Daniel Colson
Beyond Good and Evil!
early 2000s

Retrieved on February 18, 2011 from raforum.info
Translation by Jesse Cohn.

theanarchistlibrary.org

Beyond Good and Evil!

Daniel Colson

early 2000s

I am radically in disagreement with Philippe Corcuff (*Charlie Hebdo n° 548*, 18/12/2002). Anarchism does not authorize half measures. That is to say its major inspiration indeed comes from nihilism and from a relativism or an absolute subjectivism, justifying the point of view of the Nazi, the libertarian banker, the Stalinist prosecutor as well as that of the revolutionary autogestionnaire syndicalist, and he should then reject it radically. That is to say its autogestionnaire and federalist subjectivism and perspectivism indeed contain a true alternative to the failures of all the other forms of socialism and it is then necessary to examine the anarchist project attentively and without half measures, to endorse it or to refuse it.

In following Corcuff, let us stop on what seems to be the most scandalous point, but also the point which is most decisive, concerning the anarchist dimension of Nietzsche (but especially of Spinoza, in fact) : the refusal of the distinction between good and evil, and its replacement by the distinction between what is good and what is bad for a given being, in which, as the anarchist Ernest Coeuderoy writes, “when each one fights for his own cause, no one will need to be represented

any longer". It is not certain that Corcuff is not led, in his criticism, to be satisfied once again to the half-measures which so often ensnare emancipatory movements in the governmental drifts of socialism, whether they take the hard form of the immoral and oppressive dictatorships of state socialism or the apparently gentler form of rallying wholeheartedly to the existing capitalist order.

The first of the half-measures one finds, to begin with, in the way in which Corcuff can recognize at the same time that the distinction between good and the evil is at the foundation of all the oppressive transcendences (God and his priests or imams, the State and its judges, Capital and its commercial logic, Science and its apparent determinisms), but while at the same time he is afraid to see this distinction radically replaced by an immanent evaluation of what is good and what is bad for human beings. However, in this matter more than others, half measures are impossible. Even in a homeopathic dose, even in dotted lines, the transcendence of good and evil, truth and falsehood, always tends to impose the domination of its priests, its leaders, its scientists, its parties, its States and its judges, its more or less violent compromises with the existing order. The emancipatory struggle has no choice. A radically immanent emancipatory movement must be developed, founded on federalism, the free association of free forces, self-management, the capacity of beings (whether individual or collective) to determine for themselves the reality of the values which link them, without relying on any external authority, on any external regulation.

Corcuff's second half measure concerns his reading of the anarchist project. Our "libertarian social democrat" (undoubtedly too much a "social democrat" and insufficiently "libertarian") is right to emphasize how much anarchism, Nietzsche, and Spinoza challenge any transcendence, any categorical imperative, any external law. But he does not understand in what respects anarchism — like Nietzsche and

Spinoza — is always committed to an ethical evaluation of the quality and value of the forces which motivate communities and human beings, an evaluation entirely internal to these forces, an immanent judgement, particularly demanding, which proceeds directly through the processes of association and disassociation of emancipatory forces, by the selection and federation of the forces able to make an emancipated world prevail.