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**FROM XENOFEMINISM TO DOMESTIC REALISM: SOME NOTES ON
HELEN HESTER'S WRITINGS POST-LABORIA CUBONIKS**

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Abstract: This paper discusses the recent texts of Helen Hester, a contemporary feminist theorist, in relation to the writings of Laboria Cuboniks, a feminist collective she was a member of. On the one hand, I critically discuss some of the main concepts underlying xenofeminism, a contemporary strand of feminism revolving around the refunctionalization of technology and the introduction of neo-rationalist tenets in feminist thought, developed by the collective Laboria Cuboniks in their 2015 *Xenofeminist Manifesto*. On the other hand, I want to propose that some of the shortcomings of these initial xenofeminist concepts are solved in the separate writings of one of the collective's members, Helen Hester. I begin by situating xenofeminism in the context of left-accelerationism, a philosophy upon which they build their theoretical framework, comprising ontological anti-naturalism, neo-rationalism and a counter-hegemonic approach to politics. Then, I introduce the two key terms I engage from xenofeminism, hyperstition and technology, and demonstrate how Hester nuances their usage in her own works. Finally, I use the term mesopolitics to define Hester's overall recent project and to help situate it in wider debates surrounding post-work politics and reproductive work.

Keywords: xenofeminism, Helen Hester, left-accelerationism, domestic realism, reproductive work.

Nowadays, seeing someone use the term “accelerationism” to define their political views has definitely become a rare sighting¹, but there was a time in the 2010s that, to some, deserves to be remembered as “the accelerationist years” (Terranova 2022, 7). In that fervid context, fueled by the publishing of *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* in 2014, left-accelerationism² was supposed to herald a new way of doing leftist political theory. Not only did it seek to wake us from the neoliberal “dogmatic slumber” causing an omnipresent “reflexive impotence” (Fisher 2009, 21), but left-accelerationism also acknowledged the need to develop thorough analyses and long-term strategies, tactics, and plans to tackle the sprawling complexity of the capitalist system (Srnicsek & Williams 2016, 16). Despite its many supporters and adherents, left-accelerationism was also met with various criticisms, probably the most relevant one for this paper being the gendered bias of its initial proponents. It was definitely difficult to find any women or queer persons among the first public voices supporting accelerationism (Reza Negarestani, Ray Brassier, Peter Wolfendale, Nick Srnicsek, Alex Williams, etc.)³, which led Alexander R. Galloway to humorously call this theoretical entourage “Bromethanism” (2017). Reacting precisely to the lack of gender discussions within the accelerationist discourse, a group of six women who met each other in 2014 at a workshop dedicated to accelerationism and neo-rationalism formed “Laboria

¹ There are, indeed, exceptions, such as the very recent publishing of *Cute Accelerationism*, by Maya B. Kronic and Amy Ireland (2024). I will not discuss here the specifics of this new strand of accelerationism, because this text does not deal with the convoluted genealogies and differences between the many types of accelerationism.

² Accelerationism is sometimes used as an overarching umbrella term for a variety of very different political orientations (ranging, quite idiosyncratically, from the left to the far-right). The term is used in this paper specifically with its leftist connotation, which I will explain below. See Matt Colquhoun, “Nowhere Fast: What Happened to Accelerationism?” (2023) for a discussion regarding some of accelerationism’s main strands.

³ It is worth mentioning, however, that the *Accelerationist Reader* also had entries written by women, such as Tiziana Terranova, Luciana Parisi, Patricia Reed etc., but they were undoubtedly less visible at the time compared to their male counterparts.

Cuboniks,”⁴ a moniker under which they published the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* in 2015⁵.

Laboria Cuboniks’ main interest was in “stripping Accelerationism for parts” (Hester 2018a), which meant taking certain conceptual elements from accelerationism and refunctionalizing them in a theory of gender. The significance of their move was double: on the one hand, to show critics such as Galloway that accelerationism was not just a “men’s playground,” and, on the other hand, even more importantly, to demonstrate accelerationism’s capacity for being usefully extended towards multiple social ends, such as gender issues. Before critically assessing the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* and its reworkings of left-accelerationism, a brief acquaintance with the latter’s main theoretical tenets is in order. There are three main elements of left-accelerationism that I propose as the theoretical building blocks upon which Laboria Cuboniks build their xenofeminism. Ranging from the most abstract to the most practical, these are: Prometheanism, neo-rationalism, and counter-hegemony.

Two different contemporary⁶ conceptualizations of Prometheanism can be referenced here. One stems from Alberto Toscano, who directly tackles Prometheus’s myth and extracts from it a vision of Promethean politics wherein humans should revolt against “infinite authority” and which places on them an “unconditional demand for emancipation” (Toscano 2009, 254; 255). Toscano proposes an active emancipation of humanity and an outright refusal of the supposed finitude of our political capabilities, underlining the importance of action against resignation. Some problems with Toscano’s Promethean vision were directly discussed by Helen Hester (2017). However, there is another, more ontological conceptualization of Prometheanism, whose echoes are prevalent throughout the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*: that of Ray Brassier. Brassier’s Prometheanism derives from his reading of Wilfrid Sellars, particularly the latter’s idea

⁴ Their name is an anagram constructed by rearranging the letters of “Nicolas Bourbaki” (Hester 2016), itself a pseudonym elected by a famous group of French mathematicians from the 20th century who worked on pure mathematics and was notable, among others, for introducing the concept of “mathematical structure”. For a possible link between Bourbaki’s attempt to conceptualise structures in mathematics and the general interest in structuralism in other fields of study, see Aubin 1997.

⁵ Although the pseudonym was supposed to help keep their anonymity, the identities of the 6 women were made public soon afterwards: Helen Hester, Lucca Fraser, Amy Ireland, Diann Bauer, Katrina Burch and Patricia Reed (Lewis 2019).

⁶ The history of Prometheanism is much larger, with its roots stretching back towards the Ancient Greece, but this paper focuses solely on the two contemporary views of Prometheanism due to their relevance for the subject of left-accelerationism and, implicitly, xenofeminism.

regarding “the myth of the given.”⁷ Disentangling the many implications of this Sellarsian reading for Prometheanism (and neo-rationalism) is beyond the scope of this paper. Briefly put, Brassier claims that nothing is naturally “given.” On the contrary, everything is constructed, and humanity’s capacity to transform the world and the concept of the “human” itself is potentially infinite (Brassier 2014, 470). Whereas Toscano’s claims were mostly political, Brassier’s aim is to reconfigure certain ontological conceptions, namely to deontologise finitude and to explicitly advocate for an ontological anti-naturalism. This anti-naturalism is obvious in the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*, from their claim of being “adamantly synthetic” (0x07) to the ending line, which explicitly reads: “If nature is unjust, change nature!” (0x1A)⁸.

Openly declaring that “xenofeminism is a rationalism” (0x04) is bound to stir a few critical responses, as it has already done (Goh 2019; Gleeson 2019). However, before jumping to conclusions regarding the use of a loaded term such as “rationalism,” it is important to accurately locate the meaning Laboria Cuboniks assigns to this term in their works. Neo-rationalism (the preferred term in left-accelerationist writings) has been popularised through the recent writings of Ray Brassier, Reza Negarestani, and Peter Wolfendale, who have been influenced by American analytic philosophers such as the above-mentioned Wilfrid Sellars and Robert Brandom. Far from being an essentialist, Cartesian rationalism, neo-rationalism is predicated on an understanding of reason as a socially embedded practice—“reason has its roots in social construction, in communal assessment, and in the manipulability of conditionals embedded in modes of inference” (Negarestani 2014, 454). Thus, reason is not something immutable, “given” naturally to humans. Instead, reason results from linguistic practices, which open the possibility of a “deontic game of giving and asking for reasons” (Negarestani 2014, 432), consequently helping to shape social organisations based on negotiating and revising the validity of different rules. Far from excluding the necessary criticism of an entire problematic lineage of the term “rationalism,” left-accelerationism and xenofeminism use a specific understanding of this term which entails that reason is infinitely and

⁷ For Sellars’s own exposition of his ideas regarding the “given”, see *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (originally published in 1956).

⁸ For availability reasons, I will be quoting the paragraphs from the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* as they appear in the version available on the following website: <https://laboriacuboniks.net/manifesto/xenofeminism-a-politics-for-alienation/>. Furthermore, for brevity reasons, I will be using the abbreviation *XFM* from now on, when referring to the manifesto.

continually revisable, thus implicitly welcoming these challenges and revisions of the term itself.

The two characteristics outlined above have a certain philosophical allure to them, but xenofeminism also salvaged an overtly practical aspect from left-accelerationism: the desire to mount a counter-hegemonic offensive to capitalism based on “large-scale, collective social organisation” (XFM, 0x09) and built from a structural and systematic analysis of capitalism (XFM, 0x05). This necessity to abstract the primary characteristics of capitalism and to place them in a systematic picture striving towards exhaustion mirrors Nick Srnicek & Alex Williams’s call for an anticapitalist project which starts by recognizing the complexity of capitalism. Consequently, any such project “will require an ambitious, abstract, mediated, complex, and global approach” (Srnicek & Williams 2016, 12). Laboria Cuboniks repeats Srnicek & Williams’s criticism towards what the latter call “folk politics,”⁹ accusing the “excess of modesty in feminist agendas of recent decades” (XFM, 0x05) and supplanting it with a counter-hegemonic approach supposed to combine “an updated way of thinking politics [...] with an upgraded way of doing politics” (Srnicek & Williams 2016, 13).

Laboria Cuboniks extends the framework borrowed from left-accelerationism to accommodate gender issues. Prometheanism, or ontological anti-naturalism, is visible, for example, in their call for “gender abolitionism.” This abolitionism does not give in to the problematic position of erasing all the differences between gendered people or genders in general—that would mean neglecting the historical way in which “gendered” labels have been used predominantly against women or queer people. Instead, xenofeminism challenges the structural inequalities resulting from the marginalisation and discrimination caused by gendered traits. Since nothing is “given,” not even gender, we could construct as many genders as we wanted and “[l]et a hundred sexes bloom!” (XFM, 0x0E), thereby dismantling the supposed superiority of certain gendered traits over others. Advocating neo-rationalism also leads xenofeminists to reconsider science, especially a science dislocated from its current patriarchal domination (XFM, 0x04),

⁹ For Srnicek & Williams, “folk politics” denote a set of predominantly deficient features present in many contemporary leftist movements which impede the actual instantiation of a post-capitalist society. To them, the main problem with “folk politics” is that they privilege “the transient, the small-scale, the unmediated and the particular” (2016, 12), favouring tactics converging around immediacy, horizontalism, localism etc.

and technology. While the problem of technology requires more critical discussion, it is worth noting that technology seems to be one of the main instruments xenofeminists seek to use to “re-engineer the world” (XFM, 0x02). Repurposing technologies would be one of the main methods for achieving their goals. A counter-hegemonic movement could also be established through technology, specifically by building different platforms (digital and ideally also material) for “connection, organisation, and skill-sharing” (XFM, 0x0C). Even though their primary goal would probably be resurrecting a sense of solidarity present in the cyberfeminist online circles of the 1990s (XFM, 0x13), one should be wary of how trustful xenofeminists are regarding platforms—especially given the recent criticism towards “platform capitalism” (Srnicek 2016).

I have already hinted above that xenofeminism has previously received its share of criticisms. In what remains of this article, I want to add to the critical debates surrounding two particular elements of the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*: those of hyperstition and technology. Many other terms from the Manifesto have been criticised before, such as alienation (Goh 2019; Lewis 2019), universalism (Goh 2019), and rationalism (Gleeson 2019). In choosing the two mentioned above, I aim to bring a new dimension to this critical discussion. Afterwards, I will attempt to show how a member of Laboria Cuboniks, Helen Hester, manages to solve most of the initial ambiguities and misconceptions surrounding these concepts in her writings—both in texts published by herself and in the latest book co-authored with Nick Srnicek. There are two reasons for showcasing Helen Hester’s work as a possible route for smoothing out the asperities found in the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*: on the one hand, out of the six members of Laboria Cuboniks, Hester is the one to directly engage feminist theory the most (Hester & Srnicek 2023); on the other hand, Hester is also the member who has written most extensively on xenofeminism, trying to offer her own version of the term on numerous occasions (Hester 2016; 2017; 2018a; 2018b).

Defining “hyperstition” turns out to be quite a challenging task¹⁰. The term was popularised by Nick Land and the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit, a group of “rogue academics” who convened at the University of Warwick in the 1990s, where they sought to push the boundaries of academic disciplines in many experimental ways

¹⁰ I have also discussed elsewhere how “hyperstition” has been an important concept for some Romanian performance artists. See Țapu, “Travelling Theory-Fiction. A Romanian Case Study”.

(Reynolds 2009). To make sense of its meaning and avoid pitfalls associated with the term's complicated history, the sense in which hyperstition will be used throughout this article is borrowed from Luciana Parisi and Robin Mackay (both ex-members of the CCRU). Parisi defines its scope as “a thought experiment or an enabler of the future” (Parisi 2017, 215), while Mackay brings more clarity to hyperstition's actual method, that of making “fictions [...] real through collective practice” (Mackay 2012). A hyperstition is a collective thought experiment that seeks to materialise a “fiction” into reality in the future. One of the main issues with this term is its mystical allure, or, differently put, its innate similarity with what we would popularly call wishful thinking. Hyperstition does not circumscribe any practical ways through which one could instantiate the particular fiction they envision, instead focusing on the imaginative side of things, on the activity of collectively “hoping” to make something happen.

It is not my desire to conflate the significance hyperstition holds for Laboria Cuboniks's xenofeminist project, as the term explicitly appears in their Manifesto only once (OxOD). I bring up this notion and critically assess its practical utility because this endeavour also seems to echo the opinions of some of Laboria Cuboniks's members. As they overtly declare in one of their interviews, some members of the collective have “many reservations regarding hyperstition,” mainly because “it mystifies the labour of thinking, rationality, and construction of a future” (Cuboniks 2016a)¹¹. Instead of helping usher in a new future, hyperstition could backfire in the opposite direction and obscure the complex practical work which should be done to construct that desired future. In the end, besides being a placeholder term, which signals a wish of changing the world and arriving at different futures, hyperstition does not aid us in grasping what actions people should actually undertake to construct and achieve those futures.

Laboria Cuboniks were not the only ones, at the time, to develop an anxious relationship with ideas coming from Nick Land. Given the latter's recent explicit turn

¹¹ In this particular interview, the members of Laboria Cuboniks who answer the different questions are identified through their initials. Thus, we can assume that behind the initials “LC-DB”, the member who directly asserted her worry regarding hyperstition, stands Diann Bauer. This also proves, positively, I would say, that the group was continuously discussing their uses of different terms and their validity, seeking to revise their own positions in future works.

towards right-libertarianism¹², several of his associates started to move away from his ideas – including, most prominently perhaps, Reza Negarestani¹³, but also the likes of Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, who wrote their “Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics” (2014) specifically against Land’s version of accelerationism. In her most recent writings, Helen Hester, too, seems to be straying away from hyperstition and towards a more nuanced position regarding the methods for building an anti-capitalist future.

A certain orientation towards the future is still prevalent in Hester’s texts post-Laboria Cuboniks. However, how she theorises these methods in which said future can be instantiated has changed, giving way to a more materialist theory of gender. On the one hand, hyperstition’s naïve imaginative investment in an alternative future has been supplanted by planning and strategizing as the main tools to change the world and, implicitly, the future. Hester’s latest book, co-authored with Nick Srnicek, looks at various historical ways in which the home—seen here as a terrain for genuine political demands—has been transformed under different political regimes. In doing so, they attempt to extract elements that could help transform the home into a site aiding the struggle for a post-work world (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 11). On the other hand, Hester’s focus is no longer on an overarching gender theory (ambitions relatively obvious in the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*), instead narrowing in on a single, though very important point, that of social reproduction.

Tackling social reproduction, Hester both enters Marxist feminist debates surrounding this subject—also theorised by the likes of Vogel (1983) and Armstrong (2021)—and extends it into the field of post-work politics. Hester and Srnicek’s book is,

¹² Traces of libertarianism were already visible in Land’s texts from the 1990s and early 2000s, later collected in *Fanged Noumena*, but an explicit avowal of neo-reactionary and right-libertarian ideas was voiced on his now-archived blog *Xenosystems*, at the beginning of 2010s.

¹³ Negarestani’s case is particularly interesting and deserves a longer footnote. After publishing one of the most famous “theory-fictional” writings in 2008 (*Cyclonopedia*), Negarestani moved away from most of the ideas and formal procedures pertaining to this type of texts. He relinquished stylistic ambiguity and formal fragmentariness in favour of a more systematic and clear approach, and started recovering many ideas from so-called “analytic philosophy”, giving up most of his interest in figures seminal for *Cyclonopedia*, such as Deleuze&Guattari, Bataille etc. However, in the period when Laboria Cuboniks also appeared (2013-2015), Negarestani’s own texts seemed to struggle with a “Landian shadow”. Even though his “Labor of the Inhuman” text was seminal in introducing neo-rationalism and many tenets of analytic philosophy to a mostly continental-informed public, some of his ideas regarding temporality, most notably the future actively acting on the present and past, seem conspicuously reminiscent of Land’s own conception of time. Negarestani later openly criticised Land for his “philosophically and politically conservative” ideas (2018). In a way, Negarestani’s case seems paradigmatic for an entire generation of thinkers who had started at the time to reevaluate their relationship to Land and his concepts.

for the most part, a historical analysis of the different gendered components of social reproduction that have an effect on women's reproductive work and on the idea of the family in general. However, the authors explicitly attempt to link together some emancipatory elements that could become building blocks for a physical and social familial milieu that would reduce the burdens of reproductive work. Hence, they take cues from architectural projects of the past—such as the communes in Revolutionary Russia (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 115), the public affordances of Red Vienna (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 131), etc.—or address, among others, the shortcomings of the so-called equalised access to the market labour for the whole family, which was supposed to correct the nuclear family's overburdening of women (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 104). The goal would not be the complete eradication of all reproductive constraints (since some people willfully indulge in them), but instead to balance the asymmetric relation between the “realm of freedom” and the “realm of necessities,” “to reduce necessary labour (or ‘work’) as much as possible while expanding freedom (or ‘free activity’) as much as possible” (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 154-156).

Where hyperstition had only appeared once as a term in the *Xenofeminist Manifesto*, technology is a key term recurring throughout all of the major parts of the text. Such an interest in technology is not to blame, since technological infrastructures, objects, and interfaces surround us and condition our living. Even more, Laboria Cuboniks correctly assert that technology is not inherently “progressive” (XFM, ox02) and that the “real emancipatory potential of technology remains unrealized” (XFM, ox03). What I want to argue against, however, is a sort of subterranean technoutopianism structuring the collective's ideas regarding technology. Even though they start from the emancipatory assumption that technology must be dissociated from its current capitalist, profit-oriented goals (XFM, ox08), they also seem to imply that re-routing current technologies and building novel, collective ones would help usher in fundamentally different social relations.

Is that truly the directionality of the relationship between technology and society? Does technology have an inherent primacy in its structuring of social relations? Recent Marxist studies on technology echo Marx's original thoughts on this matter, showing that “technological development (the means of production) is triggered by the division of labour (the relations of production) and not the other way around”

(Pasquinelli 2023, 82). Technology would thus be, simultaneously, a crystallisation and an attempt to automate certain previous relations of production already embedded in the social structure. Adopting this view does not imply negating technology's potential utility for progressive ends. This theory's implications are, instead, twofold. First, against the utopian presumptions accepted by Laboria Cuboniks, any attempt at re-engineering existing technologies should start by correctly locating and assessing the social relations underlying them. Then, the creation of new, progressive technologies must presuppose a certain set of progressive social relations on which they could be built. If we accept that technology is primarily a tool, the people using that tool have to be intertwined in emancipatory social relations from the beginning.

Helen Hester adds some important nuances regarding the issue of technology in her writings. Recruiting certain practices surrounding technologies from the 1970s second wave of feminism, Hester offers a set of four characteristics any xenofeminist technology should display: [1] "circumnavigation of gatekeepers," [2] "status as a tool of repurposing," [3] "immersion in discourses of scalability," [4] "potential for intersectional application" (Hester 2018, 78-79). Hester's "partial, imperfect" (2018, 70) example of such a technology is the Del-Em, a "menstrual extraction device devised by American feminists in the 1970s" (Hester 2018, 70). Briefly put, Hester sees the Del-Em as a fitting example of technology because the feminists of that time had to gather the knowledge for building the devices by themselves, without relying on medical specialists [1], they had to construct it using materials initially destined for other uses [2], in building this they transformed discussions surrounding bodily autonomy and abortion into a full-fledged political problem [3], and, finally, each particular device could be built to suit the user and her specific needs, whether they were specific racial or bodily needs [4]. From her foray into the uses of the Del-Em, Hester extracts a view of technology much closer to the Marxist one sketched above. The Del-Em presupposes a social matrix of solidarity among women which permeates all levels of construction and usage of the device. By focusing her attention towards a specific understanding of technology as a collective tool for enhancing bodily autonomy, Hester manages to circumvent a utopian vision of technology while simultaneously situating her own discourse in a broader conversation about the possible recovery of different conceptual tenets pertaining to the second American feminist wave.

Technology also plays an important role in the post-work project Hester develops with Srnicek. Whereas, with the above example of the Del-Em, Hester offered some insights regarding bodily autonomy, her latest writings deal with familial issues and the refashioning of technological affordances to help reduce reproductive work for the entire household. Simply automating different domestic activities does not seem to be the answer Hester seeks, since “[t]he idea that automation in the home might eradicate many of the daily burdens of housekeeping is one that has long been promoted by consumer capitalism” (Hester 2017, 10). Instead of helping create a more progressive household, many automation devices put a financial strain on the family and add to the burdens of the women, since the “housewives” are generally expected to operate them (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 23). Furthermore, it could be argued that automation reinforces the ideas of “domestic realism,” rather than challenging them. An explicit wordplay on Mark Fisher’s term “capitalist realism,” “domestic realism” denotes “the phenomenon by which the isolated and individualised small dwelling (and the concomitant privatisation of household labour) becomes so accepted and commonplace that it is nearly impossible to imagine life being organised in any other way” (Hester 2017, 7).

The fact that automation alone does not alleviate the amount of reproductive work within households is not a new discovery. The authors quote, in this regard, the work of Ruth Schwartz Cowan and the paradox that now bears her name, which outlines that no matter how many new technologies have been added to the household, it appears that, during the time period of 1870-1970, the amount of reproductive work has not diminished (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 22-23). Things have not changed since 1970 either, although new appliances, such as smart homes, have appeared. These smart homes also bear the mark of financial discrimination and demand, in some cases, reshaping the entire way of living to tend to their technical needs (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 43-44). One of the primary reasons these technologies have not been entirely helpful is that they do not fundamentally change the infrastructure of the social relations underpinning the single-family household and its dependency on the capitalist market. That is to say, none of these technological innovations open the household towards a more communal living, which could be based on inter-familial solidarity and a redistribution of tasks according to the availability of more than two or three people. Contrary to this, the

iterative benefits of technologies continue to be subsumed to the massive workload (both reproductive and financial) placed upon the nuclear family. Instead, a postcapitalist reconfiguration of social reproduction should take into account redistributing work, but it should not stop here, given that this would not reduce the amount of work—this different social configuration should also consider reshaping the “legal and cultural apparatus” (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 168) which favours the nuclear family as a primary familial organisation. Only once we start from these different social relations might technology serve as an ally in the quest for temporal autonomy and for the recognition, redistribution, and reduction of reproductive labour (Hester & Srnicek 2023, 48).

Besides offering some viable solutions to the questions and problems raised by Laboria Cuboniks’s use of hyperstition and technology, I would argue that Helen Hester’s texts also effectively theorise the mesopolitical level xenofeminism seeks to emphasise:

Like engineers who must conceive of a total structure, as well as the molecular parts from which it is constructed, XF emphasises the importance of the mesopolitical sphere against the limited effectiveness of local gestures, creation of autonomous zones, and sheer horizontalism, just as it stands against transcendent, or top-down impositions of values and norms (*XFM*, 0x17)

In standing with the mesopolitical, Laboria Cuboniks reflect a broader left-accelerationist tendency of proposing a synthetic¹⁴ middle ground between the individual (or small-scale) level, dominated by “folk political” tactics which cannot “reorganise our socioeconomic system” (Srnicek & Williams 2016, 29), and the society-wide, large-scale level of rigidly defined and oppressively imposing norms, which has to be iteratively transformed. A genuine counter-hegemonic strategy against neoliberal capitalism would thus have to necessarily negotiate between the complementing scales of the particular and universal, local and global, concrete and abstract etc. in order to

¹⁴ Beyond the obvious meaning of “synthetic” as “artificial” (or the more Kantian-charged meaning “novelty”, also present in *Xenofeminist Manifesto*), an important influence behind the entire scientifico-mathematical jargon of many left-accelerationist texts is Fernando Zalamea and his philosophical writings on contemporary mathematics (2012). For Zalamea, the synthetic is specifically the “connective, relational environment” (3) which brings together local and global elements in order to construct an appropriate way to tend a multiplicity of points of views.

devise strategies for steadily changing the current social order. Such a mesopolitical scale is also the domestic space, which Helen Hester sees as not only “an object of Promethean ambition, but also a site from which to launch emancipatory political projects” (2017, 3).

Reframing what is commonly understood as domestic space and dismantling “domestic realism” would have wide effects in a community, surpassing the level of a single-family unit. Communal solidarities that could effectively reduce reproductive work would entail both a restructuring of the actual architectural spaces of homes, and potentially neighbourhoods, as well as the social relations undergirding the communication between people and the (re)distribution of collective tasks. In doing so, rearranging the domestic could offer a scalable societal model based on a more democratic reduction and redistribution of reproductive work. Even though tackling the domestic might seem insufficient when compared to the sprawling hegemony of capitalism, the former’s mesopolitical transformations would be a necessary component of a larger set of counter-hegemonic practices needed to assemble a coherent offensive against capitalism.

I have attempted to highlight Helen Hester’s writings post-Laboria Cuboniks’ *Xenofeminist Manifesto* for two main reasons. On the one hand, Hester manages to offer a more nuanced discussion of some xenofeminist concepts and tools, such as hyperstition and technology. Regarding these, her texts show that a “future-oriented” politics does not have to rely on an ambiguous and mystical term such as hyperstition and could, instead, function according to planning and tactics, while the overall conception relating to technology must not be utopian, but socially embedded. On the other hand, Hester focuses her attention towards a mesopolitical site from which an emancipatory politics could start: the domestic space. By historically assessing past attempts to reduce reproductive work and by recovering certain elements from those previous trials, she underlines the importance of rethinking communal social relations to achieve a maximisation of free time. While doing this, she also enters the debate with other feminist and gender theories, whether they are techno-feminism and the legacy of the American second wave of feminism, or Marxist feminist theory with its attention towards social reproduction.

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