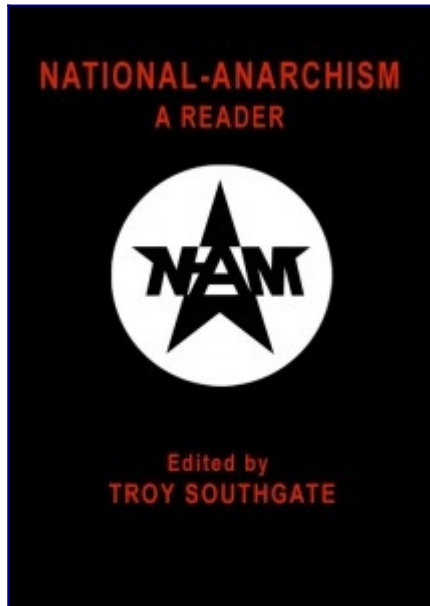


Pushing the System: Troy Southgate's *National-Anarchism: A Reader*

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1,853 words

[National-Anarchism: A Reader](#)

Ed. Troy Southgate

London: Black Front Press, 2012

“That which is falling, should also be pushed” — Nietzsche, as quoted by Troy Southgate

This is a very well organized book. This is an interesting, enlightening, and autodidactic book. This is a much needed book. While I don't recall when I first heard about National Anarchism, I do know that I have never really fully understood it. Until now.

Troy Southgate's own words regarding National Anarchism capture the essence of this book:

Our vision, in a nutshell, is one of small village-communities in which people occupy their own space in which to live in accordance with their own principles. These principles depend on the nature of the people forming the community in the first place, because the last thing we wish to do is impose a rigid or dogmatic system of any kind. In theory, therefore, National-Anarchists can be Christian or pagan, farmers or artisans, heterosexual or homosexual. The important thing, however, is for National-Anarchist communities to be self-sufficient. They should also be mutualist, rather than coercive. In other words, people should be free to come and go at all times. If you are unhappy with the unifying principle of one National-Anarchist community, then simply relocate to another. On the other hand, communities must be respectful of their neighbors and be prepared to defend themselves from outsiders.

Finally, contrary to the increasingly desperate smears of our enemies on the both the Right and Left of the political spectrum, we are not using Anarchism as a convenient tactic to conceal a secret fascistic agenda of any kind—we are deadly serious. In addition, as mutualists we abide by the ‘live and let live’ philosophy. People are different and have different values. In modern, pluralistic societies, those values tend to conflict and it is inevitable that some values will override or perhaps even eradicate others. We think certain values are worth preserving for future generations and this is why we wish to create a climate in which this is possible. National-Anarchism, therefore, is Anarchism *sui generis*. An Anarchy of its own kind. (pp. 43–44)

Troy Southgate has put together an ambitious tome: a reader that holds the essential text of a revolutionary political movement inside its simple black, red and white covers, while remaining clear, to the point, and amazingly approachable. Southgate’s collection of 23 essays is deceptively easy to read, and collectively deep to ponder.

Combining the talents of contributors such as Keith Preston (attackthesystem.com), Welf Herfurth (*A Life in the Political Wilderness* [Finis Mundi Press, 2011]), Flavio Gonçalves (of Finis Mundi Press), Brett Stevens (of the Amerika.org blog), Andreas Faust, and Josh Bates as well as Troy Southgate, *National-Anarchism: A Reader* represents the best of a new cycle of visionary thinkers.

From the very first sentences of the foreword, Southgate pulls no punches regarding the ideological underpinning of this book:

It may sound hard to believe, but there was a time when ordinary people had more control over their own lives and inhabited a world in which the vast majority of individuals were able to live in close-knit communities with their own kind, pursue a more rural existence away from the shallow environs of the average shopping mall, hunt or grow food for their own consumption, make conversation and music in a society without television or computer games, and even pass traditional values to their own children without the pernicious influence of Establishment schools and the mass media. So what went wrong? (p. 1)

This book offers both the answer and the antidote to that question. Kicking aside the shallow left and right sidebanks of history, National Anarchism “seeks to transcend the superfluous and obsolete ideologies of ‘left’, ‘right’ and ‘centre’” (back cover).

It is refreshing — in an age where the typical answer to that question would have been full of backward glances, romantic hand-wringing, and pessimistic doom and gloom predictions concerning the outcome of the challenges we are up against as a folk and as a people — to read the words of those who look straight ahead, critically and with sound plans for a continued undimmed and undiminished existence. Our continued undimmed and undiminished existence, and the rest of the sane world’s as well. Hope is here. More than hope — here we see a presentation of vision, a collection of thought, experience, reason, and will combined with a testament of faith from those who have obviously been digging deep and thinking hard about the future we face as our past crumbles away.

The book opens with a historical overview of the movement. Part educational, part who’s who and what’s what, this chapter is essential reading as a refresher or as a crash course, depending on your

level of knowledge. Either way, it gives a great amount of detail and background succinctly and clearly, without condescension.

This chapter is followed by Brett Stevens' interview with Troy Southgate which expands the overview of the movement in an interesting and personable manner. This feeling of personal presence, of the book having been written in the authentic voices of real men, coming out of real experience and practical reflection, is a quality that sets this book apart from most political texts. It is extremely readable (without being 'dumbed down'); the chapters build with seeming effortlessness upon each other like conversations that take place when great minds meet.

Troy Southgate's essays act as the central 'voice' alternating with and connecting the other 'speakers' in this conversation.

Chapter 3, aptly titled "National Anarchism in a Nutshell" is just that. Josh Bates does a great job of distilling the movement to its vital essence: "National-Anarchist philosophy, then, is not the oxymoronic amalgamation of right and left wing political ideologies but a harkening to the original and true meaning of *nation* combined with a desire to preserve the natural races of man and the aspiration to free all people from the chains of both left and right wing totalitarianism and imperialism" (p. 28).

Flavio Gonçalves' essay, "National Anarchism: The Way of the Future," which makes up Chapter 5, defines further what National Anarchism stands for in light of the movement's repudiation of dogmas of state, racial supremacy, racism, anti-racism, equalitarianism, and the whole left/right concept.

N-A stands for something that many believe to be pessimistic and/or defeatist, and considering the degree of social degradation that is so deep and rooted we see no way of turning this boat around, if you will allow me to use an analogy from "Ship of Fools". Drugs, alcohol, MTV and sexual degradation have affected our society in such a way that it is impossible to return to the old days, some even consider those things as a fundamental part of our society.

N-A stands for the termination of nation-states, has a necessity for survival and upholds the need of a rebirth of our tribal spirit. All national territories should be regionalized, fragmented, reduced to small territories and within those territories people with common ethnic or cultural affinities will gather together . . ." (pp. 37–38).

Keith Preston's essays comprise chapters 7, 11, and 13. These vary from his brief 4 page "Anarchism of the Right" which presents core ideas: "White libertarians and anarcho-capitalists tend to be economics-oriented, anarchists of the Right prefer to emphasize the particular, and champion the sovereignty, autonomy, and preservation of the unique cultures, regions, ethnicities, identities, faiths and tribes against the homogenizing and universalizing forces of the global economy, technology and imperialism" (p. 47) and core names: "De Benoist, Nietzsche, Jünger, Evola, Schopenhauer, Belloc, . . . Proudhon, Bakunin, Tolstoy, Stirner and Kropotkin. Its leading current proponents are Troy Southgate, Flavio Gonçalves, Hans Cany, Peter Topfer, Andrew Yeoman, Welf Herfurth, Chris Donnellan and, at least peripherally, myself" (p. 46) to his 103 page "Philosophical Anarchism and the Death of Empire," an essay which is, as he notes in his preface, "an effort, however humble, to apply traditional anarchist theory to the world situation we contemporary radicals currently find ourselves in, particularly the emergence of the New World Order, the ongoing dilemma of the Leviathan state, and the uniquely

subtle form of totalitarianism that has caught the fancy of the elites of the First World nations, so-called “political correctness” (p. 126). Heady, heavy stuff, written in clear and accessible language free of multi-syllabic words that sound clever but are devoid of substance.

Along with essays that cover stances on everything from alternative education, economic autarky, and environment all the way to addressing and examining anarchism itself, *National-Anarchism: A Reader* includes essays that deal with components that should be part of every emerging and existing movement’s normal operations. Andreas Faust weighs in on the power of pranks and hijinks as promotional tools, looking at ways activists can use and manipulate the media in his essay “Humour as a Weapon,” and Welf Herfurth offers examples, pointers and truisms concerning the positives of political confrontation in “The Strategy of Tension.” Again, as with every piece of text in this book, the essays are logical, understandable and worth reading.

As an editor of a book that is destined to become the defining text of a movement, Troy Southgate lives up to his role. Not only are his essays well written themselves, and balanced adroitly throughout the book, the chapters are arranged intelligently, each leading up to, complementing or building from the others that come before it. The individual voices of the writers are not lost in an overall mix, yet the book keeps to its single note – that of being a National Anarchist Reader—with no jarring or discordant elements. Apt quotations (“A good man and a good citizen are not exactly the same thing.—Augustine” (p. 74)) head up some of the essays, while handy lists of further reading suggestions follow others. The font is easy to read, the paper stock bright and the margins wide enough for note making.

While no one ought to judge a book by its cover alone, a well-designed cover is no small advantage in giving a book appeal; *National-Anarchism: A Reader* is beautifully designed—from the glossy black of its background to the stark red of its lettering to the well sized and well placed NAM Star-in-circle symbol presented in eye-catching white in the center of the front cover. The back cover is as well laid out as the front, albeit less stark and more textual as befits its place.

The first real words in the book are from the finest of all English poets, John Keats: “The only means of strengthening one’s intellect is to make up one’s mind about nothing; to let the mind be a thoroughfare for all thoughts” (unnumbered fourth page). The last word printed in this book is “victory.” It concludes a final sentence: “In the long-term, it is the only possible road to victory” (p. 306). I don’t know if Mr. Southgate realized that he began and ended his reader this way, but I find that he chose (however he chose) perfectly — with a fitting opening quotation, and a fitting final word that make two perfectly fitting sentiments. *National-Anarchism: A Reader* makes a great case for the complete and utter sensibleness of its positions, thoughts, stances, attitudes, agendas, and, ultimately, its victory.