

Rejectionary Anarchist Critiques

Echo

9.10.2013

Contents

Rejectionary Anarchist Critiques	4
<i>I. Rejection</i>	6
<i>II. Killing Capital</i>	8
<i>III. No Economy Is A Good Economy</i>	11
<i>IV. Abandoning The Workplace</i>	13
<i>V. We Need No State- Simply Freedom</i>	16
<i>VI. Organization And Anarchy</i>	18
<i>VII. I Call For The End-Times: Ending Civilization</i>	20
<i>VIII. Forgetting Ideological Answers And Forming Your Own</i>	23
<i>IX. Anarchism And Who I Am In Relation To It</i>	24

Rejectionary Anarchist Critiques

by Echo

I. Rejection

Anarchists often bicker about many things. How to organize (or rather, not organize), what actions to take (or not take), and even what their final goal is.

Enough!

We want anarchy!

Do not take this as a call for the unity of all anarchists, whether or not they are on the left or post-left, or even the liberal “anarchists” that we have been presented with as shining examples of anarchism.

Rather, this is the exact opposite of a call for unity. This is a call to rejection. We do not need to unify, rather, we need to identify hierarchical theories and dissect them, removing everything that makes the theory unstable, then reassemble them so that we can use them for our own ends.

This is rejectionary anarchism.

We would think this is common sense for anarchists, as they oppose hierarchies. However, we (myself included) often make the mistake of accepting what others tell us, without bothering to ask, “Does this theory lift some beings over others?” Or “Does this theory benefit me? My friends? My community?”

If the theory lifts anyone (whether its the majority or minority) over others, then this theory is inherently hierarchical, as some have been determined to be “more important” and thus, they have been given a base, so they can begin to prosper and oppress, while those deemed “unimportant” have had what they previously had removed, therefore allowing them to be oppressed.

This is why we must never unify, we must never accept all of what we are told.

Some people may say that this is a “re-coining” of self-theory, and in some aspects, they would be correct. The difference however, between this and advocating self-theory is that rejectionary anarchism no longer accepts any specific theory. This means that the struggle for the perfect theory can never be over. Every theory has its drawbacks, most of them involving some form of hierarchy. Whether it be for capitalism, where capital rules over everyone, and chooses the bourgeoisie to thus rule over the proletariat, or the dictatorship of the proletariat, where the proletariat are rulers over the bourgeoisie, and capital *still* rules everyone.

That’s why every theory must be in a perpetual state of motion, working to remove its own kinks and its own drawbacks. It will never be perfect, as it will always have some hierarchy, or some indefensible weakness, but the point is to continue altering it until you can no longer find weaknesses in the theory. But continue examining it, and spread it to others so they can critique it and they can alter it. Ask your comrades to critique the theory so you can still alter it, and maybe, even after all that work, realize your theory is useless and throw it all away and start again.

One thing to realize is that this is not a theory that you accept- indeed, such an action would be antithetical to this idea. Rather, I would consider it a loose guide to developing your own self-

theory, so you can hopefully realize your own freedom rather than someone subjugating you to “your freedom”.

I have outlined my conclusions that stem from what I have now dubbed “Rejectionary Anarchism”. These will hopefully allow others to critique, build off of, or, best of all, reject my theories. These theories in many ways are identical to the theories of other anarchists such as Wolfi Landstreicher, Alfredo M. Bonanno, and some others have influenced me heavily, to the point where I have adopted their viewpoints. This does not mean, however, that I believe their views are without fault, I just agree with them on certain topics. So some of this will be my own, original thoughts, and others will be my interpretation of others’ theory.

I want to give a quick outline for this paper so that people may jump to different sections and know what to expect. All of the critiques and arguments I put forward will be based on showing why the things I am opposed to are hierarchical and oppressive, or how they incorrectly assess oppression. First, I will critique capital, and the Leftist viewpoint of it. Then, I will critique the economy, whether it is a communist one or a capitalist one. Building off of the economy critique, I will critique work. I plan to also critique the idea of the state. Afterward, I am going to explain why I believe all organization, even a revolutionary one, is inherently oppressive, which will lead into a critique of all civilization. After that, I will give my views of what oppression really is. There will be a short section about identity politics. Then there will be some thoughts on ideology. Then I plan to give some thoughts on anarchism and who I am in relation to it.

Let’s get started.

II. Killing Capital

Here I am just covering the immediate problems with capital, however, throughout the essay I will explain how every part of oppression relates to it's counterparts.

The Left has a very definite idea of capital, which in turn leaves them with a very definite version of who is and who is not oppressed. The Left believes that the proletariat are the oppressed people, and that any other struggle is secondary to that of the class war.

All of this stems from, and leads to, what I believe to be a slightly incorrect view of capital. For example, let us look at the Leftist conclusions so we may arrive at their assumptions. First of all, they define oppression in terms of capital (or rather, they say that struggle for the proletariat's control of capital is the most important struggle, with all other forms of oppression taking a back seat to class-based oppression). If you don't control capital, you are a member of the proletariat, and thus, you are oppressed on class based terms.

Of course, the proletariat is oppressed on a class basis, however, the reason is slightly different than the Leftists put it.

The Leftist approach is a seemingly obvious route, then: the oppressed class must take control of capital. More or less, they feel the final goal is to let everyone control capital, whether they get there through a state, or some transitional period, or even go straight for the goal, they all want to put capital into the hands of everyone. This can be seen by what Karl Marx and Jules Guesde said in their document, *The Programme of the Parti Ouvrier*, "The producers can be free only when they are in possession of the means of production." This is clear proof that the Marxists consider the ownership of capital to be a requirement for the freedom of the proletariat. But what about the Leftist anarchists?

For one, in chapter one of Kropotkin's book, *The Conquest of Bread*, he says that the masses are destitute "...because all that is necessary for production-- the land, the mines, the highways, machinery, food, shelter, education, knowledge--all have been seized by the few..." I think here, it is important to note that Peter Kropotkin is considered the father of anarchist communism.

These two separate currents of the Left arriving at the conclusion that capital is the key to freedom show that the Left feels it must be taken control of for the proletariat to achieve freedom.

Now, on the surface, this conclusion makes sense. If everyone has access and control over capital, no one can oppress anyone. Which seems all fine and well.

Now, ignoring the other ramifications of this idea (which will pop up throughout this essay), this leaves us with the question: what about those of us who wish to no longer be a slave, working under capital? What about those of us who wish to be free?

Immediately some people may think that the statement "After a revolution, and after the workers take control of capital, they will still be a slave to it" makes no sense.

However, it does. The problem with the Left's proposed answer to class oppression is that if someone chooses not to work under capital, they will be oppressed on the basis that they

would not work for the production of goods. If, instead, they'd rather do work out of their home because they enjoyed it- thus, making it play- and it still produced, they would be considered to not be working for the good of the community and therefore, they would get no support from the community and would likely die. The reason it is oppressing them is that it provides obligatory work, so they cannot choose to no longer do it. If they are to do so, they are seen as not fulfilling their required amount of work.

Where does the idea of a required amount of work come from?

Well, we see it in the ideas of many Leftist thinkers. Kropotkin repeatedly stated throughout *The Conquest of Bread* that workers would only be *required* to work 4–5 hours a day. Then they are allowed their leisure time (the time they are allowed to play).

Is this forced labour not almost identical to Bakunin's idea of slavery? Having a requirement for the amount of work you must do means that someone must be forcing you to do it, and most likely it would be the community who forced you to do said work.

Someone might say, "How does capital existing in a post-capitalist society like communism directly mean forced labour? Why would the community be forcing individuals to work?"

This is because capital chooses its ruling and serving classes (this theme will be explained in a few paragraphs). Under communism, with capital still being left in tact, the proletariat is simultaneously the ruling class and the serving class (keep in mind "ruling class" doesn't mean they rule over capital and the subservient classes, but rather, they are subservient to capital and they control the subservient class under them). We can then reason that the community will rule over the individual to make them work, and, seeing as they will be trying to make sure others are working as much as they are, so they can feel equal, the individuals will enforce the idea that everyone must fill a certain requirement for the amount of work they do.

If the worker decides to disregard the importance of capital, as they recognize it is directly responsible for their own oppression, then they will no longer benefit from allowing the "means of production" to rule their lives. This benefit is not truly a benefit, but rather, they are simply allowed to live. However, they are being allowed to live as a slave, which is in many ways just the absence of life.

They may choose not to bow to capital, and capital will then choose to take their lives.

This is an example of how capital cannot be controlled in a Leftist system, such as Leftist Communism (I use this to distinguish between the communism advocated by the Left and the communism advocated by the Post-Left, which I will call "Post-Left communism"). Now, let us look at today's capitalist system, and see why it is not being controlled.

The Leftists say that the bourgeoisie control capital. They then use it to oppress the proletariat and increase their own profits. Then, if the proletariat does not worship capital and work for production of goods, they starve.

It is obvious that the proletariat does not control capital. However, then we must look at the bourgeoisie: the idea that they control capital is diametrically opposed to the idea that they must also bow to capital.

I believe they must. Of course, they benefit more from their worship, but they worship it nonetheless, much as a priest worships their god. Just because the priest benefits from their worship more does not mean that they are controlling their god.

If a member of the bourgeoisie decides to no longer worship capital, they lose their power of production, then their power base, then they may even drop all the way into the class of the proletariat.

The choice for the proletariat is slavery or death. The choice for the bourgeoisie is between death and mastery. This leads to the theme of the bourgeois defense of capital.

Therefore, capital never has been, nor ever will be, controlled. The idea that we can control it is an illusion.

The reason that all of the analysis that says we must control capital is wrong is that it assumes capital is not an active participant in civilization. I have chosen to see capital as more of an active participant; rather than an inanimate object, an animate being. It may not have its own mind, but it creates structures that make it a necessity to survive. It creates people to benefit it, and in turn, these people work to show capital as a positive force, and show off their success as a way to keep people working for it- cause they believe one day they will also be successful.

In this way, capital is not just existing, but it is surviving. As it is an entity, we can see capital in two ways: the “normal” way, which is the type of capital (the private property or the means of production themselves, which then amount to the means of oppression) that we destroy, and the “new way”, where you kill capital (the collective entity formed by the means of oppression that creates a class defend itself).

Some might say seeing capital as a living entity is incorrect, as it seems that calling what is seen as an inanimate object (private property or the means of production) an animate object is not materialist, which would make it idealist.

To those that say this, you must understand that I do not see capital as an actually living creature, but that its very existence causes others to interact with it in such a way as if they were receiving commands from it, and as if it were acting of its own accord.

Thus, as it can be seen as alive, there was a stroke of genius on the part of capital when it created the bourgeoisie- their existence protects capital, and in turn, capital will help them. Now, it is important to consider certain truths regarding the bourgeoisie. They help capital in more ways than just being the bourgeoisie. They also have provided it with some tools to maintain itself. All these tools stem from the bourgeoisie wishing to retain their benefits they receive from their capital worship.

This is why I must kill capital- as long as it survives, it, as an oppressive entity, will find a way to oppress people. It makes it impossible to achieve anarchy and communism.

I refuse to bow to capital, I hope everyone else does too.

So, combining all of the ideas I have put forward, we see capital not as a tool, but an entity which can act in its own self interest. It manages to create classes that defend it, and benefits them so they have a reason to maintain it. Because of its ability to create the ruling classes, it also can ensure its survival within any system. And finally, it must be killed as it is an inherently oppressive entity.

III. No Economy Is A Good Economy

Just so we have a jumping off point, let us define what the economy is. The economy is the distribution of wealth within a civilization or society.

The Left has addressed the economy only in a critique of the capitalist economy, rather than the economy as a whole. They have the conviction that if we turn the economy into a more egalitarian form of distribution, it will all work out.

However, this is wrong. Not for the reasons the capitalists would have you believe however (as they constantly are saying it just can't work, which I believe humanity as a whole is coming to terms with the fact that this is a lie).

No, the problem is far deeper: that the economy (no matter how it is arranged) is in fact, against equality.

There are two problems with the economy: the power base it establishes, and its reliance on production, rather than how the wealth is distributed (however that can be a problem as capitalism and co. have shown us).

The economy creates the idea that certain objects have a certain value. For the purpose of example, I'll use Item 1, 2, and 3, with Item 1 being the most valuable, and Item 3 being the least valuable.

If a producer is producing Item 1, then they automatically will have more wealth than the person who produces Item 2, who in turn has more wealth than the person who produces Item 3. In this way, the person who produces Item 1 will begin to rise, and will have more wealth to work with than the other two producers.

Due to the producer having more wealth they will be able to have others work for them, whether the economic system is "communist" or not. They will be able to idle, but someone *must* produce those goods, so others must produce, under that person.

They will also be able to operate with the promise that they can grant others more wealth if they work for them. Of course, though, this will result in capitalism, just not necessarily the capitalism we have today. Most likely, it will be closer to the theories of "anarcho-capitalism" (which is a contradiction of terms, but that is a discussion for another time). Therefore, if the economy is to exist, *so will capitalism*.

Another problem with the economy is that it necessitates the production of goods. If goods were not produced, then they would have no value, and the economy could not operate, as without any wealth or value to distribute, the economy no longer has a purpose, and is immediately non-existent.

Between this chapter and the next (where I will examine the idea of work) I will critique production.

One of the problems with production is that it is a piece of *capital process*, meaning that it is a process that requires the existence of capital. It's pretty simple- to produce, you must have the

means to do so, which would obviously be the means of production (means of oppression). And if the community is controlling the means of oppression, then the individual will be oppressed and be considered as “lesser” than the community, which is antithetical to communism.

Then, of course, there is one point that I agree with Trotsky about: “production gives rise to classes and to groupings of classes,” which he said in his book, *1905*.

Production is, other than being reliant of forced labour to meet quotas, a creator of value. And when objects are granted a value, immediately, an economy is born. We have no reason to allow this to exist, because that would be opening the door for further oppression.

This is a pretty simple concept to understand. Therefore, before communism is to be realized, the economy must be destroyed.

The economy is a tool of inequality, whether it's because someone may accumulate more wealth to use as a leverage against others, or if it's because of the inherent problems with production. So, if we are to call ourselves anarchists, we must abolish it. We must also abolish wealth, which will always create an economy. Wealth is just a concept, it has no true material basis. So if we are to destroy wealth, we are to destroy a concept, not a material item or structure.

IV. *Abandoning The Workplace*

Let's jump right into the idea of work with its relation to production. Production is related to work in the following way: it is based in required quotas being met, therefore, one is forced to work until that quota is met. And of course, they have to be forced by someone, which forms a hierarchy.

This leads us to work: what is it? I (as well as much of the post-Left) would answer that it is forced labour, which is forced production. Why do we find it unenjoyable? The Leftists tell us that work after a revolution will be fun, but really, work can never be fun. Work is always restrictive- you could be doing something else that is more worth your time. For example, if you were to have a job in say, machining, and you hate it, why should you do it? What are you being forced to *produce* that is so important?

What do you really enjoy?

You should go out and play, if that play is painting, do it. If that play is exercising, then do that. But never, ever, work.

Work is a way to keep you occupied. If you are not occupied you have more time to think for yourself, and more time to see ways in which you, your friends, or even others you have nothing to do with are being oppressed. So we work to be distracted.

It then serves the double purpose of making us afraid to act. In a capitalist society, we are afraid to act against our oppressors because we are afraid that we will lose a job and plunge ourselves into starvation and poverty. In a communist society where there is still work, if one was to rebel against the oppression they felt from the community, they could be forced out of their job and then, with the excuse of the fact that they do not contribute to the community, they would not be supplied to, and they would starve.

Another problem with work is that work is always for the purpose of producing something. If you aren't producing anything, you are seen as useless. The problem is that production forces you into slavery (a quota-based form of slavery, however), so there must be no production, and thus, by extension, no work. This is precisely because of the quotas- if one does not meet a quota, then they are punished. Again, they can be forced into starvation.

And the final issue with work: it transforms us into mere resources. It turns us into a quantity of labour, rather than a qualitative being, which is what we are. Marx and Engels were close to acknowledging this in *The Communist Manifesto*, where they say, "The proletariat... a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity..." They just failed to see that no matter how work is organized, it still makes us into a resource rather than a human being. If humans are nothing but quantity, then ethics, morals, feelings, and a whole range of other things don't matter. In fact, quantifying human beings negates work itself- why should we work to support people who are simply quantities?

Work has managed to infect Leftist thought to the bone. Kropotkin wrote many times that everyone would need to work 4–5 hours a day so that they were allowed leisure time. He said that this would allow them to get what they need from the community. This labour is slavery, as one must work or else there is threat against them.

The Leftists argue for work on the basis of duty politics- this essentially means that they believe it is our duty to do this or do that. Within the context of work, this means they believe we must work in a post-“revolutionary” society. They think that we *must* contribute to the community. We *must* be *productive*.

While I agree that I would like people to contribute, I don’t believe they must. I believe they will so they can get benefits from the community. Also, partially because mutual aid is part of how we evolved, so we could stay alive.

The alternative to work that I have seen proposed is play. I must say that I agree with this idea. This is a bit tricky to understand. The first question people generally ask is, “Don’t we already play?”

First, I’d like to ask these people when we play. After we work, eat, sleep, do chores? This leaves us with a vast minority of our time available to ourselves.

Then, we get to the real problem: the joy we feel in the tiny amount of time is used to trick us into believing that we are experiencing true joy. This is not possible. Until we know the joy that is the affirmation of our permanent freedom, we cannot say we know true joy, but rather, we’ve simply gotten small tastes of it.

Another problem with the time we get to play now is that it is being quantified- we time the amount of play we get, we do everything we can to collect the time. But this means we are quantifying a qualitative entity, which is exactly what work itself does.

This is one of the reasons we must have permanent play- until we do, we cannot know what real play is.

Another thing critics of permanent play might say is that if no one works, nothing will ever get done.

This is not true. First, the people who say this are under the impression that play cannot result in a new item being made or created.

For example, play for me would be making firearms. I imagine others would play by baking. Some by gardening. Play does not need to be idle- you can make something. Many people do. So where does this idea that nothing would ever get done if everyone played come from? As far as I can tell, it comes from the idea of “play” within the framework of a work-based society. Play is simply leisure time that we stack up to quantify and store, within the framework of work. It is a resource that is sold to us, rather than something that comes from within us. So we have been taught that play is consumptive, because the only play available to us is consumptive play.

However, I want to make guns. I want to garden. I want to cook. I want to work on cars. I don’t need to be forced to do these things because I want to, so why should I be forced to do them, forced to meet quotas?

Then we have people who attempt to tell us that there will be no work ethic if everyone plays all the time. This argument is surprisingly common.

I tell them that in a society where there is no work, why have a work ethic? This is something we should lose. Of course, we have things such as exercising that people say you need to have a work ethic to do, but really, why are you doing it if you don’t enjoy it? And of course, if you do enjoy it, it is not work, but simply play.

V. We Need No State- Simply Freedom

To different people, the State is different things. To me, it represents a lot of things. Not a single one can be construed as good. I am going to start by talking about what the State is from a Leftist perspective.

To the Left, the State is seen as an organ of class oppression. We can see this from what Trotsky said in 1905, "... the State is an organ of class oppression." This is a pretty good analysis, on the part of the Left. It's obviously repressing the working class. No doubt.

But there are other definitions of the state. I view the State in this way (among many others that I will get to): the State is simply a collective body that oppresses those who disagree with it. We see this in many instances: protestors against the Vietnam War being shot, Chinese citizens being murdered in the Tiananmen Square Massacre, the USSR and its gulags. There are many examples of this.

Another way to view it is that the State is as a glue that keeps the gears of equality from turning. By this I mean the State enforces homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia, racism, classism, ableism, and many other oppressive attitudes. Now, the people who make up the State could actually believe people deserve more freedom than the policies they put forward (even though I do not believe this is the case). So why don't they put policies that actually benefit people forward?

It is because they must pander to the reactionaries. The ones who believe people should not marry who they choose, who believe in female chastity, who say that race is not a social construct. These people are who the state supports. And because the state supports them, it normalizes these viewpoints. In effect, the state is producing a stronger and stronger base of people who wish to repress others' freedom. So it is digging itself a reactionary pit, which it can never get out of.

Assuming it did climb its way out of the pit, it would still be opposed to freedom. Even if it wouldn't put forward policies (such as a larger police presence, higher levels of surveillance, and anti-dissident laws) that were based in maintaining its power over others, and it was some perfect, directly democratic "everybody gets a vote" entity, it would still repress the minority of the vote. An argument many of us are learning to recognize is, "the state is good because it does what the majority wants it to!"

Even if that were true, it would not be desirable, as the minority would continue to be oppressed.

Furthermore, the State protects capital. Can you imagine burning down a factory under capitalism? Imagine the backlash. You are sent to jail, most like never to return under "terrorism" charges. Now, if you were to do this in a socialist system (I'm using the definition where socialism is the lower stage of communism where there is still a State) or a dictatorship of the proletariat, you would also be imprisoned, or even jailed, for "attacking the achievements of the proletariat".

The State as is used as a way to deradicalize people too, by giving the illusion of "progress". It offers reforms that do some good, however, people see them and assume that the problems that

led to those reforms in the first place. However, most of the time, what they are doing is using scotch tape to try to keep the world together, as well as keeping it subservient.

The State can also be seen simply as an organ of oppression (I believe this to be a universally true definition). This differs from my earlier definition (a collective body that oppresses those who disagree with it) in that the State under my previous definition could survive without oppression, but it oppresses those who support it even, by not allowing them to exit the roles that they have been assigned.

VI. Organization And Anarchy

Organizations are simply bad for the individual. There are many many reasons for this. First off, they oppress the action of the individual. They do this for two reasons. The first of which is that they are trying to gain support from the public. Organizations who actively support burning down banks and factories, destroying monoculture farmland, or killing cops are actively shunned by the public. Even if the public does not truly believe these actions are wrong, it is part of living in a society where it is expected that you are pacifistic in nature. Plus, organizations who support any action that is violent by having members who they know take part in them are often infiltrated and destroyed. So they do whatever they can to stop our comrades from violent action, even going as far as to alert the state. The second reason they do this is to maintain their control over others. The longer someone is controlled, the more “normal” it becomes, and thus, less likely to be resisted.

Now, the reason it is bad to limit individual action is that it is limiting individual freedom. We shouldn't limit anyone in their fight for freedom, and if we do, we are doing something terribly wrong. If this ever happens, we should be stripped of our identity as anarchists, and be abolished.

Another problem is that organization is hierarchical. Even bottom-up organization is hierarchical, and, while it is better than top-down organization, it still a hierarchical form. Anarchist organizations establish hierarchy- only to attempt to abolish hierarchy. However, there is such a thing as social inertia.

By social inertia, I mean a concept very similar to scientific inertia (the tendency of an object to resist change in motion). Society experiences inertia in that it has a tendency to stay the way it is, to try and survive without changing. Of course there are factors that affect the inertia, like a state (making it harder to become more ethical as a society). Due to this property of society, creating hierarchies makes it even harder to finally abolish them.

One thing to be aware of is that if there is a defined leader of any group, that group is an organization. Therefore, I am anti-leader. Some people (including myself in the past) have said “but there is a difference between leaders and rulers!” This is true. Like many say, a ruler is someone who imposes their will, and a leader is someone who simply says what they believe should be done and people do it. The problem is that leaders often turn into rulers. Also, even if they don't, they are creating a “willing” hierarchy- meaning that they don't impose their views on those who haven't joined them (until their organization gains power), but once you join them you *must* follow them.

Another problem is that leaders tend to lead to dogmatism. They are adherents of an ideology, always trying to enforce their views and build a society based on their idea of what the social order should be.

Another reason to avoid organizations is that they have a tendency to be reformist. Fighting purely for reforms rather than an insurrection. They may do this in two ways: reform in that classical sense, meaning reforms withing capitalism. They also may be fighting for a Leftist “rev-

olution”, which simply means the reorganization of capital and oppression, rather than their abolishment. They simply are trying to reorganize based on a single class interest, rather than fighting for the freedom of all to never be subjugated by others.

VII. I Call For The End-Times: Ending Civilization

What is civilization? What are the implications that arise from it?

If we look at the dictionary definition of civilization, it says this: [civilization is] an advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached.

There are several problems with civilization defined this way. First, the definition starts by assuming the false idea of “progress”, where it says, “an advanced state of human society”. Progress is wrong for a few reasons. For one, it is a Eurocentric view that assumes that societies move on a linear route. However, as we have seen, many societies and cultures move along different routes. For example, we can examine western and far-western societies. The Europeans’ conflict with the Incas.

We only need one example to prove the notion of progress wrong. The Incas had a system where, as far as we can understand, had no currency and no markets. They still had an economy, as they were still involved in production, but their production resulted in huge surpluses rather than deficits. European society, on the other hand, had both markets and currency, and many people starved. This difference in society at around the same time shows that society does not necessarily move on a single axis.

The notion of progress is also racist, because it is always assuming the European society is the pinnacle of all society. Of course, some might bring up how they called societies that were more generous than European societies “more civilized”, but they were basing their views on what they perceived their own society to be.

When the definition continues to say “with a high level of culture” we are presented with more racism. Culture is subjective, meaning that there can be no high nor low level of culture. If we are to take the idea of “high culture” then we are assuming European culture rather than African culture or Native American culture, or any other non-European culture, despite neither of the two being the right answer, as no culture can be higher than another.

Then the definition goes on to discuss industry, which the same dictionary defines as “systematic work or labour”. This fits in very well with production, as work is always to produce some item. And this is how we know industrial production is harmful to freedom.

Need I even discuss the government?

Now, I have covered why the dictionary definition is problematic, now let’s delve into what civilization really is.

Civilization arose as a result of having a sustainable power base (which is agriculture, which means that agriculture is the base unit of civilization), where people were then able to collect into cities and start forming specialized jobs for themselves. Some people rose to the top, as their power base was bigger, and they became the leaders and rulers.

Some people have said that we have only witnessed a European dominated civilization, and with that being our only guideline, we don't know if all civilization is bad.

However, with the discovery of the new world, we discovered other civilizations. The Aztec empire, which had networks of domination through conquest and hierarchy, is an example of civilization. The Incas, who were also involved in conquest (though it was more economical in nature), were also a wonderful example of civilization (though, in the favor of the Inca, while they had strict hierarchy, they had more than enough resources for everyone to survive).

Take note of the fact that agriculture is another form of production.

Civilization is the current organization of our society, but more definitively, civilization is a set of crystallized structures that individuals and communities must work within in a specific way determined by those structures to survive.

If we look at pre-civilization history, we see a lot more personal freedoms and communalism. For example, in the paleolithic period, we see more social equality. Men and women were equally involved in the acquisition of food in a hunter-gatherer society (which John Charles Chasteen describes as a non-sedentary society). Then there were semi-sedentary societies which describes non-permanent farming cities that people moved to and from frequently because the soil needed to replenish. This only arises in areas where the soil often needs to be replenished, and there is not a quick way to replenish it. Then there is civilization (which is a form of sedentary society).

Before I move on, I want to clarify that I do not believe that all sedentary society is civilization, but all sedentary societies to date have had the characteristics of civilization.

Civilization arose and eroded away at both the individual and the communal lifestyle. It immediately set to work dismantling social equality. Example: with the introduction of agriculture (like I said earlier, the base unit of civilization), men and women began to have different social roles: men, cultivating and producing food, women, taking care of the household. It began to turn from friendly competition, to a more disastrous, dangerous competition that we see today: the competition for supremacy. Plus, it gives us all of the logic of oppression- because if there is no oppression, there is no civilization. Therefore, we have several ways to attack civilization: attack the structures, attack supremacy competition, attack agriculture, and oppression.

The cultivation of food will from here on out exist if we wish to have comfortable lives. However, it should be something you do because you enjoy it (if you plan on doing it for the community), or because you need it, but never because you are being forced to whether it be by capitalistic bosses or communistic communities. We cannot allow the community to be placed over the individual.

The difference between cultivation of food and agriculture is that agriculture is only a productive force, whereas cultivation of food is something you do because you need to or because you like to, but it's not production (as it is not forced or quota-based).

So, we see that civilization is reliant on capital existing based on its reliance on a productive means.

We must learn to identify the structures of civilization if we are to truly understand civilization, especially if we wish to attack it. Things like the State, businesses, and capital (the non-living form) are all examples of these structures. But the easiest way to identify them is to say to yourself, "Does this structure force individuals and communities to work within them in a certain way?"

Every structure I have spoken of and will speak of in this is a part of civilization, and must be torn down.

These structures can range from non-physical power structures like patriarchy, to physical structures to mold the individual and their community (such as a school). Of course, with a physical structure, you must consider who you are hurting if you hurt it. If someone burns down my school, I lose my ability to survive enough to actively resist the current system. This isn't to say that one shouldn't harm a school, but rather that they should be careful or considerate of the effect they're having on others when they do harm the school, or any other physical structure, as they can remove another rebel's ability to rebel. On the other hand, non-physical structure will receive no niceties- they will simply be destroyed.

Mutual aid is a great way to end supremacy competition, as you are reducing the competition itself. Plus, then you will receive more greatly from others when you need help. Another way to end supremacy competition is to destroy the structures associated with them (like the structure of work, or a physical job).

Attacking agriculture can be done in many ways, from starting your own garden to burning down a farm, that it is pointless to try and list them. All I have to say is be creative! Creativity is key to our struggle. And the same goes for oppression- fight it at any cost.

This is not a call to a primitive existence, but rather, a call to transcend civilization. A call to freedom from the civil world. We don't need those structures to live comfortably- indeed, after they are destroyed we will be more comfortable!

VIII. Forgetting Ideological Answers And Forming Your Own

We all know the person who will defend a point til the end, grasping at more and more straws, trying to ensure that their ideology is correct, that they made a right decision. This is common amongst many people, as they try to defend their opinions that they have been handed down since the beginnings of anarchism and communism. Their out of date (or just irrelevant) theories begin to pain them as they work intensively to attempt to remedy the holes we see with patches they see fit for their ideology.

For example, Marxists and the State. They know that it is oppressive, but they don't care. All Marxists care about is the science behind reaching communism. But none of this is the problem I am referring to is that as long as a State is involved in the process to reach communism, it will be impossible to reach anything even remotely like communism.

This is because it, as an oppressive entity, will lead to certain people (probably the previously rich people) being oppressed horribly, and due to the politics of revenge, the state will remain simply to oppress these people.

Plus, the State is inherently protective of both non-living and living capital, and as long as capital survives and exists, there can be no communism, and sure as shit, it makes it impossible to achieve anarchy.

The Marxists simply defend against arguments by saying, "But *our* State won't!"

This is not an argument.

This is the nature of ideology. It forces us to remain in one constant condition of defending long-dead theories despite their flaws or irrelevance. I'm gonna pick on the Marxists some more- they say that reading Capital vol. 1-3 is vital for a revolutionary. However, why do I need to know the math to know capitalism is wrong? And hasn't Marx essentially been proven to be wrong that it will collapse under it's own weight, as it will always have more updates an patches? Isn't that just an excuse not to be a rebel?

This is why ideology is wrong- it is inherently dogmatic.

Another reason to avoid ideology is its relationship with organization. If you are not in an organization you are free to develop your own self-theory and have your own actions. You are free from the ideology that the organization tries to push on you. Ideology is a cause for organizations, as it causes them to form around a specific platform, and then they attempt to implement their organization's platform (and as their platform must allow for organization, they try to implement organization to help themselves).

IX. Anarchism And Who I Am In Relation To It

I consider myself undefined, I don't say I'm an Individualist or a Communalist, I don't think I'm Left or Post-Left necessarily (though others may define me that way, maybe even correctly). I don't wish to define myself into an ideology- rather, I wish to be greater than the sum of my ideological nouns. And I feel that the best way to do that is to never restrict myself to using those nouns, and simply say, "I am an anarchist". This makes me an iconoclast.

I feel this is important to say because I am often asked what I am, so that people can gauge what I believe in. However- I believe in no specific ideology other than that which will free me. And this may change, whether it's because my opinions change, or because my conditions change. None of my theories will last, and this is why I constantly reject them. I destroy my self-made images.

So, my relation to anarchism is that I am simply a human being fighting for their freedom. An iconoclastic anarchist, a rejectionary, all of it is the same- simply anarchist.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Echo
Rejectionary Anarchist Critiques
9.10.2013

Echo

theanarchistlibrary.org