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A Direct Response To An Indirect Jab

Julian Langer

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I am going to end this by sharing a personal desire here, which is non-specific to this situation. Through these digital means of communicating I don't really, authentically, directly, get to be-with individuals, in a way where I can have personally-embodied-knowing of the individual. This does not negate my desire to, as best I can, respect and care for the individuals, who are the living beings at the other end of these artificial worms we communicate through.

“Everything takes on a tinge of fantastical absurdity. One believes and disbelieves everything.” Shestov

I have sought to be direct here and, equally, I am aware that I have not written this as a message, email or letter (even a published open-letter) to FB, but as a response piece, which is directly in response to what I see as a largely passive aggressive jab at me. While I have differentiated and (maybe) challenged here, I want to make it clear that I am not suggesting that FB is “bad”, or “wrong”, or needs to change anything of their ideology/praxis. If I had never found the piece that fuelled my fires to write this, I almost certainly would never have written anything like this about them, as I largely no longer care about their writings.

Following life experiences, like being a brain tumour patient and others, I am intensely oriented towards my self-care, self-preservation and well-being, in all sense. So I do not take jabs without either defending myself or hitting back. This is me, carefully (and with more respect than I have been shown), hitting back.

To speak directly to FB here; I feel very much, in most areas of my experience “in the dark”, as in unsure, uncertain, not-knowing, etc., and don’t pertain to much further than this. I believe in a great deal – will-to-life, wild-Beings, myself, etc., – and don’t believe in a great deal to. And while I know that I have stated this privately in our messages following the “trial by public” that you orchestrated with RDM, given that you have publicly sought to side-jab me in your Vegan Egoism piece; I want to state here publicly and directly that I don’t believe you – I don’t believe what you write about yourself. I am not suggesting that anyone else needs to not believe you – I am just stating that I don’t. I live an ocean and more away from you, as you do from me. So we cannot sincerely claim to have any authentic or direct experience of each other. But my experience of you, through these digital exchanges that we have had, has left me in a state of disbelief, which I don’t see changing.

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tificial worms”, Agamben called “anthropological machines”, what Quinn called “totalitarian agriculture”, what some call the “technosphere”/“anthropocene”, and what could easily be described as this-culture/this-Reality, which is now (basically) totalising across this planet – and I desperately want it to de-totalise itself faster, through its techno-auto-cannibalism (as in, the mode of accelerationism Camatte suggests in his theories). In many ways, this approach to luddite/anti-tech-rebellion is entirely the opposite of the praxis embodied by the Unabomber/Kaczynski and those he inspired, which is and was entirely anti-individualist, in that it involved physical-abusive-hostility, through technologically mediating apparatus, towards individual living beings.

If I were to offer here a linguistic object-form to this individualism, in the same way that FB objectifies their praxis as Vegan Egoism, I would do so somewhat carefully (and reluctantly). Rather than anti-tech-individualism, or luddite-individualism, where the individualism is captured by a mode of ideology; the way that I would linguistically enframe this would be individualist-anti-tech praxis, as the rebellion against artificial worms/anthropological machines/totalitarian agriculture/the technosphere/the anthropocene/Leviathan/civilisation/Moloch/this culture/this Reality (whatever the fuck you want to call it) extends from my individual experience, desire, life, being, will, presence and, ultimately, is, for me, a praxis of care – care being an expression of positive affirmation.

Concluding/Ending This

“The obscure streets of life do not offer the conveniences of the central thoroughfares: no electric light, no gas, not even a kerosene lamp-bracket. There are no pavements: the traveller has to fumble his way in the dark.” Shestov

For the sake of clarity, I want to emphasise that I am not suggesting that an egoist-veganism is impossible or necessitates species-being; but there is a difference between an egoist-veganism and a vegan egoist – veganism being an activity, philosophy, politics, diet, etc., and vegan being an identity. Following this, FB destroys any belief I have in their praxis being individualist/egoist, through their rigid, dogmatic and unplayful vegan-species-being – which is actually fine by me, because I don't care if they are vegan or not, or what their praxis is. (Those who know me well will know that I will generally identify as a badger, following my anti-cull activities, but this is an entirely playful embrace of species-being, done partly to mock the idea that knowing my label means anything of knowing me.)

Individualism

I know that when I use the term “individualism” I am not using it in the way generally used within any discourse – and I don't care. My individualism is mine and I do not expect anyone else to conform to my individualism, as they are not the individuals I am. With regards to the individuals that other individuals are, my desire is to affirm the lives of other individuals and to care as best I can. Seeking to police, condemn or repress an individual living being, due to how they differ from an ideological norm, to me, is not individualism and is more a mode of anti-individualism, due to its hostility towards the individual living being.

As I don't see living individuals as anything other than being worthy of care, with each praxis of care being unique for each differentiated individual, my rebellious desire and the focus of my critique/challenge/resistance/de-struction/de-construction is not where I encounter life. No! I wish-to, seek-to and attempt-to – as best I can and in an entirely imperfect, polluted, absurdist and somewhat desperate way – rebel against what Perlman called “ar-

“There is no one right way to live.” Daniel Quinn, Ishmael

I hadn't read anything by Flower Bomb for quite a while, until yesterday, but yesterday I read their piece *Egoist Vegan: Some Thoughts on an Individualist Animal Liberation*¹ and feel to respond directly to the piece here. Before I do so, I want to make it clear that I am not seeking to attack any individual (or lifestyle) (not even Flower Bomb) for not living an ideal or puritanically ethically perfect life, especially given the context of attempting to survive amidst the humiliation and brutality of this planetary death camp – even outside of this context, I don't believe such an ideal or pure-ethical-life is real. I am entirely oriented towards radical-individualism as radical-pluralism/diversity (in a non-anthropocentric sense) and feel inclined towards affirming different means of survival within this context.

Micro-political contextualisation

To give a little background on why I am writing and why I read FB's piece as a passive-aggressive/indirect jab towards me, I will share here what happened between us that, up until now, I hadn't intended on sharing publicly.

Late last year (2021), shortly before the publication of *Egoist Vegan: Some Thoughts on an Individualist Animal Liberation*, FB, along with Ria Del Montana, orchestrated what they described as a “trial by public” within a “vegan anarcho-primitivist” Facebook group – which I saw as ridiculous and didn't really engage with. My crime was that of not advocating vegan politics within my essay *An eco-egoist destruction of species-being and speciesism*² and for not self-identifying as vegan, without any knowledge of what my

¹ Flower Bomb - *Egoist Vegan: Some Thoughts on an Individualist Animal Liberation*

² Julian Langer - *An Eco-Egoist Destruction of Species-Being and Speciesism*

diet was or is. Following this, FB sent me a few messages, obviously in the hope that I'd want to be friends and play nice, backing off when I shared that I still felt cold, despite their apology. The use of a quote from the criminal essay and an obvious reference to my/this blog in the Egoist Vegan essay, to my eyes, renders the apologies as dishonest and insincere, especially given that FB did not share the essay with me, or tell me that the essay had been published through their distro.

I am not inclined towards being jabbed, directly or indirectly, and not defending myself or attacking back, particularly in the context of being jabbed by individuals who view themselves as authorities to police my writing, identity and/or lifestyle; which I find to be grotesquely liberal political narratives and I find revolting. I am also not wanting to make this response a character assassination, or something surmounting to online bitching – my sharing this context coming entirely from my desire to be open and honest.

Fauna-centred “Anti-Speciesism”

I open my anti-speciesism essay with an affirmation of anti-speciesism that extends towards including flora and mineral individuals, as well as fauna. With this, I don't consider animals as hierarchically greater than plants or minerals; nor do I consider them less. My biospheric-egalitarianism includes a rejection of the entirety of the concept of “the great chain of being”, which I experience as being at the core of speciesism.

Now, I don't care if FB is or isn't vegan – it honestly doesn't matter to me. I also don't care if anyone is or isn't vegan. I respect that it is fucking difficult to survive within this humiliating and annihilating death camp and only want to affirm individual will-to-life/will-to-power/will-to-survive. I also appreciate that most individuals who adopt the diet, politics, philosophy, etc., come from a will-to-care that is beautiful!

I do feel to state here that, to my eyes, there is nothing inherently anti-speciesist about being vegan and that, despite what is popular within the ideologies, veganism is a mode of speciesism. Yes, this might read as counter-intuitive, but I feel that this holds true. My reason for stating this is entirely due to veganism operating on the moral axiom that the life experience of animals is more important than that of plants and minerals, which means that abuse towards animals is worse than abuse towards flora and minerals. Monocultures of crops are less bad, and supporting that industry is less bad, than factory farmed meat and supporting that industry – apparently.

Considering veganism as a mode of speciesism; I utterly reject the notion that there is anything inherently anti-speciesist about “egoist veganism”, or FB's praxis. Let me be clear here – I am not saying that FB is doing anything wrong or attempting to police their politics, diet or philosophy. I simply feel to respond to the jab of anti-speciesism = veganism.

Vegan Species-Being

The next point I wish to make here pertains to the tragic aspect of FB's failure to understand the matter of species-being – which I consider the foundation of speciesism. This failure is that where FB states within their Vegan Egoist piece that they reject the notion of species-being, while repeatedly stating that they identify as the species(/conceptual-collective-object-type) of vegan. Not only do they seek to position themselves as the species-object of vegan (repeatedly), they position, within their rhetoric, vegans as a superior mode of species-being, above the non-vegans – or at least, that is how they read to me. This collectivist posturing, to me, in no way reflects anything of the individualism/egoism, which they also seek to posture through their writings.