

This file archived at UnionOfEgoists.com.

# Union of Egoists

This item was scanned by UoE from Libertarian Microfiche Publishing Peace Plans films. John Zube's LMP project preserved thousands of documents that would otherwise be lost.

More information can be found at our website under "contributors."

-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

## AN INDIVIDUALIST ANARCHIST REVIEW

Number Twenty Four

July 1969

AN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF THE HAROLD WILSON MEMORIAL COMMITTEE OF LONDON, ENGLAND.

by Anonymous

We have the distinguished honour of being Members of the Committee to raise five million pounds to place a Statue of Harold Wilson in the front of the Houses of Parliament.

This Committee was in quite a quandary about selecting the proper location for the Statue. It was thought unwise to place it beside the Statue of George Washington who never told a lie, nor beside the Statue of Lloyd George who never told the truth, since Harold Wilson could never tell the difference.

After very careful consideration we thought it would be a good idea to place it beside the Statue of Christopher Columbus, the greatest socialist of them all in that he started out not knowing where he was going and, upon arrival, did not know where he was and, upon returning, did not know where he had been and did it on borrowed money.

Five thousand years ago Moses said to the children of Israel "Pick up your shovels, mount your asses and camels and I will lead you to the promised land." Nearly five thousand years later Frank Cousins said "Lay down your shovels, sit on your asses and light up a camel, this is the promised land." Now Harold Wilson is stealing your shovels, kicking your asses, raising the price of camels and taking over the promised land.

If you are one of the Citizens who has any money left after paying taxes, we would expect a generous response from you for this most worth-while project.

-----

With the monstrous laws that are accumulating on the Statute-Books, one may safely say that the man who is not a confirmed criminal is scarcely fit to live among decent people.

## THOUGHTS OUT OF SEASON

by S.E.Parker

## The Case of Aldo Braibanti.

Last year in Italy King Mob claimed another victim in the person of Aldo Braibanti. Braibanti, a professor of philosophy at Fiorenzule d'Arda, was sentenced to nine years imprisonment for "entrapping, corrupting, and subjugating" two young men, Piero Carlo Tascaro and Giovanni Sanfratello. Homosexuality was mentioned at his trial, although this is no crime in Italy. Also mentioned was the fact that Braibanti is an anarchist and "an enemy of society". What was apparently not mentioned was that the law under which he was sentenced is a left-over from the fascist regime which condemns the "plagiarizing of personality"(!).

During the trial Braibanti was denounced as being a "refined devil" and an "invader of souls". The real reason for his persecution, however, was brought out in the testimony of Sanfratello who said that Braibanti taught that the only reality is the individual and that individual freedom cannot tolerate any limitation imposed by other individuals or social and moral laws. "Hence," writes Enzo Martucci in 'Pensiero Anarchico', "the thinker of Fiorenzule d'Arda said to his friends that if they wanted to taste the 'joy of living' they must possess a real, microcosmic 'I', which was free and anarchist, and which did not recognize any authority or let itself be dominated by anyone, not even Braibanti."

When passing sentence Judge Orlando Falco justified his imposition of nine years' "reclusion" with some pseudo-psybhanalytical observations. Martucci remarks that his conclusions merely confirm that "the hen cannot become an eagle, that those who are born to scratch cannot fly."

Aldo Braibanti is now in prison for nine years so that the respectable citizenry of a small Italian town can sleep the sleep of the just. A man whose enemies admit that he has a brilliant mind can now waste away so that hens can continue to scratch.

## Egoism and The Cult of Evil.

Readers of Minus One are no doubt familiar with individuals who pretend to be non-conformists but whose non-formity is merely another form of conformity. The "anti-bourgeois", for example, who, because the right-thinking bourgeois bathes regularly, wears suits and has his hair cut short, expresses his non-conformity by not bothering to wash, refusing to wear shorts and wearing his hair long. His "non-conformity" simply amounts to turning bourgeois customs inside out. Whatever "they" do, he must do the opposite. He is as much enslaved to custom as they are.

\*1) All least anarchists should be able & willing to distinguish between "society" & "the state" etc.

There is a similar phenomenon in the attempt to identify egoism with the "cult of evil" or immoralism. Here again the same mechanism operates. To be an "egoist" one has always to do the opposite of what is called "good". If truthfulness is praised by moralists one has to be untruthful, if consideration for others is praised one has to be inconsiderate, if generosity is praised one has to be mean. The categorical imperative that one ought to be such and such still applies - in reverse. It is not surprising that some who cry "evil be thou my good" eventually crawl back into the embrace of the church or its modern equivalent. They are as spook-ridden as the virtuous faithful they profess to despise.

Egoism - conscious egoism - is neither moral nor immoral. It stands beyond "good and evil". It is amoral. An egoist may be truthful or untruthful, considerate or inconsiderate, generous or mean, according to his nature, taste or circumstances, and at his own risk, but he is under no obligation to be any of these. He may behave in a way that the moral call "good" or in a way that they call "evil", but he does so because he judges his interest to lie in one direction or the other, not because he is possessed by the spook of moralism or that of immoralism.

#### Violence.

Alain Roussel's reflections on violence which appear on another page are both interesting and perceptive. The anonymous violence of the mob, particularly of the acephalous mob, has become a popular mode of expression for many of today's "anti-authoritarian socialists". But although it may appear to be a means for getting rid of individual frustrations it fails in this purpose because, as Ronet points out, the self is not involved. It simply creates a recurring appetite that needs to be continually stilled by more anonymity. It becomes a show in which the spectator maybe killed, but is not aware of having taken part. And this to the tune of a mindless militancy and a pointless provocation.

Whatever may be thought of their expediency, the violence of the individual gladiator and the individual assassin are at least ways of asserting the ego, not of submerging it in the crowd. This violence is man to man, not mob to mob.

To adapt a notorious statement: The violence of the people is not my violence.

Last year in the "International Times" the pacifist theatrical impressario Julian Beck demanded the renunciation of all violence in the name of "love". By this means he claimed we could obtain an instant communist paradise. Any who would be foolish enough to follow his advice would only do violence to themselves. Individualists reject the violence of the State and the violence of the crowd on themselves. They refuse to be robbed of their own violence in order to be crushed by the violences of others. Tyranny has other shapes than that of violence and "love" can deny the self as effectively as "hate".

## THE EGO AND HIS DEFINITIONS

By Kerry Thornley

Much confusion could be eliminated in discussions of egcism if it were more widely understood that men commonly use the word-symbol "ego" to indicate three different referents - two of which are in essential respects opposite in their characteristics!

Specifically, we have the philosophical ego, the psychological ego, and the physiological ego. The last of these has properties in common with the first two, but they, in turn, have little in common with each other.

The philosophical ego is the self as it is used in the context of Western philosophical dialcgue - the seat of consciousness, the ultimate receiver and evaluator of sensory input, and/or the will. It may be regarded, in a sense, as the "other end of the stick" in reference to the physiological ego, or physical self, which it is usually thought to control and direct.

The psychological ego, however, is essentially a Freudian hypothesis accounting for a psychological function - and it refers not to a projected seat of consciousness or will, but to a "how-am-I-doing" social feedback mechanism. This is the ego which is deflated or inflated by the criticism and praise of others - and its vast difference from the philosophical ego may be fully appreciated in the light of the consideration that the philosophical egoist gives not a damn for the applause of others, except perhaps as it may influence his physical well-being. Nor does the egoist fear idle condemnation or scolding. The egoist is ego-less!

The physiological, or "skin-encapsulated", ego does seem, however, to have some sort of relationship with the psychological ego, in that therapy aimed at the destruction of the psychological ego often results also in a sense of unity with the natural universe - an alteration of the physiological ego-sense. (Alan Watts has expertly described this feeling as that in which the skin is felt to be that which connects the individual with his environment, instead of that which separates him from it. Those who have experimented with LSD and similar chemicals will appreciate this representation.)

Now the hypothesis of a psychological ego is a valuable one from the functional standpoint and, in any case, it would be futile to crusade to try to alter or abolish the confusing use of "ego" in the psychological meaning of the term - but it is absolutely essential to keep in mind that the philosophical ego and the psychological ego are separate and antagonistic concepts. The death of the psychological ego is the triumph of the philosophical ego and the radical reconception of the physiological ego.

Thus, when a Conscious Egoist hears another praising "egolessness" or hailing the "death of the ego" he should be careful - lest he mistake a friend for an enemy!

## REFLECTIONS ON VIOLENCE

by Alain Roinet

translated by Alfred Reynolds

? I suggest that only that kind of violence<sup>\*</sup> may be called noble  
 ? which leads to relentless self-questioning. We are like the  
 ? gladiators of old times, left in the arena without the slightest  
 ? chance of escape unless we 'prove ourselves' worthy of survival.  
 Confronted with, and engaged in, this form of violence the  
 individual is personally involved - having endured the confrontation  
 with himself before submitting to a confrontation with others -  
 and no doubt this is violence at its most cruel. Indeed it is a  
 terrifying 'inquisition' and only very few have really known it.  
 I must reject that false violence which is practised by our  
 contemporaries, the kind which enables them to submerge in anon-  
ymity. In their actions the self plays no part. Their violence  
 is a great frenzy - the excitement of the circus in which they  
 take the part of spectators. How revealing, then, that in this  
 atrophied, distorted, cheap violence they can experience a luxurious  
 submersion in an altruistic, universal concern for others - albeit  
 in complete anonymity! Why indeed should we not dissociate ourselves  
 from this cheap form of altruism?

Perhaps all these convulsions have been leading somewhere, or  
 nowhere - surely the answer depends on our point of view.

In any case, we must remember that 'violent' thought and action  
 - whether in solitude or in dialogue \* requires a renunciation of  
 anonymity....Is there anything more contemptible than an-onymous  
 violence, the violence of groups whatever their name? Dialogue  
 is out of date, people say smugly, but perhaps they should be  
 reminded that so is their kind of violence. It is merely barbarous.  
 Something else is involved, something monstrous, but no violence  
 in my sense of the word. And how trite is their so-called violence  
 which springs from a gigantic anonymity?

Is it still possible to talk of violence when it becomes  
 'comfortable'? Just reflect on the incompatibility of these two  
 words - comfortable violence. It sounds like a joke.

Contemporary man is mostly no more than a spectator seized  
 from time to time by a great fear which turns the 'show' into a  
 successful 'thriller'....But does a show 'presenting violence'  
 contain any danger to himself? Certainly not! He can be sure of his  
 accustomed comfort when he returns home. In our days the 'show of  
 violence' must be paid for like all other forms of entertainment...  
 Even if it is perhaps a joke in bad taste we may say that to a  
 certain extent the very existence of modern man is covered by a  
 life-insurance against violence.

(Reprinted from the Jan/Feb 1969 issue of "The London Letter")

\* & x) I would rather say x) force & xx) liberation. J.E.

0087

## NIETZSCHE

by Enzo Martucci

translated by Stephen Marletta

Nietzsche was a great philosopher and a fine poet. His individualism has much in common with mine. His exaltation of the individual, his evaluation of egoism, his negation of all the religious, moral and social bonds that oppress the personality, his recognition that force legitimises every action because it is the only means by which the ego can obtain all that it desires - all these constitute a common platform between us.

Even the idea that "man is a bridge between the brute and the overman, a bridge above a deep gulf" is common to us both - even if for Nietzsche the bridge leads to a type like Alexander the Great, Caesar, of Napoleon, and for me to a type like Corrado Brando or Jules Bonnot.

Both anarchism and imperialism are children of individualism inasmuch as they are born of the need which prompts the individual to be free and not to submit to anyone or anything, to expand life to the fullest extent, even oppressing others if he thinks it necessary and has the force to do so.

Beginning like Corrado Brando the individual can end in the tyranny of a Caesar. Yes, but egoism can be awakened in everyone. If individualist sentiments are generalized, if humanity dissolves into separate personalities, free, resolute and independent, each one of whom will not submit to others, then imperialism becomes practically impossible as a form of domination. Each individual would resist those who wanted him to submit. If he fell in battle he would not become a slave, and if he succeeded in repelling the attack he would preserve his freedom and continue to live without masters.

In this way we would realize an anarchy that could never be transformed into a proper egoarchy because of the oscillating equilibrium that would exist between alert individuals who have developed to the maximum their ability to resist aggressors and to decisively counter-attack them. We would achieve a natural state, in which post-history would be realized by individuals different to those of history - which is characterized by the permanent submission of the gregarious mass to a few leaders who use them as cannon-fodder.

But such a post-history - which I believe has some possibility of being realized in the future - had no meaning for Nietzsche. He believed that everything must repeat itself eternally, always gliding along the rails of history. From this arises the possibility of the triumph of imperialism, of the domination of a few superior men over the multitude of the weak and cowardly, who will forever

? remain so because gregariousness is so deeply rooted in them that they feel the need for community and masters.

To arouse individualist sentiments in the souls of these slaves is impossible. Although given to man by nature only a few possess them today due to the conditioning of herdism.

"Since man began" - wrote Nietzsche - "there have been herds (associations of families, communities, peoples, states, churches) and always the obedient are many compared to the small number who command. Considering, therefore, that men have been well trained into obedience, it is easy to suppose that the average man now has an innate need which takes the form of a conscience which orders: you must absolutely do this, you must not absolutely do that - in a word, you must. Man seeks to satisfy this need and give it a motive."

From this Nietzsche deduces that:

"According to the force, the impatience, and the energy of the need, man hords without choice and with a gross appetite accepts all which those in command whisper in his ears, be these his parents or masters, class prejudice or public opinion. The result is that in Europe today the herdlike give themselves airs as being the sole species of authorized men and glorify the virtues which make them useful to the herd as the only really human virtues."

? All this is perfectly true now and has been perfectly true throughout history. But man was naturally individualistic in the beginning and only afterwards became gregarious by an accident which developed his original sociability beyond the needs of free and casual relationships. If the fundamental egoism and particularism, which still manifests itself in rare individuals, is asleep in the subconscious of everyone and could be awakened under the stimulus of exceptional circumstances (nuclear war exterminating the masses, destroying civilization), then who could prove that this subconscious individualism would not come to the surface and lead man once more towards the free and spontaneous life for which he was born?

Nietzsche's theory of the Eternal Recurrence is unproven and unprovable. The theory, that is, that everything must repeat itself as it was in the past, and that even if we return to the beginnings of things we will reproduce in the same way and with the same substance all that has been before. This means that there is no possibility of any novelty and that the only gay and heroic note in this cold and blind mechanism is the spontaneous revolt of the overman who shatters the monotony of the common life, shines with a strange light and then disappears, destroyed by the machine that continues its senseless, eternal work.

But this conception of Nietzsche's, inspired in great part by others akin to the Pythagoreans, is unproven and it is therefore



possible to suppose that life will once more know novelty and the cosmos express the chaos from which it came. And this same chaos of eternal energy produce innumerable combinations which are varied and opposite. By means of this intuition we can free ourselves from the oppression caused by the cold and arid mechanical determinism of Nietzsche and warm ourselves by the heat of a creative energy which, in its exuberance, does not follow any pre-established plan like that of the christian Eternal Father, but spontaneously develops every variety of existence.

Therefore the overmen are not fatally condemned to remain exceptions. Life can change even in our world. With major or minor success, all men liberated from the herd can be directed towards the ideal of the overman. Will these live in amoral spontaneity - or in the immoral morality of Nietzsche, that overturned ethic which raises to virtue everything that Christianity degrades to sin?

2 Duty is always a law which oppresses the individual. The duty  
2 to be hard, cruel and dominating when one does not want to be such  
2 is as oppressive as the duty to be pitying when one is not disposed  
to pity.

Conquer and win - yes. But if we are not inclined to conquer and win we can renounce this, even if we must pay with our lives or in some other way.

Existence is spontaneity

Nietzsche creates a new discipline. I, who reject all discipline, deny even his.

Even so, I consider him very near to me.

-----

## A PROTEST

by Donald Room

S.E.Parker (Thoughts Out Of Season, December 1968) energetically defends Benjamin Tucker against "a malicious accusation" in Aims and Principles of Anarchism.

When the same pamphlet makes a somewhat similar accusation against me, however, Parker's objection is only to the implication that I am a competent spokesman for individualist anarchism. He accepts without question the author's version of my opinions about the police.

He then proceeds to make a surprising accusation of his own

"(D.R.) has been known to make out a case for State comprehensive schools on socialist grounds, and to be surprised when asked what this had to do with anarchism!"

Parker can trace the passage in Tucker, and could if he chose identify the quote from me, that has been more or less deliberately misconstrued by the author of Aims and Principles. But there is no source for Parker's allegation against me; it is not misconstruction, it is fabrication.

For your information: I think school places should be freely available, without compulsion, to whoever can make use of them. I object to boarding schools because it is cruel to separate young children from their mothers for long periods, and cruelty to children turns my stomach. *at whose expense?*

I know of people associated with the anarchist movement who pay people to take their kids off their hands. If one of those were to ask me what this had to do with anarchism, I might doubt the authenticity of his anarchism, but I would not be surprised.

#### A RETORT

by S.E.Parker

The source for my "fabrication" was a meeting at Donald Room's place that I went to a couple of years or so ago. At this meeting Room said that he had been asked by the head mistress of his local school to speak in favour of the Labour Government's comprehensive education scheme that was then being widely discussed. During the ensuing discussion I was the only one who did not favour this scheme. All the others who took part supported it on the grounds that it was fairer than the existing mixed system and particularly fairer than "public" (i.e. private) schools. My view was and is that a State comprehensive system would increase the power of the government, not decrease it and that I could not see what such a system had to do with anarchism. At no time do I remember Room dissenting from the socialist views put forward by other contributors to the discussion. Indeed, since he had begun by saying that he might speak in favour of comprehensive education I do not think that I wittingly distorted his views in my comment in the last issue of Minus One, even though I took no notes at the meeting and have to rely on my memory as to what took place.

That socialism is implicit in Room's views is shown when he writes that "school places should be freely available, without compulsion, to whoever can make use of them". This is quite in keeping with the evangelical abstractions so beloved of libertarian and other socialists. School places do not drop like manna from heaven. They come into being because of the money and labour of individuals outside the school. If school places are to be

MINUS ONE is edited and published by S.E. Parker, 2 Orsett Terrace, London, W.2. 6/6 for six issues (£ dollar U.S.)

---

made available as an unconditional right to all who want them, then the only guarantee that they can be so available is some form of compulsory taxation on a sufficient number of individuals to ensure this. His qualification "without compulsion" might well apply to the children, but not, surely, to those taxed to support them. He is thus landed in a dilemma typical of "anarcho-communists" - on the one hand they want to do away with coercion, on the other the collectivist means they propose in order to do this lead them back to coercion - social, moral or legal - and the authority needed to sanction it.

The question of boarding schools is quite irrelevant to what I wrote.

that

I do not see/what I wrote about D.R. and the police in any way misrepresents his views. I have checked the quotation given by the author of "Aims and Principles" with the version of the broadcast published in "Anarchy" 85 and it seems to me that he does not distort Rooum's views to any serious extent, even though he does link them erroneously with individualist anarchism.

I would like to go into the question of the police as an expression of a "sick society" and the individualist critique of it, but space considerations make it necessary to postpone this to a future issue.

-----

#### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

EROS - poems by Domenico Pastorello (in Italian). Copies free from the author at 13 Fos sur mer, France.

La Negation Fait L'Homme. Poems and drawings by Daniel Giraud. Preface by Gaston Criel. Editions de Mezigue. c/o the author, 29 Boulevard Lord-Duveen, Marseille 8e, France. No price given.

Primaute et Liberte de Individu by Dan, Editions Aseretresoletse-foutredureste. La Ruche Ouvriere, 10, rue de Montmorency, Paris 3e, France. No price given.

How I Found The Goddess and What I Did To Her When I Found Her. By Malacypse The Younger KSC. A beautiful spoof on religious cults. All addresses given are suspect (one presumed that of Doris Day!) but strong grounds for believing that two readers of Minus One are responsible - one for the main body and the other, who contributes to this issue, for some of the trimmings.....

But Mr. Speaker, It Will Create Anarchy! By Jim Huggon. No price. No publisher. Perche?