

Octonary of Philosophical Sufficiency¹

François Laruelle

Translated by Jeremy R. Smith

Abstract: In this experimental philo-fiction, Laruelle groups eight paragraphs reflecting on the relationship between philosophy, man, and naming. This relationship itself serves as a kind of landmark, monument, or bridge that strives to connect, in its very sufficiency, the thought of man and man himself. Situated in the midst of Philosophy II and as part of the third issue of *La décision philosophique*, Laruelle's text implicitly relates to other pieces from this same issue, such as reflections on Charles Péguy, human philosophy, anthropology, naming, and a non-epistemological description of science. This philo-fiction that appears towards the end of the third issue of *La décision philosophique* opens this issue of *Oraxiom* with the goal of highlighting the distinction between a human philosophy whose solitude is non-self-positing and the self-positing of philosophical sufficiency to account for philosophy, the real of man, and naming.

François Laruelle was professor emeritus at Université de Paris X-Nanterre and progenitor of non-philosophy and non-standard philosophy. Author of over twenty five texts, Laruelle is also a co-founder of Organisation Non-Philosophique Internationale (ONPhI). His latest works are *Philosophie non-standard. Générique, quantique, philo-fiction* (Paris: Kimé, 2010) (where the portmanteau *Oraxiom* was created), *Tétralogos, un opéra de philosophies* (Paris: Cerf, 2019), and *Le Nouvel Esprit technologique* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2020). François Laruelle's cogito is not only philosophical, but also philo-musical. For this purpose, he articulates philosophy with other disciplines, in particular quantum, which replaces natural objects with states and operators. Using these operators and the generic, Laruelle constructs a technique of ascent from the world to the universe, then a long descent towards humans, distinct from philosophical subjects.

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On the Argument:

Man is named within proper names, philosophy is named within tautologies. “Man” is a proper name, “Philosophy” is a tautology. However, it is *sufficient* that any name would be in the last instance a name of man so that tautologies would be suitable for “Man” and become secondary proper names that are said of “Man.”

I. *The Principle of Sufficient Reason* is a name that is not yet recognized as a proper name: it speaks the reason for that which is: The World, The *There is* of things, the Given. It speaks the reason for that which it assumes which is. This is that which it postulates at first: it has already asked or posited that something = X, a being, is presented in the panorama of transcendence, but it speaks the reason for that which is without that it can speak the reason of what says about it that which is. This is that which it postulates secondly: that it also would be given in the face of the Given. It is deployed from one postulate to another, in the difference of that which it postulates as being that which receives *the Principle of Reason* and from that which it postulates as being that which gives it *the Principle of Reason*. It deploys the arc of Reason from one absence of reason to the other and constrains *Man* to borrow this bridge. A bridge suspended

over the void holds together by the power of the intertwining of three strands: duty (it prescribes to search for a reason), security (it assures that there is always a reason), and sufficiency (it anticipates the reason that, already being there, is enough). These are the three strands that make up the knotted solidity of *Reason*: the obligation for searching for reason that obliges the being, the always available capital of reason, the sufficiency of this inexhaustible reserve that is enough to exhaust being.

II. No architect has reclaimed the sublime monument that, from one extreme land to the other, assembles the Western continent. No architect, not even the bridge itself, exists. What only exists is the rope—which believes that it prevents the opposing moles from falling into the ravine of the river called “Becoming”—and the moles—who think that the rope must exist and be tightened for them. Neither one supports the other above the nothingness. Together they are only held by the invisible pillar that makes the bricks of the bridge rise above the void in which they are already divided: the transcendence of the Philosophical Decision, the new name that does not yet know a proper name. The philosopher is the only architect who dared to make their body the monument of the Western Dis-Junction. *The Principle of Reason* barely speaks the reason that it is split into another name, *The Principle of Sufficient*

Philosophy, and because its sufficiency, which it speaks but with which it is not satisfied, comes back as the sufficiency of *Philosophy*; that the reason it speaks and that it cannot produce for itself coming back as the philosophical decision; that the duty that it speaks and cannot fulfill for its own account comes back as the duty to philosophize. The misfortune of *Reason* is to be divided without knowing what divides it: riven between the extreme presuppositions of being and the reason of being, reason and the Principle of Reason, the principle that it is already without yet being it. It is inconsistent to the point of being threatened by chaos or the Evil Genius. But it is *Philosophy* that has dug the ravine and installed the bridge. Philosophy alone is enough to divide *Reason* and to reunite it with its strength as principle. Philosophy alone is enough to give *Reason* its sufficiency as a principle and make the difference between these two sufficiencies. *Philosophy* makes *Reason* feel its precarity and imposes the diktat of the philosophical saying: either chaos or me. The sufficiency of *Reason* can only become a principle through the supplement of *Philosophy*.

III. That which is enough thus suffices to think sufficiency [*Ce qui suffit ainsi suffit à penser la suffisance*]. It suffices to think the tautologies of sufficiency to suffice for thought. “Sufficient” is said of the unknown = X that resolves the equation philosophy = real; “unknown” is said

of this sufficiency that only resolves the equation because it makes it into a position. *Philosophy* decides that it is the (ad)equation to the real, and therefore in-(ad)equated [*in-(ad)équation*] to decide it. Philosophy only admits the equation with the real within a more essential inequation. Philosophy is the term and arbiter, partisan and biased; known as a partisan, unknown as impartial. “Philosophy” is a judge that intends to remain secret, but by saying the reason of *Reason* without speaking its own reason, that which is enough thus to which is not enough for it does not either suffice in turn—sufficiency remains an unknown = X and is insufficient. That which is enough suffices and not quite suffices in thinking sufficiency. This is because that which is enough was thought prematurely as sufficient to think the sufficiency before absolutely sufficing by itself. From sufficing to this task that is in-sufficient for it, *Philosophy* in-suffices in turn for *Man* – the absolute and first proper name. This non-tautology of the name of man is enough to demonstrate that which absolutely suffices is enough in order to finally demonstrate the insufficiency of philosophical sufficiency to think the real or man and therefore the “sufficiency” – the pretention – of *Philosophy* and its tautologies. The insufficiency of philosophical sufficiency ensues from the sufficiency of the new but oldest name: *Man*.

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IV. Two paradigms are enough to divide thought, to think sufficiency, causality, and the sufficiency of causality. Either it suffices by a requisite to make a cause, or because the cause is enough by itself without first being required. *Philosophy* says that that which is sufficient must be required, and that that which is required must be sufficient; that that which is posited as required and required as posited suffices for the real and is enough for itself to suffice itself and in view of being enough for it. *Philosophy* is the name of that which poorly, viciously or tautologically begets, that which begets outside of any order, for example the sufficient cause, therefore insufficient cause, from the sufficiency of the effect that is in-itself insufficient. It shares the sufficiency over two insufficiencies. By contrast, *Man* says that, as sufficing as the real, he suffices for *Philosophy* and as the cause of *Philosophy*. In search for a requisite, for its decision and position, *Man* opposes his absolutely sufficient causality and his proper name: *Determination in the last instance*. It is to *Philosophy* requisitioned as a cause, therefore as an insufficient cause that pretends to be sufficient, *Man*, the real, is opposed as *Last Instance* who suffices to determine. To the three continuously knotted strands that *Philosophy* draws its existence and the existence of *Reason*, *Man* opposes his own: *The Last Instance* suffices as the real and alone is to be real; it suffices as cause and needs no return of causality or a

supplement of causality in return; and suffices as a term, the sufficiency of the term to be the real cause. *Last Instance* is the other proper name that describes the sufficiency of the solitude to be a cause.

V. *Philosophy* pretends to suffice and only demonstrates the sufficiency of this pretention. However, it is a sufficiency that is only shown elsewhere and from the solitude of *Man*. *Philosophy* thus begets in turn *Sufficiency* that is exposed and appears as it is finally. *Sufficiency* is hidden within the wrinkle of *Philosophy*, it is the effect of immensity, the shadow stretched out by the philosophizing fold. The Queen of the World hidden to the eyes of the World, *Philosophy* is a secret that can only live secretly wherever philosophizing sufficiency reigns. But this secret has become visible as it is to the eyes of *Man* without ceasing to be a secret for him. *Denudation* is the name of the manifestation of the secret that integrally remains a secret when it is shown and that it no longer lives in secret. *Philosophy* is thus exposed in its operation which is never denudation, but sufficiency: it takes the coat of the logos off the phenomenon of the secret and claims to reveal this phenomenon by hiding the secret of the phenomenon. The secret of the *World* was in the world and the world did not see it, and *Philosophy* only believes to make it seen on condition of destroying it as a secret. The secret of *Philosophy* was in

philosophy and philosophy did not see it, and the *World* only believes to make it seen on condition of breaking it as a secret. *Man* alone is enough to denude the secret of philosophizing sufficiency.

VI. *Reason* speaks the sufficiency of things; *Philosophy* speaks the insufficiency of *Reason*; and *Man* speaks the in-sufficiency of *Philosophy*, its “Sufficiency” or its pretention. What in turn does this say about *Man*? It says that *Man* suffices-of..., that sufficing-of is a decision that *Man* suffices for a decision and that the decision suffices (for *Philosophy*, for *Reason*) so that *Reason* speaks the sufficiency of things and *Philosophy* speaks the sufficiency of Reason. It also says that sufficiency consists in sufficing-for and that it serves as a support, and that *Man* suffices by a support for... But *Man* no longer sees this sufficiency split or disjointed from itself, he now sees it from that which it is as a proper name, the proper name of *Sufficiency* before philosophizing tautology. *Sufficiency* is now the name of this primary emotion that did not need division to appear. Sufficiency is the unbegotten child of *Man*, the child’s proper name of *Sufficiency* makes it precede philosophizing sufficiency which is not yet one such proper name and which is disjointed in the twins “Sufficiency” for and “Sufficiency” of... *Human Sufficiency* is not defined as that which suffices-of... nor as that which suffices-for. It suffices

(with) its identity before sufficing; it is human and subject before being a condition, inauguration, and decision; it is inapparent to the sufficiency of the *World* and *Philosophy*, to their strategy and calculation. Only praise, rather than logos, can speak this reality, this stability and this transcendence of undivided *Sufficiency*.

VII. *Sufficiency*, as the child of man, is the invisible sufficiency of any visible sufficiency; the proper name or the secret of tautological sufficiency. However, the latter can and must be now celebrated as the occasion necessary for *Man* so that he can beget the unbegotten *Sufficiency*, for if *Man* begets all things as unbegotten, he needs to do so by an occasion drawn from philosophical sufficiency. Without it, which is not enough and what grounds its “sufficiency,” *Man* will never have had the occasion to draw from his bosom and experience the pre-twinning simplicity of *Sufficiency*, that which—being but one Identity identical to nothing—is absolutely enough. *Sufficiency* which was exposed and considered as absolutely insufficient is once more sufficient, but under the reason of this more anterior sufficiency that the Vision-in-man gives, and only under this condition. That which is believed to be enough is not seen as dressed up with a realer sufficiency except on condition of becoming sterile or absolutely philosophically non-sufficient. The Principle of Sufficient Philosophy, this tautology is

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experienced in *Man* as this name of man—the *Principle of Sufficient Philosophy*—unfindable in the kingdom of philosophy.

VIII. Philosophical sufficiency, even revealed as a pure emotion or *Sufficiency*, has not yet completed metamorphoses by which it is definitively submitted to *Man*. Even more than its unbegotten child, *Man* is the redeemer of philosophy, its most lively salvation. *Man* imposes upon philosophy an ultimate transformation, the only one that brings philosophy to its use as a proper name—so much less than this tautology can tolerate the absolutely proper name of *Man*, and its secret is to be revealed by remaining in the interior of this more secret interior. Philosophical sufficiency, but *Sufficiency* itself, and their unity too (the unity of the sufficient occasion so that *Man* experiences *Sufficiency* as his child), still manifests, each in their own way, an ultimate trait of pretention, and only the absolutely sufficient proper name as the proper name—*Man*—can definitively impair this pretention. Even *Sufficiency*, if it were unbegotten, if it were invisible within the horizon of philosophical sufficiency, falls under the “(non)-human” power that *Man* radiates as soon as an Other-than-*Man* claims to present itself before him as sufficient. The Principle of Sufficient Philosophy, but also its name, that in which *Man* experiences it, are not dejected or destroyed by him. They receive for the first

time a “(non)-human” place that keeps them, them and their pretention, away from the absolutely proper name that alone can affect them as “(non)-human.” Yet *Man* does not depose the sufficiency of the philosophical position, and even the sufficiency of *Sufficiency* forever imposed or un-decided, without which, through another effect of its efficacy—the sufficiency of its solitude as *Last Instance*—*Man* does not submit them to another use. It is a philosophically non-sufficient use of the sufficiency of philosophy. By stopping to pretend to be valid for *Man*, by stopping to use its sufficiency as enough, *Philosophy* is finally with its sufficiency set to be in service of *Man* as the proper name that describes him.