David Roden |
Subtractive-Catastrophic Xenophilia

Bionote: David Roden's published work has addressed the relationship between deconstruction and analytic philosophy, philosophical naturalism, the metaphysics of sound and posthumanism. His book *Posthuman Life: Philosophy at the Edge of the Human* (New York, 2014) explores the ethical and epistemological ramifications of Speculative Posthumanism: the thesis that there could be agents originating in human social-technical systems that become posthuman as a result of some technological alteration of their powers. His current work considers posthumanist theories of agency and their implications for aesthetics and philosophical method. He teaches at the Open University, UK.

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Abstract: Subtraction is a critical method whereby a cognitively inaccessible reality is thought in terms of its inaccessibility or "subtraction" from discourse. In this essay I begin by considering the role of subtraction in Alain Badiou's work, where the method receives its most explicit contemporary articulation. I then generalize subtraction beyond Badiou's ontology to explore a productive aporia in posthumanist theory. The implicit subtraction of posthumanist epistemology and ontology, I claim, confronts theorists of the posthuman with an inescapable tension between their philosophical language and its deployment within the historical situation I call the "posthumanist predicament." This reveals an equivalence between ontological subtraction and an empty compulsion to become what one cannot yet think, or "xenophilia." That is, between a philosophy of limits that forecloses the thought of the posthuman (*qua* defined structure or subject) through subtraction and an implicit desire to construct or "become" this subtracted, unpresented posthuman.

Keywords: Badiou, subtractive ontology, set theory, posthumanism, speculative posthumanism, inhumanism, vitalism, deconstruction, loving the alien, xenophilia

Introduction

If the real is independent of thought (as realists aver) we can presume no correlation between them. "Thought," Ray Brassier remarks, "is not guaranteed access to being; being is not inherently thinkable."[1] To think the real, then, is not to represent it but to exhibit representation's constitutive inefficacy.

Subtraction is a procedure for exhibiting this constitutive "gap" between thought and reality. In Alain Badiou's ontological writings - where subtraction has been most rigorously explored and formalized - it is pursued in tandem with a rationalist conception of ontology as the pure mathematics of multiplicity - specifically Set Theory. On the one hand, set theoretical language has a good claim to theorize ontological invariants for any situation.[2] On the other, certain results and antinomies of set and model theory formalize its inability to conceive multiplicity with complete generality or to comprehend certain infinite (generic) multiplicities in the language of a well-defined model (or interpreted theory).

It follows that even if, with Badiou, we grant that the real is multiple, it is not bound by any particular discourse of the multiple, such as Zermelo-Frankel Set Theory. It is thought only in terms of traces that imply its subtraction or unobjectifiability. Subtraction consequently allows us to think the possibility of an "Outside" that cannot be represented in discourse, which is thus thought *only through the operation of subtraction itself*.

The task of subtraction, accordingly, is to demonstrate that the most rigorous project of description or representation (as in the case of axiomatic set theory) implies its limit with respect to an implied Outside.

In his anti-realist phase, Hilary Putnam argued that even given the existence of a determinate set-theoretic multiplicity corresponding to a world, there is no uniquely adequate mapping between theo-

ry and reality because it is possible to permutate even the Lord's Theory, shuffling around the meanings of the symbols to produce a distinct but equally true and empirically adequate theory.[3] However, subtraction goes further than Putnam's or Willard Quine's claims for semantic undetermination; proposing constitutive gaps in thought which expose it to the *principled possibility of the unthinkable* or "the event." This is a direct implication of a realism that denies that correlation between thought (or discourse) and Being. For example, in Speculative Posthumanism (see below) this allows the possibility of a disconnection from the human state that cannot be predicted or conceived prior to its effectuation.

For Badiou, it follows, that even the most rational ontology must confront a gap between representation and the unsayable or indescribable.[4]

Any philosophy which purports to "say," "show" or "exhibit" the unsayable or unrepresentable exposes itself to the charge of express or performative contradiction. Badiou, for example, has been criticized for incoherently stating both that ontology (in the form of mathematics) delineates the topic-neutral structures of any situation (presentation) while holding that these consistent multiplicities are the result of an operation (the "count-as-one") applied to "inconsistent" or *untheorizable* multiplicities, and that these alone constitute the real of ontological theory.[5]

My aim here is not to resolve this supposed aporia within Badiou's system, even less to arbitrate in debates about his fascinating ontology. Rather, I want to use the methodology of subtraction as tool to explore a productive aporia in posthumanist theory. The implicit subtraction of posthumanist theory confronts theorists of the posthuman, I will argue, with an inescapable tension (if not outright contradiction) between their philosophical language and its deployment within the historical situation constitutive of posthumanist theory ("the posthuman predicament"). This, I demonstrate, reveals an equivalence between ontological subtraction and an empty com-

pulsion to become what I/We cannot *yet* think, or "xenophilia." That is, between a philosophy of limits that forecloses the thought of the posthuman (*qua* defined structure or subject) through subtraction *and an implicit desire to construct or "become" this subtracted, unpresented posthuman.*

Badiou's ontology creatively exploits this tension in his idea of fidelity to the unknowable event.[6] I will argue that the posthumanist project can, likewise, only be understood in terms of an operation that disconnects the human from any stable or tractable condition of life. Posthumanism consequently leave us no relation to the future beyond the febrile, uncertain eros of the very historical constellation which constitutes its condition of possibility - a perverse mechanism, reformatting bodies and transforming or destroying worlds. This is not a psychological "desire for" but a groundless, self-extirpating and necessarily contentless vector of biomorphic change.

Posthumanism is consequently not - as some claim - an ethics committed to releasing the world from the philosophical grip of anthropocentricism. A sedentary, relatable world against which anthropocentrism once appeared tenable or well-motivated is subliming away in the heat of undirected technoscientific and environmental change - that is, in what Rosi Braidotti and I call our shared "posthuman predicament" or "posthuman condition."[7]

Since posthumanism recapitulates the effects of this predicament discursively - through subtraction - it is not an ethics but the organon of a "counter-ethics" (a term I owe to Claire Colebrook[8]). Posthumanism, of itself, does not offer a new form of life that might end the perverse counter-finality of the posthuman but only a space in which to release (thus implicitly and insidiously affirm) the erotic potentials it discloses, an affirmation that, as Colebrook argues, can no longer be bounded by any transcendental subjectivity or norm.[9]

[3] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
[4] Tracy McNulty, "The New Man's Fetish," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 51, Issue S1 (September 2013), 32-33.
[5] Adrian Johnston, "Phantom of Consistency: Alain Badiou and Kantian Transcendental idealism," *Continental Philosophy Review*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (2008), 352-54; Badiou, *Being and Event*, 28.

[6] Ibid., 327-43.
[7] David Roden, *Posthuman Life: Philosophy at the Edge of the Human* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014); Rosi Braidotti, *Posthuman Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019), 2, 41.
[8] Claire Colebrook, "A Globe of One's Own: In Praise of the Flat Earth," *SubStance: A Review of Theory and Literary Criticism*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2012), 38.
[9] Claire Colebrook, "How Queer Can You Go? Theory, Normality and Normativity," in *Queering the Non/Human*, ed. by Myra J. Hird and Noreen Giffney (London and New York: Routledge, [2008] 2016), 29.

1.

In *Being and Event* Badiou proposes to unbind Being from Leibniz's dictum that "What is not *a* being is not a *being*."[10] Where traditional thought sees beings as unities, Badiou argues that any whole is derived from an operation, a "count" applied to an inconsistent (non-unitary) multiplicity that cannot be described by ontology without inducing "paradoxes of totality" familiar from set theory.[11] Being *as such*, then, is not merely uncountable but lacks even a definite uncountable numbering of the Alephs: Cantor's ascending orders of infinity. It is without unity and thus cannot be presented or described in ontological discourse.

Consequently, Being - considered as the unpresentable precondition of presentation - is "no thing" in that it is not "a being."[12] It cannot be described or presented in ontology - understood here as the mathematics of multiplicities - but thought only through its various symptoms, the empty places furrowed by the articulatory power of mathematical discourse.[13] This is only to say, as Becky Vartabedian emphasizes, that the inconsistent multiplicity supposed by the count is not a term presented in a situation (including the situation that constitutes ontology itself). It is thus traceable only as a lacuna.[14]

For Badiou, the "name" of this absence is the null set or void set - symbolized as "∅." In axiomatic set theory, ∅ is defined as the set such that nothing belongs to it. Since nothing is presented by it (not even nothing!) the null set to refers to Being only through its lack of unity. It is a kind of splinter of "unpresentation in presentation":[15]

> The name I have chosen, the void, indicates precisely that nothing is presented, no term, and also that the designation of that nothing occurs "emptily," it does not locate it structurally.

> The void is the name of being - of inconsistency - according to a situation, inasmuch as presentation gives us therein an unpresentable access, thus non-access, to this access, in the mode of what is not-one, nor composable of ones; thus what is qualifiable within the situation solely as the errancy of the nothing.[16]

This exemplifies the method of subtraction in Badiou's thought perfectly insofar as the void set presents *nothing through subtraction*. It also demonstrates that subtraction is an event within a definite situation (mathematics) yielding no epistemic access to the Outside thereby subtracted (e.g., as would be the case if what were presented were some defined set theoretic structure).

There are other ways in which mathematics, according to Badiou, exhibits the errancy of Being with regard to ontological discourse. Among these symptoms is the demonstrable existence of the generic set that - while adjoinable to an ordinary situation - is anonymous and unspecifiable within it by a comprehending property, instantiating only the generic property of belonging to it alone. The existence of a generic multiplicity - whose members lack any common feature discernable within the situation - furnishes the elbow room for a "Subject" to emerge and link its members in ways that the situation, *ex hypothesi*, cannot prescribe. In short, the errancy of Being exhibited by the generic supports a space of radical freedom that can transform a situation utterly.[17]

In summary, subtraction cuts away that which it thinks by capitalizing on various weakness discerned within thought, at the same time allowing space for the construction of the Outside it "unpresents."[18]

Wherever posthumanism is committed to exhibiting this inefficacy, it is consequently a subtractive operation that, however incremen-

[10] Badiou, *Being and Event*, 53.
[11] Joshua Heller and Jon Cogburn, "Meillassoux's Dilemma: Paradoxes of Totality After the Speculative Turn," in *New Perspectives on Realism*, ed. by Luca Taddio (Milan: Mimesis International, 2017).
[12] Badiou, *Being and Event*, 23.
[13] Tzuchien Tho, "The Consistency of Inconsistency: Alain Badiou and the Limits of Mathematical Ontology," *Symposium: Canadian Journal for Continental Philosophy*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Fall 2008), 70-92.
[14] Becky Vartabedian, *Multiplicity and Ontology in Deleuze and Badiou* (New York: Springer, 2018), Kindle location 1968.
[15] Badiou, *Being and Event*, 55.

[16] Ibid., 56.
[17] See ibid., 338-9; Olivia Lucca Fraser, "Nothingness and Event" (unpublished manuscript), *Academia* (2009), https://www.academia.edu/858888/Nothingness_and_Event. Meillassoux argues, along similar lines, that the absolute represented by science is not a thing but the absolute contingency that follows from the lack of any sufficient reason for the laws or structures of appearance. Again, citing set-theoretic considerations similar to those adduced by Badiou, he claims that this contingency does not belong in any space of possibilities - like a set of all possible worlds (see Heller and Cogburn, "Meillassoux's Dilemma"). There is no all, only a groundless, hyperchaotic time in which all laws and regularities can be overthrown.
[18] Subtractive ontologies can be contrasted to those which ascribe positive characteristics to thing. Being as formed matter, as object of lived experience, as the duration felt or lived by biological creatures, as the material thing as described by mathematical natural science.

tally or indirectly, supports the construction of the unpresented, uncognized Outside.

This can be readily discerned in the work of a philosopher more regularly associated with the academic posthumanities than Badiou: Jacques Derrida. In Derrida's work, the deconstruction of a definite structure cedes to the "structurality of structure": an absolute decentering that cannot be secured within any historical situation.[19] Rather than losing the world among texts or signifiers, Derrida addresses rudimentary inscriptional and temporal relations - such as iterability - that he proposes as conditions for life, meaning and intentionality.[20] As with Badiou, these imply an ideal and incipient weakness in the status of systems as such.

The deconstructive event is consequently not a radical alien or Other - alien or other to what? Deconstruction unbinds the structurality that would otherwise determine alterity and ipseity, sameness and difference, because no system can totalize, "arrest or ground" the play of meaning and function.[21] Deconstruction does not, then, reveal or "represent" a kind of slippery underside to meaning, function and performativity, but, functions as what Drucilla Cornell terms a "philosophy of the limit," peeling away the constraints that render a notional world in our image through the presumption of meaning, etc.[22] What remains, as in Laruelle's non-philosophy, is not a world, and perhaps something weaker than philosophy.[23]

Unbinding and subtraction recur in more fleshy, libidinal posthumanisms. For example, critical posthumanists appeal to a passionate non-unitary "cyborg" that composes its world by affiliating with other systems. Not a transcendental subject but dispersed singularities, transversally hybridizing and crossing "species, categories and domains."[24] Braidotti refers to this power of lively affiliation with the ancient Greek for non-human/non-political life (*zoe*) - as opposed to *bios*, the cultivated, discursive life of the human citizen.

By contrast, the "alien vectors" of Rational Inhumanism (Prometheanism) are discursively mediated norms that engender active, self-modifying technological intelligences. In Ray Brassier's neo-rationalist futurism, this formal idea of a "self-conscious rational agent" is central to any conception of general intelligence as a "self-correcting exercise."[25]

Inhumanists reject the critical posthumanist primacy of life and sensate matter. Such vitalisms and materialism, they argue, violate Wilfred Sellars's stricture against the epistemic given: that is, claims to self-authenticating insight into reality which bypass the space of discursive reason.[26]

Here, observe, the first posthumanism unbinds a filter (a constraint on posthuman possibility) retained by the second and vice versa: the *sapience filter* identifying agency with linguistic and conceptual aptitudes; the *sentience filter* identifying agency with felt duration or incipient life.

As in subtractive music synthesis, the more Filters you remove, the closer the output to inharmonic noise.

The inhumanist cannot survey which materialized subjects (organic or post-organic) will instantiate the diagrams of rational subjectivity. The vitalist cannot pre-empt the diversity of life - its "Great Outdoors." Indeed, as Carol Cleland reminds us, there may well be no features common to living things - no life *as such*. Perhaps, living entities compose an irreducibly generic multiple; one that cannot be comprehended under any salient common features.[27]

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[19] Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *Writing and Difference*, trans. by Alan Bass (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 162-3, 278.; Suhail Malik, "Materialist Reason and Its Languages. Part One: Absolute Reason, Absolute Deconstruction," in *Genealogies of Speculation: Materialism and Subjectivity Since Structuralism*, ed. by Suhail Malik and Armen Avanessian (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

[20] These "infrastructures" purportedly abstract from anything recognizably human or subject-like: yielding an a-subjective, topic-neutral difference that articulates such discrepant regions as Freudian unconscious, the theory of neural networks or semiotics. See David Roden, "Naturalizing Deconstruction," *Continental Philosophy Review*, Vol. 38, No. 1-2 (2005), 82.

[21] See Derrida, "Structure," 288-9; Malik, "Materialist Reason."

[22] Roden, "Naturalizing," 82.

[23] Drucilla Cornell, *The Philosophy of the Limit* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 1; Katerina Kolozova, *Cut of the Real: Subjectivity in Poststructuralist Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 99; François Laruelle, *Principles of Non-Philosophy*, trans. by Nicola Rubczak and Anthony Paul Smith (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

[24] Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 60, 193.

[25] Ray Brassier, "The View from Nowhere," *Identities: Journal for Politics, Gender and Culture*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Summer 2011a): 7-23; Reza Negarestani, *Intelligence and Spirit* (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2019); David Roden, "Promethean and Posthuman Freedom: Brassier on Improvisation and Time," *Performance Philosophy*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2019), 510-27.

[26] Matija Jelača, "Sellars Contra Deleuze on Intuitive Knowledge," *Speculations: A Journal of Speculative Realism*, Vol. 5 (2014), 111.

[27] Carol E. Cleland, "Life without Definitions," *Synthese: An International Journal for Epistemology, Methodology and Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 185, No. 1 (2012), 129; Eugene Thacker, *After Life*

The synthesis metaphor acquires further traction if we consider posthumanism primarily as an orientation to time. The Speculative Posthumanism (SP) elaborated in my book *Posthuman Life* is specifically concerned with conceptualizing our relation to hypothetical agents in technological deep time. For SP, becoming posthuman is conceived as the disconnection of hypothetical posthuman agents from the human socio-technical system or "Wide Human" (WH).

The Disconnection Thesis (DT) is also conceived abstractly and anonymously. It says nothing about how posthumans are embodied or disembodied; only that they possess the power or functional autonomy to become independent of WH.[28]

Other posthumanisms, Xenofeminism (XF) and Accelerationism (ACC) or Prometheanism are explicitly futural; concerned with the production of novel, less oppressive gender relations or sexualities. Even a critical posthumanism that, like Braidotti's, eschews futurism, is concerned with power relations in the contemporary world and thus with whatever futures their transversal becomings might induce.[29]

Each posthumanism, then, pre-empts *an abstract disconnection space, unbounded by whatever Filters it removes.*

Moreover, all Filters are espistemically contestable.

The Sapience Filter, to give one example, assumes that "serious" agents participate in shared linguistic and inferential functions.

I have argued elsewhere[30] that this pragmatist vision - most recently and extensively articulated in Reza Negarestani's *Intelligence and Spirit* - is incomplete. It supposes sapients capable of interpreting normative statuses within the social game of giving and asking for reasons. However, this interpretationist model unbinds subjectivity by supplementing it. It accounts for a pragmatist subject$_1$ able to follow shared practices; but leaves us a dangling interpreter subject$_2$. This spectral figure is not accounted for by normativity because it is a condition of it. Thus, normative functionalism leaves what counts as a text or practice, hence agency and subjectivity, undetermined; marked, as in Derrida's work, by the "absolute absence" of any finite or notionally human reader.[31]

Given the futural orientation of positions which buy heavily into functionalism - including XF and Brassier's Prometheanism, this voids their deep-time horizon by subtracting their agent from discourse.[32]

Even the irreducibility of the normative to the material - frequently offered in defences against eliminative or reductive materialism - portends the dispensability of normativity and the fragility of agency concepts. Making our obeisance to Lovecraft and the unknowable, alien thing of Weird literature, this can be figured in the unreadable monstrosity of the hyper-agent: a being whose functional autonomy (or power) has been expanded to a critical point at which agency ceases.

Maximizing agency implies its discursive subtraction because the irreducibility of the normative implies that hyper-agents could not use intentional idioms for self-understanding. Given the irreducibility of the psychological to the physical or functional states of such a system, any self-intervention could delete any belief, desire or emotional attitude ascribed by auto- or hetero-interpretation. Such being would have to use forms of control other than human forms of reflection, discourse or first-person narrative.[33]

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

[28] Some empirical content is retained, however, because this version of SP works with a minimal concept of self-maintaining agency that is psychology-free - giving no account of its modes of thought or feeling.

[29] Braidotti, *Posthuman Knowledge*, 4.

[30] David Roden, "On Reason and Spectral Machines: Robert Brandom and Bounded Posthumanism," in *Philosophy After Nature*, ed. by Rosi Braidotti and Rick Dolphijn (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), 99-119.

[31] Deborah Goldgaber, "Plasticity, Technicity, Writing," *parallax*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2019), 147; Roden, *Posthuman Life*, 128; Roden, "On Reason," 111-12.

[32] See Helen Hester, "SAPIENCE+CARE: Reason and Responsibility in Posthuman Politics," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2019), 67-80. Another filter is the tacit or explicit appeal to invariants of experience like embodiment or temporal duration. However, this "sentience" filter is vulnerable to what I call the "dark phenomenology" objection. A facet of experience is "dark" (or intuition-transcendent) if having it confers either no or a very minimal understanding of its nature. See David Roden, "Nature's Dark Domain: An Argument for a Naturalized Phenomenology," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements*, Vol. 72 (2013), 169-88. If there is dark phenomenology, experience offers no yardstick for its proper description. Thus, even the most sophisticated philosophical accounts of experience (transcendental phenomenology, say) may leave us with little grip on disconnection space.

[33] For details see Roden, *Posthuman Life*, 100-2; David Roden, "Reduction, Elimination and Radical Uninterpretability," *Academia.edu* (2015), www.academia.edu/15054582/Reduction_Elimination_and_Radical_Uninterpretability; David Roden, "Letters from the Ocean Terminus," *Dis Magazine* (2016). http://dismagazine.com/discussion/81950/letters-from-the-ocean-ter-

This limit (or non) agent is subtracted from any consistent theory of agency - it occupies a kind of hole in the space of reasons. As a consequence of this subtraction, the transhumanist dream of a technologically compliant nature maximizing subjective autonomy recrudesces as "advanced non-compliance": *Cthulhu-Prometheus*.[34]

If posthumanism has a founding axiom, then, it is the subtractive claim that the Outside is not radically "other" to the human but merely unconstrained by invariances we might once have attributed to humanity or to the idea of a rational subject or sensate subject. "The human" as transcendental constraint is effectively broken.

Consequently, a maximally unbound posthumanism can think its Outside not through a positive account of subjectivity but only by making its subject up: producing, becoming, adjoining it. In Colebrook's terms, disconnection is not a matter of decision or deliberation but of determinedly queer encounters which cannot be determined in advance by recognition or reproduction.[35] The posthuman, then, is *thought as performance*, amid the biomorphic debris of disconnection space.[36]

2.

Braidotti is correct when she claims that a subject is necessary to provide a normative response to the posthuman predicament that entangles life in its divergent, counter-final process.[37] The subject *just is* the source and address of normative claims. But, as we have seen, the most rigorous response to the posthuman predicament addresses the multiplicity of disconnection space by subtracting any ethically salient conceptions of subjectivity.[38]

Xenophilia and subtraction are thus correlative. Subtraction xeno-thinks the posthuman by removing the normative filters that,

however fragile, allowed us to keep the Outside at a philosophical remove. The posthuman "It thinks" and "It feels" operating not with transcendental arguments or dialectics - the epistemic frailties of the Filters preclude this - but with biomorphisms: simulating, producing, mixing with or encountering bodies; an unruly productivity like the unoccupied factory that populates a wasteland with hideous novelties in Thomas Ligotti's masterpiece of objective horror "The Red Tower."[39]

Xenophilia/Subtraction is here not only a conceptual operation but an input to the Red Tower's desolation of anthropocentrism.

It follows that posthumanism must recuse itself from any positive ethical role. Since there are no filters on the noise from the future, the Outside is produced before it is empirically determined or subject to a moral or political decision. The effectuation of posthumanist subtraction expresses xenophilic desire because the operation exposes critical reason to these acephalic processes of biomorphic disruption.

Posthumanists often ground their position in an ethics of alterity that seeks to recognize nonhuman life in its difference rather than as a resource for exploitation.[40] But the portals of alterity swing wider than Justice - as is evident in awkward attempts to distinguish the "perverse" post-anthropocentrism of advanced capitalism - its constant disruption of boundaries and species, etc. - from an "ethical" posthumanism which acknowledges life's "constant disruption of boundaries and species, etc."[41]

Posthumanism operates at this juncture between contestable life and the Unbounding/Unbounded. Its notional "bodies" are uncertain experiments without the vitality or integrity accorded by the

minus-david-roden; Roden, "Promethean"; Germán Sierra, "Metaplasticity," *Šum: Journal for Contemporary Art Criticism and Theory*, Vol. 12 (2019), 1797-1809. http://sumrevija.si/en/german-sierra-metaplasticity-sum12.
[34] Roden, "Letters."
[35] Colebrook, "How Queer," 30.
[36] See David Roden, "Posthumanism, Critical, Speculative, Biormorphic," in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Posthumanism*, ed. by Mads Rosendhal Thomsen and Joseph Wamburg (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020) (forthcoming).
[37] Colebrook, "A Globe," 37; Roden, *Posthuman Life*, 186, 150-65; Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, 42; Braidotti, *Posthuman Knowledge*, 41.
[38] Colebrook, "A Globe," 37.

[39] Thomas Ligotti, "The Red Tower," *Weird Fiction Review* (December 19, 2011). http://weirdfictionreview.com/2011/12/the-red-tower-by-thomas-ligotti.
[40] Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, 140.
[41] Roden, *Posthuman Life*, 184-85; Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, 60-61; Francesca Ferrando, *Philosophical Posthumanism* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 123. All functions and values supervene on fragile vessels or contexts whose transactions are perpetually open to technical, political or erotic contestation; the indetermination of life itself. The game is the same in the sedentary cultural re-use of highly discriminate human cortical maps for reading script - that could never have been evolved for this purpose - over a short timescale of millennia; to the rapid production of transgenic organisms, whose usable traits may traverse biological "kingdoms." Both forms of re-use (cultural and technological) exploit the functional indeterminacy of life's "plug and play" components.

sapience and sentience Filters. The biomorphic body is constituted by technical forms of supplementation and repetition; its status politicized and eroticized by mobile or porous borders.[42] As in Derrida's work, this structural opening pre-empts ethics with its subtracted counterpart - "the majestic and simple notion of otherness itself."[43]

Subtraction thus recapitulates through theory (or post-theory or performance) the queer indetermination of biomorphic bodies encysted in rapacious planetary engines: an ontological catastrophe that is both global and intimate. In J. G. Ballard's short story "The Terminal Beach" this savage modernity unbinds a void that a hallucinating former airman exploring the bunker landscape of Eniwetok Atoll (a former Pacific H-Bomb test site) experiences as an "ontological Eden." Its "historical and psychic zero" all that binds a biomorphic space littered with encyclopedically injured human dolls, anagrammatized by the overkill technologies of modern wars; the conceptual auto-disasters endlessly reiterated Ballard's *Crash*.[44]

3.

Insofar as Xenophilia is satisfied it cannot be. Insofar as Xenophilia is, it cannot be satisfied.

Lacking subjective satisfaction conditions, the Xenophilic desire expressed in posthumanist subtraction 1) does not represent a goal state and 2) cannot oppose a present state on the grounds that it fails to optimize them - it is thus an input to the Posthuman Predicament upon which it purports to reflect. Posthumanism thus exacerbates the acephalic counter-finality of the Predicament, an effect of self-catalyzing technological circuits too vast and profligate to predict or control.

As noted, this operation is functional and self-defining, albeit without the assurance that Philosophy finds even in its perennial defeats.[45] This broken posthuman performance converts the DT from abstract ontology to seriated operations; to multiple mobile formu-

lae of bricolage and "demontology," untying even the minimal conceptual framework with which SP originally sought to regiment our relation to the deep future. Its scope is correspondingly indeterminate, perhaps closer to hand, and philosophically mute.

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[42] Goldgaber, "Plasticity," 139; Roden, "Posthumanism."

[43] Patricia MacCormack, *Posthuman Ethics: Embodiment and Cultural Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, [2012] 2016), 16.

[44] J. G. Ballard, "The Terminal Beach," in *The Complete Short Stories*, Vol. II (London: Fourth Estate, 2014), 30-31; J. G. Ballard, *Crash* (London: Vintage, 1995), 179.

[45] Roden, "Posthumanism."