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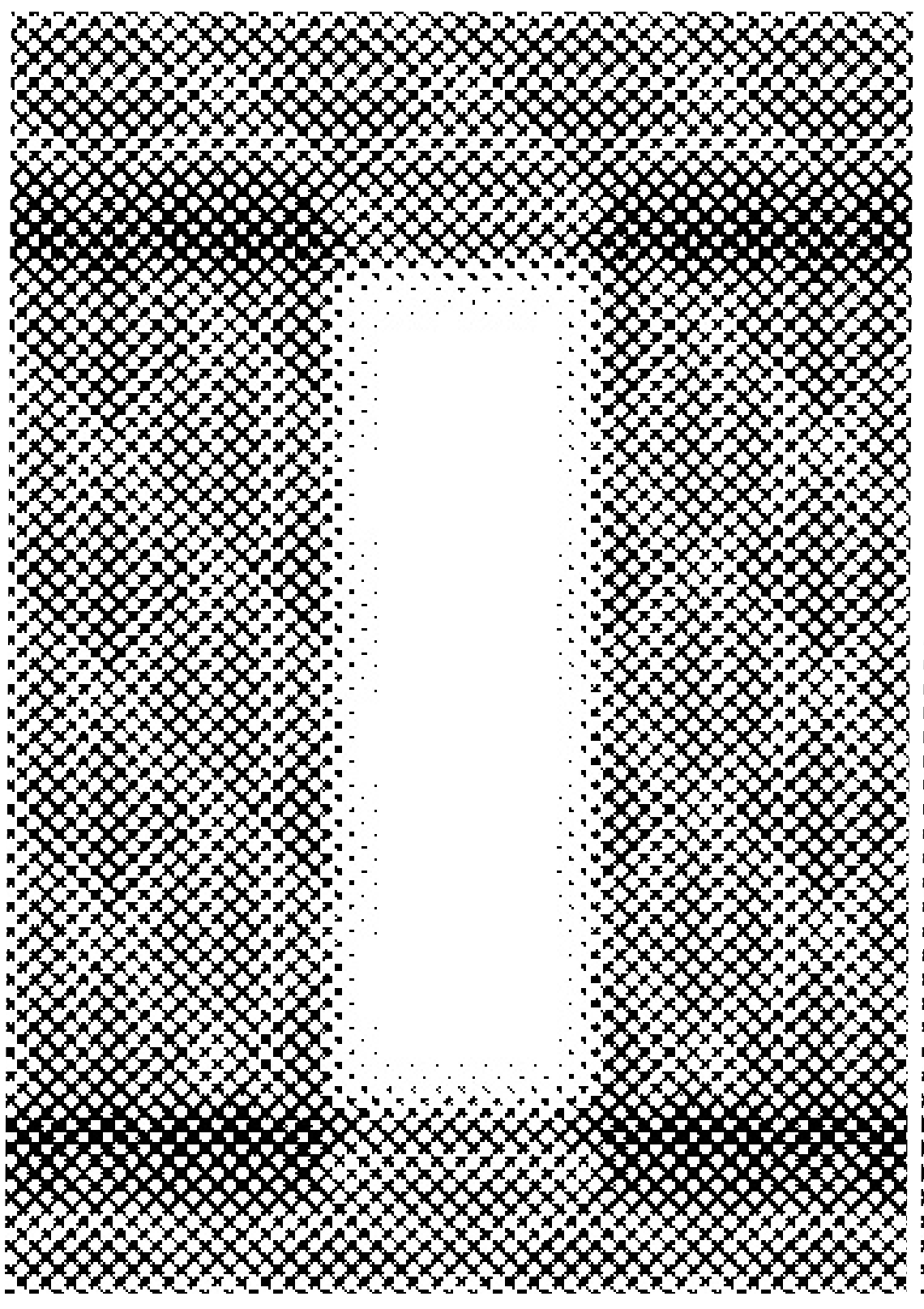
WARNING!!

The zine you now hold in your hands contains ideas of the most dangerous kind.

Amendments to the Human Security Act of 2007 might put you at risk when found in possession of this volume.

After reading, symptoms of dangerous ideas taking root may include:

- * Existential Dread
- * Questioning all Hierarchy and Authority
- * Having no patience for red tape and bureaucratic bullshit
- * Hatred of bosses, politicians and the police
- * Wanting to build radical direct democracy
- * Wanting cocktail parties, of the Molotov kind
- * Living life on your own terms



SO, WHAT'S INSIDE???

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**"DI KA NAMAN TUNAY
NA AKTIBISTA":
REFLECTIONS ON
FILIPINO LEFTIST
EXCLUSION**

by: When I was an undergrad, I
Adrienne had to fight so many people
Onday to allow my voice and
opinions to be heard. The
central point of my struggle
as a young activist then was
to get formally organized activists to
realize that speaking up is a form of
action, too; that not being part of any
organization or not being as physically
and publicly active in political
struggles as they were didn't mean you
weren't one; that just because someone
isn't doing activism and radicalism the
exact same way the established Left
does, doesn't mean they aren't activists
or radicals.

At the time, I was a middle-class kid
tied to my meager-for-a-middle-class-kid
allowance, my home life, and my mental
health struggles. I couldn't leave our
house as much even if I tried because I
didn't have the money to, nor did I have
parental permission to go to faraway
(anything beyond Quezon City was far to
my Marikina-based family) political
events that typically last into the
night. I also had to deal with crippling
anxiety—I used to have attacks at least

once a week, and having an attack in public where I knew no one well enough who could help me or send me to safety would not have been a good situation for me. These attacks, growing frequent around 2013 when I started university, lasted well into 2016-2017, when I started becoming more visible at protests and the general political sphere.

I figured people would say that there's a way to circumvent all these issues, and one of those ways was to be a member of a mass organization. They could lend you money or carpool or something. They could ensure your safety. They could do so many things to alleviate my worries. But in the Philippines, they say, kung ayaw may dahilan; kung gusto may paraan. And there was a personal reason I held back: I really didn't want to be a member of any mass org I knew of.

I didn't want to join because they made me and the people I cared about feel unsafe, judged, and othered.

I've been doing some reflecting this morning and I realize now more than ever that the reason I was so hellbent on recognizing even mere expression as activism, and the reason I was so hesitant to join more largely-recognized

and collective forms of activism, was because of the elitism and exclusion I and other people I encountered experienced at the hands of Philippine political circles.

How could I say activism here is elite and exclusive? My experiences crystallized in the following reflections.

People refused to see speaking up and doing what you could with what you have as enough to qualify to be part of the struggle.

And I didn't want anything to do with those kinds of people.

People think that just because you're a middle-class kid, you have no excuse of limitation or

oppression, and that being privileged, you had to be empowered enough to go out of your way to do Activist Things. But as I mentioned above, I'm not from a well-off-enough family (I lived in a single-parent household with four siblings); I'm also the eldest child, and a woman at that, meaning I had to be an active and emotionally available mother to my siblings as our own mother couldn't be (at some points during

university, even during exams, I would have to stay up until 4 or 5am to care for my baby sibling, leaving me with an hour or two to sleep and study); and I have been suffering mental health issues that get triggered in social situations.

Having been limited back then due to these factors, learning more, speaking up and sharing what I thought, what I knew, and what I learned were the least that I thought I could contribute stripped of any other resource but knowledge and platform. I knew what I was good at, and I knew what I had and didn't have. I was good at reading, writing, and talking people's ears off. And even though I didn't really have the resources necessary to frequent mass mobilizations, I was privileged enough to go to university. I had a good reach online.

So I did what I could with what I had. I was a sociology major, so I kept reading everything my professors gave me and kept up-to-date on current events of my own volition. I processed what I learned and talked about it with friends and relatives who would listen, and posted and tweeted my reflections about these things online. I called out mistakes and wrong conclusions, back when I took active part in call-out

culture, before it had a name. I called for support for different causes and advocacies – against tuition hikes, against militarization, for the lumad march, for the farmers – and redirected people to resources and other people who knew more about said issues than I did.

In 2016, I took part in a little personal protest my friends did. It was an idea that my friend started. We carried it out, and I posted about the protest and my experience doing it online. Unexpectedly, this protest caught attention, went viral and extended beyond the reach I originally had. We gained more platforms to talk about the issues we were concerned about. We had more chances to point to the roots of the various problems we faced.

I spoke out not only against the administration but questioned inconsistencies with more progressive actors as well. Bringing to light a critique about the current attitude of certain actors of the Left, however, also brought me vitriol. At the time, part of the Left supported the current president both during his campaign and after his election due to his promises for the marginalized and his self-identification as a socialist. I

wondered aloud about the relative silence of the Left (at least, in my circles) regarding extrajudicial killings under the president's only policy, the War on Drugs.

The only responses this got were direct, albeit "templated," rebuttals to my claims, and personal attacks questioning my self-identified and publicly-bestowed "activist" label. A lot of Leftists wondered how I could consider myself an activist when I wasn't part of a mass organization or present in any protest and mobilization, the latter hurled at me despite my attendance in a handful of mobilizations they organized and which I photo-documented to use online to raise awareness and support.

I marveled at the height of the bar I had to measure up to just to become an activist. I also wondered how others who do not and cannot have access to the privileges I did can become activists themselves, in spaces where mass organizations are too far, too few, or unrepresentative of specific sectors, or where the kinds of protests that are considered "proper" may be ineffective, expensive, or altogether dangerous. Apart from the seeming binary of activism which was organizer/organized, could anyone else become an activist?

Could anything else be activism?

The short answer, where I stood, was no. At least, not if I'm coming from where these "official, real" activists come from. (It should be telling that a dichotomy arises, between "official, real" as in "organized and active" activists and "unofficial, fake" as in "everyone else who doesn't fit the mold".)

So I gave up trying to get people to accept me and what I did, and instead did my best to help others – those similarly not accepted and finding different ways to be radical – to realize that they deserved to carve out spaces of their own and that their voices and efforts mattered, whatever other people said.

I experienced discomfort and eventually some form of trauma from discrimination and harassment in activist spaces, predominantly from encounters with "progressive" or "radical" men.

I didn't really have anyone do that for me—no one in the political sphere really reassured me that I was doing fine as an activist and that what I was doing, what I could do, mattered. I had to work up the security and confidence to realize that myself, or find other ways to learn that what I was doing was really helping.

What I did have were Leftists who were telling me that I was fake or a reactionary, or that I didn't have the right to critique their organizations and methods even as they critiqued mine.

I distinctly remember one man from the red side of things telling me that I was a dilawan for wanting to participate in the EDSA Day commemoration event at the People Power Monument, telling me that being a sociologist, I should know that my mere presence there means support and legitimization for the Aquinos. I met this man through Bumble, back when I was bored enough to use dating apps. I also felt extremely uncomfortable talking to him, with nicknames and backhanded compliments as the norm when he used to hit me up. Unsurprisingly, I learned a few years after that he has manipulated, lied to, and solicited sex from other women in radical spaces, amongst many other deeds. I heard the only thing his

organization did about him was to warn him to limit his encounters with women or to stop doing those things.

Yet another man from the red side of things asked me very personal and intrusive questions, such as if I masturbated and how. This same man called what my friends and I did "intellectual masturbation," and to him what we did contributed nothing to the struggles of the people.

I also remember another man from the yellow side of things getting mad at me and, consequently, at a friend because I publicly criticized an event they organized for false advertisement and many other things. He would later ignore a few attempts I made to help out in their campaigns.

I know someone, too, who hates both sides as as an active part of the Left. He mansplains to me and other women quite often and talks over us whether he is aware or not; inserts himself into conversations that don't need him; brings up his personal preferences about sex and romance in situations that may tackle the topics but don't ask him of it; and subscribes to the idea that political conversations anywhere other than the spaces he deems valid and with

anyone other than the people he considers the only oppressed are nothing but kaburgisan—essentially excluding anyone who does even just a little bit better than the working class (and what even is a clear-cut definition of the working class at a time of economic ambivalence and precarity?).

I could go on, I realize. This is the first time I'm sitting down and specifically thinking about all the uncomfortable situations I have been confronted with when with "radical" or "progressive" men. The casual objectification they show when they talk about other women with me because they think I'd understand as queer and "one of the boys." The unacknowledged homophobia and transphobia. The speed and ease of things descending to physical violence when one gets offended.

It all points to a hypermasculine, overexaggerated performance that, although not exclusive to the political sphere, when mixed with ideas of activism and radicalism somehow allows men to believe they are shielded from any and all criticism. As if being an activist or radical by name is enough to make them immune to both being sexists, misogynists, homophobes and transphobes

and to being criticized for being sexists, misogynists, homophobes, and transphobes. It's not impossible to hear these men's voices in my head say, "How could I be a misogynist? I fight for equality for all!"

Tell that to the girlfriend you cheated on with someone else in your mass org. Tell that to the women in your collective you solicit sex from. Or, well, I'm sure you did; and your fellow men in the collective did nothing but baby you, defend you, and coddle you.

But sure, people like me aren't "real" activists or radicals because we go to less protests or choose not to expose ourselves to these kinds of things.

**Our idea of
activism is
still classist,
ableist, and
sexist.**

When men like that not only exist but even thrive in activist spaces, you get a sense of how unfree and unfreeing our idea of activism really is. Broad, genuine,

and truly inclusive representation and action cannot exist in spaces where people are made to feel used or unsafe, in spaces requiring specific experiences to be considered, in spaces where people

cannot physically or even remotely participate.

Even today, people can't just get up and leave their homes, however much we want them to do that. There are harassers to confront. There are children to be fed. There are homes to be guarded. There are disabilities to consider. This begs us to ask: what are the ways we can make radical spaces safer and braver? What are the ways we can make activism and mobilization more accessible, kid-friendly, and inclusive?

Maybe we could have designated spaces near or outside, say, protests or meetings to care for children. Maybe there are acts of activism that can and have been done at home or elsewhere from protest sites that we didn't recognize as acts of activism before, like free schools and care work. Maybe we have to think of ways to recognize that the PWD community has power but will have to express it differently.

Or maybe we have to reassess and rethink our spaces altogether, see how they are hinged and founded on the discomfort, unsafety, nonparticipation and oppression of many of the people we

claim to fight for. Maybe we have to drastically change how we organize our collectives. Maybe we have to consider infrastructures, language, and interactions. Maybe we have to instill self-awareness, unlearn harmful behaviors, and learn better ones instead of pointing fingers, blaming anyone else but us.

Power-together, that is, our power as the people, isn't supposed to be monolithic and unchanging, only expressed the exact same way it was done 40 years ago by coming together in Luneta or PPM to publicly protest. Creativity needs to come in to ensure our power isn't stagnant or exclusive. An important thing to remember is that reproductive labor (better worded as care work, or how we ensure the physical, mental, emotional, and developmental needs of people are being met) sustains our power, too. Besides, I think there are other forms of activism that may have the same effects as – if not deeper, more personal, and more immediate than – what we call mass mobilizations.

Our idea of activism is still highly exclusive, as if activism was something people performed to be included in a Cool Kids Club rather than something anyone could participate in, whoever they are, in any way they can.

Enshrining activism in the form of placards, publicity, and protests leads to the tendency to equate activism with just these factors, and equating activism with these factors leads to the belief that doing these things and these things alone is what makes you an activist. Two unfortunate consequences: those who seem to only aspire for the clout are accepted into the fold as is without pushing them to be better, while those who work hard to live the principles of radical progressivism in different ways – in ways they have access to and ways they learn how to – are overlooked, kept out, and even demonized.

This is related to my earlier point of the lack of inclusivity in our idea of activism. I'd also like to bring up a very important point: the seeming importance of public performance

(language, presentation, attendance) over personal effort (self-awareness, treating others better, taking their own steps when they can) in activist spaces creates such an unsafe and unaccepting environment. People — and men in particular, cis or not, based on my experience — seem to think that being this label or that means they're automatically safe from being any type of wrong. I've met one too many manipulators, abusers, and perverts from the Left. I've met people who get mad and attack you personally because you dared to be dissatisfied and asked for better. I've met people who call you a know-it-all, only to turn to Twitter and call others out for one mistake, however tiny, and hurl orthodox Marxist vocabulary at them for not knowing better. Oddly, more often than not, these people are either highly respected, protected, or really coddled by their activist groups and spaces.

Meanwhile, people who are just stepping into the world of political discourse and exploring their own ideas, opinions, beliefs, ethics, and stances are either eaten up by the costume party of the activism or called out and rejected for not doing activism the way others do. People who might be more radical than we would care to admit aren't recognized as

able to contribute or already contributing because we think "contribution" requires a membership subscription, be it to an organization, an ideology, an event, or a cause.

What's attached to the membership terrifies me, to be honest. I've been to enough mobilizations and educational discussions to see, hear, and feel the near-exact same way people appear, talk, and act in the political sphere.

(It's a little funny because, despite differences, most I've encountered from the Left have had the exact same fatal flaw across colors: their inability to recognize their own mistakes, accept criticism, and own up to and make up for them.)

The uniformity in their use of "scientific" language, the way they carry themselves, their manner of speaking, and their takes on things (which a professor of mine called "templated") terrifies me because sometimes I feel like I'm interacting with soldiers or bots, whatever side of the Left they came from. There's an odd disdain for nuance, too, which I've seen eerily echoed both online and offline and definitely acted on in many cases.

Activists here seem to function on a you're-either-with-us-or-against-us logic which kicks in once you either try to critique them or provide a perspective that considers the context of what they might be going against at the moment. The vision feels very black-and-white, the gray area automatically qualifying as enemy territory if only for the mere fact that it's not the exact same thing they're saying. Even if you clarify that you're not taking the other side, by somehow trying to be more understanding of the Enemy of the Day (or at least, where they're coming from), you're immediately analyzed with a suspicious eye, the Reactionary stamp hovering over you and ready to descend any time.

But almost everyone lives in the gray area. People will not see and perform activism the way "real" activists expect them to because people will have different degrees of reservations, freedom, awareness, and risk-taking. Some may not be as theoretically equipped, but intuitively act more ethically even if they can't explain why. Some may know more than most, but not be as visible because of resources or context. There have also been countless people who have had the "right" opinions on issues but the

"wrong" opinions on activism because the reputation of activism — as in marches, rallies, and public demonstrations — has been so historically tarnished in the Philippines (by State anti-communist propaganda, by issues that arise from socially-rooted phenomenon like traffic and bad infrastructure, by problems of the Left itself) that people are bound to hate what we have now. And they're allowed that opinion because those may be rooted in different experiences that are valid.

People are shackled and privileged in different ways, just as people walk different lives. More than changing the ways people might be adding to our repertoires of activism, maybe we should strive to add to our own and get a feel for what might garner more support from people who may not be on board with our other methods. This doesn't mean we should pander, nor does it mean our goals and principles would change; sometimes, we just need to explore the different ways we can deliver a message so that it may be received better, clearer, and more appropriately by the people who might need to hear it.

Other people are doing that at present. Some write, some create art, some talk

to people. Many are not affiliated with blatantly political organizations. Some even act through hobby or interest groups. But everyone is still learning, because there has to be many different ways to approach our goal.

The point is, activism cannot and should not come from a very specific group of people with clear, non-negotiable, take-it-as-is-or-leave-it political ideologies. Including only some automatically excludes many others, and there's a saying that goes, "I'd rather be excluded for who I include, than included for who I exclude." If a movement that aspires for systemic change does not make an attempt to include everyone, what's the point of

having this
movement at all?

**Ano nga ba ang
"tunay na
aktibista?"**

I feel this
question needs to
be asked within our

circles before we even begin to exclude people. It's inevitably attached to the larger question of how we treat not only those who are like us, but especially those who are different from us.

The name of the game these days is othering and weaponizing identities. We already see this in how Duterte others drug users and pushers; we see this in how Trump others Blacks, people of color, and the LGBT+; are we really going to keep it alive in the spaces that are supposed to be dismantling this system that's rooted in the oppression of certain groups and sectors? Isn't it a point of concern that the discrimination we see the State use against its people is the same discrimination we mete out in keeping our movements "pure," "real," and "in line?" Isn't aspiring for "purity" and homogeneity the problem anyway?

The activist and radical I am now – still so different, but more directly involved now than I could be before – is because of all the rejection and negativity I have experienced at the hands of those who positioned themselves at the forefront of the Philippine struggle. I have been working hard for the past few years to learn to be okay with what I am, what I've done, and what I want to do; I've also been doing my best to help others who feel as rejected and confused to be okay with being different in their political perspectives and activities, too.

I think difference is what drives change and innovation. And minding differences we need to adjust to, adapt to, and include is how we can keep our movements not only safe and alive but maybe even successful, however marginally success may feel in the face of the behemoth that is the Empire. Imagine how boring, stagnant and ineffective we would be if all of us were activists and radicals the exact same way. We'd probably still be fooling ourselves about how we haven't really lost, even when the enemy has transformed once again, fifty years into an unrecognizable future.

**ABUSING RESILIENCE :
THE FILIPINO IN THE
FACE OF DISASTER**

by: APS

On the afternoon of January 12 the Taal Volcano began spewing ash and smoke from its ancient caldera. Within hours a massive evacuation effort was launched to get people out of harm's way. A comrade was among the people fleeing the scene. Government offices and schools were understandably closed due to the disaster, but BPO centers around the areas most affected by the ensuing ashfall had the gall to call their workers back to work.

We've seen this story before:

A calamity or some other misfortune affects a large area of the nation and we get reports of people calling in to work being praised for "their dedication to their jobs" despite the obvious risks. The true story is most likely that they literally couldn't afford to be gone that shift. They might not get administrative sanctions or attendance memos for being absent, thought that still happens, but they still won't be paid for that workday. No work, no pay, right? But, this isn't to say that the

supervisors and managers frantically calling their employees to work are bad people. This is bigger than any one person.

When you have someone who lives completely on what they make per hour worked, they have little choice but to show up for work. This is the greatest triumph of modern capitalism over the human spirit. I remember someone calling money "survival notes" because it literally does mean whether or not you survive in this society. ~~Because we live inside it!~~ It's become a very efficient way for the rich business owner and investor to value profits over human lives.

With slavery, you own the person, end of discussion. In feudalism, you own the land, you get part of the produce of that land. But with capitalism? Oh, boy, you not only own the place where they work, you also own the places where they spend their hard-earned survival-notes at!

That's how you get people to show up at work soaking in rainwater after braving the elements for two hours to get to a job that pays less than a hundred pesos an hour. That's how you get people to stay to watch over what little property

they have in the face of a raging volcano. That's how you get people to value profit over human lives, most especially if that life is their own.

So no, it isn't surprising that there'd be people who'd come to work on the apocalypse. Capitalism has made our world so absurd that it would actually make sense.

So here's to the working-class heroes who instead of going to work went out to help in whatever way they could, even if it's something as natural as getting your family to safety.

**BEING FORCED TO DO
ANYTHING , WITH
ANYONE**

by: So anarchy's all about doing
Ponkan whatever the hell we want,
right?

Before answering that, let me go on a bulky tangent about why group projects suck.

A general problem amongst group projects (i.e why they suck) tends to be with people. Modern white collar work ethic tells us to be flexible with people and work in groups of whatever stature, in order to maintain/expand efficiency. Inaccuracies aside, essentially we are supposed to be nice and gel work with anyone as a team. This is made big by team building, "making friends" policies and whatever the fuck the HR and Faculty wants to foster the ideal work environment. In cases it works well and mutual bonds develop, and in the other there's lingering resentment over being forced to interact in social situations and dealing with toxic and unsavory individuals, from asshole bosses to dipshit co-workers and classmates.

Thus, the idea is that we should work with anyone at any time and

(practically) have to deal with somebody else's bullshit by recommendation of the head honcho. Of course, a typical person nowadays would say "well, that's not bullshit." But if the price of survival is persistent frustration over restrictive superiors and horrible people, shouldn't we consider how impractical and nonsensical it is on hindsight?

There's this old facebook meme that was lying around back in the early 10's. It was a visual comparison of what a boss is and what a leader is. The meme describes a boss as someone, well, bossing over his subordinates, being a general asshole and acting like he holds their lives in their hands (well, in practice it kinda is). A leader is described as someone who acts with his subordinates, works with them as a team and guides them in their job.

The general definition of Anarchism (as per Chomsky) is the "abolition of all unjust hierarchy" (though this is a very shallow definition but useful enough to this piece's context-we'll get to that in following essays). The idea that one should be above the other (i.e power) is absolute bullshit and really someone has to deal with that. In this piece's context, the idea of "leaders > bosses"

is a particular aspect that ties into anarchy-coordination trumps direction. Toxic and bossy individuals within work groups exercise their power over people (this may sound bullshit but bear with me here) by being assholes over everyone else.

Yes, in an intrapersonal sense, basic Anarchism shifts on the idea that you have to work with people that can be absolute pieces of garbage that needs to be kicked in the genitals for good measure. Anarchists, are in a sense, Consistent Individualists who believe that no person should be above another, and that things can get done working together without someone trying to talk over anyone. And that people who try to do so should—and ideally, shall—get their groins smashed with a bat.

Anarchist ideals of “leaderlessness” or “masterlessness” are tied to the value of cooperating together, collaborating together, and scratching each other’s backs. If everyone in the team’s really into it, understands each other, has a stake into it, even if they aren’t exactly on the same page, they’d wing it. In terms of the organization, the leader(s) becomes not an imperious figure but a coordinating actor, working as a leg of this association of

individuals (to be honest, anyone or everyone in that group can be that kind of person).

This dynamic of forced participation in productive activity (ie. working with anyone) ties also with forced participation in all other activity.

I had a Law professor who's really pissed at the way our department teaches kids. He even finds it odd that our course has a subject like this (hint: we make ads), so he uses the subject instead to teach us how to learn—"if you don't know it, The way he's expresses that in our class—requiring us to read the required book and express what we recalled in our own words—is where I depart from that.

There's nothing particularly wrong about knowing how to learn, but as a person who learned how to do things as how I do now by myself (like writing this long of an essay), we're kinda being forced to learn. I learned more reading for myself without having to fear my grades being in danger. Similarly, groups I worked with for shits and giggles (mostly nerd stuff) have been more fruitful and ran its course as it should've.

Free association is a word that tends to be thrown out in discussions about anarchy, sometimes amongst more Libertarian and Individualist circles. It's the freedom to choose whoever and wherever you want to be a part of and whoever you want to work with. You don't have to join if you don't want to, and you sure as hell might ignore someone you dislike. Make them if they keep on coming to you or something. I don't know.

I initially said association because essentially, collective work (like all productive activity), to the anarchist is ideally a voluntary act. Wiktionary talks of the root verb associate having two relevant meanings: joining with another or others with equal status, and following/accompanying another. In this context, the productive association is an activity of equals. It's an open companionship where it may last at any time at any pace.

**It's a bunch of
energetic initiatives
working together out
of common interest.**

This idea of productive activity in Anarchy is like a fun and actually continuing D&D session. It's a voluntary social act where people with their own voices collaborate together to create an open ended story (the GM simply serves to set the tone and general framework). I could say that the session analogy is very much true of all activity in anarchy, but I'm getting too ahead of myself here.

There's this one person I talked with who mentioned that anarchy is actually happening all the time, in small places and little exchanges. In-jokes and funny conversations with friends at a dinner party. Two people collaborating to make a work of art. Impromptu musical duets. Wikipedia in a good mood. Agreeing to do things for each other, trading card games, meetups of online communities, mutual gratitude, and the list goes on.

So anarchy's all about doing whatever the hell we want, yes, but only while also respecting the agency of others. It can be as productive as it is destructive. We can do things and make things out of our own volition and pace, we can work with people as we please, and essentially we forge mutually beneficial and wholesome relationships.

**Because why the fuck
would you even want to
work with shit people?**

Recommended Reading:

* Your Freedom is My Freedom: The
Premise of Anarchism by William Gillis

* Anarchism as a Theory of Organization
by Colin Ward (available on
theanarchistlibrary.org)

* Are you an Anarchist? The Answer Might
Surprise You by David Graeber
(available on theanarchistlibrary.org)

* Organization Theory: A Libertarian
Perspective by Kevin Carson

BLOSSOMS OF AN ABORTED REVOLUTION

by:
Malagino

Let us not mince our
words. The EDSA
Revolution has failed.

If you look around at the state of society in our archipelago, you can see clear parallels to the horrors of 1972. A dictator, with the military and police in the palm of his hand, supported by sycophants blindly loyal to his person and by local and foreign capitalist interests, brutally murdering and terrorizing the poor, and the dissidents who fight for them.

It's as if we never woke up from the nightmare.

Supporters of the revolution have praised it for being bloodless, and for setting an example of a peaceful transition to democracy. It is said to have inspired the revolts in Eastern Europe, the democratization of South Korea, and even the recent Arab Spring of 2011. What would have been the beginning of a bloody civil war, instead brought the all sectors of society to rally in the capital and force a dictator to resign. If there is any

validation of the strength of civil disobedience, it is on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue from February 24 to 25, 1986.

However, detractors vilify its failure of replacing the prevailing order, instead replacing old oligarchs with new ones. For all the irony in their words, the right do have a point: EDSA 1 ended up futile in the end. That mass movement could have sown the seeds of a social revolution, towards the weakening and dismantling of Capital and State that has brutalized them for so long. It instead brought about the return of a cacique democracy: the perfect breeding ground for cultivating the return of a tyrant.

We cannot pinpoint where the Revolution was defeated by the interests of the ruling class. However, the events unfolding after February were already premonitions of its failure.

Unsuccessful attempts of the Cory Aquino administration at agrarian reform, already insufficient to address the feudalistic control of landowning families, caused peasants' organizations to strike in the nation's capital. Their concerns for recognition in land ownership were ignored by the government

they supported to supplant the indulgently capitalist Marcos regime. They also criticized the background of the President, who came from the Cojuangco family, wealthy hacenderos who came to control the San Miguel Corporation. This all came to a head in Mendiola Bridge, on January 1987, when 13 were shot and killed and 51 demonstrators were injured by security forces.

The Reform the Armed Forces Movement, led by Col. Gregorio Honasan, who joined forces with pro-Marcos soldiers, couped the government multiple times from 1987-1990. The gravest one was on August 28, 1987, when forces launched a coordinated attack on multiple military bases and even Malacañang itself, which claimed 53 lives. There were also around 200 military and civilian injuries, including the future President, Benigno Aquino III. Ka Louie Beltran reported that the President "hid under her bed" during the revolt, prompting a libel charge and arguably, the first instance of the repression of press freedom since the Marcos era.

These incidents concerned the military officials from within the government. As a result, reformist and radical voices, once resounding in government, were

silenced and pushed away. There was also tightened control over agitation by workers' organizations and human rights groups. These events all led to the rise of Fidel Ramos, from a coup's co-conspirator, to the right-hand man of the President. The rightist forces prevailed in the administration.

The government also authorized the establishment of paramilitary groups, ostensibly to counter the insurgency of the CPP-NPA-NDF. This, however, became pretense for politicians and military officers to create private armies at their own disposal, terrorizing political opponents and dissidents. To this day, we still deal with the legacy of these quasi-military forces, who offer no loyalty but to their financiers and patrons.

These incidents, along with neoliberal reforms and corruption by the President's own family, started to convince dissidents that we are still at status quo. First, of course, were the Marcos loyalists and Aquino critics that were itching for an electoral win. However, as the leftists woke up from their political accommodation—perhaps after shots were fired in Mendiola—it soon became apparent that EDSA didn't topple a system, it merely changed the

... it soon became
apparent that
EDSA didn't
topple a system,
it merely changed
the king (or
rather queen)...

king (or rather
queen), on the
throne.

This should be
considered a
missed
opportunity, and
possibly even a
shame. Here was

a chance to destroy a broken society
fueled by capitalism and oppression of
minorities, women, and the poor. Here
was a peaceful movement that brought
people of all social strata to commit
mass civil disobedience. Here was a
moment to propagate the ideas of
egalitarianism and bayanihan, that could
have led towards the dismantling of
hierarchical and violent social
structures that plague us today. Yet, in
the end, the bourgeoisie, the
compradors, and the imperialists
prevailed.

However, there are also lessons that we
can learn from this stillborn revolution
as citizens of this archipelago. We
cannot rely on electoralism to achieve
the necessary fundamental changes in
society. The State that is so intimately
tied to Capital is not the vehicle for
achieving lasting freedom and equality.
The ruling classes that tailored the

government for their own benefit cannot be the true representatives of the people, and their struggle. We have seen it before and after the EDSA Revolution. Marcos used the instruments of State to funnel wealth into his own pocket and the corporations of his cronies and financial backers. The same can be said for all presidents after, from Cory to Erap to Gloria and Duterte. Cory, for her part, blocked the passage of laws that would have brought needed reforms to the millions of Filipinos laboring away in the agricultural sector. It is the epitome of the ruling class protecting their own interests at the cost of the masses.

Simply, what we should take from EDSA is that regime change and replacing our presidents cannot bring about liberation. Liberation is the task of the oppressed and dispossessed alone.

Now, we are seeing history repeat itself in the form of Rodrigo Duterte. The ideals that made EDSA the foundation of the Fifth Republic have crumbled under the weight of an authoritarian government filled with lapdogs, lackeys, and opportunists. As we commemorate the end of an era, let us remind ourselves that we are entering another, perhaps as vile and oppressive. If we are called by

our own consciences to rise up again;
for the poor shot dead in the streets,
for those arrested and tortured for
speaking the truth; for the laborers
organizing to receive the true value of
their labor against the complex of
Capital and State; let us lay the
groundwork for an outright revolution,
towards the total liberation of all
people, and the end of all masters on
this archipelago.

Even an aborted
revolution can bring the
blossoms of freedom. A
reminder of the failures
past can be a guide for
the success and victory
of tomorrow.

**INTERVENTION ON THE
FILIPINO MINDSPACE :
IDENTITY AND
BELONGING IN THE AGE
OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

by: APS MA Buendia mentioned in a viral tweet [1] how foreign youtubers were taking advantage of the Filipino need for global validation to garner more views - and therefore, ad revenue. But what is going on here? What does that mean for us as people? Does anyone care?

"Never attribute to malice what can be adequately explained by incompetence."

- Hanlon's Razor I can't really call what these content creators did as "incompetent". Neither are they also likely to be malicious either. It's not like there's some weird cabal of Youtubers that go "Hey! This demographic is an easy mark".

At least, I hope there isn't. LOL.

Although the lack of intentionality behind this phenomenon might actually make it all worse.

Love him or hate him, Slovenian Philosopher Slavoj Zizek considers ideology as not just the amalgam of

ideas and ideals, most especially today, as an unconscious process that serves as a series of justifications and spontaneous symbolic acts which support abstract authorities. We do things and follow certain social mores, all the while not seeing how it keeps things the way they are. People following a trend is just part of that.

But what is "That"?

"The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that was once lived has become mere representation..."

"...The Spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediate by images."

- Guy Debord, "The Society of the Spectacle"

When French revolutionary and artist Guy Debord wrote those lines back in 1967, he was talking about the Press, the Movies and the Radio. In the age of Vainstagram, Facestalk and that little annoying bird, it becomes more and more relevant. Watching foodbloggers cook instant ramen with melted cheese and barbecued pork bellies so you don't have to. Seeing people travel to distant places to live vicariously through them. Feeling proud about your nation winning in the Olympics. Living the life of your dreams becomes a matter of sending "Likes" or sharing their posts on your own social media page. Living becomes a matter of consumption. Consumption.

**Consumption. Brings up
images of cows grazing out
on pasture, don't it?**

**Labels for the trees only
benefit the logger.**

The Spectacle, in the words of Debord, creates labels and "images" for us. The entire process of demand management depends on the management of demographics, which are in terms of The Spectacle, a social relationship that is mediated by images. Youtuber Peter

Coffin words it cleverly in his video
Somewhere to Belong [2]:

 "Instead we're presented
 with an identity and a
 'community' that keeps us
on the path of consumption
 that we're already on...
 It's birthed ways to
convince people not to band
 together in a meaningful
 way, painting the
 individual as the prime
 concern and authority -
Ultimately preaching that
the basis of community is
 the validation of the
 self."

Like what Peter says later - validation
in and of itself isn't a bad thing. But
the only validation that we will get
from the current order is the kind that
gets us to buy more. Watch more. Eat
more. We get divided into these little
cults of cultivated identities. And like
crops and livestock, these identities
are cultivated in order to be harvested
later in some form.

Nation-States like the Republic of the Philippines are among the biggest culprits in cultivating identities for their own benefit. Historian and Political Scientist Benedict Anderson calls nations "Imagined Communities". And not the kind that form because of shared interests, no. The kind that forms just because you happen to be born in the same place as the people who want to take advantage of you. This is especially true for the Philippines in that before the Spanish conquest, the inhabitants of what would come to be known as the Philippines lived in semi-autonomous communities that band together according to need. Although there was a proto-state formation in the case of the Kingdom of Maynila, but it was an outlier.

It served its purpose in building a united front against the Spanish, and then against the American and Japanese occupations. But in today's fully-integrated global capitalism, the oppressive force is no longer a single nation of colonizers. It has become a network of centers of capital around what is known as the "Developed Nations", The United States, Western Europe, Japan, and increasingly, China. Gone are the days of coming in guns blazing to suppress a native population

to grab land and resources. They'll go to your World Bank conferences and your United Nations meetings to do it for you! Nationalities have become nothing more than a useful illusion to get people to work together in the interests of a global elite. How else can you get people to lay down their lives to make a few rich perverts richer? "Serve your country!"

But, before I get misrepresented, this is not a call to a past "Golden Age" before global capital, before social media. This is a reminder to be more aware and vigilant about how our actions and patterns of consumption feed into the agendas of the ultrawealthy and ultrapowerful. The cat's out of the bag and the bad guys have already taken over. All that's left to do now is to weaken the structures that hold the dystopia in place. Unionize workplaces. Build communities. **Find. The. Others.**

A storm is coming and building the infrastructure needed to survive it with people that will have our backs is critical.

But we might be too busy
watching rich foreigners
eating Jollibee to do it in
time.

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**THERE IS NO
"NATURAL BALANCE"**

by: APS On social media, I usually see people moan over how we're "Destroying Nature", and that "Mother Nature is dying." No, my sweet summer child. Mother Nature ain't dying. Mother Nature is just grabbing the slippers she's gon' use to spank our collective asses with. Natural processes that lead to life are going to remain well after we are gone. We just won't be in it.

What we're really calling "Mother Nature" is the specific set of material conditions found in nature that is conducive to life as we know it. And more importantly, to *human life* as we know it. Studies in catastrophe theory and chaos theory have all discussed at length how this works.

What we're here to talk about though, is how this "enduring myth" of a "Balance of Nature" reveals about how the Filipino thinks about the world around them.

Essentialism is the view that for every entity or object, there lies certain

attributes or substances that are critical for what it does. That there are things that make things what they are. This has been explored in Plato's Theory of Forms, that everything is an imperfect embodiment of a perfect, abstract Form. Following this logic, certain characteristics make "Nature" what it is. "Men" and "Women" would also have not only defining, but *essential* characteristics. Not having certain characteristics disqualifies something from being something.

I hope you can see how this kind of thinking is problematic.

Not only does this kind of thinking removes an entity, in this case, Nature, out of its historical context, but it also ignores the variety and breadth of human experience tied to the entity. A semi-essential view of nature was found in the Animism of the natives of the pre-colonial Philippines. It was a living and present force in their lives, something that could be bargained and negotiated with. Offerings could be made to placate their anger, while feasts were held to thank them for a bountiful harvest. Recognizing the role that the environment, and "Nature", in general, plays in their lives.

Although this isn't to say that the natives were this "in-tune with nature" collective of hippies that they're sometimes made out to be. Muro-Ami is the practice of using rocks to destroy corals in order to catch them in dragnets. This not only leads to overfishing, but also depletes the ocean biome's ability to replenish fish populations.

But it gets worse with the eventual arrival of the Spanish conquistadors and the wide-scale feudalization of the islands. The old gods were demonized and "Nature" just became God's gift to mankind. Which the colonized laborers were obliged to hand over to their conquerors. The theocratic ideology of the Church caused a greater split between the inhabitants of the archipelago and their environment, with the building of the oldest cities.

With the arrival of the American "Benevolent Assimilators", almost all sectors experience some form of industrialization. The relationship of Society and Nature was then made into a purely economic one. It is here that Alienation from Nature is made complete.

Observe how at each stage, Nature was assigned a different "Essence" and

contextualizes society's relationship with it. We are not saying that all of these changes happened overnight, and that these are complete, sweeping changes, either. Reality is a lot more messy than that. What does though, is unconsciously make us ignore nature's role in the context of our material conditions. It's just somewhere you get all that wood from. It downplays the fact that we affect it as much as it affects us. As living creatures, we need to realize our interdependence with nature. And this indifference to the role that large-scale human activity, of which large corporate and military entities are the most at fault for, has resulted in the crisis we are seeing today with global warming.

We must learn that Nature is not a great, monolithic entity. Nature is an inconceivably large and interconnected network of systems, of which animal life, and specifically human life, is merely just a part of. The contradiction between Nature and the needs of human social production, is something that Marx calls *The Metabolic Rift*, and we can see how that is creating a global crisis and pushing us head-first into what is likely going to be a 6th extinction event the world has ever seen.

We must learn how to
resolve this dialectical
contradiction, or pay the
price in countless lives.

WHAT IS "EGOISM"?

by: Tadano Egoism is named after the word "ego," which is latin for "I." Everyone around us has an ego for which, Max Stirner understood that we all have a drive to serve ourselves and the I, the self. This philosophical observation is also often seen in the sciences, as any serious scientist studying in the field of psychology or zoology can tell you that humans act for their own self-interest. It is then asked, is altruism a case against egoism? The answer is no, for which even Stirner argues that even altruism is a form of egoism on its own. Stirner said that altruism and cooperation—and even community—is made because it serves our ego in a way. Why do we work with other people? For our own interests. This is the meat and flesh of egoism, it's not at all complicated.

"Egoism means it's fine to murder and rape people!" is one of the many strawmen that unfortunately many leftists can easily fall into, as frustrating it is as just how plain false it is. For which Stirner said in a classic quote,

I love men too not merely
individuals, but every
one. But I love them with
the consciousness of
egoism; I love them
because love makes me
happy, I love because
loving is natural to me,
because it pleases me. I
know no 'commandment of
love.' I have a fellow-
feeling with every feeling
being, and their torment
torments, their
refreshment refreshes me
too; I can kill them, not
torture them. [1]

Egoism is not a rejection of altruism,
or collectivism. To call egoism an
opposite to collectivism would just be
plain false. It simply means to embrace
an ego that is in all of us, and live
for ourselves and to respect each
other's ego, uniqueness, and
personality.

The divine is God's
concern; the human, man's.
My concern is neither the
divine nor the human, not
the true, good, just,
free, etc., but solely
what is mine, and it is
not a general one, but
is unique, as I am unique.
Nothing is more to me than
myself! [2]

The roots of egoist thinking at its core is found in Max Stirner in his books *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*, translated as *Ego and its Own*, and *Stirner's Critics*, which are both incredible books to read and you should read—it's not too long either.

Another belief of egoism—and Stirner in particular—is the opposition of property. There seems to be a lot of confusion of leftists on his ideas of property, by which we have to make one thing very, very clear, stirner does not advocate for private property—just the opposite—he quotes,

The laborers have the most enormous power in their hands, and, if they once became thoroughly conscious of it and used it, nothing would withstand them; they would only have to stop labor, regard the product of labor as theirs, and enjoy it. This is the sense of the labor disturbances which show themselves here and there. The State rests on the slavery of labor. If labor becomes free. the State is lost. [3]

Stirner is not a capitalist, he was an anarchist in nature, even if he hasn't outright said it, and a socialist especially. He especially does not believe in "private property" nor even normal "property," at all. He puts in his book, that property has to be fought for, harshly to be owned, you cannot own a property (personal or private), without violence. One cannot own a property by simply saying, "this is

mine!"—by which stirner then observes, that property is fought for in violence, the violence of the state, and the bourgeoisie. The violence of the state and the bourgeoisie are spooked, handling themselves in the false idea of "property," in which they then use to exploit and extract! To put this in a quote, "[p]roperty exists by grace of the law. It is not a fact, but a legal fiction." Stirner extensively goes on about this in the section of Ego and Its Own known as "Political Liberalism," in which he regularly critiques liberals and the state, and exposing their spookiness and hatred towards the proletariat in a false sense of "freedom" and "choice." In a quote,

So runs the speech of commonality. The commonality is nothing else than the thought that the State is all in all, the true man, and that the individual's human value consists in being a citizen of the State. In being a good citizen he seeks his highest honor; beyond that he knows nothing higher than at most the antiquated being a "good Christian." [4]

Another idea that egoists believe in, is the Union of Egoists. This idea of organization by Stirner is not literal, but rather, a metaphorical one. It simply means that a union of egoists is a group of voluntary people and/or egoists that are in association with each other out of pure will, not due to some spook, or "inheritance." In Stirner's Critics, Stirner brilliantly explains this concept further by writing:

It would be another thing indeed, if Hess wanted to see egoistic unions not on paper, but in life. Faust finds himself in the midst of such a union when he cries: "Here I am human, here I can be human" Goethe says it in black and white. If Hess attentively observed real life, to which he holds so much, he will see hundreds of such egoistic unions, some passing quickly, others lasting. Perhaps at this very moment,

some children have come together just outside his window in a friendly game. If he looks at them, he will see a playful egoistic union. Perhaps Hess has a friend or a beloved; then he knows how one heart finds another, as their two hearts unite egotistically to delight (enjoy) each other, and how no one "comes up short" in this. Perhaps he meets a few good friends on the street and they ask him to accompany them to a tavern for wine; does he go along as a favor to them, or does he "unite" with them because it promises pleasure? Should they thank him heartily for the "sacrifice," or do they know that all together they form an "egoistic union" for a little while? [5]

And in another quote, he says,

We two, the State and I,
are enemies. I, the egoist,
have not at heart the
welfare of this 'human
society,' I sacrifice
nothing to it, I only
utilize it; but to be able
to utilize it completely I
transform it rather into my
property and my creature;
i. e., I annihilate it, and
form in its place the Union
of Egoists. [6]

To make things simple to understand,
egoists believe that we have all an
innate ego that we can activate at any
time, an ego that works for a self-
interest that does not bow down to any
spook or false idea that statists and/or
liberals will throw down on you. An ego
that loves all egos, while obliterating
all that stands away or harm egos, i.e.
Spooks, in which we will talk about in a
second.

What is a Spook?

A spook is a social construct, an abstract concept made up by society with no material basis—an immaterial spirit, a figment of the imagination. The motherland, fatherland, nationalism, God, religion, morality, and the obligation to work under capitalist society are all spooks. "But it is not only man that 'haunts'; so does everything. The higher essence, the spirit, that walks in everything, is at the same time bound to nothing, and only—appears' in it. Ghosts in every corner!"^[7] Spooks are around us all, under the fake liberalism of the US, or the fake ethno-nationalism of the DPRK. All spooks are created by humanity, usually for political power and purposes, to keep down ego, and to keep down the freedom of the individual, to disallow the free association of individuals, to prevent the exploration of our ego!

I hate capitalism 'cause it's spooked, right? But I don't like the spooked way socialism is promoted and enforced. This can be seen in the ultranationalism of the USSR or DPRK, the obligation, the duty, to build socialism, not because of an inner egoist desire, but because,

"it's for the motherland! 'Cause I said so!" Now continue working under state owned property. No, I want socialism not 'cause it's for "a greater cause;" I want socialism so I can really do whatever I want! Like, play League of Legends all day! Or having intense gay sex with no risk of economic collapse due to medical bills! Or to make whatever weird wood statues I can make, just because!

Stirner actually spent a section of the book criticizing socialism and socialists at the time, the section was called "Social Liberalism" in Ego and its Own and how socialists can often be as spooked as normal liberals. In which in a memorable quote, he says,

**By the principle of labor
that of fortune or
competition is certainly
outdone. But at the same
time the laborer, in his
consciousness that the
essential thing in him is
"the laborer," holds
himself aloof from egoism
and subjects himself to the
supremacy of a society of
laborers, as the commoner**

clung with self-abandonment
to the competition-State.
The beautiful dream of a
“social duty” still
continues to be dreamed.
People think again that
society gives what we need,
and we are under
obligations to it on that
account, owe it everything.
They are still at the point
of wanting to serve a
“supreme giver of all
good.” That society is no
ego at all, which could
give, bestow, or grant, but
an instrument or means,
from which we may derive
benefit; that we have no
social duties, but solely
interests for the pursuance
of which society must serve
us; that we owe society no
sacrifice, but, if we
sacrifice anything,
sacrifice it to
ourselves of this the

Socialists do not think,
because they as
liberals are imprisoned in
the religious principle,
and zealously aspire
after a sacred society,
e.g. the State was
hitherto. [8]

Two classic examples of spooks that invade us all, is nationalism and the state. The state is a spook because it institutes and enforces laws that aren't real. Laws are not material in reality, thus must be violently enforced via state violence. Whether something as simple as a law to put logos on tax bills, or more extreme laws, ones that actively harm people and the proletariat, i.e cops.

Nationalism is a spook. The entire idea of countries is a spook—borders are made up, thus, has to be violently enforced via borders, guards, and the law. Nationalism is then—through another spook—culture, and is a deadly combination to not only enforce capitalism, but also put down the ego. In which it goes hand in hand with the

idea of "cultural hegemony," as brought forth by a Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, in many ways, the observations of the use of culture by Stirner and Gramsci are very similar. As Gramsci put in his books, that cultural hegemony is what happens when the bourgeoisie uses culture to put down socialism and class consciousness and enforce capitalism,^[9] for any kind of reasons, as can be observed in US liberal society, Philippines, Japan, and many others.

Culture in itself is a spook, if not the ultimate spook as culture shapes entire societies. The study of culture is the study of a spook. Traditional customs, requirement to pray, requirement to cite a pledge of allegiance, where do these ideas come from? All but figments of the imagination, a spirit, a spook.

We can see this dynamic, the dynamic between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat under capitalist societies play out in many cultures, and how it intentionally or unintentionally, enforces capitalism. I'll give you a classic example in Filipino society: the obligation to work and do well because "responsibilidad mo to! para to kay Jesus!" In the USSR, many workers have to keep doing labor "for the motherland!" In Imperial Japan: "work or

you will throw away your family honor! If you throw away your honor, you must execute yourself!" The worst example of this is Fascist Germany. Fascism is dangerous because it abuses spooks in the worst way possible. Fascist ideology is riddled with spooks: the belief that one race is superior, that Jews bad cause something something, using Christianity to justify genocide, and the use of religion in general to be an ass. Fascism, anti-semitism, race, inherent superiority, unfortunately has not material and/or scientific basis, but the fascist does not care, why? It's not meant to be logical, pure reactionary, to gain and use state violence under a fake coat of "populism."

Egoist Analysis

Egoist analysis explains a lot of things, especially useful for understanding class conflicts and how the bourgeoisie abuses spooks to hinder the egos of the working class and force them to conform. If you think about it, Marx uses egoism unconsciously in his works to philosophically and scientifically explain bourgeoisie activity and what they do under capitalist society. While it is true that the bourgeoisie do things for their

own ego, they do so in complete disrespect of the ego of others, in this case, the proletariat. As explained earlier, egoist analysis simultaneously explains why we are both not only egoistic, but also altruistic. The whole debacle about individualism vs collectivism is a false dichotomy, they're both great and useful to serve our egos!

Egoist analysis is a nice philosophical reflection that confirms a lot of things that I thought about my experience as a Filipino and Filipino society. Like, why are we really altruistic, but at the same time, we're also individualistic? Why is the state always so rude and mean towards the poor people, why does it feel like there's a massive disconnect between the poor and the rich? While these can be answered through Marxism, I've found that egoism is a more useful tool in figuring this out.

The Liberating Potential of Egoism

Egoism is a liberating philosophy that explains a lot of my angers towards modern Filipino society. This is first seen and acknowledged by me when in very early on in school, I continue to keep asking myself, every year, "why do we keep having to go school? Why can't we

just be free and do whatever we want, even if education is so important, why are these teachers so strict about our lives, freedoms, uniqueness?" The answer to this is always been, "well, it's for your grades! You have to keep working when you're older, it's your responsibility, as a human being!" Then after that, they start to threaten you with terrible things that happened towards workers, "If you don't want to work! You'll be living on the streets like those poor hobos! Do you want that? Do you want to live like a hobo?" And I'm especially not alone here in these thoughts.

Once I noticed and fully understood just how spooked society is, that's when I've truly become so much more free and happy. I can recall many days in grade school where I was left crying in my bed 'cause, "I'm not good enough," for society, and once I've fully taken in that these spooks don't matter, it made me so much better, happier, and free. I believe that is the value in egoism as a philosophy, and together with other nihilistic, postmodernist literature in philosophy, and that is why we must start reading Stirner and be free. It is especially valuable in the Philippines, as many, many of the proletarians and people here are spooked into religion,

into "responsibility," into human society as a whole.

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