Abstract:

The anthropocene has seen the human not only manipulate nonhuman forces but territorialise all forces so they may be understood or valued only via anthropocentric formal logic. This article explores the ethical urgency of the need to open up new spaces, primarily via the deformalised (or at least non-anthropomorphic) flesh where can be explored the concept of the nonhuman. In the context of the article the nonhuman does not only refer to nonhuman animals, but also the human’s necessary becoming-nonhuman in order to liberate the Earth from the violent tendencies of anthropocentric ideology and/and as action. The article does address our human relations with nonhuman animals as part of the need to become-nonhuman without fetishizing other life forms or human minoritarians. This is suggested via three trajectories – nonhuman becomings via art, via nature and via radical abolitionist ethics. All three offer ways in which the subject can find escape routes and philosophical fissures through which new pathways may emerge to alter interactions between humans, humans and nonhuman animals and the world itself as a system of relation rather than human occupation.

**Art, Nature, Ethics: Nonhuman Queerings**

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‘It is not sufficient to liberate sexuality; it is also necessary to liberate ourselves from the notion of sexuality itself.’ (Foucault 2000: 245)

‘This *man of negation* – yes, even he counts among the very great forces which *conserve* and *affirm* life…What is the reason for this sickliness? For man is more sick, more uncertain, more mutable, less defined than any other animal…even when this master of destruction, of self-destruction *wounds* himself – it is the wound itself which afterwards compels him to *live*…’ (Nietzsche 1996: 100)

‘Already constructed theoretical language does not speak of the mucous. The mucous remains a remainder, producer of delirium, of dereliction, of wounds, sometimes of exhaustion.’ (Irigaray 2002a: 244)

‘That is the only way Nature operates – against itself.’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 242)

The above quotations share a disparagement toward three systems: the system of epistemic language, the system of a non-relational hermeneutic man separate from the world, and the system which paradoxically claims one’s capacity to define and be a subject leads to one’s freedom through that subjectivity. The nonhuman haunts all of these criticisms. It is present not as a precursor to the human in a chronocentric prevolutionary way, nor as a descriptor of any organism which fails to fulfil the criteria of the human (itself a myth which has been anxiously affirmed and debunked since its inception). It is present as the world, even the cosmos, itself. Its verbing affect precedes its function as a noun. It may describe any organism in a state which expresses and is affected in ways resistant to the abovementioned three systems, but more it describes escape routes, or modes of being which are apprehended in their more ‘natural’ state, though nature is not pitted against culture but is, rather, everything in its chaoid state, the pure potentiality of all mechanisms and combinations for action, production, destruction and metamorphosis. As Deleuze and Guattari tell us, nature operates against itself because it is not an ‘it’ in the same way that man or human is phantasised desperately as such. Nature is infinite particles and waves that includes all matter without demarcating anything as independent of its connections to all other matter. The wounded man of Nietzsche is not destroyed but opened out toward novel possibilities of penetration and reformation, via the becoming-mucosal of Irigaray’s delirium and dereliction, mucus being a thoroughly nonhuman and thoroughly natural substance, a posthuman or ahuman humour perhaps.

What trajectories of expression could constitute a nonhuman? I posit three: The nonhuman is constituted as an ethical entity without co-option or fetishisation; the nonhuman is a work of art as a silent, unknowable falsehood; the nonhuman is a work of nature in that it is the thought of nature. The first can only be a result of the experimentations of the second and third and thus will be addressed last.

**Nonhuman as Art**

In *The Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche sees art as having two principles: the first is it cannot operate to fulfil criteria and thus resolve or heal a problem. Related to this, the second principle is that art as falsehood shows the world as error. These both come from Man’s tragic adherence to the concept of the ideal where he asks ‘Is an ideal being set up or broken down here?’ (1996: 75) The first principle shows the folly in attempts to glue together the broken ideal, the second that ideals are erroneous understandings of the world to begin with. Beyond their associations with diachronous qualities of good and bad, ideals order the world through a will to power that privileges power over affect, and that subsumes freedom as a liberation of force to will as an affirmation of a perceived understanding of the one who imposes that force as superior subject. The idealisation of the ‘I’ slaughters freedom before action even begins, the attempts to recuperate it slaughter creativity. The vitalism in Nietzsche’s understanding of art, even though Deleuze calls it tragic (2006: 95), shows that Man’s tragedy comes paradoxically from his attempt to understand himself through force as power and his expression of force without creativity as ultimately destroying other possible creative relations and showing his ideal as a myth. The falsity of art, the world as an error, is a jubilantly positive way to describe art’s function. We understand the world through humanism as a topography populated with demarcated truths waiting to be illuminated, and which will all gel into a logical jigsaw and thus illuminate our own existences upon this topos when we finally reveal these truths. This self-perpetuating force relies on the pseudo-religious sense in science of logic as being coincident with meaning. Understanding the world as error repudiates the myth of logocentrism and relishes the inexhaustibility of the world in its perpetual recombinings of relations and the affects they produce. Via Irigaray with Nietzsche, error sometimes produces wounds, and these are the openings or corporeally and psychically (never extricated of course) beneficial escape routes via which our new and unexpected becomings occur. Error is defined via man, and as Deleuze and Guattari state, nature operates against itself: for nature this is harmony, for man this is discord. Disjunctive combinations of things brought together ‘in error’ or ‘unnaturally’ as humanism may describe them, are the artistic combinations available only via nonhuman trajectories – those which are done with ideals, done with human faith in logocentrism, done with any form of art as recuperative or a more perfected form of nature, as Artaud says, to be done with the judgement of (State, Family, Capital, Education as) God: ‘The fact that the world is not yet formed,/Or that man only has a small idea of the world/and wants to hold onto it forever?/This comes from the fact that man,/one fine day,/*stopped*/the idea of the world.’ (1988: 561).

Without wishing to draw false polarities, what Nietzsche and Artaud emphasise is that the human comes to the world from a psychical, ideational structuring of the world and by this actualisation of the world never experiences world, or self, or most explicitly self as infinite and infinitesimal part of the world. The nonhuman coming to the world as part of the world and already within the world is simultaneously corporeal and psychical (we are also done with the judgement of Descartes) and, most explicitly, undifferentiated from the world, including all other organisms and the unknowable of self within self – the word self becoming an increasingly tenuous term. While this notion of undifferentiated relation resonates with queer theory it also brings queer theory and art together. Nietzsche tells us what art is not for, and celebrates falsehood, yet from a nonhuman perspective falsehood is nothing more than forsaking the idea of truth and falsity and their isomorphic hierarchical dissymmetry. Deleuze states that for the dogmatic definition of thought and image in art: ‘We are also told that we are diverted from the truth but by forces which are foreign to it (body, passions, sensuous interests).’ (2006: 96) By this dogma truth has its acolyte adherents – the very humans who created the concept to begin with, as a will to power, not an observation of ‘reality’ (itself often highly unreal). Any forces which are antagonistic to humanist thought must therefore be antagonistic to truth. Art, by its constructed nature, is untrue. While dogma sees this as resolvable through ‘method’ (Deleuze, 2006: 96) which makes logical our relations with nature, any ‘method’ opposed to logic would be untrue, and yet it is these methods which create and are responsible for art that liberates thought as an opening rather than confers information or knowledge as a structuring.

Queering the nonhuman would do very well to think of itself as a work of art for two reasons: The first is the impossible bind that we are within human culture and our access to nature is fatally prevented by this state, yet we must try liberate ourselves from this mode of apprehension for the sake of art and other nonhuman organisms, specifically the other lives we destroy. Secondly acknowledging falsehood makes all things true, creating the queer relation as a chaos magic mantra in the hope that the expressions we emit and the affects we produce will fulfil the function of art – not to represent or confirm but to open new modes of expressivity in those which encounter art. For, like nature, art operates against itself. Deleuze explicitly states that dogma critiques the body, passions and sensuous interests. However these intensities manifest the body as ecstatic and vulnerable. Shifting from ‘the’ body, externally evaluated and judged by God, to body as constellation of intensities, independent of inside/outside, object/subject, describes the body as expressive and affective, liberated from the myth of the human, Vitruvian template which coincides with identity itself. Artaud explores this simultaneous destruction as liberation of body and subject as

the need to abolish the idea,/the idea and its myth,/ and to enthrone in its place/ the thundering manifestation/ of this explosive necessity:/to dilate the body of my internal night,/ the internal nothingness/ of myself/ which is night,/ nothingness, /thoughtlessness,/but which is explosive affirmation/that there is/ something/to make room for: my body. (Artaud 1988: 565)

The body as Body without Organs, more correctly without organisation, for Artaud is the site of life, nature and freedom but his use of words shows, like many writers such as Bataille, Cixous, Irigaray and Kristeva, words can manifest corporeality without becoming ideals, words are fleshy mucosal bodies, Irigaray’s language of delirium. Art shows all substances as corporeal and also connects the cosmos with its own unique substance that is irrefutably libidinal, but without an object of desire: ‘To write is to seek luck. Luck animates the smallest part of the Universe: the twinkling of stars is its power, a wildflower its incantation. The heat of life left me; desire no longer had an object…I was happy to be the plaything of luck.’ (Bataille 2004: 53) The sensual and sexual nature of writing is clear, as are all submissive relations to art we see, from our ecstasy at Bernini’s St Teresa’s ecstasy in the infinite unknowability of baroque folds reflecting baroque desire, to the Stendhal Syndrome. But if we attempt to construct (without structure) our queer selves as expressive art objects, all we ask is that our power opens up the world rather than closing it down in the too human massacre of nature that operations of signification masquerading as truth perpetuate, no matter how well meant when addressing nonhuman animals or minoritarians. Where Kristeva states ‘The act of questioning is present in artistic experience, in rejection and renewal of old codes of representation staged in painting, music or poetry’ (2002: 121) we acknowledge that, as unresponsive, questions do not, cannot, demand answers. Like the sexuated subject which will not respond, taking our cue from Foucault, becoming nonhuman via understanding self as expressive in ways which resonate with art makes us shut up about any compulsion for defining factors of our desires and most importantly, makes no demand on any witness to the art that is self to define itself in order that we may oppose or reflect it. In its revelling jubilant celebration of being constructed artifice, art demands we exploit and create unlikely relations with nature to become otherwise, not via the content of what we become, but the openings we make for others to become otherwise. Far from sacrificial however, this allows us to live many lives by forsaking the one life of the human subject in our constant malleability. Art which illuminates nothing but affects returns us to the first thing from which we are estranged, our bodies, without signification or subjectification, so that the more we know ourselves as art – as false, as nonhuman, as unnatural natural phenomenon – the more our entire relation with the world is inherently queer.

**Nonhuman as Nature**

The most immediate indicator of the human is often found in its juxtaposition against nature, defaulting the word human to culture and the word nature to nonhuman animal. This rhetoric justifies the murder and torture of nonhuman animals because they belong to the unconstructed and therefore somehow non-self aware mechanised operations of nature, while humans belong to the sentient operations of culture, which, through our self-determined construction gives us the right to manipulate what, within this logic, cannot manipulate itself. Even much animal rights work attempts to drag nonhumans up to culture, imposing or demarcating a culture of nonhumans in order to vindicate their right to live only due to the ways they reflect human cultural operations. Nature is seen as a dumb mute accidental performance of phenomenon when it is denigrated as the lesser in the binary of the self-styled science of the human, and when the human discovers ‘truths’ in nature they are raised to a more noble status due to their becoming manipulatable. This is one problem with versions of posthuman theory that place the cyborg biotech human as the zenith of promises of ultimate self-realisation, where a relationship with nature is sought only to vanquish, reorient or exploit it toward posthuman as hyperhumanist goals. For this reason I prefer the concept of the ‘ahuman’ to the posthuman (MacCormack 2014) as it includes the natural phenomenon human organisms are in its address to relations, yet also demands the human forsake the more destructive compulsions which reiterate human subjectivity as a pattern of violation of nonhumans. Humans are social, nonhuman animals are natural, the humanist tells us. Yet, this society is what makes us a giant, mindless consuming phenomenon which overlays nature rather than being within the web of relations with nature. The social contract suffocates the natural contract rather than occurring within it. It causes amnesia of nature and demands nature rise to be integrated within the social in order to be acknowledged, verified and utilised. If it is below the social, it does not register and therefore does not count (as a differend). If it registers, it is made to celebrate its often devastating inclusion in the social by being used as host for the parasite who is Man, because it is included, but will never be that which includes it. ‘Man is a stockpile, the strongest and most connected of nature. He is a being everywhere. And bound. According to philosophers of old, men formed a great animal by assembling through a social contract. In the passage from individuals to groups we rose in groups but fell from thought, to brute life, brainless or mechanical, so true is it that in saying “we”, publically, meaning the essence of the public, has never really known what it was saying or thinking: such groups may be superior then, in critical mass, but inferior in the chain of being,’ (Serres, 2001: 18)

Demarcated self as human adheres one to a community, even when alone, so that the stylised perceived individuality of consumer capitalism is as much a stockpile of social brainless mechanisation as is the placated mentality of any human society as a collective via failed-communist totalitarianism, the assimilative operations of fascism or other collectives. The solitary human always belongs to this mindset if it persists in defining itself as human. Paradoxically, the human sees commonality in purpose as giving freedom of individuality, where the very being of human makes one’s ‘right’ to do as one pleases to nature, while ethically common notions according to Spinoza are found in the very disjunctures of relations that allow two unlike entities to flourish in relation with one another. Deleuze states:

In short a common notion is the representation of a composition between two or more bodies, and a unity of this composition… For when we encounter a body that agrees with ours we experience an affect or feeling of joy-passion, although we do not adequately know what it has in common with us…(1988: 55,56)

The commonality between humans as humans means any inter-human relations cannot be defined as queer. Whether via act, object choice, lack of sexuality or any other form of speech or silence about desire, if the source from whence it is emitted is identified as human – that is, someone who fulfils (or attempts to and fails in the case of many minoritarians) the template criteria of the social corpus as a subject belonging to the species human with all of its parasitic and violating impulses – then the desire is human and thus the relation can neither be queer nor (as will be elaborated below) ethical. Of course I am not talking here about bestiality or becoming-animal, but the reconception of the powers and affects which traditional conceptions of the human as social and cultural construct privilege.

Back to nature then! That means we must add to the exclusively social contract a natural contract of symbiosis and reciprocity in which our relationship with things would set aside mastery and possession in favour of admiring attention, reciprocity, contemplation, and respect; where knowledge would no longer imply property, nor action, mastery… the parasite takes all and gives nothing; the host gives all and takes nothing. Rights of mastery and property come down to parasitism. Conversely rights of symbiosis are defined by reciprocity; however much nature gives man, man must give that much back to nature, now a legal subject. (Serres 2001: 38)

Nature does not give so that the human can take, nature is never offered the opportunity to consent, and sadly in its grace cannot conceive of what the human has in store for it so often (in the case of many human-nonhuman–animal relations) and it does not recoil from the horrific dissymmetrical hierarchy the human imposes upon the relation until the full horror of that relation is executed. Those humans who seek to abolish such relations, such as abolitionist vegans, are defined persistently as ‘humans who believe/propose…’ etcetera. Abolitionist discourse is forced to enunciate what it is within human discourse via the human social contract, which is paradoxical to its primary goal of allowing others (both minoritarian humans and nonhumans) to exist independent of the human contract. The faux benevolence of ‘inclusion’ means the natural contract remains ignored by those who will not relinquish their parasitism, because the action of inclusion within the human discourse is in reality the reactive force of parasitism masquerading its destructive affects. For the human to become part of the natural contract is a queer operation. It involves forsaking the privilege of human social power, including all degrees of majoritarian to minoritarian, which delimits desire to one between humans as viable objects of desire or facilitators of acts, including one’s self as both subject-object and facilitator. In this way the human becomes the ahuman nonhuman. It also opens relations up to the natural contract, a gracious form of desire found in commonality as producing beneficial affects for all parties based on their unknowable specificity, contemplation as being affected by some ‘thing’ (thing being constituted by its flows of expression, not ontological essence) without intervening or interfering with it, and attention as a patient waiting that makes no demands, nor may even register. These forms of interaction are decidedly queer in that they describe quiet approaches, tentative waitings, nothing of which seeks a result or knows an outcome, and most importantly, exploits in a positive way the unpredictable infinity of potential relations when nothing is defined in advance and all things are appreciated with patient unknowing. If knowledge is mastery and speech is ownership then this relation is the opening out toward the thought of nature, listening to how nature thinks, which is of course also infinite and before and beyond any human syntax. Becoming-ahuman catalyses an openness to a natural contract, which makes other humans ahuman, and thus even in the most traditionally defined relations between two bodies nonhuman queerness flourishes.

**Nonhuman Ethics**

In reference to the ethical consideration of queering the nonhuman there seems to be two trajectories into which philosophy risks falling – that of fetishisation and that of repudiation. Many feminists have maligned Deleuze and Guattari’s becoming-woman for co-opting women in their postmodern adventures and a similar argument could be made for their becoming animal, but this trend of fetishisation of the nonhuman is somewhat redeemed in their attention to fabulated animals rather than real life nonhuman entities – werewolves, packs, demons and such, aligning them more with the nonhuman as art than actual animal lives. Not so the narcissistic assimilation of his cat staring at him naked by Derrida, or Haraway’s Oedipal relations with ‘companion’ species, ignoring the slavery that domestication necessitated and the continuation of meat production that nurturing companion animals fosters, rigorously maintaining speciesist hierarchies. Speciesism continues in contemporary animal studies. Wolfe’s work ‘uses’ animals zoontologically, ironically enunciating ‘my assertion [to question species distinction] might seem rather rash or even quaintly lunatic fringe to most scholars and critics.’ (2003: 1) whilst naming veganism a form of radical posturing. Contemporary media trends from social media to digital theory assimilate human perceptions of insect hive interactions. Even animal rights in its traditional Singer (1996) incarnation, equivocates reflecting the human with greater integrity of life and liberty. This default position suggests the term nonhuman can refer the human to new ways of augmenting our own existential crisis by rethinking ourselves through taking conveniently supportive human perceptions of nonhuman animals – homogenised as species, denied their singularity – to further our obsession with ourselves, be it in affirmation of superiority or toward alternate understandings of human subjectivity. While the latter is an absolutely necessary project for thinking ethical ecosophical futures (without the use of subjectivity), it seems particularly cruel that we look to the very organisms we enslave and destroy to get us out of the philosophical identity crisis we continue to create for ourselves, rather than seek to unravel the concept of the human in order to open ourselves to the world beyond – beyond language, beyond structure, beyond dialectics and beyond signification. Spinoza states: ‘Emulation is the desire of something engendered in us by our conception that others have the same desire.’ (1957: 68) Thus, any thinking the animal is not to liberate them but to further bend and conform their freedom to our use.

Abolitionism, by contrast, advocates the cessation of thinking the animal at all, as thinking the animal knows and manipulates it. (This does not preclude care, but care without reason, not through what an animal is but *that* it is.) Fabulated nonhumans and natural nonhumans show the human has always been a unique combination of a nature it cannot know and an imagination which has no limit, while humanism obsessively seeks to know nature in order to control it and limit imagination in order to regulate subjectivity through a perception of the concept of ‘truth’ as a limit of the possible. Queering the nonhuman requires a very careful consideration of how we use nonhuman, because all thought is ultimately use in that it produces material affects via action upon the bodies of others. As we humans are the only species which needs unravelling (and the only species into which we have the right to intervene), we are faced with the limitless energy invigorated in thinking what we already are differently without co-opting anything else. The nonhuman understood in this way is the difference within the human that is nonhuman, but not like any nonhuman animal individual (and never like a species, a term which should be abolished in ethical considerations of nature). Queering the nonhuman queers the human so all humans become nonhuman – unlike themselves as the selves they perceive themselves to be and unlike the too often destructive values which accompany these. The role of queer is emphasised, as the noun nonhuman is secondary, even tactical, compared to the verb queering, because it privileges relation over being. Ethically this difference in itself is reminiscent of a body without organs, as, according to Spinoza ‘the human body is composed of very many parts of different nature, which stand in continual need of varied nourishment, so that the whole body may be equally capable of doing everything that can follow from its own nature’ (1957: 132). Spinoza is very clear in this section of the *Ethics* that love, not admiration or hope, are what constitute ethics. ‘Thinking’ the animal is without love, be it via the robbery of specificity which comes from metaphor or ethology as forms of admiration, or offering reasons why animals ‘deserve’ a better future through diminished human-generated torture and murder, where hope still relies on the animal proving itself. Abolitionism is love, because it makes us accountable for the expression of a passion – love – without demand for reciprocity or intervention – grace – that leads to leaving nonhuman animals alone by not intervening in their use for any reason.

In *The Way of Love* Irigaray states:

To suppose Being as the whole of being as ground does not take account of the ground that the relation between human beings represents. This relation does not realise itself as the result of a gathering of human beings, of people for example. It takes place each time between two subjects… The relation between those who are the same and different weaves a groundless ground. It corresponds neither to the abyss nor to nothingness but results from an act of grounding which does not end in any ground.(2002b: 72)

This natural ground reflects Serres’ natural contract, where the ground is the queer territory through which the nonhuman emerges, rather than a mapped dialectic social space occupied by two in opposition. Queer ground is natural ground in its capacity for welcoming endless affects and expressions and exploiting the mobilisations these afford, ethically via action – the activity of an organism based on the ways it is affected - and passions – the phenomenon of relations which occurs between organisms as they originate outside the organism but affect it nonetheless. There is no need for a fetishised other to find the nonhumans we are within this queer terrain. Rethinking the nature of relation at all is enough to constitute a disempowerment of the human subject as an ethical, activist and experimental action if it seeks to avoid repetition which leads to reinstatement of the category human, in its majoritarian or minoritarian manifestation. Irigaray continues:

This real, in myself as in the other, contains in itself the possibility of blossoming. Its unfolding, its flowering, do not depend upon the making of something other. In this sense the human remains tied to nature. And when it takes root in History, without fidelity to nature, it alienates there its particularity and the task of producing it as such, among other things for the construction of a present and future History. The human also loses in this the occasion to elaborate in the present its relation with the other. And what it considers as the most human of its work then becomes non-human… which makes the human itself hybrid. (2002b: 121)

An ethical queering of the nonhuman is the act of love that comes from the self no longer understood as human and the other not sought to be understood, belonging to the same species – the ‘organism formerly known as human’ – but other to itself. Irigaray captures the capacity for nonhuman love and limitless desire without our needing to go outside the human and make another organism accountable for the failures in our own queering imagination. Even her human as hybrid is a hybrid made up of human unlikes rather than the traditional mythologised animal/human hybrid. It is a chimera of unnameable parts of the human not yet apprehended (and without need to be). This chimera is the parabolic configuration of the fabulated at one end and the natural at the other, but curved so their intimacy is closer than the point at which we believe the self emerges. Our natural animal selves are unbound through openness to affect. Deleuze states ‘[In Spinoza] animals are defined less by the abstract notions of genus and species than by a capacity for being affected, by the affections of which they are “capable”, by the excitations to which they react within the limits of their capability.’ (1988: 27) Deleuze is explicit that for Spinoza, morality is a Judgement of God, a sentiment with which Nietzsche and Artaud would agree, while ethics is an ethology which *includes man* as it is a way of thinking all interaction (thought not in an evolutionary sense which would privilege man). This both allows the ethics to remain accountable for any inevitable interaction with nonhuman animals (denying neither human nor nonhuman animal their own unique affects) and refuses a hierarchy of liberty based on claims that some affects are more noble or higher than others. Further Deleuze and Guattari claim ‘*affects are the becoming inhuman of man*’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 169 original emphasis), precluding nature from morality and the human from ethics should we remain within the realm of the signified subject. Ethics is defined by relation and specific capacities, not forms or species; queer is the ground of love which emphasises the interactivity of organisms defined through their relation, and thus all queer becomings facilitate our becoming-nonhuman.

**Conclusion: The Giving Ground**

Queer has long been about letting go of opposition, giving up binaries. Nature/Culture, Male/Female, Hetero/Homo, Flesh/Word and myriad other scaffolds of majoritarian humanist signification are challenged by queer theory. Binaries almost always operate isomorphically, where one term fails to fulfil the more desirable status of the other, and the dominant term owes a debt to the oppressed for sustaining its mythological but naturalised power, vindicated through masquerades such as science, truth, language, family, capitalism, church. For queer there is no opposite. The nonhuman has tactical referents – animals which are not human and suffer because they aren’t so, but also the ahuman becomings of the human who wishes to repudiate the isomorphic power structures which facilitate all forms of oppression. The nonhuman both does and does not have an opposite. It is no longer animal to man, but it is stood apart from the ideational concept of the human. It is not opposite, however, as to be so would forget or deny the atrocities and not be accountable for the actions perpetuated by systems which value the concept of the human over other life. So becoming nonhuman does not oppose the human – it is indeed the impetus. Unlike the posthuman which, in its most biotech chronocentric fetishistic way hyper-stylises humanist compulsions of immortality, mechanisation, manipulation and exhaustible knowledge, the nonhuman has had enough of humanist directions, and seeks multiple trajectories which acknowledge human life, whatever that means, as part of a constellation of lives to which it must be accountable, while also indulging in the jubilance of the unthought potentialities that letting go of power for grace and love elicits. In a way, the nonhuman is the object queer could never speak, for queer does not define its objects, and the nonhuman does not know its desires. These terms are nonterms which lead to the most important binary that nonhuman queer collapses – the real and the signified. The Cartesian hangover of mind and body has borne out in contemporary society through the loss of the real, however nowhere is this more evidently shown to be a First World capitalist fantasy than in the wholesale murder and torture of nonhuman animals for various ‘uses’. No amount of argument, discussion, or ‘rights’ elaboration can vindicate this. Speaking about why nonhuman animals should/should not be murdered for food, clothes or whatever use does nothing except perpetuate the denial of the singularity and suffering of the flesh of each animal whose only crime is it cannot speak within human signifying systems. Activism says very little but does an enormous amount physically; it simply stops this use, which is why abolitionism is the only ethical relation we can have with nonhuman animals. Ironically the hurl of the insult ‘queer’ has, at least for me, been replaced by equivalences based on abolitionism such as ‘extremist vegan weirdo’, or ‘animal terrorist’. All use words to insult a refusal to relate in a way that perpetuates signification over physical activism and false need over the corporeal suffering which should be the focus. Words and their intimacy with logic, reason and other elaborate denial fantasies have become the enemy of physicality. As Guattari states:

It is the body and all the desires it produces that we wish to liberate from ‘foreign’ domination. It is ‘on that ground’ that we wish to ‘work’ for the liberation of society. There is no boundary between the two elements. I oppress myself inasmuch as that I is the product of a system of oppression that extends to all aspects of living.... We can no longer allow others to turn our mucous membranes, our skin, all our sensitive area into occupied territory – territory controlled and regimented by others, to which we are forbidden access… Tirelessly it continues its dirty work of castrating, suppressing torturing, and dividing up our bodies in order to inscribe its laws on our flesh, in order to rivet to our subconscious its mechanisms for reproducing this system of enslavement. (1996: 30–1)

Nowhere is this more viscerally evident than in human treatment of nonhuman animals. While I am not in any way suggesting the liberation of nonhuman animals benefits our liberation and therefore is a reason for it, our becoming nonhuman is certainly *necessary* for any such liberation. Rethinking relations by refusing to allow signification to overwrite flesh has always been part of a queer project, in the pure reduction of sexuality to elements (one, two, many) in a unique relation that is before and beyond language. Queer subjectivity seems anathema, because if a subject is demarcated, its relation seems determined and its sexuality destined. Nonhumanity for humans is to subjectivity what queer is to sexuality – emphatically corporeal, anti-structural, without origin or destination, dependent on imagination, exploitative of unknown potentiality, and based on relations thought differently to ensure the expressivity of all entities their own experimental imagination which then circulates in a constant remapping of the world through the affects of unfamiliar actions and passions. Certainly queer does have a residual concurrence with sexuality or at least non object-oriented desire and pleasure, but for Serres grace is a form of love and abolitionist nonhuman activism is a form of grace, and certainly love is not excluded from queer desire. The love that incarnates in leaving be is the most ethical form of desire and antagonistic to traditional significations of desiring relations. As nonhumans we can speak of desiring relations with other nonhumans (ourselves included) but we also acknowledge we are inextricable from the world through our actions and affects so nature, nonhuman animals and ecology are an inevitable part of this nonhuman queer. The specificity comes in the qualitative nature of the intensities expressed and the ways these remap the cosmogenic ecology of love.

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