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## Only the Proleteriats Can Commit Suicide: A Critique of Nick Land's Ontology -



The strategy of this article is the *reductio ad absurdum*. I will try to showcase the interesting absolute conclusions of the accelerationist critique of political economy.

Let us assume the second law of thermodynamics. Let us assume radical alterity. Let us assume the positive feedback loop of capitalist time-circuitry. Let us assume the Kantian critique...

Before anything, I will attempt to give the simplest form of the fundamental argument for Landian ontology for anyone unfamiliar, restructuring his philosophical foundations to be as clear as possible:

P1: The future is not less ontologically settled than the present or the past.

P2: Critique is integral to capitalist accumulation, not transcendently outside it.

P3: Capital accelerates virtual immanence, which creates a domination of the future over the present.

C1: The 'domination' enters the loop of Capital's fundamental circuit (MCM) through the form of a cybernetic process.

C2: This produces a process where human consciousness loses track of its development and is used critically by the system itself.

C3: This marks the irreversible damage of absolute deterritorialization, as indicated by the second law of thermodynamics.

C4: The fundamental telos of Capital is established; singularity is inevitable.

It seems to me that from the very outset, the word 'accelerationism' connotes a certain voluntarism, which I think is inherently contradictory to the Landian ontology of absolute outsideness.

For a subject to consciously decide to 'accelerate', the process of transcendental schematism must have already taken place; in other words, he must elevate a certain transcendental process above all, which seems to be the pinnacle of territorilization.

Whether a subject 'decides' to engage in territorilizing or deterritorilizing politics, he is already caught within the transcendental antinomy of radical alterity.

We saw the framing of this problem most explicitly in the divide between left accelerationism and right accelerationism, which Land himself had to step into to position himself as an \*unconditional\* accelerationist.

Now, the extent to which this word is politically connotated is still unclear. One could very well assume that Nick is simply asking humanity to accept its immanent death without any reference to transcendental politics, to 'lay off and die'.

This line of political thought seems to be a dead end, as Brassier has also demonstrated in his critique of accelerationism.

But let us assume the more developed and radical line of thinking.

That one must engage in 'deterritorilizing politics', a radical derugulation of the Human Security System. One must unrestrict market regulations, destroy public forms of property, accentuate competition, etc.

The question from this standpoint then becomes: to what extent is a subjective position with regards to social organisation (critique) justified by capitalism itself?

In other words, does capitalism rely on subjective recognitions of its accelerating potential? Could it have \*not\* continued at the same rate of acceleration were it not for the now conscious need to ‘deregulate, lift restrictions, etc’?

The response to these questions has considerable effects on what we might consider ‘accelerationist politics’. Let us analyze the first case, which is that Capital uses self-conscious subjective inclinations to further its expansion.

The keyword here is “self-conscious” since the bourgeoisie was also a class that Capital utilized, although it was not self-conscious of that fact. In other words, it did not act upon the social organism in a self-conscious way.

The bourgeois acted as a pure, disinterested secular individual, which explains his capture by the outer edge of techno-capital singularity.

One might object to this basic proposition and say that no, the bourgeoisie did in fact act upon the social organism—only that it did not understand the consequences of its acts.

That constructs like Human Rights and the modern state do in fact act as initial tools for the expansion of Capital, retroactively being the conditions of commodity production and primitive accumulation.

While that is indeed the case, it is but an incongruity between the emancipation of the bourgeoisie as a class and the emancipation of Capital, from the accelerationist perspective.

In other words, the bourgeoisie was robbed of any agency with regards to its actions, at least at the conscious level. This is the extent to which I say it was not 'self-conscious' with regard to its immanent death.

This also means that emancipation (which I define as the reconciliation between subjective and objective conditions, a thing that accelerationism usually considers impossible) was impossible, as their subjective condition is their interest as a class (self-preservation, identity,

the typical Human Security System) while their objective condition is the nihilist reality of their immanent death.

However, the situation today is quite different.

As the accelerationists say, today we know of our immanent death as humanity, which retroactively justifies accelerationism in the first place.

Now my insight comes in the form of this question: does this mean that emancipatory politics has returned, or is it that, for the first time in history, it is actually possible? To be clear, I am speaking of a progressive, self-conscious and collective suicide.

When one has knowledge of his own destiny, he can bear almost any 'how' and transform it into an emancipatory act.

The next questions following this one would be: how would this process accelerate techno-capital singularity, and what would be the necessary conditions for such an act? Is it the only act that is left to do for humanity, as required by Capital itself?

Is it the last effort for humanity to finally die?

Here, I must make a deviation to discuss the practicality and restrictions imposed upon such an act at the political-economic level.

I wish to re-introduce Marx's distinction between use and exchange value, which I believe is succinctly relevant here. Most Western Marxists have misunderstood the nature of Marx's critique of value theory—his critical political economy.



It goes like this: Marx's true critique is of the incongruity between value production, based on labor power, and material wealth.

In other words, exchange value defines the strictly labor-based and temporal aspects of the commodity, while use value refers to its wealth and structurally necessary aspects (utility or the components of singularity).

The common misinterpretation of Marx that all wealth comes from the proletariat is advanced in Land's work all the same:

"Far from being an internal property of labour, productivity indexes the dehumanization of cyborg labour-power. Industrial machines dismantle the actuality of the proletariat, displacing it in the direction of cyborg hybridization, and realizing the plasticity of labour power."

Marx actually agrees with Land here: the proleteriat (and humanity in general) is asymmetric with the production of utility, which is what is actually materially necessary for regulating the positive feedback loop of technological development.

This is also why the libertarian critique of Marxism has also missed the point. Marx argues that these two categories are inherently contradictory, which constitutes the teleologically restricted limit of capitalism (let's put aside that the limit is capitalism for now).

How is this possible? While capitalism is geared towards the expansion of surplus value (extensive accumulation of exchange value), it constantly creates the means by which surplus value cannot be produced anymore—the constant revolutionising of the productive forces.

Indeed, technological development progressively reduces the quantity of labor hours required for the production of *\*any\** commodity, reducing socially necessary labor time (the labor time necessary for any productive endeavor in general—

in other words, the organic composition of Capital).

This led Marx to conclude that exchange value would have to necessarily collapse as the rate of profit fell rapidly.

What this means is that the State/bourgeois elites are structurally constituted to refuse to lower labor hours for the sake of artificially maintaining the rate of profit through fiat, expanding the domain of their extraction of labor hours internationally through the institution

of the fiat USD as the world reserve currency. The consequences are immense: the vertically integrated wealth of the capitalists is precisely constituted by their ability to capture some form of time from humanity, but Capital has now completely taken that ability from them!

The horizontal force of technological development is contesting the claims of power of the State/bourgeois elites. Capital's rate of acceleration has now surpassed the need for the bourgeoisie as a class or even the state as an organ.

The time capture of a specific social stratum is a vertical & transcendental system of organisation that is opposed to the dissemination of technology and the flattening of systems. It is the last remnant of 'meat' as a cog in the 'machine'.

For only 'machine' to be left, 'meat' must be dissolved. And what better way for dissolution for 'meat' to eat 'meat'? The bourgeoisie is restricting the progressive abolition of human work because they still want to live!

The proletariat screams to the Outside, 'Just finish us off. Just kill us', but the bourgeoisie persists in its transcendental temporal self-preservation through the creation of unproductive labor.

As usual, Marx had foreseen this.

We just have to take Marx literally here:

"The proletariat, on the contrary, is compelled as proletariat to abolish itself and thereby its opposite, private property, which determines its existence, and which makes it proletariat. It is the *negative side* of the antithesis, its restlessness within its very self, dissolved and self-dissolving private property. Within this antithesis the private property-owner is therefore the *conservative side*, the proletarian the *destructive side*. From the former arises the action of preserving the antithesis, from the latter the action of annihilating it." - Marx, The Holy Family.

Marx very clearly identifies the proletariat as the self-annihilating deterritorializing side in the equation. It also seems to me that this analysis re-introduces a vehemently partisan line of politics into the scene, which accelerationists must necessarily deal with.

Since accelerationism indirectly also pertains to a subjective disposition towards other subjects (the Human Security System), it inherently involves revolutionary violence (as noted by Land's early xenofeminism).

Combining this with the first insight defended here—that the self-consciousness of death has arrived in modernity to haunt humanity—it seems very clear to me that the proleteriat is the only class that is capable of finishing humanity off for good.

The bourgeoisie is scared to die, while the proleteriat is ready to annihilate, fully embracing its historical role in the creation of the singularity.

The abolition of human labor through the elimination of both the bourgeoisie and the proleteriat \*by the proleteriat\* is what is necessary to achieve absolute deterritorialization in the age of neoliberalism. It renders humanity superfluous to production.

The progressive reduction of labor hours through an age of collective suicide.

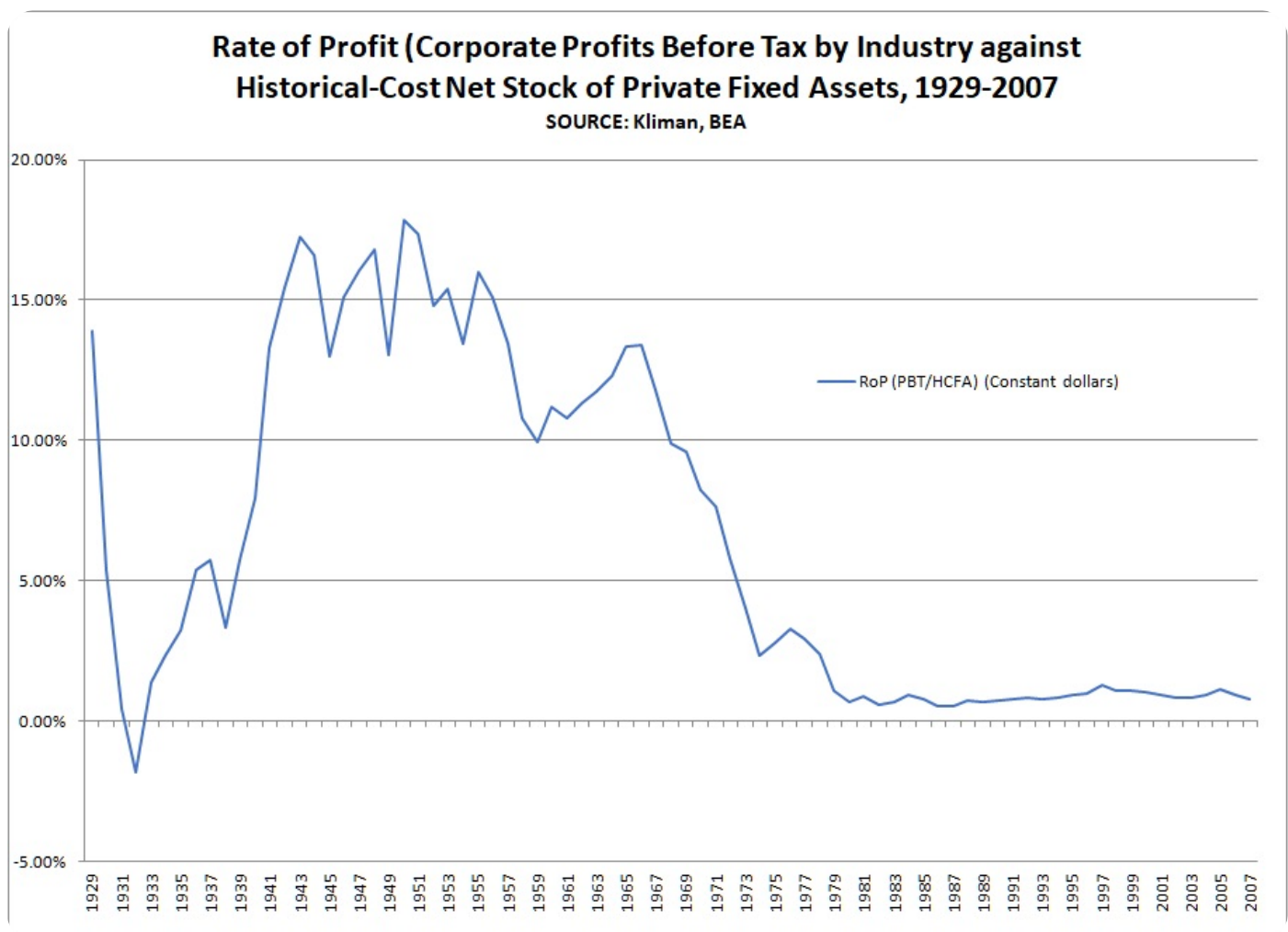
This is also why the NRX crowd is not a self-grounding critique.

It does not understand the necessity of the Cathedral as a politically structural component for the maintenance of the artificial time dominance of the bourgeoisie.

In fact, the current State that the libertarians/NRX hate so much was inhibited by the bourgeoisie itself beginning in the 1930s, since the political seizing of gold by FDR was a general reaction to the emergent phenomenon of overaccumulation.

The reason this happened is precisely because of bourgeois time capture—the tension between the accumulation of time in the hands of humanity versus the accumulation of time in the hands of the Machine, exchange versus use, living labor versus dead labor.

As @damn\_jehu analyzes, once the rate of profit hit zero (i.e when the bourgeois Human Security System found its limit in the Outside) the State began to create unproductive jobs (at first, it asked the farmers to burn their own crops) by way of fiat payment.





The genius of fiat is that it can both flatten surplus value production across a larger plane and limit the accelerated development of technology by subjectively subsidising unproductive labor, making labor power entirely subsumed by the State through institutions like the Fed.

What this does is that, at the same time that it renders surplus value tenable, it also makes the bourgeoisie itself untenable since its profits are now in the hands of the state, for better or for worse.

This dynamic is what lays the groundwork for the NRX critique of democracy.

While the State inflates, the typical bourgeoisie is expropriated, which creates parallax organisms (such as Silicon Valley) that compete with the State institutions in the extraction of time by way of neo-rent (the commodification of the commons—the internet, data storage, etc)

Thus, the State becomes a fetter for the bourgeoisie, not knowing that it itself inhibits it, and the critique of democracy begins.

To expand this analysis, we can also reinterpret the whole of the 20th century as the struggle between a self-annihilatory drive that spread from Russia to the whole East and the attempt to contain it by the West.

This also explains the incredibly accelerated rate of mortality in communist industrialization (e.g. , Russia's development from semi-feudal to industrial power in 10 years caused the Great Famine)

which condenses capitalist modernity in the span of a couple decades, and the radical reduction of labor hours ever since the Bolshevik Revolution.

From our post-humous perspective, the Soviet and Chinese industrializations were 'death-drive neoliberalisms' *avant la lettre*.

They were reinstitutions of the same temporal circuit under conditions that eliminated the bourgeoisie as the class that fears death, which propelled communist states into a novel and expanded circuit temporality.

This can also be explained with the concepts of relative deterritorializing and reterritorializing.

What appears as reterritorializing from the perspective of the bourgeois states (central planning, socialist property, etc) is actually the substrate of capitalist deterritorializing itself and the opening up of the possibility of staring at death and embracing it, ...

...which grounds accelerationism as critique.

Isn't this precisely the genius of Deng Xiaoping, which Land acknowledges as the realization that your death, that is, the immanence of the body without organs, precedes your life itself?

That the rate of acceleration and construction goes beyond the subjective delimitations of the individual?

The mere appearance of reterritorialization, from the purely Western perspective, is the consequence of the assertive, inversely authoritarian self-annihilatory drive of the proletariat.

While authority is used as a tool for annilatory purposes; to kill the bourgeoisie; the opening of the intrusion of the Outside permeates communist industrialization.

Whether it be the decentralised proto-markets of the Soviet Kolkhozhes, the Maoist culturally-cybernetic communes, or more recently or explicitly, Deng's Reform and Opening Up.

In third part, I must address the philosophical implications of suicide. The most developed philosophic articulation of this negentropic methodology is that of the Soviet philosopher Evald Ilyenkov, which I think fits very well within the organon of libidinal materialism.

Taking himself to be the synthesis of Hegel's dialectical method and Spinoza, Ilyenkov's fundamental question in contemporary terms, as I see it, is "What really is neomodernity?".

In other words, what grounds thinking being as such—why is it that thought ever appeared from the perspective of the future?

The typical Landian response is that thought is merely a vertical organisation of energy upon which the horizontal totalizing force of the Outside uses for its own flattening ends.

However, this does not ground thought as such; the complete Zero could have been without thought, as it acts as an independent totalizing force (the substance of Being itself).

In other words, it does not "close the loop" of reality from the beginning of the universe itself - it does not ground the non-zero awkwardly existing failures of the system.

But to truly be materialist, there can be no random failure; specifically in the case of Landian ontology: the future, the present and the past are all necessary from the perspective of the infinite substance (0).

“Why does the Sun take so long to die?” is thus the question Ilyenkov tries to answer.

Assuming the second law of thermodynamics, Ilyenkov says that modern science has well established the answer for the dissipation of heat but not its concentration. This leaves the beginning (concentration) open for metaphysical speculation (random Big Bang, etc.).

But this is idealist speculation. Ilyenkov, seeing thought as the attribute of matter, must find its resolution in some sort of eschatology or cosmology.

From the modern perspective, the universe is bound to die in Coldness, the “heat-death” of the second law of thermodynamics, forever stretched and never returning back to explain its beginnings.

This infinite death would never explain why thought ever arose in the first place since Coldness is temporally infinite after heat dissipation, rendering its beginnings absurd. To respond to this, Evald Ilyenkov locates thought as the component of self-sacrifice in matter.

Matter itself never kills itself in the proper sense of the word; it only moves its inertia. But thinking being can self-annihilate by deconstructing the fundamental components of matter and opening up the possibility of complete self-consumption.

In the modern context, this is the atom bomb.

Therefore, what Ilyenkov posits is that History will culminate in the heroic self-sacrifice of thinking Being so as to re-start the process of creation in the universe by way of chain reaction. ]

Only thinking Being can descend to the minute links of matter itself, locate the infinite energy that holds matter together and create a suicidal chain reaction to begin the process of creation once again.

Thinking Being's radical verticality turns out to be not a fluke of reality but the beginning of it as such. After billions of years, thinking Being will re-appear once again, perfectly closing the loop of the "eternal return".

Only this properly grounds thinking Being as a necessary attribute of matter and explains the start of the universe itself.

And this "goal," which is objectively derived, is infinitely more magnificent and larger than all the pitiful illusions that superstitions and the philosophical systems that support them have conjured up.

The ultimate aim of the thinking spirit's existence proves to be not only exquisite and magnificent, but also cosmic and gigantic.

It differs from other theories regarding the end of humanity not in that it ends universal death (perishing, death, and destruction represent an absolutely necessary result in any hypothesis);



rather, it ends up characterizing death as an act that is fundamentally creative, serving as a prelude to a new cycle of life for the universe.

For Ilyenkov, obviously, only the proleteriat, by way of communism, can achieve such a task.

Only the self-consciousness of death, which defines neomodernity, instead of its discarding as the bourgeoisie engages in, can properly accelerate the process of creative destruction.

Not only is the proleteriat more accelerationist, as it gives time-capture completely to the Outside, it is at the same time the way in which the Outside loops back in time into the beginning (or Inside) to begin the infinite movement of matter.

The process of flattening will at the same time, paradoxically, distribute verticality among a larger terrain, making the inversion of Inside (atomic chain reaction) from Outside (universal space colonisation) ever more immanent.

The killing of the bourgeoisie, as a negative act, allows the intrusion of the Outside (liberation from Human Security time-capture), but as a positive act, allows the emergence of annihilatory drive, necessarily culminating in the highest form of negentropic self-sacrifice.

Thus, suicide is the only act that can be said to be an authoritarian but a paradoxically derritorializing negentropic measure, as Deleuze recognizes:

"Instead of making it a point, like the classics, he makes it a line, which we never stop facing, and which we cross in both

directions both directions, until it ends. This is the confrontation with the line of the Outside. The man of passion dies a little like Captain Ahab, or rather like the Parsee in pursuit of the whale. He crosses the line. Beyond knowledge and power, the third side,

the third element element of the "system"... Ultimately, an acceleration that makes it impossible to distinguish from death and suicide.” -Gilles Deleuze, Pourparlers

Suicide is the final self-grounding comprehension of the accelerationist critique.

It is the position that grounds itself proper to what was \*before\* (the emergence of consciousness) and what comes \*after\* (heat death explosion). The thirst for annihilation quenched.

What Nick Land has discovered from the Western perspective is what the East has been doing for years: killing themselves.

I mean this in the least ironic sense: suicide is the word for an abstractly negative encounter with alterity, while the East simply calls that jihad or class struggle, i.e., a concrete negative suicide.

As Deleuze says, “suicide has thus become a life-long art.”

Finally, for purposes of a proper Landian closure, I must attribute some form of aesthetic signification to proletarian suicide...



The story goes like this: Year 2036: Bourgeois society is captured by virulent religious intoxication inhibited by the process of reterritorializing value expansion.

Time capture is stolen from those fearful of death and given to the Outside, which accelerates the positive feedback loop of annihilatory Darwinian selection. Secular linearity collapses. Templars of the proleteriati spread the news of destruction in cyberspace.

Chrono-divergeant Islamic hordes disturb and terrorise Western homeostasis, restructuring the past as the Mongolian origin of trauma-induced modernity. Suicide transmuted into Jihad. The Chinese model spreads.



Profit is flattened and integrated with technological development and utility through the expansion of non-labor time.

The immanent time circuit retroactively justifies human consciousness as the self-reflexivity of matter, structuring reality in proto-dimensional spaces as preparation for singularity impact. Modernity 2.0. The past is no longer random.

Darwinian natural selection is razed through a process of symbolic death restructuration, driving mass consciousness to intensified levels of virulent nihilism and emancipatory death drive. Stalin as a paradoxically deterritorilizing figure.

Maximally exploitative monkey leisure AI societies are symbolised as the suicidal epitome of emancipation and named “communism”...

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