

Death to Bourgeois Society

The Propagandists of the Deed

Edited and translated by Mitchell Abidor

Perhaps no period has so marked, so deformed, or so defined the anarchist movement as the three years in France from 1892 to 1894, the years known as the Age of Attentats, the years dominated by the Propagandists of the Deed.

Death to Bourgeois Society tells the story of four young anarchists who were guillotined in France in the 1890s. Their courage was motivated by noble ideals whose realization they saw their bombs and assassinations as hastening. In a time of cynicism and political decay for many, they represented a purity lacking in society, and their actions when they were captured, their forthrightness, their defiance up to the guillotine only added to their luster.

The texts collected in *Death to Bourgeois Society* focus on the main avatars of this movement, the grave robber/murderer/terrorist Ravachol, Auguste Vaillant, who bombed the Chamber of Deputies, Emile Henry, who attacked both the bourgeois in their class function and their very existence, and the Italian immigrant Santo Caserio, who brought down the curtain on the age when he assassinated the French president Sadi Carnot.

The volume contains key first person narratives of the events, from Ravachol's forbidden speech and his account of his life, to Henry's questioning at his trial and his programmatic letter to the director of the prison in which he was held, to Vaillant's confrontation with the investigators immediately after tossing his bomb, and Caserio's description of the assassination and his defense at his trial.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Mitchell Abidor is the principal French translator for the Marxists Internet Archive and has published several collections of his translations. He is currently working on translations of further unpublished works by Victor Serge and Daniel Guérin.

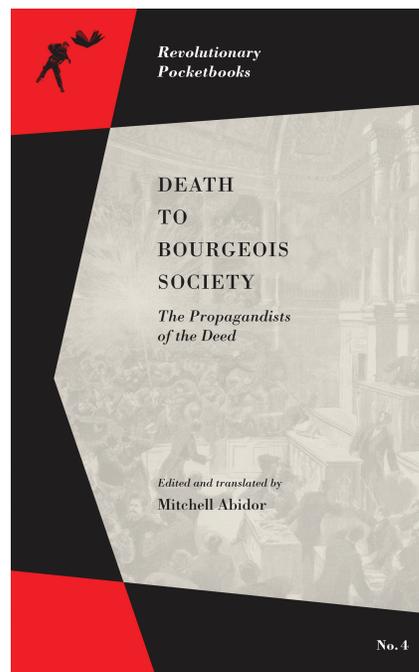
ACCOLADES

"It is quite wrong and anachronistic to call the practitioners of 'propaganda by the deed' at the end of the nineteenth century 'lifestyle anarchists.' They were part and product of a social movement which was consciously anarchist and socialist."

—Peter Marshall, author of *Demanding the Impossible*

"Excellent edited collection of inspired and thoughtful reflections."

—Andrej Grubic, coauthor of *Wobblies & Zapatistas: Conversations on Anarchism, Marxism and Radical History*



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