



## Did you hear the one about the anarchist manager?

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### Introduction

How many anarchists does it take to start a conversation about anarchism in a business school? Perhaps the most appropriate punchline is that such a conversation shouldn't ever take place at all, never mind the number of participants. And yet just that conversation did take place, in November 2010. In fact, the topic of anarchism almost naturally surfaces within discussions of forms of organising that escape the Procrustean bed of the day-to-day academic curriculum of business and management studies; at least it does if this special issue is anything to go by.

While the inclusion of anarchism and management in the same sentence would normally connote a rejection of one and a corresponding defence of the other, the study of management and radical social and political thought are not as antithetical as one might at first imagine. The field of critical management studies (CMS), regularly dated back to the publication of Mats Alvesson and Hugh Willmott's collection (1992), has drawn on theoretical sources including the Frankfurt School, poststructuralism and various left-wing political traditions, as well as heterodox empirical research, in reflecting on and ultimately criticizing prevailing practices and discourses of management. As Gibson Burrell noted twenty years ago, there is a 'growing number of alternative organisational forms now appearing, whether inspired by anarchism, syndicalism, the ecological movement, the co-operative movement, libertarian communism, self-help groups or, perhaps most importantly, by feminism' (1992: 82). Despite anarchism appearing first in his list of inspirations for alternative organisation and having a history at least as old as Marxism and feminism, there has been relatively little

research on anarchism and its principles within management studies. The core aims of this special issue are, firstly, to identify where the links between anarchism and CMS lie and, secondly, to provide a space for those working at these intersections to contribute towards bringing this new cross-over into existence. In many ways, one could say that this issue returns to Burrell's comments made at the outset of CMS and tries to show where and how the claim about anarchism as an alternative organisational form influencing CMS can be taken seriously.

To date, anarchism hasn't prominently featured in any of the key CMS journals. Many of the authors who have juxtaposed anarchism and CMS, or introduced an anarchist-inspired reading of management, business and organisation into the mix of what goes on in CMS, have also contributed to this special issue. So while this special issue is introductory in nature, it is not unprecedented. One might see the pre-history of anarchism and CMS as Colin Ward, the influential British anarchist writer, sees anarchism itself: always existing, like seeds beneath the snow. So if the already existing work can be seen as the anarchist seeds beneath the CMS snow, then this special issue, while certainly not the blossoming end-point of this intersection can be made sense of as a green shoot, struggling to make an entry into the world.

So what was germinating beneath the snow before the special issue was put together? While there are of course a number of important works that focus more generally on radical left politics and organisation theory, focussing variously on social movements (e.g. Böhm et al. 2010; Davies et al., 2005; Feigenbaum et al. 2014; Maeckelbergh 2009; 2014), workers cooperatives and self-organisation (e.g. Atzeni and Ghigliani, 2007; Atzeni and Vieta, 2014; Cheney, 1999; Webb and Cheney 2014), non-commodified work practices (Williams, 2005; 2014), leadership (Western, 2013) and the commons (De Angelis and Harvie, 2014; Fournier, 2013), the purpose of this special issue is to hone in on specifically anarchist contributions to these debates and others. In terms of CMS, the anarchist seeds are indeed few and far between. While Chris Land's (2007) and Martin Parker's (2011) work on pirates and other outlaws don't deal exclusively with anarchism, they do show the radical and very-often anarchistic practice that have taken place in specific historical contexts. More explicitly, Patrick Reedy's (2002) work has drawn on anarchism in its discussion of utopias. Reedy takes inspiration from anarchism as a 'powerful counter-discourse to the managerial vision of the good life' and argues that anarchism is characterised by principles of 'diversity, difference and voluntarism over collective norms and orthodoxies' (*ibid.*: 170). Reedy, along with Martin Parker and Valerie Fournier, have also contributed to the intersection of anarchism and

CMS through their *Dictionary of Alternatives* (2007) which similarly takes anarchism as having something important to say to CMS.

The two most recent contributions to the discussion come from Neil Sutherland et al. (2013) and George Kokkinidis (2014). Sutherland et al. discuss forms of anti-authoritarian leadership in anarchist groups, highlighting the fact that while leaders may not be formally present in such groups, practices of leadership certainly are. Kokkinidis in turn examines the role of autonomy and democratic decision-making in Greek workers' collectives. This empirical research focuses on the concrete practices that take place within several radical workers' collectives in Greece and how they relate to political principles such as fair pay, democratic control and individual autonomy in the workplace.

Other attempts to bring anarchism into conversation with organisation theory, though outside CMS as a discipline, do represent important contributions. Perhaps the earliest of these is Pierre Guillet de Monthoux's *Action and existence* (1983): Guillet de Monthoux reflects on his experiences with anarchism in this special issue. Marius de Geus' *Organisation theory in political philosophy* follows, published in Dutch (as *Organisatietheorie in de politieke filosofie*) in 1989, examined several political philosophers' work through the lens of organisation theory. De Geus devotes two chapters to anarchism and organisation theory, one to Mikhail Bakunin and the other to Peter Kropotkin (this latter chapter is included in this issue in English translation for the first time). Brian Martin has also written on the relationships between anarchism and organisation, highlighting, for example, how anarchists are expected to behave in mainstream organisations (2013) as well as anarchist responses to expertise (2008-2009). L. Susan Brown's essay 'Does work really work?' (n.d.) questions identity in the context of work and discusses the case for the abolition of work (see also, Black 1986). Similarly of interest, Guillaume Paoli's *Demotivational training* (2008) attacks modern human resources management, while Liam Barrington-Bush's *Anarchists in the boardroom* (2013) focuses on the management and organisational practices of NGOs encouraging organisations to be 'more like people.'

Other studies consider anarchism as a theory of organisation including critical legal scholar Grietje Baars (2011), social movements scholars Anna Feigenbaum (e.g. 2010) and Andre Pusey (e.g. 2010) and critical geographers Jenny Pickerill (e.g. Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006; Barker and Pickerill, 2012), Simon Springer (e.g. 2012) and Richard J. White (e.g. White and Williams, 2012)<sup>1</sup>. Other scholars

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1 White and Williams have also contributed to this special issue.

worth mentioning here are: Adin Crnkić (2013), Maria Daskalaki, PJ Holtum, Emil Krastrup Husted, Bojan Radej, Leandros Savvides and Orestis Varkarolis.

As mentioned above, this brief literature review constitutes a few anarchist seeds beneath the snow of CMS. Something we wanted to identify in putting this special issue together was whether anarchism figures more generally in CMS and to do this we turned to six journals that are considered as suitable homes for CMS research.

### **Anarchism in critical management studies**

We conducted a brief bibliometric analysis for the sake of discerning the extent to which anarchism resides within CMS. Drawing on the work of Stephen Dunne, Stefano Harney and Martin Parker (2008), we surveyed six journals ‘usually hospitable to those writing in the name of CMS’ (*ibid.* 275). The six journals we examined were: *Culture and Organization*; *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*; *Gender, Work and Organization*; *Consumption, Markets and Culture*; *Accounting, Organizations and Society*; and *Organization*. Rather than providing research that aims to bolster the status quo of mainstream organisations, critical management journals aim to take business, management and organisation as phenomena that deserve to be studied and/or criticised. As Martin Parker, writing with Robyn Thomas, elsewhere notes (Parker and Thomas, 2011), the very idea of a critical sociological discipline is oxymoronic:

many academics would argue that all good work in social sciences is critical, in the sense of being sceptical of common sense, and regarding all arguments as provisional and dependent on evidence. (*ibid.*, 421)

In opposition to this conventional notion of critique, CMS developed a need to challenge the complicity of business and management research in the running of capitalism from a moral and political, as well as academic, standpoint. Not only is CMS aimed at studying business and management, it is also committed, at least in theory, to generating a politically oriented critique of management and managerialism (Parker, 2002). At its inception, the ‘critical’ in CMS was taken to refer to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School, labour process theory and critical realism (all having their roots in Marxist political thought), as well as postmodernism and poststructuralism (which while not being as explicitly left-wing as other influences have certainly formed an important part of left-wing critique for the last 40 or so years) (e.g. Alvesson and Wilmott, 1992; Böhm and Spoelstra, 2004). In this sense, then, to be a critical management journal is not only to soberly take business and management as objects of study but also to approach them as parts of the capitalist system and to critique them on those

grounds. As CMS developed as a discipline it moved to include as wide a range in terms of critique as exists in the left as a whole. Feminist opposition to patriarchy (e.g. Calás, 1996; Ashcraft, 2009), post-colonial opposition to racism and imperialism (e.g. Ibarra-Colado, 2006; Mir and Mir, 2013) and queer opposition to imposed gender and sexual identities (e.g. Brewis, Hampton and Linstead, 1997; Hassard, Holliday and Wilmott, 2000) all made an impact (although as Rumens (2013; 2014) highlights, queer theory could be seen as occupying a marginal space in CMS and as we show below in some journals appears less than anarchism).

So what role has been given to anarchism within CMS's critique of business and management? A review of the critical management journals can help answer this question. The analysis we conducted took these six CMS-related journals and, using their websites' own search functions, searched for the phrase "anarch\*" (using the wildcard asterisk would return results containing all words beginning with 'anarch', such as 'anarchism', 'anarchist', 'anarchy', etc.). We included all results available, which in all cases meant from the journal's inception to when the study was conducted, in May 2013. Based on these searches, we ended up with a total of fifty-five articles.

Of these fifty-five articles, twenty-five had an instance of the search term in the text, three of which were in quotations from other authors; twenty-three included the search term in the bibliography; and only two referenced authors who could be considered as anarchist academics. The search turned up only five instances of what we termed 'naive' uses of anarchism. By this we mean the equation of anarchy with chaos, mindless violence, a complete lack of rules and authority and an ethics of 'anything goes'. Twelve of the fifty-five articles returned had some kind of a radical edge to them: they presented, discussed or came from a radical left political position. Not one of the articles we found in these six critical management journals actually dealt with anarchism at length as a political theory or form of action. In every case where anarchism or anarchy came up it was a fleeting mention, an aside in an article the focus of which was elsewhere. This supports the hypothesis that anarchism has been largely absent from critical management journals: not once in the last 20 or more years has a CMS-related journal published an article that deals extensively with anarchism.

As well as searching for explicit mentions of anarchism in critical management journals, we also searched for other political 'ideologies', for want of a better word: socialism, feminism, Marxism, post-colonial theory and queer theory. Along with anarchism these have all been highlighted as having influenced CMS. In each case there was significantly more interest paid to these other bodies of theory than anarchism. 'Socialism', for example, appears in thirty-one articles in

*Culture and Organization* compared to anarchism's two, and has forty-three mentions in articles in *Gender, Work and Organization* compared to three article that mention anarchism. *Organization* is one journal in which the differences aren't so pronounced. Socialism comes up in twenty-seven articles in *Organization* while anarchism appears in twenty-two; still a difference in favour of socialism but not such a great one. Looking at 'feminism' tells a similar story, *Accounting, Organizations and Society* has sixty-seven articles but only twelve mentioning anarchism. The only political position or ideology which comes up in a similar amount of articles is that of 'queer' (i.e. queer theory). Four articles in *Culture and Organization* mention 'queer' while two mention anarchism. *Accounting, Organizations and Society* doesn't have a single article that includes the word 'queer' but has twelve that include some mention of anarchism. This perhaps owing to the fact that Queer Theory is a relatively recent academic intervention, emerging in the early 1990s. Still, in some other journals it enjoys more frequent mention than anarchism. Table 1 below includes the figures for each journal and ideology.

Journals	Anarchism	Feminism	Socialism	Marxism	Post-colonial	Queer
<i>Culture and Organization</i>	2	66	31	38	22	4
<i>Critical Perspectives on Accounting</i>	14	105	152	227	82	6
<i>Gender, Work and Organization</i>	3	354	43	41	11	44
<i>Consumption, Markets and Culture</i>	2	64	26	35	6	15
<i>Accounting, Organizations and Society</i>	12	67	161	123	54	0
<i>Organization</i>	22	89	27	38	45	29

Table 1: Mentions of specific political positions or ideologies in CMS journals

Our search in these journals also brought to our attention three articles which both included anarchism in the title and were mentioned more than once as references in the 55 articles we surveyed. These three articles are: David Cooper, David Hayes and Frank Wolf's 'Accounting in organized anarchies: understanding and designing accounting systems in ambiguous situations' (1981) (which was returned in our initial search as well as being referenced more than once); Tony Tinker's 'Metaphor and reification: are radical humanists really libertarian anarchists?' (1986) (referenced more than once); and Eben Moglen's 'Anarchism triumphant: free software and the death of copyright' (1999) (referenced more than once). Of these, only Moglen's article deals with anarchism in a political sense. Cooper, Hayes and Wolf are among those who use anarchy in a naive sense to refer to disorder, while Tinker doesn't really deploy the concept at all and any mention of libertarian anarchism outside the title is buried in an endnote that makes reference to Gareth Morgan's radical humanism.

What this empirical account of the state of CMS journals with respect to anarchism tries to show is not that there are moves behind-the-scenes to exclude research on anarchism from CMS or that CMS is on the whole hostile to anarchist research but the more general point that anarchism simply hasn't featured as a serious concern in CMS. The reasons for this may be many and we wouldn't want to start speculating; this is something further, more qualitative research might be able to determine. Anarchism has only in the last decade or two began to be taken seriously again as a movement on the radical left (e.g. Graeber, 2002; Parker et al., 2007: 10) never mind in academia and perhaps it should come as no surprise that while it has warranted mention now and then given its historical importance, it hasn't featured in the same way that feminism or Marxism have. Anarchist studies itself is a small (but quickly growing) field and while the journal *Anarchist Studies* has been published twice a year since 1993 the first Anarchist Studies Network conference was held only six years ago, at Loughborough University in September 2008. So anarchist research hasn't played much of a role in academia up until the last few years, certainly not when compared to other political movements, and CMS proves, as we have tried to show, to be no different. While the seeds have been there, they haven't yet produced the green shoots this special issue represents. Perhaps our initial disappointment at not finding more of anarchism in CMS in fact could have been expected from the outset. But of course this says nothing of the role anarchism should have in CMS. It may appear infrequently and even then most often in passing, but for us there have been since the outset strong reasons to believe that anarchism has much to offer CMS and vice versa. Ultimately, this special issue attempts to redress the imbalance in CMS journals and provide a

space for discussions of that which lies at the intersection(s) between anarchism and CMS.

## Contribution to the field

When starting work on this project, we as editors ventured into uncharted territory, perhaps even creating a new territory that had not previously ever properly existed. The cartographic metaphors (see e.g. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) that are invoked here often do more than simply bringing the land of CMS and anarchism into being in some kind of Baudrillardian manner, but are actually the best way of describing what the issue does in terms of its goals and contribution. Not only, however, are the whereabouts of anarchism and CMS quite unknown, as analysis outlined in the previous section reveals, but also the route has to pass through a space saturated with a plethora of biases, stereotypes, misconceptions, hostilities and simple lack of understanding. The most challenging aspect of this is that those biases are equally present on the side of organisation studies as well as on that of anarchist studies. This may in fact be evidence of the conceptual flimsiness that the former often suffers from and the controversial (at least from a mainstream academic standpoint) political biography the latter is endowed with.

Thus it seems to us that one of the main and overarching contributions this issue makes is shaking off these misconceptions, paving a way for a productive dialogue and further questioning of what exactly alternative forms of organising can and should be about. Correspondingly, the importance of opening up the debate and identifying points of intersection, can be gauged by the number of preconceived opinions that have to be scrutinised and (hopefully) revaluated and/or reconsidered in the process of going through the pages of this edition of *ephemera*. If there was a goal we had firmly in our minds while working on this special issue it was precisely this one.

At the same time an attempt to try to firmly establish the coordinates of the intersection between CMS and anarchism might be an example of rigid scholarly fetishisation, which risks reducing each field to dogmatism and their respective default positions. Instead, we think the issue makes most sense as a collection of answers to all sorts of questions that inevitably rise when anarchism is offered to serious reflection, all the more so with management and business as the backdrop. In this light, the contributions, while being self-sufficient and dealing with different problems, together make up a complex and comprehensive narrative aimed at addressing a wide range of practical and theoretical concerns; such concerns that inevitably arise when a progressive theory of organisation is



proposed. Taking the gamut of the various (primarily poorly informed) critiques often levelled at anarchism – a simplistic understanding of political economy, a certain degree of anachronism, a naive utopianism, etc. – as an implicit point from which to distance ourselves, this special issue, through its multiple contributions, presents anarchist theory of organisation as much more nuanced and appealing than it might appear at the outset.

CMS seems to be inevitably connoted as a field where practical knowledge of a kind of ‘how things can be done’ is favoured, increasingly so under the auspices of the call for ‘critical performativity’ (Spicer, et al., 2009). That may be one reason why the anarchist studies perspective presented by Ruth Kinna suggests that the practical side of the recent examples of anarchist organising may constitute the main contribution of anarchism to CMS. However, the likely fallacy of adopting the position of critical performativity with respect to management of organisation can be seen as, perhaps inevitably, succumbing to a Jamesonian diagnosis. We simply stop imagining the world outside of capitalism and also other forms of domination and exploitation. That is why we suggest that as well as paying attention to practical lessons (indeed, this has merited a separate section in this special issue), CMS has to preserve the critical-political edge that Burrell was talking about at the dawn of the CMS, as a heterodox niche within organisation and management studies. Thus, somewhat contrary to Kinna’s suggestion, we contend that there is a lot to be learned and even introduced to the field of CMS from anarchist history as well as anarchist theory; not least to reawaken a suppressed and yet vital capacity for critical imagination.

Imagination is something that envelops this whole project. This is where everything started. Although, as we highlighted above, we didn’t initially think that it would take an awful lot of imagination to bring anarchism and CMS together, it turned out to be essential. That is also why the final section of this special issue affirms radical imagination as one of the crucial ways forward for the project of bringing anarchism and CMS together. Importantly, however, between tender sentiments to imagination, what we managed to accomplish, thanks to all the people who took part in this project, is to recalibrate our understanding of alternative organising and what studying it critically might mean. It would be naive to assume that with this one issue all the omissions, gaps and even deliberate evasions presented in the previous section can be fully addressed. Meanwhile, the range of themes raised within the special issue and variety of the backgrounds of the contributors, is testament to the fact of how much there is to be said about many facets of organisational life and its political implications. What we, as editors, witnessed with this special issue is the emergence of an almost separate vernacular, one that allows questions of the very notion of organisation to be asked, and in a way that breaks with the trite

ideological wisdoms and capitalist discursive hegemony. Introducing anarchist theory and practice to the field of organisation studies, where business and management are shy of being sacred ideologemes, allows for reclaiming of the territory at which we all, willingly or otherwise, dwell

## One possible ordering of the special issue

Trying to stitch together an overview of the articles and notes included in this special issue is a difficult task. Not only are there so many (twenty in total, making this one of the biggest issues of ephemera to date), but the connections between them are so manifold that when putting the table of contents together we found ourselves with several options on our hands. Indeed, drawing a map of this special issue has proved perhaps as difficult as drawing a map of a physical landscape, the central concern being: which map do you draw, while all the time acknowledging that the map is not the territory? Ruth Kinna, editor of the journal *Anarchist Studies* and one of the founders of the Anarchism Research Group at Loughborough University, has provided her own overview of the issue from an anarchist studies perspective (see the preface to this issue). She has drawn one of these possible maps. Our table of contents and this overview make up another. We have sub-divided the special issue into five sections, outlined below.

### 1. *Anarchism as a theory of organisation*

‘Anarchism as a theory of organisation’ borrows its title from Colin Ward’s influential 1966 piece. This is apt not only because Ward is one of the authors cited in this issue the most, but also because organisation, alternative forms of organisation to be more precise, emerges as one of the core concerns of the contributions to this issue. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the intersection here is between anarchist politics and anarchist studies, on the one hand, and critical management studies, a body of sociological thought that deals intimately with questions of organisation: organisation of space, people, bodies, identities, knowledge, resources, value, wealth, and so on. As Kinna notes in her overview, ‘the inventive and productive ways that anarchism has approached questions of organisation in theory and through practical experimentation might be seen as its primary contribution to CMS’. That being said, CMS’ account of organisation and the analysis of different organisational forms many of the authors here present shows that this could also be a terrain on which CMS contributes to anarchist theory and practice.

Martin Parker, George Cheney, Valerie Fournier and Chris Land’s contribution is perhaps the most pertinent in this regard, presenting as it does a manifesto for alternative organisation. They present a view of alternative organisation with

autonomy, solidarity and responsibility as fundamental elements and their article highlights both the promise and difficulties of anarchist and alternative organisation. Individual autonomy and co-operation are on the face of it contradictory, but doesn't identifying such a contradiction as being of central importance risk reducing anarchist engagement with organisation to a simplistic rejection in the name of the untamed individual? Patrick Reedy's article contributes to this project bringing a critical edge to discussions of alternative organisation. He highlights the tendency within critical scholarship to reproduce abstracted accounts of non-managerial sites of organisation rather than engaging critically with the practices and subjectivities that actually constitute such sites. Reedy argues that CMS scholars could learn a lot from critical geographers, sociologists and political theorists in approaching alternative organisation and, crucially, drawing on real-life examples of anarchist organisation. While Reedy's and Parker et al.'s contributions speak to a humility of CMS academics concerned with radical and anarchist organisations, it is important to recognise where and how CMS can contribute to understanding these forms of organisation and, ultimately, making them better as alternatives. In the final contribution to the section on anarchism and organisation theory, J. Christopher Paskewich deals directly with Colin Ward's work and its relation to that godfather of management gurus Peter Drucker. Paskewich brings to this debate on anarchist organisation theory the cautionary tale of taking anarchism merely as a form of organisation (embodying certain principles of flexibility and autonomy and an opposition to strict hierarchy) and ignoring the essential challenge it represents for all forms of domination and exploitation. Crucially though, Paskewich is not suggesting that anarchists and those interested in alternative organisation can learn nothing from Drucker. His work, while limited in its critique, does suggest ways in which autonomous forms of work can be integrated in large organisations. The flip side of this is that it also shows how autonomy can be incorporated and co-opted by capitalist organisation and sapped of its radical potential.

## *2. Key ideas in anarchism and CMS*

The second section of this special issue focusses on some of the key ideas in CMS and anarchist theory and practice. Looking in turn at leadership, ethics, political economy, consumption and technology, this section draws out some of the important overlaps between cutting edge work in both anarchist studies and CMS. Simon Western, who here builds on his earlier-introduced concept of Autonomist Leadership, argues that rather than rejecting leadership in social movements, anarchists and other radicals ought to recognise that leadership is not synonymous with hierarchical structures and fixed leaders. Western draws on Lacanian psychoanalysis to describe the potential of leadership as an

emergent process that occurs in social movements. Western's contribution is important not only because leadership is a central topic of discussion in CMS but also because of how he engages with recent critical work on leadership in social movements. Following Western's contribution comes that of Benjamin Franks. Franks here develops an anarchist critique of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. In a focussed and rigorous account of both anarchism's critical edge and Milton Friedman's position on ethics and the duty of the manager, Franks argues that even a softer version of capitalism, of the type promoted by CSR scholars and activists, should be rejected on the grounds that it clashes with the core anarchist values. Franks shifts anarchism away from a simplistic opposition to coercion and instead defines it in terms of the contestation of hierarchical social structures, a social view of the self, a focus on prefigurative action and the rejection of a universal epistemology. Carl Rhodes takes up the question of business ethics and anarchism from a different direction, basing his contribution on Emmanuel Levinas' an-archic ethics of openness to the Other and sets this against a background of corporate tax-avoidance and the bottom-line justification of 'it's called capitalism.' Rhodes shows that a Levinasian ethics has the potential to pose a critique of corporate authority and can be put to work to justify dissent in the face of the excesses of corporate freedom. This note makes connections between some of the most critical ethical responses to capitalism in CMS and recent developments in Postanarchism. What Rhodes is able to do ultimately is frame anarchism in terms that those unfamiliar with its terminology might find less alienating than other approaches.

The fourth contribution in this section is from Angela Wigger and deals with some of the proposals for an anarchist political economy. While anarchism is often characterised as having less to say about political economy than Marxism, Wigger shows that although it does share much of its critique with its sibling, this doesn't mean that anarchist theorists don't have important contributions to make. Wigger demonstrates that from its inception in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, anarchism was intimately concerned not only with a critique of political economy but also with proposing alternative economic practices. Andreas Chatzidakis, Gretchen Larsen and Simon Bishop, in their note, add more to this anarchist political economic critique by focussing on consumption and the importance of de-growth in imagining and realising practical alternatives. Rather than situating themselves in mainstream de-growth discourse, Chatziadakis et al. put forward a more radical understanding of de-growth and sustainability and provide an analysis of contemporary consumer culture along these lines. They conclude by arguing for a shift from viewing citizenship as consumption to viewing citizenship as social participation. Their account is developed in relation to a more general radical politics but shows again one area of clear intersection between anarchist theory and practice and CMS. The final contribution in this

second section is Simon Collister's note on anarchism, social technology and hacktivism. Collister asks whether there is any space left for technology-enabled radical organisation in contemporary society and draws on a range of theoretical positions including, importantly, hacker culture and Postanarchism. Hacktivism, he shows, is not a homogenous phenomenon and the distinction between an abstract and a critical hacktivism is crucial when it is seen in relation to anarchist and radical politics. Collister also highlights the importance of discussions around technology in the anarchist tradition and points towards the connections between anarchism and cybernetics developed in Ward's *Anarchy* journal in the 1960s.

### 3. *The roots of anarchist organisation*

The third section of this special issue tries to bring together contributions that examine the roots of anarchism as a theory and practice of organisation. Marcello Vietta opens this section with a detailed historical account of *autogestión* or self-organisation. He describes how the concept emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was promoted by anarchists like Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin as well as Marx and others. Vietta lays out a narrative of how *autogestión* developed through the 20<sup>th</sup> century before making something of a resurgence in the early-21<sup>st</sup> century with workers co-operatives and the solidarity economy coming to the fore as radical alternatives to capitalist exploitation. This account of *autogestión* is an invaluable contribution to both anarchist studies and CMS given its foundation in Vietta's rich theoretical and empirical research. Moving on from Vietta's large-scale account of anarchist self-organisation, Elen Riot's case study of publishing and multimedia workers in France charts the shift in politics from the anarchist and syndicalist publishing workers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to the current neoliberal outlook of those working in the contemporary multimedia and software industries. In a contrast reminiscent of the distinction between Ward's anarchism and Drucker's liberal working practices discussed by Paskewich, Riot shows how in many ways the signified content of anarchism as a radical anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist position has been replaced by a far more accommodating and commercial way of doing business, as exemplified by the likes of Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg and the Googleplex. Remaining in the French context, Norman Jackson and Pippa Carter turn to the pseudo-anarchist Georges Sorel and the ways in which his radical thought connects to many of the most recent developments in critical management and organisation theory. While Sorel has often been adopted as something of a fascist, for example by Carl Schmidt, Jackson and Carter do a fine job of highlighting his personal and academic importance for a more critical, even radical, position and argue that his approaches to language, science, myth and agonistics prefigure the poststructuralist turn in CMS. While not made explicit in the paper itself, the

reader may well note some (unexpectedly) strong connections here between Sorel and Postanarchism, and Sorel could well come to stand alongside Max Stirner as a precursor to this turn in anarchist theory.

#### *4. Anarchist praxis*

The next section turns from anarchist theory to anarchist praxis and the practical experiences activists and others have with anarchist organising. This is an incredibly important section to have in the special issue as it provides a space for reflection on the real-life examples of anarchism. While many see anarchism as an unworkable ideal, the contributions in this section show that although it certainly isn't unproblematic, anarchism does exist in the lived practices of alternative forms of organising and reproducing social life. Sandra Jeppesen, Anna Kruzynski, Rachel Sarrasin and Émilie Breton of the Collectif de Recherche sur l'Autonomie (CRAC; Collective Autonomy Research Group), a Montreal-based anarchist research collective, discuss in their contribution some of the results of their long-term research project on the anarchist commons in Montreal. Their article both surveys some of the concrete practices of the anarchist commons and provides a reflection on the role of such a commons in resisting exploitation and domination. Their rich analysis identifies several key elements of anarchist organisation and sheds a theoretical light on them that draws on anarchist as well as Autonomist Marxist theory. Fabian Frenzel provides a similar empirically-grounded reflection but this time on protest camps, specifically the Camps for Climate Action in the UK. Building on some of the themes discussed in the contributions to the first section of the special issue, Frenzel argues for a spatial understanding of protest camps and highlights some of the tensions present in these examples of alternative organisation. Space and territory is central to Frenzel's account and he uses his experience of protest camps to counter some recent conclusions about the virtual nature of partial organisation.

Chris Land and Daniel King focus in their contribution instead on voluntary sector organisation and take the example of one organisation that developed from being rooted in radical and anarchist activism to embodying elements of hierarchical and exploitative working relations. They discuss how dissatisfaction with the shift to more a traditional organisational structure coupled with a drastic cut in funding in recent years drove the organisation to a period of reflection and the resumption of anarchist-inspired consensus decision-making practices. Land and King's research, however, highlights some of the problematic aspects of 'translating' anarchist practices to more mainstream organisational settings. The final contribution to the section on anarchist praxis comes from Richard J. White and Colin C. Williams. They aim to provide support for Ward's thesis that

anarchism always exists in society as seeds beneath the snow. Their study of non-commodified work shows that within the cracks of capitalism there are examples of the anarchistic organisation of production and reproduction. While they don't claim that these examples show an explicit uptake of anarchist ideas, their work does show that capitalism is far from hegemonic and alternatives exist in the everyday.

### 5. *The radical imagination*

The fifth and final section of the special issues turns to look at notions of the radical imagination and anarchist aesthetics. Pierre Guillet de Monthoux provides a retrospective account of his time working at the intersection of anarchism and CMS. Going back to the 1960s and 1970s Guillet de Monthoux discusses some of the key movements in an aesthetic anarchism, situating this as a form of critique that can be deployed in a management context. He describes a personal narrative that brings him into contact with European radicals, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT in the Spanish Civil War and the neoliberal surge of the 1980s ending by highlighting the importance of Jacques Ranciere's aesthetics as well as his politics as examples of anarchist critique. Brigitte Biehl-Missal and Raymond Saner develop further the notion of anarchist aesthetics in focussing on Fernando Pessoa's *The Anarchist Banker*, a short story adapted for a stage environment by Saner. Their analysis is not only directed towards the claims by the eponymous character of being the only real anarchist in practice but also at seeing the staged version of the short story as a form of anarchist reflection that draws on some of the identifiable aspects of anarchist aesthetics discussed by anarchist studies scholars. Staging such a play in the business school context, Biehl-Missal and Saner argue, presents an opportunity for anarchist reflection on the realities of business and management practice. The final paper in this section and in the special issue as a whole is by David Bell. Bell's paper comes last because in many ways it wraps up a lot of the discussions that have been played out across the various articles and notes in the special issue. Bell takes musical improvisation as an example of anarchist praxis and shows clearly how some of the ideas around anarchist organisation set out in this issue can be developed in practice and what the potential pitfalls of these practical experiments are. Important among these is the constant risk of anarchist modes of organisation being incorporated into dominating and exploitative projects.

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