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Union of Egoists

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-Kevin I. Slaughter

What is a UnionOfEgoists.com?

This is an informational resource provided by Kevin I. Slaughter of Underworld Amusements and Trevor Blake of OVO, initiated in February and publicly launched April 1st of 2016. The website initially focuses on providing historical, biographical and bibliographical details of a few their favorite Egoist philosophers. It is also integrating the archives of egoist website i-studies.com, the former project of Svein Olav Nyberg, and the EgoistArchives.com project of Dan Davies. Further, it will be home to Der Geist, a Journal of Egoism in print 1845 – 1945. UnionOfEgoists.com will be the best resource for Egoism online.

What is a Union of Egoists?

"We two, the State and I, are enemies. I, the egoist, have not at heart the welfare of this "human society," I sacrifice nothing to it, I only utilize it; but to be able to utilize it completely I transform it rather into my property and my creature; i. e., I annihilate it, and form in its place the Union of Egoists."

- Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*

What is Egoism?

"Egoism is the claim that the Individual is the measure of all things. In ethics, in epistemology, in aesthetics, in society, the Individual is the best and only arbitrator. Egoism claims social convention, laws, other people, religion, language, time and all other forces outside of the Individual are an impediment to the liberty and existence of the Individual. Such impediments may be tolerated but they have no special standing to the Individual, who may elect to ignore or subvert or destroy them as He can. In egoism the State has no monopoly to take tax or to wage war."

-Trevor Blake, *Confessions of a Failed Egoist*

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IMPERIALISM

by Jo Labadie (1850-1933)

I am an imperialist,
 Being emperor of myself.
 My ego is my empire, over which none other may wield the
 sceptre of rulership.
 I alone an emperor in the realm of my own consciousness.
 Who denies me this prerogative is a usurper;
 Who takes it from me is mine enemy;
 Who invades my territory deserves no kindly consideration,
 puts his weal in jeopardy.
 This empire keeps me busy with affairs its own,
 So I have no time to dabble in matters foreign to its sphere,
 No inclination to add burdens to those justly, fairly,
 squarely mine own.
 My empire is different than any other.
 In so far as is possible mine is a self-determining entity,
 And no-one shall invade but at his peril.
 I am an enemy of all invaders, and invader of none,
 Being at peace with every one who minds his own business
 and leaves mine to myself.

x x x

Please note: I have informed some readers of Minus One and others that from this issue this review would be known as "Retort". I have now decided to retain the original title, so I ask all who have received this announcement to now disregard it. I am sorry for any confusion this may have caused.

S.E.Parker.

MAN MEETS BOOK - Some Notes On Reading Stirner ~1100~

by Willian Flygare

3. b) Private correspondent #2 complains that Stirner condones rapacity:

"Stirner would seem to be sympatico to the modern cult of 'doing your own thing', a position which in my view has one fatal defect. If, as Stirner says, 'I am unique,' then there is no general principle which applies to me which I can invoke against people who would despoil me or my property.

"Again, if every man is 'doing his own thing', what happens when X decides that his thing is to prevent Y from doing his?"

I let Neck answer my Neckian friend:

"All I want in the world is to reform and clear and educate myself, so that my character will pass muster with the one man I must live with all day and sleep with all night - - - and that leaves me little time or inclination to care much about the opinion of others. That chap knows me, you see; the rest don't."

Letters from Albert Jay Neck, App., p. 213

and asked if this was not a case of "doing your own thing", or rather being your own thing, since my long voluntary exile made the other expression meaningless; also, I wrote that Stirner serves to weed out possessedness including that of encroachment and slave-mindedness.

Incidentally, Stirner's parallel to Pentagruelism's the only reform that one is called upon to make is that of oneself is:

22.13: "He who overturns one of his limits may have shown others the way and means; the overturning of their limits remains their own affair."

"Invoking" spirits to come to one's aid evokes equivocation as surely as it did in Faust and Isebeth:

8.12: (moral judges entrusting important things to rascals),
26.12: (Russian boundary-sentinels), etc.

On "X despoiling Y," 35.3 (the "mighty...crime...in distant thunders" passage) has been cited out of all proportion to its import (probably because of its poetry) and out of context as the expression of a "rhapsodic glorification of crime" (Woodcock, p.103). In 20.1, Stirner states that the ego (the id?) is criminal at birth. But,

23.6: "What is the ordinary criminal but one who has committed the fatal mistake of endeavouring after what is people's instead of seeking for what is his? He has sought despicably

alien goods....Talk with the so-called criminal as with an egoist and he will be ashamed, not that he transgressed against your laws and goods, but...that he did not despise you and yours altogether, that he was too little an egoist."

Relevant here would be the buddhistic problem: pain.

10.10: (pathetic picture of a nun).

24.8: "I moan because my body means."

39.16: "Your love of man (philanthropy) is the torment of men."

39.17-18" ...his tooth pains him, but his pain pains me....
therefore for my sake, I kiss it away."

E. Armand, in his delicate essay, A QUI EST DESTINE L'UNIQUE, tells of the "plan" that "our kind of individualist" has

"...for freeing 'his world' of useless and avoidable suffering."

and goes on to say,

"In short, the individualist, as we know him, abominates brutes, cretins, rogues, schemers, twisters, skunks, and so forth, no matter with what ideology they wish to conceal themselves."

The mode differs...not the mood.

4. a) Kropotkin, commenting on individualist anarchism in America, writes,

"Those who profess it...they are chiefly 'intellectuals'... soon realize that the individualism they so highly praise is not attainable by individual efforts, and either abandon the ranks of the Anarchists, and are driven into the liberal individualism of the classical economists, or they retire into a sort of Epicurean a-moralism, or super-man-theory, similar to that of Stirner and Nietzsche..."

Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th ed. Vol.1, pp 914-916

Nietzsche's superman is a new mutation of the human species towards which "Man is but a bridge"; this, for Stirner, would be a "spook".

If, by "superman", the popular meaning is meant see:

25.34: "Perhaps I cannot make very much out of myself, but this little is everything."

48.67: "I, this 'drop in the bucket', this insignificant man!"

38.24: "What competence does not a child possess..."

25.43: "It is foolish to assert that there is no power above mine."

24.31: "If I am weak, I have only weak means...which are yet good enough for a considerable part of the world."

4. b) The sub-man-ic Stirner: "Stirner wanted all to be free."
(Editor's Introduction, p.xvii)

But, 24.8: "What a difference between freedom and ownness!"
24.27: "'Freedom' awakens your rage . . . ; 'egoism' calls
you to joy . . ."

(This slip of the pen has been wrenched out of context): in
Walker's introduction, it reads,

"Stirner loved liberty for himself, and he loved to see
any and all men and women taking liberty, and he had no lust
for power." (Italics mine)

5. a) Private correspondent /#3 writes,

"I can see that Stirner is a tough writer. Nock is a
man of letters, but Stirner is a philosopher. And oh the
difference to me . . . Although I can't read Kant, I have read
Winnegan's Wake through twice with most intense pleasure and
with roars of laughter. Then I realized that I must be a
professional man of letters (!) I am certainly no philosopher.
The only philosophers I've ever loved have been great lit-
erary artists (Plato and Nietzsche). However, I'm looking
forward to a tussle with Stirner, especially because I am
interested in comparing him with the New England
Transcendentalists, with whom I have more in common than
with any other philosophers (if they are philosophers)."

Stirner's teaching at Mme. Gropmus's School for Young
Ladies (Oct. 1, 1839 to Oct. 1, 1844) was not in philosophy,
but in the German Language (from 1839); the History of
Literature, especially on the (Second) Silesian School of
Poetry, in which subject he was remarkably successful; and
in History (from 1840).

5. b) Kropotkin, in the article on "Anarchism" cited above,
writes,

"His (the individual's) development would remain
unilateral. This is why the direction of thought,
notwithstanding its undoubtedly correct and useful advocacy
of the full development of each individuality, finds a
hearing only in limited artistic and literary circles."
(Italics mine)

In Nagarjuna's buddhist logic, The Middle Way is:
neither ns nor non-ons, neither either nor both.

As for uni-lateral, the one-way street of fashions,
customs, and institutions could also be questioned. But
I digress.

(To be continued)

I NOW

by Tom Lisicki

In making distinctions between concepts and percepts, it has been asserted many times by many people that words and languages do not perfectly correspond with what is called "reality". This point is hard to clarify because any criticism of words and language depends on words and language themselves and any attempt to criticize them tends to invalidate the critic's own remarks. Therefore ambiguity and intuition must be tolerated to some degree in a discussion of this topic and others related to it.

What is the relation of language to reality and to the individual? Although language attempts to describe all of reality it might be more accurate to say that it describes social or societal reality and not individual reality. Language is a part of society, one of the common links between individuals. It is a very precious, real, natural, human thing and I do not wish to downgrade it, but there are limitations to the use of language that are of major significance to the individual and to individual self-expression and self-experience.

The individual is a process in constant flux, changing from instant to instant. The individual and his uniqueness only exist "now". "Now" is not the same as the "present" that is found in language. The linguistic "present" is static and defined and cannot handle the "now-ness" and uniqueness of the individual, but rather it deals with the "not now-ness" of individuals and with experiences rather than experiencing. Society is the product of the "not-ness" or "not now-ness" of individuals and language can describe it in the static, linear logic of past, present and future tenses that truly describe the society but not the individual, who doesn't exist in the past, present or future, but always "now". The individual is what he is now experiencing, sensing and feeling, "internally" and "externally", while society stems only from what individuals have experienced, sensed and felt. For an individual to be truly self-experiencing and self-expressing he must be open to the uniqueness of "now". But very often individuals close themselves off from their "now" experiencing by limiting themselves to the narrow sensibilities of language, in an attempt to clarify and define with terms and expectations their "nows", preferring the security and consistency of language to the insecurity and wonder of "now". Not that one is less real or natural in doing this, but one is less individual and is unable to fully know one's self and one's self interests by accepting this conventionality. It is possible for an individual to experience his unique "now", but it is not possible to think about "now" conceptually without reducing it to some common denominator, thus sacrificing individuality and uniqueness.

Since language by nature is common and static rather than individual and changing, its children - logic and laws - aren't

good supporters of the individual. Because language is consistently defined, logic and laws have consistency and this consistency is good enough for society because society does not deal with the flux of "now".

Laws are real in society and society deals with them conceptually. To an individual, laws are real just insofar as they are connected to percepts that occur in his "now" and to accept them conceptually would deny his individuality. Laws and authority are just elaborate manifestations of social reality engendered by words and concepts and as such are basically anti-individual. Not accepting laws and not believing in any sacred authority does not mean that those societal pressures will not be part of an individual's experiences. They will be real as part of "now" experiences, but only in the context of the individual's open awareness of the reality of his individuality without any acceptance of the soporific effects of societal standards.

To attempt to define and clarify an individual's "goals" or "worth" would be foolish. Although an individual may often act in common with others, he will never be in common with others. Society may term him "common", but as an individual he won't really be. The only possible description of an individual's relation to society is a negative one. An individual can be non-negative, but such a state is beyond description as far as the individual's reality is concerned.

"Individual anarchist" is the plug that society tries to use to fill the hole in its faulty description of a true individual.

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ECONOMICS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

by Michael Huir

Economics, originally meaning the managing of the household, has come to be regarded as the managing of the State or the affairs of the country.

The economics of the day is mixed-economics. People are constantly mixing voluntary action with coercion in their economics, much the same as they do in regards to other areas of human interaction (e.g. education)

Many libertarians have recently come to be known as supporters of only those sections of the market where there is voluntary association. These same people also propose that the other sections of the market should be made voluntary in order that individuals may be free.

But there is one area of economics that all economists acknowledge: individual dependency. Both the voluntary and coercive sections of

economics thrive only in a situation where individuals depend upon each other. In the absence of exchange there is no economics. In the absence of economics there is individuality.

Individuality is living individually. It is exposing the ego, the self, to its natural environment, and learning to maximize the "I" through actions of the self alone. This maximizing of self-mastery I call Iconomics.

One measures his or her individuality to the degree to which he or she is dependent upon otherpeople, or society.

Being able to survive alone in nature is an excellent way to start practical individual living. If one can survive by oneself in nature, then any dependency he or she will later assume will only be of a temporary order. Certain goods utilized expediently which draw one into a position of dependency can always be abandoned in case of emergency, and thereby independent individuality can be maintained. Any compromise of individuality with dependency would be wisely done on this level, rather than on the level of absolute dependence. With a knowledge of, and a capacity for, self-survival, should the need or desire arise, one can then look to the type of life-style he or she will find most comfortable.

The main concern of iconomics is that one may better understand him or herself and the dependent-independent relationship one has with society.

Iconomics begins with the analysis of the degrees of individuality, of self-sufficiency in one's actions and interactions. One can act dependent wholly or partly upon others - or for oneself.

Dependency upon a few can be regarded in most cases as preferable to dependency upon many. The division of labour is such that it is generally easier for the individual, if the need arises, to provide comparable goods for those which have been produced by one or a few, rather than for those which have been produced by many. For example, a salt shaker can be made out of wood or plastic. The possibility of an individual making a salt shaker out of wood by himself is much greater than making one out of plastic due to the tremendous, inexcusable dependency of division of labour and equipment which is needed to produce one plastic salt shaker. (Not to mention the mental dependency one would have to go through to learn to process a plastic salt shaker, rather than make one out of wood.)

A simple example of a basic personal good that can be analyzed is a shirt. I assume that all the individualists reading this have one, but I wonder how many have viewed their shirt in the light of their individuality.

Imagine a straight line scale with rough values of dependency/

independency running left to right. Extreme left being complete dependence upon society; extreme right being complete independence. Taking the example of the shirt, if one were very dependent upon society, then would buy or receive his or her shirt from a large department store. He or she would then be dependent upon a long line of people who contributed to the making of the shirt, from the farmer who grew the basic material all the way to the stockholders in the department store.

Moving to the right on the scale would be a person who buys shirts from an individual tailor. This would free one from dependency upon the large department store bureaucracy and a large company which does sewing.

A further step towards self-sufficiency would be buying material and sewing a shirt for oneself. The next step would be to buy the yarn and weaving material, and sewing the shirt for oneself. And so we could move through the stages to self-sufficiency, where a person obtains all the material from nature, builds a loom, and weaves and sews the shirt with hand-made instruments.

This type of scale of economic analysis can be used for all the goods an individual uses, and thus further his or her knowledge of specific dependencies and independencies. The results can often be amazing. How many individualists reading this now would die in a week or two if they were cut off from society?

A further carrying out of economic values into one's life would probably first result in simplified living. As can be reasoned, if one were to become more individual and independent then his or her standard of living would generally tend to decrease. This would be due to the fact that most of what we possess is not essential to our basic living.

Society demands the consumer. If one accepts the values of society one will naturally consume to keep up with it. Values such as the belief in keeping up with the latest style of dress or car, in public education as essential for one's child - all are perpetuated and kept in high esteem by society.

Economic individualism necessitates separation, diversification and simplification. The degree to which one becomes independent differs with each person. Not all can go the whole route of economics today. Yet the challenge is there in all we do to become more individual. Mental liberation, such as can be experienced in Stirner, is only half way to becoming oneself. Unless coupled to physical liberation in the economic sense, mental individualism is at best just plain frustrating. Knowing where one would like to go, but having no power to go other than in a dream, is nothing more than a dream.

A man is a slave when his labour products are appropriated, and his activities are governed by some agency other than himself.

Albert Jay Reek

NIETZSCHE AND EVERYTHING

by W.F.

(Friedrich Nietzsche - Dithyrambe a Dionysus le Crucifie. Par Daniel Giraud)

Daniel Giraud's "Friedrich Nietzsche: Dithyramb of the Crucified Dionysus" is an elation in 38 pages of French studded with footnotes, quotations, and occult graphs. Wishing to be synthetic rather than analytic ("mangling" he delegates to others), Mr. Giraud draws upon every discipline imaginable, pseudo- and truedo ("To speak of Nietzsche is to speak of everything"). Graphology shows N. to be the incarnation of "sincerity and spontaneity" (Yen and Zen?) On pp. 29-30, N's horoscope is drawn and drained so that we come to learn how the stars conspired to produce "the one true man" (honnete homme translates poorly), who was "aped by Hitler as 'God was aped by the Devil.'"

"The Grand Sound of the Milky Way" (Music of the Spheres?) is represented by a Major (or minor?; the six line staff makes one see double) 7th chord with repeated subtonics and dominants notes upon which the introduction ends.

Other ingredients in the stew include Yoga, etc (kudalini, kali-yuga, etc.), Taoism, Book of Change (I-Ching), Cycle of (4 Greek) elements, Alchemy, Jung, Eliade (Eternal Return), Ouspensky, Heraclitus.....The list is endless and trinitics abound; if one would find all the post-Jungian vogues in one place, here they are! and the Kosmos is neatly rapped out, Mystery has become clarifying, and the occult made ocular as well as jocular. Poets love to dabble in these things; D. Giraud is no exception.

As to Stirner:S. is named as a "slight influence" on N's middle period (that of 'Negation' - 1873-81); this contention of influence is open to contention; at any rate, the only thing that the two men might have shared would be a nervous excitability. D. Giraud remarks that "Stirner rarely rises to the inspired plane of Nietzsche." True enough; N., master poet, was the better critic and writer...he was also the better educated, better inspired, and the better --- bespecked. Walker, in contrasting N. and S. in his introduction to the EGO AND HIS OWN (omitted in the current edition), points to N's "false imagery": "Who ever imagined such an unnatural conjunction as an eagle toting a serpent in friendship?" (Walker may have noted the meaning on the Mexican flag). This is an instance, perhaps, but this image is as contrary to all traditional myth as Hitler's back-turning, unresting Sun-symbol; ask Jung or Eliade, ask poetic intuition.

It is a painful thing to pen a poet's perspiration. The booklet is interesting although it is too crammed and complicated for confidence; such "depth" becomes shallow. But many readers would enjoy it. Homo-Sap is indeed a defective mutation, but what good

docs Super-Sap do? I cannot help thinking of Montaigne's words at the end of his last essay: "I have ever observed that super-celestial ideas and sub-terrestrial conduct are singularly suited to each other" "And sitting on the loftiest throne in the world, we are still sitting on our own arse."

SOCIAL TOTALITARIANISM

by Francis Ellingham

(Social Anarchism by Giovanni Baldelli. Aldine-Atherton Inc.)

Imagine a book written by an individualist-anarchist as an ironic parody of anarchist-communism - a pseudo-philosophical treatise in which a completely totalitarian social system is solemnly advocated in the name of perfect anarchist freedom - and you have a good idea of this book by Giovanni Baldelli. The only difference is that this book is meant to be taken seriously.

"Social anarchism," writes Baldelli, "means that anarchism is intended to be for the good of society." And the word society "applies particularly to those activities which can be most aptly be compared to the circulatory, respiratory, and digestive functions of a living body." Can an individual be free as a cell in the social body? He can, according to Baldelli, if society is ethical. And he duly unrolls a blueprint of an "ethical society" in which "those invested with authority, whom we may call guardians of the ethical customs and institutions that society has created" are "to denounce any impingement and infringement, to keep naked power at bay, and to pay it back if necessary in its own currency." Compare the "guardians" of Plato's "Republic"?

Baldelli has a key concept: "the ethical capital of mankind". This is "an agglomerate of wills directed to good purposes and socially beneficial." Contributions to it are made by "whatever dictates to one man actions which are beneficial to another" - even by lust, for "a man who keeps a woman with a view to future satisfaction," so long as he takes her independent will into account, makes "a contribution to the ethical capital, if none to love." In the ethical society this metaphysical capital will be "skilfully invested", but at present it is "exploited" by the State, which "can be defined as organised exploitation of ethical capital."

Every modern State originated "from an act of usurpation against its own people" who had already become ethical through "habit and customs" (it never occurs to Baldelli that customs could be unethical, or that ethical people might not let themselves be usurped). By exploiting the ethical capital (i.e. by "using coercion to elicit fruits of good will without giving anything in return") the State destroys it, since good will "must ordinarily be sustained

by its being reciprocated." Thus the State should be overthrown - and replaced with "the rule of authority" based on "Natural Law" as interpreted by the discipline of "Social Deontology". This new discipline (when fully developed) will "determine what is right and what is wrong" and provide us with "an arithmetic of values" - i.e. "an axiological calculus capable of assisting in the solution of complex social problems.

Authority, to Baldelli, "is not the opposite or enemy of freedom but its necessary complement." He proves this by defining authority as "the right to take and carry out decisions with the assent of every person whom the decisions affect." But (and this is a typical manoeuvre) he soon forgets his own definition and starts using the word authority in its normal sense - the right to take decisions, full stop. Thus "an offender who refuses to accept....a decision by an ethical authority....calls down upon himself the use of compulsion." And thus the ethical society turns out to be rigidly controlled by a host of authorities ("local", "cultural", "economic", and "mediating") which are responsible to one another "in a system that joins all together in a tangle of chains where each link is interlocked with several others." This principle of "multilateral responsibility" is supposed to preclude any danger of centralised tyranny. The possibility that the individual might feel the whole "tangle of chains" to be a tyranny is not discussed.

In the ethical society essential goods are distributed free "on lines similar to those adopted in Great Britain....for the supply and distribution of rations during the second world war." What is essential for each individual "should be determined by the individual himself, a medical authority, and a local economic authority, jointly" - but the individual's say is limited to such matters as "cultural peculiarities (e.g. no meat for vegetarians)"; such anarchist choice already exists in British prisons. There is no compulsion to work, but "work will be remunerated in the form of purchasing power, and nonessential goods will be obtainable only through purchase" - and the "range of nonessentials" will be "vast". Moreover, if the ethical society runs short of provisions, "able-bodied nonworkers will naturally be the first to suffer when a reduction in the individual quota of essential goods is made imperative. The choice of working or starving will then face them...for which society could not be blamed."

Work is to be measured in "ergons" and remunerated in "edons" - units of measurement that are "uniform throughout each community and groups of communities linked into an economic whole by co-ordinated planning." Naturally a worker cannot claim the whole product of his work, since he owes a "tremendous debt" to society for his upbringing and education, his "right of usufruct" of land and raw materials, his tools, his home, and all the other goodies laid on by the ethical authorities according to the best principles of Social Deontology.

Among those goodies are institutions "for the relief of harm and the discouragement of harmfulness." These differ only in name from those of bourgeois "law and order". Thus there is no army or police force, but "emergency corps" will "stave off organised attempts at suppression of liberties" and be responsible for "detection and apprehension of perpetrators of murders and torts"-tort being the ethical word for crime. Punishment "cannot be ethical", but "there will, in an ethical society, inevitably be authorised infliction of pain. It must be understood as a defensive measure...." Written law has grave defects, but "precisely stated regulations" will "give guidance to those who exert power in the name of society." Instead of a judiciary there will be "assessors of torts" - "men of experience and sensitive intelligence and keen social vocation." In the event of such splendid men making a mistake, you could appeal to an "approver" - "someone of integrity and competence" appointed by a local authority.

Under these flawless arrangements, "without judging an offender except to establish whether...he suffers from hubris, society will take the necessary steps to avoid repercussions damaging to faith in an ethical society" - e.g. "voluntary removal to another community" or "some form of confinement and compulsory reparation" (nor must we forget "authorised infliction of pain"). Many potential offenders, however, will be dissuaded from perpetrating torts by "preventors" - men qualified "by a special ethical education or by such a vocation as priesthood or psychiatry" to help "persons in need of enlightenment, advice, and relief".

To bring all this about, Baldelli is ready to kill. In the aftermath of the antipower struggle" (antipower is "engendered by power" and is "the motive force of genuine revolutions") we shall find that "hardly any leading exponent of the revolutionary forces will be without at least one death on his conscience" - although no homicide must be committed "except under valid circumstances of self-defence". What is valid? Well, since we learn in the closing paragraphs that "no-one....has the right to decide which is the right way for any person at any time" (not even Social Deontologists?) we cannot be sure. But we may take it that self-defence against the ethical society, or antipower engendered by the power of the guardians, would not seem valid to the fanatical author of this hopelessly confused, absolutely preposterous book.

5th. October 1971.

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Just as the gregarious spirit is indestructible, so is the struggle of the individual against society equally indestructible and eternal. This struggle constitutes, in the words of H. de Roberty, "the sombre and mysterious drama that plays without interruption, holding without relaxation the stage of history."

Georges Palante, 1902

ANARCHISM AND MORALIZATION

by S.D. Parker

(Precondition for Peace and Prosperity: Rational Anarchy. By Richard and Ernestine Perkins. Published by the Authors. St. Thomas, Ontario, 1971)

This book is a nother addition to the growing literature on "anarcho-capitalism" - although the authors reject the term "capitalist" as being inextricably connected with statism and prefer the term "free enterprise". Covering much the same ground as the Tannhills' "Market for Liberty", it combines some acute criticism of archism with a dry, acedemical utopianism. Like their left-wing opponents, these advocates of "rational anarchy" are large-scale dealers in "if such and such were" then "such and such would be". An argument that no-one can dispute, but which is applicable to every creed from Seventh Day Adventists to hysterical hystericalists.

Richard and Ernestine Perkins appear to be incorrigible moralists. In fact, one could describe their book as a sustained effort to moralize anarchism. Like their spiritual mother, Ayn Rand, they are obsessed with the desire to fix some objective standard for human behaviour that will endure for all time. In their utopia "when we build a moral society, the words 'politics' and 'legality' will be anachronisms. They will be replaced by the words 'morality' and 'moral law'. Big deal! Having got rid of the authority of law we shall not be allowed to do what we will, for a new yoke will be fashioned, the authority of morality. And all in the name of "rational anarchy"...

The Perkins base their morality on an anthropomorphization of "nature". For the purpose of their argument, "nature" is transformed into a willing individual capable of "authorizing" "natural right". In fact, in one place they write of this authorization as a "directive issued by nature herself" and the wonder is that they do not use capital letters in true nature-deifying fashion. I strongly suspect that they are carrying around within them a large chunk of the 'ghost of God' to be able to think in such anthropistic terms.

A natural law is a formula not a fiat. It is a term used to describe the repetition of a specific phenomenon, or group of phenomena, and is no more than a working hypothesis. It can be done away with at any time by the discovery of fresh data which demands a different explanation. Science, therefore, cannot be used as the grounds for an unalterable code of conduct. To raise such a demand is to try to freeze a particular stage of scientific knowledge and use it as a sanction for dictating to the individual what he should or should not do.

Such "rational anarchy" is not for me. It is a spook like God, State and Society. Anarchism needs amoralization, not moralization.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Individualist Forum meets at 7.30 p.m. every other Sunday at the Peace Centre, 36 Romilly Street, Cambridge Circus, London. (Nearest tube stations: Leicester Square and Tottenham Court Rd.) April 16 and 30: "A Critique of Communism and the Individualist Alternative" by Ken Knudson. Presented by S.E.Parker.

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LETTER

Your comments on my pamphlet didn't upset me at all, in fact the first third of your review was very favourable. I didn't expect you to understand the pagan bit, but it was only a minor part of the pamphlet and you seem to have given it undue prominence in your review.

Your comments on pluralism may be valid, perhaps I have misunderstood pluralism and its implications. I must read up on the subject a bit. However, I did say that people who rock the boat in a stable and pluralist society should be shot (or similarly dealt with). You asked what would be done with them. Perhaps you thought I was joking when I mentioned shooting.

There is no mystery at all about the broad outlines of Neolithic life and belief. I didn't invent it as you seem to think. Large numbers of books have been written on the subject, there are museums or parts of museums devoted to it. At Skara Brae in the Orkneys a Neolithic village with buildings intact and tools and other artifacts in situ have been excavated. There are thousands more sites and many archeologists have commented that the number of weapons compared to other artifacts is smaller during the Neolithic than during other historical and prehistorical periods.

By the way you should look up "animism".

I do, however, strongly object to the accusation of being soft on Xtianity. After all, one can hardly be pro-Xtian and a pagan at the same time.

Jeff Robinson.

(I remain unrepentant -- S.E.P.)

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CORRECTION: "down" in the third line of the poem by Goethe, quoted and translated by Wm. Flygare in No. 28, should have read "downed".