

## From Each According to Their Ability... The Postmodern Pro-Situ

*Le surréalisme est évidemment vivant. Ses créateurs même ne sont pas encore morts. Des gens nouveaux, de plus en plus médiocres il est vrai, s'en réclament. Le surréalisme est connu du grand public comme l'extrême du modernisme et, d'autre part, il est devenu objet de jugements universitaires. Il s'agit bien d'une de ces choses qui vivent en même temps que nous, comme le catholicisme et le général de Gaulle.*

After a screening of Debord's *Howls for Sade* in London, a work best known for its concluding 20 minutes of silence, a particular instance arose wherein the enraged spectators of the first viewing began to beg and plead with those waiting for the second screening to avoid the film. The incident only sparked further desire in the waiting crowd to view the film.

The phenomena of the postmodern shift in the pro-situ doesn't leave one with much to view, amounting to nothing beyond an update on the classical formulation long since described by the SI itself, but its persistence in and around the field of idiocy demands some comment yet. It serves as the next best thing in the science of recuperation, a recuperation hinged upon a crusade against itself. If Debord had spent his days writing scathing denunciations of every wretched piece of literature to arise on the question of Dadaism or Surrealism, it suffices to say we wouldn't have seen a SI with his presence, but the logic of the latest reiteration of the pro-situ must, by unspoken definition, never display an effort to think beyond these basic parameters of generally understood stipulation in membership. The SI was the end of revolution, such is now window dressing for what remains of an internal hierarchy of radical credentials based not on any theoretical questions, but rather on a word count on how many denunciations have been produced aimlessly defending a reputation that never needed the effort. They hate academia, of course, the pro-situs, but they're certainly not below a turn towards its developments when their preferred delusions of historical consideration are concerned.

Now, most of the targets selected by the post-modern pro-situs of today are hardly as intriguing as Howls for Sade was and still is, but the point remains that this lesson is still one which has yet to be adopted by those who have renounced this title to earn it. The SI has indeed been recuperated in a number of capacities, but the reality which the pro-situs have missed is the significance of their role in this process. The fiery denunciations of every *individua* academic to dare take pen to paper in the university to speak of the SI, the online petitions against any act deemed to be 'anti-situationist', all have become integral PR stunts for the movement of these recuperative acts, seals of really existing radical legitimacy that denote books as something of value, negative or not. Now, in this dichotomy, it is of course irrelevant if any given work or book is or is not of any notable worth, the only relevant factor is how grand the ensuing internet-feud will be. Debord once spoke of the destruction of literacy via the rise of computer sciences in comments, though it seems unlikely that he had banked on this laughable a realization of such.

There is indeed a waiting comment to be levied at this critique, however, namely the 'why are you legitimizing the illegitimate attempts to legitimize recuperation' bit, but such would have been tired enough with or without this preemptive remark. These comments do not pretend to defend any historical avant-garde, or any historical organization, they do not appear to play at situationist *historiography*, but rather to realize situationist *theory*. McKenzie Wark recently made a 3D figure of Guy Debord, how terribly recuperative, yes, we must not have the image of Mohammed seen in representation, this is all fine and well, but we are at some point or another going to have to return to the question of getting on with the making of revolution. The SI is a niche of academia today, recuperation does indeed exist in this sense, but not much of an understanding of this phenomena will be found in the face value present in the aimless screaming of the postmodern pro-situ, a now well accepted element of this academic niche in and of itself. If the question of revolution today finds itself played out purely in debates over academic publicity and the recuperation of the SI, it is quite safe to say not much should come of revolution again. Indulgence in a purely academic understanding of the SI is quite thoroughly pointless, just as Debord figured surrealism wasn't worth the comparable effort, this much serves as a rather basic

fact, but it seems necessary to reiterate that the mere contrarian academic defense of the political SI has long since been transferred in the grounds of academia as well.

These comments might not have been warranted, however, they could have just as easily been conveyed with a reiteration to the modern pro-situ as brief as 'from each according to their ability'...

-R.-M. Rogers

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