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Anarchy is What Anarchists Make of it: Reclaiming the Concept of Agency in IR
and Security Studies

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This article posits a point of entry for anarchist interventions in critical theories of international relations and security studies. It explores potential for an approach which begins with grassroots direct action as a means to reforming dominant ontologies of agency. The article discusses the potential in a resistance which engages in perpetual struggle between a direct action rooted in positive constructions of alternative agencies, and a direct action which commits to an ongoing resistance to the imposition of order and control, through a sustained engagement with Simon Critchley and Gustav Landauer, arguing that the tensions between their positions might offer productive routes for anarchism to make an intervention in the field. This argument is taken forward through a case study of the 'Raytheon 9', an anti-arms trade group who offer powerful perspectives on the broader discussion here.

Keywords: *Anarchism, Resistance, Direct Action, the Raytheon 9, Simon Critchley, Gustav Landauer*

To date, critical theories of international relations (IR) and critical security studies (CSS) have not engaged substantively with the potentials and promises of anarchist political philosophy and practice. This article suggests possible terms of how such an engagement might proceed, positing a point of entry which begins at the level of agency/practice, of grassroots direct action.¹ I argue that anarchist interventions in the field, theoretically and practically, may find force through a focus on reclaiming and localising ontologies of agency, refusing and reforming dominant, statist approaches.² After an introductory discussion about current approaches within IR and CSS, the argument proceeds in three sections. In the first, the article discusses the normative theories of anarchist direct action given by Gustav Landauer and Simon Critchley, suggesting that the tensions which emerge from their approaches may offer productive routes for thinking anarchism in the IR context, particularly with respect to negotiating the contested realms of positivity and negation. Following this discussion, several illustrative examples are provided as a means to suggesting the opportunities and challenges of the preceding discussion. Finally the article engages in an extended case study of ‘the Raytheon 9’, a group of anti-arms trade activists who vandalised/decommissioned a Raytheon office during the Israeli assault on Lebanon in 2006. It is suggested that their actions offer valuable perspectives for how we might think anarchism in the IR/CSS context through their performance of an agency which undermined dominant conceptions and ontologies while prefiguring a more localised and democratised set of relations, rejecting mediated agency in favour of ‘doing’ politics themselves.

¹ I would like to thank James Brassett, Aggie Hirst and participants at the Anarchism and World Politics conference in Bristol 2010, as well as the editors at *Millennium* and two anonymous reviewers, for comments on various drafts of this article, and the various members of Warwick Anarchists for the many hours of debate and discussion which led me to write it.

² This article does not engage substantively with the concept of statism, its linkages with hegemony, and its problematic dimensions. Alongside the other pieces in this special issue, anarchist discussion on this question can be found throughout anarchist political philosophy, significantly in Mikhail Bakunin, *Statism and Anarchy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Emma Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*, ed., Alix Kates Shulman (London: Wildwood House, 1979); and Richard Day, *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements* (London: Pluto Press, 2005). See also Daniel Guérin, *No Gods, No Masters: An Anthology of Anarchism* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005).

In suggesting that an anarchist approach to IR might begin at the level of agency, this article may also be read as a challenge to dominant approaches taken within critical IR theory and CSS. Whilst these two fields are by no means identical, the following paragraphs argue that much of the work undertaken within them suffers from what is argued to be a limited and/or limiting approach to agency, which restricts the normative thrust of these approaches. I suggest that such limitation occurs through a disciplinary move which casts non-traditional ‘agents’ (such as social movements) through dominant ontologies of agency. In doing so, approaches which refuse to respect prevailing, statist conceptions of agency are implicitly marginalised, silenced, or co-opted and represented in more amenable fashions; the terms of ‘the political’ are firmly secured against such interventions, and the normative dimensions inherent to any discussion of agency and potential are obscured.³ As the rest of the article argues, anarchist interventions may have the capacity to unsettle this disciplinary move.

Despite a critical approach towards the state and statism across much of the critical literature on IR and security, this statism is often reperformed in discussions of agency. Space constraints prohibit a comprehensive overview; however two examples suffice to demonstrate the logic which often holds. The first comes from one of the most highly celebrated exponents of the critical turn in IR, Ken Booth, and in particular his discussion of the state in his 2007 *Theory of World Security*.⁴ Whilst critical of states, arguing that ‘for the most part states fluctuate between the role of gangsters, prostitutes, fat cats, or bystanders’, he also suggests that ‘[at] this stage of history sovereign states exist at best as necessary evils for human society’, an assertion which lies broadly unqualified save for the comment that ‘[locally] and globally there is a need for mechanisms for producing redistribution and welfare’.⁵ This perspective may be read as problematic through Booth’s brief nod towards anarchism during the discussion, where he claims that ‘[few] would go

³ My use of ‘the political’ here is introduced in Jenny Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations* (Lynne Rienner: London, 1999), 2-6.

⁴ Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 202-204.

all the way with the anarchist position that states are an “extraneous burden” on society, and should be dispensed with’.⁶ Forcing the broad tradition of anarchism into an ‘all the way’ absolutism forecloses much of the potential challenge which might be offered by anarchistic approaches to agency, explored throughout this article. Instead, Booth invokes a binary choice between dispensing/not dispensing with the state which implicitly invokes the need for a continued statism (as a necessary opposite to a potentially disempowering utopia). Indeed, when Booth has discussed the emancipatory potential of non- or sub-state actors, including the radical direct action carried out by the Seeds of Hope women (whose actions have much in common with those of the Raytheon 9 discussed below), he has done so in a way which casts these agents as *adjuncts* to statist agency, failing to consider the ways in which they might constitute deep challenges to the ways in which we theorise agency in IR and security.

A further example of this statist approach to agency can be found in Claudia Aradau’s critique of Ole Wæver’s work on securitization.⁷ Aradau argues that the logic of security is fundamentally anti-democratic – that even attempts to securitize in an emancipatory fashion are liable to fall into the traps of an exceptionalist approach (as opposed to a democratic, deliberation-led approach). Whilst Aradau’s concerns are important, there is a sense in which her criticism is confined to a very specific (statist) realm. It is such a perspective which leads her to criticise William Connolly’s optimism about building conciliatory relationships with Others, misplaced, she says, because it is unclear how such an injunction ‘could reach the bureaucratic field where security is carried out’.⁸ There is no engagement here with the limiting dynamic which comes from reifying the ‘bureaucratic field’ as the defining agent of security. As such, Aradau’s criticism is limited to a particular contextualisation of agency which, when unproblematised, serves to restrict the capacity

⁶ Ibid., 203.

⁷ Claudia Aradau, ‘Security and the democratic scene: desecuritization and emancipation’, *Journal of International Relations and Development* 7 (2004): 388-413.

⁸ Ibid., 400.

for the unsettling of statism which has motivated much of the critical project in international relations and in security studies.

These limitations within much of the field have not gone unnoticed or unchallenged. In particular, Richard Ashley offers a powerful critique of those approaches which employ the 'heroic practice', by which he means those which invoke

'a dichotomy of *sovereignty* versus *anarchy*, where the former term is privileged as a higher reality, a regulative ideal, and the latter term is understood only in a derivative and negative way, as a failure to live up to this ideal and as something that endangers this ideal...'Anarchy' signifies a problematic domain yet to be brought under the controlling influence of a sovereign centre. Disciplined by this heroic practice, modern discourses of politics, upon encountering ambiguous and indeterminate circumstances, are disposed to recur to the ideal of a sovereign presence, whether it be an individual actor, a group, a class, or a political community'.⁹

Whilst Ashley's focus is more specifically on traditional IR theory, the above examples suggest that the heroic practice is re-performed in the critical schools. Like Ashley, this article argues that non-state actors have the potential to destabilise such a dichotomy.

Powerful perspectives also come from feminist work in the discipline. Whilst some, such as J. Ann Tickner, might be said to reperform statist attitudes in ways similar to Booth, others, including Cynthia Enloe (who seeks to uncover marginalised voices as a means to uncover the fragility of statism) and Christine Sylvester (who, as will be discussed below, is more explicit in her engagement with transformative agency) offer productive routes for rethinking dominant conceptualisations of agency.¹⁰

⁹ Richard Ashley, 'Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique', *Millennium*, 17, no.2 (1988): 230.

¹⁰ J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), especially 96-124; Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: Pandora, 1989); Cynthia Enloe, 'Margins, silences and bottom rungs: how to overcome the underestimation of power in the study of international relations', in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, eds., Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 186-202; Christine Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

This article argues that anarchist interventions have the capacity to disrupt and move beyond the limited approach towards agency and statism which runs through much of the critical field. As the previous two paragraphs have noted, this disruption is not unique. Nonetheless the contributions of anarchism, in particular the focus on the potential for agencies which come from below, and which refuse the notion of any single, hegemonic and external ‘emancipator’, have the power to offer significant challenges to current approaches. These challenges run through the philosophies of Gustav Landauer and Simon Critchley.

The Politics of Intervention

This section begins to discuss the potential for anarchist theory to animate a rethinking of agency in IR and CSS at a grassroots level. Through engagement with the theories of revolution/resistance offered by Gustav Landauer and Simon Critchley, and the productive tensions which might be drawn from a comparison of their respective positions, the article begins to consider the place of anarchist interventions which might disturb the conceptions of agency common in much of critical IR and security theory, prefiguring radical alternatives which move beyond the statism still present in the discipline.

Gustav Landauer was a German anarchist active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Whilst closely aligned in many respects with Peter Kropotkin’s communist anarchism, and its desire for a society free from the coercive constraints of capital and the state, he moved beyond his peers in arguing that radical transformations could not be achieved through the instantaneous and confrontational destruction of existing institutions, nor by their slow reform. Instead, he advocated the creation of alternative institutions and relationships alongside, but separate from, prevailing structures and modes of organisation. This radical alternative (which has, to some extent, been taken up by contemporary forms of direct action) arose directly from Landauer’s

perspective on the state.¹¹ He refused the prevailing Kropotkinian view of the state as a corporeal institution which can be destroyed through revolution. Instead, Landauer argued that '[t]he State is a condition, a certain relationship between human beings, a mode of human behaviour'.¹² As Richard Day makes clear, 'Landauer grasped...that we are not governed by 'institutions' apart from ourselves, by a 'state' set over against a 'civil society'. Rather, *we all govern each other* via a complex web of capillary relations of power'.¹³

Landauer's analysis of the state (and indeed of other social institutions, not least capitalism) engenders his theory of revolution. If the state is a set of relationships amongst people, 'we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently toward one another...We are the state, and we shall continue to be the state until we have created the institutions that form a real community and society of men [*sic*]'.¹⁴ James Horrox notes that 'Landauer savagely excoriated those more concerned with the politics of protest and demand than with creativity', and advocated the construction of 'functioning enclaves of libertarianism [as a] prefigurative framework for emancipation'.¹⁵ Horrox further observes that Landauer was active in advocating local, small-scale examples of such enclaves, including setting up soup kitchens, and growing food on lawns and street borders, both as a means to providing direct respite for those in need and as a way of introducing people to the merits of collective action.¹⁶ This last point is important; as Day observes, for Landauer the alternatives constructed are not solely intended as preparation for a future revolution, but as valuable *in and of themselves*, a perspective which cuts through the 'all the way'

¹¹ James Horrox, 'Reinventing Resistance: Constructive Anarchism in Gustav Landauer's Social Philosophy', in *New Perspectives on Anarchism*, eds. Nathan J. Jun and Shane Wahl (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), 189-209.

¹² Cited in Martin Buber, *Paths in Utopia* (New York: Macmillan, 1988 [1949]), 46. Originally in Gustav Landauer, 'Weak Statesmen, Weaker People', in *Anarchism in Germany and Other Essays* (The Barbary Coast Collective, 1994), 1. See also Gustav Landauer, *For Socialism*, trans. D. J. Parent, ed. R. Berman and T. Luke (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1978).

¹³ Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 124-125. Day further notes that this analysis is not dissimilar to Foucault's governmentality thesis, a dynamic he attributes to Nietzsche's influence on Landauer.

¹⁴ Cited in Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (London: Fontana, 1993), 411.

¹⁵ Horrox, *Reinventing Resistance*, 192, 195.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 198.

dichotomy mobilised by Booth.¹⁷ For Landauer, we destroy the prevailing system ‘mainly by means of the gentle, permanent, and binding reality that we build’.¹⁸ Such an approach aims to reduce the efficacy and reach of prevailing relations by withdrawing energy from them and rendering them redundant’.¹⁹ In short, we reach a better world not through seeking to destroy the existing one, but through building it ourselves. When discussing critical approaches towards agency in IR and CSS, the challenge from Landauer may be read as the imperative to focus on contracting alternative relations of agency as a means to undermining the position of dominant, statist relations.

There is much of merit in Landauer’s approach, particularly with regards to his analysis of the state and his corresponding view of the need for a resistance grounded in positive construction. Nonetheless, there are clear limitations here, not least his general refusal to engage in a politics of confrontation, in his rejection of the politics of ‘being-against-something’.²⁰ Criticism on this point has been most emphatic from Marxists, who have condemned Landauer for ‘implying a withdrawal from the world of human exploitation and the ruthless battle against it, to an island where one could passively observe all these tremendous happenings’.²¹ Martin Buber defends Landauer from this charge, arguing that Landauer’s position was rooted in a committed and active desire to see a revolutionary politics which avoided the tendency to self-destruct.²² Whilst I am sympathetic to Buber’s defence and to Landauer’s sceptical attitude towards approaches grounded in confrontation, there remain ambiguities. Simply put, it is difficult to see what Landauer could offer to those suffering through relations of domination in which they play little if any constitutive role. However well-disposed one might be to Landauer’s reading of the state, it would be difficult if not

¹⁷ Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 124.

¹⁸ Cited in *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

²⁰ Horrox, ‘Reinventing Resistance’, 202.

²¹ Buber, *Paths in Utopia*, 50.

²² *Ibid.*

impossible to extend such analysis to the victims of imperialism, whether read through statist terms (e.g., the Palestinians) or capitalist-globalist terms (e.g., victims of the international arms trade).

The intention here is not to reject Landauer, but to consider where the place of more direct resistance – confronting and impeding the flows of oppression – might sit. As will be discussed in the case studies, such interventions, while manifestly ‘negative’, inhere within themselves important dynamics of positivity and creativity. The challenge offered by Landauer is to engage in a creative, subversive and essentially constructive counter-relation without falling into the trap of what Horrox takes to be ‘the fetishization of values and reification of state and society’ and the all-too-common ‘lack of imagination’ displayed by many resistance movements.²³ The article returns to this question in more detail after considering Simon Critchley’s discussion of ‘anarchic meta-politics’, suggesting that the tensions between his perspective and Landauer’s might offer productive directions.

Critchley provides a number of observations and normative perspectives on contemporary anarchism.²⁴ Through a Levinasian view of ethics as ‘anarchic meta-politics’, where an *anarchic* ethics should not seek to mirror the archic sovereignty that it undermines, and should instead ‘remain the negation of totality and not the affirmation of a new totality’, he outlines a resistance which finds value in its push to disturb the totalising foundations of traditional political systems (which he defines as ‘anti-political’ insofar as they limit the domain of politics within predefined and elitist boundaries).²⁵ He argues that ‘[true] politics consists in the manifestation of a dissensus that disturbs the order by which government wishes to depoliticize society’.²⁶ Avoiding the classical temptation to lead with a set of positive values (such as freedom, autonomy, etc), Critchley’s

²³ Horrox, ‘Reinventing Resistance’, 199.

²⁴ Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London: Verso, 2008): 88-131.

²⁵ His use of the term ‘archic sovereignty’ comes from Levinas, where *archè* is the ‘hegemonic principle of political organization’, set against the continual ‘radical disturbance of the state...of the state’s attempt to set itself up or erect itself into a whole’ that is anarchy. *Ibid.*, 122.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 129.

approach to anarchism is rooted in a continual disturbance of systems and structures of authority. In more concrete terms, the anarchic ethical imperative becomes ‘the continual questioning from below of any attempt to establish order from above’.²⁷

These concerns lead Critchley to consider a resistance performed at an interstitial distance from the state, a distance from the state that is ‘*within* the state, that is, within and upon the state’s territory...a distance that has to be opened from the inside’. Against the Schmittian impulse towards political closure, ‘the task of radical political articulation is the *creation* of interstitial distance within the state territory’, a politics which opens spaces for ‘working independently of the state, working in a situation’.²⁸ Contra Landauer’s spaces of autonomous construction, these spaces provide a level at which ‘the atomizing, expropriating force of neo-liberal globalization is to be met, contested and resisted’. It is a space to work ‘within the state *against* the state’.²⁹ Critchley argues that it is in the play of this distance that a ‘true democracy’, defined as the performance of ‘cooperative alliances, aggregations of conviviality and affinity at the level of society that materially deform the state power that threatens to saturate them’, might be enacted.³⁰ Whilst Critchley’s broader discussion on this point (and on others) might be criticised for sliding too far either towards Gramscian counter-hegemony, or towards liberal reformism, the interest here lies in his moves to open spaces for a democratic/political dissensus which resists the impulse towards political closure, refusing the tendency to form a new totality by opening spaces within the existing order as a continuous disturbance of ‘the political’; significant here, as noted in the introduction, insofar as the terms of ‘the political’ are well established and secured with regards to non- (or anti-) hegemonic articulations of agency in the context of IR and security.

²⁷ Ibid., 122.

²⁸ Ibid., 112-113.

²⁹ Ibid., 114, emphasis added.

³⁰ Ibid., 117.

Moving to more explicit discussions of civil disobedience, Critchley sees ‘the great virtue of contemporary anarchist practice [as] the spectacular, creative and imaginative disturbance of the state’.³¹ Focussing on the comical tactics of groups such as Ya Basta! and Billionaires for Bush, he finds value in their politics of subversion.³²

[It] is the exposed, self-ridiculing and self-undermining character of these forms of protest that I find most compelling as opposed to the pious humourlessness of most forms of vanguardist active nihilism and some forms of contemporary protest...Groups like the Pink Bloc or Billionaires for Bush are performing their *powerlessness* in the face of power in a profoundly powerful way. Politically, humour is a powerless power that uses its position of weakness to expose those in power through forms of self-aware ridicule... Anarchic political resistance should not seek to mimic and mirror the archaic violent sovereignty it opposes. It is rather a question of the cultivation of a *pacifist* activism that deploys techniques of non-violent warfare or what we might even call ‘tactical frivolity’.³³

What is compelling here is the refusal to emulate the practices of that which is opposed, through a self-conscious self-undermining which seeks to disturb and combat prevailing structures while maintaining and performing a continual awareness of one’s ‘powerful powerlessness’, and indeed one’s struggle to resist the continual impulse towards totalising practices. Critchley ties this perspective to a turn in recent years away from a resistance grounded in shared theoretical doctrines, usually Marxism, to one grounded in shared senses of outrage and grievance, ‘namely that unrestrained multi-national corporate, military capitalism is wrong, that war is the wrong response to the grief of 9/11, etc.’.³⁴ He argues that anarchism has moved away from its traditional concern with freedom and autonomy to a concern with ‘responsibility, whether sexual, ecological or socio-economic, [flowing from] an experience of conscience about the manifold ways in which the West ravages the rest’.³⁵ Whilst such a perspective might sound problematic, and the invocation to choose between ethical responsibility and freedom may be missing the opportunity to play the

³¹ Ibid., 123.

³² In the context of the UK, one might look towards groups such as the Space Hijackers (<http://www.spacehijackers.org>) to find similar examples.

³³ Ibid., 124.

³⁴ Ibid., 126.

³⁵ Ibid., 125.

two together, his presentation of contemporary anarchist practice as one which flourishes through its centeredness around an infinite responsibility to the Other, rather than one which insists upon adherence to a totalising theoretical doctrine, can be more readily accepted. Anarchist disturbance works against that which motivates anger (which Critchley takes to be the first political emotion).³⁶ It is this disturbance, which seeks a continuous resistance against totalising conceptions of the political (rooted in Levinas' concern that 'political totalitarianism rests on an ontological totalitarianism'), founded upon an infinite responsibility to the Other, which may be productive here.³⁷ Articulations of agency prohibited by dominant conceptions of 'the political', motivated not by totalising impulses but by a sense of anger and responsibility, may serve to destabilise dominant ontologies of agency while resisting the impulse towards establishing new totalities, remaining a continuous disturbance of hegemonic agency.

Whilst Critchley offers valuable perspectives on contemporary anarchist practice, his approach fails to engage with the direct creativity of the dissensus and resistance he advocates. Critchley's positive view of dissensus as a disturbance of the depoliticizing totality of archic systems is persuasive. However, there is a shortcoming which lies in his reluctance to engage in the tension between a non-totalising dissensus and the concrete normativities which occur within that dissensus. He rejects the popular anarchist focus on consensus, arguing that 'behind [the goal of

³⁶ There is insufficient space here to discuss the potentially atomising and conservative implications of a resistance which flows from anger or emotion as divorced from analysis of the relations and dynamics of power which are being confronted. Whilst criticism might be directed against traditional Marxism from Critchley's perspective for prioritising dispassionate analysis over what one feels, such criticism could go the other way – a prioritisation of passion over analysis could certainly hold conservative implications. Given the space, my contention would be that anarchists are particularly well placed to resist the notion of a dichotomy here, refusing to choose between emotion and analysis (and indeed denying that this is even possible). Examples of anarchists working beyond this dichotomy include Landauer himself, Uri Gordon, *Anarchy Alive! Anti-Authoritarian Politics from Practice to Theory* (London: Pluto, 2008)), and Emma Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*, amongst many others. For an Autonomist Marxist perspective which also plays emotion and analysis together in novel and exciting ways, see John Holloway, *Change the World Without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today* (London: Pluto Press, 2005).

³⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, 'Freedom of Speech', in Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 206.

consensus] stand unquestioned and simply liberal conceptions of freedom and autonomy.’³⁸ Instead, Critchley casts the anarchist imperative only through negation. His mobilisation of a dichotomy between negation and sovereignty/totality precludes a more complex engagement. More value might be found if we engage in the tension between negativity and sovereignty, asking whether the refusal to establish a new totality in the place of the old can remain normative beyond dissensus (or might at least find productive spaces in the struggle to resist a new totality).

It is here that Landauer and Critchley might be brought against one another, not in a move to reconcile their respective positions, but to consider the productive tensions which may arise. Where Critchley sees value in a politics rooted in continual disturbance of any existing order, a dissensus which seeks to open spaces for radical articulations within and against the state, Landauer favours a positivity which, while favourable to the opening of spaces within the state, rejects the question of working (directly) against it, focussing efforts on the immediate creation of concrete alternatives, framed here in terms of alternative articulations of agency. From Critchley’s position, one might argue that Landauer runs the risk of establishing new totalities, of refusing to engage in the politics of anger and responsibility to the other by his rejection of confrontation (albeit a subversive confrontation). For Critchley, directly impeding statist articulations of agency, working against the anti-politics of dominant systems, might be said to be the imperative of anarchist interventions in IR. From Landauer’s perspective, Critchley must be challenged for his preference for negation and dissensus, which holds little hope for *reforming* the relations of agency which perpetuate domination.

To engage in the tensions between Critchley and Landauer’s positions is not to suggest that they can be brought together unproblematically, nor is it to imply that the warnings offered by both writers about the dangers of not taking their positions are anything but serious. Rather, it

³⁸ Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding*, 127. It should be noted that such a perspective fails to engage with the large amount of anarchist writing which explicitly engages with the struggles inherent in moving towards a consensus process. For an exemplary contemporary example, see Gordon, *Anarchy Alive!*, 47-78.

is to ask whether an approach which takes these dangers seriously, but simultaneously struggles to push against the shortcomings discussed, might find a place in how we think and practice anarchist interventions in the international context: how we might think agencies which seek to undermine statism whilst forming new relations which resist totalising impulses.

Approaching the tensions between Landauer and Critchley might begin by considering the common ground which exists between them, i.e., their reluctance to engage in the concrete *positivities* of negation, their suspicion of a resistance which seeks to build something new and tangible in and through the act of confrontation. Resisting this reluctance opens opportunities for an exploration of the struggle between the two positions which refuses the impulse to choose between them and/or seek out any ‘pure’ resistance. This refusal sees value in both Critchley’s perpetual disturbance of dominant forms and Landauer’s imperative to construct new relationships as a means to undermining those which prevail, and asks whether the formation of alternative relations can run (however ambiguously) alongside confrontations. In the context of this article, the challenge lies with the desire to construct alternative relations of agency within the situation of a contemporary resistance which must often engage in a politics of confrontation. A major part of this approach is to examine and discuss the positivities which inhere within acts of dissensus. After considering some strands which might be available here, the article will move to a discussion of the ‘Raytheon 9’ as a case study which may provide some illumination on the challenges outlined.

Impeding Flows, Creating Flows

For critical IR and CSS, the concerns here lie with acts of confrontation and resistance which might nonetheless serve to engage in concrete and self-conscious acts of creation with regards to rewriting dominant narratives of agency, asking whether the disruptions of stable ontologies

advocated by Critchley might nonetheless hold within themselves more concrete acts of construction, taking seriously Landauer's concern that a resistance which fails to build risks reaffirming and solidifying the logics of that which is opposed. This section discusses several examples as means by which to consider possible sites and dynamics of construction, before the article moves to the more substantive case study.

Discussing the actions of Earth First!, a radical environmentalist group, Richard Day suggests 'that most actions oriented to impeding flows have a constructive moment, precisely to the extent that they prevent or limit the havoc wreaked by industrial capitalism. Human private property will have little value once we have all died of cancer or radiation sickness'.³⁹ Day gives further examples, including the Chipko movement active in the 1970's and 1980's across India, who sought to protect forests and watersheds through 'treehugging', placing their bodies between the trees and the saws which would destroy them. He also discusses the workplace sabotage carried out by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the early part of the twentieth century, and what he takes to be the most 'spectacular example of a creative direct action to impede the flows of state and corporate power', the Black Bloc tactic, which offers a challenge

to the monopoly on invisibility and silence, with its active ignorance of the command not only to behave well, but to be available to be *seen* behaving well. In refusing to follow the rule of transparency which guides the societies of control, Bloc subjects represent glaring exceptions within the domesticated and privileged strata of the global North. Not only has the system of cybernetic regulation failed to modulate their behaviour properly, but they also seem to be immune to self-discipline, fear of physical punishment, and verbal and physical attacks by other activists and academics [*sic*].⁴⁰

Day finds in the Bloc a specific constructive dimension, directed both toward the immediate situation and the popular imagination, which would find little place in Landauer and Critchley, yet

³⁹ Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 26. This is not to suggest that this 'constructive' moment is always positive, desirable or sufficient, but that it is a potential foundation upon which to consider such actions.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 27-29.

which engages in the struggle to resist the totalising impulse while forming (or, more properly, engaging in the ambiguous struggle of seeking to form) micro-relations of solidarity and mutuality.

We might even go a step beyond Day here, specifically on the question of self-discipline; while the Black Bloc tactic is formed largely around an explicit refusal to adhere to the self-discipline demanded by the state, alongside this runs a clear enactment of an alternative relation of self-discipline which, to use Day's terminology, is founded more in affinity than hegemony. It is a self-discipline which is built through mutual understanding and discussion rather than an unproblematic acceptance of authority. As David Graeber notes, contrary to media representation, Black Bloc activists at Seattle were mostly 'fastidious about their dedication to nonviolence', even in the face of physical violence from other activists angry with the Bloc's window-smashing tactics.⁴¹ Furthermore, as Graeber makes clear, this mutual understanding is not the unproblematic adherence to 'consensus' suggested in Critchley's critique above, but an ongoing process of self-reflection and contextual awareness, which often for the Bloc finds its value precisely in the absence of consensus.⁴² Perhaps, then, the refusal to behave, while in the context of the Bloc clearly an act of disturbance and (usually minor) destruction, contains within itself a powerful rewriting of the politics of agency, a challenge to totalising conceptions of political action and legitimacy, and a construction of modes of intervention and self-discipline founded in affinity, in a coterminous and indistinguishable consensus and dissensus. Perhaps this refusal is an integral part of what Day takes to be a crucial element of prefigurative struggle, that '[avoiding] the quest for masters requires some experience in alternatives to slavery'.⁴³

Another potential contribution can be found in Christine Sylvester's discussion of the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, which was established in the 1980's to protest against the stationing of Cruise Missiles at the RAF base in Berkshire. Sylvester suggests that the actions

⁴¹ David Graeber, *Direct Action: An Ethnography* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009), 497. 406-409

⁴² *Ibid.*, 406-409. See also 287-359 for a broader discussion of consensus processes.

⁴³ Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 34.

at the camp over a number of years opened spaces for significant rewritings of agency in IR. She notes how the women

danced...on the missile silos under construction at the base; they blockaded the base gates when missiles were sent on manoeuvres...they domesticated the forces by sticking potatoes up the exhaust pipes of convoy vehicles. Throughout, some campers burned out, became angry, and left. Others stayed angry on, in, and around the fence – that emblematic boundary of security that could not keep them out.⁴⁴

In refusing to mimic the decision making models and security practices of traditional IR, instead engaging in consensus processes and friendly discussions with the soldiers on the base, the women engaged in what Critchley might call the performance of powerlessness in the face of power. In the traditional script, they were irrelevant: 'Peace camps do not lead us to the edge of war. They do not stockpile weapons and hurtle us into arms races. They do not have significant trade patterns with the world. They do not sit at the UN. They do not matter'.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, as they disrupted the actions of the base, they also publicly challenged dominant expectations about agency in IR, most obviously with regards to the place of women, but more significantly, with respect to the place of 'ordinary' people. By physically interacting with the tools of IR, with jeeps and missiles and soldiers, they challenged the traditional distinction between the global and the local.⁴⁶ In essence, a group of women in rural Berkshire were *doing* international politics, challenging popular imaginations of what was possible, prefiguring concrete alternatives. More expansively,

the peace camp became the bustling point of energy for a good anarchic system where in the absence of rule-governed expectations, there was room to change what and where one was properly supposed to be through actions at the fences of assigned place. Constructivist Alexander Wendt claims that "Anarchy is What States Make of It." Anarchy is also what a variety of yet-to-be-heard people of international relations, and their "strange" politics and conversations and empathies, make of it...we might rehabilitate "anarchy" to think about

⁴⁴ Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations*, 185.

⁴⁵ Christine Sylvester, 'The Contributions of Feminist Theory to International Relations', in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, eds. Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 265.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 264.

the ways contemporary relations international scramble and refuse IR standards of identity and place [*sic*].⁴⁷

Sylvester's neat inversion of Wendt's dictum opens the door to a perpetual rewriting of the terms of IR through the interventions of grassroots agents, and opens spaces to engage seriously with Landauer's challenge to undermine dominant systems through our own performance of alternatives. The women of Greenham Common, through their disturbances, were engaged in a struggle to re-imagine and recreate the boundaries of possibility for ordinary people to participate as agents in IR, denying the globalist, elitist and militarist dimensions as they publicly practiced and formed counter-relations of localism and anti-militarism.

The final example here comes from Polly Pallister-Wilkins and her discussion of anarchist direct action against the Wall being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.⁴⁸ She examines the approach taken by Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW), an Israeli group of activists, making the central point that their actions represent a merging of anarchist ideas about 'the politics of the act' with Foucauldian perspectives on networks of power.⁴⁹ As opposed to other activist groups, such as Peace Now, AATW are defined through 'a refutation of the assumption that as a collective of people hoping to change something they will take their claim to the state'.⁵⁰ Pallister-Wilkins offers three reasons why AATW act rather than ask; the first is a fear of rendering power to institutions of oppression, reinforcing a politics of demand; the second is the more

⁴⁷ Christine Sylvester, *Feminist International Relations: An Unfinished Journey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 261.

⁴⁸ Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 'Radical Ground: Israeli and Palestinian Activists and Joint Protest Against the Wall', *Social Movement Studies* 8, no. 4 (2009): 393-407.

⁴⁹ The split between a 'politics of demand' and a 'politics of the act' is increasingly popular in contemporary anarchism (although the essential conceptual distinction has been espoused since at least the time of Kropotkin, see Peter Kropotkin, 'The Spirit of Revolt', in *Anarchism: A Collection of Revolutionary Writings* (New York: Dover Publications, 2002), 37-39). As currently understood, a 'politics of demand' is founded on the notion that political agency must be mediated through a monopolistic institution, such as the state (Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 14-15), limited because 'it can change the content of structures of domination and exploitation, but it cannot change their form' (ibid., 88). A 'politics of the act', set against a 'politics of demand', is more concerned with exercising an agency which resists such coercive mediation. Landauer might be celebrated as one of the most committed exponents of a 'politics of the act' in anarchist history.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 398.

pragmatic concern that the state will not listen; the third is the ‘almost impossible task of identifying all those interest groups who have converged to benefit from the separation Wall and thus cast a large and almost impenetrable network of domination’.⁵¹ Yonatan Pollak, a prominent member of AATW, articulated these concerns when discussing the role of direct action, stating that ‘we do not ask anyone to stop the constructions [of the Wall], because no one has the legitimate right to engage this construction. We simply go and try and stop the work where it is being constructed’.⁵²

The actions of AATW are most obviously rooted in a disturbance, in finding spaces of distance within the state to work against its practices. Nonetheless, in refusing to allow the state to mediate their demands, and in engaging with the dominant security network at its local and diffuse level (bringing in the Foucauldian concern with networks and nodal points of domination, rather than the traditional focus on the state as *the* pivotal point of security), AATW open spaces for re-imaginings of how agency might be advanced, disrupting dominant ontologies through their contraction of alternative relations of intervention and practice (relations which, as noted above, are rarely taken seriously in critical IR theory and CSS). Uri Gordon notes the powerful impact that the actions of AATW have on the Israeli public, particularly when they act alongside Palestinians, and challenge dominant narratives of identity, existential threats, fear and ethnicity.⁵³ The activists’ explicit practice of the conflict as one founded in joint struggle against authority, rather than one based in entrenched ethnic difference, constitutes a strong and challenging rewriting of the relations central to security practices in the region, a disturbance which is nonetheless deeply creative.

⁵¹ Ibid., 402.

⁵² Cited in Ibid., 402.

⁵³ Gordon, *Anarchy Alive!*, 156-157.

The Raytheon 9

The remainder of this article examines one particular case study, that of the ‘Raytheon 9’, as a means to elaborating on the discussions above. This case is not presented as an exemplary example of the challenges posed – indeed, the inherent ambiguities preclude any such exemplar. Instead, it is a study which, while problematic, may help to suggest potential routes for future interventions, particularly with regards to the ways in which the Raytheon 9 are argued to have engaged in a reformation and re-narration of the terms of agency with respect to IR and security.

At 08:15 on Wednesday 9th August, 2006, around thirty members of the Derry Anti War Coalition (DAWC) assembled at the Raytheon plant on the outskirts of Derry. They had decided to try and gain access to the plant at a meeting two days before, in response to the use of Raytheon software in guided missile systems which were being used by the Israeli Air Force in its assault on Lebanon. At this point over a thousand Lebanese civilians had been killed since 12th July 2006. When the opportunity to enter the building arose, those thirty attempted to gain access to Raytheon’s offices. Most were prevented from gaining access by the police, but ten were able to enter (one subsequently left for personal reasons).

‘We piled desks and chairs against the doors. Documents found on the premises were thrown from the windows to supporters outside. After our supporters were moved away by the police, computers, already damaged, were also hurled out. Our main target was the mainframe: we knew that putting this out of action would disrupt Raytheon’s internal ordering system and thus hamper production, including production of missiles. The mainframe was decommissioned with a fire-extinguisher.

...After about eight hours inside, a contingent of police, perhaps 40 strong, smashed through the doors wearing riot gear and stood in a semi-circle around us, many holding Perspex shields, some pointing plastic-bullet guns. Holding formation, they inched forward while the officer in command shouted orders to us to “surrender” and lie on the floor. We continued playing cards at a desk in the centre of the room.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Eamonn McCann, *The Raytheon 9* (Derry: Derry Anti-War Coalition), 8-9.

After they were arrested, the nine were charged with aggravated burglary and affray, later amended to criminal damage and affray. On 11th June 2008, by a unanimous vote of the jury, they were found not guilty on three charges of criminal damage (the charge of affray having been dismissed by a judge prior to this). The centrepiece of the Raytheon 9's argument was that they had acted to prevent the commission of war crimes. In his statement to press and supporters following the verdict, Eamonn McCann stated that

the jury has accepted that we were reasonable in our belief that: the Israeli Defence Forces were guilty of war crimes in Lebanon in the summer of 2006; that the Raytheon company, including its facility in Derry, was aiding and abetting the commission of these crimes; and that the action we took was intended to have, and did have, the effect of hampering or delaying the commission of war crimes.

We have been vindicated.⁵⁵

The actions of the nine were part of a longer campaign to expel Raytheon from Derry, which had been ongoing since the plant was established in 1999, and which had employed tactics including citizens' juries, die-ins, vigils, protests and occupations.⁵⁶ The campaign also attempted to press the city council and the Northern Ireland assembly to withdraw its support and permission for the company's presence.⁵⁷

It is important to note that the group itself and the broader DAWC were not an explicitly anarchist group, and were 'a loose alliance of human rights activists, radical Christians, feminists, Republicans, anarchists, socialists and environmentalists'.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, their actions can offer interesting perspectives on the discussions above about the ambiguities and possibilities of anarchist interventions in the politics of IR and security; indeed, the absence of the 'anarchist' signifier is, as Graeber has argued, not necessarily a sign that anarchist praxis is absent, but

⁵⁵ <http://www.raytheon9.org> (9th May 2010).

⁵⁶ McCann, *The Raytheon 9*, 29-31.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 18-28.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 29. There is a potential tension here between what is argued to below to be a radical intervention and the potential that the nature of the alliance and its unity through anger might actually have fairly problematic implications, following the concerns raised in footnote 38.

potentially part of a broader shift towards anarchistic theories of direct action taking hold in broader contemporary activist movements.⁵⁹ It is also important to qualify the use of the example by adding that the actions of the Raytheon 9 are by no means unique, both with respect to the wider tradition of direct action, and to action against the arms trade in particular. They are used here not as a special case, but as one amongst many similar actions. Other examples from UK anti-arms trade groups include the four women from Trident Ploughshares who, in 1996 destroyed a BAE Systems Hawk Jet before it could be sold to Indonesia by the British Government, and the EDO Decommissioners who, in 2009, ransacked an EDO MBM components factory with the intention of preventing arms exports to Israel.⁶⁰ Whilst there are similarities and differences between the various cases, the central argument advanced here might be applied across many different resistances and actions.

The Raytheon 9 performed an intervention which served to undermine dominant understandings about the site of security while concurrently practicing and proposing alternatives in a manner determined to engage with dominant public assumptions. This intervention can be read in two interrelated ways; first, through the target of their intervention; second, through the manner of their intervention. That their target was not the state or another accepted ‘political’ mediator of security (such as the UN) is not insignificant. In a similar situation to that discussed by Pallister-Wilkins in the context of resistance against the Wall, the Raytheon 9 provoked a re-imagination of the site of security and responsibility, engaging with a specific point in the networks of power which made possible the assault on Lebanon (a perspective resisted by politicians in Derry City Council where even Sinn Féin politicians who had condemned the violence in Lebanon refused to acknowledge the role of Raytheon).⁶¹ In refusing the traditional site of security, the

⁵⁹ David Graeber, ‘The New Anarchists’, *New Left Review*, 13 (2002): 61-73.

⁶⁰ see Angie Zelter, ‘Civil Society and Global Responsibility: the Arms Trade and East Timor’, *International Relations*, 18, no.1 (2004): 125-140, for a first-hand account by one of the participants in the Ploughshares action. On the EDO Decommissioners, see <http://decommissioners.co.uk/> (20th July 2010).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

Raytheon 9 engaged in what Critchley might call a meta-political disturbance, denying the totalising narratives placed on acceptable conceptions and locations of security. Through this intervention, the Raytheon 9 served to reform the relations which make up the narrow sites of security, demonstrating to the citizens of Derry that the depoliticising narrative of a security politics located in the alienated realms of the Foreign Office and the UN was not necessary, and that an alternative narrative which saw the site of security as located on the outskirts of their city was possible.

More importantly, in their refusal to adhere to the orthodoxy of statist mediation, the Raytheon 9 undermined dominant ontologies of agency. The action itself cannot be divorced from the wider campaign against Raytheon's presence in Derry, which, from 1999 until the plant eventually shut in 2010, made the case to local people that the company should not be made welcome in their city.⁶² This argument was made by invoking links between Derry's own violent past and the ongoing events in Lebanon.⁶³ Particular ties were drawn at the time of the Raytheon 9's actions between the Bloody Sunday massacre of 1972 and the 28 civilian deaths which resulted from a Raytheon-guided 'bunker-buster' missile hitting a house in Qana, Lebanon, on 30th July 2006.⁶⁴ Feeling that an important part of the network which facilitated the Israeli assault was located nearby, the Raytheon 9 claim that they 'had a legal, moral and political duty' to 'stop or at least delay war crimes'.⁶⁵ In refusing the expectation that ordinary people should limit their representation to a politics of demand, and in taking government inaction as a cue to themselves act, the Raytheon 9 might be said to be engaging in a manifestation of the opening of spaces to act against the disciplining authority of the totalising state, derived through anger and responsibility, that Critchley advocates.

⁶² Ibid., 7.

⁶³ Ibid., 31.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 43-48.

⁶⁵ <http://raytheon9.org/Trial%20Updates.html> (9th May 2010).

Nonetheless it would be limiting to deny the deeply creative aspects of the action. Whilst Landauer may have criticised the destructive and confrontational elements, in this destruction they also performed counter-relations of agency with regards to political practice, simultaneously refusing the mediation of their actions through totalising, statist conceptions of agency (a dynamic which, as discussed in the introduction, is rarely recognised within much of critical IR and security studies) while creating alternatives founded in affinity, in the local and in responsibility. As with the example of the Greenham Common Peace Camp discussed above, they were in this respect ‘doing’ international politics in a manner rarely respected in academic discussions. This dynamic might be said to have occurred both at the level of action - of what they did, of their capacity to limit the conduct of the Israeli assault, and at a broader level of provoking popular imagination about the role of ordinary people in security practice. They practiced and preached the realm of security politics and of IR as the *agentic* concern of ordinary people (and particularly of *local* people), not solely in the traditional context of political representation (in various forms), but as a direct and practicable normative concern. In Landauer’s terms, the Raytheon 9 can be seen as overcoming the relations which make up dominant conceptions of security practice through a construction and contraction of alternative relations which seek to intervene in fundamentally different ways. The image painted in the quotation above in which, as riot police surrounded the nine, they continued to play cards, is remarkably evocative. In one respect, the men refused to take their roles in the expected performance of deference to the arrival of *the real* agents.⁶⁶ In another, the riot police were forced into an unanticipated tableau of the activists’ own creation, the forces and protectors of militarism rendered mockingly irrelevant, absurd and impotent in the face of the Raytheon 9’s powerful powerlessness.

The above considerations give some indication of how the broader discussions in this article might find more direct expression. However, there are ambiguities in the Raytheon 9

⁶⁶ That the Raytheon 9 were all men is a potentially problematic dimension which will not be taken up here.

example which should be examined further, as a means to engaging with the essential ambiguities which form a part of any such intervention. The following paragraphs discuss the Raytheon 9's potentially limited approach to security, and the legalistic dimensions of their actions.

As has been suggested, the actions of the Raytheon 9 served in part to destabilise dominant logics of agency. However, it might also be suggested that, while they served to undermine one approach, they also re-instantiated other absolutist discourses. The unproblematic use of slogans such as 'War stoppers are the real crime stoppers' and 'Resisting war crimes is not a crime' reifies a security founded in and secured by totalising logics, inverting dominant discourses, rather than engaging in the challenge to resist and dispel such polarities.⁶⁷ The Raytheon 9 also made a number of concessions to a legalistic discourse through their actions; they waited to be arrested after smashing the office and, in court, insisted that their actions were legal, that they were acting to prevent a greater crime, i.e. 'the commission of war crimes'.⁶⁸ In addition to a legalistic defence of the actions came appeals to place the arms trade beyond the law, and for *heads of states* to limit Israel's aggression.⁶⁹

There is some space to speak critically about these aspects of Raytheon 9's action; particularly that, unlike AATW, they did in part serve to render power to an oppressive institution (or, in keeping with the concerns here, serve to reify dominant conceptions of agency even while opening spaces for counter-narratives). To the Raytheon 9's credit, there are re-readings of these tensions which paint the situation in a more positive light.⁷⁰ For instance, it could be argued that the importance they placed on being tried by jury transferred their appeals from the state to ordinary citizens who, as peers, were those from whom they wished to derive legitimacy. It could

⁶⁷ McCann, *The Raytheon 9*, 9. This is not to deny the potential value in such statements, but to highlight their ambiguous and limited nature.

⁶⁸ <http://raytheon9.org/Trial%20Updates.html> (10th May 2010).

⁶⁹ <http://www.raytheon9.org> (10th May 2010).

⁷⁰ It might be argued that such ambiguities, whether cast as a tension between the politics of the act and a politics of demand (see Day, *Gramsci is Dead*, 88-89), or between revolutionary and reformist action, run throughout any such action.

also be argued that in appealing to the statist framework for ‘vindication’, they performed an ironic subversion, turning the system against itself as a tool for their own narration of agency. Nonetheless there is an ambiguity here which cannot be ignored and which, to some extent, vindicates Landauer’s concerns about the paucity of working ‘against’ the state, and Critchley’s concerns about seeking any unproblematic positivity, as opposed to a continuous negation of that which motivates outrage.

A productive route might be to take these ambiguities as central to how such interventions are performed, not as a motivation to inaction, but as part of a continuous struggle to engage in the essentially compromised nature of resistance in a responsible manner; engaging in negation while maintaining a cautious awareness of its potentially limited and limiting features, and while exhibiting a sceptical but active awareness of the positive counter-narratives and counter-relations which might be offered, and indeed prioritised over those which might render power in unproductive directions. Emphasising those elements of the Raytheon 9’s actions which might be read as seeking to form alternative relations of agency with regards to security practice highlights what might be seen to be the most engaging and empowering dynamic within their intervention. It also provokes imaginations about how anarchism can engage with the politics of IR and security in a manner which engages in the struggle to resist totalising practices demanded by Critchley, while maintaining a commitment to a Landauer-inspired positivity which seeks to reform dominant relations of agency. Whilst there are problematic dimensions running through the Raytheon 9, their intervention suggests and opens more than might at first be apparent; in engaging in the play of agency, actively refusing and reforming dominant ontologies, they provoke important reflections for how we think anarchism in this context, moving away from overly globalist and idealist approaches to one which thinks, practices and recreates the international at the local.

Conclusion

In this article I have argued that an anarchist approach to IR and CSS might find force when engaging at the level of concrete, grassroots practices. Anarchist interventions have the potential to engage in counter-narrations and counter-relations which undermine and reform dominant ontologies of agency, challenging statism and elitism by practicing both their negation and their alternatives. Through engaging with Gustav Landauer's imperative to understand and focus the positive counter-relations which might be formed by grassroots articulations of agency, and Simon Critchley's insistence that we must avoid forming new totalities, and should instead seek manifestations of anarchic interventions which mobilise a powerful powerlessness, sovereign and statist conceptions of agency may be undermined, and alternative relations practiced and proclaimed in the very field where the state claims special privilege and existential validation.

The challenges offered to critical theories of IR and security here are twofold. The first is to prompt an increased focus on the politics of agency. Current approaches were criticised in the introduction for their limited and/or limiting approach to agency, and for the latent statism which this betrays. While important moves have been made to unseat the position of the state as the referent object of security,⁷¹ to examine forms of political community which move beyond nation-state orthodoxy,⁷² and to problematise the ontological and ethical foundations of states and statism,⁷³ the position of statist agency and the potential for its disruption has been largely overlooked. The second challenge follows directly from the first, and concerns the capacities of anarchist political theory and practice, and examinations of non- and sub-state activisms, to

⁷¹ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Richard Wyn Jones, *Security, Strategy, and Critical Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

⁷² Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Columbia: South Carolina Press, 1998).

⁷³ David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

provoke re-imaginings of the boundaries of ‘the political’ with respect to the possibilities of agencies not disciplined by statist and/or sovereign boundaries.

The various case studies, in particular the Raytheon 9, suggest the positivities which inhere in many acts of resistance, and which might be conceptualised as challenges to dominant scripts of agency. They show the ways in which ‘ordinary’ people might refuse statist mediation and practice alternatives, ‘doing’ international relations themselves, undermining the terms by which ‘the political’ is disciplined in much of IR and security studies. The focus here has been both normative and analytic; indeed, neither is prioritised, and the practices of different non-statist agents are used to show how already-existing challenges to statism might aid in re-framing imaginations about the possibilities of agencies not disciplined in statist terms.

Anarchist direct action is concerned with making positive interventions in the prevailing system, while prefiguring relations which look beyond the limits of that system. An anarchist intervention into IR and CSS should place these concerns at its heart, examining the opportunities to undermine and recreate prevailing relations of agency, seeking a perpetual disruption and recreation of the terms and tensions of the global field.