

Enemies Of The Logic Of Totalitarianism

Julian Langer

20/5/2021

Contents

Nomadism Not Dialectics	3
Destroying Hegel	3

Nomadism Not Dialectics

I generally describe my anarchist-philosophy as ontological and one of my reasons for this is due to my lack of belief in authority, with my basic position being that all-is-(actually-)anarchy – the attempt at assuming authority I encounter as an admission of being-powerless. As I do not encounter authority as any-Thing with any meaningful existence, my rebellion is directed towards non-conformity towards totalitarianism (and I consider Daniel Quinn’s definition of civilisation as totalitarian-agriculture to be, basically, right).

This piece is intended as a work of destruction, seeking to rebel against a form of philosophy/logic/thought that I encounter as totalitarian – Hegelianism and dialectics. This is not an analysis or critical review of Hegel or his dialectical system; it is affirmation of anti-Hegelian thought, through destruction as a positivist activity. To avoid any individual reading this piece and finding that they are mistaking my approach for a dialectical synthesis, seeking to build a system, please note from the outset that I am approaching this from a position of psychic-nomadism – the difference between psychic-nomadism and dialectical synthesis cannot be overstated – dialectics seek to totalise, while nomadism moves between spaces. Finally, this is not an attempt to verify anti-Hegelian arguments or falsify Hegelianism, to convince any reader that Hegelianism is as I encounter it or as the individuals I will reference encounter it – all I am seeking to do here is affirm areas of anti-Hegelian thought that I find value in.

It could be questioned why I would even bother writing this! Why write about a dead philosopher? Also, if I’m going to write a piece about a dialectical-philosopher whose thought I find terrible, why not write about Plato – a philosopher whose entire philosophical project seemed to be focused on the annihilation of thought that differed from his, or neutralising it so as to incorporate it into his system through dialectical methods? And I do find myself experiencing similar feelings of revolt towards Plato’s work, as I do when encountering Hegel. However, I consider Hegel’s influence now, particularly with regards to totalitarian anthropological systems that seek to annihilate or neutralise anything that contradicts/does-not-conform-to their system, more dangerous and undesirable than that of Plato.

This piece could also be criticised for being an entirely circular piece in its argument, as I am starting from the affirmation that Hegel’s dialectical-philosophy is a form of totalitarian systematising/reasoning and ending with that position. I am completely comfortable with this criticism, as my skepticism inclines me towards the position that any statement ultimately collapses under Munchhausen’s trilemma and that it is more desirable to say things regardless of epistemological issues.

Destroying Hegel

In his book *Eroticism* Bataille states an observation that in Hegel’s thought the immediate, meaningful experience, is “bad”. Also note that, for Bataille, experience is bound to being discontinuous(/alive), with the state of absolute totalising continuousness being found in death – he positions eroticism as the activity of assenting to life, even in death. So I encounter Bataille’s observation as stating that Hegel’s thought positions being-alive as “bad”, as a statement of rejecting that thought and differentiating from it through his embrace of eroticism, as assenting to life. While this point might not be seen as following from the first part of this piece of writing, as it

is not obviously an observation regarding totalitarianism, it seems relevant to me when considering how totalitarian-systems function as death-machinery – agricultural monocultures, death camps and other similar examples come to mind. As far as my rebellion goes, I have embraced a practice I describe as presentist, or immediatist, as one that affirms the immediacy of the living world, which includes the immediacy of me-as-a-living-body=here/now. Rather than rejecting life/experience/immediacy/myself, as Hegel would seek to do, I wish to embrace it with a(n absurd) passion – as I do not encounter life as either good or bad (and reject that dualism), but absurd and beautiful and horrifying and wonderful and more experiences than I could ever hope to include here.

Following from this; Kierkegaard's work *Either/Or* was written principally as a rejection of Hegel's dialectical annihilation of choice, as a rebellion affirming freedom. A basic quality of totalitarian systems is the attempt at erasing choice, by seeking to set limits that reduce the scope of potential to only those that conform to the system and do not contradict. The individuals in communication with each other in Kierkegaard's work are confronted with choosing between different modes-of-living, aesthetic life practices, moral life practices and religious ones, and while Kierkegaard's conclusion is that the religious path is the best, I do not encounter him as advocating that a religious life be the only option for individuals – instead, Kierkegaard affirms the individual's basic experience of being confronted by choice and being unable to think away their choices. Not being able to think away your choices leaves logical-systems, such as dialectics, hollow and empty, with no meaningful value, as phantoms of bad-faith. While I have not arrived at the same conclusion as Kierkegaard, in choosing a religious life – as my lifestyle and philosophy is more of an aesthetic one – I entirely agree with him that choice is more desirable than the dialectical attempt to reconcile, and that that attempt can only fail. As I take note of my experience here, I notice seemingly unending possibilities and potential for the anarchy of my immediate freedom – I could continue writing, or stop and do some tidying up before returning to this work, or I could smash my laptop on the table until it breaks, or I could jump on my bed and fling poop at the wall, or I could go into my garden and dance in the rain, or I could sit here and quietly think for several minutes before continuing to type, and there are more and more choices available to me and I cannot think them away.

But, what about the overtly political qualities of Hegelianism – which I am aware I have not yet commented on)? Hegelianism and the totalitarian logic of dialectics are at the core collectivist in thought and practice. Camus affirms this in *The Rebel*, as he notes how Hegel is indifferent to the life of the individual, who is only valuable as a means of achieving “human salvation”, as he comments on the “kill or be enslaved” quality of the dialectical system (annihilate/negate or neutralise/synthesise) – all that contradicts/does-not-conform must undergo either mode of systematising. It is obvious how intensely these qualities fit the ideologies and practices of collectivist-totalitarianism, with states deemed “far right” or “far left” (Fascists, corporatist or Marxist) being obvious examples – though I would affirm Quinn's position again of civilisation/agriculture being totalitarian, in as much as its pesticidal-domesticating philosophy and practice fit this description. Camus also notices that in the system “all is necessary”, as in all-that-can-be-is-necessary-for-the-system, rather than “all is possible”, as the system must annihilate or neutralise all possibilities that contradict. Again, consider the pesticidal-domesticating systems of agriculture and civilisation that would destroy possible living beings to include only those living-beings who are necessary for production to function, or (if you are not comfortable with anti-civilisational thought) consider how much the annihilation of possibility to allow only

what is necessary for the system fits the ideology and practices of despotic-communist regimes. Stirner's individualist work *The Ego and its Own*, which is partly a mockery of Hegel's dialectic seeking to destroy the system by using the system (his nihilism as negating the negation – a form of weird-positivism, as I encounter it (and argued in my book *Feral Iconoclasm*, which was partly a work of anti-Hegelianism)), also notes the collectivist and humanist qualities of Hegelianism; that the system is just conceptual dogma, aimed at regulating life, as a violent and despotic force; and that, within the dialectic logic of absolute-thinking the “my thinking” gets forgotten, as the individual thinker is subsumed by the system. (Rather than writing a fuller critique of collectivism here, I would encourage any reader wanting to explore such a critique to read my essay *An Eco-Egoist Destruction of Species-Being and Speciesism* and/or my essay *Becoming Animal: My Feral Individualism*).

Some of my favourite attacks against Hegelianism come from Deleuze, whose philosophy of affirming-difference I encounter as a project dedicated to destroying Hegel's philosophy, through the creation of new concepts (to use as bricks to smash Hegel's theatre). Deleuze names Hegel and his system as mediation, which resonates with my embrace of immediatism and I notice also fits primitivist-type rejections of mediation; as false movement, as the system doesn't go anywhere, but builds and develops, until it totalises, in very much the same way as we witness dehabitation happening daily, as towns and cities expand, annihilating the spaces where wildlife live; as recognition, akin to politicians stating that they recognise that mass-extinction is happening, to satisfy the appetites of liberal-greens (but nothing ever happens to seek to stop mass-extinction-machinery/culture); as representation, like how many groups will now be granted representation in politics and the media, as individuals feel disgust towards bigotry and collectivised-hatred, with nothing of actual authentic liberation-from-systematisation occurring; as monocentricity, with there being one-centre, basically the systemic machinery of production, that all sub-systems, economic, productive, governmental, state, etc., functioning to maintain and support, in servitude – Leviathan; and as distortion, which I notice today most intensely in mass-media machines, such as news outlets on television and websites like Twitter. (These are my interpretations of Deleuze's statements on Hegel, not just Deleuze's statements – just to be clear and honest). Deleuze also affirms the philosophy of Nietzsche as largely an anti-Hegelian endeavour. Rather than the dialectical method of annihilation of neutralisation, Deleuze affirms Nietzsche's life-affirmation and yes-saying as affirming difference/contradiction, which is at the core of Deleuze's philosophical project, as efforts to reject and rebel against the totalitarian logic of dialectics.

A defender of Hegel might seek to undermine this effort in destruction by stating something akin to “but dialectics work” and be willing to accept basically all the comments on Hegel's system made here – a state/civilisation/Leviathan fetishiser. My counter to that would be simply “they don't though”, as Sartre identifies in his book *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre states that Hegel and his system is unsuccessful in its aims, that his system of optimism is a failure, and that Hegel's totalitarianism can only be a failure as totalities are constantly detotalising – a strangely joyful notion, considering it is coming from an existentialist famed for being a depressing philosopher. I notice this happening in the world continually, as systems breakdown, individuals refuse to conform to totalitarian narratives and all manner of other processes – feral-iconoclasm happening as everyday involutions, which I desire the acceleration of as the embrace/experience of total liberation. De Beauvoir continues Sartre's critique of Hegel in her work *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (one of the most underappreciated works in philosophy), as she affirms that, while Hegel's

system supports dictatorships, Hegelian “fullness” (Absolute/totality) passes into absence (Nothingness) – De Beauvoir describes Hegel’s philosophy as one of “comfort”, which, coming from this existentialist, I encounter as a point of mockery. There is a sort of optimistic-comfort to the politics of totalitarianism, with its promises of safety, security and so on, but I notice how this perpetually falls into absence, as systems de-totalise – my tendency to affirm pessimism in part comes from this awareness, as a rejection of Hegelian optimism.

Affirming Failure

While this effort in destroying(-de-structuring) Hegelianism is a destruction of Hegelianism, it clearly has not destroyed the totalitarian presence of Hegelianism within discourse, nor dialectical machinery – it never could, as this is one short ontological-anarchist essay. In a political sense, this piece is a failed attempt at destroying totalitarianism, as totalitarianism is continuing to do what totalitarianism does. Individuals are right now, as I write this and as you read this, experiencing the abusive pesticide-domesticate/annihilate-neutralise/negate-synthesise dialectical machinery that is mass-extinction-culture/civilisation/Leviathan.

As well as the failure of this piece, I want to affirm the failure that is Hegelianism and dialectical-machinery. It has not overcome the freedom of choice, as choice is insurmountable. It has not transcended the immediate world that is life/experience, nor could it ever. The collective is only ever a theatre attempting to subsume individuals into its totality, but they remain individuals. Difference/contradiction has not been erased, as all-is-different, which I affirm as a yes-saying to life. The totality is always de-totalising into Nothingness, as totalitarianism and its optimism surmounts to total-failure. I encounter this as wonderful and joyous to affirm, with a sense of horror regarding those who have embraced the system and/or are engaged in it. As despotic totalitarian regimes collapse, there is often a great deal of struggle for those who they abused. I am reminded that the world is a messy, confusing and often uncomfortable place to be, but I’d rather be-here than be-dead. Unlike Hegelianism, I cannot offer comfort and do not wish for it, as I’d rather embrace the aesthetic-encounter of experience/life, with sensations that include the heights of happiness, love and pleasure, as well as intense suffering and sadness.

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)
Anti-Copyright



Julian Langer
Enemies Of The Logic Of Totalitarianism
20/5/2021

<https://ecorevoltblog.wordpress.com/2021/05/20/enemies-of-the-logic-of-totalitarianism/>

usa.anarchistlibraries.net