

Guy Debord

Anselm Jappe

Translator: Donald Nicholson-Smith

Foreword: T.J. Clark

This is the first and best intellectual biography of Guy Debord, prime mover of the Situationist International (1957–1972) and author of *The Society of the Spectacle*, perhaps the seminal book of the May 1968 uprising in France. Anselm Jappe offers a powerful corrective to the continual attempts to incorporate Debord's theoretical work into "French theory." Jappe's focus, to the contrary, is on Debord's debt to the Hegelian-Marxist tradition, to Karl Korsch and Georg Lukács, and more generally to left-Marxist currents of council communism. His close reading of Debord's magnum opus supplies a superb gloss that has never been rivaled despite the great flood of writing on the Situationists in recent decades.

At the same time, Debord is placed squarely in context among the Letterist and Situationist anti-artists who, in the aftermath of World War II, sought to criticize and transcend the legacy of Dada and Surrealism. Jappe's book offers a lively account of the Situationists' theory and practice as this "last avant-garde" made its way from radical bohemianism to revolutionary theory and action.

Guy Debord has been translated into many languages. This PM Press reprint edition benefits from a new author's preface and a bibliographical update.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Anselm Jappe was born in Bonn in 1962. He is an independent scholar currently teaching art history and political and economic theory at the Collège International de Philosophie in Paris and at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Sassari in Sardinia. He is the author of several works of critical theory. A collection of his essays translated by Alastair Hemmens is *The Writing on the Wall: On the Decomposition of Capitalism and Its Critics* (London: Zero, 2017).

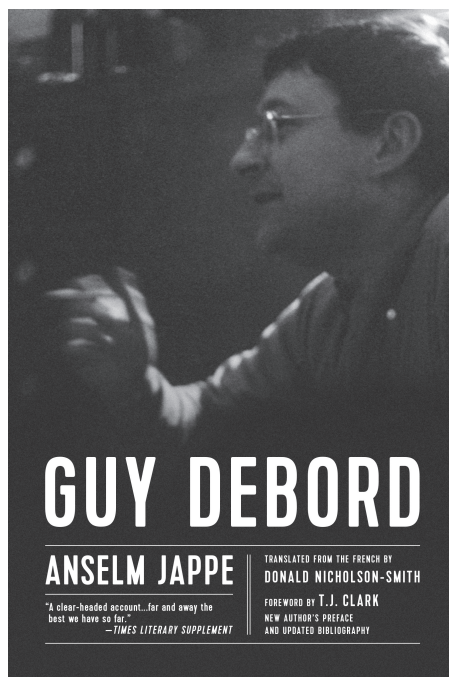
Donald Nicholson-Smith was born in Manchester, England and is a longtime resident of New York City. He has translated the two main programmatic works of the Situationist International, Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone, 2012) and Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (revised edition, PM Press, 2012). In his youth he was a member of the Situationist International (1965–67) in Paris and a comrade-in-arms of Guy Debord.

T.J. Clark is an English art historian and a sometime Situationist. He has taught at Harvard and Berkeley and written widely on the social character of modern art, notably in *The Painting of Modern Life* (1984), *Farewell to an Idea* (1999), and *Picasso and Truth* (2013).

ACCOLADES

"The only book on Debord in either French or English that can be unreservedly recommended . . . particularly useful for its extensive treatment of the Marxian connection that is usually ignored in culture-oriented accounts of the Situationists."

—Ken Knabb, editor of *Situationist International Anthology*



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