarchist periodical to feature the word in its title.<sup>72</sup> Bellegarrigue was more hostile to the wage system than was Molinari, but shared his enthusiasm for the market provision of security, though he was vaguer about the details.

On the other side of the Channel, one of the most important pioneers of anti-capitalist individualist anarchism is Thomas Hodgskin,<sup>73</sup> who was already calling for the replacement of governments by private enterprise as early as 1820.<sup>74</sup> Accepting Locke’s theory of natural property rights, Hodgskin argued that the property of the landed and capitalist classes originated not in the legitimate Lockean methods of homesteading and voluntary trade, but in governmental grants of privilege. Hodgskin’s theory of class (which, like that of

68 Gustave de Molinari, *L'évolution politique et la révolution* (Paris: C. Reinwald, 1884), 394.

69 Gustave de Molinari, *Les bourses du travail* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1893).

70 Paul Émile de Puydt, “Panarchie,” *Revue Trimestrielle* 27 (Jul. 1860): 222–245. De Puydt’s version of panarchy maintained a role for a monopoly state as a legal framework within which the competing regimes would operate, but subsequent thinkers who have built on de Puydt’s ideas have dispensed with this feature; see Max Nettlau, “Panarchie: Eine verschollene Idee von 1860,” *Der Sozialist* (15 Mar. 1909); Gian Piero de Bellis, “On Panarchy: A Brief Review and a Personal View” (2009), <http://www.panarchy.org/debellis/onpanarchy.html>.

71 M. Perradeau, *Anselme Bellegarrigue: Le premier des libertaires* (Paris: Libertaires Editions, 2012).

72 Anselme Bellegarrigue, *L'Anarchie: journal de l'ordre* (Apr.-May 1850); cf. Anselme Bellegarrigue, *Au fait, au fait!! Interprétation de l'idée démocratique* (Paris: Garnier, 1848).

73 The best study of Hodgskin is D. Stack, *Nature and Artifice: The Life and Thought of Thomas Hodgskin, 1787–1869* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1997), though the earlier study by E. Halévy, *Thomas Hodgskin*, trans. A.J. Taylor (London: Ernest Benn, 1956) remains useful.

74 Thomas Hodgskin, *Travels in the North of Germany: Describing the Present State of the Social and Political Institutions in That Country, Particularly in the Kingdom of Hanover*, 2 vols, (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1820).

the *Censeur* group, influenced Marx without being adopted by him) assigned responsibility for class rule not simply, as for Marx, to differential access to the means of production, nor yet simply, as for the *Censeur* group, to differential access to state power, but rather to differential access to the means of production grounded in differential access to state power. Abolish the state, let economic *laissez-faire* reign, and the power of landlords and capitalists would wither away.<sup>75</sup> Since distribution of property in violation of Lockean property rights is the chief cause of crime, a post-governmental society would have little need of police services.<sup>76</sup>

Hodgskin's protégé Herbert Spencer contributed to the pro-market, anti-state tradition with his 1850 book *Social Statics*,<sup>77</sup> a work that has influenced both anarcho-capitalists and anti-capitalist individualists, without being precisely to the taste of either. Defending a "law of equal freedom" (explicitly extended to women, children, and non-whites) as necessary for the full development of each individual's faculties, Spencer maintained that government belongs to "a particular phase of human development," and will likely be succeeded by "one in which it shall have become extinct."<sup>78</sup> He argued further that inasmuch as only voluntary associations are legitimate, any individual has a right to withdraw all connection with and support for the state.<sup>79</sup> Unlike his contemporary Molinari, however, Spencer did not envision the possibility of the dissident's transferring his affiliation to a rival security agency; in general, Spencer expected order in a stateless society to be maintained not by the sorts of economic incentives Molinari was appealing to, but instead to the general tendency of human nature to evolve toward a condition of greater and greater

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75 Thomas Hodgskin, *Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital; or the Unproductiveness of Capital Proved with Reference to the Present Combinations Amongst Journeymen, by a Labourer* (London: B. Steil, 1825); Thomas Hodgskin, *Popular Political Economy: Four Lectures Delivered at the London Mechanics' Institution* (London: Tait, 1827); Thomas Hodgskin, *The Natural and Artificial Rights of Property Contrasted* (London: B. Steil, 1832). Thomas Hodgskin, "Peace, Law, and Order": *A Lecture Delivered in the Hall of the National Association* (London: Hetherington, 1842).

76 Thomas Hodgskin, *What Shall We Do With Our Criminals? Don't Create Them: A Lecture Delivered at St. Martin's Hall* (London: Groombridge, 1857); Thomas Hodgskin, *Our Chief Crime: Cause and Cure: Second Lecture on What Shall We Do With Our Criminals* (London: Groombridge, 1857).

77 Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics: Or, the Conditions Essential to Human Happiness Specified, and the First of Them Developed* (London: John Chapman, 1851). While 1851 is the stated publication date, the book actually appeared in late 1850.

78 *Ibid.*, 13.

79 *Ibid.*, 206.

altruism. In any case, the anarchist dimension of Spencer's thought in *Social Statics* becomes considerably moderated in his subsequent work, and later editions even deleted the chapter on "The Right to Ignore the State."

It's difficult to say to what extent Spencer counts as a "capitalist" thinker. He rejected private property in land,<sup>80</sup> and insisted on the continuity and mutual dependence between governmental and private forms of oppression. On the other hand, most of his views on property rights (not counting land) are indistinguishable from those of anarcho-capitalists. Sympathetic and unsympathetic attitudes toward the poor coexist cheek by jowl throughout his work; and while Spencer never held the "Social Darwinist" view often attributed to him, that the weaker and less fit should be allowed to die off to improve the species, the unsympathetic attitudes tend to predominate in his later work, to the point that Benjamin Tucker accused him of having "become a champion of the capitalistic class."<sup>81</sup> On the other hand, even toward the end of his life Spencer continued to regard the wage system as a vestige of slavery, and to look forward to its replacement by workers' cooperatives.<sup>82</sup> While Spencer may have retreated from the antistatist implications of his principles, those implications were developed further by such Spencerians as Auberon Herbert and Wordsworth Donisthorpe, whose work Tucker simultaneously hailed as anarchistic and criticised (sometimes) as too capitalistic.

Across the Atlantic, Josiah Warren (1798–1874), an individualist defector from one of Robert Owen's collectivistic experimental communities, was establishing his own individualist communities (Utopia, Ohio and Modern Times, New York) with the help of his chief disciple, Stephen Pearl Andrews (1812–1886);<sup>83</sup> Warren's 1833 *Peaceful Revolutionist* is often described as the first anarchist periodical. Warren and Andrews championed the labor theory of

80 In a mostly glowing review, the only major objection raised by the so-called "socialist" Hodgskin against the so-called "capitalist" Spencer was that Spencer showed insufficient respect for private property in land! See Thomas Hodgskin, Review of Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*, in *The Economist* 9, no. 389 (8 Feb. 1851): 149–151.

81 Benjamin R. Tucker, "The Sin of Herbert Spencer," *Liberty* 2, no. 16 (17 May 1884): 170–171.

82 Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, vol. 3 (New York: D. Appleton, 1899), 551–552, 573.

83 C. Sartwell, ed., *The Practical Anarchist: Writings of Josiah Warren* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011); Stephen Pearl Andrews, *The Science of Society, No. 1: The True Constitution of Government in the Sovereignty of the Individual As the Final Development of Protestantism, Democracy and Socialism* (New York: William J. Baner, 1851); Stephen Pearl Andrews, *The Science of Society, No. 2: Cost the Limit of Price: A Scientific Measure of Honesty in Trade As One of the Fundamental Principles in the Solution of the Social Problem* (New York: Fowlers and Wells, 1852); M.B. Stern, *The Pantarch: A Biography of Stephen Pearl Andrews* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1968).



value as a moral principle (while proposing to secure adherence to this rule by education and example rather than by force of law), and upheld the principles of “equitable commerce” and “the sovereignty of the individual, to be exercised at his own cost.” Both thinkers (but Andrews in particular) also championed racial and gender equality.

Individualist anarchists who followed in their footsteps, developing a fusion of antistatism, abolitionism, feminism, free love, antimilitarism, and labor empowerment, included William Batchelder Greene (1819–1878); Ezra H. Heywood (1829–1893)<sup>84</sup> and his wife Angela (1840–1935); Moses Harman (1830–1910) and his daughter Lillian (1869–1929); Dyer D. Lum (1839–1893); Francis Dashwood Tandy (1867–1913); Clara Dixon Davidson (1851–1916); Sarah E. Holmes (1847–1929); Joseph Labadie (1850–1933);<sup>85</sup> Gertrude B. Kelly (1862–1934); and of course the aforementioned Spooner, Tucker, and de Cleyre. Most of these thinkers were associated with Tucker’s journal *Liberty* (1881–1908);<sup>86</sup> some of them incorporated ideas from European thinkers like Proudhon, Stirner, and Spencer (with Spencer’s “law of equal freedom” and his theory of historical progress from “militant” to “industrial” society being especially popular), while others did not. These thinkers were, and often called themselves, “socialists,” in the sense of calling for worker control of industry; several of them (Warren, Andrews, Greene, and by one account Spooner) were even members of the American branch of the First International. But their conception of what it meant to implement socialism involved not the suppression, but rather the emancipation, of markets and private property. By contrast with Warren and Andrews, later thinkers like Tucker regarded the labor theory of value as a predictive rather than a normative principle; in a free and competitive market, they held, cost would tend to determine price, and so urging sellers to charge no more than cost would be superfluous. The 19th-century American individualists are covered in more detail elsewhere in this volume,<sup>87</sup> so I shall pass onward to the following century.

84 M. Blatt, *Free Love and Anarchism: The Biography of Ezra Heywood* (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

85 C. Anderson, *All-American Anarchist: Joseph A. Labadie and the Labor Movement* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998).

86 For the views of the various writers associated with *Liberty*, see F.H. Brooks, ed., *The Individualist Anarchists: An Anthology of Liberty, 1881–1908* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1994), and W. McElroy, *The Debates of Liberty: An Overview of Individualist Anarchism, 1881–1908* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2002). For the American individualist anarchist movement more broadly, see J. Martin, *Men Against the State: The Expositors of Individualist Anarchism, 1827–1908* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Ralph Myles, 1970).

87 See Kevin Carson’s chapter on “Market Anarchism” in this volume.

### Libertarian Anarchism in the 20th Century

Contemporary free-market libertarianism grew out of the revival of classical liberalism in the early to mid-20th century,<sup>88</sup> by such figures as Ludwig von Mises (1881–1973), Isabel Paterson (1866–1961), Friedrich A. Hayek (1889–1992), Ayn Rand (1905–1982), and Milton Friedman (1912–2006)—thinkers who for the most part challenged the legitimacy of neither monopoly capital nor the state.<sup>89</sup> But just as with Locke, Smith, and Paine, these founders of modern libertarianism opened doors through which others would walk. The stress placed by economists like Mises, Hayek, and Friedman on the ability of self-ordering markets to produce and maintain social coordination without central direction helped to make statelessness seem viable, while Rand's insistence on a moral principle banning the initiation of force made the state's claim to a coercive territorial monopoly look dubious. From the 1960s onward, growing numbers of libertarians who had cut their teeth on the likes of Mises and Rand—writers such as Morris and Linda Tannehill,<sup>90</sup> Roy A. Childs,<sup>91</sup> David Friedman (Milton Friedman's more radical son),<sup>92</sup> Randy Barnett,<sup>93</sup> and most prominently Mises's protégé Murray N. Rothbard<sup>94</sup>—began to revive and develop the idea of replacing the state with competing protection agencies.

Firms that were inefficient, or abused power, or solved inter-firm disputes by the costly method of warfare rather than the cheaper method of arbitration, would find themselves losing customers to more civilized competitors; and customer demand for intrusive or bigoted policies would decline once confronted with the need to pay the full cost of such policies rather than

88 For the twentieth-century rise and development of free-market libertarianism in the United States, see B. Doherty, *Radicals for Capitalism: A Freewheeling History of the Modern American Libertarian Movement* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2009).

89 Those who did continue to uphold the anti-state, anti-monopoly position were mainly followers of Henry George, such as Albert Jay Nock (1870–1945) and Frank Chodorov (1887–1966).

90 M. Tannehill and L. Tannehill, *The Market for Liberty* (Washington D.C.: Libertarian Review Foundation, 1970).

91 R.A. Childs, "An Open Letter to Ayn Rand: Objectivism and the State," *Rational Individualist* 1, no. 10 (Aug. 1969): 4–12. This was a reply to Ayn Rand, "The Nature of Government," in *The Virtue of Selfishness* (New York: New American Library, 1964), 125–134.

92 Friedman, *Machinery of Freedom*, op. cit.

93 R.E. Barnett, *The Structure of Liberty: Justice and the Rule of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

94 M.N. Rothbard, *For a New Liberty* (New York: Macmillan, 1973); Rothbard, *The Ethics of Liberty*, op. cit.



socializing them through the ballot box. Not all of these writers were familiar with the earlier history of such ideas; but Rothbard and his associates were, and played an important role in publicizing and reviving interest in thinkers like Molinari, Spooner, and Tucker. They also pointed to historical examples of non-state legal systems from medieval Iceland to the American frontier as demonstrating the efficacy of competitive security provision.<sup>95</sup>

In the 1960s, Rothbard and several of his allies, including Leonard Liggio and former Goldwater speechwriter Karl Hess,<sup>96</sup> welcomed the emerging New Left as a positive liberatory force,<sup>97</sup> and a welcome alternative both to the militarism of mainstream liberalism and conservatism, and the bureaucratic authoritarianism of the Old Left. The Rothbardians drew a free-market moral from the works of Gabriel Kolko and other New Left revisionist historians who debunked the traditional reading of the Progressive movement and its New Deal successor as an attack on big business on behalf of the downtrodden<sup>98</sup> (Kolko argued that the corporate elite were the chief beneficiaries of, and often the chief lobbyists for, supposedly anti-business legislation); Rothbardians also sought alliances with such groups as the Students for a Democratic Society and the Black Panthers. But the effective collapse of the New Left soon sent Rothbard and many (not all) of his associates rebounding in a severely rightward direction—though Samuel E. Konkin III and his “Movement of the Libertarian Left,” with its hostility to the wage system, and its anti-electoral,

95 The standard literature on historical examples cited by free-market anarchists is surveyed in T.W. Bell, “Polycentric Law,” *Humane Studies Review* 7, no. 1 (Winter 1991/1992): 1–10. Contributions since Bell’s bibliographic essay was published include T.L. Anderson and P.J. Hill, *The Not So Wild, Wild West: Property Rights on the Frontier* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004); P.T. Leeson, *Anarchy Unbound: Why Self-Governance Works Better Than You Think* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); and E.P. Stringham, *Private Governance: Creating Order in Economic and Social Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

96 Hess has also been credited with originating the Occupy movement’s language of the 99% against the 1%. See M. Tkacik, “The Radical Right-Wing Roots of Occupy Wall Street,” *Reuters Blog* (20 Sept. 20, 2012), <http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2012/09/20/the-radical-right-wing-roots-of-occupy-wall-street>.

97 See, e.g., the Rothbard-edited journals *Left and Right* (1965–1968) and, at least in its early years, *Libertarian Forum* (1969–1984). Especially relevant is M.N. Rothbard, “Liberty and the New Left,” *Left and Right* 1, no. 2 (Aug. 1965): 35–67.

98 See, e.g., R.A. Childs, “Big Business and the Rise of American Statism,” *Reason* (Feb. 1971): 9–12; R.A. Childs, “Big Business and the Rise of American Statism,” *Reason* (Mar. 1971): 12–18; cf. John Payne, “Rothbard’s Time on the Left,” *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 19, no. 1 (2005): 7–24.

“agorist” strategy of building networks of black-market enterprises to replace the state, kept alive an aspect of the period of left/libertarian rapprochement.<sup>99</sup>

In the 1970s, the debate between minarchist and anarchist versions of libertarianism gained academic prominence with the publication of Robert Nozick’s *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*.<sup>100</sup> Nozick, a former member of Rothbard’s circle, devoted the opening chapters of his book to a critique of Rothbard-style anarchism (though many readers, unfamiliar with the libertarian tradition in which Nozick was working, took the system of competing protection agencies to be Nozick’s invention). Nozick argued that free-market anarchism *would* develop into a state, and *could* do so permissibly. On behalf of the predictive claim, Nozick suggested that agencies would solve their disputes either by violent conflict or by arbitration; violent conflict would lead either to more powerful agencies conquering weaker ones, or (if agencies were equally matched) by their dividing the territory between them, and thus, in either case, to one or more states—while arbitration would lead over time to a single legal system uniting all the agencies, and thus again to a state. On behalf of the permissibility claim, Nozick maintained that a dominant protection agency would be within its rights to ban competitors in order to protect its own customers from their possibly risky procedures, so long as it compensated its competitors’ erstwhile customers by extending its protection to them. Free-market anarchists disputed both the predictive claim (denying, for example, that a system of arbitration contracts among protection agencies constitutes a state, so long as free entry is permitted) and the normative one (insisting that the mere possibility of risky procedures is insufficient grounds to license prohibiting competitors).<sup>101</sup> The debate has survived its original participants, and has more recently turned on the question of whether a network of protection agencies would be in a position to form a stable cartel to exclude new entrants.<sup>102</sup>

99 Konkin *New Libertarian Manifest*, op. cit.; S.E. Konkin, *An Agorist Primer* (Huntington Beach, Calif.: KoPubCo, 2008).

100 R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

101 R.A. Childs, Jr., “The Invisible Hand Strikes Back,” *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 1, no. 1 (1977): 22–33; M.N. Rothbard, “Robert Nozick and the Immaculate Conception of the State,” *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 1, no. 1 (1977): 45–47.

102 T. Cowen, “Law as a Public Good: The Economics of Anarchy,” *Economics and Philosophy* 8 (1992): 249–267; B. Caplan and E.P. Stringham, “Networks, Law, and the Paradox of Cooperation,” *Review of Austrian Economics* 16, no. 4 (2003): 309–326. On the anarchist/minarchist debate more broadly, see E.P. Stringham, ed., *Anarchy and the Law: The Political Economy of Choice* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 2011), and R.T. Long and T.R. Machan, eds., *Anarchism/Minarchism: Is a Government Part of a Free Country?*

### Libertarian Anarchism Today: The Anti-Capitalist Revival

The past two decades have seen a revival of the anti-capitalist version of free-market anarchism, primarily via figures associated with the Center for a Stateless Society and the Alliance of the Libertarian Left—including Gary Chartier, Charles W. Johnson, Sheldon Richman, and most influentially of all, Kevin Carson.<sup>103</sup> Within the libertarian movement these thinkers are usually called “left-libertarians”—one of many meanings of that phrase.<sup>104</sup> Carson’s approach, which he labels “free-market anti-capitalism,” represents in large part an updating of Tucker’s (though without Tucker’s egoistic ethical orientation); in particular, Carson defends the labor theory of value (albeit in a subjectivized version) and a use-and-occupancy approach to land ownership, though his overall analysis has been enormously influential even on contemporary anti-capitalist individualists who disagree with him on the labor theory and on land, but agree in regarding the concentration of the means of production in the hands of the capitalist class as a product of government intervention in the market, and a state of affairs that would be dissolved by free competition.

Much of Carson’s work focuses on the extent to which the large, hierarchical firms that dominate the contemporary economic scene are the product of state intervention. Carson notes that while economies of scale reward

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(Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2012). The most prominent recent academic defense of the free-market anarchist position is M. Huemer, *The Problem of Political Authority: An Examination of the Right to Coerce and the Duty to Obey* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

103 K.A. Carson, *Studies in Mutualist Political Economy* (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge, 2007); K.A. Carson, *Organization Theory: A Libertarian Perspective* (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge, 2008); K.A. Carson, *The Homebrew Industrial Revolution: A Low-Overhead Manifesto* (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge, 2010). Other major works of the revival include G. Chartier, *Anarchy and Legal Order: Law and Politics for a Stateless Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) and G. Chartier and C.W. Johnson, eds., *Markets Not Capitalism: Individualist Anarchism Against Bosses, Inequality, Corporate Power, and Structural Poverty* (London: Minor Compositions, 2011).

104 The term “left-libertarian” is commonly used in at least three senses: a) to distinguish social anarchism from free-market libertarianism; b) to distinguish anticapitalist (and/or otherwise left-wing) versions of free-market libertarianism from capitalist (and/or otherwise right-wing) ones; and c) to identify a position (not necessarily anarchist) that combines self-ownership with some kind of common ownership of resources. Sense (c) emerged in academic circles in the 1990s, and is associated with thinkers such as Peter Vallentyne, Hillel Steiner, and Michael Otsuka; senses (a) and (b) are older. Sense (b) is the operative one here.

increased firm size up to a certain point, the problems of information flow in large, hierarchical organizations isolated from price feedback show that diseconomies of scale eventually overtake economies of scale; otherwise a single firm centrally planning the entire economy would be the zenith of efficiency. In many cases, however, government intervention enables firms to grow past the point of overtake by externalizing the costs of increased scale while privatizing the profits. For example, when larger scale makes a firm more productive, it ordinarily faces higher distribution costs, since the area over which it needs to sell its products has widened; but transportation subsidies (originally railways, later highways), to which these firms do not pay a share in taxes proportionate to their use, enable them to reap the benefits of larger scale while facing only the costs associated with a smaller scale. Without such interventions, firms would be smaller, flatter, and more numerous, and both workers' cooperatives and individual proprietorships would become viable alternatives to traditional wage labor.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, the "abolition of patents and trademarks" would mean an "end to all restrictions on the production and sale of competing versions of medications under patent, often for as little as 5% of the price," as well as an "end to all legal barriers that prevent Nike's contractors in Asia from immediately producing identical knockoff sneakers and marketing them to the local population at a tiny fraction of the price."<sup>106</sup>

While staunchly in the anticapitalist individualist tradition of anarchism, Carson draws freely, though not uncritically, on anarcho-capitalist and social anarchist influences as well. Carson has coined and popularized the phrase "vulgar libertarianism" to refer to the tendency within the mainstream libertarian movement to treat the virtues of free markets as justifying the evils of existing capitalism. (The analogous term "vulgar liberalism" is applied to the tendency on the left to treat the evils of existing capitalism as grounds for condemning free markets.) Carson also embraces such "leftist" concerns as intersectional feminism and environmental sustainability—concerns often alien to the mainstream libertarian movement.

Yet while widely known as a severe critic of contemporary libertarianism, Carson also considers himself part of it: "as an individualist in the tradition of Tucker," he writes, "I embrace *both* the free market libertarian and libertarian socialist camps."<sup>107</sup> Most other figures in the free-market anti-capitalist revival have expressed similar attitudes. The reception of this revival among

105 Carson, *Organization Theory*, chapters 1–7.

106 K.A. Carson, "What Is Left-Libertarianism?" *Center for a Stateless Society* (15 Jun. 2014), <http://c4ss.org/content/28216>.

107 Carson, *Organization Theory*, 1.

mainstream libertarians has been mixed. In a 2006 symposium issue of the *Journal of Libertarian Studies* devoted to Carson's first book, reactions ranged from one writer's praise for Carson's "impressive work" and "strong case that the typical libertarian defense of the modern employer/employee relationship may be quite naïve" owing to "ignorance of the historical development of capitalism"<sup>108</sup> to another writer's angry dismissal of Carson's "ignorant Marxist diatribes against capitalism."<sup>109</sup> Whatever the future holds, the revival of free-market anti-capitalism is likely to play an important role in relations between the libertarian and anarchist movements.

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108 R.P. Murphy, "The Labor Theory of Value: A Critique of Carson's *Studies in Mutualist Political Economy*," *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 17–33.

109 G. Reisman, "Freedom Is Slavery: Laissez-Faire Capitalism Is Government Intervention: A Critique of Carson's *Studies in Mutualist Political Economy*," *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 84.

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