



WORKS

The Dragon & The Hydra **Russell Maroon Shoatz** **(2014)**

Foreword by Julius Gavroche

Russell Maroon Shoatz, activist and writer, was a founding member of the revolutionary group Black Unity Council in 1969, as well as a member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army. In 1972, he would be convicted for a 1970 killing of a Philadelphia police officer. He would spend 49 years in prison (22 of which in solitary confinement), being released in October of 2021 on grounds of compassion, only to die in December of the same year.

While not describing himself as an anarchist, Shoatz's history of decentralised slave and indigenous rebellions in the americas looks "a whole lot like anarchism". For Shoatz, it was in the diffused, archipelago like resistance of autonomous maroon communities, that colonialism and plantation slavery would find its greatest opposition, to which the colonial would be forced to respond.

Against the "Dragon" of colonial authority, Shoatz celebrates the "Hydra" tradition of a black-indigenous "anarchism" that did not bear this name, but from which anarchists, and others, must learn.

THE DRAGON & THE HYDRA

"You have fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and people's struggles to go through, not only to change the conditions but in order to change yourselves and make yourselves fit for political rule." – Karl Marx addressing the IWMA, the body that would later become the First International.

Marx's words hit close to home. I've been involved in such movements for forty years, a product – originally – of the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s, and subsequently being held as a political prisoner in the U.S. since 1972. Over that period, I've participated in a number of mass and party formations. It never fails to amaze me how much energy and time is dedicated towards establishing various groups' claims to being the so-called vanguard of some struggle for justice, when in

