

# **The Alchemy of Luddism**

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2006

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*for Diane di Prima*  
*St. John's Eve (Midsummer) 2006*

## 1.

It's the idea  
of code that's cool not the actual  
bother of decipherment: the utopia  
of not having been in a state of  
anticipation or regret. The Dowager Empress  
took fresh honeysuckle petals in her green tea — yes even Civilization had its finer  
moments  
which now seen almost as remote as  
the Paleolithic & almost as strange.

## 2. Plot Outline for Steam-Punk SciFi Novel

Frankenstein's Monster returns from the North Pole with Alexander Mackenzie Expedition in 1798—sails to England—meets William Blake (Grand Master of Druid Order) who lectures him on Satanic Mills & Newton's Night etc. Thru Blake's hermetic underground connections, he finds Colonel Despard & joins the Conspiracy in 1802. Urged north to organize the Black Lamp of Nottinghamshire, he undergoes vision of Robin Hood & King Ludd (the Celtic sun god)—takes the name General Ned Ludd of Sherwood Forest & smashes his first mechanical loom with an Enoch's Hammer. In 1812, he leads the attack on Wm Horsfall's Mill near Huddersfield because he knows the evil Capitalist (a relative of Dr. Frankenstein) has invented the first computer. The raid fails. The Monster assassinates Horsfall—flees to London—meets Byron & Shelley thru their Fund For Luddite Children & tells story of his life to them & Mary Wollstonecroft & her father William Godwin one long night before vanishing into the west, returning to the Canadian North to join the Indians & carry on the struggle against Civilization.

(Sources: Alexander Mackenzie, *Voyages to the Frozen & Pacific Oceans* (1801); EP Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; Kirkpatrick Sale, *Rebels Against the Future*; Peter Linebaugh & Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*; Mike Jay, *The Unfortunate Col. Despard*; Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*)

## 3. Noetic Terrorism

The only way to save the avantgarde & move forward beyond the point where aesthetics dis-integrates in the dessication of market subjectivitieshowever exquisite—is by moving backward. Don't say you can't turn back the clock—you do it every year, dupe of daylight savings time—as if you could add or subtract one hour from light by bureaucratic fiat. The really progressive position is reversion.

## 4. InstaSonnet

Finally after all those re-makes I grok  
HG Wells War of the Worlds and  
how Orson Welles scared the shit  
out of half of New Jersey with it—i.e.,  
it'd already happened. Huge clanking  
death machines were already colonizing  
New Jersey & driving the last few  
humans underground into  
roots of hollow trees (or is that some  
other SciFi novel I'm mixing it  
up with). No wonder they found the  
whole idea completely plausible on  
the subconscious level where washing  
machines for example are as malevolent as they look.

## 5. Minifesto

Discarding all irony & misdirection & blurting it out with the humorless clarity & lack of wit of hate-lit or porn: Why not an existentialism of mindless jubilation & out-&-out smashing of Obnoxious Machinery? Shouldn't handprinted fiery flying rolls ignore the niceties of deconstruction & the fastidious impeccabilities which constitute the last refuge of the culturally exhausted? Why hide childhood fascination with fanaticism under the cyberbourgeois bushel of an airbrushed & poisonous discourse?

## 6. Luddism Deluxe

Luddite technology leads not to more misery but less, not less luxury but more. An immense luxury as Charles Fourier put it: luddism deluxe.

Utopia conceals/reveals its pulsating pulchritude behind the seven veils of a Baltimore stripper or Kabuli teen bride. Take one step outside yourself & you're there reading by the black lamp of a thousand glowworms quaffing the dandelion wine of a recrudescence pubescence, sez this hootchycootchy Isis: a rosicrucian cocoon with you as a Nabokov's Blue. Easy as turning out the light & leaving the room & looking for the Moon. But somehow far more difficult even than love.

## 7. *Young Germany*

(review of the book by Walter Laqueur)

The Wandervogel secret is that to wander in search of the blue flower is the blue flower. The elsewhere after all is not so elusive just as blue altho rare is also common as dirt & needs no permission to be unconfined.

Aimless wandering creates space just as pilgrimage creates place. Psychogeography traces the bones of Gog & Magog in landscape's recumbent limbs or lineaments of carefree vagabonds against a background of industrial waste setting out to practice survival of the happiest in defiance of all bourgeois necrology but at an oblique angle to anything that can be pinned down by later historians looking with perfect hindsight for signs of inevitable crash & burn. You had to be there. And still do.

## 8. Minifesto

Only animism prevents the emergence of diffidence; only idols save us from an idolatry of disenchantment, a universe haunted by absence of ghosts. We need holy wells & ice lingams to convince us that consciousness extends beyond the cartesian skull. In this game, you might get what you pray for but not what you pay for. A culture that lives in superstitious dread of nature at least never suffers the hell of sustainable development.

## 9.

Other peoples' gardens  
have become parts of this  
political nostalgism with its bright erotic undertones of  
Pierrots & Columbines in revolt  
against pollution of the Moon.  
Other peoples' children other peoples' cats  
with their electromagnetic auras  
Other peoples' tomatoes & poppies.

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2006

Retrieved on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 from [www.fiftheestate.org](http://www.fiftheestate.org)  
Published in *Fifth Estate* #373, Fall 2006.

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