

the “refugee-friendly policies” of the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan , whose staunch Turkish nationalism otherwise troubles the region, in particular when it comes to the Kurdish case (159)? Is the brutal air-war against civilians in Yemen a result of “Saudi clumsiness” (206)? Or is Riyadh not following a military strategy not too far removed from that of the Assad regime?

To be sure, given the high standard of the authors’ study, these are minor points of critique hardly affecting the quality of an otherwise remarkably well-written book. *Burning Country* is essential reading on the Syrian war, addressing scholars of the Middle East, of political science, and of International Relations at the same time. Given its accessible style and well-calibrated argumentation, the audience of the book certainly goes beyond the scholarly realm. In particular, I consider it to be authoritative reading for policy makers and journalists engaged in Middle Eastern affairs. In times in which Jihadism has almost exclusively taken over the attention of a global audience, this book reminds us strongly of those people who started the Syrian revolution and whose dreams for a better future of the country hopefully will prevail.

Dietrich Jung  
University of South Denmark

**Andrew Cornell, *Unruly Equality: U.S. Anarchism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016). 399pp. Paperback \$37.95.**

As the United States, and indeed the world, faces up to the realities of Donald Trump’s presidency, anarchism’s red and black banner has once again been seen fluttering in the winter breeze of cities across the globe. It is difficult not to wonder, when reading Andrew Cornell’s fascinating and thorough study of the history of twentieth-century anarchism in the US, how the potpourri of thinkers, activists, and artists he examines would have reacted to the opening acts of an administration seemingly unperturbed by the accusations of racism, misogyny, and authoritarianism that continually confront it. Perhaps the rise of European fascism would have been the natural point of comparison, a political ideology that many anarchists feared was gaining ground in the US in the troubled 1930s. These activists would have recognised, therefore, the historical association lurking behind the speculation about what Trump’s “first 100 days” would entail, and perhaps seen FDR’s presidency as a fitting point of reference, especially when some feared the New Deal was nothing but a plot to inaugurate “American Fascism” (125). Others may be seduced by the impulse which continually reappears in Cornell’s book, judging that if revolution had been indefinitely postponed in the face of ascendant reaction, then the time was ripe to realise anarchist values in experimental communities. To, in the words of one practitioner, “create a community life in ... [a] ... pleasant setting much better than anything we as individuals could hope for in a teeming city like New York”

(99). Or, maybe art would be the way out, recognising, as Emma Goldman did, “unity between revolutionary effort and artistic expression,” or as the American poet William Everson more boldly expressed it, believing that “art ... [is] ... insurrectional, revolutionary: the *real* revolution” (39, 197).

Cornell’s ambition is principally twofold: to rescue from obscurity the anarchist tradition as a feature of American political and intellectual life while also conveying the richness of ideas gathering under the anarchist umbrella, and to suggest that this tradition played an important role in shaping the left more generally in the US, especially in the 1960s. These themes emerge across eight substantive chapters divided into two sections that periodise anarchism in terms of a “classical anarchism” running from the late-nineteenth century until 1940, and a “contemporary anarchism” focusing on the 1940s to the early 1970s. This historical frame informs an important point of Cornell’s argument: the idea that rather than the “classical” tradition meeting its end in the First World War—as the rush to the colours betrayed the hollowness of the anarchist shibboleths of internationalism and anti-imperialism—anarchism, in fact, never disappeared. There was certainly important conceptual change, he posits, but the anarchist ideas that rose to prominence in the context of the 1960s New Left and which continue to shape anarchist practice, actually owe far more to developments in the 1940s, as older activists were replaced by a “new generation [who] ... looked to radical pacifism and the cultural avant-garde to renew the libertarian socialist tradition” (148).

Such a bald description of Cornell’s book does not really do it justice. Indeed, the apparent simplicity of this frame informs an analysis that endeavours to understand the history of US anarchism in all its complexity. What becomes clear, from the “insurrectionary anarchism” of the Italian-American “Galleanisti,” who rejected reform as “ballast the bourgeoisie throws overboard to lighten its old boat” and demanded “retributive violence,” to proponents of non-violence like Paul Goodman and David Dellinger who insisted on the necessity of revolutionary tactics being “worthy of the ideas we seek to serve,” is the continual tumult and contestation at the heart of the tradition (37, 174). This persistent debate over tactics, the effort, and frequent failure, to revise anarchist theory in the light of changing historical circumstance, and to build fresh organisational networks amidst shifting fortunes, does demonstrate the continual presence of anarchist ideas and activists on the American left. Indeed, one of Cornell’s key claims is that while anarchists have been “consistent experimenters and innovators” in cultural and tactical matters, they have also often served as a “moral compass,” anticipating developments that have become foundational leftist principles, such as the recognition of racial, gender, and sexual oppression (281). Sensitivity to the importance of racial oppression, especially the treatment of African Americans, was undoubtedly belated given the relative insignificance attributed to it by the first generation of anarchists in the US, but Cornell subsequently traces important connections between the anarchist milieu and the “organizational style of the black freedom struggles of the 1950s and

1960s” (237).

In clarifying this deeply complex history, clouded by the fissiparousness and ephemerality of most anarchist groups, *Unruly Equality* is undoubtedly a major achievement, and a contribution that is destined to become a standard history of anarchism in the United States. Yet while presenting itself as an intellectual history of anarchism, the extent to which *Unruly Equality* really adheres to the textual/contextual perspective that defines that historical sub-discipline is questionable. In one sense this is not a major criticism: to write a history that traces intellectual inheritances through a process of close textual analysis, focusing on the development of shared conceptual vocabularies, and undertaking the terminological archaeology this sometimes demands—while also appreciating the determining qualities of historical context—is probably impossible over such a broad timeframe, and in a work involving so many multifaceted characters. This fact becomes more apparent in the later stages of the book, where the aim shifts towards selecting those threads that most inform contemporary anarchist politics. Here, however, the fact that anarchism in the 1970s “was not a unified ... movement ... but an array of small groups excited by communalism, syndicalism, situationism, libertarian socialism, ultraleftism, revolutionary nonviolence, anarcha-feminism, and social ecology,” will always inhibit the practical textual work that defines intellectual history (279).

To stress this criticism, however, would be to miss the real value of *Unruly Equality*. Its worth as an act of recovery, rescuing intrinsically interesting ideas and personalities from the condescension of posterity, to borrow E.P. Thompson’s famous formulation, is without question. But Cornell also does not hide the fact that he sees the historical work at the heart of his book as having contemporary relevance, as the “wealth of experience and insight anarchists and their allies have accumulated throughout the twentieth century” are reassessed in the present (300). Perhaps, as the winter wind fluttering those banners gives way to spring and summer breezes, these ideas will never have been so important.

Matthew S. Adams  
Loughborough University, UK

**Jude McCulloch and Dean Wilson, *Pre-crime: Pre-emption, precaution, and the future* (New York: Routledge, 2016). 154 pp. Paperback \$43.96.**

McCulloch’s and Wilson’s book *Pre-Crime* is wonderfully paradoxical. It is a “history of the future” written in the present but, since its themes concern the prediction of future-crime and regard present security practices as the anxiety-provoking harbingers of ignominious things to come, its paradoxes become many as it points suggestively towards future dystopia. The authors warn that pre-crime “expands the risk of state crime, harm and injustice perpetrated in the name of security” (143). Early symptoms of the shift to pre-crime were observed more than a decade