

# Corporations: Incentive to Harm

*Editor's Pick. Written by Sima Qian.*

As left-anarchists are often quick to point out, corporations have a bloody history. During the colonial era corporate structures were some of the most effective tools of conquest, and today that legacy lives on with “security” firms like G4s, or weapons manufacturers like Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman or BAE Systems. On the other hand, “corporation” can also refer to your corner bakery, a small manufacturer, or farm. Most businesses these days have some form of limited liability, and corporate “personhood.”

These two different expressions of what a corporation “is” (an arm of the state, or a firm engaged in voluntary exchange) often make it difficult for right-anarchists and left-anarchists to discuss corporate structures with each other. The left often assumes that “corporation” refers to massive systems of power that dumb-down and spy on the masses, while distracting people to keep them in line. The right often assumes that “corporation” refers to a group of people doing their best to provide their customers with the goods and services that people most intensely want.

Both these stories are true.

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