

## On Laruelle and the Radical Dyad: Katerina Kolozova's Materialist Non-Humanism

Ekin Erkan

### Introduction: On Laruelle's Non-Standard Philosophy

As one of the seminal theorists further developing François Laruelle's politically-poised "non-standard philosophy," Katerina Kolozova's approach to animality and feminism is part of a particular post-humanist Marxist continuum (which includes Rosi Braidotti, Luce Irigaray, Donna Haraway and N. Katherine Hayles). Nonetheless, Kolozova distinguishes herself from this lineage by adhering to Laruelle's method, liquidating philosophy of its anthropomorphic nexus. Thus, Kolozova also belongs to a more recently inaugurated and nascent tradition, working in tandem with post-Laruellean philosophers of media, technology, aesthetics and feminist critique, such as Bogna Konior, Yvette Granata, Jonathan Fardy and John Ó Maoilearca. Within this variegated assemblage, Kolozova's most recent project, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals* (2019), saliently reconciles and radicalizes Haraway's epochal dyad of the "inhuman"—a bifurcation riven by technology on one node and the animal on the other—by a resolution of superlative unity. This methodology, adhering to Laruelle's system of "synthesis-without-synthesizing" attempts to dissolve the spectral chimeras that have haunted philosophy's metaphysical heredity, proffering a generic identity.

Laruelle's "non-standard philosophy," often abbreviated to "non-philosophy" is directed at the synthetic *a priori*, inaugurated by Plato's riven distinction between *Form* (or *Idea*) and "material things," but reaching its apex with Kant's transcendental deduction,<sup>1</sup> whereby "reality can be thought [...] only through inference."<sup>2</sup> Laruelle's non-standard method challenges the Kantian thesis, whereby mind is not a "mirror of the world," but, instead, mediates and restructures the passage of phenomena vis-à-vis its "own internal structure, giving these flows form."<sup>3</sup> The consequence the transcendental decision is that cognition is directed by the noumenal real, which is removed from any possibility of cognition. While the "real world" is, thus, substantiated as "unattainable, unprovable, unpromisable,"<sup>4</sup> it is through cognition that the Kantian transcendental exacts its cardinal reign, predetermining the conditions of possibility,

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<sup>1</sup> As Kant writes in the first Critique, "[u]p to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them a priori through concept that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problem of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition." See: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), Bxvi 110.

<sup>2</sup> John Ó Maoilearca, *All Thoughts Are Equal: Laruelle and Nonhuman Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Levi R. Bryant, *Onto-cartography: An Ontology of Machines and Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 57.

<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R.J. Hollindale (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 20.

according to which all that is empirical conforms. Laruelle's Marxist verge reveals itself within the "non-standard" critique, which is not solely concentrated towards the prevalence of the transcendental decision, but, in turn, ruptures how philosophy has historically been subject to a kind of constitutional capitalist alterity, "proper to mastery."<sup>5</sup>

Laruelle avoids engaging in this "transcendental decision," reverting to Parmenides' Eleatic ontology of the One, whereby "[e]ach one of these [dyads] is by and large treated as an *a priori* possessing an identity," whereby "ontological difference becomes the unilateral duality of Being and being."<sup>6</sup> Contra Kant, under Laruelle's system, the unilateral duality (of "Being" and "being") is both *contained in* and, consequently, *occluded from* the subject; Laruelle's philosophy of univocal immanence is purged of the antinomies coloring the metaphysical enterprise, which Laruelle terms the "principle of sufficient philosophy." Consequently, as Maoilearca aptly remarks, Laruelle's is a *representationalist* critique, whereby the function of non-standard philosophy is to "integrate" philosophical distinctions back into the Real, rather than "reduce, replace, or eliminate" them, thus instating a democratic and immanent revision whereby no view is superior to, or transcends, the other.<sup>7</sup> Where Deleuzian immanence relies upon the multiplicity of micro-processual thought (e.g. rhizomes, assemblages, networks), Laruellean immanence is neither based on heterogeneity nor on distinction but, co-opting the Althusserian realist manifesto of "determination in the last instance," is predicated on the commonality of the Real, so as to subjugate Being to genericity.

### The Laruellean Real and Quantum Superpositioning

Having thus abridged the foundations of Laruelle's "non-standard" methodology, we are now more aptly prepared to properly analyze Kolozova's non-humanist Marxian tactility—an ambidextrous materialist task of mending machine with animal while, synchronously, eluding the circuit of auto-referential abstraction, so as to to recover "use value" from its subjection to "becoming-surplus." However, before fully committing to this scrutiny, let us more closely distinguish the operative prowess of Laruelle's Real. The Laruellean Real is perhaps best understood via deferral to quantum mechanics, to which Laruelle's system is heavily indebted. The "double slit" quantum experiment evidences that observation has non-trivial effects on both the instruments of observation and on the pre-established macroscopic Newtonian "worldview," whereby predictability and causal laws are provisioned as all-determining.<sup>8</sup> Quantum mechanics' "observation effect" evidences that there subsists an atomic "superpositioning" that we, as

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<sup>5</sup> François Laruelle, *Struggle and Utopia at the End Times of Philosophy*, trans. Drew S. Burk (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press: 2012), 239.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Galloway, "Autism of Reason," *Angelaki* 19.2, Laruelle Does Not Exist (2014), ed. Anthony Paul Smith, 77.

<sup>7</sup> John Ó Maoilearca, *All Thoughts Are Equal*, 11.

<sup>8</sup> As Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg's Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum mechanics and Uncertainty Principle disclose, the quantum world is that which is depicted a topos of uncertainty and probability; "[t]he double-slit experiment had shown that even single particles appear on occasion to follow a trajectory from the particle emitter through both slits, interfering with itself, creating a wave-like pattern, the signature of interference, on the sensor [...] the Uncertainty Principle states that it is impossible to know with absolute certainty the position and momentum of a particle." For further literature tying aesthetics with perception and demonstrating its relationship with Laruelle's "Vision-in-One," see Jonathan Fardy, *Laruelle and Art* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 79-116.

observers, are denied epistemic access to. This “observation effect” transpires in Laruelle as the “Vision-in-One,” whereby the Real is both all-determining and immanently conditioned, so that we are denied epistemic access to it. Consequently, the Real finds itself “cloned,” by the material/physical world. As it applies to thought and theorization, “non-philosophy’s” axiomatic force transpires as the “cloned” condition of the force of the immanently Real on thought. Accordingly,

“[n]on-philosophy has two aspects: on the one hand, it reduces philosophy to a state of whatever material; on the other hand, it announces new positive rules (which are non-philosophical but deduced from vision-in-One) of the labor of this material. By presenting these rules without yet founding them, we are giving a very succinct and elementary idea of their founding, which is vision-in-One.”<sup>9</sup>

It is on the grounds of materiality as a transcendental continuum, allineated between the animal and technological, that Kolozova turns to Haraway’s work on socialist feminism and the cyborg, both radicalizing (and, eventually, problematizing) Haraway. In “Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980’s,” Haraway urges that the subjugated bodies and “decentered selves”<sup>10</sup> of post-humanist production ought to seize the (originary) means of capitalist militarism, for both the animal and the human have become unavoidably “hybridized” with technology. Haraway’s dyad, distinguished by the nodes of animality and the machinic, formulates the fundamental crux for Kolozova’s project, as she transcends Haraway’s posthumanism. Haraway’s posthumanist premise is eclipsed by its failure to transcend its latent graft of superior and exploitive positioning—throughout Haraway’s oeuvre, the intellect overdetermines its prelingual counterpart, the body. Kolozova’s feminist and *non*-human (as opposed to post-human) task is that of a non-Euclidean transformation, as she seeks to further Laruelle’s work on Marx<sup>12</sup> through a “radical decentering,” avoiding the capitalist coordinates of posthumanist discourse, which so often lapse into transhumanism. Kolozova’s project echoes Marx and Laruelle’s post-philosophical critique on philosophy/the transcendental as ancillary and subservient to the atavism of subject-centered knowledge (which is, in turn, underpinned by the ambitions of science and the linguistic partition). Advocating for theory’s adoption of an under-determination of the human, Kolozova’s “non-human” retreats from that which binds

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<sup>9</sup> Thus, non-philosophy is identified with the suspension of standard philosophy’s Philosophical Decision (or the determination of the Kantian “transcendental”); therefore, “thought is produced and determined-in-the-last-instance by the One, which is not a thought.” See: Anthony Paul Smith, *Laruelle: A Stranger Thought* (London, Polity Press: 2016), 47.

<sup>10</sup> François Laruelle, *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy*, trans. Taylor Adkins (Minneapolis: Univocal Publishing, 2013), 11.

<sup>11</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism’s Holocaust of Animals: A Non-Marxist Critique of Capital, Philosophy and Patriarchy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 2.

<sup>12</sup> Laruelle’s work on Marx, as we shall further demonstrate, departs from the standard lineage of Marxian literature by evacuating from humanism as anthropocentric thought and based on gestures of exchange between the Real and thought. In Laruelle’s “non-Marxist” system, humanity is conceived of as an “identity-in-the-last-instance,” and as one amongst many that, coupled with the aforementioned “determination-in-the-last-instance,” evinces a fundamentally materialist vulnerability, whereby the human becomes a category of contingency rather than an Absolute.

Haraway to Kant's Transcendental Decision: the ascendancy (of the Real) to intellectual faculties.

### **Kolozova's Marxian Non-Human**

What Kolozova *does* retain from the Marxist-feminist post-humanist tradition is a conception of the "inhuman" that resists identification with the flat-surfaced intelligence of the anthropomorphic *Übermensch* (as it encroaches and inches closer to AGI). It is this "element of inanity," or the "gaping real," which, at the "heart of selfhood,"<sup>13</sup> escapes both meaning and philosophy, but is exploited by Marx's M-C-M circuit. This alterity is that which Kolozova preserves as outthrust of the pre-linguistic departure. Haraway's cyborg is the figure of adulterated boundaries, illuminating "pollution and monstrosity"<sup>14</sup> as the irredeemable hybrid condition of animality and the automaton of signification.

The cyborg also permits us to conceive of the non-human as feminist figure disrupting standard homologues of exchange, whether these be the treatment of women as transactional commodities, as in "marriage exchange(s),"<sup>15</sup> or manifest in the ontological order undergirding Capital. Kolozova purposes this "remainder" as her theoretical fulcrum, as it is the vestige that escapes sense-conditioning and the teleological transhumanist purpose of "humanity transcending itself."<sup>16</sup> The transcendental is made into a literal transhumanist inclination within today's discourse and research re: technological extension and libidinal maximization, as demonstrated by transhumanist NBIC fantasies of mind-uploading, life-prolonging and prosthetic extension.

Throughout, Kolozova recalls Marx's erudite 1844 "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy in General." It is here that Marx identifies in Hegel the apex of the fallacy and the point of philosophical climax where an expenditure of animality is exchanged for the asymptotic teleological arrow that is *Geist* ("world-spirit"). For Kolozova, transcending the expenditure of such rationalist idealist insistence, "triumphing materiality and nature," is critical for formulating a true "[p]olitics of the non-human" and carving a post-capitalist vision of "society and its socialist response."<sup>17</sup> If it is Kant's Transcendental Decision that assumes the hypothetical suspension of causal necessity, whereby unification precedes experience as the transcendent reality produced by philosophy via the destruction of representation, then we see how the Kantian principle of causality re-emerges in Hegel's immaterial teleology of a transcendent world-spirit. This is exactly why it is Hegel whose philosophy occupies the nexus of Marx's critique, reified in Kolozova via the materialist and scientific post-philosophical treatment of the non-human. Kolozova's Marxian vigor readily combats Hegel's conquering of nature by way of its annihilation, which yields the "transformation into the 'Idea in and for itself,' or 'the self-realisation of the Absolute.'"<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals*, 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals*, 14.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

Haraway's dyad between animal and machine is reproduced in Kolozova's system of the non-human as a doublet-split between the Real, understood here as material physicality, which is poised against the "automaton" of signification. It is the aperture of the "automaton" that captures Hegelian transcendence, regulating subjectivity (transcending body), capitalism (transcending matter), and patriarchy (transcending human animality or femaleness). Rather than circumscribe the automaton to automatized computational, the consolidation of Marx's materialist formalism and Laruelle's reversal of the interconditioned formulation (between thought and the Real) prompts the automaton as the self-moving process of signification and language. The automaton is a (spectral) value-exchange system, retrofitted along the linealities of anthropocentric mythologemes. Whereas post-structuralism attempts to arrive at the Real through thought (or "philosophizing," proper), Kolozova furthers Laruelle's insistence upon thought as a mere "fictionalized" cloning of the Real,<sup>19</sup> arriving at the abject as a *thérion* of distorted mediation, a politically-galvanized estrangement necessary to escape the philosophy's purview of phenomenological postulation and metaphysical abstraction.

Accordingly, the Real is beyond the brink of exteriority and, thus, it can solely be (replicated/cloned as) the object of "fictionalization." For both Kolozova and Laruelle, science accepts thought's finitude and the Real's foreclosure as the determination-in-the-last-instance of its practice.<sup>20</sup> Indifferent to language, which seeks to mediate and correlate its exteriority, the Real's stronghold is in this "dualysis," or a "cut" of "critical distinction,"<sup>21</sup> which affirms that language and thought mediate the transcendental incursion of philosophy, directing it towards the political terrain of the Real. Marx's "science of species" similarly seeks a "non-standard" position of exteriority. Kolozova demonstrates how Marx not only upends Hegel's teleologically-denaturalized spirit—where, denuded of spiritual negation, logical life bears a "constitutive 'surplus of life' that goes beyond what either natural or spiritual life can bear"<sup>22</sup>—but, also, circumvents the fallacy of Kant's noumenon, that radical "outsidedness" that cannot be recounted.

### **The Animal as Exploitive Functor: The Annihilation of the Physical**

In parallel to capitalism's treatment of physical commodities (which accumulate fetishized value) is the exploitation of *homines sacri*, whereby value-production is materially invested through the discrete process of signification. Kolozova's Marxian fervor balances the poles of materialist critique with theoretical aptitude: Kolozova grounds her analysis in contemporaneous political phenomena, ascertaining that emigrants, women, and workers are those exploited along their basis of proximity to the animal. In Marx's analysis, labor is revealed to have an inextricable bond to wage labor; Laruelle demonstrates that philosophy consistently produces an amphibology, whereby sign, thought and truth are ceded as "indistinguishable from

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<sup>19</sup> François Laruelle, *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 231.

<sup>20</sup> François Laruelle, *Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction to Non-Philosophy*, trans. Rocco Gangle. (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2010), 233.

<sup>21</sup> François Laruelle, *A Biography of Ordinary Man: On Authorities and Minorities*, trans. Jessie Hock and Alex Dubilet (London: Polity Press, 2018), 105.

<sup>22</sup> Frank Ruda and Rebecca Comay, *The Dash—The Other Side of Absolute Knowing* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018), 25.

the real.”<sup>23</sup> Philosophy’s capitalist sublation—an usurping of the position of the Real—is contrasted with Laruelle’s non-standard philosophy, which uses the transcendental material of philosophy to illuminate how the Real is, in fact, irrevocably indifferent to the thought that seeks to signify or describe it. Such is the purpose of “cloning,” not only to demonstrate how the Real functions but how proletarianization is manifest through the seizure of abstract labor for wage. As opposed to the auto-referential postulation of exchange-value, which determines the Marxist medium of relation, Laruelle’s non-Marxist formulation is grounded by the principle of physicality being independent from representations.<sup>24</sup>

It is quite possibly the most pernicious and dangerous misreading of Marx where one arrives at capitalism’s plexus as determined by the material. As confirmed by the dominion of today’s immaterial labor, manifest in the “generalized proletarianization” of diffracted neuropower (e.g. those shopping online and surfing the web are both equally privy to the passive collection of metadata information, which will be sold and exchanged by servers and businesses, alike), capitalism’s pathology arrives at the immaterial phantasm and is sustained by the gradual annihilation of the physical. Thus, finance capitalism’s teleological vantage is not “absolute surplus” but what Marx termed “relative surplus-value.” As opposed to “absolute surplus,” which relies on increased work hours and a corresponding broadening of production, “relative surplus-value” is generated by improvements in technology, workplace organization or appropriative labor productivity (e.g. the monetization of debt),<sup>25</sup> “arising from the curtailment of the necessary labour-time” and the obfuscation of regular temporal ordinance.<sup>26</sup>

The destruction of brute materiality and the bodily/biological domain of exteriority is reduced so that, through its dematerialization, it becomes “pure value.”<sup>27</sup> This destruction of brute materiality, or animality, is the central fixture of Kolozova’s metaphor of the rites of *holocaustos*, or, etymologically, the “burning of the dead animal.”<sup>28</sup> Where the *enagismata*, or ritual Greek offerings to the dead, were supplementary (e.g. the benefaction of milk, honey, wine or perfumes), the “*holocaustos*” serves as the foundation of logos, law and order in the polis through “[t]he destruction of the physical body,” thus ensuring the “immortal light of reason.”<sup>29</sup> The capital cycle invigorates the complete holocaust of all animality and material vestiges so as to insure that the absolute rule of “pure reason,” or of “Absolute Spirit” finds its perfected immaterial thrust in its perfected form: capitalism-as-philosophy.

The sacrificial Olympian ritual dedicated to life-preserving and reason, *hiereia*, remains attached to the physical body as a transcendental product, as the sacrificed burnt body is transformed into the transcendental. This “becoming” of “pure value” is the process of

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<sup>23</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism’s Holocaust of Animals*, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, “[t]he real is given in essentially passive experiences, and cannot ground a metaphysical and political activism or voluntarism [...] The real is not a vague instance, the jewel of ideology; it is ‘individual’ experiences.” See: François Laruelle, *A Biography of Ordinary Man*, 144.

<sup>25</sup> Arjun Appaduria and Neta Alexander, *Failure* (London: Polity Press, 2019), 110.

<sup>26</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume I, Book One: The Process of Production of Capital, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1999), 221.

<sup>27</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism’s Holocaust of Animals*, 45.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

abstraction, whereby a signifying chain encloses around the processual accumulation of exchange and worth-accumulation. Thus, Kolozova follows Laruelle's "determination-in-the-last-instance" to demonstrate that it is not the fetishized abstraction-process of surplus value via massive hyper-production that epitomizes capitalism's hubris. Instead, it is the "Complete holocaust," directed towards competition between the immortal gods, whereby the reality of "being in a state of exception" engenders transcendence.<sup>30</sup> Today, of course, it is not the ritual rites of *hiereia/holocaustos* that seeps into the political economy of material detachment and annihilation but the automaton manifest as machinic transhumanism, whereby computation indexes the process of full signification.

### Radical Metaphysics of Un-Computability

Marx decenters the humanist perspective as it is philosophically determined by equating naturalism *with* humanism, insisting on the materialist epistemic foundation of the "real and sensuous" as material and determined by "bodily form".<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Laruelle's conception of the "human-in-human"<sup>32</sup> refers to human identity "in the last instance," abdicating its status to the state of the Real, where it precedes, yet simultaneously prefigures, language. If Laruelle's conception of "identity in the last instance" is determined by the Real, which, in turn, is determined by the physical/material, then there is something outside of the formalism and computability of full signification: a radical metaphysics. Marx's homology with Laruelle's non-standard philosophy is on the mark of science as a post-philosophical semblance whereby philosophy and the world are recognized for their cosmologically unorganized material, "to be studied in its unilaterality."<sup>33</sup>

Laruellean non-standard philosophy's Marxian expulsion of exchange is particularly appropriate when examining the technesis of our era, where predictive processing algorithms, continuous computation and elastic graph bunching determine biometric surveillance and noetic dreaming. The trans-spatial bounds of Foucauldian disciplinary society have been revised by modulation, so that "control," as a purvey of digitality, is a silent accomplice to daily life.<sup>34</sup> It is the absolutely determining matter of physicality and praxis that gives an account to the thinking subject, rather than philosophy; such is the post-philosophical stance that bridges Marx with Laruelle. Marx's scientific materialist study intends to wrest the subject from Hegelian subjective self-consciousness as a substitution for material praxis. Thus, whereby philosophy is centered by subjectivity's atavist humanisms and anthropomorphism, scientific thought is determined by a kind of "third party perspective" that Marx described as "objective, natural and sensuous," where "[i]ndividuation is praxis of the matter and the individual life form, including

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy in General" in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and the Communist Manifesto*, trans. Martin Milligan (Buffalo: Prometheus, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> François Laruelle, *Théorie des étrangers: Science des hommes, démocratie, non-psychanalyse*, trans. Katerina Kolozova (Paris: Editions Kimé, 1995).

<sup>33</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals*, 96.

<sup>34</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 177-182.

human, is its result.”<sup>35</sup> Drawing from Simondon, individuation—or “transindividuation,” which is trans-generationally determined by technological apparatuses—comprises the morphology of the existing material universe. Thus, the process of (trans)individuation can never be exhausted, continually coming-into-being by the becoming-produced of psychosocial “information” through multi-generational assemblages and circuits.<sup>36</sup> The pre-linguistic upswelling is not only a subject remainder but the grounds for capitalist mining, as transindividual memory “transits across individuals and generations, engaging within the cross-generational social sphere of non-verbal encoding.”<sup>37</sup>

Accordingly, Kolozova traces a parallel with Walter Benjamin’s “divine violence” and Carl Schmitt’s “religious miracle” by conceiving of an enactment of sovereignty beyond human morphology, invigorating a radicalization of the dyad while resorting to the post-philosophical discursive possibilities of non-self-standing entities. Where leftist accelerationists like Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams direct us towards transhuman, Kolozova’s non-humanist discourse is rid of philosophical sufficiency, so as to erase the metaphysical trace of fetishization that subordinates automata to the axis of capital, which invariably results in derealization (or “dematerialization”). In today’s capitalist world of automation and predictive technics, the “excess of commodity production is solved through holocaust of use value—literal destruction of products—in order to preserve the mathematical projection of surplus value.”<sup>38</sup>

Kolozova’s Marxist-feminism seeks to instantiate gender as a dematerialized abstraction, rather than to reinstate the (binary and fetishistic) terms of identity politics, which are complicit in evacuating the “relevance of any physicality.”<sup>39</sup> Recall that Marx’s description of the automaton of capital frames the mechanized process of elimination; this is not automation conceived of as it is relegated to the fiduciary horizon of commodity-as-money but, also, as the fetish that recognizes “the irrelevance of materiality”<sup>40</sup> (such is the circuit of product-as-profit, or P-P’). Thus, the Laruellean “reworking” of the Socialist “nonhuman” does not seek to lionize the body as “the perfect automaton” but establish a material unity between sheer materiality and the self-standing real.

### **A Stranger Thought: On Xeno-Feminist Posthumanism and Haraway**

While eruditely synthesizes Irigaray, Haraway, Marx and Laruelle, and instating a non-Euclidean vantage, Kolozova polemics are most prudently honed when she problematizes contemporary feminist techno-solutionist transhumanism’s relics, as they appear under today’s post-Marxist discourse. One such marked example is the feminist collective Laboria Cuboniks,

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<sup>35</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism*, 101.

<sup>36</sup> David Scott, *Gilbert Simondon's Psychic and Collective Individuation: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 139.

<sup>37</sup> Ekin Erkan, “Psychopower and Ordinary Madness: Reticulated Dividuals in Cognitive Capitalism,” *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy*, 15.1 (2019), 220.

<sup>38</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism’s Holocaust of Animals*, 120.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; here, Kolozova further remarks that, “[t]o aspire for equality in marriage and in relation to the two normative genders is to participate in the pacification of the subversive force of sexual queerness and the possibility of feminist Marxism.”



whose *The Xenofeminist Manifesto: A Politics for Alienation* (2018) seeks to expel essentialism naturalism which, according to the xenofeminist collective “reeks of theology.” However, as Kolozova demonstrates, the xenofeminist project fails to recognize the dialectic ratiocination between physicality and the automaton of signification, or—through the Laruellean aperture—the preeminence of the Kantian Absolute of Pure Reason and “nature.” The xenofeminist project remains within an atavistic garrison, structurally knotted to the strand of capitalism that, to paraphrase Žižek, is little more than “Capitalism with a friendly face.”

Rather than a decentered humanism of material physicality, the xenofeminist opposition to naturalism:

“remains entrapped within the old humanism that is determined inside the binary of naturalism/rationalism, an extension of the Cartesian divide that fails to recognize the devaluation or subordination of matter and physicality to the cognitive practice of self-standing abstraction (of the Universal Egoist) or the all-encompassing entity of Reason.”<sup>41</sup>

Xenofeminism’s appeal to an anti-materialist solution reveals its complicity within the inherent process of de-materialization that is concurrent to capitalism’s impulse for erasure via the becoming-surplus, which Kolozova captures under the destruction of the physical body via *holocaustos*. Furthermore, the xenofeminist project fails to regard the technical becoming of automation as a node of originary alienation, as Marx presaged. The xenofeminist’s manifesto contends with simply negotiating with capitalism for more rights, less consumerism, and better protection of vulnerable social groups, querying “[w]hy is there so little explicit, organized effort to repurpose technologies for progressive gender political ends?”<sup>42</sup> Whereas Kolozova’s tactical use of Laruelle postulates for a socialist political-economic infrastructure of the non-human, the xenofeminist project returns to re-engineering the world via technical appropriation, faltering into the same flounder as leftist accelerationism.

However, it is not simply the xenofeminist project that is privy to capitalism’s extemporization of diffuse dissipation. Kolozova also brilliantly problematizes Haraway’s “weak Christian moralism.”<sup>43</sup> According to Haraway’s *When Species Meet* (2007), we “human beings” ought to learn to “kill responsibly” for, as animals ourselves, we sometimes need to kill other animals; according to Haraway, what is key is that we must not kill in the “calculative sense”, or through “preset taxonomic calculation.”<sup>44</sup> From lab animals to animals for slaughter, Haraway erects a false equipollence between the human and animal as laborers. Despite Haraway attempts to bypass the discourse of perfected calculability refined by technical aptitude and predictive processing (which transpires in the xenofeminist project), Haraway treats the human and non-human animal as commensurate, passing through a sustained an equally complicit chain of technological instantiation.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>42</sup> Laboria Cuboniks *Xenofeminism: A Politics of Alienation* (2015). Available at <http://www.laboriacuboniks.net/#firstPage>, accessed on October 23, 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism’s Holocaust of Animals*, 141.

<sup>44</sup> Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 71; 81.

Haraway's is neither a Marxist nor feminist (and certainly not a Marxist-feminist) solution. Wage labor is unequivocally applicable to humans *solely*, and Haraway's elevating the non-human animal and human into mutually bound "laborers" not only implies an (alien) agency of labor,<sup>45</sup> akin to the Hegelian *Geist*, but, more critically, placates the capitalist "holocaust of animals" to a bearable plateau.

Here, we find Kolozova is at her most ardent Marxian advocacy, as she makes no mistake: animals are reduced not into laborers but "*commodities* that serve the use value of combustion of their materiality," with "their holocaust" as "the origin of the aerial reality of not only surplus value but of value *tout courte* or of the Absolute."<sup>46</sup> Laruelle's "victims-in-person"<sup>47</sup> serves a far more politically rigorous role than Haraway's abstractions reified as general entities, for Laruelle's generalization, manifest as a "superposition," is not bound to human-psychological identification but universal compossibility.<sup>48</sup> Kolozova does not prompt some kind of revalorization or anthropomorphizing of the animal as a general equivalent of the Real. Instead, she recognizes that this reduction is the foundational gesture of capitalism, the very same gesture that "grounds and sustains patriarchy and heteronormative sexuality" as a "general equivalent of woman or the woman as reified abstraction."<sup>49</sup> Rather than impart an amphibologic metaphysics of supplanting the perfected Real via the philosopheme, Kolozova seeks to emancipate the non-human, beginning with the animal. Within the tradition of the (standard) philosopheme, from Plato's *Timaeus* to Derrida's "The Animal that I am," the animal is either reduced to a "mere machine," an automata devoid of any semblance of epiphenomenal sensoria, or disembodied as a superlative category, appropriated for framing truth claims by instantiating the Real through animality-as-transcendent.

While Kolozova does not engage in any particular empirical-ecological survey of factory farming, the Anthropocene, carbon/methane emissions, land degradation or biodiversity loss, she does prompt an emancipation of materiality, inflaming a Laruellean "future science" where the non-human is prohibited from being assigned any special hierarchical status. While Kolozova inaugurates the possibility of such prospects *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals* also reveal that there is a great deal of further non-human Marxist work to be done.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> John Ó Maoilearca uses the term "philosomorphism" to describe the anthropic compulsion riddling the history of standard philosophical practice. According to Laruelle, philosophy "not only anthropomorphises the Real, it anthropomorphises man too (or rather, it philosomorphises both after its own image)." According to Maoilearca, "[t]he radicality of non-philosophy is rooted in its non-decisionism: it is an axiom, or better, a stance or posture, an embodied attitude." It would appear that Haraway inherits her conception of animality, or animal-as-equipollent-laborer, from Derrida, whose philosomorphism indexes the animal as a signifier for death. See: John Ó Maoilearca, "The Animal Line: on the possibility of a 'Laruellean' non-human philosophy," *Angelaki* (2014) 19.2, 104-129; Jacques Derrida "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)," trans. David Wills, *Critical Inquiry* (2002) 28, 369-418.

<sup>46</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals*, 144.

<sup>47</sup> François Laruelle, *General Theory of Victims* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, 2012), 148-149.

<sup>48</sup> That which Laruelle terms "superposition" reappears in Kolozova as the "set," a democratization of human-animal thought devoid of human morphology.

<sup>49</sup> Katerina Kolozova, *Capitalism's Holocaust of Animals*, 147.

<sup>50</sup> Philosopher Alexander Wilson's recent book, *Aisthesis and Perceptonium* challenges the anthropocentric vantage of phenomenological distinction by hypostatizing the non-human as a perceptual category. See: Alexander

### Conclusion: Lauelle Qua Marx

Both Laruelle and Marx problematize philosophy for being trapped within a circularity of negligence, blindsiding materiality. Marx's critique of philosophy is rested on a "naturalism" that departs from vitalism, (re)submitting realism to exteriority. This "third person" conceptualization decenters the human episteme, abandoning the philosophical sufficiency of the human, marked in Kant's transcendental deduction and the Hegelian liberation of *geist*. In Laruelle, the perspective of exteriority is enacted by the non-human pre-lingual inhabitant, the "non-philosophically-conceived animal"<sup>51</sup> of ante-decisional enticement. The conception of "philofiction" permits us the possibility of subjectivizing the universe by fictionalizing the objectivization of self, upholding the stance of science that *submits* to the Real, rather than the other way around.<sup>52</sup>

Through Marx and Laruelle, Kolozova carves a conception of the non-human as devoid of the gesture of amphibology that conflates the Real with thought, which inevitably produces an ontologization of human centrality. Humanity, for Laruelle, is merely one "identity-in-the-last-instance" among many and, "determined-in-the-last-instance," humanity is reduced to a category that is determined by historicity, thus becoming fundamentally vulnerable to the Real. In short, the human is a central for Laruelle because it *is a contingency*, rather than an Absolute—the human is positioned in Laruellean discourse as prior to any decision on the Real. In contrast, the standard philosophical decision would instate "the human" as a category prior to the philosophical projection (or "fictionalization") of the Real.<sup>53</sup> As Kolozova's Marxian project demonstrates, the interminable task of Laruellean radical immanence furnishes us with a non-human generic category with which to perturb the diffracted transhumanist confluence of the animal/machine dyad. The onus is now on us to further the political project through praxis and theory's conflux, whether this be circumscribed to environmental advocacy, ecological action or animal liberation.

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Wilson, *Aesthesis and Perceptronium: On the Entanglement of Sensation, Cognition, and Matter* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).

<sup>51</sup> John Ó Maoilearca, *All Thoughts Are Equal*, 115.

<sup>52</sup> This is how Laruelle's "non-standard philosophy" avoids relying upon science or mathematics as a central empty sign upon which the ontological facticity of the universe unfolds, which Quentin Meillassoux's anti-correlationist ascendancy necessitates.

<sup>53</sup> Jonathan Fardy, *Laruelle and Art*, 16.

### **Author**

Ekin Erkan is a philosopher of technology and media theorist, notable for developing Bernard Stiegler's system of "psychopolitics" and research on François Laruelle's non-standard philosophy. Erkan's work examines the collective closure between neural networks, predictive processing, and perceptual faculties as they relate to machine intelligence and algorithmic governmentality. Erkan is currently pursuing post-graduate research with Reza Negarestani and Reza Negarestani. Erkan has published their work in journals including *Cosmos & History*, *Cultural Studies*, *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, *Chiasma*, *Rhizomes*, and *Labyrinth*. Erkan currently working with Giacomo Gilmozzi on Bernard Stiegler's United Nations 2020 World Summit initiative "Internation.World." Erkan is currently working on a book concerning the collective closure between net.art, early digital utopianism, and the Marxist-Leninist Turkish hacktivist group, Redhack.



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