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A Red Country

Ngu Thi Yen, Mèo Mun

July 2021

My country's red, long so I was told
Victories, a star glows
Flag crimson, glorious so
Vanguard leads, the people follow.

Red in sight, we have traded lives
Beat armies, lay siege to empires.
Red in mind, we have triumphed fights
Bathed rivals in blood and plight.

Why today I see but grey
Of skyscrapers in fatal haze
Of nostalgia from olden days
Of people's groveling for a pay.

Red, they lie, whilst we sell and buy
Whilst at sea our people die.
Set vanguard on fire, compatriot mine
So from black, a rainbow shall rise.

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Ngu Thi Yen is a Vietnamese translator and writer working to make anarchist theory more accessible to Vietnamese speakers. He writes to illustrate “the state capitalist reality in Vietnam with a call to action to build a true libertarian society.

“There is a lack of anarchist voices from Vietnam due to state repression and inaccessibility to primary sources. The most prominent Vietnamese voices in both leftist and anarchist spaces are, alarmingly, pro-authoritarian and state-friendly.

“As fellow South East Asian anarchists, libertarian communists and principled workers, it is our duty to call out the Vietnamese state’s for-profit, authoritarian capitalist nature and callous disregard for the workers’ lives.”