

# Escapism

Peter Lamborn Wilson

March 2008

Swear fealty to the dark leprechaunism of revenge  
Social Camouflage  
Fabulous Insularity  
become a lump of sensual actuality in the thin gruel of  
Spectacular Electromagnetism  
Set your basement afloat.  
Behind the iron curtain of sheer boredom  
with Civilization as we know it psychic  
discoveries proliferate & angelic sensations  
are a dime a dozen.  
like a dirigible sleepy with nitrous oxide  
finally so attenuated it can trance us  
with streaming sensations of thinking we remember  
what it was.

What if every perversion were legalized except yours? every drug decriminalized except the very one you need to attain enlightenment? all politics permitted saving only the perfidious & universally despised credo you happen to adhere to?

The Escapist Militia practises reenactments  
costumed complete with powdered wigs  
of greet moments in the history of haute cuisine  
a fantasia of negation.

Escapism flies under the radar of the consumerist panopticon with a critique of reality honed by decades of serious drug use & evasive shillyshallying.

Obsessions are veritable Galapagoses of Mutuality & elegant boredom.

Renounce the emptiness of vacations for the pleroma of permanent unemployment — the vaguely impenetrable isles of the blest.

Even short thunder showers threaten power authority with free electricity that swells up the head like a grape & makes it blush.

Rain is a coast & briefly we're degenerate wreckers eager to pilfer whatever flotsam washes up on our distant shore.

Those who huff these alien spores drift back in time & temporarily indwell the bodies of long gone smokers who in turn have wafted off to even earlier dates & remoter climes ad perhaps infinitum. In 1911 these devotees of extraterrestrial mycofumation are disguised as opium addicts in Fu Manchu's Limehouse den beneath the Thames. Off I go for one gilded soporific transmutatory augenblik & while I'm vacant who knows what nostalgist from the 23<sup>rd</sup> century passes thru my empty brain.

Revolutionary Escapist will prevail thru sheer inertia when millions too bored & sluggish to sustain the vibratory level of incessant Progress slump toward the portholes like so many rats, clamber down the ropes & scuttle off into the conceptual hinterlands on a *sauf-qui-peut* basis in search of some consolatory obsession.

What we love must be incomplete. We must ruin ourselves for it financially & morally like the sunken wreck of a Spanish treasure galleon even tho it's always free in every sense of the word including loose unattached lost errant careless unformed & lewd.

Our Militia utilize aimless wandering or random walk to neutralize surveillance & stymie all statistical analyses of strategic supply, each dressed in the military motley of some different & unheard-of hopeless lost cause.

Tropicalismo

Orientalismo

Nostalgismo

Horizontalismo

... each with its favorite bistro.

Aimless wandering turns in on itself & devolves into a tableau vivante of sentimental anniversaries & badly printed newsletters a college so invisible as to seem diaphanous the eternal avant-garde & everlasting gospel so secret some of its members don't even know they're in it.

A shimmering glow of Diireresque melancholia suffuses the twilight of Kapital. Snow & night seem thicker, more radiant.

So sue me. And go to yr grave with regrets for the winged words you wasted.

Exile is the opposite of Escape. Sunlight deprivation syndrome is no joke.

Is. Is. Is. The tyranny of the intransitive.

If I remember correctly it was during Shay's Rebellion certain backwoods sages propounded the doctrine that parts of Massachusetts & Vermont had reverted to the primordial condition of Nature, therefore free to construct their sovereignty *ex nihilo* or perhaps even remain in that Hyperborean moment of perfect liberty forever or until someone finally dragged them back.

Aubrey Beardsley in suburban New Jersey  
in 1957 thinks he's trapped in the  
fat boy like Felix the Cat in a bottle  
of india ink– superhero stuck  
in his secret identity scared to jump.  
But he jumps. Thank god for LSD.  
The whole gang has been reincarnated.  
Few days are so pleasurable as those  
on which one quits a job. Crime pays.  
Slowly slowly one makes up for having  
died so young last time.  
How To Start Your Own Country.  
Is it possible to remember a smell  
or is the smell itself the memory?  
If only our manifestoes  
could attain the rhetorical felicity of  
The Acme Catalogue of Heirloom Roses.  
As in the French Assembly  
if you're reactionary enough you suddenly  
find yourself on the Left so also  
with roses. Talk about yr  
poesie trouvee . If only!  
Political parties would be classified by scent.  
I see them as bombs  
slow deep silk mnemonic bombs.

Attar of cordite at the altar of contrition for lukewarmness  
myrrh for hesitations benzoin of strangled desires & incorrect regrets  
incense that explodes knocks over the tapers & shreds the ikebana  
gleeful joss for all the little devils who'll become our Castenedan allies  
the immortal part the mumia of mummies like Boris Karloff  
wafted aloft on a cloud of balsam.

If smells have color this one's tinged with back to school melancholia like a vast field of su-  
perannuated sunflowers down to a riverbank where no one is swimming. I'd call it nostalgic but  
any smell is nostalgic, wallpaper in a room where you once recovered from some disease.

Selfish hallucinations damp paperbacks  
the luxury of a perfect excuse  
for a day in the bag in the tent  
contemplating the sensitive chaos of  
dripping thinking how sorry we'll be  
when it stops & the trail opens again  
& we'll have to hike back down to catch up  
on all the dryness we missed.

We want to quit our lousy jobs in autumn even if we're self employed  
& camp out in apple orchards amongst the windfalls like drunken cows

Unfortunately utopia was all too affordable  
a politics that begins at my door & ends only  
in floods of tears  
our only innovation being to admit defeat &  
plan the retreat into some no-go Chernobyl;  
where we can become the monsters we are.  
Spirit possession would be the ultimate vacation  
ridden by the Orisha like a divine  
Jekyll/Hyde or Heckle/Jeckle, the twin  
ravens of Odin, knower of runes & ruins  
Escapism believes that "life is elsewhere"  
but accessible. An oasis of orgone.  
Temporary Ruins.

Eccentrics are successful escapists. They have diamond bodies. I knew one who lived in 1911,  
including wingtip collars & a player piano, but suddenly he lost his adamantine purity of inten-  
tion, realized he was crazy & rejoined the modern world. A dervish once told me "They call us  
escapists—but if you're being chased by a tiger & have no gun Escapism makes perfect sense."

Fuckin' John Muir & John Burroughs 'ld be doing 7-to-40 in Club Fed as ecoterrorists if they  
were above room temperature, as Tuli says, & still with us. "Protected wilderness" may be an  
Orwellian oxymoron but where else is there left to escape to but state parks?

The rich have already escaped  
to all the islands & we must  
re-define insularity perhaps as  
an oasis of ruin or failure  
obsessive & remote  
we await the withdrawal of Heaven's  
Mandate from the fabric of  
reality itself. Scholars stones spontaneous  
conversation driving home drunk in  
moonlight calligraphy: escapist as resistance.

Nothing to lose but yr cyber roles  
in the ballet mechanic of the dominant paradigm  
The International Horizontalist Society  
Oblomov in Kathmandu  
The League for Endarkenment  
O [your name here] the highest form of Escapist Lit  
blurs the border between Shiraz & now.

Voluntary identity politics. Misidentity politics.  
Potential possession by ancient voices  
prophesying the usual punch-up.  
Patron saint Houdini. We savor the effluvium of your ectoplasm.  
Please evade “maturity,” the last two minutes before death.

A post post colonialism in which rare & delicate languages fail to go extinct but instead proliferate with the mutability of Darwin’s Finches. Survival of the Happiest. Doctrine of continual creation according to the hieromathematology of the otherwise inexplicable beauty of physical things.

Time itself is lunar. It swells. It diminishes. Space is solar. Electricity doesn’t conquer darkness — it erases stars.: We’ve had socialist plus electricity, now let’s try, it with endarkenment. Anarcho-noctambulism. Black reaction back to prelapsarian hyperboreanism & nutritive chaos. Night equals right. Crushed velvet. Pre-industrial musk. Only slaves could conceive of heaven as unrelieved daylight. Escapism’s paradise lies in the shadows of the moon.

Sailing to an island  
might as well be science fiction  
ions ozone iodine delight  
dappled light bewilders but  
sharpens appetite. Raoul Dufy, meet  
Winslow Homer. Pascal would’ve bet on  
Neptune — a brine-drunk existentialist seduced by Germanic nudism.  
All islands are Celtic. One is saintly.  
One drinks a lot  
because so little is actually at stake  
in these pro-tem clandestine eutopias.

Neo-Exoticism decides not to apologize for its gaze of yearning toward alterity because ultimately uniformity however progressive numbs the Imagination & other erogenous zones with the neo Brutalitarian novocaine of pseudo choice — any color so long as it’s black said Ford the Fordist, Hitler’s guru — because all the colors of the spectrum are secretly black: the universal mourning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for the Future it had allowed itself to picture in the technopathocratic subconscious seizure of its greed for universal empire — the Empire of the Same in 600 attractive designer shades.

Water is an undinic realm akin to sleep; it cuts us off from adult supervision. Buried treasure symbolizes the fact that we’re alone together — an alchemical situation — a game with rules as strict as love or necromancy.

The Junkyard of History turns out  
to be an OK vacation destination  
a sort of Guadalajara for retired  
radicals — low rents lots of sunshine.

Surely Hermes is patron of garbage  
as secret form of writing.  
The Dump is our power spot  
its mephitic memorial gasses  
source or our philosophic fire.  
A regime based on veridical dreams  
with a Constitution written as  
a symphony without words  
across transparent borders  
with a transparent flag indistinguishable  
from the wind that waves it.

The Anarchist Library  
Anti-Copyright



Peter Lamborn Wilson  
Escapism  
March 2008

Retrieved on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 from [www.fifthestate.org](http://www.fifthestate.org)  
Published in *Fifth Estate* #377, March 2008.

**[theanarchistlibrary.org](http://theanarchistlibrary.org)**