

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)

Anti-Copyright



Burn All Bibles

Apio Ludd

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My Own #24

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A while ago, while sifting through some individualist anarchist ephemera, I came upon an article that talked about a debate between two egoists. The topic on which they were debating is not relevant to what I want to say here. What is relevant is the way the debaters chose to support their viewpoints. Neither of these allegedly egoistic individuals took the time to develop and present their own arguments based on their own lived experience of willful self-creation...No, instead they quoted chapter and verse from the writing of Max Stirner, as if it were sacred scripture.

I would expect creed-ridden christian cretins or mass-minded marxist morons to search their sacred scriptures to support the beliefs of their faith. After all they *have* faiths, scriptures, prophets, deities. From their own points of view, it makes sense that such feckless, faith-ridden fools would turn to their scriptures rather than think and feel for themselves. After all such self-guided thinking and feeling could well lead them to doubt the dreary and dull-witted doctrines of their faith...And then where would they be?

But for those who claim to be self-owning, self-creating individuals to turn to anyone or anything other than themselves

to support their ideas, for those who say that they are creating their lives and their worlds as they desire, to the extent of their abilities to treat any book as a scripture or any thinker as a prophet is an absurdity, a deep contradiction. So for any self-proclaimed individualist or egoist to treat Stirner or Nietzsche as prophets and their writings as scriptures is not only insulting them deeply, but more significantly is exposing herself as just another dim-witted disciple in the hapless herd of the faithful. It matters not that he calls his faith names like "individualism" or "egoism"; it remains a form of slavish servitude to a higher power of her own creation. Otherwise, he would have no need for a sacred scripture, for a bible to quote, because she would be quite capable of speaking and acting for herself.

Don't get me wrong. I love Stirner's and Nietzsche's writings. These guys were smart. They could be hilarious, poetic, fierce. There's plenty in their writing worth stealing to weave into your own ways of playing with your life and your worlds. But as soon as you treat these writings like scripture, you are no longer stealing from them for your own play. Instead you have given yourself over to them; you have turned these writings into something sacred for you to worship..You have turned them into a bible.

A genuinely willful self-creator will refuse to be bound to a bible, to serve any scripture. At the least sign that such servitude has begun, she'll be ready to burn her bible. But fire is not the only (nor even necessarily the best) tool for burning a bible. In this case, what the self-creator wants to burn is the sacred hold the book has over him, what makes him turn to it not for tools or toys to steal for use in her own play of self- and world-creation, but for *answers* to apply universally. To eradicate this sacredness, to burn it away, the best tool is the caustic acid of mockery and laughter, sarcasm and contempt applied as frequently and generously as necessary to fully eradicate the taint of the sacred.

And if the bibles you need to burn are those writings of Stirner or Nietzsche that you have turned into sacred scriptures for yourself -- well, luck you! These writings themselves provide endless examples of how to annihilate the sacred with this caustic acid. So steal this wise-ass weapon of wit from your grinning, godless gods. They're dead...they can't stop you! Then apply it to your own witless worshipful attitude. Then you should find you've turned the books back into tools and toys to play with...And if not...?

Then the next time you have a big bonfire, go ahead...Throw in your Stirner, throw in your Nietzsche, laughing uproariously, singing "Stirner is dead! Nietzsche is dead! As dead and gone as god!!!" Because after all, when you're finally ready to live without any bibles, you can always steal yourself new copies of those books.