This special issue of Race Traitor focuses on a particular group of race-traitors—the world’s first Surrealist Group in 1920s Paris, and the subsequent international (and multinational) surrealist movement. With an unbroken continuity from 1924 down to the present day, the surrealist movement has helped develop not only a revolutionary critique of whiteness but also new forms of revolutionary action against it.

As a historically constructed social formation, the notion of a “white race” approaches its ideological, mirage, hose, cow-game, racket, sweatd: an altogether malevolent piece of duplicity and horror. But for those who buy it and sell it, whiteness is a neat right. Richard Wright once called a powerful “psychological reality,” a commodity fetishized into a pattern of belief, custom, law. The psychic illusion of those who are deceived into thinking they are white are unhappy about it, but don’t quite know how to direct their anger at this distorting declaration. How to get white—how to release the latent but repressed yearning by attacking the absurdity of whiteness and to become truly human at last—one of the burning questions of the age.

For many Europeans and Americans of European descent, being surrealism has been one way of not being white—and indeed, a way of actively undermining the white mystique and of sabotaging the representative and administrative structures of white supremacy. From the surrealism of point of view, traditional anti-racist strategies have become education against prejudice; support for civil rights; boycotts; picket lines; etc.—however important, clearly are not enough. The fact that white privilege is an inherently unjust phenomenon is proof that I cannot be overcome by rational means alone. Nothing less than surrealism remedial abolishes. Whiteness once and for all.

Surrealist intervention in this domain has always emphasized the beauty and the attractive imagination, in keeping with surrealism's fundamental aim: the realization of poetry in everyday life. This involves revolutionary criticism, integral subversion, aggressive humor, and direct action. In pop art as in surrealism, the commodity is副总经理 and solidarity against the color line as well as reassertiveness struggle against the very existence of the color-line, and against all that it has to offer to tolerate.

As we emphasized in our declaration on the Los Angeles Rebellion of April-May 1992, "whiteness corrupts and consumes every impulse towards love so that no solution can be found to any social problem without solving the problem of whiteness. Everyone knows that white supremacy is the single biggest obstacle to overcoming class oppression. It is also the major stumbling-block in the way of women’s equality, for white supremacy is inherently patriarchal. There are also conflicts between female white supremacists—a large part of today’s ‘women’s movement’ is affected by this malady—but such women truly are no more free from the evil than the white male power structure. Can anyone doubt that overcoming whiteness is indispensable to women’s liberation?"

Similarly, it is no accident that the people most responsible for devastating the Earth’s wild places, poisoning the air and water, driving uncannibalized creatures of animals and plants to extinction and otherying the very foundations of life, are those who define themselves as white only when human kind is free of the stinking burden of white supremacy. We are able to develop a new, exploitive, ecologically sound relationship to the Earth and all its inhabitants. With rare exceptions, however, the organizations of color are unable to see themselves off as the "environmental movement" in this country are as devalued as white supremacy is paternalism as the giant corporations, whose depredations they pretend to oppose. As surrealists, we are especially interested in how the "white problem" turns up in language, images, myth, symbols, popular culture, even the whole field of human expression. However, our goal at all times is to attack and abolish whiteness as a commodity, to attack and abolish that social/political/economic/natural system that has made whiteness the hideous emblem of the worst oppression the world has ever had to endure.

With this presentation of the concrete experience of surrealists past and present in the worldwide struggle against white supremacy, we are by no means attempting to provide and inspire leaders to develop their own abolliserotic imaginations in new directions, and more generally to stimulate discussion and debate with all who uphold the motto “Treason to Whiteness is Loyalty to Humanity.”

THIE THE CHICAGO SURREALIST GROUP

Chicago, April 1988


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