

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)
Anti-Copyright



Political Line of Libertarian Communist Front

Jayu Gongsanjuui Jeonseon

Jayu Gongsanjuui Jeonseon
Political Line of Libertarian Communist Front
3/05/26

jayucommunist.blogspot.com

usa.anarchistlibraries.net

3/05/26

merely to preserve numbers, but to materially carry forward capacity and perspective.

For this reason, we agree with and respect every compromise that the masses decide upon for themselves. Compromise is not betrayal. The question is how, and under what conditions, that compromise is produced. We believe that only the most radical and revolutionary struggle, grounded in direct action, can produce the best compromise. Compromise must be the result of struggle, not the avoidance of struggle.

We do not reject reforms. We approve them only when they are the product of revolutionary practice. Measures such as legal amendments, the expansion of welfare, wage increases, and employment security may appear as achievements within the system. But if they are won not as benevolence from the state or capital, but through the collective force and struggle of the masses, then they are part of the revolution.

Social revolution is not some change of government achieved overnight. We do not believe that a single heroic uprising or dramatic turn can change the world. Revolution is not a single event, but a task constructed through the defeats and gains of accumulated revolutionary struggles, and through the process by which the masses recover their own initiative within them.

Uncompromising Compromisism is the strategic practice that keeps this process in view. Even if the struggle of this moment is not a completed revolution, it is an attitude that turns that struggle into a tactical retreat that lays the foundation for the next struggle, leaves behind organization, leaves behind consciousness, and preserves the memory of the direction of liberation. It is a process of preparing for the revolution to come.

We always advance as far as possible, while ensuring that the masses do not lose the strength to rise again. This is the only way to make revolution sustainable.

Uncompromising Compromisism

As libertarian communists, we always drive every struggle to advance as far as possible. Our task is not to organize the anger of the masses and arrange it into orderly form, but to draw out from within that anger the possibility of overturning the structure, and to organize the most radical practice possible. We seek to expand practice so that every struggle aims at the foundations of the system.

But this radical propulsion does not mean “fighting without compromise until the final moment.” The subject of revolution is the masses, and what we must defend, more than any declarative victory, is the survival and growth of mass organizations. Any struggle, even if its outcome is called “defeat,” is an advance toward the liberated world we seek, so long as it accumulates the experience through which the masses directly organize and determine the conditions of their own lives.

We have seen far too many struggles in which “resolute struggle until all demands are won” leaves behind only a small number of committed activists, while the mass organization as a whole is exhausted or dissolved. We understand this, in the end, as reducing the revolutionary front to a struggle of “advanced elements” alone, and as leading to the construction of a vanguard party as a “party of those who remain.”

What we seek is this: if this struggle does not reach revolution, if this revolution is once again defeated, then the mass organization must not end with that defeat, but prepare for the next struggle. No struggle must end as an isolated event. If this fight has failed to overthrow the system, it must at least leave behind a foundation from which the next struggle can advance one step further. So long as the mass organization survives, and so long as the masses do not lose the will to fight again, the revolution is not over. We have only lost this fight; we are preparing the next victory. To preserve the organization is not

Contents

Forewords : Why Re-organize	5
Introduction : Methodology of Analysis	7
Objectives	9
Social Revolution	9
Libertarian Communism	11
Liberation of Every Individuals	14
Structural Analysis	17
Structure of the Society	17
Types of Dominating Power	18
Capitalism	18
Patriarchy	23
Korean Ethno-nationalism and Imperialism	29
Moralism	32
Militarism / Barracks Culture	33
Class	35
The State	41
General Strategy – “What is to be Done”	43
Revolutionary Minority	43
Reformist Essence of Masses in General	45
Libertarian Communists as Revolutionary	
Masses	48
Social Insertion	51
Intersectionality	53
Methods of Organization	55
Dual Organization	55
General Union of Anarchists	56
Uncompromising Compromisism	58

autonomously determine our roles through agreement, deliberation, and mutual respect, and we assume responsibility for carrying out common decisions. This internal discipline is not the coercion of hierarchy, but a promise that guarantees the autonomy and continuity of the organization.

Theoretical unity means a shared and agreed analysis and perspective on what kind of society we seek to build, how the structures of oppression in the present system operate, and by what means we will dismantle them. Libertarian communism is the perspective of abolishing state power and all hierarchical relations of domination, and of simultaneously overthrowing the multilayered and intersecting forms of oppression that operate across the economic, political, and cultural spheres. Without this theoretical foundation, the organization loses its direction, and struggle becomes dispersed. Theory is not a fixed doctrine, but a point of orientation that binds us together as it is repeatedly criticized and renewed through practice.

Tactical unity means maintaining an agreed strategy and consistent practice on the basis of an analysis of reality. This is not a hierarchical command system, but a common practical commitment reached through discussion and agreement among all members. If we take contradictory positions within the same struggle, confusion arises among the masses, and our force is dispersed. Even under differing conditions, we advance toward one strategic objective, and through this we drive the mass movement beyond reformism or bargaining power within the system, toward total liberation.

We will build the General Union of Anarchists and fight as a revolutionary minority, as a vanguard that drives the masses forward from within mass organizations.

Toward libertarian communism.

isfaction with partial improvements. Fourth, it builds political power from below through discussion and persuasion with the rank and file, not through commands issued by being elected to “leadership.” Fifth, it exists not as an external commander of mass organizations, but as a comrade who practices in the middle of struggle and shares its risks.

We do not see mass organizations and political organizations as severed structures. The two maintain mutual independence, while one provides the practical force of the broad masses and the other provides the force of principle and perspective. In this way, they complement one another, so that mass movements can move beyond mere bargaining power and advance toward the comprehensive dismantling of oppression and domination. The task of the political organization is to open, in practice, the furthest path toward liberation, within the masses and together with the masses.

General Union of Anarchists

We, the Libertarian Communist Front, agree with the conception of the anarchist general union presented by Dielo Truda in the Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists. Revolution cannot be completed through short-term responses or loose associations. To dismantle the solid structure of the state, long-term and systematic practice is necessary. Therefore, we build a responsible organization based on three principles: organizational unity, theoretical unity, and tactical unity.

Organizational unity means that members do not act separately and at random, but act in mutual connection as one community. This does not mean integration according to commands from above. It means the division of roles, shared responsibility, and practical cooperation based on agreed theory and tactics. Loose and temporary solidarity disperses responsibility and weakens sustained practical capacity. We

Forewords : Why Re-organize

We were born in the midst of Covid-19 Pandemic, when the state’s infringement upon individual rights and freedoms, carried out in the name of public health and social order, had come to seem all too natural. We were the minorities, who insisted that nevertheless, individual freedom must not be violated. We grouped together and called ourselves the Organizational Solidarity of Revolutionary Anarchists, or Anarchist Yondae.

We called ourselves the Organizational Solidarity of Revolutionary Anarchists because there existed within us a firm consensus on the following two points.

First, we rejected any “anarchism” that instead of advancing the direct action of the masses, turned toward parliamentarism and representation by proxy. For us, anarchism was the ideology of the self-emancipation of the oppressed classes. We believed that what this self-emancipation required was not the expansion of social welfare, nor entry into parliament, but the task of building mass organizations of workers, organizing their struggles, and bringing these organized struggles together.

Second, we sought to break with any “anarchism” that glorified individual escape from the system, or the terrorism of a few heroic individuals. For us, the system was not a spook that would vanish through resolute refusal, nor some flimsy idea that could be shaken open by individual struggle. For us, the system was a solid material force; and for that very reason, we held that only the equally solid organization of the popular masses could bring it down.

Five years have passed since then. And we, on the basis of experiences from struggles and studies we’ve done, hereby re-organize ourselves and establish Libertarian Communist Front(XXXXXXXXXX, Jayu Gongsanjuui Jeonseon).

This does not mean that we are not ‘anarchists’ anymore. Over the past five years, we have built an organization, re-

flected on the principles of our movement, formed relations with the masses within mass organizations, exchanged views with anarchist activists, and engaged with non-anarchist activists. Through this process, we have sharpened the ideology we had called anarchism. In the course of that tempering, we reached the conclusion that the word “anarchism” is far too broad to express our ideology.

For this reason, through the process of reexamining and rewriting our political line, we now lay bare our ideology in more explicit terms. We take as our aim not the liberation of hollow and decorative “individuals,” but the self-emancipation of the oppressed classes who suffer under the regime. As for the method of organization, we take not the loose solidarity of individual activists, but the ideological, tactical, and organizational unity of militant activists on the basis of a political organization. We take not peaceful synthesis, but fierce struggle amid division. Rather than waiting for the masses to rise up on their own, relying on the “revolutionary self-sufficiency of the masses,” we choose to become a revolutionary momentum within the masses, as the most revolutionary part of the masses themselves.

We are a leftist ideology that emerged organically under the influence of the rank-and-file militant tradition of Korea’s combative democratic trade union movement. Within the international anarchist movement, we find our line overlapping with that of Mikhail Bakunin, Errico Malatesta, and Nestor Makhno / Dielo Truda. In terms of contemporary “tendency” distinctions, this means that we stand in line with Platformism / Specific Anarchism / Especificismo. We therefore adopt Libertarian Communism as the term that best expresses this tendency.

We are to specify the strategy/tactic of our movement, and distinguish ourselves from those lines of other movements.

Anarchism is an ideology of division and struggle. Or at least, it must become one. For anarchism longs for a society built from below: a decentralized society in which the individu-

Methods of Organization

Dual Organization

In organizing struggle, we have no choice but to distinguish between political organizations and mass organizations. Mass organizations, such as trade unions, residents’ organizations, and social movement networks, encompass broad and heterogeneous masses, and are formed around immediate demands such as the right to livelihood, labor conditions, and the abolition of discrimination. Yet because they have grown within the orders of the state, capital, patriarchy, racism, and so on, their spontaneous struggles often take on a partial and reformist character.

By contrast, a political organization is an organization of activists united organizationally, theoretically, strategically, and tactically. It has a structure distinct from mass organizations, yet acts within the masses and exists as a revolutionary minority that drives struggles in the most radical direction. The role of the political organization is to check the tendency of mass organizations to drift toward reformism and incorporation into the system, and to connect mass struggles with a perspective that challenges the whole structure of oppression. The political organization does not become the leadership of mass organizations. It is the concentration of radical tendencies formed within the masses, and an organization that fights at the front.

The task of the political organization does not stop at mere theoretical initiative. First, within existing struggles, it expands individual issues into challenges against the entire order of oppression. Second, when mass movements drift toward parliamentarism and compromise, it organizes criticism and re-orientation from the rank and file. Third, it aims simultaneously at intersecting structures of oppression, including labor, gender, race, nationality, disability, and sexuality, and seeks the transformation of every sphere of society rather than sat-

axes of the structure of domination. We do not treat their conditions of life and struggle as mere victim narratives or objects of sympathy. Rather, by intervening at these points of intersection, we must reconstruct the political front so that different fronts, capital and gender, borders and citizenship, production and reproduction, can be connected into a single rupture.

For example, when the feminist movement does not remain only at the level of resistance to gendered violence, but also takes issue with the gendered division of labor and the wage gap within the capitalist process of production, it becomes not merely “feminism,” but a central front of class struggle. Likewise, when the migrant movement moves beyond the question of borders alone and advances toward a challenge against social reproduction and the entire system of the nation-state, it can become a detonator of liberation that shakes the whole system.

We do not design struggle under the moral weight of simply “having to address every form of oppression.” We seek out the links that make the system most vulnerable, and strike at points of intersection as a tactic for producing the greatest rupture with the least amount of force. This efficiency is the only realistic path by which we can materially disrupt the system even from a position of numerical weakness.

Oppression intersects structurally. So does liberation. Libertarian communism is not the liberation of a single identity, but a political practice that destroys the whole structure which maintains the division and hierarchy of identities. What we aim at is not merely one axis of exploitation, but the system itself, in which these axes justify and sustain one another. We struggle at the clearest points where the greatest rupture can be opened in the system: the points of intersection.

ality of every person is respected to the fullest extent; in which those who share “tolerable differences” within that individuality build organizations together; in which those organizations, in order to bring their own individuality to its fullest expression, struggle against, debate with, and at times ally with other organizations; and in which, through this process, agreements are ultimately reached. For this reason, if you call yourselves “the left,” or at the very least if you call yourselves “anarchists,” do not speak to us of integration and unity. Sharpen your divisions further, and build your own movement. The movement you build and our movement will differ from one another, and for that reason we will struggle against each other. Yet when social necessity demands it, will we not also ally with one another and gather under a united front? Is this not what anarchism means by federation?

Our Political Line is not a doctrine. Nor is it a document that must serve as the correct answer for all. It is simply our own methodology for social revolution. For that reason, we welcome every criticism directed at our program. For it is precisely such criticism, and our struggle against it, that will forge our movement and our theory into a sharper blade. And we believe that this “blade” will become our weapon: a weapon with which we will cut through the system of oppression and exploitation, and achieve the liberation in which all may live freely.

Long Live the Social Revolution of the Workers of the World!

Libertarian Communist Front

Introduction : Methodology of Analysis

We discussed our political line on the basis of the following table of contents.

1. Objective

We regard the foremost responsibility of a political organization as the task of presenting a vision of the new society.

Newton's laws of motion state that "every body remains at rest or continues to move uniformly in a straight line unless compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it," and that "the change of motion is proportional to the motive force impressed, and is made in the direction of the straight line in which that force is impressed." These principles are coherent not only as laws of the physical world, but also as principles of society.

Society does not change unless someone creates momentum, or a driving force. And even when social transformation is brought about by such a force, the direction of that transformation follows "the direction of the straight line in which that force is impressed."

Ultimately, if we seek to transform society in a particular direction, namely in the direction of libertarian communism, we must clearly define the direction in which our own force is applied.

For this reason, we judged that the first question our line and program must address is our purpose. As Dielo Truda declared in the Organizational Platform of the General Union of Anarchists: "It is time for anarchism to leave the swamp of disorganisation, to put an end to endless vacillations on the most important tactical and theoretical questions, to resolutely move towards a clearly recognised goal, and to operate an organised collective practice."

2. Structural Analysis

We are convinced that our "objective" cannot be achieved through the resistance of individuals, heroic terrorism, or insurrection. It is equally clear that it is not enough to set forth a beautiful philosophical purpose on the lofty plane of scholarship and theory.

Our "objective" must stand firmly on the ground of the existing order, and must be realized within the conditions

Intersectionality

The class structure of the existing system is not built upon a single axis. Capitalism is not simply a structure of exploitation mediated through wage labor. It is a system of oppression in which countless apparatuses of power, including gender hierarchy, racial exclusion, division by nationality and citizenship, the ideology of the normal family, sexual normativity, ageism, and discrimination against disabled people, intersect around capital and reproduce one another. The domination of the present system is therefore a collective apparatus of intersecting powers.

What we need, then, is not a single movement of liberation against a single contradiction, but a multiple and total attack against intersecting structures of power. We pay attention to the lives of those situated at points of intersection: women, elderly, irregular workers; foreigners, women, and sexual minorities; migrant workers, disabled people, and youth. These people are not merely those who suffer a greater sum of injuries. Because they are situated at the intersections of oppressive structures, their struggles form strategic links that can shake the whole structure.

Above all, we do not possess sufficient numbers or resources to fight on every front at once. As a revolutionary minority, our practice always takes place under limited conditions, with limited means and limited organizational capacity. Under these conditions, constructing practice at the points where multiple structures of power intersect, rather than building a movement that strikes only a single contradiction, is necessary not merely because it is ideologically "correct," but because it is the most efficient strategy.

The struggles of those situated in intersecting conditions are important not simply because they bear a greater sum of oppression. They are important because their struggles are strategic strongholds capable of producing fractures along multiple

this year's wage and collective bargaining struggle does not remain merely a question of how much wages will be raised, but raises the question of the employer's managerial prerogative itself; that women workers' demand to close the wage gap does not remain merely a question of this year's wages, but expands into resistance against the patriarchal hierarchy as a whole.

We must connect the prospect of total liberation to struggles fragmented by workplace and position. We must develop the struggles the masses are already carrying out into challenges against the entire order of domination.

Second, when the masses seek to be satisfied with reforms within the system, we organize criticism against this tendency and carry out the formation of new political power from the rank and file. Amid the currents of mass movements that become submerged in compromise and concession, parliamentarism, and changes of government, libertarian communists become the practical vanguard that checks the bureaucratization of organizations and reorients mass organizations so that they can once again function as subjects of self-emancipation.

Third, within mass organizations, we drive the organization's direction further toward libertarian communism through struggle against other political tendencies. We reject political avoidance disguised as "neutrality," and seek the independent political empowerment of the working class. Yet this political empowerment must not remain at the level of support for an external party. We must provide ideological initiative so that the direction of struggle and practice on the ground can advance toward liberation.

In the end, once again, through the process of social insertion, we reveal our political direction within the masses.

it presents. For this reason, we placed a general analysis of the structure of the existing order as the next task of our discussion.

3. Strategy

Strategy is the general methodology by which we seek to achieve our purpose within the structure of the existing order.

4. Tactic

Since the terrain on which we must implement our strategy is Korean society as it exists now, the question of "what is to be done" must necessarily be grounded in an analysis of that conjuncture.

However, unlike the preceding sections 1 to 3, the conjuncture is fluid and subject to change. We therefore treated conjunctural analysis, and the tactics derived from it, as matters that must likewise remain open to change.

Objectives

Social Revolution

Existing society stands upon a structure that is inherently unequal and hierarchical. This structure does not depend on the question of "who rules, and how." Rather, it is sustained by class relations of domination that run through society as a whole. This is a system that does not treat human beings as human beings. It is a society built upon lives forced into submission for the sake of survival, and upon people consumed like machines for the interests of the ruling class. For this reason, we must transform this society revolutionarily.

But the question is: what kind of revolution? Throughout our history, we have witnessed countless events that have borne the name of revolution. Yet did these revolutions transform the lives of the oppressed classes? History does not say so. Dynastic revolutions, in which one ruling house was overthrown only for another family name to seize power;

the political history of Korea, where the masses held candles in the streets only for the faces of the established powers to change; even the Russian Revolution, which took power in the name of the working class, all converge upon a single common outcome. The ruling class was replaced, but the structure of domination remained. The oppressed classes continued to be oppressed. They made revolutions in order to abolish class. What remained, however, was the class ascent of the revolutionaries.

Ultimately, once again, this is a question of structure. It is not a question of who rules. It is a question of the total social structure in which some rules and others are ruled. Therefore, the social revolution we speak of is not a mere change of government. Nor is it the transformation of any single sphere, whether that sphere is the “property relations in the means of production” or “gendered violence.” The social revolution we seek must be a comprehensive and total transformation: one in which the solid mass organizations of the oppressed classes, through their struggle for self-emancipation, overthrow with their own hands, from below, the relations of power that exist in every sphere of society, and build a new society upon their ruins. It is not a matter of changing the form of government, but of uprooting the social structure itself. A world without class. A society without domination. That is our goal.

Such a social revolution will necessarily strike directly at the structure of class domination. Simple reforms and partial repairs can always be absorbed or tolerated by the capitalist order. But a revolution that targets the foundations of the system itself cannot help but provoke violent confrontation, because the system will never collapse on its own, and power will never step down voluntarily.

If so, how can we prevail in this radical and total class war? The lessons of war, which has occurred far more often than revolution in human history, show us that victory and defeat are not decided by “moral legitimacy” or “ingenious tactics.” The

Social Insertion

We engage in social insertion within mass organizations. We constitute a solid political organization distinct from mass organizations, but our mode of action is not “leadership” from outside the masses. Rather, we enter into the masses, exist as the most radical elements of the masses, and form the direction of struggle through practice.

Today, the masses are born, educated, and live within the systemic orders of the state, capital, patriarchy, racism, sexual normativity, borders, and so on. For this reason, the senses, common sense, and standards of life of the masses already remain within the limits permitted by the system. Thus the spontaneous struggles of the masses are often partial, and generally remain within the adjustment of interests inside the system. But we do not reject the masses because of these limits. On the contrary, it is precisely within them that we seek the possibility of raising and organizing the prospect of liberation. For only the vast and united struggle of the masses can create the conditions for building a new society.

We accept this reality as the condition in which we must act, and within it we actively respond for the sake of social revolution. We are not philosophers shouting correct answers from outside mass organizations. We struggle together with the masses inside mass organizations, while at the same time driving that struggle as far as it can go. We do not constitute the leadership of the masses. We exist not as “representatives” who issue commands from the upper layers of the organization, but as “comrades” who practice together and shape direction from the rank and file of the organization.

We uphold the following three principles as the concrete direction of social insertion.

First, we drive existing struggles from within so that they can become as revolutionary as possible. We must ensure, through political propulsion and ideological initiative, that

being incorporated into the system or retreating into compromise.

At the same time, we must not take the “easy” path of being elected to leadership and presenting these as official directives. We must persuade the rank and file, and through this, build political power from below. Simultaneously, we must take part in actual struggles, intervene within the masses, and grasp and expand the possibilities of liberation revealed in the spontaneous actions of the masses.

Even if mass organizations organize themselves and take action, this alone does not complete the revolution. If a trade union leaves discrimination against irregular workers intact, or if it calls for self-management in the factory while maintaining gender inequality in the home, then only the subject of power has changed, while the structure of power remains as it was.

The revolutionary minority exists in order to move beyond this “incomplete liberation.” For the total abolition of oppression, it must constantly raise questions about the various structures of oppression, and provide direction so that the mass movement does not stop at economic improvement in a particular sector, but advances toward the transformation of society as a whole.

The revolutionary minority must also do more than simply tail the tactics and practices of mass organizations. It must spread the most radical tactics and methods of practice within the masses. This must be done not by “teaching” the masses, but through a process of learning together, fighting together, and reorganizing organizations together in practice.

Libertarian communists must remain not “representatives,” but the “rank and file”; not “leaders,” but “comrades.” Within the immediate reality before us, we always seek to advance as far as possible, and through practice, we force open the possibility of the most radical future that can be realized within the masses.

outcome of this class war will be determined, rather, by the extent to which we can organize the masses and bring them onto the terrain of struggle; by how we construct a strategy capable of responding to rapidly changing revolutionary conditions; and by what influence we secure within the revolutionary forces themselves.

Moreover, revolution will not be a single event. Our revolution is not some coup that overthrows a government overnight. Our revolution is a long-term and many-sided struggle to sever, one by one, the structures of domination rooted throughout society: the relations of hierarchy and submission between people, and the web of exploitation and alienation. Social revolution is not “a single event,” nor is it some “dope insurrection.” It is a continuous, complex, and at times grinding process of revolutionary practice.

From the day after our victory in the class war, we will confront the question that Kropotkin placed at the heart of *The Conquest of Bread*: the question of “Bread for All.” From “the first day of the Revolution to the last,” he insisted, we must ensure that “there is not a single man who lacks bread.” Upon the ruins of the fallen system, we will have to build a new society. And at that moment, we must clearly present our own social alternative. We present that alternative as libertarian communism.

Libertarian Communism

By presenting libertarian communism as our alternative, we mean that our central aim is not only the overthrow of capitalism, but the construction of a liberated society through the abolition and overthrow of all hierarchical structures of power, including state power: in other words, the entirety of organized relations of domination among human beings. That is to say, we aim beyond economic objectives such as the nationalization of the means of production or the abolition of wage labor. We

seek the comprehensive dismantling of structural oppression operating across every political, social, and cultural sphere.

From this standpoint, communism is not a mere transition to a different economic system. It means a liberated society in which the oppressed classes as a whole, including the working class, can directly control every sphere of their own lives: a society in which they exercise autonomous and equal initiative across the realms of production, reproduction, culture, and politics. For communism to be libertarian means that each individual must be not only a member of the working class or of the commune, but a being capable of determining their own desires, needs, and forms of life for themselves. Ultimately, then, our revolution too must not be carried out under anyone's direction. It must be a revolution of self-emancipation by all individuals, by the masses themselves.

The moment someone claims that they will seize power on our behalf, or bring liberation in our place, what they offer is not liberation. It is merely the replacement of one ruler with another. So it was with dynastic revolutions. So it was with the Russian Revolution. The surname of the king changed; the name of the Bolsheviks was inscribed at the summit of power. Yet the masses were still compelled to obey.

The revolution we speak of is different. Revolution is the process in which the oppressed rise up for themselves, organize themselves, and overthrow power with their own hands. Only through this process can the masses cease to be objects of domination and be reborn as the subjects of a new society.

Liberation handed down from outside is not liberation. It is merely another name for power. The self-emancipation of the masses is not a declarative ideal, but a necessity. This is because oppression is not a single institution, but a structure that permeates every relation of life. Even if workers seize control of the factory, if patriarchy remains intact within the household, then only the subject of power has changed; the power rela-

tendencies within the masses. We are not those who tail reality as it is, but a vanguard that transforms the desire to move beyond oppression and compromise into practice.

(There may be some confusion, in using the word "vanguard," with the concept of the "vanguard party" in the Marxist-Leninist tradition. But the "vanguard" we speak of is not a "vanguard party" that reigns above the masses, or that becomes the leadership by claiming the approval of the masses.

For us, the vanguard is a practical center within autonomous and horizontal organization: one that pursues the most radical direction and forms the heat and direction of struggle. It is not an existence that gives commands from outside the masses, or from the upper layers of mass organizations. It is the concentration of radical tendencies formed within the masses, and an organized passion that proves itself in the course of struggle.

For us, therefore, the vanguard is not "representation," but "practice." When mass organizations show a tendency to be integrated into the system, this vanguard does not follow them uncritically. Rather, through struggle grounded in principle, it plays the role of reorienting the direction of the mass movement.

In other words, the vanguard is not "the one who commands," but "the one who fights first"; not "the leader of the masses," but "a common practitioner formed in the process of liberation.")

The role of libertarian communists must not stop at mere theoretical leadership. Within organizations, we must squarely confront the limits faced by mass organizations and provide the theoretical and tactical foundations needed to overcome them. We must ensure that mass organizations set the direction of struggle for themselves, clarify the aim of class self-emancipation, and constantly guard against the organization

regard the existence of the state, the existence of capitalism, and the state's intervention in their lives as natural and correct. When mass movements become internalized into the system and often turn toward legislative movements, parliamentary movements, or movements for a change of government, this is not because the people involved are inferior or weak. It is simply because these are the only alternatives given to them within the system. For them, at the present moment, the most "egoist" choice lies not in rebelling against the system, but in serving it.

Then, while recognizing the limits of the capacities of the masses and mass organizations, and the limits of their consciousness, are we simply to accept those limits and tail after them? Is it enough for the masses merely to organize themselves, raise their own voices, and pursue their own interests through direct action?

Libertarian Communists as Revolutionary Masses

We are exceedingly ordinary human beings, and therefore we reject the homogeneity of the masses. If there are 1,000 people, one may be good at football, another at English, and another at repairing computers. In the same way, some may be the most revolutionary and libertarian. We affirm the existence of this "most revolutionary part of the masses," or revolutionary minority.

As libertarian communists, we constitute this revolutionary minority. That is, we must become the most radical part of the masses, and the most active defenders of mass power.

This is not elitism. Rather, it is a position of political practice that begins from recognizing heterogeneity and diversity within the masses. The revolutionary minority does not exist outside the masses, as a force that enlightens or manipulates them. We exist as part of the masses, while also serving as the political expression that consciously organizes the most radical

tion itself has not been dismantled. Therefore, revolution must necessarily be self-emancipation in every sphere.

The method of revolution determines the content of revolution. Only in the process through which the masses themselves fight, organize, and make decisions is the form of a new society forged. Liberation granted by a leadership culminates in rule from above. Liberation won by the masses themselves culminates in self-government from below. Revolution cannot be carried out by proxy. It can be completed only as self-emancipation.

The structure of class domination we speak of is not confined to class structure in the traditional sense: that is, to capitalist domination arising from relations of ownership over the means of production. The structure of class domination we speak of is the totality of contradictions produced not only by the relation between capital and labor, but by the multilayered and intersecting apparatuses of oppression: gender hierarchy, norms of sexuality, racial supremacy, mechanisms of exclusion mediated through nationality and citizenship, the ideology of the normative family, discrimination against disabled people, and the coercion of cultural homogeneity. For even if wage labor were abolished and the means of production held in common, an MTF lesbian Vietnamese disabled woman worker would still not necessarily be liberated.

These structural forms of power do not operate independently of one another. Rather, they are intertwined in ways that complement one another and reinforce the stability and durability of the system.

For this reason, reformist change in a particular sector, or localized reform in isolation, cannot produce a decisive rupture in the system itself. Libertarian communism therefore demands the comprehensive and simultaneous dismantling of all relations of domination.

Such a society is not fixed in a single form, and may be realized in many different ways. It may take the form of democratic

control in the workplace. It may mean conditions in which LGBTQ people can live with dignity, free from social stigma and exclusion. It may mean a structure in which migrants are recognized as members of the local community, without depending on nationality or legal status.

Libertarian communism is not a completed form, but an ongoing practice of constructing relations and forms of life without domination.

It is not a mere replacement of power, nor a simple shift in policy. It means the comprehensive reorganization of the whole social structure: a process that declares liberation while materially creating the conditions that make liberation possible.

Liberation of Every Individuals

Emma Goldman once said, "If I cannot dance, it is not my revolution." What this ultimately means is that, no matter how much the form of the world changes, if there remains discomfort for me in that world, then it is not a liberated world. What would it matter if the regime were replaced, if waves of general strikes covered society, if workers' self-management were introduced in workplaces, and if, in any case, the world changed? If the oppression applied to "me" remains, then "I" would still be unable to dance. And if that is so, what meaning would revolution and a liberated world have for "me"?

The world we must seek is a world in which no one dominates me, a world in which I can live exactly as I was born. It is not a world in which things such as "our interests," the "common good," or "class interests" have been achieved.

The "revolution" we want is the same. Our revolution is to build a society in which every individual can realize their own desires. It is to liberate human individuality from the system of exploitation and oppression, and from the shackles of social norms. Within a community where oppressive power and coer-

a mass organization can be secured not through revolutionary struggle, but rather through class ascent achieved by compromise and concession. Consider the example of regular workers' unions in large factories, which are so often denounced for "not caring about the issue of irregular workers," for "striving to defend their own vested interests," and for being "class-compromising rather than class-struggle-oriented."

They were not reformists from the beginning. On the contrary, they once stood at the forefront of Korea's militant unionist tradition. Nor did this happen because undemocratic, labor-management-cooperationist forces seized the upper layers of the organization through political maneuvering. It is simply that, at a certain point, an era arrived in which revolutionaries calling for uncompromising struggle could no longer be elected to leadership. As the system began to embrace these organizations, and as these mass organizations began to be internalized into the system, their maximum interest came to lie not in entering struggles where someone might be injured, arrested, or imprisoned, but in compromising and making concessions at an appropriate moment. Through direct action that serves their own interests more faithfully than anything else, they strengthen and serve the strategy of class division.

In addition, several thousand years have already passed since the state first emerged. On the Korean peninsula, it has already been roughly a thousand years since a centralized state was established, and more than five hundred years since a system took shape in which the state's intervention in the lives of the people became taken for granted. The order called capitalism, too, has existed and taken root over several centuries. Even the concept of the welfare state, in which the state actively improves the conditions of people's lives, is now nearly a hundred years old.

The masses we must encounter in reality are people who were born in this system, educated within this system, and raised under this system. It is by no means strange that they

the popular masses in society, through which they overthrow the mechanisms of oppression that surround them. But when a union, or an organization, declares itself “neutral” toward areas outside its core task, can it become revolutionary? Self-directed transformation may be possible in one part of the lives of union members. But if mechanisms of oppression still operate in the remaining areas, this cannot become revolutionary transformation.

Another problem was that, when the union acted for the interests of its members within its own stated purpose, it abandoned the task of giving direction to that action. The union could speak about improving the working conditions of its members, but because it would be too “anarchist,” it was not supposed to speak about workers’ self-management of production. A migrant organization could struggle against the deportation of its members, but because it would be too “internationalist,” it was not supposed to speak about the abolition of borders. In the present day, this appears under the name of “identity politics.”

We reject the notion that any particular mechanism of oppression is the “foundation” of oppression, while the others are merely “secondary oppressions” derived from that “foundation.” In the end, what liberation requires is the total destruction of all oppression.

Even if workers succeed in turning an industry over to self-management, if wage discrimination against women workers or employment discrimination against irregular workers still occurs within that industry, then what has happened is merely that management has been replaced by the trade union. It is not the liberation of the industry.

Above all, even if we believe that mass organizations can reconstruct society through direct action and struggle, there is no guarantee that the society created in this way will be an “anarchist” society. So long as the existing system remains, in the absolute majority of situations, the “maximum interest” of

cive discipline have been destroyed, each individual is reborn as a being who freely unfolds their own desires, emotions, and creative impulses, and thereby contributes to common life.

In the end, our anarchism must be a thought of “I,” a thought of the relation between “I” and “you.” It must be a thought concerning the individuality of “I,” and an ideology for creating a world in which “I” can pursue my own happiness to the fullest possible extent. What we should aim for is neither faith and doctrine, nor morality and law, nor the attention of the masses. It is to build a relationship in which “I” can live together in mutual respect with another “I” beside me, who is generally called “you.”

When we speak in this way, a predictable pessimism tends to follow as if it were self-evident. One example is the so-called homo economicus critique: since individual selfishness is infinite, freeing individual desire would leave nothing but ruin.

Yet human history proves otherwise. In *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, Kropotkin analyzed communities from the lower animals to humankind, and showed that “helping one another” was advantageous for survival. Human beings can voluntarily give up their own interests at any time for the sake of “survival,” precisely because doing so becomes a greater interest.

Even “mainstream economics,” which claims that human selfishness is “infinite,” accepts that marginal utility diminishes. Therefore, at a certain point, when the expression of one’s own desire produces the cost of “the collapse of the community,” even the “homo economicus” will halt that desire.

This means, in the end, that in order for human beings to realize their individuality, or their personal desires, to the fullest possible extent, they come to act in the most communal way. The commune we speak of is not something sacred, inviolable, and benevolent; it is a community of egoistic human beings.

Above all, human beings cannot survive alone. The solitary individual cannot overcome nature. The solitary individual can-

not produce alone. The solitary individual cannot reproduce. Therefore human beings choose to be together. In the process of making that choice, even if part of one's individuality is lost, so long as the scale of that loss is smaller than the scale of the gain, one can autonomously decide to serve that cause. To make that service something autonomously decided: this is the essence of what we call "the liberation of the individual."

Therefore, when we speak of "the liberation of the individual," or "my liberation," this is the same as speaking of "the liberation of all the people." The reason is self-evident: in a world where all the people are not free, "I" cannot be free.

No matter how much better a life we may enjoy, if that better life is built upon the oppression of "someone else," then it is merely the ascent of a class, not the abolition of class. More essentially, if our lives are made possible by relying on the exploitation of others, then those lives can never be independent, autonomous, and free lives.

Let us take an example. Imagine an individual who withdraws from the systems of the state, capital, and industry, builds a cabin in the mountains, cultivates a small garden, and lives a self-sufficient life. This person may be free from state regulation, may not depend on capital, and may be free from labor. But this does not make their life an independent life.

Their free life depends on the exploitation of the workers who produce the raw materials needed to build the cabin. The moment the employer of those workers raises the price of raw materials, that free life can no longer begin. Their independence depends on those who make the farming tools needed to cultivate the garden, and on those who grow the seeds to be planted in it. The moment the landlord says that farming must cease and sheep must be raised on that land instead, their garden disappears.

When we turn our eyes away from all forms of oppression imposed upon all the people, and speak only of "my liberation," "I" cannot be liberated. For this reason, we cannot help

Then do the masses possess sufficient capacity to build a new society? Answering this question may require a certain degree of imagination. Let us think of the things provided to us by the "state," which may be called present society. And let us ask whether the "state," or a "leadership," is necessary in order to provide them.

Reformist Essence of Masses in General

But this does not mean that we speak of a romantic mass utopia in which the masses are always right and inherently contain revolution. Revolutionary syndicalists have already carried out such an experiment. They declared that members of the organization had "complete freedom outside the trade union to conduct any form of struggle according to their own political and philosophical views," while also insisting that those "political and philosophical views" must not be introduced "inside the union." This applied regardless of whether an individual's political views were anarchist, Marxist, social-democratic, bourgeois-democratic, or fascist.

This view produced two problems. The first was that it abandoned intervention in, or propulsion of, the views of union members outside the purpose of the union. If a worker who participated in a strike against discrimination against women workers at the workplace today goes home and beats his wife, the union cannot intervene. If a worker who grabbed the factory owner by the collar today in a struggle to intervene in the operation of his own factory then goes to the polling place and decides to entrust the operation of his own life to Hitler, the union must not intervene.

We speak not of "reform," in which one part of society changes, but of "revolutionary transformation," in which society changes as a whole. And that revolution must not be the elevation of some people's status through a blow against the upper layers of society, but the self-emancipation of all

tion of a new society must be discussed together. Therefore, the role of mass organizations in social revolution must also be discussed in both aspects: destruction and construction.

It is clear that the masses possess the capacity to destroy the old order. A significant part of human history consists of the struggles of the popular masses for freedom, struggles aimed at destroying systems and oppressors. From the countless peasant revolts of medieval Europe to the ikki of Japan, from the French Revolution to the Russian Revolution, across East and West and throughout history, it has always been the struggle of the popular masses that brought about the transformation of systems.

There is no need to look far. In modern workplaces, where low wages, long working hours, job insecurity, the risk of industrial accidents, and workplace harassment lie in wait, it is easy to see that the way to transform the despotic factory system is not through legal amendments or the entry of a workers' party into parliament, but through the construction of trade unions. When a trade union is built in a workplace where wages had been frozen for years, wages rise, staffing is expanded, and work that had once been done alone comes to be performed by two or more workers. This is no page torn from a spellbook; it is happening in countless workplaces at this very moment.

More than anything else, when workplace trade unions plan the tactics of a strike struggle, those tactics do not come from the heads of union leaders or bureaucrats. It is the rank-and-file union members on the shop floor, who labor there and know the process and results of that labor better than anyone else, who can devise the most effective ways to strike at the system of the workplace. If so, there is no reason why those who know how to strike most effectively at the existing system should not also be the masses themselves: those who sweat and labor in society, form relations with others, and take charge of the actual processes and results by which society operates.

but speak of a total revolt by all the oppressed masses against every system of oppression. We cannot help but engage in the tactical and strategic practice necessary to make such a revolt possible. Only as the result of such a revolt can I emancipate myself.

Structural Analysis

Power/Violence

“Force” does not refer merely to physical force. It arises at every level of society. The “force” possessed by each individual or group may differ from the “force” possessed by others, and this is entirely natural. From this, authority emerges. As Bakunin argued in *God and the State*, authority is naturally formed through expertise, knowledge, experience, and so on, and this fact cannot be denied.

There is also authority that is not natural, but artificially produced. This includes authority granted to a particular individual or group merely because they own the means of production, because they possess a particular form of genitalia, or because they have a particular skin color.

These forms of authority do not arise from natural relations or mutual respect. They are authorities that ruling classes have created and maintained throughout history in order to preserve their own rule. Ownership of the means of production does not arise from the natural order of the division and cooperation of labor. Gender and race are not forms of authority arising from the necessity of interdependence for the existence of the community. Nevertheless, these forms of authority are imposed as if they were laws of nature, as if they were an immutable order.

We define violence as the act of compelling others to take certain actions on the basis of authority. Whether that author-

ity is natural or artificial, the moment it is used violently, dominating power emerges.

It is natural for authority to arise from differences in age and experience. But the moment that authority is used to denounce “young people these days” and demand obedience to manners and hierarchy, it becomes *kkondae* power, that is, the power of condescending elder authority. Needless to say, when ownership of the means of production is used to force the propertyless class into intense, long-hour, low-wage labor, or when the shape of genitalia is used to direct discrimination and hatred toward a particular gender, it becomes the power of capital or gender power.

We seek the abolition of dominating power. This is because any situation in which an individual is compelled, by an imbalance of force, to act against their own desires is contrary to the libertarian communist society we aim for.

But this does not mean that we oppose “violence” in general. We aim for a “violent revolution” that destroys the existing system and forces upon the propertied classes a liberation “they do not want.” We believe that, by using the superiority of force that naturally arises from our “numerical superiority,” the many oppressed classes must sever the class structure of exploitation and oppression against the will of the few ruling classes.

Types of Dominating Power

Major types of dominating power as we see are as follows:

Capitalism

1. The Contradictions of Capitalism

Human beings, and the civilization human beings have created, can be sustained only through the use of products. For this reason, what to produce, how to produce it, and how and

lence only in certain directions, while blocking violence for liberation at its source. The state legalizes violence for oppression and criminalizes violence for resistance. Thus the state does not reduce violence; rather, it functions as the subject that determines the direction and target of violence.

We fundamentally reject this structure of the state’s monopoly on violence. The problem is not simply that the state exercises violence, but that it monopolizes both the right to judge violence and the right to exercise it. We do not oppose all violence. We oppose violence that suppresses desire through coercion, neutralizes autonomy, and preserves class and domination in the name of order. But violence that destroys the structures of oppression and makes real a liberation that the rulers will never want is justified. It is not a “crime,” but a “means of liberation,” and the exercise of a right by the oppressed that the state will never tolerate.

The state will never collapse on its own. In the name of law and institutions, with the lie of “public safety,” it constantly disciplines and controls us. The state tells us that chaos will come if it disappears. In truth, however, that very chaos is the beginning of a new order, and the condition of genuine freedom. We will overthrow the violence of the state. We will challenge its monopoly.

General Strategy — “What is to be Done”

Mass as Subjects of Social Revolution

We have defined above that the social revolution we seek must be realized through the struggle of solid mass organizations for self-emancipation. Then what is this “struggle of mass organizations for self-emancipation,” and how is it possible?

Bakunin once said, “The passion for destruction is a creative passion, too.” We understand this proposition to mean that, in revolution, the destruction of the old order and the construc-

that power through the monopoly of violence. The existence of the state makes some commands and others obey, and in that process it inevitably produces a separation between the few who issue orders and the many who submit to them. Whether its name bears “patriotism,” “democracy,” or “the general interest of the proletariat,” the moment decision-making is concentrated and execution is enforced, power becomes hierarchical, and the logic of domination begins to operate.

And that logic of domination is legitimized by violence monopolized in the name of the state. The state organizes and owns the physical means of violence: the police, the army, prisons, intelligence agencies, and so on. The essence of these apparatuses does not change even if the word “Red” is attached to their names. Guns and batons, tasers and water cannons, tear gas and handcuffs, confinement and deportation are not left in the hands of individuals. No one may exercise physical force beyond self-defense, and even that is restricted under the approval of the state. This means that the state has declared itself the only subject entitled to exercise violence, and functions as a system that structures, institutionalizes, and manages violence.

The state uses this violence as a weapon to defend the structure of power. Workers are forced into labor that can kill them, simply because they signed a contract stipulating low wages and long hours. The state legally justifies this as the “duty to honor the contract.” Yet if workers refuse that contract, they cannot work. Then the state offers no relief, while demanding that they fulfill the constitutional “duty to work.” Women suffer low wages and sex discrimination at work, while at the same time being assigned the “duty to form and preserve the family.” This is defined as necessary for “the maintenance of the state.”

And when individuals or groups exercise violence in self-defense against such structures of power, the state mobilizes violence to suppress them. The state calls the order that serves the ruling class “social safety,” and brands every attempt to break that order as illegal. In this way, the state permits vio-

to what extent it should be distributed have always been the most important social questions for human civilization. Production itself is carried out through the combination of factors of production, commonly distinguished as land, capital, labor, technology, and so on.

Yet throughout human history, those who have held hierarchical superiority in the process of production have been the owners of the non-human elements among the factors of production, or in other words, the owners of the means of production. This is true not only of modern industrial capitalism, but also of slave societies and feudal societies. Without the labor power of slaves and serfs, production could not be carried out by land and factories alone. Nevertheless, class superiority has belonged not to those who labor, but to those who own the means of production.

Modern society is a society in which the capitalist class owns the means of production. For this reason, we call this system capitalism.

On the basis of this hierarchical superiority, a power imbalance emerges between the capitalist class and the working class. Those who own the means of production, that is, the capitalist class, control the entire labor process on the basis of that ownership. The existing system then sanctifies the right to exercise this control under the name of managerial prerogative.

The exercise of managerial prerogative appears to the working class, or to workers in general, as everyday violence. The conditions under which workers labor are generally determined at the discretion of capitalists. The hiring and dismissal of workers are likewise matters of capitalist discretion. Even when workers seek to exercise control over labor as their own factor of production, through collective bargaining or collective action by trade unions, the Trade Union Act stipulates that trade unions cannot bargain over “managerial prerogative.”

The formation of this hierarchy and dominating power is by no means natural. The capitalist did not personally build any factory or machine. A factory is the combined product of construction labor that builds the factory, the social labor accumulated over thousands of years in building the roads that lead to it, the agricultural labor that has cultivated the land around it, and so on. A machine is the combined product of productive labor that makes each of its components, the social and technological innovations accumulated over thousands of years until that machine could be built, the transport labor that carries the machine to the factory, and so on.

Even if a single capitalist has added some innovative idea to the design of the factory or the operation of the machine, that idea is only a terminal point of the technological progress created by society as a whole. It does not justify that capitalist's position of power over the process of production.

Nevertheless, the fact that the capitalist holds control over the process of production is the first contradiction of capitalism as we see it.

Furthermore, on the sole basis that it owns the means of production, the capitalist class also appropriates and monopolizes the right to distribute the products of production.

As stated above, production is carried out through the combination of many different means of production. For example, even if one walks into any ordinary eatery and orders a single bowl of rice, that bowl contains the labor of Chinese rice farmers, Vietnamese workers who manufacture stainless-steel tableware, Filipino shipping companies that transport those goods to Korea, freight workers who carry them to wholesalers in Korea, and Korean Chinese workers who cook the rice in the restaurant. How, then, can it be solely within the authority of the restaurant owner to decide how much that bowl of rice will be sold for, to whom it will be sold, and how the profit left from that sale will be used?

This is the second contradiction of capitalism as we see it.

where females and males are not alike or even always equal, but where a vision of mutuality is the ethos shaping our interaction. Imagine living in a world where we can all be who we are, a world of peace and possibility. Feminist revolution alone will not create such a world; we need to end racism, class elitism, imperialism.”

Yes. The world to be built upon the ruins of patriarchy and racism, capitalism and imperialism, and every other structure of oppression not named here, must be a world in which no one dominates anyone else; a world in which all can live as they are, on the basis of mutual respect. This is the world we must seek.

The State

The state, contrary to the Genesis it tells about itself, is not a neutral order constituted through a social contract among individuals. This is because, under conditions where structures of power and the corresponding class structures already exist, a “free contract” is impossible. Those without the means of production, women, sexual minorities, and ethnic minorities have never even been asked whether they consent to this “contract.” For the state, the “social contract” is nothing more than a means of concealing a structure in which some dominate and others are dominated.

Nor, however, do we fully agree with Marx and his followers that the state is merely “the executive committee of the bourgeoisie.” In this claim, the state is nothing more than an instrument that serves the ruling class. For this reason, they believe that if the proletarian class takes possession of state power, the state too can become an “instrument of liberation,” and that with the abolition of class, it will naturally wither away.

But the essence of the state does not lie in who owns it. It lies in the very way the state structures power and legitimizes

tion” in the Minimum Wage Commission. Nor did capitalists want the expansion of women’s rights, or the abolition of racial discrimination.

These social changes came about, rather, because each “superstructure” moved autonomously against the immediate interests of the propertied class. And those movements took place so that the present ruling class could continue to remain the ruling class in the future. They were made in order to preserve a system in which a minority rules and others are ruled.

Of course, the system preserved in this way ultimately converges back around capital: labor law prevents workers from forming autonomous organizations; Black capitalists are produced; women’s purchasing power is increased in order to expand sales; and surplus stock is painted in rainbow colors so that value can be recreated.

In the end, the Libertarian Communist Front’s materialist understanding of society means recognizing that a wide variety of oppressions each constitute “foundations,” and that these foundations, intertwined with one another around capitalist class oppression, uphold the “system.” According to this understanding of society, striking and abolishing only one specific foundation among these “foundations” cannot transform the system itself.

Therefore, once again, we must not be satisfied with being “anti-capitalists.” We must be anti-capitalists and anti-statists, feminists and queer activists, anti-racists and pacifists, anti-colonialists and anti-nationalists. At the same time, all at once.

We must not stop at cutting a single thread from the warp and weft that uphold the ruling class. With the blade of our struggle, we must cut through every mechanism of oppression at once.

For this reason, comrade Bell Hooks, an anarchist and feminist, declared in the preface to *Feminism Is for Everybody*: “Imagine living in a world where there is no domination,

2. Can Capitalism Endure?

In the course of the development from agrarian society to commercial society, and further into industrial society, capitalism has continued to unfold by developing new logics for itself. The capitalism of the French Revolution was used as the core ideology of the bourgeoisie who led that revolution, and as an emancipatory ideology of the individual against absolute monarchy. Free capitalism, standing against the controlled mercantilism of absolute monarchy, proclaimed the idea of a free market order led by individuals, and transformed this idea in revolutionary form. In this process, there were revolutionaries and masses who raised questions and doubts against it. Yet they did not become the main current of history, and were pressed down by the mainstream forces of the revolution who succeeded in taking power: the bourgeoisie.

The Industrial Revolution, which began to emerge around the same period, then joined with the free market order and began to create a new myth. The explosive increase in production and efficiency brought about by technological development appeared to mean the victory of the free market and industrial capitalism they advocated, and therefore its legitimacy itself.

Nevertheless, the contradictions of industrial capitalism, or of capitalism itself, were not resolved. In every case, control over the process of production and over its products remained monopolized by capitalists, by the ruling class. Capitalism, and the system itself, blocked and concealed the contradictions that erupted, the contradictions that burst forth in a revolutionary atmosphere, by creating countless myths.

Class relations within the capitalist system are described as something other than relations of domination and subordination. Capitalism as a revolutionary ideology had been a symbol of liberation against the tyranny of kings and absolute monarchy. The thesis that free individuals could freely accumulate wealth through contracts among themselves allowed the structural contradictions of capitalism, which were erupting amid

the revolutionary atmosphere, to take root as an alternative to the old order, and as a myth. In contrast to the feudal social order, capitalism seemed to take root as an ideology of liberation.

Nevertheless, industrial capitalism ultimately failed to conceal its own contradictions.

First, the premise of competition, and of constant growth and development arising from competition, collapsed. The claim that competition among free individuals, and the development of the enterprises they form, would drive technological development and lead to the development and progress of humanity as a whole was one of the myths that sustained capitalism.

But this myth collapsed. From the added value produced through the combination of the capital they advanced and the labor performed by workers in the process of production, capitalists take as profit whatever remains after the wages paid to workers are deducted.

According to the myth of capitalism, if capitalists seek to maximize profit, they should do so by using more innovative and efficient technologies and methods of management to generate greater profits. But they did not do that. Instead, they chose the easier path: they maximized their own profits by dismissing workers, cutting workers' wages, and minimizing the capital spent on workers.

Naturally, this appeared as capitalists carrying out oppression against workers.

Second, the thesis of contract based on equal relations between individuals collapsed. The myth of capitalism claims that workers and capitalists are equal, and that within contracts between equal individuals, everyone creates the greatest possible profit.

But capitalists, who own the means of production, do not ask workers for their opinions on how products should be handled. They do not discuss with workers how the profit generated from those products should be distributed. Workers'

brings greater benefit than resisting the system's oppression, they have ultimately served the system.

In this context, we must not stop at simply becoming "anti-capitalists." Of course, this statement does not mean a rejection of class theory based on social pluralism. We agree that the various systems of oppression mentioned above were created by the propertied class in order to consolidate its domination over the propertyless class. Therefore, we cannot deny that what these intersecting systems of oppression ultimately uphold is the interest of the propertied class. We understand these various systems of oppression as appearing through the capitalist forms of the monetary economy and the relations of distribution of social wealth. In other words, we recognize the class contradiction produced by "capitalism" as both the starting point of social contradiction and the point of convergence within modern state-society.

However, what we do not agree with is the so-called "Marxist materialism" which claims that, if the single oppression called "relations of ownership of capital" is abolished, the people can be freed from oppression. Marxism calls the state, gender, sexual orientation, race, nation, and so on "superstructures" placed upon the foundation of class, whose forms can only be determined according to the form of that foundation. As Marx put it in *The Communist Manifesto*, the state is merely "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."

Yet we sometimes witness this "committee" acting against the will of the capitalists who are supposed to be its "masters." Capitalists did not want labor laws. The bourgeoisie of Northern Europe did not tolerate so-called "Nordic socialism" because they were exceedingly benevolent, nor did capitalists in the Americas accept the New Deal for the well-being of all. Every early summer, it has now become all too common to hear the South Korean propertied class talking about things like "cutting the minimum wage" or "differentiated applica-

Modern state-society likewise upholds the ruling class through the complex intersection of many different mechanisms of oppression.

In such a society, the majority of the people are oppressed in a particular position, while also becoming oppressors in that same position. Male workers in large factories are driven by capital into relentless overtime, night work, and low-wage labor, even as they become agents of the gendered mechanism of oppression that, under the “male breadwinner model,” renders the labor of “women,” “irregular workers,” and workers in “small and medium-sized workplaces” secondary. Forcing a transgender professional soldier to leave the military is violent oppression against a transgender woman; yet the “proud female soldier” she wished to become is also, after all, an oppressor within the state’s apparatus of violence called militarism.

And these various mechanisms of oppression support and uphold one another. Imperialism cannot exist without racism and nationalism. International capitalism cannot exist without imperialist plunder of other countries. Male workers reproduce their own labor power, which will be exploited by capitalists, by exploiting women’s domestic labor. The ideology of the “normal family,” composed of such men and women, can exist only upon heteronormative relations of oppression and subordination.

By sometimes placing the oppressed masses in the position of oppressors, the system secures the firmest foundation of all: the support of the masses. Regular workers support outsourcing in order to preserve their relative power over irregular workers. Men support the exploitation of women workers in order to preserve patriarchal power. The same is obvious in the case of settled workers who reject migrant labor in order to protect the price of labor power, that is, wages, in the labor market. This is how the calculation works. If people judge that defending the “vested interests” provided by the system

wages are never raised unless the capitalist who employs them agrees to it.

A relation in which everything is decided by those who own the means of production is never an equal or symmetrical relation. This contradiction in the relations of production began to spread like wildfire, uncontrollably, to the point that it could no longer be hidden by myth alone.

Those who appear claiming that they will confront this contradiction head-on enthusiastically proclaim the possibility of reforming capitalism. They argue that these contradictions can be corrected, and in doing so emphasize the role of the state above all else. Their logic is that the state need only collect higher taxes from the profits capitalists earn, then redistribute those taxes so that they return to the workers who suffer from these contradictions. This is the position advanced by social democrats and democratic socialists, who fervently preach the so-called reformability of capitalism and often claim that this, in itself, is socialism.

Yet not one of them pays attention to the root of that “contradiction.” In the end, none of them attends to the fact that those who produce can exert no influence over either the products or the process of production. Or rather, even if some do notice this fact, they never seek to resolve it. They merely stitch patches upon patches onto the system like rags, then declare that capitalism has been reformed. In the end, what is revealed is precisely that capitalism cannot be reformed.

Patriarchy

1. Definition of Patriarchy

Patriarchy refers to a social hierarchical order in which the distribution of power is determined according to the form of one’s genitalia, gender performativity, sexual identity, and related factors. This order is not merely a cultural custom, but a social-structural apparatus that emerged and became estab-

lished under specific material conditions and through particular historical developments.

After human civilization was formed, the so-called “civilized societies” of antiquity adopted modes of production based on slave labor. The central task of society was how effectively labor power could be secured and mobilized, and this led to the securing of slaves through war and conquest. Under these conditions, physically strong male warriors emerged as both a core means of production and a means of rule. Men were positioned as warriors and rulers, while women were positioned within the household as beings who “reproduced” warriors and workers. The patriarchal order was formed within this logic of division of labor and distribution of power.

Through the Middle Ages and then through the Industrial Revolution and the development of capitalism, technological development increasingly allowed machines to replace the efficiency of human labor. The significance of physical differences between men and women for productive capacity gradually declined. When it comes to pressing a button in front of a conveyor belt, the form of a man’s or woman’s genitalia makes no substantive difference.

Nevertheless, patriarchy was not dismantled. Rather, it has survived by changing its form. Even today, when women’s participation in wage labor has become widespread, women still suffer under social pressure to reproduce the labor power of the next generation through “childbirth.” Whatever job a woman may perform, within the household she is still expected to perform housework and emotional labor for the “recharging of the male worker.”

In this way, women’s labor becomes the object of double exploitation. Domestic labor in particular is rendered invisible and degraded as secondary. Patriarchy is precisely the social-structural apparatus that makes this logic of exploitation possible.

2. Patriarchy as Structural Violence

Barack Obama was the head of U.S. imperialism and the supreme commander of imperialist invasion and plunder. Yet he was also a victim of racism, forced by Donald Trump to submit his birth certificate under the claim that he may have been born in Kenya, and forced to hear the North Korean regime call him something like a “monkey in a zoo.”

Nor need we speak only of distant worlds. We need only look around us. A woman boss or manager who drives workers harder than anyone else during work or at the bargaining table, yet becomes the object of sexual harassment at drinking gatherings among male workers, is a scene that can be seen anywhere. It is not an exceptional case.

We cannot understand such cases simply as “the expression of working-class backlash and resistance against capitalists,” or as “male vested interests resisting the reversal of patriarchal hierarchy.” If we abolish only the hierarchy of power in ownership relations, or only patriarchal gender oppression, we will inevitably leave behind “someone who has not been liberated.”

Therefore, the former Program of Anarchist Solidarity declared: “We understand revolution as something that must take place in every direction. Even if wage labor and private property, whether as parts of capitalism or as its most essential parts, were abolished, a Vietnamese MTF lesbian woman worker could not be fully liberated.”

In other words, we do not view the modern state simply as a “bourgeois state.” For us, the modern state is a capitalist, patriarchal, heteronormative, nationalist, racist, imperialist, and militarist state. The system of authority in which all these systems of oppression intersect with and support one another is what we understand as modern state-society.

Imagine a tightly woven fabric. Each thread that composes the fabric is sometimes placed above another thread, and sometimes below it, interlacing with the others. In this way, the woven fabric comes to possess a durability firm enough to withstand pressures that no single thread could bear on its own.

tions of ownership over the means of production. Patriarchy is treated in the same way. The “femininity” of all propertied-class women is understood as deriving from the exploitation of the propertiless class. The same goes for heteronormativity. Social oppression against non-heterosexual people is seen as something created by capital’s need for the reproduction of labor power. Intergenerational conflict, discrimination against race or nation, and state repression against the people all become structures of oppression produced by capital in order to maintain itself. In all these structures of oppression, the propertiless class is ultimately always placed in the position of the oppressed in relation to the propertied class.

This is not a point limited to Marxism alone. In feminism, which says essentially the same thing by replacing “relations of ownership over the means of production” with “the shape of genitalia,” women are always placed in the inferior position within the oppressor-oppressed relation in relation to men. The same is true of Black socialist currents of the Black Panther type, where Black people stand in that relation to white people. These currents of thought are different from one another, and they struggle against one another, but if we shift the viewpoint, their form is similar. When analyzing the system of social oppression, they understand oppression and contradiction as arising “principally” from a single criterion. This ultimately leads them to treat other criteria as “secondary.”

But we do not agree with this. Reality cannot be divided so simply into the principal and the secondary.

The heads of the subcontracting firm Jisu INC, which dismissed the cleaning workers at LG Twin Towers, were vicious capitalists who expanded their assets through the blood and sweat of cleaning workers and then dismissed those workers. At the same time, however, they were also victims of patriarchy, excluded from the succession structure of the LG Group because they were women, and deprived of succession rights by Koo Kwang-mo, an “adopted son.”

The power of patriarchy is concentrated in heterosexual cis-gender men. In other words, the “manly man,” or the one who “penetrates” within the hierarchy of sexual acts, appropriates social power over the one who “is penetrated.” This power does not operate merely at the level of symbolic status. It operates in the actual distribution of resources, opportunities, safety, and autonomy.

a. Dominating Power Given by the Genitalia

Which genitalia a person is born with belongs to the realm of genetic randomness. Under the order of patriarchy, however, this biological sex difference, “determined in advance regardless of one’s will,” is transformed into a social hierarchy. This structure distributes power among human beings according to the shape of their genitalia. Those with penises are defined as “active subjects,” while those with vaginas are defined as “passive objects,” and this binary becomes not merely a biological distinction, but the foundation of a power order.

Here, power is not merely a matter of symbols. The “one who penetrates” is treated as a conqueror, as one who commands, and as one who has the right to access the means of production. By contrast, the “one who is penetrated” is treated as an object of control, an object of surveillance, and a being who must be subjected to oppression in the name of protection. This legitimizes not only the power relations embedded in sexual acts, but also the structure of domination and submission embedded across everyday life. This is because the penis-strong-rational-man-human is considered more suited to the role of the “modern ruler” than the vagina-weak-emotional-woman-human.

Contrary to the delusions of top-voted posts on internet communities screaming about “reverse discrimination against men,” Korea’s labor environment is still not equal for women. Women’s labor is still treated as secondary, and managers in the workplace are generally men.

Sexual violence is the most extreme form in which this authority is transformed into physical coercion. In Korean society, sexual violence is still not a deviant incident, but part of a structurally tolerated operation of power. The perpetrator invokes “instinct,” while the victim is suspected because she “did not resist.” This is not merely a question of sexual desire. The very structure in which the one who penetrates holds power, and the one who is penetrated remains under the control of that power, is an ideology that justifies violence.

In this way, patriarchy assigns unnatural authority according to the form of one’s genitalia, and constructs power by justifying coercive force on that basis. This is a thoroughly artificial and political order. Nevertheless, this power is packaged as a “law of nature,” and people are compelled to accept it as an immutable fate.

b. The Gender Binary as a Mechanism for the Reproduction of Patriarchal Power

For patriarchal power to be reproduced, it must perpetuate a mechanism in which some dominate and others are dominated. Under the name of the “gender binary,” this mechanism produces the binary itself, “man and woman,” and through it constructs and legitimizes a hierarchical order.

“Men are rational and strong, while women are emotional and weak.” “Men are the subjects of the public sphere, while women are the managers of the private sphere.” These binaries are by no means a natural division of labor or a functional difference. They are violent narratives that fix social roles on the basis of physical characteristics, and at the same time educational, cultural, and institutional apparatuses that socialize people into accepting those narratives.

The collective obsession with maintaining the boundary between men and women is not a mere cultural phenomenon. It is an ideological premise necessary for patriarchal power to reproduce itself. In other words, for power to persist, sex and gender distinctions must be made clear, and fixed roles and

Although the Republic of Korea presents itself as a democratic state, it maintains a structure in which military values are placed above civic values. The barracks remain a symbol of authority, and militarism remains at the center of national identity. This structure of power destroys individual freedom and equal human relations, and compels individuals to submit to authority artificially constructed by the state.

Militarism and barracks culture are by no means problems that can be solved through improvement. They must be thoroughly dismantled. A structure that is upheld by numerous other structures of power, while itself existing in order to uphold those other structures of power, will only return to its original form, as it always has, if it is merely reformed. What is needed is nothing less than total liberation from it, and its complete dismantling.

Class

Human beings living in modern society are divided into oppressors and the oppressed. And modern society is situated within the constant struggle between these two classes. Whether one is a reformist who sees this struggle as something to be prevented or mitigated, and therefore seeks to improve the conditions of the oppressed masses through institutions and laws, or a revolutionary who sees this struggle as inevitable, and therefore seeks to join the oppressed masses in that struggle and overthrow the class structure, class theory itself cannot be set aside by anyone who dreams of social transformation.

Yet we cannot help but question the following: at the same point in time, and in the same place, are the oppressed masses always placed in the position of the oppressed?

For example, this may be the case in the so-called “materialist understanding of society” of Marxism. From this standpoint, every relation of social oppression derives entirely from rela-

duty of national defense, but as a rite of passage through which only those who have served the state acquire full “citizenship.”

The military still takes hierarchy and obedience as virtues, and the structure of obeying orders from above remains alive in everyday language and behavior. During their period of service, soldiers must censor themselves, watch the moods of their superiors, and exist with their personhood suspended. “Gaslighting” and “group bullying” continue in less visible forms, and there is no end to extreme choices by soldiers who cannot endure them. All of these phenomena are not simply individual problems, but structural violence produced by the system the state has constructed under the name of the barracks.

Moreover, militarism extends beyond the barracks. Living in this era, we continue to witness the endless strengthening of state power in the name of security, and the branding of political opponents as unpatriotic. The threat of war functions as a means of consolidating state power. The national defense budget continues to increase, and the introduction of advanced weapons systems and the expansion of the defense industry are justified in the name of compensating for the decline in the number of soldiers. In this way, the idea that everything must be sacrificed for the military is repeated.

Barracks culture also functions as a miniature of social power relations. The military is plainly a male-centered space, and its hierarchy and authoritarianism are directly connected to the patriarchal order. The reality that conscription is imposed only on men deepens the power imbalance between genders, and can also function as a mechanism for justifying male-supremacist consciousness. The question “Have you been to the military?” is not simple curiosity, but functions as cultural violence that asserts authority through a hierarchy of experience. Whether one has served in the military divides hierarchies among men, and forms a ranking of authority in which women cannot participate.

attributes must be assigned to each category. The imposed figures of “masculinity” and “femininity” perform this function, and when individuals fail to conform to them, they become targets of ridicule, oppression, and violence.

For example, men must not cry, and women must not raise their voices. Men must become “soldiers who defend the nation,” while women must become “mothers who bear and raise children.” This narrative transforms gender into a social technology, dividing human beings into labor power, reproductive power, and national mobilization power. In other words, the gender binary is not simply a matter of identity. It is an efficient machinery created by capital, the state, and patriarchy to manage and dominate human bodies.

The gender binary is not reality, but a fiction of power designed to process and control reality. It legitimizes the power produced through differences in the shape of genitalia with the words masculinity and femininity.

c. Sexual Oppression and Sexual Solemnism

This society commands us to desire. Advertisements overflow with sex appeal, and television and the internet make us consume love and sex. Motel districts are the last prop holding up declining local economies, while the markets for contraceptive pills and condoms break record highs day after day. The government worries about the birth rate and sponsors group blind dates, while nationalist campaigns that “encourage marriage” are updated every year. In short, we are incited to desire.

Yet at the same time, we must not express desire. Women must remain pure, men may have sex but must remain faithful to the family, queer desires must stay silent, and trans existence must be pushed out of sight because it makes people uncomfortable. Sex must exist, but must not be spoken of. It must be displayed, but must not be done directly. Incited desire is censored, and individuals are made to bear that contradiction.

This is precisely the structure of sexual oppression: a method of control that does not eliminate desire, but instead

classifies it and arranges it into hierarchy. Male desire becomes “instinct,” while female desire becomes “promiscuity.” Women are defined as “precious bodies that will one day become mothers,” and masturbation is cautiously taught as something to be done “in moderation.” Desires outside heterosexuality are pathologized or degraded as obscenity. We learned sex as something that must be done only in the “missionary position,” and we grew up being taught that sex without love is sinful, and that sex means pregnancy and ruin.

This oppression is by no means a matter of moral regression. Sexual oppression is rule. As Wilhelm Reich argued, authoritarian systems induce obedience by repressing desire. Hitler mocked “degenerate art,” the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea classifies “complacent and debauched” beings as members of the hostile class, and the military dictatorship controlled sexuality under the name of “National Spirit.”

Sexual solemnism is joined to this. Sex is to be permitted only on the premise of love, or reproduction. A woman who has premarital sex becomes “a woman with low self-esteem,” while a man may do whatever he wants, so long as he is “ultimately someone who will take responsibility for a family.” This double standard is not merely a conservative value. It is the structuring of sexual authority, and a mechanism for the self-preservation of the patriarchal-capitalist system.

Even contemporary anti-sexual-violence movements are captured by this authority. Women are fixed in the identity of “victim,” while desiring women are once again pointed at as “promiscuous.” Sexual expression is blocked under the phrase “verbal sexual violence,” and freedom of expression is mortgaged to moral sensitivity. In this way, sexual violence is displaced from a question of power into a question of morality, and the structure is concealed.

But we do not view sexual violence as the deviance of “bad men.” Sexual violence is a question of power. It is the product of a systematic classification by class of “who may desire, and

Moralism controls people by stigmatizing the poor as “those who did not try hard enough,” translating sexual freedom into “promiscuity,” and denouncing those with dissenting views as “unethical.” Moralism makes people guilty before the law does, and binds life more deeply than violence can.

This power is invisible, and it requires neither prisons nor armies. It reproduces itself through the normative conscience lodged within people. People become ashamed of their own ways of life, voluntarily suppress their own desires, and monitor and judge others. Moralism is not an external power, but an internalized authority. For that very reason, it becomes the most powerful and tenacious apparatus of control.

In this way, moralism is not bound to any particular ideology; it intervenes, in itself, in every form of life. It operates in the same way in education, religion, the media, community, and even within movements that call themselves “progressive.” In the names of justice for all, everyone’s safety, or the morality of the community, individual freedom is constantly violated. The moment we violate someone else’s “morality,” we are condemned, isolated, and forced into silence.

We do not speak of a society without morality. We reject a society in which morality becomes power. Only when the diversity of desire can be free from morality can genuine ethics begin. That ethics will be based not on obedience but on solidarity, not on stigma but on understanding, and not on discipline but on autonomy.

Militarism / Barracks Culture

Militarism and barracks culture have always dominated the foundations of Korean society. The state maintains conscription, still treating all young men as objects of military control, while society classifies and discriminates against young people according to whether or not they have performed military service. This means that military service functions not merely as a

Nationalism is no longer a language of liberation. It is a language of oppression operating in the realm of morality, and a discourse of imperialism carried out in the name of capital. Today, nationalism does not protect the masses from foreign oppression. Rather, it becomes a mechanism of justification through which domestic capital exploits the masses of the world.

We accept no integration, no reunification, and no domination organized in the name of the nation. The world we aim for is a world centered not on the nation but on human beings, not on the state but on community, not on authority but on autonomy. No history of victimhood, no moral legitimacy, and no supposed benevolence of capital can justify this oppression. Nationalism is not liberation, but yet another form of violence.

Moralism

Morality arises from the ethical sense necessary for coexistence in human community. It forms mutual trust, respect, and responsibility, and could have served as an agreed standard for protecting individual freedom. But the moment morality is absolutized and turned into a fixed norm, it is no longer an expression of freedom, but a system for control and coercion. We call this point “moralism.”

Moralism operates beyond a simple framework of value judgment, as an independent structure of power. Moralism is not law, not economic interest, and not physical coercion. Nevertheless, it exerts a powerful force that moves, controls, punishes, and subordinates people. This force is exercised not as physical violence, but as psychological violence, in the form of guilt, shame, and moral stigma. No one calls it “violence,” yet it makes countless individuals censor and repress their own desires and lives. This is the most refined form of power, of violence.

who becomes the object of desire.” As long as patriarchy grants authority according to the shape of genitalia and hierarchizes sexual acts, sexual violence is inevitable. We speak not of reforming men’s ethics, but of abolishing authority itself.

For this reason, we say: without the abolition of patriarchy, free love is impossible. Sexual liberation is not a moral ideal; it means the restoration of relations without power. We do not speak of sexual pleasure. We speak of the end of sexual authority. The path to abolishing sexual violence is not to define desire as sin, but to liberate desire from power.

3. Therefore, Sexual Liberation

We do not demand the mitigation of sexism, nor the pretense of benevolent equality. What we speak of is the liberation of sex. The mere exchange of gender roles, in which women too can work, women too can serve in the military, and men too can take parental leave, does not shake the foundations of the system. In a society that takes genitalia, gender, and sexuality as criteria for the distribution of power, merely “eliminating discrimination” cannot touch the structure that represses desire.

We seek to dismantle authority itself. Patriarchy classifies desire by hierarchy, hierarchizes sexual acts, and determines whose pleasure is permitted and whose existence must be rendered invisible. In this system, sex is political. We say that this politics must be liberated. Sex must be free, and desire must not be subordinated to power. Therefore, what we aim for is not a society of “equal men and women,” but relations into which power cannot intervene, desire from which hierarchy has disappeared, and a world in which sexual authority has been abolished.

Korean Ethno-nationalism and Imperialism

Korean nationalism is not a mere expression of identity. It is a mechanism of power formed under long-standing histori-

cal conditions. Geopolitically, Korea was caught between great powers, and in response to these external threats, a centralized system in which the people rallied around the state took root from a very early period. Survival was thus tied to state-centered integration and order, and this integration became the basis for producing a single identity under the name of the nation. Nationalism became a means of supporting the legitimacy of state power, and today it functions as an oppressive ideology.

In particular, the experience of Japanese colonial rule gave nationalism a moral imperative. The narrative of a “virtuous nation” that has never invaded another country(though it might be worth asking the Tsushima pirates invaded by Yi Jong-mu what they think of that) and has never administered colonies(though one wonders whether the innocent Jurchens who lived in Manchuria would agree) turned Korean nationalism into a symbol of ethical innocence.

This victim identity functions not only as an internal means of rule that compels loyalty and identification among its members, but also as a diplomatic narrative used externally to justify the expansion of Korean capital.

Korea foregrounds the fact that it has never administered colonies, and on that basis presents itself as morally harmless even as it exports capital to developing countries and enters into exploitative relations with them. This capital enters under the names of foreign aid, construction, K-culture, K-technology, K-defense, and so on, creating a structure that absorbs local labor and resources.

If colonialism in the past advanced under armies and flags, Korean imperialism today advances under the hypocritical legitimacy of the nation’s victim narrative and the supposed benevolence of capital. The sentence “we are different from Japan” is, precisely because Korea does the same thing while wearing a different mask, all the more cunning and violent.

The same applies to the discourse on reunification. Slogans such as “reunification is a jackpot” and “the North’s resources and labor plus the South’s capital and technology” transform reunification into an opportunity for capital, and North Korea into a plan for economic colonization.

What becomes one under the name of reunification is the state. It is not the people who are liberated. The existence of a unified state means only the existence of a stronger centralized power. Within it, capital will be able to exploit more freely, and the state will be able to control more forcefully.

That said, even if one moves beyond this capitalist perspective and speaks of national reunification as a liberation movement of an oppressed nation, this does not grant it any different legitimacy. Such nationalist currents tend to abstract “reunification” into a sacred task, and in order to carry out that task, they often arrive at an ideology that justifies yet another form of statism, centralism, and authoritarianism. The problem is that this leads not to liberation, but to another form of “forced homogeneity.”

If the “unified homeland” produced by a national liberation movement were to uncritically “integrate” the power structures of both systems, encompassing not only South Korea’s militarism and capitalist order, but also North Korea’s statist oppression, then in this unified homeland, the self-determination of the oppressed would merely be subordinated beneath the reconstruction of the nation-state.

In the end, this means creating a structure that controls both the inside and the outside by using nationalism as a moral standard. Reunification is not liberation. It is merely an expansion of the structure of power, and a new national project of economic imperialism. We feel neither sentiment nor obligation toward this nationalism. It is an artificial authority, and insofar as it operates as violence, we regard it as power and reject it. At the same time, every form of nationalism operates in this way.