

An Essay On Green Nihilism

Julian Langer

11/23/2017

“Nihilist anarchism isn’t concerned with a social revolution that adds a new chapter to an old history but the ending of history altogether.” Aragorn!

Before I really start this I want to say that, actually, it is ok and that we can be ok with that. Sure we can be horrified, enraged, hateful and so on, but it is ok that we’ve encountered those feelings and what caused them to be, in a certain sense, is ok.

No-thing was ever meant to last and nothingness is all that lasts.

Which is why my first statement regarding starting this piece is actually bullshit. This piece didn’t start when I started typing it and it won’t finish when I stop. Its beginnings are located in the nothingness of displaced origins, far too complex for any cartography to be created, and its endings will dissipate into the nothingness of transience, when all who have read it or will ever read it have forgotten it or died.

And that is ok too. No-thing was ever meant to last and nothingness is all that lasts.

The river flows, with you and I caught in its currents, both made new and destroyed in each present moment, and that is ok. It is ok that any attempt to construct a meaningful existence out of the nothingness of this acosmic condition was and is Absurd. And it is ok to keep doing it – all living beings have done this and died, their efforts rendered useless, but their wild fight/struggle to survive still beautiful the same: even if Life is a cosmic joke, with the living being the punch line, it is still ok to laugh and delight in the tragic comedy of it all.

No-thing was ever meant to last and nothingness is all that lasts.

In Feral Consciousness I use for this type of acosmic nihilist ontology the term o-nihilism and recently have taken to using the term wild-Being to encompass a broad ontological description, which includes acosmic transience. In this piece I will use wild-Being as the specific term for ontological-nihilism and try to make my meaning of the term nihilism clear in-use.

This is the fundamental issue presented when trying to discuss nihilism. How do you define nothing? Can you say what isn’t is? Does the term with all its varying context specific usages hold any pure true meaning? (The definition of any word/sign is arbitrary and subject-specific, which does render the last question irrelevant in one sense, but relevant to the phantasmic game of discourse.)

There is also the issue of when varying categories of nihilism cross over each other, making specific usages messier. Ontological, mereological and existential nihilism all cross over each other at various points, in ways that are difficult to disconnect. Epistemological nihilism – what

I term s-nihilism (nihilist-scepticism) in Feral Consciousness – also seems linked to these three usages, but at the same time doesn't. And equally, existential, moral and political nihilism seem interconnected and difficult to disconnect from each other, or epistemological nihilism.

I am not going to worry though. I will just muddle through this as best as I can. We are talking about No-thingness after all, through the medium of constructing categories of forms and locating them within meaning-maps, to describe events, locations, places, situations, geographies, etc., which have already dissipated into the abyss of transience. We are in the realm of phantasms of history, by virtue of any level of engagement within this medium.

And that is ok. Remember it is an Absurd cosmic joke and you are the punch line – so laugh arsehole! (Nietzsche called this Amor Fati)

No-thing was ever meant to last and nothingness is all that lasts.

We simply keep dancing our lives to the songs we find and create, in rebellious revolt, and embrace the responsibility we have to ourselves egoistically, as embodied selves who are extensions of the world, given the freedom we are condemned to.

“The revolt against civilization means that we must attack both internally and externally. In reality, there is no separation between the two. This attack is a response: a response to the totality we've been lulled into that seeks to destroy everything. For some that is meant literally. Their goal is to eliminate everything from concrete to Nature so that you are free to do anything or go anywhere. It's a nihilistic rage that seeks honesty only where the individual remains isolated: to remove any and all conceivable chains.” Tucker

“I would rather be ashes than dust!

I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot.

I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.

The function of man is to live, not to exist.

I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them.

I shall use my time.” London

The subject of nihilism has been one that anarchists have had to engage with for many years. Primal anarchy, to borrow Tucker's term, seems synonymous to nihilism, in the sense of wild-Being.

But this has not been, is not and likely will continue not to be a comfortable relationship.

This is predominantly due to the split between anarchists interested in anarchism and those interested in anarchy.

Anarchism is a moral and political systematic ideological framework, born out of the spirit of European “revolutions” in the 18th and 19th centuries and utopian socialists aesthetics. Since its earliest usages, the definition of anarchism has split into various schools of thought, whose general focus of practice has been squabbling amongst themselves over what it is that they want to do and if other anarchists will allow them to do what they want to do – anarchism tends to be incredibly boring and disappointing, so I personally generally don't engage with it.

Anarchy, as already stated, is wild-Being and something totally at odds with most categories of anarchism's aesthetics over what it is we as anarchists desire – with the exceptions to this being green anarchism and ontological anarchism (both in broad senses of the terms).

This contradiction is born out of anarchism's general desire to construct nice, civilised ways of being, which fit into Euro-American moral preferences and the meliorist progression of History;

whereas anarchy requires the release from the repression of History into cynical authenticity. (It is worth noting that many nihilist anarchists are only part of that community out of disappointment with the failure of anarchism as a movement to produce its desired ideological aims.)

Because of this contradiction, nihilist anarchists (in this context referring to political and moral nihilism) are frequently ostracised from the broader discussion, demonised and subjugated to witch-hunts. This is in many ways amusing, given that Emma Goldman, a classic of traditional anarchist discourse, was highly influenced by nihilists like Stirner and Nietzsche, and that in many ways, even if through failure, the Russian nihilist movement has had a larger effect on history, in its effect on Lenin, than anarchism ever has done. But again, anarchy cares not for history.

History is a means of encoding the territorialisation of the world into order – creating the illusionary dichotomy of order and chaos in the process. History is a realm of phantasms and spooks, and anarchists who value anarchy over the systems of anarchism know this. As such, nihilists frequently rebel in the face of history, angering its proponents. And while there is perhaps something to be said for tact, there is value in the schizm this laughter creates, as it opens up spaces for collapsing history.

And here we encounter a problem. We have a perhaps valuable schizm and yet find ourselves within History, subject to its means of enacting violent oppression.

So the questions present themselves. What do we do? How do we go on? Do we go on?

No clear answers present themselves. But we are not in an age of clear answers (if we ever were is questionable, but moving on). So I shan't try to give something clear cut and easy.

Actually I am going to give something incredibly messy and difficult, which will likely disgust many of you reading this (at least I hope it will do).

We [...] want to love because we feel love, because love pleases our hearts and our senses, and we experience a higher self-enjoyment in the love for another being. Stirner

We are perfect altogether! For we are, every moment, all that we can be; and we never need be more. Stirner

"Love, genuine passionate love, was his for the first time." London

Hippies, pacifists, liberals and romantics of varying descriptions have ruined discussions around love for the most part. So as I transition into this section, I'm aware of people's prejudices and how it might be being perceived already.

But love, like nihilism, is a term with many differing means. And love can often almost mean opposite things.

If we take it that here love is not being used to refer to romance, then we need to ask what romance is? It is easy enough to state that romance involves an idealized perception of whatever it is we are undergoing affection for. But there seems more to it than that. Romance is not affection for the thing in-itself, but rather affection for the symbolic mask the viewer is partially responsible for creating, hiding the actual face and body of the thing in-itself. (This has involved embracing the notion of things containing identities, but this is something I am willing to embrace, while trapped in this medium of language to communicate.)

Romance is actually what most of our contemporary ideologies are entirely about. Nationalists and conservative are romantic towards their nations. Liberals are romantic towards the oppressed. (Most) Anarchists and socialists are romantic towards the revolution and supposed attacks on the system. None of them love the thing in-itself. Their affections are towards the idealised mask of what it represents symbolically, within the language of discourse and its values.

Love is direct though. Love involves being a naked nothingness to embrace the naked nothingness you are loving. Love requires finding beauty in the imperfect. It requires seeing beauty behind the mask and in the maskless. Love is affection for the thing in-itself, before all language, representation and symbolisation, as something transient, Absurd and beautiful, in its cosmic revolt to Be.

Love is the only reason to value anything – be it love of one’s self or love of another. Love is the only reason to fight for anything. Love is also the only reason to hate anything, as you can only love as intensely as you can hate.

(Some (vulgar) nihilists, who cling to the dogmatism of scientism and poor quality eliminative materialism, claim that love isn’t real, but this is born out of crass inauthenticity and utter self renunciation.)

“He was a silent fury who no torment could tame.” London

Revenge. “I call it Zarathustra’s Revenge because as Nietzsche said, revenge may be second rate but it’s not nothing. One might enjoy the satisfaction of terrifying the bastards for at least a few moments. Formerly I advocated “Poetic Terrorism” rather than actual violence, the idea being that art could be wielded as a weapon. Now I’ve rather come to doubt it. But perhaps weapons might be wielded as art. From the sledgehammer of the Luddites to the black bomb of the attentat, destruction could serve as a form of creativity, for its own sake, or for purely aesthetic reasons, without any illusions about revolution. Oscar Wilde meets the acte gratuit: a dandyism of despair..... Green anarchists” & AntiCivilization Neo-primitivists seem (some of them) to be moving toward a new pole of attraction, nihilism. Perhaps neo-nihilism would serve as a better label, since this tendency is not simply replicating the nihilism of the Russian narodniks or the French attentatists of circa 1890 to 1912, however much the new nihilists look to the old ones as precursors. I share their critique—in fact I think I’ve been mirroring it to a large extent in this essay: creative despair, let’s call it. What I do not understand however is their proposal—if any. “What is to be done?” was originally a nihilist slogan, after all, before Lenin appropriated it. I presume that my option #1, passive escape, would not suit the agenda. As for Active Escapism, to use the suffix “ism” implies some form not only of ideology but also some action. What is the logical outcome of this train of thought?” Hakim Bey

“If the politics of cruelty follows from the belief that we must destroy what destroys us, the emotion of cruelty is revenge. Only this taste for revenge offers resistance to the voices of this world that tell us to put up with the daily violence done to us. To feel cruel is to know that we deserve better than this world; that our bodies are not for us to hate or to look upon with disgust; that our desires are not disastrous pathologies. To feel the burning passion of cruelty, then, is to reclaim refusal. We refuse to compromising ourselves and the million tiny compromises of patriarchy, capitalism, white-supremacy, heter/homo-normativity, and so on. As such, the subject of cruelty no longer convinces themselves to love the world or to find something in the world that redeems the whole. Simply put: the subject of cruelty learns to hate the world. The feeling of cruelty is the necessary correlate to the politics of cruelty; learning to hate the world is what correlates to the political task of destroying what destroys us all.” Hostis

Hatred is often, due to its historicised association with ugly aspects of civilisation like racism, homophobia, nationalism, etc., disregarded as something valuable or desirable. Many, if not most, religious traditions preach that hatred is something evil and must be exorcised from us, through various rituals and stages within their institutional progressions.

This repression of an authentic emotive state that serves as a means of reacting to that which inhibits our ability to live, is part of the self-denying psychosis that civilisation actively creates. It serves as a means of maintaining socio-normative every day life.

Hatred though is intimately tied to love though. I love what is wild and as such hate that which represses the wild, civilisation. A mother badger loves her cubs and as such hates the farmer who kills them. A baby rhino loves its mother and as such hates the hunter who kills her.

Hatred is a valuable energy to draw from, like love.

Many of us within the nihilist anarchist community came to feel the hatred we have for this culture out of a deep love for what is wild. It is my desire for these energies to be well directed.

The direction of the love is easy – defend what you love and resist that which seeks to harm what you love. We know this space well, though none of us within the radical world are very good at it – which is not to say that those efforts to defend and protect aren't valuable. The direction of the hatred is harder and we are, out of the moral sympathies that dominate our discourses, worse at it. But simply enough, the direction for the hatred is revenge.

Revenge is valuable as a means of cathartic release, for our psychic wellbeing. But revenge is also important, as it serves as a means of destabilising the power that those with authority have and taking it for yourself.

How anyone chooses to take revenge remains to be seen.

Hakim Bey in the quote above advocates for poetic terrorism. Eco-extremists advocate more explicitly violent means of revenge. What route eco-radicals of any community/milieu chooses is up to them.

I'm not writing a how to manual here, so will let your imagination take you to what feels like your desired course of action.

"I envy the savages. And I will cry to them in a loud voice: "Save yourselves, civilization is coming."

Of course: our dear civilization of which we are so proud. We have abandoned the free and happy life of the forests for this horrendous moral and material slavery. And we are maniacs, neurasthenics, suicides.

Why should I care that civilization has given humanity wings to fly so that it can bomb cities, why should I care if I know every star in the sky or every river on earth?" Filippi

So what is green nihilism?

It could be said that green nihilism is the energies of revenge born from love and defence born from hate. It could also be said that green nihilism is an embrace of the Absurd and defiant rebellious revolt in the face of this culture of Death.

It could also be said though that green nihilism is the naturistic becoming-animal of a feral becoming, relinquishing the adornments of civilisation, its technologies, dressings and so on, in an unromantic embrace of the wild. And in this sense, green nihilism is the practice of individualistic authentic self-actualisation, through an individualism tied to an egoism that encompasses the entire scope of the world we are extensions of and immersed within.

In this way, green nihilism is very similar to gender nihilism and is ultimately a rejection of species-being, in the sense Stirner described.

With the practice of rewilding as animal-becoming, like gender nihilist friends, green nihilists are best served practicing active rebellion, in whatever situation fits their needs and desires. This rebellion serves as a means to releasing the repression of civility. It is a space that presents a great deal of opportunity for fun for anarchists and green nihilists, and is a space to simply enjoy the beauty of being alive, with the energy of a wildfire at the core of our Being.

Again, I'm not writing a how to manual, so let your imagination and desires take you.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Julian Langer
An Essay On Green Nihilism
11/23/2017

<https://barbarically.blog/2017/11/23/an-essay-on-green-nihilism/>

theanarchistlibrary.org