

# Éditions de la Roue

*Documents relevant to this new publishing house, run by Miguel Amoros, Michel Gomez, Marie-Christine Le-Borgne and Bernard Pecheur, and located at La Taillade, 111509 Villasavary.*<sup>1</sup>

## Why Éditions de la Roue?

“The time has come to restore the image of illusions.” Georges Henein,<sup>2</sup> *Le Prestige de la Terreur*, 8 August 1945.

Straight off let us say that, without being animated by any primitivism or any belief in an improbable Golden Age, we want to speak from the past to the present by inventorying, in its different moments, all that could favor a resurgence of practical critique today: language, memory, behavior, know-how, all that could constitute a basis for support for the revolution and irrigate everyday life anew. No doubt partially and in a clandestine manner, but it is in the course of the catastrophe that what saves us from the worst and preserves freedom comes out: for those who refuse to go blindly towards a pre-determined outcome, there are still several byways to explore.

But also because, in the Marseille tarot deck, the Wheel of Fortune, the card of the cyclical change of perspective, is the one that means, to quote Zamyatin,<sup>3</sup> “there is no final revolution: revolutions are infinite.” On this tenth mystery, there figures, as the ascending phase, a dog with a collar, the sign of submission; at the summit, a crowned sphinx, the sign of accomplishment; and, as the descending phase, a monkey symbolizing decadence. It comes before the Hermit (mystery IX), the “carrier of light,” the one who has brought knowledge intended to be used wisely. In an era of generalized superstition in which many human victims are sacrificed to the gods of progress, and in which terror seems to become the ordinary means by which power is exercised and its prestige becomes the accepted

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by NOT BORED! 18 September 2014. All footnotes by the translator.

<sup>2</sup> Egyptian surrealist (1914-1973).

<sup>3</sup> Russian born writer (1884-1937), primarily known as the author of *We* (1921).

explication of its success, it seems useful to us to recall that, among the means by which human beings can try to master their destinies, there are some that are less offensive and more amiable than atomics, GMOs and nanoparticles. Far from restraining people's inventiveness and extinguishing their insatiable curiosity, these ancient games of love and chance enrich them and make them *individuals*, which is the preliminary to any collective organization that can be mastered by each of its participants, while the irrational pretension to a mastery of necrotechnology reduces life to a trip between an open prison and a well-equipped collective grave.

Deprived of practical use, nostalgia doesn't hesitate to make nostalgic people resemble amputees: the seat of their sadness is in what they have lost and will never return. Moreover, many of those who instinctively refuse the march towards the abyss are in no position to discern its causes and can only reject it absolutely, but this refuge in the absolute is not a position of conquest, but at most a desperate reflex. What we mean by "anti-industrial perspectives" will thus be, in the first instance, knowledge of the moments of history in which, humanly and materially, split-offs have been possible and have thrown themselves into open conflict, but also discussion and combat in order to restore the truth to the present. We cannot resuscitate the past, but desertion – which is a mental thing at first – must, in its refusal of an established future, reinvent the atmosphere as a prelude to a complete disintoxication.

"Everywhere that the seasons are marked by festivals and ceremonies; everywhere that the periods of life are punctuated by family and community rituals; everywhere that eating, drinking and sexual games constitute the kernel of existence; everywhere that work, even if difficult, is rarely separated from rhythm, from song, from human company and aesthetic pleasure; everywhere that vital activity is counted as a much greater compensation for labor than its product; everywhere that neither power nor profit has the upper hand over life; everywhere that the family, the neighborhood and the friend are all part of a visible, tangible, face-to-face community; everywhere that each person, whether man or woman, can accomplish any task as well as anyone else – there Neolithic civilization exists in its essential characteristics, even if one makes use of iron tools or a broken-down truck to bring goods to market" (Lewis Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine*). This "everywhere" that is nowhere in our lands and that, despite all its limitations, allows us to confront the giddiness of freedom, is our closest horizon.

Miguel Amoros, *The Situationists and Anarchy*  
Published March 2012, 192 pages  
ISBN 978-2-9541154-0-5

“Forty years after May 68, it is still necessary to do research into this important historical moment in order to try to understand the way in which a malaise that was at first felt in the artistic avant-gardes was able to transform itself into a resounding social explosion that shook the foundations of the West.” (Extract from the back cover of the Spanish edition,<sup>4</sup> published in May 2008.)

It was in the 1960s that youth was placed at the foreground as a new social strata, the privileged recipient of promises of development. At the same time, the youth perceived the qualitative poverty of these promises and thus recognized itself as a receptacle of dissatisfaction. By deepening, this dissatisfaction could not fail to unleash a veritable crisis.

In this process, protest began to speak a new language and to promote behavior and agitation that were scandalous in the eyes of the dominant order – all this greatly influenced by a small group that came from the artistic avant-garde: the Situationist International.

In the context of subterranean effervescence, some groups of young anarchists that formed by confusedly trying to recapture life, found in the originality, radicalism and style of situationist theses (which were biting and topical to anarchist critique) something to nourish new reasons for their libertarian aspirations.

This completely unsettled the intolerance of the “leaders” of fossilized anarchist ideology (cf. the crisis of the Anarchist Federation in 1966) as much as the sectarianism of the ultra-leftist or libertarian groups of the time (cf. the [SI’s] tumultuous relations with the I.C.O., for example).

For this reason, some situationist initiatives to build upon the bonds with other radical expressions stumbled over insurmountable prejudices, which even limited the extension of revolutionary propositions that were formulated with the explicit goal of being realized.

The author, relying upon his study of an important mass of documents, letters (some unpublished), pamphlets and critical editions, as well as on direct conversations with some of the protagonists, paints the most complete picture to

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<sup>4</sup> In March 2012, Editions de la Roue published a French translation of this book.

date of the relationships between the libertarian universe and the SI before and up to the revolt of May 68.

At first glance, what is striking in this book is the extraordinary richness of the “revolts” of the 1960s and their essentially libertarian content; as a result, one better understands how the SI, which possessed very weak means but much intelligence, succeeded, “through its ideas,” in greatly influencing the project of the social revolution possible at the time: the work of dis-alienation had already been started by the alienated people themselves. But we also touch upon another important point made in the book: the American fiasco. In this context, the author provides us with many elements that allow the reader to reflect upon the “nature” of the SI’s organizational failure in the United States and in England.

In the postface to the English edition of *On the Poverty of Student Life*, the English section of the SI wrote,

Until now, the social position of situationist thought has been determined by the following contradiction: the most highly developed critique of modern life was produced in the modern world’s least highly developed country [...] In the French context, situationist theory has marched ahead of the social forces by which it will be realized. In the highly developed countries, the inverse has taken place: the forces of the revolt exist, but without revolutionary perspectives.

This lucid observation about the paradox of the situation already puts the manner of organizing the SI into question. Because if it is always possible – but not desirable – that a limited group of theoreticians can “produce” unimplemented [*manquantes*] revolutionary “perspectives,” then it is improbable that, by this avant-garde practice, already-existing “forces of revolt” will be able to appropriate them. “Something else” would be necessary: this was not the SI’s choice.

Now that the aggravated passivity of the highly developed countries has become the basis of our present, this “something else” remains to be invented or reinvented faced with the always-present enemies of the “good old cause.”

*Government Through Fear in the Time of Catastrophe:  
Anti-Industrial Reflections on the Possibilities for Resistance*

Published March 2013, 176 pages  
ISBN 978-2-9541154-1-2

In its first part, this book studies the nature of the contemporary system of domination, which is marked by the new and preponderant role of the State, and establishes a strong correlation between the defense of the idea of progress and justifications for servitude. Faced with current reality and the perspectives that it sketches out, this text examines the forms of struggle that could resist submission and the requirements for the defense of territory, considered as the result of the spatial-temporal relationships created between a human group and its environment. This text conceives of such defense as the putting into play of the antidote to despair that is contained in a fundamental reflection by Lewis Mumford: “The megamachine is an elephant that fears the smallest mouse.”

In the second part, the publication of several contemporary texts illustrates that nothing is impossible, but also that everything remains to be done in the anti-industrial perspective, which is the only one that can avoid the reproduction of the separations at work in this society, and the reprinting of several post-Chernobyl, anti-nuclear power texts shows that, if the struggle against the nuclearization of the world<sup>5</sup> has regressed, this is no mystery: the Party of the State, which includes the ecolocrats,<sup>6</sup> has already divulged to us the essential of its lies, methods and projects. There is, in this, a strange and fatal blindness in not keeping in mind [the likeliness of] a subsequent catastrophe. Salutary resistance and rejection are anchored in the “superstition of freedom” that has survived the religions, the ideologies, the modern spectacle and all the outrages of the times.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jaime Semprun, *La Nucléarisation du monde*, published in March 1980 by Editions de L'Assommoir and reprinted by Editions Gerard Lebovici in 1986.

<sup>6</sup> Ecological bureaucrats.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. the letters from Jean-Pierre Baudet to Guy Debord dated 21 August 1987 <http://www.notbored.org/baudet-21August1987.html> and from Jean-Francois Martos to Guy Debord dated 25 February 1988 <http://www.notbored.org/martos-25February1988.html>.

*The Lamp Outside of the Hourglass:  
Elements of Anti-Industrial Critique*

Published April 2014, 128 pages  
ISBN 978-2-9541154-2-9

Text on back cover:

The Glorious Sixties of Consumption destroyed many material realities, mental and natural, that protected the individual from spectacular machinery. Urban extension killed the town and dried up working-class culture, which no longer has a territory to create itself, renew itself or find its vernacular language. The class consciousness of which it constituted the backdrop, with its deconditioned reflexes, could not *a priori* get away unscathed and its vampirization by narcissistic mass culture leaves each person orphaned from a universe of resistance.

To fill this lack, the riches of the past will not be enough if they are not regenerated and reinvented in the struggles of the present. It is here and now, in the course of the collapse, that a period of transition begins, one in which it is vital to paint in great strokes the backdrop of the reclamation of life, the inventorying of the material and intellectuals means that could serve something other than the perpetuation of domination and thus dispossession. Direct democracy is the collective means of this inventorying and the defense of territory is the means of its materialization.

A society without classes and masses creates the beautiful, the good and the useful, establishes the rules for veritable way of knowing how to live on the Earth, and knows how to ally the libertarian project of the anti-capitalist critique of the Twentieth Century – *all for all and by all* – with the precautionary, anti-totalitarian and thus anti-ecological wisdom of the Neolithic period – *enough, it is too much* – that Lewis Mumford erected into a principle for the future: anti-industrial critique has no other horizon.

Preface:

In *La Lampe dans l'horloge*,<sup>8</sup> André Breton wrote in 1948: “The end of the world isn’t ours.” Since then, the Pacific Ocean has welcomed into its waters thousands of millions of Becquerels of radiation coming from Fukushima and – this is the height of outrageousness – sufficient sand is lacking to measure the pace of its progress. The lamp is no longer in the hourglass; lucidity must be used, and language chattering about dispossession can be combatted. As a result, territory will not only be a non-place either overpopulated or turned into a desert by its management and regulated survival, but also the *habitat* of the critique-in-acts of hydroponic everyday life; direct democracy will not be a technique of government, but the living processes of the self-education of a new historical subject, while today revolutions are born and die *in* mass society: to get out of it, everything must be reinvented.

In this perspective, the three texts that make up this collection represent an outline of what we can expect from a federation of individual forces: the complicity that leads towards the affirmation of shared conclusions that, by borrowing singular routes that are always oriented by an attachment to freedom, put into question certain aims, such as the means of the dominant social critique. The few considerations that they put forth concerning it will not be, it seems to us, the most negligible criteria of their pertinence.

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<sup>8</sup> *The Lamp in the Hourglass*.

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