

## Anarchism

### A. Preliminaries

1. Vlog series, rambling, notes
2. My history--activist scene. At first I mocked anarchists. (high school and college education). Media Mouse ([Anarchists in Grand Rapids](#)), Reading (History/Biography mainly, not philosophy Melbourne 2010). Nowadays: not particularly political, no group loyalty, dangers of tribalism
3. Disclaimer--Other people know this better, Not an expert, Not fresh in memory, Rambling, video time limit, mispronounce French names
4. Why do? Self-indulgence, (at a coffeehouse talk), possibly clear some stuff up. Invite corrections, Booktube tie in
5. Structure: What it is, History, arguments for and against.

### B. What is Anarchism

1. Anarchism is difficult to define, and has a lot of different varieties. Example, the conference I went to. Anarchists resist strict categorizations. (Although there are some doctrinaire anarchists.)
2. Dictionary definition misleading--but same with many political ideologies (Democrats, Republicans, National Socialists, etc). Historical tradition is more important than definition. Anarchist history 1870s to 1930s.
3. Anarchism is not anarchy in the sense of chaos (James Bond villain. Organized anarchism is not an oxymoron).
4. anarchy= an (no) archy (government/ruler) e.g. monarchy, oligarchy. Does it mean no government or no ruler?
5. Usual description: no unjustified hierarchies. Hierarchy has got to justify itself. (parent/child, ship on high seas)
6. Anarchism comes out of Socialist tradition--Is this strange?
  - a. Common misconceptions: Socialism is higher taxes, Obama-care, etc. But this is actually welfare state within capitalism
  - b. Also: Marx didn't create Socialism. Socialist movement from 1820s.
  - c. Common misconceptions about capitalism--buying and selling.
  - d. History textbooks often say Capitalism emerged in the 18th century. I found this confusing
  - e. Capitalism: shareholders (stockholders) get the profits from the company, not the workers. (By definition, then, the workers are not being paid the value of their labor, since the profits go to the shareholders).
  - f. Socialism: workers control the means of production= workers control the company. (Private property)
  - g. Makes sense with anarchism--abolishment of hierarchies.
7. So...It's on a scale. Absolute state control of factories (e.g. Stalinism or Maoism) is opposite of anarchism. But some forms of decentralized democratic socialism are quite close to (or equivalent to) more organized schools of anarchism. (My experience debating Socialists). Some of the difference is what tradition you want to identify yourself with. Libertarian Socialism

8. Anarchism: small communes organized into federations. Direct democracy or recallable elected representatives. Consensus democracy. (Consensus minus 1).
9. Anarcho-communism versus anarcho-syndicalism.

## B. History

1. Antiquity--Modern (after French Revolution) Max Stirner
2. Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin
3. Proudhon:
  - a. First to self-identify as anarchist. Famous dialogue (But Bakunin often seen as founder). Proudhon more in Socialist tradition. (Against violence)
  - b. Biographies: Couldn't find on Amazon. [Revolutions of 1848 by Priscilla Robertson](#) (Part in the Revolution)
  - c. Also, feud with Marx (Marx feuded a lot): Philosophy of Poverty/ Poverty of Philosophy. Any biography
  - d. Dark side of Proudhon: anti-semitism (but not major), Patriarchal
  - e. Property is theft
4. Bakunin
  - a. Biography?
  - b. Russian aristocratic family:
  - c. Bakunin also involved in Revolutions of 1848 ([Revolutions of 1848 by Priscilla Robertson](#)) With Wagner ([Wagner: A Documentary Study edited by Herbert Barth. Dietrich Mack. Egon Voss](#))
  - d. Imprisonment in Russia, escape to Japan-USA-Europe
  - e. Feud with Marx--
  - f. Bakunin's darkside: antisemitism ([Francis Wheen: Karl Marx A life](#)), also his love of conspiracies (anti-democratic) Sergey Nechayev; Catechism of a Revolutionary. Careless about Revolutions (not like Marx). Also not as brilliant as Marx
  - g. But... critiques of Marx still hold ([Isaiah Berlin](#)) We believe power corrupts those who wield it as much as those who are forced to obey it. Under its influence, some become greedy and ambitious tyrants, exploiting society in their own interest, or in that of their class, while others are turned into abject slaves. Intellectuals, positivists, doctrinaires, all those who put science before life...defend the idea of the state and its authority as being the only possible salvation of society-quite logically, since from their false premises that thought comes before life, that only abstract theory can form the starting-point of social practice...they draw the inevitable conclusion that since such theoretical knowledge is at present possessed by very few, these few must be put in control of social life, not only to inspire, but to direct all popular movements, and that no sooner is the revolution over than a new social organization must be at once be set up; not a free association of popular bodies...working in accordance with the needs and instincts of the people but a centralized dictatorial power concentrated in the hands of this academic minority, as if they really expressed the popular will....The difference between such revolutionary dictatorship and the modern State is only one of external trappings. In substance both are a tyranny of the minority over the majority in the name of the people-in the name of

the stupidity of the many and the superior wisdom of the few-and so they are equally reactionary, devising to secure political and economic privilege to the ruling minority, and the...enslavement of the masses, to destroy the present order only to erect their own rigid dictatorship on its ruins.

- h. End of life: ([The World That Never Was: A True Story of Dreamers, Schemers, Anarchists, and Secret Agents by Alex Butterworth](#)...and [Bakunin, An Invention by Horst Bienek](#))
  - i. Workingman's International--1872 expulsion (and New York) Jura Federation--1876
5. Kropotkin
- a. I've read about the least--but he has the best reputation (reasonable, no crackpot.)
  - b. The Great French Revolution --[A People's History of the World by Chris Harman](#)
  - c. Supported World War I-- Marxists always bring this up ([Emma Goldman autobiography](#))
6. Paris Commune
- a. Big in Marxist and Anarchist mythology, but ultimately an unplanned revolution. (Marx warned against it). Working class revolution, but ideology confused
  - b. Anarchist--City autonomous. Recallable delegates (Bakunin at Lyon the year before)
  - c. Marx--name associated with it, but delayed [Isaiah Berlin](#), Paris Commune, [Revolution and Reaction](#)
  - d. Revolution went off--election Jacobin (Blanquist) majority, Proudhonist Socialist Minority (anarchist), Louise Michel ([Louise Michel by Edith Thomas](#))
  - e. "The most fundamental split in the Commune so far had taken place, and henceforth its Assembly would consist of a Majority and Minority faction; the one, controlled by Jacobins, wanting to exercise dictatorship and terror--the methods of '93--and blaming the failures of the Commune upon the sentimentality of the Socialists; the other desiring to govern by reasonably democratic methods, to observe moderation in order to leave, as Rochefort put it, 'the door at least half open to conciliation'. In the light of twentieth-century history, it seems perhaps ironical that the exponents of democracy and moderation should have been chiefly the Internationalists, the forefathers of Lenin's Bolsheviks."--[The Fall of Paris by Alistair Horne](#)
  - f. Brutal repression--future violence
7. Propaganda of the Deed
- a. assassinations--targeted and not so targeted ([The World That Never Was: A True Story of Dreamers, Schemers, Anarchists, and Secret Agents by Alex Butterworth](#))
8. Anarchism in the United States
- a. Haymarket massacre 1886
  - b. Emma Goldman ([Living my Life](#))
  - c. Homestead Strike--Henry Clay Frick--Attempted Assassination
  - d. Socialist Critique of this--undemocratic--Emma Goldman sort of realizes this later in life
  - e. Leon Czolgosz--assassinated President of the United States (Weird, isn't it?) Inspired by anarchists in Europe (witnessed police brutality). Not allowed in any anarchist group, and yet he self-identified as an anarchist. (Brings up problems of self-identification, group responsibility). Disavowed by anarchists, except Emma Goldman.

9. China--[attraction to anarchism in 1910s and 1920s--Chinese Communist Party largely made up of anarchists until Comintern. Chen Duxiu used to be anarchist, sons anarchist](#)

10. Korea--anarchists in 1910s

11. Japan

- a. 1910 crackdown--accused of killing the emperor
- b. Osugi Sakae (Sakae Osugi) Memoirs of an anarchist--childhood, [Osugi Sakae: Anarchist in Taisho Japan by Thomas Stanley](#). Free love scandal. Murdered by police in 1923 (precursor to crackdown).
- c. People my age didn't know him, but 1968 generation did. Anarchist versus socialist. (Chomsky)

12. Spain--Spanish Civil War

[Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell](#)

Arguments

Vietnam

Holocaust (120,000 buses), Stalin secret police Gulag

Manhattan project

anarchist space program

environment