**Imagination and Potentiality: The Quest for the Real**

Graham Harman*

**The Only Exit From Modern Philosophy**

https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2020-0009

Received January 25, 2020; accepted February 28, 2020

**Abstract:** This article contends that the central principle of modern philosophy is obscured by a side-debate between two opposed camps that are united in accepting a deeper flawed premise. Consider the powerful critiques of Kantian philosophy offered by Quentin Meillassoux and Bruno Latour, respectively. These two thinkers criticize Kant for opposite reasons: Meillassoux because Kant collapses thought and world into a permanent “correlate” without isolated terms, and Latour because Kant tries to purify thought and world from each other rather than realizing that they are always combined in “hybrid” form. What both critiques tacitly accept is the notion that “thought” and “world” are the two major poles of the universe. I claim that this stems from the post-Cartesian assumption that thought and world are the two basic kinds of things that exist. The name “onto-taxonomy” is introduced for this view.

**Keywords:** modernity, onto-taxonomy, formalism, realism, materialism, Bruno Latour, Quentin Meillassoux

---

**1 Against Onto-Taxonomy**

Two of the most interesting philosophers at work today live just a mile apart on the Left Bank in Paris, though separated in age by twenty years: Bruno Latour (b. 1947) and Quentin Meillassoux (b. 1967). In some ways they have very little in common. A Venn diagram of their respective readerships would show minuscule intersection, mostly covering a small circle of authors working on object-oriented ontology (OOO). Latour and Meillassoux are not even especially interested in each other’s work, although they did share some kind words after a salon for Meillassoux held at Latour’s Latin Quarter flat in 2006.1 Meillassoux is an unapologetic rationalist from the school of Alain Badiou, one who takes René Descartes as our model for forward progress; Latour is a vehement anti-modernist whom many rationalists dismiss as seeing no difference in kind between particle physics and witchcraft. Nonetheless, the two are united in their view that Immanuel Kant is still the most dangerous influence on contemporary philosophy.2 In *After Finitude*, Meillassoux explicitly charges Kant’s so-called Copernican Revolution with being a “Ptolemaic Counter-Revolution”; Latour had said much the same thing a generation earlier in *We Have Never Been Modern*.3 Given that Kant still provides the basic background assumptions for most present-day philosophy—whether of an analytic or

---

1 Latour’s initial enthusiastic remarks about Meillassoux can be found in Harman, *Quentin Meillassoux*, 2. Two years later, Latour provided a largely positive back jacket endorsement for Meillassoux’s debut book *After Finitude*. Meillassoux also spoke kind words about Latour to me in person, though a sample of his mostly critical attitude in print can be found in the transcript of the 2007 Speculative Realism workshop at Goldsmiths: see Brassier et al., “Speculative Realism,” 423.
2 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. See also Ferraris, *Goodbye, Kant!*
3 Meillassoux, *After Finitude*; Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern.*
Continental stripe—this point alone is already worthy of interest. What is even more interesting is that the two philosophers reject Kant for opposite reasons:

1. For Meillassoux, Kant collapses the independence of thought and world into a correlation when they really ought to be kept separate from each other. Meillassoux implements such a separation with his concepts of “ancestrality” and “diachronicity,” which refer to the existence of the world prior to the existence of conscious life and after its possible disappearance. He pushes it further with his view that mathematics is able to index the primary qualities of things outside their presence to thought. The problem with Kant—and already with David Hume—was that he left us with no possibility of thinking the separation of thought and world, thereby leading us inexorably into “correlationism,” the dominant philosopheme of our time.\footnote{Meillassoux’s extension of correlationism from Kant back in time to Hume can be found in the published version of his 2012 Berlin lecture “Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition,” 91, n. 18.}

2. In Latour’s eyes, Kant has precisely the opposite problem: namely, he tries to purify thought and world from each other. Far from being a problem with Kant alone, Latour sees this attempted but impossible purification as the essence of modernity in all its forms. His solution, in We Have Never Been Modern, is to argue just how difficult it is to separate nature from culture. Just consider such examples as the ozone hole, whales fitted with tracking devices, or a garbage dump that becomes an ecological preserve. Latour calls such entities “hybrids,” and they are impossible to clarify by way of the modern concepts of nature and culture. In fact, Latour is often inclined to treat every entity as a hybrid. If it is true that Kant tries to separate thought from world, then the hybrid flouts the Kantian paradigm insofar as it is always made up of both poles: nature and culture at the same time.

I regard Latour’s position as superior due to his recognition that modern onto-taxonomy is a problem, whereas Meillassoux prefers to celebrate and even extend it. Nonetheless, Latour’s solution to the nature/culture divide—namely, asserting that both terms are everywhere united—still affirms onto-taxonomy at the very moment it could have escaped. It is also noteworthy that Meillassoux and Latour follow typical early modern and typical late modern approaches, respectively. In early modernity running from Descartes through Kant, everyone was concerned with gaps in the cosmos: gaps between mind and body, God and both mind and body, or phenomena and noumena. By insisting on a separation between thought and world, one that can supposedly be bridged by mathematical reason, Meillassoux takes the side of early modernity on this question. This will come as little surprise in view of his ultimately Cartesian inclinations. But from German Idealism onward the terrain shifted, and the worry about gaps in the world came to be seen as a naive pseudo-problem. We see this not only in Hegel’s collapse of the phenomenal/noumenal distinction into an immanent space of dialectical reason, but also in Husserl’s and Heidegger’s respective ways of claiming that we are “always already outside” in the world, and in the pragmatist notion that we should not artificially separate the two great poles of mind and world. This is the late modern position, where Latour feels fully at home.

Stated differently, the fundamental problem with the modern taxonomy has been obscured by a side-debate over two possible kinds of responses to it. Namely, it becomes a war over whether there are gaps in the world or whether these are merely illusions or “false problems.” Yet in a sense this is just what Louis Althusser would call “ideology,” in which a secondary problem serves to conceal the primary one.\footnote{Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.”} For instance, Marxists like to give the example of how American liberals obsess over racism and sexism precisely in order to avoid a purportedly more issue in which liberals themselves are heavily implicated: the class struggle. Whatever one thinks of this particular example, it is easy to see how the general mechanism might work in which a side problem is used to distract us from a more central one. In the present case, everything comes down to an outright rejection of onto-taxonomy, which cannot be accomplished either by avoiding correlationism or embracing hybrids. The rejection of onto-taxonomy is the only exit from modern philosophy. If we avoid this taxonomy, we escape; if we retain it, we remain stranded in an increasingly
exhausted modernism. If we continue to assume that thought and world are the two basic poles around which reality turns, it does not matter much whether we try to separate or combine them. Furthermore, if we claim that the problem is simply that the human side has been overemphasized and that we must now “meet the universe halfway,” as in the title of Karen Barad’s influential book, then we are still accepting the two terms of the modern settlement. For it is philosophically fruitless to encourage two things meet halfway if they are not actually the two basic pillars of the cosmos. Notice that no one is asking reptiles and dust to “meet halfway,” and the same holds for music and toothpaste.

Another important consequence of onto-taxonomy is the way it gives rise to the modern division of labor. One of the strictures implemented by Kantian philosophy is that we cannot discuss object-object interactions at all, except insofar as they are framed by the transcendental structure of human experience. That is to say, from the Kantian standpoint we are forbidden to discuss the collision of two rocks in empty space, but can only describe how this collision presents itself to us according to time, space, and the twelve categories of the understanding. The sciences alone are permitted to discuss interactions between inanimate things, while philosophy (and kindred disciplines) is left to meditate on the human-world relation alone. Occasionally an effort is made to reduce all of reality to one side or the other: turning science into a merely social phenomenon, or—moving in the other direction—attempting to reduce all the “soft” disciplines either to neuroscience or subatomic physics. On the whole, however, there is general satisfaction with the aforementioned division of labor.

Now, what is most unusual is that today’s Neo-Rationalist philosophers try to leverage two separate forces that flow from different springs; Meillassoux is probably the most interesting thinker of this sort. For in a first sense, he lays claim to the insurpassable rigor of post-transcendental philosophy. To think a thing outside thought is itself already a thought, which leads to a performative contradiction. Therefore philosophical reflection must begin, at least, from within the closed circle of thought. In its most rigorous form, Husserl’s phenomenology, this vision of the nonsensical unthinkable of that which lies beyond thought leads science into a subordinate role: after all, no findings of the hard sciences can ever reach the supreme self-transparency of phenomenological reflection. But contemporary Neo-Rationalism will have none of this, since it badly wants to link itself with the unbroken cognitive success of the hard sciences. True enough, the most rigorous philosophy would be the sort that is grounded in the immediate self-evidence of its logical truths, but since a priori logical analysis is not the way that science attains its achievements, one commits to two separate principles that are fundamentally different in kind: (1) the inescapability of the circle of thought, (2) the mighty greatness of science. But a third principle soon appears. For these same Neo-Rationalists also wish to associate themselves with the evident urgency of revolutionary politics. But this sort of politics—like every other—cannot be deduced either from the a priori conditions of the circle of thought, or from scientific discovery. Instead, it arises only from the moral postulate of human equality. As admirable as this may sound, it cannot be derived from the same sources as either logical rigor or scientific success, which means that Neo-Rationalism now stumbles awkwardly on three separate legs, each moving at its own pace. Yet the situation soon becomes even more complicated. For if a flat ontologist argues that there is no logical reason why human cognition should be radically different in kind from the animal sort, and that science points instead toward a continuity of human and animal and perhaps even vegetable minds, and that morality suggests kindness toward animals no less than toward people, the Neo-Rationalist counters all this with a fourth separate principle: common sense. After all, humans are obviously different in certain ways from lizards or even dolphins, and if we open up the term “thought” to include animals, then there is no stop on the slippery slope until we end up with the ridiculous idea that cotton, fire, and dust can think as well.

In this way, we see that the apparently crushing rigor of Neo-Rationalist philosophy is fully willing to give up rigor in favor of other virtues whenever the situation requires it. It brackets everyday scientific

6 See Harman, “What the End of Modern Philosophy Would Look Like.”
7 Barad, Meeting the Universe Halfway. For a fuller critique of Barad’s interesting position see Harman, “Agential and Speculative Realism.”
8 See Meillassoux, “Presentation by Quentin Meillassoux,” in Brassier et al., “Speculative Realism.”
9 Traces of this fusion can be found both in Meillassoux, “Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition” and Brassier, Nihil Unbound.
feasibility in favor of the impeccable logic of its first principles. Yet it strays beyond the circle of thought whenever necessary to borrow some of the glory of physics, neuroscience, or evolutionary biology, none of them derivable from a priori principles of cognition. And as soon as it finds this combination of rigor and success too limiting, it claims moral superiority in postulating a human quality that cannot be justified by way of transcendental logic or scientific discovery. Finally, once logic, science, and morality suggest that animals are no less important than humans, Neo-Rationalism appeals to our commonsensical feeling of separation from the animal kingdom as a whole. It was Latour who first discovered this hypocritical dimension of every form of modernism, which consists of feigned strengths that are really just a “tiered array of weaknesses.”

For in what did the victory of the Conquistadores consist?

They arrived separately, each in his place and each with his purity, like another plague on Egypt. The priests spoke only of the Bible, and to this and this alone they attributed the success of their mission. The administrators, with their rules and regulations, attributed their success to their country’s civilizing mission. The geographers spoke only of science and its advance. The merchants attributed all the virtues of their art to gold, to trade, and to the London Stock Exchange. The soldiers simply obeyed orders and interpreted everything they did in terms of the fatherland. The engineers attributed the efficacy of their machines to progress.

Latour adds that “they each believed themselves to be strong because of their purity... Even so –and they knew this well– it was only because of each other that they were able to stay on the island at all.” And so it is with the Neo-Rationalist philosophers, who hope we will never notice that they move the shell with the ball through four different positions: logical certitude, scientific success, moral superiority, and good old common sense.

But let’s focus here on the appeal to certitude, the chief philosophical support for onto-taxonomy. As we saw, this taxonomy splits the world into two and only two basic kinds of things: (1) human thought, and (2) everything else. Taken in isolation this claim would be absurd, given the distinctly puny import of our species amidst the vast universe as a whole. But of course, modern philosophy has been built by some prodigious minds, none of them parochial enough to grant humans half of philosophy simply because we happen to be humans; obviously, they will have a stronger case than this. That case can be found initially in Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*, in which the method of radical doubt shows that everything can be doubted other than the existence of thought itself: *cogito, ergo sum*.

In other words, the central case for onto-taxonomy is not that we are humans and therefore humans must be important, but that human thought is directly present and certain in a way that nothing else is. This is why onto-taxonomy places humans alone on one side of the cosmos and all the trillions of other kinds of entities on the other: for only the first side is directly accessible, while the rest is not.

To what extent is this true? In one sense, I would have to agree that some things are immediately accessible while others can only be accessed in mediated fashion: object-oriented ontology (OOO) already affirms a similar distinction between the sensual and the real, and this overlaps with the distinction between the immediately available and that which is only given in mediated form. Yes indeed. But a problem arises from the further step of identifying the immediate with *my thinking* and the mediated with everything else. For the thought that thinks and the thought it thinks about are not one and the same, and therefore human thought has no privileged immediacy over anything else. Whatever I think about, including myself, is given only in mediated fashion. Note that the finitude of human thought is not directly given, but only *deduced* from the fact that my thought of a table outside the mind does not actually prove it exists there: even if the table really does exist, my thought of it is still finite insofar as my thought of the table is not itself the table, which means that there is a difference between the two. Moreover, while I deduce my own

---

10 Latour, “Irreductions,” 201.
11 Ibid., 202.
12 Ibid.
13 Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*.
14 Harman, *The Quadruple Object*.
15 The closest predecessor to this critique of modern philosophy can be found in Ortega y Gasset, “Preface for Germans.”
finitude in this way, I deduce the finitude of all other entities in precisely the same way. Stated differently, I don’t grasp human finitude simply because I happen to be human, but because I can deduce the finitude of human experience, and for the very same reason can deduce the finitude of horses, cats, trains, flowers, and atoms. The argument, to summarize, is that the same form can never exist in two different places. To move the form of a horse from the horse itself and bring it into my mind is not merely to extract it from “matter” – whatever that might be–but to transform it. The horse-form in the horse is not the horse-form in my mind.

3 Realism and Materialism

A number of analytic philosophers in the blogosphere have ridiculed the recent emergence of a realist trend in Continental thought. In a way this is perfectly understandable, since realism has always been a live philosophical option in the analytic tradition, and can hardly seem like a great innovation to those working within it. Yet this sort of mockery can also be dangerous for those who employ it, since it is so often reversible. For all the Sturm und Drang over whether Saul Kripke, Ruth Barkan Marcus, or some other figure deserves to be honored for launching the “new theory of reference,” a Continental could always laugh and tell them to go back to Husserl’s discussion of “nominal acts” or “fixed appellations” (cf. Kripke’s “rigid designators”) in the Logical Investigations six decades earlier. What made Kripke’s emergence in the early 1970s so exciting was not its non-existent discovery that names point at something beyond definite descriptions, but that he raised possibilities so foreign to the assumptions of his intellectual environment. The same holds for the longstanding Continental attitude toward realism, which Husserl and Heidegger long ago dismissed as a “pseudo-problem.” Lee Braver has even plausibly claimed that anti-realism has been at the core of Continental thought since its inception. To be sure, one can always point to Nicolai Hartmann as a bona fide realist in early twentieth-century Continental philosophy, but he is the classic exception that proves the rule: until recently almost no one was working on Hartmann, and even today his influence is minimal compared with that of the more mainstream phenomenologists.

In any case, the real heyday of Continental realism is upon us at this very moment. In the early 1990s in Italy, Maurizio Ferraris broke with Gianni Vattimo and his circle in the name of a robust form of realism, one that would eventually serve as a magnet for German Wunderkind Markus Gabriel as well. In 2002, my own book Tool-Being offered a realist interpretation of Heidegger’s philosophy, and eventually fed into the Speculative Realism movement launched a few years later in London. In the same year, the Mexican-born New Yorker Manuel DeLanda did the same service for Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, interpreting them as realist philosophers as well. DeLanda begins his book by defining realists in a straightforward way as those “who grant reality full autonomy from the human mind.” This is a good start, and certainly a sine qua non of any realism with a straight face, rather than the sort that simply finesses the meaning of “realism” so that it no longer poses a threat to non-realist enterprises. Nonetheless, to formulate realism as upholding the existence of something outside the mind concedes too much to the modern standpoint by assuming that

---

16 Kripke, Naming and Necessity; Ruth Barcan Marcus, “Modalities and Intensional Languages”; Williamson, “In Memoriam: Ruth Barcan Marcus, 1921-2012.” For a discussion of nominal acts see Husserl, Logical Investigations, vol. 2, 561, and for fixed appellations see p. 685 of the same volume.

17 Braver, A Thing of This World. For an appreciative critique of Braver’s approach see Harman, “A Festival of Anti-Realism.”

18 One will immediate notice a stark contrast between a book like Ferraris’s Manifesto of New Realism and the articles contained in Vattimo’s co-edited anthology Weak Thought. For the work of Markus Gabriel, Fields of Sense is a good place to survey the breadth of his concerns.

19 Harman, Tool-Being; Brassier et al., “Speculative Realism.”

20 DeLanda, Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy.

21 Ibid., xii.

22 One of the worst examples is surely John D. Caputo, “For the Love of the Things Themselves,” whose primary interest is not realism per se, but the elimination of realism as a threat to his philosophical hero, Jacques Derrida: who bears as much resemblance to a realist as does a rabbit to an elephant. Unfortunately, another such example is Bruno Latour in the opening pages of his otherwise marvellous Pandora’s Hope, which is less concerned with realism as a positive doctrine than with fending off critics in the “science wars” of the time.
where we stand is “the mind,” with the implication that the human mind is the only thing that really has an exterior. The problem is that raindrops also have an outside, as do sunflowers, black holes, and *Moby-Dick*. Rather than realism pointing “outside the mind,” where it should point is the outside of any relation at all.

The easiest way to look like a philosophical crackpot in the present day is to discuss object-object relations without passing through the official checkpoint of natural science, which was long ago granted a monopoly on this topic. To claim by contrast that philosophy has its own foothold in the object-object realm is apparently to retreat to some pre-contemporary version of philosophy. By “contemporary” I mean any philosophy that won’t get one laughed at behind one’s back in mainstream philosophy departments, which basically means philosophy beginning with Hume and Kant. To suggest that philosophy go straight to object-object relations is seemingly to flirt with what Meillassoux dismissed as a philosophical “hyper-physics” in the oral version of his 2012 Berlin lecture, though this seems to have been removed from the published text. One symptom of this ban on discussing object-object relations is that Alfred North Whitehead, one of a handful of truly major twentieth-century philosophers, has never been fully admitted into the canon by either the analytic or Continental tradition, whose hidden union is perhaps best summarized by their shared transcendental allergy to object meeting object outside surveillance by human experience. It is for this reason that a taste for Whitehead is usually a good sign that one also has a taste for escaping the straitjacket of modern philosophy, as we see in various remarks by Deleuze, Isabelle Stengers, and Latour.

Another important duty when discussing realism is to distinguish it from materialism, which flourishes today in two separate but related senses of the term. Everyone is familiar with the classical materialism of atoms swerving through a void, which for many has simply been updated with subatomic particles, and with fields acting across what used to be considered empty space. It is the second type of materialism that might cause readers more puzzlement, as Levi Bryant notes when he tackles the topic for all of us: “materialism has become a *terme d’art* which has little to do with anything material. Materialism has come to mean simply that something is historical, socially constructed, involves cultural practices, and is contingent . . . We wonder where the materialism in materialism is.” Part of what Bryant has in mind is Slavoj Žižek’s unusual claim that “the true formula of materialism is not that there is some noumenal reality beyond our distorting perception of it. The only consistent position is that *the world does not exist.*” As laughable as this might sound to hardcore materialists of atoms and the void, there is a sense in which the two views are close cousins. For on the one hand, classical materialism reduces matter to its physical underpinnings, thereby belittling the possibility of any form of emergent reality not contained in the microphysical constituents of the world. And on the other, the new cultural materialisms reduce in the opposite direction, denying the existence of anything submergent beneath matter in its present cultural configuration. But this strange new sort of materialism reduces reality upward to its present manifestations or effects, thereby denying any surplus of the sort required to make things change. Aristotle already saw the problem with this when introducing his concept of “potentiality” to combat the actualism of his Megarian opponents, who claimed that no one is a house builder unless they happen to be building a house right now. Elsewhere I have called the downward reduction “undermining,” the upward reduction “overmining,” and their combination “duomining.”

23 Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*; Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
24 Meillassoux, “Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition.”
25 Whitehead, *Process and Reality*.
26 Deleuze, *The Fold*, 86, 90, 92; Stengers, *Thinking with Whitehead*; Latour, “Irreductions.” For a discussion of Latour’s debt to Whitehead see Harman, *Prince of Networks*.
27 Bryant, *Onto-Cartography*, 2.
28 Žižek and Daly, *Conversations with Žižek*, 97.
29 Although Žižek provides the most photogenic quote for this form of materialism, the more emblematic versions can be sampled in the following works: Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*; Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman*; Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*. Jane Bennett in *Vibrant Matter* is more of a *bona fide* physical materialist than these three, steering in the direction of a Deleuzian *monism* of matter. On this point see especially Bennett, “Systems and Things.”
30 Aristotle, *Metaphysics, Θ 3*.
31 Harman, “On the Undermining of Objects”; Harman, “Undermining, Overmining, and Duomining”; Harman, “The Third Table.”
4 The World Without Us

Let’s begin this section with an anecdote. Some years ago, I was giving a lecture on the philosophy of art at a conference in central France.32 The organizer of the event, Tom Trevatt, asked a simple question that left me puzzled for months afterward: “What would an art without humans look like?” The motive behind his question immediately made sense. After all, the Speculative Realist movement in philosophy was already known for its interest in what the world is like apart from human access to it.33 As one of the original members of that movement, I was a perfectly legitimate recipient of Trevatt’s question, even though something in the phrasing of his question seemed wrong. Trevatt was not alone in seeing the relation between Speculative Realism and art as the need for artworks “without humans.” The artist Joanna Malinowska had ventured in this direction in her 2009-2010 New York show Time of Guerrilla Metaphysics. In a contemporaneous interview with David Coggins, Malinowska explained one amusing work in which she left a solar-powered boombox “in the middle of absolute Arctic nowhere,” heard presumably by no one and eventually sinking beneath the sea once global warming melts the ice on which it sits.34 Along with this aesthetic exemplar of an “art without humans,” there was Tristan Garcia’s claim a few years later in Form and Object that art can be art without humans.35

It was some months before I realized that Trevatt’s important question unknowingly played on an ambiguity in the phrase “without humans.” It is true that within Speculative Realism, Meillasoux was preoccupied with the “ancestral” or “diachronic” realm of a time before or after the human species, and that Brassier in particular remains fascinated by the eventual extinction of our race.36 Nonetheless, this is too limited and literal a sense of the phrase “without humans.” And it is simply not applicable to OOO, which is not interested in artworks in the absence of humans, but only with what is absent in artworks even when humans are standing right there. Stated differently, the point is not to get rid of humans, but to realize that artworks exceed the human grasp even when we are on the scene. In technical terms, we need to distinguish between humans as ingredients of a situation and humans as observers of it, and to recognize that realism is only committed to opposing the second. It is DeLanda, on the opening page of his A New Philosophy of Society, who sees this most clearly.37 After announcing that his book will pursue a realist theory of society, he notes that philosophical realism generally entails a commitment to the mind-independent reality of whatever it discusses. But given that societies cannot exist without minds, is it not impossible to conceive of society in a mind-independent sense? Obviously not. For what interests DeLanda is not societies of mindless zombies, but societies of mindful humans, with the proviso that human societies are still independent of human conceptions of them. That is to say, the realist conception of society means simply that society exceeds whatever we see or say of it, and has independent features that are not first produced by our knowledge of them. And mind-independent reality is there even when humans—far from being extinct—are staring at it directly. More than this: human comportment towards the world, even if only towards illusions, is itself a new kind of reality in its own right. There can be no question of increasing the amount of realism by getting rid of humans.

A good deal of recent thought has been occupied with the question of what the earth would be like if humans were no longer here. Alan Weisman wrote a best-seller called The World Without Us, which envisions the gradual breakdown of various human facilities after our hypothetical disappearance.38 Eugene Thacker’s Horror of Philosophy trilogy has earned a large following and even spawned a pop culture catchphrase (“In the Dust of This Planet”) by way of reflections in a similar vein.39 Rationalist circles have

32 My lecture was entitled “Art and Paradox,” and the conference was entitled “The Matter of Contradiction: Ungrounding the Object,” held at Île de Vassivière, France on September 9, 2012.
33 Harman, Speculative Realism: An Introduction.
34 Coggins, “Secret Powers.”
35 Garcia, Form and Object, Book II, Chapter VIII.
36 Brassier, Nihil Unbound.
37 DeLanda, A New Philosophy of Society, 1.
38 Weisman, The World Without Us.
39 Thacker, In the Dust of This Planet; Thacker, Starry Speculative Corpse; Thacker, Tentacles Longer Than Night.
long taken Halloweenish delight in Thomas Metzinger’s claim that “there is no self.” There is also the interpretation of Speculative Realism given by Deborah Danowski and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro in The Ends of the World. Ignas Šatkauskas reports that according to these authors, “Meillassoux’s speculative materialism... lays the theoretical groundwork for a world-without-us, while offering metaphysical schemes that would be appropriate for the cognition of such reality.” As already mentioned, this is true for Brassier and Meillassoux’s conceptions of realism, but is certainly not the case for OOO. The latter current does not seek the in-itself in some temporal region uninhabited by humans, but joins Kant in pointing to an in-itself that exists here and now but still beyond our ability to relate to it. This cuts against the grain of Meillassoux’s view in particular. As he sees it, any in-itself that existed simultaneously with humans could simply be recuperated by the old German Idealist argument that to think a thing outside thought is to turn it into a thought, with the noumenal being only a special case of the phenomenal.

This brings us to an important paradox in the history of philosophy. Kant is almost universally recognized as one of the greatest philosophers in Western history; his influence approaches that of Plato and Aristotle, the twin colossi standing at the entrance to our discipline. Even so, vanishingly few people today are willing to accept Kant’s central idea: the thing-in-itself. It is often said that the Ding an sich is a “dogmatic residue” in Kant’s position, so that the German Idealists were heroic in dispensing with it. The problem with this view is that the thing-in-itself is what allows Kant to refute all dogmatism. If dogmatic metaphysics means the claim to be able to prove philosophical theses about how things really are, Kant rejects dogmatism precisely because reason can never make reality directly accessible. But among the new realists and their fellow travelers, who accepts this thing-in-itself? Certainly not Ferraris or Gabriel, who reject it on principle as a barrier to knowledge; certainly not Meillassoux, who reduces the thing-in-itself to something that merely outlasts us in time. Not Latour or Whitehead, who treat the real in relational terms and allow no excess beyond relation, even if Whiteheadians tend to contest this point vigorously. Not Husserl, who finds it “absurd” that anything could exist that would not—at least in principle—be the object of an intentional act. At most there is a trace of it in Heidegger, in a neglected passage near the end of his Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics: “What is the significance of the struggle initiated in German Idealism against the ‘thing-in-itself’ except a growing forgetfulness of what Kant had won...?” But the rest of his sentence ruins his remark: “namely... the original development and searching study of the problem of human finitude?” With these additional words, he fetters the thing-in-itself in the dungeon of onto-taxonomy, where it becomes nothing more than an unknowable trauma to human thought, as happens even in Kant’s great works.

That is to say, the usual manner of trying to get beyond Kant is along the lines of German Idealism. “Kant was a great genius, except for his naively traditional and self-contradictory and vaguely Platonic or Christian bit about the thing-in-itself. But he can be forgiven, since he did so many other important things, and luckily his successors cleaned up the thing-in-itself problem for him.” These admiring critics of Kant are no less taxonomical than the master himself. As we saw earlier, whether or not there is a “gap” between thought and world, the real problem is that thought and world are taken as the two basic terms in the first place. The only way to escape this assumption, the only exit from modern philosophy, is to cease conceiving of the thing-in-itself as something “unknowable to humans,” and to reconceive it as the excess in things beyond any of their relations to each other. The reason why so many are reluctant to take this step, which has been explained and promoted by OOO authors for nearly a generation, is because it so openly flouts the division of labor at the heart of modern thought. “How can philosophy say anything at all about object-object relations? This is what science already does! Philosophy should stick to the thought-world relation where it belongs.” This is why some in Brassier’s rationalist circle have mistakenly claimed that Speculative Realism

---

40 Metzinger, Being No One.
41 Danowski and Viveiros de Castro, The Ends of the World.
42 Šatkauskas, “Where is the ‘Great Outdoors’ in Meillassoux’s Speculative Materialism?,” 112.
43 Steven Shaviro is one such aficionado of Whitehead with whom I have had a long and productive dispute. See Shaviro, Without Criteria and Shaviro, “The Actual Volcano,” as well as my counterpoints in Harman, “Response to Shaviro” and Harman, “Whitehead and Schools X, Y, and Z.”
44 Heidegger, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, 251-252.
is interested in science as opposed to the humanities, as if science had all the reality and the humanities all the illusions. Yet there is plenty of reality in the study of the Hittites, the human psyche, or Warner Brothers cartoons, and since at least Popper’s time we have known that scientific statements are always just inches away from being rejected as false. The real and the unreal cannot be taxonomically aligned with individual disciplines, since both the real and the unreal are present everywhere at all times.

Nowhere is the flaw of onto-taxonomy more visible than in the unfortunate fate of the word “formalism” in the modern period, especially in the arts. Like so much else in this period, the term is grounded in the ideas of Kant. As far as I am aware, he uses the term explicitly only in the Second Critique, where it means both that ethical actions must be walled off from their consequences, and that ethics has to do with the general form of the categorical imperative rather than more specific ethical rules. In short, formalism means the autonomy of ethics from all impure influences, such as the wish to go to heaven or hell, or to obtain a good reputation in the business community. Although I do not recall the word “formalism” being used in the Critique of Judgment, it is an eminently formalist work as well. The beautiful must be walled off from both the agreeable and the politically beneficent: unlike Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Kant thinks it no obstacle to the beauty of a palace that the masses suffered to enable its construction. It is no accident that Kant is considered the godfather of modern formalism in art, as represented by the American art critics Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried (even if both reject the “formalist” label). Something similar occurs in the First Critique, whose central principle is the mutual independence of things-in-themselves and appearances. But despite Kant’s pioneering advocacy of this formalist autonomy in several domains of philosophy, there is a flaw in the diamond. Namely, he is not interested in the theme of autonomy per se but only in one specific kind of autonomy: the independence of thought and world from each other. Kant’s autonomy is spoiled by his onto-taxonomy. The same holds for much of high modernist art criticism, as in Fried’s polemic against the “theatrical” blending of beholder and artwork in his 1967 “Art and Objecthood.” Soon enough, however, we will see that Fried took a surprising turn in the decades that followed.

The problems with Kantian formalism did not escape the notice of later thinkers, and I have argued elsewhere that each of his three Critiques eventually found a critic equal to the work. We have seen that Kant’s fixation on the gap between thought and world was skillfully dissected by Latour, even if we cannot accept the “all hybrids, all the time” flavor of his solution. The best critique of Kant’s ethics – among many such attempts – comes from his admirer Max Scheler, who upholds the autonomy of ethics from any external purpose, but who sees the unit of ethics less in the human ethical agent than in the compound formed by the agent and the objects of its loves, its ordo amoris. And just as with Scheler’s ethical insight, the central flaw of Kantian aesthetics could only be seen by an author so committed to its spirit as to reject it only with considerable reluctance. I speak here of Fried, whose turn from criticism to history did not initially change his sentiments. In his first historical work, on anti-theatrical painting in the age of Denis Diderot, Fried continued to uphold a crucial gap between the beholder of the painting on one side and the absorbed figures within it on the other. Only later, under the pressure of his subject matter, did Fried come to see that the later history of French painting was by no means anti-theatrical. He first finds an “absorptive continuum” in the paintings of Gustave Courbet, who effectively paints himself into his own canvases, thereby breaking down the wall between work and beholder (with the painter himself being just a special case of the beholder). But even more important is the “facingness” found in the works of Édouard Manet, that pivotal figure of modern art, in which every inch of the painting seems

45 Kant, Critique of Practical Reason.
46 Kant, Critique of Judgment, 46.
47 Greenberg, Homemade Esthetics; Fried, “Art and Objecthood.”
48 Fried, “Art and Objecthood.”
49 Harman, Dante’s Broken Hammer; Harman, Art and Objects.
50 Latour, We Have Never Been Modern.
51 Scheler, Formalism in Ethics and a Non-Formal Ethics of Value.
52 Fried, Absorption and Theatricality.
53 Fried, Courbet’s Realism.
to confront the beholder directly rather than receding into absorptive depth. The forerunner of all these anti-taxonomical authors is surely Dante, perhaps the most non-Kantian figure in Western intellectual history. Rather than conceding any sort of autonomy of thought and world from each other, Dante depicts a world of amorous agents who are not only fully deployed in their loves and hates for various people and objects, but are even judged for it. There has never been a more “theatrical” author in Fried’s sense of the term.

5 Philosophies of the Future

We have now reached a good point to speak of one of my favorite themes: “philosophies of the future.” The obvious problem with maintaining that this or that author is “the future of philosophy” is that it presumes that one knows where philosophy will or ought to head next. More often than not, unless someone has an unusually sensitive nose for where certain problems are headed—and this means a nose for how contemporary lines of thought might eventually be twisted or reversed—one’s conception of the future will simply be a projection of where they are standing now. To give an example that is not my central one, consider the case of Maurice Blanchot. During my doctoral student days in the early 1990s, the impression was often conveyed that Blanchot was a major piece of the philosophy of the future. Needless to say, almost thirty years have passed, but Continental philosophy has not become noticeably Blanchotian. He is still a perfectly respectable figure to study, if not to everyone’s taste, and it would be strange to ridicule anyone who argued for his continued importance. Nonetheless, it is now clear that the progress of Blanchot’s philosophical reputation from 1990-2020 is not what his staunchest champions would have hoped and predicted. Paul de Man, writing much earlier than 1990, offered the following note of praise:

When we will be able to observe the [post-war] period with more detachment, the main proponents of contemporary French literature may well turn out to be figures that now seem shadowy in comparison with the celebrities of the hour. And none is more likely to achieve future prominence than the little-publicized and difficult writer, Maurice Blanchot.

This high regard for Blanchot was not rare in the circles frequented by de Man. Indeed, the 1992 English translation of Blanchot’s The Infinite Conversation featured a back cover endorsement by Jacques Derrida that took the tendency to nearly histrionic extremes: “Blanchot waits for us to come, to be read and re-read... I would say that never as much as today have I pictured him so far ahead of us.” Either Blanchot is still further ahead of us than we realize, or Derrida’s assessment turned out to be exaggerated. I say this not to be cruel to Derrida in particular, but because it exhibits a more general point: the human tendency to project the future as simply a more futuristic or “far-out” version of the present. Derrida and his intellectual kin ruled early 1990s Continental philosophy in almost crushing fashion, in a way that is difficult for young people today to imagine. In such an environment, who would have seemed a better heir apparent for a few decades down the line than Blanchot? For in some ways he is simply a darker, eerier version of Derrida, more turbulent and paradoxical but never casting dangerous light on anything missing from Derrida himself. While the latter’s expressed admiration for Blanchot was no doubt sincere, it is hard to imagine he found him the least bit threatening.

There is a particular country, whose name I omit out of fondness for the place, that has often been called “the country of the future.” In response to this, cynical observers sometimes remark that “country X is the country of the future, and always will be.” Is there not a sense in which Blanchot is the future of Continental philosophy, and always will be? I could still be proven wrong, but Blanchot has now “waited for us to come” for nearly thirty years, and it begins to seem as if our failure to come may not be entirely our own fault.

54 Fried, Manet’s Modernism.  
55 de Man, Blindness and Insight, 61.  
56 Derrida, back cover endorsement for Blanchot, The Infinite Conversation.
A pair of related remarks from important authors come to mind. The first comes from Whitehead’s under-read dialogues with Lucien Price, and dates to the immediate aftermath of World War II:

Price: “Do you see any bulwark against [nuclear war]?”
Whitehead: “Only the appearance of half a dozen eminent men.”
Price: “Can you descry half a dozen such on the horizon?”
Whitehead: “They don’t appear on the horizon; they appear in our midst and cannot at once be identified.”

The other relevant passage, which I am currently unable to locate, comes from Marcel Proust in his great multi-volume novel. Somewhere in those thousand of pages, Proust remarks that we tend to imagine the future as some sort of intricate variant of the present, failing to realize that the future springs from hidden factors in the present that are not currently manifest.

In any case, Blanchot is the philosopher of the future, and always will be. But my concern is not so much with Blanchot, whose futuristic rose has faded since my youth. Instead, I wish to propose a related maxim that might well annoy some readers: Schelling and Merleau-Ponty are the philosophers of the future, and always will be. It is widely recognized that F.W.J. Schelling and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are two of the most colorful thinkers in the whole modern period. Both have an aura of being on the scent of something possible and paradoxical but not yet actualized. There is still an air of the twenty-second century about them; we would not be surprised to hear science fiction characters discuss their work. Schelling always smells like the faint promise of an overturning of the largely Hegelian history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the consequent emergence of a parallel intellectual universe. How many attempted “Schelling Renaissances” have there already been, and how many more are still to come? Merleau-Ponty’s various forays into the body and “the flesh” seem to promise an impending explosion of everyone else’s lingering mind/matter deadlock. The more that analytic philosophers of mind seem to become interested in him, the more this seems to verify that Merleau-Ponty is on the track of whatever has somehow always eluded us until now. The problem is that both Schelling and Merleau-Ponty are modern onto-taxonomists to the core. For as bizarre as the pages of Schelling sometimes become, it is always a question of “nature” and “spirit,” the same basic twofold we find as early as Descartes. And as outré as Merleau-Ponty sounds in certain pages of his unfinished work The Visible and the Invisible, with his ostensibly scandalous notion that the world looks at me just as I look at it, this is really just Descartes’ two terms observing each other reciprocally without anything else being added to the mix. Even “the body,” Merleau-Ponty’s theoretical bread and butter, is little more than a version of “meeting the universe halfway” in Barad’s sense. DeLanda said it best when he called the body “a kind of token material object, invited to [non-realist] ontology just to include one member of a minority.” Restated in Whiteheadian terms, the problem is that Schelling and Merleau-Ponty are too much “on the horizon” and not enough “in our midst”; they cannot possibly be the future, because they accept too firmly the restrictions of past and present. They are projections of how we once thought the future should look, like pre-color films of 1980s Manhattan with hovercraft roaming the streets and lasers striking down villains.

Every moment has its “philosophers of the future,” and for clarity’s sake I will risk listing a few more names. François Laruelle has a large following among the young, but—with the proviso that I could always be wrong—I have yet to find a significant breakthrough in his position. And while I do find Gilbert Simondon more useful, his “futuristic” quality strikes me mostly as a tantalizing mirage for Deleuzeans who feel that

---

57 Whitehead and Price, Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead, 362, emph. added.
58 Above all I mean no offense to my comrade-in-arms Iain Hamilton Grant, who has made such productive use of Schelling in his own work. Our disagreement concerns whether Schelling makes sufficient room for the role of individual objects as opposed to “nature.” See Grant, Philosophies of Nature After Schelling. For my treatment of Grant’s books see Harman, Speculative Realism, 60-72 and Harman, “On the Undermining of Objects.”
59 Schelling, Philosophical Inquiries Into the Nature of Human Freedom; Merleau-Ponty, The Visible and the Invisible.
60 DeLanda, in Delanda and Harman, The Rise of Realism, 116.
their hourglass ran out too quickly. Tell me your “philosopher of the future” and I will tell you who you are. More likely than not, your future philosopher is a phantasmatic image of the place where you already stand—as when hopeful fathers imagine their infant sons following in their professional footsteps someday, but with more success. Heidegger had some sense of this problem, as we find in one of his passages on ambiguity in *Being and Time*:

> Everyone is acquainted with what is up for discussion and what occurs, and everyone discusses it; but everyone also knows already how to talk about what has to happen first—about what is not yet up for discussion but “really” must be done. Already everyone has surmised and scented out in advance what Others have also surmised and scented out. This Being-on-the-scent is of course based upon hearsay, for if anyone is genuinely “on the scent” of anything, he does not speak about it....

Any philosophical future that merely involves some new permutation on the onto-taxonomy of thought and world—however radically it claims to have ended “Cartesian dualism”—is not much of a future, but merely an extension of the present. We need to stop looking toward the horizon, and reflect instead on the major prejudice in our midst.

## 6 Concluding Remarks

Why is there is only one possible exit from modern philosophy? Because modern philosophy lives and breathes from a single basic principle: the notion that thought and world are the two poles of the universe, the first of them immediate and radically certain, the latter less certain but impressively masterable by science. But in this way, the rift between immediacy and mediation—which I do accept—is wrongly identified with two specific *kinds* of beings. What is immediately knowable are entities in their sensual realities, as related not just to thought but to *anything else*. What is not immediately knowable, but only detectable by indirect means, is the surplus in any reality that is not exhausted by its relations with anything else. This surplus is not something that merely lurks beneath the human symbolic order, as in Lacan’s narrowly traumatic sense of “the Real,” but is always a form that can never be fully translated into any set of relations, whether animiate or inanimate. Moreover, we can deduce this for rocks and raindrops just as easily as we do for human thought.

It follows that non-modern (not “pre”-modern) philosophy should be non-relational in its outlook. This means it should be *non-literal* in its outlook, since to reduce anything to its pieces (undermining) and to reduce anything to its effects (overmining) are equally defective maneuvers. Literal language succeeds by ascribing properties to entities that they truly have. But since entities are more than bundles of qualities, they are never literalizable. This is why philosophy is *philosophia*, not *sophia*. To argue that philosophy should be non-relational does not mean that relations do not occur. If every entity is a compound (not a hybrid, as Latour claims) then every entity is formed from relations between components, without being nothing more than these relations. And if every entity can affect other entities, it does not follow that entities are nothing more than the sum of these effects.

Among other things, this is why arguments since the 1960s over formalism in the arts often seem to go nowhere. The problem is wrongly framed in terms of either “everything relates to everything” or “everything relates to nothing.” The point, instead, is that most possible relations do not in fact occur, so that even the most “site-specific” work of art or architecture makes contact with only a limited number of aspects of its site. The work with its small circle of relations actively fends off any probings from the outside, so that further relations require genuine labor. The reason why things are inherently non-relational, even when they relate, is that no form can be moved from one place to another without change. A philosophy like Meillassoux’s, which holds that we gain access to entities through mathematical formalization, ultimately

---

61 Laruelle, *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy*; Laruelle, *Principles of Non-Philosophy*; Simondon, *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*.

62 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 217-218.

63 Lacan, *Écrits*.
G. Harman relies on an ill-defined “matter” that supports the same forms extracted and moved without alteration into the mind. Against this notion, OOO holds with Latour that there is no transport without transformation. A form does not move—whether from the thing to the mind or in any other manner—without undergoing some sort of translation. In this age of resurgent materialism, we need less materialism and more formalism.

References

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation),” in The Anthropology of the State: A Reader, ed. A. Sharma & A. Gupta, pp. 86-111. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

Aristotle. Metaphysics, trans. J. Sachs, Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 1999.

Barad, Karen. Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

Barcan Marcus, Ruth. “Modalities and Intensional Languages,” Synthese, Vol. 13, No. 4 (December 1961), 303-322.

Bennett, Jane. “Systems and Things: A Response to Graham Harman and Timothy Morton,” New Literary History 43 (2012), 225-233.

Bennett, Jane. Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

Blanchot, Maurice. The Infinite Conversation, trans. S. Hanson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992.

Braidotti, Rosi. The Posthuman. Cambridge, UK: Polity 2013.

Brassier, Ray. Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Brassier, Ray, Iain Hamilton Grant, Graham Harman, & Quentin Meillassoux, “Speculative Realism,” Collapse III (2007), 306-449.

Braver, Lee. A Thing of This World: A History of Continental Anti-Realism. Evanston, IL: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2007.

Bryant, Levi R. Onto-Cartography: An Ontology of Machines and Media, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.

Caputo, John D. “For the Love of the Things Themselves: Derrida’s Phenomenology of the Hyper-Real,” in Fenomenologia Hoje II: Significado e Linguagem, ed. R. Timm de Souza & N. Fernandes de Oliveira, 37-59. Porto Alegre, Brazil: EDIPUCRS, 2002.

Coggins, David. “Secret Powers: An Interview with Joanna Malinowska,” artnet, January 24, 2010. [Last accessed on July 10, 2019.] http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/coggins/joanna-malinowska1-15-10.asp

Danowski, Deborah & Eduardo Viveiros de Castro. The Ends of the World, trans. R. Guimarães Nunes. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.

Dante Alighieri. The Divine Comedy, trans. A. Mandelbaum. New York: Random House, 1995.

DeLanda, Manuel. Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy. London: Continuum, 2002.

DeLanda, Manuel. A New Philosophy of Society. London: Continuum, 2006.

DeLanda, Manuel & Graham Harman. The Rise of Realism. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2017.

Deleuze, Gilles. The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque, trans. T. Conley. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. de Man, Paul. Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

Descartes, René. Meditations on First Philosophy, trans. D. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993.

Ferraris, Maurizio. Goodbye, Kant! What Still Stands of the Critique of Pure Reason, trans. R. Davies. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2013.

Ferraris, Maurizio. Manifesto of New Realism, trans. S. De Sanctis. Albany, NY: Suny Press, 2014.

Fried, Michael. Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

Fried, Michael. “Art and Objecthood,” in Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews, 148-172. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Fried, Michael. Courbet’s Realism. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Fried, Michael. Manet’s Modernism: or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Gabriel, Markus. Fields of Sense: A New Realist Ontology. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

Garcia, Tristan. Form and Object: A Treatise on Things, trans. M.A. Ohm & J. Cogburn. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.

Grant, Iain Hamilton. Philosophies of Nature After Schelling. London: Continuum, 2006.

Greenberg, Clement. Homemade Esthetics: Observations on Art and Taste. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Haraway, Donna. Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.

Harman, Graham. “Agential and Speculative Realism: Remarks on Barad’s Ontology,” rhizomes 30 (2016). http://www.rhizomes.net/issue30/harman.html

Harman, Graham. Art and Objects. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2020.

64 Latour, Aramis, 119.
Stengers, Isabelle. *Thinking with Whitehead: A Free and Wild Creation of Concepts*, trans. M. Chase. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Thacker, Eugene. *In the Dust of This Planet: Horror of Philosophy*, Vol. 1. Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2011.

Thacker, Eugene. *Starry Speculative Corpse: Horror of Philosophy*, Vol. 2. Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2015.

Thacker, Eugene. *Tentacles Longer Than Night: Horror of Philosophy*, Vol. 3. Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2015.

Vattimo, Gianni & Rovatti, Pier Aldo, eds. *Weak Thought*, trans. P. Carravetta. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2013.

Weisman, Alan. *The World Without Us*. New York: Picador, 2008.

Whitehead, Alfred North. *Process and Reality*. New York: Free Press, 1978.

Whitehead, Alfred North & Lucien Price. *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead*. New York: Mentor, 1956.

Williamson, Timothy. “In Memoriam: Ruth Barcan Marcus, 1921-2012,” *The Bulletin of Symbolic Logic*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (2013), 123-126.

Žižek, Slavoj and Glyn Daly. 2003, *Conversations with Žižek*, Cambridge, UK: Polity.