

Anti-Copyright



To Be Queer is to Love All

A Perspective on Queer Activism and Anarchism in the
Philippines

Malagino

Malagino

To Be Queer is to Love All

A Perspective on Queer Activism and Anarchism in the Philippines

July 2020

Retrieved on 2020-08-08 from

<https://bandilangitim.noblogs.org/2020/07/01/to-be-queer-is-to-love-all-a-perspective-on-queer-activism-and-anarchism-in-the-philippines/>

Content and trigger warning: This text discusses physical, mental, and sexual abuse, discrimination, and murder committed against queer people.

sea.theanarchistlibrary.org

July 2020

to show us their humanity, in favor of their own interests. Outside the norm can we find liberation and compassion.

To be queer is to not be normal. To be queer is to love all.

Contents

What Became Normal	3
What Became Abnormal	4
When the Abnormal and Normal Crash	5
When the Abnormal Becomes Deadly	6
When You Discover the Abnormal...	7
... In its Many Forms	8
When the Abnormal Becomes “Normal”	10
When the Abnormal Strikes Back	12
When There Is No More Abnormal	13

that is reminiscent of Martial Law.¹⁰ Then, the Anti-Terrorism Bill was passed in the Legislature of the Republic that will be ripe for abuse to silence the government's critics and dissenters, something I already analyzed and discussed at length.¹¹ Not to mention the cyber-libel case of Maria Ressa and Rey Santos that put into question whatever semblance of press freedom the country had left.¹²

But the blow that really showed me just how impudent and autocratic the Republic has become was the arrest of twenty activists at a Pride manifestation in Manila.¹³ A peaceful, socially-distanced protest was suppressed by police in riot gear without any statement of violation until hours after they were detained. That was the day I realized that now, no one can be safe anymore. The new normal is an undeclared dictatorship under the guise of public safety diametrically opposed to the libertarian Filipino, already seething at the corruption of politicians, businessmen, and sycophants that has controlled this country.

We must respond in kind by pushing back and fighting back. The only way we can oppose a ruling class hellbent on taking away our freedom, our lives, is to connect with one another, to unite against the fascist. The only way we can build the resistance is if we support each other, regardless of who we are and where we come from. The only way we can defeat oppression is in compassion and mutual aid; what we know as *bayanihan*. Solidarity in the face of struggle, helping each other out not for reward or gain, but out of respect and out of love.

What we need is a *revolutionary love*. Not the kind that the ruling class espouses, a love only for those who are normal, for those who benefit from society as it is today. A revolutionary love is a love that transcends all social constructs, whether it be color, gender, sex, class, race. One that is *unconditional* for a fellow human being and one that reciprocates when the need and want arises. It is free for all to give, for each human deserves love. This love should define the steps we need to take next in education, community organization, and social interaction. Our home is within the cracks of the status quo, where those who rule fail and refuse

¹⁰ Simoun Magsalin. "Against Quarantine with Martial Law Characteristics." *Bandilang Itim PH*. pril 3, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://libcom.org/blog/against-quarantine-martial-law-characteristics-03042020>

¹¹ Malagino. "Against the Terror of Anti-Terror." June 1, 2020. *Bandilang Itim PH*. Retrieved from: <http://libcom.org/blog/against-terror-anti-terror-01062020>

¹² ABS-CBN News. "Rappler chief Maria Ressa found guilty of cyber libel." June 15, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/06/15/20/rappler-chief-maria-ressa-found-guilty-of-cyber-libel>

¹³ Rappler. "At least 20 arrested at Pride March in Manila." Rappler. June 26, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/264919-cops-arrest-individuals-pride-month-protest-manila-june-2020>

For the first time, I'm going to speak in the first person, because contrary to the belief of religious conservatives and macho-fascists, there is no such thing as a Gay Agenda™, and the queer community isn't a monolith. I cannot write for all queers, nor the communities I have come to know and love in my less than two decades of existence in the world. No, they have their own stories to tell, and they have their own time to tell it. I have mine. I can only write for myself, but that's a good start, isn't it?

What Became Normal

As a species, there are a majority of people who have come to define what is "normal," what is "right." You can call it whatever you want, the Church, the State, the patriarchy, they're all culprits in establishing what we know as a society today. Around this normal, a human's whole life can be built. See how close your life is to this description.

From birth, you grow up with a mother and a father, so that you can be educated one way or another, to be followed by an adulthood of working to earn for your food, clothing, and shelter, while trying to support a family you built with your spouse. You raise your children the same way your parents raised you, teaching them how to act, bringing them to church, educating them on household chores and soon on the work they're going to inevitably do. Maybe, when you're old and frail, they'll take care of you. Maybe you'll keep working to supplement your family's income. One way or another, you will eventually die, but you laid the foundations for another generation to continue it. The lives your parents lived are the same as the lives your children will live.

Does it sound familiar to you? Is this how you've lived your life so far, or have you lived a radically different life from this?

There is a constant theme in our Social Studies classes in elementary school that the "family is the foundation of society." Growing up I only knew one kind of family. A man, a woman, married in a church or at least city hall, and an unspecified number of children. Whenever I heard of any other kind of relationships, they're not considered a family, they're cohabitation — live-in, they call it. Of course, it's worse when one parent is incomplete. There's always an uneasy air whenever that discussion pops up, but somehow society has come to accept and assist single parents raising children.

Yet, there's always something missing. In fact, it took me almost a decade and a half to fully understand that concept, and even then I'm discovering more and

more about it from around the world. Queer families, and queer relationships in general are what is missing.

I've never heard of a family with two dads, or two moms. Of course, my life experience is limited, but for a kid that studied in a school with over five hundred students, not once did I see a man pick up their kid's report card to show to his husband, or two wives come to see their teacher because they had failing grades. No same-sex couples teaching their kids to ride a bike, prepare their families dinner, bicker in when they get to work, then make up by the time they get home. None. Not a single one.

You never hear about parents discussing queer children either, except in a derogatory manner, of course. A young boy acting gay and dressing up, or a girl hanging with guys too often. Every once in a while parents come together, you're bound to hear snickers about it. The parents of the kid don't actually hear it though. I would imagine it would be hell, one way or another. That's the stuff neighborhood watchmen would be summoned in for to stop some mother from pulling off another woman's hair.

What Became Abnormal

Queerness is defined by either silence or exaggeration. There is no normal in being queer.

I can say I haven't lived that normal of a life. Sure, I'm probably living in the pettiest of petty bourgeois lives but that doesn't mean that my life will be as straightforward as some Marxists put it out to be. Life is addition: personality plus circumstances. I just so happen to be very angry queer living in a country that tolerates but doesn't accept my identity. As a result, it feels pretty underground to be a queer, especially in a school that is steeped in Catholic tradition.

When you peel back the first impressions and piety that we put on to abide by school regulations, there's a whole slew of kids that are not normal at all. There are flamboyant gays that cross-dress and make themselves up at any chance they get. There are bisexuals who openly give relationship advice to deal with significant others depending on their sex or gender. There are lesbians who are usually the most understanding "ates" (elder sisters) you could ever ask for. Yet, even as they are relatively comfortable in their situation, they are still trying to discover who they are and how they fit in the world. Some will eventually realize they are transgender, some will come to terms with their asexuality, and still some others

we should not doubt just how important yet unrecognized the role queers played in our history. The fact that they have been maligned and maltreated first by the conqueror, then by the native elite, and placed diametrically opposite the Church, the State, and the Patriarchy meant that they stood side by side with the other dispossessed sectors throughout history.

A native shaman's struggle to rid themselves of the invader merged itself with the peasant's struggle on the land. One's faith and concern for nature and the environment became the backbone for discontent over the *hacien* and the businessman. In the modern age, with poverty so deeply embedded, the struggle of someone to provide for themselves and their family is shared across the genders, sexes, religions, and homelands. Just to survive, many people, including queers, had to sell their labor or worse, their own bodies, at the lowest price.

A history of rejection defined their roles in society, as outcasts but also militants. In what little room they are given to express themselves, they do so with courage and bravura. If given a chance to come together and speak out, they will make sure no one will forget their voices and their message. Whether it be in the mountains or out on the street, they know what they stand for, and what they are fighting for.

To be queer is to understand pain and suffering. To be queer is to understand rejection and ignorance. To be queer is to understand that normal, this normal is not acceptable. Discrimination is not acceptable, abuse is not acceptable, death is not acceptable.

When There Is No More Abnormal

In complete honesty, this is a personal work, based on my limited experiences in queer activism and anarchism. I am not an authority on these issues, not by a long shot.

But I am angry, sick, and tired of a society that treats discrimination and disrespect as a fact of life. I am also a person who has the support of those around me, as a friend, as family, and as a fellow human being.

I have the privilege to speak out, to write in great length of what I face in the context of my homeland and my environment; the things that someone living in the archipelago can face if they're queer, and how that struggle affects the other struggles that we continue to fight for every single day.

I am writing this at the tail end of Pride 2020, a month that was already tumultuous given the Philippine health crisis brought about by focusing on a Quarantine

lective of people negatively affected by the complex that continues to oppress them.

When the Abnormal Strikes Back

The fact is that *the struggle of the queers is not for the queer alone.*

Queer liberation is tied to struggles of women, of people of color, of economic inequality, of colonies and of oppressed peoples. We all have our own identities, and our own unique struggles we face everyday. We are dominated by these hierarchies that dictate how we are supposed to live and supposed to act, dictating how we are a cog in the machine of society.

“We need to build more families based on the authority of a man,” so that the children can get used to being bossed around by a capitalist or a government official. “We need to work so that we can provide for our family,” no matter how unsafe our workplace is or how little we get paid. “We need to follow the law” even if it doesn’t benefit us but rather the rich and powerful. “We have to teach our children to have kids and to not be gay so that they can build their own families.” Don’t forget! “If they’re not the same ethnicity as us, they’re going to take away our jobs and terrorize our streets.” The cycle goes on and on. Anybody who deviates from the path are immoral, misguided, and evil. So, while we fight over our religions, our races, our beliefs, those who benefit from our current society only get wealthier, stronger, and more willing to fuck us over.

The ruling class win. The poor, the working-class, women, Blacks, Indigenous peoples, and queers lose. The only way the tides can be reversed is if we have solidarity, build alliances, and create affinities with one another. And this isn’t even a novel idea, we just have to look to our past.

The history of resistance against colonialism and conversion in our country were led by queers. Local leaders and mystics such as the Zamboangueño Ponciano Elofre (known as Dios Buhawi, or the Whirlwind God) and Ilonggos Tapara and Gregorio Lampinio were queers, rose up against the institution of a religion, governance, and culture foreign to their native land. In fact, it’s surprising to note that Elofre and Lampinio’s resistance came at the end of the 19th century, when presumably the archipelago was fully Hispanized and Christianized. Lampinio even participated in the Ilustrado’s war for national liberation as part of the Philippine Revolution in Panay.

In fact, the story of these revolts led by the *asog* and *babaylan*, one of the most important social and cultural influences in indigenous societies across the country,

might go on with their lives as they are. But in this kind of society, in this kind of world we live in, there are two routes for a queer to take.

Either stay on like this and be the subject of the world’s ire, or conform to the norm, and achieve what is expected of you.

When the Abnormal and Normal Crash

Well-meaning elders and straight-out homophobes alike warn the queer of the dangers of not following the normal life. Are you going to be promiscuous? You’re obviously going to get sick. You don’t want to settle down with a husband? You won’t be able to support yourself. You want to settle down with another man? Everyone in the neighborhood will be suspicious of you and think you’re a psychopath. You want to get surgery? Hormones? Don’t change the way God made you. You’re not going to stop and hide? We’ll force you to change, whether you like it or not, whatever it takes. For everything we want to do, there is an objection that’s either grounded in the Bible or some other colonial tradition that survived its colonizers.

Of course, a person like me can simply ignore it, overcome the challenges and discrimination that comes with it. I can prove to them that I am equal, nay, better than them. I can work hard, get through college, earn a master’s, a doctoral degree. I can become a successful lawyer, businessperson, politician, and advocate for my cause on a wider scale. I can prove to them that a queer can become a productive, even distinguished member of society.

Read into that paragraph for a moment. I hope you can find the problem in all of this. We’ll get back to that.

To be fair, the LGBTQI+ advocates across the world, and especially in my country are doing an amazing job in raising awareness about our sexual and gender identities, and in fighting against discrimination in the workplace and out on the street. One of them went so far as to bring same-sex marriage to the Supreme Court. Of course, that case was a long shot, even a queer person could see that. Nonetheless, all of them proved to put queer issues on the minds and media of the average Filipino.

But there’s a catch to all of this that is so obvious yet so problematic. No matter how rich your family may be, how educated you are, or how successful you became, you had an obstacle to overcome. Luckily, that wealth, that education, that influence can equalize your playing field, and give you an opportunity to fight back. Of course, to those who can, this is the right thing to do, to stand up and

fight for yourself and the brethren you love. But lest we forget, this is an anarchist writing a queer piece. This kind of action is insufficient in solving the problem that comes with Capital and State.

When the Abnormal Becomes Deadly

No single case can highlight the intersection of capitalism, imperialism, and the domination of straight white men in the global society than Jennifer Laude. She was found lifeless in an Olongapo motel in 2014, murdered by American William Pemberton. Of course, the court wouldn't call it a murder, rather just a homicide. What's the difference? Pemberton didn't do it in his right mind. He was "in the heat of passion, he arm-locked the deceased, and dunked his (her) head in the toilet"¹

Let's set aside the wrong pronouns for a second and focus on that explanation. Heat of passion? Any queer would recognize that it was the extreme that they could experience. A straight person being confused and angry at who they are. It looked as if the court trying to excuse the transphobia and toxic masculinity that Pemberton exhibited, chalking it up to passion and confusion. Harry Roque, then Laude's defense attorney, showed himself to be a broken clock, stating that "it is not right that these mitigating circumstances showed his bigotry towards a transgender woman and that the bigotry itself was the reason he killed her."²

Then again, what would be expect of a court from a country that doesn't recognize a transgender woman's rights to womanhood? What would we expect of a country that continues to be controlled by foreign interests, especially a country built for the advantage of the macho white man, and a soldier at that?

This isn't the only incident, and this isn't only murder to take place. How many queers have committed suicide because of bullying³ or worse, HIV stigma?⁴ How

¹ Lira Dalangin-Fernandez and Brian Maglungsod. "Pemberton meted 6 to 12 years for homicide in Jennifer Laude case." Interaksyon. December 1, 2015. Retrieved from: <https://web.archive.org/web/20151204030811/http://www.interaksyon.com/article/120900/court-sentences-pemberton-to-6-to-12-years-for-homicide-in-jennifer-laude-case>

² VOA News. "US Marine Appeals Conviction in Death of Transgender Filipina." VOA News. January 6, 2016. Retrieved from: <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-marine-convicted-of-killing-transgender-woman-in-philippines/3082350.html>

³ Sam Manzella. "Bisexual Teen Commits After Being Bullied at School". Newnownext. February 2, 2018. Retrieved from; <http://www.newnownext.com/filipino-teen-bisexual-suicide-bullying/02/2018/>

⁴ DW. "Dying of Shame and AIDS in the Philippines." DW.com. May 20 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.dw.com/en/dying-of-shame-and-aids-in-the-philippines/a-19292896>

That kind of rejection is rampant in all parts of society, whether you're rich or poor, come from Luzon, Visayas or Mindanao, live in a city, the suburbs, or the countryside. In fact, it's become so prevalent, it becomes passive, it isn't even propagandized or drilled into a person, it just comes with their upbringing and culture. Why do you make fun of queer people? "Because it's funny" Why don't you want gay people on television? "Because I don't want them to affect my kid adversely." Why are you so easily homophobic and transphobic? "*Ganun talaga* eh. [That's just how it is.]"

You know how bad a culture can treat its queers if they don't even have proper words for its queer identities. In most languages, *bakla* and *bading* can mean any guy that is non-straight. *Tibo* can mean any girl that even looks non-straight. *Silahis* is an obscure word for bisexual. And if it weren't for the queer claiming the term for themselves, all these were considered purely insults.

And surprisingly, for a lot of progressive spaces, this is an issue that still affects them. Being discriminatory to queers and being sexist to women is so deeply ingrained in our collective psyche that it manifests even in socialist and anarchist organizations. Whether this is out of ideology⁸ or straight out fear and hatred⁹ there is still a surviving sense of domination and of authority by straight people, by men, and by those who have the privilege not to face these struggles everyday.

Even queers themselves have a problem dealing with themselves, since they grew up not knowing any alternative to the norm. They reject who they are, they reject what they feel and how they act, because they know what kind of shame and discrimination that they face, or they cannot come to terms with their identity based on their religious and cultural perspective. They still conform to the gender binary. They still argue over the validity of a trans person. They discriminate based on their gender expression, only liking "acceptable" (read: masculine) gays.

There are many people who have told stories about their internalized phobias, and still grapple with accepting themselves. Other queers simply accept the situation they're in, content with their little niche of society, unaware of how it can affect other queers and even themselves. They do not realize just how important their voices can be, not only for their own queer communities, but the entire col-

⁸ Garcia, J. Neil C. (2008). *Philippine Gay Culture: Binabae to Bakla, Silahis to MSM*. (3rd Edition) Hong Kong, Hong Kong <https://hkupress.hku.hk/pro/con/54.pdf>

⁹ Adrienne Onday. "Wrath Over Pride: A Call Out Post to Radical Cis Men and Their Inadequacy in Gender Struggles" Friendship Anarchy. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://friendshipanarchy.wordpress.com/2020/06/22/wrath-over-pride-a-call-out-post-to-radical-cis-het-men-and-their-inadequacy-in-gender-struggles/>

and stagnant forever. But analyzing the issues that face queer Filipinos is like peering past the facade, the veneer of “progress” made to satisfy us.

When the Abnormal Becomes “Normal”

Right now, our reality dictates that we need to remain vigilant to protect ourselves. No matter how “progressive” and “tolerant” our society claims to be, the facade almost constantly falls apart. You can take your pick at what sector of society you’d see homophobia and transphobia: the halls of the Senate⁵ the music industry,⁶ on social media, not to mention inside churches and houses. You wonder how polls show over 70% of Filipinos can accept homosexuals but only 25% of them think it is not an immoral act.⁷

Take a look at how queer culture has developed over the years. It is colorful, diverse, and truly beautiful. I am in awe at the amount of talent queer people have especially when it comes to arts, music, dance, and literature. Over time, they have come to develop their own register, a gayspeak that to this day can be heard from teenagers, straight and queer alike. Various entertainment personalities, queer and queer allies alike, both here and abroad became influences for generations to create an open secret of a culture that is truly one of a kind.

Yet, the way the traditional culture of male-centered, authoritarian, Catholic morality defined queers based on its stereotypes and bastardizations. For many gays and trans women, they’re only expected to be themselves in beauty salons, parlors, or pageant back-stages. Lesbians and trans men are seen as aberrations, raised wrongly or raised without parents, kidnapping their lovers when their families reject them. Bisexuality is treated as a phase, asexuality is treated basically as a mental illness.

It’s worst if you’re openly gay, since there comes the discussion on having “it.” There is still a strong stigma for sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV-AIDS. Harrowing stories of being disowned and shunned, insulted and discriminated, even much darker incidences continue to plague this society.

⁵ Chris Murphy. “Manny Pacquiao: Sorry for ‘gay people worse than animals’ remark”. CNN Edition. February 17, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/02/16/sport/boxing-manny-pacquiao-animals-gay/index.html>

⁶ ABS-CBN News. “After admitting it was offensive, local rapper releases transphobic song anyway”. ABS-CBN News. January 15, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://news.abs-cbn.com/entertainment/01/18/20/after-admitting-it-was-offensive-local-rapper-releases-transphobic-song-anyway>

⁷ Magda Mis. “Is Philippines really Asia’s most gay-friendly country?” May 16, 2014. Retrieved from: <https://news.trust.org/item/20140516162146-jipm9/>

many lesbians, asexuals, a non-binary people born female were assaulted and raped in order to “set them right?” How many times have government officials joked about homosexuality as if it were punchline? How many times did that senator call homosexuals scourges in the eyes of the Lord? How many queer workers continue to toil in the middle of this international crisis just to make ends meet? How many of them faced discrimination on the streets, at their workplace, or in their very own homes just because of who they are? How many continue to suffer as they curse the world for being who they are and loving who they love?

I don’t know the answer to all of that. Because there are many of us. So many of us forced to live life normally, or live in the sidelines if don’t play along. The choice is there to make: live in a lie or suffer until you die?

On one hand, you end up in a transparent cage, living the “normal” life, that is totally foreign to you. Every moment, it feels like you’re watched, and the moment you slip up, all hell will break loose. So you make sure every step is perfect, even if it means getting married to a person you are as much sorry to as to yourself, and having children even if it’s against your volition. On the other hand, there is a life of being open about who you are, and earning the ire of everyone around you. You are constantly scrutinized in your speech, your behavior, and your actions. You receive insults and discrimination every day and eventually, you will be abandoned by the people whom you love and you held on to, for daring to show who you really are.

These are the choices I grew up with, and no doubt choices that many queers were confined to take. With no other alternatives to a life of deception or a life of exclusion, a queer would still live worse off, if not economically or socially, then psychologically, for something that was never a fault, but something society chose to reject.

That was how I thought, until I discovered the concept of free love, and rendered those previous choices and that previous mentality irrelevant.

When You Discover the Abnormal...

Free love cannot exist without self-discovery. It’s hard to expand your bounds and liberate yourself from what was drilled into your head as a kid without spontaneous moments of realization and a sustained motivation to understand how you feel about certain aspects of your life. Personally, there were moments that I couldn’t understand what I was going through because it was never discussed to me at length. I couldn’t place the attraction I felt for those I felt close to because I was told there wasn’t a place to put it in. It might seem a bit cliched, but it was

true that it was not just friendship or affinity that kept me close to them, it was attraction and genuine love.

So what does this mean? There is a need to educate ourselves on how we handle our feelings, on our orientation, identity, and expression, and on how we can build safe spaces of interaction and support in our community for those who feel the same way. But at the same time, we need to de-educate ourselves as well, from the bias and prejudice that was indoctrinated into us not only by education dominated by the Church, but also the normality that straight people take as a fact: gender roles and stereotypes, use of homophobic slurs, tolerance of queers with understanding their situation and the issues that face them.

This comes in different ways for different people, but one of the catalysts for information, education, and de-education in my generation was the rise of the Internet. It came to me and many of my queer friends in different ways: social media posts, news articles during Pride Month, stories from other queer people, and even, mass entertainment. From there, collecting knowledge became reaching out to other queer people, finding spaces to share your experiences and learn about dealing with the many things that come from being queer.

These spaces eventually graduated from the relative safety and detachment of online forums and private messages to real-life circles, where support became physical and vocal. Of course, they were small groups within large communities, but even a small show of defiance, in speech, in dress, in rhetoric, was enough to make a point, to increase awareness, and to bring more people together.

This effort of understanding the underlying issues of society combined with widening spaces for critique and discussion expanded unsurprisingly into my politics, and I needed to find an intellectual and ideological framework from which I can build avenues to other queers and allies with the same intentions.

... In its Many Forms

Along that way, I came across various works from different activists and theorists, largely through footnotes on online articles like the one you're reading now. I guess the "Google Bookchin" phenomenon, though problematic in its own way, does work for some people, because the next thing I knew I was reading about Libertarian Municipalism, then about the meaning of Autonomy, and so on and so on.

Unlike many of the Marxist works that you'd find from a cursory glance of a Twitter feed, these had a different approach to achieving liberation and experienc-

ing liberty. Though some of it may be derived from the classic texts on the value of labor and the dynamic of the different classes, it was clear that it did not take it as a dogma like other socialist movements would, but in fact critiqued it, and look for ways to synthesize it to counter a government, used by a privileged class for its own benefit, influenced by culture, traditions, and perspectives that are outdated for the modern world.

Anarchism. I knew about anarchism, its history, its agitators and its detractors. I also knew about its connotations: chaos, discord, disorder, a society deconstructed, destroyed, and in shambles. My elders warned that those who questioned those in authority were bad, those who didn't support our current society is our enemy, those who don't conform and respect the rules that have been made for us shouldn't be respected and should just be eliminated. Now, tell me, does that sound familiar?

And it wasn't long until I discovered just how much literature there was on gender studies and queer issues, dating back decades and centuries. In fact, whenever I read anything about sex and gender, or feminism, or the queer struggle, especially if they were authored in the West (i.e. Europe and the United States) it always traces itself back to the free love movement that was influenced by anarchist principles. It was Emma Goldman's sarcasm and Mikhail Bakunin's abolition of the family. It was Oscar Wilde hearkening back to Max Stirner. It was the *Mujeres Libre*, or Daniel Guérin, or even the modern YPJ. It all pointed back to anarchism, defined by no gods and no masters.

Why? Because anarchy was the opposite of the state. Because anarchism was the opposite of the philosophy that guided the ruling class throughout history. Because just like how being queer questioned the supremacy of being straight, anarchism questioned supremacy in all forms. Through anarchism, many feminists and queers found a basis from which to attack the institutions that continue to oppress them. The different iterations of a movement for the deconstruction of the father-led family and its macrocosm, the paternalistic state dominated by white male rulers were all struggles against hierarchy, against authority, against power. Anarchism was always the rejection of the norms of society. To quote a comrade, "One can make the case for anarchism as queering the political."

Just like that, as many have before me, I discovered the framework from which I can try developing understanding for my identity, and my relation to the world around me. From there, I became more conscious of just how massive and how wide a scope the struggles that we all face, especially here in the archipelago where social, economic, and political relations are, for want of a better word, completely fucked up. Sure, progress is coming to our shores, besides, no one can stay static