

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)

Anti-Copyright



BALKANIZE

Post-Comprehension

2021

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYvcOtaVbV4>

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Being has advocated for decentralization since the start of this channel. So much so that in the state-capitalist video, leftism was defined as “advocating for decentralization”. The issue, however, is trying to explain to people how this works exactly. The presented dichotomy of decentralization vs. centralization invokes some very broad structural forms. So vague, in fact, that some added nuance is needed. For example, while Balkanization could arguably be considered a form of decentralization, does this make it inherently leftist? Well, at first glance, one would assume, and almost immediately, my dichotomy has run into an issue. So let's further examine the dynamics involved in balkanization. We'll be using the fictional fascist country of Sysescentstan as an analogy.

So, for whatever reason, Sysescentstan has been balkanized into four new separate countries, each belonging to one of the former Sysescentstan provinces. These four states are Muncibara, Bahavia, Sourisia, and Beingstonia, which are all fascists themselves. So we have fragmented from one state to four. Arguably, we had one giant concentrated state with one ruler, and now we have four smaller states with one ruler ruling each. At least at first glance, a one-to-four ratio of scale, but this isn't

really decentralization; it's more of a type of fragmentation in which the number of concentrated rulers goes from one to one. Instead of one ruler ruling all four provinces, each of the former provinces is still heavily concentrated, with one ruler ruling only one each.

The internal relationship of a top-down hierarchy hasn't changed. The difference is that the number of existing top-down hierarchies has increased. So, for example, instead of one giant prison, we have four fragmented prisons. This is very similar to the concept of ethnopluralism, which some fascists use rhetorically to appear non-racist, advocating a "separate but equal" mentality towards race and ethnicity, wanting a world of separated and homogenized ethnostates. This is based on a primordialist framework of ethnicity, which believes that ethnicities (or races) are fixed, natural, and ancient. These fascists aren't "progressive" or "decentralist," but rather advocate for a world full of tiny prisons where everyone is forced to live within an ethnostate because they have a certain race or ethnicity.

Decentralization is more about the lessening of concentrated power away from a centralized authority, which gives those below more power. This is a grand-scale and micro-process. Anarchism seeks the abolition of all hierarchical relations in total, in which power is completely diffused and individuated away, allowing for the maximum amount of agency and choice possible. Giving more rulers and votes to people within a centralized body can appear decentralized, as was the case when absolute monarchism became liberalism, and admittedly, you could make the semantic argument that the Balkanization of Sysescentstan was a decentralizing process, but it's still very much different from free association. The rulership over the lands that was once Sysescentstan has decentralized in scale, or at least the concentrated power over a geographical area has been split up from one ruler to four, but the internal relationship within these states is still

highly centralized. This is why advocating for ideological decentralization is just as important as merely decentralizing on scale. Creating a million tiny fascist city-states, or homogenized communities, or if your Hoppean "covenant communities" may as well be a form of decentralization, it in no way exemplifies leftist values like freedom of movement and egalitarianism.

Just because your warden is more intimate with you doesn't make their dominance any less bad. In fact, it can make it a lot more severe. Like with a domestic abuser, the violence is more immediate and encompassing. The abuser doesn't have the police force or military at their disposal, but they do have concentrated control over you in some way, be it physical, psychological, or both. That's why the ability to both break free and reconnect is important for fluidity and transparency. The ability to move freely is essential for free association and the preservation of a truly decentralized and liberated world.