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Union of Egoists

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-Kevin I. Slaughter

What is a UnionOfEgoists.com?

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

What is a Union of Egoists?

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

– Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own*

What is Egoism?

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

-Trevor Blake, *Confessions of a Failed Egoist*

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IMPORTANT NOTICE: New Address - Please send all subscriptions, articles, correspondence and exchanges to S.E.PARKER, BASEMENT FLAT, 91 TALBOT RD., LONDON, W2, ENGLAND. Subscriptions are now £1.25 (3.50 U.S.Dollars) for six issues.

MINUS ONE - An Individualist Review is edited and published at irregular intervals by S.E.Parker.

INDIVIDUALISM AND THE FREEDOM ASSOCIATION

There are individualists and "individualists". The first are concerned to make their individuality and its expression the primary purpose of their lives. The second are concerned to use the word as a cloak for yet another species of authoritarianism.

In Britain today the largest group of these pseudo-individualists call themselves The Freedom Association. Their fortnightly journal, The Free Nation, features article after article that warns against the dangers of collectivism, the impertinence of bureaucracy, the menace of Statism, and proclaims the need for individual freedom. Yet in each issue is published "The Charter of Rights and Liberties" that gives the lie to their claim to be individualists.

This Charter states that "We believe that in return for allegiance to the Sovereign in Parliament, citizens enjoy the right to be governed according to the Rule of Law, duly enforced without fear or favour."

Now, why do they assume for me that I have a "right" to be governed, let alone "enjoy" it? It is true that I am governed, but this is without my consent and against my interest. Indeed, the cost of this governing to me, both in terms of taxation and restrictions upon my being and having, is such that I consider that I would be much better off if I had no such "right" and was free to order my life as I see fit. I care little whether the "Rule of Law" is "duly enforced without fear or favour", which is, in any case, a legalist's pipe-dream. It is how to evade this enforcement that worries me - not its mode of implementation. A man condemned to death has only a marginal curiosity in his manner of execution. Whether he is killed by hanging, electrocution, or a firing squad, amounts to pretty much the same thing as far as he is concerned. And this is my position vis-a-vis government. Governments can differ in degree - they do not differ in kind. I do not think that the mass of mankind will ever be able to dispense with government, but at least one can recognise the nature of the beast for what it is: an enemy of the individual.

n) Should only this mass be free to choose - its kind of governments, for ALL? J.Z.2.1977.

Then they want me to have "The Right to be defended against the country's enemies." This "right" begs several questions. Who is to decide who are the "country's enemies"? And if such a person or body of persons is identifiable why should his/her/their decision be binding upon me? If "freedom" is involved then surely I can decide who is my enemy and how I am to fight this enemy? I suspect that by "country" is meant "State" and, as has been shown all too often, when a war occurs the State, which ostensibly exists to protect me from

the "country's enemies", does not hesitate to conscript me to protect it. In other words, this "right" is no more than an excuse for the age-old sacrifice of the individual to the collectivity in the name of "defence".

They also want me to have "freedom of assembly and association". Unfortunately, however, they qualify this "freedom" with the words "for a lawful purpose" and thereby render it useless. Neither Hitler nor Stalin had anything against people assembling and associating for lawful purposes. Their subjects could assemble to demand the expulsion of Jews, or associate to liquidate "kulaks" without any trouble. But of what use is such a "freedom" to me? If "the law" is to be more to me than myself, then this "freedom" is a mere mockery. To be of any value it must include the freedom to bring into question the law itself, and to repudiate it if it is found wanting.

A similar stricture applies to another of their "freedoms" which allows me to withdraw my labour "other than contrary to the public safety". This formulation is nothing more than a carte blanche for those in power to condemn any and every strike which appears to threaten their interests. The question of who are "the public" and by what criteria their "safety" is to be assessed is, of course, ignored. This is not surprising, since any proper analysis would show that "the public" is simply a verbal abstraction disguising the existence of warring interests, and that its "safety" is the safety of whatever group happens to be dominant at any given moment. Placed as I am near the bottom of the social pyramid I have a sneaking suspicion that what I consider to be my safety and what is considered by those at the top of the social pyramid to be "the public safety" will rarely coincide. And I state this not out of any belief in the superior virtues of "the workers" compared to those of "the capitalists", but simply because such a situation has been, is, and is likely to be, the reality of any society composed of human beings.

I do not propose to consider the other "rights" and "freedoms" they propose that seem to me to be against my "right" and "freedom", except to point out that "freedom...from oppressive, unnecessary or confiscatory taxation" is another piece of question begging. They do not define "oppressive" or "unnecessary", nor explain just what sort of tax there can be that is not confiscatory.

Of course such "rights and liberties" are subject to "amendment" by "the entire electorate" which means they are not worth the paper they are printed on. What "freedom" can I exercise if I am to be at the mercy of what Ibsen called "the damned, compact majority"? I do not accept the authority of the "sovereign electorate" any more than the authority of the "divine king". You may shower upon me as many "rights" and "liberties" as you please, such freedoms as I do have derive not from any notion of "right", but solely from my "might". Only when I have the power to determine my own life am I "free".

The Freedom Association pretend to be upholding the individual against collectivism. What their Charter of Rights and Liberties offers, however, has nothing in common with real individualism except a few verbal similarities. What they propose amounts to nothing more than yet another plea for Authority. Constitutional reformers they may be. Individualists they are not.

S.E.PARKER

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Man is already weak at the moment he searches for laws and rules according to which he shall think and act.

Rudolf Steiner

"A LA BASTILLE!..." AN INDIVIDUALIST LOOKS AT THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

In 1789, in France, there was a proper "crisis". Things were not going on to the satisfaction of the people for many reasons, and the rulers of that particular time and country had to face a problem: How to keep the people quiet and law abiding!...How to prevent an always impending uprising! A similar case now (1930) exists in India and the same failure is bound to start the conflagration.

Of the French Revolution we know that besides the economic crisis, new rights had been discovered, the Rights of Man, and this was handy as new reasons to give, but how tricky were those rights we may realize when we see that they were just used to enslave men again in a new constitutional way. Again we witness a similar case in our own time when the socialistic schools propose us new slogans: The Rule of the Workers...Workers of the World Unite...One For All and All For One, and a host of others.

"Bastille" means Stronghold, or Fortress, and the historic Bastille was used as a State prison from the time of Louis XIV to the time of Louis XVI, a fact that explains the hatred of the people for the Feudal building, and why they thought at once of destroying it. Of course, removing the Bastille was not suppressing the abuses and injustices, but men are so, they like to smash the furniture when they are tyrannized at home.

On the fourteenth of July, 1789, the people grew suddenly excited, and one of the crowd started shouting "A la Bastille!" Something like one shouting in a New York crowd, "to the Tombs!" when excitement in New York may reach the pitch it did in the Paris of 1789.

And the good people of Paris, looking for some new way of smashing furniture to express their discontent with their masters, went as a single man to the Bastille.

But it was a big job, and it proved to be no ordinary smashing.

Now this particular uprising, or riot, was almost fortuitous, although determined beforehand by the political state and many attending circumstances. Let us consider a moment the nature of the political or revolutionary agitation in France at that time.

In Versailles, where the king of France resided, there was a general convention or congress discussing the various matters connected with the new needs of the country. The Third Estate, which was representing what they claimed to be the "People", was struggling against the other two Estates, the Nobility and the Clergy. We remember the claim of the Third Estate which was condensed in a short pamphlet: What is the Third Estate? The People! What have they been so far? Nothing! What do they want to be? Everything!

These slogans, no doubt, were effective, just as our new slogans about the workers and their future ruling. That is the way to make the people stir. As a rule it is always the people who undertake the genuine fighting, although the result has always degenerated into a new form of oppression. And it seems that it will always be the same as long as there is a misguided sense of solidarity in the people's mind, or so long as there is a "soul of the crowd".

Thus, to return to our description of that curious agitation! The Third Estate was being double-crossed in Versailles and bullied by the king and his supporters; and the people of Paris, only a few miles away, resented it.

We complain of unemployment in our own time. We ought to consider the past history of our race and see the terrible state our forefathers were in. It seems that there was, indeed, very little to do in the capital of France in that particular year and day, and very little to eat. So, no wonder that when those discussions were going on in Versailles between the three classes or estates on the 12th., 13th. and 14th. of July, the people were congregated in the streets and busy discussing, too.

An agitator yelled, "A la Bastille" and the people readily responded - they had nothing better to do. Another agitator became practical and gave the advice that there were guns and cannons to be had at 'the Invalides'. They went there, and little resistance being offered to such a big crowd, they were soon armed after the manner of the time. Forks, spears, guns, swords, crowbars, and many kinds of improvised weapons.

We spoke of the Bastille as a state prison and if we dig carefully in history we will soon discover that it was far from being a frightful dungeon as it is currently believed. It was not an ordinary jail and the prisoners were almost exclusively aristocrats of the best blood, or persons of good standing: writers, financiers, rebellious priests, politicians, and so on. There were, at the time, very few inmates and it was not for their sake that the Bastille was destroyed.

The destruction of the Bastille was on the programme of the politicians just as in this city they may ask the demolition of the 6th. Avenue Elevated or the modification of the 18th Amendment, or of some other nuisance. Abuses had been committed with the "lettres de cachet" when they used to arrest a man secretly and keep him in the Bastille as long as they chose. A certain half wit was kept 35 years in that manner, he was still living at the time of the Revolution and they gave him a pension. In 1789 the Bastille's time was over. Torture had been recently abolished, the king had freed his serfs, the "lettre de cachet" privilege had been broken, but the name remained, the Bastille fell too late!

To tell the truth, the best reason that was given to the people to stimulate them to run to the Bastille, was that cannons were fixed on the top of the fortress and were pointed towards the city. The people wanted to make sure that they were not going to go off and shoot them: for this purpose they sent a deputy to enquire from the governor. The deputy went in, was received, but did not come out quick enough. An unknown voice yelled that they were torturing the deputy and then things began to happen.

Never would the people have been able to take the Bastille under other circumstances. But then the government was weakened, the army was parading somewhere else, and the police were otherwise engaged.

We know what happened: The people murdered the soldiers because they were all foreigners, but chiefly because they defended themselves, and the Bastille was a heap of ruins after a few hours of madness. Just the starting event of a big revolution! A turn of history when man was given an opportunity to show his violence and believe in his strength. This happens to horses sometimes, to camels, even to sheep when they have had enough suffering and ill treatment, they go mad and bite.

In the Bastille day we find a terrible lesson besides a great joke. The joke is on us when we take the trouble to consider how the bourgeois class selected this particular day of all days as their independence day! But the lesson is greater still if we happen to realize all that

is contained in the word "people", the people! The rage of the oppressed together with the ignorance of the slave.....The terrible strength of a great power and the uselessness of mob action, yet full of meaning and consequences.

Now we may contemplate the future "prise de la Bastille", the future taking of the modern Bastilles....No doubt similar events will take place, and with similar results. The mass is just a social force to be used by its leaders as any other natural force, and really there is little difference between the disgusting crowd who lately destroyed a court house in Texas to burn a poor black fellow, and the crowd who pulled down the Bastille on the fourteenth of July, 1789, in Paris. The people may have a "soul", as our psychologists say, but it is not by the manifestations of such a soul that we will be saved.

The people cannot be right, the people have never been right, neither a Fascist crowd nor a Soviet herd will help us in our work of emancipation. The people will never understand the individual and will always be ready to crush him, to lynch him, as it always has before and since Socrates and Galileo. And we may here repeat with one who was not of the crowd: "The liberty of the people is not my liberty."

E. BERTRAN

(This article was first published in *The Road To Freedom*, New York, July, 1930)

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REVIEWS

(Kaleidoscope De L'Homme Libre by Marcel Renoulet. Cercle D'Etudes Psychologiques, B.P. 282 - 42006, St. Etienne, France, 1978.)

The French quarterly review L'Homme Libre, founded and edited by Marcel Renoulet, has been going for some 30 years. It professes to be "a forum for men of good will" (not for advocates of terrorism, concentration camps, or suchlike barbarities), and it offers its readers "psychological medicine" - the exposure and destruction of all "idols, myths and illusions", all "concepts of class, race, ideology, etc.", and "all the influences and suggestions of propaganda". The first half of this booklet comprises 17 short pieces by M. Renoulet, mostly editorials from L'Homme Libre, and is entitled "In Quest of a Liberating Psychology". It dispenses some of that "psychological medicine", and gives an idea of the author's position as a non-violent "integralist individualist anarchist".

In M. Renoulet's view the outlook for the world is bleak. He denounces "the present tendency of the masses towards a levelling and totalitarian collectivism" and towards "the obliteration of the individual". The masses are stupid, "capable of believing every absurdity", while "the psychological level of most people represents the mental age of a child of about twelve". The masses are manipulated, not by their ostensible rulers, but by the "hidden masters" of international high finance, who "pull the strings of political groups, of sects, religions, and governments" both in the west and east. These "hidden masters" dream of world domination, and their strategy is to cause economic crises, social breakdown, and eventually a third world war, so that in the ensuing chaos they can seize everything and establish a totalitarian world order, a "veritable hyper-capitalism".

But all is not lost. It is still open to the individual to make

"an effort of clarity" - to learn about his own psyche and the way it has been manipulated. "No person, no system, no method can really free the individual, since reality can only be grasped through the knowledge and understanding of oneself: it is from this knowledge that individuality springs." The clarity of self-knowledge destroys the influence of social conditioning, and produces a state of "cosmic consciousness". Thus freed, the individual "finds a solution in a total disengagement, in a permanent and generalized conscientious objection in the face of the propaganda of States and ideologies". True, only a few are capable of so liberating themselves, but their clarity will bring about a change in the rest: "it is always minorities who have opened the door to progress". Thus the ideological divisions and conflicts fomented by the "hidden masters" will come to an end, and we shall see a "reintegration" of mankind, accomplished without

violence. *Unchecked promises, of which most people are unaware, like territorialist & collective responsibility notions, have more influence on the minds & actions of most people than*

That will be too utopian for individualist anarchists of the "permanent protest" school. But while condemning "the utopian delirium of young activists who, under the cover of the black flag, behave like the worst imperialists", M. Renoulet insists on imagining "a more just and humane society", wherein the State will be abolished and replaced by "the organization of communes, of ethnic and economic regions, in a utilitarian and libertarian federalist union". Here his three watch-words are "co-operation", "mutualism", and "syndicalism". Those terms are never fully explained, but clearly there is no compulsion: "each individual becoming a centre of harmony, all authority, all government will become unnecessary". Each will be guided by the realization, born of self-knowledge, that "one carries in oneself one's own sanctions (the Law of Karma)...misery and happiness are the daily consequences of our own actions."

To some followers of Max Stirner, "permanent and generalized conscientious objection" may sound moralistic, and "cosmic consciousness" holistic and mystical (in the bad sense). Such impressions would be wrong. M. Renoulet's man of cosmic consciousness is "sovereign over himself and his actions", and "has no need for codes of morals, or the customary trappings of religion". M. Renoulet has seen that it is possible to be totally free, psychologically, and yet to have a great sense of responsibility for the world. On that vital point he agrees with Krishnakurti, whom he has obviously read with some attention; and whatever reservations I would make on other, less important points, I can only say "bravo" to that.

The second half of this booklet, however, is very different. Entitled "The Lessons of Human History" it consists of "extracts" (from material gathered by the Cercle D'Etudes Psychologiques) "presented by Yann Le Tournier". History, we are told, has been falsified. "Establishment" historians concentrate only on the last 2500 years, ignoring more enlightened forms of culture in previous millennia. In particular, they ignore the world empire (8000-3250 BC) of the Celtic warrior-sage Rama (of the Hindu epic Ramayana), an affair of decentralized communes based on "true religion". Absolute non-violence and a form of authority based on wisdom, not power, were important features of this culture. The supreme wisdom of Rama has been handed down secretly through the ages (Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster and others were the missionaries of a secret Ramidic university in the Himalayas). It is now mediated by a "High Council" of twelve persons who "know the ultimate point this world will reach in its evolution" and were contacted by a certain "master" in Istanbul in 1966. Above them are yet higher "Beings"...

I am not very convinced! In any case, surely, if all depends on

individual psychological self-liberation (as I wholeheartedly agree it does), then history is relatively unimportant, and the last thing we need is the psychological authority of so-called sages and esoteric masters.

FRANCIS ELLINGHAM

11.5.79

(Max Stirner: Etudes, documentes reunis and presentes par Diederick Dettmeyer. Cahiers de Philosophie - L'Age d'Homme. Editions L'Age d'Homme. S.A. Lausanne (Switzerland) F88)

I always have mixed feelings when confronted by academic studies of Max Stirner. On the one hand, they often provide useful background material for his life and ideas. On the other hand, I fear that their proliferation is likely to bury their subject under such a weight of verbiage that he will become a "classic": frequently referred to but seldom read and even less understood.

Again, those who approach Stirner through such studies are likely ^(to) be confused by the way they contradict each other. Who, for example, reading R.W.K. Paterson's "The Egoistic Nihilist: Max Stirner" would recognize the Stirner portrayed there as the same person who featured in John Carroll's "Break Out From The Crystal Palace"? Some of the most interesting "Stirnerians" I have met have taken their Stirner neat without needing academic dilutions, or, indeed, being aware that such things existed.

Keeping these reservations in mind, I think that readers of this review who know French will find the material assembled by Mr. Dettmeyer of considerable interest. In this well-designed, although awkwardly sized, volume, can be found contributions from a number of diverse "specialists" on Stirner, plus French translations of two of Stirner's early essays and of Feuerbach's reply to Stirner.

In a review of this sort it is not possible to give the detailed consideration that such a book deserves - even if my knowledge of the French language warranted it, which it does not. I will state, however, that from a Stirnerian viewpoint the great disagreement would be focussed on such contributors as Martin Bubor, Hans G. Helms and Daniel Guerin. Indeed, the last named repeats his lament that Stirner did not "find a perfect synthesis between the individual and society" which he first sounded in his book on anarchism in 1965. To this he adds the astonishing comment that Proudhon, whom Stirner despised, and Bakunin, who advocated the annihilation of the individual, completed the work that Stirner began! *Proudhon spoke at least concretely enough to advocate free contracts for all individuals, in all spheres, - which would lead to anarchism. J.E. 21.8.77.*

The book also contains a few illustrations - one of which is Engels' famous sketch of Stirner and his colleagues of "The Free" and another a beautifully apt and untitled photograph of a tramcar bearing the destination sign: "St. Marx".

S.E.P.

(Feuerbach, Marx and The Left Hegelians. The Philosophical Forum. A Triple Issue. Volume VIII, Nos. 2-4. Box 247, Boston University Station, Boston, Mass. 02215, USA. \$8.50.)

This triple issue of The Philosophical Forum will be of interest to readers of MINUS ONE for the material it features on or by Max Stirner.

Above all, it contains the first English translation of the controversy between Feuerbach and Stirner over the latter's *The Ego and His Own*. The translator, Fredrick M. Gordon, not only provides an introduction ably summarizing the controversy, but also contributes an essay on *The Contradictory Nature of Feuerbach's Humanism* which supplements Stirner's critique.

The controversy itself confirms James L. Walker's comment that Stirner's early critics "nearly all display the most astonishing triviality and impotent malice". Feuerbach often resorts to the kind of clumsy sarcasm that was later deployed to a frenetic extent by those over-rated peddlers of social mystifications, Messrs. Marx and Engels. An example of this is his attack on Stirner's statement "I am more than Man". To this Feuerbach counters: "But are you more than a male?" and concludes "What else is your unique, incomparable, your consequently sexless I than an undigested residue of old Christian supernaturalism?"

Stirner replies by pointing out that "Humanity and masculinity do not express you exhaustively and it can therefore be a matter of indifference to you what is presented to you as 'true humanity' or 'true masculinity'". It was not enough, he continues, for Feuerbach to be merely male in order to write *The Essence of Christianity*. It was because he was this unique Feuerbach that he was able to write this particular book, because, in other words, he was "more than masculine". To Walker's comment could also be added a supplement that Stirner's critics, in their rush to attack the notion of the Unique, display a most astonishing desire to devalue themselves.

Hildebrandt?

Of course, given a collection of academics such as this, learned nonsense is sure to appear. This is the case regarding one of the pieces about Stirner: a letter written in 1882 by Edgar Bauer to John Henry Mackay's friend Max Hildebrandt. In it is an anecdote that Stirner, having once seen his first wife naked, became "averse" to her. On this slight and unconfirmed basis, Hans-Martin Sass rests his comment "As to any psychoanalytic interpretation of Stirner or anarchism in general, the information contained in this letter regarding Stirner's sexual life is certainly of interest!!"

Now this shattering information concerning Stirner's "sexual life" is contained in two sentences in a reminiscence written almost thirty years after his death. It is, furthermore, a reminiscence that is wrong about Stirner's place of birth, the date of his first marriage, the occupation of his first wife, his academic qualifications and the age at which he died! Not only this, but Bauer manages to say within a few lines that *The Ego and His Own* "is immortal, as valid today as it was forty years ago" and "that it is much too unworldly" and "given to transitory, illusory and negative things"!

How, in such an erroneous and confused account, one can hope to find material for a "psychoanalytic interpretation, I cannot understand, even supposing, which I deny, that one can "psychoanalyze" the dead. As for "psychoanalyzing" "anarchism in general", since when has it been possible to put a theory on an analyst's couch? It is nonsense such as this that makes "anti-intellectualism" such an enticing prospect...

There is much else in this interesting publication on which I would like to comment if I had the space. I would like, however, to particularly recommend Henri Arvon's essay on the effects of the criticism of Bruno Bauer and Stirner upon Marx's "epistemology". I would also like to deplore the omission of the English translation of Stirner's *The False Principle Of Our Education*, published by Ralph Kyles in 1967, from the bibliography compiled by Michael Levi.

S.E.P.

(Libertarian Broadside No 7: Selected Essays by Laurence Labadie. Introduction and appendices by James J. Martin. \$1.50. No 8: Uncivil Liberty by Ezra Heywood. Introduction by James J. Martin. \$1.00. Ralph Myles Publisher Inc, Box 1533, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901, USA)

When Benjamin Tucker left the USA in 1908 and went into self-imposed exile in Europe, propaganda for his brand of anarchist mutualism did not cease. Articulate associates such as Clarence Lee Swartz, John Beverley Robinson, E.H. Fulton, Joseph A. Labadie and others kept up the work he had begun over thirty years before. By the 1930s, however, old age, death, or disillusionment had silenced them. They had no successor - except one: Laurence Labadie (1898-1975), the son of Joseph.

A self-taught industrial worker, Laurence Labadie issued a series of pamphlets and leaflets which he printed on the small hand press he had inherited from his father. In addition, he occasionally managed to get articles published in such libertarian publications as *Man*, *Resistance*, *A Way Out* and *The Indian Libertarian*. Towards the end of his life he even made the columns of a university publication called the *Journal of Human Relations* - a somewhat ironic event in view of his often expressed scorn for academics.

Like other Tuckerians, Labadie was a firm believer in the mutualist economics promulgated by Proudhon and Wm. B. Greene. Communism, even of the "anarcho" variety, he regarded as a species of infantilism. The only economy worthy of free individuals was, he thought, one in which private property and free competition prevailed: "When all forms of private property are abolished, exchange hampered or prohibited, competition wiped out, and money forbidden, the liberty and independence of the individual is gone, and there remains a tyranny as totalitarian and despotic as can be imagined." (Reflections on Socio-Economic Evolution)

Economic exploitation did not come from private property, but from monopolies created by the State. The three main forms assumed by these monopolies were: "the control of the circulating medium - money and credit, private property in land not based on occupancy and use, patent rights and copyrights, and tariffs." (Anarchism Applied to Economics). Abolish the State, establish freedom of credit and competition and an anarchist society would result.

Such a society would not, however, be equalitarian, for Labadie regarded inequality of ability as inevitable and any attempt to artificially produce equality as tantamount to authoritarianism. The only "equality" he saw as both possible and desirable was "equality of opportunity". He subscribed to Proudhon's view that communist egalitarianism might well do away with the exploitation of the weak by the strong, but only in order to substitute the exploitation of the strong by the weak.

Laurence Labadie was a little-known figure during his lifetime. This first collection of selected essays, edited by his friend James J. Martin, should serve as a means of introducing a wider public to this pungent and provocative advocate of anarchy. Dr Martin also contributes a fascinating memoir of Labadie, together with one of their mutual friends, Agnes Inglis, for many years curator of the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan.

Ezra Heywood's *Uncivil Liberty*, first published in 1873, has a certain curiosity value as an example of an early tract advocating women's suffrage and equality of legal rights. However, its overblown

rhetorical style, heavily charged with appeals to abstract and unverifiable principles, its irrational moral meanderings which almost qualify the author as the Mary Whitehouse of "free love" (at one point he denounces women who have abortions as "perverted"), do not endear it to this reviewer.....

S.E.P.

The above review first appeared in Freedom for June 30, 1979)

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FILM REVIEW

Daisy Miller and The Europeans.

The much publicised "The Europeans" is still running at The Curzon Cinema, London. "Daisy Miller" was shown for three days at The Everyman Cinema early last year. Its arrival was not attended by the bally-hoo that surrounded the opening of "The Europeans" and its going was quiet and hardly noticed, but it was a film for which I cannot find words superlative enough to describe. There did not seem to be a flaw in it. Sybil Shepherd, who played the title role, created a scatterbrained beauty aware of, but unable to express, her deeper nature. While staying at the same hotel in Switzerland, a rich young American falls in love with her. He is unable to see through her poses, disguises and apparently empty chatter; his infatuation blinds him to her true predicament. Tragedy ensues. It is filmed in colour as perfect as a dream. The rest of the cast are excellent. It is the best interpretation of a Henry James novel I have so far seen. See it - if it ever comes your way.

As for "The Europeans", it could be compared to the audience on the night I attended: ostentatious and pseudo. There is little subtlety or complexity here. It is wishy-washy and slow, With the exception of Tim Woodward, the actors are on the whole unrelated to a Henry James novel. Lee Remick, for whom it was meant to be a vehicle, gives a performance which can only be described as silly and frivolous with no deeper undertones in this case. Slack where it should be taut. Vague where it should be subtle. With as much atmosphere as a laundry on a Monday morning. If you haven't seen it so far give it a miss - unless you've money to spare and nothing better to do with your time.

MEANDA

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