

BLACK ROSE

VOLUME 1 - NUMBER 1 - SPRING 79

CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR	2
THE ANARCHIST AESTHETIC	
Michael Scrivener	7
POEM	
Stephen Jonas	22
NEITHER GOD NOR MASTER:	
An Interview with Juan Goytisolo	24
POEM	
Bill Costley	40
REVIEWS	
Avrich: <i>An American Anarchist</i>	
<i>The Life of Voltairine de Cleyre</i>	
Marian Leighton	41
Schechter: <i>The Politics of Urban Liberation</i>	
Stephen Amberg	45
LAST WRITES	
John Hess	51

Qui nos rodunt, confudantor . . .

It is perhaps bad form to begin a new magazine with an apology, but as coordinating editor for this issue of Black Rose it is my duty to so begin. We had hoped to have a group statement to serve as an introduction to the magazine. After several futile attempts we gave up, and decided instead to have the coordinating editor for each issue (it is a revolving position) introduce that issue as he or she sees fit. Thus, although these editor's statements will in a sense reflect the group, since each editor will be obviously a member of the group, in essence each statement will be the personal statement of that particular editor. There will be no group statement. Hence the apology.

But the apology demands an apology. In fact, the series of editor's statement will give the reader a better understanding of the group over time than a group statement would, especially when considered in the context of the type of articles published. The character of the group will become more apparent, which is in many ways more significant than allegiance to a series of stated principles. But this does not mean that the Black Rose group has no previous history, or "prehistory," and that the magazine springs forth full-blown like a conspiracy from the mind of Bakunin. In fact the Black Rose first made its appearance in the States some six or so years ago on the campus of a minor northeastern university to which its founders were then tenuously, but tenaciously, attached. This university connection greatly affected the character of the group at the time, as it was snide and very ideological. As its influence increased, and as more people came to be part of the group, the idea of putting out a magazine was raised. An editorial group was formed and two issues of a magazine called Black Rose were published about four years ago, issues which are now collector's items, before the editorial group parted mutual company.

The Black Rose, however, was always more than the Black Rose. At the time there were de facto two groups with only one or two individuals belonging to both: the magazine group and the nebulous "wider group." This latter was more the "real" Black Rose and continued after the collapse of the first magazine.

The Black Rose, aside from the usual work in the neighborhoods,

unions, and co-ops, made its presence felt in the Boston area, especially in leftist circles, by issuing a number of memorable leaflets, characterized by often unintelligible jargon and precocious, provocative graphics, and by a lively, irreverent spirit. Members also collaborated on a newsletter called Black Circles, which enjoyed a well deserved notoriety in certain obscure circles.

But the group really took on its solid form with the decision to begin the Black Rose Lecture Series, now five years old. At the time the group was greatly dissatisfied with oppositional politics and ideology and wanted to introduce a new voice into the area in a public and accessible way. Not being marxist-hyphens we decided that ideas were very important, and thus initiated what the Real Paper has correctly identified as the "prestigious Black Rose Lecture Series."

The Lecture Series had, and has, as its purpose the introduction of new approaches and ideas to the issues of our age, and a re-examination of past understandings from a relevatory or critical perspective. The group felt, and feels, that it was more important to provoke discourse rather than to take a "line"; to examine and gently exhort rather than dogmatize and berate.

Ideally, the purpose of the Lecture Series will be both broadened and continued in the magazine. In publishing Black Rose we as a group will most likely not take positions, but rather present provocative articles on a variety of topics not normally considered in so-called "political" journals. Indeed, we in no way wish to be like the usual "political" journal. We are not an anarchist, marxist, or socialist organization, though we draw from and are sympathetic to many elements of each of these creeds, because each of these designations are really labels, carrying along with them an intellectual baggage of prefabricated positions and automatic behavior.

The space which ought to be provided by the refusal to be labeled should allow the magazine to approach things in a freer and more exploratory vein. It is nothing to be dissatisfied with contemporary society. It seems almost everyone is and such dissatisfaction is respectable, even allowed for. But more important is the more critical sense of dissatisfaction which brings under scrutiny the more radical critiques of society, especially those critiques inherited from the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century, namely marxism, socialism, and anarchism. These critiques are powerful, exposing failures of society in a merciless and compelling manner. Because they reflect to some degree what actually happens, they

have a powerful hold on our minds and mold our thought in subtle ways, of which one becomes aware only with difficulty. Yet these critiques are flawed and incomplete, as even their more thoughtful adherents will admit, and a current of thought has arisen which seeks to redevelop and recreate a truly radical critique of contemporary society and which recognizes that the old ways of looking at things are possibly the greatest barriers to coming to grips with the problems of our age. It is with this current that I feel the magazine should flow.

Why should we celebrate
The past more than the present?
It is not to ring the bell backward
Nor is it an incantation
To stifle the spectre of a Rose.
We cannot revive old factions
We cannot restore old policies
Or follow an antique drum.
These ideas, and those who opposed them
And those whom they opposed
Accept the constitution of silence
And are folded in a single party
Whatever we inherit from these ancestors
We must take with critical eye
What comes from what they left us? — a symbol:
A Rose that blooms on a grave.

(with apologies to T.S. Eliot)

This current of analysis threatens the usual boundaries of political and social thought. Originally radical political thought sought to overcome a series of tensions and situations in which humanity had trapped itself. It sought to elucidate the interactions between the individual and the institution, the social and the personal, the subjective and the objective, which were part of the root of the highly visible and pressing problems of exploitation and domination. This was done to clarify and elucidate, with the idea that lasting social progress was more likely the deeper the understanding of the problem. Unfortunately the project was never carried through, the elucidation has ended in an obscurantist jargon, and the same divisions continue to haunt the contemporary social edifice.

Political and social thought continues in the main to follow the path of "objective" analysis. Notwithstanding the fact that these analyses and the "objective" approach are valuable, perhaps the most telling insights into the problems and nature of our age are coming from what could be broadly designated as the area of fiction: literature and "the arts" — music, painting, theater, etc. In the words of Shelley:

Poets [fiction in general, editor] are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the acknowledged legislators of the world.

To integrate "objective" analysis with the insights of fiction would be, I feel, an important step in the resolution of the tensions mentioned above, by more accurately identifying the individual as the focal ground in which these distinct but inseparable tensions are located and "resolved."

Such an understanding would also throw new light on the serious problem of freedom and organization, which the industrial age has resolved more and more in the direction of organization. There can be no freedom without social organization, but it is quite another thing to assert that "anarchism is organization" or to spout the usual marxist and liberal platitudes about the need for powerful and active state apparatus. In fact it is questionable to what degree the classical approaches to organization are today viable vehicles for social change.

It might seem from what has been said so far that Black Rose will be another fancy theoretical or literary magazine. Well, Black Rose will contain theory and literature, but we are well aware that the problems of our age are existential ones and that life will always be bigger and different from talk about life. And if you re-read my presentation, I think you will find that it is perhaps an argument, but hardly of the usual leftist or political sort. For one thing I haven't once mentioned alienation, depression, or the proletariat; and for another it is written in generally understandable English. What we hope to provide is a wide variety of approaches and comments on things, and to present things as reasonably and as understandably as we can.

This is not to say that everything we print will be perfectly clear and readily understood, though that is obviously something to strive for. The current within which the magazine flows is far from being settled or fully defined. The attempt to come up with a new social critique will mean a

deal of confusion and uncertainty, and proper forms of expression will be hard won.

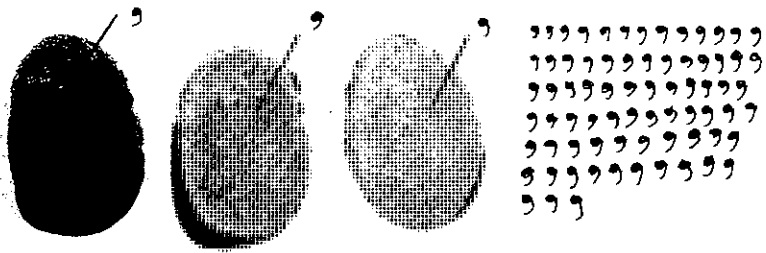
Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish.
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still. Shrieking voices
Scolding, mocking, or merely chattering,
Always assail them.

(with no apologies, Eliot)

A radical critique ought to be always more than a set of principles and theories. It ought to be a way of life and have a flavor of its own, readily identifiable, an *elan*. We are fully aware that we hope to achieve a great deal. And we are fully aware of our own limitations. There are, we feel, a lot of people who, for their own reasons, think and feel somewhat similar to how we think and feel. Ideally, somehow, we hope that Black Rose can become a means of developing that genuine counter-culture which any truly radical critique must be if it is to be a truly radical critique.

These, then, are some of my thoughts about Black Rose. A lot of what I say is in agreement with what the others in the group say; and a lot of it is not. But this disagreement is what will enrich the undertaking, and as long as we can keep our sense of humor and keep widening our contacts and perspectives, it should be alright. We hope you will join us for the ride.

— Huckleberry Hess



The Anarchist Aesthetic

Michael Scrivener

"The form of government that is most suitable to the artist is no government at all." Oscar Wilde

"The anarchist painter is not he who does anarchist paintings but he who without caring for money, without desire for recompense, struggles with all his individuality against bourgeois conventions." Paul Signac

"Musicians can do without government." John Cage

Introduction

Although the phrase "Marxist aesthetic" is far more familiar than "anarchist aesthetic," the connection between anarchism and art has generated a rich diversity of both art and theory. William Godwin, the first anarchist philosopher, was an innovative novelist who influenced Percy Shelley, probably the first anarchist poet. Thoreau, Tolstoy, Octave Mirbeau (French novelist), Gustav Landauer (German novelist and anarchist revolutionary), the French symbolist poets of the 1890s, Pa Chin (Chinese novelist), B. Traven, Paul Goodman, Ursula LeGuin, Philip Levine, and Beck and Malina are some other anarchist writers—poets, novelists, dramatists. There are numerous other writers who have been influenced by anarchism or whose aesthetic theories and practices parallel anarchist ones: William Morris, Oscar Wilde, Eugene O'Neill (who sent Emma Goldman a volume of his plays while she was in prison for anti-war activities), William Blake, Franz Kafka (who was arrested in Prague for attending anarchist meetings), D.H. Lawrence, Henry

Notes

1. The first author I know of to use the phrase, "anarchist aesthetic," is Andre Reszler, *L'esthetique anarchists* (Vendome, 1973). In addition to this and Eugenia Herbert's *The Artist and Social Reform, France and Belgium 1885-1898* (New Haven, 1961), Donald Egbert's *Social Radicalism and the Art* (New York, 1970) also concerns itself with anarchism and the arts. None of these books is written by an anarchist; Ebert's is filled with errors and inexplicable omissions; Reszler's is

deal of confusion and uncertainty, and proper forms of expression will be hard won.

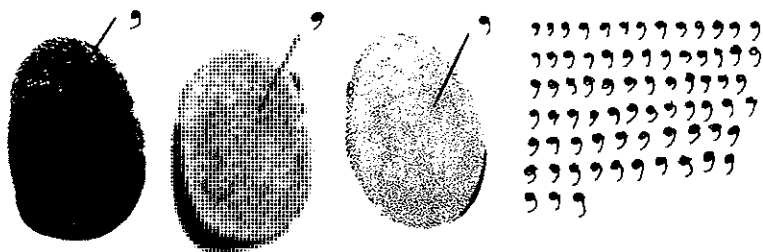
Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish.
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still. Shrieking voices
Scolding, mocking, or merely chattering,
Always assail them.

(with no apologies, Eliot)

A radical critique ought to be always more than a set of principles and theories. It ought to be a way of life and have a flavor of its own, readily identifiable, an *elan*. We are fully aware that we hope to achieve a great deal. And we are fully aware of our own limitations. There are, we feel, a lot of people who, for their own reasons, think and feel somewhat similar to how we think and feel. Ideally, somehow, we hope that Black Rose can become a means of developing that genuine counter-culture which any truly radical critique must be if it is to be a truly radical critique.

These, then, are some of my thoughts about Black Rose. A lot of what I say is in agreement with what the others in the group say; and a lot of it is not. But this disagreement is what will enrich the undertaking, and as long as we can keep our sense of humor and keep widening our contacts and perspectives, it should be alright. We hope you will join us for the ride.

—Huckleberry Hess



The Anarchist Aesthetic

Michael Scrivener

"The form of government that is most suitable to the artist is no government at all." Oscar Wilde

"The anarchist painter is not he who does anarchist paintings but he who without caring for money, without desire for recompense, struggles with all his individuality against bourgeois conventions." Paul Signac

"Musicians can do without government." John Cage

Introduction

Although the phrase "Marxist aesthetic" is far more familiar than "anarchist aesthetic," the connection between anarchism and art has generated a rich diversity of both art and theory. William Godwin, the first anarchist philosopher, was an innovative novelist who influenced Percy Shelley, probably the first anarchist poet. Thoreau, Tolstoy, Octave Mirbeau (French novelist), Gustav Landauer (German novelist and anarchist revolutionary), the French symbolist poets of the 1890s, Pa Chin (Chinese novelist), B. Traven, Paul Goodman, Ursula LeGuin, Philip Levine, and Beck and Malina are some other anarchist writers—poets, novelists, dramatists. There are numerous other writers who have been influenced by anarchism or whose aesthetic theories and practices parallel anarchist ones: William Morris, Oscar Wilde, Eugene O'Neill (who sent Emma Goldman a volume of his plays while she was in prison for anti-war activities), William Blake, Franz Kafka (who was arrested in Prague for attending anarchist meetings), D.H. Lawrence, Henry

Notes

1. The first author I know of to use the phrase, "anarchist aesthetic," is Andre Reszler, *L'esthétique anarchiste* (Vendome, 1973). In addition to this and Eugenia Herbert's *The Artist and Social Reform, France and Belgium 1885-1898* (New Haven, 1961), Donald Egbert's *Social Radicalism and the Art* (New York, 1970) also concerns itself with anarchism and the arts. None of these books is written by an anarchist; Ebert's is filled with errors and inexplicable omissions; Reszler's is

sketchy and Herbert's has a narrow range. A lot of work still needs to be done in this area. Anarchist aesthetic criticism, as distinct from art history, is a much more interesting field. Important authors include: Dwight MacDonald, Kingsley Widmer, Paul Goodman, Herbert Read, Alex Comfort, and Art Efron.

2. See Herbert, above; also, Rennato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Fitzgerald (NY, 1968), p. 99: "the only omnipresent or recurring political ideology within the avant-garde is the least political or the most anti-political of all: libertarianism and anarchism."

3. See Reszler, Chapter III, for the Wagner-Bakunin relationship.

4. Although not an anarchist work as such, or even consistently libertarian, John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (NY, 1934) is richly suggestive of anarchist aesthetic ideas.

Miller, Robert Creeley, the Dada poets, the Surrealist poets, Gary Snyder, Grace Paley, Ibsen, and many others. In painting, sculpture, and the graphic arts anarchism was the dominant influence from the 1880s to the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia.² In music, Bakunin's friend and comrade-in-arms, Richard Wagner, exerted considerable influence on anarchist ideas concerning socially integrated art and revolutionary culture.³ In the twentieth century, however, anarchists have repudiated Wagnerian authoritarianism, so that now John Cage is the representative anarchist in music. With the prevalence of avant-garde art in every field in the twentieth century, from poetry to dance, one could argue that experimental art itself is anarchistic at least in tendency, if not always self-consciously.

Along with anarchist art, there is a rich tradition of anarchist criticism of the arts. From Godwin and the romantic poets to contemporary theorists, the anarchist aesthetic has three major aspects: (1) an uncompromising insistence upon total freedom for the artist, and an avant-garde contempt for conservative art; (2) a critique of elitist, alienated art and a visionary alternative in which art becomes integrated into everyday life; (3) art as social critique—that is, since art is an experience, it is a way to define and redefine human needs, altering socio-political structures accordingly.⁴ I want to analyze each aspect of the anarchist aesthetic with a special emphasis on the tension between artistic autonomy and the social ideal of unalienated art. I also want to suggest ways in which art and aesthetic theory are relevant to contemporary anarchist politics.

The Avant-Garde

For the sake of time and space I will limit myself to literature, even though the other arts are just as important, each one requiring its own avant-garde history. When the word "avant-garde" was coined in 1825 by

Saint-Simon to refer to the artist-engineers he designated to govern the new socialist society, there already existed in England an avant-garde literary movement: romantic poetry. Art is avant-garde which makes radical innovations in either the art's form or content or both.⁵ Both the artist and the audience acknowledge the deviation from the norm so that either the audience changes its expectations to accommodate the new art or the audience rejects the new art in any number of ways: censorship, repression, unpopularity, ridicule, refusing to call it art. The first literary avant-garde appeared in England during a period of extreme social uncertainty, when the political institutions were archaic in relation to the actual social relations.⁶ It was not until the 1830s that the bourgeois institutional apparatus had been fully created for controlling a society shaped by industrial and agricultural capitalism. The destruction of the peasantry by the enclosure movement, the contradiction between the middle class's growing social power and its political disenfranchisement, the emergence of democratic and secular ideas from the Enlightenment and French Revolution, all contributed to making the romantic avant-garde possible. From Blake, Godwin, the early Wordsworth, and Shelley, there came an aesthetic and political ideal of creativity. Blake described social domination and exploitation as effects of the enslaved imagination, whose mind-forged manacles had to be abolished. Blake also attacked the repression of sexuality and feeling, the liberation of which would transform every social institution. Godwin's insistence upon creativity was so stubborn that he deemed oppressive and authoritarian performances of other people's art. Wordsworth's innovation was to situate poetry closer to everyday speech and daily life. And Shelley argued that perception itself was a creative, constitutive activity; therefore, both perception and aesthetic creation involved a radical questioning of established social concepts. Furthermore, Shel-

5. Ortega y Gasset's essay, "The Dehumanization of Art," (1925) has a brilliant theory of the avant-garde which is marred by the author's elitism. He confuses sham democracy with real democracy, the culture industry with participatory art. Ortega would not accept my calling romantic poetry avant-garde, which he dates much later and which he sees as essentially anti-romantic.

6. See E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (NY, 1963).

ley's reliance upon inspiration helped distance poetry from neoclassical technique and placed it closer to experiences accessible to everyone. The particular strain of romanticism I am briefly alluding to here based a radical politics on an aesthetic foundation. To create and perceive in new ways that transcend the established aesthetic norms is to question the legitimacy of the socio-political order which upholds those norms. This radical romanticism was stridently attacked and rejected by the cultural guardians of law and order. While Blake was too uncompromising for the cultural establishment to even bother with, Wordsworth's ideas on poetic diction were ridiculed; Godwin became so unpopular after the 1790s that he had to adopt a pseudonym to continue publishing; Shelley was not just unpopular, but his most radical works were suppressed, censored, and left unpublished in his lifetime. Even John Keats's deliberate aesthetic withdrawal from socio-political concerns did not save the poet from reactionary attacks because his new imagery, as well as his paganism and friendship with Leigh Hunt, placed him in the "Cockney School," as they contemptuously called it. Whether the innovation is in form or content, the avant-garde arouses the same anxiety.

The romantics, however, weakened the effectiveness of their counter-cultural attack in several ways. First, as a defense against their unpopularity and failure in the marketplace, they suggested that the romantic artist was a Genius, whose nature was different from other people's;⁷ this reinforced audience passivity and mystified the concept of artistic creation. Second, so troubled were the romantics over their unpopularity that some became politically conservative (like Wordsworth and Coleridge), while others posited poetry as a special form of wisdom that could be acquired only under special conditions, thus excluding almost everyone except a privileged coterie. The romantics did not understand fully the avant-garde nature of their art and often merely

7. Raymond Williams, "The Romantic Artist," in *Culture and Society* (NY, 1958), analyzes the social dimensions of the romantic theories.

elevated it above what they perceived as popular art. Even though the romantics were the first avant-gardists, they also formulated ideas which would domesticate the avant-garde and integrate it into the established culture in the form of "high art."

The cult of the Genius came to a romantic culmination with Wagner, who wanted singlehandedly to create a new culture. Late-romantic sentimentality, flamboyance, and hero-worship of charismatic artists, like Liszt, carried to logical extremes audience passivity and mystified art. The cult of the Genius effectively undermined the idea of participatory art and generated instead the crucial importance of criticism to mediate between creator and audience, to separate the good from the bad, the high from the low.

The anti-romantic avant-garde, however, not only repudiated the Wagnerian artist-as-hero, it also formulated a theory and practice of art with a different set of assumptions. The new avant-garde, as Ortega y Gasset noted, refused to play the role of religious leader, trying to guide the masses toward wisdom. The new art was playful and ironic, refusing to set itself above the audience as a moral authority.⁸ The main problem with Ortega's theory is the opposition he draws between realist and nonrepresentational art, calling only the latter avant-garde. In fact, the collapse of romanticism stimulated two avant-garde currents: symbolism and realism? The avant-garde realists shocked audiences with new content (sexuality, poverty, anti-militarism, labor struggles, political corruption), while the symbolists outraged the audience with their form and technique. It is not even always useful to distinguish between form and technique because when one approaches a writer like Kafka or Celine, one needs to formulate a different vocabulary; nevertheless, there has always been a recurrent tension between realist and symbolist ideas.

When one examines the literary phenomenon

8. Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art* (Princeton, 1968), pp. 49-50; 14.

9. Herbert, for example, shows that both realist novels and symbolist poetry were the avant-garde literary expressions in France and Belgium in the 1880s and 90s. Paul Goodman makes this same point in "Advance-Guard Writing in America: 1900-1950," in *Creator Spirit Come!* (NY, 1977), pp. 144-164.

known as modernism, one sees the ambiguity of the literary avant-garde in clear terms. One tradition issues from Flaubert, Henry James and Matthew Arnold, extending to T.S. Eliot, Pound, Yeats and Joyce, and more or less ending with writers like Mann, Bellow, and Stevens. Although the modernist tradition is critical of twentieth-century society, it carefully distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate kinds of criticism; it fastidiously separates high art from low art, dismissing into the hinterlands literary productions that are too obscene, too political, too incomprehensible, too simplistic, too rough and unhewn. Modernism and its critical schools, which have dominated the universities for decades, are the filter through which avant-garde literature passes.¹⁰ If an author cannot be dismissed outright, then s/he is domesticated with a barrage of irrelevant and pedantic criticism, burying the author's rebellious art underneath a rubble of words. Modernism has also promoted a certain kind of sensibility which the avant-garde has always attacked and which came under effective attack in the 1960s by critics like Susan Sontag.¹¹ This sensibility cultivates seriousness and a certain kind of (serious) irony, values the importance of complexity, is uncomfortable with spontaneity and sincerity, discourages levity, playfulness and propaganda, stresses the importance of aesthetic unity and insists upon discrete boundaries between art and society. The modernist can tell good from bad, high from low, and will never lose control when experiencing an artwork; the modernist is one who can never be fooled—or if s/he is, s/he will never let anyone know about it.

There is a crisis in modernism today because not only does hardly anyone produce modernist literature (most of the interesting literature today is adamantly avant-garde), but modernist criticism has been subjected to several decades of devastating critiques. There is no doubt that bourgeois ideology will reconstitute itself in some form or other to substitute for the discredited mod-

ernist creed, but today it is unclear what exactly that substitution will be.¹²

If in the bourgeois democracies the battle is between modernism and the avant-garde, in totalitarian regimes the writer who deviates from the party line is silenced, censored, jailed or exiled, sometimes even killed. One tends to forget that the avant-garde is a possibility for a minority of writers, the rest of whom, the majority, live under dictatorships of the left or right. In countries where literature is taken seriously, rebellious writers are silenced or controlled, while in states like the U.S., where writers have the freedom to write whatever they want, the audience can be truly shocked only with great difficulty. When one examines closely the nature of artistic freedom in the U.S., then one sees why dictatorial methods are not needed. In addition to the universities and the critics, who promulgate the modernist ideology, there are the extremely conservative publishing companies, who never take a risk; so it is very difficult for avant-garde writers to get published by a major press. (I personally know of three excellent novels which are unpublished and which were rejected by publishing companies.) The freedom to write does not mean the freedom to publish and have an audience. Furthermore, in the U.S. people have such unsatisfying jobs that when they get home they do not want to be challenged in an aesthetic way, so that they accept the consumerist entertainment served up to them by the culture industry.¹³ So, although the writer has freedom to write, most working people do not have the freedom to read avant-garde literature, because they are so dehumanized at the workplace and also because avant-garde art is not readily accessible.

One might think that unrestricted freedom for a writer to write whatever s/he wanted would be uncontroversial, but one need only look at the Marxist-Leninist tradition to see otherwise. In the 1960s some Communist parties finally accepted as legitimate art other than

12. Witness the hysteria by liberal intellectuals who are desperately trying to undo the damage inflicted upon modernist assumptions by the 1960s. A recent issue of *Salmagundi*, 42 (Summer-Fall, 1978), is entirely devoted to attacking what it calls cultural radicalism; contemporary modernists are trying to find an alternative not only to avant-garde literature, but also to literary criticism which refuses to play cultural policeman.

13. For the concept of the culture industry, see T.W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Cumming (NY, 1973). The Frankfurt School has done a lot of valuable work in this area.

10. See John Fekete, *The Critical Twilight: Explorations in the Ideology of Anglo-American Literary Thought from Eliot to McCluban* (London and Boston, 1977), for an excellent discussion of literature's cultural domestication.

11. The important essay is "Against Interpretation," (1964) reprinted in one of the most important texts of 1960s' cultural criticism, *Against Interpretation* (NY, 1966). Significantly, she finds in Oscar Wilde's epigrammatic wit a real alternative to the modernist spirit of seriousness.

"socialist realism," not without, however, expelling two of the most vocal advocates of aesthetic openmindedness, Ernst Fischer, the Austrian critic, and Roger Garaudy, the French critic.¹⁴ Stalinism is not solely responsible for Marxist aesthetic conservatism because neither Marx, Engels, nor Lenin appreciated the avant-garde at all; their taste was completely bourgeois. Although Trotsky was more receptive than the rest to new art, he still believed the party and the state had a right—a duty—to suppress all art that was "counter-revolutionary," that did not serve the interests of the "revolution." Mao's aesthetic conservatism was so extreme that an authoritarian "moderate" like Teng Shaio-Ping appears to be a surrealist in comparison. Perhaps the most telling story concerning the avant-garde and Marxist-Leninism is that of Mayakovsky, the great Futurist poet who championed the Bolshevik revolution and linked it with avant-garde art. Progressively disillusioned by the Bolsheviks, cut off from a sympathetic audience, he took his own life in despair. Another interesting but much later episode was the jailing of the Cuban poet Padilla in 1971. After international protests, Castro was forced to release Padilla, whose two major crimes were homosexuality and avant-garde tendencies ("bourgeois individualism," as they call it). In a shocking article the editors of *Jump Cut*, a leftist film journal, said that it was wrong to jail Padilla for homosexuality, but they agreed with Castro that the "revolution" had a right to tell artists and intellectuals what to do; the editors sanctioned the repression of Padilla for being an individualist and an avant-gardist.¹⁵ I thought that this kind of thinking had died out long ago but I am wrong; the article was signed by ten editors. Clearly the idea of artistic freedom is still radical and needs to be defended.

Unalienated Art

Utopia as a place where art is unalienated, reconstituted along egalitarian lines, is a commonplace idea in

nineteenth-century socialism, from Fourier to Marx, from Godwin to Ruskin. Morris and Kropotkin, however, gave the most complete and interesting visions of a new art in a society which had conquered alienation. Kropotkin had, in *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, praised the medieval aesthetic of an organic, participatory, collective culture. Just as Shelley and Nietzsche had idealized Hellenic culture's high degree of social integration, so Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris and Kropotkin idealized the social culture of the medieval city, run by guilds and artisans. Kropotkin refused to accept as normal art's alienation into so many specialized fragments, all of which were kept apart from politics, the economy, and social life. Kropotkin and Morris envisioned art as something that permeated social life in all its aspects. Homes, streets, gardens, rooms, villages and cities would be constructed with a sense of beauty as a primary concern. The things of everyday life—kitchen utensils, curtains, rugs, tables, furniture—should reflect the aesthetic values of the society. Not only should the environment be shaped according to the logic of beauty, but productive activity itself should be animated with aesthetic concerns. In the anarchist society, one would learn a variety of skills and participate in a variety of useful activities, concentrating on whatever is most interesting. Tedious labor, performed collectively, loses its oppressive burden; furthermore, since no one does such labor all the time, people are free to develop in different areas.

There is, however, something disturbing in Kropotkin's aesthetic ideas, because he used the ideal of unalienated future art to discredit the avant-garde. Nietzsche, the aesthetes, the symbolists, the new anarchists in France sympathetic with the avant-garde, were all labeled by Kropotkin as bourgeois individualists, self-indulgent and irresponsible.¹⁶ Although Proudhon, earlier, had defended Gustave Courbet's realist paintings against the academic establishment in *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale* (1865), the later influence



16. See George Woodcock and Adam Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince* (Cleveland, 1971), pp. 280-282.

14. For the gloomy history of the Marxist-Leninist aesthetic, see George Bizstray's uncritical but informative *Marxist Models of Literary Realism* (NY, 1978). For a tragi-comic account of the Communist encounter with Franz Kafka's literature, see Tom Morris, "From Liblice to Kafka," *Telos*, 24 (Summer, 1975); Morris also shows the influence of anarchism on Kafka.

15. For this shameful article, see *Jump Cut*, No. 19, pp. 38-39.

of Proudhon's ideas was antagonistic to the avant-garde and encouraged instead an engage art, one closely aligned to the aspirations of the social movement. Tolstoy, as is well known, condemned almost everything ever produced by artists, including his own novels, because such art was decadent, unethical, irreligious.¹⁷ Godwin, Bakunin and Stirner, I am happy to say, were aesthetic libertarians, but the fact that three of the major anarchist theorists were not deserves serious analysis.

In Ursula LeGuin's utopian novel, *The Dispossessed* (1974), her protagonist, Shevek, is an innovative scientist whose uncompromising originality disturbs the egalitarian ethos of the anarchosyndicalist society. Her novel suggests that any society, even one organized anarchistically, with the ideals of mutual aid and solidarity, will view with suspicion any expressions of avant-garde individualism.¹⁸ The avant-garde seems to be anti-social even when it is not. The problem, as the novel demonstrates so well, is this: libertarianism cannot exist for long without individualism. When Shevek's society persecutes him for his scientific theories, it discloses its authoritarian features; although the society exists without an institutional state, the authoritarianism exists nevertheless inside the people. The aesthetic conservatism of Tolstoy, Proudhon, and Kropotkin suggests the possibility of a regime of authoritarianism implemented not by a state or a capitalist ruling class, but by an egalitarian society. Does society, as distinguished from a government, have the right to regulate artistic production? An anarchist must answer with an unequivocal "No" because without unrestricted artistic freedom a libertarian society will not for long remain libertarian.

The dichotomy which Kropotkin, Proudhon, and Tolstoy make between avant-garde and engage art is an unfortunate one. There have not been many anarchist engage works as such,¹⁹ but the few that have existed were avant-garde by virtue of their content. Unless art is unacceptable to the cultural establishment for either its

form or content or both, it can be of little interest to anarchists anyway, so that Kropotkin's dichotomy is in fact a spurious one. There are *kinds* of avant-garde art, some of which might be called *engage*. The problem with most *engage* art, the kind usually produced by Marxists, is that it does not tell us anything we did not already know. Avant-garde art, on the other hand, is an aesthetic adventure, trying to discover new realms of experience, making new departures.

Although the utopian vision of unalienated art is an indispensable feature of anarchism, it should not be used as a club with which to strike down the avant-garde. I am not saying that everything which calls itself avant-garde is therefore good, but unless art breaks new ground in content or technique then it is no different from bourgeois art or totalitarian art.

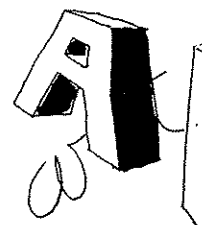
Art as Social Critique

After Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman were expelled from the U.S., then from the U.S.S.R., they were bounced around Europe and Canada by government bureaucracies, while fascism gradually rose to dominance. Although Berkman and Goldman publicized the betrayal of the Russian social revolution by the Bolsheviks, the international left did not like to hear about it and waited until the 1950s to admit that there were problems with Soviet "communism." In the 1920s and 1930s, Berkman and Goldman had to reevaluate their anarchist politics because clearly historical events had gone beyond their theories. Goldman concluded that the problems were not simply economic exploitation and government power because such could not explain why so many working people were supporting fascism, why so many workers had supported World War One. In 1927 she wrote to Berkman, "The entire school, Kropotkin, Bakunin, and the rest, had a childish faith in what Peter calls 'the creative spirit of the people.' I'll be damned if I

17. See Tolstoy's *What Is Art?*

18. Bob Newman pointed out Ursula LeGuin's novel to me and suggested an authoritarianism within anarchism that I had never considered before. He has written an essay on *The Dispossessed* which should be published soon. See also the article on LeGuin in *Cienfuegos Review*, #2 (the entire issue is relevant to art and anarchism).

19. Herbert discusses some such works which appeared in France and Belgium.



can see it. If the people could really create out of themselves, could a thousand Lenins or the rest have put the noose back on the throat of the Russian masses?"²⁰ The problem, then, was authoritarianism, the willingness to accept political authority, the inability to pursue self-determination. (This too is the topic of Rudolf Rocker's classic study, *Nationalism and Culture*, published in English in 1937, and recently republished in the U.S. by Michael Coughlin; Rocker was good friends with Goldman and Berkman.) Before both members of the Frankfurt School and Wilhelm Reich had begun their studies into the psychology of fascism, Berkman and Goldman were trying to analyze the problem of domination. Nineteenth-century socialism from the utopians to the Marxists and anarchists had constructed a movement and set of theories concerned primarily with the dynamics of exploitation; the utter collapse of the workers' movements during World War One, after the Bolshevik seizure of power, and the rise of fascism made necessary a revolutionary theory that would take domination as its point of departure.

Emma Goldman was extraordinarily sensitive to the problem of domination and the importance of individualism and avant-garde art.²¹ The Mother Earth Press published Oscar Wilde's "Soul of Man Under Socialism," promoted the avant-garde theatre of Ibsen and Hauptmann, and sympathetically introduced readers to the thought of Nietzsche. Goldman was beginning to formulate a theory of domination when the Spanish revolution occurred; although she disagreed with many of the anarchosyndicalist decisions, especially the one to participate in the Popular Front government, she continued to work for the Spanish revolution.

If the primary factor of oppression is exploitation, then it is plausible to relegate art, especially avant-garde art, to a lowly position, subordinate to the class struggle. If, however, domination is at least as important as exploitation, then art, especially avant-garde art, gives

20. Richard and Maria Drinnon, eds., *Nowhere at Home, Letters from Exile of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman* (NY, 1975), p. 82.

21. See for example her superb essay, "The Individual, Society, and the State," reprinted in *Red Emma Speaks* (NY, 1972).

one a way of comprehending experience. The avant-garde, always working at the limits and extremes of consciousness, makes possible libertarian ruptures with established reality. To understand experience, so much of which is shaped and determined by factors outside one's control, one must go beyond the consumerist entertainments served up by the culture industry. One must also go beyond the anarchist and Marxist theories formulated in the nineteenth century on assumptions that are no longer adequate. Every aspect of modern life has the imprint of authoritarian design inscribed on it. One is taught from the earliest age to submit to authority, to accept bureaucratic procedures, to defer one's judgment to the experts, to limit one's desires. The social world which men and women confront every day is totalitarian, totally organized from top to bottom, from left to right, without any free zones within which one might formulate a counter-cultural opposition.²²

One of the most discouraging aspects of the 1970s' left has been its resurrection of exploitation-based politics and its revival of cultural conservatism. Exploitation-based politics can and will be coopted by liberals, social democrats, union bureaucrats, or Marxist-Leninist parties. In the West it is not economic exploitation as such but the entire culture that deprives us of creative autonomy. Since domination is the experience which defines our modernity, we should look to avant-garde art, not theories about the working class, in order to find libertarian points of departure. Although rank and file worker initiatives and autonomous working-class movements are anarchist possibilities, they are only possibilities; if they are not to be coopted and assimilated, then the anarchists must also provide insights into authoritarianism and domination. Unless anarchism is linked with the attempt to build a counter-culture, a living alternative to the culture industry and its consumerism, then it will merely be the left-wing of a reformist effort to patch up the irrational breakdowns of the capitalist system. Along

22. Recent authors I find sensitive to domination and useful in analyzing it are Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. See especially Foucault's *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Sheridan (NY, 1977), and Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Hurley, Seem, and Lane (NY, 1977).



with a 1930s' style politics has come cultural conservatism, a reaction against the 1960s. The major problem, according to people like Christopher Lasch and Richard Sennett, is what they call narcissism, which they identify with the 1960s' counter-culture. Although the many critiques of the counter-culture contain useful insights, their purpose is not to reconstitute a counter-culture at a higher level, but to demolish it. Lasch, for example, considers the avant-garde historically obsolete and presumably prefers "The Waltons," where the family is clearly a haven (in between the commercials).²³

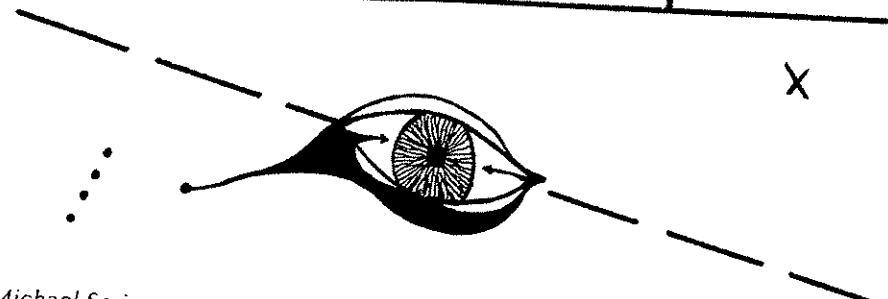
A libertarian counter-culture has to be avant-garde to maintain its critical perspective on capitalist exploitation and modern domination. The avant-garde, however, must be challenged at all times because, like everything else in a capitalist society, it tends toward commodification. There is a sense in which the avant-garde's innovative fervor corresponds not only to the capitalist fashion industry but to an essential feature of modern capitalism; the accumulation of capital depends on the perpetual destruction of old patterns of consumption and the creation of new needs which only the new and improved commodities can fulfill.

The avant-garde has always dramatized the desire to overcome the dichotomy of art and life, to counteract audience passivity, to demystify aesthetic creation, to insist upon a participatory art. The avant-garde, however, must go beyond the stage of merely making a gesture in this direction and start seriously implementing this aesthetic program. The next stage has to be aesthetic education, the proliferation of aesthetic skills and training so that former audiences can create their own art (or at least become more critically aware participants in aesthetic experiences). Unless people participate in experiences outside those initiated by the culture industry (whether it is PBS operas or "Charlie's Angels," "Superman," or "Coming Home," Jeannie C. Riley or the Rolling Stones), they will never learn to be self-determin-

23. Lasch attacks the avant-garde in the *Salmagundi* issue discussed in note 15.

ing, confident of their ability to create alternatives to the society controlled by government, big business, bureaucracies and the experts. If people are to free themselves from authoritarianism, then they have to begin creating their own culture. I think the libertarian socialists associated with the journal *Root and Branch* are whistling to the wind when they dismiss as irrelevant the issue of culture. What matters, according to them, is the economic crisis which will force workers to create a new society. At present, however, an economic collapse would bring only authoritarian alternatives because people are not accustomed to cooperating, making decisions collectively, initiating and carrying through policies. If a crisis were to happen tomorrow, people would turn on the television to find out what they were supposed to do. Far more appropriate to a relevant anarchism is Franklin Rosemont's article in the most recent *Industrial Worker*, the IWW paper, where he links the goal of worker democracy with surrealism.²⁴ During the May-June days in France, 1968, one of the famous slogans was "All power to the imagination." I cannot think of a better slogan for a contemporary anarchism which seeks counter-cultural initiatives within the aesthetic avant-garde and which makes theoretical advances starting from the problem of domination.

24. Franklin Rosemont, "Surrealism and Revolution," *Industrial Worker*, 76:1 (Jan., 1979). I do not agree that surrealism is the only revolutionary tendency in the avant-garde, but I am pleased to find myself disagreeing with someone about which kind of avant-garde is libertarian.



Michael Scrivener teaches English at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Judgement Number XX

clear ye street of ye Romans
clear ye streets of ye Greeks for a much
greater announcement is bout to be issued
lend me yr ears
ye quick and yea ever you who are already dead in yr beds:

the earth shall be to the living
and the fruits thereof. The governments shall
diminish themselves until they will be no longer needed
or desired

each man his own governor. these toys
that preoccupy you (products of profane sciences) put away
these toys & come away into the mind (Mines)

take no thot of yrselves saying:
what clothes shall I put on
what food shall I eat

for such are the things
the gentiles seek.

rather you find yr.selves intent on
learning the process by which La Grand Dame
LaNature operates seek to know everything's
invisible counterpart

wherein the microcosmos
¯ocosmos are at unity in one
and great wealth

greater than the Jews seek
shall be yours

the *acqua vitae* of the immortal fountain
shall preserve you all
yr. days

& the generations pass like water
but the bloke educated in the dead universities
shall not have precedent over thee
nor shall he possess Our Stone. Wisdom cometh of right acts
resulting from cognitions,
that which is upright
proper & fitting



BLACK ROSE

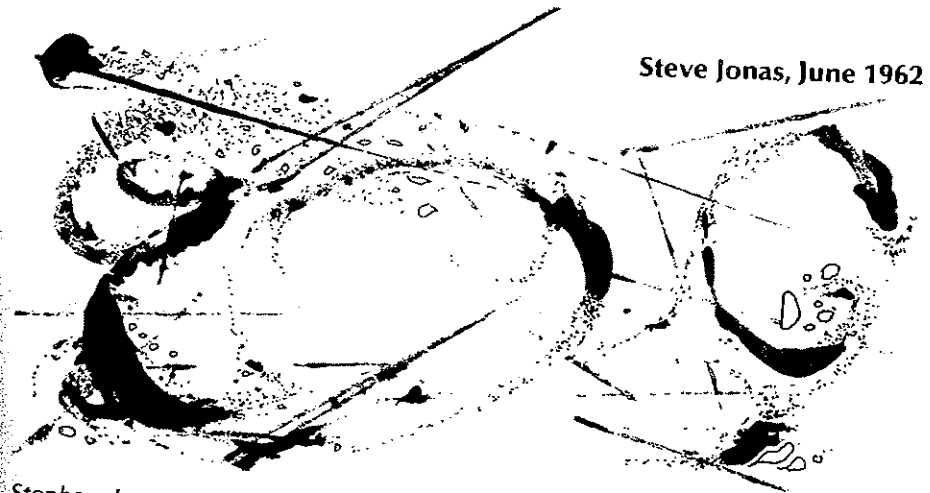
thro' a Vacuum, w/out the Mediation of anything else, by
and through which their actions & force may be conveyed from one
to another is to me so great and Absurdity, that I believe no
Man who has in philosophical Matters a competent Faculty of
thinking, can ever fall into it. Gravity must be caused by an
Agent acting constantly according to certain Laws; but whether
this Agent be material or immaterial, I have left to the
Consideration of my Readers".

The Wheel is moving and the linen thread which is
sacred to her as Isis. And when it comes over me
that the "fish bones", Charles Olson, picked up by
Talos, thereby was the saw invented.

O two-wheeled vehicle driven by fire-bearing juice'
or Barb'd epithets pitched at the baseball

sei, sette, otto, nove, dio, serpe
The flame of the Athanor
Till the Phoenix alights again

renewd.



Steve Jonas, June 1962

Stephen Jonas was a Boston poet who died in 1970. A considerable
amount of his works are still unpublished.

SPRING 79

Neither God Nor Master: An interview with Juan Goytisolo

س لى ما فلهو نيشا ما مقاوشا ينبلو فې

Juan Goytisolo (1931) is Spain's foremost living writer and dissident.

Self-exiled since 1956, he acted during the Franco years—when most of his writing was banned in Spain—as its most vigilant countercensor. Since 1975, his past work (11 books of prose fiction, 4 collections of varied essays, 3 travel accounts, translations, and scores of articles) has been published again in his recently democratic country of origin. Most of his fiction has been translated into several languages, and is available in English. His trilogy, *Marks of Identity* (1966), *Count Julian* (1970), and *Juan the Landless* (1975), will remain one of this century's exemplary accounts of an individual's liberation from the oppressive mirages (social, political, cultural) of Western civilization—out of which emerges a scarred but richer, authentic human being.

A wandering intellectual, Juan Goytisolo writes, speaks, teaches and lives itinerately throughout four continents, although he has a marked predilection for the Arab world of Morocco. It was while in Boston last Fall, that he gave us permission to translate and publish this recent interview with Spanish journalist E. Parra, which appeared originally in the Spanish monthly *El viejo topo* (November 1978).

In the translation we have tried to preserve Juan Goytisolo's own style of diction and thought, even though this may at times read slightly un-American. We hope that this decision does not impair its intelligibility, while allowing the uniqueness of the individual voice to appear undisguised. All italicized notes in brackets are the translator's—Gonzalo Diaz-Migoyo.

لا قتنا انتصت | يو بدو | السكين

JG: Neither God, nor master.

EP: What means does the dissident have at his disposal today? What attitudes can he adopt?

JG: When I gave the title of *Dissidences* [Title of Goytisolo's book, *Disidencias*, not yet translated into English] to the volume of essays with my literary pieces of the last few years, I did it for a very precise reason. While I was translating (into Spanish) the English works of Blanco White [Spanish

expatriate (1775-1841), who took refuge in England, where he wrote in English], something immediately caught my attention. Everything that Blanco wrote about the Church and the orthodoxy of his century (the nineteenth) was very similar to what the present dissidents in the USSR and Eastern Europe say about the ideological monolithism of the totalitarian societies in which they have to live. Just as the Catholic and Anglican churches in the time of Blanco White, the caste that holds power in the USSR behaves as if it were eternal; it doesn't want to see itself reflected in the mirror of time and to discover its own wrinkles; it mistakes its voice for the voice of the people; actually it only wants to perpetuate itself. The fight of Blanco and of the many Spanish dissidents who preceded him—the first and most illustrious of them being Fernando de Rojas—was above all the fight against a language occupied and manipulated by the ideology in power; a language that completely perverted its vocabulary and syntax; a frozen, empty, solemn language with a liturgical seriousness that was really funereal. A comparative analysis of the Papal encyclicals and Brezhnev's speeches would clearly show this parallel: the same pomposity, gravity, sufficiency, putrefaction of consecrated formulas, worn to the marrow. I remember that a Soviet hispanist, the translator into Spanish of the "political literature" of his country, confided to me once that his job was very easy: for someone experienced like himself, it was very easy to guess from a simple sentence the contents of the following paragraph, inasmuch as each pamphlet or speech had a framework, a kind of outline of articulated sentences, in which any one of them called inexorably for the next; that is, a kind of crossword puzzle argument in which the translator had only to fill in with clichés and topical phrases. Faced with this canonized, rigid language, monopolized by power, the dissident, whether he be Blanco White, Bulgakov, or Zinoviev, is forced to undertake a subversive and demystifying task, aiming to undermine the semantic order imposed by the occupying ideology. In this task, satire, irony play a primordial role: they are the weapons used by the writer to recuperate language, to expose the petrification of the system, to point to the grotesque and ridiculous side of the pontiffs and the processional oxen. Bakhtin's [*Russian literary critic, author of Rabelais and His World*] observations on the spaces of freedom of the Carnival, the Rabelaisian mockery of official and dogmatic religion, apply perfectly to that literature coming from the USSR today which is alive—and I have no doubt that, in speaking of the past, Bakhtin was at

the same time pointing slyly to the political churches of the present. Coming back to my book: it's very clear to me that Rojas was a dissident with regard to the Spanish life of his time: a dissident both against a society that persecuted cruelly his own family and the members of his caste, and against a literary tradition that he confronted so admirably in *La Celestina*. A double rebellion, then: artistic and moral. If literature is, according to the well-known remark of Pavese, "a defense against life's offenses," one could outline a literary history from the successive answers of writers such as Rojas, Cervantes, etc. to the asphyxiating situation inevitably created by the totalitarian state and by orthodox thought, and arrive at the equation, "Writing = Dissidence."

EP: I think that the stance of the dissident, as far as you are concerned, is perfectly defined. You were interested, some time ago, in the writings of Gramsci and Rosa Luxemburg. What has Marxism meant to you as a global experience?

JG: My discovery of Marxism was rather early, if one takes into account the milieu from which I came and the situation of Spain in 1950. My brother, Luis, and I used to attend a literary discussion group at the Bar-Club, in Barcelona, and there we discussed Marxism, political commitment, etc. We used to read French communist magazines, smuggled into Spain, and as a result a good number of my companions ended up joining the CP. Later, in Paris, I began to read Marx, Engels, and, above all, Lukacs, who was, unfortunately, my inseparable mentor during four or five years. I say unfortunately because, even though his intellectual stature is beyond doubt, and he has never—contrary to other orthodox intellectuals—fallen into the aberrant demagoguery of Stalinism, his aesthetic conservatism, his fascination with bourgeois art and literature, influenced my work of those years: it is not by chance that the worst novel I have written, *La Resaca (The Undertow)*, met with his very lively praise, which was conveyed to me through a common friend. Lukacs, the same as Lenin, thought that XIX Century realism was the epitome of art, and both judged contemporary literature through the prism of Balzac or Tolstoy. Both defended a rigid concept of realism and condemned the avant-garde (one only has to remember the attacks of Lukacs against Proust, Joyce, Kafka, Surrealism), without understanding at all that the new world in which they lived demanded the invention, the search for a new language (precisely what they called, derogatorily, formalism). They did not under-

stand that, on the contrary, to try to grasp the changing reality (the technical and cultural revolution—Picasso's discovery of the "imaginary museum" which makes it possible to plunder the art and writing of all times and civilizations) within the framework of laws established once and for all, is to incur an authentic case of formalism (as far as I am concerned there is nothing more formal than so-called "socialist realism"). During these years I wrote two or three very Lukacsian essays, which had very little to do with my own writing: as is the case with 90 percent of Spanish essays, they were not the product of a personal literary experience, but of a hurried ingestion of badly digested reading.

Luckily for me, my later acquaintances were less orthodox. First Gramsci (whom I read in Italian, since the French CP then opposed his translation) and then Trotsky, and, above all, Rosa Luxemburg, whose live reading of Marx still seems to me fundamentally important. Of contemporary authors the one who influenced me most is probably Marcuse. But when I read him I had already abandoned my exclusive adherence to Marxism, if by that one understands the fact of looking at the totality of life through the single prism of an ideology. Marxism today is part of contemporary culture and, whether we like it or not, we are all impregnated by it. But the same thing happens with a number of thinkers, such as for example Freud, and I do not consider myself Freudian either. Actually, no ideological system can encompass nor explain the whole of human existence and the world without fatally becoming a totalitarian system: Stalinism proved that clearly with Zhdanov and Lysenko. In these last years my political reading has turned to anarchist thought: Fourier, Bakunin, Chomsky.

EP: The present Freudo-Marxism has used a schizoid-type analysis to label Bakunin as a neuropath and a naïf. Or what amounts to the same: it has taken up again Plekhanov's old tag, identifying Bakuninism with decadent utopianism. Such a salutary appreciation turns out to be as gratuitous as the right-thinking bourgeois' identification of anarchism with barbarism. Now then, doesn't Bakunin's philosophy (between anti-authoritarianism and anti-social bureaucracy) become enlightening as a critical method when applied to today's Marxist regimes?

JG: If we go as far back as the famous polemic between Marx and Bakunin, we can verify that while history, the facts of the past, have proven Marx right—today close to a third of humanity lives in self-proclaimed Marxist

societies, and even capitalism has completely modified its course by incorporating into its mechanisms, for reasons of self-defense, a series of elements taken from the body of ideas of *Capital*, the future belongs to Bakunin without a doubt. The "corrected" capitalism of social-democratic societies, as well as the authoritarian model (or anti-model) now governing the USSR, China, Cuba, etc., cry out for a revolution of the anarchist type in its dual aspect, individualistic and communitarian.

Let's take the industrial societies of the West, which are economically and culturally developed: the Leninist, Trotskyist, Maoist, Guevarist blueprints have very little to do with the real aspirations of the working class, or with the historical forces that are in favor of social change. The extreme economism of Marxist revolutionary movements has isolated them from the desires and the new needs of the masses, inasmuch as it does not address, nor has it addressed until recently, a series of problems about which anarchists have always been much more sensitive: citizens' rights, individual liberties, the condemnation of alienated labor, a critique of industrialization as a presumed liberatory agent of human beings, feminism, the defense of the environment, a denunciation of consumerism, etc. . . . As we can see from the present example in Spain, even the staunchest groups of Marxists or Marxist-Leninists are beginning to undergo a healthy contagion of the anarchist virus.

In the USSR and other Eastern European countries, the "contamination" is even clearer. The hierarchisation of power, the ideological monolithism, the dualism between the ruled and the rulers, the negation of the most elementary freedoms and rights, give to the writings of Bakunin a prophetic character. Not having taken into account his warnings, the paradise created by the Marxist-Leninist parties in power has transformed itself into something completely different from that predicted: after the mirage of the *new man* (a concept which, on the other hand smells strongly of Christianity) has come the sad reality of the *old barbarian*. The movements that crop up and will crop up with increasing strength in these societies (the demand for democratization, political and ideological freedom, criticism of the leadership, etc.) are also a kind of posthumous revenge of Bakunin against his old rival.

As Alvarez Junco observed [*Spanish author of a political monograph published by the then French-based Spanish publisher "Ruedo Iberico"*] state "socialism" of an authoritarian type can only tempt the exploited and miserable societies of the Third World. Because of its rigid organiza-

tion, almost military, it is the most efficient form to take them out of the underdevelopment and ignorance in which imperialism keeps them today. But once this is achieved—something that my brother Luis compared recently to the first-aid given to the victim of an accident—this so-called authoritarian socialism has proven to be totally incapable of improving and transforming itself. The first thing of course is to give food to a hungry population (something that capitalism doesn't do in the Third World countries which it exploits ruthlessly). But we shouldn't forget (and this the regimes of a Soviet style do not take into account) that human rights begin, do not end, with the right to eat.

EP: "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." The revolutionary experiences (especially in the XX Century) have shown their inability even to improve an economic system, so that the means of production end up being the origin of repression, don't you think?

JG: Marxism has justly denounced the economic exploitation of man by man, that is, the appropriation of the workers' surplus by capital, but it ignores or neglects a similar or worse exploitation: the political exploitation undertaken by power, the appropriation of part or all of the freedoms inherent in a human being by the representatives of power. While Marx limits himself to fighting private capital and economic exploitation, Bakunin, much more daring and revolutionary, condemns the State, that fatal usurper of our political, economic, cultural, physical freedoms: this monster, which Marx did not foresee, that decides what can and can't be read, who can and cannot travel, what is the orthodox way of thinking and of making love, and a very long etc. In the first draft of a projected anarchist manifesto, written to be discussed by a group of intellectual sympathizers, Francisco Carrasquer [*Contemporary Spanish political writer*] asks himself why it is realistic for the Left to fight against the desire, so prevalent, to accumulate private property, and, on the other hand, unrealistic to fight the desire for power; when it turns out that those who are obsessed by it, the power-sick, are only, fortunately, a small percentage of humanity. To argue in a pessimistic way by saying that "there will always be the ruled and the rulers," is it not perhaps to fall in the old trap of "there will always be slaves and masters," "capitalists and proletarians," not to speak of the male chauvinist argument which until recently justified the secondary and oppressed status of women? Future society could set itself the task of *correcting the destructive tendencies to*

power the same way it already fights the destructive tendencies of the pyromaniac or of the born assassin. Without looking too far back in history, and sticking to that which has happened in this century, anybody can verify that tens of millions of men have died because of decisions taken by individuals thirsty for power. Based on such facts, it seems logical and reasonable that society should develop mechanisms of self-defense. The crimes of Docteur Petiot, of Jack the Ripper, or of the Texas Blue Beard are ridiculous and dilettantish next to those committed by Hitler, Stalin, and their kind. Given the extreme difficulty of dislodging the leaders once they have seized power—here we have the recent example of Franco, who died in bed—we ought to reach the following conclusion: *the best way to prevent such individuals from taking possession of power is to prevent power from possessing them.* This proposal is not utopian at all, rather it is a necessary and pressing one. Humanity must finish not only with its economic exploiters, but also with its führers, helmsmen, caudillos, benefactors, maximum leaders. At any rate, I agree completely with Carrasquer when he says that, even though we might not be able to do away with power, “human justice and liberty have been, are, and will be inversely proportional to the amount of concentrated power, and directly proportional to the influence of the anarchist mode of thought in the world.”

EP: There have been two recent revolutionary experiences: concerning the Chinese, I don't know what references and data you have about it, but I imagine that you must have more information about the Cuban one. And, besides, you have been there several times.

JG: About the Chinese revolution I can't give you an opinion simply because I have never been in China and I do not know the history, culture, and language of that country. I have read several books on Maoism like everybody else, but that is not enough to judge an experience which affects the destiny of a billion persons. I believe that Maoism, like all authoritarian “socialist” systems, has given “first aid” to that huge mass of “victims of an accident”: it has given them food and clothing, something which, if we take as a starting point the alleged bourgeois democracy of India, certainly represents a giant step forward (the industrial regimes of the Free World, on the other hand, keep the masses of the Third World in a state of subhuman misery). Still, I think that the Western Left has undertaken an idealization of the Maoist experience by repeat-

ing the same schematic thinking and by falling into the same errors of forty years ago about the Soviet Union. Now, after the Khrushche report and the subsequent dismantling of the Stalinist myth, though the Western Left has finally opened its eyes about the USSR, a great number of its members maintain a kind of pious self-deceit about China, about the evident fact that Stalinism there is still alive and kicking. The image of the Soviet paradise already destroyed, the Left insists in forging a substitute paradise, call it China, Cuba, Vietnam (I even know of some devotees of the Albanian and North Korean Edens).

The continuous see-sawing of Chinese policies in the last twenty years has forced its unfortunate defenders in the West to extraordinary exercises of mental gymnastics, to a series of dialectical pirouettes which would be grotesque, if they weren't, at least for me, quite painful: this is irrefutable evidence of the alienation that exists on the Left. Those who praise the experience of the Hundred Flowers have to take up immediately thereafter the hosanna to the Great Leap Forward; the panegyrists of the Cultural Revolution and denigrators of Confucius, have to applaud the reintroduction of the profit-motive and to proclaim that Confucius had been calumniated by the sinister “gang of four.” These unconditional pro-Chinese prove themselves to be excellent acrobats when, after they have praised Lin Piao to the skies, they accuse him the next day of being a traitor; when, after they have praised Mao's wife extravagantly, they must then admit that she had had an empress's dress made, and that she attended with her cronies showings of Soviet porno-movies—I imagine the characters in these movies were played by powerful Stakhanovites and expert feminine manual workers.

Obviously we are facing a phenomenon of a religious nature: what many books and allegedly revolutionary publications offer us are neither arguments nor reasons but acts of will, and, above all, statements of faith, some of them very close to the well-known *credo quia absurdum* of Tertullian. As Thorez's widow said recently on a TV program, Soviet socialism had been as clear to her as two and two makes four and, even more, as clear as two and two makes five.

EP: And Castro's experience?

JG: About Castro's experience I can speak with more knowledge, as I have visited Cuba several times, during different phases of the revolutionary process, and in spite of the present scarcity of reliable information, I fol-

low very closely, as best I can, the Cuban situation. I have to say, right at the beginning, that I have defended, I now defend, and will always defend the historical necessity of the Cuban revolution. Since the time of its independence from Spain, Cuba, just like the rest of the countries of Hispanic America, was subjected to an unbridled exploitation by U.S. capitalism and by its own bourgeoisie: corruption, illiteracy, poverty existed in Cuba, just as they exist today in most of the continent (even in a wealthy country with a bourgeois democratic regime like Venezuela, the people in the "ranchitos" (local slums) live in conditions that are totally unacceptable). Castro's revolution ended this state of affairs very quickly: it eliminated the most outrageous differences of the past, it provided a series of immediate social benefits, it did away with illiteracy, etc. That is to say, it provided first aid to a series of sectors of the population (the subproletariat in the slums, the farmers) who hadn't reached until then the threshold of minimal dignity for human beings. But if the authoritarian model followed by Castro could have been the necessary condition for the progress of the people, today it obviously is an obstacle. Just like the Soviet CP, the Cuban party seems totally incapable of becoming democratic, of abandoning its authoritarian habits, of providing the people rights other than those strictly elementary. That is to say, if Castro has liberated a great sector of the population from the poverty and humiliation of the past, he maintains today the whole of the population in a state of perpetual legal minority, of frustration and impotence, inasmuch as he controls absolutely the mechanisms of power, has confiscated all of the political rights, has imposed an iron censorship, has established an all-powerful police force. The predictions of Bakunin, the warnings of Rosa Luxemburg to Lenin, fit perfectly the social practice of the Cuban revolution: the dictatorship of the proletariat has become that of the party, the one of the party has become that of the Central Committee and the Central Committee's that of the Secretary General, Maximum Leader and Commander-in-Chief, who holds in his hands all of the powers without any limitation or check. It is Fidel Castro who decides everything: from the breeding of cows and the manufacturing of cheese to what must be planted and to what reading is authorized (his panegyrists quote rapturously the fact that he allowed in 1966 the first and only edition of *Paradiso*) [Novel by the Cuban writer J. Lezama Lima, now dead, which has been the object of much controversy]. In the early seventies, I remember that he launched the idea of "Havana's Belt": they had to plant coffee

around the capital instead of going to Pinar del Rio for it. It was a time of great popular enthusiasm, and people volunteered to work after normal working hours: a true manifestation of energy, voluntary and spontaneous. I was very impressed by this collective effort and I received a cold shower when Carlos Franqui [Now a Cuban defector] informed me confidentially that coffee would never grow there because the land was not suited for growing coffee. He is of peasant stock, and he knew what he was talking about. I asked him then why they wasted so much time, enthusiasm, and energy in a task that was doomed to fail (which actually happened: two years later nobody was speaking anymore of "Havana's Belt" and in order to substitute for the spectacular low in volunteer work they had to revive laws against vagrancy and idleness, very similar to those which existed in colonial times), and Franqui answered me with a smile: "It's a personal decision of Fidel's. Who's going to bell the cat?" About the same time—to give you another example—the director of ICAIC [Cuban Government's branch in charge of, among other things, film production and distribution], Alfredo Guevara, to whom I had confided my preoccupations because of the attacks he had been subjected to by some of the members of the old core of directors of the Cuban CP (Blas Roca, Vicentina Antuna, etc.), speaking about the organization's tolerance regarding films (it had allowed the showing of *Eight and a Half* by Fellini), explained to me his cultural policy in these terms: "What Blas Roca and the rest do not know is that, before I buy a film or I authorize a script, I tell Fidel the plot, and if he likes it, then we go ahead." To speak of democracy and popular participation in this context is to pervert language. Fidel Castro goes back to a Hispano-Arabic tradition of "caudillos": he governs Cuba like a ranch. He did away with large landed estates (among them those of his own family), but today he administers one infinitely larger: the whole island. I don't think that the degeneration of the Cuban revolutionary project is caused by a deliberate Machiavellism of Castro. Geopolitics explains many things and it exonerates him in a certain sense. In 1959 the 26th of July Movement wanted to put an end to those characteristics of political-economic underdevelopment that Cuba had in common with the other nations of the Caribbean: single crop, the military as a pillar of national life, the "caudillismo," the dependence on U.S. imperialism. I know for a fact, I was witness to the efforts made to come out of this state of underdevelopment in which the U.S. keeps the countries in the area. That's why it is very sad to see that in

trying to escape a single crop system, they have fallen back into it (exploitation today is run by the state and not by capitalists; but the "macheteros" still can't determine the utilization of the fruits of their labor); that the military is still the backbone of the nation (Cuban society today is a society in a permanent state of mobilization); that Fidel Castro exercises the prerogatives of a true "caudillo" and that, even though they have managed to escape the claws of U.S. capitalism, it has been to fall into the political, economic, and ideological dependency of the USSR. I insist that the least favored sectors of the population during the last regime have benefited from the change. But the authoritarian program of the revolution is blocking today any possibility of betterment beyond the most elementary social and economic sphere. The people have learned to read, but only to be subjected to an indoctrination without precedent; censorship is much more severe than the one which existed in Spain in the last fifteen years of Franco's rule. Literary magazines are of the lowest quality, discussion groups concerning Marxism have been prohibited. Just as in East Germany, the regime fabricates excellent athletes, but it has destroyed its thinkers. Muscular development coincides with cerebral atrophy. This is clear as mountain water, even though, for whatever reason, many insist on not seeing it or don't want to take it into account. I, for one, have supported the Cuban revolution when one had to support it, and I stopped doing it the day I saw that it had become a check instead of the motor of the people's progress.

EP: On many occasions Moscow's radicalism as well as Cuba's have defined clearly and forcefully their stand regarding dissidents or any rebellious initiative (Hungary, Czechoslovakia). The revolutionary capacity in the Left seems to have been literally extirpated. Paternal substitutes for criticism and obfuscation turn out to be the best antidote to truth.

JG: The Left's self-censorship continues to function today with enviable health. As Enzensberger said in one of his essays, "For the last fifty years there still lives in us the custom of lying, knowing that we are lying." The reasons for this painful exercise are the same always: not to give ammunition to the enemy, not to discourage those "comrades" who do not "know," etc. The only thing that's changed is the field of application: today, for example, one can be a Marxist, a Communist, Leninist, and criticize freely the social practice of the Soviet Union; nobody or almost nobody is scandalized anymore when Ellenstein or Azcarte speak of the USSR as an anti-model. But the taboo has been displaced to other coun-

tries, other areas: for some it's Cuba, for others China, for some Vietnam. . . . When the Soviet courts condemn for grossly false reasons a dissident like Ginzburg, we are witness to a true storm of protest in the socialist or communist ranks of the western countries. When a Cuban tribunal condemns to 29 years a woman with an exemplary revolutionary past such as Martha Frayde because of her political disagreements with the regime, accusing her falsely of being a CIA agent, nobody says a word. For the ineffable Tierno Galvan [*Leading Spanish Socialist*], the Cuban authorities "respect human freedoms to the fullest." The left has internalized this habit of hiding the truth to the marrow. *Camp de l'Arpa* [*Spanish literary magazine*] published recently a letter of Orwell explaining the censorship he was the victim of in the English socialist press when he wanted to tell what really happened to the POUM in Spain: even his editor refused to publish his *Homage to Catalonia*. This might seem shocking to us today, because even Carrillo himself bemoans the anti-Trotskyist sectarianism of that time. But self-censorship still exists about contemporary realities that are very similar. When K.S. Karol wrote his book about Cuba, he spent several years without a publisher in Spanish and when it finally appeared in Spain, the leftist press maintained a total silence about it. The need to preserve the purity of the Castroist myth closed all doors to him, just as the need not to besmirch the image of the Popular Front closed doors to Orwell in 1937. The same miserable reasoning has infected almost the whole of the political class: the socialist leaders of the 1930s believed or said they believed in the contents of the charges of the Moscow trials against Bukharin and other revolutionary leaders; Felipe Gonzalez [*Secretary General of the Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol*] believes or feigns to believe the leaders of Algeria when they tell him that Ben Bella isn't arrested, rather that he is voluntarily detained (apparently he suffers from agoraphobia!). If the Left wants to finish once and for all with its present dejection and to offer a believable revolutionary alternative, it must free itself from these habits of self-justification, from these pious lies. Octavio Paz quoted recently the sentence of one of the heroes of the Paris Commune: "He who tells the people false revolutionary legends is as much of a criminal as the one who draws false navigational charts." The unfortunate experience of this half century must make us understand the importance of Gramsci's phrase: "Truth is always revolutionary."

EP: From an anti-authoritarian viewpoint, putting aside the right wing which

disqualifies itself, and from a critical perspective, where would you locate the bases for the permanent revolution?

JG: Taking, as I do, an optimistic perspective, one open to the future, I know nothing more defeatist than the mania of the partisan of an authoritarian socialism who want to foist upon us their "paradises," Soviet style, or Chinese, or Cuban, with a kind of smiling fatalism—I think that my position is very clear: to help those forces which, in the industrial countries of the west, which include Spain, fight for a political-social transformation from a socialist and libertarian perspective; to support the needed political revolution that will put an end to the totalitarian bureaucracies of the East; to support, in a first phase, the authoritarian socialist regimes of the Third World to the extent that their blueprint—which in fact is the solution of least effort—favors the progress of the people: once this objective is reached, when the motor becomes a brake, to extend to these regimes the modes of thought and the requirements of libertarian communism. When one acts in this way, without hiding anything, without obeying considerations or calculations of opportunity, one doesn't have to fear playing into the hands of the Right: those who help the Right are, on the contrary, those who insist on imposing on the advanced societies regressive, oppressive models, which, actually serve as scarecrows.

EP: **To bring this matter to a close, there is an almost obligatory question about the ten years which separate us from that French May, the prodigious decade of the "new" seventies: what have been the results of that revolutionary initiative?**

JG: The experience of May '68 was for all those who lived it very impressive: it meant the break with the old political blueprints and the surging forth of a new problematic. To understand the explosion that took place, one has to take into account the convergence of two opposite elements within the framework of an exceptionally favorable economic situation: Europe lived in the middle of a boom, a thousand leagues away from the present situation of a crisis of capitalism, in which the harshness of the fight to survive provokes the anguish of losing one's job, the fear of unemployment, and that makes the working class, and even a larger number of students, hesitate greatly before they decide on radical, confrontational actions. There was on the one hand the student movement, supported by most of the young people and even by many young workers, and on the other hand the traditional working class, whose instantaneous

and massive action, outside of unions and political parties, was the surprise factor, on which nobody was counting. But these two movements were divergent, even though their coming together at that point in time provided momentarily the spark. The students, the sons of the bourgeoisie and the intellectual strata, protested against the stultifying consumerism, the aberrant dogma of industrialization, alienated labor, in the name of a conception of life that was freer and more spontaneous: they carried Bakunin's flag. The working class, on the other hand, as the political and union leaders discovered very soon to their relief, did not contest the role whole of the consumer society, rather, egged on and directed by them, it demanded a larger share in the goods of that society: their revindications had a social democratic content; they referred to Bernstein. Within this dual framework, Lenin was nowhere to be seen, except perhaps in the dead rhetoric of the French CP and some Trotskyist or Maoist groups, which belatedly and against the grain tried to recuperate the movement. The revolution was frustrated the moment that the CGT [French CP trade union] and Marchais [Secretary General of the French CP] agreed to discuss salary improvements with the government. But that which specifically characterizes the dynamics of May is the surging of a problematic, which instead of reducing the human being to the economic sphere, encompasses the whole of the components of social life: the new status of women, the liberation from the slavery of work, the right to happiness. With this perspective it can be said that May '68 signals the comeback of Bakunin, the resurgence of anarchist thought. Today these questions are everyday matters in Western industrial societies, and the political parties are forced to take them into consideration in their programs.

EP: **After having chosen a certain identity [References to the three novels mentioned in the introduction], and through that prism carrying out a critical revision of the historical context, you laid the foundations of an ethical nomadism (which implies, in turn, a new aesthetic of writing): refusal of hierarchy and of the norms of power. In the last page of Juan the Landless you choose to remain "on the other side of the fence, with the pariahs, sharpening the knife." From this point on, the texts that you have published, even though they represent a partial exposition, a fragmentary one (and even an insufficient one) of the work that you are preparing ["Lectura del espacio en Xemaa-El-Fna," passage from his work in prog-**

ress], express a severe attitude of unlearning: Xemaa-el-fna is the agora: a space inhabited by gestures, provocations and the bloodless although grotesque spectacle of the hunted hunter: "merienda de blancos," [Untranslatable pun on the Spanish idiom "merienda de negros," literally the midday sweat of the negros, meaning a chaotic, primitive, destructive undertaking. Coytisolo turns it around ethnically, ascribing it to Whites instead of Blacks] you write; it could be interpreted as a "merienda" on the Western orthodox culture. A revolutionary proposal that requires an active interpretation of the rhapsodist, making speech the vehicle of literature, in which the listener, even the illiterate one, participates and protagonizes. The reading of the space of Kema-el-fna seems to be evoked under the motto: "I destroy in order to build," in its widest sense.

JG: *Juan the Landless* has been the object of much critical attention in Spain and outside of Spain: some of the essays included, for instance, in the volume of *Espiral* [Spanish literary magazine] seem to me excellent. But what has intrigued me most is the fact that nobody until now has undertaken a political reading of the book, when I believe it to be the most political book I have written or, if you want, a metapolitical one: all the problems we have just discussed are essential ingredients of its structure. The need for a Bakunin-styled revolution; the references to Marx, Lafargue, Fourier, the proposal of a society strictly egalitarian, based on the inversion of the duality face-ass; the refusal of alienated labor; the revindication of the body, assumed in its most material and "base" aspect: excrement; the abolition of classes and hierarchies of power, inasmuch as those who undertake temporarily public functions, don't have a face, they're only known by their backsides, etc.—all these elements are part of a global revolutionary position.

Any careful reader will find an X-ray picture of the sado-masochistic mechanism of power (hence my reference to D.H. Lawrence) or an analysis of the repressive role of society, with its normative criteria regarding free, abnormal, unconditioned writing (in this last point, the anarchist aspect is not the communal one, but the individualistic one, following Stirner).

These ingredients are very mixed with others and are subjected to the requirements and imponderables of narrative discourse; but *Juan the Landless* is a literary text, and one has to accept it as such. When I wrote it, Franco was still alive, there wasn't yet any room for discussion, and a proposal such as mine, translated to the strictly rational language of the

essay, couldn't find its place in the narrow political framework of those years; not only within the parameters of tolerance of the regime, but even within those of the opposition. To say what I wanted to say I had to use a new language. The novel was the product of this strategy of invention.

EP: **Language as a source of pleasure is the result of the deepest of subversions of its utilitarian function, but at the same time, doesn't that exclude from writing its most somatic, most ludic quality, the gestural one?**

JG: I have to confess at the onset that that expression is beginning to bother me considerably. Lately, people have invoked "the ludic function of language" to cover up so many botched jobs and so many irresponsible monstrosities, that the expression should be used with the utmost care. Nowadays, almost all of the apes of our national literature have decided to dress in its finery, and the spectacle they offer is really painful. Actually, to evoke the ludic element of literature ought to be a truism. Our classics, from Juan Ruiz and the Archpriest of Talavera to Cervantes, played with language with the same naturalness with which they ate, fucked, or shat: without speaking about it, precisely because it was self-evident. The sensual function of aesthetic enjoyment—which distinguishes the literary code from the rest of communicative languages—became critical in the eighteenth century, which was, as we know, in Spain, an ill-fated century, speaking in literary terms. With the Enlightenment, a rational, serious, reductive, constipated language was introduced among us, which purges "reality" from a host of factors which were integral to it; utilitarian criteria were introduced among us based on a naive optimism, in the belief that literature was an instrument to improve the condition of human beings in the cities. The culmination of this tendency is to be found in Lukacs (intelligent version) and in Zhdanov (schematic and rough version). The best literature in the Spanish language of the twentieth century tries to link itself with the literary language before that century; but for that effort to yield good results, I think that one must avoid being too explicit. Many of those who flaunt the ludic character seem rather like paraplegics intent on performing sad acrobatic exercises.

EP: **To conclude I would like to ask you one thing, even though it might be a cliché: what does writing mean to you?**

JG: I can't answer, because it's as if you asked me what does eating or mak-

ing love mean to me. I simply write, and I try to do it well. I do precisely the contrary of what our luminaries do: while they normally take their own persons very seriously, instead of taking their work seriously, I do my work with all the rigor I can muster, and I try not to take myself seriously. I'm inspired by the old popular wisdom. As the marvelous woman who brought me up used to say: "Your doo-doo smells like everybody else's."



War Stories: Soldiers (2)

The Spic, who had been born in Spain, was the son of Spanish anarchists who had come to America in the 20s, went back in '36, & somehow managed to escape again to America by '40. He fought in the Spanish Republican Army until the fall of Spain, jumped over to France, & then back to the U.S. Just in time. With his U.S. citizenship thru his parents, he was drafted, and marked w/ an inadmissible notation in his Permanent Army Record: P.A.F. P.A.F. stood for "Premature Antifascist" & carried a Security Warning. This was intended to mark anyone who was known to have been anti-Fascist before Pearl Harbor, or @ the very earliest, The Battle of Britain. Anything earlier, passive or active, was considered Suspect. Un-American. The Spic was Spanish by act & deed; that was actively Un-American. in the 30s his brand of being Spanish was above & beyond the call of duty. Spellman, Cushing & Curley were the true American stand on Spain: *pro-Franco, pro-Fascist: P.F.*

Bill Costley

(This poem was printed in ASPECT/No. 71.)

Reviews

An American Anarchist: The Life of Voltairine De Cleyre

Paul Avrich (*Princeton University Press, 1978*), 266 pp., \$16.50.

Both as a speaker and a writer, Voltairine De Cleyre is one of the major figures in the history of American anarchism. Among the women of the movement, she occupies a position in the first rank with Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons. Aside from her own considerable contributions to the anarchist movement, whose significance are largely undiminished today, her own "times" are also important, spanning what Paul Avrich delineates as the "classical age of anarchism," that between the Commune of Paris and the First World War, also the "heyday" or "blossom-time" of the American anarchist movement.

This *Life of Voltairine De Cleyre* is intended to be the first of a series of books by Avrich, which taken together will constitute a fairly complete history of American anarchism. Other figures on whom the author will do similar biographies are Josiah Warren, Alexander Berkman, Benjamin Tucker, Johann Most, and Emma Goldman. For undertaking such a massive research project, as well as for his interviews with the remaining individuals who had widest contact with the earlier anarchist movement,

both anarchists and libertarians generally owe a debt of thanks to Professor Avrich and to Princeton University Press.

Furthermore, Avrich's organizational approach to the writing of a history of American anarchism, that of choosing various colorful personalities, is in itself interesting. The author feels such an approach is justified since anarchism never did become the creed of the mass of industrial workers, but rather "remained a dream of comparatively small groups of men and women who had alienated themselves from the mainstream of American society." (p. xvii) However, these people were not merely colorful personalities, "interesting" on that account, but powerful social and moral critics, "whose voices should not go unheard." (p. xvii)

One of these major social and moral critics, Voltairine De Cleyre was also in some respects an extraordinarily prophetic voice crying in the wilderness, anticipating "the contemporary mood of distrust toward the centralized bureaucratic state." (p. xix) Probably Avrich's greatest contribution to contemporary anarchists interested in Voltairine De Cleyre is in bringing out the development of her ideas on "Anarchism Without Adjectives," a doctrine to which she adhered throughout all the schisms of the anarchist movement — individualism vs. collectivism, private property vs. its expropriation, anarcho-socialism, anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-communism, anarcho-capitalism,

schisms that remain alive today, little changed.

De Cleyre saw each of these tendencies as forming a part of anarchism, each emphasizing one human need or form of economic organization to the exclusion of all other possibilities. Theoretical discussion and dialogue, she felt, was essential to see the strengths and limitations of each tendency. If push were to come to shove and a practical situation emerge in which one method or another be applied, the form or method of organization chosen should be based upon each individual situation; in other words, what was best suited to one situation would not necessarily be best suited to all others, and above all, should not be imposed upon people whose traditions might be alien to a particular form of structure. De Cleyre's "Anarchism Without Adjectives" reflected an extraordinarily broad, tolerant, and well-disciplined intellect, that developed a uniquely inspiring conception of anarchist thought, that was nearly without equal, "in its tolerance, breadth of outlook, high seriousness, close reasoning, and clear definition." (p. 157)

This breadth of conception of what is embraced by anarchism is the more remarkable given Voltairine De Cleyre's individual political evolution. Like many other indigenous American anarchists, De Cleyre was nurtured upon the writings of Paine, Jefferson, Emerson, and Thoreau, and from such thinkers her own radical tendencies emerged. Of her contemporaries, two of her major influences

were Dyer Lum and Stephen Pearl Andrews, both free thinkers, one a secularist and one a spiritualist. Again, like many other indigenous American anarchists, she espoused individualism as a major part of her political credo in her early years; this was true of many other members of the free thought, or secular, movement from which she emerged.

Unlike many other indigenous American anarchists, Voltairine De Cleyre moved on from individualism to a vastly modified position embracing socialism and, in special circumstances, expropriation of private property. Such an evolution was a far cry from her early years when she had described herself as an "individualist," in contradistinction to Emma Goldman who she called a "communist." Yet, Voltairine De Cleyre, above all intelligent, calm, and measured in her thought, did not pass through a series of "stages" or "phases," with each new one implying a renunciation of all previous ones, but saw each as somewhat of a counterbalance to the other. While she parted company intellectually with some of her earlier comrades, she continued to value the work of each and remained on friendly and civil terms with most, a favor infrequently returned. And to the end of her life, she continued to speak and write for the free thought and secular movement as well as for the anarchist movement.

Tolerant though she was, Voltairine De Cleyre did not lapse into a fuzzy-headed, all-inclusive, all-things-are-

equal definition of anarchism. Debate and theoretical discussion should always be encouraged; disciplined and consistent thinking should always be given a hearing, regardless of whether it disagreed with one's current conviction. But only the word Anarchy could adequately describe her own beliefs. Nor was it subject to modification:

The triumphant word of Anarchism alone has the power to stir the moral pulses of the world. It is the only word which can animate the dreamer, poet, sculptor, painter, musician, artist of chisel or pen, with power to fashion forth his dream. (p. 162 quoted)

Only if a moral and aesthetic revolution occurs in the hearts and minds of men and women, in turn acting upon the material and political structures of the world, will Anarchy truly be served.

Avrich has done a more-thancommendable job in fleshing out the influences upon Voltairine De Cleyre's thinking. He is particularly strong in dealing with some of the more obscure and later European influences upon Voltairine De Cleyre, little-known (in the United States) Italian and Spanish comrades. He is not equally strong perhaps, or at least does not devote as much space, to the indigenous American influences upon De Cleyre. Lum, for instance, does not come to life very much at all, but comes across mostly as a shadowy, bizarre, hard, and tragic figure, whose common devotion to the Haymarket martyrs and to suicide seems his strongest link to Voltairine.

While Lum, De Cleyre's closest comrade for a number of years, is tagged as some obscure sort of Buddhist, we learn little of De Cleyre's own spiritual odyssey, though one senses it was immense. We know that she rejected Catholicism early in life, having attended a convent high school. To what extent, if at all, was she tainted with Stephen Pearl Andrews' spiritualism? Dyer D. Lum, who wrote a tract against spiritualism, nonetheless, supported Victoria Woodhull's Presidential candidacy, for example, she who was notorious for her spiritualism as well as for her free love. Similarly, *Freethought*, a periodical to which both De Cleyre and Lum contributed articles in the 1880s, included about 25 percent spiritualists among its subscribers. Such were the vagaries and ins-and-outs of American radicalism of the 1880s, prior to most of the important European influences. Where did Lum and De Cleyre fit in? What did they feel about all this? One senses that particularly for Lum, who committed suicide only a few years later, such details would be significant. (Hal Sears' *The Sex Radicals* provides one of the fullest pictures of this period of American radicalism.)

In addition to the mysterious Lum, however, the various dramatic relationships with other anarchists form a fascinating backdrop to her thought. Avrich goes into a good bit of detail on her ambivalent friendship with Emma Goldman, her late-blossoming friendship with Berkman on his assuming the editorship of *Mother*

Earth after his release from prison, and the series of unhappy and unhealthy sexual liaisons — particularly with younger men — that marked her mature years. To Berkman, in platonic solidity and literary sympathy, Voltairine De Cleyre was a true friend. One of the most moving and human passages Avrigh quotes is from a letter to Berkman on the subject of suicide. Emma Goldman, with her large lust for living, could be only impatient with such weakness.

Voltairine, on the other hand, was not only a compassionate listener, but was able to empathize with Berkman and see him through his period of self-doubt and readjustment (though Berkman died by his own hand in the 1930s). Voltairine De Cleyre had attempted the act of suicide twice, once by poison with a lover following a particularly futile and devastating argument and once by morphine following a long and painful illness. On this subject, Voltairine lived what Emma, ever the spokesperson of Romanticism and Idealism, spoke but did not feel. The nineteenth century European Romantics probably have more that is meaningful to say to us on suicide — as well as on drugs — than have twentieth century social scientists, beginning as far back as Mme. de Staël's "Reflections on Suicide." As with most of the original Romantics, Voltairine De Cleyre did not ultimately take her life but could not condemn in theory the self-justified right to discontinue one's life.

Despite her experience with near-

suicides, her unhappy sexual unions, and her relentless poverty, Voltairine De Cleyre was not a morbid person, not until the very last part of her life when she had been shattered psychologically and physically by persistent ill-health, once due to a would-be assassin's bullet. Avrigh rightly emphasizes this point since it is contrary to the prevailing picture of De Cleyre as a martyr- or an ascetic-type for which Emma Goldman was at least in part responsible in her autobiography. And, despite many personality differences, Voltairine De Cleyre's opposition to marriage and woman's enslavement to child-rearing were strong points shared with Emma Goldman.

One contributing factor to De Cleyre's lifelong poverty was her position that an anarchist should earn his or her daily bread and not be dependent economically on the movement, a position shared with Kropotkin. This was in contrast to both Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons who were professional movement lecturers and writers. Voltairine De Cleyre distrusted the more popular and inflammatory rhetorical styles of Goldman and Parsons as speakers, as she did any speaker whose appeal was in any large way influenced by personal charisma or magnetism. De Cleyre, who on at least one occasion appeared at the podium attired in a Roman toga emphasizing classic serenity and calmness of appeal, delivered speeches carefully written out in advance and characterized by greater complexity and subtlety of

argument than Emma Goldman's most popular speeches. De Cleyre considered the brisk-selling *Anarchism and Other Essays* by Goldman to be fine, for the most part, for as far as it went, implying the work was a bit superficial for her own taste.

For all this fascinating and intimate detail about the movement and his thoroughness in developing Voltairine De Cleyre's political evolution, Avrigh has not really succeeded in making his subject "live" or "come to life" in the way Richard Drinnon was able to do with Emma Goldman in *Rebel in Paradise*. In part, this may be inevitable because Voltairine De Cleyre is simply a more aloof sort of person, whereas for Emma Goldman the world was her stage and she flourished in the public eye. In part, however, it is because Avrigh's project is somewhat limited to the political, theoretical, and analytical, although he professed in his introduction as his goal "to analyze her character, her ideas, her feelings, . . ." (p. 16) To have done this more thoroughly, he would have had to provide more about De Cleyre's writing, her spiritual development, her emotional development, her more satisfying and enduring friendships, perhaps at the expense of space devoted to the movement figures, who were less significant personally for Voltairine though more significant for history.

While Voltairine De Cleyre cultivated an aloof air in public, it was only because her interior life was so rich, so full of imagery, so strong, and at times so turbulent. For me, the

human side of Voltairine De Cleyre is at least as fascinating as the human side of Emma Goldman, perhaps more so, as her dark sides were more intense, her need for privacy more overwhelming, and her fears and doubts — both about herself and the world — apparently stronger.

While there are aspects of Voltairine De Cleyre's life — particularly her writing, concerning which Berkman recommended her to Upton Sinclair as "one of the best short story writers in America" — that still await definitive treatment, Paul Avrigh's account of De Cleyre's life is thoroughly researched and doubtless accurate, a corrective to previous mistaken treatments of her life. Not one for idle speculation, Avrigh states what the facts and sources clearly reveal and no more. For this reason, as well as for having filled in a conspicuous gap, a missing puzzle piece, in the history of American anarchism, Paul Avrigh has given us a work that will solidly endure. His portrait of Voltairine De Cleyre as a calm and well-measured theorist of major note is not to be faulted.

—Marian Leighton

The Politics of Urban Liberation

Stephen Schecter, *Black Rose Books*, 3934 rue St. Urbain, Montreal, Quebec, 1978, \$5.95 paper.

The domination of inflation and austerity in the national political concern is a case of calling an old conflict

by a new name. Following from the logic of monetary and fiscal policy are the issues of continued viability of national political coalitions and urban independence, investment of resources to enhance monopoly capitalist growth, the changing position of the United States in the international system, and the direction of democracy as special interest groups obtrude on governability.

The restrictions of Carter administration policies on wages and prices are partly a response to the consequences of the Vietnam War and of the widespread mobilization begun in the 1960s of blacks, youth, liberal and leftist activist groups, state workers, women and poor people. The effectiveness of their political demands was the basis of the leap in the growth of government budgets after 1964. Domestic resistance coupled with a commitment to international expansion precluded a guns or butter trade-off in the national budget. Rather than raise taxes, the Johnson administration (as countless governments before it had done) financed war with inflation. But as inflation began to run out of control while growth lagged in the early 1970s, expanding social expenditures quickly became less supportable.

Carter's reaffirmed fiscal conservatism in acting directly against inflation rather than unemployment is fundamentally a response to a conjunctural change in the political-economic system. During the late 1960s American industry rapidly expanded into overseas (especially European) mar-

kets. Indicative is that in 1965 there were only thirteen American banks with foreign branches; by 1972 there were 107 banks with 588 branches holding about \$80 billion in assets. Monopoly capital was experiencing a profit squeeze as well, as inflation generated successive rounds of wage and price increases. The decision not to pay for the Vietnam War with taxes, but to expand the money supply, stimulated needed demand and enhanced the basic trend of dollar inflation. This set the stage for the monetary crisis of 1972, when the international monetary system fell apart and the dollar was devalued twice in three years. Subsequently, to preserve the value of the dollar, stem balance of payments and trade deficits, shore up American power and the trading position of American industry in the world, Carter has proposed zero growth in the national budget to prevent "fiscal drag" on economic growth and tight money to choke off inflation. It remains to be seen whether or not the Congress will go along.

Clear enough, though, is that anti-inflationary policies seek to chasten the politics which help promote and sustain inflation. For monopoly capital to have a greater share of resources for continued growth, state budgets must be cut and reoriented to productivity. All the groups whose demands were satisfied or bought off by government money and programs (and moreover those who weren't satisfied, etc.) must now be satisfied to have less income and control. The aftermath of the 1975 coup in New

York City is an example of the severe possibilities. The policy shift also has worked against organized labor, a partner in the old Democratic presidential coalition, which is being called upon to sacrifice part of its corporate share of income or its political position. Here, too, it remains to be seen how people who are used to a particular or expanding living standard will be convinced by the new political line, especially if they are in a strategic position as is organized labor. If they are not convinced, and state expenditures remain high while economic growth lags and thus state revenues are relatively low, a political crisis appears inevitable. The state must either expand absolutely its share of the national economy or seek further to suppress group demands.

Stephen Schecter presents a short but wide-ranging argument for the key position which urban struggles have in the crisis of the state. The proposition arises from a general premise that cities are major links between daily life and the global realms of economy and nationstate (p. 9). Liberals and Marxists might emphasize different aspects of the global presence in cities, inasmuch as cities enhance capital accumulation and circulation, consume production and services and house labor power. But a libertarian socialist perspective, Schecter suggests, would identify the economic mode of production as only one element in a larger civic life, of habitat and the yearning to be and live the good life. Since the Paris Commune, the apparent radicalism of daily life in

the city has been hailed by libertarians as a well-spring of practical resistance to global economic and political domination. Much of the new political mobilization has been in cities and it's there that fiscal retrenchment is most severely felt.

From the re-analysis of the political-economic crisis, Schecter perceives the possibility of a libertarian socialist strategy which could burst the state at its fiscal seams. He identifies recent examples in Chile, France and Italy plus his own experience with the Montreal Citizens' Movement as prototypes for this strategy. Yet, as lucid a strategic analysis as it is, the mixture of May 1968 terminology of daily life with the traditional socialist mechanism of historic lessons and missions breaks the stride of his radical criticism. Despite silly melodramatic references to demonic "preying" capitalism (p. 124), the book nevertheless is a reaffirmation of strategic thinking in a short-sighted era and is firmly grounded in the political-economic life of the city. The persistent concern of Black Rose Books to promote renewed discussion of urban questions should be commended.

By a logic similar to the struggle in the factory over control of the work process, urban struggles over government-provided services and goods of all kinds, which support monopoly capitalism, may call into question the defensiveness and restriction of social life. But urban liberation needs more than application of traditional socialist concepts. A new conceptual effort is called for. Following political-eco-

conomic *phenomenology* is the *objectivist* critique of political-economy, leaving to the *dialectical objectivist* explanation to revive strategy and qualitative change. On the one hand, the city has undoubtedly become closely entwined through its economic functions with the development of capitalism. Commercial capital built port cities and trading centers. Industrial capital escaped the city and set itself up in the countryside, drawing cities around it. And with the development of enormous diversified and integrated bureaucratic businesses, the city once again has been wrenched and wrought. Widespread decentralization of industry and habitat to suburbs is matched by the build-up of administrative centers in the central cities. Since the 1930s the American government has abetted this development on a continental scale.

On the other hand, focus on the traditional workplace (factory) struggle misses the development of urban life in the government service center, home, school, "public space" and neighborhood. As a model of industrial struggle the traditional view appeared to be a faithful explanation. But the new urban struggle is something other and more than a deduction from the factory. To emphasize the development of capital and describe the new cities as corporate cities (even if critically objective) obscures the ambiguity of social practice. Or, as Schecter says, it would imply that capital has had it all its own way (p. 11). Rather, the political

life of cities new and old is the outcome of a continuing conflict among citizens and their habitat over various urban and social values (p. 69). While the control of work is one of these values, the extension of capitalist relations broadens that struggle.

Urban politics in France, Italy and Quebec raises the possibility that something new can be started. The objective conditions of fiscal crisis can be played with and politics brought home by struggles for day-care, cheap housing and transportation, clean air and water, more and better city services, welfare and unemployment benefits, and power over city development. When effective, these demands all can be explicit challenges to the domination of the agents of capitalist and statist practice. Grasping the dialectic of strategy implicit in the linkage of the everyday with the global is the beginning of a revolutionary praxis. As Schecter reports, urban struggles in France have begun to link these issues with the capitalist organization of cities, creating a new opposition to domination. But involvement in these struggles by unions, the Communist Party and vanguard parties has reinforced the old approach and hindered autonomous action arising from direct daily experience.

The most remarkable developments are those in Italy during the past five years. In the crisis there, linkages have been recognized more widely and self-governing action has been more successful. Massive resistance has been organized to attempts to take

back in rent, telephone, transportation and electric rate increases the wage gains won in industrial conflicts. Resistance has been organized in many cities by neighborhood-initiated joint citizen-union committees. An especial strength for the Italian urban movement was previous experience with union-party conflict which had resulted in autonomous shop committees. When urban struggles were begun neighborhood committees were created independently of unions and the Communist Party, which then impelled the CP and CP-dominated unions to respond favorably to direct action. However, resistance to the state's functions in support of monopoly capitalism went beyond CP policy of seeking to control the state. Urban struggles not only exacerbated the state's fiscal crisis, but revealed an autonomous social practice based upon an everyday rejection of the ideology of dependence and constraint.

In Quebec, where the crisis has been less acute partly because managed by the Parti Quebecois, Montreal activists have sought to cohere and direct widespread opposition to the municipal regime. This experience has perhaps the most to say to Americans. In 1970, a radical city political party, FRAP, was created by representatives of the community organizing movement which for years had organized around a wide range of specific issues and of the radicalized Quebec labor movement. Part of the more general social movement in Quebec, FRAP split apart in the aftermath of

the crisis provoked by the Front de Liberation du Quebec, while the acrimonious general strike of 1972 dampened movement initiatives. In 1973, however, another municipal party was established, called the Montreal Citizens' Movement, by the Montreal labor councils, the Montreal branch of the PQ and community and university activists, plus the Quebec New Democratic Party. Less programmatic at its founding than FRAP, the MCM included divergent strategies, which appeared soon after the 1974 elections in which the MCM received 45 percent of the vote and elected eighty city councillors (of 50 total). A strong parliamentary and reformist wing pursued a traditional course while the radical, anti-capitalist wing, which in 1975 was elected into the party executive, sought post facto to develop a mass base.

Partly from the unresolved tension between the two wings, Schecter reports, energies were diverted into party organization rather than popular mobilization. Although the MCM has been beset with serious difficulties and has retained its electoral support in the 1978 elections while failing to elect anyone, the practical experience gained with political resources has illuminated the range of problems encountered in a North American context of domination. Beyond the strictures set by the crisis, these problems seem to have been the result of the absence of a critical mass of left-wing Montrealers to conceive of programmatically manipulating the latitude in the urban situation in a libertarian

direction. The urban context for radical action was a new one, while the MCM left was inexperienced, theoretically unsophisticated and unfamiliar with the libertarian tradition. At the same time, against the creation of a practical strategy to mobilize everyday opposition and take advantage of the key position of Montreal in the crisis were Marxist-Leninists (mostly outside the MCM) comfortably repeating the formulas of other places and times and social-democrats (inside the MCM) emphasizing the electoral strategy. Specifying and developing a libertarian socialist approach as a practical matter thus ran into limits. So, while the MCM program contained remarkably libertarian and "populist" principles and goals, such as strong neighborhood councils and free transit, the practice of the MCM dealt with internal heterogeneity of interests, making district autonomy work for securing collective political goals, dealing with and pushing past the bounds of reformism and mobilizing a base with consciousness of the potential breadth of the movement.

The conception of libertarian socialist strategy discussed by Schecter emphasizes the freedom of action possible in a given dynamic situation rather than the objective limitations of it. The conditions of autonomy at the daily level are naturally seen as a strength, not an organizational weakness, while breaking the domination of daily existence is the goal. (This is why Schecter's use of determinist language seems so out of place.) The

logic of the crises in France, Italy and Quebec are similar to that outlined in the United States. The urban element here is equally clear, but as was evident in Montreal there is no necessity that it will successfully be made explicit in practice. Greatly increased fiscal dependence on the national government and monopoly capital and their lowly status in the federal system have made cities the most vulnerable places to impose austerity. At the same time such a global strategy is full of risks and uncertainties. Cutting back urban programs with strong social control functions will impose the crisis in the daily lives of people the most exposed to the diverse possibilities of social life and the most liable to resistance given the opportunity. Praxis in this conception is the systematic expression of the crisis for the everyday, with the untypical coherence and reinforcement of an analysis of the conditions of domination and opposition. But as long as strategy is not conscious of itself the conditions of urban liberation will only issue into reform. Conscious of itself and its situation, a popular strategy can seek to take advantage of the limitations posed to the agents of domination.

— Stephen Amberg



Last Writes:

BLACK ROSE LECTURE SERIES WINTER/SPRING 1979

- March 9: George Salzman— *The Conquest of Bread: On Food, Energy, Entropy, and Anarchism*
 March 23: Danielle— *Prostitution as Psychological Guerilla Warfare*
 April 6: Grace Paley— *Reading from her work*
 April 27: Howard Erlich— *Building a Transfer Culture: How To Get From Here to There*
 May 4: The Women's Community Health Center— *Self-Help as an Organizational Tool*

We received a great deal of help from many people in producing *Black Rose*. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of the people at *Radical America* who helped us arrange our mailing lists. *Radical America* (P.O. Box B, Cambridge, MA 02140) is a bimonthly magazine of generally marxist persuasion. Their latest issue (Jan.-Feb.) features a look at pornography, "Erotica and Socialist Morality," and an article on city organizing in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts by Kathy McAfee of the City Life group active in Jamaica Plain.

Frank Brodhead of *Resist* (324 Somerville Ave., Somerville, MA 02143) also helped a great deal with the mailing. *Resist* functions as a conduit for funds which are given as grants to various groups engaged in what can be called "progressive" organizing. The selection of groups for grants is non-sectarian and wide-ranging. *Resist* is also the name of that group's monthly newsletter.

"Last Writes" is a space given over to the editor of each issue to use for announcements of events or to point out articles or journals of interest. The group as a whole has input, but the final choice is at the editor's fancy, there being no other criteria. Perhaps this is the place to state our policy toward exchange subscriptions with other publications. We will willingly exchange with any publication so desiring. But we have decided as a group that we will not exchange advertisements, and will print no advertisements of any kind in *Black Rose*, save what is mentioned by the editor in "Last Writes," as I said before.

So, to mention but two. Since the beginning of the Black Rose group we have enjoyed a working, and for some of us a personal, relationship with Murray Bookchin. He has recently revived the publication of a provocative tri-weekly newsletter, *Comment*, which he published in the early sixties. It basically presents Murray's thoughts on things and costs eighty cents an issue. The address is P.O. Box 371, Hoboken, NJ 07030.

Cultural Correspondence (c/o Dorwar Bookstore, 224 Thayer Street, Providence, RI 02906, \$2 each issue) publishes seriously humorous articles on a variety of topics. Recent issues center upon "feminist humor," including women's underground comics, interviews with Trina Robbins, and Mary Beard's "Laughing Our Way."

A very well-done reissue of Rudolf Rocker's long out-of-print "anarchist classic," *Nationalism and Culture* (written in the 1930s), has been released for \$15 (600 pages) by Michael Coughlin, Publisher, 1985 Selby Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104.

The Association of Libertarian Feminists and the Gay Men's Alliance of Hunter College will sponsor an anarchist feminist conference on Saturday, April 28, at Park Royal Hotel, 23 West 73 Street, in New York, starting at 11 a.m. Speakers will include Alix Kates Shulman and Paul Avrich. Their address is 41 Union Square West, Suite 1428, NY, NY 10003.

We have heard an unsubstantiated rumor that a well-known West Coast chanteuse with avenues of influence in that area's governmental circles has seen the light and is changing her name to L. Kronstadt. Not with a bang but a whimper.

Finally, the second issue of *Black Rose* will appear by June and will feature an interview with Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, an article on the revival of the selective service, a piece by Lester Mazon on the State, book reviews, poetry, and more. We can always use more articles and anyone who wishes may submit an article to us. Articles should be typewritten, double-spaced, and will not be returned. We will not print every article we receive and will try to respond as quickly as possible to each author about their article. We also ask that articles given to us not be given to other publications until we have decided upon whether to print or not.

—John Hess