

# ‡ ON DISMANTLING THE MASTER'S HOUSE

*François Laruelle's Theory (in) Practice*

ROSHAYA RODNESS

*The anti-racist and feminist Audre Lorde's now famous edict, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house"<sup>1</sup> has always struck me as a provocative summons rather than a description of current or even future scholarship. For it would seem that the most direct, intuitive route to dismantling would be to locate the master's tools and use them as he did, in reverse. But the project of challenging the structural foundations of racism is neither direct nor intuitive, and I read Lorde's too oft straightforwardly-read statement as a challenge to widen our gaze to the structural substrates of our existences and to rigorously embrace radical methodologies that actively provoke and challenge traditions of thought, an endless dismantling that is never to be dismantled. Lorde's powerful summons is also a call to reconfigure the use of critical theory, or to use the tools of theory without mastery as their objective. François Laruelle's intentions in creating a non-philosophy seem to harmonize with Lorde's vision. Laruelle has created a theory that examines philosophy from without, seeking to expand its horizons beyond its standard use. The terms that comprise non-philosophy are philosophical, but used "non-philosophically," or neutered of their philosophical utility. Reading Laruelle, it can appear as if his prose is simply a repetition of that which he critiques, when in fact he has refashioned these tools into a strange, radical vocabulary that renders inoperable the philosophical means of knowing the Real. Non-philosophy is designed to "destroy the classical usage of philosophy,"<sup>2</sup> but what kind of theory is this, considering that destruction as a*

1 Audre Lorde, *Sister Outside: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Ten Speed Press, 2007), 110, 123.

2 François Laruelle in Robin Mackay, "Introduction: Laruelle Undivided," *From Deci-*

*mode of theory strikes a chord whose vibration reverberates deep into the recesses of continental philosophy? Lorde's and Laruelle's words join Heidegger's Destruktion and Derrida's deconstruction in the history of critical theory, even as Lorde and Laruelle want to limit the claims of that history. If destruction is also one of the master's tools, then Laruelle's idea of what it means to destroy the classical usage of philosophy is neither direct nor intuitive, and the kind of practice that non-philosophy imagines itself to be doing requires a robust, fine-grained inquiry. What follows will be a consideration of non-philosophy as a practice and a pedagogy as well as a methodology that radically reimagines what it means to use critical terms in communities of thought.*

The question of the utility or application of non-philosophy haunts François Laruelle's often disorienting prose. For how does one "use" a theory that undoes the very practice of explaining the world in philosophical terms? While the many cogent prefaces to Laruelle's work on non-philosophy written in English gesture toward a non-philosophical practice that exceeds Laruelle's own parameters, they tend not to themselves exceed those parameters. John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith conclude their illuminating introduction with just this gesture: "Alongside a non-cinematic thinking, how does thought appear in non-literature or non-theatre (a film, book, or play)? It will be the objective of a future volume to examine the thinking within *other* non-philosophies in all their non-Laruellean guises."<sup>3</sup> How to take Laruelle beyond Laruelle is indeed a challenging imperative. His idiosyncratic style and his non-philosophical rearticulation of philosophical terms can have the effect of rendering his theory closed to engagement. In a well-known 1988 conversation, Jacques Derrida expressed a desire to engage with non-philosophy, but accused Laruelle of "carrying out a kind of violent shuffling of the cards in a game whose rules are known to [him] alone."<sup>4</sup> Yet I take Derrida's lessons on hospitality to be a radical invitation to practices that always risk shattering the subject, and Laruelle's alien theory offers an important limit case in our

---

*sion to Heresy: Experiments In Non-Standard Thought*, ed. Robin Mackay (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2012), 29.

3 John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith, "Introduction: The Non-Philosophical Inversion: Laruelle's Knowledge Without Domination," in *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, eds. John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 16.

4 Jacques Derrida in François Laruelle, "Controversy Over the Possibility of a Science of Philosophy" *The Non-Philosophy Project*, trans. Ray Brassier and Robin Mackay (New York: Telos Press, 2012), 76.

capacity as scholars trained in a wide range of philosophical discourses to remain open and inviting to provocative questions. When reading Laruelle it is easy to feel like a stranger setting foot on a terrain whose geography does not accommodate your presence, and yet Laruelle invokes the very concept of “the stranger”<sup>5</sup> to simulate the subject’s non-philosophical engagement with philosophy.

As non-philosophers, we enter philosophical practice not as colonizing agents with a passport to transcendental realities, but as strangers whose sovereign privileges, connections, and permissions are void. We are, in effect, *sans-papiers*. The difficulty one encounters with non-philosophy is productive and instructive of this disquieting and yet crucially generative interruption of standard modes of philosophical thinking. And yet to be confronted so roughly with our own strangeness in the province of non-philosophy—the alterity of the theory reflecting a sense of not belonging in us—quickly reminds us of the strange conditions under which our scholarly encounters regularly take place, whether they are with peers, students, colleagues, or administrators. Laruelle’s writing is a powerful lure to thought that reminds us that theory should *always* be strange.<sup>6</sup> In this afterword, I suggest that Laruelle is gener-

---

5 The “stranger” in Laruelle’s writing is not a person, but an abstraction or avatar of the practice of non-philosophy as it is performed. See François Laruelle, “A Summary of Non-Philosophy” *The Non-Philosophy Project.*, trans. Ray Brassier (New York: Telos Press, 2012), 36, where Laruelle dissociates “the stranger” from the subject and the ego.

6 As I have noted, Laruelle has a distinctive and difficult style of writing, yet it continually amazes me that this is cited as a reason not to engage with his work. In his unflattering review of the English translation of Laruelle’s *Les Philosophies de la différence (Philosophies of Difference)*, Graham Harman, a pioneer of the emerging field of “speculative realism,” claims that Laruelle’s work will not be widely received in the Anglophone world because his style is “abominable” (Harman). Theorists who make this claim seem to be subject to a general amnesia of critical theories of the speech act over the last twenty years. Responding to criticism that the style of her watershed *Gender Trouble* [1990] (1999) was too alienating, Judith Butler writes in the 1999 Preface to the book, “It would be a mistake to think that received grammar is the best vehicle for expressing radical views, given the constraints that grammar imposes on thought, indeed, on the thinkable itself. But formulations that twist grammar or that implicitly call into question the subject-verb requirements of propositional sense are clearly irritating for some. They produce more work for readers, and sometimes their readers are offended by such demands. Are those who are offended making a legitimate request for ‘plain speaking’ or does their complaint emerge from a consumer expectation of intellectual life? Is there, perhaps, a value to be derived from such experiences of linguistic difficulty?” (New York: Routledge, 1999), xviii-xix. My contention is that as there clearly is for Derrida,

ous with the possibility of taking his theory beyond himself, but to depart from Laruelle is first to engage directly with the difficulties that he poses to philosophically-minded subjects and to accepted modes of theoretical application. I will begin with an overview of modes of use in philosophy and non-philosophy, and continue with a view to non-philosophy as the subject of pedagogy. I will then shift to John Keats' magnificent poem, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" [1819] (1958) as an occasion to model the concerns and tools of non-philosophical inquiry.

I selected Keats as a concluding model for non-philosophical thought because of the particular concerns about representation, conceptual knowledge, and art that quicken his writing. Coming of age in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, Keats was writing during a time of reconstruction and great social unease. He was a member of a young cohort of thinkers who inherited the ideas of the French revolutionaries, the devastating toll of the Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, and the poetic innovations and sensibilities of the first wave of Romantic poets. The quintet of odes he composed in the spring of 1819 speak from a sense of immobility while at the same time reimagine the stakes of the ode, expanding what could count as an ode. Keats wrote his odes not about ascendant topics such as joy—as was the convention of the ode—but the perspicacity of material life, such as Grecian urns, nightingales, autumn, melancholia, and indolence. These objects were not vehicles of access to higher principles, but the stuff of life to which he felt answerable. "Ode on a Grecian Urn" treats a surface of representation, a decorated urn that remains silent as the narrator implores it to speak. As the object of the narrator's interest, the urn is unavailable as a representation of higher truths, even when it seems that representation is the labour the urn is designed to perform. By choosing this poem as a lure to the practice of non-philosophy, I want to model a "non-analysis" of literature, or a view to literary objects that does not have a transcendentalizing imperative. The historical context of Keats' writing provides a familiar handle for our own time, in which the horizon of seemingly endless wars and a series of global revolts call upon us to question and rethink fundamental modes of action in our political, social, and intellectual lives. This is the landscape that, I will explain, is the historical and social context for the growing interest in non-

---

Deleuze, and Butler, there is also value to be derived from an encounter with Laruelle's difficult style.

philosophy. By beginning this essay with Lorde’s aphorism and ending with Keats’ poem, I thread non-philosophy heterogeneously through an anticipatory intellectual imperative and an experimental act of art. Non-philosophy, a mode of thought that questions basic assumptions and practices of analytical and conceptual thought, potentially has a wide-range of stakes that are worth exploring if we are to understand the full impact of the generalizing problem that non-philosophy identifies.

Non-philosophy challenges the principles of use and application that dominate critical scholarship and pedagogical practice. To “apply” a philosophy is to invoke a material double of its operation, assuming that the philosophy itself is nonmaterial or has no worldly substance that acts on its own. A successful application establishes the finitude of the philosophical method by demonstrating how it successfully represents the world. It would appear that philosophy’s movement and efficacy are necessarily separate from its formal articulation; it gives a sense that theory itself is inert without another engine. But philosophy is no less a material part of the world than a brain or a fly or an atom. “Think this: thought is a thing,”<sup>7</sup> says Laruelle. But often the litmus test for both the rigour of our own philosophical endeavours and the success of our students’ comprehension is the degree to which we and they can represent reality in theoretical terms. The currency of “the example” in our fields—a form of rhetoric that slides between the particular and the abstract—instils the assumption that concepts and the world always bear a perfect alignment, like the map of the empire in Jorge Luis Borges’ “On Exactitude in Science.”<sup>8</sup> Expectations placed on academic institutions by the public also encourage this cartographic practice. Increasing pressure from corporate-minded governments on the Humanities to justify themselves in the face

7 Laruelle in Mullarkey and Smith, *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, 9.

8 Jorge Luis Borges, “On Exactitude in Science” in *Collected Fictions*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 325. The story in its entirety: “In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guild struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that the vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciples of Geography.”

of severe budget cuts to higher education insists that our work embrace a limited idea of practice, in which the skills that we teach should prepare students for the “practical” demands of low-level employment, which are vehemently set against the goals of higher-level critical thinking. As members of Humanities departments struggling to maintain ourselves against these pressures, it is understandable that we emphasize the instrumental use of theory to explain the world. This imperative to “map” philosophy onto material realities illustrates what Laruelle calls “philosophical Decision,” or the hybridizing of a transcendental, conditioning term (the concept) and a material, conditioned term (objects in the world)<sup>9</sup>. All philosophy bears a Decisional structure that elevates it to an omniscient status. Non-philosophy presents us, instead, with the radical premise that the map is a lovely fiction among many that does not explain the world, but exists with it in a non-dominating, lateral way.

*Laruelle’s Sabbath: A Classroom for Non-Philosophy*

In her work on Laruelle’s “non-Marxism,” Katerina Kolozova claims that his theory argues for the importance of “*monstrously* radical concepts.”<sup>10</sup> Monstrosity certainly captures the alienating quality of Laruellian concepts and the resistance Laruelle faces from the scholarly community, but the quali-

---

9 Giorgio Agamben is, to my knowledge, the only other thinker ruminating on a generic division in philosophy between a transcendental term and a material term, what he calls the common and the proper, respectively. See William Watkin’s *Agamben and Indifference: A Critical Overview* (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), xi-xvii. Watkin elaborates this division in the opening movements of the text and suggests that a dialogue between Laruelle and Agamben would be fruitful.

10 Katerina Kolozova, “The Project of Non-Marxism: Arguing for ‘Monstrously’ Radical Concepts,” in *Cultural Logic: An Electronic Journal of Marxist Theory and Practice* 10 (2007): 1. Following Giambattista Vico, Kolozova claims that monstrosity is the product of “the bordering of two types of languages, the ‘scientific’ and the ‘poetic’” (20). As both a “science of philosophy” and method of turning philosophy into poetry (see Laruelle in Mackay, “Introduction,” 29), non-philosophy is produced at that semantic intersection. However, science and poetry are both material objects for Laruelle that have been denied the capacity to think by the philosophical regime (see Laruelle, “Controversy,” 84). As objects caused by the One, science and poetry would be indifferent to each other, in the sense that they would operate as lateral, non-hierarchical modes of knowledge. Therefore, there can be no real bordering between these two types of knowledge that would produce yet a third term that we could call “non-philosophy.” For Laruelle, non-philosophy is at once a science and a poetry, such that these three terms are only semantically different. Nonetheless, the indifference between science and poetry in the practice of non-philosophy is certainly a monstrous discourse.

fication of “monstrously” also suggests that Laruelle seeks to develop a new fundamental vocabulary, one that perverts the “radix” or roots of concepts themselves. For Laruelle, radical concepts do not include those concepts that stray from the norm or the heavily cited, but those that question the fundamental operation of conceptual work itself. A commitment to the development of truly radical claims—claims that shatter the very idea of the concept—is immanent to the pedagogical work of non-philosophy. Non-philosophy teaches its students the importance of thinking radically in practice and not just in name.

Non-philosophy suspends philosophical operations to forge space for the generation and co-mingling of monstrously radical concepts; it constitutes a “Sabbath” of thought that momentarily holds back to create a space for renewal. At the end of *The Open* (2004), Giorgio Agamben envisions a Jewish Sabbath for human and animal, a clearing that momentarily suspends the anthropocentric machinery that structures relations between human and non-human animals. Agamben writes,

To render inoperative the machine that governs our conception of man will therefore mean no longer to seek new—more effective and more authentic—articulations, but rather to show the central emptiness, the hiatus that—within man—separates man and animal, and to risk ourselves in this emptiness: the suspension of the suspension, Shabbat of both animal and man.<sup>11</sup>

Agamben’s Shabbat is a space for radical thought made possible only through a holding-back of a divisive conceptual apparatus. Laruelle’s Sabbath is not an abyss between creatures akin to the Derridian *trace*, but a perspective from which the theorist chooses to abstain from legitimized and legitimizing modes of thought. Human exceptionalism is suspended in this space, and the humanisms that ground their articulations in the human’s unique capacity for knowledge are nullified. Agamben reveals the hierarchical division between human and animal to be a hallucination of the human. Thought produced from this space puts us at risk of proceeding without our seemingly inalienable privileges.

This scene of possibility is activated by the engine of inoperability—a

---

11 Giorgio Agamben, *The Open*, trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 92.

concept Agamben returns to in other writings—understood not as inertia or sloth but a “generic mode of potentiality that is not exhausted (like individual action or collective action understood as the sum of individual actions).”<sup>12</sup> The inoperable is both a refusal to work for institutional interests and a wager of praxis, or a thought or action that may never be realized. Non-philosophy renders philosophical decision inoperable; it refuses to work for the “philosophical machine” and from this non-work it produces monstrous possibility.<sup>13</sup>

In “What Can Non-Philosophy Do?” (2012) Laruelle summons philosophical thinkers to “put practice into theory rather than just inserting practice ‘in theory’.”<sup>14</sup> The destruction of the classical usage of philosophy would be a fundamental *indifférence* between theory and practice,<sup>15</sup> for there is noth-

12 Agamben in Leland De La Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: An Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 19.

13 Critical theory already boasts many avatars of immobility besides the inoperative. “Inoperativity” or *désœuvrement* was coined by Maurice Blanchot in *L’Espace Littéraire* (*The Space of Literature* (1989)) as the negativity of doing at the heart of the work of literature. Blanchot’s use of the concept is typically translated as “worklessness.” Georges Bataille, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Agamben have all made use of the concept to different ends. Alfred Korzybski’s (first A. E. von Vogt’s) concept of the “cortico-thalamic pause” may also fall into this tradition. Important to note for the feminist/queer posture of my intervention is Janet Halley’s *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take A Break From Feminism* (2006), where the author argues that the scholarly community should “take a break” from feminism to avoid participating in the prescriptive use of theory and the consequences thereof for subjected communities. Halley’s provocative monograph makes many of the same criticisms of philosophy as does Laruelle, and takes the additional step of showing how the use of philosophy can be immanently harmful to communities. I have not afforded the book a more central place in this essay because I do not believe that the solution it provides to the problem of the violence of theory is radical enough. Halley argues that we should assume the posture of many theories simultaneously (such as feminism, queer theory, and anti-racist theory), and that the internal negotiation between theories, the difficulties revealed by their coming into contact with each other coextensively, is valuable for and not limiting of the continual generation and renewal of radical politics. I have great respect for Halley’s promotion of a politics at the interstices of theory, and yet I fear that if the answer to the problems raised by one theory is *more theory* then “theory” has won out against what could be a more radical questioning of the work of theory as such. “Taking a Break” from feminism is not ultimately taking a break from theory. A further encounter between Halley and Laruelle would prove to be extremely generative for both thinkers, and particularly for the relevance of non-philosophy to queer, anti-racist, and feminist work.

14 François Laruelle, “What Can Non-Philosophy Do?” in *The Non-Philosophy Project*, trans. Ray Brassier (New York: Telos Press, 2012), 218.

15 Laruelle’s position is very close to Deleuze’s position on the relationship between

ing more theoretical than theory's auto-positioned difference from practice. "Indifference" is perhaps Laruelle's most scandalous and, in effect, most destructive, instrument for the reconfiguration of relations between objects in a moment still productively tarrying with Continental philosophy's interests in "difference." However, indifference is not an absurd negation of differences so much as a non-philosophical orientation between objects that cannot be reduced to absolute alterity. The non-philosophical thinker, Laruelle explains, is a force (of) thought, in which the bracketed preposition expresses the immanence of thought and force as non-philosophical practice.<sup>16</sup>

I invoke "orientation" outside the norms of its use in phenomeno-

---

theory and practice. In his conversation with Michel Foucault in "Intellectuals and Power," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. D.F.B. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 205–217, Deleuze suggests that practice is not an application of theory. Yet for Deleuze, theory "encounters" nodes of reality rather than being derived, wrought, or cohered from reality itself. His representation of Foucault's work with prisoners suggests that the prisoners' focalized reality came only at a second stage of theoretic attunement as a way to recalibrate an already robust constellation of concepts. Practice has an oddly sublating function in Deleuze's description. If the role of the intellectual is not to represent the interests of the underclass, then theory remains as a somewhat virtual labour that preserves its claim to originality and exclusivity. Deleuze discloses the limitations of his "zone of indistinction" between theory and practice when he suggests that, "reality is what actually happens in the factories, in schools, in barracks, in prisons, in police stations. And this action carries a type of information which is altogether different from that found in newspapers" (212). Different, perhaps, but according to what measures? This statement works to define reality as that which unfolds as struggle rather than as the "continuation of power," yet in doing so, it reroutes the information found in newspapers to what must be a virtual reality that can be alienated from the material conditions of its existence. It is worth adding that Laruelle in *Dictionary of Non-Philosophy* (trans. Taylor Adkins), in what must be an intentional reappropriation of Deleuze's metaphor of theory as a "toolbox" in this essay, calls non-philosophy a "toolbox," "where the box is itself a tool, where every tool is inseparable from the box," (1, accessed March 10, 2014, [http://monoskop.org/images/2/2b/Laruelle\\_Francois\\_Dictionary\\_of\\_Non-Philosophy.pdf](http://monoskop.org/images/2/2b/Laruelle_Francois_Dictionary_of_Non-Philosophy.pdf)). Laruelle's argument that theory, like the rest of material reality, is caused by and cannot be alienated from the universe of objects (what he calls "the One") suggests that the very partiality of the tool (to combine the metaphors) is its immanence to the box and its incapacity to be instrumentalized reciprocally.

16 Force (of) thought is not a relation between a subject and a thought in the philosophical sense where the terms have a bilateral relation. Laruelle's (non-)relation is "a relation without correlation or reciprocity." See Laruelle, *Principles of Non-Philosophy*, trans. Nicola Rubczak and Anthony Paul Smith (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 107, or a relation in which force does not conform to our experience of it and lives in excess of our capacity to know it. I have chosen to call this relation "indifference."

logical scholarship, where it typically describes an effect of being-in-the world and therefore anticipates a bilateral relation between a world and an alienated body. In *The Concept of Non-Photography*, Laruelle describes “vision-force,” another term for the force (of) thought, as a stance rather than a position: “The photographer does not throw himself into the World, he replaces himself firstly in his body as a stance, and renounces all corporeal or psychic intentionality. ‘Stance’—this word means: to be rooted in oneself, to be held within one’s own immanence, to be at ones station rather than in a position relative to the ‘motif’.”<sup>17</sup> The stance signals one’s undifferentiated existence of the world, an indifference to the distinction between the world and the body of the photographer, an uninhabitable world that cannot be captured by the photographer. Orientation names the *unidirectional* stance<sup>18</sup> as a function of the non-philosophical encounter, which Laruelle claims is thinking *from* “the One” and *to* philosophy, rather than *from* philosophy and *to* “the One,” the attempt to represent the “the One” in philosophical terms.

Laruelle invokes “the One” in opposition to the neo-Platonic term of the same name.<sup>19</sup> It is an abstract term for the universe of objects foreclosed to thought and therefore unrepresentable by philosophy. The One strikes an indifferent posture toward the objects it causes, and as such is illustrated best according what theorists of gender and sexuality call “queer.” Queer theories follow a vexed and unfinished narrative of identity politics for the generations inheriting a wide range of continental and postcolonial philosophies. Whether scholars invoke queer as a “non-identity”—an amplification of what counts as identity—as an outright rejection of identity as the normative means of ensuring the intelligibility of structures of sexual desire and gender identity, or as an indifference to the very concept of sexual and gender identity, what these designations share is their deferral to a wide range of differences in the mode of a fundamental indifference to the distinctions between them.<sup>20</sup>

17 François Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, trans. Robin Mackay (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2011), 12.

18 Because the One is foreclosed to human knowledge, the non-philosophical orientation is never a bilateral relation between the One and what it causes, but a unidirectional relation from *within* the One.

19 For a concise elaboration of the neo-Platonic and Laruelian “One,” see Anthony Paul Smith’s “Thinking From The One: Science and the Ancient Philosophical Figure of the One,” in *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, eds. John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 19–41.

20 Judith Butler has recently suggested that the regulatory constitution of gender is

“Queer” incorporates structures of desire that may be otherwise described as lesbian, asexual, transgender, gay, non-normative, or BDSM, to name only a few, without striking a self-differential posture toward them. Queerness produces a gamut of experiences that are themselves unable to retroactively represent queerness in its entirety.<sup>21</sup>

Similar to the Laruellean One, the queer causes a universe of objects but is itself foreclosed to objectification.<sup>22</sup> The One is indifferent to the world of differences it produces, and as a practice oriented from the One, non-philosophy strikes a posture toward philosophy and the rest of the world that strives to *in*-differentiate between the poles of its compass. This guise of causation Laruelle calls “determination-in-the-last-instance” or “unilateral duality.” The material, including philosophy and the philosopher, caused by the One cannot know the One, so their relation cannot be conceived as reflexive, bilateral, or reciprocal. Here, we should remember that the subject of non-philosophy—the stranger, force (of) thought, vision-force—is not a person but an avatar for the practice of non-philosophy, a force strange to the normative distinctions between concepts, persons, and bodies. “The subject,” says Laruelle, “does not use philosophy as if it were already constituted, it is that use. It is not only pragmatic, making use of world-thought, but also and equally

---

indifferent to the regulatory constitution of sexuality. An indifference, therefore, between the very differences that define queer theory. See Athena Athanasiou and Judith Butler, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2013), 45.

21 See Kolozova’s *The Cut of the Real: Subjectivity in Poststructuralist Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), in which the author recapitulates poststructuralist feminist and queer theories under the aegis of Laruelle’s non-philosophical vocabulary. “The aim,” she writes, “is to produce an emancipatory move of stepping out from the scholastic enclosure that constrains the discourse of contemporary gender theory” (15). Kolozova leads the charge in the development of what we could call a “non-gender theory,” or a theory that questions the axioms of gender criticism and expands its relevance beyond poststructural thought.

22 Laruelle has weighed in on queer theory in the Foreword to Kolozova’s *Cut of the Real*. Queer, he says, “is a vector; it has a departure point, a transition point at which it provisionally completes itself, but not an arrival point where it would shut itself away.” See Laruelle in Kolozova, *The Cut of the Real*, xvi. Similar to many poststructuralist queer theorists for whom queer is “radically anticipatory,” Laruelle understands it as a promissory gesture, ushering in a future that contemporary thinkers cannot represent. The “vectoral queer” may be one avatar of Laruelle’s “unilateral duality,” or a relationship to a text in which the text does give itself reciprocally to the reader’s representation.

theoretical, and further, it does not ‘do’ theory, it is the theoretical.”<sup>23</sup> The non-philosophical subject is more akin to the “non-stranger” or a “stranger-in-the-last-instance,” an avatar “queer” to philosophical conceptions of what or who a stranger might be.

Non-philosophy revives indifference as a critical position toward the world that reconfigures the hierarchical division between humans and things.<sup>24</sup> But Laruelle is not the first to enlist indifference as a critical posture, and the term has an august history in continental philosophy. Martin Heidegger formulates “boredom” in *Being and Time* with respect to indifference, or the affective posture through which we relate to the everydayness of being. Invoking Heidegger’s writing on boredom and Gilles Deleuze’s concept of “zones of indiscernibility,” Agamben devises the “zones of indifference,”<sup>25</sup> spaces of exception that both disrupt taxonomical differences between human and nonhuman life and that mark the radical dissolution of life into bare life, or the rendering of “life that is separated and excluded from itself” (Agamben 2004, 38). I suggest that this concept in its most radical form would be a zone of indifference that is itself indifferent to the difference between life and bare life, or what Agamben calls *bios* and *zoë*. The negation of indifference is the engine of Hegel’s dialectic in the development of Being.<sup>26</sup> For Friedrich Schelling, indifference is a primordial monad that exists prior the ground that differentiates Being, an *Ungrund*. Indifference makes possible the differentiation of existence from the ground.<sup>27</sup> Cognates of indifference, such as Derrida’s and Emmanuel Levinas’ “disinterest,” respectively, and Imman-

23 Laruelle, “A Summary of Non-Philosophy,” 36.

24 Speculative realists, who share with non-philosophers a desire to circumvent correlationism in philosophy, have written productively, in other terms, about the possibility of an indifferent relationship to nature. See Jane Bennett’s concept of “vital materialism” in *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010) which describes ecological material and phenomena not as passive matter but lively, unpredictable actants. See also Claire Colebrook’s essay, “Not Symbiosis, Not Now: Why Anthropogenic Change is Not Really Human,” *Oxford Literary Review* 34.2 (2012), which argues that humanity can be conceived of an event of the earth (the anthropocene) and not as occupants *within* it.

25 Agamben, *The Open*, 24, 37.

26 See William Watkin, *Agamben and Indifference: A Critical Overview* (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 52–53, for a detailed approach to the quality and role of indifference in the Hegelian dialectic.

27 See John Laughland, *Schelling versus Hegel: From German Idealism to Christian Metaphysics* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007), 83–84, for a detailed approach to the quality and role of indifference in Schelling’s philosophy.

uel Kant’s “apathy” might be generous contributions to this archive.

Laruelle’s practice of indifference accomplishes the dismantling of divisions that support philosophical practice and in doing so renders philosophy inoperable as the tool of the master. His project differs most significantly from his colleagues’ in its insistence on *thinking indifferently* rather than *thinking about indifference*. As a practice concerned specifically with differences in philosophy, indifference neuters the divisions that stratify competing modes of thought, including non-philosophical thought. I enlist the “neuter” both from biology and linguistics, the organism and the machine. Where in biology it describes the arrest of reproduction as well as possibilities for sexual pleasure indifferent to the propagation of the future, in linguistics it describes a third position existing laterally with and indifferent to the first and the second person singular. Invoking Maurice Blanchot’s interest in the term, Roberto Esposito explains,

The neuter [or third person] is not another person to be added to the first two, but what is *neither* one *nor* the other, and what defies all dichotomies founded on, or presupposed by, the language of the person. For this reason it is not located at any particular point in the interlocutory relation—high or low, at the center, on the side, as Levinas would have it—but most definitely outside interlocation, so much so that it ends up being identical with the placeless space of the “outside.”<sup>28</sup>

The neuter does not render dichotomous pronouns inactive, but names that place(lessness) within locution that refuses dichotomy, that does not accommodate the “I” or the “you.” As Esposito explains, the neuter is not a person—neither the subject “I” or the object “you”—but the impersonal “one” that rejects the language of personality altogether. For the first person “I” and second person “you” structurally assume a relation to each other; the third person “one” is not coordinated by a subject-object relation. In the productive spirit of Laruelle’s indifference, the discursive neuter operates indifferently to the central division that structures discourse. As a queer place(lessness), indifference names the production of pleasure opened by a body made inoperable as an instrument of reproduction.

Non-philosophy teaches that philosophical Decision creates the false divisions we have discussed. Philosophical Decision is the atomic structure

28 Roberto Esposito, *Third Person* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 16–17.

that Laruelle identifies in all philosophical practices that divide the One into segments thinkable by philosophy. Its primary effect is to hallucinate a world in which everything is philosophizable, a world that is, in effect, by and for philosophy. Beginning as a Nietzschean scholar, Laruelle soon realized that all the philosophies he was reading were underwritten by this “amphibology” of concept and thing—a false unity that both posits a transcendental double of all worldly material and that brackets theory from the material conditions it studies.

Laruelle traces philosophy’s dominating, auto-authoritative posture toward the world to its Decisionist core. In a fashion that has become typical of non-philosophical discourse, he deploys the concept of Decision to the side of the more familiar discourses of “decisionism” in philosophical, theological, and legal studies. However, what remains so remarkable about this particular indifference to philosophical precedent is its association with the notion of decision as the primary expression of the arbitrary force of sovereign power. Carl Schmitt’s influential pronouncement is apposite: “Sovereign is he who decides on the exception.”<sup>29</sup> But it is worth emphasizing that although Decision may refuse the extant discourse of decisionism, it does so without putting that discourse entirely out of reach. That is because, for Laruelle, the tyranny of philosophy’s auto-legitimation is haunted by the spectre of decisionism in modern political theory, where it names the executive power of political rulers to override democratic norms in the name of state security. In the 1988 conversation, Laruelle and Derrida discuss the stakes of non-philosophy in the pursuit of peace and democracy.<sup>30</sup> If not in letter, Laruelle is certainly writing in spirit against a republic of thought in which freedoms are always under siege.<sup>31</sup> What the Decisionist tendencies Laruelle observes in philosophy conspicuously lack is the singular force of will that marks the decisionist school against other ethico-political theories. If Decision is indeed

---

29 Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology, Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 5.

30 Laruelle, “Controversy Over the Possibility of a Science of Philosophy,” 74–83.

31 Laruelle’s representation of philosophers resembles Jacques Rancière’s “magisterium of thought” in *Hatred of Democracy* (London: Verso, 2006), 97. Rancière, diverging significantly from Laruelle, places emphasis on the representative government of a democracy rather than its equalizing potential. Those who exercise the magisterium of thought could be found equally in a political democratic ontology. For Laruelle, all philosophers would exercise the magisterium.

a *norm* of philosophical practice—a systematic convention that exceeds the absolute authority or dominion of any one philosophy or philosopher—then whatever tyranny it performs on the heterodoxy of thought is not derived from the force of a sovereign power. Absent is the privative, wilful suspension of lawful means of rule that constitutes sovereignty.

Whether Philosophy—as an assemblage greater than the sum of philosophies and philosophers—can be conceived as executing sovereign power depends upon how far we are willing to extend the operation of sovereignty beyond humanistic qualifications. Giorgio Agamben concludes *Homo Sacer* by arguing that “an act is sovereign when it realizes itself by simply taking away its own potentiality not to be, letting itself be, giving itself to itself.”<sup>32</sup> Certainly such a claim against potentiality figures strongly in institutions such as corporate “persons.” A corporate person is a unity of resources sourced from multiple other persons that becomes legally and financially separate from the persons investing in its growth. Its purpose is to gain profit, and its rights and responsibilities are irreducible to those of the individuals that constitute it, even as some of those individuals may take decision-making or representative roles in its name. The corporation, therefore, is an embodiment of sovereign force divested of singular human will, a creature that has decided *sans* decision that it is here to stay and here to make its force felt. Sovereignty, like racism, may be productively understood as a quality of institutions rather than of persons—albeit, it works through these same persons. In non-philosophy, philosophy is lateralized; it becomes a thing in the world no more privileged than a rock, a dream, an art, or a science. Whatever sovereign force it exerts is necessarily conditioned by an automatism indifferent to the human pretensions to will, reason, or desire. In his introduction to *François Laruelle’s Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (2013), Rocco Gangle asks,

What has philosophy done for you lately? Has it challenged you? Has it saved you? Has it become an instrument in your hands for challenging and saving others? Or has it used you merely to propagate itself? Has it tricked you? In this dance or fellowship or war between you and philosophy, who leads and who follows? Are you philosophy’s subject or its object, its mirror or its image? Are you Master or Slave here; maker, tool or half-finished product? To be sure, such images and relations are just metaphors and not

---

32 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 46.

concepts, yet we cannot help but ask what metaphor or image would be appropriate to such questions.<sup>33</sup>

Gangle models the materialist perspective in which non-philosophy reimagines philosophical thought. Theory is a thing that has what Jane Bennett calls a “vital materialism”<sup>34</sup> that lives a life beyond and indifferent to human modes of agency or agenda. If the effect of Decision is to reproduce itself through us, it does so in ways that require a renewed inquiry into the operation of sovereignty.

For Laruelle, nothing less than a democracy of thought is the goal of non-philosophy’s non-dominating intellectual posture toward an unruly world. But the status of democracy in philosophical practice is vexed, claims Laruelle, for committing democracy to thought is not to think democratically:

We regularly confuse the business surrounding democracy, like a political object, with an attitude or a position or a democratic practice... To philosophize on X is to withdraw from X; to take an essential distance from the term for which we posit other terms, for example predicates of X, but the operation does not stop there. The relation cannot remain external but must be interiorized by the means of a supplementary term, a superior unity the circularity of which closes the system. Interiority signifies here that the concept skims over its object or over itself, contemplates and completes it.<sup>35</sup>

What is at stake for non-philosophy is not a political democracy, but a “non-democracy” that thinks *from* the terms of democratic practice rather than about a political ontology as we experience it. Similarly, to think about art is not to think artistically, or to think according to an art object. The more one claims to think about art, the more one thinks over it, both in the sense of thinking in its name and thinking at a distance. In addition to thinking dialectically or conceptually, for example, what if we were also to think artistically, musically, digitally, literarily, or for that matter, emotionally, gastronomically, geologically, bacterially, nasally, or finally, relationally, resistantly, and peace-

33 Rocco Gangle, *François Laruelle’s Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 1.

34 Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 13–17.

35 François Laruelle, “Is Thinking Democratic? Or, How to Introduce Theory into Democracy,” in *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, eds. John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 229–30.

fully; are these practices also potential lures to thought?

I consider this call for democratic thought to be similar in intent to Derrida's call for hospitality. Derrida's stance posits the exposure to radical Others that effaces the self-sufficiency of the subject. But to submit fully to the horizons of hospitality would mean to be subsumed by the Other, so acting hospitably is always to stand at a necessary distance from its principles. It is equally impossible to think fully democratically, but the lure of its thought, notwithstanding its rhetorical popularity for Western audiences, is the positing of difference prior to opposition, or a plurality of differences that remain in flux and non-exclusive.

A move from tyrannical to democratic thought requires, for Laruelle, a levelling of all Decisions. In one of his more scandalous claims, he argues that "there is no reason to 'choose' Heidegger rather than Nietzsche or inversely."<sup>36</sup> By positing the equivalence of all philosophical Decisions, Laruelle seeks to *expand* rather than to jettison critical engagement with different schools of philosophy. The principle behind this equivalency or democracy of philosophies is their lateral cause by "the One"—the universe of objects always foreclosed to human thought—and their status as material constituents of it, but its effect is to suggest that there is no good reason for choosing one philosophy over another. Every philosophical school believes that it alone possesses the theoretical framework sufficient to explain the world: The Deleuzian body is a network of intensities and flows operating in relation to other bodies; the Foucaultian body is regulated and surveilled by institutions of bio-power; the Nietzschean body is a site of the will to power; and the Freudian body manifests desires foreclosed to consciousness. But none of these schools of philosophy is better equipped than its sisters to explain the world or define what counts as thought. Philosophies do not circulate as a transcendental hierarchy wherein some illuminate the world more brightly than others. In this community of thought, no one philosophy can gain a doctrinal adherence that closes possibilities for criticism that could be opened by exposure to others.

Non-philosophical practice operates to the side of philosophy's "non-sovereignty." It strikes a pose in relation to Decisional thinking that strives to abstain from meta-philosophical critique that, as Timothy Morton has ar-

---

36 François Laruelle, *Philosophies of Difference*, trans. Rocco Gangle (New York: Continuum, 2011), 210.

gued, constitutes a history of Western philosophy that proceeds in the spirit and practice of “anything you can do I can do meta.”<sup>37</sup> The non-philosophical posture practices a studied indifference to Decisional thinking—thinking that accomplishes the meta-philosophical pose—rather than a critical methodology designed to supersede philosophy’s claims, a move that would constitute its readmission into the cycle of meta-critique. The precise nature of its encounter with philosophy is variously described as indifference, suspension, or non-Decision; these are benign approaches that strive to embody the non-dominating perspective that philosophy itself lacks, and yet each has a different connotative and etymological force that lends the operation of non-philosophy to different interpretations.<sup>38</sup> Ray Brassier interestingly describes that relationship as one of development:

Non-philosophy is not an anti-philosophical doctrine but a theory for philosophy, a theory that, once applied to a philosophical material, radically reconfigures the structures of philosophical thought on the basis of that material. Far from seeking to terminate or to interrupt philosophical Decision, the Laruellean practise of non-philosophy constitutes a non-Decisional theory for philosophical Decision; a theoretical praxis which seeks to broaden the horizons of Decision and widen conceptual possibilities available to philosophical thought by suspending the sufficiency of Decision as practiced in its autonomously philosophical mode.<sup>39</sup>

If Decision is only one practice of thought among an occluded range of legitimate others, then it is worth lending close scrutiny to Brassier’s evaluation of the effects of “non-Decision” and the therapeutic force it lends to its encounters with Decision. Only by identifying the Decisional structure do we release the possibility for the exercise of its others. But this release also threat-

---

37 Timothy Morton, “Anything You Can Do I Can Do Meta,” *Ecology Without Nature*, <http://ecologywithoutnature.blogspot.ca/2010/11/anything-you-can-do-i-can-do-meta.html> (accessed July 26, 2013).

38 While this essay has not intervened in this particular question, further study on Laruelle and non-philosophy could ask if “indifference, suspension, and non-Decision” align easily as cognate descriptions of the operation of non-philosophy, or if perhaps these terms variously reflect the operation of non-philosophy across different stages of its development or coextensively across different stages of its intervention.

39 Ray Brassier, “Alien Theory: The Decline of Materialism in the Name of Matter” (PhD diss. University of Warwick, 2001), 6.

ens the central engine of philosophy, or its authority as the privileged point of access to the material world. The benignity of non-Decision, as Brassier describes it, delivers as an effect a kind of disaster for philosophy, or what Laruelle has called the destruction of the “classical usage of philosophy.”<sup>40</sup> Philosophy is tightly bound up with its use, so while philosophy itself survives the inclusion of non-Decisional thought, it serves a different role altogether. Non-Decision as a theory *for* philosophy also creates a disaster *for* philosophy. What becomes possible from non-Decisional thinking could be one incarnation of what Jacques Khalip calls the “non-normative and transformative effects produced by disaster.”<sup>41</sup> This generative disaster for philosophy is, as Brassier explains, not a foreclosure of philosophical discourse but its radical expansion, a seismic leveling that, as Khalip suggests, “isn’t merely synonymous with the denigration of thought, but rather suggests new conditions of intelligibility and complex forms of non-triumphal, wasted life.”<sup>42</sup>

Non-philosophy exposes new possibilities for thought emerging from the wasted life of philosophy. It represents a growing body of work undertaken against the backdrop of the “death of theory” that thinkers such as Terry Eagleton in *After Theory* (2004) have been quick to pronounce as the only possibility for critical thought “after” post-structuralism. In Borges’ “On Exactitude in Science,” the map that grew to the size of the Empire was not subjected to a violent skirmish once the new generation rejected its use, but was “delivered ... up to the Inclemencies of the Sun and Winters”<sup>43</sup> and remained in the Empire as tattered ruins inhabited by animals and beggars. So too does the ruinous life of philosophy gain new usage among those who inhabit the margins when the new generation of non-philosophers gives philosophy to the universe of objects.

The relevance of non-philosophy for feminist, anti-racist, and queer theory suggest that the stakes of non-philosophy lie in the work of criticism and—as we will see through Keats—the work of literature. It is also worth considering the historical and social conditions that have contributed to an interest in non-philosophy and that have produced a way of life that could

40 Laruelle in Mackay, “Introduction: Laruelle Undivided,” 29.

41 Jacques Khalip, “The Ruin of Things,” *Romantic Frictions*, ed. Teresa Kelley, Special Issue of *Romantic Circles Praxis Series*, <http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/frictions/HTML/praxis.2011.khalip.html> (accessed August 1, 2013).

42 Ibid.

43 Borges, “On Exactitude in Science,” 325.

benefit from an encounter with Laruelle. Laruelle's writing has caught the imagination of a new generation in the face of a certain impasse met by some with the "death of theory" and others, with the critical inoperability of the Occupy Movement. Its insistence on the recasting of the master's tools to be used without mastery—what Anne-Lise François affirms as "not-for-profit experience"<sup>44</sup>—has been received both with hostility toward and excitement for; among other things, experimenting with the oppositional power of worklessness, not as a privation, but as a powerful political movement in its own right. Non-philosophy's possibilities for "non-triumphal" thought have inspired young scholars living in exhausted times when the constant spectacle of war, the demolition of unions and social safety nets, the growing power of corporations, and economic and environmental crises are met with a chorus of "how to proceed?" Laruelle's fashioning of a critical encounter with philosophy that does not hinge on self-reflexivity resonates with a generation grappling with a sense that knowing about these global emergencies and our precarious roles in their midst is not to challenge them.<sup>45</sup> Far from ceding to what Elaine Scarry has named the "seduction to stop thinking"<sup>46</sup> in emergency conditions administrated by executive decision, non-philosophy responds to this impasse with an affirmation of the plurality of modes of thought, irreducible to a privative and exclusive scene of *having* knowledge.

The conditions of our present moment, from within which Laruelle speaks to us, recalls the conditions of John Keats' own moment. In the years following Napoleon's final attack on the Anglo-allied army at Waterloo in 1815, the battle that proceeded Napoleon's exile to Elba by one hundred days and the supposed end of the French Revolution by sixteen years, the second generation of Romantic writers were confronting an impasse marked by the

44 Anne-Lise François, *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 21.

45 Laruelle argues that one of the primary gestures of philosophy is to engage reflexively with its own operations in the name of philosophy and its continued privilege. "Philosophy," he explains, "gives itself according to the mode of its own self-positing/giveness/reflection/naming, or according to that of an enlarged self-consciousness or universal cogito. It is, at best, existence and gives itself with the feeling or affect of its own existence ("I know, I feel that I philosophize")" (see Laruelle, "A Summary of non-Philosophy," 31). Non-philosophy departs from the model of reflection as adequate critique and seeks to view its operations from without.

46 Elaine Scarry, *Thinking In An Emergency* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011), 3.

precariousness of what Rei Terada claims was the impossibility of discerning restoration from revolution.<sup>47</sup> In *Prison Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci describes the Napoleonic postwar situation as revolution-restoration, an indifference of transformative forces that he also locates in the Italian Risorgimento and the aftermaths of the First World War and the American stock market crash of 1929. The revolution-restoration, or “passive revolution,”<sup>48</sup> is an obstruction of the progressive dialectic where, Gramsci writes, “The thesis alone in fact develops to its full potential for struggle, up to the point where it absorbs even the so-called representatives of the antithesis.”<sup>49</sup> The result is a distension of oppositional energy that does not progress fully into revolution and that retains the conservative structure of restoration.

This inoperable moment was the occasion for Keats to consider the labour of literary history and of classical poetry as legitimized and legitimizing forms of work. Tilottama Rajan shows that Keats struggled with the status of historicist aspirations and epic poetry in the *Hyperions* and argues that “for Keats the fact that poetry ‘makes nothing happen’ (to use W. H. Auden’s words) is not a sign of literature’s difference from a history where things ‘happen.’ For poetry makes ‘nothing’ happen, thus disclosing a negativity that is in history as much as in poetry.”<sup>50</sup> Poetry embodies what Blanchot referred to as *désœuvrement* or worklessness that makes reading Laruelle after Romanticism (and Romanticism after Laruelle) a potentially generative endeavour. Although poetry has not yet seized the particular interest of non-philosophical theorists, it is a form of thought that clearly holds considerable interest for Laruelle.<sup>51</sup> Explaining his intentions in creating non-philosophy, he says,

My idea, which has been growing for some years, and may last a little longer, is to make art with philosophy, to introduce or make a poetry of thought, not necessarily a poetry made of concepts, a poetry that would put forth some

---

47 Rei Terada, “Looking At The Stars Forever,” *Studies in Romanticism*. 50.2 (2011): 279.

48 This term is attributed to Vincenzo Cuoco.

49 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, trans. Geoffrey N. Smith and Quintin Hoare (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 110.

50 Tilottama Rajan, “Keats, Poetry, and ‘The Absence of Work,’” *Modern Philology* 95.3 (1998): 335.

51 Many of Laruelle’s own non-philosophical texts resemble poetry. See “Universe Black in the Foundations of Human Color” and “What the One Sees in the One,” in Laruelle’s *From Decision to Heresy: Experiments in Non-Standard Thought* (Falmouth: Urbanomic Press, 2012).

philosophical thesis—but to make something poetic with concepts. Thus, to create a practice that could destroy, in a certain way, the classical usage of philosophy.<sup>52</sup>

The aestheticization of philosophy achieves the form of inoperability that Laruelle envisions for criticism. That non-philosophical destruction has the status of a poetic claim suggests that the corrosive materiality of the poetic has the potential to reterritorialize legitimized modes of thought. Poetry functions as a type of discourse that actively *neuters the concept*, and if a poem made of concepts does not describe the non-philosophical goal, it is nonetheless a monstrous thing: a non-philosophical womb for philosophical activity. If poetry is a workless form of knowledge, then the philosophical claims addressed within the poetic are surely being put to use to the side of the philosophical project they appear to endorse.

Again, there is a rich history of such a fantasy in German Romanticism. Schlegel wrote in the *Lyceum Fragments* that “poetry can be criticized only through poetry. A critique which itself is not a work of art, either in content of representation of the necessary impression in the process of creation, or through its beautiful form and in its liberal tone in the spirit of the old Roman satire, has no right of citizenship in the realm of art.”<sup>53</sup> While Schlegel identifies poetry by the work of representation or tone, he favours critique that is indifferent to art and that is refused its own territory outside of art’s dominion. Criticism is given no privileged space that would exempt it from the material conditions that give rise to art. Rajan argues that what counted as “literature” in this period was gradually “narrowed to mean imaginative writing and this new category was further subdivided so as to separate poetry (once synonymous with “making”) from prose.”<sup>54</sup> The history of philosophical Decision as it applies to the critical and interpretative work performed with art—specifically literature—perhaps deserves its own consideration in non-philosophical scholarship as a more recent development of the forces of cultural capital.

---

52 Laruelle in Mackay, “Introduction: Laruelle Undivided,” 29.

53 Friedrich Schlegel, *Lucinde and the Fragments*, trans. Peter Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 157.

54 Rajan, “Keats, Poetry, and the ‘Absence of Work,’” 337.

*Laruelle's Indolence: Keats After Non-Philosophy*

To describe Laruelle's pedagogical posture, I enlisted Agamben's concept of the Sabbath as a spatio-temporal clearing where the theorist is free to experiment with radical modes of thought. Keats, to whose poetry I now turn, experienced his own clearing near the end of his short life that he called "indolence." Keats' indolence—like Laruelle's indifference—is a mutated posture invigorated with critical potential. In the spring of 1819, Keats produced five odes in a feat of searching creativity. He describes his countenance during this surge of production as indolence, or an evacuation of affect that renders him inert and yet strangely, paradoxically, happy. He writes to his older brother and his brother's wife on 19 March, 1819,

This morning I am in a sort of temper, indolent and supremely careless... my passions are all asleep, from my having slumbered to nearly eleven, and weakened the animal fibre all over me, to a delightful sensation, about three degrees on this side of faintness. If I had teeth of pearl and breath of lilies I should call it langour, but as I am I must call it laziness. In this state of effeminacy the fibres of the brain are relaxed in common with the rest of the body, and to such a happy degree that pleasure has no show of enticement and pain no unbearable power. Neither Poetry, nor Ambition, nor Love have any alertness of countenance as they pass me; they seem rather like figures on a Greek vase—a Man and two women whom no one but myself could distinguish in their disguisement. This is the only happiness, and is a rare instance of the advantage of the body overpowering the mind.<sup>55</sup>

Keats describes the very peculiar condition of being overpowered by a body without passions. His words realign the Cartesian tautology of the body and the appetite, and reimagine the productivity of the body evacuated of the engine of the passions. This would be a clean, saintly, masculine state if it weren't characterized by laziness and carelessness. It is, rather, a complexly feminized state in which the subject of poetry is consumed by the *jouissance* of bodily demands—a *jouissance*, rather, that is both passionless and unappealing to the senses. Poetry, ambition, and love pass like indifferent spectres distant from and unconcerned about the poet idly watching their progress. And yet this metaphor of the three figures on a Greek vase produced from the state of

---

<sup>55</sup> John Keats, *The Letters of John Keats 1814–1821, Volume II*, ed. Hyder Edwards Rolins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 78–79.

indolence is the image that structures two of the 1819 odes. Keats' indolence is a condition of being-in-the-world characterized by an abstention from productivity, a pause or impasse, as fleeting as it is activating, experienced and imagined as otherwise than a privation.

Like the clearing for radical thought made possible by non-philosophical inquiry, Keats' indolence is a small opening of radical potential, a holding-back of the forces that regularly shape our actions. Non-philosophy functions by suspending the engine of philosophical production to make room for an expanded regime of thought production, and Keats was invested in that project. His 1819 quintet of odes is an experiment in the boundaries of poetic form. The odes constitute an expanded notion of the genre that includes the quotidian objects and observations of a life steeped in poverty and illness and that reimagines the relation between the ode and its subject. Writing in the spirit of indolence, Keats shares in the suspension of normative modes of thought production to make room for new forms of literary and critical labour.

Turning now to "Ode on a Grecian Urn," I want to regenerate the ideas that have occupied this afterword with respect to one of Keats' magnificent odes. My engagement with this poem will proceed both philosophically and non-philosophically; it will not only serve as a "mutation" of non-philosophical practice but as a model for the concerns raised by non-philosophical scholarship. The ode shares its central imagery of the Greek vase with "Ode on Indolence," and it appears that Keats valued Greek masonry as an ideal form of art worthy of close discussion and emulation.<sup>56</sup>

Of all Keats' odes, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" perhaps most radically disrupts the philosopher's pretensions to knowledge about the material world. The poem is preoccupied with a funereal urn that remains silent as the narrator-philosopher implores it to speak, or grant him access to its meaning. The narrator-philosopher's task in the poem mirrors the strangely parallel task adopted by some Romanticists to locate the urn that served as Keats' model for the ode.<sup>57</sup> Like Keats' narrator-philosopher, who believes that human language will gain him access to the wondrous object, the Romanticists assume

56 Keats was deeply inspired by the Elgin Marbles in England. See Notopoulos, "'Truth-Beauty' In The 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and the Elgin Marbles," *The Modern Language Review* 61.2 (1966): 180–82.

57 See Jerome McGann in *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in Historical Method and Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 43–44.

that the poem, too, is a form of access to an elusive material reality. The poem does not reveal whether Keats was inspired by the memory of a particular urn, a set of two dimensional engravings in a book, or a composite of Greek art, nor does it offer up a set of coordinates leading to the source. The urn's silence, its idle resistance to questions about its source, are instructive of the life of poetry. The poem always lives in excess of our search for meaning, and if I take any meaning of this ode away with me, it is, paradoxically, the poem's resistance to the very idea of its role as a meaning-giver. Like the spectral voice at the close of the poem that pronounces an oddly conclusive equation—"beauty is truth, truth beauty"—meaning may be our own "hallucination," as Laruelle would say. Whatever the material genesis of the poem, it is ultimately foreclosed to human knowledge as the urn in the poem is also silent.

Similar to Laruelle's reconfiguration of the critical posture toward philosophy, the poem begins by reorienting the relation between the poetic form of the ode and the subject of poetic discourse. One of three Keatsian odes written "on" the subject rather than the more traditional "to," the title of this ode is an immediate provocation to the genre conventions of the Ode and its function as a lyrical style of address. In other words, this ode begins as a challenge to the very role of Ode as a mode of address. But the content of the ode is somewhat at odds with its title. The narrator poses questions to the figures on the urn in vain, knowing all too well that they cannot answer. The urn's silence is established in the first two lines before the interrogation begins, suggesting just how redundant—or even indolent—this address will be:

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
 Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,  
 Sylvan historian who canst thus express  
 A flowery talk more sweetly than our rhyme.<sup>58</sup>

What is the point of questioning the "foster child of silence" unless the questions themselves are a rhetorical mockery of the very idea of such questions put to art?

Keats' narrator-philosopher puts questions to the frozen figures on the urn like a literary theorist puts questions to a poem. The parallel commen-

<sup>58</sup> John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," lines 1–4, in *The Poetical Works of John Keats*, ed. H. W. Garrod (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), 260.

tary on the two forms of art—the urn and the poem—has not been ignored by scholars of Keats. Keats’ praise of the urn’s “Attic shape”<sup>59</sup> in the final stanza suggests that the urn’s toroid canvas is a model for poetry. Thinking about the influence of urns and Greek art on this ode, Adam Roberts asks if the ode could be considered to be “urn-shaped.” In the vocabulary of non-philosophy, Roberts want to know if the poem is speaking *from* the urn. He suggests that because an urn’s geometry is non-Euclidean—its shape is three dimensional and the narrative drawn on its exterior can only be read continuously—and a poem’s geometry is Euclidean—its linear form has a definitive beginning and end—the poem stresses the fundamental difference between the two forms of art. Keats, he suggests, draws our attention to this difference:

It is difficult to avoid the sense that the urn Keats elaborates is a curiously flat, Euclidean urn: a non-continuous, non-toroid urn. Indeed, it could be argued that an “ode” about a torus is an oxymoron to begin with: the dialectic progression implicit in strophe, antistrophe and epode suggests development, such that the position reached at the end of the poem is in some sense different (albeit derived) from the beginning. This is not really compatible with the nature of a torus. It could certainly be argued that the details of ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ undercut any idea of toroidity.<sup>60</sup>

For Roberts, the aesthetic constitution of the urn is fundamentally at odds with that of the ode; the two forms of art do not even reside in the same dimensional realities. Indeed, the urn’s silence also stands in contrast to the chatty ode, a poem enlivened with the inquisitive passion that the poet says remains far above the urn. The relationship between the narrator-philosopher and the urn is remarkably unerotic when compared to the equivalent relationship in “Ode on Indolence,” which is punctuated by the intimate, embodied gesture of the narrator repeatedly turning the vase around in his hands. In “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” the star-crossed lovers could not be more remote. For Roberts, the ode does not speak *from* the urn. But in what sense, as Roberts suggests, does the geometrical difference preclude poetic discourse *about* the torus? To claim that one speaks “about” an object is to make a representational claim that both establishes the difference between the claim and

---

59 Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” line 41, 261.

60 Adam Roberts, “Keats’ ‘Attic Shape’: ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ and Non-Euclidean Geometry,” in *Keats-Shelley Review* 9 (1995): 5.

the object and in the same moment promises closer proximity to the object, or a special, transcendent knowledge made available to the theorist through that difference. In other words, representation is difference that elides the image of difference, a difference masked as a site of repetition.

The ode does appear to take pains to represent the object, but by its own admission that the urn “canst thus express / A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme,”<sup>61</sup> it challenges from the start any simple tautology between itself and the urn. The poem asserts its difference from the urn, and it is precisely this difference that coordinates the poem’s effort to speak *about* the urn. By representing the urn, the poem exempts itself from the material reality of the urn; indeed, the urn and the poem exist in different dimensional realities, can they even be said to be of the same world? The rhetorical questions posed *on* rather than *to* the ode establish its hierarchical advantage with respect to the discursive function of the urn. The ode knows its place; it knows that a style of address can hide as a mode of representation. Keats’ poem first appears to be a classic example of philosophical representation. The urn is beholden to the poet to communicate; it is only legible as an object of another’s interest. And yet, the ode and the urn do not cleave neatly into the philosophical and the material, respectively. Keats valorizes the urn precisely for its a-materiality, its transcendence from the passage of time and the world of “breathing human passion.”<sup>62</sup> Even in its Euclidean dimensionality, it expresses the passion and the *telos* of an anxious pursuit arrested on the surface of the urn. The poem is enlivened by a sense of the non-Euclidean that the urn itself rejects. It captures the materiality of embodied affect and emotion while the urn suspends it. There is a difference that structures the poem, but that difference is indifferent to the divide between the philosophical and the material. Indeed, the philosophical “wonder” propelling the narrator-philosopher grounds him among the earthly tangle to which the urn is indifferent.

The “lesson” that concludes the poem is strange one, not in the least because it is attributed to an object that cannot voice it. The ventriloquism, “beauty is truth, truth beauty,”<sup>63</sup> is an unusually conclusive ending for Keats,

61 Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” lines 3–4, 260.

62 Ibid., line 28, 261.

63 Keats adopted the epithet, “truth-beauty,” after being introduced to the Elgin Marbles, a set of Greek scenes set in marble brought from the pantheon to England at the turn of the eighteenth century. For Keats, it described an ideal of Greek art that became a model for the best of English poetry. See Notopolous, “Truth-Beauty,” 180–82.

considering that another of his 1819 odes addressed to a nonhuman companion, “Ode To A Nightingale,” concludes with the ambivalent phrase, “do I wake or do I sleep.”<sup>64</sup> But more than the ending of its sister ode, the unexplained presence and origin of “beauty is truth, truth beauty” provides no closure. As a conclusion, these words refigure what it means to conclude and what it means to learn something intelligible by reading a poem. The tautology is not an invention of Keats. It circulated among the Romantics as a prescription for model art. It was introduced to Keats by the painter Robert Haydon,<sup>65</sup> and Schlegel used it to describe the poetry of Giovanni Boccaccio.<sup>66</sup> Kyoung-Min Han has read the tautology as a blending of the philosophical and the sensual, an expression of “how sensory experience can provide access to that which transcends sensory grasp.”<sup>67</sup> However, both poles of this tautology are conditioning terms, expressions not of two realities but of a fundamental indifference between metaphysical forms. The words are not a Decision creating a false unity between conditioning and conditioned terms; rather, they express the equivalence of conceptual schemas. Like the narrator-philosopher thinks of the urn, there can be no “breathing human passion” in Beauty or Truth, which have no sense of what it means to breathe or to cease breathing. There is nothing beautiful about Beauty.

Perhaps the ode can be thought to be speaking *from* the urn, or to be “urn-shaped,” in the most contradictory sense. If what the narrator-philosopher admires about the urn is its silence—its indifference to the breathing human passion it elicits—then perhaps silence is the aesthetic ideal mimicked by the ode. A silent poem, like the urn, does not respond to our interpretations of its meaning; indeed, does not need them. It does not know the breathing human passion from which comes the desire for meaning. The poem is a Real that causes a plurality of meanings, but the poem itself is not *meaningful*. Keats’ ode does not contain, nor does it care about, this lesson I hallucinate in its presence. That the ode does not mean its indifference to meaning does not make poetic learning impossible, only that this pedagogy occurs at a site of paradox.

64 John Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale,” in *The Poetical Works of John Keats*, ed. H. W. Garrod, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), line 80, 260.

65 *Ibid.*, 180–81.

66 Friedrich Schlegel, *Aesthetic and Miscellaneous Works of Frederick von Schlegel*, trans. E. J. Millington, (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1849), 201.

67 Kyoung-Min Han, “The Urn’s ‘Silent Form’: Keats’ Critique of Poetic Judgment,” *Papers on Language & Literature* 48.3 (2012): 245.

*Conclusion*

The many ways in which students of Laruelle will use his theories as avatars of pedagogical and professional work constitute an anticipated future we cannot yet imagine. But with a future that forecasts any number of ways to read and write non-philosophy and non-philosophically will also come a body of helpful criticisms that will fine-tune the reception of non-philosophical (non-)concepts and (non?)axioms. Anthony Paul Smith, for one, has asked why our conception of philosophy need be the Western kind.<sup>68</sup> Non-philosophy describes a type of philosophical operation that has evolved from the Greco-Occidental tradition and may not resemble uses of philosophy found in non-Western academia. The interest that non-philosophy takes in modes of war and peace—and indeed in its self-image as an usher of peace in the face of a tyrannical mode of thought<sup>69</sup>—is a site of much needed development as well. Laruelle describes non-philosophy’s posture toward the usage of philosophy variously between suspension and destruction. His work is riddled with the language of war, peace, democracy, terror, and destruction, and this murmuration of globalizing language creates a consequential terrain on which Laruelle has made his work legible to others. As a mode of thinking from the One that wants to “destroy the classical usage of philosophy,” we might ask if non-philosophy thinks from destruction—thinks destructively—and how a methodology configured by destruction brings about an order of peace. It is perhaps in this methodology of destruction that Laruelle is closest to Derrida, the father of “deconstruction.” Laruelle’s work should prompt new reviews of the methodology of destruction as it is mobilized by Derrida, whose writing on deconstruction was formed in part as a response to Heidegger’s *Destruktion*.

The stakes of non-philosophy could be significantly elaborated through an encounter with feminist, queer, and anti-racist schools of thought. These scholarly domains were developed, and in their best forms continue to proceed, in the spirit of a questioning and reformulation of the fundamental principles of criticism. William Haver, for instance, suggested in 1997 that “queer research” could be something other than (or as he says, “essentially more disturbing than”) “the manipulation of concepts.” What if it could be,

68 Anthony Paul Smith. “So What?: On Graham Harman’s Abominable Review of Laruelle’s *Philosophies of Difference*,” *An und für sich*, <http://itself.wordpress.com/2011/08/15/so-what-on-graham-harmans-abominable-review-of-laruelle/> (accessed March 10, 2014).

69 Laruelle, “Controversy Over the Possibility of a Science of Philosophy,” 74–92.

he says, something other than a representation of queer lives and cultural locations and could “constitute itself in and as a refusal to participate in the struggle for intellectual hegemony, to provide a better explanation of the world?”<sup>70</sup> Non-philosophy offers a collection of resources that seem tailored to rise to the challenge of a constituting set of research practices that seek something other than a “better explanation.” As a radical approach to literature, non-philosophy could unseat the primacy of the “interpretation” as the profit of literary criticism. The experiment I began in this essay with Keats could surely take many forms as a “not-for-profit” approach to literature.

New scholarship will also want to lend a closer eye to the type of “non-triumphal” peace that becomes possible when philosophy no longer has a monopoly on thought. If in suspending philosophical Decision non-philosophy desires peace from philosophy’s dominance, I assume that this peace could only be a peace-in-the-last-instance, a non-peace that we have yet to consider. But here is perhaps the phantasmatic glimmer in Laruelle’s uncompromising work: faced with a world in which war constitutes an all-consuming organizational force, the specter of a non-peace—an amplification of what counts as peace—looms over our desire to forge new ways of living in a constant state of exception. Kant suggested that peace was not the absence of war, and perhaps non-philosophy can pick up where Kant left off and pressure the concept of peace into a clearing for radical thought.

---

70 William Haver, “Queer Research; or, How to Practise Invention to the Brink of Intelligibility,” in *The Eight Technologies of Otherness*, ed. Sue Golding (New York: Routledge, 1997), 278.

**Works Cited**

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- . *The Open: Man and Animal*. Translated by Kevin Attell. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Blanchot, Maurice. *The Space of Literature*. Translated by Ann Smock. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. "On Exactitude in Science." In *Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley. New York, NY: Viking, 1999.
- Brassier, Ray. "Alien Theory: The Decline of Materialism in the Name of Matter." Diss., University of Warwick, 2001.
- Butler, Judith, and Athena Athanasiou. *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2013.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1999.
- Colebrook, Claire. "Not Symbiosis, Not Now: Why Anthropogenic Change Is Not Really Human." *Oxford Literary Review* 34.2 (December 2012): 185-209. doi:10.3366/olr.2012.0041.
- Durantaye, Leland De La. *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Esposito, Roberto. *Third Person: Politics of Life and Philosophy of the Impersonal*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2012.
- Foucault, Michel and Gilles Deleuze. "Intellectuals and Power." In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, translated

by Donald F. Bouchard and Sharry Simon, 205-17. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980.

François, Anne-Lise. *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Gangle, Rocco. *François Laruelle's Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

Gramsci, Antonio, Quintin Hoare, and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. New York: International Publishers, 1972.

Halley, Janet E. *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Han, Kyoung-Min. "The Urn's 'Silent Form': Keats' Critique of Poetic Judgment." *Papers on Language & Literature* 48.3 (Summer 2012). <http://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-304467110/the-urn-s-silent-form-keats-s-critique-of-poetic> (accessed March 24, 2014).

Harman, Graham. "Review of Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction to Non-Philosophy." *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, August 11, 2011. <http://ndpr.nd.edu/news/25437-philosophies-of-difference-a-critical-introduction-to-non-philosophy/> (accessed March 24, 2014).

Haver, William. "Queer Research; Or, How to Practice Invention to the Brink of Intelligibility." In *The Eight Technologies of Otherness*, by Sue Golding. London: Routledge, 1997.

Keats, John, and Hyder Edward Rollins. *The Letters of John Keats, 1814-1821*. Vol. II. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Keats, John. *The Poetical Works of John Keats*. Translated by H. W. Garrod. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

Khalip, Jacques. "The Ruin of Things." *Romantic Circles*. September 2011.

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/frictions/HTML/praxis.2011.khalip.html> (accessed August 1, 2013).

Kolozova, Katerina. "The Project of Non-Marxism: Arguing for 'Monstrously' Radical Concepts." *Cultural Logic: An Electronic Journal of Marxist Theory and Practice* 10 (2007).

Laruelle, François. *The Concept of Non-Photography*. Translated by Robin Mackay. Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2011.

———. *Dictionary of Non-Philosophy*. Translated by Taylor Adkins. Minneapolis, MN: Univocal, 2013.

———. *From Decision to Heresy: Experiments in Non-Standard Thought*. Edited by Robin Mackay. Falmouth, UK: Urbanomic, 2012.

———. "Is Thinking Democratic? Or, How to Introduce Theory into Democracy." In *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, by John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith, 227-37. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.

———. *Non-Philosophy Project: Essays*. Edited by Gabriel Alkon and Boris Gunjević. New York: Telos Press Pub., 2012.

———. *Philosophies of Difference: A Critical Introduction to Non-Philosophy*. Translated by Rocco Gangle. London: Continuum, 2010.

———. *Principles of Non-Philosophy*. Translated by Nicola Rubczak and Anthony Paul Smith. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Laughland, John. *Schelling versus Hegel: From German Idealism to Christian Metaphysics*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outside: Essays and Speeches*. New York, NY: Ten Speed Press, 2007.

McGann, Jerome J. *The Beauty of Inflections: Literary Investigations in History, Method and Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

- Morton, Timothy. "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Meta." *Ecology Without Nature*. November 6, 2010. <http://ecologywithoutnature.blogspot.ca/2010/11/anything-you-can-do-i-can-do-meta.html> (accessed March 24, 2014).
- . *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Mullarkey, John, and Anthony Paul Smith, editors. *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Notopoulos, James A. "'Truth-Beauty' in the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and the Elgin Marbles." *The Modern Language Review* 61.2 (April 1966): 180-82. doi:10.2307/3720744.
- Rajan, Tilottama. "Keats, Poetry, and 'The Absence of Work'." *Modern Philology* 95.3 (February 1998): 334-51. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/438903?ref=search-gateway:d4159ee20bd6d0ff8bb23b7e6b2aca48> (accessed March 24, 2014).
- Rancière, Jacques. *Hatred of Democracy*. Translated by Steve Corcoran. London: Verso, 2007.
- Roberts, Adam. "Keats' 'Attic Shape': 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and Non-Euclidian Geometry." *The Keats-Shelley Review* 9.1 (1995): 1-14. doi:10.1179/ksr.1995.9.1.1.
- Scarry, Elaine. *Thinking in an Emergency*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.
- Schlegel, Friedrich von. *The Aesthetic and Miscellaneous Works of Frederick Von Schlegel*. Translated by E. J. Millington. London: H.G. Bohn, 1849.
- . *Lucinde and the Fragments*. Translated by Peter Firchow. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971.
- Schmitt, Carl. *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Translated by George Schwab. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985.

- Smith, Anthony Paul. "So What?: On Graham Harman's Abominable Review of Laruelle's Philosophies of Difference." An und für sich. August 15, 2011. <http://itself.wordpress.com/2011/08/15/so-what-on-graham-harmans-abominable-review-of-laruelle/> (accessed March 10, 2014).
- . "Thinking From The One: Science and the Ancient Philosophical Figure of the One." In *Laruelle and Non-Philosophy*, edited by John Mullarkey and Anthony Paul Smith, 19-41. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Terada, Rei. "Looking At The Stars Forever." *Studies in Romanticism* 50.2 (Summer 2011): 275-309.
- Watkin, William. *Agamben and Indifference: A Critical Overview*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.