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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

MINUS ONE

MAX STIRNER

JOSIAH WARREN

JAMES L. WALKER

RENZO NOVATORE

JOHN HENRY MACKAY

E. ARMONO

ALBERT LIBERATO

MATRENA PRISIAZHNIK

LYSANDER SPOONER

RAGNAR REDBEARD

No 30

EDITOR Sid Parker
Francis Ellingham
Pat Parker
Wm. Flygare.

ARTHUR MOYSE

EN MARGE

S.E.Parker

Libertarian Broadside and Individualist Sorties.

Every man is an egoist - whoever ceases to be one becomes a thing. He who pretends it is not necessary to be one is a thief.
Anselme Bellegarrigue

The only consistent philosophical basis for anarchist individualism is conscious egoism, which finds its most radical and extensive expression in Max Stirner's pioneering epic "The Ego and His Own". Stirner's work, however, is not easy to read, but for many years it was the only durable account of philosophical egoism available. Now, with the reissue of James L. Walker's long-neglected classic "The Philosophy of Egoism" and John Badcock's "Slaves to Duty", it is possible to approach "The Ego and His Own" by an easier route. Together with the first of The Libertarian Broadside Series, Stirner's "The False Principle of Our Education", they provide a fitting supplement to, and an illuminating comment on, Stirner's magnum opus.

Walker deservedly earned the title of "Father of Egoism" in the U.S.A. By his early twenties he was expounding an embryonic form of egoism and had reached substantially the same conclusions as Stirner before he heard of the latter in 1872. Under the pseudonym of Tak Kak he opened a debate on the subject in the columns of Benjamin Tucker's "Liberty" in the 1880s and succeeded in carrying most of the Tuckerites, including Tucker himself, into the egoist camp. The bulk of "The Philosophy of Egoism", however, appeared serially in the magazine "Egoism", published by Georgia and Henry Replogle from 1890 to 1898. In 1905 it was published in its entirety by Walker's widow, a year after his death from smallpox in Mexico.

When the book first appeared it was described in "Liberty" as "No more concise exposition of the philosophy of egoism has ever been given to the world. In this book Duty, Conscience, Moralism, Right and all the fetiches and superstitions which have infested the human intellect since man ceased to walk on four feet, are annihilated, swept away, relegated to the rubbish heap of the waste of human intelligence that has gone on through the progress of the race from its infancy."

Little has appeared in the English language since then to alter this judgement. Indeed, reading Walker in the light of certain recent "egoists" one sees how he stands head and shoulders above them, particularly those who retail constipated moralisms from under the sign of the Randian Revelation. How Walker would have been amused by their interminable mental gymnastics over "rights" and "force" which resemble nothing so much as the legendary medieval debates on how many angels could dance on the point of a needle. For him both "right" and "force" were expediences to be claimed or excised as an individual saw fit - and had the power!

In a style alternating between the magisterial and the pithy, and lit and lightened with flashes of telling eloquence, Walker launches broadside after broadside at the ramparts of altruistic idealism. Every type of "supernal Altruist", from the priest to the moralizing freethinker, from Nietzsche (yes, Nietzsche, who wanted us to live for the Overman!) to the quasi-individualist Herbert Spencer, comes under his withering fire. I am tempted to quote from many passages in which he deftly turns the tables on the anti-egoists and shows how nearly 2,000 years of Judeo-Christianity has covered what Stirner called "the noble nature of egoism" with the rancorous slime of the self-sacrificed, but I will content myself with only one in which Walker is replying to some of his critics writing in "libertarian papers":

"Many show absolutely no understanding of Egoism. It is an affair of objective classification of acts, they suppose. Thus if I have an apple and eat it, that is Egoism, they suppose. If I give the apple to my friend, that is Altruism, they suppose. How simple! Then I, being an Egoist and liking to see some of my friends eat my apples, must not indulge this pleasure unless I can stand certain persons' charges of inconsistency. Let me give them a point: I select my friends. My apples are not for everybody to help himself. Let me give them another point: The man who eats his own apple, not because he likes it, but because he thinks it is Egoistic to eat it - not to talk of duty - is only a deluded Egoist, by which I mean that he has missed being an Egoist in the definite sense in which I am using the word in these closing chapters."

As James J. Martin remarks in his Foreword: Walker was one of "the giants of philosophical egoism".

Badcock's essay "Slaves to Duty" nearly suffered the same fate as Walker's book, but was saved from complete neglect by Laurance Labadie who reprinted it in 1938. First delivered as a lecture in 1894 to the London South Place Junior Ethical Society, it appeared shortly afterwards as a pamphlet. Badcock subjects the "duty" spook to a thorough investigation and after he has finished it there is not enough left to give even a modicum of consolation to the most credulous member of the Society for Psychical Research.

Since I have written the Introduction to this corrected and annotated edition I will leave it at that - adding, however, that the appendix is a much needed reprint of John Beverly Robinson's little 1915 masterpiece "Egoism". I doubt if anyone else has surpassed Robinson in compressing so much about egoism into just four pages.

The fourth of the Libertarian Broadside Series consists of three of Benjamin Tucker's most pertinent essays: "State Socialism and Anarchism", "The Attitude of Anarchism Towards Industrial

Combinations", and the personal, little-known, "Why I Am An Anarchist". For anyone wanting to grasp the salient ideas of Tucker's interpretation of anarchism these essays can be recommended. Tucker was a stylish writer and always presented his case with impeccable polish.

The essays are preceded by an outstanding Introduction by James J. Martin which, for me, was the most important part of the booklet: particularly since Martin is the greatest living "authority" on Tucker's life and ideas.

After paying tribute to Tucker's intellectual eminence and literary ability, Martin goes on to consider the relevance of Tuckerism today. This is a crucial question for anarchist individualists, since Tucker and his contemporaries not only lived, as Martin puts it, in a "mainly stable world State system at the height of the era of world colonialism", but were necessarily strangers to our air-conditioned nightmare of nuclear weapons, concentration camps, gas chambers, and the sophisticated repressive techniques of modern collectivist manipulators. The corporate, corporation and warfare states were largely smudges on the horizon when they were most active in formulating their ideas. The problem of the individual versus organized collectives loomed large seventy years ago, but its growth since then has been so staggering that one cannot conceive of its solution, even if one were convinced that individualism could become the active concern of the majority of mankind. As the hero of Paul Herr's novel *Journey Not To End* remarks:

"The true radical in the Age of Organization is a hermit in a cave."

An exaggeration, perhaps, but a pardonable one!

Martin asks what can be done now in this "Age of Organization". Intellectually, those of the opposition who claim Tucker as a precursor, simply repeat the critiques of the past "disguised by present day fashionable stylistic conventions". Actively, there have been no significant operational improvements on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

"One would be inclined to conclude from the evidence at hand that no new day in the affairs of men is about to dawn. An interminable period of Statist night time lies ahead, during which the matter of individual survival will supercede all other goals. It remains to be seen whether radical political activity along the traditional lines of mass politics, which always runs the risk of succeeding and thereupon creating an even worse State, or anonymous individualist philosophical strategies, best lend themselves to meeting the objective adequately."

Not a conclusion to commend itself to those who, seeking utopia,

at the same time seek to cripple individualism within the fetters of mass politicking. But for those who are beyond such stupidities, for the remnant who understand what individualism is really about, such strategies will be among the first of their priorities. From "internal exile" to the desperate heroism of militant illegalism, the options lie open. What each will do is up to each..... Individualist strategies are the products of individuals - not of groups or parties.

(Libertarian Broadside Series No. 2; Slaves to Duty by John Badcock, Junior. Introduction by S.E. Parker, with an Appendix consisting of the essay Egoism by John Beverly Robinson. No. 3: The Philosophy of Egoism by James L. Walker, with a biographical sketch of the author by Henry Replogle. Foreword by James J. Martin. No. 4: 1. State Socialism and Anarchism: Wherein they Agree and Wherein they Differ; 2. The Attitude of Anarchism Toward Industrial Combinations; 3. Why I am an Anarchist, by Benjamin R. Tucker. Introduction by James J. Martin. All published by, and available from, Ralph Myles Publisher, Inc. Box 1533, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80901, U.S.A. Prices: No.2: 85 cents; No.3: 1 doll.35cents; No.4: 1 doll.)

DEATH

On July 24th., 1972, Gilda, wife of Minus One collaborator Stephen Marletta, died of lung cancer complicated by a neoplasm to the brain. Born in Glasgow in 1915, Gilda studied music at the Glasgow Atheneum and was an accomplished pianist. She was a hair stylist by profession. I remember her warm hospitality when I visited her and Stephen in 1965. Vale!

IMPRISONMENT

Enzo Martucci, whose writings are well-known to readers, is serving an eighteen months prison sentence at Bari, Italy. The reason for his imprisonment is not yet known.

PUBLICATION

The Revisionist Press, G.P.O. Box 200', , Brooklyn, New York 11202, U.S.A., announce the publication of "Germany's Poet-Anarchist: John Henry Mackay" by Thomas A. Riley. Price 16 dolls. 50 cents. This is the first full length study of Mackay - novelist, poet and biographer of Max Stirner - ever to be published.

FRIENDLY RIVAL

"Individualist Forum", a new anarchist individualist journal, is published by Gregory Hill, 2 Church Crescent, London N.10. Three issues have appeared so far and can be obtained from the above, 5p each.

AGAINST ANARCHIST IDEALISM

by Francis Ellingham

"To me, an ideal is merely an escape, an avoidance of what is, a contradiction of what is. An ideal prevents direct action upon what is."

J. Krishnamurti - "First and Last Freedom"

"Precisely because he (Christ) put from him the upsetting of the established, he was its deadly enemy and real annihilator."

Max Stirner - "The Ego and His Own"

Most professed anarchists are idealists: having some conception of an ideal free society, they struggle in various ways to make that conception a reality. Only Max Stirner, among the recognized great names of anarchism, warned against idealism - a warning that few people seem to understand. Let us consider (without necessarily following Stirner) what may be said against anarchist idealism.

Anarchist idealists struggle to bring about an ideal society. If asked why, they might give various answers, but each answer would contain a condemnation of existing society. Each answer would contain a basic argument of the form: "existing society is bad (because authoritarian, oppressive, capitalist, or whatever) and should therefore be abolished." Now, bad though existing society may be, most people evidently find it more or less acceptable. Therefore anarchist idealists are evidently struggling to impose their will on others - and not just on a few others, but on the majority. Such a struggle, however, is by definition very authorittarian. It seems, then, that anarchist idealists, are open to the charge that they behave in a very authoritarian way themselves.

To rebut this charge, anarchist idealists might put forward various arguments. We will consider four.

1. They might say: "The majority may seem to accept existing society, but they do not really accept it. They would dearly like to abolish it, but they have no choice, because they are oppressed by government, by ruling classes, by capitalists. We are struggling to put an end to all this oppression, to set the people free. Then, when we have succeeded, the people will create whatever form of society they like."

This is very weak. Any intelligent man can see that existing society could not remain in existence if most people did not really find it acceptable. No government, no ruling classes, no capitalists could oppress anybody without the broad support of public opinion, and to imagine that most people are longing for the abolition of all the hallowed institutions of authoritarian society is to live in a dream-world: most of even the most discontented people are far from being anarchists. Furthermore, anarchist idealists, struggling to create the ideal society as they conceive it, cannot say, very consistently, that the people should create

whatever form of society they like.

2. A more plausible move by anarchist idealists would be to say: "We grant that most people find existing society acceptable - but this is only because they have been conditioned to accept it by their false upbringing and education. We are struggling (by persuasion, propaganda, educational projects, or whatever) to destroy the evil effects of this conditioning. Then, when we have succeeded, the people will naturally shake off their oppressors, and create an unoppressive form of society - which is all we mean by the ideal free society."

One weakness here is the assumption that most people accept existing society only because they have been conditioned to accept it. They have, doubtless, been so conditioned - but even if the effects of this conditioning were destroyed, there would still be no reason to expect the people to create an unoppressive society. Indeed, since the people have in fact created an oppressive society (for, although conditioned by it, they are also ultimately responsible for it), all the evidence points in the opposite direction. In the last analysis, existing society - together with its false education and other forms of conditioning - has evidently come into being as a result of certain psychological causes. So long as these basic causes remain, to suppose that the removal of the conditioning would suffice to transform society seems hopelessly superficial.

Another fatal objection is that persuasion, propaganda, and all the other techniques that might be used to destroy the effects of conditioning, are themselves forms of conditioning: and all conditioning, being essentially a means of manipulating behaviour, is a authoritarian. Theoretically it might seem that conditioning could simply be neutralized by opposite conditioning. What happens, however, is that the opposite conditioning is either ineffective or supersedes the original conditioning as a manipulative factor. In neither case is the result freedom from conditioning itself.

3. One obvious way out for anarchist idealists would be to say: "We are not struggling to impose our will on anybody, not even by persuasion, since we are only trying to create an ideal society for ourselves. Others may join us if they like, and we hope they will, but if most people prefer to go on with existing authoritarian society they have a perfect right to do so. All we are asserting is right to create our form of society, and to enjoy it - if necessary - on our own."

The short answer to this is that it means abandoning what we have understood, throughout this article, by anarchist idealism - that is, the struggle to replace existing authoritarian society with something radically different. Anarchist idealism as we have understood it - and as most professed anarchists seem to understand it - is not merely an effort to establish independent

ideal communities, apart from the rest of the world: it is the struggle to bring about a world-wide social revolution. The two activities are quite different, have quite different objectives, and should not be confused.

4. The usual and most successful move by anarchist idealists is to fall back on sophistry. "We fully agree," they may say, "that most people, at present, accept existing society. But since this society is authoritarian, we cannot be called authoritarian for struggling against it. We stand for freedom, which in itself is good. The people suffer oppression, which in itself - whether they accept it or not - is bad. Therefore our struggle is perfectly justified: we are struggling to ensure that the good shall prevail. The majority of people, deluded as they are by their conditioning, may oppose us now, but when they are free and happy, enjoying the splendid new society that we shall create for them, they will appreciate our efforts on their behalf, and salute us as the saviours of mankind."

This is sheer claptrap, and its implications are completely totalitarian: the mentality behind it is that of Rousseau arguing that people should be forced to be free. The same sort of high-sounding nonsense is put out by all dictators, all imperialists, all those oppressors who hide their true nature beneath a cloak of respectability. They know what is good for us - we ourselves being the last to know - and woe betide anybody who questions their heaven-sent wisdom.

No doubt freedom is good and oppression bad. But oppression cannot be stopped by oppressive means, and freedom cannot be promoted by first denying it. Would-be revolutionaries who ignore these facts will never bring about a genuine revolution. Their best efforts - as the history of all past "revolutions" goes to show - can only lead to new forms of tyranny.

If it is now clear, as we hope it is, that anarchist idealists cannot escape the charge of authoritarianism, the question remains - what are anarchists to do? If they are not to be idealists, it may seem that they must reconcile themselves to the indefinite continuation of authoritarian society. Perhaps they may contrive to enjoy a certain freedom in their private lives. Perhaps they may even form small communities of their own, apart from the rest of the world. But they must leave the rest of the world - it may be thought - to go on as if they were not there. And thus the great majority of human beings, victims of their own psychology and the conditioning to which it gives rise, must presumably go on suffering under authoritarian systems for ever.

But does this really follow? When a man gives up his own particular kind of idealism, what actually happens? Perhaps a new psychological factor may come into being - a liberating, truly revolutionary factor.

The anarchist idealist looks at the hideous, appalling evil of authoritarian society and says, "I must do something about it". That is quite natural and understandable. But suppose he then sees the futility of trying to do something about it. Suppose he realizes that this idealism is essentially itself authoritarian - that, in fact, this very idealism, this very urge to do something about evil, is the root psychological cause of authoritarian society. Then, for the first time, he will really understand this society - which means he will look at it choicelessly, without desiring to interfere. He will look at it with eyes that are completely unauthoritarian and completely unconditioned.

What will he see? And what psychological effect will this new vision have upon him? And what effect will his whole life then have, naturally and effortlessly, upon the world around him? We could try to answer these questions, but verbal answers are never enough. Every man has to see the truth, and live it (and to see it is to live it), for himself.

19.8.72

WM. FLYGARE WRITES:

ICONOMICS (Minus One 29) voices something I'd often felt and even tried once with ill-success (Thoreau managed because he was already experienced when he began his experiment. He was also free from interference) Stirner deals not with the capital difficulty of the mental liberation (the EGO is only a starter; further contribution remains to be done by others); Muir does not (or has not yet) deal(t) with the capital difficulty of the physical liberation; the conditioning requires a de-conditioning process... the education (leading out) requires a reducation (leading back)

I think that I-economics should have been hyphenated to prevent misreading (looks like a mispronunciation of economics); eco (oikos: house) and nomy (nemein: manage):: economy; ego-nomics might therefore have been a better word, despite the Latin and Greek mixture (like tele-vision), as the meaning of self-management would have been excellent.

MIKE MUIR REPLIES:

I agree that linguistically "ego-nomics" is probably more correct. I have decided not to go on further with iconomics, for there are all the tools and recourses for anyone to do anything they want in furthering their individuality and to go over them would just be a huge repetition. I just wanted to express my feeling that no matter where one is at now, he or she would be wise to recognize all their limits or potentials in the light of their relationship with society... And if readers of Minus One are economically chained to society they should be honest enough to admit that it is they who are chaining themselves to society - not the other way round.

MAN MEETS BOOK - Some Notes On Reading Stirner: 111

by William Flygare

6. a) Private correspondent #2, again, complains that Stirner is "too subjective" (as Marx does also).

Actually, the reader gets nothing of Stirner's personal I; if he did, the compilation of a biography would have been easy. He says nothing of his tragedies, handicaps, and frustrations; these had to be pieced together with difficulty by John Henry Mackay. Like Keats, he transcended Romanticism:

5.2: "The Romanticists...not only by their reawakened fairy world, but...by the 'intrusion of a higher world,' by their somnambulists...."

42.8: "For me, call it Romanticism!"

The I that Stirner uses is the same poetical I that Whitman and other poets use; he uses we in certain dramatic instances, but never the imperial we or the inside we ("we individualists", for example, makes no sense at all); and Thoreau had to explain why he used the I.

6. b) In the frequently cited,

25.25: "I annihilate it (the State) and form in its place the Union of Egoists."

appears to be the too objective proposal of an institutional alternative to the State. On page 63 of Eltzbacher's Anarchism, one learns that

"Stirner intends not only to give us information about his inward condition...but tell us...what we ought to do."

Is this "ought," sneaking through the back door, socio-political? or psycho-linguistic? Does it pertain to a me? or a we?

Reference to the 'union' also appears in various parts of Section 41, but 34.10, where the action and attitude of "egoistic union" with a party is pictured, may help. "I form" (i.e. organize or establish) is probably verbal irony; the end of 41.10 shows 'the union' to be a "maxim": Six? or Seven? ...of Empson's Ambiguities? An instance where one finds:

BOTH either-or And neither-nor.

7.a) Eugene Goodhart, in his The Cult of the Ego, an attack on Romanticism (University of Chicago Press, 1968?) complains, that Stirner "never analyzed the ego."

If conceptualization is what Prof. Goodhart (and Marx too) is seeking, Section 16 will spell out Stirner's stand on concepts; however, in The Ego, the ego is clearly revealed:

- 0.10: "creative nothing"
 45.14: "'Who'...not 'what'...is 'man!'"
 45.15: "Names name thee not."
 5.13: (a self-transforming process; the buddhist puggala)
 25.43: "I speak of the transitory ego."

Sonnet 84: "You alone are you."
Japanese Proverb: "Folks are folks; I am I."
Popeye: "I yam what I yam and that's what I yam."

7. b) The Encyclopedia Britannica has no separate article on Max Stirner, and The Great Books of the Western World do not list him in the Bibliography of Additional Readings (Synopticon, Vol. 11, pp. 1142-1217), although he is listed in The Great Ideas Program (Vol VIII, p. 319).

"Get thee to a nunnery!"

If Nock be described as "not an original thinker, but a clarifying one," then Stirner might be described as not a clarifying (un)thinker, but an encouraging stimulator.

Among the above interpretations, some were half-hearted, tentative, or premature; some were preconceived (through linking with Nietzsche, for instance); some were incidental to some extensive or alien purpose; most were plausible.

Indeed, Stirner invites whimsy:

- 36.29: "Pray do what you like with what you call my property."
 39.35: "Do with it (my writing) what you will and what you can; that is your affair and does not trouble me."

and he gives precedents in the arbitrary uses of the Bible: 43. 1-5.

11

MAN MAKES BOOK - The Making

What do you make of it?

A prism:

refractions only, splintered light;
 bit by bit, a wordless spectrum
 (the form and style of insight flight)
 to make me see that light is white.

(12/22/70)

The form

"Beginning, middle, and end."

The "Ages" derive from Hegel's Philosophy of History; so do their racial metaphors ("Negroid," etc.), to which the response of private correspondent #3 was the germane equivalent of bovine excrement; but see 36.8-11 (ridiculous tribalists) and 33.23-36 (good-natured Teutonmaniacs). The transcendental equivalent:

"Nationa! What are nations? Tartars! and Huns! and Chinamen! Like insects they swarm. The historian strives in vain to make them memorable. It is for want of a man that there are so many men. It is individuals that populate the world."

Thoreau's Journal, May 1, 1855

The form may have been imposed on the work after much of the writing had been done, a probable clue to the order of composition, the sections being varyingly concise and diffuse. The use of bar-lines instead of subtitles may have been intended to obfuscate the censor; they might patch seams.

COVERT EGOISM rejected for OVERT EGOISM is the method; by accepting the ego-centric predicament for what it is....by coming to terms with the intra-personal relationship, the inter-personal relationships will take care of themselves.

Chart balance and book bulk differ (only nine pages devoted to The Ancients, a bit over half the book to The Own); so does a map and a position. Helm's (1) cutting of sections 2 and 3 is completely incomprehensible since the A-B-A-like recapitulations at the end lose relevance, but, more important, the roots of the Modern's possessedness are left unaccounted for and....Stirner's self-dramatization is lost.

Pyrrho overcomes reality; Stirner overcomes ideality. The Ancients did overcome the world (2.4); the Moderns are to overcome the spirit. Pyrrho refuses recognition; Stirner resorts to refractoriness. He refers to the Ancients as "children" but with some affection.

Fanaticism is berated both by Stirner (e.g. 8.4-7) and Pyrrho ("rashness") (to refer to thorough scepticism as "extreme" is a popular aberration)

(1) Hans G. Helms - founder of a Stirner Archive, author of a hostile, Marxist critique of Stirner (see Minus One No. 25) and editor of a recent edition of The Ego and His Own in Germany. S.E.P.

Pilate significantly enters the scene at the beginning (2.33) and the end (43.62) of the book; Stirner's answer to Pilate's question is exactly what Pilate means by posing the question.

As for ataraxia and aphasia, Stirner's remarks (2.33) that to the pyrrhonian "only unmovedness and isolated inwardness are left; but see the important, seldom quoted, "thrall of languages" passage:

43.36: "You make progress only by becoming speechless and thoughtless every moment."

Many of this school, like Sextus Empiricus himself, were busy practitioners in the most enlightened of the Greek medical schools and had little time or inclination for speculation or..... "inwardness".

Both Pyrrho and Stirner historically lead to "?"; Pyrrhonism was intermittent for about six centuries, fell into desuetude till the Renaissance, Montaigne being the one who gave it its most literary expression (Sextus is a dull notebook with some bright spots), and the New Pyrrhonism was "conquered by Descartes; Stirner's attacks on Descartes (15.4-7 and elsewhere) are in good agreement.

Stirner, for a bit over a century has similarly moved in and out of obscurity. The Ancient God brought forth a new vexation; what shall be the next hexation? -----"?)

Both would do away with indicative signs to live among recollective signs; both, concerned with the tyranny of words.

This does not equate the two; only points out affinities.

The section on the Ancients is short, not because it is unimportant, but because it needs no further treatment; present pain's the point.

"History," which seeks Man (36.12), ends at PRESENCE (42.29) by a "breaking off" (23.18); the concern has shifted from peoples to persons.

"In what concerns you much, do not think you have companions; know that you are alone in the world."

Thoreau

The style

"No man's thoughts are new, but the style of their expression is the never failing novelty which cheers and refreshes men"

Thoreau

Woodcock complains,

"....the appalling verbosity with which the substance of a brilliant essay has been inflated to the most tedious of libertarian classica....."

Anarchism, p.105

Redundancy? perhaps; verbosity? surely; appalling?

To avoid conceptualization ----- a tour de force.

As the alternative to causation, Jung proposes "synchronicity" to account for the operation of the Chinese Book of Change(s); psychologists, etc., use free association to uncover unconscious processes; rhyme (a species of pun) and other sound sounding devices are used by pensters and punsters to get across a notion without thinking about it.....as we all know.

Stirner uses what is akin to all of these -- etymological association, more the method of the maker (poet) than the philosopher; his teaching of languages and literature in the days of men like the Grimm Brothers could easily have led him to his dissociative technique, through which, hitherto fastly held notions suddenly take on a ridiculous aspect. In the Preface to his Dictionary of the Principal Indo-European Languages, Carl Darling Buck begins, "Where do we get our ideas?" He could have added...crazy.

Krinerman and Perry on Stirner:

"It is occasionally held that some forms of government can be used to disintegrate or diminish the need for any government. If this is so, it may also be possible to use language to bring us to the point where conventional categories can be laid aside or have even been divested of their capacity to obstruct the free spirit. Here then is an exorcession (undoubtedly oversimple) of the idea central to Stirner's philosophizing.

Patterns of Anarchy, p. 166

Etymology is limited as a guide to meaning since words "slip and slide", but etymology does uncover the obscurantism that the slipping and sliding brings about. Two Indo-Europcan roots will illustrate:

I.E. OIN-

Gk.	<u>oinos</u>	(on dice): one
Lat.	<u>unus</u>	(hence <u>unique</u>)
Eng.	<u>one</u>	(<u>an, any, alone</u> , etc.)
	<u>own</u>	to make <u>one's</u> ; <u>eigan</u> in Old High German; similar in Scand. langs. (possess means to have power over)
	<u>owe</u>	to <u>own</u> another's (debt, similarly, from <u>de-habere</u> from "have") ("should" used in Ger, & Scand.)
	<u>ought</u>	past tense of <u>owe</u>

German words beginning with ein meaning one (not in)
eigen (see 24.1 ftm.), eigen-s, eigenen, and derivatives;
einmal-ig, einsam, Einzel-, einzeln, einzig.

I.E. WEK- (vocal emission)
 (non-germanic: voice; germanic: thing)
whit Ger.: Wicht (obs. in this sense)
ought (e'er a whit)

NE & WEK-
naught, nought Ger. nicht, Nichts (ni & Wicht)
not (abbr. of nought)

(thing in nothing derives, deviously, from time).

Stirner, playing with verstehen (understand):

2.15: "...one's understanding no longer stands still
before..."
 "...der Verstand vor Nichts mehr still steht..."

English, not being fore- but under-, he must have been thinking
 in English in

43.67: "...truths beneath me are to my liking; a truth above
 me..."
 "...Wahrheiten unter mir sind mir lieb; ein Wahrheit
uber mir..."

Possibly, since he later translated Mill. Had he written in
 English, he might have said,

"Understand? No. Over-stand. I want to stand over truths, not
under them, master them, not....serve them."

In a number of languages, "use" and "enjoy" are the same. The
 important consumption image that runs through the book originates
 in the related words nutzen (use-eat), geniessen (use-enjoy),
Genuss (joy):

23.27: (consume my presupposition)
 43.65: (objects, etc. I use up)
 39.34: (dissolve the world, feed on lover)
 16.20: "Digest the sacramental wafer and you are rid of it!"
 42.2: "...like the candle...One uses life, and consequently
 himself, the living one, in consuming it and himself.
Enjoyment of life is using life up."
 25.25: "I transform it (the State) rather into my property
 and my creature." (several layers of meaning here)

One must continually ask oneself whether Stirner is advocating
 or describing, literal or rhetorical, frowning or clowning. Often,
 the tone is cheerfully vulgar:

- 28.6: "Well -- just put everything nicely to rights for your master!" (Dog!)
- 42.8: "For me, call it Romanticism." (Dreamer!)
- 24.18: "...and you know you want very much to be practical." (Clod!)
- 26.23: "Is this wisdom so hard to attain?" (Bonehead!)
- 24.33: "But you have no taste." (Philistine)

Sometimes shouting:

- 32.23: "The people is dead - up with me!"
- 31.16: "Everything sacred is a tie, a fetter."
- 42.21: "Calling - destiny - task!"

These verbal fireworks have one disadvantage: The excitability tends to make one read presto when one should read andante.

Classics and news-clippings get "equal rights" -- probably an expression of "nothing sacred".

Apropos of self-dramatization, the personal pronouns in descending frequency are: I, thou, (familiar, plural), you, seldom we; communication is more person-to-person than it seems in English. In 38.36ff(strike), for example, plural you is clearly a group of wage-earners, but in most other places, who is the imaginative you-you?

People in Central Park? "The Free Ones" of Hippel's being put in their place in compensation for Stirner's having spent an evening with them silently on good terms with all but friendly with none? His essay on education suggests his students, doubtless the better fancy.

Max Stirner has been associated with philosophy, (a-) politics, history, and especially with language and literature, but it is most likely as an educator (educer rather than inducer: 11.1-5) that he lives.

to teach means to encourage

Kyoto, Dec 25, 1970.

References:

- Stirner, Max: The False Principle of Our Education, tr.Beebe, Robt. H. ed., Martin, James J., (1967) Ralph Myles, Publisher, Colorado Springs, 80901.
- Armand, E: Anarchism and Individualism, three essays; tr. from the French by A.S., N.G., and D.T.W. (1962) published by S.E.Parker, 2 Orsett Terrace, London, W.2. (now out of print - Ed)

Related if not equated:

- Hallie, Philip, P: Scepticism, Man, and God - Selections from the Major Writings of Sextus Empiricus, tr. from the Greek by Etheridge, Sanford G. (1964) Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn.
- " " The Scar of Montaigne - An Essay in Personal Philosophy, (1966) Same publisher. Good references.
- Jacobson, Nolan P: Buddhism - The Religion of Analysis (1966) Geo. Allen and Unwin Ltd., Good references. The Buddha as a Rebel.
- Nock, Albert J: Memoirs of a Superfluous Man (1964); Gateway (paperback) edition, 1969. Henry Regnery Co., Chicago. But not a superfluous book.

Consumation to be desired:

- Walker, James L.: The Philosophy of Egoism (1905) Denver, Colorado. (Now available as a paperback from Ralph Myles, Publisher, 1972 - Ed)

SOME POETIC EGOICS

by John Davidson (Died 1909)

Henceforth I shall be God; for consciousness
Is God: I suffer: I am God: this Self,
That all the universe combines to quell,
Is greater than the universe; and I
Am that I am. To think and not be God?—
It cannot be!

(Ballads and Songs 1894)

Above, beneath,
About me, or within, nothing is great:
I only, am great: greater than thought.
Spirit and flesh, my casual qualities:
But I, the individual, I am more
Than soul and body: insubmissive me...
I am the only individual, I:
The Truth itself is nothing: to believe
The highest Truth would be to abdicate
The individual: all things disappear
Before the sovereign Me.

(The Testament of a Prime Minister, 1904)

and William Walstein Gerdak: NIETZSCHE

I sneezed - it was his name:
He is a great philosopher,
But then - I am the same.