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DON'T BRING BACK THE PLAGUE! A POSTHUMAN APPROACH TO THE FOOD CRISIS AND ITS IDEOLOGICAL PREDICAMENT

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Abstract: Eating insects has been an ongoing topic raised in different contexts: as an exotic meal, as a solution to world hunger, as an answer to ecological-environmental issues and even as a fashion trend. We have recently seen approved the proposal for the use of two insects (cricket and beetle larva) as marketable food by the European Commission, making a total of four (if we include the migratory locust and the mealworm), in what seems like a great leap in environmental and ecological matters. These decisions are intended to face world hunger, implement a more eco-sustainable diet and reduce the impact of the ecological footprint. Truth is, sometimes they turn out to be western capitalist greenwashing. It would be important to examine the underlying implications of these measures to address the possibility we might be ignoring some background of domination, exploitation or even racism, as well as reactions evoked in the obscene playground of cultural battles. As Derrida would say, nowadays we eat the *other*. If so, the question for the otherness takes on a radically posthuman dimension. In this brief article, we will analyze this proposal from three perspectives: the role insect-eating plays in the spectacular logic of commodities, the reactionary viewpoints against it, and the status of insects as *otherness*. Thus, this article won't focus on the current sustainable alternatives to the food crisis, instead we aim to point out some symptoms in these absurd measures. Would it be too bold to question whether, from an Abrahamic eschatology, we are not invoking the plague ourselves?

Keywords: speciesism, environmentalism, animal ethics, entomophagy, post-humanism, commodities, seduction, masculinity, difference, otherness.

NU ADUCEȚI CIUMA ÎNAPOI! O ABORDARE POSTUMANĂ A CRIZEI ALIMENTARE ȘI A PREDICȚIEI SALE IDEOLOGICE

Rezumat: Consumul de insecte a fost un subiect permanent abordat în diferite contexte: ca o masă exotică, ca o soluție la foametea din lume, ca un răspuns la problemele ecologice și de mediu și chiar ca o tendință a modei. Recent, am văzut aprobată propunerea Comisiei Europene de a utiliza a două insecte (greierele și larva de gândac) ca alimente care se pot comercializa, ceea ce reprezintă un total de patru (dacă includem lăcusta migratoare și viermele de făină); în ceea ce pare a fi un mare salt în materie de mediu și ecologie. Aceste decizii sunt menite să facă față foametei în lume, să pună în aplicare o dietă mai eco-sustenabilă și să reducă impactul amprentei ecologice. Adevărul este că, uneori, ele se dovedesc a fi *greenwashing* capitalist occidental. Ar fi important să examinăm implicațiile care stau la baza acestor măsuri pentru a aborda posibilitatea de a ignora unele antecedente de dominație, exploatare sau chiar rasism, precum și reacțiile evocate pe terenul de joacă obscen al bătăliilor culturale. Așa cum ar spune Derrida, în zilele noastre îl mâncăm pe celălalt. Dacă este așa, întrebarea pentru alteritate capătă o dimensiune radical postumană. În acest scurt articol, vom analiza această propunere din trei perspective: rolul pe care consumul de insecte îl joacă în logica spectaculoasă a mărfurilor, punctele de vedere reacționare împotriva acestora și statutul insectelor ca alteritate. Astfel, acest articol nu se va concentra pe alternativele sustenabile actuale la criza alimentară, ci ne propunem să evidențiem câteva simptome în aceste măsuri absurde. Ar fi prea îndrăzneț să ne întrebăm dacă, pornind de la o escatologie avraamică, nu invocăm noi înșine ciurma?

Cuvinte-cheie: speciism, ecologism, etica animalelor, entomofagie, postumanism, mărfuri, seducție, masculinitate, diferență, alteritate.

1. Introduction: the subject of the plague

*A living, breathing piece of defecating meat
Two-legged massacre expressing glands in heat
Draining the bleed.*

Cattle Decapitation, *A living, breathing piece of defecating meat*

Let's start by addressing the elephant in the room. When I was writing the script for the 4th National Conference "Human Nature, Culture, Technology", I realized that the title may be confusing. Why use a pejorative term such as "plague", when the aim of the article is to provide a posthuman analysis on insect speciesism? It is common that the classification western writers use for animals is framed within a division between *undesirable* animals, regarded as disposable, and *desirable* ones¹, and that this framework has to do with economic issues, that is, works in proportion to the potential impact on economic profits². The usage of this word is precisely what a speciesist, someone who would consider insects a "plague" that interferes with human-made spaces, would say regarding insect consumption. Of course, this is an obscene click-bait wordplay that will have a twist as soon as we get deeper into the article, so let's make some clarifications.

What is the plague, or who is the plague? From the standpoint of Christian eschatology, it is clear: the insects are the "plague" we're unconsciously bringing upon the Earth through all these Babylon-the-whoreish measures. This is obviously the position of conservative, reactionary, and/or extreme right-winged individuals and/or politicians subjected to Christian, platonic and anthropocentric ideologies. These ideologies are described by Frans De Waal as *anthropodenial*³, which is the tendency of some individuals within Christian-platonic ideological framework to deny its own animality,

depicting features of human body that may look “animal” (hair, fluids, excrements, body odors, and so on), setting a hierarchical supremacy towards nonhuman animals. This western way of thought dates to the first Hellenic/Christian civilizations and it's rooted in the fear and anguish of our own finitude and mortality, with the raw materiality (flesh, fluids, and bones) of the body as its core. If we think about it, we can see the influence of the same fear and anguish in masculinity. Masculine predicaments deny emotions such as empathy and compassion, driven by the same fear and rejection of the body's natural vulnerability, fragility, and finitude. Here, we surely found the plague. Indeed, one of the declinations of this “plague” is the whole conglomerate of reactionary conservatives, chauvinists, and Internet *redpilled* crypto fascists who cling on this kind of measures to fuel the imaginary of a hyper spectacular cultural war between leftist, vegan, communist, LGTB, pro-abortion activist and traditional, hypergamous, racist, protestant, traditionalist subjects. We can also find this *anthropodenial* in the core of today's Internet dialectics, from Tumblr to 4chan's Trump supporters, known as the *online culture wars*⁴.

Call me crazy, but could we find any underlying truth in the reactionary pathos? Conservatives and far-right activists have a good eye when it comes to identifying measures taken by white liberal leftists that are linked to market practices, product-placement, or other forms of exploitation. Even when both conservatives and alienated status-quo-friendly consumers can't point out the structural issue behind the multiple crises, or the link between patriarchy and capitalism; it seems there's a point being made, some intuition about those kinds of measures “not being enough” to face current global problems. Could that be a projection of resentment stemming from their recently failed neoliberal American dream? Maybe the fact that this mass of neoliberals and conservatives can identify very well which is the western pseudo-activist trick in the decisions taken by so-called progressive governments and institutions is because they are used to the same political practices in their own block. What underlines the “not enough” argument is the resentment of not being able to use these dirty tricks themselves, since they're incompatible ideologically. We will explore this particular projection throughout the

article and why this is not about the ecology at all but rather about who has the access to the profit.

At this point we can recall the Foucauldian idea about how power, once redirected after an apparent revolutionary process, becomes doubly insidious. What we're observing are measures that might seem to seek global justice, while they are not only ineffective but obscenely counter-productive when it comes to political strategies. They're wrong not because of their statements ("we need sustainable food measures" or "we must stop contaminating"), but because they're a mere display of a *jouissance* fantasy, a political decision based on the libidinal economy. A theater that fuels both leftist pseudo-activist narcissist superego ("we're more eco-friendly now that we're forcing abstinence from meat eating") and conservative conspiracist fantasies (being able to find and fight against Babylon the whore or the elders of Sion). Here, we find the second declination of the plague, the plague of greenwashing and pink capitalism which creates the illusion we're led towards a more sustainable, fair, and eco-friendly society whereas the structural problem remains untouched.

In other words, this kind of measures are putting into display the classic fallacy of *structural problems/individual solutions*. The mechanism by which capitalism can integrate the ecologist, queer, antifa activism *pathos* back into the logic and dynamics of consumption is something already known by contemporary critical theorists⁵. This means that measures like insect-consumption, the prohibition of carbon-fuelled engines or the infamous ban on plastic straws, imposed on the common citizens have the same real-change capacity as buying an organic meal wrapped in plastic. These measures, far from solving problems, are what in psychoanalysis is called the masking of the *Real* (death, suffering, the unspeakable *thing* out there, the void, anguish) by the symbolic fantasy: "at least we're doing something" for the leftists and "the Jewish-LGTB-mason agenda" for the conspiracist, right-winged, conservatives. It is the work of posthuman philosophy, psychoanalytic critical theory, and radical ecofeminism to face off and denounce these fake "achievements" that as a society we try to convince ourselves we reached. And it is my

work to, paradoxically, find truth in reactionaries, and lies in liberals. In this sense, I am the plague.

2. Insect-consumption and the monopoly of the difference

Let me present the proposal we are trying to discuss in this article, that is, the proposal for the use of two insects, cricket and beetle larva, as marketable food by the European Commission, making a total of four if we include the migratory locust and the mealworm. The past January of this year 2023 the European commission approved that by the 8th article of the EU regulation 2015/2283 and execution regulation 2017/2470 only, and *only* two companies are going to be allowed to commercialize with two types of insects: frozen, paste, dried and powdered *Alphitobius diaperinus larvae* (dung beetle), provided by Ynsect NL B.V. and partially defatted powder of *Acheta domesticus* (house cricket) provided by Cricket One Co. Ltd. Turning to the providers, Cricket One is owned by Bicky Nguyen (Co-Founder) and Nam Dang (Co-Founder), both with an education in marketing, market research, business development and international sales management; and with experience working in institutions such as the London chamber of commerce and industry. Nam Dang is *also* the CEO of a company called MimosaTek. Guess what this business is specialized in? Services and technology applied to agriculture. About the other company, Ynsect, it suffices to say that they have Robert Downey Jr. as one of its investors, a move that can only make sense in a spectacular social system entangled in a chain of images and signifiers without any connection to the real.

Merely functioning as a hyperreal spectacle, we can ask ourselves: do we really think that Ironman is here to save the world? Obviously not, not only because in the films he is destroying the city while fighting “the evil intruder”, but also because both in the case of the insect-consumption and in the case of a “superhero” promoting it, we encounter the turn analyzed by the eighties’ Baudrillard, that is, the shift from the society of production passing over to simulation and seduction⁶. Within this paradigm, *seductive* power is that which causes an object-image or image-object to take hold of and control the

subject. These measures, and their reactionary responses, are a perfect example of how our lives are created around objects or images: “my *life* is over because I lost my *phone*”, “I can’t live without *vegan products*”, “we need to protect the *kids* from the *evil trans*”. Note how the keywords in italics happen to fall into the description of a fetishized object-image. This clarifies the symbiotic relationship between an institution like the European Commission in its need for a green-face eco-friendly *seductive* performance and several businesses which make money through “sustainable” futuristic-alternative food industry. It is much like the Starbucks of new-age food, they exploit soil and workers for profit but with an ecological facade. The lack of activism, and social and political organization in daily life is thus compensated by its simulation; consuming goods already comes with some *surplus enjoyment* by way of some ecological, sustainable, or vegan-friendly feature. That way, the consumer gains relief after consuming because they feel like they helped some cause *by buying the product*.

Now, for me as a cook with some philosophical understanding, this trick obscures something even worse. I can assure you this measure is the ultimate recycled deception, a trick to fool amnesiac consumer-driven individuals. Or, have we already forgotten that insect consumption here in southern Europe started as a luxury? Allow me to talk a bit about elite cuisine. In the 90’s we saw the commercialization of insect lollipops in Thailand (a hyperreal form of insect consumption?), and in 2012 the creation of Jimini’s, an edible (the first if I’m not wrong) fried mealworms company in France. So, we can say the boom in Europe started in 2010. Fifteen years ago, posh, bourgeois Michelin-star cooks would tell you how they went to Asia or Latin-America and “discovered” some “exotic” cuisine practices such as insect-eating. We are talking about a time where influencers, foodies, or Instagram edgy cooks weren’t yet a thing. A time when the TV, not the Internet, was still in monopoly of the media. During the 2000s’ proliferation of molecular cuisine and vanguardist-chemistry cooking, western chefs wandered around countries like Thailand, China, or México, looking for something else, new flavors. When interviewed,

they couldn't help making the typical colonist reflections: "*they* eat things like *that*", "they even consider it delicatessen", etc.

Why bring up this culinary story now? The symbolic distancing and difference between the "delicatessen-gourmet" and the "ecological choice" is the best example to understand the functioning of consumerist ideology. There's something still haunting the consumer society, the necessity of *surplus enjoyment*: the object must be more than an ordinary object. Commodities aren't merely satisfying a need but offering *something more*, they permit the consumer to keep desiring. These commodities, to gain value in the fetishized market, are elevated to a seemingly spiritual mystical dimension by being shrouded by a special veil, some brand, something that participates in the symbolic order of desire. However, this can go the other way around if they lose this mystical aura, falling from the sublime to the excremental. This is precisely what Baudrillard was describing regarding the "monopoly concentration of the production of differences"². As absurd as it may sound, the *monopoly* of the *difference* can only make sense if the differences aren't real, and the subject is integrated in the code of signs and values. Humans, after having merged with products, form relationships between each other as objects, and their *jouissance* is mediated by the social signifiers endowing certain objects of production. This gives us two clues why these measures will never really work: they aren't effectively changing anything in a structural sense, moreover, the "solution" is not a function the individual is hoping to find in them. The myth of equality is historically generated in a way that real (democratic) equality is replaced by the equality of the consumer by/from the object-image³. The consumer looks for happiness/status not only in objects, but in that particular object that would mark the difference with other objects within the symbolic codes of signs and signifiers.

We can see how commodities work as sign value, the infamous Lacanian *phallus*, that which is you more than yourself, that which tells the Other (and yourself) who you are. Food, as commodity, is used by the subject to differentially posit itself in a hierarchical scale. If you buy expensive food, your status is upgraded. Nowadays it doesn't have to be expensive, as we know from Baudrillard that exchange value has

been overshadowed by the sign value², but it must participate in a code, as that object at “the top”. We can also tell how the industry will then exploit *that* object once marked by differentiation, first producing it as expensive and genuine, then as affordable copies. This allows the individual to posit itself in a group, namely, the bourgeois, therefore establishing the difference with other groups, namely, the poor. Industrial revolution and the advent of consumer society give the object its revenge upon humans by making it the ruler of their hierarchies.

Which is the paradox? Hierarchies aren't immutable, they change and so do their signifiers. Insect dishes would mean nothing without their place in the code, for they must enter a relationship with its announcer, the big Other, in this case the Michelin star cooks. There's a joke I say a lot whenever I encounter a graphic designer that can exemplify this: “*PCs are for real jobs, Macs are for fake jobs*”. iPhones aren't valued by its use or its factory price, but by the space they share with other signs: iPad, iMac, Steve Jobs, Air Pods, the fetishized future imaginary, white futuristic aesthetic in sci-fi films, etc. We can observe this logic operate in the famous movie by David Frankel, *The Devil Wears Prada*, in the scene with the cerulean blue dress where Mirandas' lecture explains the shift in its sign-value, from a De la Renta fashion collection, to a bargain on a sale.

The disintegration of the consumer's fantasy happens when instead of luxury (obscene and perverted champagne over white pearls), insects are shown as an ethical, environmental, sustainable choice. In this case chefs don't have what Baudrillard refers to as “the difference monopoly”, insects as food commodity are reduced to not-too-expensive gourmet experiences in some restaurants (like one here in Catalunya, *El Santuari de la Gleva*), or wacky ordinary commodities like lollipops. Regarding insect-consumption, people can't set a hierarchical difference in its status anymore. It lacks some *seductive* dimension. That is why veganism and vegetarianism only became commodified by industry and business alongside seductive advertising which exploited a niche identity that was emerging on the Internet, creating an obscene mass-produced spectacle and marking “the difference” with its signs and memes. With that, veganism stopped

being *only* an ethical choice of resistance, but became *also* a commodity. This is not an attack on the true vegan, vegetarian and antispeciesist community, this is a reminder of how capitalism integrates whatever it can exploit, using its techniques and mechanisms: spectacle, seduction, advertising, objects, images, appearances, insecurities, trauma, existential emptiness, etc.

3. Reactions, reactions everywhere

The reaction to these measures, as we said in the beginning, are even worse, and are rooted in the same logic of the privileging difference. That's why the reactionary response against "moralist" types of measures such as using electric cars, paper straws, saving water, or eating less meat, is usually led by western, conservative, neoliberal, consumerist individuals forming a mob/mass. Because they are losing the monopoly of the difference on two aspects. First, as we already know, the uprising of social causes like feminism, transfeminism, anticolonialism, BLM, queer-LGTB movements; fighting, taking back, and occupying the social field, is threatening the white cis privileged man from being the central subject of discourse and enunciation. Secondly, these subjects, once in privilege to contaminate and eat meat, know that we live in a world of contradictions where only the rich are excluded and exempt from certain social and moral norms, obligations, laws, prohibitions, etc. Therefore, the only ones allowed to transgress these ethical mandates and play the object-difference logic are the extraordinarily rich, using private jets, eating hundred-dollar stakes or staying at 5-star hotels wasting water. The alienated mass of *status-quo* does not dislike these measures because they are not ethical enough, but because the access to the high sphere of symbolic objects is getting increasingly more expensive and exclusive, facing them with the realization that they were never rich, neither upper nor middle class. They have been expelled from the class they thought they occupied. This social phenomenon and its perception were studied by Adorno as one of the factors of extreme right-wing uprisings¹⁰.

This scenario causes the psychoanalytic effect known as *jouir de l'autre*, where male chauvinists, 4channers and redditors blame the leftists/LGTB/BLM movement because they are “stealing” the access to the symbolic code of objects and images. They, the Trumpists for example, perceive their *jouissance* being stolen by *them/the others* (immigrants, women, trans...) This *jouissance* of the other takes the form of “I would be X (happy, rich, etc.) if it wasn't for Y (immigrants, women, etc.)”. By observing how women, queer and black people seize the power, they find themselves to be the powerless and the victims, having no option but to build an alternative universe where the powerful subjects are in fact powerless or evil. This Nietzschean creative resentment is what generates the strawman of “evil rioters”, “cultural Marxists”, “perverted trans”, “LGTB globalist agenda”, “Franco-Judeo-Masonic evil plan”, etc.

Concerning this article, it looks like insect food was only okay as far as it implied some rich excess, some obscene enjoyment, a transgression of a certain taboo; now that it is supposedly “the law”, it is not desired anymore and is seen as a violent attempt to change the normality. In fact, now that “the law” is “marked” by the ecological, feminist, queer code, a Batailllean take on that would suggest that the most normal thing to expect is that the subject would try to transgress and go against it.

4. Insects, the other *otherness*

We can now get to the hard posthumanist point. Reactionaries think that veganism, antispeciesism or queer ideology is a trend that is creating a new differential symbolic system of objects which is taking space in the social as commodity flux within the neoliberal market. And even if they are not completely wrong, it is not fundamentally true. Truth is that these movements such as antispeciesism are aiming (in a more or less commodified form, but that is an inevitable reality within capitalism) towards the topic of the century, the *otherness*. This is why, from a truly critical standpoint, insect eating is bad not because it is too radical but because it is not radical enough.

By conceiving insects as commodities, they are expelled from the realm of the otherness in order to become food, following a long history of sentient beings that are objectified. Insects, and obviously other animals, are the last resort for an ethical standpoint. Why? If we take the famous Levinas' phrase, "it is impossible for a human to kill something with a face"; then it follows that the process of objectifying enables the murder. We are stuck in a challenging situation: we must avoid any intent of anthropomorphizing to respect the others' sovereignty as *others*, at the same time, we need to be able to expand the circle of concerns and compassion to integrate this otherness as "weness"¹¹. The other must remain something we cannot link with, neither give nor erase its face. The moment we can link with it, it ceases to be the other. We need to deconstruct again the *otherness* because we failed at incorporating it into our structures of thought. The otherness should be found in that, the exclusion of which (human and nonhuman) we have naturalized to such a degree that we can no longer see them as our *other*.

Who is expelled from their rights nowadays? Those whose whole life and body are used as a metaphor or analogy for derogatory language: "pesky bee", "gypsy moth", "treated like an insect". Analogies then used in a "human scale" to discriminate sexually and racially those marginalized by the heterocapitalistic biopower¹². Insect speciesism employs similar rhetoric reinforcing discrimination patterns also found in racism, colonialism, and white supremacy. Derrida already claimed in the 90's that today in the west the other is being eaten¹³. Today the nonhuman other is the animal, the forest, the river, or the insect -apart from all humans marginalized by the biopower matrix. It is not a trend; it's a wakeup call from the fascist-capitalist illusion. Antispeciesism, veganism and radical empathy is not only posthuman but the ethical concept of our times in a Hegelian sense.

The big issue with insect speciesism is that it is usually reduced to nutritional facts. All you find in articles is how much protein insects can contribute to our "modest and sustainable diet", but you won't find any interrogation into whether we are applying the same *anthropodenialist* formula that we use for other nonhuman animals

that we eat. We should conceive our interaction with insects in terms of how we (the world, the *natura naturata*) really need them: they perform beneficial activities within our myriad ecosystems, they pollinate the plants, they're the foundation of the food chain. The ones able to draw a line between a chicken and a dog are the same ones that now paradoxically draw the line when it comes to insects "because it is gross" not because it is "ethically problematic". At this point I don't know which predicament is less ethical, not eating insects or eating them. Having said that, this need not apply to the Indigenous people, non-capitalistic societies or other cultures who have had and still have symbiotic relationships with insects; especially considering how those symbiotic relationships were violently severed by colonialism and capitalism. We know from indigenous activists, such as the Innuits Sheila Watt-Cloutier and Rosemary Kuptana, that far from speciesism (in the same sense that there was strictly speaking no racism before colonialism), Indigenous people have a long history of symbiotic cohabitation, cultivating respect and gratitude towards the environment.

What is obscene in this proposal is that activists have been pointing out the evidence for the need for a better relationship with insects, not only because they were inhabiting the Earth long before us, but because they play an essential role in the maintenance of the global ecosystem. And now we are proposing to mass produce them for consumption?

5. Conclusion

*Dig their graves. They'll find a way to rid the world
of finding new tomorrows. End of days.
Dig those graves. Bring back the plague. Even if it
means your own survival. Is at stake.
Dig your grave!*

Cattle Decapitation, *Bring back the plague.*

Now we can draw some concluding thoughts. What can we learn from the reactions against these resolutions? First, the obvious, that this is not a real solution but a political roleplay which serves both the illusion of the institutions taking eco-friendly solutions, and the opening of a market that will surely spawn a monopoly. Second, this market is not only cultural appropriation of foreign and indigenous cultures but also the inscription of these within the architecture, economic system and apparatus which fundamentally go against any symbiotic relationship with nature and the others.

Let us recall some psychoanalytic features operating in the background. The reactionary far right position against this measure masks their insecurities. Conservatives, white, cis, occidental individuals reveal a fragility when it comes to supporting ethical causes, as we can see in some social media claims or memes like “they want us to eat insects while the rich are going to keep eating meat”, unconsciously overlooking the central point. It is not unlike the reproaches towards Greta Thunberg, questioning if she would be so brave against Chinese factories. Between the lines we can recognise the masculine impotence of observing someone else stand for a cause they would never have the courage nor put the effort to defend. We can even draw a parallelism with other cases of resentment, when they attack the feminist movement asking them to “go to Islamic countries and go topples for freedom”. The ideological battle underneath all this is not between progressivists and conservatives but against the sexist hypergamic chauvinist male framework which prevents the subject from stopping eating meat in order to perform their carbon heavy masculinity¹⁴ or hard body masculinity¹⁵. This pathos expresses how masculinity as “fake” must compensate for the void of subjectivity (recall the Lacanian maxims “*the woman doesn't exist*” or “*there's no sexual relationship*” as an indication that there are no hard, universal, complementary, immobile identities) with their big trucks, big cars, big engines or big steaks. This is what in psychoanalysis is referred to as the *phallus* (the thing that is *you* more than yourself) that prevents the castration: the “big daddy macho-man” with a beard and a sword that observes all males from above and

impedes them from showing emotions, being empathic, understanding their own vulnerability, being kind, etc.

To sum up, we are facing the same anthropocentric “patch” solutions that not only are not solving anything at structural level (in fact they participate in the capitalistic logic), but on top of that keep asserting the same supremacy towards the other that we have already seen in colonialism. There is an obvious difference between the longevity of entomophagy practices in non-capitalistic areas and the consuming and farming of the insects as commodities or greenwashing strategies. Again, we’re stuck in a tricky situation. Yes, consuming insect as a mass-produced commodity is wrong from an ecological, antispeciesist and anti-capitalistic approach, but those unable to eat insects because it is gross hold an anthropodenialist approach to the *other* (“insects are dirty, viscous, sticky”) which posits the human as an angelic being in contrast to the earthly-unholy-animals; which may be even worse than eating them. The challenge is not a joke, we must push the boundaries as far as we can. We must stop the colonization and market appropriation of certain practices that won’t change the structure of violence and exploitation. If we really want to learn about insects, we had better transform our relationship with them into a more peaceful and compassionate cohabitation. They can teach us how to live more slowly and decelerate the capitalist machine.

Which brings us to the last thoughts. What does all this symbolic performance mask? Obviously the brutal and raw Lacanian *Real* beneath our constructed reality: mass murder of nonhuman animals, the destruction of all ecosystems known to mankind and the horrendous famine in the Global South caused by exploitation, wars and extractivist capitalism. This is all there is, fascist racism and homicidal capitalism. We can look up some data and see why there’s only hope in a post-capitalist, post-humanist, and ecofeminist world. There are 110M people living in extreme poverty¹⁶. In 2009, we already had the capacity to feed 10Bilion people¹⁷, and even so, more than 25.000 people die from starvation every day¹⁸.

We don’t need fake non-solutions; we need radical actions in a structural way. We need social organization and direct action towards

those killing us all, human and nonhuman animals. We need to seize the public space to create, for example, communal allotments where to grow sustainable eco-friendly veggies. Recalling Timothy Morton's term hyperobject¹⁹, capitalism is a huge hyperobject that sticks to and surrounds everything, which means that if we take down meat, plastic, and gas production, we are going to erase so many workplaces and paralyze capital circulation in such a way, that it will lead the global economy to its brutal collapse. As far as we keep engaging with the logic of capitalism and patriarchy, we are propagating murder, and that is the least bad scenario. There are no happy solutions nor upbeat applied humanities/sciences here. We are so used to this neoliberal mentality of negative liberty that, the moment scarcity affects meat, water or gas *for real*, everyone is going to face the *Real*. It won't be just a plague; it is already the apocalypse.

Notes:

¹ Kelsi Nagy and Phillip David Johnson II, 2013, "Introduction", in Nagy, K. and Johnson II, P.D. (Eds), *Trash Animals: How We Live with Nature's Filthy, Feral, Invasive, and Unwanted Species* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press): 1-28.

² Mahendra Rai and Avinash Ingle, 2012, «Role of nanotechnology in agriculture with special reference to management of insect pests» *Applied Microbiology and Biotechnology*, 94, no. 2: 287-93, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00253-012-3969-4>.

³ Martha Nussbaum, 2013, *Political emotions: why love matters for justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 159.

⁴ Angela Nagle, 2017, *Kill all normies: online culture wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right* (Zero Books).

⁵ I strongly recommend the chapter *What if you held a protest and everyone came?* In Fisher, *Capitalism*, 12.

⁶ Jean Baudrillard, 1990, *Seduction* (New World Perspectives: Montreal).

⁷ Jean Baudrillard, 1998, *The consumer society: myths and structures* (SAGE Publications: London), 89.

⁸ Jean Baudrillard, 1998, *The consumer society: myths and structures* (SAGE Publications: London), 49-51.

⁹ Jean Baudrillard, 1981, *For a critique of the political economy of the sign* (St. Louis: Telos Press), 121.

¹⁰ *At the same time, this tendency towards concentration still creates the possibility of constantly downgrading strata of society that were clearly bourgeois in terms of their subjective class consciousness [...] [by which] they lay the blame for their own potential downgrading not on the apparatus that causes it, but on those who were critical towards the system in which they once had status [...]*

¹¹ Martha Nussbaum, 2013, *Political emotions: why love matters for justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 179.

¹² Nina Held, 2016, "'They look at you like an insect that wants to be squashed': An ethnographic account of the racialized sexual spaces of Manchester's Gay Village", *Sexualities*, 20, no. 5-6: 535-557 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716676988>.

¹³ Jacques Derrida, 1989-1990 *Manger l'autre: politiques de l'amitié*. Unpublished seminar archived in the Derrida Collection /Critical Theory Collection/ Special Collections and Archives/ UCI Library, California, USA. Box 10, files 8 - 15.

¹⁴ Stacy Alaimo, 2016, "Climate Systems, Carbon-Heavy Masculinity, and Feminist Exposure". In *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

¹⁵ Susan Jeffords, 1994, *Hard bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press).

¹⁶ "Poverty and shared Prosperity 2020 ", Issuu, accessed November 21, 2020, <https://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9781464816024>.

¹⁷ Eric Holt-Giménez, Annie Shattuck, Miguel Altieri, Hans Herren & Steve Gliessman, 2012, "We Already Grow Enough Food for 10 billion People ... and Still Can't End Hunger", *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*, 36, no.6: 595-598, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10440046.2012.695331>.

¹⁸ Noticias ONU, 2018, "El desprecio por los pobres en Estados Unidos conduce a políticas crueles", *Noticias ONU*, June 4, <https://news.un.org/es/story/2018/06/1435081>.

¹⁹ Timothy Morton, 2013, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and ecology after the end of the world* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

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