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Proudhon

Socialism's Enfant Terrible

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The only biography of the father of anarchism.

Time's passing has not sufficed to explain the discrepancy between the very dim memory our culture at large retains of Proudhon and his vast historical importance. Too often, he is reduced to a few flashy bons mots that discourage would-be readers from pursuing further study of his oeuvre. It is difficult to situate the often ambiguous ideas of a mind always thirsting after freedom. These ideas have their dark side, and this, as much as the hatred of Marx and Marxists, goes some way toward explaining Proudhon's undeserved neglect.

His copious writings, which denounce the ravages that the Industrial Revolution wreaked upon society, herald the predictable disillusion of the 1848 Revolution. In the end, Proudhon never gave a second thought to drawing down imperial censorship when critiquing the collusion of power and Industrial feudalism, offering up a fascinating interpretive framework for his time.
