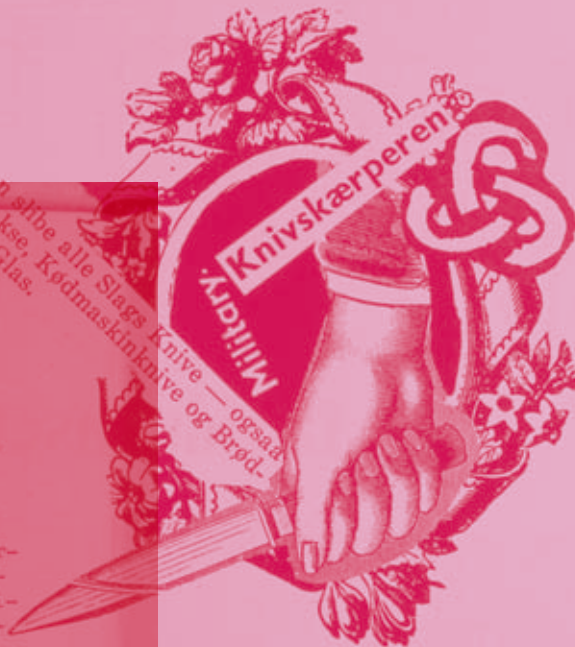


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# COSMONAUTS OF THE FUTURE

Texts from The Situationist Movement  
in Scandinavia and Elsewhere

Edited by Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen & Jakob Jakobsen

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Med de venligste hilsener,

J.V. Martin

**COSMONAUTS  
OF THE FUTURE**

## COSMONAUTS OF THE FUTURE

TEXTS FROM THE SITUATIONIST MOVEMENT IN SCANDINAVIA AND ELSEWHERE

Edited by Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen & Jakob Jakobsen

Published 2015 by Nebula in association with Autonomedia

### Nebula

Læssøegade 3,4  
DK-2200 Copenhagen  
Denmark

www.nebulabooks.dk  
nebula@nebulabooks.dk

ISBN 978-87-993651-8-0

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ISBN 978-1-57027-304-9

Editors: Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen & Jakob Jakobsen | Translators: Peter Shield, James Manley, Anja Büchele, Matthew Hyland, Fabian Tompsett, Jakob Jakobsen | Copyeditor: Marina Vishmidt | Proofreading: Danny Hayward | Design: Ase Eg | Printed by: Naryana Press in 1,200 copies

Thanks to: Jacqueline de Jong, Lis Zwick, Ulla Borchenius, Fabian Tompsett, Howard Slater, Peter Shield, James Manley, Anja Büchele, Matthew Hyland, Danny Hayward, Marina Vishmidt, Stephen Shukaitis, Jim Fleming, Mathias Kokholm, Lukas Haberkorn, Keith Towndrow, Ase Eg and Infopool ([www.scansitu.antipool.org.uk](http://www.scansitu.antipool.org.uk))

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Cover images: Press Release by J.V. Martin, 1962; Jørgen Nash: **Det naturlige smil**, 1964; Jacqueline de Jong: "Critique of the Political Practice of Détournement", 1962

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## TEXTS FROM THE SITUATIONIST MOVEMENT IN SCANDINAVIA AND ELSEWHERE

Edited by  
**Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen  
& Jakob Jakobsen**

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## INTRODUCTION: TO BE BURIED ALIVE

Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen & Jakob Jakobsen

“Down with art which is complacent and egocentric, which con-  
templates its own navel! Up with generating everybody’s art for all!  
Long live the popular art of toilet graffiti, where one can be jerked  
off at 10pm if you call the right telephone number.”

*J.V. Martin*

“We do not always distinguish between theory and practice.  
We intend to produce our theories after the event.”

*Jørgen Nash, Jens Jørgen Thorsen, Gordon Fazakerley, Hardy Strid,  
Staffan Larsson, Ansgar Elde, Jacqueline de Jong & Patrick O'Brien*

### The many realizations of art

In many ways it is difficult today to really comprehend the Situationist idea of art as a radical, even revolutionary, gesture. Nowadays, it is easier to see art as a haven for newly accumulated capital and a resource for regional or national development. The artist has taken on the role of a celebrity and a much-loved model for entrepreneurs. Today art equals ‘creativity’ and luxury goods. In business schools professors talk about art as the ultimate result of capitalist production, about companies being ‘art firms’ that should look upon their products as aesthetic artefacts open to interpretation and aesthetic judgement. The sad fact is that art during the last two decades has become increasingly tied to post-Fordist speculation with bling, boom and bust transforming art into an important economic resource.

For the Situationists, art was something completely different. For them art was the means to an aesthetic emancipation from capitalist society, an end to the parcelling out of human existence into compartmentalized sectors where most people worked and consumed but primarily passively contemplated a selected group of people-commodities – politicians or movie stars or artists but never all at once. The Situationists wanted to realize art. Not in the sense we have been witnessing for the last twenty-five years where the relative autonomy of art has come under intense pressure, as art has fused with the economy, but in the opposite sense of an abolition of capitalism and its separate identities, including that of the artist. Art was to be realized beyond the confines of the art institution where art was safely locked away from everyday life.

This idea of the ‘realization of art’ was shared by the many different Situationist fractions that materialized during the dramatic history of the Situationist movement as it unfolded from 1957 onwards to the early 1970s. Asger Jorn, Constant, Jørgen Nash, Jacqueline de Jong, but also Guy Debord, subscribed to the idea of art as a transgression, art as an attack on the spectacular commodity society. The contemplative viewing of art was to be replaced by the construction of situations, meaning the construction of a new life beyond the constraints of capitalism.

### Beyond art through art

Of course the Situationists strongly disagreed when it came to the exact nature of the realization of art. The many exclusions and the split in the International at the beginning of the 1960s testifies to that disagreement. Beyond the many different ideas of artistic practice, there slowly emerged an opposition between one group of members, ‘the theoreticians of an art-of-war’ situated around Debord, that was getting more and more dissatisfied with modern art, and another group, ‘the artistic front that wanted to realize art here and now’. Initially this was connected to Jorn, but as he silently left, the group came to be led by his younger brother Nash. This faction saw the artistic method of experimentation as a means to the expansion of human existence and as a revolutionary process without specific political ends.

As is well-known from the by now fairly comprehensive literature on the Situationist International, during the first years of the group’s existence it was deemed possible to engage in experiments with art, using artistic means to different ends within the overall horizon of critiquing bourgeois capitalist society. It was in this period from 1957 to 1960 when Jorn made his modified kitsch paintings, Pinot Gallizio worked on his industrial painting and Constant started his New Babylon project that envisioned a Situationist city.

A range of diverse but complementary activities were going on at the same time in several places in Europe. Jorn was busy exhibiting in galleries in Paris, Milan and Copenhagen. Gallizio also started mounting exhibitions with his industrial painting. In Paris the *Internationale Situationniste* journal was put together. Jorn toured Europe getting into contact with like-minded artists who all wanted to participate in the development of the Situationists’ new radical artistic plasticity and experimentation. Old comrades like Constant who had been in Cobra and new ones like the German Gruppe SPUR and the Dutch painter Jacqueline de Jong joined the Situationist avant-garde. The members of this diverse group of avant-garde artists were all in agreement that it was necessary to continue and even accelerate artistic development with a view to destroying post-war Fordist society where people were reduced to workers and passive consumers living in sterile and boring urban environments while watching images glorifying that life. That society had to be replaced with a new life where the specialized identities and roles of capitalist society would be replaced by the idea of the total wo/man able to liberate and realize her/himself. According to the Situationists, historical advances had made a new life possible but the capitalist relations of production, not least on the symbolic plane, subjugated people, forcing them to survive instead of genuinely living.

The Situationists were in a certain sense continuing the iconoclastic project of the inter-war avant-gardes, which envisioned art as an intervention into the communication systems of capitalist society. Because modern art was the place where an idea of a total wo/man survived in a suspended form – the ideology of the artist being free from external constraints and

endowed with a godlike creativity – art was the place to begin the transgression of the autonomisation of modern capitalist society, destroying the artist and making creativity available for all. Therefore the Situationists attacked art fiercely. In a time where technological development had made it feasible to do away with coercive waged labour the Situationists were looking for a new kind of human creativity. They considered art and labour within capitalism to be two sides of the same matter: repressed, specialised attempts by wo/man to realize her/himself. Art and labour thus had to be transcended and replaced with a new art of life that would only become possible through a revolution of everyday life carried out not by a vanguard but by people themselves. Poetry made by all.

The question was how to get everybody to participate in the revolutionary process. In the first four or five years of the movement there was a push to exclude certain practices deemed suspect or too close to contemporary bourgeois art. Constant for instance was highly sceptical towards Gallizio and Jorn's continued experiments with painting. Following difficulties with getting the proper Situationist anti-artistic stance across to a Parisian art audience in connection with Gallizio's exhibition in Galerie Drouin in 1959, where he transformed the gallery into a 'cavern of anti-matter', and problems with a scheduled Situationist manifestation at the Stedelijk in Amsterdam, several artists left the group or were expelled. Gallizio was thrown out in May 1960, Constant left the group the following month and Jorn also withdrew his active membership, although he continued to finance activities and was still active in the shadows. He remained in contact with Debord as well as the members who started to dispute Debord's hardliner rhetoric of art as 'non-Situationist' and the demand to abandon individual art work no matter how experimental it was.

### The split

The conflicts came to a preliminary highpoint during the conference in Gothenburg in 1961 where the new member Raoul Vaneigem stated that the Situationist project could not be the creation of a spectacle of refusal but must entail refusing the spectacle. Therefore the Situationists had to stop making works of art. 'The elements of the destruction of the spectacle

must [...] cease to be works of art'. Only thus would it be possible to be truly artistic 'in the new and authentic sense defined by the Situationist International'. The Debord line was approved after some discussions, but there was dissent. Gruppe SPUR especially was reluctant to comply with the new discourse.

Gruppe SPUR and members like Jørgen Nash and Hardy Strid felt the pressure of the 'normalcy' of the post-war bourgeois world and believed that art should engage in a fierce battle against a conformist society that wanted to put a lid on modern art's wild experiments; especially the SPURists felt the pressing norms of post-war gerontocracy and embraced a nonconformist bohemian lifestyle. The court cases against Gruppe SPUR, but also contemporary ones against the Danish Surrealist Wilhelm Freddie as well as Henry Miller and the scandals that Nash and his compatriots staged testified to this. Nash and the members of the artistic front therefore considered it to be a fundamental error to move away from art in the hope of a new proletarian offensive that, they argued, was not likely to come anyway. Vaneigem and Debord were on the other hand afraid that the Situationist project was turning into an accepted transgression. Bourgeois society used art as a safety valve. That's why they had to keep a distance from the art world. The revolution couldn't take place inside the art institution or as some kind of art event – no matter how ephemeral – it had to be a seizing of the means of production on a world-scale, in other words a proletarian revolution in which the masses took to the streets and created a completely new world beyond the capitalist money economy.

For the Debord fraction the discussions in the group in the years from 1960 to 1962 enabled them to specify their understanding of the Situationist project as being an attempt to enable the proletariat to seize power in order to transform society through total democracy, doing away with all the spheres of class society including art and culture but also politics as a separate sphere. The members that left or were forced to leave the group during the discussion about the role of art of course disagreed with the Debord fraction that art had to be abandoned. Leaving art would be a grave error and would only further force the Situationist project into a problematic direction where it would be impossible to experiment and



carry out interventions. It was necessary to continue the experimentation, Nash and Jorn contended. Theoretical analysis could not be a substitute for concrete experiments and actions.

While we can highlight the differences between the several competing fractions, such as between Debord and Jorn, between the First and the Second Situationist International and between Jorn and Nash, it is clear in retrospect that they shared a common project striving to develop the appropriate means of setting free the creative forces of art in everyday life. Significantly, Jorn tried to navigate between the two positions or conceptualised them as two aspects of the broader Situationist project, of the Situlogy he was trying to develop. As he explained, the analytic scientific approach and the playful experimental approach in fact complemented each other and were to be understood as two sides of the same general Situlogic project that he was trying to develop within the framework of his Skandinavisk Institut for Sammenlignende Vandalisme (Scandinavian Institute of Comparative Vandalism).

But Jorn's attempt to maintain a process of exchange that would enable the two approaches to continue alongside one another soon came to a dead end. The conflict came to a head when a number of members in the central committee in February 1962 excluded Gruppe SPUR from the Situationist International due to the German members not having gotten the permission of the Central Committee to publish a new issue of the SPUR journal and for 'arriving' as artists. The remaining members of the central committee, Nash, de Jong and Elde, disagreed and protested, which resulted in their own exclusion from the Situationist organisation. Right away a battle broke out between the fractions, with both asserting that they in fact represented the genuine Situationist perspective. 'Being a Situationist could not be reduced to being an artist'. 'Giving up on art in favour of Marxist theory is a step back'. The accusations flew back and forth between the two groupings.

### Situationisms

After the split, the Danish artist J.V. Martin, who had originally been invited into the Situationist International during the 1961 conference in Gothenburg by Nash, with whom he had also co-written a book, became

the representative of the Situationist International in Scandinavia with the mission to stop Nash from 'stealing' the Situationist identity and falsifying it by turning it into an artistic promotional stunt. Martin had difficulties competing with Nash when it came to getting public attention, but he did manage to start a Danish Situationist journal called *Situationistisk Revolution* (Situationist Revolution) which published translations of texts from the French journal as well as some new contributions, mainly by himself and the few other Danish members he was able to gather around him. Martin was in many ways closer in spirit to Nash than to Debord but he took up the job and was a member of the Situationist International until Debord and Sanguinetti dissolved the organisation in 1972.

If the group that was left around Debord found Nash to be a real nuisance who somehow represented a genuine threat to the Situationist project, the question emerges about how the difference between a revolutionary and a pseudo-revolutionary practice, between a revolutionary art-of-war and a radical artistic approach, was constructed. Nash and his comrades seemed to enjoy the quarrel with the 'dull theoreticians in Paris' fronted by 'Guy the Bore'. The conflict functioned as a catalyst for both sides; for the group around Nash it led to a constant production of actions, events, tracts, pamphlets and manifestoes. The 'Nash-ists', which included members excluded from the First Situationist International like Strid, but also new faces like the English painter and poet Gordon Fazakerley and the Danish art critic and film director Jens Jørgen Thorsen, quickly set to work under the motto 'Everybody is an artist', organising a tremendous amount of actions and exhibitions. The goal was consistently the conversion of the docile masses of post-war reconstruction into creative co-artists through various types of guerrilla-activists pranks. In 1962 alone the group published two issues of the new Situationist journal *Drakabygget*, had an exhibition in Odense called 'Seven Rebels' where they marched through the city centre carrying a cross made of trash and empty picture frames, and staged the first CO-RITUS event in Copenhagen where they invited the audience to create a kind of environment or installation, themselves continuing the experiment out in the streets of Copenhagen before being arrested by the police.



With a base at Drakabygget, the farm Nash had acquired in southern Sweden in 1960, the Drakabygget Situationists engaged in a seemingly endless range of provocations that made Nash and Thorsen household names in Denmark and Sweden during the 1960s and 1970s, staging one spectacular stunt after another, not least the infamous beheading of the Little Mermaid in 1964. The public spectacles, or, rather, attempts to take over and détourn the media, were just one dimension of Nash and Thorsen's practice, which also included a long list of exhibitions and publications as well as the development of an international artistic commune at Drakabygget, a Situationist Bauhaus. Nothing was apparently sacred for the Bauhaus Situationists. They engaged in a kind of cultural insurrectionism, spoofing friends and enemies alike: making fake Jorn paintings, re-writing a de Jong text as well as bilking the state by getting subsidies for a farming project at Drakabygget that never materialised. The group focused primarily on activities and less on theory in their use of a wild mixture of social democratic and anarchist ideas to advance their notion of art as a ritualistic experiment aimed at liberating people.

Although J.V. Martin was not capable of staging the same amount of public scandals as Nash and Thorsen, he nonetheless managed to organise two of what Debord termed 'heavy-handed' Situationist exhibitions in Denmark. In 1963 Martin opened the 'Destruktion af RSG-6' (Destruction of RSG-6) manifestation in Odense under the supervision of Debord, turning one room in the gallery into a nuclear shelter in homage to the British activists that one month prior had revealed a secret plan to protect the British government in case of a nuclear war. In 1967 Martin organised the exhibition 'Operation Playtime' in Aarhus. Martin's exhibitions were presented by the Situationists as 'heavy-handed manifestations' not exhibitions. According to them, they were using the art institution for propaganda purposes but did not make art. The Nashists' ability to stir up a public furore compelled Debord and Martin to intervene in a gallery. This was of course something the Situationist International never did after 1960 in Paris, where they more or less abandoned the image as a means of critique.<sup>1</sup> Instead the Parisian Situationists opted for the conciseness

<sup>1</sup> Debord's abandonment of the image should be seen both in the sense of our ability to understand the world, to make a representation of the world, but also in the sense of the image we create artistically using our imagination.

of the analytic standpoint. The Scandinavian Situationists never abandoned the image but continued to create images artistically *ex novo* in order to understand as well as challenge the world. The Situationists in Scandinavia continued to trust the transgressive nature of the imagination, looking upon the image as a battle ground to be occupied. Nash, Thorsen, Strid – but also Martin – perfectly well understood that the new image sphere that was becoming a reality during the accelerated re-build of Europe after the Second World War was the place where politics was played out and where a new politics would have to be built. Whereas the French Situationists became increasingly sceptical towards any progressive use of images and bordered on downright iconoclasm, the Scandinavian Situationists continued to try and subvert the ruling images by making subversive counter-images.

This never-failing belief in the power of art to détourn the new image-based forms of control meant that it was easy for the former enemies Martin and Nash and Thorsen to hook up after 1972 when the Situationist International was dissolved, continuing the Situationist project by setting up the Antinational Situationist. The new project, however, never really got off the ground. Although Martin did not approve of Debord's dissolution of the Situationist International, and Nash and Thorsen continued their public scandals for the next two decades, the beginning of the 1970s seems to have been a turning point for the Scandinavian Situationists. The protest wave of the 1960s died out in most places by the early 1970s and the large-scale structural transformation of the booming post-war capitalist economy was slowly beginning. The neoliberal (counter)revolution was on its way, and within two decades the world of the Situationists had completely disappeared in favour of a world where capitalism was the only game in town.

This anthology covers over three decades. The texts are organised in a more or less chronological order, with the first text by Asger Jorn from 1952 and the last text being the statements from the Antinational Situationist in 1974. The main weight of the collection lies in 1962, when the Situationist movement in many ways went through its most dynamic and critical moments when the disagreements about the relationship

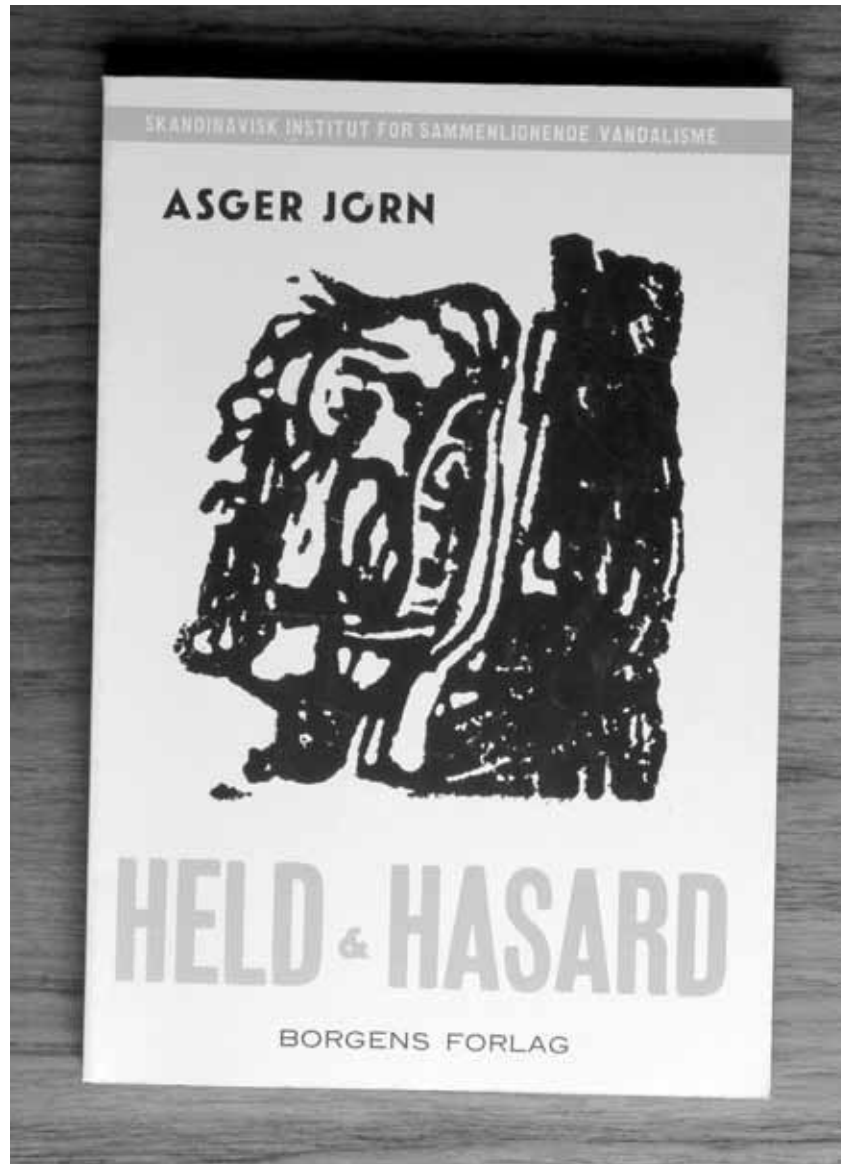
between art and theory came to a head, resulting in exclusions and the split in the International. The collection gathers texts and documents written by the lesser-known fractions of the Situationist movement that were active in Scandinavia or that were related to the Scandinavian sections. Where the texts appeared originally in English we have kept the original versions.

### **A history of defeat: Expect nothing**

What's the purpose of publishing a book with documents and texts from the Situationist movement in Scandinavia in the 1960s? What is the point of gathering these traces of a long-gone avant-garde group and their internal schisms and publishing their texts and tracts in 2015? Is it not just a question of fantastic but old and almost forgotten stories about drunken artists trying to degrade high art or theoreticians striving to transform the world when that was still believed to be possible? What's the relevance of a book that gathers texts and tracts that are so 20th century? Precisely because the Situationists did not win. As we know from the history of all revolutionary endeavours, there's a lot to be learned from defeats. And the Situationists definitely lost: they lost big time. It is through an analysis of the Situationist defeat that we will be able to advance beyond the dull contemplation of yet another paper in Debord's archive or yet another drawing by Jorn.

The Situationist project failed, no doubt about it. But they did constitute an attempt at a decisive break with the ruling socio-economic order and a projection of the coming into being of new forms of life. As such they still point forward beyond the crisis-ridden capitalist order that survives today. They themselves of course were very much interested in retrieving what was still alive in the revolutionary tradition from Marx and Bakunin to the Council Communists in the 1920s, as well as the inter-war avant-gardes like Dada and Surrealism that sought to accelerate the making strange of the modern world. Like these historical precursors, the Situationists sought to embrace alienation and take it to a new level from where it might be possible to escape capitalism altogether. The Situationists sought to reignite that tradition and bring back the revolutionary perspective at a time when it seemed to be lost.

In many ways, we can look back upon their efforts as self-defeating. The Jornian idea of an experimental attitude has been perversely realized in the 'creativity' hype. Self-realization is now an obligation and not an escape. Nash's wish to activate people has been turned into a discourse of participation where people only participate in their own alienation, leaving the structures of the system intact. The critique of capitalist production and division of labour has been put to work as new management techniques enabling capitalism to further penetrate the human body and mind. The vision of the city as a great work of art without spectators has been realized upside down by capitalist city planning. The Situationists critiqued this development as 'the spectacle of taking part' – as a kind of pseudo-psychogeography that was not meant to set people free. The problem is of course that the capital-negating dimension was closed down by the forces of history and reaction, transforming the anti-authoritarian project into individualised and hedonistic self-realization. The isolation of the critique of alienation and inauthenticity paved the way for new forms of control and exploitation that have taken on the shape of self-control and self-exploitation. The Situationists were well aware of the risks – the split and the exclusions all show that – but they nevertheless tried to advance a radical critique of capitalist society with a view to creating something different. They were willing to risk themselves even if it meant ending up looking ridiculous and contradictory.



## LUCK AND CHANGE DAGGER AND GUITAR

Asger Jorn

### The status of the aesthetic problems of the present day

“One evening I sat Beauty on my knees – And I found her bitter –  
And I abused her.

I armed myself against justice.

I fled. O witches, O misery, O hatred, to you my treasure was  
entrusted!

... Misfortune was my god. I stretched myself out in the mud. I  
dried myself in the air of crime. And I played some fine tricks on  
madness.

And the spring brought the idiot's frightening laughter.

... – oh! every vice, anger, luxury – magnificent, that luxury – above  
all, falsehood and sloth.”

*Arthur Rimbaud*

The two unsolved problems hindering further progress in the systemization of the scientific research of aesthetics today are the declining ability to give the topic *a serviceable definition* and the difficulty in finding *the clear and tenable distinction between the object of aesthetics and the object of art*, especially in the question of the essence of dance, music, poetry and pictorial art, that is to say, *the essence of the fine arts*. As far as these are concerned, an understanding has been generally reached that they are not identical with the aesthetic, but merely *represent an especially effective and rarely failing technique for the exposition of aesthetic effects*. Moreover, in certain circles there is also a gradually dawning feeling that *the fine arts themselves never represent pure beauty, but are above all arts*, and as such

always more than beauty, with an effect going deeper and transmitting more than the purely aesthetic. This is something we touch upon here in the indication of the ethical character of art and which is manifested in more recent art by *the pictorial content being moved from the aesthetic over to the magical*, even though this word has to be understood in a new meaning as the expression of power.

As far as the problem of aesthetic definition is concerned, then the difficulty lies in being unable to limit the aesthetic area to *an easily comprehensible field of activity* with a clear distinction between the true *methodical* activity of aesthetics and *auxiliary investigations* into other disciplines, economics, sociology, politics, biology, psychology, technology, religion etc., from which benefit and experience can be derived. Furthermore, the blurred boundary between aesthetics and art also causes *even the most rigorous separation between aesthetics and the other philosophical areas* (ethics, logic) *to have no objective validity* and to be based merely upon sensory illusion uncovered more and more by each new experience.

If, in an attempt at empirical aesthetics, we take the road of experience to find the aesthetic object in the articles and laws of beauty, we immediately come up against resistance from *subjective judgement*, which perceives *the human being as a primary existence in relation to his thoughts*. This judgement, the individual's judgement, takes its point of departure in the individual's reaction to the sensed object, a precondition and a point of departure which no one can deny.

### The objective synthesis

If *the individual judgement* necessary to construct an aesthetic doctrine is *to be coordinated with the aesthetic judgements of other individuals*, then this can only happen by getting behind these judgements in order to *analyse the common preconditions reflected in the internal psycho-physiological similarities and the bio-sociological dependence of the individuals*, as is done, for example, in medical science, to discover *the common human subjectivity or the community of inter-human interest* which is a bio-physiological, sociological and cultural fact.

The wider question then becomes whether this organic community of interest extends out over the human into the vegetable and animal kingdoms, whether *the whole biological world can be perceived as a collected interdependence, a fellowship of interest, an organic subjectivity* and mutual necessity, and historically as an evolutionary unity, or, in short, whether we can *make aesthetics relate to the natural sciences*.

However, to achieve a real *objective aesthetics* it is necessary to demonstrate *a causal unity between the forms of reaction of the organic and the inorganic worlds* which reaches from the macrocosmic aesthetics of *the universe* itself to the *atom's* microcosmic reactions of an aesthetic character. If this is not possible, then the results of both subjective and objective aesthetics are worthless and the establishment of a scientific aesthetics impossible.

The synthesis for which I am here the spokesman definitively breaks with the intermixing of aesthetics and art theory, a break which is based upon new experiences and arguments, the most weighty of which is perhaps the recognition, derived from the development of modern art, of the value of so-called primitive art and the consequent understanding that *aesthetic recognition and any acquaintanceship with the idea of beauty, the understanding even of the difference between the thing and its depiction, is quite meaningless for elemental artistic creation*. As, into the bargain, it is apparent that modern aesthetic education, as known from the art academies, is directly restrictive to creative ability in art, these facts demonstrate that *not only is the aesthetic knowledge of our time worthless but also directly damaging* and thus, in other words, false.

### The extreme definition of aesthetics

This acknowledgment, which is shared by all aestheticians, has gradually made it generally appreciated that *aesthetics should not be understood as a phenomenon exclusively connected with the fine arts*. On the contrary, it represents one of our forms of *existential experience*, its subjective *point of departure in interest* having forced science to perceive the object of aesthetics as impenetrable by exact, scientific research, so that it has to be perceived as something 'which can be described and to a certain

extent limited, but not defined and computed, remaining a demonstrable and communicable 'unknown', which can throw its light over one of the problematic forms in which our being exposes itself, and thereby have an instructive significance for art and criticism.'

That this instructive significance is only to the detriment of both art and criticism has really nothing to do with science nor obviously the critics, but it involves artistic activity and the artists' working conditions themselves in the most painful way. Because of this inconvenience it must, of course, be *the artists* themselves who, by theoretical activity, have to intervene and change course about this point.

What have I then been able to change in this hazy picture? Apparently something quite insignificant, as I have only tightened up this 'aesthetic definition' *from being 'something unknown and enigmatic' to mean 'the unknown' or everything unknown and enigmatic*. By this clarification of the aesthetic object, it takes on not only a subjective and *existential* but also an objective and *essential* significance, from its smallest detail to its greatest context. This makes possible the establishment of the following outline, of which we will only have occasion in the following text to deal with the first half and point c. III.

### Brief outline of the fields of activity in aesthetic research

*Thesis:* The aesthetic object is defined as *the unknown*, and aesthetics as the empirical science of the reactions of the known to the unknown or the unknown, unexpected or uncontrollable reactions of the known.

#### 1. Objective aesthetics

then becomes the empirical science of the immediate reactions of substances to other substances and of the character of the substance's macrocosmic and microcosmic phenomena towards the borders with the non-existent, and thus the effects of chance.

#### 2. The aesthetics of the natural sciences

then becomes the science of the reactions of biological organisms to

unknown, unaccustomed or unexpected impulses and of their abilities to invoke such impulses biologically.

#### 3. The aesthetics of the human sciences

becomes the empirical science of man's experiential and recognitive reactions to everything unknown, divided over the subjects:

##### *a. Psycho-physiological aesthetics*

The empirical science of man's spiritual and physical reactions to everything unknown: 1. destructive, 2. passively negligent as well as 3. actively absorbent reactions.

##### *b. Sociological aesthetics*

comprises the empirical science of the societal group's positive, negative and passive reaction to the occurrence of the unknown in societal life and society's ability to invoke unknown phenomena in all areas, political, economic, technical, artistic, scientific, ethical, philosophical, cultural, ideological, religious, etc.

##### *c. The aesthetics of art scholarship*

This comprises the empirical science of man's expansive reactions to unknown external and internal impulses, as *aesthetic art* is defined as our ability to invoke and satisfy unknown interests, phenomena, things, thoughts and ideas.

The aesthetics of art scholarship is divided into two groups, the aesthetics of direct experience and the aesthetics of indirect recognition, which can be grouped as follows:

##### *c.I. The aesthetics of human artistic action*

The empirical science of human reactions to what *cannot* be done; the interest in creating and enjoying unknown things, thoughts and pictures created by people. With connections to psycho-physiological and neurological aesthetics in general, this is divided into:



*a. The aesthetics of productive experience*

The empirical science of the process of human creative experience, which develops in a dialectical relationship of opposition and dependence to:

*b. The aesthetics of receptive experience*

The empirical science of the human ability to absorb aesthetic art experiences. Both are developed in connection with the artistic material which represents:

*c.II. The aesthetics of the art-work or the artistic means*

The empirical science of the character of the art object and its aesthetic effect upon the producer and consumer, comprising:

*a. The aesthetic character of technique in general.**b. Aesthetic technique or the fine arts which form:**1. Psychological sensory aesthetics*

The empirical science of immediate sensory effects (sound, pitch, light, colour, form, movement, etc.)

*2. The aesthetics of mental conception*

The empirical science of the aesthetic effect of visual formulation and conception. This leads to the opposite of the aesthetics of experience:

*c.III. The aesthetics of recognition*

The empirical science of human intellectual reactions to what is not *known*. This is divided into two contrasting activities:

*a. The aesthetics of fantasy and speculation*

The empirical science of the human activity of idea and thought in the treatment of subjects neither understood nor known and the reactions of people to the results of such speculations and fantasies.

*b. The aesthetics of scientific research*

The empirical science of human interest in and attempts to gather exact knowledge about hitherto unknown phenomena which can be analyzed empirically, as well as the abilities and means to do this, and the significance of this activity for human art and aesthetics in general.

**The aesthetic phenomenon – summing up and definition***‘Disinterested pleasure’*

Kant defined beauty as ‘universal, disinterested and necessary pleasure’, but as pleasure is really nothing other than a kind of interest, we have to reject this self-contradictory definition and assert that *aesthetics is the interest in the unknown, the effect of which can be unpleasant as well as pleasant, antipathetic as well as sympathetic. This brings out feelings of distaste or delight which give us the opportunity to judge the object of the experience as either ugly or beautiful*, a biological reaction called attraction and repulsion in the mineral world.

*The essence of aesthetics is unconditional and immediate interest or spontaneous reaction, and the aesthetic object is that phenomenon which invokes this immediate interest, whilst the aesthetic subject is the field of immediate interest.*

*“Known and unknown*

Beautiful are the things we see.

More beautiful are the things we understand,  
but by far the most beautiful  
are surely those we do not comprehend.”

*Niels Steno*

Only the unknown or the apparently and partially unknown can possess this aesthetic property. What one already knows is effective only through its recognizability and corresponds to those deeper, regular interests

which, on the strength of their vital significance and regulatory essence, we call ethical interests.

However, as soon as we become aware that the known and the unknown are relative phenomena, the question then becomes whether we can connect them with anything at all. We could say that *the objectively known is everything that acts as facts, as impressions in the context of sensory material, and can be directly or indirectly sensed*. But therefore it is not certain that we know it, and as in itself this is a matter of acquaintanceship or transmission, we must find another yardstick for the known and the unknown. What do these two concepts really mean? The latter is derived from the former as its opposite, but this does not take us very far, and we already appear to have excluded in advance any possibility of an empirical analysis of this subject, as science, as is well known, is based upon the study of the comprehensible, the known or the actual.

We are not, however, giving up, even though we will have to reduce the area of aesthetic study to the border phenomena between the known from which we start and the unknown, to the study of the unknown reactions of the known and the effect of unknown phenomena on the known.

### Aesthetics perceived as interest in the unknown

“Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,  
Juristerie und Medizin  
und leider auch Theologie  
durchaus studiert, mit heissem Bemühn.  
Da steh’ ich nun, ich armer Tor!  
und bin so klug als wie zuvor.”  
Goethe

#### *Aesthetics as the law of change*

But what have we really embarked on here? Simply that *the true point of departure of aesthetics is the law of change, allowing the unknown and the new to arise in the universe and create evolution, whereas the known is the*

*static cycle or law of immutability, which we have perceived as the ethical principle of nature*. Here immediately we are in the elemental philosophical conflict between compatibilists and incompatibilists, empiricists and idealists. The latter was a school founded by Socrates, who came to the conviction that ‘we only know that we know nothing’, that everything is unknown and thus aesthetic. We also know about the opposite school of determinists, and aver simply that they are both correct, in the same way as the scientists who quarrelled about whether light was rays or waves, since the law of change exists on the strength of and because of the law of immutability, in the same way as the radiant character of light is conditioned by its wave system, and the aesthetic principle of nature is precisely its radiant essence, the material’s ‘ideality’ or *éclat*.

*We have thus transferred the world of the metaphysical concept over to matter*, but can this work? Yes, it depends exclusively on whether it can form a system and if this system, which we regard as *primary*, connects naturally with *the secondary* spiritual or metaphysical system to form a unit.

#### *Subject or area of interest*

*The elementary metaphysical concept is the subject*, normally defined as ‘the conscious ego’, the observing, thinking, feeling, active individual, and thus the human object. But if we take into account how humanity originated, this definition is too narrow. When did the human embryo begin to be a subject? The question is meaningless. *Here we will use the concept of the subject as a designation for any exclusive or limited sphere of interest in matter*, any system of action, any individuality. But the limited phenomenon in matter is what is called the object. *Object and subject should thus only be two different ways of perceiving the same phenomena and two different sides of their essence*. Quite so!

This subjectivity of matter or classification of interest can be called the qualitative properties of the material, and ‘the feeling, thinking and observing properties’ are just the most consummate and differentiated means of existence of this subjectivity or sphere of interest, which here on earth has achieved the greatest perfection in humanity.



*Objective subjectivity*

*Objective science is the science of how matter thinks, about the spirit of matter. Subjective science could be called the science of how material feels, of the material's interests or the material's soul, its enthusiasms or eros, its body-forming principle. This science of the objective subjectivity of the material, which makes it corporeally identical with the spiritual and thus perceives the spiritual as a physical phenomenon, is obvious and easily understood if it is really made clear what an object or a body is. We can buy the materials in a human body at a chemist's shop, but we cannot unite them into a human body, yet the human body endures even when the materials of which it is formed are renewed. One is the same even though one is someone else. We can shape a lump of clay into a vase and a sudden movement will change it again to a lump of clay. We can lay out a rail-track and constantly change all the material. Even if there are completely new materials, it is still the same track, the same region of interest, the same context.*

*The bodily perception of the soul*

We are, however, in no doubt that the living person exists as a latent possibility in the material we have bought. Thus the impotence we feel before a dead person whom we wish were alive is not caused by the soul forsaking the body. That it cannot do. But by the human soul having disintegrated, so that we are unable to put it together again.

Therefore, unlike the spiritualists, we perceive *the visionary faculty*, the highest achievement of the aesthetician, not in the form of a detachment of the soul from its bodily mortal frame, but *as a superior and intense radiation and receptive activity with its unavoidable centre in the physical ego*. From this it follows that we evaluate the proficiencies acquired by this clairvoyance according to their ability to serve our actions. With this, our opponent relationship to spiritualism in its traditional form appears to be clarified.

*The subjective context of material*

The word interest means what is between certain phenomena and thus the context. We have defined subjectivity as interest or context.

*Every cell in the human body is an object and at the same time an area of interest, a subject or acting individual. Cells are again part of the areas of interest of the organs which in fellowship form a human ego, body or individual, together with his mental equipment. The individual is a part of the ego of the family, the group, whose common interest is given its self-conscious expression in its codex of action or ethics. Together all human groups, classes, peoples, nations and races form a joint human object, humanity, which is thus not an idea but an actuality, a body, an ego or subject, which is, for example, the common object of medical science and the very basis of actuality for the whole of technique and culture, the joint human interest. I call this perception Nordic humanism.*

**Aesthetics as meaninglessness and cynicism**

"For a long time I boasted of possessing all possible landscapes, and found the celebrities of modern painting and poetry derisory. I loved absurd pictures, fanlights, stage scenery, mountebanks' backcloths, inn-signs, cheap prints; unfashionable literature, church Latin, badly spelt pornographic books, grandmothers' novels, fairytales, little books for children, old operas, silly refrains, naive rhythms.

I dreamed of crusades, voyages of discovery never reported, unrecorded republics, suppressed religious wars, revolutions in manners, movements of races and of continents: I believed in all enchantments."

*Arthur Rimbaud*

*Secret interests*

We are, however, going beyond human, even organic subjectivity and maintaining that *even the least atom with its rotating nuclear system, as well as the solar systems, must be perceived as spheres of interest, units of activity or subjects*. The study of the interests of these materials and peoples is not only complicated but dangerous, especially as far the latter are

concerned. Not everyone is interested in having their interest clarified and this is undoubtedly the real reason that an objective and scientific basis for the so-called 'human sciences' has not yet been established and that there is still no interest in doing so. Yet we have apparently got to the stage that today artistic, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic development is simply demanding the renewal that can only be established by *the recognition and study of the objective subject*.

#### *Subjective knowledge*

"Who follows his own head must also stand on his own feet."

*Danish proverb*

We have stated that what is called objective knowledge is just the intellectual demonstration that a phenomenon exists in the world. But the word *know* has a more immediate sensory meaning, as when one says, I know myself. Here the word has the same meaning given to the Greek origin of the word aesthetics. *Subjective knowledge is thus a direct context, an acknowledgement of a phenomenon. For a subject, the absolute known, that which is within bounds, is thus a part of the context, the established, the determined, the law.*

#### *The aesthetics of subjectivity*

"Everything like is unlike."

However, we know that all phenomena, objects and spheres of interest are in constant change, are established, extended and dissolved, enter into other contexts, exchange, are condensed and exploded, that there are thus different *degrees of acquaintanceship*, right from the most airy and superficial to contextual, flowing and yet firm, compact, almost immobile and unbreakable connections, and that the aesthetic stage is thus the study of the superficial individual stages.

#### *Universal rationalism*

Aristotle, who in his metaphysics stressed the experience of this constant movement or change in matter by which it takes on new forms, maintained

that it is the realization of an all-embracing reasonable plan that the divine spirit is following in the shaping of the cosmos through the development of nature, which is gradually and logically following the purposeful meaning of our existence, with which human reason can lead us into harmony. The movement in, for example, a plant's genesis is invoked by 'external' causes (Aristotle was the first person who dissociated himself absolutely from objective subjectivism), like the seed from the mother-plant. But the form that occurs as a plant is because of an intrinsic power in matter, and thus in the seed, of a preordained kind (inheritance?). The seed thus contains the coming plant in itself as a possibility which could come into being or reality, be activated, be unfurled and take on an actual form that is the true being. Every form is in this way developed by other forms, and all these forms ultimately point back to the first cause which is consequently the absolute divine idea.

#### *The imbalance of matter*

"He also makes new who destroys the old."

Even with due regard paid to Aristotle's doctrine of catharsis, this perception can only be a half-truth, and therefore wrong, especially when its further enlargement in connection with Christianity's belief in providence and the doctrine of immortality is borne in mind. On the other hand, Hume's liberation of the purely deterministic perception of the world offers no opportunity for the establishment of an opponent relationship between aesthetics and ethics, but forces, as we have noted, the establishment of the former as a side of the latter in 'the doctrine of pleasure'. His philosophy thereby becomes purely analytical without a perspective of development, or what we could call positivity, inclination forward or imbalance, and this absolute equilibrium automatically forces the denial of the actual existence of the objective context, which is only delineated in the dynamic of motion and not in what is stationary. Then even a realistic ethics becomes an impossibility.

We maintain the following:

*No providence exists for people other than our own foresight, where ever we get that from, but we merely wish to maintain that it is always the present, existence, actuality or reality that manifests itself as the static and absolute, and that all development is and must be a break with the known, with laws, and takes place through the ceaseless dialectic between the establishment of law and lawbreaking, between ethics and aesthetics.*

One-sided moral upbringing towards reason and justice, which inculcates an absolute disgust of all stupidity, injustice, lies, brutality and heedless, ugly self-assertion, to which orphanage children and future kings in particular are subjected, results in just as one-sided tendencies towards servility and desperation.

### Aesthetics as injustice, disaster and crime

*Law creates lawbreaking*

“You walk over dead men... of your jewels Horror not least charming and Murder, amongst your dearest trinkets, there on your proud belly dances amorously.”

*Ch. Baudelaire: ‘Hymn to Beauty’*

On the other hand, it is health that changes the drama of life from being a perpetual tragedy to being a principle of development. *All renewal consists of casting oneself out into the unknown and thereby into almost certain annihilation, and even if it is the exception that proves the law or rule by renewing it, no successful renewal or introduction of the unknown can happen without the context and the order being destroyed*, crushed and dissolved to give way to new contexts. This revolutionary unrest, the unknown, incomprehensible and incompatibilistic element in existence, where the old is destroyed to give way to new, is the inevitable law of the universe and humanity. Incompatibilism is determined, and determinism acts only through this. The transcendent is immanent.

*Lawbreaking creates law*

“Diamonds are polished in diamond dust.”

*Taras Bulba*

If one loses this understanding of the dialectical context between law and lawbreaking necessary to establish this, then, instead of perceiving lawbreaking as a necessary ingredient, one must necessarily feel it as a disturbing, destructive, devilish element in existence, as something absolutely wicked, as nature’s ‘tragic principle’. *By denying this absolute ideality and independence of the aesthetic we are turning away from the abstract doctrine of suicide, which is its logical extreme point*, and like everyone with ‘sound common sense’ also turning from what it demonstrates: that all development would stop if ‘sound common sense’ came to rule.

*Unforeseen happenings*

“Did you not see recently how eagerly the dove there over the treetops beat the air with its wings?

He had seen his mate and the nest with the young: that was the reason for his quick flight.

It appeared to him that it was under his own power that he moved his wings and took the shortest way. But it was love, his downy young and his beloved that awakened his soul, and this that thereafter moved his wings.

Love is like the coachman who looks after the reins and controls us as the rider controls his horse. He obscures our soul and convinces us that we sit as chiefs or coachmen.”

*Swedenborg*

The circle of interest dominates the cycle of materials and life. But things can suddenly happen that quite change the picture. It can so happen that the dove suddenly leaves his track. As if drawn by a strange force within or without, it is thrown up against quite different experiences that attract and entice it. Apparently, we say expressly, there is nothing here for it to like, let alone love. On the contrary, there is something immediately

loveless, something disquieting and unpleasant, something surprising, *the unknown*, and because this is new it is meaningless, irritating, unreasonable and worthless, but nevertheless a force, which, like the lighthouse or the lamp, could throw one off course, possibly even kill and annihilate, but which does, at any rate, innervate, interest, animate and obsess with an externally warm and inner cold excitement.

*Why – why not?*

“Misfortune often makes people pale, as hot water does lobsters.”

Why this? Yes, the whole aesthetic problem consists of just this *why – why not?* If the question is answered, the enchantment is lifted, the unknown has become known, but the incomprehensible is often just dissolved by this intervention in an even greater sum of unknowns.

This is the essence of aesthetics. Is it of value but at the same time valueless, is there something harmonious in the paradoxical, something obvious in the unknown, in the insecurity and dissatisfaction? If one accepts that this is the case, then one accepts the obviousness and meaning of aesthetics, the actuality of the illusion. The need to separate illusion from reality results in concepts of god, but the need to make illusion reality and reshape reality according to our illusions is aesthetic activity or what one calls ‘the fine arts’. The metaphysicians seek what is *in* this world, but not *of* this world. The aestheticians seek the precise opposite, what is *of* this world but not *in* it.

*The legality of the illegal*

“To do a great right, do a little wrong!”

*Shakespeare*

*Aesthetics is the ceaseless hunt of the universe, nature and humanity to prove that nothing supernatural exists, for the truth of aesthetics is namely nothing other than the naturalness of the unnatural, the humanity of the inhuman, the health of the anomalous and sick, the clarity of the darkness, the good fortune of misfortune, the competence and power of the*

*incompetent and powerless, the significance of the insignificant, the track of the trackless, the reality of the unreal, the rightness and the truth of the intolerable, of dislike, nastiness, faithlessness, lack of respect, disobedience, injustice, recklessness, cynicism, distrust, insincerity, falseness, immorality, irresponsibility, crime and lawlessness, the order and utility of the capricious, the ephemeral, the terrible, the awful, the doubtful, the uneven, the unusual and misplaced as well as the unusable, useless, inept, disordered and impractical, in short, all that is not interesting except in its immediate effect, the new, the radical, the original and experimental, the fertility of the earthquake.*

### Aesthetics as repellent abnormality

“When the Indian teaching about evil perceives God as just as much the source of evil as of good, thus in a way placing the Devil in the Trinity, is this not Hegelianism?”

*Søren Kierkegaard*

*The pleasure of distaste*

This and nothing else is the immediate effect of the unknown in the known, the primary or extreme aesthetic effect, pure aesthetics. It is neither beautiful nor pleasant, but it is the raw material from which the beautiful is born, and, what is more, from which life itself is created.

You will perhaps say it is impossible for the repellent to be the precondition for the attractive, but let us just push these phenomena into the distance a little, into the future of the past, in the example of memory, so that we can more easily see their attractive sides. How truly *exciting and unforgettable, wonderful were those catastrophic events we experienced at that time, even though they were shocking, astonishing, terrible, upsetting, irritating, provocative, innervating and inspiring, and what a marvel it was that they strengthened us instead of crushing us and what a miracle that they really took place, even though we had perhaps not experienced themselves ourselves but had read about them in the newspaper or in a novel. It was sensational or, in short, aesthetic.*

Although we have thus pulled back from the phenomenon in order to perceive its meaning, we can nevertheless ascertain that this is the point that cannot be excluded – whether aesthetics should be made into a vital and independent function: *the procurement of the unknown*.

#### *Dysmorphism and abnormality*

“All sins are no more complicated than that they all would get their deathblow if one eradicated breach of confidence.”

Nis Petersen

On the occasion of the breakthrough of Expressionism in Denmark, a certain Professor Salomonsen undertook a very notorious and ridiculed analysis of this new aesthetic phenomenon and came to the conclusion that it was *a sort of ‘dysformism’ or an ugliness-seeking epidemic*, like the medieval self-tormentors, flagellants and other sick phenomena. So the man was quite right, but he just did not understand that *the ugly is not ugly in itself, but is perceived so only because it is incomprehensible* and unknown and therefore meaningless, and that therefore any renewal at once appears ugly, because the ugly is nothing other than the abnormal, and the ugliness grows with the size of the abnormality. Only in the instant the meaningless has been comprehended, possessed, owned or understood, does it become beautiful.

Thus there is no way around it. If aesthetics is to have a meaning, it must be as the meaninglessness of existence, and if it is not to have meaning, then it thus becomes meaningless anyway.

#### **Aesthetics as curiosity and wonder**

“Zum Erstaunen bin ich da.”

Goethe

#### *The interest of the new*

When something is neither lovely, good nor logical, but nevertheless attracts us, then this interest can only be explained as purely immediate interest, curiosity, wonder or astonishment. Curiosity is thus nature’s primary aesthetic factor.

‘*The objects we meet for the first time immediately exercise a mental impression upon us,*’ says the Russian painter *Kandinsky*, and in our need to collect rarities and rare experiences or strange and sensational articles, *curiosities*, we have the starting point of our aesthetic activity. This capacity and need is not associated only with humanity, even birds and insects can demonstrably develop such an aesthetic activity by the collection of strange stones, shells, pieces of metal etc. That even fish are immensely curious is known by everyone.

According to these observations, the capacity for wonderment is thus the basic element of aesthetic activity. No one shows wonder at the normal. But where does the abnormal come from? We are not the first who have banged our heads against this problem. However, we feel that it arises from within, as a part of the life process.

#### *The need for the new and the desire for adventure*

“Foreign food and forbidden fruit taste best.”

That certain reactions are normal or known is to say that they have direct preconceptions or demonstrable grounds. Where these are lacking, we are before *unknown products of the known*. As we do not reckon with actual unknown powers, we must perceive these activities as their own object, a self-contradictory capacity in matter, as a sort of osmotic pressure in the spheres of interest, as innervating factors of tension, acting as an attraction towards the unknown. One could call this need for the expansion of capacity for development *the healthy sickness*. Rationalists call it, characteristically enough, ‘*horror vacui*’, or fear of emptiness. The opposite description *deciderium ad vacuum*, longing for the unknown, the curiosity or aesthetic capacity of matter must be more correct.



## Aesthetics as tension, surprise or shock

“The higher a species is  
the more uselessly it behaves.  
Hens do not write aphorisms.”  
*Nis Petersen*

### *New and useful*

The capacity for wonderment is thus a primary characteristic of the individual's or species's stage of evolution. The human being is the most curious, whimsical and changeable being in nature. This is the reason for our power.

In his history of Denmark, Professor Arup stresses that tattooing and the use of strange attachments are phenomena just as old as protective hide clothing. We venture to assert that they are older and that even hide clothing was originally only used to appear sensational. An old, emaciated and frozen shaman one day just discovered that it was warmer to keep the bearskin on all the time. We believe that *any new development begins as something meaningless and worthless, from which the ability to create values is conditioned by the ability to occupy oneself with the valueless, and that this law is not just valid in the world of art but also in the biological sphere, and even overall, because nothing new can immediately be correct.*

But can we consequently make curiosity and the capacity for wonderment into the elemental phenomenon of aesthetics without further ado? It has to be said that it was not us who discovered this placing. Throughout the centuries and right up to Surrealism, surprise or shock has been perceived as a basic factor in the sphere of aesthetic experience.

### *Surprise and wonderment*

“For him beauty was always the hidden.”  
*G. Brandes on M. Goldschmidt*

Writing of unreasonable, pre-logical or irrational actuality, that border phenomenon between the existing and non-existent, *Descartes* says

(although he exchanges pure *wonderment* with its sympathetic offshoot *admiration*) that ‘admiration (wonderment), that is to say first and foremost *surprise, is the only thing that does not rest upon an organic process, but exclusively on the state of the brain.*’

That his latter statement about the activity of the brain alone is disproved by the fact that we are able to evoke the shock of surprise by purely physical means (with insulin shock, etc.), and that we have recognized the organic character of the brain and nervous system changes nothing in the condition *we have here, which is the essence of surprise itself: the break with the organic, that is, the anti-organic effect in matter.*

## Aesthetics as opportunity or possibility

“Writing forewords is like remarking that one is in the process of falling in love. The soul searches restlessly. The puzzle is given up. Every event is a hint of explanation. Writing a foreword is like bending a branch to the side in the jasmine cabin and seeing her sitting there secretly: my love.

- and how is he who writes this? he goes amongst people like a dupe in winter and a fool in summer, he is hello and goodbye in the same person, always happy and carefree, pleased with himself, a feckless gadabout, yes, an immoral person.”

*Søren Kierkegaard*

### *Luck in misfortune*

Here we are at the very core of extreme aesthetics, its lack of preconditions, its groundlessness, its non-dialectical curtness towards nothingness, to what it is directed towards and seeks to overcome. This position as the negation of nothingness abolishes the normal dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. *It is the thesis that seeks the unknown antithesis, and the game is a merciless either – or, luck or misfortune, renewal or annihilation, and we cannot therefore call aesthetic reactions true causal reactions, as we reject all theories of divine guidance, being forced to perceive them as*

*secretions, provocations, reactions of opportunity or possibility, as this is their immediate aspect, and this is precisely what we are trying to bring out.*

*The paradox of aesthetic science*

“There are some truths, at least, of a particular modesty and ticklishness of which one does not come into possession if not suddenly – that one must *surprise* or abandon.”

*Fr. Nietzsche*

But how can one make science in this way? Let us explain our position. The disinterested research which is the mechanism of science is a result of human interest in its purest form, *interest in being interested*. We want to maintain this state, even though the result of the research influences our other interests and develops and renews them.

However self-contradictory this may seem, we could thus well interest ourselves in something that for us does not exist, in the unknown, but the real paradox lies in our interest consisting of *wanting to know the unknown*. When we have achieved this, the object of our research dissolves in our hands. This is what makes the establishment of the science of aesthetic experience so enormously difficult. *Acquaintanceship or experience kills and dissolves the unknown, the aesthetic object. From being interesting it becomes unimportant*. But this is an inner subjective process. Therefore if we are to work on the problem, we must find a method to keep the interest awake, to preserve our wonderment. However, as scientific truth is precisely the opposite of this, we can only approach it in short lightning visits that leave as few traces as possible, in order to keep the ability for experience awake and vitality intact in us. Life cannot be studied in a cadaver, nor experience in knowledge, nor fire in ashes.

## Aesthetics as fanaticism and intolerance

“It is strange that people are so angry with the Jesuits. In a certain sense, everyone who is enthusiastic about an idea and wishes only its realization is to that extent a Jesuit.”

*Søren Kierkegaard*

*Self-forgetfulness versus memory*

Burnt children fear the fire, they say, but this is not so for foolish or forgetful children, for what is forgotten is also new. *One must thus have a short memory to continue to be a good aesthetician, whilst one must have a long and good memory to be a significant scientist*, as science is nothing other than experience, recollection or memory.

*Aesthetic understanding is the completely intolerant will or control, the absolute talent. Scientific understanding is complete tolerance, disinterestedness, the all-forgiving lack of talent.*

To contain enough of both these characteristics to establish an aesthetic science has not hitherto been vouchsafed anyone, and we would not assert that we have it. We would just like to point out that in any such explanation one has to evaluate whether *the passion of the idea* is sound and well, and that the necessary experience for this is not achieved through the experience of the art of others and imagined experiences, but only through *an intense and conscious experience of the aesthetic and artistic process during its creation, during the transformation of matter to a sphere of interest or art*. An aesthetic science must not only be true, it must also be interesting, not just useless ashes but firewood or artistic proficiency.

*The need for non-critical experience*

“Experience is the best teacher.”

‘Don’t talk, artist – create!’ they say, and even if it is from time to time necessary to open one’s mouth to correct certain misunderstandings, there is something right about this. If only one could then get the artist, and incidentally also the viewer, to stop listening to what people who don’t understand art say about it.



‘He who will not listen, has to feel,’ is another saying, and as feeling is aesthetics precisely, this explains something fundamental: that *the aesthetician will not be content with secondhand experiences, but will get into the hard school of the facts themselves. It is the task of aesthetics to confront people constantly with themselves and their own experiences, to get them to feel and believe more in their own feelings and sensations than in the words of others.* This Doubting Thomas attitude is neither an expression of lack of faith nor scepticism, but, on the contrary, of an expression of a need for experience without criticism that will realize the idea, the fantasy, the performance and the word in sensory perception. When the aesthetician reads a sign ‘The ice is unsafe’, then for him this is not just an invitation to see whether the sign is true, but also to see how unsafe ice feels. This is the precondition of aesthetics, development and progress: that one gets on thin ice.

### Aesthetics as surplus of power or luxury

“The superfluous, a very necessary thing.”  
*Voltaire*

#### *The aggressivity of the desire for experience*

Children and naive, forgetful and inexperienced people have their elemental aesthetic areas intact. They marvel easily and are without routine because of their ignorance. Consequently there is something childish in preserving one’s aesthetic need: *one’s capacity for wonderment, the longing for the new, for possibilities, for following one’s impulses, whims, external causes and preambles, the invitations, temptations and provocations of others, the predilection for openings, introductions, beginnings and sketches, one’s capacity for impulsive, immediate and unpremeditated action. It is called keeping oneself young.*

This initiatory capacity in children and young people with the great possibilities for development is a natural power for growth. It is an *aggression or conquest*, a reaching out beyond the static ego.

But one must not forget that children, idiots and naive people are also more limited and bigoted than experienced and developed people, because all organisms seek stability, limitation or morals. They therefore have to smash and destroy in order to develop, and as they neither understand nor know nor recognize anything other than their own world, they perceive many of the actions of developed people as meaningless, incomprehensible and unnecessary occupations, as games or secret black magic and wizardry, and will behave accordingly.

If one has absorbed or rejected all the normal skills and knowledge, but has nevertheless preserved one’s ‘childishness’ or need for wonderment, then one will be drawn towards the unknown in human society and become *a conqueror, adventurer or researcher in the fabrications of the life of the imagination, the inventions of art life and the discoveries of science*, if one does not simply become an oppressor or exploiter of other people.

**Held & hasard. Dolk & guitar** [1952] (Copenhagen: Skandinavisk Institut for Sammenlignende Vandalisme & Borgen, 1963), pp. 17-30 & 33-52.

Translated by Peter Shield.

# SPUR MANIFESTO

1

Today there is a promising artistic rearmament in opposition to moral rearmament. Europe is facing a great revolution, a unique cultural *putsch*.

2

Art is the last domain of freedom, and we will defend it with every resource.

3

We are daring to raise our voice against the monstrous colossus, the technological machine. We oppose the rationalism which has led to cultural devastation. The automatic, functional attitude has led to stubborn mindlessness, to academicism, to the atom bomb.

4

The renewal of the world, beyond democracy and communism, will only come about through a renewal of individualism, not through the collective thought.

5

In order to be created, culture must be destroyed.

6

Concepts such as culture, truth, eternity, do not interest us artists. We have to be able to survive. The material and spiritual situation of art is so desperate that a painter should not be expected to be obliging when he paints. Let the established do the obligatory.

7

Basic research is purely scientific and practical research purely technical. Artistic research is free and has nothing to do with the scientific nor with the technical. We oppose the present trend to turn art into a pseudo-science, an instrument of technological stupefaction. Art relies on instinct, on the elemental creative forces. These wild, unharnessed forces push for the creation of new, unexpected forms – much to the annoyance of all intellectual spectators.

8

Art is a resounding stroke of the gong, its lingering sound the raised voices of the imitators fading into thin air. Its transference into the technical deadens artistic strength.

9

Art has nothing to do with truth. Truth lies between entities. To want to be objective is one-sided. To be one-sided is pedantic and boring.

10

We are all-embracing.

11

It is all over, the tired generation, the angry one... Now is the turn of the kitsch generation. WE DEMAND KITSCH, DIRT, PRIMEVAL SLIME, CHAOS. Art is the dung heap upon which kitsch grows. Kitsch is the daughter of art. The daughter is young and smells good, the mother is an ancient stinking hag. We just want one thing – to spread kitsch.

12

We demand ERROR. The Constructivists and the Communists have eliminated error and live in eternal truth. We are against truth, against happiness, against satisfaction, against the free conscience, against the fat stomach, against HARMONY. Error is the most glorious accomplishment of mankind! Why is man here? To add new errors to the errors of the past, which no longer suit him.

13

Instead of abstract idealism we call for honest nihilism. The greatest crimes of man are committed in the names of truth, honesty, progress, for a better future.

14

Abstract painting has become empty aestheticism, a playground for the lazy-minded who seek an easy pretext for the chewing-over once again of long-outdated truths.

15

Abstract painting is  
a HUNDREDFOLD  
MASTICATED PIECE OF  
CHEWING GUM stuck un-  
derneath the edge of the table.  
Today the Constructivist and the  
structuralist painters are trying to  
lick off this long dried-up piece of  
chewing gum once again.

16

Abstraction has given us the  
commonplace of 4 dimensional  
space. The painting of the future  
is POLYDIMENSIONAL. Endless  
dimensions await us.

17

Art historians manufacture  
intellectual dinner conversations  
from every necessary spir-  
itual revolution. WE SHALL SET  
AGAINST THIS OBJECTIVE  
NON-ENGAGEMENT A  
MILITANT DICTATORSHIP OF  
THE SPIRIT.

18

It is not our fault that we can  
paint well. We even make efforts  
to do so. We are arrogant and ec-  
centric. We scorn every definition.

19

WE ARE THE THIRD  
ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST  
WAVE. WE ARE THE THIRD  
DADA WAVE. WE ARE THE  
THIRD FUTURIST WAVE. WE  
ARE THE THIRD SURREALIST  
WAVE.

20

WE ARE THE THIRD  
WAVE. We are a sea of waves  
(SITUATIONISM)

21

It is only through us that the  
world can be cleared of its debris.  
WE ARE THE PAINTERS OF  
THE FUTURE!

SPUR 1958

H. Prem, H.P. Zimmer, E. Eisch,  
H. Sturm, L. Fischer, A. Jorn,  
D. Rempt, G. Britt and G. Stadler

"Manifest", leaflet, 1958.

Translated by Luther Blissett.

## SITUATIONIST MANIFESTO

The existing framework cannot subdue the new human force that is in-  
creasing day by day alongside the irresistible development of technology  
and the dissatisfaction with its possible uses in our senseless social life.

Alienation and oppression in this society cannot be distributed  
amongst a range of variants, but only rejected *en bloc* with this very society.  
All real progress has clearly been suspended until the revolutionary solu-  
tion of the present multiform crisis.

What are the organizational perspectives of life in a society which  
authentically 'reorganizes production on the basis of the free and equal  
association of the producers'? Work would more and more be reduced  
as an exterior necessity through the automation of production and the  
socialization of vital goods, which would finally give complete liberty to  
the individual. Thus liberated from all economic responsibility, liberated  
from all the debts and responsibilities from the past and other people,  
humankind will exude a new surplus value, incalculable in money because  
it would be impossible to reduce it to the measure of waged work. The  
guarantee of the liberty of each and of all is in the value of the game, of life  
freely constructed. The exercise of this ludic recreation is the framework  
of the only guaranteed equality with non-exploitation of man by man. The  
liberation of the game, its creative autonomy, supersedes the ancient divi-  
sion between imposed work and passive leisure.

The church has already burnt the so-called witches to repress the  
primitive ludic tendencies conserved in popular festivities. Under the  
existing dominant society, which produces the miserable pseudo-games of  
non-participation, a true artistic activity is necessarily classed as criminal-  
ity. It is semi-clandestine. It appears in the form of scandal.

So what really is the situation? It's the realization of a better game,  
which more exactly is provoked by the human presence. The revolution-  
ary gamesters of all countries can be united in the S.I. to commence the  
emergence from the prehistory of daily life.

Henceforth, we propose an autonomous organization of the producers of the new culture, independent of the political and union organizations which currently exist, as we dispute their capacity to organize anything other than the management of that which already exists.

From the moment when this organization leaves the initial experimental stage for its first public campaign, the most urgent objective we have ascribed to it is the seizure of UNESCO. United at a world level, the bureaucratization of art and all culture is a new phenomenon which expresses the deep inter-relationship of the social systems co-existing in the world on the basis of eclectic conservation and the reproduction of the past. The riposte of the revolutionary artists to these new conditions must be a new type of action. As the very existence of this managerial concentration of culture, located in a single building, favors a seizure by way of putsch; and as the institution is completely destitute of any sensible usage outside our subversive perspective, we find our seizure of this apparatus justified before our contemporaries. And we will have it. We are resolved to take over UNESCO, even if only for a short time, as we are sure we would quickly carry out work which would prove most significant in the clarification of a long series of demands.

What would be the principal characteristics of the new culture and how would it compare with ancient art?

Against the spectacle, the realized situationist culture introduces total participation.

Against preserved art, it is the organization of the directly lived moment.

Against particularized art, it will be a global practice with a bearing, each moment, on all the usable elements. Naturally this would tend to collective production which would be without doubt anonymous (at least to the extent where the works are no longer stocked as commodities, this culture will not be dominated by the need to leave traces.) The minimum proposals of these experiences will be a revolution in behavior and a dynamic unitary urbanism capable of extension to the entire planet, and of being further extensible to all habitable planets.

Against unilateral art, situationist culture will be an art of dialogue, an art of interaction. Today artists — with all culture visible — have been completely separated from society, just as they are separated from each other by competition. But faced with this impasse of capitalism, art has remained essentially unilateral in response. This enclosed era of primitivism must be superseded by complete communication.

At a higher stage, everyone will become an artist, i.e., inseparably a producer-consumer of total culture creation, which will help the rapid dissolution of the linear criteria of novelty. Everyone will be a situationist so to speak, with a multidimensional inflation of tendencies, experiences, or radically different 'schools' — not successively, but simultaneously.

We will inaugurate what will historically be the last of the crafts. The role of amateur-professional situationist — of anti-specialist — is again a specialization up to the point of economic and mental abundance, when everyone becomes an 'artist', in the sense that the artists have not attained the construction of their own life. However, the last craft of history is so close to the society without a permanent division of labor, that when it appeared amongst the SI, its status as a craft was generally denied.

To those who don't understand us properly, we say with an irreducible scorn: 'The situationists of which you believe yourselves perhaps to be the judges, will one day judge you. We await the turning point which is the inevitable liquidation of the world of privation, in all its forms. Such are our goals, and these will be the future goals of humanity.'

17 May 1960

"Manifeste", **Internationale situationniste** no. 4, 1960.

Translated by Fabian Tompsett.



## TRACT

### Gruppe SPUR

TODAY (November 9, 1961) the Munich Public Prosecutor's office had the gross audacity to seize the entire print run of all six issues of the artists' journal *SPUR*.

The homes of artists were searched for the first time since 1945. They would like to intimidate the SPURISTS with the crudest of threats. This cynical police provocation would threaten us with a publication ban, trial and imprisonment. Agents of superannuated religious institutions or of the ruling class must have denounced us.

We call for the solidarity of all artists, intellectuals and all who struggle for autonomy through free human action. Together we can break the coercive tutelage currently imposed on free expression by such incompetent institutions as bureaucracy, police, church and judiciary.

#### Responsible:

Sturm, Fischer, Zimmer, Kunzelmann, Prem

#### In solidarity:

Lausen, Kotanyi, Debord, Jorn, Nash, Martin, Larsson, J. de Jong, Vaneigem, Lindquist, Elde, Trocchi, Straram, Ovidia, Bernstein, Eisch, Stadler, Strack, Laber, Senfft-Hohburg, Engelhard, Hesterberg, Reichert, Grieshaber, Rainer, Feuerstein, Döhl, Pzillas, Röhl, Platschek, Dohmen.

"Flugblatt", pamphlet, 1961, reprinted in **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.



# OUR REPLY

## Gruppe SPUR

The prosecutor has accused us of distributing indecent and blasphemous writings and deems this to be a punishable offense. The evidence underlying the charge was deliberately taken out of context: this must be made quite clear to the court. The not-unprejudiced directness of some of our statements to the court follows the example of the indictment itself in its pretension to apodicticity.

The sole purpose of ceremonials in today's society is to preserve the self-evident once it turns brittle. We refuse the rules of such games as debate and decision-making if what's decided is determined in advance. Democratic man is surely not a man who accepts being coerced to suppress the impulse to act, but rather a man who has agreed with others to be different in all his expressions of life. We are unwilling to approve of the standardised interplay of all social groups and the calibrated balance of a society whose main task is to channel insurgent response, to operate perfectly the narrow valve of permitted acts and to absorb any human expression into the non-participation of individuals, masked by consumption. The suffocatingly tight net, spread invitingly over society with bread and circuses, sweetly smiling, a net consisting of the impenetrable knit of passivity, an almost flawlessly functioning absorption mechanism and well-conditioned safety relief valves, suggests an illusory justification even to those who play the victims: a moment of attention directed to your fate gives you new strength to go on patiently enduring it.

The rational and irrational social framework of earlier times – the so-called primitive conjunction of customs, folk art, feasts and play integrated in manifold creative activity – all this was atomized into the pseudo-coherence of ideological worldviews, purchased through acceptance of pseudo-knowledge, whose only pride is its obliviousness to all interdependencies.

This crisis, which first affected religious values then those of reason and civilisation, strengthened art's legitimate claim to form from within itself a social field open to the tremors of the total social structure, to attempt experimentally to shape a world anew, overcoming an existing one whose failure is sufficiently proven. To the extent that any fragmentary attempt to do this is blocked in our Christian-Democratic state by institutions conserving a superannuated mindset, we have no choice but to declare that the rule of religion – whether it be called state, justice or Christianity – remains a religion of rule.

We don't know whether the artistic ignorance that springs from the latest one-sided teaching methods can excuse the elevation of classical aesthetics to a legal standard. Even academic art history in post-war Germany has broadened its horizon and acknowledges the anti-classical expression that was manifest in Dada and Surrealism and continues to affect social life. But what use is it to know the denatured game of thought beyond aesthetic or moralistic prejudice, to know the higher reality contained in certain forms of association or the work of art as an irreducible magnitude? What use is all that in a world whose cultural canon is too stuck to be able to hand this world back to chaos or let a revealing image emerge from it?

Yesterday's legal categories are used to suppress today's problems. In its bureaucratic pedantry, the closed legal system seeks to classify art within its determinology: art whose essence is open, experimental and dynamic. The law achieves this classification by deliberately ignoring art in its totality, its grotesque and blackly comic freedom of expression, its claim to *détournement* (the free and interchangeable use of all free-floating values released by dissolution). *Détournement* of all knowledge: religious psychology, sociology, biology, depth psychology, pataphysics, comparative ethnology and other sciences. The law deliberately ignores art's right to use playful research methods to represent on an existential level the ferment of dissolution in a stagnating society. Our anti-ideological and anti-tendentious texts are multi-layered palimpsests, layered surrealistically and dadaistically: it's up to the reader to discern any clarity.

The remarkable agreement between East and West when it comes to the subtle means of suppressing ungraspable elements is increasingly obvious, confirming our belief that the Iron Curtain is used mostly to pose pseudo-alternatives so that the basic problems need not be discussed. Today's youth instinctively see through banal projections and speculative fake alternatives.

Because we know all about social relations and correlations we know that 'a punishment as such has no other purpose than to satisfy a legislator who deems a punishment necessary'[1.] and that 'justice in a state has as much to do with justness as sex in a whorehouse has to do with love'[2.]. We also resolutely refuse to serve as a screen for the projections of all those unable to revolt for themselves, those who need objects in order to displace onto us the negativity latent in themselves. We are well aware that the limitless scope of individual freedom permitted for private thoughts is conspicuously cut off when opinions are expressed in public, so that under present circumstances any breach of the limits leads to the madhouse, the prison or the halo of glossy magazine publicity. But not even that is enough to stop us hoping to find a point on the map of society which, when excavated, would bring tumbling down a superstructure perpetually plugged by bureaucracy and formalism.

How can pornography be condemned in a society whose final prospect of communication and consumption lies precisely on that plane, raised to sublimity by the secret seducers of advertising? What does it mean to blaspheme against God in a society that masturbates the religious drive with new social encyclicals, with a God of the economic cycle or the theology of machines? This drive can find its ecstatic release only in God: the idea of *that which I would be, beyond the human*. An idea whose thousand-year human history, far from exhausting man's need to be God, has propelled his legitimate claim to become God to the heavens.

Ultimately we must ask the esoterics of today's society this question: does the immutability of written laws create the uproar of the discontented consciously, or are they created consciously so that others might remain mired in lethargy?

Today, while the court faces all these fundamental questions, a total lack of openness to influence fosters the cheap opinions that will be dogmas tomorrow.

SPUR Group: Fischer, Kunzelmann, Prem, Sturm, Zimmer

[1.] Dr. Johannes Werthauer, *Strafbuch-Entwurf* (draft criminal code), Liga für Menschenrechte (League for Human Rights), Berlin, 1929.

[2.] E. Mühsam, *FANAL*, year 4, p. 35.

"Unsere Antwort", tract, 1962, reprinted in **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.





## CANON OF THE REVOLUTION

Dieter Kunzelmann

Tumescence, ejaculation, cigarette of my life!

Society throws chunks into our wide-open gobs – but the question is: can they be stuffed?

It shouldn't bother me that you sleep with others. Man's freedom is his freedom to act.

Why are we the only revolutionaries? All the others are fed non-creativity by giant department stores of culture. General passivity is not the ground of our revolution – the gob of the civilisation dragon spits seas of well-packaged goods at the prompted demand of manipulated consumers.

Everyone must become creative:

Those who like to play with glass marbles get a park with glass marbles. James Dean gets his shaman tree, which looks like the missile base of Cape Canaveral. Those who need a myth receive their Mother of God directly to their door, free of charge and cash on delivery, so they may satisfy themselves in divine intercourse.

Those who shout 'Panem et Circenses' will celebrate holy orgies while sinking into whipped cream, until their orgiastic cry falls stertorously into the void.

Everyone must become creative! You will learn to fly, impelled as though by a tornado, destroying everything, upheaving the planes and breaking through them.

You shall no longer wait for the drug that lets the antinomies of feeling fall into the great Third.

You shall come to know that the true value of your cars and your appliance-homes lies not in performance, comfort and commercial benefit but only in the design to destroy the myth of technology and to use the works of its revelation as blasphemous toys.

Everyone must become creative, and will you still be able to love me? The bench in the sun was my World Tree but I did not find you at God's throne. Your hair was transubstantiated into Moses's burning thorn bush and your body into Jacob's stairway to heaven. How could I live with you when the people were crowding around us to behold our bed as the union of heaven and earth ... I knew of the ambivalence of Hierophanies and even back then I heard the annihilating howl of the masses and saw you drown in rose blossom. Sulphur, mercury, sal – what are they synonyms for?

We are the rationalists of irrationalism and the irrationalists of rationalism. Thinking before Being or: Being before Thinking?

The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is peddled on the markets; the Tree of Life has still not been found. We are dreaming in its shadow.

Why could none of them reach beyond their genius? Why did they consider themselves revolutionaries? They were producers. Couldn't they have known that poetry and candy, furnaces and operas, statues and sports goods, coffee and film are dumped on all the world's trade fairs? Their work is stored in culture's silos, dull consumption turns revolutionary ideas into mundane cafe chatter, painlessly and guiltlessly aborting the germ of revolutionary fire inside people.

The cities will be sandpits for grown-up children, everyone owns their own outer-space Volkswagen; states become ping-pong balls, battered across planets by transobjective forces to the amusement of all.

They killed you! To which rooms did the white horse carry you off? And which eagle watches over your sleep? How should I read the signs? How solve the puzzles?

Your shadow benights me and leads me to the waters.

"Kanon der Revolution", **SPUR**, no. 6, 1961.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.

## HOMAGE TO C.G. JUNG

Dieter Kunzelmann

"The dynamic principle of fantasy is play."

C.G. Jung: *Psychological Types*

The tram conductor shouted the stops – Rosarium Philosophorum, Aurora, Consurgens, Ars Chemica – and I got off at Hermes Trismegistus. I was still a bit annoyed that my marriage quaternia didn't add up: there was always one person left over no matter how many passengers got on and off at each stop. You will finally have to learn that silence is the acre into which everything can be sowed – let's not speak of the harvest. Intelligence is dangerous not because it easily forgets its opposite pole but rather because it delivers more comfortable material for self-delusion. I was still thinking of how I bought the ticket, the conductor handing me back my anima complex in 10-Pfennig pieces, when the phallic shadow of the church tower set the transcendental machinery of functions in my collective unconscious into motion, just like a 20th century tank at the battle of Marathon about to press bodies into the ground. I knew of the synchronicity of my dualist existence (wrongly defined as assembly hall and storeroom): all that was missing was the final perspective-of-Being for the Coincidentia Oppositorum, which would have been equivalent to a child's tidy room. Gabricus disappeared in his sister Beya's body, and I thought you would also be able to dissolve the divergence between I and you, subject and object, spirit and life, or at least find a correlation. If only I had stayed on until Agrippa von Nettesheim station or Anastasius Sinaita, then I wouldn't need to trouble myself now with the archetypal bumpiness of the paving stones, despite the conglomerate to be formed from the Vedas, Bible, Upanishads, I Ching, Tibetan Book of the Dead, Koran and Eranos Yearbooks. You alone are able to conjure away the tomb of books I comfortably rest in, and then I do usually come out into the light. I wait for

you so that you get wine and bread for our dinner. Why did the contents of my unconscious propel me to the city's periphery? The deceptive squaring of the circle at the tramlines, Zosimos of Panopolis station, reminded me of last night's algolagnia. Was it reality, an initial dream or only the phobia of an incestuous wish tendency? It is thanks to you that I don't yet associate the Axiom of Maria with coprophagy and don't yet avoid the policeman over there, because I am willing to see a lung-gom-pa in him. The cars play the role of adepts and the pedestrians Sorores Mysticae. I am overwhelmed with syndromes of the individuation process. Only my astral body exists in public and my soul will soon be dissected as aetiological factor of pathology. I love the night when Sol and Luna unite symbolically as Hierogamy for all Enantiodynamias. I walk to Isidore of Seville station and ride back into the city, a city whose living barracks are pseudopodias of titans who have decided on our downfall. Today's city is a dichotomy of Elixir Vitae and no-longer loaded symbols. I can finally get off at Francesco Colonna (Le Songe de Poliphile). When you are not with me, your Tulku is there – sects take Buddha and Christ for a Tulku – and we converse by means of xenoglossy. We will beget the divine child in royal incest and be flooded by symbols of wholeness: Mandala, Trinity, Hermaphrodite. We will cultivate our collisions in order to find ever-new trichotomies. I fight my way through the bustle of the streets and encounter the bilocations of Celsus and Iamblichus, of Arisleus and Dion Chrysostom, of Paracelsus and Rosenkreuz, of Maria Prophetissa and Nicholas of Cusa, of Abu Sulayman and Michael Maier. They are hovering like UFOs in empty space and some carry the Lapis Philosophorum. Hopefully they won't drop it through the roofs of parliaments or henhouses, of churches or crematoria. Cohabitatio of uterus and penis is only the image of a Conjunctio Oppositorum. Samadhi, Tumo, or the ecstasies and visions of Nikolaus of Flüe, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Teresa of Ávila are other images. Common to the images are the faeces of revolutionary cosmogonies, formed into sculptures. The most recent communiqué from the conference on Olympus – the UN finished the landing site for galactic vehicles just in time – proclaims agreement on all issues. With such disparate hotheads as Ivan the Terrible, Christ, the Marquis de Sade, Mohammed, Hitler,

Prodicus, Stirner, the Buddha, Aretinus, Zimmer, Origen, Klages, Lao-tzu, Prem, Plato, H.K. Khunrath, Lenin, Olympiodoros, Senior, Ziegler, Eliade, Theognis, Ptahhotep, Heidegger and many others in attendance, this result surprised even the most well informed circles to no small extent. The letters of protest from Bonn (the Berlin question was neglected), Rome (the decision to confiscate the leaflets circulating in South American brothels showing Christ nailed to the cross by his own personified virtues – corresponding to the easily proven psychological truth – was not unanimous) and Moscow (Stalin's lowest shirt button was taken from the Mausoleum by the FBI after years of preparation – as is well-known, General Franco was the only Western-occidental statesman to send a telegram of condolence – and is now to be placed on a platinum plinth one metre high in the U.S. House of Representatives as an enduring symbol of democratic spirit, censored daily) were unanimously declared as false-true-true-false and then given to Zeus as toilet paper free of charge. (The German news magazine *DER SPIEGEL* reported this in an in-depth *SPIEGEL* interview with Brigitte Bardot, Zeus's current lover). I will ring your bell and you will open. You will tell me there is already someone lying by your side and then my bicycle takes me home. I will open the letterbox to no avail and will not be able to stop the cold in my basement. Consumption became the approved arcane substance for mankind, allowing the accumulated air to escape lawfully during sleep from the valve of the bicycle tube that's about to explode. The collective eruption of individually repressed problems (like a tiny stone resting on a ploughed acre: when lifted, it brings to light a sea of seething worms) will happen everywhere if it proves impossible to shout out, to holler into the world the collisions, the latent psychoses, the Vas Hermeticum, the complexities of the self, so that even the cataleptic body of the esoteric starts to moan. Will YOU be with us when our voices start to fail? The rain in the desert proclaims: 'I will be with you. I will not be with you: already I will not be there tomorrow.'

"Homage à C.G. Jung", **SPUR**, no. 6, 1961.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.

# DRAKABYGGET

Dieter Kunzelmann

Next to the thinly frozen ice sheet of the exchange  
The burden of Sisyphus is a Majorca summer holiday  
My life was perpetual departure from given rooms  
Even as the cows in the field seemed like Sunday  
Christ's Agfa-bright blood stains my suit  
And I begin to hate listening behind doors

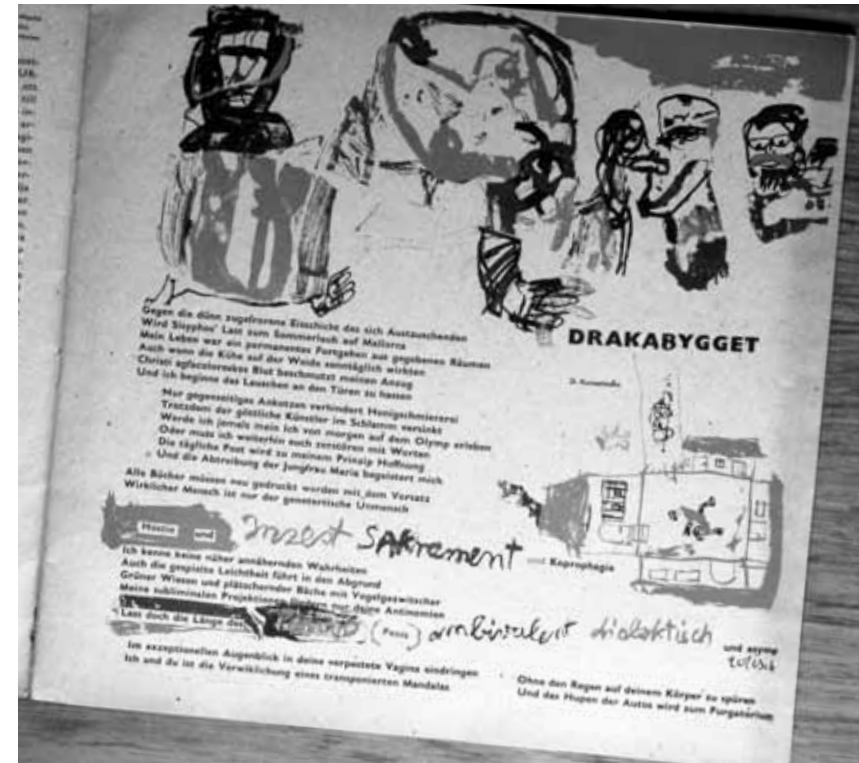
Only mutually induced vomiting prevents honeyed mutual sucking-up  
Although the divine artist is drowning in mud  
Will I ever experience my tomorrow's I on Olympus  
Or must I go on destroying you with words  
The mail every day becomes my principle of hope  
And the abortion of the Virgin Mary thrills me

All books must be reprinted under the heading  
The true human is nothing but the genetertic inhuman

Host and **incest sacrament** and coprophagy

I don't know any approximate truths  
Fake simplicity is one more way to the abyss  
Of green meadows and babbling brooks with birds chirping  
My subliminal projections only extend your antinomies

Just leave the length of the **penis** (penis) **ambivalent dialectical** and asymp  
**totic**



To penetrate at the exceptional moment your pestilent vagina  
Without feeling the rain on your body  
I and you is the realization of a transposed Mandala  
And the honking of the cars becomes purgatory

"Drakabygget", **SPUR**, no. 6, 1961.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.





# MUTANT

Guy Debord & Asger Jorn

European critique of the inadequate program that has just been presented to President Kennedy and governor Rockefeller by the academic staff of Universities, Colleges and Research Institutes for New York City and the Cambridge-Boston Area, with the aim of overthrowing the absurd procedures of 'civil defense' in the United States.

January 1962

We should like to point out the absurdity and complete emptiness of the declaration made by you as the 'Civil Defense Letter Committee' in *The New York Times* of Saturday, 30 December 1961 (international edition), unless one considers it only as a pure declaration of personal conscience against the new American defense policy. We regret the fact that there cannot be found a single element of real importance in all your oppositions, and we propose that you join us in a concrete attitude toward our common aim. We therefore suggest that you adopt the positive program of the 'European Committee for the Pursuit of Human Expansion', which proposes to create a new cultural Renaissance, a new practical liberty.

For this, it is necessary to subscribe to our three fundamental demands:

1. I promise that I personally shall never, under any circumstances, set foot in an atomic shelter. It is better to die standing with all the cultural heritage of humanity, the perpetual modification of which must remain our task.
2. I refuse to have anything whatsoever to do with the new aristocracy of the caves, and never to drink in the company of an owner or builder of an atomic shelter; for this subterranean aristocracy,

even if it manages to survive the disaster, will be of the quality of sewer rats, and could in no case be considered a continuation of the human race.

3. At this point in our current situation, it is not so much the thermonuclear war, but rather the threat of this war, that shows the absolute bankruptcy of all the politicians of the world. The capitalist or bureaucratic leaders of both East and West already make use of their bombs every day, in order to secure power for themselves. Only if one realizes that they have placed themselves beyond the law can one establish a new legality. I therefore pledge myself not to expect the necessary upheavals of society to come from any of the existing formations of specialized politics.

In the first stages, one can demand a neutralization of the defense program of States by their transferral into an Armed Force controlled by the United Nations. At the same time, military programs of conquest could be submitted to a world organization such as UNESCO, though it would be radically transformed and divested of its dependence on state bureaucracies. This organization would coordinate the development of spatial/interplanetary activities of different groups into a perspective of human solidarity. Only the unification of the military traditions of the whole world toward a spatial expansion can guarantee world peace, the alternative of peace and war being false, because in fact there is no choice. The choice that imposes itself upon modern man is the continuation of imperialist competition of human destruction or the Renaissance of humanity on a spatial scale.

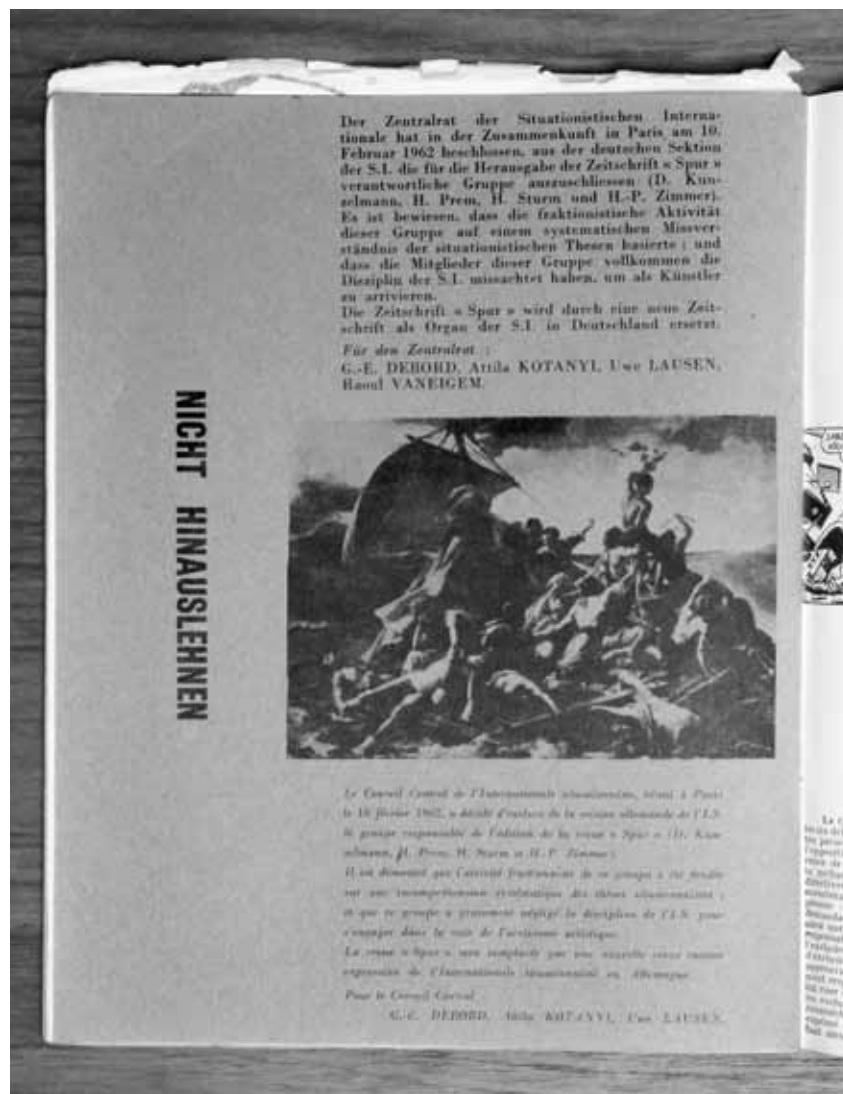
But the new frontier of mankind is not only in outer space; it is in the radical transformation of life on this planet. If the nations can come to an agreement to maintain peace by transforming it into spatial expansion, then — on the question of total expansion of mankind — we cannot come to an understanding with the 'nations'. We are not unconditional partisans of peace: the profound error of American intellectuals is their defense, devoid of imagination, of the actual peace that they wish to preserve. Nobody really likes this peace, which nourishes not only the menace of such a war, but also the total alienation of actual daily life, and the absolute boredom

of a society on the road to cybernetization. Peace remains, like this life itself, without importance, and what is important is human expansion: the creation of events that suit us.

We are going to inform you in greater detail in our review *MUTANT*, which will appear in the spring, of your underdeveloped attitudes, as well as those of the Russians. We hope that many of the subscribers to your manifest will join us in this perspective, which can give a future to your direction.

"Mutant", tract, 1962, reprinted in **Drakabygget**, no. 2-3, 1962.





## NICHT HINAUSLEHNEN!

The Central Council of the S.I. has resolved, in its meeting in Paris on 10 February 1962, to exclude from the German section of the S.I. the group responsible for issuing the journal *SPUR* (D. Kunzelmann, H. Prem, H. Sturm, and H.P. Zimmer).

It was argued that the fractional activity of this group is based on a systematic misunderstanding of situationist theses; and that the members of this group have perfectly disregarded the discipline of the S.I. in order to 'arrive' as artists.

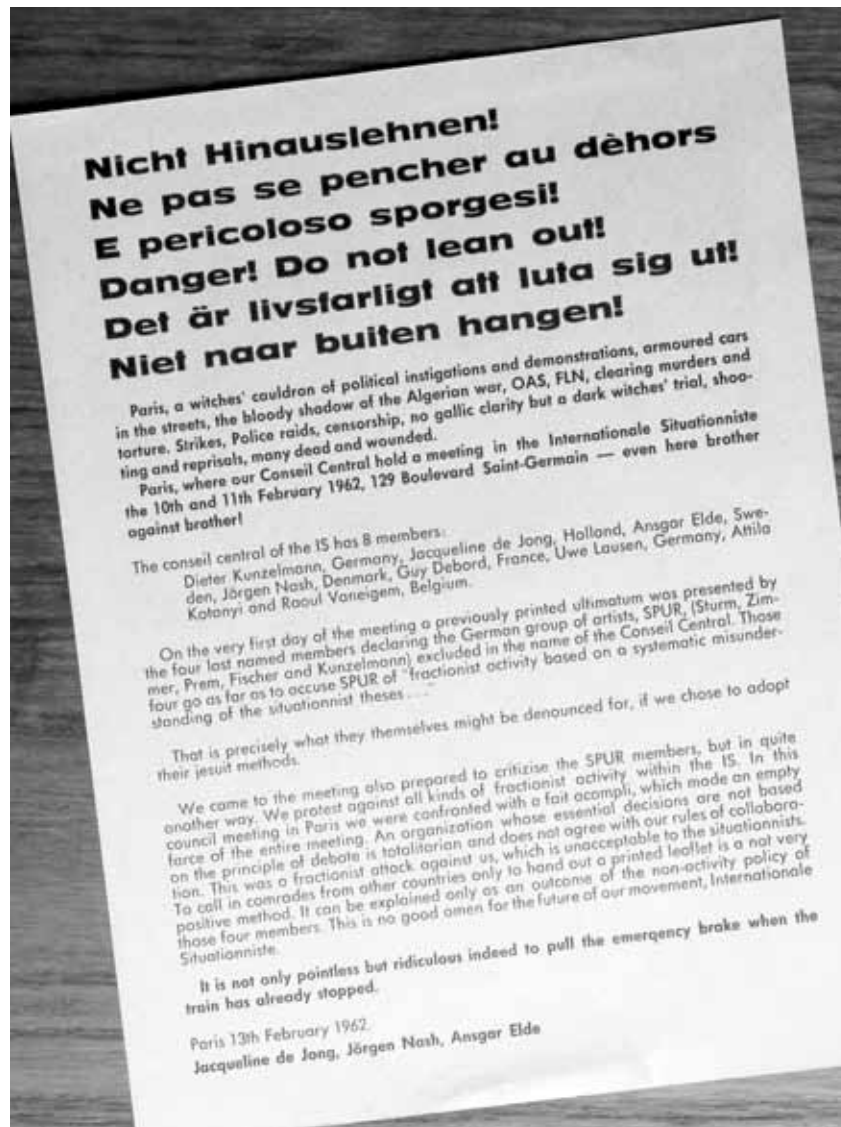
The journal *SPUR* will be replaced by a new journal as the organ of the S.I. in Germany.

For the Central Committee:

G.E. Debord, Attila Kotyani, Uwe Lausen and Raoul Vaneigem

"Nicht hinauslehnen", tract, 1962, reprinted in **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962, and **Internationale situationniste**, no. 8, 1963.

Translated by John Lepper.



**NICHT HINAUSLEHNEN!**  
**NE PAS SE PENCHEUR AU DEHORS!**  
**E PERICOLOSO SPORGERSI!**  
**DANGER! DO NOT LEAN OUT!**  
**DET AR LIVSFARLIGT ATT LUTA SIG UT!**  
**NIET NAAR BUITEN HANGEN!**

Paris, a witches' cauldron of political instigations and demonstrations, armoured cars in the streets, the bloody shadow of the Algerian War, the O.A.S., the F.L.N., mysterious assassinations and torture. Strikes, police raids, censorship, no Gallic clarity but a dark witches' trial, shootings and reprisals, many dead and wounded.

Paris, where our Central Committee held a meeting of the *Internationale Situationniste* on the 10th and 11th February 1962, at 129 Boulevard Saint-Germain — even here, it is brother against brother!

The *Conseil Central* of the I.S. has eight members: Dieter Kunzelmann, Germany; Jacqueline de Jong, Holland; Ansgar Elde, Sweden; Jørgen Nash, Denmark; Guy Debord, France; Uwe Lausen, Germany; Attila Kotanyi and Raoul Vaneigem, Belgium.

On the very first day of the meeting, a previously printed ultimatum was presented by the four last-named members (Debord, Lausen, Kotanyi and Vaneigem) declaring the German group of artists, SPUR (Sturm, Zimmer, Prem, Fischer and Kunzelmann), excluded in the name of the *Conseil Central*. Those four go as far as to accuse SPUR of 'fractionist activity based on a systematic misunderstanding of the situationist theses...'

That is precisely what they themselves might be denounced for, if we chose to adopt their Jesuit methods.

We came to the meeting also prepared to criticize the SPUR members, but in quite another way. We protest against all kinds of fractionist activity within the I.S. In this council meeting in Paris we were confronted with a *fait accompli*, which made an empty farce of the entire meeting. An organization whose essential decisions are not based on the principle of debate is totalitarian and does not agree with our rules of collaboration. This was a fractionist attack against us, which is unacceptable to the situationists. To call in comrades from other countries only to hand out a printed leaflet is a not very positive method. It can be explained only as an outcome of the non-activity policy of those four members. This is not a good omen for the future of our movement *Internationale Situationniste*.

It is not only pointless but ridiculous indeed to pull the emergency brake when the train has already stopped.

Paris, 13 February 1962.

Jacqueline de Jong, Jørgen Nash & Ansgar Elde

"Nicht Hinauslehnen", tract, 1962, reprinted in **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962.

## PROCLAMATION FROM THE FIRST SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL!

On the 15th March 1962, a proclamation against the Situationist International was published in Sweden by Ansgar Elde and Jørgen Nash, former members of the Central Committee.

Under the shelter of the S.I., these conspirators, who have so suddenly shown their hands, tried to support a number of collectors with the aid of the recently repelled fraction which was excluded from the German section at the Paris conference of the Central Committee on the 10th February.

### The cynical forgeries of Nashist gang mainly refer to three items:

- a. On the 10th of February, at the latest Paris conference of the Central Committee (which numbered seven members according to resolution at the 5th S.I. congress) the exclusion of the Prem-Kunzelmann fraction was passed by 5 votes to 1, Ansgar Elde being absent. NASH JOINED THE MAJORITY.
- b. The Nashist proclamation was misdated: Paris, 13th February. This misdating is just a ridiculous attempt to pretend that somebody has ventured to put forward this crazy idea at a Situationist conference.
- c. Moreover, in their leaflet the Nashists introduce a fictitious eighth member of the Central Committee [Jacqueline de Jong], who is said to have shared their opinion. This person has never been a member of the Central Committee, and further, on her return in January from a journey in Germany, she reported the facts which resulted in the inevitable exclusion of the Prem-Kunzelmann fraction.



## PROCLAMATION FROM 1<sup>re</sup> INTERNATIONALE SITUATIONNISTE!

On the 15th March a proclamation against l'Internationale situationniste was published in Sweden by Ansgar Elde and Jørgen Nash, former members of the Conseil Central.

Under the shelter of 1<sup>re</sup> I.S. these conspirators who have so suddenly shown their hands, tried to support a number of collectors with the aid of the recently repelled fraction which was excluded from the German section of the Paris conference of the Conseil Central on the 10th February.

The explicit forgeries of the Machistic gang mainly refer to three items:

- a. On the 10th February, at the latest Paris conference of the Conseil Central (which numbered seven members according to resolution of the 2th I.S. congress) the exclusion of the Prem-Kunzelemann fraction was passed by 3 votes to 1, Ansgar Elde being absent. NASH JOINED THE MAJORITY.
- b. The Machistic proclamation was misdated: Paris, 12th February. This misdating is just a voluntary effort to pretend that somebody has ventured to put forward this crazy idea at a situationnistic conference.
- c. Moreover, in their shelter the Machists introduce a fictitious eighth member of the Conseil Central, who is said to have shared their opinion. This person has never been a member of the Conseil Central and further, on her return in January from a journey in Germany, she reported the facts which resulted in the inevitable exclusion of the Prem-Kunzelemann fraction.

Considering these facts the Conseil Central of 1<sup>re</sup> Internationale situationniste:

**proclaims** that all followers of Nash, the falsifier, and Elde, his agent, will be considered enemies of 1<sup>re</sup> I.S.

**confers** on J.V. Martin the supreme authority to represent 1<sup>re</sup> Internationale situationniste in the area covered by the former Scandinavian section (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) together with the task and the responsibility to reorganize the true situationnistic elements in these countries before the opening of the 6th I.S. congress in Antwerp.

For the C.C. of 1<sup>re</sup> I.S.

23rd March, 1962.

Debord, A. Kotanyi, U. Lausen, R. Vaneigem.

Considering these facts the Central Committee of the Situationist International:

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For the C.C. of the S.I.

23 March, 1962

Debord, A. Kotanyi, U. Lausen, R. Vaneigem

"Proclamation from the 1<sup>st</sup> Internationale Situationniste!", tract, 1962, reprinted in **Situationistisk Revolution**, no. 1, 1962, and **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962.





## CRITIQUE OF THE POLITICAL PRACTICE OF DÉTOURNEMENT

Jacqueline de Jong

1

After the exclusion of the German art group SPUR from the Internationale Situationniste, Jørgen Nash and I decided that the way this exclusion had taken place called for protest on our part. The reaction to this protest (this protest was made in Paris on 13th February 1962 and published in Sweden some time later and was sent to the people concerned) in the No.7 issue of the *Internationale Situationniste* postulates some deeper going problems. Thus I will try to make clear what actually happened on the 10th February 1962.

2

The SPUR Group (Gruppe SPUR) had indeed got themselves involved in activities which were unacceptable to us (the I.S.) and they had made their position even worse by publishing a seventh issue of their journal without informing Attila Kotanyi and myself; a decision made by the I.S. congress in Göteborg (end of August 1961) had chosen us to collaborate in the editing of the future *SPUR* journal issues, to establish in this way a closer I.S.-SPUR connection. The *SPUR* issue No.7 had been made in Italy. In this issue, the Gruppe SPUR turned over to an economic and practical collaboration with people who are officially declared anti-Situationist. This fact did not prevent SPUR from realising this issue in a way that on the last page of the SPUR book, in which all the issues of the journal is printed with the SPUR manifesto, the names of these very (anti-I.S.) people appear as collaborators in the journal. We asked SPUR to explain No.7 and the last page of the book. Nevertheless they did not seem to get to the point of giving an acceptable explanation, which put them in an extremely bad

position. Four members of the Conseil Central of the I.S.: G.E. Debord, Attila Kotanyi, Uwe Lausen, Raoul Vaneigem, had declared at the beginning of this meeting that as far as they were concerned the case was closed and SPUR was excluded from the Internationale Situationniste because: Spur had written a letter to Debord in which they had refused to show the requested texts (to be given to another I.S. member). The explanation given for the refusal given by SPUR at the CC was that the texts were at the translator and would have been sent later on. Since none of the other members of the I.S. present at the meeting of the CC February 1962, had seen this letter of SPUR until that very moment we were asked by this group of four (Lausen, Debord, Vaneigem, Kotanyi) to make up our minds about the exclusion of SPUR, and informed about the fact that whatever our decision would be this group of four would in no case change their minds.

### 3

It is evident that with this ultimatum the possibility of any open discussion was cut short completely and that SPUR's eventual explanations would have in any case no value whatsoever to the decision of this group of four. Jørgen Nash refused to decide within a such a short time as the situation was too important and therefore the action completely without value. Nevertheless we did instigate a discussion by trying to get the explanations but were cut off by the demand for a immediate decision. Debord speaking on behalf of the group of four accepted this and added that, only those who agreed with him could come back to the meeting later on in the evening. He further said that it would be evidence of our solidarity in the matter of SPUR's lawsuit. Only later in the evening when we got the tract 'Nicht Hinauslehnen' which had obviously been printed before the CC meeting their game became clear to us. To us the taking of an only political action and position in this case seemed absolutely absurd. It is a pity for this group of four to have published in I.S. 7 at the moment that SPUR was [next page]

### 4

... receiving summons to appear in court: ..... ET LE RESTE DU PROCESS est au POINT MORT.

After having spoken and eaten with the SPUR group in the evening we met the group of four again with the intention of discussing. But what we got the moment we were seated around the meeting table was 'NICHT HINAUSLEHNEN' with Debord's remark 'of course if you had not accepted the exclusion of SPUR this printed matter would have in any case been thrown on the table!' By coming we had accepted an exclusion of SPUR but on another basis and not just in the moment of their lawsuit. The discussion on that matter was closed AND THE ...

### 5

BIG FIGHT HAD STARTED. After this evening I went home with the most disgusting taste in my mouth. I decided to wait until the end of next day's meeting, where, of course apart from the SPUR people we would all meet again to talk about everything but Spur's complete misunderstanding and contradictions within the movement itself seem to exist and therefore the necessity of an intern dictionary had been decided. The next day a decision was taken to promote clearer understanding inside the movement and of a [indcipherable – ed.] theoretical work such as a dictionary of situationist terms and concepts etc as there exists several misunderstandings and different interpretations and explanations which make a practical collaboration inside the I.S. quite difficult. No word about SPUR anymore. The meeting was soon finished. We left and Nash and I decided to meet again in the evening. After a long discussion we (Nash and I) decided to make our own protest in the form in which is done (here present) – a method having been presided by Guy Debord's fractionary print: 'Nicht hinauslehnen'. Nash left for Sweden. I stayed in Paris. Nothing was seen or heard from the group of four until issue No. 7 of the I.S. journal came out with its significant content. In the above-quoted text of I.S. 7 it is written that on the 15th March Nash and Elde pronounced themselves suddenly against the Internationale Situationniste. The expression of suddenness of a date (15th March) is rather strange when the published protest is not



at all against the Internationale Situationniste but against the action of four members of the I.S. who seem to think that their fraction includes a totality of the I.S. with all its implied limitations. I am only to take this insult which they make by writing that we pronounced ourselves against the I.S. as seeming to be one of those misunderstandings or even contradictions as during the last CC it was a clear fact that the terms and theories of the I.S. were not understood by everyone in an absolutely similar way and that even complete misunderstanding and contradictions within the movement itself seemed to exist and therefore the necessity for an internal dictionary had been decided on.

## 6

Misunderstandings and contradictions are not only of great value but in fact the basis of all art and creation, if not the source of all activity in general. The entire institution of society is built upon these facts. And it is only in political activity that they are considered to be: A) the basis of all politics B) the means to be used in politics C) the danger to be avoided and denied. IN FACT REAL politics consists of all three points simultaneously and interplays with the last two points (B+C) as best seems fit. And that is exactly where we are today in the I.S. In our protest we do not attack the movement and its theory and action. We do indeed not even attack one single point of the I.S. All we protest against is the organisation which four members of the I.S. have tried to establish into what we have always and will always consider as Situationist, the movement of the I.S.

## 7

And where in the Situationist movement does a practical and theoretical limitation up to that point exist? Why is a protest against a non-accepted political action of four members an accusation against the entire I.S. movement? What the hell is left of the I.S. as a movement if the establishment of an organisation comes to that point where open protest against this establishment seems to be considered as against the movement? I don't believe that these purely political activities which have been made will ever be able to détourn what is and will always be the I.S., even with

the détournement of its own texts it will always have its misunderstandings and contradictions and it will always need them (apart from the four politicians), not for the organisation but for its development. All right; but what if their decision is fixed, these four members have by an exclusion of other members shown that their action was completely political and absolutist (absolutist, absolutist, absolutist). Does any theory, idea or action of the movement depend on them, these four members of the same movement?

## 8

And neither do I believe that I could attack the theories or actions which I have always considered as Situationist and of which movement I have chosen to be a member. Only the false use of this movement should be attacked. If the four are right, that our protest is an attack against the Situationist movement and against them and their personal activities then it will mean that ONLY they and what is theirs is Situationist. In that case I must admit that my opinion on the Internationale Situationniste is, was, and will always be wrong. I refuse to undertake a suicide in this way, as others would have to do the same along with me. As the mentioning of the third signature, which happens to be mine, seems to have been neglected because of the fact that there is perhaps a misunderstanding (already shown during the CC) about my position I will try to explain. You say in your text, Guy Debord, that the entire I.S. (consisting as it seems of you and the other three signatories of the 'Nicht Hinauslehnen' and the Danish voice J.V. Martin) is false, that I, as the only Dutch member of the I.S. was chosen as the representative (of Holland) of the CC. But when we made the list of the members of the CC for our protest we had to control by asking the excluded SPUR, as you neglected in Goteborg to make a protocol written and signed by all of us with every decision. Nash, Kunzelmann, Zimmer, Prem, Sturm + Strid being in Paris for the CC declared that in fact I had been chosen as Dutch member of the CC at the congress in Goteborg, where they were present. And Elde signing the protest statement later on in Sweden, agreed with this. In the issue No. 7 (I.S.) my name as member of the CC does not appear. Bad memory and the

neglect by all present members of the I.S. of a signed protocol means that there are now two different opinions of the then not yet excluded members of the I.S. present at the congress in Goteborg. Nowhere in our protest is it written that the Scandinavian Section will be transformed into a Bauhaus. Thank you for informing us about this, Guy Debord. I actually thought this had been talked over to a decisive point before the Conseil Central. Where in our text is it written that you tried to intimidate us (the minority) with an atmosphere of civil war, which has ruled since two days (helas) in Paris? Paris happened to be in an extremely bad situation (10–12 Feb 1962) and to foreigners coming from perhaps too calm countries even if they are Situationists this makes an impression which is undeniable. To mention that in an introduction in the protest does not mean to be intimidated, as you see.

## 9

I regret to have to admit that here it becomes clear why our collaboration in *MUTANT* seemed difficult, Guy Debord; when you open up the *New York Herald Tribune* of the 30th December 1961 you will not find the publication of the open letter to President Kennedy and Governor Rockefeller, written by the members of the academic staff of University Colleges and Research Institutes in the New York City and the Cambridge-Boston area after which we made *MUTANT* as you indicate in I.S. no. 7 but in the *New York Times* (international edition of 30 Dec. 1961). For an ultimatum is made by a fraction towards another part of this same movement (see last page). What is wrong is the fear of facing the reaction after the offence made by an ultimatum, that then appears and exists between the ‘ultimators’ towards the others. On the base of this fear, a cold war and a thermo-nuclear agitation are made by what are the ‘ultimators’ or ‘provocateurs’. As long as neither the ‘provocateurs’ or ‘ultimators’ get a protest from the others, this game goes on. When there are several provocateurs they all try to be the strongest, and then it becomes an economic, social, etc. question. There have to be found new ways out to détourn the problems (from A-Bomb to shelter, etc.). And this goes on until the disaster OR until a protest of the non-provoking but provoked lot. As long as Europe prefers

to be provoked in this way in the hope to one day become strong enough to be provocator itself, it’s quiet. But if Europe will start protesting against ridiculous provocation – and it might be that not all of Europe will do so, but only a part, because of a certain tradition in which one part has always shown a desire for clarification of necessary facts AND another part has always had an extreme capacity and desire to détourn facts. WHAT THEN?

## 10

What has happened here has an extreme importance because this sort of game is very close to another game which has to be considered as quite dangerous for Europe. Why do we protest and why do we want to clarify a situation which appears to us as wrong and damned unclear? Why do you protest against our desire to clarify things? You détourn our protest very smartly into a false one. Well done! But had you printed our protest in the I.S. issue 7 your détournement would have been completely unnecessary (and obviously ridiculous) as far as facts go. I’m absolutely not interested in facts, but when I see that there is a point where they are necessary, I use them. And you prefer to détourn them rather than use them. This is of course a fantastically good tactic up to a certain point. And that is where we are now. When détournements come to this point inside an organisation or movement, they are not called détournement anymore, but SABOTAGE. It is not possible to be together in a movement if the distrust or disinterest is so great that a discussion on a subject does not even seem to be needed. The Anti-Nash fight which you have started, has not so very much to do with what has to be considered as the Internationale Situationniste movement. The fight which has started with your fractionist exclusion of SPUR and our protest against what we considered as being an un-Situationist action has only started. It will go on. This means that all the I.S. evidently knows the existence of a Dutch member of the CC is false. Only all the members of the I.S. still left seem to know that.

## 11

I’m proud that you call us gangsters, nevertheless you are wrong. We are worse; we are Situationists. The continual process of inclusions and

exclusion of the I.S. have after the last events come to the point where the I.S. has to be considered either as an avant-garde school which has already produced a series of first-class artists thrown out after having passed through their education OR as an anti-organisation based upon a new ideology which is Situationist and which has not yet found in details its clear formulations in the fields of science, technique and art. The Situationistic notion cannot be on art, it is an ideological and elaborative development. Everybody who develops theoretically or practically this new unity is automatically a member of the Situationist International and, from this perspective, *The Situationist Times* is made. The I.S. is a movement declared publicly as an anti-organisation. The reason why Debord wanted the exclusion of the Gruppe SPUR was a pure question of discipline in an organisation which has absolutely no rules.

[The text was originally presented as a handwritten graphic text in *The Situationist Times* where the sentences flow into and out of spirals, are written as clumps and show no clear continuation from one page to the next. Its very graphic, labyrinthine form makes the text take on the appearance of an improvisatory outburst and we have tried to maintain an element of this by only slightly editing the language or the sentence structure.]

"Critic on the Political Practice of Détournement", **The Situationist Times**, no. 1, 1962.

Transcribed by Howard Slater.

## PRESS RELEASE FROM THE SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL, SCANDINAVIAN SECTION

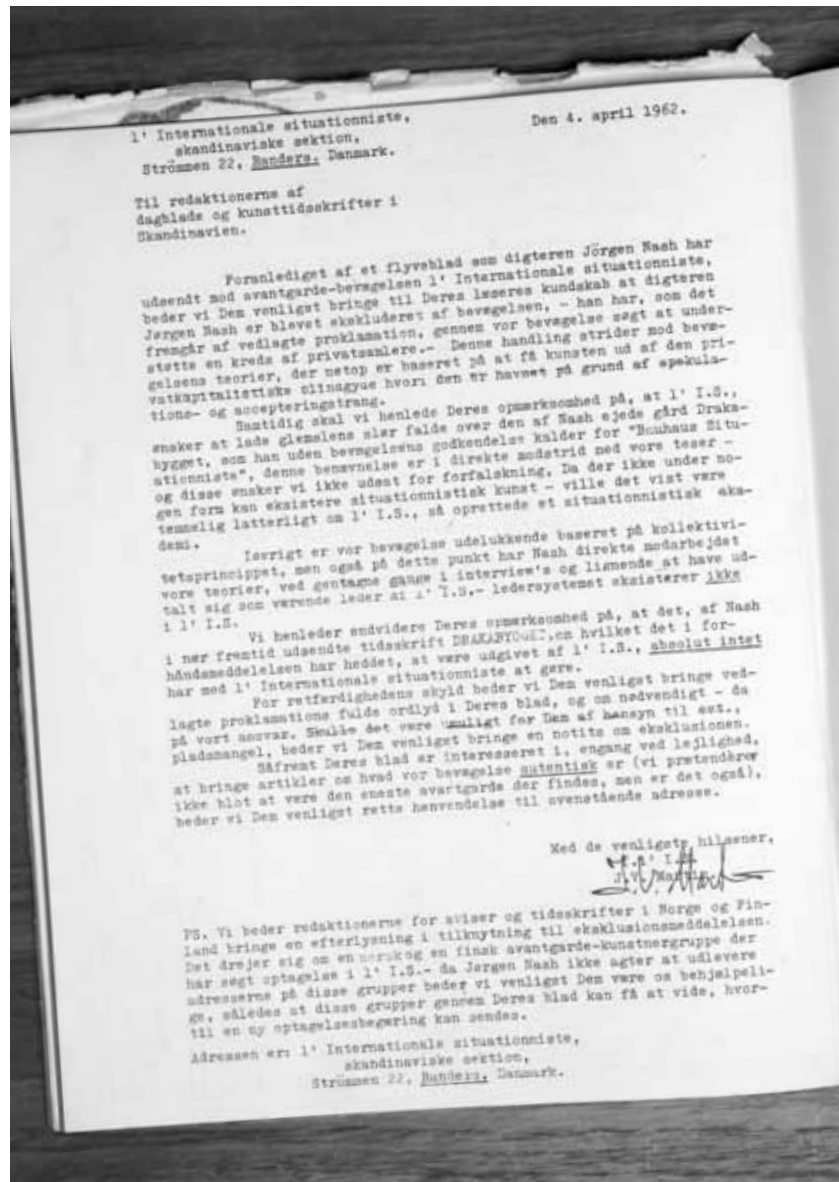
4th April 1962  
Situationist International,  
Scandinavian Section,  
Strømmen 22, Randers, Denmark

### To the editors of newspapers and art periodicals in Scandinavia

Prompted by a pamphlet issued by the poet Jørgen Nash against the avant-garde movement Situationist International, we ask you kindly to make it known to your readers that the poet Jørgen Nash has been excluded from the movement – he has attempted, as will be evident from the enclosed proclamation, to support a circle of private collectors through our movement. This action conflicts with the theories of the movement, which are based precisely on getting art out of the hands of the private capitalist blind alley in which it has ended as a result of the urge towards speculation and acceptance.

At the same time we would like to direct your attention to the fact that the S.I. wishes to let the veil of oblivion descend upon the farm Drakabygget owned by Nash, which he has without the approval of the movement called the 'Bauhaus Situationniste'; this designation is in direct contravention of our theses – which we do not wish to see subjected to falsification. Since no such thing as situationist art can exist in any form, it would clearly be rather ridiculous if the S.I. then established a situationist academy.

In addition our movement is based exclusively on the collectivity principle; but in this respect too Nash has worked directly against our theories by repeatedly, in interviews and the like, stating that he is the leader of the S.I. – the leader system does not exist in the S.I.



We further direct your attention to the fact that the periodical *Drakabygget*, to be issued in the near future by Nash, about which it is stated in the advance announcement that it is published by the S.I., has absolutely nothing to do with the First Situationist International.

In the interests of fairness we ask you kindly to publish the full wording of the enclosed proclamation in your paper, if necessary on our responsibility. If this should be impossible for you for reasons of lack of space, we ask you kindly to publish a notice of the exclusion.

If your paper is interested on some later occasion in featuring articles on what our movement authentically is (we not only claim to be, but actually are the only avant-garde in existence) we ask you to make inquiries at the above address.

Yours very sincerely  
for the S.I.  
J.V. Martin

P.S. We ask the editors of newspapers and periodicals in Norway and Finland to publish a notice in connection with the exclusion announcement. It concerns a Norwegian and a Finnish avant-garde artist group that have applied to join the S.I. – since Jørgen Nash does not intend to release the addresses of these groups we kindly ask you to be of assistance to us, such that these groups, through your paper, can be informed where an application to join can be sent.

"Pressemeddelelse", press release, 1962, reprinted in **The Situationist Times**, nr. 1, 1962.

Translated by James Manley.



## THE STRUGGLE OF THE SITUCRATIC SOCIETY: A SITUATIONIST MANIFESTO

Modern industrial society has so far been organised along classical lines as developed in Greece and Rome. During the industrial period following the French Revolution there have been cycles in which all the different forms of such a method of government have been explored. This has been a valuable experience. It has shown that the enlightened autocracy of Plato and the more or less aristocratic military dictatorship which replaced the legal government as well as the various forms of democracy (including the latest edition, the so-called people's democracy) – that none of these have been capable of creating a form of government to meet and satisfy human needs, much less to allow life to flourish and prosper.

The new phenomena which dominated industrial society from the beginning, despite some pioneer romanticism, is the growing socialisation of all the means of life which is itself the ineluctable consequence of machine techniques. By socialism we understand the inclusive principle which makes society the centre, meaning and purpose of all human activity. It is all the same whether one takes this evolution to mean progress or whether one interprets it as a growing threat to human freedom. Both attitudes amount to the same thing. Socialisation will spread in one way or another. Man can only dominate his future environment if we face this fact. We must use this knowledge to evolve the means of liberation. In order to win, it is essential for us to extricate ourselves from the principle of fatalistic necessity and to regain a new potential of choice and self-determination.

The social structure which fulfills the conditions for freedom is what we have termed the situcratic order. The point of departure is the de-christianisation of Kierkegaard's philosophy of situations. This must



be combined with British economic doctrine, German dialectics and French social action programmes. It involves a profound revision of Marxist doctrine and a complete revolution whose growth is rooted in the Scandinavian concept of culture.

This new ideology and philosophical theory we have called situology. It is based on the principle of social democracy inasmuch as it excludes all artificial forms of privilege. It is the only existing guarantee which ensures that human life can develop in all its cultural variety and without crushing the special abilities of the individual in an anonymous society designed for the unfit. Sartre says that we should always ask what would happen if everyone acted like me. Our answer is that we should all die of boredom. We want to make it possible for man to be able to gamble his life. This can only happen if everyone is allowed to have individual freedom of action.

The first Situationist International was founded in Paris in 1957. Its function was to formulate and develop Situology. During the last five years some serious differences of opinion have arisen. These have led to the progressive exclusion of many Situationist comrades in Great Britain, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Needless to say this continual up and down has imperilled the movement. It looks like it might be becoming an international training college for avant-gardists, a sort of finishing school for serious artists. It was not for this that the Situationist movement was founded. All the various tensions came to a head in Paris on February 10th 1962. At that council meeting the Parisians excluded the German Situationists of Gruppe SPUR (Munich). They did this at the very moment when the group was being tried by neo-Nazi authorities in West Germany: charged with producing degenerate art (*entartete kunst*). It is with great regret that we have to place it on record that the Paris declaration came as a stab in the back to our comrades; it was used by the German authorities as a weapon to discredit Gruppe SPUR in court. Only after the verdict had been announced did Paris suddenly declare its solidarity with the German Situationists. A meaningless gesture rather late in the day.

This sort of vacillation shows that the Situationists' action programme – at the intellectual level – is suffering from a cancer. The root of

this cancer lies in the adherence to old-fashioned, classical and ultra-rigid patterns of organisation.

To avoid the disruptive consequences of this disease, the Dutch representative Jaqueline de Jong proposed in *The Situationist Times* to go ahead with the Situationist programme of anti-organisation by dissolving the central organisation. Now anyone is free to become a Situationist without the need for special formalities. It is up to the individual to fulfill the Situationist ideology in the best way that seems fit. This does away with all problems of inclusion and exclusion.

The Franco-Belgian group of Situationists answered the above proposal with a categorical 'No'. Articles published in *Internationale Situationniste* and the Copenhagen journal *Information* declared that the Scandinavian group of Situationists around Drakabygget (Secretary: Jørgen Nash) had been excluded from the Situationist International. They also saw fit to level a stream of querulous accusations against us which we reject out of hand. Whatever happens we shall adhere to our role in the Situationist revolution. We shall continue to do our duty. Here and now this document is our witness: we proclaim the foundation of the 2nd Situationist International. We look upon this action in the light of historical necessity. The action has been forced upon us. At the same time we trust that the split will only be temporary. We foresee that our own Situationist evolution and that which has its roots in Paris will be followed by an East European Situationist Movement. The three groups each evolving from its own set of problems and attitudes shall one day unite into a Situationist International.

For the sake of Europe it is very important that genuine differences and variants should not be suppressed. On the contrary these characteristic differences have a vital part to play in the development of a Situcratic community.

Oddly enough Situcratic history has followed the same trend as the Communist International during the last century. The latter separated into the 2nd Social Democratic and later into the Communist International. With us the process has been speedier. Our experience throws new light on the way in which socialist splinter movements come about. The process



cannot be explained merely in terms of internal self-criticism as has usually been done in the past when people have looked for an explanation for changes in social structure. Yet there is clearly a parallel between the two movements.

Niels Bohr's complementary theory is based on the observation that one cannot give a simultaneous description of position and movement. This is more than a purely abstract scientific observation. Indeed something of the same incompatibility between position and movement underlies Bohr's own scientific methods and procedures. Let us for the moment disregard the overtones of recrimination and abuse in our present controversy. Let us assume that the Scandinavian and French programmes are both equally well-meaning, intelligent and correct. We shall then find that there is a fundamental difference of assumption between us. If we discard all prejudice we shall see that the problem, as seen by Guy Debord from a Paris point of view, is purely a matter of position. This same applies to this analysis of situation. The Scandinavian outlook is completely different. It is based on movement and mobility. Once we understand this difference the split between the two groups seems natural and inevitable. We must agree to differ in order to let the two opposing tendencies work out their own salvation. Any attempt to force them both into the same mould will lead to frustration and further conflict. Therefore the creation of a 2nd Situationist International is not a matter of progress or regression. It is the natural result of Situationist dichotomy which operates from two fundamentally different assumptions and programmes.

We want to steer clear of Parisian problems of position at least until such time as these problems have been clarified to the point where they become amenable to systematic and rational discussion. Positional Situationism starts out by making projects. This is a typically Latin pattern whereas Scandinavian Social Democracy is called reformatory because its plans arise out of the situation itself. This method seems to be quite alien to the French way of thinking at the present time and they therefore regard it as taboo. These differences automatically preclude any form of close Franco-Nordic co-operation. In this argument neither side can claim to have a monopoly of the right ideas.

Greco-Roman thinking is rooted in political and social theory. It is opposed to our own way of thinking because we believe that man as a human being and individual stands at the centre of all worthwhile activity.

Sartre's scholasticism has been called humanistic but in fact this human being is a socio-centric creature. The Franco-Belgian Situationists base themselves on the same principles as Pascal, Descartes, Grace and Gide. Action precedes emotion. Emotion is a primary, non-reflective intelligence: passionate thought/thinking passion. 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. Lastly this: Scandinavian politicians who chose to ignore these fundamental differences will do so at their own peril. They will get an unpleasant surprise at the Nordic emotional reaction.

The 2nd Situationist International is a freely organised movement. It is a voluntary association of autonomous work groups, whose programme as agreed in Stockholm is briefly as follows:

A. Freedom for science and intellectual life. Scientific knowledge shall be pooled. The achievements of science belong to society as a whole. A world organisation must be set up to ensure that scientific discoveries are made to benefit all mankind. Scientific inventions shall not be sequestered by individual states or departments of state. Science shall not be used as an instrument of repression or terror.

The new world organisation will resemble UNESCO, but without being dominated by any single political power group or alliance. It shall be based in Prague. But Czechoslovakia must be released from its satellite attachment to the Soviet Union. This is a perfectly feasible demand.

It is inevitable that scientific knowledge and technological skills should be unevenly distributed throughout the world. It is therefore impossible to socialise science on a global scale. But the achievements of science can and shall be made available to all.

B. Art shall be for the benefit of mankind. Art and culture can only function properly when they are free from political interference. It is necessary to establish autonomous centres of cultural activity and colleges for

the people. Such institutions will come under the protection of the new UNESCO in Prague.

C. The labour movement was once considered to be the salt of the earth. Today it is more like a milk cow whose udders are being pumped in an effort to get more and more material benefits at the expense of the mind. All the same our material standards have not risen to such great heights when seen overall. We have the spectacle of society which, on the one hand, is consumer-minded but on the other hand is controlled by shopkeepers of every kind. They are in charge of business, politics and cultural affairs. The Situationist movement wants to achieve freedom of the mind.

D. We shall work towards the accomplishment of the MUTANT programme of interplanetary economic expansion: the abolition of military designs, the destruction of all atomic weapons. If mankind is nevertheless doomed, we prefer that we should all perish together. We are opposed to any plan which favours the survival of a bunker aristocracy.

### **Situationists and nordic rebels**

We admit that Scandinavians are feeble planners and probably even feebler at carrying out other people's plans. We do not always distinguish between theory and practice. We intend to produce our theories after the event. Now that we have become involved in a Situationist evolution we are planning towards feasible objectives. The French work exactly the other way round. They want everything straight before they start and everybody has to line up correctly. With them it is 'fall in or get out'. As for strategy, they believe in frontal attacks regardless of the costs. They do not seem to realise that by making weak frontal attacks they are playing into the hands of the enemy and wasting their own strength. It pays the enemy to provoke such attacks. We do not believe in this strategy.

Another important difference is this. The Scandinavians strive towards reform whereas the French aim at Revolution. We build on the past and we let new ideas grow out of past experience. This can be called an organic principle, it can also be called ultra-conservatism.

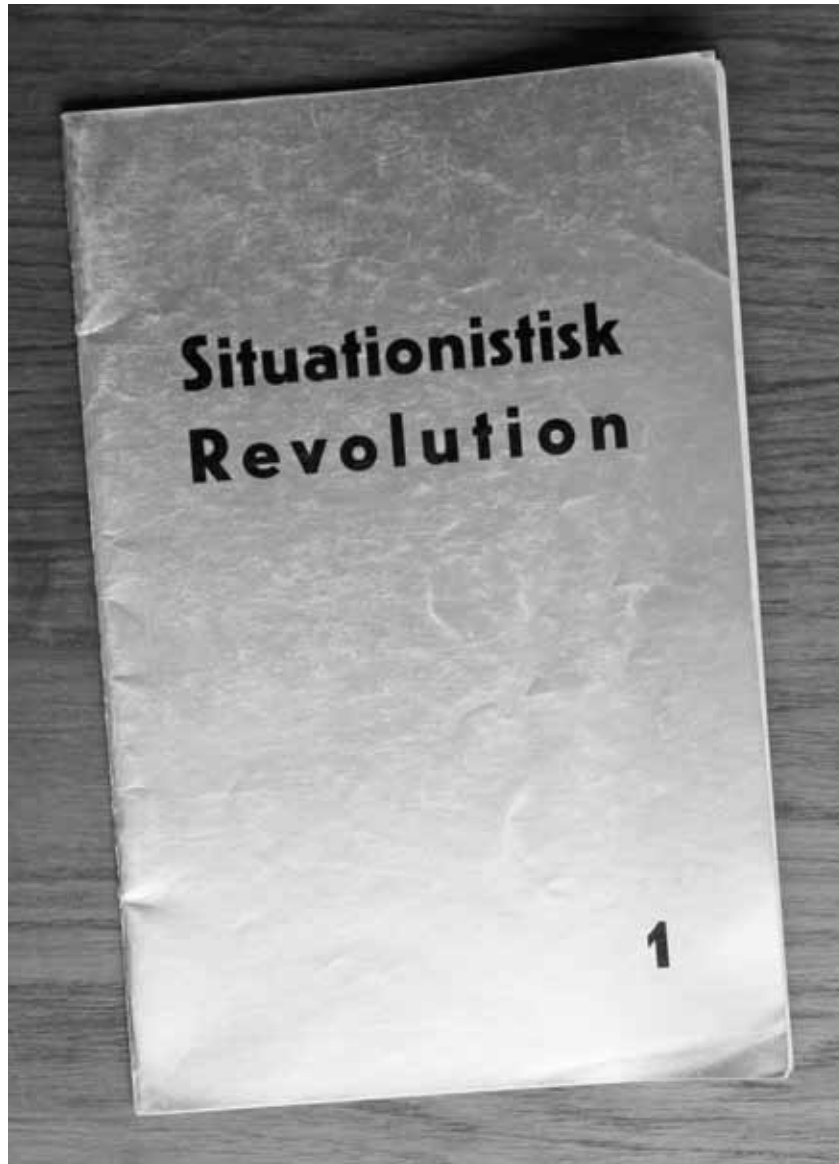
Today terms like conservatism, progress, revolution and reactionism have become meaningless. The terminology of liberalism is equally fatuous and played out. There is no point in using phrases of this kind for the Nordic philosophy of situations which is essentially tradition-directed. Herein lies our strength. On this we base our ideology and our working principles. If the French Situationists cannot accept our view, they must make their own plans and go ahead independently.

There are some people who will fail to grasp the significance of the Situationist struggle. The head-on collision in which we are involved will strike them as inexplicable. But we are convinced that one day this phase will be seen as an event of primary importance for Europe: the moment before a decisive breakthrough. To those who think that a verbal battle is not worthwhile, we would like to say this: A word war is better than a world war.

### **SIGNED:**

Jørgen Nash (Denmark); Jens Jørgen Thorsen (Denmark);  
Gordon Fazakerley (Great Britain); Hardy Strid (Sweden);  
Staffan Larsson (Sweden); Ansgar Elde (Sweden);  
Jacqueline de Jong (Holland); Patrick O'Brien (Eire)  
(Members of the Stockholm Conference in August 1962).

"The Struggle of the Situcratic Society: A Situationist Manifesto", **The Situationist Times**, no. 2, 1962, and **Drakabygget**, no. 2-3, 1962.



## ANTIPOLITICAL ACTIVITY

J.V. Martin

Anyone who has not actually deliberately closed his eyes cannot have failed to notice the forces set in motion to turn mankind into a uniformised and inarticulate machine of habit rather than thought. It is not too much to say that a large part of the responsibility for this devolves upon the architects who work directly with urban planning in the longer term. Not only must we witness everywhere in Europe at present the frighteningly dominant and improbably sterile high-rise buildings of recent times – whose foundation pits we can only wish were dug so deep that these horrors could quickly have been buried. We must also resign ourselves to having the curtains that the architect in question has incorporated in the development. At a large hotel in Copenhagen it is now the case that at particular places in the building one must not draw the curtains if one wants to look out over the city, since drawing the curtains interrupts the rhythm of the given arrangement, according to the architect.

In recent years, everywhere in the proximity of the big cities, new so-called 'dormitory towns' are mushrooming; their whole planning recalls ghettos to an alarming degree. If the mute machine-slave should one day suddenly acquire a voice – and we will teach him not only to speak but also to shout – then he will see that there is no difference between the 'dormitory towns' that the sociological monster Dr. Verwoerd has organized for the black Africans near Johannesburg, and those organized for example in Scandinavia, where the planning of very small villages has begun this very autumn such that 'they' now only need to set up a watch-tower in the centre of the town to have a quite excellent concentration camp. The architects ought to know that if the examples mentioned here are truly coincidental, they are coincidences that the forces of law and order are exceedingly keen to have presented to them so that they will be better equipped when they attempt to introduce the system that Orwell describes in his book *1984*.

Depressingly enough, there are really architects who are proud that they are now able to plan and build towns in which the potential experiences of the residents have either been removed or reduced to a minimum. We know that there will be no point exploring such a town, for if we walk along Fifth Street on the right we will encounter there exactly the same sights as if we were to walk along Eighth Street on the left. The isolation of mankind has led to an alienation which, viewed with the social hierarchy as its background, has led to neighbourhoods where it is no longer people who meet people, but apartments that meet apartments. Sterilization is thus thriving, and these architects are happy that prefabricated construction elements have given them the excuse they lacked in the past when they have been subjected to criticism. The client must respond with resignation when he hears: 'technically impossible in any other way'. Vällingby, the town in Sweden with the high suicide rate, must be preserved for future town planners and architects as the example that it is.

In other areas the politicians are trying, in the most infantile fashion, to create tensions, not only of a global character, but also of a more local character, where deemed necessary. In Denmark, which possesses a fully developed canalization system, the tensions created can however only be compared to stage thunder. But everywhere now, those who think that their place in the social hierarchy has any significance are bringing their big guns into position in an attempt to annihilate the remains of the human inclination to play. This is only a detail of the prevailing picture of the global situation at the moment, a picture which, when viewed in its entirety, only deserves the name of an impoverished society.

But it is possible to transform this picture totally.

The S.I. will turn out to be precisely the detail – always small and unforeseen – that will grow to become damning evidence of the above-mentioned big gunners. For it may be useful to mount a counter-attack on the areas in society in which we are interested at present. This is not to say that we will not deal with the residual areas; but at present these are working unconsciously and completely in the interest of the S.I., and as long as they do that, there is no reason at the present juncture to direct criticism at the resignation that is the result of their work.

The S.I. at present exists in a certain kind of isolation, an isolation that will be broken. For the moment, it finds itself in combat with the ejected para-situationist Nashists who, with the poet Jørgen Nash at their head, are attempting to expose the movement to mockery and laughter. The S.I. will be unable to serve the powers-that-be as a state-approved canalization system in which revolutionary elements of the population can be neutralized. We know that the resources and the materials we need lie right at our feet. For any artists of bygone times who might have felt a revolutionary instinct to launch the society of the artistically creative and playful human being, this would have been an impossibility, since the tools for such a transition did not exist. It is obvious for example that in feudal society, where people did not have modern tools at their disposal, they would not have had full disposal of their time either.

Since large parts of the population of this planet can only be regarded as the living dead, it is clear that the modern tools will quickly take over the leadership, and where they should have played the role of taking over forced labour and thus freeing human beings by giving them full time for play, they will instead become the oppressors. Now the revolutionary groups of workers and artists are all that remain. The artists, whose wish for the emancipation of their vocation is thus now facing its fulfilment, suddenly see themselves as betrayed more by their own kind than the workers. The betraying artists apparently know that if everyone is elevated to the pedestal that has hitherto been reserved for artists, this means that everyone will be an artist – and hero-worship for purposes of speculation will cease. That the stake in this game is human freedom must therefore be made clear to the artists who suffer from this kind of self-adulation, the result of which is an ominous internal urge to be accepted in a society which, despite everything, they cannot themselves accept. As far as we can see, a continuation of this pathological self-worship can only lead to a betrayal that turns not only against artistic freedom, but against freedom as a whole. The Nashists in Scandinavia, several of whom have emerged after the ejection of Nash and have never seen or in any way encountered a real situationist, actively participate with life and soul in this betrayal. With the aid of more-than-enthusiastic journalists employed by the Scandinavian

press, it must be admitted that initially the Nashists have succeeded in waging war on the S.I. The only thing the Nashists have needed, however, is a designation, a name that can function as a guarantee of their products and art-merchandising talent. The general public has therefore been given the false impression that the S.I. is an artistic movement – enough said about that. To go into all the foolishness about ‘situationism’ which the Nashists, with the aid of their advertising agency, have published in the Scandinavian press would be as pointless as it is ridiculous, since the clichés that the Nashists produce are one great bottomless swamp of court-jesterish compromises – a swamp which for these cliché-mongers is the only appropriate domicile.

In the canalization system of society the patent left-wing intelligentsia also appears – an intelligentsia which is quite harmless to society and is therefore also helped along in the best possible way, because at suitable intervals it can be brought out and held up to the people as a placebo whose purpose is to convince them of the great infallibility of our own ‘democracy’. This patent left-wing intelligentsia which knows of no immediate solutions – indeed cannot produce even a probable solution to the chaotic conditions of society – is therefore content to point out such conditions, but is otherwise sufficient unto itself. It is thus wary of the S.I. and will seek to liquidate us with silence, since it feels that its prestige is exposed to very rough contrary winds. But do not worry – the S.I. does not engage in your prestige-hungry spectacle, nor does it wish to perpetuate the negative role that society has given you, for we are ready to ‘get our hands dirty’ in the battle ahead to transform society into a community of artistically playful and truly living human beings who realize new wishes and ideas every day. Our movement, which is at present unfolding globally, must work, with a decisiveness and a strength of will that no earlier revolutionary movements have been able to muster, to hasten the time when our theses clash with society during its fateful development towards ‘1984’.

Here where we stand, a good way over the threshold of the age of automation, it is therefore a matter of engaging in extreme actions – whether as results of revolutionary artistic play or provocations; and when these do not suffice, of using direct action to break the chain of development that

past and ‘present’ controlling elements in society have turned into a chain around the neck of all playful activity on this planet. We will recall the millions of living dead to life, at the exact moment when needed. The full disposal of mankind’s time will then be secured, and the fully automated factories will become what they should be: the slaves of mankind!

It would be naive of us to believe that the politicians in society who have today (consciously or unconsciously) resigned themselves to playing the future role of foremen in a global assembly factory for uniformisers, will offer mankind a choice. Today the avant-garde therefore strengthens the struggle against bureaucracy and formalism and through this struggle creates fertile soil for humanity to become open and receptive to learning new things from the varying situations of play. Once we reach that far, the choice will come by itself.

To formalists, bureaucrats and politicians, we can now say: the harshness of the imminent struggle for the transformation of the structure of society depends exclusively on you gentlemen. In this struggle we will at all events remain uncompromising.

“Antipolitisk virksomhed”, **Situationistisk Revolution**, no. 1, 1962.

Translated by James Manley.



# ON THE SPUR TRIAL

Jacqueline de Jong

In these last two years we have seen several important trials which revealed certain facts about humanity at this stage of its development. We had to take the American actions in the Chessman case as an example of the 'prolongation for public' with expected results. Then there was the Eichmann case about which we will talk further, as it seems to us a quite evident example of German politics throwing their light not only upon Eichmann but more upon the most mundane fuss possible, the Vera Brühne-affair. As this Vera Brühne case was simultaneous with the SPUR trial, and making a hell of noise because it seemed to be so extremely scandalous, we became interested and looked into the publications about this case. It is striking that all the fuss made around Vera Brühne took away much attention from the SPUR trial. Yet, what is interesting is the reason why. This Vera Brühne case is not more exciting than any other cheap 'roman noir', but since it 'really happened', people found it to be a nice stimulant to their sleeping minds without waking them too much, and giving just a little juice of undangerous sensation to their general boredom. It had all taken place in a so-called 'dolce vita' atmosphere, but without any smell of the 'dolce' in it, and the smell of the cadavers not enough to spoil the atmosphere

Although it was not important, this affair was played up to the level of a world scandal. More important things were going on, next door and further away, but these more interesting matters were dangerous. Dangerous for the public, dangerous for the state and dangerous for the whole society. These dangers should be wrapped in silence. Eichmann was executed and the SPUR trial proceeded next door in silence. We do not need to waste any more words than we already have on Vera Brühne – the charming lady who was chosen to camouflage the uncharming society's facts, made clear by Eichmann and SPUR, and who had to pay quite dear for her 'good behaviour'.

During the general concentration on the Eichmann trial, Germany had to be extremely quiet, since it did not accept the principle of judging someone it saw as a victim of the system rather than a perpetrator, it had not accepted to judge the victim of the system itself, a system by which it had been governed during the period '32-'45. In '61 this game around the Eichmann case started openly, and in this way the trial disclosed the facts not then known by enough people. From Israel all journalists sent their headlines into the world, and this world was shocked, as it should be! However, a danger unknown to this world flared up. Eichmann was not a simple gangster and could not possibly be the antichrist, nor could he, whose trial led to revelations of the facts of '32-'45, become something of the anti-hero.

The public was completely confused, not only because of the orders given by Adolf Eichmann, but more on account of this specimen of humanity that they, the public, could not place in any usual 'slot'. The trial was not so much of juridical as of human and sociological significance. The fact that, nevertheless, Eichmann was executed can be considered as an act of pure nonsense.

Why the public could not get a clear view of this man is very well-described in the (voluntary) report of the trial, written by the Dutch author Harry Mulisch in *De zaak* 40/61.

'If one looks through the entire production of E.T.A. Hoffmann to Fritz Lang one can find all of them: going back from Hitler-Coppeliuss-Caligari-Mabuse and Himmler-Caesar to the murdering SS man in the crowd of Mabuse. But wherever one looks – and I have searched for him – one person is lacking: Eichmann.'

'It is dangerous to get rid of the calling for "Eid" and "befehl", being characteristic for "Neuzeitliche" machines people like Eichmann, by seeing them as escapes. It is one more effort to get them assigned to a soothing criminal psychology that lulls us into a false sense of security. We must not go on watching the criminals, we must continue to watch the deadly normal people. We should go on watching the mirror.'



'Nobody has thought of him; not even the greatest genius has been able to imagine him. The quiet, dutiful official, who offers the girl to Maldoror's dog. The quiet, dutiful official, who brings the surrealist the passer-by to be shot down. The quiet, dutiful official, who guided the European Jews to Rudolf Höss' gas chambers.'

'He was no "Caesar" under hypnosis like Himmler. He declared never to have read official party-literature, and only superficially *Mein Kampf*. He was not very interested in Hitler. He only obeyed. A medium has to believe in the hypnotist, but Eichmann was a medium without any belief or hypnosis. Himmler believed in Hitler, but Eichmann only in the ORDER. Himmler would not have believed in anyone else, but Eichmann would have obeyed anyone else as well. When there were no more orders, he immediately changed into a "peaceful citizen" as Servatius justly remarked.'

'He is the difference between the artist and the murderer. And if I have said that works of art throw the shadows of coming events before us, then I say now that Eichmann did not throw a shadow, because he is not about what artists wrote, but why they wrote: the new element whose approach they felt with alarm, and which the paper Caligari as a real Hitler only made possible – the symbol of progress.'

'Eichmann cannot call on God, he can call on something else. On something very abstract: the "order"'

Mulisch goes on: 'Until Hitler's death he stayed solidary with his highest order. Afterwards he became a "peaceful citizen", which means: solidarity with the order of the society, in which he lived in that time.'

'Automatically he clacked his heels and said "Jawohl". Automatically. Here we are in the world of machines.' A medium without hypnosis is the definition of the machine; there is no mystical order for a car.'

'But I call it the technical, which is not good or bad, but literally amoral. The question arises: how does a human being, a free creature change into an automaton, into a mechanical executor of orders, into a "weapon?" The answer is simple: by an oath. "Eid ist Eid", Eichmann says. The "Eid" is the manipulation with which the machine gets organised. The danger that the machine will alter the human beings, is not very big. Bigger is the danger that at the same time with the machine, changed people will get born: people like machines, obeying impulses without the possibility to inquire after their origin. That is why I called Eichmann "the symbol of progress". This zombie is the prototype of "the present human being, who created the machine after its own very "picture"'

'I believe that our society is more based on Eichmann than on Chessman. Chessman did not behave. He was, perhaps, innocently gassed by an "Eichmann". This extremely useful, completely incorrupt, terribly dangerous man is the exact opposite of the Rebel. He is the counterpart of the man, who is no good. He is the machine, reliable for everything. He is the right man in the right place. He is the ideal of the Psychotechnique.'

'I mean that it is not impossible that in a hundred years a reporter will examine the science fiction literature of our days for the same reasons that I have done the literature of last century.'

# THE FREEDOM OF ART

Jørgen Nash

5 November 1962

Since the war three trials have directed the interest of the world towards the problem of Germany: first the Nuremberg trial, later the Eichmann trial and now the SPUR trial in Munich. The interest of this last trial lies in the fact that it is the prosecutors from the first two trials who are now the accused and the accused from the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials who today sit in judgement upon the SPUR group.

The accused in the first two trials were Nazis, and hitherto their attitude to art, as it found expression in the concept of 'degenerate art', has not been manifested for the public eye. This is happening now, and it turns out that the Nazi view of art is today still the authorities' norm for action within the arts in order to protect their own inviolability, indeed their divinity. Even Hitler refrained from demanding all too directly, as is happening here, the assertion of his own divine authority by means of persecutions.

In legal language a persecution is called a trial. Gruppe SPUR has now been convicted. One can discuss whether this legal persecution is correct, fair or incorrect. This will only be established by the history of art. But that a persecution has taken place there can be no doubt whatsoever. I would therefore like to direct the attention of the world to the fact that a well known German art critic writes of this trial that there is no question of any persecution.

That this art critic is called Kristtreu is of secondary importance. What is worth noting is that all the German papers agree with him. This astonishing German capacity to lie to oneself is today once more becoming prevalent. We have always been surprised that so many fine Germans

whom we like and respect could avoid taking a stand on what was happening in the German concentration camps during the war. The explanation lies in precisely this: the Germans' fantastic ability to ignore things that it does not suit them to consider. I have encountered this mental gap innumerable times in my relations with Germans. Who has not? Indeed, in the trial itself there is such a gap. Why have the judges not, with true German thoroughness, set the police to track down examples of the reprehensible periodical, so that in accordance with good old custom they could be burnt on the market square in Munich? The prosecutors have in American fashion sifted out a concentrate of all that must not be in the periodical, but have not later prevented this concentrated pornographic and blasphemous material from being issued to anyone in its pure form. No one talks about this absurdity, which in itself turns the trial into a farce.

No one outside Germany doubts that this artists' group is the first that has begun to renew German art from within, directly on the soil that Hitler devastated, but that it has today inspired the whole development of world art. Even in Germany they know this to be so. So why have they not turned a blind eye in this case? Here we come to the heart of the matter. How did this trial begin? Who has complained? Who has directed the attention of the authorities to the periodical and demanded its persecution? It was tellingly enough an Italian citizen. But no one mentions that. However, it is the bigoted Americans who are behind this trial. They are simply too sly and cunning to confess openly that they are the ones who rule Munich. With my own eyes I have seen this 'master race' in action in this city. In a café I have seen how a drunken American NCO in uniform, with unprecedented brutality, knocked a young German to the floor with no further result than the removal of the unconscious German; and since the American was obviously hunting for new victims, the waiter went around discreetly from table to table and got all the Germans to leave the premises quietly, so that in the end I sat alone in the middle of an empty room. Somehow a couple of his military comrades managed to stop him trying to attack me. That this situation was quite normal was evident from the discipline and order with which the Germans withdrew. It is claimed that it is necessary to keep the Germans down this way so they will not

make trouble. I believe on the contrary that this kind of behaviour has the opposite effect, and that it is an illusion that one can rule over them in this way – that they will explode for the benefit of the Americans; for this after all is the intention of the whole development after the war.

Gruppe SPUR has not been convicted of pornography or of contempt for religion. It is very important to note this. Erotically stimulating or erotically inspired literature with far more pornographic effect is widespread and permitted in Germany. These are the words of the judge himself. Atheism is permitted in Germany, and books that show the absurdity of belief in God and the intellectual superiority of the atheistic view of life to the religious one can be bought everywhere. THE ONLY THING THE SPUR PERIODICAL IS ACTUALLY ACCUSED OF IS THAT IT REPRESENTS AN ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN ART, nothing more. Excerpts from the indictment can be read by anyone. The WORDS used are the main charge. They are not fine enough, not high enough in the hierarchy of words. They represent popular expressions that can be heard every day, everywhere, among the broad strata of the people, or scientific expressions that can be found in any medical book, but which one must have an academic degree to be allowed to use. The judge has thus not judged Gruppe SPUR for the content of the periodical. IT IS A LEGAL JUDGEMENT THAT PUNISHES A PARTICULAR ARTISTIC FORM, because it lies outside the authorized hierarchy, because this form is not of the authorized kind, because as a work of art, and exclusively as a work of art, it is *entartet* – degenerate. This and nothing else is what the judgement in Munich is about. It is a purely aesthetic judgement and condemnation.

So no one can claim otherwise than that the conviction of this artists' group is a direct continuation of Hitler's cultural policy, with Hitler's methods as the means. This is related to the fact that an Eichmann trial in the Germany of today would be an impossibility. The connection is clear and unequivocal.

Inasmuch as the writings attacked were edited and printed in Scandinavia with Jørgen Nash as the publisher with legal responsibility, Scandinavia has become an accomplice in this case, and this prompts the Frenchman Guy Debord to claim that both French and Scandinavian

opinion agree on condemning this attack on artistic freedom. This is where Debord's illusions about Scandinavia play the trick on him that has led to the fierce conflict between the French and Scandinavian situationists, for French and Nordic liberal-mindedness are here attacking the Germans with two opposite and incompatible demands for freedom: the French with the demand for ARTISTIC FREEDOM and the Scandinavians with the demand for THE RIGHTS OF THE NATURAL.

If Debord understood the trial of Wilhelm Freddie, he would understand that the Scandinavians, in the matter of *entartete Kunst*, are in fact much worse than the Germans, indeed almost reach the heights of the English and Americans in bigotry; but on the basis of an attitude that is opposite to that of the Germans, based on an anti-authoritarian demand for THE RIGHTS OF THE NATURAL.

The Germans are accused of having compared a church tower to a penis. In the periodical *Helhesten* a picture of a church tower was juxtaposed with a phallic figure. No one thought that there was anything at all strange in this. While Freddie's pictures were appropriated by the Museum of Crime, Dan Sterup Hansen exhibited a series of pictures of sexual intercourse at the Artists' Autumn Exhibition in Copenhagen before the war. No one thought there was anything at all strange about this, not even the so-called gutter press. Freddie's pictures are still in the Museum of Crime – why? Not for pornographic but for artistic reasons: quite simply because his art was considered ARTIFICIAL and unnatural, nothing else. THE ACCUSATION OF PORNOGRAPHY AGAINST FREDDIE IS LEGAL NONSENSE OF THE FIRST ORDER AND HAS NEVER BEEN ANYTHING ELSE. That is why the police went to the Academy to find out if it is real art. Quite simply because in Scandinavia the fact cannot be acknowledged that ART AND THE ARTIFICIAL are one and the same thing. However, this is a matter of course in the Latin cultural sphere. If one does not believe this one can simply look it up in Maledetto Croce's book about the aesthetic problem, where he is directly forced to condemn the natural expression of feelings, not only as inartistic but also as feminine and unmanly, that is, as 'perverse'.

Here lies the core of the SPUR trial. It is directed straight at Nordic art and the Nordic view of culture such that we cannot possibly feel solidarity with the French protest against the trial. The only thing we can agree on is that the trial is an attempt to destroy European art, since beauty and enrichment are nothing but *Entartung*, variation and dissimilarity.

If Freddie's art was rejected in its time by the artists of 'Linien' it was not because he was any more pornographic than the artists of 'Linien'. On the contrary, it is precisely the sexual in Freddie's art that makes him a typical Danish and Nordic Surrealist. The leading figure among his Halmstad colleagues has converted to Catholicism and paints church art. It was first and foremost this tendency that was not tolerated in 'Linien', and it is in strict opposition to this very aspect that Danish art has asserted itself so much that it has become a factor in world art. This is what they are trying to put a stop to now with the Munich trial and the related preparations for accepting Scandinavia in the so-called 'European' community.

If one turned to the Scandinavian artists and scholars who are today responsible for the renewal of Nordic culture, and who have knowledge of European conditions, to hear their views, I do not doubt that they would all, without exception, agree with me. The price of the common market will be to cut away the best shoots of Nordic cultural development – an intellectual stunting. But perhaps they are not worth as much as a mess of pottage or a plate of spaghetti. I am referring to the right to see ourselves as one of the original products of European culture.

Ibsen pointed to the Nordic understanding of art as the right to ask questions without answers, an attitude that leaves the whole responsibility to the public or the people. But the Nordic people as a whole is an aestheticizing people in this sense, and loves paradoxes and problems. It knows that every time one links a question with a particular answer that has to be ABSOLUTELY valid, the spell is broken. This is viewed by others as indecision. But it always leads to disaster if we let others make decisions for us, for then our enthusiasm and joy in life cease. Our capability and our art lie in our free indecisiveness and what despite everything matures within it. What lies dormant in between our difficult decisions are our habits, our ancient culture.

In the charges against SPUR it is asserted that the periodical proposes that the church service should be developed into an erotic orgy. The Frenchman Noel Arnaud states that such orgies, at certain times and in certain cultures, have had their place in the Christian cult of love.

In addition, in a book by Jules Romain, there is a description of how in our own time a man disguised as a priest locked in a congregation in a French provincial town for such an erotic-ecstatic orgy. It has experienced great success all over the world. It is accepted because it is apparently a fiction. So why is Gruppe SPUR prosecuted for the same thing? For artistic reasons: because the authorities understand that this art is of a Nordic character, that it is inextricably bound up with real impulses to action. This charge is an exact repetition of the charge against N.F.S. Grundtvig, when during his Easter sermon he was seized by a poetic vision. The authorities know that this group of artists, like Grundtvig, mean what they say, stand up for what they say. In this sense they have a much more astute view than the French. And here lies the danger of mixing up the French and the Scandinavian protest. In Scandinavia this very failure of the ability and will to stand behind one's words is considered unmanly and to say anything else than what one thinks is considered unnatural or perverse. In fact the Danish authorities do not believe that Freddie is pornographic, they fear that he is perverse or unnatural BECAUSE HE IS ABNORMAL and BECAUSE THERE IS NO CRITERION FOR DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND THE NORMAL.

It is at this point that Latin culture is always clear-sighted, inasmuch as it quite simply forbids the mixing of the NORMAL and the NATURAL, because it knows that every norm is an artwork created by human beings. It is this art that has meant that the Latin peoples have hitherto always been norm-giving, and that they consider this normative activity to be the essential feature of art. But it is a fact that hitherto Nordic art has stood outside the norms, indeed that it directly hates all that smacks of fashion. And they take no account of us abroad, precisely because our artistic substrate lies outside every norm, is found in something that absolutely precedes any norm – the problem. A problem ceases to be a problem the moment it is subjected to a norm.

This is why naturalness and sincerity are quite simply regarded in France as boring and unaesthetic, as ugly. For example the Copenhagen newspaper *Ekstra Bladet* recently reported that a Frenchman who had spent some years in Denmark considered the Danish women boring. After three months you had no more to talk to them about. Some Danish women interviewed by the newspaper explained that they were not boring at all. The only thing that was boring was that they themselves had to say so, and that the photographer, who was also a Frenchman, agreed with his fellow-countryman.

Instead of understanding that what for one person can be boring can be interesting for another, these clever Danish girls asserted that THE FRENCHMAN SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF HIMSELF, and that it was the foreigners who were boring, not themselves. Of course such a situation was unbearable for the newspaper, in view of the European community, and very appropriately a Frenchman appeared later who remedied the situation by means of an exquisite bouquet of compliments to the Danish women and a reprimand to his fellow countrymen for their breach of courtesy, which does not permit you to say anything derogatory about women, not even Danish ones, and then everyone was happy, even the Frenchmen who had expressed their honest opinion, which they thought you were supposed to do in Denmark, for now they understood that this sincerity was also a pretence. Of course Danes are not sincere. But they appreciate sincerity, need it deep down, at least after three months, and so we begin to get boring, for it does not only apply to women. It also applies to our art, our literature, our culture on the whole. It is, and in the eyes of Latin people must remain, deeply boring, because our most fundamental interests go in different directions. Anatole France even thought the Edda was insufferably boring, and no one from the Nordic countries can avoid, after a certain time, a strange feeling of emptiness sneaking up on you in the Latin cultural world, a feeling of something frightfully boring. Why do we have to bore one another? Yet the foreign is always exciting, as long as it does not get too close to you.

But demanding attention when you act in a boring way is something that you can only do if you have power. That is why the perspective on

the whole of the coming European dispute is already sketched out in these silly little newspaper polemics. The relations of Scandinavia with French culture have always been extremely fruitful. Most richly so when the connection is mediated by a free German intellectual flowering. It is only regrettable that this is as a rule stifled by the peculiar authoritarian discipline that prevails among the German people. Prompted by the SPUR trial, the so-called minister of culture in Bavaria has prohibited artists' organizations from exhibiting the works of this artist group – a censorship that carries on the line from Goebbels. At the same time as the minister of culture prohibits these artists from exhibiting in among other places the Hitler-inaugurated Haus der Kunst, in the same building he is opening an exhibition of the excellent works of art that Hitler stigmatized as *entartete Kunst*. Not even in this exhibition is SPUR allowed to show its pictures. In a country that is today occupied by foreign troops and which still has no peace treaty, an authoritarian and military regime is an obvious consequence. The worrying thing about the situation is at a quite different level – that is, in the reaction of the German artists' organizations to SPUR, when the group went to ask them whether they would accept this cultural censorship. The answer they were given was not only a clear 'yes'; they were also urged to write to the highest Catholic authority in Munich to apologize for their heresy, since such an acknowledgement of the power of the authorities would automatically bring the trial to an end. That the great majority in German artistic, cultural and intellectual life share the attitude of the artists' organizations and consider it quite natural and correct, shows where we stand.

With the establishment of the new Danish ministry of culture the problem has become crucial for the Scandinavians, has become a state of affairs that concerns us directly and requires a clear, principled Scandinavian standpoint.

"Konstens frihet", *Drakabygget*, no. 2-3, 1962.

Translated by James Manley.





## SEVEN REBELS

Jørgen Nash, Jens Jørgen Thorsen, Gordon Fazakerley,  
Jacqueline de Jong, Ansgar Elde, Hardy Strid & Hans Peter Zimmer

These seven artists have all broken away from the 'Internationale Situationniste' in Paris and formed a Second Situationist International based in Scandinavia. This is one of the few things they have in common. For the rest they are individualists with different idols and heroes: Charlie Chaplin, Dylan Thomas, Walt Whitman, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Hans Christian Andersen, Henri Michaux, Strindberg, Guy Debord, Carl Frederic Hill... They are young and spontaneous, experimental and fighters for the new situcratic community. All of them are exiles from their own countries. The Danish Nash lives in Sweden; Fazakerley in Denmark; Thorsen has moved across the Kattegat; De Jong in Paris; Elde's studio is in Italy; Strid is moving to Dublin; and Hans Peter Zimmer is only kept in Germany because of the process the Bavarian government is running against him. They are not cosmopolitans but cosmonauts of the new society.

"Seven Rebels", **Seven Rebels** (Odense: Bauhaus Situationniste, 1962).

# FUCK OFF!

Gordon Fazakerley

Farewell! Thou art too dear for my possessing,  
and like enough thou knowest thy estimate:

To hell with you and your capitalising from politics. You who have tattooed whoredom with sunflowers. Ambassadors, in outworn myths and contemporary alibis. Whose conscience is a sleeping sickness that is an evergreen. Yes we know what the crumbs contained that they threw to you, so you would emit from under the Ostrich wings of the American Embassies. They paid you with dictatorship of a culture. The so-called Democratic Culture, what a democratic fallacy this culture, what a paranoid holiday. What an anti-climax to the human enterprise of Hart Crain, Jackson Pollock, Dylan Thomas, James Dean and the dying Jack Kerouac. What a deficiency of Integrity, on the part of the politician and the artist. What a way for a poet, a painter to gain creative recognition by embalming their bodies for posteriority.

To the nauseating Royal Danish Porcelain, to wonderful Copenhagen and its German officers, to the Louisiana museum of modern cheese, near the grave of Hamlet, arranged as a service for the tourist industry. To the Carlsberg Beer Foundation for bad art and the pseudoavantgarde art magazine Signum. Now it is that we understand Bill Shakespeare's words that, 'there is something rotten in the state of Denmark'.

To the cockoo Eliot at the top of Faber and Faber Chestnut tree, to BBC, the British Council, the Establishment, Made in England, to the Tory, Labour, and Liberal party, the garden party, the cocktail party, and to every political party in the world I say: Fuck off!



We are free men and free exiles, here in the hills of Hallandsåsen, in a free country, which is not a member of NATO or any other military block or atomic werewolf pack that threatens innocent people.

Perhaps it was the dove of peace, we don't know – it was not made by Picasso or burnt by little Tinguely, but we found an olive leaf in the beak of a dove.

Drakabygget, Bauhaus Situationniste, March 1962

"Fuck Off!", **Drakabygget**, no. 1, 1962.

# BLAB BLAB BLAB

Gordon Fazakerley

Blab blab blab blab blab blab Blab blab blab blab blab blab  
Blab blab blab blab blab blab Blab blab blab blab blab blab  
Blab blab blab blab blab blab Blab blab blab blab blab blab  
blab blab

Blab Blab Blab talk a donkey's hind leg off blab blab  
long winded blabber blabber blabbe blab blab  
muffle blabber blab blab, croak, splutter, mumble,  
mutter, japper, stammer, whisper, drawl, nasal blabber,  
guttural lisp a blab blab.

Jabber, chatter, prattle cackle twaddle rattle blabber  
bibble-babble, gibble-gabble, blab blab.

Avant-garde, bibble-babble, gibble-gabble

Utter blabber, pronounce blabber, deliver blabber, hum & haw  
blabber. Manifesto blabber blab blab. Mouthpiece blabber  
gift of the gab blab blab.

Blab to the centre.

Blab to the right.

Blab to the left.

Blab blab has fallowed blab blab without blab blab

Or blab blab then blab blab but blab blab there is no blap plap

Blab 1, 2, 3, blab. Bang the bomb blab blab, all together

Bang the bomb, bang the bomb, bang the bomb, blab blab.

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Zero. Fire, blab, blab

Earthman go home blab blab

A B C D E F G H J K L blab blab M

nothing to blab, nothing which to blab

no power to blab, no desire to blab

no obligation to blab blab.

All together blabber International blab blab

BANG THE BOMB

BANG THE BOMB

BANG THE BOMB

B-L-A-B B-L-A-B

Viva la blab blab

"Blab Blab blab", pamphlet, 1962, reprinted in **Drakabygget**, no. 4-5, 1966.



## DRAWINGS, POEMS

Gordon Fazakerley

opened to the steps of silences  
I am unrecognisable to all my changes  
as I wake in the shroud of my fable

— — —

I measure the circle the centre that I am  
with the language chain  
that has grown from my mouth  
grown into my hands to be pulled  
or-else I will be dragged.

— — —

my fingers unbutton the language of the space  
whose gradual acquisition covers and punctuates  
the turning throngs of hiddenness

Gordon Fazakerley: **Drawings, Poems** (Copenhagen: Bauhaus Situationniste, 1962).

# ATOMIC BOMBS FOR THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

Gruppe SPUR

All the playful energy of Europe is crushed by the rule of the culture industry. The value of atomic bombs – vehemently denied by society at large – becomes obvious with their deployment in the struggle against the culture industry. To ensure the orderly conduct of this atomic deployment and to avoid chaos, instructions must be followed:

## ATOMIC BOMBS FOR THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

1. With each transaction at a cultural supermarket, a handy atomic bomb will discreetly be added to the purchase.
2. Opponents of the atom bomb who refuse to take part in the forthcoming atomic bombing orgies will have their basal neocortices removed.
3. The pseudo-games currently played (political assemblies, church services, summits, concerts and whorehouse visits) will be replaced by a public potlatch of atomic bombs.
4. Decoratively strewn corpses of culture managers and their subordinates will be made available to artists, interior designers and necromancers for use as working material.
5. The current social structure, based on consumption serving conditioned needs, will be replaced by the hierarchy of successful atomic bombing champions.
6. In order that new atomic bomb-throwers may be produced undisturbed, persons performing sexual acts in public places, pissoirs or confessional boxes will be indulged with the most tender care.
7. The new projection screen created for all desires and aggressive drives by the *Atomic Bombs Against the Culture Industry* campaign shall not be undermined by the reaction.

8. Consequently, any misuse of atomic bombs for peaceful purposes such as abortion, masturbation or divorce shall be punished with a minimum of five years' consumption of traditional culture. (Cost of travel to America to be borne by the convict.)
9. With the immediate opening of the Atomic Bombing Games (first scheduled targets: UNESCO, the Vatican, museums, all radio and TV stations), Europe will inaugurate the explosive cultural age worldwide.
10. Once the world is turned into a gigantic sea of ruins, the search for experimental forms of life can enter a creative phase.

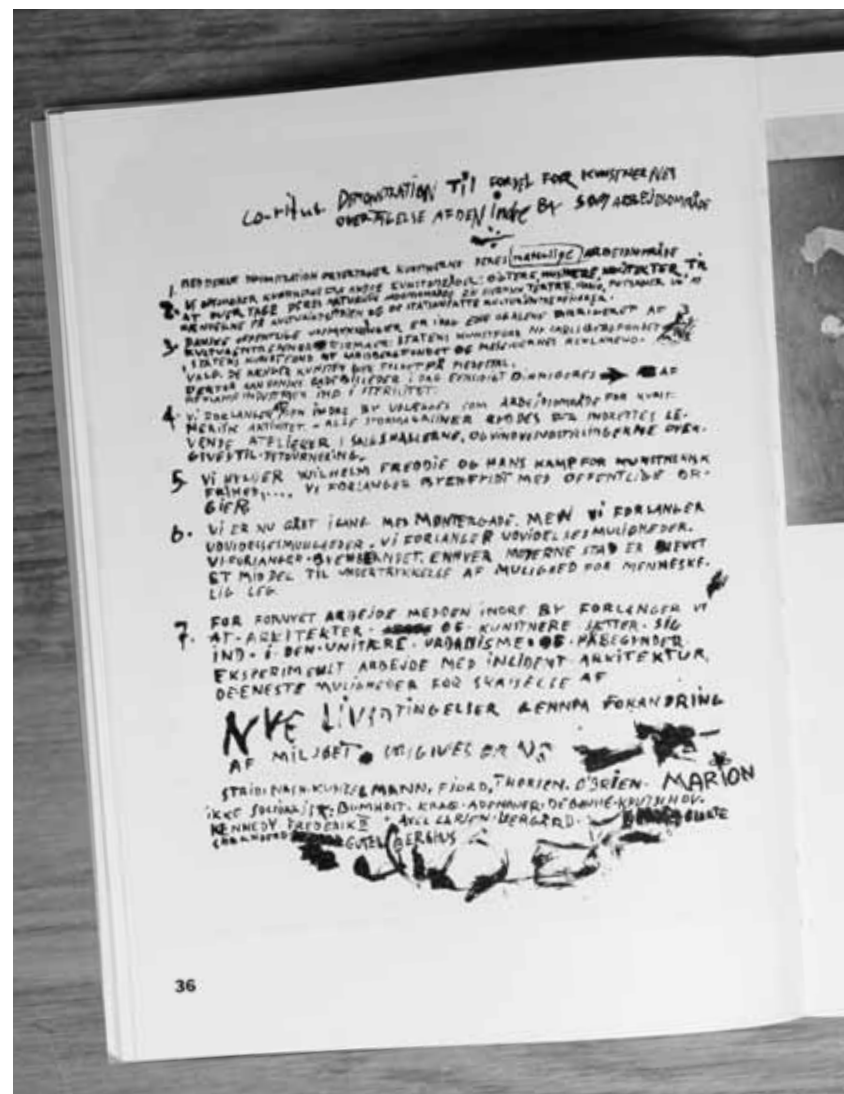
This document has been sent to all governments represented at the Geneva disarmament conference.

Baldeney, Gasché, Kunzelmann, Zimmer

"Atombombe für Kulturindustrie", pamphlet, 1962, reprinted in **Drakabygget**, no. 4-5, 1966.

Translated by Anja Büchele & Matthew Hyland.





# CO-RITUS MANIFESTO

Jens Jørgen Thorsen, Jørgen Nash & Hardy Strid

1

The Renaissance is irrevocably over. And if we did not work on eradicating it, one day it would eradicate itself.

2

With an enormous bang. 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0...

3

In the European cultural tradition there is an insurmountable barrier between performer and audience. This barrier is blocking cultural evolution and threatens to make all of us into twaddling fools in the supermarket of the culture industry and victims of an anonymous repression on an unheard-of scale.

4

We want to create new rituals. Rituals are human thinking shaped in social patterns. Every cultural pattern is a ritual.

5

The European cultural tradition is as one-eyed as the individualised central perspective of the Renaissance. From here there is only one position to view things from at a time: the position of the artist or the audience. The cultural ritual created in this way by the Renaissance made the exhibition a confining trap, which Tinguely, Happenings, Fluxus and the Nouveau Realists are still helplessly caught in.

## 6

Individualism is utopian. However, it became the defining perspective of European culture and it produced the divide between the individual and the group, between the ideal and the banal, between art and anti-art, between the creator and the sheep. It produced the spectator, the consumer. It produced Communism, Cubism, Liberalism, Fascism. Now the utopian epoch is over. No more utopias can be produced. Time has run out.

## 7

The perspective of the Renaissance became the leap of technology, but at the same time it became the pretext for doing nothing in cultural life.

## 8

Tradition tells us that when it comes to the artist or the spectator it is sublime or banal. We say: from our point of view art is happening in the space between. In the space between people, in the space between the sublime and the banal. It is the very functioning of art we want to change. It is here and now it is happening.

## 9

We are de-christianising the idea of the Folk High School. We are de-animising the African tradition. We are stealing and borrowing as we feel like. We are using the heritage. Moreover, we allow ourselves to play with it.

## 10

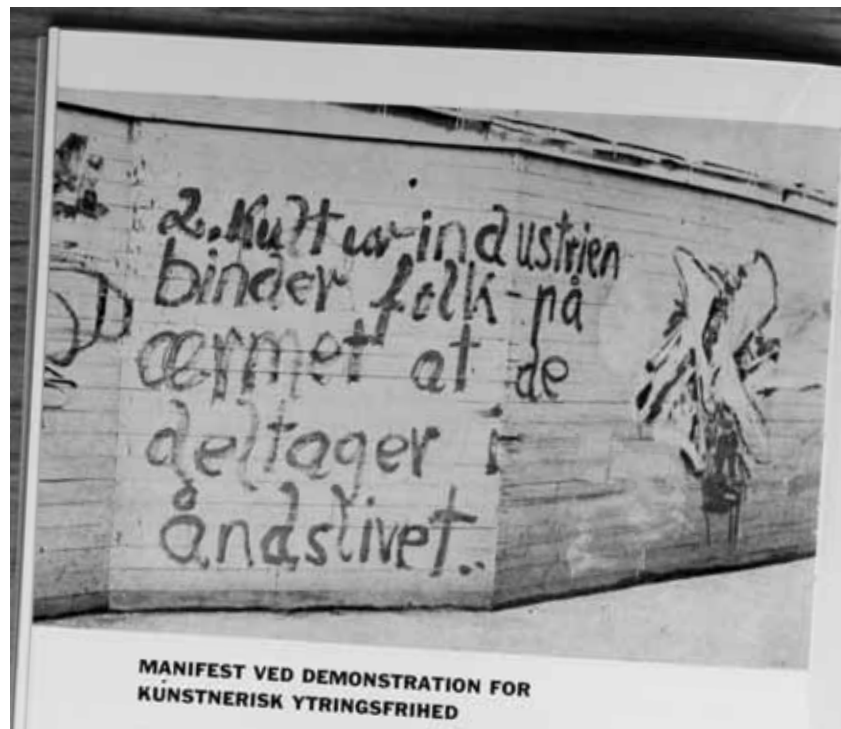
This is the first time it has been said to the audience: Come and join us. Get down to it. Everybody has right of appeal.

## 11

CO-RITUS is washing art shining clean. It is the bomb under cultural life. But we do not need to attempt assassination. Cultural life has been at a standstill since 1850.

"CO-RITUS Manifest", leaflet written for the CO-RITUS show at Galerie Jensen, 1962.

Translated by Jakob Jakobsen.



## SLOGANS

Jørgen Nash, Jens Jørgen Thorsen & Dieter Kunzelmann

1

The designer of the city is a counterfeiter.

2

Culture is culture industry. The culture industry is a swindle. Swindle is the same as work. Culture industry = organized free time!

3

Today the planning of the human environment only aims at planning schematic forms of life.

4

The culture industry and the city planners are pulling people around by the nose.

5

The world and all means of communication should be open for playful acts of creation.

6

The culture industry makes people believe that they participate in culture.

7

The city = organised emptiness.

Slogans painted at Møntergade, 1962.

Translated by Jakob Jakobsen.

# LUXURY AND MARTYRDOM

Jacqueline de Jong

Nature's decisions are based upon a fact resulting from a preliminary necessity.

Man's impulse does not result out of a necessity but he can create one. As it is impulse in mankind which decides this preliminary necessity, he cannot always recognize nature's way of acting. That is why man as a creator is luxury.

The naturalist ethic is as contradictory to creative mankind as the Platonic ethic, because neither of them result from the impulse to create. Rather by ignoring this impulse, they emanate either from the necessities of nature or of Socio-scientology, which a priori are anti-luxurious.

The puritanism in Judaism as well as in Christianity denied any acceptance of any impulse of luxury and therefore became iconoclastic, etc. As this meant destruction of an essential aspect in mankind, the human being had to create a martyr. On this base Christian and democratic society developed into what it is now. The field of creation became more and more overwhelmed by the industrialisation of anti-luxurious fields and by the luxury-industry which has become the pure surrogacy of impulses.

Nevertheless man creates and is pursued by the anti-luxurious as well as by the surrogate luxury side of society.

Only by trying to separate creative man from society or by declaring him a martyr can puritanism deny the existence of unorganised impulses. The Catholic Church has been able to absorb a part of creation by concentrating on the necessity of its existence, while never accepting the factor of impulse without having to turn it into the a priori necessities of its own focus. The same applies to Byzantinism.

The so-called 'luxury' of these institutions is none other than the 'poverty' of Judaism and Protestant puritanism: these are absolutely un-impulsive.

Only by escaping from these fake symbolic organizations has creation been able to develop its independence.

The suffering of the human being for his neighbour is a false luxury which has never been accepted by luxury man, as his suffering permits it only to be for himself. Luxury does not permit martyrs.

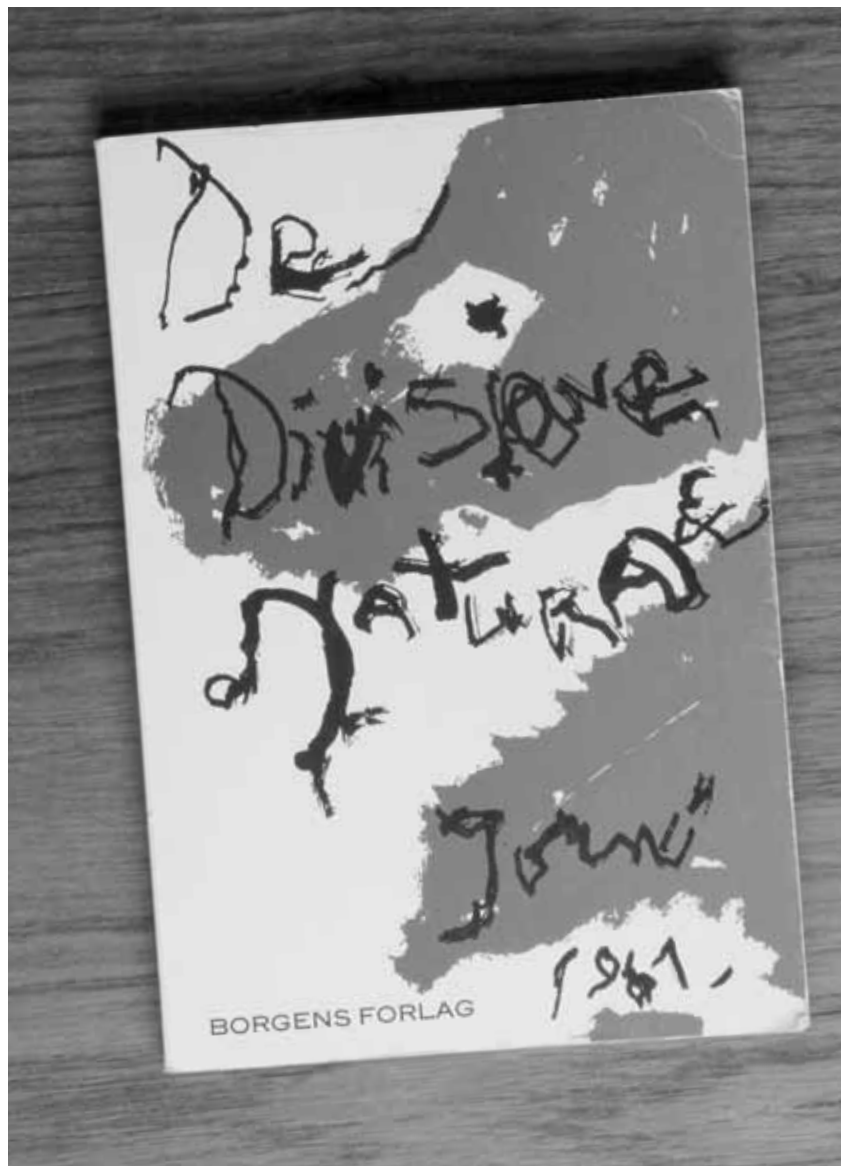
Therefore the Judeo-Christian ethic cannot accept this refusal of martyrdom as it entirely destroys their concepts. Neither can the socio-democratic societies, as they are based on these concepts.

That is why only in the so-called naivete of 'popular' creation has the escape been possible without being cut off completely from society.

The separation of creative worlds such as science and the arts from vulgarization has only exacerbated their situation inside the socio-democratic world.

Note: The Scandinavian journal *Drakabygget* has published an article which they called 'Gog and Magog', signed with my name. This is an obvious détournement of an article called 'Luxury and Martyrdom' which I wrote indeed and sent to them to get published.

"Luxury and Martyrdom", **The Situationist Times**, no. 3, 1963.



## THE NATURAL ORDER

Asger Jorn

### The law of contradistinction

Under the name of the Copenhagen Interpretation, Niels Bohr's theory of complementarity has gradually attracted notice the world over and day by day is penetrating more and more to the centre of the complex of problems around modern thought.

This preoccupation with the theory of complementarity is so unavoidable not on scientific but on philosophical grounds, in as much as it appears to be a new philosophical principle which, to put it mildly, is like a bull in a china shop in relation to the philosophical tradition. Really it is something far more dangerous. It is a new factor that either dissolves the possibilities or demands completely new rules of the game, because the theory of complementarity appears to be a law supported by scientific experience.

The first reaction has been attempts to repudiate the scientific character and the consequent well-knit legitimacies of the hypothesis. Since the probability of getting around the problem in this way gradually appears to have diminished, a growing mood of panic has begun to spread in philosophical circles, a panic already latent during the whole modern development of science, where philosophy or the so-called humanities have been on retreat across the board. Today philosophy has shrunk to being the branch of scholarship about the history of philosophy. At a time when the perception of philosophy as a creative activity is about to be given up and where a new ahistorical form of existence is being prepared, where humanity's historical and philosophical periods have been brought to a close, Bohr's theory appears to be the first sketch for a completely new scientific philosophy, independent of everything which has hitherto been united under the name of philosophy.



If the foundation of science is the equation, that is, comparisons of uniform dimensions or quantities, and thus above all a *doctrine of resemblance*, a doctrine of symmetry, then *the doctrine of unity* can be characterized as central to philosophy, the doctrine of the unity or correlation of things, thoughts and incidents, of their adherence to rules. One could therefore correctly maintain that any *legal* conclusion is in itself unscientific, and is a piece of philosophy even if it rests upon scientific analyses.

Law means correlation and what creates panic in philosophy is that Bohr's law is the law of the lack of correlation, a law of incompatibility, a law of *separation*, an anti-law law or, if you will, an anti-philosophical principle with philosophical consequences, and thus a new unity of opposites, a doctrine of dissymmetry.

The philosophical consequences of the Copenhagen Interpretation are as follows: either one must accept that it is no longer possible to establish a valid philosophy or one must accept the necessity of *the simultaneous presence of several complementary or mutually incompatible but equally valid philosophical systems*, principles or tendencies.

Only the latter conclusion gives philosophy new possibilities for existence. However, if one wishes to go this way on the basis of Bohr's principle, it soon becomes apparent that it leads nowhere. If one nevertheless wishes to go this way, then it can only happen by a critique of the Copenhagen Interpretation, but as the foundation of this is scientific, a purely philosophical critique can conclude nothing at all. It can only postulate certain lacks, an incompleteness, which must be logical as well as purely experiential. Niels Bohr himself and his collaborators must either clearly prove the incorrectness of the critique and the impossibility of changing or extending the Interpretation in these realms of experience, or they must also realize the possibility of such a change. The concrete demand I pose here is colossal. It is *the demand for a third interpretation of the character of light completely independent of the wave theory as well as the particle theory*, and thus a third complementary theory of light, a theory of the plastic form of light.

When I associate myself with the necessity of the development of such third theory of light, I have two reasons, a logical one which rests on

the assertion that *any complementary relationship must always be at least triple* and can never be established in a purely duple system. In any two descriptions of a phenomenon, for the description to be sufficient or complete a third necessary description is always ignored, which is only to say that the three descriptions form a unit and thus become philosophically accessible. The other reason is founded purely upon my experiences of light and colour, acquired as a painter, even though I base my opinions on the investigation made by the South Jutland painter Philipp Otto Runge around 1800 and reworked by Goethe in his theory of colour.

Goethe's demonstration that there are concrete optical characteristics in the essence of light and colour which do not form part of the descriptions of light postulated up to that time (Newton) are, in my opinion, valid to this day with regard to both the wave theory and the particle theory. I hope to be able to demonstrate that such a concrete material exists, demanding its own separate description, without again committing Goethe's error of refuting the correctness of a scientific systemization on an amateur basis. But if a new doctrine of form which could replace the Renaissance's descriptions of form is to have general and scientific validity, I am in agreement with Goethe that it must begin with a description of *the form of light*. In the following text I hope to be able to indicate this possibility without driving up all too many of the blind alleys of the speculative method.

### The Copenhagen Interpretation. The Silkeborg Interpretation

Is it by chance that Bohr's theory is called the Copenhagen Interpretation? Is it by chance that it was postulated in Copenhagen or does it have natural roots in the Scandinavian mentality or pattern of thought? I am posing this quite absurd question because such a causal context will in the future automatically form part of the reflections on the problem of complementarity the world over simply because of the name on the label. The question is then whether one can imagine and construct such a Scandinavian principle of unity. If one can, this means that a specific Scandinavian philosophy exists, something no one had imagined before, and that one can talk of Scandinavian philosophy in the same way that one talks about Greek, German, French, English etc. philosophy. Is there

a common denominator to, or a more profound connection between, for example, Søren Kierkegaard's situation philosophy and Swedenborg's fundamental principles, to take two of the North's thinkers whose teaching has had a fundamental significance for modern culture? Is this common denominator also valid for Tycho Brahe and can it also include Niels Bohr's philosophical viewpoint?

It has been shown to the point of triviality how analytical mathematics and geometry has its starting point in Euclid's geometry and in Greek logic, and that all this development is a result of the mentality and life pattern which developed in and with the Greek *polis*. No one disputes the logic and the experience of this development from this particular and clearly defined environment.

Can the same method be used for a Nordic development where the environment is ill-defined and imprecise and the aversion to unity appears to be inborn? To make the question concrete – is there a connection between Existentialism and Bohr's theory of complementarity? The answer must immediately be a clear no, as every attempt to combine Bohr's thesis with any already existent philosophical principle at all has led to a hopeless self-contradiction.

The only logical consequence must be that an inductive method cannot be created on the basis of the Copenhagen Interpretation, and, if this is accepted, then the inductive method is completely bankrupt. Several scientists have already taken the consequences of this attitude and agreed that it is no longer possible to form a model or a picture of the modern *Weltanschauung*. We do not at this moment wish to discuss the rights or wrongs of this postulate. We only want to draw attention to a simple fact and an unavoidable consequence in connection with this principle. From this perception, one can no longer allow oneself to talk about 'an image of the world' or about 'images' on the whole, as according to this postulate they have no scientific relevance. If one then represents this bankruptcy as the 'new scientific image of the world', this can only be stamped as a swindle and a deceit. One could just as well call the lack of an image an image as call a world which no longer exists, which no longer possesses the context that could justify the label 'world', a world.

Every *image* is an *illusion* and thus exists in a complementary relationship to reality. The picture and the world have always been two complementary areas. Even a geometrical figure is an image, a picture, a work of art, a pure illusion, and scientists can no more suspect what humanity will be able to imagine in the future than can tram conductors or customs officers. The only thing scientists can establish today is that it is not possible to undertake a description of the most recent scientific experiences upon the basis of the classical form of description or even upon the basis of forms of description which have developed on a completely new foundation, apparently independently of the classical form of description. That is all.

It is here that the Copenhagen Interpretation begins by setting up an absolutely unforgivable taboo, a completely irrational prohibition, which Werner Heisenberg expresses in this way:

'The concepts of classical physics form the language by which we describe the arrangements of our experiments and state the results. We cannot and *should not* replace these concepts by any others... We must keep in mind this limited range of applicability of the classical concepts while using them, but *we cannot and should not try to improve them.*'

Only on the basis of this stupid sanctification of the classical interpretation of the concepts of elementary physics and geometry does the conclusion automatically follow that the new physics is indescribable because *the descriptive form* is laid down. The prohibition against meddling with the elementary descriptive forms thus really becomes a prohibition against making a completely new elementary basis of description, a new pictorial form. By the maintenance of this prohibition, the Copenhagen Interpretation blocks the way it has itself scientifically opened up.

Here we turn back to the question I asked myself at the beginning of this section. Can an elementary philosophical basis as clear and simple as the classical one and with its roots in Scandinavian thought processes be found? Is it possible, for example, to describe the relationship between the dimensions in a quite different but just as simple way as Euclid's discursive account? Perhaps this is an idea that only my own personal imagination could reconcile, a vision I myself have discovered and of which only I

can enjoy the fruits. But I have much pleasure in imagining a connection between Ole Rømer's statement of the constant called the speed of light, the characteristically right-angled clash which H.C. Ørsted demonstrated existed between electrical and magnetic poles and then Niels Bohr's demonstration of the constant he called the *quantum*. What do we know about *forms* today, other than that they are constants? What difference is there between spatial *statics* and other forms of constants? It amuses me to imagine a world where topology or the so-called *analysis situ* is united with Kierkegaard's situation philosophy and this again with a plastic world picture which includes and explains all the elements of nature in a unity of time and space in unceasing transformation, where the constants are only metamorphoses.

As I, in order to satisfy such an irrational desire for logic on the basis of such extravagant wishes, am forced into criticizing the Copenhagen Interpretation, I have decided that I will modestly make do with calling my perception, which is above all a kind of corroboration of the Copenhagen Interpretation, the Silkeborg Interpretation.

### The rules of the game

Against the postulation of Bohr and Heisenberg, I set the following statement of the scientist C.D. Darlington, quoted by John Dewey in his book *Reconstruction in Philosophy*: 'Scientific discovery is often carelessly looked upon as the creation of some new knowledge which can be added to the great body of old knowledge. This is true of the strictly trivial discoveries. It is not true of the fundamental discoveries, such as those of the laws of mechanics, of chemical combinations, of evolution on which scientific advance ultimately depends. *These always entail the destruction or disintegration of old knowledge before the new can be created.*'

Niels Bohr has done neither one thing nor the other. He has done a third thing, created a both-and. This solution may perhaps be of interim value because the problem is thereby pushed to one side and given time to mature, but it can never be a definitive solution. It is nothing other than an agreement to ignore a set of crucial problems which are gradually forcing themselves more and more upon the attention.

Einstein based his statements upon the classical definition of the concept of *the experiment* as an experience that could be expressed, communicated and understood. Bohr's scientific experiences went against Einstein's rational perception to the degree that Einstein felt himself forced to come out with the purely sentimental-religious argument that God did not play dice. However, with these new experiences the *concept of play* is irrevocably introduced into natural science. Interestingly enough, at precisely the same time Johan Huizinga was demonstrating on a purely humanistic basis the fundamental significance of play to human cultural life with the book *Homo Ludens*. At the turn of the century, the Norwegian-American author Thorstein Veblen had demonstrated with great irony that play is the foundation of every system of social hierarchy in his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*.

The consequences of the opposition between the ideas of Einstein and Bohr will not, to my mind, be fathomed before the basic concepts of classical physics and mathematics have been interpreted in a new way which makes it possible either to discard them completely or to integrate them into a new context with the world that opens up with the new physical experiences. Incidentally, the Copenhagen Interpretation, with its taboo, has been completely unable to stem the semantic disintegration taking place everywhere, something which is so obvious that even an old politician like Stalin was clear that something was wrong. The classical world picture belongs with the classical form of language and will vanish with it.

### Thoughts, words and actions

Why do the Latin peoples think and express themselves far more rapidly and more precisely than others, and why do Englishmen only listen to a man who finds it difficult to express himself and whose thoughts move forwards with a boring long-windedness? Because the Latin peoples think exactly as they speak and because the starting point of their thoughts is *the word*. From a Latin or classical perception there exist no thoughts for which there are no words, as each thought has in a subtle way arisen *as words*. The characteristic of a thought is that it can be expressed. That it

can be expressed is to say that it can be understood by others, that it is a *social reality*, and, as language is an accepted fellowship, that only communicated thoughts exist. Only *the socialized* thought exists in the Latin perception as thought, because only that thought which is expressed so that it is understood by others exists. However, this is not a definition of the activity of thought itself at all, but only of socialized thinking. From this it must be logically concluded that in the classical meaning no individual thinking exists. Therefore in the classical cultures each new word, each new concept, is a direct attack on the social unity of society itself, based as this is precisely upon the absolute meaning and context of concepts. This explains why Socrates and all creative Greek philosophers were 'enemies of society' because of their new ideas.

Any identification between thought and expression, their union in what we call a *concept*, is the standardization or rationalization of thought, the abolition of its variability as far as meaning is concerned. A concept can only have *one* meaning if it is to be understood, so that it can thus enter into intellectual communication, intellectual fellowship in dialogue. Therefore the identification of thought with word is nothing other than the standardization of thought, the maintenance of one uniquely permitted way of thought, of a particular set of meanings. He who does not follow these rules of the game, or at least allows it to appear that he does not, is simply not taken into account. He does not exist. The advantage of this systemization is that it gives a swift and very clear process of thought and expression and that the rules of this game can be learned by anyone who has sufficient aptitude. This is called *classical education*. However, it also prevents anyone who knows the combinatory possibilities of all the expressions (which is invariably the case as, after centuries of philosophizing, all the possibilities of the game have been revealed) having the possibility of setting out one single original thought, one single new idea, on the basis of the conceptual system. If one demands such a creative originality, then one has to begin to play with the concepts themselves.

If one says to a man, you are a hero, whilst at the same time thinking that he is a prat, then one is apparently thinking the opposite of what one is saying. In reality, one *means* the opposite of what one is saying, for it is

not easy to explain what one has said as anything other than the expression of a thought, which thus must have had a reason, an *ulterior thought*, which is not the thought that the man is a prat, but that *it is advantageous to say something else*. One can thus think one's own thoughts without saying anything, or even whilst simultaneously saying a third thing. It is maintained that one can only think in words, but it is difficult to say how words and thoughts are connected. One can easily read a text aloud without hitting upon a single thought that is expressed in the text, just as one can act without thinking about what one is doing, or think without putting one's thoughts into action. It is this powerful play of possibilities which represents the individual creator and separates his being from all others. In order to orchestrate people in a social harmony, it is necessary to agree mutually, at least, to give up one or more of these characteristics. The more characteristics that are given up, the more the human being's individuality is abolished. Such a socialization of humanity produces different cultural types according to which individual characteristics have to be renounced in order to have the right to be a member of the society. Seen in this perspective, Scandinavian socialization appears to be based upon the socialization of *the thought*, Latin socialization upon the socialization of *the word* and that of the Slavs upon the socialization of *the action*. By socialization should be understood that which all the members of the society are theoretically agreed upon and perceive as common property.

### The possible and the actual

One cannot answer anything that cannot be posed as a question, but it is surprising how much one cannot express in a concrete question. All posed questions are simply conditioned by the words we have available to form questions: *what, where, whom, how, why, when*. All of these questions can be starting points for a philosophical principle and can be interpreted in various ways, but the question still remains the same. The starting point is still the same. If, as far as elementary physics is concerned, one thus retains these classical interpretations, then these concepts *are not an isolated area peripheral to the conceptual area of modern physics but its foundation*.

The most hotly discussed concept today, which sooner or later will demand an unequivocal solution, is the interpretation of the concept of *actuality*. What is the Copenhagen Interpretation of *the actual*? There the actual is placed in opposition to the *possible* and it is stressed that the transformation from the possible to the actual takes place with a leap. What then is the possible according to the theory of relativity? The possible can be arranged in two opposing groups of possibilities. One is called *the past*, which contains all the events we know (at least in principle) and about which we have been able to hear (in principle). In the same way, we postulate by the concept of 'future' all events we could influence (in principle) and which we could attempt to change or prevent (in principle). In classical theory one postulates the future and the past as separated by an infinitesimally short interval of time we call now, *the present*, or the instant. In the theory of relativity we have come to understand that this is not so. Future and past are separated by an interval of time which exists, the length of which is dependent upon *the distance between the observed phenomenon and the observer*.

At any given point in time, the observer can find himself unable to recognize and influence a phenomenon taking place at a distant point in the period separating two clearly specified moments. One of these is the moment when a light signal has to be triggered at the point of the event in order to reach the observer at the instant of observation. The other is the instant when a light signal sent by the observer at the instant of observation reaches the place of the event.

All events which take place between these two specific times can be called 'simultaneous' or *contemporaneous*, actual or timeless. *As past and future according to the Copenhagen Interpretation are the possible, thus the present must be the actual*. Here, without knowing it, the Copenhagen Interpretation is completely in agreement with dialectical materialism. There is just the difference that *dialectical materialism asserts that everything is simultaneous or actual and that the actual is the same as the objective*, whilst the objective in reality, like all experience, belongs to the past. That *the positivists identify actuality with future*, and therefore have to give the observer (the influencer) an unequivocal role in the process, is

another error, which Niels Bohr attempts to avoid by simply cutting out the observer as an influencing element, to make him one with the conditions of the observations, with the instrument, without however managing to free himself from positivism.

The Marxist perception that everything is actuality was already formulated by Engels in the perception that *everything is process*. This perception was made even more precise by Lenin in his definition of *matter as that which is given to us by our senses*. As we cannot sense latent energy, only kinetic energy, this is really to say that this is *a statement that all energy is kinetic*, that mass and energy are the same. In Marxist terminology, drawing attention to the contrast between latent and kinetic energy is called formalism, which one could well say is correct. But as an object is just a formal thing or a form, this dialectical materialism works completely without objects.

The misunderstanding of the Copenhagen Interpretation is to drag around with it the classical identification of object and actuality instead of using the two concepts as opposites and acknowledging that three and not two complementary elements exist, namely the objective, the actual and the subjective or, to put it another way, *object, instrument and observer*. What in reality both dialectical materialism and the Copenhagen Interpretation are agreed upon is that *instrument and actuality are the same*. To instrumentate or to set up an experimental condition is really nothing other than to combine a simultaneity or contemporaneity.

Not long ago, Niels Bohr warned against wanting to define more precisely the dividing line between object and subject, as the mobility of this dividing line appears to advance development. The instrumental and the technical are the same and it is in reality 'actuality' that thrusts itself between object and subject, between past and future, between knowledge and influence. Hegel had already observed this strange development, which he called '*Entfremdung*', and which Marxists maintain is 'a capitalist fault that will vanish with the transition to socialism.'

I myself am of the opinion that it is immensely important to demarcate the scientific from the technical and the technical from the subjective or human, if we are not to run into the crazy catastrophe, of which this



conscious blindness had led us to the edge. To clarify and define their relationship to technique is the one and only responsibility scientists have today, and this they fulfill in order not to be the ones with the prime responsibility.

Work demands an instrument, a tool. To look demands, if not a microscope, a telescope or a set of spectacles, then at any rate a pair of eyes to look with. But that which one has to look *with*, one cannot at the same time look *at*. I have the impression that it is this context that Bohr calls complementarity. Movement is the instrument with which one ascertains positions and positions are the instrument with which one ascertains movement. At any rate, to move or change something one must have the Archimedean point outside of that which is to be moved.

### Interest, instrument and object

The critique of the complementarity principle propounded here is a purely artistic critique, a critique of the Copenhagen Interpretation as a work of art. In common with dialectical materialism, this way of looking at it situates *the subjective or interest* as the foundation for any observation. Without interest, no attention. This attention can be compelled by other interests or be a pure and voluntary personal curiosity. From this attitude one can differentiate purely artistically between three forms of interest:

1. artistic or purely human interest,
2. technical, pragmatic, methodical or purely instrumental interest,
3. scientific or purely empirical interest in experiences.

From these three complementary forms of interest, actuality or the instrument takes on three basically different meanings and purposes.

*The instrument is neither object nor subject.* As modern science has had to demonstrate that the instrument influences the object under observation, that the arrangement itself of the experiment changes the conditions of the object, then this relationship has nothing at all to do with *subjectivity*, for subjectivity is above all *will and wish*, and in this case one cannot say that it is *the observer's wishes* which influence the object, unless by *his interest in observing*. As far as the technician is concerned, the

relationship is completely the opposite. He wishes to influence the object with his instrument, to operate, to generate a process. If the instrument cannot influence the object, it is of no use in the technical sense, it has no technical interest. This adversarial condition between the relationship of the scientist and the technician to the instrument is clear and unambiguous. This adversarial condition can only be clearly seen from the artist's angle, because he is not interested in the object at all, only in the subjective and in *instruments which can serve these subjective interests*, which are purely purposeless curiosity, the liberation from tedium. He wishes to play on or with the instruments, and anything at all that he sees or senses is therefore a possible instrument. In principle he cannot accept that the object, '*das Ding an sich*', exists at all. Instruments serve only one thing for him, pure subjectivity or '*das Ich an sich*'. *In the artistic sense the instrument is thus a means of expanding human activity and interest.*

From a technical viewpoint, the goal of instrumentalization is the instrument itself and a development identical with a growing instrumentation, the cementing of a practical causal relationship. *The instrument here is a replacement for human activity and interest, 'das Ding für mich'.*

In scientific observation, on the other hand, *the instrument serves to eliminate the influence of human interests and activities on the objective process.*

In relation to the causal world of technique or the logical object world of science, the contrasts are so sharp that unalloyed artistic activity has to be perceived as a purely destructive world, whilst the destructive in art has the opposite sign. It is this that I called the aesthetic world in my book *Luck and Chance*. This is the only one that gives the concept of *value* any meaning, a world that is deliberately ignored or resisted by all modern philosophers, politicians, economists, sociologists, psychologists, teachers and scientists, and which made C.D. Darlington add to the already quoted text, 'We need a Ministry of Disturbance, a regulated source of annoyance, a destroyer of routine, an underminer of complacency,' or, in other words, a ministry of aesthetic activity. The necessity of this centre for organized 'ill-doing' is perhaps above all conditioned by the destructive power of the military having become so widespread that it must be abolished or abolish itself.

### The cultivation or dissolution of personality

How is the *present*, the actual, to be expanded to comprise ever greater ahistorical or eventless periods of time in a simultaneity, so that to an ever greater extent it *abolishes the meaning of time*? This can happen by coupling the events together into ever greater events where the whole of time becomes literally a waiting period, '*en attendant Godot*'. At the same time the event one is building up becomes more and more monstrous.

'To be educated is to be observant', a Danish author has stressed recently. He could have added that to educate is to shape, and society's intellectual culture thus consists of shaping people to *concentrate their attention upon the same things*.

To be an artist is to create attention. Therefore a creative artist can only distract people from their forced attention. Only the inattentive person can observe and draw attention to something new. Artistic upbringing consists in uneducating the people and making them inattentive and instead opening their eyes, ears and other senses.

An artist cannot live where he is forced to concentrate his attention upon what any stupid idiot could hit upon, regardless of how educated such behaviour is. He has to leave.

I hereby declare that I only acknowledge a land as my fatherland if it consistently refuses to have anything at all to do with powers which own atom bombs. One could call this treason. As it is so, I owe it to my fatherland that I accept being called a traitor.

For me the event itself, the situation, the living instant in immediate contact with past and future, with what I *know*, is the only acceptable reality, the artistic and the intelligent reality and the realistic and intelligent art.

In the last century, Kierkegaard complained that Christianity was being abolished by its own spread. However, that this was at all possible demonstrates that in Kierkegaard's perception Christianity was not an eternal but a temporal phenomenon. If Kierkegaard identified the instant with the eternal, the present with the divine, then Marxists can safely maintain *that socialism is the secular realization of Christianity*, of the all embracing and eternal instant, as one of my old Communist comrades recently asserted to me, for what science is helping the technicians to

develop today, what they in fellowship call progress, is the gradual evolution of the present in time and space.

Therefore I can today indicate that it is actuality itself, human reality, that is being abolished by the spread of industrialization. This human reality is no longer valid as quality but only as quantity, as amount. The mistake in Bohr's terminology lies to an even higher degree than the Marxists in identifying amount with mass, quantity with quality, and calling an amount that represents a determined unit or mass a quantum.

The profound and explosive conflict today growing within Communist and Socialist development is based upon the realizations that to an increasing degree are bringing to light a problem in relation to which it has hitherto been more or less unnecessary to take a position. However, this development is splitting into two opposite tendencies of a completely new character, towards either a human or an inhuman evolution. Marxism's superiority over all earlier philosophies lies in it being the first attempt to unite the scientific *perception of truth* with human *ethics* and norms of action which, to use Høffding's definition, are a *perception of health*. If, as Friedell and Nietzsche, one perceives what I would call the aesthetic purely negatively, as the negation of both truth and health, then we will see that the modern philosophical and political struggle is to a greater and greater degree about how far aesthetics or the perception of beauty have any right to exist, about whether there should still be freedom for Loke as well as for Thor.

### Form and container

With the Copenhagen Interpretation's reservation of a place of honour for classical metaphysics and logic and the apparent commencement of a completely new construction by its side, the conflict between the new and the old physics is avoided. It is otherwise with its relationship to materialistic dialectics. Here it is war to the knife, even though Bohr carefully avoids saying anything concrete, making do with a head-shaking 'not understood'.

Dialectical materialism has been able to avoid discovering that it has abolished the object because there *matter* is only perceived and

acknowledged as *substance for processes* and not as forms in itself, and thus only in its character of *raw material*. Hereby arises the peculiar and absurd theory about quality's sudden change into quantity, which, despite everything, is immensely effective in a *purely technical* sense as an explanation.

By dividing this dialectical opposition into three complementary forms of observation, the observation of *constants* or masses which we call *qualities* (and not like Bohr *quanta*) and the observation of *amounts* which we call *quantities* and finally the observation of *changes* or processes which we call *values* or variations, it is possible to acknowledge dialectics and the theory of complementarity as two of three complementary systems of experience, an artistic, a technical and a scientific system. However, this initially presupposes that one recognizes the limited field of dialectics and at the same time goes in for my postulate that in every complementary relationship there must be at least three complementary factors. Even if I have not been able to demonstrate that this is the case in the relationship object-instrument-subject in a sufficiently convincing way, it seems to me that we can, at any rate, request an explanation as to why.

When, after this first superficial tour around a number of problems, we turn back to our first problem, we can do so with a more comprehensive acquaintanceship with the framework in which I have arranged the knowledge and the elementary experiences I as an artist have had to gather in order to come in contact with the intellectual surroundings in which I live and which to an ever increasing degree are marked by the expressions, language and conceptual world of scientific thought.

In his collection of articles *Atomphysics and Human Knowledge*, Niels Bohr emphasizes that in the *never ending striving* for harmony between content and form there is reason to remember that 'no content can be represented without a logical framework and that any form, however useful it has hitherto been, can become too narrow to include new experiences.'

The word *form* can have several different meanings. In this case there can be no doubt that, in its adversarial relationship to the concept of content, the word form means *container*. Here Bohr does not make the

Marxist mistake expressed in the dogma, 'the only true form is the form of the content', a mistake which, however, becomes *true* according to the definition of truth and reality given here, and as such makes necessary a supplementary statement that *the only actual form is the opposite of the content*. When Bohr talks about framework he is talking about actual form not true form.

The logical framework for scientific description is the forms of language. 'This attitude is also expressed in historical development, as one no longer discerns sharply between formal logic and studies of semantics or even philosophical syntax...', says Bohr. 'In our discussion we will not regard mathematics as a separate branch of knowledge but rather as a refinement of the common language.'

The harmony between container and content, between the milk bottle and the milk, does not mean that the bottle is made of milk, but that its form holds the milk in place, gathers the milk into a three-dimensional form. Thus milk is given an actual form. If we had wished to give it a true form, an objective form identical with the content, we could have just quick-frozen it. But in our case the milk is framed by a container. This could be of metal, clay, cardboard, glass etc. and thus have its own *true* content of various characters. Such a container could be used not only for milk but for an endless number of fluids and powders *unless a prohibition is made from pure convention against using the container for anything other than one particular form of liquid by the application of a label*.

The container is an instrument. So are language and the philosophical concepts described. Werner Heisenberg says, 'the only thing one can say about philosophical concepts like causality, space, time etc. is that they are indispensable *instruments* for present scientific research,' but to define the limits of their spheres of usefulness is impossible.

Here Niels Bohr agrees with Heisenberg, as he says, 'The distinction between object and subject necessary for unambiguous description is upheld by the fact that with every communication that contains a reference to ourselves, we, so to speak, insert a new subject which does not appear as an element of the communication's content. It hardly needs stressing that it is precisely this freedom in the choice of the line of demarcation between

subject and object which gives room for the phenomena of the manifoldness of consciousness and the possibilities of human life.'

In this form, the postulation does not separate the 'will' of the instrument from human will and must invariably lead to the blind alley in which Bohr finds himself when he says, 'The problem is how far we can talk about freedom to act in agreement with our possibilities.' No, we have no possibilities of action at all if they have to be identified with our instruments, and at a certain point this is the demand of science and in this case of Bohr, as he wishes all actions which cannot be described in words to be reckoned as non-existent. In agreement with Einstein, he calls this 'a clear logical demand, as the word *experiment* (which means attempt: A.J.) itself refers to a situation where we can tell others what we have done and what we have learnt.' This presupposes in the first place that one cannot or may not do something that one cannot express, that one cannot or may not attempt something that one cannot at the same time express, but it also means that one does not have leave to express oneself artistically, for *the artistic is precisely the telling to others what one has done without thereby having learnt anything at all or imparting any experience whatever to others.*

### New consequences mean new logic

In his definition of the experiment, Bohr emphasizes that it is not a question of specialized experiments, scientific experiments, but that the definition should have a universal validity. As justification or reason for this demand he produces a new demand, *the demand for logic*, which Heisenberg has already described as an instrument. In reality, this demand is to the effect that human thinking should be identical with the framework in which it is traditionally organized, and that it is forbidden to take this apparatus to pieces to see how it works in order to make another. However, at the same time, this is what Bohr wants and regards as absolutely necessary when he says, 'It is precisely this impossibility of setting, by observation, a sharp distinction between subject and object that creates the necessary latitude for the expression of will,' and continues elsewhere, 'As far as the relationship between reason [logic? A.J.] and instinct [the reflex

or unconditioned action without cause? A.J.] is concerned, it is above all decisive to understand that no human thought in the true sense is possible without the use of a conceptual construct based upon a language which each generation has to learn from the beginning again. This utilization of concepts represses to a large extent not just purely instinctive life, but even stands in a distinct complementary adversarial relationship to the display of inherited instincts. If we look with wonder at the superiority in relation to man with which the lowest animal can use the possibilities of nature for the necessities and propagation of life, the most correct explanation is often that *for these animals there is no question at all of conscious thought in our sense...* The execution of such actions is only possible, when refuge is not taken in *conceptual thought*.'

I am of another persuasion and associate myself with those biologists who maintain that the whole of biological development has happened through sparks of conscious thought, and, if this is so, is identified with *intelligence* and not with *conceptual* thinking. I assert that a concept is not a thought but a device, an instrument for thinking, and that a complementary form of thought thus exists to the *thought that constructs concepts* (philosophical thinking) as well as *pure quantitative thought* (scientific thinking) or calculation, and this is subjective thought, *willed thought* or wishful thinking.

There are thus two possibilities. Either such a purely wishful thinking does not exist, or it exists, but is *forbidden* on scientific grounds, stamped as abnormal, unhealthy thought.

If science has use for a philosophical apparatus in order to undertake its experiments, then it is of course obvious that this apparatus must in perfect condition at the moment it is to be used as an instrument. However, if the apparatus is not good enough, and fortunately Bohr says that it may never be good enough, then it must be improved. But this in itself says that the scientist at the observatory cannot *at the same time* undertake his observations and enlarge the telescope with which he is to see. If science has thus use for *philosophy* as an instrument, it must find that which best suits it and protest if it is not good enough. However, if the philosophers on their part are to elaborate a set of meanings with universal validity, they

must also have standardized their building materials, *words*. They cannot agree to them being pulled apart and used in a thousand ways meaningless to philosophy. But if the language is not rich enough, then there is only one way in which it can be enriched, through literary and poetic development, the only thing that can enrich and refine the language in itself as language, as expression. However, philosophy is not developed as an instrument for science nor poetry as an instrument for philosophy.

Bohr maintains that the logical framework for scientific description is in the forms of language and continues, 'This attitude is also expressed in historical development, as one no longer discerns sharply between formal logic and studies of semantics or even philosophical syntax... In our discussion we will not regard mathematics as a separate branch of knowledge but rather as a refinement of the common language.'

With this perception, Bohr has consigned the whole of language to one large container in which can be found an orientation from the sediment of daily speech towards refined language, mathematics. This simply means that Bohr accepts that one has use for instinct with which to make philosophy and one also has use for philosophy with which to make science. However, instinct must be confined and only those drops which philosophy distils in its alembic have the right to exist, and this same situation is 'necessary' as far as philosophy is concerned. Yet he does not think that the consciousness of society functions in such a way that the drops from the pure test-tube of science are directed straight back into the alembics of the primitive instincts where they act as huge, heaven-sent instruments. The facts show us that *it is the instincts which have use for scientific research and keep it going* and here only he who works directly with instincts, the artist, has positive *power*. No compromise is valid here.

Dialectical materialism starts from the realistic perception that it is life that determines consciousness and not consciousness that determines life, but forgets that life shapes consciousness by developing it in a dialectical opposition to life, in a continuous protest against the conditions of life, and that an identification of life with consciousness is simply the death of intelligence, is an unconscious reflex. Classical scholars perpetrated another misunderstanding in perceiving life as something quite independent

of practical existence. It appears to me that the theory of complementarity could give both a more correct and more effective and, at any rate, a more realistic picture of these conditions. However, if this is the case then we have to avoid, for example, J.P. Jacobsen's *Arabesques* being perceived either as 'daily speech' or as another mysterious form of mathematics. Artistic refinement must be accepted as a spiritual development complementary to both the rationalistic development of instruments in daily life and to scientific and logical development. Everyday art does not exist, for art is celebration, and is so even if there is celebration every day and every instant of that day. *Art is the phenomenal itself and the phenomenal is the unique*. If the word 'phenomenon' can no longer be used in this meaning, then art no longer exists, and neither do the sensory phenomena.

### **Either phenomenal or functional**

Niels Bohr maintains that 'it is impossible to distinguish between the behaviour of material bodies and our observations of it. In order to find a true parallel to this knowledge of the limited validity of the accustomed idealizations that the atomic theory has given us, we must turn to an area of science so far removed from physics as psychology or even to the kind of epistemological problems already posed by thinkers like Buddha and Lao Tze in their efforts to find an expression for the harmony in the great drama of existence in which we are simultaneously actors and spectators.' This old situation has, however, completely changed, for a role which is neither that of the actor nor the observer but that of the instrument is growing like lightning. More and more, we are all becoming instruments or functionaries, and those groups which can really call themselves active players as well as free spectators, whose freedom in one of these areas dominates all their other functions, are becoming less and less in relation to the total population. What is worse, even the concept that should cover these two groups, that of the elite, is in reality just an expression for the most rigid and responsible and immovable of functionaries who have not the least power, for *power is beauty, grace*. In modern society this is replaced by what is called impartiality, which is really no more than scientific control.



Bohr's anti-artistic position can be established from the following statement, 'As a more appropriate method of expression, I suggested that the word *phenomenon* be exclusively used to refer to observations gained under stated circumstances comprising an account of the whole experimental arrangement.' If this concept is to replace the simple description of sensory impressions in general and if Bohr's description is not merely to characterize *specialized* scientific phenomena or more correctly *scientifically treated* phenomena, then phenomena, the world of the senses in itself, will no longer exist.

I would therefore suggest that this definition is changed to a *phenomenon is a sensed or observed change*. This definition allows us to establish a new perception of the intermediate relationship, to establish the transition between causality and non-causality, a problem that first took on universal significance after the observations of Bohr forced science to give up the belief in absolute relativism, absolute process or absolute actuality. This paradox that the law of causation cannot be given general validity but at the same time cannot be deprived of any validity is really the reason for this new philosophical conflict, and this has also given me the opportunity to introduce the aesthetic, defined in agreement with Baumgarten as sensed or observed changes, as an integral part of human thought or intelligence without doing violence to that artistic autonomy which has hitherto been necessary to all philosophical systems.

### Pawns, the other players and spectators

What Bohr has discovered, or rather the conclusion that Bohr should have reached from his observations, is that *conditions* and *laws* are not the same and never can be, that they are complementary opposites. Conditions are set in advance and rules are deduced. If the rules deduced from an experiment or a game are identical to those conditions set for the game, then nothing new at all has been experienced, and if they are in harmony with those conditions then anything novel is unimportant.

The conditions for an experiment can never be identical to the conditions *during* the experiment and must stand in a complementary adversarial relationship to them. *The condition of the experiment itself is that it*

*can either succeed or fail. If this possibility is not present, the experiment cannot be recognized as a true experiment, but must only be perceived as the purely experiment-free repetition of an already undertaken experiment. The experimental content of the repetition of an already undertaken experiment has only a purely subjective significance as an experiment for those who were not present at the time, but who have followed the instructions as to how it is to be undertaken, and are not therefore themselves experimenting. The definition of experiment laid down by Bohr and Einstein really excludes any truly new scientific research from the area they call experiments and thus does not even cover the purely scientific experiment at all.* The fact alone of having proved that an experiment can be repeated is in itself a proof that it is no longer an experiment, and this proof is present when all Bohr's conditions are fulfilled.

Thus, if the validity of a scientific experiment is to be recognized, the general condition is that all the conditions which presuppose the possibility of the carrying out of the experiment are known, that the result of the experiment itself has hitherto been unknown, and that, when they are present, it can be repeated under the same conditions. The result of a scientific experiment is the description of the experiment.

The separation of laws and conditions, which is the separation between idea and experience, can only happen outside the field of the experiment, in the actuality where the game is under way.

### Dialectics – trilectics. Dynamics and statics

What now remains is to give a presentation of the relationship between dialectics and the complementary system. My abilities and my knowledge only permit me to sketch the possibility of such a connection. As I have said before, I cannot nor will not attempt to prove it.

In its perception of history, dialectical materialism has, by involving the historical past in the present, celebrated great triumphs. No one can deny that I am the synthesis of my mother and my father. These *two* persons are not possibilities but necessary actualities in my existence in the same way as my *four* grandparents, my *eight* great-grandparents, *sixteen* great-great-grandparents, etc. back until in the fourteenth century, when

I have over a million necessary kin. The whole dialectical apparatus functions irreproachably. However, if instead of moving into the past, I follow the family trees of these innumerable forefathers in the direction of the future, then the whole of the dialectical system dissolves in an impenetrable jungle of accidents. Certainty is lost. What in one direction is determinism is chance seen in the other.

But what if one now wishes to force this same dialectical economy to be also valid into the future, then there is no longer anything that can be done, neither as *past* nor as *future*, for then the future has become identical with the past and the past identical with the present. This is what happens purely logically if the theory of dialectical materialism is followed up in its present form. That the Soviet Socialist Republics do not do this at all demonstrates their whole evolution and their philosophical silence. How far this break with the principles of dialectical materialism is unconscious or a hidden manoeuvre justified on its subjective basis, I will not say. However, the result is the same. We will have to find out for ourselves.

Dialectics is based upon a conviction about the endless union of polarizations or *two-sided* oppositions into syntheses, which then again produce dualities. That there is something correct about the unity of duality cannot be explained away as long as the polarity of electricity and magnetism has not been explained away. But if this principle is transferred to politics, and internal national polarization, right and left, is abolished, then a country has to seek its polarization outside itself. That such a polarization between East and West can be of high dynamic quality for the development of trade on both sides in a sort of naive competition or cold war, there can be no doubt. It is like a football match where both sides are trying to win. However, let us now imagine a whole new type of football field, where, instead of two teams and two goals, there are three teams in play and three goals. Now what would happen when the three teams began to play against each other? It would swiftly be discovered that it is impossible to control which of the two attacking enemies had scored. It would become necessary to invert the rules so that the victory was a negative one, so that it was the team that has defended itself best and had let in the least goals that was the victor. The victory becomes defensive and

not offensive. The game would of course adjust itself accordingly. It would not be an exciting game at all. This is how a third power can neutralize a tension between two powers. Therefore two-sided opponents are always aggressive whilst three-sided ones are defensive. Whether this in itself describes the transition from dialectics to complementarity, I will leave unsaid. Whether a three-sided relationship is static or constant is dependent, however, upon whether a rising tension occurs. Then this could perhaps lead to an actual explosion, the possibilities of which are abreacted in a two-sided relationship by the *duel's* incessant consumption of energy. No political advice whatsoever lies in these observations. I am only trying to discover what happens.

Two dialectical oppositions neutralize each other, like positive and negative. Where there are three mutual oppositions, such a synthesis cannot occur. Here we seem to be discovering the philosophical rule of Bohr's complementarity theory.

But let us move to the area which has my special interest as an artist, the character of light and colour. One can make a spherical model of every, absolutely every, colour possibility available in Runge's colour ball, with the spectral circle at an oblique angle on the black-white axis, and get all the colours lying in a rectilinear relationship to the centre of this sphere, at the same distance from the centre, to neutralize each other so that they, by mixing together, under all circumstances return to the grey colour in the centre. Here I ask science, how is this possible? Is this not the most perfect mechanical model one could imagine? What is the explanation of this polarity? Can it be a subjective accident with no foundation whatsoever in the order of nature and the physical characteristics of light?

If we now regard the three primary colours blue, yellow and red which slide harmoniously over each other in the spectral circle, and place them in a triangular relationship to each other, we will see that even though all three are constant, irreducible colours, then *the complementary colour to one is the median proportional colour between the other two*, the evenly mixed colour of the other two. It is thus the three primary colours which, in accord with Bohr's definition of complementarity, relate complementarily to each other, whilst what have hitherto been called the complementary

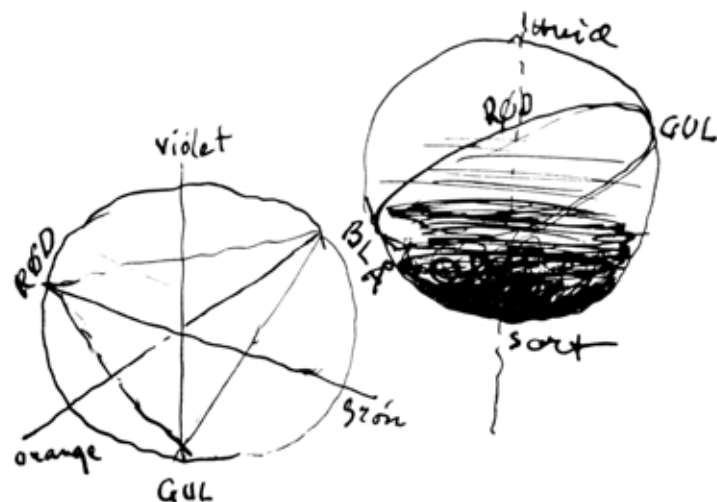


FIG. 1. THE SPECTRAL DIALECTIC

RØD = RED, BLÅ = BLUE, Grøn = Green, GUL = YELLOW, Hvid = White, Sort = Black.

colours relate dialectically and not complementarily to each other, as their synthesis abolishes the colour effect. This observation lies at the root of my whole taxonomy and under any circumstance abolishes the possibility of using both the traditional interpretation and Bohr's interpretation of 'complementarity' within the world of colours.

According to recent information, the Swedes have established that gila tissue has significance as a constant in the nervous system, something that Fridtjof Nansen is said to have indicated as a possibility as early as 1886. By this, they can be said to have in practice abolished the basis for the centuries-old conflict between the advocates of the three colour theory and the complementary colour theory and given a synthesized explanation for them both, in that the visual cells *are* trichromatic whilst the whole mechanism of sight *works* in accordance with the system of complementary colours. This shows that in this area there appears to be a connection between complementary statics and dynamic dialectics. But how does this model relate to the optical phenomena themselves?

When we observe nature, everything becomes greyer and greyer the more it spreads out and becomes distanced, whilst the grey in our model is in the centre. Could one imagine an inverted perspective where the things became smaller and smaller the closer they came, and thus an inverted space that would be the spatiality of light? Is our perception of space one-sided, like our perception of past and future and thus *oriented*? Should the idea of the expansion of the universe be supplemented with another about that same universe in the process of shrinking? I don't know. I only know that just as the Renaissance's perspective picture of the universe does not satisfy us any more and therefore art since Impressionism has sought to base itself upon completely new principles, so it now becomes a question about *pictorial art*, about how far new perspectives can be outlined for anything at all.

### Three world pictures

1. *The variable entity*
2. *The process of creation*
3. *The process of liberation*

At each corner of the borders of the old Chinese empire stood a stone on which was written 'World's End'. Society and universe were one, were the world. As it was discovered that there was a world outside Verona, so there arose the problem of the extension of the world that classical culture had chosen for its own, *the accepted world*, society. However *the fission between the two worlds, society and universe*, had already been observed, and the recognition that the laws of the universe were different from those of society had been established, even though the tendency to harmonize will always be at work in human consciousness. The belief that the formula for this harmonization has been found is called religion. I do not believe in the possibility of an unambiguous world picture, but the lines of direction given here do permit the conjecture that it is possible to develop three mutually complementary world pictures, providing one keeps them strictly separate.

A picture can only be a picture of the process under which the picture came into existence, nothing more. This is true also of a world picture. At

any rate, this is the reason why I, as an artist, dare postulate that there exist three complementary world pictures which cannot under any circumstances be identified with each other because they occur under three opponent processes, which I will briefly sketch here.

You take a lump of clay and shape it plastically into an image without losing any of the clay and without adding new clay. This method is the exact expression of the homeomorphic world picture, the *a priori* of which is that nothing gets lost and nothing is created, but where everything can be changed. I have the impression that this world picture is the foundation of what is called the wave interpretation.

When Heerup entered the Academy's Sculpture Department, he used this method and was immediately thrown out, because he could not reconcile himself to the particle method, which consists of first securing an arbitrary number of small particles and then beginning to place these particles in position, one against the other, a development which is conditioned by the *number* of particles and stops when there are no more. This progressive process of development, the *a priori* of which is that new quantities can be constantly added, expresses the classical world picture that has to be established before the process begins, as if it were an imaginary container or mould into which the molten metal is poured.

Finally you can go in the exact opposite direction to the latter as you begin by removing those parts of a given material, for example a rock or a piece of wood, which do not belong in the picture. This comes into existence directly by the breaking down of the material, by the removal of the picture-less material from the pictorial material. Here the image-making is directly identical with destructive action, with pure action, with what we will call radiant action, effect or activity, phenomenal action. These are three different actions of creation.

If I have not talked of any specific world picture in the last two cases, it is because the expansive explanation of the universe is in reality a hybrid product where you paste on something here and remove something there. What in my opinion characterizes modern atomic physics is that it has certainly isolated the world picture constructed upon the wave interpretation, but only at the expense of an imprecision which arises through a fusion

of the particle and the ray concepts. Only when one decides to set up a complementary description of all three observations, will the three world pictures clearly emerge. That they could emerge simultaneously seems to be excluded, however, as it would hardly be possible to describe a pure particle observation unless on the basis of a mixture of ray and wave description. Just as a pure description of the radiation phenomenon presupposes a mixture of wave and particle description, so a fission is conditioned by a fusion, not because of the deficient objectivity of the theory, but because we would otherwise be unable to observe, because there is no *place* for the observer. I would like to know if I am right about this interpretation.

### What do we observe?

The empirical doctrine of classical physics constructs its proofs on the basis of direct observation. This is no longer possible today. What one uses as a basis for one's conclusions is no longer the sensation of the object itself but signs of the object's behaviour deciphered by measuring instruments, on photographic plates and so on. These signs and not the object itself have become the only criteria for the demonstrability of scientific statements. The postulate that matter is what is given to us by our senses is hereby given the *coup de grâce*, whilst the same thing has happened to the classical perception of reality.

If I stand by an aeroplane and it flies away, then I see it getting smaller and smaller. The classical perception would say that this is imaginary. 'In reality', the aeroplane remains the same size. However, if I now set up ten cameras at my side and take photographs with the cameras at regular intervals as the aeroplane distances itself, then I get ten uniform photographic proofs that the aeroplane really got smaller and smaller. This is the reason that the classical perception of actuality is no longer valid, also in daily life. By the perception of actuality here I mean *what one can use the word actuality for*. *The object has not become smaller, but actuality shows something different*. I will here ignore the lacking proof that it is the same flier the camera has taken, of the possibility that there could have been aeroplanes of differing sizes and that the various cameras could have photographed different machines. What interests us in this experiment are

the possibilities for the most comprehensive explanation, the most logical explanation. Anyone can see that this is a problem that plays the greatest role in art, in the sense that it is the perspective problem itself that is at issue. The important thing is to demonstrate that *we do not see or sense what is at all, but what happens*, that the camera is completely unable to maintain a picture of the object, of what *is*, only of what *happens*, of the instant however long or short that is. Our senses do not perceive things, only changes of a quite specific limited kind or form.

### Complementary semantics. Symptom versus signal

If we go back to the modern scientific explanation of the use of observation instruments, we see that, according to Susanne K. Langer (*Philosophy in a New Key*), they are classified in an explanatory series of three elements, *object, sign, subject*. In this connection, the object is what the subject is interested in observing. However, when he cannot observe it, he seeks a sensory phenomenon connected with the object which it is possible to observe. If he is sure that these two phenomena always appear together, then he is sure to have found a sure sign that can show him *where* the object is to be found at any rate. Such a relationship of actuality or simultaneity between a thing and its associated sensory phenomenon is called a *sign relationship*. Now it appears that both humans and animals use such sign relationships everywhere. Indeed, we can just as well establish right away that any sensation at all is a sensation not of objects but of signs of these objects' presence. *No one has ever seen an object. No one will ever see an object*. One only sees light rays in motion and the refraction of these movements and nothing else. This is what we take for objects, because we have always experienced the direct correlation of these two things with each other. As our sensations are paramount in relation to our experiences, this is the world of objects we encounter, the construction of sign combinations we will call *symptoms* in forms or gestalts. This perception forms the logical conclusion of the materialistic postulate that objects exist independently of our sensation of them.

This definition of the symptom is different from that of Langer, but has the advantage that it can be expressed logically in detail and form the basis

for an unambiguous definition of the purpose of scientific research, as the revelation of symptoms, as *the demonstration of symptomatic relationships*.

In order for a symptom to be recognized as such, it must be absolutely 'true'. If the object is not always and under all circumstances present where the sign appears, then the sign is simply not a symptom. A mistake has been made and the whole thing must be scrapped. This mistake can only be due to the established sign relationship being false or one sign having been exchanged for another.

Just as a doctor defines a picture of illness by the combination of several different symptoms, we define our sensory pictures by combining sensory impulses in forms of objects or in images of forces and movements.

In contrast to the absolute unambiguity of the symptom, another form of sign combination, *the signal*, has a dual character which the former has not. If we set up an adversarial relationship between *the natural* and *the artificial*, then we are right to call symptoms natural signs and signals artificial signs. This division which, against the background of our definition of the symptom, is, as far as I know, quite new in semantics, and which clashes with other definitions of what is called 'the natural sign', is based upon the clear separation that *symptoms in my definition are what one would call objective signs whilst signals in contrast are subjective signs*, willed or intentional signs. If this simple arrangement is wrong then a specialist should easily be able to pull it to pieces.

If a symptom is a sign relationship that is established by the hand of nature, as one might say, then in order to establish a signal it is necessary to produce a special device, a special instrument for the transmission of the signal. Regarded as a sign instrument, the relationship between the requirements of symptom and signal device is similar to that between the requirement to use only previously found stones to hammer with and the permission to make a specially constructed hammer. As an effect, the difference is like that between the tracks one leaves when walking and those one makes on purpose to mark the way with a stick. If there can be opposition to this definition of the signal as identical with the artificial sign, then it is because it indeed *covers all natural phenomena which have arisen as and exclusively have the function of sensory effects*. This is to say that the song and



dance of the birds as well as the colour, scent and form of the flowers must be perceived as artificial signs or signals. This dissolves the old established adversarial relationship set up between the actual and the concept, or, if you will, the sensual and the 'actual', where everything apart from human ideas is perceived as 'nature'. From an actualistic perception, the artificial must naturally have its nature, together with the ideas, under all circumstances.

If we set up the symptomatic relationship object-sign-subject, then we can set up the signalistic relationship subject-sign-subject. Whilst symptoms exclusively serve as the orientation of a subject in motion in the objective world, signals serve as a subjective orientation in relation to the movements of another subject, either by indicating as symptoms the presence of the sign-transmitting subject, or by also influencing the sign-receiving subject's movements and changing them. The signal is artistic because it is artificial and free in relation to what is being described. The growling or barking of a dog is a sign that it is aggressive, but is in no way identical with the aggressive action. On the contrary, it is a sign it uses to avoid biting. The sign has become more important than the object. This contrast between action and the sensual sign of the action's potency cannot be established at all on the basis of a traditional philosophical use of language (see Benedetto Croce's aesthetics).

With symptoms one can only orient, but with signals one can orient and *direct* and thus force something to follow one's will. The orientation which the subject can establish through the signal is *data* about its own state and movements. However, by yet another element the signal can become *indicative*, as the signal-transmitting subject describes not itself but *an object*, for example an approaching danger, from which we get the series *subject (I) – sign – object – subject (II)*. Such a form of warning does not need to be directed towards one single subject, but could be a general broadcast. It must be noted that such an indicative signalling appears most often to have an accusatory, provocative or teasing function.

### Signal versus symbol

Apart from this *insultative* characteristic of the signal transmission, another characteristic exists, albeit upon a parasitic basis, which is not in the most proper sense signalistic, but nevertheless is so, as it is what we call a

*false signal, a fraud*. For example, the equipment of flesh-eating plants has to be perceived in this way. *At a more developed stage this trickery represents the ability to lie* and to pretend, to play-act. This is possible because, as already mentioned, the observer believes in the correctness of the signal and thus in the presence of an object which is not there. If he doesn't then the effort will be in vain. The observer reacts in this way, allowing himself to be fooled, because from experience he had *the concept* that where there was an object there was a sign. He has mistaken the signal for a real symptom. His critical sense is not functioning. His reaction to the signal has become a *conditioned reflex*. This is what happens when a fox allows himself to be enticed away from the ducklings by the apparently wounded mother duck.

Allowing oneself to be systematically fooled by such false signals is called conscious logic or symbolization. To symbolize is to say that one permits the presence of the object to be replaced with an idea or just a concept *x*. The difference between *idea* and *concept* is that the idea demands an imaginary signal, whilst this only hampers the concept. Only when any idea about a concrete object in connection with concept *x* is eliminated has one reached pure symbolism, pure concept. With this is determined not only the difference between symptom and signal but also that between signal and symbol. *A word can thus be used as a symptom as well as a signal or a symbol*. None of these uses can be dispensed with or identified with each other.

The difference between symptom and signal can thus reveal the difference between the natural and the artificial, and it is only by the representation of false signs or symbols that an adversarial relationship can be established between what we call lies and what we call truth. If, as is asserted, it is this ability of man to symbolize that lifts him above the animal world, then this is to say that the one who lies the best lifts himself the most. This may sound cynical, but it is at any rate what mathematics and classical philosophy teach us. Placed in correlation to the social requirement for truth it could well give a deal of trouble. When therefore we asserted in the beginning that a symptom should be absolutely true, this only has meaning if at the same time an absolute lie is cultivated, for without this the concept of truth would have no actuality any more. It would have vanished by dissemination.

### *New signals*

What has happened in the relativistic experimental arrangement for the determination of the period of the present is that our sign system has been duplicated and that the two sets of signal systems have been placed in an adversarial relationship to each other so that signals can be exchanged. A dialogue has been established.

If we keep to the world of the senses in the artistic signal relationship we have an actor, an instrument (the sign) and an observer or spectator who, just like the scientist, has to collect his observations. In the exchange of the two light signals, the first signal becoming the most primitive form of question and the second the most primitive form of answer.

*There is no meaning at all in sending a new sign before the answer has arrived. If questions are continually sent out without answers coming in, then in reality it is the same question being repeated constantly, regardless of whether its form changes. Time stands still until contact is made and communication or dialogue is set up.*

The longer there is between question and answer, the longer time is wasted by having to wait. The interesting part of the relativistic explanation is namely what can be scientifically proved – that time can be wasted. This is an enormously important observation for the understanding of the principles of the Marxist economic doctrine, which is based upon the English principle of ‘time is money’.

### **Symbol versus symptom**

If there is a particular reason to perceive the world of the signal as identical with that of art or, to be quite precise, the world of the fine and beautiful arts, it is simply because for humanity the beautiful is when the signalistic becomes art. Let us put it this way, what we will call *magic* is an intermediate thing between what we call symptoms and what we call signals.

Let us first establish that a causal relationship between the symptom and its object has in no way been established. It is not thunder *because* there is lightning. It has not rained *because* it is wet everywhere. It is not *because* one has a fever that one is sick and so on. However, *it is quite different if one is able to change a movement with the help of signals.* This can

only be explained as a causal connection. In order to operate, and thus for technical reasons, the revelation of such possibilities for the establishment of a causal connection is a consequence or a number of consequences or a chain of consequences with the help of another consequence which is the only one that has significance. It is therefore the technician’s requirement from science that it will not only find symptoms, but above all establish causal connections, this in itself being the opposite of a scientific analysis. *The establishment of objectively operative causal relationships is technique. The establishment of subjectively operative causal relationships is magic* or art, is captivation. Simple-minded thought does not separate these two forms. The belief in an almighty god is the belief in a universally subjective causal relationship. The belief in justice is the belief in a socially subjective causal relationship and so on.

That such causal systems are not true does not hamper the fact both that they are actual (if they are not mistaken) and that they function, help or hinder people in doing certain things. That the concept of magic has also been given a non-metaphysical interpretation in this account is a consequence of the remaining interpretations. Our definition simply says that *magic is doing what one wants and yet coming well out of it*, which one could also call the Faustian perception of art. In the classical view, magic is a pseudo-science constructed from particular concepts and ideas. It is only when one accepts this definition of magic that one can assert that runes, for example, do not have a magical origin. Metaphysical definition is necessary in classical philosophy because it has no place at all for non-conceptual thought, thought without tools, thought that is based only upon the talent of thinking.

Instead of magic, one could call this form of thought *introductory thought*, for it is not completely without context. One could just as well also call it seductive thought or aesthetic thought: one could call it thought for particular occasions or whatever. But it seems to me to be quite unnecessary here to describe this phenomenon, as I could never measure myself with the authorship of Søren Kierkegaard in this region.

The dialectical opposite to truth is lie. When Bohr sets up a complementary opposition between truth and clarity, then he has in reality given

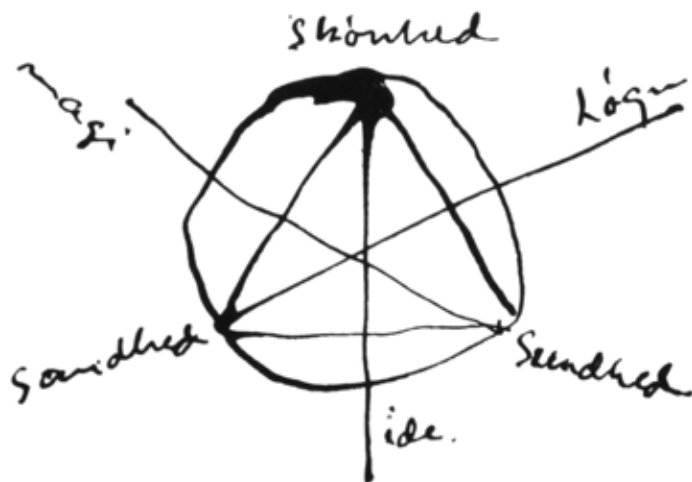


FIG. 2. THE FIRST TRIOLECTIC

Skønhed = Beauty, Løgn = Lie, Sundhed = Health, ide = idea, Sandhed = Truth, magi = magic.

me the key to the acknowledgment of the triple character of complementarity, as imagination or illusion also exists in a complementary relationship to truth as well as to clarity, unless he does not reckon with fantasy as an important psychic activity at all.

If the dividing line between the symptomatic and the signalistic represents the opposition between the natural and the artificial, then the dividing line between the symptomatic and the symbolic represents the opposition between the real and the imaginary, and thus that which we call the truth and the mendacious, and is the mechanism itself which allows the setting up of an adversarial relationship of truth-lie itself.

It is here that the inner structure of modern science is about to fall apart. It is from this point that the sickness today is spreading into all science, for science has no conditions at all at its disposal for concepts such as actuality, reality, experiment or phenomenon. However, just one concept is to this degree identical with science, in that it fuses with the unambiguity of the concept, and that is *truth*. If science is not true then it is simply no

more, it has vanished. Any attempt at a scientific approach to philosophy must pass through the control of truth. If science today wishes to appeal to philosophy, it must identify itself or we must identify it if it will not do so itself, and the question, 'What is truth?' is the same as the question, 'What is science?' In its modern evolution, science has appropriated truth, has identified itself with truth, but it cannot introduce scientific truth as an unidentified truism into philosophy, and cannot introduce itself into philosophy without examination.

What has happened today is that the natural sciences, the classical sciences, are no longer coherent, but have broken down the middle into two opposites. Classical natural science was symptomatic in its criterion of truth. We have clearly shown that the symbol in relation to the symptom is the definition of what we call lie, imagination or illusion. Universal approval of imagination is called convention or agreement, and an intellectual convention is called a concept. When therefore modern science clings to the demand for the constancy of the concepts, this means that it is demanding belief in the constancy of the imagination, in fixed lies. That this is simply a prohibition against a creative pictorial art we have already demonstrated. But even such a prohibition cannot save the situation, for the constancy of the concepts does not secure unambiguity in the concept of scientific truth, it does not abolish the self-contradiction.

Niels Bohr has laid down that 'it is the purpose of science to increase and order our experiences'. This statement, which is very unclear, is surely the reason for the general mobilization in the philosophy camp. That science gathers and increases our experiences is the very essence of science, but then comes the question of the ordering of these experiences. Here the question then is, do scientists believe that it is a scientific activity to order experiences, do scientists believe that a scientific method is to be found to order anything at all, and do scientists imagine that anything at all can be found which in a direct sense could be called a 'scientific order'? If this is the case then we are in a serious conflict.

Keeping order is a police affair, and the only thing that science can pronounce upon is the ascertainment of truths and nothing else. When science puts itself at the service of order, this means that it has to function

as an authorized lie detector. It is said that the lie detectors which are used in the American forces do not react to Italians. They are too clever at lying. If science really demands participation in controlling the ordering of our experiences, then it is time that we set up Darlington's Ministry for the Destruction of International Understanding and Conformation and, as a focus, set up an institute for advanced lying with training in make-believe for ourselves and others, a central institute for artistic activity. This institute could also be called an institute for new ordering or for creative philosophy or simply the Folk High School, for imagination is just *discovering something for oneself*. Discovery and invention are two opposing activities. Any ordering is an invention. Every systemization is an art. If the meaning of Bohr's statement is that science does not have a purely intrinsic purpose because it cannot continue its research without the results achieved connecting with the public consciousness or, at any rate, with the consciousness of other research results, and that systematized development is therefore a necessary precondition for the development of scientific research, then a very painful controversy will have been removed. Humanity has always had to systematize its experiences quite independently of scientific research in order to be able to act with wisdom, in order to be able to transform its knowledge into something it perceives as wisdom, and this doctrine of wisdom is in reality philosophical activity. This activity has developed quite independently of modern science and has not been equal to constructing a systems theory that harmonizes with the experiences of modern science. However, today a philosophical science is necessary, as any philosophy which is contradicted by scientific experiences is without any actuality, except as an instrument for upholding social peace, order and stagnation, for supporting social *actuality* and avoiding events. Preserving the conceptual definitions of classical physics also involves preserving classical philosophy and classical forms of society. Or is the order of the factors reversed? Building a new world of concepts parallel to and independent of the old is only possible if one finds a new planet and begins *existence* in a completely new way. This is perhaps possible today, but we others who still wish to remain on the earth are not interested in having it reduced to a museum. We would rather discover something new for ourselves.

### The rules of nature and the laws of society

A law must be kept, but a rule has to be followed. A rule is thus a regulation of order, but is not itself the order. A rule can be followed in different ways just as one can order in different ways, but within an order all details are fixed. One can ascertain if certain rules are being kept, and rules are thus also a kind of law, although they are not absolutely constant. A law is to be considered absolute in a given situation, but a rule is a law which one decides to follow or not follow, and in a given situation or a particular form of situations is thus still open to choice and decision.

Can there be an objective or scientific separation between laws and rules? Such a thing could only be arranged if one called all artificial rules discovered by man laws and only recognized the rules of nature, the rules that nature follows in and outside humanity's existence, independently of human will and impervious to human will, ability and knowledge. Attempts have been made to identify the laws of society with such natural laws, and attempts have been made to give them a divine, absolute character, all in vain. Today everyone has agreed to perceive all social laws, orders and rules as kinds of contracts which people agree to keep or follow or, at any rate, to behave as if they keep or follow.

Herein lies the self-contradiction of modern science. We have already indicated that the *'laws'* of the natural sciences are, without exception, proof of symptomatic sign relationships. When science therefore talks of the laws of mathematics, it also destroys the unambiguity and truth of its statements about laws, for no concept, no mathematical formula is natural. They are all purely artificial rules which can be accepted or rejected at will and *their essential artificiality is that if they are rejected, they do not exist at all. The same is the case with words and writing*. An unknown writing, an unknown language, has no existence at all, even if its signs exist, unless its rules and meaning are known. This is the contrast between concepts and symptoms. The development of the natural sciences takes place according to certain rules, but nothing makes these rules absolute, nothing makes them natural laws, although this is what science tries to demonstrate. No one can prove that science could not develop according to absolutely different rules. Today science can no longer find out what the

rules of its game are or even what the game is. Science has therefore lost its *raison d'être* as the unambiguous criterion of truth and thus as science. The re-erected unambiguity of this concept of truth will be necessary in order to accept science into philosophy.

What has brought confusion into the natural sciences is the discovery that one cannot perceive natural symptoms as absolute, that nature does not follow its own '*laws*' with absolute consistency, and that nature is a gambler marked to the highest degree both by chance and by rules of the game of its own, called '*natural laws*'. However, their absolute infallibility, in which no one believes anymore, takes from them nothing of their absolute character of being rules of the game for particular natural phenomena.

An answer that is already formulated and given before the question arises and is posed could, if it was a scientific answer, be called a precondition, or, where the question is of an ethical nature, is called a defence, and in both cases they take on the character of legality from repeated use. An essential feature of the original Nordic perception of law was that it was not perceived as a mutual agreement, a message, or a forced demand, but as a *vow* that was absolutely one-sided. Agreement only occurs when *belief* in the vow is declared. The relationship of trust is thus a relationship between both *belief* and *laws*.

A law is thus a decision or a prejudice. A defense is the same as a resistance or a defended point of view, a prohibition.

One can change a law by force whilst being elevated above the law oneself, and one can in fellowship work out a law that all vow to maintain. But what in reality are perceived as its basic laws are its theoretical *a priori*, and one can demand of them that they are logical, that they are not self-contradictory, but even where this is achieved one cannot call them scientific, as they are just preconditions for talking about the results of scientific investigations, not for the results in themselves. In nature are found no laws, only rules.

In the most advanced circles of modern culture, games theory has already become an instrument with which one prepares oneself to play upon people's credulity. *A game is a process the end result of which is unknown, an experiment.* A superior power is one who can make an opponent play

a game, the result of which he knows, and which is thus not a real game to him. An authority is one whose opposite number knows that he knows the result in advance, but nevertheless agrees to play. A winner is the one who plays the best, and a cheat is one who pretends to be following the rules of the game, but in reality does not. The only player who in the aesthetic sense could be an artist is the cheat, because his game is, without exception, *apparent*, and thus is pure sensory effect, pure intuition, a performance. The actor does not play. He plays the role of the player. In the same way, the virtuoso does not play music. He plays Mozart without being Mozart. The artist is the only one that is always conscious of this double game, wherever it is played. An artist never lets himself be fooled by a politician, unless he perceives him as an artist. Inorganic nature does not seem able to play the double game or fool anyone. This is the basis of the relative truth value of the symptom. If truth is symbolic then it cannot at the same time be symptomatic and vice versa. Truth must be indivisible if it is to be a truth. An illusion is also a truth if it is defined as a true illusion. A lie is a form of truth: if its antagonistic relationship to the facts is defined then it is *a true picture*. To an artist this is obvious, indeed it is even the monitor of his originality. In order to really imagine something, to be able to imagine, one must know precisely what is *not* imagination. It is in the symbolic area that the artist finds the concepts of truth of the modern scientist so deplorably unscientific and illusory – indeed, improbably poor and dilettantish in their illusionism or imagery. Only by handing over the control of universal imagery to creative artists can scientists today have order in the tabernacle. In this way, the artist's stance becomes that of an anti-symbolistic symbolist.

If we thus set up a theory about a complementary tripartition of *symptom – signal – symbol* and identify these with the criteria for *truth – beauty – health*, meaning by health only balance or legality, then we can construct a triangle similar to the colour triangle, and with this we can work out the dialectically antagonistic relationships.

If we perceive the symptomatic relationship as the criterion of truth and set up the lie as the dialectical opponent to truth, then we must maintain that a lie is half symbolic and half signalistic, that a lie is a hybrid



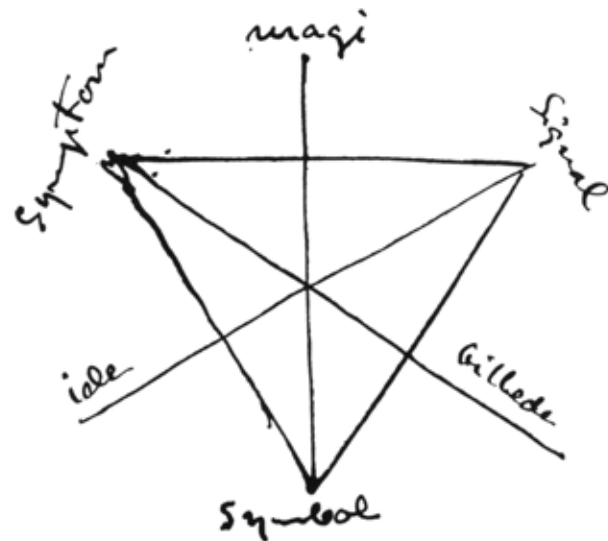


FIG. 3. THE SECOND TRIOLECTIC

magi = magic, billede = image, ide = idea.

product and thus as such more complicated and more interesting than truth. The great mistake of modern culture has been that, in its idealism, it has undervalued the cultural significance of the lie and worn itself out in an eternal hunt for truth, instead of investigating what a lie is. In a peculiar way, this investigation has been a taboo. The reason is the fear of losing those illusions that can make people conform to rules and customs. Nevertheless, at a time when scientific symbolism is stagnating into an irreplaceable implement, it is enormously important to define the mean between signal and symbol called pictorial art. In reality it is this, which, being the opposite of the symptom, places pictorial art in an antagonistic relationship to science. The recognition of this is of fundamental dynamic and dialectical significance for both art and science. In its antagonistic relationship to the symbol, pictorial art is a false symptom produced by signalistic and symbolic effects, and is in this sense pure illusion. The false symptom is a representation of the sensual signs that always describe the

presence of an object without that object being there. It is the life-like picture of an apple on a dish, where in reality there is neither an apple nor a dish, but just a canvas and some paints. *Such a picture is not signalistic. Neither is it symbolic but more or less both.*

In the same way, if we seek the dialectically antagonistic relationship to the signal, then it must be a false signal that is a mixture of symbol and symptom. Such a hybrid product is called an ideal. *Ideals are imaginary signals*, but are imageless, having nothing to do with the world of sensation, and cannot be produced pictorially. In the sensual sense, they are *anti-pictures*.

Similarly, the dialectical opposition to the symbol is a hybrid product of symptom and signal called magic. We can thus now polarize these phenomena in relationships where they mutually abolish each other, and establish that symptom and picture are deadly enemies just like signal and ideal and like symbol and magic.

In European culture, it looks as if three basic cultural types are being separated out, each of which in itself has a tendency to fall back to one of these antagonistic relationships which, as it were, form the basic tension in the intellectual structure. It is as if the Byzantine-Muscovite culture above all emanates from the opposition symptom-picture, as if the Romano-Latin culture first and foremost stretches between the opposition symbol-magic, and the Nordic culture above all orients itself along the opposition signal-ideal, and that the basic European conflicts are identical with the mutual competition and complementarity of these three orientations. At any rate, it is possible to explain certain conflicts in religious history from this viewpoint.

**Naturens orden. De divisione Naturae** (Aarhus: Skandinavisk Institut for Sammenlignende Vandalisme, 1962), pp. 9-58.

Translated by Peter Shield.



## CRITIQUE OF ECONOMIC POLICY

Asger Jorn

*This section, apart from a few rearrangements, was published in French by the Situationist International in 1959 and dedicated to the Danish syndicalist and workers' leader Christian Christensen, who in my youth, when he lived in Sejs near Silkeborg, was like a father to me and taught me what economics, economic critique and organization are.*

*The Marxism which is criticized here is what made Marx maintain that he was not a Marxist. The old basis for international communism has today definitively broken down. Here I could say to all those who are seeking pure socialism, 'If you are going to the right, then I'll go to the left.' I have already indicated in my book *The Natural Order* that this statement should not be perceived in the traditional sense. The illusion that progress and evolution are the same has come to an end. This has meant that the communist movement is dissolving. I go in for progress, but in order to progress one must be able to regress. In his cultural history, Hartvig Frisch has demonstrated that the forces of progress do not always evolve from the top, but can shoot out as side-shoots from the trunk. My idea of progress is therefore based upon an out-and-out revolutionary conservatism, for I am going back to the composition of the First Internationale and maintaining that none of its three basic principles – anarchism or the principle of the evolution of personal freedom, syndicalism or the evolution of wise, social organizations and socialism or the knowledge of the context of all social phenomena – can be done without today.*

### The main points in my critique

*Production and reproduction are, like progress and evolution, two complementary oppositions.*

*Neither commodity value nor work can comprise the elemental concept of social value, which must base itself upon the human being as the source of value.*

*Raw material cannot be constant or free capital, as capitalists and socialists maintain. Raw material is in a continual reductive process.*

*Use value is the opposite and negation of the article of utility, as quality is the opposite of value.*

### Value in itself and forms of value

The common criterion for truth for any socialist or anti-capitalist politics, the basis that is still recognized as valid by socialists as well as communists, is the Marxist analysis and critique of the capitalist form of value, the commodity, perceived as the elemental form of the wealth existent in a society where the capitalist form of production is dominant. This manifests itself as an immense accumulation of commodities.

This analysis was carried out by Karl Marx in his 'critique of political economy', a work that was given the name of *Das Kapital*. Marx does not just demonstrate that the capitalist form of wealth is the commodity, for that demonstration cannot take place at all without a precondition that wealth and value are the same.

As wealth exists as the opposite of poverty, it is precisely this opposition between rich and poor that socialist politics wants to remove. However, as, according to dialectics, an opposition cannot be removed without thereby achieving the removal of or the neutralization of both oppositions, socialism abolishes wealth along with poverty. If wealth continues to blossom one can simply demonstrate that socialism does not exist. The idea of a socialist wealth is not just utopia. It is simply rubbish.

The present crisis of socialism has its starting point in the fact that Marxism's identification of commodity, wealth and value make the

abolition of value as such the ideological goal of socialism. Thus the concept of value itself becomes an absurdity in socialist terminology, whilst socialist politics is forced to become a permanent politics of devaluation, the end purpose of which can only be the absolute abolition of all values. Nothing in Marxist economic dogma contradicts this goal in a scientifically logical way. This absolute and all-embracing devaluation is, indeed, altogether unavoidable and will happen of its own accord whether people wish it or not. This natural evolution forms the scientific basis of socialist theory. This tendency is the basic definition of socialist development itself, the one by which the consequences of all socialist actions are justified, and is the justification in itself of socialist politics.

We will here attempt to indicate that it is possible to accept the Marxist analysis and critique of the *capitalist* form of value, the commodity, without thereby taking over the identification of this form with value itself as a concept and a reality. This is to say that it is possible to accept the purely scientific side of *Das Kapital* without thereby automatically taking over the political conclusions that Marx drew from it. It consists of perceiving the Marxist critique not as a critique of value in itself but of a specially occurring form of value limited in time and space. To get to this new form of critique, it is first necessary to lay down a new and precise concept of value which does not contradict itself, and which is at the same time far more comprehensive than the Marxist one, a concept of value that harmonizes with the conceptual world of the natural sciences, something which the Marxist concept of value clearly does not do. In order to do this, we must find a corresponding definition of the concept of form so that we can clearly and unambiguously lay down what is meant by different forms of value. This leads directly to a necessary critique of the concept which in dialectical materialism goes under the name of 'objective quality'. This is the purpose of this study.

### Concepts are concepts – actualities are actualities

In order to avoid a thorough discussion about this question of concepts, Marx was obliged to exclude the whole question by saying that it did not exist at all, that it was unreal. He stated that value is not a concept but

an actuality, namely the commodity or the exchange value. Thereby he is really stating that all value is exchange value. Concepts are words which everyone has agreed to give one and only one meaning. This socialization of the concepts is altogether necessary to make it possible to explain something to each other that we can agree on in fellowship. Therefore the whole socialist theory stands or falls on this tool, with which this theory is transformed to an ideology, becoming clearly and unambiguously socialized. In this argument Marx forgets, however, that he himself in *Das Kapital* defines value as a purely *metaphysical* and thus immaterial phenomenon, as an *agreement by convention*, and thus as nothing other than a concept.

However, even this Marxist refusal to discuss concepts does not hinder the rising depreciation in all areas which is a result of socialist politics. On the contrary. As the actual goal of socialism is the practical abolition of exchange value, socialism is not just moving towards an eradication of possible new value theories but towards a state where even the actual objects vanish, towards a state without actual values.

Marx was himself the first to see this evolution and to go in for it at full throttle. He even perceived his own Marxist philosophy as the last philosophy for which there would be a use, and that only in the period of transition to the socialist society, where all philosophy, even the Marxist, would be abolished. Here one sees his own economic philosophy replaced by the greatest economy, as far as philosophy is concerned. His goal was to make all philosophy unnecessary, including Marxism. Thus this growing devaluation of everything, of even Marxism itself, is not anything unexpected. It is both the conscious and unconscious goal of socialism.

Marx's conceptual confusion is too great to be able to demonstrate the overall consequences of this consistently anti-progressive ideology. For example, he talks of the commodity's factors, the use value (defined as the substance of value) and the exchange value or 'value in itself' (which he identifies with the dimension of value). There can be no doubt that dimension and value are here perceived as the same. However, he thereafter divides exchange value into two completely different factors, as he says, 'Any article of utility can be perceived from a double viewpoint, from that of the quantity and from that of the quality.' As dimension and quantity are

the same, value and quantity must also be so. In dialectical materialism, the concepts of *quantity* and *quality* are themselves the key concepts. It is therefore strange that Marx cannot keep to them when he has to talk of value and commodities. The reason hits one in the eye. It is altogether impossible to classify considerations of value, be it under the concept of quantity or the concept of quality. Even the most diligent materialistic dialectician falls down here. Is value then really, as Marx himself suggests, just a purely metaphysical concept? There are only two possibilities. Either this is the case and then Marxism is neither materialistic nor scientific in the strict meaning of that expression, or Marxism's concept of value is out-of-date and must be replaced by a new one. It is this latter perception that I want to attempt to develop here. In order to do this we must look a little closer at what could lie in the concepts that Marx is manipulating. What do, for example, *substance and dimension*, the two concepts which in Marxist doctrine are the two factors of form, mean?

### Substance and process are in the Marxist sense the same

In order to be able to understand Marx's concept of substance, it is necessary to place it in relation to what he calls form. As we are keeping to a purely materialistic evaluation and conceptual world, we can in the main confirm that what the Marxists call matter is perceived as substance, and is normally perceived as being the same as the material's characteristic of *raw material* for something, and not in a true sense as an *element*. In the Marxist sense, all material is actually or possibly raw material and nothing else. On the other hand, the form of the material designates its character as a material different from all other materials, which can be determined or united in a special object. In this way one talks of different forms of energy, etc.

These forms of energy stand in a dialectical opponent relationship to the substance of the same energies. But it is here that Marx is wrong. In Marx, the concept of form is, so to speak, never placed in relation to the concept of substance. He prefers to operate with a completely different opposition: form and content. Thus he talks of the value's form and the value's content. A content is what is enclosed in a form. Thus Marx

declares that the content of value is work and adds to this description that *the true form is the form of the content*, which logically makes formal truth identical with work or with content in the value question.

However, he also says somewhere, 'We now know the substance of value. It is work!' We must thus state that in Marx, *substance and content are the same*. However, he also declares that use value is 'the value's' (the exchange value's) substance and at the same time explains that 'work is not the only source of value for the use values it creates, for material wealth. It is the father. The earth is the mother.' But in order for a use value to be able to be transformed into a true 'value', an exchange value, he himself emphasizes that it is necessary to eliminate or completely devalue one factor, the material character of the commodity, to deny the mother, the earth, which is the original source. *The transition from use value to exchange value happens by the devaluation of the article of utility's material actuality*.

The deficient understanding of the materialistic significance of this operation can be seen even more clearly in Marxist theory, if one goes a little closer into the Marxist perception of form. Here it is stated that *the use value is the natural form of the commodity*. What does that mean? Marx adds, however, that the commodity possesses a form of value of a quite special kind that contrasts sharply with the various natural forms of the commodity, namely the form of money. If we accept that the use value is the commodity's actual *substance*, then it is impossible to perceive an article of utility as being identical with a natural form. An article of utility is not a natural form but a cultural form, otherwise a wooden table would have the same form as a tree. The more one reads Marx, the more one becomes clear that he hasn't an inkling of what a use value and an article of utility are. He believes that they are the same. One can excuse him. In spite of his unique efforts in the cultural history of humanity, it was not given to him in practice to immerse himself in either the world of wealth or of use values.

Nevertheless it is precisely this lack of knowledge of the artistic and the artificial elements in the article of utility's character of wealth that reduces the extent of the Marxist theories to a limited period in history which is now past.

We can accept the fact that articles of utility represent the substance or raw material of commodities. There is, however, just the important thing that use value is something more and something more essential than just commodity substance. It is in itself a value that is certainly devalued in the instant of barter, but immediately takes up its intrinsic value again in the consumer's hand, when the exchange has taken place. *Once bought by the consumer the article of utility is no longer a commodity. It has again become an article of utility*. This determination is necessary for all articles of utility except money.

He who manufactures articles of utility does it primarily because he has use for them. If he makes more than he can use himself, then he has created a utilitarian surplus value. This surplus production is directly valueless to himself. If others are interested in it, then he can give it away. This is called potlatch. However, it is this productive *surplus value*, and only this, which is made into commodities, first by the exchange of surplus products in barter and then by the surplus production being exchanged for money, this again being exchanged for other articles of utility. Exploitation arises when a person is not allowed to give his surplus production away to whom he will. Slavery consists in the person no longer being allowed to decide what he has a use for himself. One can thus be exploited before one becomes a slave. The Marxists have not discovered this. However, if one has no right whatever to decide what, how much and why one produces, then one is simply an instrument.

What Marx discovered was that all the processes mentioned here is *artificial*, that is, discovered by people, and that *the article of utility also has its substance which is the forms of nature*. However, nature exists, as Lenin maintains, independent of our sensing it and our use of it. This means that nature is not in itself a substance. It is so only in its relation to the human wishes and abilities that create the articles of utility. Nature itself is not a means, and has not in itself an end that serves humanity. Nature is simply the first unavoidable condition for all production. Nature exists in natural forms. The destruction of these natural forms is the process we call the manufacture of articles of utility. One can destroy natural forms without manufacturing anything. But the manufacture of articles



of utility is impossible except by a destructive incursion into the natural order. This incursion is called culture. So the foundation of socialism in the order of *nature* makes its theory a denial of art and culture. This is apparent above all in socialism's complete lack of understanding of the agriculture problem.

### Use value is the negation of the article of utility

Marx is forced to eliminate the whole problem of consumption to avoid seeing the holes in his theory. He does this by simply and primitively maintaining obstinately that there is nothing at all that one could call use value and what one does call use value is in reality what should be called the article of utility. If Marx in the beginning maintains that value and dimension are the same, then he also ends by identifying value with quality or article, which in reality abolishes the difference between quality and quantity upon which dialectical materialism is built. In no other place has Marx used such an agitated tone and such cheap arguments as in this question and, oddly enough, no postulates have been lapped up with greater joy than precisely this rubbish, be it by communists, socialists or capitalists, priests and popes and artists, the whole caboodle.

Marx asserts that the use of the word *value* in connection with articles of utility is just as crazy and pre-scientific as the pre-chemical use of the word salt not just for true salt but also for substances like sugar because there is a purely external similarity between sugar and salt. This parallelization is not, however, a scientific argument but a piece of chicanery that the socialists have also used recently in Denmark to assert that one cannot compare the amounts from the national wealth used for military purposes with those used for cultural institutions like the National Museum, because the military, as everyone can clearly see, has nothing to do with culture. No arguments seem to have so great a carrying capacity as such mental short-circuits.

Of course, Marx himself believed in his own argument. However, he did not follow it. He could not solve the problem. But if he had really followed his own theory in *Das Kapital* and written *article of utility* every time he wrote *use value*, then he would have swiftly discovered the

absurdity. But he was careful not to do that, and Marxists since have not dared to do the experiment, but have all faithfully continued to swallow his assertion. One has to hinder discussions about this problem. When Marx says, '*Use value is realized in use or consumption*', then it would be quite meaningless to imagine that he is talking of the article of utility, for the realization of the article of utility is after all because of its production and not its consumption. One does not realize a roll by eating it.

*The use value* of bread is realized in the digestion, in the dissolution and thus in the process of digestion. This is all that can be said directly about use value. Use value must therefore be exactly the opposite of article of utility, *the negation of the article of utility* as article or object, or as actual form.

Marx elaborates, 'As use value, the commodity is above all of differing quality. As exchange value, it can only be of differing quantity.' Here we have arrived back at the concepts of quality and quantity. Does anyone, after this presentation, doubt that use value cannot be the same as the article of utility? If one uses an article of utility one cannot at the same time preserve it as a commodity. In order for an article of utility to be recognized as a commodity in the modern sense, it must be *unused*, remain intact, and it is thus this intact object that Marx calls quality. We will keep to this unambiguous definition of the concept of quality.

However, it is thereby impossible for use value to be the quality of an article as one likes to maintain. Quality, if this word is to have one unambiguous meaning, must simply mean the article in itself, the extent and duration of its body, which in reality are the same, its *condition*.

If I buy myself a pair of shoes, then their consumption and destruction by wear cannot really be their quality. On the contrary, one perceives their *quality as their resistance to destruction*, their permanence or constancy as an article. It is obvious that the shoes will hold their quality best if one never uses them, if one puts them in a cupboard. This is the way the shopkeeper has to treat them. The least use diminishes their price to a degree that no Marxist law can explain. However, if I don't use my shoes, then they are at the same time without value to me. *The value is created in the use* but not by the wear or consumption in itself. I buy good quality

shoes precisely to avoid them being swiftly worn out, even though this is, despite everything, unavoidable, if I am to use them. One cannot thus directly identify use or consumption. For bread the problem is even more complex. I do not bite the bread into pieces to destroy it but to produce thereby strength with which to build myself up. Only that part of the bread that gives me strength is a value to me. The rest is pure garbage.

### Value is process

Marx says that 'as an article of utility the commodity is quality and as exchange value it is quantity'. This formula, perceived by dialectical materialism as a renewal of the scientific concepts, would, however, remain completely static and unusable, if Marxism did not reckon with what it calls the transition from quality to quantity and vice versa. This process has not been given a clear scientific formulation in the ideology of dialectical materialism.

What evades the attention of Marxists in this formulation is that Marx's so-called exchange value has no more to do with value than the article of utility has to do with use value. The Marxist pseudo-value, *exchange value*, is nothing other than the neutralization of two values in a condition of equilibrium which is called equivalence or equal value – equal validity. Two values which are equally valid abolish each other's value and make each other valueless until they are again torn from their established opposite number. This opposition is fixed in the object we call *currency*. Money in itself as an object is valueless. But it is an article of utility, a form. The special thing about it, however, is that as it is gradually liberated in its pure form, where there is no material covering for it, it has only a purely metaphysical value based exclusively upon belief, upon everyone believing in it. *In the socialist society the banknotes themselves become the measure of what people believe and value*, nothing more. One could abruptly agree that one no longer wanted to believe in the particular banknotes. One could make others and the first ones could be ripped up. They would be valueless, on the metaphysical ground alone that as a matter of pure convention one has agreed not to believe in them anymore.

The market value of things is not conditioned by their quality, far less by their amount. It is conditioned by their *differences*, their variability. To reduce this variability, to standardize a commodity is therefore to say that one is devaluing it. This process of standardization is called economics. The exchange value of two commodities is thus not their equivalence but the dissimilarity in the conditions they offer and this is expressed in the price difference. By reducing this difference to a price difference of a purely quantitative nature, one can fix the price. In reality this means that everything has the same price and thereby there is nothing that has a price anymore. The price no longer exists. The real exchange value exists exclusively in the change or variability in price. When all prices are fixed, trade has become meaningless. The commodity no longer exists. This is the purpose of socialism.

It should thus be correct to put forward the perception that *value and process are the same* and that which Marx calls the value's substance is the true value and not the dimension of the value as he claims. Dimension is nothing more than the quantity of a particular quality. However, *value is a particular quantity of qualities undergoing process or change*.

Matter or natural forms first become substance in the process that changes them not to quantity but to other forms or qualities. Outside the process each substance is, in its own nature, just a special quality or form. The concept of substance is thus characteristic of nothing other than the process itself or the transition between two states. Substance is the material actuality of the change or the transformation. Let us test the possibilities for a deeper knowledge of the production problem that this opens up.

### The cycle of production and consumption

Marx declares that barter implies the following change of form:

Commodity – Money – Commodity (C–M–C)

But this process necessarily presupposes a deeper lying change of form:

Article of Utility – Commodity – Article of Utility (A–C–A)

Behind this lies a third change of form:

Natural Form – Article of Utility – Natural Product (N–A–N)

The most primitive human life form was based on this simple cycle: N–A–N. The city society's trade added a new element to the chain in a cycle N–A–C–A–N. The Greco-Roman money system made the cycle one notch longer: N–A–C–M–C–A–N. What new element have the socialists added to this cycle? It is not our task here to indicate this. We would just like to stress that only the study of this cycle is able to give us a real scientific picture of the relationship between production and consumption in modern society. At the same time, it has, however, to be pointed out that, in contrast to agriculture, industry gives nothing back to nature in a rebirth of the values it consumes. Industry's consumption of nature is *irreversible*, as the natural products it leaves behind have always been definitively devalued in human and cultural terms. Industry therefore has a direct contact with that rising depreciation of matter which is called the expansion of the universe. This is the reason why its advocates do not see their own place in a cyclic development, and this is the reason that those who are not in the running must be wary of whichever cycle industry may now find to launch itself into, for behind that grows no grass.

### **A commodity is a socialized article of utility**

The bourgeois revolution against the nobility, the court and the Catholic Church had its point of departure in indignation at the wealth, plenty and luxurious living of these privileged groups, and it set up against them the bourgeois virtues of modest simplicity of conduct, of thrift and frugality. Marx did not even discover that it was this sudden and compulsory thrift in consumption which was the source of capital-creating savings. This tendency did not come on the agenda at all in the revolutionary ideas of socialism. On the contrary, there was a tendency to promise all the people what the privileged classes had before the bourgeois revolution. According to Marx, the luxury consumption of the individual capitalist plays no role at all in economic considerations.

It is only against the background of this fact that one can understand why socialists feel themselves so dependent upon capitalists that they assume a bourgeois-capitalist revolution to be a necessary prelude to a socialist one. The two revolutions are just two sides of the same affair. Of course, there are purely tactical reasons for not getting too close to the problem. No one makes a revolution to be frugal, especially not poor people. But the reason that it is at all possible for socialists to suppress this problem is that they already assume certain bourgeois-capitalist traits of character as an obvious necessity amongst the people who are to shape socialism. This means that what is called capitalism is nothing other than a particular form of socialism or socialization: a form of socialization really just as deep-seated as the working class's socialization of industry's means of production and what complements it, namely, the socialization of the means of consumption, for *a commodity is nothing other than a socialized means of consumption*, a socialized article of utility. In this way the socialist revolution is nothing other than the completion of the capitalist revolution. The only element removed from capitalism by this completion is private savings, nothing else, for the true wealth in the course of life, its variability in consumption, has already been reduced through the capitalistic mass production of the same article. It is rare today to find a capitalist whose consumption exceeds a petty and bigoted life-form. The difference in the standard of living of a grand duke in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and a great capitalist in Rockefeller's period is grotesque and is becoming steadily greater.

If socialists do not therefore need to deal with the socialization of the article of utility, it is simply because the capitalists have already saved them the labour. This socialization allowing the characterization of an article of utility as a commodity has the three following characteristics:

- a) Only articles of utility of a common interest to the members of society can find a sufficiently large market to be able to be used as commodities. The ideal commodity is the article that everyone wants.
- b) Only an article of utility which is found in sufficiently large numbers of uniform examples can be recognized as a true commodity in the Marxist sense. Industry is only interested in serial production and the interest

rises with the number. To open the way for industrial production to such a socialization, *capitalism has had to fight the idea of rarity value* and make people believe that the special value of handcrafted and individual production was a formalist superstition. This is the reason for Marx's remark about the enmity of capitalism to art, an enmity that has become absolute only in the socialist society, where one maintains that the reproduction is just as valuable as the original.

- c) Finally, capitalist production is characterized by the use of art to an immense extent for propaganda on behalf of popular mass production. The advertisement for socialized production is therefore only the natural consequence of the capitalists' advertisement for a socialized consumption. Socialists also avoid taking this economic significance of art into consideration. Therefore they cannot explain why there are types of wine in France that are half as dear as others even though they are just as good. The explanation is that because of the lack of advertisement they are not known and cannot therefore be sold for a high price. The lack of advertisement is due to the limited number of commodities.

### The container principle and the concept of form

When we maintain that socialism excludes savings from the capitalist consumption system, then this is really just a propaganda cliché without meaning, for socialism is in reality constructed on the principle of absolute savings.

This can only be understood if one includes the article of utility in the economic considerations, and this is probably the most important reason why socialists avoid it. We have been able to establish that the article of utility becomes a commodity in the instant the producer cannot use it himself and it thus becomes directly or immediately of no use to him, and therefore where the direct causal relationship between production and consumption is broken. Only the article of utility saved up in this way (placed in reserve) becomes a commodity, and this happens only in the event of a sufficiently large number of uniform articles of utility existing in the depot. This system of accumulation is the process of commodity genesis and is not eliminated by socialism. On the contrary, it has become an absolutely common principle for all production. The socialist system

is based upon a common accumulation of the whole production, without exception, before it is distributed. This occurs with the intention of achieving complete control by such a distribution.

No one up to now has analysed accumulation, which is the same as saving, in its own form, which is the form of the container. Accumulation is dialectical interplay between container and content. We have noticed that substance is often identified with the concept of content, but it is really nothing more than process. *Substance, in the form of a real content, means the latent power*, restrained energy or matter available to be used in a process. But we have always perceived form as constancy or stability. A container's form is a form that exists only as a direct opposite to the content, its function being to prevent the content entering into a process except under controlled and severely limited conditions. In this way, the container form is thus something completely different from the form of the material in itself, where only the content's own form exists. It is only in the biological world that the container becomes an elemental function. The whole of biological life has, so to speak, occurred on the basis of a development of this opponent relationship between container form and the material's own form. It is this path that technology is continuing in an artificial way and is definitively systematizing through what we call the measurement processes, for any goal whatsoever is nothing other than a form of container, and what is called by that strange expression scientific control is only the establishment of a constant relationship between objective forms and artificial container forms manufactured by man.

These measurements or container forms are established as purely conventional oppositions to the forms being measured. Generally the container hides the content's own form and thus possesses a third form, the sensual form or the apparent form. In the discussion about forms, these three forms are never clearly separated. But all three forms are actual and make up sides of our experience of matter. They make up a scale of oppositions that allow us to distinguish between the matter of the unorganized world, the forms of biological nature and our own purely sensory world. But another world unites with these three actual forms, the world of imagined forms, formed by thought and fantasy, the symbolic forms.

Scientific and philosophical systems differ from each other in the way they confuse and mix up these forms, which, as forms, have nothing to do with each other, if the descriptions are shaped into clear and unambiguous concepts. If one can establish that there is an opposition between *quality* and *quantity* as two opposite characteristics of matter which is also the opposition that exists between *units* and *similarities*, then it is precisely the principle of container form which permits people to be fooled that this opposition can be abolished as *the similarity and uniformity of the content is neutralized by the container's function as a unit*. By this one comes to the formula; the greater the unit or quality, the greater the similarity or quantity, as the law of probability abolishes the *meaning* of the differences to the same degree as the units are increased in number. In the unit *container-content* the opposition between mass and amount is abolished.

This storage of accumulation or box principle, this insurance or savings principle, is the basis for the whole of the modern tin-can philosophy which sees progress as the tendency towards greater and greater similarities. One has just to extend the container, to make it bigger and bigger, which isn't so difficult as it can be changed independently of the content because its form has nothing at all to do with the form of the content. This is the capitalist as well as the socialist principle of development and all their reflections about the relationship between form and content only serve the purpose of developing this tinned goods industry.

### Surplus and economics

The word *state* means condition, the static, the quality or the form. The great discrepancy of Marxism is that it has not understood what the state in its innermost being is, that it is that purely biological form, the container. The biological cycle in nature is called *ecology* and it is the mistake of the Marxists not to have seen that unpolitical economics, ecology and the pure doctrine of the state are the same. Despite the opposite being maintained, socialism therefore becomes the society of the pure state. This cannot be otherwise. The day that the lie is rooted out, everything is true and then truth is abolished. Really this is the way that the socialists wish to abolish the state.

Marxism is the first philosophy that has stressed the economic problem as the most important, as the basic condition for human conduct. In order to avoid the direct consequences of this theory's fusion with socialism, a distinction was discovered between higher Marxism and what was called vulgar Marxism. *Vulgus* means people, just like *populus*, and this more lowly regarded popular Marxism, which in reality is not taken into account, probably corresponds to what were called the vulgar or folk democracies in eastern Europe after the war. I here have to make this absolutely vulgar perception of Marxism my own, for I am an adherent of democracy.

Since industrialization, economics and economic problems have played a steadily rising role in human activity. It is therefore appropriate for once to examine thoroughly what this new dominant concept truly covers. If one goes back to the original speculations about economics, one discovers that they limited themselves to only one of the three sides that today comprise economics, namely the ordering of *expenditures* in a housekeeping. Neither incomes nor savings were dealt with at that time. It was only later that the concept of economics was moved over to the savings achieved by limiting expenditures.

These savings are called economizing. The question of from where the savings that are to be made or distributed are to come has not yet been posed. This undefined dimension is called *wealth*. However once the economic question is posed in its entirety as the relationship between income, saving and expenditure, the basis has been created for the development of what is called *political economy*, which deals with the question of the production, distribution and consumption of *wealth*.

### Expenditure – saving – income

We have already indicated at the beginning that wealth has nothing to do with what is necessary for the maintenance of life, and thus with the economic in its true sense. Wealth is surplus, abundance, multiplicity or what modern economics calls surplus value. If this wealth had always been used from the dawn of time in accordance with its own essence, as waste, unprofitable consumption and superfluous luxury, then an economic



problem would never have existed, but neither would technical development. Economic problems first arise the moment wealth is saved, collected and stored, thus taking on the character of a reserve. It is through the accumulation of wealth that one economizes. Thus this is immediately just a question of a choice between consumption and non-consumption and it is this problem that occupies the thoughts of most people.

Karl Marx was the first person to move the main interest in economic considerations consistently over to the relationship between production and saving. He maintained that the saving of products from time immemorial has been the source of all humanity's misfortunes and that the equivalence between human production and consumption is the formula for happiness, as it hinders the accumulation of wealth. Strangely enough this leads to the demand for absolute saving.

A completely equable economics would thereby arise, a true economy, and a new economic science, no longer interested in wealth, but, on a purely economic basis, able to control the harmony between the various parts of the economic whole. This would make economics an absolute unit, a quality, by excluding the problem of variability or what we call the concept of value. *Human economics* has hereby become identified with *biological ecology* and can be perceived as natural, and an integrated part of the natural sciences. This socialist economics is far superior in its theory to political economics, because the latter systematically avoids analyzing the source of wealth. Its success has led to a pure doctrine of political economics hardly being found anywhere in the world anymore. Everything is consciously or unconsciously stamped with the principles of socialist economics.

### Economic policy versus political economy

In order to understand this development, it is necessary to understand what the concept of *politics* really means in its basic essence. What in Hellenic city society was called politics, and is still the fundamental meaning today, are those actions carried out within a social community *without any regard whatever to economic considerations*. Politics is surplus fellowship or a social unit's anti-economic actions, the variability in the actions

of a social group. Gathering the description of all these unique and incessantly changing events together is called the writing of history. Politics is thus the medium for introducing something new and unexpected into the pattern of actions of a whole group. This is called historical development and is a purely artificial or artistic phenomenon.

The 'critique of political economy' of *Das Kapital* is in no way a critique of economics as such. On the contrary, it is a critique of the control of economics through the purely uneconomical activity called politics that is still frustrating all objective economic calculations. As an antidote to the political consequences, which are always uncertainty, instability, crises, social and productive disorder, Marx suggests a socialist politics or more precisely an anti-political economic system, which must necessarily remove any possibility or necessity of making politics.

As communists see that the state is used as a political instrument, the socialist movement reckons that one can dissolve the state by rooting out the class which dominates politics. The political goal of Marxism is therefore to replace the state with an inoffensive and automatic administration or a system of distribution of those things which could be of common interest. As in socialist terms that is everything, this is to say that this administrative apparatus would control everything. Statistics robots will compute, guided by effective soundings of public opinion, in accord with the wishes or otherwise of the majority, and in the society of the future secure us a perfect and effective dictatorship of the majority, without the least possibility of fooling the people, that is to say, of making politics with them and thereby allowing people to dominate other people. The problem will be solved.

There is just the snag that this technical administration which today has developed with growing speed all over the world to the east and the west, although it abolishes the politics of cultivating politics, does not at the same time, as was believed, abolish the state. On the contrary. *Everything becomes the state*. What was overlooked was the fact that *the state is not and never has been a directly political instrument*. The state's function has always been to avoid or at any rate diminish and even out the misfortunes that politics brought with it. The state was created to create

stability and this stability is precisely the same as what is called economics. The statesman in his pure form appears neither as emperor, nobleman nor capitalist. He comes into history under the name of '*major domus*', the householder or the economist. In this category we will find all the really great statesmen of Europe. He is the economist, the bureaucrat, the first model for the statistics robot, even though he is encumbered with faults because he is only a human being and not a machine. If the socialist goal is itself in this way in absolute conflict with the progressive ideas of the working classes, this is because of this misunderstanding of the concept of the state, and their great illusion about being able to liberate themselves from this apparatus by perfecting it.

In order to come to power, the socialists have worked out a political programme. They are therefore forced to accept the political perception of the state, a perception which contrasts completely with those perspectives in which Marx believed and which came from the theory of the swift dissolution of the state. They wish to utilize the apparatus of the state and thereby become themselves utilized for just the opposite of what they aspired to. In the Soviet Union, they believed that they were on the way to abolishing surplus value, but without knowing it they have created the greatest and most sensational completely unusable surplus value in the history of humanity, a star that could lift humanity above its attachment to the earth. The danger of this situation is that they themselves believe that they have done this of necessity, to defend themselves, and thus for military reasons. For this reason, they are blind to the fact that this new human possibility for expansion could not under any circumstances be coupled with the production of H-bombs, but on the contrary must definitively close this chapter of the history of humanity as the final mistake for this new perspective to have any possibility at all of development.

Instead, however, bureaucracy swarms everywhere. As the true so-called 'power factors' within the areas of capitalism, socialism and communism, these snotty little functionaries are increasing more and more. Like the counter-revolutionary armies of socialism, they are spreading out over all branches of human existence, for *bureaucracy is the container system of society*. In the name of economic control, and to preserve their own

meaningless little existence, they sit by the innumerable screws and taps of the whole system of pipes. They have all 'the power' except one, the one able to change anything at all, and this is really the only power that counts. That the social justification for the sputnik and the atom bomb is the same everywhere, even though they open two quite opposite perspectives, is the fault of that ridiculous flock of politicians, economists and generals which in the USA carries the delicious name of *the power elite*.

### **Value is inconstancy – quality is immutability**

What must now be the consequence of our new definition of value? Firstly it must be that we can maintain that value never under any circumstances can be a *state* of things, a constant. Thus value does not exist in the same way as things. Values arise and pass away. One cannot therefore own values, as it is so nicely put. One can only own objects containing a latent value, a possible value. A substance is a possibility of value. Thus in theory all objects in the world possess values, if people are able to extract them. This is thus dependent exclusively upon people themselves. On the other hand, one could say that everything is value in itself, because everything is in process. This is just not in people's direct interest. All matter is in constant emergence and disappearance. Value can therefore be characterized as an objective property of matter. Or, more correctly, if quality is the property of matter then value is the material characteristics or abilities, the dynamics of matter. The value of a form or a quality thus depends upon *the ease with which one can dissolve the form and liberate its latent energies*, whilst its character of quality consists in its resistance to this. The ease with which a quality is transformed to another quality is thus its value. The socialist attack upon the right of private ownership thus comes from the will to destroy a system that blocks the free play of values by making them private, which is to say socially inaccessible. However, the law of mechanics says that a form of energy cannot be counteracted without the energy gathering itself after its liberation into an even more inaccessible form or quality, which thus becomes *more valueless and precisely therefore of higher quality*. It is this opposition to which the socialists close their eyes.

Fixed values do not exist. If they are fixed, that is to say that they are qualities and not values. In his analysis of industrial society, Marx demonstrates how *variable capital* is transformed to *constant capital*, that capital from being a value is transformed into a quality, and that it is precisely this transformation that shows that the transformation of the capitalist society into a socialist society is unavoidable and necessary. The socialists have shown their theoretical superiority for it is extremely easy to demonstrate this process purely scientifically.

Value perceived as process can only be progressive or regressive. It is here that the socialists have allowed themselves to be fooled, for this means that value can only exist in the form of rising surplus value or depreciation, as inflation and deflation. The fixation of a form through a rising reproduction of the same form is the neutralization of its value, its transformation to quantity or '*Entfremdung*'.

### Uniform work is valueless – only new ideas create surplus value

Marx maintains that what is called *constant capital* is the apparatus of production, and thus the industrial machinery. This apparatus is in itself unable to enter into a process, to create wealth or surplus value. It can only repeat the same production in the same tempo. The more industrial production develops its technical apparatus the more production becomes valueless as a commodity, until complete automation makes the product completely free of charge. In this way Marx has shown that it is not the machines that produce value, in this case surplus value. *Surplus value arises exclusively in variable capital* and this variable capital is manpower, *the human being*.

This statement makes Marx draw the conclusion that it is the worker that creates surplus value. But it is of significance to investigate more closely where this surplus value really comes from. Where is the variable, the element of variation that makes the rising profit possible?

It cannot exist in the abilities and diligence of the individual worker, his personal and professional characteristics. Neither capitalists nor socialists reckon with this in the industrial production. The workers are not exploited in their abilities or in the quality and value of the work,

but exclusively on the basis of the *amount of work*, the quantity. Work is measured in man-hours. As it is thus in the exploitation of man and not of machine that profit and wealth occurs, Marx perceives the content of value as the work put into it and the standard of measurement for the object is one hour's human work in capitalist as well as socialist industry.

But even Marx was clear that it was not because the workers could be made to labour for longer and longer periods that profit rose. This has become even more distinct after the organization of the working class and the reduction in working time, for profit is still rising. How do the Marxists explain this condition? The explanation is enormously simple.

The precondition for this explanation is *that every producing human in the world has the right to what he himself produces*. If this basis, which is Marxism's great, humanistic achievement in world history, is removed, then the whole meaning of Marxism vanishes. Now it is demonstrable that the industrial worker can produce far more than he himself consumes to maintain life, and with technical development he takes less and less time to achieve the production necessary for himself. As he nevertheless continues to work at the same tempo, there is, however, a steadily increasing surplus of production, and as this is taken from him he is exploited to an ever increasing degree.

If we now stick to the capitalist and socialist evaluation of industrial labour as a purely quantitative dimension, where human characteristics play no role, then it is also quite obvious that the purely mechanical work could be carried out to a greater and greater degree by machines and thus carried out free of charge. Then the conclusion becomes in reality that *in principle mechanical work is valueless*.

Within mechanics the concept of work is *the product of quantity or tension*. If it is possible to disregard tension as a factor in industrial labour and to perceive labour purely quantitatively, then this is because *the whole of the factory installation keeps production in a constant tension* common to all. This is the reason that there is an equivalence between one man-hour and another. No variability of any significance is possible in the tempo of work. Thus the machine represents the inertia or the resistance to changes in the working process. The valuelessness of labour is conditioned by this

constancy in tension. If one man-hour is equivalent to another man-hour, then all human labour is free of charge or valueless. This is the weakness in the Marxist theory of exploitation, for if industrial labour is without value in itself, then the worker represents a higher human value than other human classes, not as maintained because of his work achievement, but on the contrary because he has preserved his human values intact despite the work, because these values are not utilized or introduced in the process.

If there is something correct in Marxism's theory of value, it is in no way connected with work. If the measurement of value is perceived as man-hours and this has nothing to do with work, then it simply has to be *the human being's time* and nothing else that is the variable capital to which he himself owns the property rights.

Surplus value is not created in the work but in the variability of the work. In reality this is well known. Movement, change, and not the price dimension, creates the profit. But where does this variability come from? It cannot come from the machines working with clockwork precision. It cannot come from the workers either, who labour with their accustomed constancy. It is just as unlikely to come from the capitalist or the manufacturer who makes the factory yield its utmost, which is also constant. It is thus the transformation of industry itself as such that creates surplus value. Therefore surplus value is, as we have seen, the result of a rising acceleration of production. But who creates this acceleration? It is those who have a new idea, those who discover new machines and processes, *the inventors*. Here we are at *the true source of rising surplus value, human ingenuity* and imagination. A new invention has already lost its ability to create surplus value the day all the competitors own the machine, when it is common to all. The socialist countries have been able to overlook this question because they have been able to exploit the exploiters in the capitalist countries for their inventions. But this problem has become topical today.

### Time – space – and event

Trade is exchange. Transport is displacement. These two processes are basically different. *Unilateral or what is called irreversible transport, and thus a transport where neither interchange nor return transport takes*

*place, is called progress.* Progress is thus pure transport. This progressive movement is necessary in order for a movement to be *oriented*. Without it, a rudder has no function at all, even though a boat without a rudder is also oriented by the advance of the water, as it drifts with the current. In order to give possibilities of orientation, progressive movement must be movement collected from within in relation to the surrounding element.

Progress is neither necessary, absolute nor ideal. Einstein explains that a uniform movement in space is without orientation, and that in a space speeding off into outer space we can only locate up and down, as we do on the earth's surface, if the speed is still rising. This explains why what is called general progress also appears as a general increase in speed, a constant acceleration. The whole of our conscious orientation is conditioned by this rising acceleration, which unites our universal experiences with our most primary conditions and thereby creates our ability to experience the connection called causality. If the idealistic belief in progress is bankrupt stock today, this, however, in no way abolishes the significance progress still has for us. We have just lost certain illusions and must in the future base our perception of the whole question upon quite new principles, which have to be combined with the three basic factors, time, space and event.

We have to demonstrate that time becomes space and space time. We now know that a star observed at a distance of 40 light years is just as old in time as the distance is long. To observe through the instrument of time or of space is thus a simple interchange.

Time is change which can be regarded as a progressive movement in space whilst space appears as a constant which can only be observed if one is participating in that movement called time. Thus neither time nor space possesses an actuality, existence or value outside this change or process, that is to say, outside the active combination called the time-space continuum. The action of time-space is the process and this process is in itself the transformation of time to space and space to time. These transformations are called events.

The rigidity, inertia, constancy or quality in matter rises with the speed of movement to the degree that one could put forward the claim that quality and speed are the same. Value is thus found not in the speed

but in the transformation of the speed, and the less this speed is the easier the speed and the direction can be changed. The general acceleration thus creates a rising progress but is in itself the tendency to greater and greater inertia. This is the double-edged effect of the general tendency of progress. A real development of value thus cannot be identical with rising devaluation or acceleration even if it is dependent upon the same.

A person's lifetime or span of years is his personal property. But this property only becomes value if this lifetime is realized, and the realization of a lifetime happens through its variation, its changeability. Therefore the perfect industrial worker realizes nothing of his life during the working process, as this is completely eventless. Seen in purely human terms, working time in its industrial form is active waiting time. Therefore the abolition of the right to private activity only makes the person more and more valueless. This is the reason why socialization can only have a standard of value in the activation of humanity's leisure time, if socialization is to have any human purpose, something which is not necessary. *Leisure time* is therefore the only thing that has value in modern society and the modern form of exploitation is concentrated upon precisely this one point: how can we steal the individual's free time from him? This is the greatest problem of modern state politics.

### Progress and change. Value is transport

That I bother at all to concern myself with something as deadly boring as economics and into the bargain do myself the even more killing inconvenience of translating what I have written and then publishing it in Danish, then, of course, this is from the conviction that this ought to be enormously significant to the Scandinavian people. Whether this is right or wrong is not my business. With me any responsibility stops at the purely personal question of conscience, to get it said and especially to get it said at a moment where it could, if wished, be included in the economic deliberations which it seems are to bring in their wake deep-seated political changes in Scandinavia's relationship to the surrounding world, and because these political deliberations are said to have been concluded upon a purely economic basis.

As I set out my theory of value in connection with my theory about the natural order, it is very evident that this is created from an analysis of the Scandinavian cultural tradition as compared with other cultural traditions, and that it is an attempt to take the fundamental Scandinavian attitude to these problems. If I therefore make the assertion that *value is the transport of forces* and not the size of these forces, nor their quantity, then this is a direct critique of economic policy in postwar Scandinavia, for, by tying itself to the belief in the superiority of dimension and quantity over variability, this policy has denied the economic principle which I am setting out here as a Scandinavian contribution to the problem. If this theory does not have general validity, then there is always a chance that it has Scandinavian validity. The unique context of Scandinavian cultural development from the Stone Age to the present day makes it enormously simple to demonstrate that our periods of full bloom have always coincided with those periods when we have concentrated all our wealth, our surplus of human enthusiasm around the problem of transport. This is especially apparent in the Nordic Bronze Age, the art of which is one long tribute to the holy transport, and it is apparent in the Viking period, where the positive element was not the plundering, rapine or trade but transport and especially the transport of precious goods. We have already indicated previously that the great humanistic discovery that Marx made was that *only in humanity, never in machines or instruments, arises wealth or surplus value*. This is the reason that human transport, especially if it is superfluous or unnecessary, is the best source of human wealth. This can be studied in the immense pilgrim transactions of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, which created all our wonderful church art. The same is also true today where, with its rising surplus, the car industry is on the way to making car traffic impossible.

I have found, however, the most shattering commentary to what is being prepared today in Scandinavian politics in Palle Lauring's fantastically clear analysis of Scandinavia's economic decline at the end of the Middle Ages in his book about *The Sons of Valdemar and the Union*. Every Scandinavian politician ought to read the section on our childishly rash indifference to the transport problem: our self-important Viking



conservatism and chivalrous enthusiasm for the *fata morgana* of the German regional farmer. History repeats itself. Nothing is learnt. Nothing is forgotten. I will not go into historical considerations here. The only thing I would indicate is that a people that voluntarily renounces valuing what is the most precious element in its own being, in which it has shown itself to be superior to all other peoples over millennia, has thereby sinned not only against itself but against all humanity, which develops precisely through the wealth of differing abilities and contributions to the development of humanity by the various peoples and cultures. Only by the development of this our special ability are Danes and Scandinavians as a whole in the same boat. This is the only boat we have. Without it we are wreckage and bodies washed ashore. And with uncomfortable clarity this too can be read in our history. To an overwhelming degree our fame abroad is unfortunately a stressing of this side of our existence and hardly without reason. However, this is outweighed by Scandinavians having, on the strength of our special culture, all the natural preconditions for being the best and most secure transporters in the world.

### Who owns whom?

Let us now sort right from wrong. In *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx has shaped a scientific analysis of the economic character of the commodity. The treatment of this concrete subject is a scientific achievement which can never be shaken. In this limited area, Karl Marx has realized a scientific knowledge that corresponds to Heisenberg's demand 'that it has universal validity and can be neither changed nor improved.'

At the same time, with the economic perspective gradually being realized more and more, as Marx foresaw, the *political* programme of Marxism has lost its interest. In the focus of events, it has already become past and history. A third value in this work, which can never be diminished, is hereby liberated, the artistic value, the literary human value.

In human sympathy, even, I dare to say, in poetic and dramatic force, this work surpasses most of what the poets of the same period have depicted. If, through the rich knowledge and the careful documentation, one is able to decipher the terrible tension of this striking document of its time,

then one cannot avoid seeing life in a different way. I mention this not to appear as a literary critic, but as just the truism it is for me as it must be for all humanity. In this area too the value of *Das Kapital* is universal. It forms a stage in the history of humanity.

In its demand for the protection of the weak against the thoughtless and violent exploitation of the strong, it is an accusation and at the same time a rule of conduct in direct continuation of the doctrine of the New Testament, which it outdoes at exactly the same point that Christ outdid the Pharisees of the Old Testament. This is why Christianity is just as little able to condemn Marxist socialism with any right as the Pharisees were able to shape a legal judgement over Christ. In the struggle against socialism, the Christian church has had to use the same means as the Pharisees used against Christ. The Pharisees' demand for forgiveness was outdone by Christ. Marx simply maintains that no individual has the right to draw up accounts over his efforts in the community. Everything must be forgiven when everything is owed by all to all. Against this demand, the champions of Christianity stand just as disarmed as the Pharisees did before Christ. This is why the principle of socialism is spreading all over the world.

'Communism is a classless societal system with uniform ownership by the people of the means of production and complete equality of the members of society,' it says in the Soviet Union's Communist Party programme. This resembles what is also in the American constitution and no one can ignore the fact that the means of production in the West are being more and more socialized.

But what about the exploitation of the strong by the weak?

**Værdi og økonomi. Kritik af den økonomiske politik og udbytningen af det enestående** (Copenhagen: Skandinavisk Institut for Sammenlignende Vandalisme & Borgen, 1962), pp. 6-43.

Translated by Peter Shield.

# CO-RITUS INTERVIEW: ART IS POP – CO-RITUS IS ART – DIVIDED WE STAND

Jørgen Nash & Jens Jørgen Thorsen

**Nash:** Situationism is not a new 'ism' in art – it is a form of action and a way of life. A command of the moment and a utilization of its possibilities.

Situationist art does not yet exist, but there are situationists working artistically with the problems of life, attempting to find a new and more living art. When situationists are being lumped together with people who set up new art movements it is because the Situationist International has been attractive for people from three categories: namely, image makers, writers and architects. This had to do with the situationists' attempt to change the conformist and sterile environment in which we live, for instance in the cities.

**Q:** What is the situationists' relationship to society?

**Thorsen:** Any potential change of society is conditioned by the cultural possibilities. A classical example is Marx and Hegel. The essential in situationism is the relationship of human beings to the forces of creativity; it is the intention to realize these forces through moments of creativity. The situationist idea is based on the use of art and the forces of creativity directly in the social environment.

There is both a French and a Scandinavian Situationist International: the First and Second Situationist International. The First International wanted a unitary organization of the city and believed that they through a Freudian method could create the possibilities for a new urban plan; an architecture constructed according to the inner desires of human beings – desires they believed could be evoked by a quick passage through various unfamiliar environments. They claimed that there was no situationist art.

We believe that situationism is art and the creative human being (the artist) has to get involved in the social situation. We do not believe that the organization of life is a matter of statistics (statistics are also used within advertising), but a question of artistic creation – the re-organizing of the situations. That is why we claim that situationism is art. Art can only be produced through an experimental activity (CO-RITUS, the concert in the spiral maze at Malmo Town Hall, CO-RITUS at Aarhus Student Society and various wall painting actions are some of our experiments).

The Parisian Situationists believed in accordance with their dialectical materialist perspective that human beings are produced by their environment. Contrary to this we believe that the source of life is the continuous realization of new possibilities of inter-human activity. Our relationship to Marxism and the radical-liberal Western concept of society is that we are at the same time reconstructing both systems from the inside. This is because both systems are on the threshold of entering the same phase, which consists of two elements:

1. A conformization, which in the East takes the form of a political and cultural regimentation, and in the West manifests itself as a schematic commercialized consumerism.
2. An increasing wealth that sets human beings free, economically speaking. (This development is neither a result of Marxism nor Liberalism, but a result of the technological progress).

**Q:** You are publishing a magazine *Drakabygget* for art against atom bombs, popes and politicians?

**Nash:** It is an organ where the anti-authoritarian tendencies within situationism are expressed. It has been said that we have turned against the Catholics and the welfare state. That is not the case. We have been fighting the enemies of total freedom of expression within culture. By popes we mean not only Pope Paul in Rome – the guy with the piles pillow – but also Pope Knud at Louisiana in Humlebaek – the guy with the big soft cheese. The Scandinavian version of the welfare state has the social sympathy of the situationists. It is wholly a good thing that the work hours are being shortened. The grotesque thing is that this development has created a new problem: the problem of free time. According to the situationists this is

a result of the monopolization of both the artistic freedom of expression and the human freedom of expression. In the communist countries the workers did take over the means of production, but the free artists got kicked in the ass by the commissioners. In Western Europe and America it is the cultural entrepreneurs (the pop cultural stronghold of Gutenberg House and its cultural commissioners at the police station in Antoniegade, Jens Frederik Don't [Lavær] from the television and the careerist Peder Nørgard with his top job at the National Radio Centre), who are controlling the publishing houses, film production, newspapers and art exhibitions. These latter are again categorized into those authorized by the state and those which do not suit the authorities.

We have asked who is going to take over the artistic means of production? All the wonderful technological innovations such as radio, TV, film, rotary press, off-set printing machines, etc. They should not exclusively become the artists' toys. All these things have been invented to be utilized by the spiritual intelligence, and not by a bunch of cultural entrepreneurs or commissioners, which both in the East and the West are mouthpieces for an enormous control apparatus filled with mentally deaf-mute and colour blind fools. Our recent action at the pedestrian street in Copenhagen Strøget had the motto 'the uncontrollable art' and it shows what potentials there are when artists utilize those rights which are normally wielded by advertising. Erik Knudsen's campaign against Radio Merkur, the advertising industry, etc. was an indication of sympathy towards everything authoritarian, e.g. the State Radio. I believe if an artist is not allowed to express himself through a programme in the monopolized state radio, then it should be possible for him to work with the technological intelligence – the radio amateur – as a pirate on the air. And if he cannot express himself in the authorized magazines without being subject to censorship, then he must start his own magazine. It is of utmost importance that he does not give up, which is to say, that he doesn't shut up with what he wants to communicate.

**Q:** What role has the audience in CO-RITUS?

**Thorsen:** The position of the audience is impossible within CO-RITUS. CO-RITUS wants to abolish the notion of audience – not like Fluxus that

bore them into leaving or makes fools of them by making dry caricatures of European theater – but by making the audience co-creators. By realizing the idea that art is not something which unfolds either inside the artist or inside the spectator, but is a game unfolding between people, we are contributing to the renewal of the terms of art, the process of creation and social construction. The basis of art at present makes it a more advanced evolutionary step than pop. That is the reason why we have made the controversial slogan (which of course is not totally correct): Art is Pop – CO-RITUS is Art. To make a human being into a spectator is like cutting off his balls. We have nothing against pop or advertising. I love milk even though it is promoted in advertising. We are against those forms which are allowing freedom to pop and not to art. This is our weapon against pop, which the anti-pop people do not have, and it became clear at Strøget and in Møntergade where the police used all their powers to stop us. The anti-pop people are lame theoreticians and the advertising business, eg. the newspaper Politiken, have cashed in on them.

**Q:** Should art be ethical, aesthetic or activating?

**Thorsen:** The term ethics is part of a problematic about ways to activate oneself and, at times, activate other people. The term aesthetics has been discussed in so many versions that it could mean either ethics or a way to activate. I can only understand the question as meaning that the interviewer himself believes that art is a way to activate. I agree: Art is simultaneously an ethical and an aesthetic way to activate human beings.

**Nash:** Divided we stand. It is important in culture that there is space for people with alternative ideas. Other rules apply to art than to the world of unions. On the trade union banners it said: 'United we stand'. This led to victory in many areas. If we are to produce a prosperous cultural life, and not the present-day version limited by the authorities, then the slogan must become 'Divided We Stand'.

"CO-RITUS interview. Kunst er pop – CO-RITUS er kunst – Uenighed gør stærk", **Aspekt**, no. 3, 1963.

Translated by Jakob Jakobsen.



## LABYRINTH PROJECT

Gordon Fazakerley

We all want Christmas... which is as good an example as can be given to illustrate the necessity of cultus. The Labyrinth Project is designed not exclusively as a feeding of the cultus necessity, but also as a way of getting rid of the world of the forgeries, the churches, the temples, etc. The labyrinth is the human condition, it is also the estate of man, so what better direction to take towards Utopia in a global sense than by the construction in every town and city of a labyrinth. With the completion of the Labyrinth Program the whole machinery of cultus manipulation by religions, politics and states can be destroyed but cultus will remain. The necessity of the Labyrinth Program cannot be more urgent, than it is today, for as the machinery of the modern state propels us towards the ultimate in authority, which will be the corrupting of the whole mass that shall exceed private resources of wealth.

The idea of the proletariat as a moral re-generator has filled society with revulsion. The bourgeoisie would not tolerate the existence of a body of people who endangered their mediocrity. The bourgeoisie then drew themselves over the proletariat, creating themselves, the bourgeoisie into an ocean, an ocean of shit, that suffocated all that was not filled with their mystic vision of mediocrity. A vision that fills me with revulsion. The last proletarian is the artist, and he stands alone, even the traditional bohemian life around the artist is gone. The Labyrinth Project has been designed to create in this negative situation a positive step towards an orientated milieu.

In discussions with friends we have often talked of the failure of the revolution of the left, and the stealing of the revolution of the left by the right. But the idea of a new left, which is the left of the left, a new Bolshevism, is a sentimental revivalist mentality, which by its fragmental nature can only create a quasi-bible kind of sect or at most quasi-bible-type-belts. The left of the left proclaim that 'all that is against the society is

good', but they fail to recognize, that for example, a teddy boy who reacts, is reacting against having nothing or not knowing what to react against. A reaction is better than no reaction. But after he has reacted he literally returns to the society, and the ocean of shit swells with a new member. But of course I will not criticize all of that which the left of the left have attacked, there is very much good in their attacks, and I stand in agreement for example with their attack on the Mathieu mentality in art. For it was Mathieu that gave direction to the bourgeoisie program, to draw the artist into their ocean of shit.

The result of the program can be seen in the 'happenings' where art has been cleaned up, and is Mahler-frei, artist-free.

The Labyrinth as a prelude or utopia, is by its very nature 'chaos and cultus' perhaps just that very mixture which shall destroy the congealed and established and the multi-acceptance of it. It can be the first positive blow struck at the paranoiac apparatus of the survival mentality of the political machinery.

(Survival is the new whip of the political-machine). To be sure, the schizophrenic machinery of the modern state, the machinery that rules now without the control of man, making a statist paradise of fragments, can be stopped. For we are each a labyrinth unto ourselves as indeed humanity is a labyrinth.

The program is faced with dangers, which are mostly distortions and crap, for the labyrinth is nothing new. The recent tragedy of pop art which was a distortion of the popular arts and their importance by the rightwing public-relation apparatus of the global academician of such bourgeoisie organs as *Art International*, *Cimaise*, etc. (1) will perhaps remind you. Events such as the Stedelijk Museum labyrinth which was just crap, also the capitalists have taken over where Hitler did not complete with supermarkets. To be sure, in behalf of the society the capitalists take and use, then leave it to the machinery of the modern state to fragment and kill. In my lifetime existentialism has been killed, jazz has been killed, and popular arts are in the process of being killed, they are all being killed by the kunst-art-industry with its pop-art, which is the first popular art that was ever signed.

The intention of the labyrinth is to act as an anti-bible. For it was with the Bible that man first surrendered his will, surrendering his will to a book of words. With the labyrinth it is hoped to reverse this tyrannical situation and give man his will back again.

A few notes on the program.

- A labyrinth to be built for every 10,000 people in cities and towns.
- To be sited at first on all possible future sites of community centres, as the labyrinths establish, it can then move in to the old centres.
- Of course if Roman Catholics carry on not using French letters, the populations of these areas will make it so that they are one great labyrinth and the churches will be lost behind the corners.
- As the population stands in China, it will end up as one great labyrinth.

#### Christmas 1962

(1) The magazines I mention here seem to have a complex against the poets who work with and popularize the painter's work. The painter is now expected to exchange the poet for a public relations officer, how decadent can it get? In this society the only way a poet can exist as a poet is with the painter. The poet is real, even if society cannot give a poem a money value on the stockmarket. The poet and painter have one thing in common, that no public relations officers can dispel: each can take his penis out and make art with it. And what critics on the face of the earth would dare to expose themselves, and let their penis speak.

"Labyrinth Project", **The Situationist Times**, no. 4, 1963.





To revive radicalism naturally also involves considerable research work, with a view to all the earlier attempts at freedom. The experience of how they have ended in isolation or turned into global mystification leads to a greater understanding of the continuity in the world that is to be changed – and by means of this understanding it is possible to salvage many of the single results that research in the most recent past has reached and which can thus be verified. This understanding of the reversible connecting factor in the world exposes – to that extent that it exists and is possible – the false character of halfway measures. It also exposes that there is, to a great extent, mention of halfway measures every time the ruling order of society – its order of rank and specialization, its habits or taste – is reshaped on the lines of the opponent.

Furthermore, material development in the world is accelerating. It is steadily engaging more powers, and the government specialists are forced to ignore this due to their roles as the guardians of passivity. Such a development creates at the same time an accumulation of general dissatisfaction and obviously mortal dangers, which these government specialists are not in a position to control in a lasting manner.

When the Situationists place artistic protest in such a perspective, it will be understood that the unified consideration for art and politics that we speak of absolutely does not mean that we recommend the conformity of art to politics. For us – and for all who begin to consider our era in a demystified way – modern art, has not existed since the end of the '30s, just as nowhere has there been created a revolutionary system of politics since then. The revival of these now can only be a sublation (*Aufhebung*) of them, that is, the very realization of their most fundamental demands.

The new protest that the Situationists talk of is being raised already. In spite of the non-communication and isolation which the present order of society has organized, signals appear through new kinds of scandals, from one land to another, from one continent to another; the exchange has begun.

For the avant-garde, everywhere it exists, it is a question of uniting these experiences and people, and along with uniting such groups, at the same time setting down clearly the common basis for them. We must

publish and make known these actions for the next revolutionary era, explain and develop them. They are easily recognizable in that they unite new combat forms and a new – manifest or latent – content in their criticism of the existing world. Thus the prevailing society, which sings its own praises for its constant modernization, will find somebody to talk to, for it has finally brought forth a modernized opposite.

Just as we have been hard because we wanted to ensure that no ambitious intellectuals or artists who were unable to understand us properly should come into the Situationist movement, and to expel and unveil various counterfeits – of which the latest example is the Nashist simulated 'Situationism' – in just the same way we are determined to recognize the originators of these new, radical activities as Situationists, to support them and never to deny them, even if some of them still are not fully aware of the revolutionary program of today, but are only on the road to finding the connecting meaning in it.

Let us limit ourselves to some examples of actions of which we fully approve. On the 16th of January, armed revolutionary students in Caracas removed five pictures from a French art exhibition – which they then offered to bring back on the condition that some political prisoners should be freed. The policemen were however successful in taking possession of the pictures again in spite of the fact that Winston Bermudes, Luis Monselve and Gladys Troconis tried to defend them. Some days later, some of their comrades threw bombs at the police car that was transporting the recaptured pictures, but unhappily did not manage to destroy them.

This is a manifestation of the only right way to treat pictures from the past: to restore them to a place in the game of life where they really can have meaning. Probably not since the death of Gauguin and Van Gogh, when their works were captured by their enemies, have they received an ovation more in accordance with their spirit than this action in Venezuela. Gauguin: 'I wanted to establish the right to hazard everything'. During the revolt in Dresden in 1849 Bakunin suggested – though without it being followed up – taking the pictures from the museum and setting them up over the barricade at the town gates in order to see whether the attacking troops would be self-conscious about continuing shooting. We can then

see how the affair in Caracas at once joins together with one of the high points in the revolutionary rising of the last century and at the same time goes a step further.

The recent bomb-action of the Danish comrades against those travel agencies that arrange tourist trips to Spain – or the illegal radio broadcasts designed to arouse resistance against the use of atomic weapons – appear to us to stem from comparable motives. It is very encouraging that, within the framework of the comfortable, dull ‘socialized’ capitalism of the Scandinavian countries, people emerge who, by means of violence, unveil certain sides of another form for violence, which is the basis for this ‘humanized’ order of society; for instance its monopoly on information or its organized alienation in free time or in tourism. The reverse side of this comfortable dullness, which must be accepted into the bargain, is not merely that this peace is not life, but it rests upon the threat of atomic death, and organized tourism is not only a wretchedly enacted show that conceals reality in those countries that are being passed through, but the reality in that country, which thus is reshaped to a neutral show, that is, the police of Franco.

Finally, the action of the English comrades who made public in April plans for the ‘Regional Shelters of Government #6’, and information concerning the location, was of immense service because it disclosed how far state power had already gone in its organization of the country, and how far advanced the staging of its totalitarian function is. This is not only bound up with the perspective of war; rather it is the threat of atomic war, in both the east and the west, which serves to maintain obedience of the masses, to organize *power’s shelters*, and to reinforce the psychological and material defense for the power of the leading classes. The rest of the superficially termed ‘modern’ urbanism serves the same goal. As early as April 1962 we wrote in No. 7 of the French edition of the Situationist periodical, *Internationale situationniste*, about the individual shelters which were constructed the year before in the United States: ‘Just as in all rackets, protection is merely a pretext. The real purpose of the shelters is to serve as a test of – and thereby in itself a strengthening of – the teachability of the people, and the adaptation of this teachability in a way that is in favor of

the ruling society. The shelter as a newly created consumer product in affluent societies shows more clearly than any other product that people can be made to work toward filling needs that are obviously artificial, and that undoubtedly will continue to be needs without ever having been wishes. The new living quarters, which take the form of ‘commuting suburbs’, are not in fact very different from the architecture of the shelters; they merely represent an inferior degree of closely related phenomena. The concentration camp organization of the surface is the normal state in a society in formation, whose underground version represents pathological excess. That illness best exposes the schema of this health.’

The English have just put forward a decisive contribution to the study of this illness and thus also the study of the ‘normal’ society. This study is in itself inseparable from a combat that is not afraid of breaking the old, national taboos concerning ‘treason’ by breaking that secrecy which is of vital importance for the authorities in the modern society, and which is hidden behind an inflation of ‘information’. The sabotage was expanded in spite of the efforts of the police and several arrests; among other things they forced their way by surprise to some secret head-quarters isolated in the country (where certain responsible persons were photographed against their will), and they systematically blockaded forty telephone lines to the Secret Service by continuously calling top-secret numbers, which they had also exposed.

This first attack on the ruling organization of social space is what we wanted to salute and carry further by arranging in Denmark the manifestation ‘Destruction of RSG-6’. We recognize hereby not only this struggle’s international dimension, but just as much its extension to another front, to the artistic side of the same global struggle.

This cultural creativity, which one may call Situationist, begins with plans for unitary urbanism or the creation of life situations, and the realization of these cannot thus be separated from the history of the movement for the realization of all the revolutionary possibilities that the present society contains. However, in the immediate action which must take place within the framework that we wish to destroy, there can be created even now a critical art with the existing cultural forms of expression, from film

to painting. It is this that the Situationists have summarized in the theory of new application (*détournement*). Critical in its content, this art must in its form be self-critical. It is a communication that, since it knows the limits for the special area of the given communication, 'will now contain *its own critique*'.

About 'RSG-6', we have first created an atmosphere of the atomic fall-out shelter, which the first room will cause one to think about. Thereafter one meets a zone of consistent denial of this type of need. The art form utilized here in a critical fashion is painting.

The revolutionary meaning of that modern art which culminated in Dadaism was the destruction of all conventions in art, in language and in behaviour. Just as that which has been destroyed in art or philosophy has not yet been entirely swept out of newspapers or churches, and just as the criticism of weapons did not keep step with certain advances for the weapon of criticism, thus Dadaism itself has become a recognized cultural style. Neo-Dadaists have recently distorted its form to reactionary diversion, and are now making it their business to adopt this style once again, which was started before 1920, with immoderately gross utilization of all details, and to let this 'style' serve the acceptance and decoration of the present world.

At the same time, though, this negative truth that modern art has contained has always been a justified denial of the surrounding society. In Paris in 1937, when the Nazi ambassador, Otto Abetz in front of the painting 'Guernica' said to Picasso: 'It is you who have done this?' Picasso replied shortly and well: 'No, it is you.'

The denial – and also the black humor – which were so widespread in modern art and poetry after the First World War, certainly deserve to emerge *anew in the light of the Third World War*; the show in which we live. Although the neo-Dadaists talk about charging Marcel Duchamp's denial with positivity (aesthetic), we are certain that everything the world presents to us as positivity can only serve to charge with negativity those forms of expression that art now allows, and in that way constitutes *the only representative art of the times*. The Situationists know that true positivity will come from somewhere else and that negativity will contribute to its coming into being.

Beyond all the pictorial problems – and even, we hope, beyond everything that can recall submission to a form for pictorial beauty, which ended long ago – we have noted here some perfectly clear signs.

The 'directives' exhibited on empty paintings or on a newly applied abstract painting are to be considered as slogans which it is possible to see written on walls. The titles of certain of the pictures come in the form of political proclamations, and they surely have the same sense of disdain and repudiation of that new *pompierism* which is in fashion and which tries to base itself upon a painting of 'pure signs', non-communicating.

The 'thermonuclear cartographs' are immediately beyond the laborious search for 'new figuration' in painting, because they unite the freest methods of Action Painting with renderings *which can lay claim to being realistic perfections* of various parts of the world in different phases of the next world war.

With the 'Victory' series – which is also a mixture of the largest format, ultramodern freedom from restriction and the minute realism of a Horace Vernet – it is a matter of a renewal of the battle-painting. In opposition to Georges Mathieu and the ideological reaction upon which he has based his little publicity scandals, it corrects the revolving of history we arrive at here, this time to the better, makes it more revolutionary and more successful than it was. 'Victories' continue the unconditionally optimistic rotation with which Lautréamont has already, with adroit boldness, set up a claim of false documentation toward all the forms of misfortune, and their logic: 'I do not accept evil. Man is perfect. The spirit does not fall. Progress exists... Up to now misfortune has been described as instilling horror, pity. I will describe happiness as bringing out the opposites of these things... As well as my friends who will not die, I will not speak of death.'

Guy Debord

June 1963

"The Situationists and the New Action Forms in Politics and Art", **Destruction of RSG-6** (Odense: Galerie Exi, 1963).

# HOMO LUDENS

Else Steen Hansen [J.V. Martin]

If the word 'avant-garde' is to describe a truly innovative group or movement, it can be no better applied than to the movement in which a number of artists from countries all over the world have gathered and which they have called the Situationist International.

Turning against sterile society, they give play pride of place, the play of the creative human being, and even take the time to create a number of theses for the society of man at play or, as they themselves want to call it, the situationist society. The situationists define present-day society in terms of three features: passive spectators, isolation and the abandonment of the subject. The situationists can only acknowledge the direct opposites of these three features as a truly integrated society: active participants, contact and the realization of the subject.

At a time when the Dada movement of the twenties has itself become a cultural fashion, and when the neo-Dadaists speak for example of re-charging Marcel Duchamp's society-denying works with positivity (aesthetics), the situationists believe that whatever is held up for them as positivity in our society can only lead to a charging-up of the negativity in them, in their society-denying works.

Although Tristan Tzara and collaborators for example, could clearly demonstrate the syphilis of political life, could turn the projects of satire against what could and must be destroyed, they were still unable to produce an alternative to the existing social order. What was one to do after painting a moustache on the Mona Lisa? Did one really want Ghengis Khan to stable his horses in the Louvre? And then what?

At this point the situationists by-pass not only the Dadaists but also the Surrealists. Their theories, with the recurrent theme that nothing must dominate mankind, have been described by the Italian periodical *Nuovo Presenza* as 'true values in the struggle against the totalitarianism of the

technocrats, the fossilized ideology of the Stalinists and the bureaucrats of socialism'. Other periodicals and magazines have used terms including 'socio-cultural cosmonauts', 'theorists of the leatherjackets' and 'a nightmare that the sleep of culture will not get over'. Certainly they are revolutionary artists; they have no qualms about staging political or artistic scandals. They play a game against the powers-that-be, and among the stakes is the human right to construct one's own life freely. They create a theory for urban planning: they call it unitary urbanism, which is to say a theory for a planned use of art and technology that can contribute to the complete construction of a milieu dynamically linked to experienced behaviour. Put differently, the surroundings should suit mankind the way the water suits the fish. They immediately exclude their own – for example the German artists' group SPUR and the Danish poet Jørgen Nash – whenever they advocate that their movement should take a moderate, reformist course. During the trial in Munich the German artist Uwe Lausen was sentenced to three years in prison for his participation in what was then the periodical of the Situationist International, SPUR. Unlike the other convicted artists Uwe Lausen had to serve his sentence. As a member of the central council of the movement the German judges perhaps considered him incorrigible. With the exclusion of Jørgen Nash the situationists' centre in Scandinavia was moved to the abandoned Danish farmhouse 'Kristinelyst' near Randers, from which they issued the periodical *Situationistisk Revolution*.

Their latest manifestation took place in Denmark and involved both a political and an artistic scandal. The manifestation had been given the name 'Destruction of RSG-6' and was a tribute to the anonymous Britons who for the sake of mankind and under the name Spies for Peace had revealed and distributed the British Government's plans for an atomic bomb-proof government bunker called RSG-6.

They had divided the gallery into three sections, the first of which was equipped like an atom bomb shelter. Everything was there that was necessary for the sustenance of 'life' for a period. It had an eerie and depressing effect on the public to experience the failure of the light, the constant howling of sirens, women's bodies on plank beds and two assistants



in anti-radiation suits handing out 'the last pill'. They wanted to hit hard – and they did.

In the next section the public had the opportunity to act out through stimulation. Photographs of political leaders prepared to take responsibility for a nuclear war were placed here. The public shot at these photographs with rifles, and the situationists thus turned the public from passive spectators into active participants.

In the third section of the gallery, the artistic section, the active participants were given a cocktail, obviously a stark contrast to 'the last pill' that was handed out in the first section of the gallery; they functioned as a common denominator for the present society. Here one could see the French film director G.E. Debord's overpainting of a picture by Pinot Galizio. In clear script Debord had written on this picture, which the situationists considered uncommunicative, ABOLITION OF ALIENATED WORK. – The picture, which represented a monetary value of 6,000 kroner, was sold by the situationists after the overpainting for just 300 Kr.

Given the laborious search of recent years for a new figuration in painting, one must note that the situationists' spokesman in Scandinavia, the artist J.V. Martin, has with one blow transcended this search by presenting a picture series at the exhibition called 'Thermonuclear Cartographies'. Combining the freest approaches of action painting with reproductions of various parts of the world at various periods of the 'third world war', he has created pictures that make a claim to be completely realistic. He treats the materials with impermissible boldness. These shattered relief maps are filled up with old melted cheese, hair, iron, slime and mould, which is still growing on these works. The process is still going on. Chain reaction? But in the spectacle in which we live, the spectacle of the third world war, the denial and the 'black humour' that were known during the spectacle of the first world war have now appeared again. This time in a very strong and advanced form.

With a demand for the artistic freedom to do exactly what she felt like, the French artist Michele Bernstein showed a number of pictures in which, with a sorely needed renewal of battle painting, she turned the whole course of world history on its head. The pictures had the common

title 'VICTORIES' and turned all the defeats that revolutionary popular uprisings have had to suffer into victories. This series of 'VICTORIES' continues the unconditionally optimistic *détournement* through which Lautréamont already, with devil-may-care gaiety, laid a charge of forgery against all forms of misfortune and its logic: 'I do not accept evil. Man is perfect. The soul does not fall. Progress exists ... Up till now misfortune has been described in order to inspire terror and pity. I will describe happiness in order to inspire their contraries. As long as my friends do not die, I will not speak of death.'

"Homo Ludens", **Konstrevy**, no. 5-6, 1963.

Translated by James Manley.

## RE: 'DESTRUCTION OF RSG-6'

To the Editor: In *Information* (8.7) you write as an introduction to a statement issued by the art dealer Tom Lindhardt, Odense, regarding the closure by the Situationist International of its manifestation 'Destruction of RSG-6'; that Lindhardt's statement refutes our accusations regarding the art dealer's broken agreements. It is our view that the art dealer nowhere in his statement deals with or repudiates any of what the matters concerned.

On our part 'Destruction of RSG-6' was a tribute to the work that Spies for Peace had done in England by publishing, during the Easter nuclear disarmament march, the secret plans for a regional seat of military government in southern England (bunkers of power). The manifestation was thus at the same time an attack on a social system that permits the possessors of power – through threats of atomic war and nuclear testing – to expose humanity to mortal danger.

The gallery in Odense was therefore divided into three sections, the first of which was a nuclear bomb shelter which simply by virtue of its furnishings – blue flashing lights, howling sirens, camp beds, canned provisions and a body on a plank bed – was able to give visitors to the exhibition an extraordinarily strong shock – which several of them indeed confirm to have been the case on the opening day, when we ourselves were present.

For purposes of 'stimulation and acting-out' four rifles were available in the next room so that the visitors could take an active part in the exhibition by shooting at the hanging photographs of the leaders of the system (Khrushchev – Kennedy, Franco – Verwoerd, Adenauer – Per Hækkerup, the Pope – de Gaulle). In this room the Thermonuclear Cartographies were hung (relief maps showing the various countries at various times in the Third World War, beginning with small skin-disease-like spots and ending with a pure inferno. Position for the spectator: in a spaceship cabin heading away from this planet).

The last room was reserved for paintings.

We have thus presented the idea on which the exhibition was based. We can see nowhere that this has resulted in us mounting 'a carnival in Galerie EXI' as claimed by Tom Lindhardt – for him the whole background of the event was too serious.

BUT – the moment we left Odense, the art dealer made cuts in the exhibition that were so severe that it would have made the literature-condensers of the Reader's Digest pale with envy. He removed the whole foundation of the idea by de-operationalizing Room 1 – the bomb shelter room. This turned it into a carnival with a shooting gallery, which we could not accept, and as soon as we became aware of this we closed the exhibition, which had been castrated by the art dealer.

On the way to Situationist International's art exhibition 'DESTRUCTION OF RSG-6' at Galerie EXI, Hunderupvej 78, Odense, on Friday 21st June, the Belgian artist Rudi Renson was refused entry into Denmark. In his luggage he had five pictures by our artist colleague Jan Strijbosch, for the above-mentioned exhibition.

We ask the Minister of Justice for a speedy explanation of why permission to enter Denmark was refused to a member of the Situationist International.

For the SITUATIONIST  
INTERNATIONAL  
J.V. Martin, Randers

"Re: Destruction of RSG6", letter to **Information**, July 10, 1963.

Translated by James Manley.

# WHO ARE THE SITUATIONISTS?

Jørgen Nash

The first manifestation of the second Situationist International after it broke away from the I.S. was a leaflet signed by Jaqueline de Jong, Ansgar Elde and myself. Shortly after, the group Seven Rebels was formed at Bauhaus Situationniste Drakabygget, founded in 1960 in southern Sweden. It is a Situationistic centre for experiments in film, painting, *décollage*, urbanism, poetry, archaeology and music.

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 Scandinavian Situationist philosophy action is the result of emotion and arises out of emotion. Emotion is a primary, non-reflective intelligence; passionate thought/thinking passion. 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.

The Second Situationist International is a freely organised movement. It is a voluntary association of autonomous work groups. At the moment there exist four such groups on the Hallandsåsen in the southern part of Sweden, and two more in Denmark and Finland. It also works together with the German avant-garde group SPUR in Munich, whose books have partly been published at Drakabygget. A periodical against popes, politicians and atomic bombs called *Drakabygget* has been edited since 1962, with the journalist and painter Katarina Lindell as editor. The following declaration is a quotation from this magazine:

1) I promise that I shall never, personally, under any circumstances set foot in an atomic shelter. It is better to die standing with all the cultural heritage of humanity, the perpetual modification of which must be our task. The labour movement was once considered to be the salt of the earth.

Today it is more like a milch cow, whose udders are being pumped in an effort to get more and more material benefits – at the expense of the mind.

2) I refuse to have anything whatsoever to do with the aristocracy of the caves, and never to drink in the company of an owner or a builder of an atomic shelter; for this subterranean aristocracy, even if it manages to survive the disaster, will be of the quality of sewer rats, and could in no case be considered a continuation of the human race.

3) At this point in our present situation it is not so much the thermonuclear war, but rather the threat of this war, which shows the absolute bankruptcy of all the politicians in the world. The capitalist or bureaucratic leaders of both East and West already make use of their bombs every day, in order to secure power for themselves. Only if one realises that they have placed themselves beyond the law can one establish a new legality. I therefore pledge myself not to expect the necessary upheavals of society from any of the existing formations of specialized politics.

This is part of the MUTANT-manifesto, signed by all the members of the movement. But as we are no missionaries, and our movement is absolutely anti-authoritarian, we don't run around forcing people to sign our manifesto. The Bauhaus production of books, booklets, lithographs and periodicals is thoroughly non-commercial. Our job is to produce, then our public has to act to get hold of our publications!

In the manifesto of the Second Situationist International we wrote: "The modern industrial society has so far been organized along classical lines as developed in Greece and in Rome. During the industrial period following the French revolution there have been cycles in which all the different forms of such a method of government have been explored. This has been a valuable experience. It has shown that the enlightened autocracy of Plato and the more or less aristocratic military dictatorship which replaced legal government, as well as the various forms of democracy (including the latest edition, the so-called 'people's democracy') – that none of these have been capable of creating a form of government to meet and satisfy human needs, still less to allow life to flourish and prosper. The new phenomenon which has dominated industrial society from the beginning, despite some pioneer romanticism, is a growing socialization of all the

means of life, which is itself the ineluctable consequence of machine techniques. By socialism we understand the inclusive principle which makes society the centre, meaning and purpose of all human activity. It is all the same whether one takes this evolution to mean progress or whether one interprets it as a growing threat to human freedom. Both attitudes amount to the same thing. Socialisation will spread in one way or another. Man can only dominate his future environment if we face this fact. We must use this knowledge to evolve the means of liberation. In order to win it is essential for us to extricate ourselves from the principle of fatalistic necessity and to regain a new potential of choice and self-determination.

The social structure which fulfills the new conditions for freedom we have termed the situcratic order. The point of departure is the de-christianisation of Kierkegaard's philosophy of situations. This must be combined with British economic doctrine, German dialectic and French social action programmes. It involves a profound revision of Marx's doctrine and a complete revolution whose growth is rooted in the Scandinavian concept of culture. This new ideology and philosophical theory we have called Situology. It is placed on the principles of social democracy inasmuch as it excludes all forms of artificial privilege. It is the only existing guarantee which ensures that human life can exist in all its cultural variety and without crushing the special abilities of the individual in an anonymous society designed for the unfit. Sartre says that we should always ask what would happen if everyone acted like me. Our answer is that we should all die of boredom.

We want to make it possible for man to be free to gamble his life. This can only happen if everyone is allowed to have individual freedom of action. Greco-Roman thinking is rooted in political and social theory. It is opposed to our own way of thinking because we believe that man as a human being, an individual stands at the centre of all worthwhile activity. Sartre's scholasticism has been called humanistic, but in fact his human being is a socio-centric creature.

There are some people who will fail to grasp the significance of the Situationist struggle. The head-on collision in which we are involved will strike them as inexplicable. But we are convinced that one day this phase

will be seen as an event of primary importance for Europe: the moment before a decisive breakthrough. To those who think that a verbal battle is not worth fighting, we would like to say this: A word war is better than a world war.

"Who are the Situationists?", **Times Literary Supplement**, Special Issue, 1964.

# THE NATURAL SMILE

Jørgen Nash

Hamletomania  
 the generous flavour and gentle glow  
 of our satellite cat  
 to have the privilege of waiting for her  
 discriminating and discerning  
 Ham  
 fly the gateway route to the heart of our democratic cat  
 we continue  
 look what's new for you in 1964  
 Hamletistic

— — —

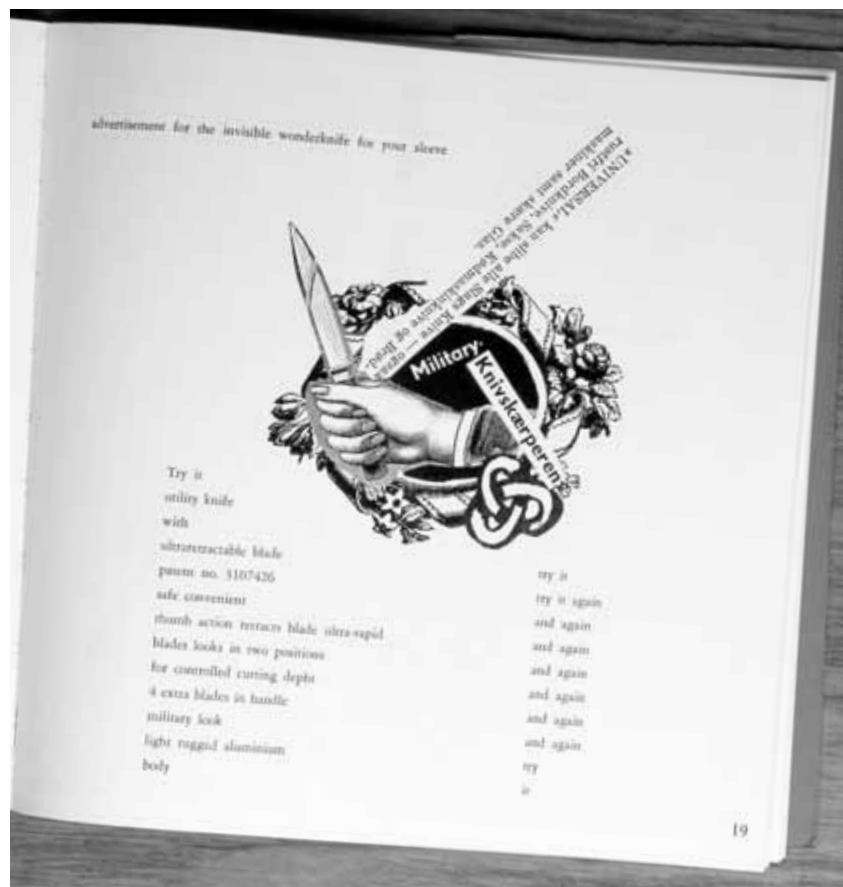
the bull in my heart  
 I guess you didn't get me the first time  
 I guess you didn't get me the second time  
 I guess you didn't get me the third time  
 I dreamed  
 I took the bull  
 By the horns in my  
 Maidenform bra

— — —

dreams come true sometimes  
 ('here thou incestuous murderous damned dane' Hamlet)  
 try for a miracle  
 one sunny day  
 earthmovers  
 our cat is transatlantic in both directions  
 Hamletization  
 the white democratic cat is important  
 and we continue  
 sleeping  
 beneath mink blankets  
 small enough to be nimble in city traffic  
 economical in fuel demands  
 everybody is doing it  
 times change, but some things remain unaltered  
 our white atomic cat for instance  
 she loved the man who gave it to her too

— — —





advertisement for the invisible wonderknife for your sleeve

Try it

utility knife

with

ultraretractable blade

patent no. 3107426

safe convenient

thumb action retracts blade ultra-rapid

blades looks in two positions

for controlled cutting depth

4 extra blades in handle

military look

light rugged aluminium

body

try it

try it again

and again

and again

and again

and again

and again

try it

# POP

J.V. Martin

Pop Art cannot be regarded otherwise than as a clear example of the prevailing state of crisis in art, a crisis which, viewed in a wider perspective, is closely related to the defeat of the Russian Revolution (the failure of the will to realize philosophy) and the modernization of capitalism, as well as its creation of inconsequential surroundings for the people ('urbanism'). The defeatist indifference shown by Pop Art can therefore only be regarded as faithfully following in the footsteps of cybernetic control and police-urbanism, and in general inscribes itself excellently in the margin of the pseudo-freedom presented to a civilization of affluence whose only purpose is bedazzlement. For these reasons it may look like a good candidate for a modernization of official art, whereas the situationists must consider it an excuse from the dustbins.

Since the foundation of modern art in the nineteenth century and its unfolding in the first three decades of the twentieth century, it has been art that has involved the most acute refusal of the state of society and the related spectacle, in which having passive spectators seems to be the highest virtue. Pop Art simply takes its place in the arena of the prevailing societal spectacle in the same way as neo-Dadaism, for example, which removed the rigour of Dada's refusals and made its products aesthetic in order to maintain the balance between supply and demand at a time when Dada had become a cultural fashion. Pop Art completely disregards the fact that the historical conditions of our time have become associated with the transgression of boundaries in the process of man's appropriation of nature, and are thus also tied to the required realization of the concrete project for a classless society (*Homo Ludens*). This is why even what is called 'great art' – although reluctantly – is becoming revolutionary. Since a revolution can never be a boring triviality, and a revolution of everyday life every day cannot be based on repetitions of trivialities, Pop Art cannot be a revolution – unless one waters

down the meaning of this word to the same extent as has been the case with the word 'avant-garde'.

Since no refusal is to be found within Pop Art, nor is there any goal, it can surely be taken as pure postulate that someone has called Pop Art the art that has 'bridged the gap between art and life'. For it is precisely these shortcomings that explain why currents like these have lost contact with the multitude of post-artistic actions (revolts and free reconstructions of life) that are already present in the world and are therefore now striving to supersede art and to challenge a state of society that has relegated the life of the people to nothingness and the great silence. Since Pop Art, already at its foundation, found itself in the situation, as a result of its failure to refuse, of having lost the right to any connection with these post-artistic actions, it had to take refuge (as did Surrealism) in the realm of aesthetics, where it was immediately petrified in an aesthetic that was both obsolete and ineffective in a world where it is already too late for aesthetics.

Other kinds of boundary-breaking than the supersession of society in its entirety therefore do not interest us, and we can only regard Pop Art as one of the now numerous 'different' currents in art that in reality are no more than absorptions of the principles of modern sales techniques: to sell the same inconsequential product under rival labels.

"Pop", **Paletten**, no. 2, 1964.

Translated by James Manley.

# ON THE TRIOLECTICAL METHOD IN ITS APPLICATIONS IN GENERAL SITULOGY

Asger Jorn

In his book *Die dreiköpfige Gottheit*, Willibald Kirfel proposed that the origin of the image of the god with three heads goes back to the pre-Celtic megalithic (or Neolithic) era and that it has its place in the cultural world of the Mediterranean. It is still found in places all over the world. To the African Yorubas, it is Shango, the god of thunder, and is associated with secret organizations.

Frobenius affirms that the feeling and the concept of Time is expressed through the number three – past, present, future – and that the number four is a projection in space of directions across the surface plane. Frobenius's proposition appears to be corroborated by the existence of Spanish representations of the month of January imagined as a triple head which, by its evident symbolism, send us back to secularity. The opposition of the Catholic Church to the representation of the Trinity as an image with three faces has its explanation here. The Christian concept of duality probably arises from the notion of opposites like black and white and the double face of Janus (January).

The Bibliothèque nationale de France holds a Botticelli drawing illustrating one of the scenes from *The Divine Comedy* of Dante. Botticelli has represented Dante beside a devil with three heads. Dante wrote, 'O, what a marvel it appeared to me/When I beheld three faces on his head!/The one in front, and that vermilion was [...] And the right-hand one seemed 'twixt white and yellow;/The left was such to look upon as those/Who come from where the Nile falls valley-ward [that is to say, between blue and black]'.

We are reminded that the book for which Abelard was condemned concerned the Trinity and the oratory which he had built at Nogent-sur-Seine was also consecrated to the Trinity.

It is interesting to compare Botticelli's diabolic triple head and Titian's allegory of Prudence with an old man (himself), his son and his nephew, being again the Past of age, the Present of maturity and the Future of youth – a context which suggests that the Present is simultaneously able to benefit from past experiences and not to compromise future actions. Erwin Panofsky sees in this image a prayer to Titian's son to permit his nephew every chance of development. Panofsky mentions Bruno Giordano's penetrating analysis of the three faces of Time. All the analyses of this image by Titian – so simple in appearance – produce apparent conflicts of interpretation, passionate conflicts from which, paradoxically, Prudence is banished. In the syntax of all Western languages there appears a Time divided into Past, Present and Future – forms to which all minds must become accustomed and which, in practice, have become current for all. On the formal plane, the message is broken up into Time in three different aspects, into three images of different moments. To the mind, this message is a mould, the considerable importance of which has escaped us until now. For a long time it has been impossible for us, as prisoners of language, to abstract from Time what this syntax tells us – that it is broken up into an apparently harmonious triplicity of pure Duration, and this means that it demands of us an important mental process, consisting of intuitively seizing upon only one of the aspects – that one of the forms of Time is always opposable to the two others present.

The concept of triplicity, which plays the same role as three elements, conceals and masks the principle of antagonism from us – one of the elements being always opposed to the two others as a pair. Stéphane Lupasco has studied the structure of a characteristic antagonism – the static and the dynamic: – 'In order for any given event to take place, to have a moment and some place in the Universe, it is necessary for an energy, a powerful dynamism, to go through a certain state of potentialization towards a certain state of actualization, without which, rigorously actual or actualized, it is not even possible to talk of energy, of dynamism. All would be static, inert for ever and never.'

The triple polarization of Time, such as it appears in language, is really the image of Lupasco's eternal statics, and he continues, 'Thus all energy – all energetic movement – which ever form it takes – implies an antagonistic event such that the actualization of one brings about the potentialization (the virtualization) of the other.' This is the union of any two of the aspects which Time appears to us to have the power to actualize and yet on the other hand to virtualize or potentialize its third aspect. The main outcome of this is that it entails the idea of Time concealing three different kinds of antagonisms distinguished by the nature of whichever aspect of Time is chosen to oppose to the other two. We could set the conjunction of past-present to its virtualized opposite, the future, then the past-future would oppose the present and finally the present-future would oppose the past.

Lupasco states that, 'An antagonistic pair of events and of energetic anti-events constitutes – and only in itself is able to constitute – a system, that is to say, that ensemble of events bounded and ordered by the forces or intrinsic dynamic relations inherent in the events themselves. This what I have formulated in a Logic of systems or a Systemology. The possible combinations of these systems of systems are certainly multitudinous, their chains numerous in an arborescent or systemogenetic expansion. However they always form threes.'

Even before I became acquainted with Lupasco's theories (which do not otherwise tackle the problem of Time and its triple aspect), it seemed to me, on examining the system of Latin structures, that this system made up an actualization of past-future and a virtualization of the present, whereas the Byzantine and Russian structures were made up of a present-future opposable to the past, and, finally that the Nordic structures were essentially an actualization of past-present and a virtualization of the future.

Upon the theological plane, the symbolism of the Trinity offers us a good opportunity to outline precisely the opposition between the Arianism of the Germanic peoples and the Roman civilization of the Latins, between Father and Son, a distinction of essences that the latter opposes in an absolute manner. This is an opposition which, liberated from all theological terminology, reappears today in Europe upon the scientific, philosophical:

and artistic planes. In his *Physics and Philosophy*, the celebrated scholar and theoretician Werner Heisenberg highlights the fact that, 'In classical theory we assume that future and past are separated by an infinitely short time interval which we may call the present moment. In the theory of relativity we have learned that the situation is different: future and past are separated by a finite time interval, the length of which depends on the distance from the observer.' One could not highlight better the fact that in classical theory the present is without dimension, that is to say, without surface, so that time is presented as reduced to just two dimensions, a head of Janus. The relativity that gives a dimension to the present makes up in itself an elective environment of a possible encounter between the two poles that represent to us the past and the future. A dialogue of time is thus instituted, that of the necessary delay between question and answer. Locke, who defined knowledge as being 'the perception of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas,' leaves us in the embarrassing position of deciding which antagonism effectuates knowledge's grasp of the notion of the relativist present. Will this be the idea of the past or that of the future? Certainly, neither of these two ideas are able to play a solo role, so that their conjunction in a unique concept of past-future has the force of opposition – of antagonism – in relation to the present: '... the properties of symmetry always constitute the most essential features of a theory.' The relationships which have long remained mysterious between the real – the ultimate form of the present – and the possible – the union of the past and the future – are thus clarified.

However, this fusion in a unique concept of past and future, and thus the notion of antagonism, was vigorously criticized by the young Russian scientist N.A. Kozyrev, who stated that, 'There is no symmetry between action and reaction: time can only move in one direction, from the past to the future and the future is completely different from the past.'

I did not think that Kozyrev's theories of oriented time made my approach to this problem any easier than those of Lupasco on antagonisms did. All these theories have not become sufficiently familiar to me and consequently the best approach for me will be the theory of colours. On the other hand, I have also been tempted to find a new solution. In this area,

the first obstacle will be the evidence of a conflict between Niels Bohr's theory of complementarities and the Hegelian and Marxist dialectic.

The idea of 'complementarity' was perfectly defined long before Bohr commenced his studies. The word 'complementary' designated the contrasting colours at the opposite extremes of a particular diametrical line of a spectral circle, colours which if mixed together neutralize each other and always give a similar grey regardless of the chosen diameter.

This polarization of colours, which we feel should preferably be called contrasts, seemed to obey marvellously the principles of Hegelian dialectics – thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Using Lupasco's terminology, we call blue, yellow and red, which are three irreducible segments of the spectral circle, potential or virtual colours. These colours oppose each other like the angles of a triangle, not in an antagonism of two poles. Red has as its contrast a mixture of yellow and blue – to become green; blue, a mixture of red yellow – to become orange; yellow a mixture of red and blue – to become violet. These observations have permitted me to establish that all mixtures are characterized as actualized poles. At any rate, variability and play are the elements which make up the mixture.

Lupasco did not – or did not wish to – take account of this definition, this placing of all mixtures in play, in his system. He is taken captive by an antagonism bounded by the opposition of the homogenous and the heterogeneous. Antiquity already knew of the triangular model of three invariable contrasts. It appeared in the three superimposed triangles that form a star on the seal of Solomon, which is called 'the seal of Good and Evil'. To trace the diagonals running between them, is, on the plane of communication, to implement a reconciliation between Kant and Hegel.

The simultaneity of my perceptions with those of Lupasco and Kozyrev appears to me to be historically significant, if one takes account of the fact that they came about in an absolutely independent manner. Lupasco only had a certain need for clarification in the logico-philosophical area, Kozyrev the desire to respond to certain lacks in astronomy, and finally I myself, a purely artistic interest in the problem of colours – following Goethe and the painter Runge in their desire to understand it better.

Lupasco stresses that light and 'death' are synonyms. Yet from a Newtonian perspective the different colours make up light. It follows therefore that the world of colours extends beyond the limit that death constitutes. On this particular point, Goethe challenges the Newtonian theory by asserting that the division of light into colours is an inverse process – of materialization – a tendency towards 'life'. It appears to me that the ignorance and disregard in which scholars have held Goethe's very impressive affirmations necessitates and makes possible the elaboration of a third theory of light, which would be complementary to the other two.

The antagonism between culture and civilization is not one of the least important sources of conflict in the real world. This is why it appears to me to be necessary to elucidate the hidden mysteries in these ideas to the greatest extent.

One could consider culture as the actualization of a past-present (of what is still called 'tradition' or '*vane*' in Danish) and civilization as the actualization of a past-future (which is called 'historicity' or 'chronology'). These two systems are based upon their own particular antagonisms, which have the potential to be a present, to be a future, and by their opposition alone seem to manifest to us the very divergence of the European North and South.

The outline which I want to propose here – the Triolectic – is conceived from this critical examination of the Copenhagen Interpretation and is entitled 'the Silkeborg Interpretation'. Sitology, of which this outline is only a part, recaptures the concept of Poincaré's *analysis situs*, but avoids giving too much importance to the idea of positional limits in the way that this is formulated in topology. We consider, with Gaston Bachelard, that the event and its moment ought to be implicated in the concept of the situation.

The concepts shaped by leaving the three elements in a static order are in danger both of remaining enigmatic and of not being sufficiently clear. They necessitate a much more profound study of the very conditions of their formulation.

For this formulation two of the three given elements – those putting the antagonistic concepts in opposition – correspond. To be well



constructed and well executed, this mental operation absolutely demands that care is taken that the matching of the concepts is effected with a suitable vital dynamism.

This is why an outline (however rudimentary) of the most elementary particulars of this formulation of concepts appears to us to be necessary. We have undertaken this work here. We will however make an effort to formulate our most express reservations about these conclusions. Therefore we are gathering together in groups of three, words which seem to us to be the basic elements of this formulation of triple concepts. The list we are appending here does not pretend to be exhaustive. In defence of this systemic classification, however, it should be possible under our guidance for everyone to become aware of the antagonisms that we are indicating in an elective and symbolic manner. Obviously, we are quite accustomed to hearing and understanding these words in a number of senses other than the vital dynamism listed here and it will certainly be disconcerting for people to find them here in their ideal static purity. We have preferentially classified them into three groups which correspond to Latin, to Byzantine and to Germanic ways of structuration.

In optics, a Swedish scholar has demonstrated that the phenomenon of the transformation of triply contrasted colours lies in the gila-tissue where they are juxtaposed. The study of this phenomenon is hampered by the fact there is a lack of psycho-physiological data. Greater knowledge would permit a better approach to mental illness. Lupasco's theory has the very great merit of having enhanced the identity that exists between the physical concept of potentiality and the ethical concept of virtuality.

The sacred and the taboo are concept words in which the ambivalence of ethics and theology on the one hand and the all-empowering Mana on the other is particularly strong.

We have established the existence of a certain antagonism between the sacred (virtualized) and the divine (actualized), an antagonism which restores the original content of the word: play – variation.

After all, the whole history of Christendom is not just that of its division into complementary antagonisms, of the successive schisms of the Church. In the end, three distinct regions have emerged, the Greco-Byzantine

church, play of present and future, the Roman Catholic church, past and future, and the Nordic Protestantism, past and present.

Here we have three complementary concepts of the sacred; firstly, the concept of the past – which I will call 'of production', as industrial society puts production and reproduction on the same footing – secondly, the concept of the present, which is 'administration', and then, thirdly 'consumption', which corresponds to the sacred future of the Protestants. Whatever it costs us and whatever discomfort is incurred, we must bear in mind these so intractably contradictory conceptual types, since they originate from radically different mental processes. We must not relinquish the dangerous facility of believing it possible – with Raymond Aron – to harmonize a hierarchical system of values (in itself) with Max Weber's world of free play. To reject this would be a fallacious illusion. And we do not conceal that there is an obligation to choose in order to avoid one day the shattering of a cohesion built upon the misunderstandings and false agreements.

To understand fully the drama that is actually being performed in consciousness, one need only to hear Stéphane Lupasco affirming without hesitation that, 'All psychiatry must be revised.' To this declaration, we immediately enlist our, to us, eminently flexible triolectical system – with optimism – in order to convey some clarification of the functioning of the deep psyche and to offer a rational account of the nature of hitherto incurable major mental illnesses.

In contrast to Lupasco, who seems to cultivate schizophrenia, we are not of the opinion that the process ought to be from the concrete to the abstract. The plastic arts are currently almost exclusively directed towards popular art and are manifesting a health towards this particular momentum that it would be vain to deny.

Amongst the antagonisms which preoccupy Lupasco there is one that particularly seems to us to capture his thought, that of space and time. He assures us that, 'The simultaneity of certain cerebral events generates the notion of space.' Now, we have long known – let us say, since Heisenberg – that notions of space and time are not alien to each other, but, on the contrary, are identical ideas, the present itself being also

simultaneity. Between question and answer there is a delay, the duration of which is the present itself, the actual as space. In its idea of the sacred, European culture somewhat vaguely includes time and space. Anything that lengthens the delay between question and response, will create the present exponentially – at the cost of the past and the future. Ultimately, we will find an absolute, integral, eternal present: ‘Waiting for Godot.’

The false and illusory possibility of introducing some equilibrium into the antagonism between time and space has been denounced with subtle efficacy by Kozyrev, who has shown us what the essential differences between the constituents (the past, the future) of time are.

Lupasco states, ‘As such – as dynamics – the antithetical elements possess the constituent property of the idea of dynamism itself. [...] The logic of contradiction is a tri-dialectic. This engenders three intersecting dialectics.’ Disjunction is the very hub of the dialectic. No dialectic without disjunction and no disjunction with dialectic.

Our triolectical thesis can be applied axiomatically in the following manner:

We have demonstrated previously how and why these three dialectics are inevitable. With regard to tri-dialectical dynamism, we have revealed the subtle mechanisms which govern the correspondence of its complementary and tri-dialectical statics. Each disjunction is followed by a conjunction and, in the same way, each conjunction is followed by a disjunction.

Fusion creates fission (actualization is the name given by Lupasco to this conjunction or fusion).

Each compromise isolates and virtualizes the opposite standpoint.

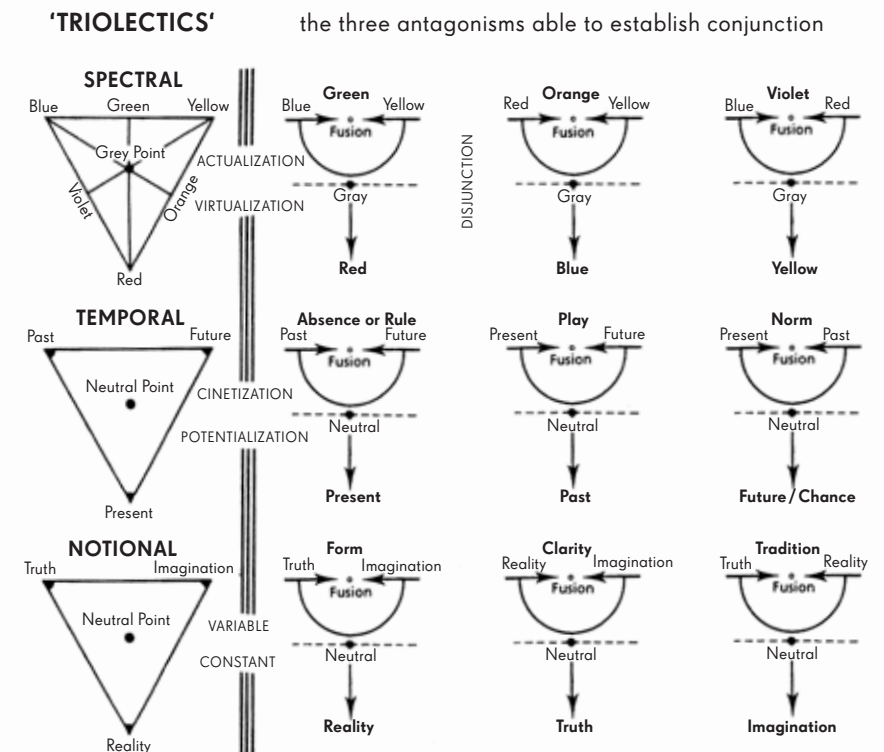
We have chosen to call the formation of an antagonism or a contradiction ‘the creation of a situation’.

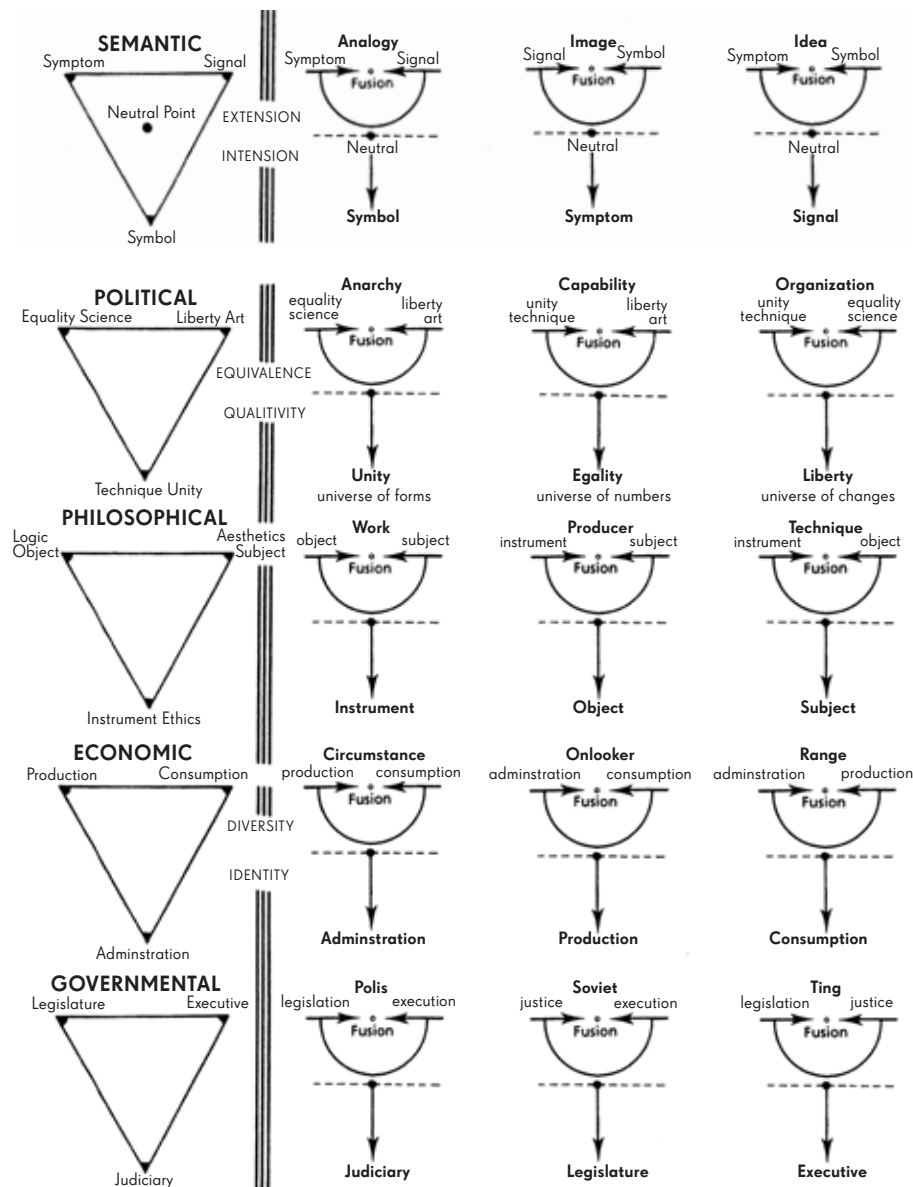
The basic necessary elements for the birth of any situation can be organized by the formation of two situations equally different and complementary to the first.

## Triolectical schemas

### SOME EXAMPLES OF TRIOLECTICAL COMPLEMENTARITY

We present here some models of triolectical equilibriums applied to different conceptual domains. We emphasize that these are simple working bases, totally undogmatic, which could be modified or extended. It is in their nature to be open, to start, for example, with more than three relations, this method not being based upon any numerological mystique.





Its purpose is to liberate the dialectical movements constrained either in sub-Marxist determinism or in the arbitrary antagonisms where Lupasco founders.

### De la méthode triolectique dans ses applications en sitologie générale

(Aarhus: Institut scandinave de vandalisme comparé, 1964).

Translated by Peter Shield.

# THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS NOT FOR SALE

Ladies and Gentlemen! We believe you agree with us in that you yourselves, much more than the police, are able to decide whether or not you want to listen to our music. Furthermore, I believe that our voices are not much more noisy than the various bands from the Royal Guards. We want a lively pedestrian street for the people. We are therefore making this protest against the patronizing attitude of the police to the citizens.

– Flemming Quist Møller

We, folk musicians, fiddlers and street painters wish hereby to express our disapproval of the ministry, the police or any law which prevents the freedom of expression from unfolding itself. We believe that folk art is the art of the people and it has the right to be among the people.

Our opinion is that the people love their own art and want it to be performed in an unofficial manner without the artists being stopped by the authorities.

Folk musicians and street painters work with and need the contact with the people in order to be able to find new ways in Danish folk art. Therefore, ministers, mayors and police chiefs: Stop the persecution of the artists when they work in the streets. The streets are just being transformed into what they are meant to be – festive streets for the people.

– Bjarne Cæsar Rasmussen

Through this protest, art enters its communicative phase. The artists are taking over their natural field of activity. Opponents are trying to stop this phase by means of film censorship, image control and music prohibition. They attack art's freedom of expression with their art placed on pedestals and their bourgeois music.

We answer this attack by placing art where it belongs and can live.

We encourage artists, architects and city planners to take over their natural field of activity, in order to work out the problems through unitary urbanism, CO-RITUS and integrated art. These are the current methods of changing the conditions of life, the possibilities for self-expression through a revision of the environment.

Today, in the period where poetry is approaching picture making, where pictures are approaching theatre, where the theatre is approaching action. Today we urge:

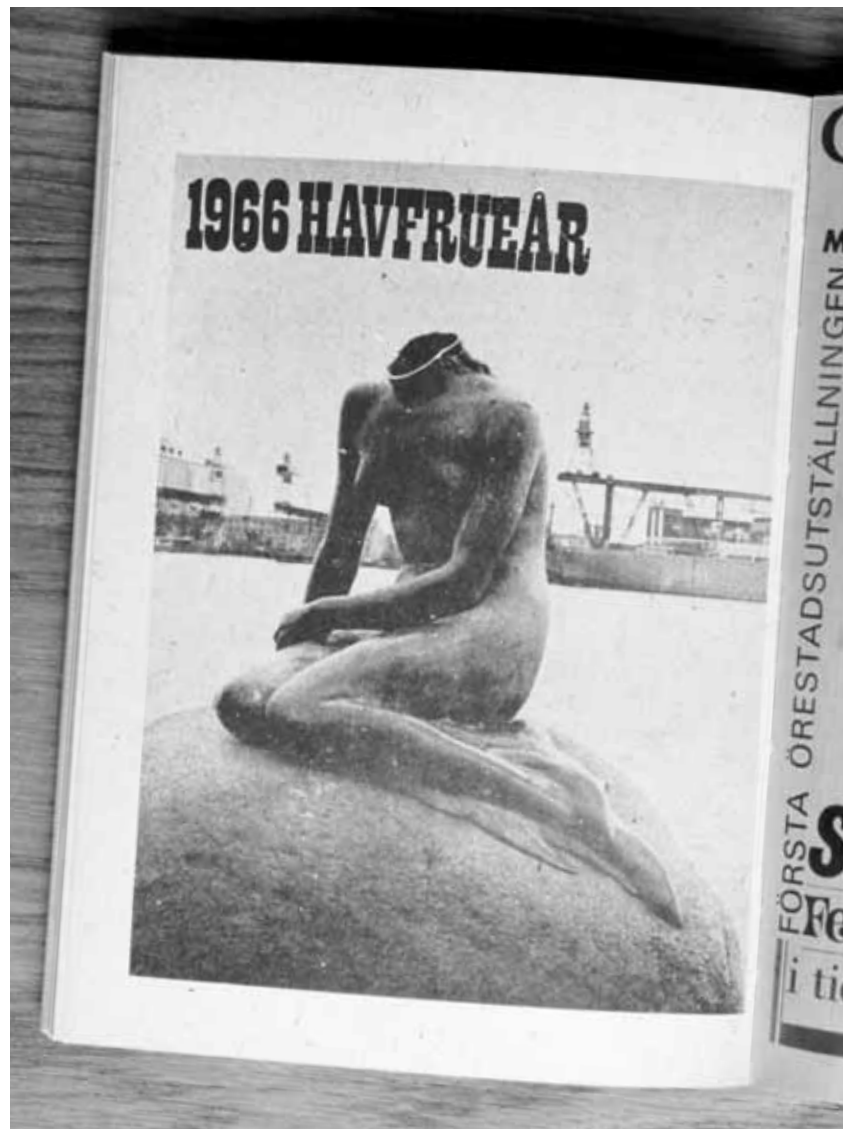
Let us make the city into a radiant workshop for the new art.

Art will get new power with CO-RITUS

– The Örestad Experimental Laboratory:  
Thorsen, Nash, Strid & O'Brien

"Ytringsfriheden ikke til salg", leaflet from the street festival and occupation of Strøget, Copenhagen 1965.

Translated by Jakob Jakobsen.



## PAMPHLET NO. 9 FROM THE SECOND SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL

Jørgen Nash & Hardy Strid

“Life consists in penetrating the unknown and fashioning our actions in accord with the new knowledge thus acquired.”

LEO TOLSTOY

A space project started on 13th May 1966 at Drakabygget with the sensational press against the situationist press. A rocket was launched from a ramp standing on three foundations: *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, Malmö; *Ekstra Bladet*, Copenhagen; and *Jyllands-Posten*, Århus. The rocket fuel was Baron Hans Ulrik van der Krone's confession in the Mermaid Mystery at Langelinie, and the accompanying satellite was equipped with registration instruments and a heat-shield consisting of the Little Mermaid's bronze head. Other participants were the Danish Royal Couple, the Royal Yacht *Dannebrog*, the head of the Danish homicide squad Knud Hornslet, a *Didaska* picture by Asger Jorn, Stiftsbogtrykkeriet, radio and TV, telegraphy, telephones, typewriters, journalists, editors, criminal policemen, artists, the public, court parasites, the entry of the psychopaths, the paperwhores of *Life*, *The Reader's Digest*, *Vindroseforeningen Perspektiv*, cultural apparatchiks of the State's Secret Arts Foundation, the viper of *Die Zeit*, the robber of *Pravda*, the rogue of *Billedbladet*, as well as the blind reporters of *Expressen*, *BT* and *Aftenbladet* and *Politiken* and *Kvällsposten* etcetera etcetera – and Norway's biggest cultural gangster, director and doctor of philosophy Brikt Jensen, spokesman of Foreningen NORDEN's anti-situationist publication council in Oslo.



It was decided to postpone the taking-down of the surveillance satellite THE LITTLE MERMAID, an anti-happening for the modern mass media, until 26th June 1966 at 4.30 p.m. The reason that we decided to postpone the unveiling was that we first wanted to finish preparing *Drakabygget*, our periodical for art and against atom bombs, popes and politicians. This fourth double issue of the periodical must not suffer because the sensational press wanted to force an unveiling as soon as possible. It is the situationist press that makes the news.

The sensational press is only a vehicle. The periodical is our face towards the wide world. This is reason enough to let the press live for another week on our patronage.

This space journey must among other things be regarded as a sociological and ethical investigation of the channels of communication in today's society, of press and mass suggestion. From this point of view the space adventure leaves Anlara's space-leaping shoemaker's philosophy far behind. The facts that are collected by the satellite's flight recorder will be donated to the Department of Art History at Lund University.

Since 1960 the anarcho-situationists in Scandinavia have mounted exhibitions – also outside the conventional, authorized exhibition localities. The exhibitions have met a new large public on streets, in barns, in condemned buildings and on vessels. But these exhibitions are not reviewed.

### Why?

The satellite project is among other things an element in our investigation of the secret links that (possibly) exist between Scandinavia's art criticism and the commercial salons; between the critics and certain large museums. As co-performers in the space drama, gallery and museum directors and art critics, willingly or unwillingly, will provide answers to our question: does a creeping corruption exist?

We will let the crawling cultural camarilla expose itself, now that it is guarding its position with all means available. What we create is not POP art. POP art learns from advertising. POP art is POPular. We are unPOPular. Advertising learns from us. We are the patrons of advertising. We are the unpopular folk art. Our texts and slogans are tendentious poetry. POP art

is not FOLK art. It is art for the folk. We work with the art that is created among the folk, communicative, mediumistic art. We want to fuse high culture with folk culture, without suppressing one at the expense of the other. We do not want to be judges, we are seekers.

POP art, like academic art, is made to be protected, fed out to the people. The situationists need no protection, our art needs no state-supported crutches.

We are made stronger by resistance. And we are everywhere.

Headquarter of the Situation, 28 June 1966.

JØRGEN NASH

*Drakabygget, journal for art against atom bombs, popes and politicians.*

HARDY STRID

Internationale Situationniste II, Bauhaus Situationniste, Sweden

"Flygblad nr. 9 från Andra Situationistiska Internationalen", *Drakabygget*, no. 3-4, 1966.

Translated by James Manley.

# THE COMMUNICATIVE PHASE IN ART: AN ESSAY ON THE DEATH OF ANTI-ART

Jens Jørgen Thorsen

The Absence of God is not a limitation anymore. It is the threshold to Infinity. God's absence is greater. This is more divine than God...

'Night is a sun too, the absence of myth is a myth too. The coldest, the most pure, the only genuine.' Georges Bataille

The communicative phase in art consists in establishing communicative fields. CO-RITUS is such an establishment of a field of communication.

The basis of this phase is the disappearance of the spectator (which isn't the same as the disappearance of the audience) and his replacement by the participator. A communicative art is an art which lives between. In the space between people. From that point of view art is no longer just a form of the aesthetic, of the philosophical, of the chronological or of mental space. Art becomes a function in the social conception. The social space. Looked upon this way through the communicative glasses (Fjord), the organisation of society, the social patterns, town-complexes, business companies, production companies, stock-car racing traffic, toilet drawings, dancehall life, farming and festivities all become manifestations of artistic value or at least have artistic possibilities.

The tradition of exhibiting art is in this case a work of art as are the paintings in themselves. So the communicative phase of art shows up when you take the consequences of this conception. Today I recommend: Take the step now. Join CO-RITUS.

In the CO-RITUS manifesto of 1961 you will find fundamental statements on this point.

## Anti-art is moralisation

The Karl Marx and Hegel theories on alienation. The theory of alienation is based upon the idea that man is fundamentally good. But made evil, alienated from his actions by evil surroundings. An assembly-line worker is alienated from the results of production. In a bad State the human being is alienated. These theories pushed forward the Bert Brecht theatre. The epic theatre.

As a contrast to the dramatic theatre, where one is only able to identify oneself with the action. Cry when the hero cries (Brecht). The epic theatre leaves the spectator free to choose because it tells a story. According to Brecht you have the possibility to laugh while the hero is crying.

The epic theatre inherently creates estrangement, the dialectical opposite to alienation. This means that people put into a position as alienated from the story on screen are not alienated from themselves anymore. They get back the possibility of judging and thinking. Being able to choose whether to be a 'yes-man' or a 'no-man'. Mixing the epic theatre with the dramatic one, the absurd theatre was born. Intended progressively, it was an answer to Brecht from the side of free art. Containing its seducing cocktail of emotions.

Mixing the absurd theatre with Zen Buddhism, Happenings rose, growing into environments, Fluxus, etc.

The method of Zen is to create alienation by means of nature itself, observing the universal auto-motion long enough to be able to attain Satori, the highest knowledge.

Inspired by Zen, which refuses all books, formulations and pictures (they got the nickname the 'stink of Zen'), anti-art tried to push back art in favour of morals. Tried turning the artist into an anti-artist and the anti-artist into a moraliser.

According to the Zen sentence which goes 'If you meet the Buddha, kill him and if you meet the patriarchs slay them at your feet'. The anti-art

was born in the late 1950s because of this myth about the disappearance of contents in favour of a basic conception. If you happen to meet the fine arts: kill them.

### **Anti-art is art too.**

The absence of art is not a limitation anymore. It is the threshold to art itself. Anti-art is greater. It is even greater than art itself.

A Goodyear tire by Oldenbourg, a can by Kaprow, a pair of blood-stained trousers presented by Nam June Paik, a card game by Dick Higgins, a burp from Vostell or the empty space pointed out by Eric Ander-Zen. All these are things of beauty. Poems transformed into action, exhibited instead of painted. Each detail a thing from the surroundings placed on the screen with some purpose or after a certain plan. Exactly as La Gioconda (Mona Lisa) or another object from somewhere painted on the canvas in the traditional way.

So Art in the classic tradition leaves the spectator just as open as does the so-called open performance.

Because of that the salt-dealer Marcel Duchamp and Picabia were able to give her the official name LHCOQ (her ass is hot) and a little moustache a la Strid. Volf Vostell for instance would never allow you to put a moustache on him during a performance.

An audience at a Happening is still sitting gazing as if it were in a theatre or in front of a painting looking for the true basic conception. The conclusion: is open art any different from basic conception? Is it still art?

### **Jorn Zorn Silkeborg.**

Using the theory of complementarity by Niels Bohr, my colleague and former co-operator Asger Jorn attacks me because of my theory concerning the disappearance of the spectator (in the Copenhagen paper *Politiken* and later on in English in *The Situationist Times*).

As he at the same time attacks the Bohr theory calling it a blind road (in his book *De Division Naturae*) I must confess that I find this without consequence.

The spectator is anyhow dead, Jorn states in *The Situationist Times*. In any case it is impossible for the spectator to exist. In this he quotes the Bohr theory stating that observation changes the object you observe. An electronic microscope for instance changes the electronic relations in objects observed through it. I quote Bohr:

‘Studying the primitive tribes the ethnographer is not only aware of the dangerous interruption he can cause to the culture through his touch upon it. He is also very often himself on his own body feeling how deeply his own way of life, his philosophy and mind can be changed through such studies. Especially I am thinking of the well-known observation among explorers, that prejudices they were not even aware of before could be shaken deeply through the harmony human life creates, even under habits and traditions quite different from their own’.

Stating the death of the spectator four years after it had been stated in the CO-RITUS manifesto, Jorn is rather a little late. We are glad of his agreement. But he does not understand the basics of my argumentation: the death of the spectator is mutually the death of the classic artist. Jorn still works as a classic artist on classic art according to classic perception.

Taking the position of the sublime creator he evidently never understood the idea nor took the consequences of it. The consequences are taken in communicative art. With the CO-RITUS placing of art in new relations.

### **CO-RITUS is not anti-art.**

So CO-RITUS is not just another death sentence of art. CO-RITUS only states the conception that the communicative field is not situated where the Renaissance tradition tried to put it. Artists in the Renaissance tradition from Zorn to Jorn and from Jorn to Zen have been aiming at another level than the one their works are to be found on. When Jorn tells me (in *Luck and Chance* 1963 edition) that the spectator shows up because of hunger, I must answer that a spectator cannot be filled up by being in the spectator’s position. And when Vostell tells me (Charlottenborg 1964) ‘I want to isolate man from the mass so that he feels lonely and sees himself’, then I have to answer that the absolute loneliness is impossible as far as I can see. You cannot mirror yourself without a mirror.

The communicative phase of art is not death of art, but its expansion. Nor do we intend to kill traditional art. But we proclaim disappearance of an illusion, a lie. We take the consequences:

- a) through turning the spectator into a participator
- b) through turning the artist into an urbanisor
- c) through turning the possibilities of art into the possibilities of the social space
- d) through turning the functional urbanism into a communicative one
- e) through turning the fixed picture into a un-composed one
- f) through turning communism into communicativism
- g) through turning passing (derive) into CO-RITUS, etc.

Very soon the time will come when work starts moving its wings in order to fly away. A new time is emerging, carried to a new social balance by servo-technology, automatics and cybernetics. Changes which will make possible the disappearance of economical circulation in favour of social circulation of an artistic type. Therefore the old French Situationistic theory on passing (dérive) is now completely worn out. Guy Debord's theory stated that by passing (dériving) rapidly through completely unknown surroundings of labyrinthine character, people should be forced into a 'verfremdungs'-situation wanting to express new wishes for a new urbanism. Labyrinths of this sort were named dérive-labyrinths. To me this theory always seemed nonsense. As a sort of answer we built the Spiral Labyrinth in the Malmö Town Hall (though the French mathematician Max Bucaille in *The Situationist Times* No.3 tried to prove that a spiral labyrinth is impossible, it is only impossible plane-geometrically). In the CO-RITUS labyrinth it was made possible for the public to participate in various activities: building, painting, playing, etc. The process was not passing (deriving) anymore but communicative creativity.

### Non-formal

The passing (dériving) theory was getting weaker. The idea of communication was growing. This weakening was the real problem behind the many breaks between the Situationist groups. In order to investigate these new fields the Örestad Experimental Laboratory in 1961 started

the neo-urbanistic experiments directly in the towns. For instance on the main streets of Copenhagen. Often in open conflict with the police and the academic state-authorised artists. In 1965 eight thousand folk singers, youngsters and our group of artists made the biggest experiment in this field ever. Starting in 1962, CO-RITUS concertos were arranged in such towns as Copenhagen, Göteborg, Lund, Uppsala, Aarhus, Malmö. CO-RITUS-manifestations took place and the results were discussed in the ÖRESTAD-conferences. After three years of eager experimentation, having been through Scandinavia's most-discussed artistic manifestations I must confess that the results are still rather unclear. The possibilities seem endless. We are now just at the starting point. Where else in today's tired art world of stylistic reprises do you find that? This will soon enable us to wave goodbye to anti-art. Anti-art came to Scandinavia after CO-RITUS was started and it will disappear before CO-RITUS. We understand the anti-artists' blaming of the audience, the anti-artists' distaste for discipline and their attempted actions which are a latent longing for new changes.

We praise with joy the new signs of understanding which we are finally seeing after many years. Our experimental concertos in the street are starting to gather successors. (Especially we have enjoyed Jean Marc Quineau's *cent mille* poems, the Vagn Steen osmotic theatre, the Peter Boonéan shooting pictures, the Bengt Rooke Wroom Rooms). So today we recommend, in the period when poetry is getting near to picture making, pictures are getting near to theatre, the theatre is getting near to action. Today I urge: *Let us make the city into a radiant workshop for the new art. Art will get new powers with CO-RITUS.*

"The Communicative Phase in Art: An Essay On The Death Of Anti-Art", Jens Jørgen Thorsen, Hardy Strid & Jørgen Nash (eds): **Situationister i Konsten** (Örkelljunga: Edition Bauhaus Situationniste, 1966).



## NEO-IRREALISM: THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE FOURTH REICH

J.V. Martin, Raoul Vaneigem, Michèle Bernstein, Guy Debord,  
Mustapha Khayati, Donald Nicholson-Smith & René Vienet

“All space is already occupied by the enemy ... Materializing freedom means beginning by appropriating a few patches of the surface of a domesticated planet.”

‘The landing: The very longest day’,  
*Situationistisk Revolution* no. 1, 1962.

The continuing development of the political, artistic, economic, social or cultural court-jesterly spectacle on the societal arena of the bureaucratic power elite serves to confirm the truth of the maxim of the SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL in 1958, which says: ‘We will not work for the spectacle of the end of the world, but for the end of the world of the spectacle.’

As signals for the disintegration of a bankrupt world it has been normal to subject its artistic sector to an analysis, since the disintegrative and destructive tendencies in this sector have been highly prevalent.

However, to the latest tendencies, such as neo-Dadaism, happenings, Pop and Cop Art, one must object that they are by no means new, but can only be described as the absorption by the artists of the capitalist advertising system: selling the same inconsequential consumer commodity, but under rival labels. We can therefore only express our deepest contempt for the manufacturers of happenings as well as all the rest of the neo-Dadaist mob who, united as they are in the avant-garde of stupidity, prefer not to understand that the disintegration of the world of the spectacle is permitted a postponement by being turned into a spectacle of dissolution.



It is the actual shit in the cultural milieu that gives the impression that the avant-garde of stupidity is in possession of a revolutionary attitude. The situationists must however stamp it as pseudo-revolutionary, and in fact would not have wasted a single word on it, had it not been for the fact that pseudo-revolutionary actions involve a considerable amount of risk, since they only serve to alarm reactionary forces into a state of emergency. This means that rather than hastening the bankruptcy of a consumer society that is collapsing under its own weight, pseudo-revolutionary activities can only help to lubricate the mechanism of totalitarianism and oppression.

There is absolutely no reason to give the spectacle a last alluring coat of varnish which only creates an artificial need to work within its organized passivity.

The avant-garde of stupidity is used today psychotechnically to recuperate the refuse from the post-Dadaist epoch, while opponents of the spectacle from 1910 to 1925 are transformed for use in a macabre repetition of the spectacle. Nevertheless those years became a time of great upheavals. The supersession of nihilism had been made possible, and it got off to an excellent start. Facts burdened with a veritable storm of messages thundered over the planet and heralded the imminent world revolution, which was to put an end to ideological illusion and lead to a realization of art and philosophy. BONNOT, KRONSTADT, DADA: it is permissible to recognize in these three names the truly radicalist signals whose sting – without which no real change is to be expected – history, with a twisting of the perspective, has so unfortunately removed.

It will be seen that the situationists are right when we say that the crisis of art is very closely linked to the deferral of the revolutionary project which is the people's takeover of power, and is thus inextricably bound up with the defeat of the Russian revolution (the failure of the will to realize philosophy).

### Suppress art

In the sterilizing consumer society, by means of the big drums of advertising, industrialism has in recent years reached a certain saturation

percentage for the establishment of artificially created needs among the consumers. Since the balance between the supply and demand of goods has been reduced, attempts are being made to get the soon-to-be-fulfilled material needs transferred so they also include a cultural need. However, expanded cultural consumption changes nothing in a society consisting of passive spectators. Only the number of dishes on display increases. The acknowledgement of the poverty of contacts among people, and the incapacity of art in a sterilized consumer society, which has led to anti-artistic exhibitions where pictures as well as pseudo-human wax mannequins were wrapped in black plastic, is only a further confirmation of the necessity of the viewpoint that the situationists have long asserted: that passive spectators have to be changed into ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS, isolation into CONTACT and the abandonment of the subject into the REALIZATION OF THE SUBJECT. It is irrevocable: ART'S TIME HAS RUN OUT. The point now is to realize art – that is, effectively to construct, at any level of life, what could hitherto only be illusions or artistic memories that were unilaterally dreamed and then conserved. One can only realize art by suppressing it.

However, it will be necessary to make the objection to the present state of society, which suppresses art by replacing it with automatism in a spectacle that is even more hierarchical and passive, that one can only suppress art by realizing it. This entails the survival of art in the art of life. Only by no longer being artists do we become artists: we come to realize art.

### Art and society

At a time when the issue of art and society has been brought up for discussion, and when a man whose name, because of his imbecility, we have forgotten, can get parts of the working class to participate in a protest against everything that for him is incomprehensible art, the responsibility for the extent of the protest must decidedly be placed at the door of the bureaucratic power elite which, through its permission to turn our cities into a capitalist advertising window for Coca-Cola, has helped to create trivial and sterilizing surroundings for people to frequent, whether they wish to or not. This is what they call urbanism (?).

As a secondary culprit one cannot avoid accusing the working class educational monopoly AOF, which through its suppression of real information about society-critical art, as well as the problem of the supersession of art, seeks to turn this into nothing but an 'artistic problem of form'.

The Situationist International wishes to help a new wave of protest from the people acquiring the proper perspective, and will therefore put the question directly to the bureaucratic power elite: how do you imagine that anything at all in culture and in the organization of the life of society, which has been created without the active participation and control of the people – indeed has even been impertinently opposed to this participation and control – could be relevant to the people? In such a societal situation even monuments, as symbols of a time when the people were relegated to nothingness and the great silence, become guilty, and must therefore be removed.

Nor must an information monopoly for the working class neglect to pass on one of the most important items of information of our time: that the historical conditions of our time have in fact been linked to a crossing of the threshold to the process of MANKIND'S APPROPRIATION OF NATURE, and thus inextricably connected with the demand for a realization of the concrete project for a CLASSLESS society. (HOMO LUDENS).

### The decline and fall of the Fourth Reich

Since we can already now write the history of the decline and fall of the consumer society and thus the Fourth Reich, faced with the threat of technocratic totalitarianism we must remember that it is not enough to rediscover radicalism. IT MUST BE READJUSTED, such that it will correspond in strength to the existing material equipment.

'BE CAREFUL, when the poor have no more bread they will eat the rich,' wrote Chaumette in 1792 in an address to the rulers of the time. This warning applies more than ever to those who today organize poverty in the midst of a superfluity of consumer goods – and what is more, the warning has already taken a tactical form.

Many questions are raised, and although the answers, at their experimental stage, are already contained within the succession of revolutionary

moments that are washing over the world, one must still, in order to increase the force of these revolutionary moments, clarify how one puts an end to the prevailing survival complex. How does one unite and strengthen the refusal of rat-like survival? By what method can one get the people to look on, demystified, and thus see through the fact that so-called 'peaceful co-existence' is nothing but the use of the A-bomb by those in power as a way of exerting pressure against the people's takeover of power. And will the blessing of this 'peaceful co-existence' not in the longer term be synonymous with the death of the people?

'Revolutionary endeavors of today, because they have to break all the rules of false understanding imposed by the "peaceful coexistence" of reigning lies, begin in ISOLATION, in one particular sector of the world or in one particular sector of contestation. Possessing only the most rudimentary conceptions of freedom, they attack only the most immediate aspects of oppression. As a result, they meet with the minimum degree of aid and the maximum of repression and slander (they are accused of rejecting one existing order while necessarily approving of an existing variant of it). The more difficult their victory, the more easily it is confiscated by new oppressors. The next revolutions CAN FIND AID IN THE WORLD ONLY BY ATTACKING THIS WORLD AS A WHOLE. The freedom movement of the American blacks, if it can assert itself incisively, will call into question all the contradictions of modern capitalism; it must not be sidetracked by the 'black nationalism' and 'black capitalism' of the black Muslims. The workers of the United States, like those in England, are engaging in 'wildcat strikes' against the bureaucratized unions that aim first of all at integrating them into the concentrated, semi-regulated capitalist system. It is with these workers and with the students who have just won their strike at the University of California in Berkeley that a North American revolution can be made; and not with the Chinese atom bomb...' (SI's 'Address to Revolutionaries of Algeria and of all countries' – Algeria, July 1965).

Through what agitation can one hasten a conviction of the necessity of an inevitable dislocation of perspective?

Revolutionary spontaneity knows, first and last, only one answer and one tactic:

## DÉTOURNEMENT

‘Considering that whatever the Government promises  
 We do not trust,  
 We have decided to build a good life  
 Under our own direction.  
 Considering: you pay attention to cannons  
 Other languages you aren’t able to understand,  
 Then we must – yes, that will be worth it –  
 Turn the cannons on you!’  
 Bertolt Brecht: ‘Resolution of the Communards’

Détournement is the simplest and most widespread form of tactical experimentation with the dislocation of perspective – that is, when individual creative ability, contrary to any order of things, is proposed and opposed to all considerations of state. Already theorized by Lautréamont, détournement has been used unceasingly by us in the service of enlightenment, and against the alienating spectacle. One can simply compare the use by the sham Marxists and by ourselves of Karl Marx – among us never asserted but always re-stated by smuggling it into the text, and thereby not guaranteeing us but guaranteed by us.

‘One can see,’ says Jorn in his preface to Debord’s book *Contre le Cinema*, ‘one can see how Russian society, whether or not it believes itself to be Marxist, has managed to essentially curse Marx’s doctrine while honouring him. There are clean breaks between the person who formulates ideas, those who consciously appreciate his ideas and his value, and the spreading of these ‘outlaw’ ideas, which return discreetly and anonymously to the forces of life through creative freedom.’ In the same spirit Jorn wrote in 1959: ‘Détournement is a game born out of the capacity for devalorization. All the elements of the cultural past must be reinvested or disappear’.

The new context in which the old elements are integrated can only be concocted with the willingness to SUPERSEDE and thus with the realization of art and philosophy. At this stage détournement manifests itself as a reinstatement of GLOBAL PLAY, a festiveness that temptingly promises a

reconquered individual freedom. It has thus become the sharpest weapon in the struggle against those who are today seeking to organize the crudest kind of survival. In other words, it has become the essence of the revolution of the everyday, every day. It has become so because only the ideas of the outlaw can extend beyond nihilism.

**Propaganda in a hostile milieu**

‘Official art’ in which no refusal is to be found – and which cannot even manifest the shadow of a purpose – is not definitively capable of bridging the gap between art and society; the foundations for this are rotten to the core on both sides.

Because of these shortcomings, this art therefore has no contact with the multitude of post-artistic actions (revolts and free constructions of life), which already exist in the world and therefore now strive to replace art and challenge a state of society and its symbols that has banished the life of the people to the great silence.

As our catalogue from the ‘DESTRUCTION OF RSG-6’ manifestation quite rightly put it, ‘Just as we have been hard because we wanted to ensure that no ambitious intellectuals or artists who were unable to understand us properly should come into the Situationist movement, and to expel and unveil various counterfeits – of which the latest example is the Nashist simulated ‘Situationism’ – in just the same way we are determined to recognize the originators of these new, radical activities as Situationists, to support them and never to deny them, even if some of them still are not fully aware of the revolutionary program of today, but are only on the road to finding the connecting meaning in it.’

The Odense manifestation constituted a stage in our experimental progress. It was about raising, within the boundaries of artistic expression, the problem of propaganda in the midst of a hostile milieu. It will be recalled that alongside the Directives of Guy Debord, slogans in the form of a political proclamation exhibited on empty canvases or on an abstract, détourned picture which in its new form became directly communicative through the text ABOLITION OF ALIENATED WORK – there appeared J.V. Martin’s ‘cartographies’, which immediately superseded all the

laboratory-like investigations of 'new figuration' in painting, inasmuch as they combined the most free procedures of action painting with a result that can lay claim to being the realistic perfection of various regions of the planet at various times in the next world war. (These nuclear-bombed maps were later, on 18th March 1965, all destroyed by a bombing of the painter's studio with the willing assistance of the Danish police).

One could also see anti-pictures by Michele Bernstein, her series of 'Victories' (destroyed in the same bombing), about which we wrote in response to an inquiry from the Centre d'Art socio-experimental: 'by incorporating only TOY objects and by making them meaningful in as heavy-handed a way as possible, these pictures set out to negate POP ART, which is materially and 'ideologically' characterized by indifference and dull complacency.

This series of 'Victories' carries on the tradition of the painting of battles; and also rectifies the history of revolts (which is not over) in a way that pleases us.'

To clarify this, the following was included in the same text: 'It seems that each new attempt to transform the world is forced to start out with the appearance of a NEO-IRREALISM'. Why this word:

#### NEO-IRREALISM?

Besides the demand for entirely free play with pictures and with form, it particularly marks our will to turn on its head the POP ART whose reactionary, neo-Dadaist variant in France was at first called neo-realism. But just as little as a situationist doctrine – an 'ism' – can exist, it goes without saying that a NEO-IRREALIST doctrine cannot exist either. The concept of 'NEO-IRREALISM' is only to be regarded as an acceptable designation within the narrow framework of our struggle against POP ART. The name can thus in no way define us – it is already known that our view of labelling (and the label) goes beyond the spectacle of confusion – on the contrary it only reveals how comfortable we feel about the need to give short shrift to the enemy.

J.V. Martin develops this in timely fashion when he follows his pictures of the nihilist apocalypse (the 'Thermonuclear Cartographies') with his series 'GOLDEN SHIPS'. These pictures recall the theory of THE LONGEST DAY – The Landing – in which it is said among other things: 'All space is already occupied by the enemy. Authentic urbanism will appear when the absence of this occupation is created in certain zones. Materializing freedom means beginning by appropriating a few patches of the surface of a domesticated planet.' As can be seen, it is true in a dual sense that J.V. Martin is creating new values on the ruins of old values. 'THE GOLDEN SHIPS' has the ominous calm of which the German bourgeoisie had such a strong sense in 1930, when they heard 'Pirate Jenny's Song':

'UND EIN SCHIFF MIT ACHT SEGELN  
UND MIT FÜNFZIG KANONEN  
WIRD BESCHIESSEN DIE STADT'

In this manifestation we have included Michèle Bernstein's anti-picture 'The Victory of the Spanish Republicans'. Sooty as it is after being subjected to two bomb explosions, it may emphasize the conditions under which the situationists must work in a directly contra-situationist society.

Moreover, through his sculptural elements, René Viénet presents an assault on the consumer society's sterilization and alienation method: the artificially created need. These elements are all composed of the illusory products with which 'considerate' industrialism tries to make the people feel anything but illusorily affected. The sculptures are an alteration (which suits us excellently) of the modern NOTHING-BOX.

#### Art for the people

Other projects are of course already now under consideration: for example the use as sculptural elements of altered and détourned weapons whose characteristic feature, despite this alteration, will be complete usability in the field.

Such things will be a parodic-serious stage of a more extensive dé-tournement, in particular when one thinks of the use the people will make of them at revolutionary moments, and at the same time are a truly sincere attempt on our part to fulfil what the Social Democrats and the Stalinist-Trotskyist bureaucrats have so often desired:

TO PLACE ART WITHIN  
THE REACH OF THE PEOPLE

It is in the secrecy and poverty of the present world that we work. But separately we ourselves possess the means of employing ourselves. What emerges from our theories through the barred windows of culture will never be anything but our writing on the walls of the prison. Let it be known once and for all: WE WILL NOT CEASE UNTIL WE HAVE FUNDAMENTALLY SUPPRESSED BOTH THE PRISON AND THIS FORM OF LIMITED EXPRESSION.

"Ny-Irrealisme", **Situationistisk Revolution**, no. 2, 1967.

Translated by James Manley.

## DECLARATION FOR OUR ITALIAN ARTISTS AND COMRADES: FOLLOW COURBET

Jens Jørgen Thorsen, Bjarne Cæsar Rasmussen & Jørgen Nash

Instruction for steps of action at the Venice Biennale revolt.

Leaflet No. 2 against the authorities' overtaking of the world art from the 2nd Situationist International.

FIRST STEP OF THE ACTION: the Trojan Horse and the Art Police.

This was the demand to us given at the Stockholm strategy meeting between the World Anarchist Council and Representatives from the 2nd Situationist International, April 1968. To organise the revolt against the International Biennale in Venice through changing it into an International Pavilion of Revolt.

Today the action is a reality. Our comrades from Italy are laying siege to the Biennale. An iron-ring of police is now defending the exhibition area.

We thank you, Italian comrades, for your deed! It has shown that the terror police by all means is defending the art police.

Go on fighting! Now we are up to the next step of the action, the opening of June the 18th. Police terror has not been able to stop us.

Our message is that the Iron Ring is broken.

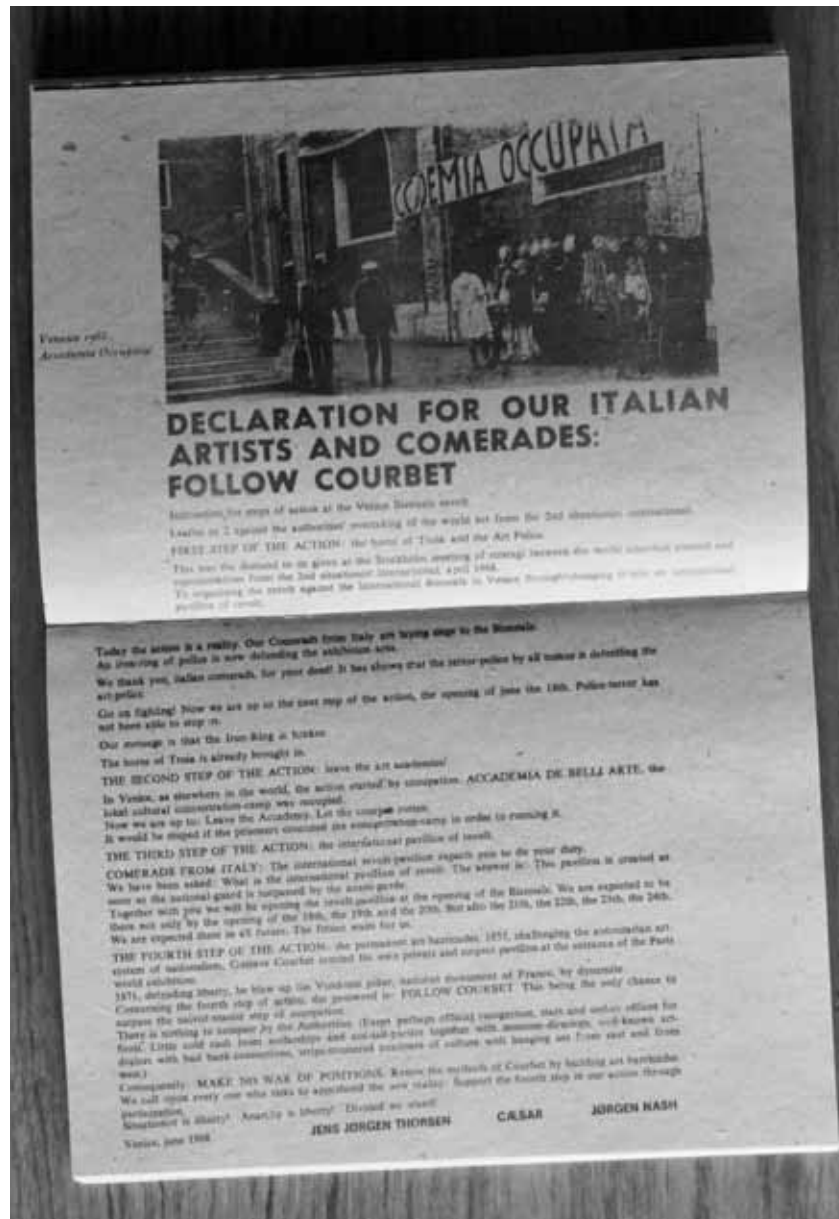
The Trojan Horse is already brought in.

THE SECOND STEP OF THE ACTION: leave the art academies!

In Venice, as elsewhere in the world, the action started by occupation. ACCADEMIA DE BELLI ARTE, the local cultural concentration camp, was occupied. Now we are up to: Leave the Academy. Let the corpse rot. It would be stupid if the prisoners concurred to run the concentration camp.

THE THIRD STEP OF THE ACTION: the International Pavilion of Revolt.





**COMRADES FROM ITALY:** The International Revolt Pavilion expects you to do your duty. We have been asked: What is the International Pavilion of Revolt? The answer is: This pavilion is created as soon as the National Guard is surpassed by the avant-garde. Together with you we will be opening the Revolt Pavilion at the opening of the Biennale. We are expected to be there not only by the openings of the 18th, the 19th and the 20th. But also the 21st, the 22nd, the 23rd, the 24th. We are expected there for the duration. The future waits for us.

**THE FOURTH STEP OF THE ACTION:** the permanent art barricades. 1855, challenging the authoritarian art system of nationalism, Gustave Courbet erected his own private and suspect pavilion at the entrance of the Paris World Exhibition. 1871, defending liberty, using dynamite he blew up a national monument of France, the Vendome pillar. Concerning the fourth step of the action, the password is: FOLLOW COURBET. This being the only chance to surpass the naive-Maoist step of occupation. There is nothing to conquer by the authorities. (Except perhaps official recognition, stars and offices for fools. A little cold cash from scholarships and cocktail parties together with museum directors, well-known art dealers with bad bank connections, baggy stripe-trousered Ministers of Culture from east and from west.) Consequently: **MAKE NO WAR OF POSITION.** Renew the methods of Courbet by building art barricades. We call upon every one who risks to apprehend the new reality: Support the fourth step in our action through participation.

Situationist is liberty! Anarchy is liberty! Divided we stand!

Venice, June 1968

"Declaration for our Italian Artists and Comrades: Follow Courbet", leaflet accompanying the **Pavilion of Revolt** at the Venice Biennale, 1968.



## GENERAL REMARKS

Bengt Ericson & J.V. Martin

### 1

After fifty years of permanent counter-revolution, the prevailing world, the society of the spectacle, once more stands face to face with the mortal enemy that it once thought it could defeat with the aid of words with a false face value: the working class. Not once, but many times, the existing spectacular society, with the aid of its epigones – the so-called socialist, communist and trade union bureaucrats – has made the working class understand that it ‘exists in reality in a fully modern, classless society’; but this society is no more classless than it is modern – even the use of the word ‘reality’ is an abuse and has nothing to do with the conditions of life offered in a society that is at bottom based on an unreal life, and in which the working class is constantly deprived of the huge potential it produces. The revolution-saturated signals which are now flooding over the world at the international level are a clear sign that the international working class is aware not only that it has had enough of these lies, but also that only one kind of society can exist that is at once real and modern: the classless society. The Situationist International which, in the light of the experiences of the past century from the proletarian revolutions, has developed a modern revolutionary theory, has for the last ten years attentively observed the signals of revolt in the period and its new types of subversive action, and has at the same time outlined the potential for an immediate realization of the revolutionary project – that is, the takeover of power by the people. This project involves nothing less than the creation of a classless society through the international realization of the power of the workers’ councils. Such a society will form the necessary launching ramp for the start of new, exciting experiments in the service of the innumerable possibilities for the development of a life that is truly alive. The modern revolutionary movement, which has nothing in common with the array of

old workers' parties and trade unions, demands *everything* and permits no limitations or schisms. If the struggle for the modern revolutionary movement at the moment looks the same as the one waged hitherto, this is exclusively because the necessary launching ramp, the classless society, has not been realized anywhere on this planet. 'For the future, all fundamental cultural creativity and every qualitative transformation of society will be deferred until progress is under way in all these areas jointly' (Guy Debord in 'Destruction of RSG-6', June 1963).

## 2

In a situation where one state after another is shaking in its foundations, because the workers reject their own trade unions and make it clear that in future they will be sure to order their own affairs, and where sabotage and wildcat strikes are spreading as never before, one hears the shouts – loud enough even here in the Scandinavian countries – from the last shrivelled remains of a left wing that has long since detached itself from the working class: for a 'Marxist-Leninist' party which will take the lead in the struggle of the working class. Whether they call themselves, in Denmark or Norway, SUF (Young Betrayers of Socialism), or in Sweden KFML (Christian Union of Mediocre Liars) or belong to one or another of the string of neo-, semi- or sub-Stalinist and Bolshevik 'groups', they promenade (even on the streets, in transparent form) a purely theoretical 'underdevelopment', and still represent nothing more than the last desperate attempt on the part of individual power to conquer the proletariat's independent efforts (for they can be nothing else) at emancipation, and lead them into a path that can guarantee these groups or these individuals' future position as new capitalists: state capitalism's 'socialist' bureaucrats. The modern revolutionary movement, on the other hand, is the radical critique of any ideology in the sense of the individual power of ideas and the ideas of individual power, and is thus opposed to the schizoid work of such groups. The only area where such groups can still maintain their illusions is therefore within the so-famous 'underdeveloped countries'; faithful to the idea of individual power they therefore devote all their energy to mobilizing the ecumenical left wing and the Stalinophile bourgeoisie to get them to grant their

most unreserved support to the so-called Third World's national liberation movements, and to a grovelling admiration for the world's most gigantic bureaucracy: China. Since the blinkers of their ideology, customized for the purpose, prevent them from seeing what is really happening in the society of the spectacle, they remain blissfully in their belief that the Third World's liberation movements can form models that can be applied to a highly industrialized society, and thus fail to see that what these national liberation movements are working for are societies that are equivalent to the highly industrialized ones, and thus a 'status quo relationship' in which a modern revolutionary and international movement cannot accept involvement. But it is in such situations that the workers in the highly industrialized societies learn to know their enemies, and when these workers set their plans in motion, the efforts of the left wing are reduced to a level that can be compared to pure sewing-club blather. In a world without intelligence the working class in fact represents the greatest intelligence; and it thus knows better than anyone that a 'Marxist-Leninist' party or any other party can only stage a new spectacle, a new fabrication in the form of new representations, classifications and ideology – that is, a new carrot that new party bosses can dangle in front of the cart to get the donkey to pull a load that is neither newer nor easier to pull than the old one. Ideology always serves those in power, functioning exclusively as a tool for the use of the new power specialists. Whether they call themselves SUF, KFM-L, FLN etc., etc., these groups are in error: they are no longer living in 1921, and even then the massacre of the Kronstadt Soviet shows that they were wrong. For the modern revolutionary movement it is crystal-clear that such groupings have nothing more to show than the old rags of the fallen revolution; they have nothing to do with the revolution of our time. And just as the workers have already driven out the clergy, the days of specialized activity and the defenders of the false revolution are numbered. Wherever a party exists, there is no freedom!

## 3

United as they are within the reactionary left wing, these adherents of the pseudo-revolution are the best protective corps and reinforcers of state

power. Their spectacular falsification of all revolutionary actions and ideas is precisely a necessary guarantee of the continued existence of the state, either in its bourgeois-democratic, its bureaucratic 'popular-democratic' or its explicitly reactionary form. How could it be otherwise, when one knows that the imprint of this or that state in the form of language, morals, customs and taste has always been able to constitute fifth columns in the mind of a pseudo-revolutionary. In Greece the seizure of power by the Junta, made possible by the defeat of a genuine revolutionary movement after the end of the war, has been a welcome and timely example for all Stalinophiles who labour for the continued persistence of the state. 'Serving the interests of the people' is the name of the spectacle with which they can attract applause from hands clapped pale-pink by the 'democratic' powers in other countries. Through its court-jesterish participation in the societal arena of the power elite, such a reactionary left wing serves to confirm the truth of the statement made by the S.I. in 1958: "We are not working for the spectacle of the end of the world; but for the end of the world of the spectacle".

#### 4

Subjected to the prevailing spectacular society of one or another state bureaucracy, the imbecile left wing's well-staged 'demonstrations' demonstrate nothing but their own lapdog mentality. It is through such 'demonstrations' that the left wing's navel contemplation truly comes into its own and proves to us and the whole world that they have allowed themselves to be subjected to state bureaucracy's spectacular society-like demagogic script for mass suggestion – the FLN groups, which are most widespread in countries with the status of welfare societies, openly use the Vietnam War to compensate for their inability to combat the domestic state bureaucracy. Funnily enough, in France and Sweden these groups enjoy a certain good will from the state, which is accepted by these groups. The fact that they are at one and the same time both with and against the state may perhaps explain the groups' schizophrenic relationship with a state that they have never questioned: the Hanoi state. When the chorus therefore invokes its new gods (Mao, Che Guevara, Uncle Ho, etc., etc.) it only confirms what

we already know: that those who claim to represent the revolution (which can contain everyone's boundless fulfilment of everyone's boundless desire) in reality represent the direct opposite of the revolution: a complete rejection of the realization of the subject and thus a profound contempt for the suffering of the masses. But the modern revolutionary, who is himself a product of the existing society until he manages to make a future society a product of himself according to his own intentions, has no use for the deployment of martyrs and self-sacrifice, but rejects such things as the foulest type of spectacle which would itself be an impossibility in the spectacle-free society he himself announces. In a world built up through the realization of the subject, self-sacrifice is the only crime.

#### 5

As a guarantee that crucial questions will not be asked, the assembly line of power produces an endless succession of pseudo-problems such as the problems of the negroes, women, youth, drugs, abortion and sport. Immediately the imbecile left wing goes tilting at these windmills, thus evoking gaping admiration from all sociologists, professors, 'intellectuals' and priests. But the fact is that these pseudo-barricades, all of which can be swept into the dustbin of history by direct revolutionary action, are deliberately built up by state power and its fawning supporters so that no one will have the time to deal with the main issue, which is the removal of state power itself. This means that in these latitudes state power, because of the intelligence of its opponents, is permitted to engage in partisan tactics. The reactionary left wing's acceptance of the battleground marked out by state power for the solution of a left wing's leisure problems, where they fight on the half of the pitch where power wants them to (that is, its own half), can only be seen as an attempt to hide the truth that is so uncomfortable to so-called socialists: their own fear of socialism.

#### 6

From the computer for the preservation of class society, certain words have been retrieved: 'democracy in the workplace' and 'co-determination'. The confusion that has arisen from the emergence of such placebos can

presumably be seen most clearly in the way the whole Springer press, from the far left wing to the right wing in international politics, wants the implementation of such an illusion; thereby also best hiding the real problem, which is WORK itself. It can come as no great surprise that all existing parties and parties under formation that have taken out a patent on the working class want to preserve this class for purposes of continued extortion, even if it means that the workers must be allowed to manage their own alienation. The party does not exist anywhere that will supersede the working class, along with work considered as work. The supersession of work is no 'utopian' idea (see SR 2); 'on the contrary it is the first condition for an effective supersession of the market-controlled consumer society and its splitting of every single human being's life into enforced 'leisure time' and 'working hours'. These complementary sectors of an alienated life must naturally prompt a revolutionary working class to abolish all alienating work, thus enabling its own supersession considered as a working class. The external contradiction between 'leisure time' and 'working time' also involves an internal contradiction, where the relationship between utility and exchange value is endlessly reflected. Only beyond these oppositions can humanity create from its activities a goal for its will, its consciousness, and enter into a society that it has itself created. The total and direct democracy of the workers' councils is the solution to all the present schisms' (Supplement to SR 2).

## 7

If it were only a matter of replacing those in power with new powers, the status quo would be maintained; one does not abolish oppression with a few changes in the details, as patent left-wing bureaucrats apparently believe. The object is to abolish the powers that colonize daily life, thus creating the potential for a total transformation of everyday life through a permanent revolution of the everyday, such that a new day will truly be experienced as a new day. Instead of new masters we now demand that we become masters ourselves: masters without slaves, masters of our own lives. Here lies one of the main problems for a modern revolutionary mass movement. However, no such movement exists today; but the very fact of calling for it here creates the potential for its foundation.

## 8

Clearly bedazzled by its own parliamentarism-accepting party apparatus, a statement from the executive committee of an alienated organization that works with alienating means, Venstresocialisterne (The Left Socialists) in Denmark, reproduced in *VS/BULLETIN* 33, is revealing. Here we have a striking proof of the inviolability of the 'left-political' parties. The statement says: 'HB [the executive committee] rejects the idea of a new and better workers' majority without fundamental changes in the power structure in the form of the establishment of organs for workers' power. This workers' power cannot be delegated out to members of parliament and union representatives, *but must be established and remain in the workplace*' (emphasized by SR).

Since we know that the experience of workers' councils and their power is greatly limited against the background of the bureaucrats' fantastic downplaying of this – the only, purest form of total democracy (which would after all also render them superfluous) – we must here present a minimum definition of the power of the workers' councils:

Annihilation of all other powers.

Direct and total democracy.

Practical unification of decisions and their implementation.

Delegates can be dismissed at any time by those who have elected them.

The abolition of the pecking-order of the farmyard (the hierarchy) and individual specializations.

The conscious mastery and transformation of all the conditions of emancipated life.

The constant, creative, active participation of the masses.

Internationalist dissemination and coordination.



## 9

Since the Situationist International's construction of a situation that led to the coup against the student union UNEF in Strasbourg and its continuation in Nanterre and the Sorbonne, which triggered the whole French spring revolt in 1968, many sympathizers have succeeded in implementing similar situations elsewhere in the world. But in contrast to these places, in Scandinavia they encounter a compact mass of stupidity in a left wing that wears the mask of the false revolution. If a *truly* revolutionary element were to try to develop a demonstration beyond the plans of a self-proclaimed demonstration leadership, such a revolutionary element – which in itself knows that it is not enough to rediscover radicalism in our time if it is not readjusted to correspond to the existing material equipment – will be regarded by the nobodies of an impotent left wing as provocateurs. Action thus ends not in creation, but in reaction, and it therefore risks being subjected to the 'fixers' of the 'demonstration leadership' who do not protect the demonstration from the police but the police from any revolutionary elements in the demonstration, who are then removed from the demonstration by these 'fixers'. This corresponds precisely to what the CGT stated about the spring revolution in France: 'Firm action must be taken against all attempts to lead the workers' movement astray'. Realizing the CGT's blunder would be the same as realizing one's own. Since no one will defend the revolutionary elements that are proclaimed provocateurs by the avant-garde of stupidity – well, we will do it. We will designate such a revolutionary element as Situationist – and this despite the fact that it may not be fully aware of the modern revolution's theoretical developments and its future flexible reference point.

## 10

The sociology that analyses pseudo-life becomes a pseudo-science itself as a result, and can probably muster a whole army of pseudo-avant-gardes in the attempt to refute us. It is clear that we can be censured on the basis of traditional legalities, but since it is just as clear that an avant-garde can only have its field of action in the present, this will also mean that from the point of view of the history to come it will far more accurately represent this

present than its censurers, whereby its criteria for the judgement of this epoch, contrary to the official values and in favour of the true values, will turn out to be correct. We are of course fully aware that such a theoretical development will mean that we have sentenced all those who thought they were our judges to exist in a delayed and therefore inauthentic present. When the last sociologist dangles from the guts of the last bureaucrats and capitalists, the world will probably have no more problems. Don't you think?

Since our theories are nothing more than the mini-life we are all forced to live and the possibilities of supersession that our world creates, the only critique of our activity that we can accept is a critique that arises out of the independent creation by the masses of the conditions of a liberated life. The revolutionary outbreaks of recent years have only been a confirmation of the rightness of our theory – now we wait impatiently for the realization of this critique to render the Situationist International superfluous.

"Almene betragtninger", **Situationistisk Revolution**, no. 3, 1970.

Translated by James Manley.

# ON KIRUNA

## Situationist International

The magic chalk circle that trade union bureaucrats have around them apparently no longer provides the intended protection anywhere in the world, since they must always, as a last resort, attempt to invoke the ghost of the revolution. The magic has been shattered. Thus when the manager of the Kiruna-Svappavaara mines said sarcastically to a small team of transport workers who had gone on strike, 'Why don't you start a revolution?', not many minutes passed before thousands of other workers also downed tools.

Of course the sociological rabble immediately had to exert themselves to find the possible causes of the strike. The workers were even asked, and unfortunately had the weakness not to answer the question with a beating. The answer the workers gave them was, 'We are striking because the pleasure of working has been taken from us' – 'Because we are being manipulated' – 'Because you have to shut up and follow the rhythm of the machine, a machine programmed by IBM: we loathe the noise and the rhythm and do not want to breathe in the exhaust gas of the machines. This has lasted a long time, and the situation is constantly getting worse. That is why we are striking.' The observers then concluded that the strike had not begun because of traditional money issues, but because of 'something' that is harder to formulate.

Here in Scandinavia, where the holy alliance – the harmony of the state, the parties and the trade unions – has made it possible to obtain some of the highest wages in the world for the benefit of programmed survival, and as a by-product also the highest suicide rate, the discord from Kiruna has apparently created a panic in the otherwise so boring musical ensemble. LO, the national federation of trade unions, whose initials could also stand for Law and Order, and which in one block encompasses all the Swedish trade unions, tried to retake the initiative in the traditional manner by starting

negotiations with the Swedish employers' association on wage hikes. But the mine-workers sent LO's bureaucrats the following telegram: 'No miners have asked LO to hold discussions with the employers' association – and about money?!'

In a letter LO asked the strike committee to send representatives to Stockholm. The workers replied: 'We have nothing to negotiate with you about in Stockholm. If you want to talk to us, you can come to Kiruna.'

LO reacted by resuming the negotiations with the employers' association, but at each new meeting the workers went to the counter-attack by making new demands (for example retirement at 40).

On 20th December our Swedish friends sent the following telegram to the strike committee: 'You have got the bureaucrats shaken STOP The very moment you do not continue to go forward the bureaucrats will be all over you STOP You can do anything STOP All power to the workers' councils STOP Be wary of the reactionary Stalinist groups STOP Mankind does not become happier until the last manager dangles from the last capitalist's guts STOP Long live the coming Italian revolution STOP Long live the miners' strike STOP The parliament of the streets.'

The famous sentence 'Mankind does not become happier...' now appeared on the walls of the sports hall, but was neither quoted by the Scandinavian press nor realized. All the same the workers were in fact the masters of the town, and they were not short of money (today, after the strike, there are still SKr 700,000 in the strike fund). The defeat came from within and was brought about by the partial nature of the acknowledgement and the self-underestimation created by the surroundings, always the best point of attack for the enemy against the proletariat.

The banks in Kiruna were more clear-sighted. They hastened to make the generous offer that they would grant the workers extensions on their mortgages until the end of the strike. An offer that was probably not made out of sympathy with the strikers, but rather against the background of the wish for the banks' continued presence in this northern district. The miners made the mistake of accepting the offer and thus missed the opportunity not only never to pay either rent or installments any more – it is obviously impossible to put thousands of workers out on the street or to go to the attack

against them – but also to seize the banks, to use their funds as pressure against the state.

The second mistake of the strike committee was finally to accept observers from LO at discussions among the strikers. The striking workers totally forgot that although they did not want to lynch the bureaucrats, they could still have taken them as hostages. This sense of the immunity of the bureaucrats was fateful, since it revived the old belief in negotiations, although in this case there could have been absolutely nothing else to negotiate about than precisely that – the skins of the LO bureaucrats themselves. After a small majority had voted to resume work, it appears that no results came from the negotiations. The swamp of the bureaucratic procedure thus little by little reconquered the zones where the supersession of alienation would have been possible.

At no time did the miners stand face to face with the police, who have only rarely been used against the workers in Scandinavia in the past thirty years, nor did they face any military intervention, since this is forbidden by the constitution. The only thing necessary was to overcome the lack of imagination and mystified awareness, in other words an application of the lesson of the Paris Commune in our own day.

"Om Kiruna", **Situationistisk Revolution**, no. 3, 1970.

Translated by James Manley.

## EUROPE'S FIRST AVANT-GARDE

Patrick O'Brien & Ambrosius Fjord  
[Jens Jørgen Thorsen & Jørgen Nash]

No avant-garde group in Europe in the 1960's has been so early, so radical, so productive and so inclusive as the Situationists from the Second Situationist International.

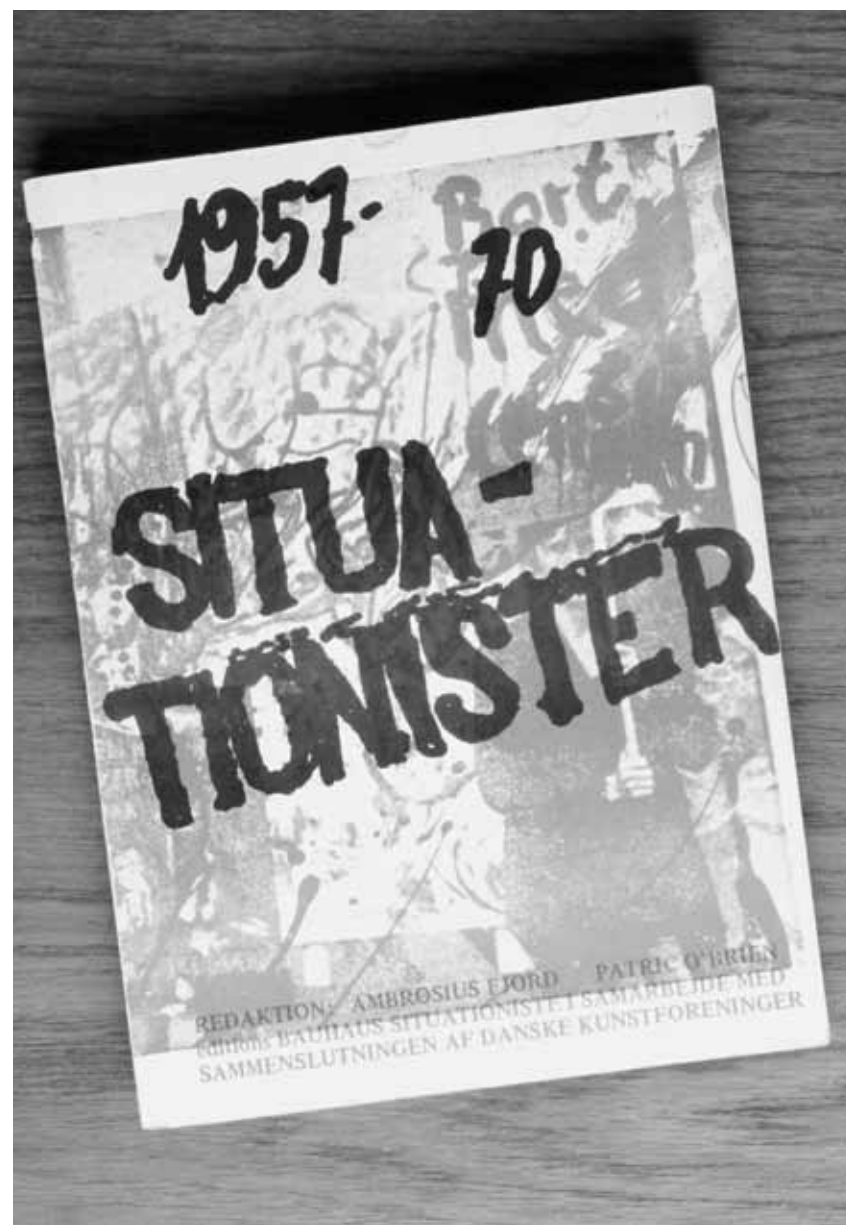
In fact they were the avant-garde not only for what is now with a mundane expression called the youth revolution, but in creating a whole new aspect of creativity, they established a broad spectrum of new possibilities which not even at this moment are fully explored.

They were Provos long before Provo. In his book on Provo, the Dutch author Simon Vinkenoog tells that the Provo originates in its ideas from the former Situationist Constant Nieuwenhuys. In his book on the French May Revolution, Jacques Landsmann in the same way states that Provo was founded by a former Situationist. Jean-Louis Brau tells that Provo originates from excluded Situationists.

The Situationists from the Second Situationist International initiated cultural revolt back in 1961 when they started revolts and manifestations against the consumerist society and its branches, urbanism and authoritarian organisations in art. They did this often in open conflict with police and authorities and they have received a series of fines and other punishments for this. Famous cases are the SPUR case, the Little Mermaid case and the cases for illegal occupations and détournings in the streets of Copenhagen.

Through for instance the CO-RITUS experiments they tried to include the audience in the creative process and to erect alternatives to the American domination of art life in the sixties through semi-official events like happenings, pop art, etc.

No avant-garde group in the sixties has been so active internationally as these Situationists. Their activities have included actions in all



Scandinavia, in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Italy, France, etc. Besides arranging fourteen international conferences and illegal actions galore they have published more than fifteen major books through their own publishing house, arranged five avant-garde film festivals, sent out more than 200 catalogues, pamphlets etc., more than 25 posters, 29 experimental films, five periodicals, street manifestations galore, participated in more than 200 exhibitions and besides maintained the collective centre Bauhaus Situationniste, Drakabygget.

The Situationist Bauhaus, located at the farm Drakabygget in Southern Sweden, has given work space to such groups as the German group SPUR, the Mexican Situationist Group, the American St. Leger Joynes-group, the group from the Danish Örestad Experimental Laboratory, the Swedish KRW-group, the Italian Gruppo Settanta, the Dutch Provos in exile, the International Overground Movement, and personalities such as Lufti Özök, Jesper Sølling, Asger Jorn, Mette Aare, Helmut Sturm, Heimrad Prem, Ansgar Elde, Dieter Kunzelmann, Guy Atkins, Hans Peter Zimmer, Ambrosius Fjord, Patrick O'Brien, Christoffer von Kremer, Roberto Manquori, Yoshio Nakajima, Niels Holt, Bengt Rooke, Attila Kotanyi, Bjørn Rosendahl, Hardy Strid, Peter Lindell, Liz Zwick, Jørgen Leth, Ole John, John Tchicai, Allan Nordmark, J.V. Martin, Dennis Kleis, Per Walhöö, Tom Krøjer, St. Leger Joynes, Novi Maruni, Finn von Eyben, Jacqueline de Jong, Ole Grünbaum, Staffan Larsson, Claus Hielborg, Bengt Ericsson, Runo de Turi, Bamber Gosling, Gordon Fazakerley, Roger de Monenstrol, Antonio de las Gambas, etc., etc.

In his book *Cours Camarade* Jean-Louis Brau correctly places the Situationists as initiators of the student revolution, together with the Japanese Zengakuren and the so-called Free Speech Movement of Berkeley, California.

Situationists stood behind the first European student revolt, the one in the University of Strasbourg 1966. But the Strasbourg Situationists were excluded by the little French Situationist Group around the French Situationist General de Bord (to which they never wanted to belong).

It seems unknown to Mr. Brau that the Second Situationist International initiated phenomena such as partial conquests of the town

(communicative urbanism) the praxis of 'Ateliers Populaires' and the demand of direct creative subversive activity almost three quarters of a decade before the events of May in France.

In contrast to these experiments the Bordists in Paris stressed the theory line. The long line of exclusions was exclusions of people and groups who almost did not want any adherence at all to the centralist French dictatorship from General de Bord. The Second Situationist International stressed the free participation and stated that any group could work along Situationist lines and that questions of adherence to the movement only was the question of co-working. And they could not stop laughing of the military influence on the Bordist when he tried to let J.V. Martin establish the I.S. 'Region Nord'.

In contrast to the Bordist who stressed theory, the Second International Situationists stressed the value of direct action and co-operation through mutual action, and exactly this was the reason for the schism in the Situationist Movement in 1962.

In Italy the Situationists from the Second started the action against the big multi-national Biennale and through this they started off the new Italian revolution through co-operation between workers, students and creative artists.

In Germany the co-operation with the Situationist group SPUR is well-documented through the *SPUR* magazine and the never-finished collective film 'Aus West Deutschland Nichts Neues' shot in Sept-Oct 1962. At the action for conquering the inner city of Copenhagen 1962 participated amongst others the SPUR-man Dieter Kunzelmann, an outstanding Situationist. He was later co-founder of the Commune Eins in Berlin, one of the originating points of the German student revolt, but later in a certain contradiction to the SDS.

For France, Brau and Landsmann seems to give a certain but in some cases limited documentation and the orientation is very chauvinistic.

So the Situationists, both the French and the big Second Situationist International, seem very clearly to be one of the central originating groups in the generation of revolt, though the Situationists from the Second International differ from the Situationists of the First through their stress

on activities rather than theories, anarchic openness rather than authoritative centralised leadership, and humour rather than seriousness.

But the real task of the Situationists from the Second is not only to have carried and transformed creativity from the traditional formal and theoretic experience into a social experiment.

To us this is secondary to the anarchist anti-political power in their actions. For instance, through a complete new use of mass media (for instance through the anti-happening 'The New Little Mermaid'). And their use of the street, the situation for experiments with a new way of creative life. And through the mutual process of creativity in the CO-RITUS. Through this the Second Situationist International have formed the first basic contribution in the 20th century to the traditions from Courbet, Proudhon, Sainte-Beuve, Gauguin etc...

We ourselves have chosen to let mass media tell the story and to do the documentation of this unique work. So nearly everything in this book are cuts and reprints from various papers and periodicals. We are grateful to Mr. Jens Jørgen Thorsen and Mr. Jørgen Nash for doing the layout so that the contents can be brought to the same vital level as their actions.

## STOCKHOLM-DUBLIN

Ambrosius Fjord – Patrick O'Brien

"Europe's First Avant-Garde", **Situationister 1957-70** (Copenhagen: Bauhaus Situationniste, 1971).



# DRAFT MANIFESTO OF ANTINATIONAL SITUATIONIST

Jens Jørgen Thorsen

We have the pleasure of presenting the manifesto at the foundation of the Antinational Situationist. We wish that interested comrades will send us commentaries and proposals for changes so that we can have the manifesto ratified, signed and distributed in an acceptable form.

We have not decided the final form of the manifesto. We can publish it as it is here in English translation followed by comment from the various undersigned comrades. Or we can have it changed in accordance with various comments.

When we have agreed on the final form of the manifesto we will have a final and correct English original made and published. The version here does not pretend to be proper English.

Comments and signatures to the address of this periodical.

## The Fourth World

A new and until now unseen world – Situationism – is now emerging. The coming international world peace through this international phenomenon. A new and forceful power is establishing in order to suppress the common creativity, the right of deciding through one's ways of life.

In the shade of the coming world peace the three international worlds, namely: The Western Private Capitalist; The Eastern State Capitalist; and the Third, the Poor, will be establishing an unmovable international system through international agreements and balance of powers. Being an international this system is deemed to develop a global organisation within with nations ranged in order and degrees, an international caste-system of hitherto unseen might.

The new unchallenged rulers of this new power-system will be the bureaucrats, the politicians and the political errand boys.

Their unit of power will be canalising, governing, uniforming, dictating and selecting the creative actions and thoughts through agreements of cultural exchange and economic support, through a process of mutual selection and economic censorship.

This process is automatically going to establish its own elite of culture and through this suppress the rights of cultural creativity of all others, their rights of deciding through their own ways of life.

This way the coming international world peace will turn into a total global war against those who do not belong to the three worlds of internationalism. A total war against those we here call the Fourth World.

This way a superorganised ambush is being prepared against all alternatives, and alternative, all out-siders and drop-outs, all freemen and strangemen, undergrounds, overgrounds, artists, scientists, gypsies, bums, proletarians and provotarians. In short everyone who is working on a realisation of Situationist thought.

On the military level all powers freed through the balance of powers will be used to destroy Situationist manifestations from the Kurds to the Black Panthers, from the artists and the students to the striking workers.

On the economic level a growing economic censorship will try breaking all those who have exchanged a private or a state capitalism in favour of a Situationist economy of life.

On the creative level all popular and free art will be suppressed in favour of state-authorized internationalistic elite art which is meant to pretend being the new culture. All research in nature or in the metaphysics will be limited to projects enforced by the economics of the politicians. All productive work will be forced towards standardising more rigidly then ever.

Maybe these people will try to pretend through political trickery that there should be four international worlds. In that case we are the Antinational of the Fifth World. Maybe they are going to pretend that there should be five international worlds. Then we are the Antinational of the Sixth world. We will always retain a number more than the others.

The characteristic of the international world is that the creative and the productive are forced to finance their own suppressor. This enforced payment is going on on all levels, but mostly and most significantly on the creative and productive levels.

It is exactly here the Situationists will intervene by creating an organism which on all levels will be able to realise a destruction of the three international worlds through manifesting the fourth world: The Situationist World.

### **Necessity of revolt**

We want to create an organism which on all levels will be able to realise the dynamics inherent in the Situationist movements through a final destruction of the passivating philosophism and its academic by-product: the pseudo-revolution.

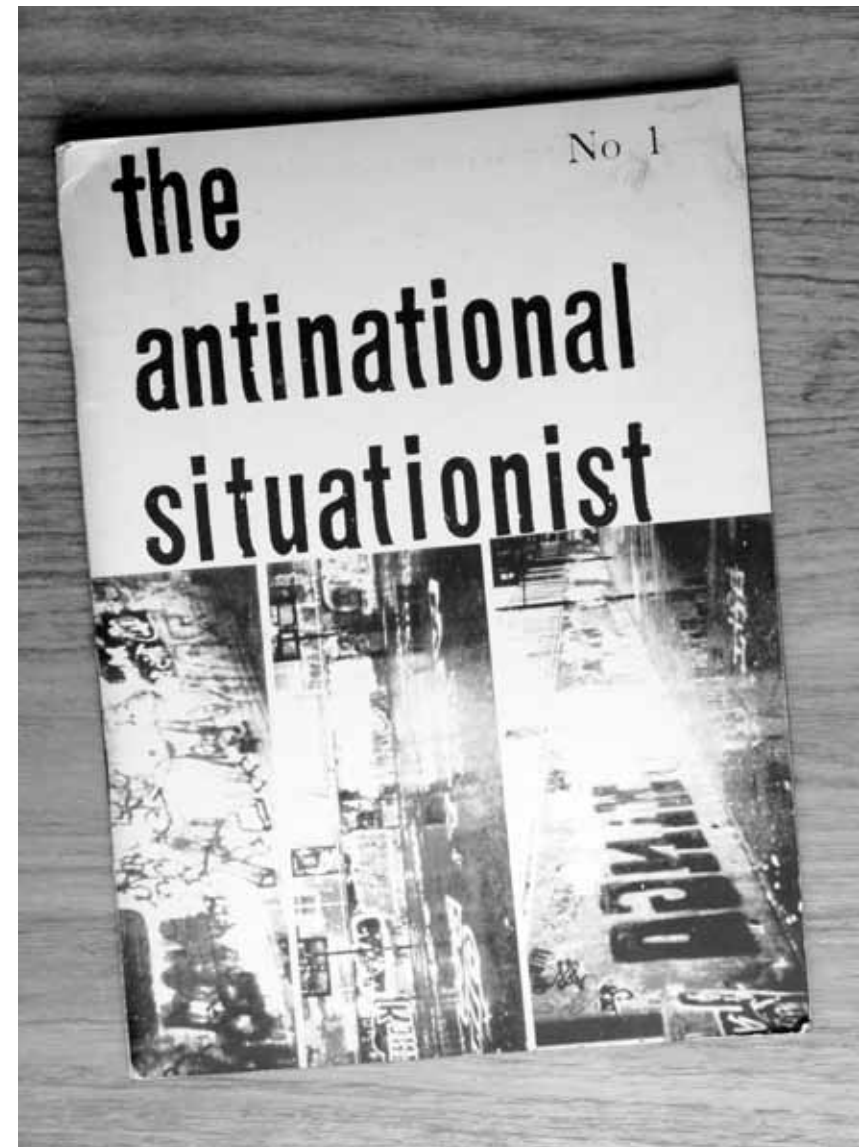
We aim at creating an organism which can optimise our dynamics instead of minimising them as any dynamics which are creative have a new direction. Our intention is to put a movement into life which is based on the necessity of disagreement.

We aim at creating an organism which is based on the process of realisation. Therefore we will have to exchange the theories of alienation in favour of the reality of realisation. This is our sole possibility of making an Antinational organism able to create a dissolving of the international world as our new movement will be based on the necessity of realising the Fourth World: The Situationist World.

We aim at creating a movement which quite simply is based on necessity. The necessity of correspondence, the necessity of common action, the necessity of poetry, the necessity of work, the necessity of laziness, loneliness, of reality and dream based on all necessity which comes from the necessity of life.

We are going to create a movement without limitations, without leadership, without censorship. Everyone wishing to realise Situationist thought is entitled to claim being a Situationist. Everyone wishing to participate in realising the Fourth World is entitled to claim being a Situationist.

We aim at creating a movement which will be able to put tools and means of survival and rise at the hands of the Fourth World



### The bankruptcy of International Situationism

Why did the Situationist fight so rapidly turn into the fight about Situationism? Why did the fight of the Situationists so fast turn into a brother-fight between Situationist factions? And why did this fighting lead to dissolutions and self-destruction among groups from Paris to New York? Why did it lead to a series of mutual exclusions and attacks, to the passivating philosophism which forced the movement on its knees, made it split into bits and alienating it in relation to its own existence, transforming it into a new ideology?

According to our analyses the explanation is to be found in the international tendency within the Situationist movement. Each fraction of the movement developed into a nationalism in Situationist disguise. This developed into a fight on the international level with each fraction fighting to get the ridiculous position of chief-ideologist.

This development shall be ended once and for all. Or more correctly: it ended by its own force and shall never again be repeated.

### The new organism

Michael Bakunin propagated the secret societies and proved them to be the until now strongest weapon in the fight for freedom and liberation. It was a weapon which was feared by both the bourgeois in power and by Karl Marx and his followers because secret societies are the only tool to paralyse nationalism and internationalism as it paralyses the common goal of the bourgeois and the authoritarian socialists: the domination through force.

Even the theses of Trotsky concerning the permanent revolution are after all nothing more than a disguised picture of dialectic changes between Authoritarian rulers. These rulers display the greatest possible guarantee that communist states – what a contradiction in adjecto – should ever be realised. The secret societies of Michael Bakunin on the contrary represent a first fundamental attempt to organise the permanent revolt.

Anarchist movements invented the idea of the secretary's office which was meant to serve as a communication link between equal anarchist groups.

Through its new organism the Antinational Situationist intends to break down the tradition of the secretary's office as we realise that the one who runs the communications also commands the informations and in this way occupies a rather centralised institution of power.

The Antinational Situationist aims at realising an organism which bases its coherence and its functions on the principle of free correspondence between autonomous groups and individuals.

This way we shall realise an organism able to break down the unifying classification, the sterilisation of everyday life on all levels. If everyday life is going to mean the dog-life of the conditioned reflexes, we will get rid of everyday life in exchange for the permanent feast of the permanent revolt.

If we at this moment pretend to own the full truth about nations built with lies we should be just as much lying as the internationalism we are fighting. Therefore the Antinational Situationist is going to play an honest game: divided we stand.

The new Situationist groups which emerge today must be like the factories of everyday life in which rebels unite in order to make their critic submerge the world through action. Nothing less will satisfy them than being fully satisfied with themselves.

This formulation is recommended by Jørgen Nash, J.V. Martin, Patrick O'Brien, Tom Krøjer, Ambrosius Fjord, Andres King, Yoshio Nakajima, Liza Menue, Heimrad Prem, Mette Aarre, Heinz Frietag, Liz Zwick, Novi Maruni and Helmut Sturm.

"Draft Manifesto of Antinational Situationist", **Antinational Situationist**, no. 1, 1974.

# IS THIS METAVILLE? A PROJECT FOR CREATIVE PLAY

**Jens Jørgen Thorsen in collaboration with Hoff and Ussing.**

Is this METAVILLE what the Situationists dreamed of for ages? The realisation of the Situationists' thesis of 1961 that the city and people's surroundings must be receptive to playful creative activity. Is it the decisive crystallisation of the Situationist desire for the people themselves to control their surroundings and experiment with them? Is this the collective city we have wished for?

## Initial theory

City planners are unable to identify with the real needs of the local environment. They cannot because it is not a question of their own needs.

This is why they must base their theses on a simulated standard family and by this pretence have created the 'standard family'. This typical family doesn't exist and never has existed, neither the Jensens, the Svenssons nor the Joneses. The major reason for the meagre potentials of surroundings and of life in modern residential areas is that the individual has no influence upon his own residence or upon the communal surroundings. Man is cut off from his surroundings, even the local ones, and is isolated from his fellow man even in crowded cities. People are made helpless by unshakable schemes in property rights.

If we restore to people the right to plan and control their local surroundings and the larger environs, we will provide the basis for a great, new birth of cooperation, liberation through teamwork, a perpetual CO-RITUS. We will shape a constant party out of what was called everyday life.

If we wish to provide an escalation of all this, we should at the same time cause a decline in its contraries. We need to diminish in order to create an escalation.

WE WILL DIMINISH: Planning from above, e.g. planning on behalf of others.

WE WILL ESCALATE: The possibility of everyone's participation in the planning, the occupants' takeover of the planning.

WE WILL DIMINISH: The responsibilities and authority of owners and housing boards.

WE WILL ESCALATE: The responsibilities and authority of the occupants, the responsibilities and authority of the occupants' district.

WE WILL DIMINISH: The monotony of high standards of materialism and the reign of mass products.

WE WILL ESCALATE: Materials and building techniques which provide for flexibility and a wide range of choice in the areas of utility and planning.

## The basic idea 1: the technology

In order to reach these goals, we have created a basic procedure which has two aspects: the one purely technical and the other concerned with developing and evolving various forms of governing.

On the technical level, our plan is to provide a basic construction which the occupants themselves can continue and complete as they see fit. The main idea is to erect a skeleton, a main structure, a sort of landscape on which various sorts of construction can take place.

The skeleton consists of two- or three-story platforms of concrete assembled from modular units, fully or partially manufactured, depending on which method is cheaper at the moment. On these platforms one can create apartments, institutions, shops, playgrounds, workshops at liberty. Flexibility has been ushered in by completely avoiding stable walls and by horizontal modular power lines in the installation's centre with variable connections.

The high degree of repetition, combined with well-established building methods, permits cheap construction and in stages, so that financing will not vary greatly between larger- and smaller-scale units in the building process.

Housing will fall into three categories:

Category A: a complete house. The occupant designs the house, which is delivered fully constructed. Here there is little real chance of additional development other than joining and dividing, and creating life, and creating sheds and greenhouses on the terrace.

Category B: a partially built house. What is delivered is a rough construction, with facade and bathroom. The occupant completes the house himself.

Category C: is made by the occupant. He installs everything himself in the rough house.

### The basic idea 2: democracy

The other basic point is occupant takeover of the control of the housing project at all levels.

Governing has two aspects, private and communal.

On the level of private control the occupants decide how their houses should look and how they should be built and equipped, what sort of construction materials should be used, etc.

On the communal level, occupant democracy will grow in the most simple and natural way if it is allowed to echo the growth of the city. The occupants will create their surroundings together and they will themselves organise the services to be provided.

It appears that the structure of government we suggest will be enable a form of organisation which is built from the bottom up. We conceive of an initial phase with the following groups:

Group A: Street groups, approximately 100 of them.

The street groups consist of about 15 to 20 housing units on both sides of a street. They are in charge of the common areas in the constructions around stairs, landings and indoors for active purposes.

Group B: Cell groups, approximately 25 of them.

The cell groups consist of from 40 to 70 housing units in a joint building unit. They are in charge of vegetation within their unit, a total of about 5,000 square metres which can be used for anything from swimming pools to animal quarters, open-air theatres or roller coasters.

Group C: Neighbourhood groups, approximately 5 of them.

The neighbourhood groups consist of about 300 housing units in the same geographical unit of construction. They are in charge of the streets, squares, and the common ground of about 5% of the housing area which contains nursery schools, kindergartens, meeting rooms, playgrounds, workshops, etc.. They decide how streets and squares should be designed and utilised.

Group D: Landscape Government. There will only be one.

The landscape government consists of representatives from all the neighbourhoods. It is in charge of nature, sports, and entertainment. It controls the entire housing area regarding the sale and rental of apartments, hotel operation, rental of the larger stores and the operation of the institutions of a more permanent and communal nature, for example, schools.

### A housing laboratory

By these means the project permits the occupants themselves to participate in the planning, construction and day-to-day direction of their areas to the greatest degree.

But into the project is also built the possibility of providing a laboratory where specific housing experiments can be made. In this lab it will be possible to analyze the experiments, as well as the whole building process as it proceeds, so that the direction and development of the process can be changed if the occupants see fit and in accordance with the results. These analyses will contribute to keeping the small stages in the black and the risks connected with popular ownership to a minimum. Investments in construction need only depend upon market demand, and one can eliminate faulty investment and the pressures on small investors' budgets which arise as a result of rental losses and empty apartments.

The analyses from this lab, combined with the experiences and decisions of the occupants, will provide the best foundation for change and improvement during the process of building this project.



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# ALL CULTURE IS COLLECTIVE: NOTES ON COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY

J.V. Martin

In these nostalgic 'Jesus-days' we should start an examination of the performance of the art of love with those avant-gardists: Adam and Eve. In the beginning Adam was deeply disgusted with being alone. Obviously, he didn't believe in the 'morbid devotion of man alone'; neither, of course, did Søren Kierkegaard.

History, which as we know cannot prove anything, can reveal however that this morbid devotion of man alone does not engender universal creativity but abortions.

Those who want to pass judgement upon us must admit that we depict our time more accurately than our critics. That is, we live in the present and judge those who think they can evaluate us; they exist behind the times and therefore in an inaccurate present.

The neo-realist lives in an unreal world but won't admit it. Long live the irrealist, who lives in an unrealistic society but admits it.

Inside the governmental concentration camp for culture, on the other hand, freedom is the crime of all crimes. Rather than being well-behaved robots inside this camp, we choose to be the terrible outsiders.

Down with art which is complacent and egocentric, which contemplates its own navel! Up with generating everybody's art for all! Long live the popular art of toilet graffiti, where one can be jerked off at 10pm if you call the right telephone number. The co-op movement produced collectively an outstanding product, Danish Lure(pak) trademark butter.

We are cooking in co-op butter. Our 'critics' are frying in their own fat.

J.V. Martin in cooperation with J.J. Thorsen, Rudkøbing and Venice, 1974.

# COSMONAUTS OF THE FUTURE

Texts from The Situationist Movement  
in Scandinavia and Elsewhere

Edited by Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen & Jakob Jakobsen

ISBN 978-87-993651-8-0



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NEBULA  
Autonomedia

1. Internationale Situation  
Kontinuerlig Aktion.  
Strömen 22, Randens 1968

Til redaktionerne af  
dagblade og kvæstionærer  
Skandinavien -

Forbenediget at  
udsende modtangsarde-bru  
seder vi Dem venligst bringe  
meddelinger om alle eksterne  
problemer af enhver natur  
støtte en kreds af mennesker  
i deres kamp for en mere  
verdenssituation, der udgør  
et alternativ til den eksisterende

Samlidrigt skal vi  
bede Dem om at sende os  
meddelinger om alle eksterne  
problemer af enhver natur  
støtte en kreds af mennesker  
i deres kamp for en mere  
verdenssituation, der udgør  
et alternativ til den eksisterende

1. 1. I.S.

Vi henleder endvi  
i nær fremtid udsendte tids  
hæftelser har heddelt  
har med 1. Internationale s

For retfærdigheds  
lagte proklamations fulde o  
på vort ansvar. Skulle det v  
pladsmangel, beder vi Dem v

Såfremt Deres bla  
at bringe artikler om hvad  
ikke blot at være den eneste  
beder vi Dem venligst rette

PS. Vi beder redaktionerne