

Disruptive Elements is a collection of previously hard to find or untranslated writings of French anarchists from the mid-19th to the early 20th century. Much of the material presented here was translated specifically for this book, and offers up a lost thread from the fabric of history, one we find particularly vibrant. The editors do not presume to provide a monolithic, complete, or definitive story about French anarchist individualism, nor do we propose answers, conclusions, or closure on any of the ideas presented. We sought out the writings of many of the major figures of the milieu, chose those that most compelled us, and collected them here. So, a few important people have been left out: Rirette Maîtrejean makes no appearance for example (she took over publication of *L'Anarchie* after Libertad's death and merits our attention).

We have set out to do a number of things in publishing this material. First, to provide insight on the lives of forgotten anarchists through their own writings. Far too little is known about many of the authors herein, despite the strength of their ideas, their prolific publishing accomplishments, and the mutual interests they share with many anarchists today (i.e., a strong affinity to the ideas of Max Stirner, a deep disdain for the Left, constantly developing theories on anarchist association, and an unflinching critique of authority paired with the insistence that putting an end to an old one should never mean submission to a new one). Though they played an early and prominent role in developing and propagating anarchist thought and action, their lives and writings have gone unknown or under-acknowledged for too long. Many of them led vibrant and inspiring lives as illegalists, propagandists, deserters, travelers and staunch individualists.

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The Extremes of French Anarchism

