

Research Article

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Subjectivity in the Age of Pandemics

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Abstract: The current pandemic that originated in a “wet” market in Wuhan has often been compared to the threat we face with climate change. The former originated in the trade in wild animals, which has driven many species to the point of extinction. In fact, we face an unprecedented rate of species loss due to pressures on habitats, pollution, and human predation. The threat of climate change originates with our uncontrolled use of fossil fuels, which, in making large parts of the globe uninhabitable, imperils our own species. The rationality (or lack thereof) that is exhibited here concerns our relation to the earth. We regard it simply as a means for our purposes. Separating ourselves from it, we follow the Biblical injunction to have “dominion” over it. In this, we express a conception of subjectivity that is exemplified by Descartes and Kant. To overcome this, I argue, we need a different sense of what it means to be a subject, one that takes it as a sustaining ground and points to the earth as the ultimate subject.

Keywords: subjectivity, rationality, imago dei, pandemic, environment, Descartes, Kant, Patočka

1 Introduction

At the end of the 2011 film, *Contagion*, we see a bat hanging from atop an open air market, somewhere in China. Suddenly, it drops the fruit it has been eating and the remains fall on the fruit in a stall. We have all read the accounts that the current pandemic originated in a “wet” market in Wuhan. Among the live animals for sale there, one suspect was a shy, scaly mammal called a pangolin, who feeds on ants. These animals have been driven almost to extinction because their meat is considered a delicacy. Their scales, moreover, are prized in traditional medicine. The trade in wild animals is, of course, not the only cause of their threatened extinction. In general, pressures on habitats, pollution, and human predation have resulted in an unprecedented rate of species’ loss. The “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice” affirms that “we have unleashed a mass extinction event, the sixth in roughly 540 million years, wherein many current life forms could be annihilated or at least committed to extinction by the end of this century.”¹ Another source estimates that about one million species of plants and animals face extinction within decades as the result of human actions.² Such actions, of course, include climate change, whose effects have been known and predicted for decades. Humans, along with other species, are directly threatened by the uncontrolled use of fossil fuels. The resulting climate change is predicted to make large parts of the globe uninhabitable. To take a few examples: the coastlands all over the world will flood; heat and humidity in the tropical zone will prove unbearable; in the more temperate zones, forests will continue to be consumed by uncontrollable fires. All of this is well known, as is our general inaction in the face of this

1 Ripple et al., “World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice,” 1026.

2 Plumer, “Humans are Speeding Extinction and Altering the Natural World at an ‘Unprecedented’ Pace.”

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threat. What prevents us from action? Why do we tolerate the destruction of other species? What accounts for our lack of concerted action to prevent our own demise through climate change? More generally: what is the rationality that is exhibited here?

An indication of such rationality is to be found in the current reaction to these threats. With regard to the coronavirus crisis, this involves curbing the trade in wildlife, closing the “wet markets,” and improving the reporting and monitoring of the spread of new viruses. The imperative is to manage the pandemic with an eye to the essential functioning of our economy, the goal being to return to the *status quo*. Rationality, here, consists in using the earth and its resources, including the other species, in a sustainable way. This includes limiting the negative effects of such use. The same holds for the threat of climate change. In the interest of sustainable development, we are advised to exploit and use fossil fuels responsibly, gradually shifting over to the renewable resources of wind and solar power. A different rationality, however, occurs when we focus on our relation to the earth. Development, sustainable or not, still regards the earth as a store of raw materials for our purposes. It continues to define it in terms of its utility. In this, it follows the Biblical injunction to “have dominion” over the other species.³ The earth, however, exceeds the sense given to it by our purposes. Like a living creature, it can, if misused, “bite back.” Rather than being a tool or implement, nature seems to have a purpose of its own. Rationality, in this case, expresses our dependence on the natural world. In what follows, I will outline such rationality. My thesis will be that it relies on a conception of what it means to be a self or a subject that is fundamentally different from the account that has prevailed since Descartes’ time.

2 The modern subject

In one sense, the roots of the modern subject stretch back to Biblical times. They are found not just in the injunction to have “dominion” over God’s creation, they are also present in the description of man as the “image of God.”⁴ The implication of his being such can be found by turning to the unique status of the God of Genesis. Since he created the world, he is prior to it. He thus distinguishes himself from the other divinities that were worshiped at that time. They were as much a part of the world as humans, plants, and stones were. In fact, they frequently had intercourse with humans, the result being the “heroes” of the ancient world. Heracles, for example, was the son of the god, Zeus, and the human, Alcmene. The Biblical God, by contrast, was transcendent. He is the “Lord” of, rather than part of, creation. So are humans, insofar as they share his likeness and, hence, his dominion over the earth.⁵

³ “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Gen 1:26).

⁴ “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness [...] So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him” (Gen 1: 26–7).

⁵ Richard Middleton, in an illuminating essay, traces the sense of this domination to the “royal” interpretation of these texts of *Genesis*. This is an “interpretation which sees the image of God as *the royal function or office of human beings as God’s representatives and agents in the world, given authorized power to share in God’s rule over the earth’s resources and creatures*” (Middleton, “The Liberating Image? Interpreting the Imago Dei in Context,” 12). Representing the “virtual consensus among Old Testament scholars,” this interpretation bases itself on the fact that “the main function of divinity in both Israel and the ancient Near East is precisely to rule.” Kings, in their power to rule, “were often viewed as divine.” So, according to Genesis, were humans taken as God’s image (Ibid., 11, 12). For Middleton, this interpretation “captures something of the empirical realities of power, which humans undoubtedly have over our environment” (Ibid., 16). Middleton takes the extension to humans of divine power to rule as “liberating” insofar it represents “‘democratizing’ the ancient Near Eastern royal ideology, by applying it to all human beings, male and female” (Ibid., 21). Implicit in this extension, however, is the separation of humans from the nature they rule over. An extended version of Middleton’s account is to be found in his book, *The Liberating Image, The Imago Dei in Genesis 1*.

The point can be put in terms of our freedom. While other creatures are bound to nature and live by responding to it, humans have a scope of action that allows them to disobey even the injunctions of God. Cain, for example, does not follow God's warning not to murder Abel. God addresses Abel "Sin crouches at the door; its urge is toward you, yet you can be its master" (Gen 4:7). Sin, here, is not some force of nature; the death Abel suffers is not inevitable. Cain, as the text makes clear, is not compelled to commit murder. In the Bible, the very transcendence of humans gives them a freedom that makes them, unlike animals, capable of sin. Behind this view is a view of creation as admitting transcendence. Levinas expresses this in speaking of the "paradox of creation." This is "the paradox of an Infinity admitting a being outside of itself which it does not encompass."⁶ The creative God, with regard to mankind, is, in other words, "an infinity that does not close in upon itself [...] but withdraws [...] so as to leave a place for a separated being."⁷ This place is his freedom, not just with regard to nature, but also with regard to God himself.⁸ He is, in bearing God's image, transcendent to both.

This conception of transcendence receives a radical cast with Descartes at the beginning of the modern age.⁹ Descartes employs doubt as a method of division, which separates humans from the world. Thus, on the one side, we have what cannot be doubted, on the other, what can. The latter includes the possibility that there is "no earth, no sky, no extended bodies," etc.¹⁰ It also includes the possibility that having a "face, hands, arms, and all this mechanism composed of bone and flesh and members" is just an illusion.¹¹ What cannot be doubted is the self that doubts. Such a self, however, is distinct from the world. No more than God does it have a body. It may appear to have one and, after an appeal to a God who is incapable of deception, this appearance may be given a certain reality, but such a reality is distinct from Descartes as a subject or self. As Descartes affirms, "I am entirely and truly distinct from my [extended] body." Indeed, reduced to what I can be certain of, it seems that "I can be or exist without [this body]."¹²

The difficulties of this position, which lead directly to the mind-body problem, need not concern us. What is of interest is the concept of rationality that accompanies this position. Again the model is the account of Genesis. Just as the world has a single source, the God of creation, so has Descartes' method. Thus, his initial goal is to find an Archimedean point, "a single truth which is certain and indubitable."¹³ This he finds in the thinking (i.e., the willing, perceiving, and understanding) self. However problematic this axiom might appear to us, the rationality at work here is clearly foundational. A sign of this is Descartes' reference to his work as "my system."¹⁴ The concept of a system is that of things "standing together" – from *suvsthma* (*sustaema*) – this, by virtue of their having some common foundation. This

⁶ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity, An Essay on Exteriority*, 103.

⁷ Ibid., 104.

⁸ This is why humans, such as Abraham, Moses and Job, can remonstrate with God, can call him to account. Abraham, for example, when confronting the God who wishes to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, says "far be it from you to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty [...] Shall not the judge of the earth deal justly?" (Gen 18:25). God gives in as he does to Moses when at Mount Sinai, Moses persuades him not to destroy the Israelites who have been worshiping the Golden Calf. God, on seeing them, cries, "leave me be that my wrath may flare against them, and I will put an end to them." But Moses restrains him saying, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel your servants, to whom you swore by yourself and spoke to them, 'I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heaven'" (Ex 32, 10, 13). God, hearing this, gives way. In the Book of Job, God goes so far as to say that Job, in his accusations, has spoken "truthfully about me" (Jb 42:7, see Jb 21, 1–15, 24). The transcendence of both humans and God signifies that their relation is not one of force, but rather that of persuasion through discourse.

⁹ For an extensive account of the co-development of the modern conception of selfhood and the corresponding conception of rationality, see Mensch, *Knowing and Being: A Post-Modern Reversal*, 11–66.

¹⁰ Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 20.

¹¹ Ibid., 25.

¹² Ibid., 74.

¹³ Ibid., 23.

¹⁴ Descartes, *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, 123–24. Descartes was not unique in this. As Jacob Klein writes, before 1600, the term, system, "is never applied to thought." Yet after 1600, "there is a sudden and remarkable shift: book after book appears under titles like 'System of Logic,' 'System of Rhetoric,' 'System of Grammar,' 'System of Theology,' 'System of Ethics and Politics,' 'System of Physics,' 'System of Jurisprudence,' 'System of Astronomy,' of Arithmetic, of Geography, of Medicine and even 'System of Systems,'" (Klein, *Lectures and Essays*, 201).

foundation is referred to as their “origin” or “principle.” A sufficiently rich system is a layered structure with things gathered under common principles, and these in turn resting on their common principles. The ultimate attempt of every system is to find a final founding principle, a “principle of principles,” which gives the system a rationally unified character. This is Descartes’ Archimedean point, i.e., the fulcrum point which he claimed could be used to “move the earth from its orbit,” if only it were “fixed and immovable.”¹⁵

What does not fit in with these principles is, by definition, excluded. Systematic or foundational thinking does not just organize things into a rationally articulated whole; it also excludes. Whatever does not fall under its principles is considered to be groundless, i.e., without foundation or reason. Thus, Descartes, at the very beginning of his attempt to construct his system, rigorously excludes all his received opinions “so that they might later on be replaced, either by others which were better, or by the same, when I had made them conform to the uniformity of a rational scheme.”¹⁶ The stress is on such conformity. Opinions are to be valued, not by virtue of the authority which propounds them, nor even, in the first place, by the arguments or evidence of their proponents: what counts is how well they fit in with the system’s “rational scheme,” a scheme which normally includes *its own rules* of evidence.

Kant mirrors this foundationalism in his “Copernican” turn to the subject. Rather than assuming that “our knowledge must conform to objects,” he begins by “assuming that objects must conform to our knowledge.”¹⁷ They must, in fact, conform to the rules of the understanding, rules expressed in concepts “with which all experiential objects must conform and agree.”¹⁸ The point follows if we agree that such rules are rules of synthesis, the very synthesis which results in objects’ perceptual presence. The ultimate principle here is the subject who engages in this synthesis, this combining of perception with perception to get a temporally extended experience of objects. It is, in its unity, the uncombined combiner of its perceptions. As such, it is the “transcendental ground of the necessary lawfulness of the appearances composing an [objective] experience.”¹⁹ In terms of Kant’s system, the synthesizing subject is the principle of principles. All further principles, such as those of the concepts which express the rules of its synthesis, presuppose it. The exclusionary character of Kant’s system is well known. Almost all of the assertions of traditional metaphysics are set aside. More fundamentally, whatever is understood as violating the principles of subjective synthesis *cannot appear*.

The same exclusion occurs on the moral realm. Here, the fundamental principle is freedom or, in Kant’s terms, the “autonomy” of the will. Beginning with the commonplace observation that people are morally responsible only for their voluntary actions, Kant defines such actions as those where the will has the “property [...] of being a law unto itself (independently of every property belonging to the objects of volition).”²⁰ The free individual’s self-determination requires him to abstract from such properties. He loses his freedom when his choices are controlled by the objects of volition. Thus, when he is moved by his desire to achieve some object, his will is not free. The actual agent is not the self, but rather the world. The world acts through the person by means of the inclinations its objects cause in him. It is thus what controls his will. The upshot is that to be autonomous, i.e., self-directed, you must “set aside altogether the influence of inclination and, along with inclination, every object of the will.”²¹ On the moral level, then, we find the same separation of the self from the world that we encountered in Genesis and then in Descartes. The exclusionary character of this separation comes when we ask whether children or animals are capable of setting aside inclination. If they cannot, then they cannot be considered moral subjects.

There are two ways, corresponding to two formulations of the categorical imperative, to express this exclusion. Kant writes that once we exclude inclination, the only principle left as determinative is “the conformity of actions to universal law [...] That is to say, I ought never to act except in such a way that I can

¹⁵ Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 23.

¹⁶ Descartes, *Philosophical Works of Descartes*, 89.

¹⁷ Kant, *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 3, ed. Königlische Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 11–12.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Kant, *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, ed. Königlische Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 93.

²⁰ Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 108.

²¹ Ibid., 68.

also will that my maxim should become a universal law.”²² This last is the formula of the categorical imperative. To apply it is to ask what would happen if everyone always adopted our maxim of action – say, the maxim that one can make a false promise to get out of a difficulty. As Kant notes, this maxim cannot be universalized without making promises unbelievable. This, however, defeats the purpose of promising.²³ Now, if we ask what is accomplished by such universalization, we return to the separation of the self from the world. The universalization demanded by the categorical imperative both abstracts us from the world of particular circumstances and commands us to act autonomously, i.e., independently of it. Those who cannot perform this universalization are not moral subjects – they do not exhibit autonomy of the will. Small children, mentally deficient adults, and non-human animals are thereby excluded. Only rational creatures can engage in universalization, with its move from the particular to the general. Only they can draw inferences. From a Kantian perspective, they alone can be regarded as moral.

The exclusion implicit in the second formulation of the categorical imperative involves our treatment of non-moral agents. Again, Kant begins with a commonplace observation. For things to have value, someone must value them. Valuing, in other words, is conditional on the person that values. What about the latter, is she not, as a source of values, an unconditional value? Kant’s response is that this holds only if she is a rational agent, that is, guides her conduct by universal maxims. If she does, then the actions she wills will have an *objective* rather than a merely individual, subjective value. She will then count as a source of value. As such, she cannot be regarded merely as a means for achieving our goals. As unconditional, her “rational nature exists as an end in itself.”²⁴ With this, we have the division between how we treat agents. On the one side, we have “non-rational beings.” These “have only a relative value as means.” On the other, we have “rational beings.” These, Kant writes “are called persons because their nature marks them out as ends in themselves, that is, as something that ought not to be used merely as a means.”²⁵ With this, we have the formulation of the imperative: “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity [...] never simply as means, but always at the same time as end.”²⁶ This imperative “imposes [...] a limit on all arbitrary treatment of them.”²⁷ No such limit, at least from a moral standpoint, is, however, commanded with regard to non-rational beings. At most, our self-regard requires us to manage them in a sustainable way.

Despite their widespread influence, neither Descartes nor Kant can be regarded as causing the modern conception of subjectivity. Rather, they articulate a general trend, one that has its origins in the shift in the sense of nature. This shift has its origins in the Christian conception of nature. Patočka, without referring to its biblical origins, describes this by writing that for Christians “[t]he locus of meaning and being is God in God’s relation to the human soul: nature is the locus of cold, abstract reflection. Thus with respect to nature modern humanity builds not on antiquity [...] but rather on the Christian mode of regarding it with a cool distance and distrust.”²⁸ He repeats this thought when he writes: “The origin of this modern (non-Platonic) rationalism is complex.” It begins with “the distancing of humans from ‘nature,’ which is no longer the locus of being human but rather something from which humans are separated by their unique unmediated relation, their relation to God.” This relation, which we have characterized as their being God’s image, “enables them to perceive this ‘nature’ as an ‘object.’”²⁹ In the modern period, nature becomes taken as something to be mastered. Patočka describes this shift in sociological terms, namely in terms of the 16th century replacement of the “care for the soul,” which had dominated western society, with the “the care to have, care for the external world and its conquest.”³⁰ Typical of the era was the sentiment of the English philosopher, Francis Bacon (1561–1626). He asserted that “knowledge is power.” Knowledge is what leads

²² Ibid., 70.

²³ Ibid., 90.

²⁴ Ibid., 96.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, 70.

²⁹ Ibid., 110.

³⁰ Ibid., 83.

to “practice and production.” Its goal is “inventions and possibilities of transforming and mastering the world to suit our needs.”³¹ There is here a transformation of the sense of both rationality and nature. Rationality becomes the ability to fit means to ends in order to achieve our objectives.³² In Patočka’s words, there arises “an entirely new kind of rationalism, the only one we know today: a rationalism that wants to master things.”³³ The goal of mastery transforms the sense of nature. It becomes a storehouse of means for our ends.³⁴ Systematic thinking, in this context, is the linking of means to ends in the production process. It draws its principle, not from the subject as a valuing agent, but rather as a source of consumer desires. All of this expresses what Patočka calls the “logic of the day.” When we follow this logic, we manage the resources of the earth. We engage, if we are wise, in sustainable development, our goal being to keep the system going, to remain with the *status quo*. Insofar as we manage the world for our own benefit, we assume our separation from it. Rather than being part of the world, we dominate it.³⁵

3 An alternate conception of subjectivity

Subjectivity, in the tradition we have been examining, is like God, distinct from the world. Its relation to the latter is, like God’s, one of domination. Its rationality also mirrors God’s relation to the earth in that it flows from a single principle. To seek an alternate view, we can turn to the etymological sense of the word, “subjectivity.” The Latin *subjectus* is the past participle of the verb, *subicere*, signifying the action of placing or throwing under. Its Greek equivalent, *hupokeimenon* (ὑποκείμενον), signifies that which lies under. Grammatically, the reference is to the subject of a sentence, understood as that which sustains the action of the verb or, more generally, the description of the predicate. Aristotle captures its ontological sense when he defined the subject *as that of which we can predicate* other things, but *what cannot, itself, be a predicate* of other things. While such predicates require it to be, it can exist on its own. Thus, “musical” can be predicated of an individual person, say Socrates; but it “is incapable of existence apart from said subject.” We do not, however, predicate this subject, Socrates, of anything else since he exists substantially, i.e., as sustaining the existence of said predicates.³⁶ The implications of this conception appear when we ask whether Socrates could indeed exist on his own. Could he exist without the innumerable microbes that exist in symbiotic relation with him? The same question can be asked about the air he breathes, the plants that produce its oxygen, the animals producing the carbon dioxide that plants themselves depend on. If we pursue this line of thought, we come finally to the earth as the ultimate subject. It alone, under certain reservations such as its relation to the sun, can exist as a sustaining ground.

The conception of nature that appears here is expressed by Darwin. Comparing the results of natural selection with domestic breeding, he writes:

Nature, if I may be allowed to personify the natural preservation or survival of the fittest, cares nothing for appearances, except insofar as they are useful to any being. She can act on every internal organ, on every shade of constitutional difference, on the whole machinery of life. Man selects only for his own good: Nature only for that of the being which she tends.³⁷

³¹ Ibid., 84

³² These objectives are “the facilitation and external multiplication of life and of its goods” (Ibid., 112).

³³ Ibid., 110.

³⁴ Charles Taylor explicitly ascribes this to Descartes. He writes, “The new model of rational mastery which Descartes offers presents it as a matter of instrumental control. To be free from the illusion which mingles mind with matter is to have an understanding of the latter which facilitates its control” (Taylor, *Sources of the Self, The Making of Modern Identity*, 149).

³⁵ This, however, does not mean that moved by desire, we are not dominated by the latter. See Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, 116. It also does not mean that we are not ultimately dominated by the economic machine and the forces it unleashes. In fact, Patočka argues, domination turns into subservience.

³⁶ Aristotle, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, 7.

³⁷ Darwin, *The Origin of the Species and the Descent of Man*, 65.

The reference to the “being which she tends” and its benefit becomes highly ambiguous once we bear “in mind how infinitely complex and close-fitting are the mutual relations of all organic beings to each other and to their physical conditions of life.”³⁸ For Darwin, each organic being is enmeshed in “the web of complex relations” that binds the different species together. This web, he writes, is such “that the structure of every organic being is related, in the most essential and yet often hidden manner, to that of all the other organic beings with which it comes into competition for food or residence or from which it has to escape or on which it preys.”³⁹ In Darwin’s view, the individual features that make up a living being’s structure, from the shape of its legs to the type of eyes it has, are actually indices. Each points to the specific features of the environment in which it functions, and in which, for the purposes of survival, its evolutionary history has internalized as part of its structure.⁴⁰ Given this shaping of individuals by environments and environments by individuals, what can we say of the being that nature tends? If we look for an ultimate referent, this can only be nature itself. It alone qualifies as a subject in the sense of being capable of existing on its own. In Darwin’s view, it has a purpose of its own, this purpose being itself.

This transformation of the notion of subject involves a corresponding transformation in the conception of rationality. In a situation of individuals determining environments which, in turn, determine individuals, there is no first cause, no ultimate determinant. Foundationalism, the systematic thinking that looks for a set of principles and, ultimately, a fundamental Archimedean point, is not possible here. What we face, instead, is a self-determining structure where each element is both a ground and something grounded. The same can be said of the human community. Every human self acts to shape its environment. It constantly affects both the things and selves about it, apprehending and determining them according to its particular projects. At the same time, however, the self is constantly determined by them. Its action, in responding to the people and things it encounters, is shaped by their presence. This mutual determination finds its expression in our language, our economics, our technology, and, in general, in our social cultural life. Every self engages in it, determining the environments that situate its others and their agency. Now, with selves determining environments, which in turn determine selves, there is clearly no first cause, no set of final determinants to the whole composed of selves and the things that support them. The resulting ensemble, in other words, is not a systematic structure with clear principles or beginnings; it cannot be subjected to a (Cartesian) foundational analysis designed to uncover these. Since it has no independent ground or foundation outside of itself, its “ground” or cause is simply itself in each of its members.

Given this view of rationality, our response to the pandemic can never have a single principle. We cannot, for example, focus on health and ignore the economy. To do so is, in Agamben’s words, to come dangerously close to reducing ourselves to “bare life.”⁴¹ As the Australian philosopher, Dalia Nassar, writes, to adopt such a view is to mistake the character of life. In her words, “life is relation,” it develops over multiple contexts.⁴² The response must be adequate to this plurality. It must take account of biological, sociological, cultural, and religious factors. Beyond this, it must recognize the earth as the ground of our subjectivity, the earth being understood as an ultimate subject.

This expansion and revision of the conception of our subjectivity implies a correlative transformation of our relation to the earth. Specifically, it involves a view of sustainable development in which the earth and its resources no longer figure merely as means that have to be managed. Since the ground of the whole is simply itself in each of its members, such members can never be considered simply as means. Each, as expressing the ground, is an end in itself. In Kantian terms, it is a source of value. To apply Kant’s imperative here, we must not treat nature “merely as a means,” i.e., subject it to “arbitrary treatment.” Such treatment cannot be guided by the interests of human subjects, considered standing outside of the

³⁸ Ibid., 63.

³⁹ Ibid., 62.

⁴⁰ See *ibid.*

⁴¹ See Agamben, “Nach Corona: Wir sind nurmehr das nackte Leben.”

⁴² Nassar, “What Can the Environmental Movement Learn from the Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic?.”

self-determining system that is the earth. Rather, we must join with the other species in being part of the self-sustaining earth.

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