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> "For our time — I think every statement should be dated" — Alexander Trocchi[1]

"The Situationists, whose judges you perhaps imagine yourselves to be, will one day judge you. We are waiting for you at the turning." On this vaguely threatening note Maurice Wyckaert, speaking for the Situationist International, wrapped up a rant at London's Institute for Contemporary Arts in 1961. One baffled member of the audience (or was he a shill?) asked just what was "Situationism" all about? Guy Debord arose to announce, in French, "We're not here to answer cuntish questions," whereupon the Situationists walked out.

[1] Alexander Trocchi, *Cain's Book* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 59. This book — an autobiographical novel of heroin addiction — is very unlike other Situationist texts in its Beat affinities (*Internationale Situationniste* No. 1 [1958], for instance, complaining that "the rotten egg smell exuded by the idea of God envelops the mystical cretins of the American 'Beat' Generation"). After resigning from the Situationist International in 1964, Trocchi went on to become a grey eminence of Scottish letters, and died in 1984 after 27 years as a junkie.

In a publicity brochure issued several years ago, the ICA recalled the event as "a conference whose chairman was stone deaf, whose main speaker spoke no English, and whose participants denied that the meeting existed." (Actually they only denied that its *topic* existed, since the Situationists defined "Situationism" as a nonsense word coined by anti-Situationists.) The ICA, as we shall see, has taken its revenge.

The Situationist International (1957–1972) was an international but Paris-based formation which recreated the avant garde tradition on a high plane of intelligence and intransigence. Best known today for its ultra-left politics, the SI was founded by artists who merged two tiny organizations, the Lettrist International (starring filmmaker Guy Debord and his wife Michele Bernstein, a collage artist) and the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus (including painters Asger Jorn and Giuseppe Pinot-Gallizio). IMIB, whose anti-functionalist credo might have been *form follows fun*, regrouped artists from the defunct COBRA group. One of them, the painter and urbanist Constant, soon brought with him into the SI the notion of unitary urbanism, "the theory of the combined use of arts and techniques for the integral construction of a milieu in dynamic relation with experiments in behavior."

[2] Jorgen Nash — Jorn's younger brother — related the major schisms of 1964 to differences in national character: The Franco-Belgian situationists base themselves on the same principles as Pascal, Descartes, Croce and Gide. Action precedes emotion. You only begin to feel religious after you have muttered your prayers. According to Scandanavian situationist philosophy action is the result of emotion and arises out of emotion… We are not saying that the French method is wrong or that it cannot be used successfully. We merely say that our two outlooks are incompatible, but they can be made to supplement one another. "Who Are the Situationists?" *Times Literary Supplement*, Sept. 1964 (Special Issue), reprinted in Iwona Blazwick, ed., *An Endless Passion … an Endless Banquet: A Situationist Scrapbook* (London: Institute for Contemporary Arts/Verso, 1989), 62, one of two coffee-table books produced in connection with the ICA exhibition of Situationist and related art. Nash, today the most celebrated Danish poet, still presides over the Situationist Bauhaus which he and Jorn founded in Sweden in 1986; so does another Situationist excluded in 1964, Hardy Strid.

Although its public face was always that of a monolith, the SI experienced several schisms and "excluded" 45 of the 70 individuals who were members at one time or another. The fundamental antagonism, roughly corresponding to a Lettrist International/IMIG-COBRA divide, was between aesthetes and political theorists. The former were usually Germanic, such as Jorn, Constant and the German *Spur* group, with the prominent exception of Pinot-Gallizio. The latter were usually Latin and under the leadership of Guy Debord.[2]

The aesthetes, faithful to the program of unitary urbanism, called for a democratized art, for the reunification and universalization of high culture and popular culture, and for an aesthetic eruption to transform the city into an emsemble of gratifying ambiences. Thus they took an interest in urban planning and architecture, although they seem to have accomplished nothing in either field. The politicos — in the formulation of Raoul Vaneigem, the first non-artist to become important in the SI — demanded the "realization and suppression of art," a revolution of everyday life.

Both sides rejected art as a specialized department of privileged creativity and as the production of commodities for consumption. Every Situationist was anti-capitalist. But where the aesthetes aspired to infuse art into every aspect of life, the politicos sought to transform social relations directly, not just vivify them by comprehensive, qualitatively superior social conditioning. As Mustapha Khayati — an Algerian Situationist and possibly the SI's most accessible polemicist — put it: "The realization of art — poetry in the situationist sense — means that one cannot realize oneself in a 'work,' but rather realizes oneself period." After art comes the art of living.

Not to ask a cuntish question or anything, but what's the difference? Neither tendency ever built what Constant called "another city for a different life." If they did, existing conditions and opportunities would count for more than preconceptions. It was in the pre-revolutionary here-and-now that the competing orientations implied divergent practices.

At the Fifth Conference of the SI in Sweden in 1961, the tendencies clashed openly. The politicos had recently immersed themselves in the history of the revolutionary workers' movement and adopted the council communism of the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie*. The aesthetes were not so much opposed to the renewal of proletarian revolt as skeptical of its prospects in the prosperous quiescence of the early 1960s. They proposed instead to deploy their power where it was already making itself felt, in the art world, for the time being. The politicos retorted that the aesthetes — the *Spur* Germans, for example — overlooked signs of refusal in their own back yards, not to mention misscelaneous episodes ranging from Zengakuren student demonstrations in Japan to the Katangan uprising in the Congo. All these, they optimistically (and erroneously) supposed, had some implicit revolutionary content. The politicos denounced the aesthetes as "cultural pimps." The aesthetes told the politicos that "your theory is going to fly right back in your faces!" Could be they were both right.

In 1962 the Germans and the "Nashists" (Jorgen Nash and the Scandinavians) were excluded; Jorn had already resigned. The Situationists assumed the political posture they would maintain for their final decade. Debord made no more films until after the SI dissolved. Situationist art — collages, cartoons and altered originals — became pure propaganda. Bernstein produced a series of collages — among them "Victory of the Paris Commune" and "Victory of the Workers' Councils of Budapest" — which were unfortunately destroyed when the Situationist headquarters in Denmark was torched in 1965. The Teutons formed their own Second Situationist International, publishing *Situationist Times* in Amsterdam and exerting a lasting influence on Scandinavian culture.

Although the Situationists boasted that theirs "was the best effort so far toward *getting out of the twentieth century*," they never made it over the wall. Their old foil the London ICA, among others, several years ago returned them to their cells in the world they'd made their break from. Their art made the rounds at three presti-

where, workers might have appropriated it, although this is sheer speculation.

It is all over — and at the same time it is all over the place. Situationism is dead.[16] Long live situationism!

gious avant hip venues. In 1989–1990, "On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time" — named after a Guy Debord film he will no longer permit to be shown — went from the Musee national d'art moderne (Centre Georges Pompidou) in Paris to the London ICA and on to the Boston ICA where I took it in. As delicately phrased by the catalog, the exhibit posed "a unique museological challenge," much as the remains of a downed UFO pilot would present a funeral home with a unique mortuary challenge.[3]

As Raoul Vaneigem declaimed, the SI was "not working for the spectacle of the end of the world, but for the end of the world of the spectacle." Regarding themselves as revolutionaries, in but not of this world, the Situationists perforce had to define the terms of their interactions with it. To be detached from the existing order was to opt to interpret it rather than change it. But to participate in it was to perpetuate it. The Situationists had to find a way to take from the system (what else is there to take from?) without being taken in by it. They characterized these possibilities as polarities: *detournement* (roughly: "diversion") and *recuperation* (roughly: "recovery"). To turn the system's images against it was to detourn, to divert them. But to be "turned" in turn — in the argot of the intelligence community — was to be recuperated, recovered by the system as art, as ideology, as any of many fragmentary forms of specialisation or partial opposition.

No revolutionary, no avant garde tendency ever appreciated the risk of recuperation as the Situationists did. This if anything justi-

[3] Elisabeth Sussman, ed., *On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time* (Cambridge, Massachusetts & London: MIT Press for the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, Massachusetts, 1985). The London show elicited a protest flyer by pro-situ Michel Prigent, "The Misadventures of the Situationist International in the Temple of Doom," castigating the belated academic discovery of the SI as "would be S.I. specialists from the capsizing world of decomposed thought … falling over themselves in a desperate attempt to shore up their bankrupt careers." The Boston stopover elicited a similar, unsigned jeremiad, "On the Attempted Gentrification of the Situationist International."

fies their claim to have modernized revolution as the spectacle had modernized capitalism. But they were better at diagnosis than cure, and the society of the spectacle is a cure-or-be-cur(at)ed world.

Some of their precautionary measures were forseeably futile. The imposition of Leninist-style party discipline (49 of 70 SI members were sooner or later "excluded") looks a lot like recuperation; certainly it didn't avert the SI's decline qualitatively or quantitatively.

More important — and with much more originality — the sits incorporated *failsafe* mechanisms into their productions. Wyckaert's and Debord's word-fetishism at the ICA as to "situationism" was probably just part of the ambush laid for the audience, but sit texts did regularly harp on parts of speech as protective amulets against recuperation — a formalism at once naive and nitpicking. *Memoires*, a graphic/textual collaboration between Jorn and Debord when they were probably both, as usual, in their cups, is bound in sandpaper covers to thwart the librarian or bibliophile who dares to treat it like just another book by shelving it between others. With mindless mimicry, the ICA bound one of its two coffee-table books in sandpaper covers[4] too, the sandpaper donated by English Abrasives and Chemical Limited. But anything *abrasive* about the *Memoires*, inside or out, was smoothed over by the ICA by keeping the book, and all other specimens of Situationist publishing, literally under glass.

Similarly, Giuseppe Pinot-Gallizio's "industrial painting" parodied mass production with painting that came off a roll and sold by the meter. What remains of one roll, part of the ICA exhibit, is 145 meters long. The idea was to devalorize art by cranking it out

[4] Sussman, *On the Passage.* As I do not own an emory board, I have found the cover useful in doing my nails. This exemplifies the Situationist aspiration to reintegrate art and everyday life. [*Last-minute note: upon reading an earlier version of this text, Molly Gill, publisher of* The Rational Feminist, *was so moved by my plight that she sent me an emory board. Thanks, Molly. You are the hippest great-grandmother ever published a fanzine.]*

knew that their Futurist, Dadaist, Surrealist and Lettrist forebears had been, in their word, *recuperated*, that is, *recovered* by and for the existing order. An order which showed itself as the *spectacle*, the "organization of appearances." Art — already image — is the easiest of all specialties to recuperate. All you have to do is ignore it or, if that doesn't work, buy it.

The Situationists conceptualized recovery and diversion as polar types, as of course they are, but forgot that they are *ideal* types, abstractions from the concrete actuality of experience — aids to interpretation, ladders (in Wittgenstein's metaphor) to be climbed up, then thrown down. All forms are mixed. Recovery and diversion are abstractions just like the points and the lines of geometry which have never been found in the wild, only approximated there. To complicate matters still more, recovery and diversion (unlike points and lines) form a continuum, not a dichotomy. Neither the Situationists nor the managers of the spectacle ever had full control over their manipulations of ideas and images. Nobody does. Diversion can also recuperate, recuperation can also divert. And so the recuperation of Situationism which is unmistakably occurring at an increasing pace is not necessarily entirely anti-Situationist.

Since 1972 unchaperoned by any organization, situationism has been available for various uses, some dubious. Punks pilfered it for subliminals. Museologists curated it. Marxist academics at *Telos* explained it away as Frankfurt School philosophy as harmless as they are. Pro-situ hustlers like Tom Ward traded on their expertise in it. SI veterans reminisced about it, but only the ones who'd been excluded. Anarchists either maligned it or miscegenated with it. Poseurs congratulated each other for having heard of it. Some-

A Preamble to the Brave New World Order," ibid. , 55–59; Bob Black, "Friendly Fire," *Friendly Fire* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1992), 275–282.

[16] So is Guy Debord, who committed suicide on November 30, 1994 at age 62. Francis Marmande, "Guy Debord, esthète de la subversion," *Le Monde*, Dec. 3, 1994, 1, 17. Debord, a heavy drinker, was reportedly suffering from alcoholic polyneuritis.

gan separatists, even Berkeley students. You don't have to be a Situationist to know that things are not always as they seem (although it helps). The spectacle only seems to be seamlessly serene. The temptation to elitism, as to optimism, is irresistible: it is *condescending* to annex all the orneriness of others to one's own pet fancies. Just possibly some people knew what they were doing and it was not situationist, thank you.[13] The Situationists made a spectacle of themselves, and that was their undoing. They finally *did* take their desires for reality. Psychiatrists call that "ideas of reference."

But then again, as Art Kleps asserted, maybe ideas of reference are where it's at. In his post-SI writings, Debord bragged that history has absolved him.[14] Perhaps the spectacle, the essence of appearance, is more manifest than ever. (The mall has its uses for things.) There *is* something situationistic abroad which has made the theory more accessible even as it shows up the parts that are passe. When anti-situationist publishers like Mike Gunderloy and Fred Woodworth boast of their inability to understand situationism, increasingly their readers are likely to conclude that they must be smarter than these proud know-nothings. To the stunned viewers of the recent mini-series, the Gulf War, the spectacle may be more meaningful than any of the old anarchist cliches.[15] And it illuminates that by which it is illuminated.

No avant garde tendency ever tried harder, fully aware what was at stake, to escape the curator's clutches than did the Situationists, even in their initial phase of intervention in the art scene. They

[13] "In the last analysis they made the same mistake as all left-wing intellectuals: *they thought that everyone else was plain thick.* The poor workers don't know what's going on, they need someone to tell them." Christopher Gray, *Leaving the 20th Century: The Incomplete Work of the Situationist International* (London: Free Fall Publications, 1974), 167.

[14] *E.g., Guy Debord, Preface to the Fourth Italian Edition of "The Society oof the Spectacle"* (2nd ed.; London: BM Chronos, 1983).

[15] Bureau of Public Secrets [Ken Knabb], "The War and the Spectacle," in Loompanics' Golden Records, ed. Michael Hoy (Port Townsend, Wash.: Loompanics Unlimited, 1993), 66–68; see also Ben G. Price, "Between Iraq and a Hard Place:

in vast quantities, but even in the 1950s the cunning of the market prevailed. When the artist arbitrarily jacked up the price of his glorified wallpaper, demand *increased.* After all, anything expensive must be worth it.

Naturally nothing came of Pinot-Gallizio's ambition to drape entire cities with industrial painting. The closest he came was the "Cavern of Anti-Matter," a large, dimly lit room lined with the stuff.[5] I enjoyed the Boston ICA's enfeebled replication because it was the only place I was not under the surveillance of the staff. For also on display were some of Asger Jorn's "modifications" — kitsch paintings by nobody artists which he "overpainted" with phantasmagoria. The last thing the ICA wanted was for anybody to get ideas and *behave* like a Situationist — by, say, overpainting overpainting.

The futility of the Situationists' precautions reminds me of a story, related by Suetonius, of an enemy of Caesar's who consumed graduated doses of poison in order to immunize himself. Hearing

[5] As originally set up by the artist, this was a multi-media project, including sounds which varied according to people's movements within the Cavern, and a live model. The Boston show was soundless; replacing the model was a dummy. Besides practical constraints — the Situationists who provided Pinot-Gallizio's sound system were expelled, as he was, over thirty years ago — squeamishness over the arguably sexist objectification of the model might have troubled Puritan/PC Boston. One needn't be hyper-feminist to wince at a liberatory tendency whose worst epithet is, as we have seen, *cuntish.* Only 10% of SI members were women. Only two played significant roles: Michele Bernstein (so long as she was Debord's wife) and Jacqueline de Jong, whose *Situationist Times* reflected the more free-wheeling atmosphere of the Second Situationist International. According to founding SI member Ralph Rumney, the SI "was extraordinarily anti-feminist in practice. Women were there to type, cook supper and so on." Rumney, who was expelled for failing to turn in a "psychogeographical" report on time, claims that Debord took credit for theory produced by Bernstgein. "The Situationist International and Its Historification" (an interview), *Art Monthly* No. 127 (June 1989). (Rumney's report is reproduced, reduced to near-indiscernibility, in Blazwick, *An Endless Adventure*, 45–49.) Rumney might be biased: he married Bernstein after she split with Debord. (They're now divorced.) According to Rumney, Bernstein is "among the most important literary critics in France today."

of this, the Emperor laughed, saying, "There is no antidote against Caesar!"

Whatever else may be said about the exhibition and its companion volumes, they correct the self-serving interpretation of the SI circulated by its regnant political faction since 1964 and recapitulated by almost everything which has appeared in English about the SI. Part of the indignation over these productions is reflexive anxiety that the SI — which boasted of its blackout by the mainstream and by the left — is now being translated, interpreted and exhibited by specialists who don't even purport to be pro-Situationist.[6] Ralph Rumney, an early-excluded SI founder, has complained of the way it "commandeered history," writing its own

[6] A neglected exception is political scientist Bernard B. Brown's *Protest in Paris: Anatomy of a Revolt* (New York: General Learning Press, 1974), an analysis of the May Days of 1968. That upsurge gave the lie to all the pluralist consensus hogwash produced by Brown and all other academics about French politics. His account is transparently vindictive, but lends independent credence to the SI's claim to have had an important influence on the uprising. The first attempt to debunk the SI is Stewart Home, *The Assault on Culture: Utopian Currents From Lettrisme to Class War* (London: Aporia Press/Unpopular Books, 1988). With enemies like Home, the SI doesn't need friends. His book — a sort of primer on the avant garde — is brief and conclusory, keyed to the TV-trained contemporary attention span. Marred by malice, moralism and misinformation, Home's screed does recount some of the lost history of the SI — especially its early, arty phase — but the ICA volumes are more informative and less tendentious precisely on this "brief moment in time." Home — calling himself The PRAXIS Group — fomented the Art Strike, which, had anyone participated in it, would have lasted from 1990 to 1993. He was careful to get his first novel published just ahead of the deadline. *Pure Mania* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Polygon, 1989). For my critique of the Art Strike, see "The Refusal of Art," *Friendly Fire* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Autonomedia, 1992), 209–214; for own my Art Strike activism, see "The Albany Art Strike Action Committee," *ibid.*, 215–218. Again getting in just under the wire, Home published a previously untranslated text by Asger Jorn, a figure I find, as a personality, the most attractive of the Situationists, but the article reveals this compulsively creative manic to have been metaphysically confused. "Pataphysics: A Religion in the Making," *Smile* No. 11 (1989); see also Asger Jorn, *Open Creation and Its Enemies with Originality and Magnitude (on the System of Isou)* , trans. Fabian Tompsett (London: Unpopular Books, 1994).

posters, postcards, fanzines and tabloids placed under glass with the rest of the relics, although nondescript post-modern art from the likes of NATO and Art & Language, which reflects little if any Situationist influence, went on display?

Probably because the marginals materials *aren't* relics — yet. For this kind of art, the copy is the original. Thus their small print runs count for less than the potential for the infinite multiplication of originals in the calculations of museologists, whose dismal science is, like economics, predicated upon scarcity. Pinot-Gallizio was on to something after all, but the material conditions for the mass production *and distribution* of art weren't quite there yet. The supersession of art — as of work — is not a matter of unitary urbanism or workers' councils but rather of generalizing the *gift*, solvent of all separations. The SI's practice was for once ahead of its theory here. Its slick journals were inexpensive, and during May-June 1968, the Situationists (*both* Internationals, in fact) churned out hundreds of thousands of posters and publications, their *don gratuit* to the proletariat.[12]

The Situationists (especially the Debordists) chronically indulged in *imputationism*, that is, wishful thinking dressed up as critical theory. The Si was forever discovering *unconscious* situationism in the actions of Watts looters, Swedish delinquents, Katan-

[12] For the SI's view of its part in the May Days, see "The Beginning of an Era" in the Knabb anthology. Academics like Bernard B. Brown, Alfred Willener and Richard Gombin have attested, with hostility or sympathy, to the saliency of Situationist themes in the uprising. In *The Assault on Culture: Utopian Currents From Lettrisme to Class War* (London: Aporia Press & Impossible Books, 1988), Stewart Home asserts: "When it's considered that millions of workers and students participated in the May events, such a miniscule grouping cannot be deemed of much significance." This judgment ignores the indisputable fact that the SI's *enrage* allies provoked the student demonstrations at Nanterre which in turn precipitated the general strike. Perhaps the best rejoinder to Home's number-crunching is the SI's answer to a query how many members it had: "A few more than the original guerrilla nucleus in the Sierra Madre, but with fewer weapons. A few less than the delegates in London in 1864 who founded the International Workingmen's Association, but with a more coherent program."

self-congratulatory version. Some attention to the history of "situationism" in Britain and America is necessary to situate the Situationist fad which the ICA represented and reinforced.

Although one of the handful of SI founders, Ralph Rumney, is English, Anglophones were more than usually likely to fall out with the Parisian control group. Rumney was soon expelled. Alexander Trocchi, a Scot, resigned in 1964. The entire English Section was expelled in 1967 for equivocating over the Parisians' resolve to break off contacts with several Americans who had the temerity to expound to Vaneigem himself a "mystical" interpretation of his book *The Revolution of Everyday Life*.[7] The English formed King Mob, which included the future manager of the Sex Pistols, Malcolm Maclaren. The Americans, based in New York City, concocted a hippie-Situationist amalgam, the Motherfuckers.

Later, the American Jon Horelick and the Dutchman Tony Verlaan formed an American Section of the SI, again in New York City. It was the "scission" of the Americans in 1971 — leaving the SI with four European members, one of them residing in an Eastern European insane asylum — which convinced Guy Debord to liquidate the SI. By then, a few SI and SI-influenced texts (by the epigones the SI scornfully called "pro-situs") had circulated, with little effect, in Britain and the United States.[8] They were too little and too late to influence the New Left. Too bad. The New Left needed theory that was rigorous *and* anti-authoritarian, but it (quite sensibly) shunned anarchism as intellectually flaccid and toyed with Marxism in its retrograde Leninist varieties, sundering the radicals from their (to this day underestimated) sources of popular support.

As the SI decomposed, pro-situ groups formed in New York City and in the San Francisco Bay Area with names like Nega-

[7] London: Practical Paradise Publications, 1972; 2nd ed., London: Rising Free Collective, 1979; Seattle: Left Bank Books & London: Rebel Press, 1983 (the "authorized" translation).

[8] E.g., *The Beginning of an Epoch* (New York: Create Situations, n.d.) (from *IS* No. 12); *The Poor and the Super-Poor* (New York: Create Situations, n.d.) (from

The presentation in English of most Situationist and pro-situ texts has sharply tilted toward the suppression, not the realisation of art, diminishing the holism of the tendency and perhaps contributing to Situationist theory's exaggerated reputation for aridity.

Not much later, Reid placed his collage style — commingling mass media texts with cut-outs — at the disposal of Malcolm Maclaren, also a King Mob veteran. Maclaren's management — not to mention his manufacture — of the Sex Pistols, looks suspiciously like a cynical experiment in Situationist social engineering. Some of the graphics which adorn Sex Pistols album covers (eagerly sought after by collectors today) Reid had previously placed in pro-situ publications.

Although not many knew it at the time, the comprehensive negativity of punk had been refracted through a Situationist prism. Happily the programmatic particulars, like council communism, had fallen by the wayside. By the late 1970s, the punk eruption in Britain included a zine eruption. Publishing a punkzine was even easier, and even more participatory, than performing punk music, which was anything but difficult. No small number of the thousands of zines which have come out in the last fifteen years look like messy versions of SI publications, and some of them were dealing with Situationist ideas before Greil Marcus got hip to them.[10] Having glanced at every page of every issue of the SI journal — the Boston ICA stapled them up — I can say that the best SI collages are markedly inferior to the work of such marginals milieu collagists as James Koehnline, Ed Lawrence, Joe Schwind, Freddie Baer and Mykell Zhan.[11] Why were absolutely none of the North American

[10] There are at least 10,000 zines publishing today in the United States alone. Mike Gunderloy & Cari Goldberg Janice, *The World of Zines* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 1. The maximum estimate became the minimum estimate in just four years. Mike Gunderloy, *How to Publish a Fanzine* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Loompanics Unlimited, 1988), 7.

[11] Autonomedia Collective., ed., *Xerox Pirates: "High" Tech & the New Collage Underground* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 1994).

tion, Point Blank, Contradiction and Bureau of Public Secrets, followed in other localities by not-so-sit grouplets (Upshot, Aurora, Tampa Narcissus) which, without intending to, insinuated situationism into the somewhat resurgent American anarchism of the 1970s. In Detroit, Fredy Perlman's Black & Red project translated and published Debord's book and other sit texts, and after 1975, the vintage underground newspaper the *Fifth Estate* adopted an anarcho-situationist stance which has recently, alas, deteriorated into some sort of eco-reformist nature-worship cult.

Excluded English Situationist Christopher Gray published an SI translation anthology, *Leaving the 20th Century*, in 1974; not many copies crossed the Atlantic. Vaneigem's book appeared in translation in 1979, followed in 1983 by a joint Anglo-American authorized version. In 1981, pro-situ Ken Knabb (sole member of the Bureau of Public Secrets) self-published a *Situationist International Anthology* containing about a third of the materials in the SI's magazine and other texts. Months later rock critic Greil Marcus, after tutoring by pro-situ Tom Ward, ended the American media blackout with a *Village Voice* article on situationism.[9] Marcus followed

IS No. 11); Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black & Red, 1970; rev. ed., 1977). In Britain, Nick Brandt, Larry Law, Michel Prigent and others made some texts available.

[9] May 11, 1982. Ward deplored Marcus' aestheticisation of the SI, but Marcus was no more one-sided than politicos like Ward himself, who'd by then regressed to the Marxism from which most of them had never really escaped. Tom Ward, "Class Struggle Is for Real, Greil" (unpublished); *cf.* Bob Black, Preface to For Ourselves, *The Right to Be Greedy* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Loompanics Unlimited, n.d. [1983]) (originally published in 1975; an exposition of "communist egoism"). What Ward retains from the Situationists is their faults: their determinism, their councilism, and their invective. In an article purporting to introduce the SI to the left, Ward served up mostly excuses for his ineffectual vulgarizations of the 1970s and Stang-style plugs for the projects of his cronies. "The Situationists Reconsidered," in *Cultures in Contention*, ed. Doug Kahn & Diane Neumaier (Seattle: Real Comet Press, 1985) (see chapter four). One outfit lauded by Ward was the violent statist cult *Processed World*, about which, see chapter four and Bob Black, *The Baby and the Bathwater* (2nd ed.; New York: Feh! Press, 1994).

up with his 1989 book *Lipstick Traces*, an uncritical and disorganized but not uninformative treatment of situationism, punk rock and all that which was published, remarkably, by Harvard University Press.

The thing about this accretion of texts is that they were just that, texts. Nobody knew about the artistic origins of the SI or the aesthetic preoccupations of its earliest years. The Debordists had their reasons for concealing their own artistic roots the better to come off as social theorists, and so it was as politics that situationism captivated a small but growing number of Britons and North Americans from the mid-70s onwards. The Teutons of the Second SI, who disdained to conceal their artistic aims, got no hearing in the Anglophonic world, although their scandals compare favorably to those of the Debordists. Constant with several anarchists set off the Provo movement in Amsterdam (1965–1967), proving it was possible for Situationists to put some fire in the belly of the counter-culture. The Germans of *Spur* were prosecuted for pornography. One of them, Dieter Kunzelmann, founded Kommune 1 in Berlin — which introduced hippie culture to both Germanies and incubated several of the terrorists of the June 2 Movement. In the Netherlands, Jacqueline de Jong's *Situationist Times*, with less text and more graphics than the SI journal, anticipated the fanzine style of the late 70s and 80s.

Back in England, SI excludees formed King Mob, which targeted art students. One of its veterans, Jamie Reid, designed Christopher Gray's SI anthology, but he was to have far more impact on the punk aesthetic through his association with the Sex Pistols. Gray has been faulted for his sloppy translations and shallow commentary, but in one crucial respect his anthology is superior to Knabb's: it incorporates enough of the cartoons and graphics to resemble the original look-and-feel of the SI journal. Knabb out-Deborded Debord in marginalizing the aesthetic dimension. For even after the Debordist consolidation, Situationist productions reflected the aesthetic of integrated forms practiced by the COBRA and IMIB artists.