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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

MINUS ONE - Editor: S.E.Parker - No. 42, 1979 - Price: Twelvepence

FREEDOM AND SOLITUDE

"Anarchy is the negation of authority of whatever kind, it is affection and solitude."

L. Ferre

To be alone, liberated from the yoke of collective life. Here is the most logical system for being truly free - free from convention, from dependence and the extortions of others. It is solitude alone that makes the individual really free.

Each day we are victims of hypocrisy, continually reciting the rules of bourgeois etiquette: "thank you...excuse me...I am sorry". Others flatter, judge, criticize. Others decide for us, others live on our weaknesses, others cheat us, others steal from us, others, always others, usurp our lives.

It is they who love us, who hate us, who betray us, rob us of our thoughts, words, life. It would be logical to leave them all, to flee physically and mentally to a proper island of solitude, self-sufficient and courageous. Courageous? Courageous because it is difficult, because we are incapable of living really alone, because we have need of contact with others in order to express our feelings, to realize ourselves, even for the simplification of our actions.

It is difficult for one individual, weak, even psychologically insecure, to do without friendship, love and solidarity. And then, clearly, life in solitude would appear monotonous because, as always, our emotions, our adventures, arise from others, evolve among others.

There is another solitude, perhaps more understood, more naturally respected, than that of the hermit. It is when you no longer feel a part of these others, when you no longer participate in their mode of living, making a world apart from them in which they no longer count, from which they are excluded. It is when you no longer accept their love, their benevolence, their hypocrisy - and your solitude then becomes freedom, rebellion, it is open defiance of society.

Anarchist individualists are alone, their life lies outside the rules imposed by others. They choose the individuals whom it pleases them to have near, to listen. The others they regard as if they were non-existent, or as enemies. Individualists live beyond the walls of society - but not as those driven out..... They are mental, rather than physical, fugitives, and their solitude is loved, it is the realization of their free thought.

Marilisa Fiorina

(Translated by S. Marletta from Il Diverso, No.1, Spring 1978)

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He who lives a wholly social life, who thinks collectively, is quite incapable of being individual and independent. You may demand every form of courage from him, and every sacrifice, but you must not ask him to wear an unfashionable necktie or profess views that are commonly laughed at.

Carl Spitteler

STIRNER'S USEFULNESS FOR THEOLOGY

I hope the title doesn't sound too pretentious; I was asked why a clergyman like myself thinks of Stirner as being close to the Kingdom of Heaven. I think I can quiet the astonishment of Mr. Parker by saying at the outset that I do recognize Stirner's ostensible purpose as being thoroughly carnal! What I hope to elaborate on, in an unscholarly manner, is my belief that a thoroughly criminal philosophy has more of God about it than a modern liberal philosophy or theology, such as that professed by the average Anglican or the typical sophomoric Unitarian or Humanist.

Now what in Heaven do I mean by that? Well, in my guts, I sense that it has something to do with the parable of the prodigal son and the many words of Jesus about the infinite preferability of substance over appearance. You see, a criminal is in a position to see, since he has made a decision based on self-interest as he honestly conceives it, and also simply because...in extremes is truth. Stirner is a blessed extremist, and in being such, he soon perceives that selfhood is at the centre of the universe. Which selfhood? His, of course.

Here is where I part company with him, but nevertheless use him for my "unholy" theological purposes! How so? I simply apply most of what he says of himself to the selfhood of God. Now, I realize that you probably don't believe in God, but that's not the issue (I maintain that finding God is like a blindman seeing the colour red for the first time: you could not have told him much about it. Like Stirner I have no use for "thinking" - only for concrete experience)

I want you to know that I've experienced God in Jesus Christ and that I can't talk about it here. Here I want to say that it was delightful for me to discover that Jesus Christ is not an ethicist and that His Father is totally beyond "morality". You see, "Christians" have totally ignored the fact that the ten commandments are just that ...they are not ethics. They come from One-Who-Commands in the same sense that reality and the scientific method command the mind of one who chooses to use them.

God commands me and I'm very happy about it because it works. I do not mean to say that God is a boss with an efficiency beyond mine. No. As a matter of fact, God is not a "personality" in the usual sense at all. If He were I'd have someone to contend with...as it is, I experience him as water irrigating my consciousness, yet I am also aware that this is a Conscious, logical, purposeful, Being.

The difference between Stirner and myself in regard to this experience relates to a previous article which mentions Krishnamurti and Hinduism. Stirner experienced, I believe, the atman or "imago Dei" within himself (which still relates him to God), but I have been experienced by the Supreme Self, God. To be more exact, Stirner may be a Jainist, while I am a Christian (He, of course, would not abide the Jainist denial of the body, but he might approve of their meditation technique as a way of consuming externalities).

The danger in both Jainism and "Stirnerism" is that the focus of both tends inward exclusively (not theoretically, but concretely). This tendency is intended to counter-balance the extreme "objectivism" of this society (...which is existentially experienced as the feeling that one's self is "out there" and is thus psychologically vulnerable to the "vibrations" of others and of objects). In John, Chapter 10, Jesus tells us that those who know Him as basis of self-interest will "go in and out", spiritually or psychologically speaking.

(Continued page 5)

THE INFLUENCE OF TUCKER'S IDEAS IN FRANCE

Tucker! What memories his name invokes in my mind! The present generation have forgotten the pioneers of "anarchist individualism" in the United States. I am not unaware of this. It is human to forget. But myself, I have never forgotten my first contact with Liberty, now more than thirty years ago. I sought my way and then edited a paper l'ere nouvelle, a Christian anarchist organ. I was at that time under the influence of Tolstoy, to whom I am indebted not only for being an opponent of governmental violence and Statist constraint, but for having comprehended that "salvation is within ourselves". But Tolstoyism did not satisfy me any more than the Kropotkin brand of anarchism satisfied me, as represented by the French tendency of the Temps Nouveau. A personality belonging to this last movement was nevertheless eminently sympathetic to me: that of Elisee Reclus. I had been to see him several times, we had conversations, and had been in accord on many points. But I was aiming at something else.

It was at that time that I made the acquaintance, intellectually speaking, of Tucker. That did not imply solely the assimilation of his doctrine. To establish contact with Tucker meant inquiring into everything which his predecessors, or those to whom he alluded, had written: Josiah Warren, Stephen Pearl Andrews, Max Stirner, Proudhon, for example. Tucker and those whom I am going to cite taught me the cry of the "individual", the doctrine of "individual sovereignty", of the association of "egos". I had learned from Tolstoy that it is within ourselves that salvation lies.

At the same time they swept from my brain all traces of metaphysics which it had still sheltered. From then on my road was clear.

I do not claim that I ever posed as an orthodox "Tuckerian"⁽¹⁾ I feel within myself the soul of a heretic. I have always felt myself an outsider, one "en dehors", a non conformist through rapport with movements that were most sympathetic to me. Moreover, I read, I studied, I deepened my mind with Emerson, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Whitman. I was in contact with Ernest Crosby, Horace Traubel, Voltairine de Cleyre. However, I am still indebted to Tucker for being revealed to myself. My knowledge of Tucker implied that of John Henry Mackay with whom I maintained friendly relations until his death, as also with Jo Labadie.

Not that the economic discussions which comprised Instead of a Book has entirely convinced me. But the spirit of this work suits my temperament better than the anarchism of John Most or Peter Kropotkin, however much I respect the character of the latter. My nature, my aspirations, are in better accord with The Ego and His Own, The Anarchists, Der Freiheitsucher, for instance, than with The Conquest of Bread. I am not, and cannot be, a communist anarchist. I do not believe in a single solution of the problem of man. I am a free associate and live absolutely convinced that there is room upon our planet for the flowering of all the nuances of the libertarian rainbow. *As history shows, there is also room for the practice of anarchist ideologies, by their believers, with peace assured by arbitral autonomy for*

I hold that the isolated individual or the free association must be able to dispose freely of their products and regulate their relations with others as they intend, other individuals or another association. I hold that there exists neither "liberty" nor the possibility of "equal liberty" nor the exercise of "reciprocity" without the possession in inalienable title of the "means of production" (or an equitable equivalent) I hold that any contract which does not include a cancellation clause is a leonine or oppressive contract.

⁽¹⁾ Anarchist as well as anarchist. 3

Enemy number one is whoever imposes the contract - whether it be an individual, a federation, a majority(3), or the State. I claim for the individual as for the association the right to self-defence against all attempts at invasion, whether it be an individual, a majority, or the State which is shown to be invasive. I hold that "mind your own business" is the only "moral law" and that "interference with another's affairs is a crime, the only crime, and as such it must be opposed". For these four or five directives which are so very clear, I am indebted to Tucker. And throughout all of my thirty five years of propaganda, whether in l'ere nouvelle, hors du troupeau, les refractaires, par dela le melee, or l'en dehors, they have wound like a guiding thread through all I have spoken or written.

In l'en dehors, I am less occupied with presenting solutions to economic problems than with affirming and exposing the individualistic view of life and the human problem. Times have changed since the appearance of Liberty. There has been the war and the diminution of general culture which has followed it. In several important European countries the political impotence of democratic parliamentarism⁴ has caused the dawning of regimes which have annihilated the victories to which individualists are very particularly attached: liberty of the press and the public expression of opinions, liberty of association. An inevitable economic crisis caused a relegation to second place of the pursuit of individual autonomy. They iterate to us in all the tones of the scale that the very concept of liberty is a superannuated idea or petit bourgeois. They proclaim that all is lost and that there is no hope of relief: here is the individual is not submerged in the collective soul, there is he does not permit himself to be absorbed by the totalitarian State. How maintain individual values, personal non-conformism, in the midst of the general upheaval? How resist the general authoritarian involvement - overt or hidden? That is the problem I am forced always to keep in sight. On the other hand, I do not believe that it is enough to attack en bloc the solid structure authority. According to my opinion, it is most appropriate to undermine separately the pillars upon which it rests(4). Shaken to its foundations, spiritual, ethical, intellectual, the edifice will finish by some day tottering.

From there on, my propaganda with the view of uprooting in the individual certain prejudices, certain moral habits. For several years my activity was specialized on some very definite points and the ostracism which has fallen upon my propaganda (interdiction of the circulation of l'en dehors in the countries with dictatorial regimes) shows that I have hit the nail on the head. (5) It goes without saying that this specialization has never caused me to neglect the appeal for the necessity of individual culture or the indispensability of hewing out the personality.

Moreover, I am no sectarian. The proof of this lies in my constant collaboration with L'Encyclopedie Anarchiste of Sebastien Faure, the first libertarian orator I ever heard. This goes back to the Dreyfus Affair - which does not make me any younger (nor him either). I admit indeed that there are consecrations to other propagandas than those to which my determinism is attracted. (6)

I have met Tucker twice, twenty five years apart. I did not meet him when he was in full propagandistic activity. I met him when he has ceased this activity. The first time we were far from being in accord on a great number of points; the second time we were in agreement on almost all points. But after every conversation I have left more encouraged, more determined to struggle for the sovereignty of the ego and for free association in all branches of human activity.

E. Arrand

x) Rather, the political ^{economic} consequences of monetary despotism, which democratic parliamentarism has introduced & maintained, together with the territorial monopoly.

7 2.21.27.

(1) For example, from the point of view of illegalism or economic non-conformism. And on several other points. The individualism of l'en dehors bears a special significance, but it would be ingratitude to deny its origin.

(2) I am convinced that the anarchism termed communist or libertarian, as the majority of its adherents understand it, would show itself as fatally absorbing, if not as despotic, as Bolshevism. The same goes for Syndicalism, Jacobinism of the extreme left, etc.

(3) And etiquette matters little.

(4) You find "anarchists" who affirm that it is counter-revolutionary (sic)! It is on "the morrow of the revolution" that one will regulate a horde of questions, the solution of which embraces the details of everyday life. In the meantime, the years pass and the individual dies, crushed under, embittered, sacrificed to a mystique!

(5) Such is our position with regard to the sexual question. Because we have remembered, like Schiller, that love, equally with hunger, was a great motivating cause of the activity of man, they have vowed us to gemoniae. As if the solution of the economic problem, important as it is, ought to be the only subject which could preoccupy a propagandist or a propaganda! I do not speak here of the individualists among whom our theses have many precursors.

(6) On condition that we are not obliged to be silent and not forced to renounce our right of criticism and free examination concerning activities which are not our own.

(Reprinted from Free Views 2, 1937. Edited by J. Ishill)

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Stirner's Usefulness For Theology (Continued from page 2)

I experience this as the greatest benefit since it overcomes Stirner's and my old enemy...duality. Everything, "good" or "bad", in this world, fights with everything else. Conflict is life in this world. Hence, my inward life fights my outward life and vice versa. Since a humanist effort to achieve balance merely results in the middle of moderation, I don't have a chance unless I can get above the forces. To do this means to respond to the trans-natural ego, the Christ...the One who gives real egoism to the plant gratis, but who can only give it to me if I want to use Him.

I hope I have given you, the reader, some glimpse of what reading Stirner (with the Gospel of John) has done for me. Perhaps I should retitle this essay "Stirner's Usefulness For My Theology" since I have written so personally...and I should also stress that I use the word "theology" in an experiential sense, not in the usual "possessed" sense. I have not tried to claim that Stirner was a Christian, but I would say that, in a Pauline sense, he is a "fool", a "nothing", etc...one who is wonderfully empty and thus at the brink of Fullness in the Theologically Egoistic sense. It bothers me, of course, that he mostly identified Christ with Christendom (Satan's domain). This resulted in what one reads on pages 317 and 318 of the Libertarian Book Club edition of The Ego and His Own (God on 317, Satan on 318)

I might mention in closing that I'm a congregational minister...but don't hold that against me - it's but a vehicle to work through. Actually, I'm an "associationalist" who believes that a real Church of God would be a union of the self-interested...in the Supreme Self that some Hasidic Jews refer to as "Nothing" (NO-THING).

ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS - Jane Wyman, Rock Hudson, Agnes Moorehead, Virginia Gray. Douglas Sirk Season, Everyman Cinema, Hampstead.

Pretty, pretty, pretty American small town. Pretty house, garden, widow, daughter, son, and free-lance, part-time, independent gardener who lives in an annexe to a greenhouse for young trees, by a pond, next to an old, disused barn. Pretty married couple, friends of the gardener, who read Thoreau's "Walden", but insist that Ron, the gardener, "lives it". Needless to say, the film is in technicolour.

We are not hit over the head with "social realism" or "psychological motives" here, but they are nonetheless present in the right amounts. The deceptive art of this film lies in the fact that, in the midst of all the colour and prettiness, there is a very intelligent and important message really relevant to today's child-centred, guilt-ridden ethos of destructive permissiveness: the conservative nature and conformist expectations of children. The heroine gives up her gardener, the man she loves, and the chance to meet the challenge of a new way of life, not because of the pressures to conform which would be inevitable in a small country town, not because her friends would be aghast and jealous, not because she is afraid of change as she obviously is, but because her son is horrified and her daughter in tears because her friends have been discussing her mother in the public library. Her son, becoming the personification of the father, insists that the house has been in the family for years and should stay that way and that if his mother carries on her relationship with "this outsider" he will not come home from college for his holidays ever again. So the widow finishes her affair with the gardener.

At the Christmas holidays, the children return home. Her daughter, overflowing with happiness, announces that she is engaged and about to be married, will be leaving home soon and adding "she had made such a silly fuss about her mother's friend, but it was probably not really important". And her son, of the short haircut, briefcase and attitude to match, is going to Europe and declares that the house will have to be sold as it is far too big for one person to live in. The heroine receives these communications in absolute silence, her face registering emotions more effectively than any words could have done. In the background stand the Xmas tree and decorations - as superfluous as the widow had become for her children.

But all does end well and the heroine goes off to the woods to her Thoreau, life in a converted barn, and different kinds of friends. Message: sacrifice of any kind is useless, selfish and stupid, and the sacrifice demanded by one's offspring (or family) often the most insidious (e.g. in this day and age it would be easier in the West to defy the State and go to prison for one's convictions than admit to this heresy). A good film, interesting story, very well directed, the message is subtly conveyed as part of the unfolding of the plot. If only modern filmmakers would take note!

(N.B. The accompanying Sirk film shows the father as the victim of the children, his wife their doting slave. He is on the verge of leaving with an old flame, who, after she realizes that he is using her because he has become an outsider in his own house, confronts the children with her reactions to their selfishness. They take it to heart and their father is able to reinstate himself as an individual in the family.)

War Resister

("Il Mio 24 Maggio 1915" Momento Cruciale Ideologico. By Castagna Luigi. Edizione Fuori Commercio, Cesola-Mantona. Iniziativa Editoriale Pro Scuola Francisco Ferrari.)

With the exception of Alexander, Napoleon, Frederick the Great, and Pope Alexander the Sixth - and that rather for what they said than did - kings, generals and priests arouse no great interest in me, whereas the solitary figure of a man or woman standing against the might of Church and State does.

Castagna was born the son of a poor farmer on September 8th., 1894, in Cesola, Italy. He received his call-up on November 10th. 1914, but had no intention of serving in the Army. "Conscientious Objection" was unheard of in those days and but for this he missed being the first C.O. Considering that his intentions could have subjected him to the death penalty, his stand was all the more heroic.

Castagna's book of 54 pages is an account of his family background, his confrontation with the military, his refusal to conform to army discipline, Italy's ultimate entry into World War 1, the rise of fascism, and means of combatting war. It also contains some poems and quotations from Godwin, Tolstoy and Gandhi. War to him was not only "ignominious death, but something worse, the complete negation of being human". Bearing in mind the risk of the death penalty, a captain once pointed his revolver at Castagna with the words "I could blow your brains out".

The story is a long one, but with his intelligence as a guide he won through the perils. His signing of a piece of paper requesting a medical examination (he had eye trouble) and the bungling of the authorities in the matter saved him from execution. The author puts his feelings on paper by the use of large capital letters: "And all because they failed in their duty?" "Down with war".

Tolstoyan - without the God bits - in his attitude, he describes how on October 13th, 1909, the day of the "assassination" of Francisco Ferrer, the founder of the Modern School, and the one who influenced him the most, he was led to writings of Malatesta and other anarchists. The book concludes with his testament. Besides his philosophy, he declares that he wishes no priest or prayers at his death, considering such "an insult to reason". All his life his intention has been "to conduct myself uniquely as "man"".

I think his book arose from a long held desire to set it down in print - and why not? I salute Luigi and wish him well.

Stephen Marletta

Anarchist Individualism

(Individualistischer Anarchismus. Details in Minus One 41)

This booklet consists of a selection of authors and writings with the aim of presenting and popularizing anarchist individualism as it has originally been expounded by its promoters. It was planned by the Mackay Society and the Libertad Publishers, and has been carried out by K.H.Z. Solneman and Uwe Timm with the will of proving the validity of anarchist individualism and showing its up-to-dateness in relation

STEVIE - Glenda Jackson, Mona Washbourne, Trevor Howard, Alec Mc Gowen.
On General Release.

Glenda Jackson in this film is an actress - for it seems that in every film since "Women In Love" and "A Touch Of Class" she has just made an appearance as Glenda Jackson. "Stevie", which she helped to finance, will not be a box office success, but it is a success. Miss Jackson seems to understand, empathize with, Stevie Smith. The square figured, asexual, aggressively friendly, generous and tender personality of the poetess (The Emily Dickinson of Palmers Green) are the qualities which Miss Jackson conveys most convincingly. "I am a friendship girl" she declares to her tennis playing boyfriend as she rejects his proposal of marriage and marriage itself for good. And yet, paradoxically, she understands how to love and to share. She perhaps gives and receives more love and tolerance in the years of her relationship with her aunt than many a married man or woman ever does.

Emily Dickinson, on the other hand, renounced marriage because she could not have the man of her dreams and thereby condemned herself to a life of martyrdom and unrequited passion. Stevie made a choice fully conscious of her nature as an "eternal child", yet she accedes to loneliness, despair, the need for solitude and courage with humour, and, almost always, dignity. By contrast, Julie Harris's Emily Dickinson in The Belle of Amherst, seen on the West End stage some eighteen months ago, is silly and featherbrained.

At the end of the film we still do not know Stevie, that is, she is not "revealed" in the modern sense, she is still a mystery, but very, very endearing. We have shared some moments of her life with her and that is about as close as we can get to anyone. See, for example, the scene where her aunt is on her sickbed and Stevie reads her poem condemning Christianity - it is rivetting. If you had missed the essence of Emily Dickinson in "The Belle of Amherst", you could find it in this scene. In it, Glenda Jackson builds a whole, new, awesome reputation.

Meanda

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MINUS ONE exchanges with The Storm, Il Diverso, L'Homme Libre (addresses on the back page) - The Broadsheet, Box 54, P.O., Darlinghurst, NSW 2010, Australia - The Dandelion, M. Coughlin, 1985 Selby Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104, USA - Centro Studi Hem Day, Via Angelo Tittoni 5, 00153 Roma, Italy - Le Refractaire, 320 rue Saint -Martin, 75003 Paris, France - Cahiers Des Amis D'Hen Ryner, 3 Allee du Chateau, 93320 Les Pavillons - sous -Bois, France - Soil of Liberty, PO Box 7056, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, MN 55407, USA - CIRA Bulletin, CP 51, CH-1211 Geneve 13, Switzerland- Sweet Gorkhins, PO Box 822, Muscatine, Iowa 52761, USA - Libercana Ligilo, Cor Bruins, W6 Tamarinde, Herensingel +/o 11a, Leiden, Holland - Southern Libertarian Messenger, PO Box 1245, Florence, S.C. 29501, USA - Rivista Volonta, c/o Codello Francesco, Casella Postale Aperta, 31049 Valdobbiadene (Treviso), Italy - Lesbian Voices, Ms. Atlas Press, 330 South 3rd Street, Suite B, San Jose, CA 95112, USA - Boxcar, 1001-B Guerfero, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA.

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Freedom Bookshop, 84B Whitechapel High St., London E1.

and

Laissez-Faire Books, 206 Mercer St., New York, NY 10012, USA.

to economics and contemporary politics. Sometimes there are attempts to conciliate it with different conceptions, but the choice of the pieces is quite complete. The fundamental concerns of individualism are introduced, explained and annotated without neglecting anything. So we find here the writings of Mackay, Proudhon, Stirner, Waldecke, Tucker, Yarros, Armand, Parker, besides those of Solneman and Timm.

Veronica Vaccaro

Voltairine de Cleyre

(An American Anarchist. The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre. By Paul Avrich. Princeton University Press. 1978. \$16.50)

Voltairine de Cleyre is one of the most unjustly neglected figures of American radicalism. Essayist, poet, translator and orator she played a prominent part in the libertarian movement between 1887 and her death in 1912 at the age of 45.

It is for this reason that I welcome Paul Avrich's well-written and serious biographical study. In it he vividly depicts her struggles to assert herself as a free individual, her relations with her comrades and the evolution of her thought. He also gives us fascinating sketches of some of her close friends and corrects the errors made by Emma Goldman and Hippolyte Havel in their biographical essays about her.

Voltairine de Cleyre began her public life as a lecturer in the freethought movement. She became interested in anarchism as a result of the Chicago Affair of 1886 and at first championed the ideas of Benjamin Tucker, to whose paper Liberty she contributed. She soon came under the influence of her friend and lover Dyer D. Lum, however, who, like Tucker, was a mutualist, but favoured militant participation in trade union struggles. Towards the end of her life she began to work closely with the libertarian communists, but refused to commit herself to their ideas, preferring to call herself an "an anarchist without adjectives" and adopting a pluralist view of any future "free society". Indeed, Paul Avrich shows conclusively that, despite claims by Rudolph Rocker and Emma Goldman, she did not embrace communism. But I am not convinced that her efforts to maintain a balance between individualism and communism rested on any sure foundation. My own experience is that one eventually has to choose one or the other and I chose individualism.

for oneself only!
7.2.
21.8.97.

In this connection Voltairine de Cleyre's attitude towards philosophical egoism is significant. Her mentor, Dyer D. Lum, believed that "the devotee of a cause is never the devotee of self" and he sneeringly dismissed egoists as "dung-beetles", "people who think a great deal of their ego and don't care a rap for society". In her obituary essay about him, written after his suicide in 1893, she describes his views without any dissent so one may take it that she then agreed with them. In her later writings, however, she began to stress the importance of thinking "a great deal" of one's ego. Even in one of her most "Tolstoyan" essays, Crime and Punishment, she wrote "I believe that the purpose of life (insofar as we can give it a purpose, and it has none save what we give it) is the assertion and the development of strong, self-centred personality". In Anarchism and Literature, not only does she echo Max Stirner by stating that "none can decide... for you so well as you for yourself; for even if you err you learn by it, while if he errs the blame is his, and if he advises well the credit is his, and you are nothing", but she pays tribute to him as "the pride of Young Germany who would have the individual acknowledge nothing, neither science nor logic, not any other creation of his thought, as having authority over him, its creator".

*) There is a time & place for everything. An obituary on someone who was close to you is hardly the best occasion for an intellectual attack on him.
J.B. 21.8.97.

Nonetheless, despite her recognition of the value of egocentricity, Voltairine de Cleyre remained haunted to the end of her life by a religious concern for the sacredness of principles, the notion that one has to serve a "cause" greater than oneself. Two years before her death she wrote one of her most impressive essays, The Dominant Idea, which shows very clearly the conflicting strains of her thought. She praises the "liberty and pride and strength of the single soul" and "the immortal fire of Individual Will which is the salvation of the future". At the same time she holds up for emulation that most obnoxious source of support for authority, the view that "to conceive a higher thing than oneself and live towards that is the only way of living worthily". Indeed, she concludes her essay by transforming "Individual Will" into her "Dominant Idea" and thus negates it. *See her notion of the SELF-GIVEN purpose of life, in the previous par. Has the individual no right to choose values to use his life as he pleases?*

It is not surprising that not long after writing this essay she became overwhelmed by a bleak despair about her life and ideas. Her vain attempt to walk the philosophical tightrope between egoism and altruism, the profane and the sacred, eventually crumbled. She found emotional refuge from her dilemmas in the shape of the Mexican Revolution which "at any moment of our lives...may invade our homes with its stern demand for self-sacrifice and suffering". Abandoning her critical awareness, she plunged into a frenzied campaign to rally support for the Mexican revolutionaries whom she idealised in a manner beyond belief in one so intelligent. She died before she could witness the revolution ending in a mere change of rulers, as is the melancholy habit of such ventures. - *If NOT guided by truly liberating ideas, combined in a programme deserving the name of libertarian fighting & peace methods.* *J.Z. 21.8.97.*

The life and ideas of Voltairine de Cleyre offer much of interest to individualists. She came so near to adopting a thoroughgoing individualist position, but sadly could not overcome the religious-^{inconsistent} collectivist nonsense she had imbibed in her youth ("God must fall in every shape" cried John Henry Mackay) In my early days as an "anarcho-communist" I found her writings both inspiring and sufficiently disturbing to implant in my thinking a seed of doubt about my championing of this contradiction in terms that later formed part of a blossoming of anarchist individualism. In Paul Avrich she has found an able biographer whose pages bring her to life once more. *Must he be free to choose his activities, driven only by the whim of the moment?* *J.Z.*

It is MORE individualistic to advocate that OTHER individuals be also free to adopt & practise their non-individualistic views among THEMSELVES! S.E. Parker

John Henry Mackay

PIOT, J.Z. 21-8-97

(John Henry Mackay - The Unique. By K.H.Z. Solnenan. The Mackay Society c/o Kurt Zube, Auwaldstrasse 7, D-7800 Freiburg/Br. Germany. 50p. Available in Britain from Freedom Press, 24B Whitechapel High Street, London E.1.)

Mackay is usually known in this country for two things: his book The Anarchists, first published in 1891, and as the biographer of Max Stirner. A full length study of him by Thos. A. Riley (The Revisionist Press) was published in 1972, but this has received little attention, probably because of its high price and a bizarre academicism which left about a third of the book in German.

This booklet, therefore, is to be welcomed as a useful and interesting introduction to Mackay's life and thought. It has the added advantage that its author was one of his comrades.

Solnenan makes it clear that Mackay was something more than just the biographer of Stirner. Important as this work was and is, he also deserves acknowledgement as a poet, novelist, and social critic. in Germany in the fifty years preceding before his death in 1933.

Indeed, there is a certain significance in the fact that the year of the triumph of National Socialism was also the year of the death of one of Germany's most eminent individualists.

There are some aspects of Solneman's thesis I find questionable. For example, he tries to "sweeten" Stirner by making him a harbinger of "social individualism" and "equal freedom" which he clearly was not. Again, like Mackay, he insists on linking Stirner with that dreadful old moralist Proudhon, even though Stirner plainly detested Proudhon's evangelical philosophizing. Solneman is also strangely reticent about the fact that the books by Mackay which were published under the pseudonym of "Sagitta" were in defence of homosexuality.

Despite these flaws., Solneman's booklet can be recommended to all who are interested in the history of individualism. He makes a persuasive case for the "rediscovery" of Mackay and I hope it will help towards the republication of his works and their translation into English.

S.E.P.

(Presence. By Wm. Flygare. Appollon Press. 209 Seiryu-cho, Imadegawa-agaru, Kawaramachi-dori, Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto-shi, Japan 602. 1977. 2,500yen - \$12.50)

This collection of poems contains some that will be familiar to readers of MINUS ONE. Together with those that are unfamiliar it forms a satisfying and familiar whole. Using a diversity of styles and a variety of moods, Wm. Flygare vividly charts his path towards liberating himself from the oppressive categorisations of family and society: the "ties that bind", the "generalities" that "won't own/ the itches and twitches/ of particularities", that "bleed no blood" and "know no pain". Now free of "calls to betray me" he is "a rock/ a lone stone/ sticking its head up out of the sea". "I am my I/ and when I sink/ and the sea shall drink me in/ I shall have been....I shall have been".

Apart from the poems dealing directly with the attainment of self-ownership, there are others of irony and humour, sadness and rage. To enumerate them in such a short review would be pointless. I can only urge you to read them.

All poets, whatever they themselves may believe, are individualists by the very nature of their craft. His consciousness of this fact adds to Wm. Flygare's work a power and a precision missing from that of many of his fellows. Stirner wrote: "Even unfree, even bound in a thousand fetters, I yet am; and I am not like freedom, extant only in the future and in hope; but even as the most abject of slaves I am - present". Presence is a lyrical expression of this "presence".**

x) Rather, knowledge of the effectiveness of better ideas, practices & institutions - IF adopted by large enough minorities -
FOR THEMSELVES, while not breaking what others like to do to themselves! J.E. 21.8.77.
 S.E.P.

Kaleidoscope De L'Homme Libre by Marcel Renculet. Cercle D'Etudes Psychologiques, B.P. 282, 42006, Saint-Etienne, France. 1978. 15F)
 A booklet by the editor of L'Homme Libre.

The Lunacy of The Superman and Other Plays by Enrico Arrigoni. 1977.
 No publisher or price given. Ten plays by Enrico Arrigoni (One in collaboration with Virgilio Gozzoli.)

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(Notice here does not preclude future review)

***) It is no substitute for sufficient enlightenment, embracing e.g. clear notions of a anarchic or meta-utopian society, realising experimental freedom or freedom of action for all, as well as programmes on how to realise competing & freely chosen societies & states - to each fit own. The one of its dreams. PNB, J.E. 21.8.77.

SECOND FESTIVAL OF MIND AND BODY
OLYMPIA, 1978

As you cough your way through the smoke-fog of herbal fags being puffed by the throng, as you were sent reeling by the waves of good vibes that battered you from all directions, and assuming you dodged the acupuncture needles and negotiated the assault course of exercise machines, you could have deemed the Second Festival of Mind and Body a success as far as it materially profitted the stall-holders.

There for the visitor to see was a mass display of crankdom. You could shake hands with palmists, pick a card with the Tarot readers, join in a mantra or two for Krishna, star gaze with astrologers, explore your psychic world with E.S.P., tie yourself in knots with yoga postures, get your bumps felt by phrenologists, discover all there is to know about flying saucers with U.P.Blavatsky's secret doctrine, etc., etc. There was, of course, a Universal Church of God, as well as a selection of healers offering you sonic serendipity, aromatherapy, hydrotherapy and faith healing.

After paying £1.50 real-world money, the visitor was overwhelmed by the massive range of stalls that competed for the belief of the public. Indeed, Festival of Mind and Body seemed a misnomer. It would have been more accurate to have called it a Festival of Faith. You would surely have had to have been out of your mind to have believed in the principles of the Institute of Pyramidology and the acned bean-poles of pasty complexion advertising a variety of health food fads looked more like advertisements for Oxfam than testaments to bodily fitness. I am all for healthy criticism of orthodox medicine and religion, and I certainly would not condemn the various fringe fads simply because they are not accepted, but these "holier than thou" creatures needed a kick in the pants to bring them down to earth.

Yes, this was a Festival of Faith and it was based essentially on a belief in a universal "oneness". You would never have believed that there were so many concepts and varieties of attaining "oneness" - but there we are.

There was one stand that was conspicuous by its absence, that of the Union of Egoists. After all, aren't they authorities on the true "oneness": themselves? Maybe next year at Olympia we will have a real Festival for Mind and Body.

Millis

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HEM DAY (Nine Years After His Death)

Hem Day was born on May 30, 1902, in Hainaut, Belgium. In 1928 he was secretary of the International Anarchist Defence Committee, thus beginning his pacifist struggle of resistance to war. In 1933 special laws were issued in Belgium against pacifist propaganda. Hem Day and Les Champion sent their military documents back to the Ministry of Defence. They were both condemned, tried, and imprisoned. They began a hunger strike that forced the government to release them and to expel them from the army reserve.

In 1937 Hem Day went to Barcelona where he held conferences and spoke on the radio. But because of grave internal contrasts, mainly between anarchists and communists, Hem Day, after having visited an anarchist brigade on the Lorida front, returned even more convinced (of the futility)

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than before about the futility of revolutionary violence. On his return he held a conference in France against Nazism and was expelled from that country for this.

During World War 2 he offered political asylum for all comrades in Brussels. In 1947 he became a member of the War Resisters International and travelled to India. But since he had been a friend of Gñadhi he was very disappointed, as also by Jordan and Israel.

An international figure of the free world, he gathered one of the most important - if not the most important - documentations on anarchism. His main work was the publication of "Pensee et Action" and over a forty year period he contributed an enormous number of articles to the publications of the international anarchist movement. He was an important international pacifist figure and was in correspondence with Gandhi and many other pacifists. He was a friend and disciple of Hen Ryner, a friend of E. Armand and Sebastien Faure. He collaborated with Faure's Anarchist Encyclopedia, especially with an important piece about the Manifesto of the Sixteen (see Volonta, May-June, 1969). And amongst other things he offered refuge to Ascaso and Durruti, who had been expelled from many countries. In 1964 Hen Day published a bibliography of his collaboration with anarchist publications. He died in Brussels on August 14, 1969.

Veronica Vaccaro

The author, together with Giovanni Trapani, runs the Hen Day Study Centre in Rome. I have published this biographical note not because I shared Hen Day's ideas, but because in his capacity as a publisher he was responsible for reprinting several interesting individualist works. I met him in 1955 or 6 and again in 1958 and remember him as a large, jovial man who, when I asked what he did, replied "I smoke, I drink, I write". Editor)

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THE STORM!. A Journal for Free Spirits. Edited and published by Mark A. Sullivan, 227 Columbus Avenue., Apt. 2c, New York, N.Y. 10023, USA. \$2.00 for six (N. America) \$2.75 (elsewhere). Published quarterly.

IL DIVERSO. New Italian individualist review. Per tutto concerne questo giornale indirizzare a: Partesana Renzo Barachin, Piazza . . . XXV Aprile, 5 - 23035 Sondalo (Sondrio), Italy.

L'HOMME LIBRE. Recherche d'une psychologie liberatrice. Directeur de publication: Marcel Renoulet. Boite Postale 282, 42006 St. Etienne, Cedex, France. 4 issues 16F (France) 27F (Abroad).

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In the last issue of MINUS ONE it was announced that this issue would contain the first complete English version of Max Stirner's 1842 essay "Art and Religion". Since the translator has expressed a preference for incorporating his translation as an appendix to a book he is writing on Stirner, publication in MINUS ONE will be delayed in order to allow him priority.

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