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**Realismo Especulativo** ..... 1



# Realismo Especulativo

**Ray Brassier's** work combines a militant enthusiasm for the Enlightenment with a theoretical position that drastically limits the presumptions of thought in its ability to grasp the nature of reality. Cutting across a number of closely-held human conceits— including our usual self-esteem as a species and our aspiration towards harmony with nature—Brassier's work aims at eliminating anything that might falsely make us feel at home in the world. The result is a position that might be called an eliminativist nihilism that takes the destruction of meaning as a positive result of the Enlightenment project: something to be pushed to its ultimate end, despite all protests to the contrary.

A stark contrast is provided by **Iain Hamilton Grant's** return to the naturephilosophy of Schelling, which aims to construct a transcendental naturalism capable of providing an ontological foundation for science. Grappling fully with the implications of Kant's critical turn even while constructively opposing it, Grant tries to move the transcendental project beyond its idealist tendencies so as to connect it with a dark and rumbling field of pure 'productivity' lying beneath all phenomenal products. It is from these very depths that nature, mind, society, and culture are all produced. Grant also aims to provide a consistent metaphysical foundation for contemporary science.

A different approach to the non-human world is found in the object-oriented philosophy of **Graham Harman**. Like many of the Austrian philosophers of the late nineteenth century, Harman pursues a general theory of objects ranging from quarks to solar systems to dragons to insurgencies, but he also adds several weird twists to the theory. From one side he treats objects according to the Heideggerian insight that objects withdraw into depths inaccessible to all access. And from another side he follows Whitehead's model, in which the relation between human and world is merely a special case of any relation at all: when fire burns cotton, this is different only by degree from the human perception of cotton. Whereas the phenomenological method bracketed the natural world out of consideration, Harman treats the phenomenological and the natural, or the perceptual and the causal, as neighbours in a drama in which objects can only make indirect contact with one another.

**Quentin Meillassoux**, whose 2006 debut book might be called the trigger for the Speculative Realist movement, argues for a mathematical absolute capable of making sense of scientific claims to have knowledge of a time prior to humanity. These 'ancestral' statements pose a problem for philosophies that refuse any knowledge of a realm independent of empirical access to it. If we are to understand these ancestral statements literally, however, it must be shown that we already have knowledge of the absolute. Meillassoux's uniqueness lies in showing how correlationism (the idea that being and thought are only accessible in their co-relation) is self-refuting—that if we take it seriously, it already presupposes a knowledge of the absolute. Yet unlike the other Speculative Realists, Meillassoux is not dismissive of correlationism, but seeks to radicalize it from within. From the facticity of our particular correlation, Meillassoux derives the necessity of contingency or 'hyperchaos': the apparently counterintuitive result that anything is possible from one moment to the next.

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Last update: **2017/10/27 12:02**

