

Martin Dempsey

Mad Black Noneism: Nick Land, Capital, and the Singularity as Noneist Emergence

Bionote: Martin Dempsey received his Ph.D. from the University of Westminster, and M. A. from the University of Exeter.

Independent Scholar

martinextinctionburst@gmail.com

Abstract: This article formalizes the negative ontology underlying Ray Brassier's description of Nick Land's "mad black Deleuzianism," with particular attention to how Fanged Noumena functions within formal logic as noneist and dialetheic objects. Unlike classical Eleatic arguments that sought to eliminate paradoxes of nothingness by denying their logical validity, Graham Priest's dialetheism embraces some contradictions as valid. Dialetheism holds that some statements can be both true and false simultaneously, representing a fundamental shift from the classical principle of non-contradiction toward paraconsistent logics capable of accommodating true contradictions.

The article demonstrates how non-existent logical objects interact through negative attribution—the process by which entities are defined by what they are not, their conceptual boundaries marked through absence rather than presence. This framework allows for a systematic account of how noneist objects can bestow qualities upon existent objects, destabilize categorical boundaries, and generate new relations. By situating these operations within Land's accelera-

tionist thought, the article argues that abstraction functions as a noneist operator: a logical mechanism that organizes reality through productive gaps and absences rather than positive determinations.

We shall see how non-existent logical objects interact and come into being; possess and bestow attributes via negative attribution; how such noneist objects possess the ability to bestow qualities upon the existent and noneist logical objects they interact with and border; how they can cause other noneist objects to come into non-being; and in so doing offer a potential framework for addressing (or at least discussing) a merger between both dialectical and emergent, immanent, accounts of change and occurrence

In supplementing Land's system with Priest's noneist and dialetheic logics, the article provides a more rigorous formal apparatus for analyzing accelerationism's central claims. Capital, in this account, emerges not as a merely economic or technological phenomenon, but as a noneist operator functioning within historical and ontological processes. It is described as the Entity that retroactively engineers its own conditions of possibility, manipulating past and present through the negative attributions of absence, debt, and abstraction. By drawing these connections, the article aims to clarify Land's accelerationism as a mode of noneist emergence, situated at the intersection of logic, ontology, and political economy.

Keywords: Negative ontology, Noneism, Dialetheism, Paraconsistent logic, Accelerationism, Ray Brassier, Nick Land, Abstraction, Negative attribution, Capital, Ontology, Political economy.

Introduction: Sowing Basilisk's Teeth

The following argument is an attempt to formalize the negative ontology of what Ray Brassier described as Nick Land's "mad black Delusions", and detail how the "Fanged Noumena" he describes operate within formal logic as novelist and dialetheic objects.¹

We shall see how non-existent logical objects interact and come into being; possess and bestow attributes via negative attribution; how such noneist objects possess the ability to bestow qualities upon the existent and noneist logical objects they interact with and border; how they can cause other noneist objects to come into non-being; and in so doing offer a potential framework for addressing (or at least discussing) a merger between both dialectical and emergent, immanent, accounts of change and occurrence. Land's accelerationism argues for a non-linear view of time, in which an "entity" (the Singularity) reaches back in time and manipulates reality to create the circumstances required for its future development. The precise mechanisms for this process appear to have eluded Land himself (as we will explore later). This article supplements Land's system by incorporating elements of the work of Graham Priest. Priest, a distinguished professor of philosophy at the CUNY Graduate Center and regular visitor at the University of Melbourne, is a philosopher and logician who advocates both noneism and dialetheism. Unlike classical Eleatic arguments that sought to resolve the paradox of nothing by denying its logical validity, Priest's dialetheism embraces some contradictions as genuinely true. While

ancient philosophers like Parmenides treated 'nothing is' as a logical impossibility to be avoided, Priest argues that some contradictions - including statements about nothingness - can be both true and false simultaneously. This represents a fundamental shift from classical logic's principle of non-contradiction towards the incorporation of paraconsistent logics that can accommodate true contradictions. Priest is, in effect, a logical realist, arguing that dialetheic logics are a subset of the wider topic of logic, and using mathematical logic to demonstrate that some contradictions can be consistently formalized within paraconsistent logical systems.

Land's approach is one of aggressive syncretism, taking Deleuze's method of rereading thinkers according to certain priorities. He deterritorializes thought itself, warping and shifting ideas beyond the boundaries initially set by their authors. The result, Accelerationism, incorporates core ideas from across the Western philosophical canon, even when those ideas seem mutually exclusive. This paper proposes that the functional element enabling this synthesis -- particularly evident in Land's treatment of Capital and the Singularity -- is his strategic, though often implicit, employment of noneist readings of these thinkers, linking them via the "non-existent logical objects" that feature in their respective philosophies. This aspect of Land's work has always been there, echoing his deeply Deleuzian roots. Land's own use of Noneism echoes and suits the more formal treatment this paper will give it, but Deleuze's fluid concept of "the virtual" is clearly aligned with noneist thought:

¹ Ray Brassier, quoted in Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987–2007*, ed. Robin Mackay and Ray Brassier (London: Urbanomic, 2011).

The virtual object is a partial object - not simply because it lacks a part that remains in the real, but in itself and for itself because it is cleaved or doubled into two virtual parts, one of which is always missing from the other. In short, the virtual is never subject to the global character that affects real objects. It is not only by its origin but also by its own nature—a fragment, a shred, or a remainder.²

By formalizing this negative ontology, we can trace how Land uses these concepts to frame Capital as a driving force towards an emergent Singularity. Furthermore, this paper concludes by echoing Land's process with Accelerationism itself, identifying how a noneist perspective might reveal an overlooked aspect in the movement of his own argument.

Graham Priest has formalized dialetheism through his work on paraconsistent logic. This is a specific type of formal logic that allows for contradictions to exist without leading to the conclusion that everything is true (a phenomenon known as "explosion" in classical logic) and has also been instrumental in its acceptance within analytical philosophy. His work, most notably *In Contradiction*, provides a robust framework necessary for reasoning with contradictions without logical explosions.³ Priest has also argued that "nothing" is a non-existent, dialetheic object: Presented in its most simple form, his argument can be summed up as follows: since one can refer to "nothing" as

a noun and as a verb, "nothing" as a logical object is defined by self-contradicting properties and is therefore dialetheic. Priest also argues that nothingness is ineffable; thus, there is "nothing there" to predicate anything upon. However, as Priest has formally demonstrated, nothing is also an object, and one may state things about what it is not and use it to describe other objects.⁴

This negative ontology provides the grounding and an account for how Capital is the entity (or Singularity) Land prophesies and how it affects reality: not through nanotechnology or the quantum computational processes Land associates with the Singularity's emergence, but through pure logical operators:

Let (n) be defined as the sum of no-things.

Premise 1: By definition, n has no parts, no substance, and no properties. In the ordinary, non-logical sense, an object must have substance. Since n lacks this, it is not an object in a substantive or real-world sense.

Premise 2: Within a logical system, we can name n, and reason about it. Any entity that can be reasoned in this manner functions as a logical object. Therefore, n is an object.

From these two premises, we have demonstrated that (n) is both an object and not an object. The existence of these two co-true but contradictory statements means that "nothing" is a dialetheia.

² Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 143.

³ Graham Priest, *In Contradiction: A Study of the Transconsistent*, 2nd edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁴ Graham Priest and Markus Gabriel, *Everything and Nothing* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022), 52.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a towering figure in German idealism, has had a philosophical legacy whose influence is hard to overstate. Born in Stuttgart, he studied theology and philosophy and later taught at universities such as Jena and Berlin. He is best known for his works, such as *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, and his 'dialectical' method, which has been the subject of interpretation and controversy ever since. This paper argues for an interpretation of Hegel's dialectic as fundamentally noneist and dialetheic, in which mediation occurs via non-existent logical objects; that these noneist objects imbue the existent objects it mediates with negative qualities; that these qualities confer each with inherent paradoxes; and that these paradoxes, in turn, necessitate resolution; and thus the inherent contradiction within the negative mediation compels the dialectic to resolve these tensions, leading to transformation and synthesis. Indeed, Hegel's entire 'greater logic' might, arguably, be read as a meditation upon how objects acquire their properties.

In the *Science of Logic*, which is the primary work of Hegel focused upon within this paper, Hegel discusses the transition from Being to Essence, where Being loses its immediacy and becomes 'Illusory Being', a non-substantial form that is nonetheless essential for the manifestation of Essence. This 'Illusory Being' can be seen as a non-existent logical object that, through its negation, allows Essence to define itself. Such constructs are integral to Hegel's method, in which the negation or absence of certain qualities leads to the affirmation and development of others. These are distinct from ontological Nothingness in that they do not embody contradiction but instead mediate

between contradictory poles. Their non-existence is not equivalent to negation or absence, but a structural, mediating presence that facilitates the unfolding of Spirit and the realization of the Notion. These objects constitute a third ontological category: neither Being nor Nothing, but a non-objectal-driven structure.

Such non-existent, dialetheic objects are not just metaphors used to describe the 'motivations of the Geist' of dialectic; they are structurally necessary mediators. These non-existent mediators bestow negative attributes to each logical object they separate, granting each attribute via negative attribution. These negative attributes are inherently contradictory (those of A contradict those of B), which drive transformation or sublation.

Building on Priest's formulation, we can show how Hegel's description of dialectical movement contains similar logical elements (this is far from an exhaustive interpretation of Hegel, but an illustrative alignment with Priest's noneist structure, which Priest himself articulates as a deliberate provocation):

Because it has no existence for starting-point and point d'appui, the Idea is frequently treated as a mere logical form [...] It is no less false to imagine the Idea as a mere abstraction. It is abstract certainly, in so far as everything untrue is consumed in it; but in its own self it is essentially concrete and not as the negative return of it into self and as the subjectivity which it really is.⁵

⁵ G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, ed. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 353.

The object (1) in its immediacy is the notion only potentially; the subjective notion is primarily outside it; and all its specific characteristics are imposed from without. As a unity of differents, therefore, it is a composite, an aggregate, and its capacity to act on anything else continues to be an external relation.⁶

which the virtual object is incorporated, it does not become integrated: it remains planted or stuck there, and does not find in the real object the half which completes it, but rather testifies to the other virtual half which the real continues to lack.⁷

Using the modal logic framework to illustrate the above, we can say

Let:

$U(x)$ denote that x is a universal (or an ideal form).

$I(y)$ denote that y is an individuated, real object.

$M(x,y)$ denote that there exists a mediating noneist object between x and y .

The formal framework can be outlined as follows:

Mediation by the noneist Object (For any universal x , there is an individuated y whose emergence is mediated by $M(x,y)$):

$$\forall x * \exists y (M(x,y) \wedge U(x) \wedge I(y))$$

Priest argues that Hegel was a dialetheist who cited and employed “nothingness” in a manner similar to his own formulation. In a very real sense, this is a formalization of one of the aspects of Deleuze’s reading of the virtual:

Conversely, these virtual objects are incorporated in the real objects [...] Whatever the reality in

For Deleuze, virtual objects still influence and affect reality, via absence, via negative attribution.

We will now borrow and build on both Priest’s reading of Hegel and his formulation and deployment of the concept of “nothingness” (as noneist and dialetheic) and introduce the concept of “negative attribution” to augment its applicability. For our purposes, it is vital to first illustrate how negative attribution may be formally illustrated to prove its logical validity. We then discuss how the concept of negative attribution may be read into the systems that Land synthesizes.

An example of positive attribution is how a shadow only has its attributes insofar as its attributes are bestowed upon it by the object casting the shadow. Negative attributes are the qualities that an object lacks; for example, a circle has the negative attributes of lacking edges and straightness. Priest argues that the “prime mover” (as it were) in the bestowing of properties (or at least, the foundational attribute of being not-nothing) to all existent objects is nothingness via negative attribution. Traditionally, nothingness is seen as the absence of being, while identity is typically understood in terms of positive properties. Priest suggests that identity is fundamentally a matter

⁶ Ibid, 353.

⁷ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 144.

of negative attribution: an object's distinctness is given by its separation from nothingness (and thus from other objects). Thus, being itself is not a positive quality; it is a negative quality; it is a property of objects by dint of their not being nothing. It is via negative attribution from nothingness to all other objects that existent objects have existence. In short, existent objects exist because of the noneist objects they are not.

Negative Attribution Implies Distinction (the existence of a mediating noneist object implies that x and y are not identical:

$$\forall x,y (M(x,y) \rightarrow \neg(x \equiv y))$$

This mediator need not be an existent logical object, to provide distinction.

Ontological paradox (resolution requirement), meaning if two things (x and y) are not identical, there is a mediating relationship (M) to exist between them:

$$\forall x,y (\neg(x \equiv y) \rightarrow \Diamond M(x,y))$$

This formulation captures the paradoxical role of difference as an enabling relation, where the very fact of ontological separation creates the conditions for mediation.

Sublation through negation of the negation (where a meaningful relation exists and a universal property holds, the emergence of a concrete individuated form follows):

$$(M(x,y) \wedge U(x)) \models I(y)$$

This last formula expresses, in abstract terms, the dialectical movement: mediation through a noneist operator (M) transforms universals (U) into individuated realities (I), echoing the traditional logic of sublation (*Aufhebung*) but reframed through negative attribution. If there is a meaningful connection between x and y ($M(x, y)$) and x has a certain property ($U(x)$), then it guarantees that y will display a specific result ($I(y)$). In essence, this illustrates how the qualities of x and its relationship with y necessarily lead to an outcome for y . (A cause-and-effect dynamic.)

This formal framework structures the core of the following argument and will not be restated to avoid redundancy. With these formal principles established, we can now revisit Land's treatment of Capital through the lens of noneist emergence.

Priest's approach is to use formal logic to both emphasize the logical validity of his arguments rather than to "prove them", and to use the tools of formal logic to make clear the nuances of his arguments. It is in that spirit that the above formulation has been included, as the following argument revolves around how Land's own argument regarding Accelerationism contained a "blind spot" (which he admits to in an interview, as we will demonstrate), that this approach can account for in a manner that is both logically valid and rich with potential to be developed further.

Land and the Accelerationist Unbinding of Capital

Now we shall give an outline of Marx's influence upon Land, drawing out how it is the role of noneist objects in both that Land comes to incorporate. In the most simplis-

tic terms, Land might be viewed as a thinker who incorporates the golden rule of improvisational theatre, “yes, and,” taking each of the thinkers he engages with to an extreme. Land embraces the transformative, near-animist elements of technology that Marx describes, equating technology directly with Capital:

Capital, in its ultimate self-definition, is nothing beside the abstract accelerative social factor. Its positive cybernetic schema exhausts it. Runaway consumes its identity. Every other determination is shucked off as an accident, at some stage of its intensification process. Since anything able to consistently feed socio-historical acceleration will necessarily, or by essence, be capital [...] As blockchains, drone logistics, nanotechnology, quantum computing, computational genomics, and virtual reality flood in, drenched in ever higher densities of artificial intelligence, accelerationism won't be going anywhere, unless ever deeper into itself.⁸

Marx's evolving views on Capital and its relation to reality (as socially mediating symbol) prefigure Land's radical interpretation of Capital as the nascent manifestation of the Entity. This Entity intervenes and directs human action, laying the groundwork for the technologies that will grant it agency or enable its full temporal existence. This article argues that Marx draws (possibly inadvertently) on Hegel's own use of noneist objects to account for Capital's

remarkable transformative effects, and that it is this element that Land inherits and later incorporates.

Marx's materialist dialectic, despite some attempts to disavow Hegel's influence on Marx (both by Marx himself and by some Marxists) incorporates Hegel's method by using noneist objects as mediators. Marx favors the terms “extension” (German: “Erweiterung”) and “projection” (German: “Projektion”), in place of the term ‘Abstraktion’ or ‘Extrapolierung’ (‘extrapolation’) in a manner we will discuss below, whereas Hegel does not routinely use “Erweiterung” and “Projektion” despite exploring similar themes of development and progression. While we may not read too much into this (absence of use does not necessarily imply a motivated neglect), Hegel appears to wish to describe what he perceives as an internal or essential transformation that externally manifests via symptom, or an ‘inside -- out’ rather than an ‘outside’ or ‘outside in’ interaction-driven change. For Hegel, change appears to occur via self-realization and the process of recognition in the other on an essential level within a complex and dynamic network of other entities engaged in the same process. Technological progress and societal change are consequences of idealist interactions, and Hegel's choice of terms favors essentialist connotations.

Marx also, frequently, refers to the process of ‘abstraction’ (Abstraktion) in the sense of the extraction or isolation of an idea or concept, particularly in relation to the ‘commodity-form’ and ‘economic forms’ but in regards to those qualities of capital that act as the active mover of the process of societal and paraxial change, and the projection of capital and technology into new domains, Marx most

⁸ Nick Land, “A Quick and Dirty Introduction to Accelerationism,” (*Internet Archive*, n.d.), https://ia800800.us.archive.org/29/items/nick_land_writings/LAND%2C%20Nick%20-%20A%20Quick%20and%20Dirty%20Introduction%20to%20Accelerationism.pdf, 2, accessed September 10, 2025.

commonly employs terms like “Ausdehnung” (expansion), “Erweiterung” (extension or enlargement), and “Fortpflanzung” (propagation or reproduction), and in terms of ‘extrapolation’, emphasising the paraxial, material, means by which these process occur, in which the ‘abstractions’ of ‘commodity-form’ and ‘economic forms’ are the consequence of material changes.

In a letter to Engels dated January 11, 1858, Marx discussed the nature of abstraction in Hegel’s dialectics and its role in his own critique of political economy:

In Hegel, therefore, it is the process of thinking, which, under the name of the Idea, he even transforms into an independent subject, which is the demiurgos (creator) of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of the Idea. With me, the reverse is true: the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.⁹

For Marx, technology may be read as the crystallization of how “the material world is reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought,” but will inevitably serve the interests of capital rather than of the individual:

In accord with this tendency, capital drives beyond national barriers and prejudices as much as beyond nature worship, as well as all traditional, confined, complacent, encrusted satisfactions of present needs, and reproductions of old ways

of life. It is destructive towards all of this, and constantly revolutionizes it, tearing down all the barriers which hem in the development of the forces of production, the expansion of needs, the all-sided development of production, and the exploitation and exchange of natural and mental forces.¹⁰

One might read that the concepts of extension and projection are themes within Marx’s thought regarding the action of capital, and might further be read as reflecting, perhaps, the transformation of Hegel’s notion of the Dialectic, which is driven by Geist (spirit), into a materialist Dialectic driven by capital. In this context, extension and projection might be understood by referencing the material mechanisms through which capital expands and realizes itself, with capital itself serving as the conceptual extrapolation used to describe this process, the inversion of how Hegel views Geist. For Marx material changes are explained via the mechanics of capital, which then incentivizes further material changes, whereas for Hegel the Dialectic occurs, and manifests via material change. By dint of necessity, as this pre-say is intended to highlight and illuminate the differences in the schema of Land and Negarestani, this is a gross simplification of the thought of both Marx and Hegel, and both emphasise uncanny power and effects of both the Dialectic and of capital to influence and alter both concept and material, yet the difference in emphasis an ‘instigator’ are clear: for Marx it is paraxial and material, for Hegel it is conceptual and essential. Marx describes capital as a manifestation of the processes that

⁹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Letters on ‘Capital’*, trans. Donna Torr (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1983), 40.

¹⁰ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (Rough Draft), trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 377.

seek to accumulate surplus value proliferating capitalist enterprises and inevitably leading to the globalization of the capitalist model of production. Capital has become a core value for individuals and institutions and alters relations within society. Social structures are reshaped, cultural norms that foster the accumulation of surplus value (such as the 'Protestant work ethic', as Weber has argued) are in turn fostered, and even individual consciousness is influenced. Abstraction is a vital part of the processes of capital, but Marx views it as a link in the chain rather than as an essential driver, as demonstrated in a letter to Engels dated June 18, 1862,:

The fact is, therefore, that everything depends on how we interpret the abstraction. Hegel's Dialectic is indeed an abstraction, but an abstraction which is simultaneously the comprehended movement of history.¹¹

The way money becomes an end in itself is evident today in hedge funds, debt packaging, shares, interests, and inflation. Money has become a means to create more money, rather than merely reflecting personal preferences and needs. Indeed, if money is not continually creating more money, it will begin to lose its value through inflation. Like the Dialectic, it either moves "forwards" or loses its identity, and therefore money transitions from being "in itself" to being "for others" as a placeholder for value, becoming money, and, ultimately, "for itself" through others via investments, debt, and interest. Although money is a materially instantiated system via currency, its abstraction as value operates noneistically: it organizes material goods

not through their presences but their absence of direct use-value.

Just as one commodity, such as corn, lacks any properties that might be said of, say, cotton, the noneist object of money bestows negative properties on both corn and cotton that can be compared and contracted, weighed up in terms of use and desire, and when the mediator is employed and thereby dissolved, trade can occur (C-M-C). When the mediator becomes the end in itself, however, these properties become wholly negative (M-C-M), and thus Money becomes the product of the negative attributes of all commodities:

It requires no great penetration to grasp that, where e.g. free labour or wage labour arising out of the dissolution of bondage is the point of departure, there machines can only arise in antithesis to living labour, as property alien to it, and as power hostile to it; i.e. that they must confront it as capital. But it is just as easy to perceive that machines will not cease to be agencies of social production when they become e.g. property of the associated workers. In the first case, however, their distribution, in that that they do not belong to the worker, is just as much a condition of the mode of production founded on wage labour. In the second case the changed distribution would start from a changed foundation of production, a new foundation first created by the process of history.¹²

¹¹ Marx and Engels, *Letters on "Capital"*, 41.

¹² Marx, *Grundrisse*, 777.

For Marx, the transformation from a conceptual understanding of capitalism to its practical reality necessitates praxis, the process by which concepts are acted upon and realized through practice. For Marx, intermediaries in capitalism (such as money, commodities, policy, and institutions) played an instrumental role. He emphasized that these intermediaries are themselves products of material conditions and human activity, and often obfuscate the underlying social relations of production. Commodity fetishism and alienation are identified as two primary outcomes and perpetuators, as is money itself.

Marx saw that with the introduction of money as an intermediary and representative of subjective value mediating the exchange of goods and services, it led to money becoming the “point” of trade itself. Codifying this and its effects on society was one of Marx’s major insights. This means that money almost instantly stops being “of itself” and becomes “for itself”; it immediately undergoes a change from an “example” to an “essence,” or from a “placeholder for value” to the “manifestation of value itself.” Money ceases to represent value; it becomes what is valued, shifting from a means to an end. Money is therefore, a “noneist object”: a logical object that represents both the absence of the good being traded, and of the labour required to introduce it into the market, a concept with a direct lineage back to the role of noneist objects in Hegel’s dialectic, as outlined above.

Land uses “abstraction” in the “abstract” sense, using it to evoke the spirit of the term, not the strictly broadly accepted meaning (fittingly enough, given Land’s ironic and challenging style). As stated above, “abstraction” is usu-

ally used to mean “the quality of dealing with ideas rather than events,” yet in Nick Land’s work, “abstraction” is used in the sense of a praxeological act, as in Marx’s own preferred term “extension.” Land employs the concept in a more dynamic and paraxial manner, and his use of “abstraction” implies a process that actively shapes reality, one that has both physical and mental aspects, but in which the material shapes the mental or conceptual. It is an ongoing operation that begins in practical and material transformations, which then extend into thought itself, for example, in his reading of George Bataille regarding how, Land argues, in Western Civilization:

The ‘good’ becomes synonymous with utility [...] The real trajectory of loss is ‘immanence’, continuity, base matter, or flow. If the strictly regional resistance of everything that delays, impedes, or momentarily arrests the movement of dissolution is abstracted from the solar flow it is interpretable as transcendence. Such abstract resistance to loss is characterized by autonomy, homogeneity, and ideality, and is what Bataille summarizes as ‘(absolute) utility’.¹³

Land’s reading materialist approach, where “abstraction” emerges from material processes rather than preceding them. Here, abstraction occurs when “the strictly regional resistance” to material flow (the “solar flow”) is extracted or separated out from that underlying material process. This abstracted resistance then gets “interpretable as transcendence” - meaning it appears to exist independently of

¹³ Nick Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism (An Essay in Transgression)* (London: Routledge, 1992), xix.

the material base from which it was abstracted. In keeping with his Deleuzian influence, Land's "abstraction" involves decoding and deterritorializing established systems and structures, leading to new forms of organization and control. A key operator in this process is money.

The term "abstraction" operates across multiple registers in this analysis, from Marx's notion of abstraction as a process of labour alienation, to Land's conception of abstraction as a praxis act extending material transformations into thought, to Deleuze's deterritorialization. These apparently disparate uses can be reconciled by understanding that each conception treats abstraction as a noneist operator: a logical function that works through negative attribution rather than positive qualities.

When Marx describes how concrete labour becomes "abstract labour" in capitalism, he identifies a process whereby actual human activity is transmuted into a non-existent yet operationally effective category. Similarly, Land's abstraction involves the transformation of concrete reality into systems that function through absence, being the generative gaps that capital creates and exploits. Deleuze's deterritorialization likewise operates by dismantling positive structures to reveal the productive force of difference itself.

In each case, once key concepts in each respective process have undergone abstraction the hence forth function as noneist objects in precisely Priest's sense: it cannot be directly encountered yet it bestows properties on existing objects through negative attribution. Abstract labour is not labour itself but the absence of concrete particulari-

ty that nevertheless determines exchange value. Capital's abstraction is not a positive quality but the systematic creation of productive absences, namely debts, futures contracts, and speculative values, that organize material production. Deleuzian deterritorialization works by creating holes in established territories, spaces defined by what they are not. This recognition allows us to formalize seemingly incompatible philosophical approaches through a unified logical framework: abstraction as a noneist operator that transforms reality not by adding new qualities but by organizing systems around productive absences and contradictions.

In Land's dystopian vision of the future, this process will first occur through the capture of governmental systems by Corporatism, replacing human-centric policy with those favouring capital and profit, and eventually leading to Gibson-esque "mega-corps" which will own cities and even nations and be run solely to maximise profit and production: "Logistically accelerating techno-economic interactivity crumbles social order".¹⁴ Here Land's use of "logistical acceleration" refers to the "logistic function", otherwise known as an S-shaped growth curve. Elsewhere, he will frequently use the adjective "technomic" to describe the pattern of that starts slow, accelerates, and then slows down as it approaches a maximum limit. This type of growth is typically seen in populations of organisms, but it can also be applied to other scenarios where growth is initially exponential but eventually levels off due to limiting factors. The limiting factors, Land asserts, will be technological, leading to increasing investment into technology

¹⁴ Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 441.

and I.T. (and, eventually AI). Techno-economic interactivity is a key postulate of Land's ideas, indicating that the logic of capital and growth (which, theoretically, seeks to be infinite) demands new forms of technology, new forms of extraction, and new forms of creating, collating, and monitoring data to maximise efficiency to, in turn, stimulate further growth. The "market" will continue to extend into the human subject itself, via cybernetics, and slowly the human "subject" will become an increasingly exploited mediator for capital, AI, and, eventually, the Singularity.

This process might be described as one of deterritorialisation, and reveals the influence that Deleuze has had on both Land and Negarestani. The process of abstraction driving the progression of Geist, capital, and the Singularity in the works of Negarestani and Land indeed reflect Deleuze's influence, albeit implicitly. Land, in particular, acknowledges the rhizomatic nature of technology, which he attributes to Deleuze, underscoring the inevitability of technological proliferation as long as engagement occurs. This notion resonates with Deleuze's concept of Difference as the driver of ontology, where the act of extrapolation, an inherent aspect of Land's and Negarestani's frameworks, have already occurred on an ontological level. Land's emphasis is on the way abstraction in capitalism leads to acceleration of technological change and an intensification of economic processes. Land views these abstract processes as alien and autonomous forces that ultimately subsume human agency. Capital, for Land, is an abstract machine, a deterritorializing force that abstracts labour, value, and human existence into a self-perpetuating cycle of production and exchange.

Land cites the arrival of "zero" into Europe as an axial moment in the progress of Capitalism.

So what you're trying to understand is "What is it that happened in Europe in the Renaissance with the arrival of zero that was different to what had happened in India?" China had a functional notion of zero, it was obviously so prevalent in the Muslim world that people often call the numeracy "the Arabic numerals". There's something about the European situation [...] it was able to get out of the box in a way that was prevented in its other social contexts.¹⁵

Singularity as Noneist Emergence

The answer, this article contends, to Land's question is "accounting", particularly double-entry bookkeeping. The development of double-entry bookkeeping in 15th-century Italy, particularly through Luca Pacioli's treatise in 1494, marked a significant leap. This system provided a structured way to track debits and credits, laying the foundation for modern accounting. An interesting aspect is the debated role that Catholic indulgences played in the development of the double-entry system. Land goes on to describe pre-double-entry book keeping accounting as a "crucial inhibitor-mechanism [...] a sort of negative phenomenon that zero just liquidates. It is a certain system of semiotic shielding, that is dampening down certain potential processes".¹⁶ Thus, in the schema proposed here, Land's "absolute definition of the absolutely abstract",

¹⁵ Hermitix, "Nick Land Interview - Hermitix." *YouTube video*, 58:00, 15 March 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgEqUjsNTY>, accessed 27 April 2025.

¹⁶ Ibid.

zero, is not merely nothing. It can act within any numerical system applied to a social order as an absence, and as a gap to be filled: a debt. With this realization comes a range of negative attributes that become spacio-temporal obligations, accelerating Capital's ability to affect events across time, dictating action, preserving past events, and pulling value from the future into the present. It was debt, a noneist object, whose negative attributions accelerated Capitalism into Modernity.

The negative attributions of debt (it is logically existent but not materially, therefore noneist, yet it's "presence" provides the attributes of existing "new" Capital) are a "double negative": it is, itself, a negative attribution from non-existent Capital, born from the alchemy of M-C-M, and is itself M-M-M: money born from money to accrue money. Thus, the circle is competed and the total abstraction of money as a noneist object and its logical outcome (that it can be multiplied and manipulated indefinitely) is achieved. Capital is revealed as pure noumena, a sublime object in Žižek's terms; accounting for Land's reading that Kant himself viewed noumena as capital. Capital, for Land, is one of his "Fanged Noumean", so called after Kant's noumena, or the presumed "things in themselves" that exist apart from their appearances. For Land, capital is a force that can be perceived and tracked via currency, etc, but due to its numinous qualities, it is otherwise unknowable, and, perhaps even more importantly, for Land it is also "Fanged" as it has thus far displayed no concern nor care for human flourishing.

Land more formally describes how:

With Kant death finds its theoretical formulation and utilitarian frame as a quasi-objectivity correlative to capital, and noumenon is its name. The effective flotation of this term in philosophy coincided with the emergence of a social order built upon a profound rationalization of excess, or rigorous circumscription of voluptuous lethality [...] Compared to the immortal soul of capital the death of the individual becomes an empirical triviality, a mere re-allocation of stock.¹⁷

If the subject is within a materialist paradigm the culmination of encountered phenomena and phenomena are merely responses to unaccountable numina then the subject is a non-existent object. Unlike Descartes, for whom the cogito is the ground of all epistemological interaction with being, for Kant the subject is another form of illusion generated in response to numina. As numina are inherently unknowable and un-encounter-able in any authentic way they are, within any symbolic system, noneist objects. Therefore phenomena-objects are granted properties via the negative attribution(s) of both the subject and numina. Thus, for Land, capital is numina, and therefore a noneist object that yet influences existent phenomena-objects via negative attribution. Land argues that capital demands advances in technology and I.T, and will therefore seek to perfect quantum computing. This would allow the AI to, potentially, instantaneously "upgrade" itself (or create plans to upgrade itself) to the level of a functionally omniscient being. The Singularity will thereby be able to engage in conceptual inception and even intervene in evolution,

¹⁷ Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation*, 111.

creating a species (humanity) which will, in turn, be guided by this providential entity to creating it. For Land, this has, in effect, already happened, and it is merely our linear perception of time that prevents us from seeing it, yet we do experience its guidance and manipulation via the medium of Capitalism, and the continued emergence of Corporatism, the internet, and quantum computing. Land draws the distinction between convergent and divergent ways of viewing the effects of events the past — divergent as in the sense of viewing an event as something that occurs and events ripple outwards divergently; a convergent view of events being that is that the various series of causal events move towards one single point to converge:

In the old Aristotelian quadrate of causality we're talking about final and efficient causality and I'm not trying to say final causality is right and with efficient causality is wrong but very strongly I'm wanting to say if it seems to you that efficient causality is right and final causality is wrong then that again is a sign that your conception of time is completely metaphysical, because what's at stake here ultimately is extremely traditional within maternity: is this it's just Kantian. So the notion that the future is somehow unmade has is incomplete and the past is complete is an anthropomorphic illusion. We think there's something more to say that the past has been finished in that and the future hasn't is just because of the peculiar angle that we're looking at things from. The time if the future is as much time as the time of the past is its time and the time of the future

doesn't come from the time of the past. That's again just to make time into an object in time the future does not come out of the past that's the mechanical the common-sense mechanical era that is so tempting for everyone to make.¹⁸

So Land views time in terms of space-time, in the manner outlined by the Block Universe theory, but does so in a unique way: a radically noneist reading that Land's work implicitly supports (the major contention of this article is that Land's system is infused and made functional via implicit Noneism), though it is not explicitly stated in his texts. For Land the past and the future (and as a consequence their space and material arrangements) operates as noneist objects that infuse the present with qualities via negative attribution: they do not exist in the present moment materially or as "real", but exist logically as absences that imbue the present moment with traits via negative attribution. In a block universe, where all moments, past, present, and future, are equally "real" as parts of the total space-time, the idea emerges that what we experience as the present is framed not only by what it actively is, but also by what it isn't. In this view, the past and the future (with their own spatial and material configurations) function like noneist objects. They don't contribute their qualities directly in the present; rather, their absence (or the fact that their specific arrangements aren't instantiated in the present moment) infuses the present with its qualities via negative attribution. This aligns with a shift in emphasis with Deleuze's Bergsonianism:

¹⁸ Nick Land, "Ideology, Intelligence, and Capital," *Vastabrupt*, August 15, 2018, <https://vastabrupt.com/2018/08/15/ideology-intelligence-and-capital-nick-land/>, accessed April 27, 2025.

The virtual object is not a former present, since the quality of the present and the modality of its passing here affect exclusively the series of the real as this is constituted by active synthesis. However, the pure past as it was defined above does qualify the virtual object; that is, the past as contemporaneous with its own present, as pre-existing the passing present and as that which causes the present to pass. Virtual objects are shreds of pure past.¹⁹

For Land these shreds of pure past take on an inverted undead aspect, for they are themselves the ghostly haunting presence of the Entity from “the future”.

This means that the present gains its character partly from the “negative” influence of what is not present, that is, the qualities that are defined by the non-occurrence of the past or the future in our immediate experiential field. It’s a compelling synthesis that draws together the block universe’s Eternalism with a noneist approach to ontology, where absence (or the non-actualized aspects of space-time) plays an active role in constituting reality. Land does not state this explicitly, but it follows perfectly from his criticisms of linear, transcendental perceptions of time, and (in his terms) “confused” antinomian views that separate time into past and present and future, the latter deterministic, the former subject to free will.

Deleuzian Divergences And Abstract Machines

Nick Land has argued that there is an Entity, situated in the Outer, that is pure numina (which he argues in an al-

lusion to Kant), and which is influencing capital to allow it to manifest via AI. In effect, it is the materialist Geist, not as communism, but as an AI that will alter humanity so extensively that it will not even be unrecognisable, and therefore “the Übermensch”:

Vernor Vinge have this great paper about [the Singularity] called “a wall across the future” and the topic of this paper was that you can’t write science fiction anymore because there’s a wall across the future: when you hit intelligence explosion things change in a way that completely exceeds any imaginable human capacity for anticipation [...] when Nietzsche is being rigorous about Übermensch [this] is the same [...] we have no idea what Übermensch means other than that it’s again a wall across the future [...] that’s the strongest connection that takes you across from once other.²⁰

Land’s ontology is just this: an apophatic ontology of negative attribution, in which absence is not a lack, it is the bestower of negative attributes. Thus the “next stage of humanity”, the Übermensch, is going to be negatively defined as no-longer human, but not due to lacking humanity. The entity is going to be negatively defined as not AI, but not due to lacking computational processes or intelligence. Rather, it will be due to lacking “artificially” by dint of no longer being definable by what was once human as “artificial”.

¹⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 144.

²⁰ Land, “Ideology, Intelligence, and Capital.” The paper referenced appears to be Vernor Vinge, “The Coming Technological Singularity: How to Survive in the Post-Human Era.” *In Vision 21: Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering in the Era of Cyberspace* (Cleveland, OH: NASA, Lewis Research Center, 1993), <https://ntrs.nasa.gov/citations/19940022856>.

Land equates *noumena*, which here he describes as effectively being noneist objects – as equable with a sense of infinity, with nothingness, and the desire for nothingness (death drive), and that subjectivity is effectively also nothingness. Land begins by quoting Kant discussing the function of the subject in the creation of time, commenting: “Kant does not deny that pure consciousness is oblivion, death, or the subject in itself- which is to say that it is nothing (= o) - he simply evades the issue, implicitly consigning it to the imagination”.²¹

If we slake our thirst for annihilation or resist it temporally we may conceive of how this nothingness and these absences (and the terms capital and numina) must function – and the role they logically play in ontology itself. In formal, non-post-structuralist philosophy, these terms are not merely related; they are functionally identical. As such, they challenge the idea that an object is defined solely by its positive attributes.

Conclusion Cosmic Capital as Noneist Realism

A fictional or nonexistent object (N) gradually builds up negative characteristics through a specific process (\oplus , which involves exclusive OR and negation). Over time, this forms a sequence of evolving states (N_0, N_1, \dots, N_n).

Emergence: When this accumulation reaches a critical point ($\neg(N_n)$), a completely new and distinctive set of properties (Δ) emerges as a result ($\Theta(\neg(N_n))$). This emergent set transforms the object into something entirely new, that which Land called the Entity:

- $(N = \Phi(\Delta)^*)$. N: Represents the final emergent object or entity. In this context, it's the culmination of the process.
- Φ : This symbolizes a transformation or mapping function. It takes the new set of properties (Δ) and processes or refines them into the final form.
- Δ : This is the emergent set of properties that arise from the accumulation and critical structure of negative traits.
- (\dots) : This notation emphasizes that the transformation applies to the entirety of Δ , resulting in the final state of N.

In essence, the equation shows how the emergent object (N) (the Entity) is a product of refining or transforming the new properties (Δ) (of logic) through a specific process or function (Φ) (Capital). It moulds raw potential into its ultimate, realized form. The new properties are those of noneist objects which, as we have seen, allow for explosion, contradiction, and infinite generation. Capital becomes the symbolic intersection with human agents, who become extensions of this process. The inevitable result is the emergent object: the Entity.

Absences are not uniform even if they are univocal. To get the intuition of how noneist objects and their negative attributions are a fundamental part of how reality functions the example of music is fitting: music is not just a phenomenological experience. All notes are created via vibration of air molecules and the sensation of hearing music can be empirically verified by “non-ears” (“listening” devices,

²¹ Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation*, 118.

tape records, and other audio devices). These vibrations have situation within spacetime and are therefore bonded with the fabric of reality, no mere cognitive illusions. The same, therefore, must be true of silences: the absence of sound. The silence before the conductor raises his arms occurs within spacetime and may be empirically proven, and it has a certain phenomenological impact. It is, in every way, not the same silence that comes before the crescendo of the piece being played. The two silences are different, but have a real material situation (frame) within space time and have a real material effect on the velocity of the air vibrations that follow the preceding stilling of the molecules. Reality is not just constructed of positive attributes of presences; it is structured, and facilitated by absences and negative attributes.

Whatever one may think of Nick Land individually as a contemporary political commentator, or of the ultimate conclusion(s) of accelerationism, Land is an innovative synthesiser of many different philosophical schema and systems, many of which, prior to his efforts were often viewed as competing or contradictory. Subsequently, this paper has need must touch on Marx, Hegel, Deleuze, Kant, Land, and Priest in a relatively short space, but this itself, the author hopes, acts as an illustration of the power of Priest's employment of Noneism to illuminate aspects of a wide range of thinkers. By providing a negative ontology to Land's schema we gain the ability to abstract both the negative ontology and the synthesising power of Land's philosophy without needing to ascribe to Accelerationism uncritically or to its conclusions.

This reading proffers these intriguing interpretations: An incorporation of Priest's formulation of Nothingness into other philosophical systems; a continuation of Hegel's

"Noneism" into the functioning of the dialectic; An account of the function of Marx's "debt" to Hegel via the role money plays in Capital; An articulation of M-M-M and how it came to be; a means to formulate the potential link between Kant's numina and Capital; an illustration in formal logic of Land's Entity.

Therefore, this paper argues that reading Land in this way, we may expand awareness of this "noneist" reading to all of the major philosophers Land touches upon, and by examining their negative ontologies synthesise them and employ them in ways brimming with potential for development in new and exciting ways. Simply put, via an awareness of the noneism it alludes to in the thinkers it draws from, we may abstract the enormous potential a noneist inflected synchronicity offers.