Ethics of Nature

A Map

Angelika Krebs

1999

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Guest Foreword

There is now an unprecedented level of concern with the environment and with the responsibilities that human beings should properly assume with regard to other living things, and even with regard to inanimate nature. It is not surprising that these concerns should be so starkly with us now, in a time when human beings are putting unprecedented pressures on the earth's resources. Many feel that an extreme ecological crisis is at hand, if it is not already there.

There is now a substantial body of philosophical work that addresses these questions. Of course, contrasts between "nature" and what human beings have made of nature are as old as reflective thought. A concern that human beings by their technical and scientific domination of nature may destroy both it and themselves goes back at least to the Romantic movement. It is only more recently, however, that philosophers have developed a specific area of their studies to help us think about our relations to nature. Everyone agrees that we need scientific and technical analyses of our impact on the environment, but in addition to such work, and in order to put it to good use in shaping our policies, we need to reflect as clearly as we can on our attitudes and our values, and ask ourselves what the true basis is of our concern for the environment.

Dr Angelika Krebs's book contributes to this task in a notably helpful way. She distinguishes between various types of argument that have been brought to bear on these questions, and shows how they rely on quite different assumptions and commitments. Some arguments appeal, in familiar ways, to human interests, including our aesthetic interests; these try to show that in damaging nature, we damage ourselves. Others invoke the interests or sufferings of creatures other than human beings. Yet again, there are outlooks that ascribe an intrinsic value to nature, quite apart from the experiences of human beings or of any other creature.

Some people say, and others deny, that the human values in terms of which we think about the environment "must be related to a human point of view." Dr Krebs makes an important distinction between two different ideas that can be expressed by this. Many who use these words mean that human beings must value everything in terms of human interests, and that human beings can only take a narrowly anthropocentric point of view. This would rule out two of the attitudes just mentioned. We need not accept that our outlook is so limited. If, however, the meaning is that any outlook we have on our relations to the environment (including all those just mentioned) must be human attitudes, so that we must be able to explain their significance to ourselves in human terms - then that, surely, as Angelika Krebs argues, must be true.

Her book is clear, rigorous, and precise. She uses some of the techniques of what is called "analytical" philosophy, but her work has a significance which goes beyond the divisions between different philosophical schools, and beyond the technical interests of academic philosophy. She directly helps us to think about our responsibilities towards nature, to formulate more sensitively our various attitudes towards it, and to make clear to ourselves what the roots of those attitudes are.

Bernard Williams

Acknowledgements

This study is the concluding report of the United Nations project "Value Systems and Attitudes toward Nature," directed by Lars Kristoferson of the Stockholm Environment Institute and by Bernard Williams of Oxford University.

My thanks go first to the Stockholm Environment Institute. At the Institute, I found a stimulating and friendly atmosphere, and I valued the chance to talk about my philosophical work with environmental experts outside philosophy.

Since this report was requested by an international organization it was written in English, though my native language is German. While this has the advantage of bringing the extensive German debate on the ethics of nature to the attention of the English-speaking philosophical community, I would like to apologize in advance for the occasional but inevitable rough spots. For help with the English language, I am indebted to Stacy von Boeckmann, Elise Kissling, and Heiner Michel.

The comments of several colleagues have helped me to improve the argument: Martin Seel, Jurgen Habermas, Anton Leist, Dieter Bimbacher, Asa Kasher, Neil Roughley, Jurgen MittelstraB, Karl-Otto Apel, Evelyn Fox Keller, Barry Stroud, and Jochen Koenigsmann.

There are two philosophers without whom this study would not be what it is. One of them is Bernard Williams, who guided me through the philosophical literature on the relationship of human beings to nature. He taught me to see, in this huge area, where the relevant philosophical issues lay.

The other is the Frankfurt philosopher Friedrich Kambartel, who was always there for me, and had all the time in the world when I needed philosophical help. Many of the conceptual distinctions which this text develops, in finding a way through the "jungle" of environmental ethics, go back to his lectures, seminars, and our conversations. It is to him that this work owes most.

Introduction

1. Synopsis of Argument

Ethics of nature is *an inquiry into the value of nature'.* Is nature's value only instrumental value for human beings (and if so, what constitutes that value) or does nature also have intrinsic value (and if so, what constitutes that value)? Can traditional anthropocentrism be defended or must we move to a new, physiocentric moral position?

The debate on the ethics of nature is fairly young. Many of its concepts and arguments stand in need of clarification and working out. This study contributes to this task by defining basic concepts such as "nature" and "anthropocentrism" (part I.) and by developing a critical taxonomy of arguments concerning the value of nature.

This taxonomy is divided into three parts. Part II. lists seven *anthropocentric* arguments: arguments which explore the value of nature for a good human life. These arguments concern: the instrumental value of nature for the satisfaction of *basic human needs* like health (II., one); die instrumental value of nature for *sensual human delight,* the fragrance of a flower or the songs of warblers (IL, two); the *aesthetic intrinsic value* beautiful and sublime nature has for human beings (II., three); the instrumental value natural design has *in relieving us of "aesthetic responsibility"* (II., four); the role the native landscape, the *"Heimat, "* plays in die identity of many human beings (II., five); the *pedagogic* value of treating nature with care (II., six); and the *meaning of life* and the intrinsic value or sacredness die wise, who know that the meaning of life is life itself, accord to nature (II., seven).

Part m. investigates an *holistic* argument, which is neither purely anthropocentric nor purely physiocentric. This argument claims that to accord intrinsic value to nature is to further the good life for human beings, as they are part of nature.

Part IV. presents five *physiocentric* arguments: arguments which give reasons for respecting the "good" of nature for its own sake. The first argument concerns the intrinsic value of *sentient* nature, especially animals; the second concerns respect for *teleological* nature; and die third respect for all *life* in nature. While IV., one to three are *extensionalist* moral arguments, arguments which extend elements of the human moral point of view to nature, IV., four and five are *absolute or transcendent* arguments, in that they try to find some basis for an intrinsic value of nature outside the human moral point of view. IV., four claims that there is a *higher order of values in nature* which we should follow. IV., five is a theological variant of IV., four, the higher order IV., five talks about is *God's order.*

The critical analysis of these arguments leads to the following results: all anthropocentric arguments are good arguments. Taken together, they constitute a strong anthropocentric case for the conservation and cultivation of nature. The holistic argument of III. and the physiocentric arguments of IV., with the exception of IV., one and two when they are restricted to certain animals, are bad arguments. Whereas sentient and teleological animal nature has moral intrinsic value, and anthropocentrism must be overcome with respect to it, the rest of nature lacks moral or absolute intrinsic value. Its value consists of its instrumental value, aesthetic intrinsic value, *Heimat* value, and (nontranscendent) sacredness for human beings. There is nothing we owe to non-animal nature itself.

2. Why an Ethics of Nature?

The ethics of nature inquires into the values or ends which should govern human conduct toward nature. Since traditional ethics concentrates on the ends which should govern human conduct toward other human beings, the ethics of nature adds a new dimension to the traditional ethical canon.

What gave rise to this new ethical concern in the late 1960s was that people in industrial countries began to suffer from the way their environment looked, sounded, smelled, and felt: They got headaches from the bad air and the noise in the cities; the rivers and lakes where they used to swim were polluted; in order to get into "proper nature" they had to drive further away from the city each year. These negative, personal experiences were complemented by information from the media on global ecological problems. Important studies documenting what came to be called "the ecological crisis" were released: the report on *The Limits to Growth* by the Club of Rome in 1972 and *Global 2000* in 1980.

The public discussion about what had gone wrong and how to do better soon revealed fundamental disagreements regarding the ends which should govern human conduct toward nature. While some claimed that nature was nothing but a resource for human use which must, however, be better managed in the future, others called for a paradigm shift in our attitude toward nature: Human beings must no longer, so they argued, regard nature merely as an instrument or a resource for their use, but show reverence for nature's *intrinsic value',* they must overcome their narrowly *anthropocentric* world view and assume their proper place in the intrinsically valuable whole of nature. The question of nature's real value is a philosophical one, which was soon taken up by philosophers.

3. The Philosophical Discipline of the Ethics of Nature

The first philosophical works on the ethics of nature appeared in the early 1970s. In the English-speaking world, some prominent titles are: John Passmore's 1974 *Man's Responsibility for Nature,* Christopher Stone's 1974 *Should Trees Have Standing?,* and Peter Singer's 1975 *Animal Liberation.* In Scandinavia in 1973, Arne Naess published his famous essay, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements." In Germany, Hans Jonas's 1979 Das *Prinzip Verantwortung* (English translation 1984 *The Imperative of Responsibility)* dominated the early discussion. In 1979, the American journal *Environmental Ethics* was founded, which soon developed into the main organ of the debate on the ethics of nature. The ethics of nature is now a flourishing discipline of applied ethics. The yearly publications and conferences are already difficult to survey. Yet because of its short history, the complexity of its subject matter, as well as its interdisciplinary character, much conceptual and argumentative confusion remains. A lot of work, clarifying the questions and improving our answers, needs to be done.

4. The Objective of This Study

This study is a contribution to the task of bringing conceptual and argumentative order into the search for knowledge about the value of nature. Its function is to provide a map which offers some orientation in this difficult territory. By defining basic concepts such as "nature," "ethics," "intrinsic value," "anthropocentrism," and "physiocentrism" in part I., the terrain of the ethics of nature is demarcated. In the taxonomy of basic arguments for the value of nature in parts II. to TV., the main paths in the terrain are mapped and evaluated on the basis of their practicability. Some of these paths are fairly easy to investigate, while others require expertise, not only in ethics but also in aesthetics, anthropology, philosophy of psychology, philosophy of religion, or philosophy of action. Often, the point where our exploration ends is not determined by the fact that everything relevant has been inspected, but by the fact that the questions have become so complex that we can go no further.

This study is a strictly *systematic* study, dedicated to the practical problem of how we should orient our conduct toward nature. It searches for conceptual distinctions and arguments which help to solve this problem. In this search, it tries to do without big names. It is not one of the many "Kant on Nature," "Heidegger on Nature," "Arne Naess on Nature" studies. While such historic and exegetical works certainly have their value, they do not further the current debate on the practical conduct toward nature. What is needed at present are concepts and arguments which anyone interested in what is at stake in this debate can understand and accept and which do not appeal exclusively to Kantians or Heideggerians. We will, therefore, make an effort to frame our arguments

in a simple and unladen language. Nevertheless, to pay tribute to the work of classical philosophers, citations from their work are included as "classical versions" of some of our arguments. The work of contemporary ethicists of nature is not ignored either. The names of contemporary ethicists appear in brackets after the arguments to which these ethicists have contributed.

Sometimes, citations from literary texts are used as "literary versions" to make the arguments more vivid. With regard to style, this study is intended to be accessible to philosophers and non-philosophers alike. As the metaphor of the map suggests, the text does not invite the reader to accompany the author on an extended exploration of paths and wrong turns in the terrain of the ethics of nature. Instead, it presents only the results of the author's exploration. Or to use still another image, the text contains only the condensate, not the vapor which arose in the course of the investigation.

Part I: Basic Concepts

One: Nature

1. A Definition of "Nature" for Environmental Ethics

It is a commonplace that the concept of nature is extremely complex. Arthur O. Lovejoy, for example, lists in *A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas* (1935, vol. 1, appendix) 66 meanings of "nature" and "natural." In the article, "Philosophical Ideas of Nature," in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* Ronald W. Hepburn writes: "The history of philosophical ideas of nature almost coincides with the history of philosophy itself." (Hepburn, 1967, p. 454).

Rather, than attempt the impossible, we will not try to capture all major meanings of "nature" (for surveys see Spaemann, 1973; MittelstraB, 1981). Instead, we will search for a meaning of die concept which is relevant to the practical issues of nature conservation in which we are interested. For example, the meaning of "nature" as the *essence* or *Wesen* of something, as in "the nature of man," "the nature of law," wherein opposites of "nature" would be "appearance" and "accidental qualities," is of little relevance to understanding what it is nature conservationists mean when they say they are concerned about nature.

Among the practically relevant definitions of "nature" we must look for a modest definition, which does not prejudge questions an inquiry into environmental ethics should address. For instance, the definition of "nature" as *everything in •which the healthy spirit of nature weaves* (Meyer-Abich, 1984, pp. 128-134) presupposes that there are spirits or forces weaving in nature. Such a question should not be decided by means of a definition. By the same token, the usual definition of "nature" as *that which is governed by causal laws* is not modest enough for our purposes. Whether nature is nothing but a causal mechanism or endowed with consciousness, sentience, teleology, even moral wisdom is and must be left for discussion. Moreover, the definition of "nature" as all that which is governed by causal laws is far too wide for our practical context, since it includes artefacts like cars and atomic power plants in the concept of "nature," and nature conservationists are not concerned about the conservation of cars and atomic power plants. The same problem arises with regard to the suggestion that "nature" be defined as *that part of the world which is not in our power, "das Unverftigbare"* (MittelstraB, 1987, p. 54). There are a great many things which are not in our power, but which we would never expect to be a concern for nature conservationists, for example, the past.

Following the etymology of "nature" from the Latin *"nasci"* = to be bom, to arise, to develop, "nature" may be defined as *that part of our -world which has not been made by human beings,* but comes into existence and vanishes, changes and remains constant in virtue of itself (Passmore, 1974, p. 32; 1975, p. 251).

The *opposite of "nature"* in this sense is *"artefact,"* something made by human beings: tables, computers, statues, and so on. While there is pure nature - the moon, high mountains, desert wilderness, and the deep sea - there are *no pure artefacts.* For whenever human beings create artefacts, they depend on material they have not themselves created. In other words, they depend on nature. According to religious teachings, there is something like a *creatio ex nihilo,* but only God can perform it.

There is *pure nature,* but the amount of pure nature is rapidly decreasing in our world. Most of what we call "nature," the conservation of which we are concerned about, lies, in fact, somewhere between the two extremes "pure nature" and "pure artefact." Take, for example, the Black Forest in Germany, which is a monoculture planted for economic use. Or think of the gardenlike landscape of the English Country which would, without human doings, be a rather monotonous forest. These are examples of cultivated nature which should not be mistaken for pure, wild, untouched nature. The suggestion of American wilderness philosophers like Paul Taylor (1986) to single out *wilderness* as the object of environmental concern, makes it appear as if all the nature movements in the intensely cultivated countries, as Germany or Great Britain, were caught up in a romantic selfdeception. Thus we have reason to be less restrictive in our definition here. Both pure and cultivated nature are of interest to environmentalism and environmental ethics.

To illustrate our terminological proposal, we can arrange various objects on a scale, at either extreme of which are "pure nature" and "pure artefact":

pure gardens wooden furniture
pure artefact
nature |————————————————————————————-
deserts farmland cars
nature artefact

Whereas "pure nature" and "pure artefact" connote polar contraries, "nature" and "artefact" connote contradictories with a fuzzy boundary between them. Sometimes the fact that this boundary is fuzzy is regarded as an objection against so defining "nature" and "artefact." Although the boundary is not as fuzzy as some radical environmentalist polemics against the animal liberation movement make it (Callicott, 1980, for example), there are indeed unclear cases. How much genetic manipulation would turn tulips or mice into artefacts? Yet, as Ludwig Wittgenstein noted in his *Philosophical Investigations,* we fare quite well in many contexts with concepts which lack sharp boundaries:

If I tell someone "Stand roughly here" - may not this explanation work perfectly? And cannot every other one fail too?

But isn't it an inexact explanation? - Yes, why shouldn't we call it "inexact?" Only let us understand what "inexact" means. For it does not mean "unusable"... (1968, paragraph 88)

So too, for our question about the value of nature the fuzziness of the definitional boundary is not problematic.

The definition of "nature" proposed here can be traced back to Aristotle's work *Physics.* The beginning of the second book of the *Physics* reads:

Of things that exist, some exist by nature, some from other causes. By nature the animals and their parts exist, and the plants and the simple bodies (earth, fire, air, water) - for we say that these and the like exist by nature.

All the things mentioned plainly differ from things which are *not* constituted by nature. For each of them has within itself a principle of motion and of stationariness (in respect of place, or of growth and decrease, or by way of alteration). On the other hand, a bed and a coat and anything else of that sort, *qua* receiving these designations - i.e. in so far as they are products of art - have no innate impulse to change. But in so far as they happen to be composed of stone or of earth or of a mixture of the two, they *do* have such an impulse, and just to that extent - which seems to indicate that nature is a principle or cause of being moved and of being at rest in that to which it belongs primarily, in virtue of itself and not accidentally. (1984a, 192b, 8-23)

2. Oikos, Cosmos, and the Human Body

We need two further qualifications to single out "nature" as the object of environmental concern.

The *cosmos,* as that part of the world which has not been made by human beings and which is *beyond human influence,* is not the object of environmental ethics. We need not worry about exploiting, damaging, or destroying the cosmos since we cannot, in principle, do any of these things. The limits of what falls under human influence shift, of course, over time. Before the first landing on the moon in 1969, the moon belonged to the cosmos.

The *human body* or *Leib* as the *human* part of the world which has not been made by human beings is the topic of a separate discipline of practical ethics, namely "bioethics" or "medical ethics," which considers our conduct toward our own nature, our bodies, and toward human beings who are more or less reduced to a bodily existence (possibly inclusive of perception and sentience, but exclusive of agency, language, or thought, die so-called human marginal cases).

One way to signal that "nature," as the object of environmental ethics, means neither die cosmos nor the human body would be to call it *"oikos"* (Greek for "household") or *"the environment. "*

But this suggestion is not a very good one. In diet, the whole terminology of *"environmental"* or *"ecological* ethics" as opposed to "bioethics" or *"medical* ethics" is somewhat unfortunate. We give three reasons why and suggest a different terminology.

First, to refer to nonhuman nature as die *"oikos"* or the "environment" has a decidedly anthropocentric ring. It remains to be investigated whether sentient animals, for example, are nothing but *oikoi* of human beings or subjects in their own right, whether they are only *"Umwelt"* or *"Mitwelt,"* as it has been formulated in German (Meyer-Abich, 1990). This point loses some of its force when we consider that the biological discipline of ecology studies the *oikoi* of all living beings and not only of human beings. The founder of the discipline of ecology, Ernst Haeckel, provided the following definition of *"ecology"* in 1866: "the whole science of the relations of the organism to its surrounding environment, which includes, in the widest sense, all its conditions for existence" (Haeckel, 1906, p. 334, my translation). Haeckel, so to speak, "democratized" the terms *"oikos"* and "environment" (but only for living beings, not for inanimate nature) so that these terms need not necessarily be thought of as anthropocentric. Nevertheless, they still sound anthropocentric to most people. There is, for example, no evidence that the German distinction between *"Umweltschutz"* (conservation of the *human* environment) and *"Naturschutz"* (conservation of nature) is becoming unfashionable.

Second, the term "bioethics" is misleading. Greek *"bios"* means life. One would thus expect "bioethics" to deal with the morality of death and life in general, be it human, animal, or plant life. But under the heading of "bioethics" the life and death of animals and plants is usually not addressed at all. Furthermore, not only human *life* is of interest in bioethics, but also human bodily well-being, which the term "medical ethics," mostly used synonymously with "bioethics," indicates. In this last respect, the term "medical ethics" is preferable to "bioethics."

Yet thirdly, the term "medical ethics" is itself problematic. Suicide, for example, is a standard topic of bioethics, but it is inappropriate to discuss suicide under the heading of medical ethics. This would make it appear as if suicide were a moral problem primarily for medical experts. Suicide is, however, only a problem for medical experts if the suicidal person is under psychiatric treatment. Moreover, the term "medical ethics" shares with the term "bioethics" the lot that it overlaps with environmental ethics. For it is not clear where something such as veterinary issues would belong.

Because of these difficulties, we suggest the following terminology: *"Ethics of nature,"* in a *wide sense,* addresses *all moral issues of our conduct toward that part of the world which has not been made by human beings* and is under human influence. The topic of *"ethics of nature, "* in a *narrow sense,* or of *"ethics of nonhuman nature, "* concerns the *nonhuman* part of the world which has not been created by human beings. "Ethics of nature," in the narrow sense, then, includes *"animal ethics"* and, for lack of a better more neutral term, *"environmental ethics. "* The discipline which addresses moral problems dealing with the human body and with human marginal cases may be called *"ethics of human nature. "*We can distinguish two sub-disciplines of the ethics

of human nature: "body ethics" (in German: *"Leibethlk")* and the "ethics of human marginal cases."

3. Conservation versus Cultivation of Nature

The aim of the *conservation of nature* is the well-being, the well-functioning, the health, the "good" of nonhuman nature. The conservation of nature is not only a passive affair of human beings leaving nature alone, but also an active, therapeutic endeavour to help nature regain its health, its well-functioning, its well-being, its good.

The aim of the *cultivation of nature* is, in contrast, the "improvement" of nature so that it allows for a better human life. Examples of the cultivation of nature are building (or repairing) dams to prevent floods, farming, breeding animals, and laying out gardens. The standard for the cultivation of nature is the good human life, while the standard for nature conservation is the good of nature itself. That the good of nature is the standard or direct aim of nature conservation does not, by itself, imply anything about the reasons we have to conserve nature. These may consist in the value of nature's good for the good human life or in respect for the good of nature for its own sake. "Ethics of nature," as an inquiry into the value of nature, should not be restricted to investigating the reasons for nature conservation. It should also address matters of the cultivation of nature.

Two: Ethics

This study does not attempt to develop or justify any ethical theory. The substantial nature-ethical arguments discussed in parts II. to IV. are not derived from any ethical theory but are intended to stand on their own feet and must, in the end, speak for themselves.

As these arguments do, however, employ concepts such as "intrinsic value," "good human life," "active" and "passive" pleasure, "well-being" and "agency," "moral concern" and "self-interest," these concepts are introduced here. Most of these conceptual explications are fairly uncontroversial. Obvious objections to more controversial distinctions are indicated and hints about ways of defending them are made. The following distinctions and objections are considered: 1. the object of ethics and the distinction between *intrinsic* and *instrumental* value; 2. the distinction between *good,* happy human life and *right,* moral human *life;* 3. the distinction between what belongs to the *core* of good human life, what are the *options* in a good human life, and what makes up *luxurious,* rich human life; 4. the distinction between two aspects of good human life: ☒*well-being* with its three kinds of pleasure - *passive pleasure, active pleasure, and the pleasure of satisfaction* - and *agency;* the hedonistic objection that good human life can be reduced to wellbeing; 5. the *objection* that in modem, *pluralistic* societies general insights into the good life of all human beings can no longer be had; 6. the distinction between *moral concern* and *self-interest;* and 7. the distinction between the *hermeneutics* of moral culture and the *justification* thereof.

1. The Object of Ethics and the Distinction between Instrumental and Intrinsic Value

Ethics is the philosophical discipline which reflects on our *ethical culture.* The ethical orientations which make up this culture are answers to the question, *how should we live,* how should we orient our practical lives. Ethical answers to this question must be distinguished from *technical* answers. While ethical answers concern the fundamental practical orientations of a good and right life, beyond which it makes no sense to go, technical answers concern the means to achieve these ends. An example of an ethical answer to the question, how should we live, is that we should do what gives pleasure. An example of a technical answer to the same question is that if you want to stay healthy you should no longer expose yourself to the sun without sunscreen lotion. Another example of an ethical answer to the question is that we should show reverence

for nature, while a technical answer is that if you want to save the forests you must drastically reduce automobile traffic or install catalytic convertors. Technical answers are concerned with what is of technical or extrinsic or *instrumental value* for achieving particular ends. Ethical standards spell out what is of *intrinsic value* in a good and right human life. When, for example, someone explains that he or she took the boat from Konstanz to Lindau instead of driving by car around the lake, because he or she enjoys being on the lake so much, the* question, "And what do you want to enjoy yourself for?" is an odd question. Pleasure is of intrinsic value, something we seek for its own sake. It is an end in itself, giving meaning to our lives. The pleasure of being on the lake is only one example of something valued intrinsically. Other examples of intrinsic values are friendship, love, communication, aesthetic contemplation, intellectual work, freedom, and justice.

2. Good Human Life and Right Human Life

We may differentiate between *"eudaemonic"* (from Greek *"eudaemonia"* for happiness) intrinsic values, which constitute the happiness or *good life* of individuals, and *"moral"* intrinsic values, which orient individual behavior toward others and constitute die *right life.*

3. Good Human Life

The various orientations which constitute the good life of human beings differ in scope: some apply to all human beings, while others apply only to human beings of a certain culture or with a certain background or history.

A. The Core

Among the orientations which apply to all human beings, some ends must be achieved if the human life in question is to be a good human life at all, one which is not beneath human dignity. These ends include: nourishment, health, shelter, emotional contact with others, communication, education, autonomy (the freedom to choose between universally justified good life options), and individuality (the desire to affirm and stick to contingent, unjustifiable matters of one's background or culture). The named ends articulate *basic human needs and capabilities.* They form the *core* or what is *part* of every good human life (cf. Kambartel, 1993b, p. 10; Nussbaum, 1992; Seel, 1995, pp. 49-255).

B. Basic Options

There is a second group of ends which, although they are of interest to all human beings, regardless of culture or background, need not all be achieved for a human life to be a good human life. We call these orientations *basic options* for a good human life. Examples of such universal basic options are having a family, enjoying food, and

aesthetic contemplation. To be autonomous is to be able to choose among these basic options. If a society offers no basic options to choose from, the core of good human life, namely autonomy, is restricted in this society. The basic options for a good human life form a *shell* around the core.

C. Luxury

Among the eudaemonic orientations which belong neither to the shell nor to the core, but make up *rich or luxurious life,* there may still be some which are of interest to all human beings, but most are culture-specific or relative to individuals. An example of such an orientation is, my friend Esther likes to spend her holidays on her yacht, or she is fond of Laura Ashley dresses.

4. The Well-Being and the Agency Aspect of Good Human Life

A. The Hedonistic Challenge

It is sometimes said that the orientations to the good life enumerated in the preceding section are not the most basic orientations, but have a derivative status. There is, it is argued, only one really fundamental orientation for good human life, only one thing which really has intrinsic value, pleasure.

The doctrine that all we seek in our lives boils down to the maximization of pleasure is called *hedonism.* Against the hedonistic distortion of what constitutes good human life, we distinguish between two aspects of good human life, the fust is centered around pleasure, the *"well-being"* aspect, the pleasant life, interests; and the second is centered around the importance of ends, irrespective of the pleasure they may involve, the *"agency"* aspect, the active, practical, fulfilled life, projects (Sen, 1987, pp. 40-45). Good food, a nice place to live, sexual fulfilment belong primarily to the well-being side of good human life. Communication, individuality, autonomy, moral projects, aesthetic contemplation, however, would be misunderstood if they were understood as oriented toward pleasure.

B. Three Forms of Pleasure

The well-being side of good human life comprises three forms of pleasure or of hedonistic intrinsic value, firstly *passive pleasure,* for example, the good taste of an apple; secondly, *active pleasure,* the enjoyment in playing chess or football; and thirdly, the *pleasure of satisfaction,* that is, the feeling we have at getting what we want. While we can directly aim at passive pleasure, active pleasure or "joy" comes about only when it is not directly aimed at, only when we are absorbed in the activity and forget about ourselves (von Wright, 1963, pp. 63-65).

Needless to say, pursuing projects such as writing a book, which make up our active life, is often accompanied by one or the other form of pleasure. When the book is finally finished we may feel the pleasure of satisfaction.

C. An Answer to the Hedonistic Challenge

To substantiate our claim that the hedonistic reduction of agency to well-being distorts what a good human life is all about, let us imagine a disease which prevents people from leading an active life in the sense of the agency aspect of life, but makes them feel happy in the sense of the well-being aspect. Alzheimer's disease may be an example of such a disease. If the ends of an active life mattered to us only because of the good feelings they bring, it would be irrational to prefer an active life with all its hedonistic drawbacks, the risk of frustration caused by the failure of a fundamental life project, to the happiness guaranteed by the disease.

5. The Objection to Paternalism

Against attempts to determine what makes up good human life, the objection to paternalism holds that in modem, pluralistic times no society, no culture, no class, no philosophy should have the impudence to tell members of other societies and cultures how to live a good life. All general claims about good human life are empirically false. The needs of human beings are so shaped by their place in history, their culture, their background that there just is no cross-historical, - cultural, -biographical core of good life for all human beings. Claims about the core, the options of a good life, and luxury must be restricted in scope to the members of a society or culture, or even to individuals (Habermas, 1991, pp. 100118; 1992, pp. 87-88).

In answer to this objection, we concede that all claims about good human life will have to be vague enough to allow for different cultural, historical, and individual specifications (Nussbaum, 1992, p. 216). To suffer from hunger, for example, does not mean the same in Europe as in India. Yet who would want to go to the extreme and claim that, in talking about different cultures, "hunger" is nothing but a *Teekessel,* an ambiguous word? When people in other cultures suffer from hunger, they too have a rather specific bodily sensation which they experience as negative, and their bodily organs also malfunction which can eventually lead to their death. The insights into good human life, however, are not confined to the level of physical needs like hunger, as the following four examples of eudaemonic arguments should make clear.

Consider the case of a youngster suffering from lover's grief about to commit suicide as he or she regards further life as devoid of all meaning. Contrary to what *he or she* believes, we judge suicide to be bad for him or her, and we may probably even feel justified in taking action to preventing it.

Or take the similar case of young women and anorexia. Can they really be left to decide whether or not starving themselves to death in their teens has any place in a good human life?

Or consider as a classical example of eudaemonic argument Aristotle's description of the proper place of wealth in good human life. About people who place intrinsic value in accumulating more and more wealth, Aristotle remarks in his *Politics* (1256b,

27-36 and 1257b, 18 - 1258a, 18) that they fail to lead good lives. The proper attitude to wealth, "genuine" or "natural" wealth, as he calls it, lies in wanting to have enough means to manage your household and to live your good life options.

Or remember the point - again Aristotelian - that whoever fails to value some things in his or her life intrinsically fails to lead a good life *(Nicomachean Ethics,* 1094a, 18-22). This is expressed beautifully in the Keuner story *"Der Zweckdiener"* by Bertolt Brecht:

Der Zweckdiener

Herr K. stellte die folgenden Fragen:

"Jeden Morgen macht mein Nachbar Musik auf einem Grammophonkasten. Warum macht er Musik? Ich hore, weil er tumt. Warum tumt er? Weil er Kraft bendtigt, hore ich. Wozu bendtigt er Kraft? Weil er seine Feinde in der Stadt besiegen muB, sagt er. Warum muB er Feinde besiegen? Weil er essen will, hore ich."

Nachdem Herr K. dies gehort hatte, daB sein Nachbar Musik machte, um zu tumen, tumte, um kraftig zu sein, kraftig sein wollte, um seine Feinde zu erschlagen, seine Feinde erschlug, um zu essen, stellte er seine Frage: "Warum iBt er?" (1967, p. 377)

A Man of Purpose

Mr K put the following questions:

"Every morning my neighbour plays music on his gramophone. Why does he play music? I hear that it is because he does exercises. Why does he do exercises? Because he needs to be strong, I hear. Why does he need to be strong? Because he has to get the better of his enemies in the town, he says. Why must he get the better of his enemies? Because he wants to eat, I hear." Having leamt that his neighbour played music in order to do exercises, did exercises in order to be strong, wanted to be strong in order to kill his enemies, killed his enemies in order to eat, he put the question: "Why does he eat?" (1961, pp. 121-122)

This being said, it should be stressed that insights, no matter what their subject matter, be it mathematics, chemistry, history, morality, or good human life, are not purely private affairs. A link exists between insights and the *consensus of others.* If the sole purpose of the paternalistic objection is to draw attention to this link and to warn us against moving directly from what we find evident to a truth-claim or even to action, its point is well-taken. The link between insight and the consensus of others is this: for something to be an insight and not merely a subjective opinion it must be universally accessible. To call something an insight and yet claim that this insight is not open to all willing and capable human beings, is to make a conceptual mistake. Insights are not private or particular or esoteric, but universal. Due to the fallibility of all human beings, it is advisable to *control* what we take to be an insight in a free discourse with others. A free discourse is a discourse which is not coercive, but symmetrical, unprejudiced, and not persuasive, that is, not rhetorical in the bad sense of the term (Habermas, 1983, p. 99; Kambartel, 1974, pp. 66-67). The results of such free discourses are, however, not constitutive of insights. Mistakes may occur even in an ideally free discourse. The role of discursive consensus is merely that of control.

6. Moral Concern and Self-Interest

To have moral concern or respect for others means to place intrinsic value on their good life, to further their happiness for its own sake and not solely for the sake of your own happiness. A self-interested agent, in contrast, accords the happiness of others only instrumental value for his or her own happiness.

That moral concern has something to do with an *unselfish regard for the good life of all others* is accepted by virtually all contemporary moral theories, be it utilitarianism (Singer, 1979, p. 12), Aristotelianism (Nussbaum, 1992), Kantianism (Kambartel, 1992, pp. 7-8), discourse ethics (Habermas, 1983, p. 75), or the ethics of compassion (Wolf, 1990, p. 59). For most of the nature-ethical arguments to come, this very general characterization of the fundamental tenets of our moral culture suffices. Adherents of the different moral theories may want to phrase the nature-ethical arguments differently, accord them a different status, and draw somewhat different practical consequences. Yet the basic ethical points remain untouched by these differences. There are, however, two or three arguments where the differences play a major role and must be attended to. There will be a critical discussion of contractualism and certain versions of Kantianism in IV., one: the pathocentric argument, and critical notes on utilitarianism in IV., one, IV., two: the teleological argument, and IV., three: the reverence for life argument.

Even if the arguments are intended to stand alone, the manner in which they are presented, the emphases placed, and the practical consequences envisaged will inevitably be influenced by the author's own moral-theoretical position. It may, thus, be best to lay the cards on the table. The approach the author favors is "substantial Kantianism" (Kambartel, 1993b; 1993c). "Substantial" stands in contrast to "formal." The approach is substantial because it is not restricted to a formal principle like the categorical imperative, but spells out what belongs to the basic good life (core and options) of all. To make a basic good life possible for everybody is the substantial object of moral duty. It is the stress on duty and on individual good life which makes the position Kantian.

According to this approach moral respect concerns only the *basic* good life of all, which means that conflicts between luxury orientations do not belong to the subject matter of morality. A moral world, or to put it in the language of "justice," a morally just world, would be a world in which every creature can satisfy his, her, or its basic needs (core) and live some basic good life options (shell). What goes beyond the basic good life may still be subject to distributive or retributive justice, but it is not subject to morality or moral justice.

7. The Hermeneutics and the Justification of Moral Culture

Can a moral inquiry into the value of nature rest content with merely hermeneutical statements about moral culture? Should it not attempt to justify this culture, to present an answer to the question "why be moral?" The ethics of nature, as any discipline of practical ethics, would be ill advised if it attempted to answer what is one of the most difficult and central questions of theoretical ethics. The question the ethics of nature should concentrate on is the limited one: Given our moral culture, given people who want to live moral lives, what value should they accord to nature? Does moral concern, if properly understood, force us to extend it beyond the limits of the human sphere to animals, plants, and nature as a whole? Hermeneutics is, thus, quite enough for the ethics of nature.

Three: Anthropocentrism versus Physiocentrism

1. The Boundaries of the Moral Universe - ”Extensional Anthropocentrism ” versus ”Extensional Physiocentrism ”

The question concerning the boundaries of the moral universe, who or what belongs to the moral universe, amounts more or less to the same as the following questions: To whom or what do we owe something morally? To whom or what do we have direct moral duties? In Kantian terms, toward *(gegentiber)* whom or what as opposed to with regard to whom or what *(in Ansehung von)* do we have moral duties? Who or what is of intrinsic value and who or what only of instrumental value? Who or what has a dignity which must be respected? Who or what are the “others” when we speak of moral respect as “respect for the good life of all ‘others?’”

Let us illustrate the distinction with an example: When I watch your house while you are on holiday, I am morally required to do certain things with regard to your house, shut the windows when there is a storm or turn down the heat on warm days, but I do not have a moral duty toward the house itself. My duties are derived from what I owe you. It is your good life which is of moral intrinsic value. While you are a member of the moral universe, your house is not.

The question of who or what belongs to the moral universe has been answered in many different ways. Some of the most common answers are:

1. only myself (egoism)
2. myself, my family, and friends (small group egoism)
3. all people of my class (classism)
4. all citizens of my country (nationalism)
5. all people of my race (racism)
6. all people of my sex (sexism)
7. all living human beings (universalism of the present)
8. all living human beings and those of the past (universalism including the past)
9. all living human beings and those of the future (universalism including the future)
10. all sentient beings (pathocentrism or sentientism)
11. all living beings (biocentrism)

12. all of nature (radical physiocentrism, ecocentrism, radical ecologism, deep ecology, holism)

Position 7., universalism of the present, is probably what most people today, if asked, would regard as the proper moral position. It is endorsed in the laws of all democratic nations. Conduct which violates the dignity of blacks (5.) or women (6.) is normally rejected as immoral, as racist, or sexist. The obvious way to understand our basic moral formula of "respect for the good life of all others" is, thus, to refer to the good life of all living human beings.

But this common approach is vulnerable to the following objection: What we do to nature today severely reduces the chances of*future generations* to lead good lives. If moral respect is respect for the good life of all others, it must include the good life of future generations. We must, therefore, move from position 7. to position 9.

It is difficult to see what good argument could be brought up against this objection. Disregarding the good life of those who come after us, who have a different position in time, is parallel to disregarding the good life of those who have a different position in space, for instance people in the Third World. If the second is immoral, the first must be immoral too.

It is sometimes claimed that we do not know enough about these future human subjects to take them into consideration or that someone who does not exist cannot have any moral rights. We will not discuss these arguments at any length but suggest only one or two reasons why the arguments seem to be pseudojustifications for what is, no doubt, the more comfortable choice for us. As regards our allegedly insufficient knowledge about future generations, it is enough that we know two things: 1. that very likely there will be human beings on this planet in the near and distant future and 2. that, although we do not know their personal and culture-specific options for the good life, we know a lot about what is part of or what are universally accessible basic options for their good life. They will, for example, want to be healthy and many of them will want to enjoy clear summer days. If we destroy the ozone layer and future generations must remain indoors to avoid skin cancer, how could this be morally right?

But - someone may object - they cannot have the moral right to health and sunshine because they do not exist, and whoever does not exist cannot have moral rights. This rebuttal is either irrelevant for our question or it is false. It is irrelevant if, for a being "to have a moral right to something" means something other than "we morally owe this to that being." The question is whether or not we morally owe something to future generations and an answer which uses "moral right" in a different, more specific sense is not an answer to our question and, thus, need not concern us. The rebuttal is false if "moral right" does indeed mean nothing but that we morally owe something to the beings in question. One standard argument for the claim that we owe nothing to future generations is that if there were anything it would, no doubt, include the right to life. We would then have a duty to bring future generations into existence, which is absurd. We will address the absurdity of this argument later (in part IV., four, 7.). Quite apart from this question, we can distinguish between unconditional moral rights

and conditional moral rights and ascribe at least conditional moral rights to future generations. On the condition of their existence, future generations have all the usual moral rights, including the right to life. As it is very likely that this condition will be fulfilled, we owe future generations all we owe to living human beings. (For more on the issue of future generations see Baier, 1984; Bimbacher, 1988; Leist, 1991; Sikora / Barry, 1978; Partridge, 1981.)

The next question is whether or not we should move from the position of universalism including future generations to positions 10., 11., or 12. and include sentient animals, plants, or nature as a whole in the moral universe. To determine the answer to this question is a major objective of this work. We will not anticipate the answer here, but refer to the question only to introduce a first sense of the concepts "anthropocentrism" and "physiocentrism."

The literal meaning of "anthropocentrism" is that human beings (Greek: *"anthropoi")* are in the center. An anthropocentric moral theory, thus, is centered around human beings. Likewise, "physiocentrism" means that nature (Greek: *"physis"*) is in the center, so a physiocentric moral theory is one centered around nature. Since there are different ways in which a moral theory can be centered around human beings or around nature, it is necessary to distinguish between different forms of anthropocentric or physiocentric moral theory.

A moral theory is anthropocentric, in a first sense, if it opts for one of the positions between 1. and 9. regarding the boundaries of the moral universe and excludes all of nonhuman nature from direct moral concern. It is physiocentric, if it opts for one of the positions between 10. and 12. This first meaning of "anthropocentrism" and "physiocentrism" will be called *"extensional anthropocentrism"* and *"extensional physiocentrism"* as it is defined via the extension of the moral universe. The first set of seven arguments listed in the taxonomy to come under part II. are anthropocentric in this sense. Other names for "extensional anthropocentrism" are "speciesism" (Ryder, 1975; Singer, 1975), "human chauvinism" (Routley *I* Routley, 1979), and "species egoism" (Lenk, 1983). In contrast to our vocabulary, all these other terms have a negative connotation.

Depending on whether or not members of the moral universe have an equal moral status, we further differentiate between *egalitarian* and *hierarchical* versions of extensional anthropocentrism and physiocentrism (Sylvan, 1985; Attfield, 1994).

To develop the contrast between the first and the second meaning of "anthropocentrism" and "physiocentrism," we must discuss one obvious strategy for overcoming extensional anthropocentrism. We will then in the next section hint at why some people are unhappy with this strategy and are searching for an alternative. This alternative strategy will be non-anthropocentric in the second main sense of the term.

The obvious strategy to overcome extensional anthropocentrism is to try and extend the human concept of "moral respect" as respect for the good life of all other human beings to nature. As in the case of future generations, this extension is effected by showing that nature as well has a good and, therefore, belongs to the others whose good must be morally respected. In the taxonomy explored in parts II. to IV. three

arguments follow this strategy. One argues that nature, or certain parts of nature, has a well-being (IV., one, the pathocentric argument); while another argues that nature, or certain parts of it, pursues projects or follows ends and, thus, has an agency good (IV., two, the teleological argument); and the third argues that animate nature has a moral right to life (IV., three, the reverence for life argument). On the basis of claims concerning what human morality is about, these arguments try to extend the boundaries of the moral universe to include parts or all of nature. We call this strategy the *"extensionalist strategy. "*

2. The Absolute Strategy in the Ethics of Nature - "Epistemic Anthropocentrism " versus "Epistemic Physiocentrism "

Critics of the extensionalist strategy complain that little is to be expected from simply appropriating the human value perspective and then incorporating bits and pieces of nature. They claim that it is rather obvious that much of nature, stones and mountains, for example, does not have a good in the relevant sense. Stones and mountains do not care for health, shelter, emotional contact, autonomy, education, and so on. They do not care for anything. They do not have a subjective good. The extensionalist strategy will, for certain, not reach them since human moral respect is respect for the subjective good life of all others. Starting from inside the human value perspective seems like the wrong starting-point. Help, if there is help at all, must come from outside. We must try, so these critics argue, to (re)gain an understanding of the absolute value order of the universe and remind ourselves of our proper place in that order; we must transcend the narrow human value perspective in the direction of this higher order.

In contrast to the extensionalist strategy, we call this strategy the *"absolute strategy"* since it searches for values which do not stem from the human value perspective but are "absolved" from it. The idea of such absolute or objective (Bimbacher, 1991, p. 285) or impersonal (Frankena, 1979, p. 18) or detached or naturalistic (Routley / Routley, 1979, p. 47) or not relational or not truncated (Callicott, 1986, pp. 142-143) values is often introduced with the help of a thought experiment: Imagine the last human being on earth having to choose between either destroying all animals and plants on earth or not destroying them. Surely he or she would act wrongly if he or she chose the first option? Does this not show that values in nature occur irrespective of any human valuers (Routley / Routley, 1980, pp. 121-122)? A secular variant of the absolute strategy is the following nature argument in part IV., four. The theological variant is to be found in IV., five. The view that respect for nature can and must be grounded in an absolute perspective will be called *"epistemic"* or *"conceptual physiocentrism."* The contrary view, that the human perspective is constitutive of human judgements, that it cannot

be transcended, will be called *"epistemic"* or *"conceptual anthropocentrism"* (Irrgang, 1990; Bayertz, 1987; Ricken, 1987; Williams, 1985, pp. 118-119; 1995). According to epistemic anthropocentrism, the extensionalist strategy is the only one possible for grounding moral respect for nature.

The claim that the human point of view is constitutive of human judgements stands in need of further explication. We distinguish three interpretations of this claim.

According to the first interpretation, the claim that human judgements depend on the human point of view means that concepts which cannot be deployed by human beings, because they cannot determine if the criteria for the application of these concepts are fulfilled, cannot play any role in their judgements. Human judgements are relative to what human beings with their specific biological makeup and their technical and social culture, can see, hear, smell, imagine. Since human technical and social culture developed in response to the problems human beings have had in practically orienting themselves in the world, human judgements are also relative to the practical needs of human beings. According to this view, human judgements, thus, do not mirror the world as it is independently of us. Our picture of the world is a human picture. Since this dependency on the human point of view is not specific to moral judgements, but characterizes all human judgements, we call this understanding of "anthropocentrism" *"general epistemic anthropocentrism."*

The second explication of the claim that the human point of view is constitutive of human judgements concerns only value judgements, moral as well as eudaemonic ones. It holds that value judgements do not refer to the objective world, as theoretical or physical judgements do, but refer only to human beings and their ways of relating to the world. According to what we may call *"epistemic value anthropocentrism,"* values come into the world with human beings who evaluate. Without the existence of human beings, nothing in the world is beautiful or sublime, pleasant, cruel, selfish, or nice. But there have always been and always will be winding rivers, high mountains, and strong earthquakes.

According to the third conception, the relativity of human judgements concerns specifically human *moral* culture. *Epistemic moral value anthropocentrism* can coexist with the denial of epistemic value anthropocentrism. You may, for example, believe that animals are hedonistic valuers and that therefore values did not come into the world with human beings. This belief is still compatible with the claim that moral values came into the world with the development of the human moral culture.

Four: Summary of Part I.

Ethics of Nature: A philosophical discipline which inquires into the eudaemonically and morally good conduct of human beings toward nature

Nature: The (nonhuman) part of our world which has not been made by human beings: mountains, lakes, plants, animals; opposite: the artefacts such as cars, statues

Anthropocentrism in the Extensional Sense: The view that the moral universe includes only human beings, and nature lacks any moral status or moral intrinsic value

Physiocentric *Opposites*		
Pathocentrism	*Biocentrism*	*Radical Physiocentrism*
All sentient beings	All living beings	All of nature
have moral status	have moral status	has moral status

Anthropocentrism in the Epistemic Sense: The view that the human perspective is constitutive of all human judgements: moral values, for example, are relational; they are values for us

Physiocentric Opposite

The view that there are absolute facts and values: moral values, for example, exist independently of human beings; they were in the world before the appearance of the human species

Part II: Seven Anthropocentric Arguments for the Value of Nature

Most of the arguments in the taxonomy of arguments for the value of nature to be developed in parts II. to IV. of this study fall into two groups: anthropocentric arguments (part II.) and physiocentric arguments (part IV.). The anthropocentric arguments are anthropocentric both in the extensional sense (only human beings are included in the moral universe) and in the epistemic sense (the human point of view is taken as constitutive). All physiocentric arguments are physiocentric in the extensional sense, but only the last two are also epistemically physiocentric. There is also a hermaphroditic argument (part III.) which rejects the distinction between "anthropocentrism" and "physiocentrism."

One: The Basic Needs Argument

(Hans Jonas [1979, esp. ch. two, I.-IIL; 1984; 1986; 1987], John Passmore [1974], Robert Spaemann [1980])

1. Classical Thoughts

Only when the last tree has died
and the last river has been poisoned
and the last fish has been caught
will we realise that we cannot eat money.
(Prophecy of a nineteenth-century Cree Indian,
made popular by Greenpeace)

2. The Argument

1. The satisfaction of basic needs for food, drink, health, and shelter is part of the good life of every human being.

2. The satisfaction of basic human needs depends upon natural conditions.

3. Modem industrial civilization endangers the satisfaction of basic human needs by exploiting, damaging, and destroying nature. Examples include the rise of skin cancer due to the depletion of the ozone layer which has been caused by the release of fluorocarbons into the air, floods in the Third World probably due to the greenhouse effect, and Tchemobyl, which irradiated large parts of the Soviet Union and Western Europe.

4. Out of concern both for your own good life as well as for the good life of all other human beings, here and in the Third World, today and in the future, nature should be conserved and cultivated in order to allow for the satisfaction of basic human needs.

3. General Comments

The basic needs argument clearly dominates the present debate on nature conservation. It fills the newspapers and it comes up in every publication on the ethics of nature. And justifiably so! For the argument concerns everybody and in a way which is important to everybody. The obstacles, especially in the economic sphere against

changing the destructive course, we have embarked on, have proved extremely difficult to surmount. So everybody repeats the same argument, and while this is no doubt necessary, it is also deplorable. It has prevented us from exploring and spelling out all the other ways in which human happiness depends upon natural conditions. Much energy must be invested into exploring and clearly formulating other aspects of our dependency on nature, and making sure they receive attention in both the public and the philosophical debates.

4. Lost Peace with Nature?

The Need for Environmental History

Sometimes people talk as if the basic needs of human beings had never been endangered before through human destruction of nature. They lament the *lost peace with nature* and lack of morality in modem industrial civilization. They proclaim that nothing short of a moral paradigm shift will save the world.

We should not allow ourselves to be taken in by such romantic visions of the past. They are false, as even a rather superficial acquaintance with *environmental history* reveals. For one example, Plato documented the effects of soil erosion caused by cutting down forests in Ancient Greece in his dialogue *Critias* (11 lb,c; for more examples see Lubbe, 1991; Thomas, 1983; 1992). The struggle against catastrophes in nature caused by human beings is a general human phenomenon and not a recent development resulting from industrialization.

This is not to deny that the environmental problems we encounter today differ from those of the past. The difference lies, in part, in the *global* character of our environmental problems. Global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer, nuclear radiation, and the exhaustion of the earth's natural resources are no longer locally bound. These issues concern the whole of the earth and the whole of humankind. Our greatest challenges revolve around the globalization of the effects of our technologies rather than regaining a lost peace with nature (Jonas, 1987, reason 3).

1. Some Reasons Why the Basic Needs Argument Is Not as Effective as You Might Expect

Arguments, like the basic needs argument, which appeal to *self-interest* are usually the most effective arguments. Among the reasons why the basic needs argument's appeal to self-interest is not as effective as you might expect is, firstly, that, as the case of radioactive radiation makes clear, we are not biologically equipped with instincts to warn us of the new dangers to our health. Our rational powers have to struggle to compensate for this biological deficit (Apel, 1992, pp. 220-222).

Secondly, most of our knowledge about the effects technologies have on the satisfaction of basic needs is quantitative knowledge, statistics about the rise of skin cancer relative to the degree of ultraviolet radiation, or limits for the tolerability of toxic gases like ozone. Numbers alone are usually not successful in motivating action. We must

search for qualitative knowledge and use our imagination to bring the numbers to life. Well-researched science fiction novels could be of help in this endeavor as could the foundation of a scientific discipline of *"qualitative futurology, "* to use Hans Jonas's term (1986, p. 5; 1979, ch. two, I. 4 and 5).

A third difficulty is that our empirical knowledge of the environmental effects of human technologies is fairly limited, and it is easy to be irrational when *deciding under uncertainty.* Everything may be totally harmless, after all.

Closely related to the lack of empirical background is the problem of *rational risk assessment.* Even where we know the risks of using a certain technology, as we do in the case of nuclear power, what risks is it rational to accept? Is the high risk - high standard of living strategy of the industrial nations more or less rational than the low risk - low standard of living strategy of some traditional societies? In a province of old South-East Asia, various sorts of rice were grown, although growing just one sort would have resulted in more rice and thus a better standard of living. Yet the risk that the monoculture might be destroyed by vermin or bad weather, that people might suffer and die from hunger, was considered too high a price for an otherwise better standard of living (Scott, 1976). It is, to say the least, questionable whether the high risk strategy of the industrial nations, as exemplified by the operation of nuclear power plants and the unrestricted use of automobiles, can be called rational.

A second set of reasons why the basic needs argument is not as effective as you might expect is that the satisfaction of the basic needs of all human beings cannot be ensured by appeal to enlightened self-interest alone, but depends on *moral respect* for others. A rich German automobile producer easily avoids the negative health effects of inhaling car exhaust by spending much of his time in his weekend retreat on a solitary Greek island. Appeal to self-interest will obviously not be enough to convince him. Or, to take another example, the effects global wanning is expected to have on Asia or on future generations are more disastrous than the effects bn Europe or on today's world. Self-interested Europeans, or living beings in general, might thus have no reason to renounce anything in order to stop global wanning. To secure the basic needs of humanity today and in the future, the basic needs argument must combine an appeal to enlightened self-interest with an appeal to moral respect.

Moral arguments change the world only with great difficulty. This is all the more true in a world in which, to put it bluntly, immoral group egoist orientations shape the controlling systems of our societies, the economic and political systems. In the economic sphere, the group egoisms of firms are the driving force. In the political sphere, the group egoisms of nations are only rarely overcome. The power of the United Nations Organization is still limited and fragile. If the moral standards guiding our conduct toward the environment are to be of any consequence in real life, our first priority is that these standards are transformed into economically and politically effective global devices (for environmental economics and politics cf. Pearce / Markandy / Barbier, 1989; Wicke, 1991; Jacobs, 1991; Hampicke 1991; O'Neill, 1993).

5. Two Versions of the Basic Needs Argument which Incorporate Intrinsic Value Claims for Nature

The standard basic needs argument accords nature only instrumental value for the satisfaction of basic human needs. Only the satisfaction of basic human needs is held to be of intrinsic value. The following two versions of the argument accord nature intrinsic value.

A. "Nature Knows Best"

This version asserts that there is only one strategy to secure the satisfaction of basic human needs and this is to accord nature intrinsic value. For we should not trust human technologies to help us. Nature knows best how to regain and maintain its health.

People who put forward this argument are probably intent on warning against underestimating the complexity of nature and overestimating human technical abilities. "Conserving nature so that it satisfies basic human needs" often means not meddling with some natural process, as in the case of fluorocarbons and the ozone layer. The reminder that natural processes took millions of years to evolve is certainly not out of place in this context.

While this warning is important, the way it is expressed is hopelessly muddled. Firstly, from the claim that it is sometimes or even often wise just to halt interference with a natural process it does not follow that this is always the case. Likewise, the claim that it is wise to trust in the body's ability to heal itself does not discredit medicine. Overestimating nature's self-healing powers is no better than overestimating human technical capabilities (Passmore, 1974, pp. 175-176). Secondly, it is not clear that the concept of "health" or "well-functioning" is applicable to nature as a whole. We do not know, for example, whether or not nature is a self-destructive mechanism (see section IV., two, the teleological argument, for more on this point). Thirdly, the argument mistakes nature's *"health"* for a guarantee of the satisfaction of basic human needs. Yet nature could be quite "healthy," that is, stable or diverse and abound with poisonous plants, deadly viruses, and dangerous animals. As will be spelled out in more detail in section III., one, the holistic argument, there is no necessary harmony between a healthy state of nature and the satisfaction of basic human needs. (Unless, that is, you define nature's "health" via its satisfaction of basic human needs. But then the argument's plea to accord nature intrinsic value no longer adds much to the standard basic needs argument.) Fourthly, and most importantly, the argument does not really contend for the intrinsic value of nature. It really only accords intrinsic value to the good of humankind. The argument should hence be rephrased to treat nature *as if* it had intrinsic value. But because of the first three points, especially the false harmony implicit in "nature knows best," treating nature as if it were of intrinsic value and

expressing concern for its health as if for its own sake is not a good device for securing the satisfaction of basic human needs.

B. The Motivational Version

According to this version (Spaemann [1980, p. 198]; Birnbacher [1987]; Bosselmann, 1992, pp. 207-208, 255]), nature is to be accorded with intrinsic value because human beings can only be motivated to conserve it if they believe it to be of intrinsic value. Otherwise, the exploitation and pollution will just go on.

All the objections raised against "nature knows best," except for the first one, apply to the motivational version as well. Treating nature *as if it* had intrinsic value is *not a good device* for securing the satisfaction of basic human needs. But we should note a further point. The proposal that we should believe in the intrinsic value of nature while knowing that it has none is both socially and personally unacceptable. It is socially unacceptable because it presumably means that a responsible elite would see to it that the masses really hold nature to be of intrinsic value. Such an affront against social transparency is not to be tolerated in modem democratic societies. It is personally unacceptable because it means a like division in the subjects as the social division between the elite and the masses and this would threaten the self-transparency of reflective subjects. You might have to suppress some beliefs in order to keep the belief in the intrinsic value of nature from being abandoned when it is under pressure. (Our criticism of the motivational argument echoes one of Bernard Williams's objections against rule-utilitarianism [Williams, 1985, pp. 107-110].)

Still, the valuable feature of the motivational argument is that we seem to stand in need of extra devices to remind ourselves of our vital dependency on nature. Many societies had and some still have rituals to govern their conduct toward nature and to celebrate the importance of nature for their lives. Rituals in hunter and gatherer societies demanded that hunters apologize to their prey after killing it (Wolters, 1991). Reritualizing some of our conduct toward nature, by introducing a rule to solemnly plant a tree for every tree cut or a rule to renaturalize fallow land for every piece of land lost to industry, dwellings, or streets, might not be a bad idea.

Two: The Aisthesis Argument

(Ursula Wolf [1987, pp. 168-169], Lothar Schafer [1993, esp. ch. 6])

1. Literary noughts

Voller Apfel, Bime und Banane, Stachelbeere ... Alles dieses spricht Tod und Leben in den Mund... Ich ahne ... Lest es einem Kind vom Angesicht,

wenn es sie erschmeckt. Dies kommt von weit. Wird euch langsam namenlos im Munde? Wo einst Worte waren, flieBen Funde, aus dem Fruchtfleisch tiberrascht befreit.

Wagt zu sagen, was ihr Apfel nennt. Diese SiiBe, die sich erst verdichtet, um, im Schmecken leise aufgerichtet, klar zu werden, wach und transparent, doppeldeutig, sonnig, erdig, hiesig O Erfahrung, Friihling, Freude -, riesig! (Rainer Maria Rilke, 1986, p. 683)

Banana, rounded apple, russet pear, gooseberry... Does not all this convey life and death into your mouth?... It's there!... Read it on a child's face any day,

when it tastes them. What infinity!

Can't you feel inside your mouth a growing mysteriousness, and, where words were, a flowing of suddenly released discovery?

Dare to say what "apple" has implied! Sweetness, concentrated, self-repressing, slowly yielding to the tongue's caressing, growing awake, transparent, clarified, double-meaning'd, sunshine-full, terrestrial: - O experience, feeling, joy, - celestial!

(1957, p. 59)

2. The Argument

1. Nature is the source of many pleasant physical sensations and feelings. The smell of pine trees, the songs of warblers, the taste of wild strawberries, swimming in wild waters, the feel of warm sand under one's bare feet, or the brightness of a summer day delight us.

2. Sensations and feelings differ from perceptions in that they include an evaluative element. This evaluative element is to a large extent independent of our will. We do not, for example, decide to dislike shrill sounds or the smell of rotten eggs, and we cannot simply decide to start liking them.

3. With the pollution and destruction of nature, we irretrievably lose the chance to experience many pleasant sensations and feelings. This loss cannot be made up by artificial substitutes.

4. Experiencing pleasant sensations and feelings is a universal basic option for a good human life.

5. Self-interest and moral concern for other human beings dictate the conservation and cultivation of nature so that it provides continued sensual delight.

3. Aisthesis and Aesthetic Theory

The *aisthesis* argument is the first one in a series of *aesthetic arguments.* This series includes, apart from the *aisthesis* argument, the aesthetic contemplation argument (IL, three), and the natural design argument (II., four).

We do not often come across the *aisthesis* argument in the literature on the ethics of nature, which is surprising considering the importance sensual delight in nature has for many people. Presumably, environmental philosophers intend to include it when they discuss the aesthetic value of nature. Yet the title "aesthetics" covers a broad range of issues, and contemporary aestheticians tend to neglect the rather basic level of sensual perception and feeling which played such an important role in the beginnings of aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century. Aesthetic theory was then a *Wahrnehmungslehre* (Baumgarten, 1750/58), a theory about sense perception and feeling *("aisthesis"* = sense perception, feeling). Since the eighteenth century, the terrain of sense perception and feeling has been somewhat deserted in the field of philosophy, with a natural science-oriented psychology attempting unsuccessfully to fill the gap. One unfortunate consequence of this lack of conceptual analysis of the language of "perception" and "feeling" is the many fruitless debates in which rationality is globally contrasted with perception and feeling as its opposite, *"Das Andere der Vemunft"* (Bohme *I* Bohme, 1983). Another unfortunate outcome, more relevant to our question, is that it is difficult to locate substantial studies on the effect of nature on human feeling.

Although sensual delight in nature is, as we have said, quite important to many people, it cannot be claimed to be *part of* the good life of everybody. Ascetics and city dwellers, who dedicate their lives to religion or politics, do not necessarily fail to lead good lives. Seeking sensual delight in nature is only a basic option for a good life. Ascetics or metropolitans have adopted other basic options and may become perfectly happy with them.

4. The Universality of Feeling

The claim that sensual delight in nature is a universal basic option for a good human life is not without controversy. It suggests that all human beings, no matter what historical or cultural background they have, can experience sensual delight in nature. To substantiate the claim of the universal accessibility of the *aisthetic* attraction of nature, we cannot do without cross-cultural studies. Here we can only offer a few suggestions which make the claim appear plausible. First, in the psychology of color, cross-cultural studies and studies with children seem to confirm what Johann Wolfgang von Goethe had already observed in his *Farbenlehre* that the warm colors - red, yellow, and orange - are experienced as exciting, vital, active colors, while the cool colors - blue, lilac, and purple - make people feel restless, soft, and longing (Sharpe, 1974, p. 2). About green, Goethe remarked that it has a soothing effect: "You do not want to move on and you cannot move on. For this reason, the color green is often selected for wallpaper for rooms in which people spend most of their time." (1982, p. 501, my translation). Second, light obviously has an effect on our moods. On bright summer days people tend to be in happier moods than on gloomy winter days. Out in the sunshine we feel better than inside under artificial lighting. These general observations about lighting and moods are corroborated by the rise of suicide rates on gloomy winter days as well as by the successfill use of light therapy in fighting depression. Last, in talking about the weather, we often use terms which indicate feeling as in: the weather is "pleasant," "oppressive," or *"Die Sonne lacht. "* If there was not a universal element in the effects of the weather on human feeling, communication via these metaphors would not work.

5. The "Grammar" of Sensation

Before considering two objections to the *aisthesis* argument we elaborate on the distinction between "perception," on the one hand, and "feeling" (physical sensation as well as [mental] feeling or emotion), on the other, upon which the *aisthesis* argument (and later, the pathocentric argument, IV., one) rests.

A. Perception

The paradigmatic objects of perception are external things or events, I perceive a bird flying in the distance. In seeing the bird fly, I do not at the same time perceive what is happening to my retina. Sense perception does not go along with the perception of my body. Perceptions are *external.*

B. Physical Sensation

In the sphere of *feeling we* can differentiate between *physical sensation* and (mental) *feeling or emotion.*

Human sensation

feeling

physical sensation
perception
(mental) feeling or emotion

Physical sensations concern either only what goes on in our own body, as in the case of pain, or also something external, as when our ears ring because of a shrill sound. Sensations may be localizable or affect the whole body, as in "I am completely worn-out." In contrast to external perceptions, sensations exist only as *our* sensations. While the flying bird still exists when we do not perceive it, there is only the subject's access to his or her sensations. The subject is *irreplaceable,* otherwise, rich people would long ago have hired "pain-bearers" for their pains! There is no pain without the subject's feeling that she or he is in pain. Although sensations are internal or subjective in this sense, we can intersubjectively communicate about our sensations because all sensations express themselves in *characteristic conduct.* The essential point about sensations for the *aisthesis* argument is that, in having a sensation, we at the same time *evaluate* it as pleasant or unpleasant. When we say our ears ring, it is not a detached, physical description of what is occurring in our ears; it involves ascribing a negative quality to the occurrence. This ascription is not something which happens after the sensation is gone. Rather, we evaluate the sensation while experiencing it. The evaluation is something which befalls us. It does not usually date back to a decision in the past, but belongs, where it is not a product of socialization, to the "nature" of human beings. To a large extent, evaluation is not in our power. We normally do not succeed in the attempt to experience a shrill noise, the stench of rotten eggs, oppressive heat, or a splitting headache as pleasant.

C. Feeling

Examples of (mental) feelings or emotions are rage, sorrow, and joy. As with physical sensations, feelings express themselves in characteristic conduct, the subjects of feelings are irreplaceable, and feelings always include an evaluative element. It is not easy to pinpoint what distinguishes feelings from physical sensations. Feelings seem to differ from bodily sensations, firstly, in that they always refer to something external: we feel sorrow about something, joy about something, or rage about something. But we do not have pain about something, our ears do not ring about something. The external reference of feelings is to an event in our life or, as with a diffuse global anxiety, to our life as a whole. Secondly, feelings, unlike bodily sensations, are not localizable in the body. In former times, people believed love or courage to be localized in the heart, and so to become more courageous, people ate the hearts of courageous animals. Today we know that bodily organs are not the *loci* but only part of the bodily conditions of feelings.

1. Two Objections to the Aisthesis *Argument*

One objection to the *aisthesis* argument is that the argument romanticizes nature and disregards the pleasures human artefacts can offer: As if rain and mist, mosquitos and poison oak could not be very unpleasant, and architecture, interior design, and art had not created many new sensual attractions! Artefacts, it is claimed, can more than

make up for an eventual loss of a sensually attractive nature. Thus, nothing in terms of nature conservation or nature cultivation really follows from the fact that nature is also sensually attractive.

That artefacts could make up for the loss of a sensually attractive nature is, however, *utopian.* If it were so easy to substitute nature's attractions, either by imitating them or by creating an abundance of new artificial attractions, why are most of our artificial surroundings - the suburbs, the factories, the offices, the highways, the noise and stench of cars and other machines - so unpleasant and depressing? Why do gourmets prefer vegetables and fruits which are naturally grown and meat from traditionally farmed animals? To suppose that human technology could make up for the pleasures of experiencing sunshine, a starry night, a light sea breeze, or the aromatic air in the mountains is, while logically not impossible, beyond what is possible here and now. It is then certainly better, to conserve and cultivate the *aisthetic* wealth of nature than to take comfort in technocratic utopianism What Rilke observed of the cities of his time in his *Stundenbuch,* remains true today:

Da leben Menschen, leben schlecht und schwer, in tiefen Zimmern, bange von Gebarde, geangsteter denn eine Erstlingsherde;

und drauBen wacht und atmet deine Erde, sie aber sind und wissen es nicht mehr.

Da wachsen Kinder auf an Fensterstufen, die inuner in demselben Schatten sind, und wissen nicht, daB drauBen Blumen rufen, zu einem Tag voll Weite, Gluck und Wind, - und mussen Kind sein und sind traurig Kind. ... (1986, p. 291)

There men are living lives of cark and care in deep rooms, shy in gesture and in word, more terror-stricken than a yearling herd; and outside wakes the Earth your breath has stirred to life of which these now live unaware.

Children grow up at window-ledges where at every hour the self-same shadow's falling, and do not know that outside flowers are calling to days all full of distance, joy and air, and must be children, but sad children, there.

...(1967, p. 89)

A second objection argues that people who do not know the *aisthetic* attractions of nature do not miss and so do not lose anything when the attractions no longer exist. It is said that someone living in the slums of a city in South America who has never seen the sun does not know what he or she is missing. Similarly, someone who has never heard the songs of warblers does not miss anything and so does not lose anything if there are no longer any warblers to sing their songs. Provided we see to it that future generations do not know what they are missing, the duty to care for nature for their sakes no longer follows.

This objection is unfeasible. How could we ensure that future generations know nothing about nature's *aisthetic* attractions? We would have to destroy most of the world's literature and paintings, as the pleasures of nature play a vital role in them Nobody could want that.

More importantly, the objection makes it appear as if something could only be a good life option for someone if he or she knows about it. Yet to enjoy the songs

of warblers or sunshine a person need not know beforehand that it may be enjoyed. Respect for the autonomy of future generations, for their right to choose among good life options, requires that we do not drastically reduce their options.

Three: The Aesthetic Contemplation Argument

☒(Martin Seel [1991a, esp. ch. VI; 1991b; 1993], Michael Schlitt [1992, pp. 243261], Bernard Williams [1995], William K. Frankena [1979], Janna Thompson [1995])

1. Literary Thoughts

But when he had reached the island which lay afar, then forth from the violet sea he came to land, and went his way until he came to a great cave, wherein dwelt the fair-tressed nymph; and he found her within. A great fire was burning on the hearth, and from afar over the isle there was a fragrance of cleft cedar und juniper, as they burned; but she within was singing with a sweet voice as she went to and fro before the loom, weaving with a golden shuttle. Round about the cave grew a luxuriant wood, alder and poplar and sweet-smelling cypress, wherein birds long of wing were wont to nest, owls and falcons and sea-crows with chattering tongues, who ply their business on the sea. And right there about the hollow cave ran trailing a garden vine, in pride of its prime, richly laden with clusters. And fountains four in a row were flowing with bright water hard by one another, turned one this way, one that. And round about soft meadows of violets and parsley were blooming. There even an immortal, who chanced to come, might gaze and marvel, and delight his soul; ... (Homer, 1960, p. 175)

Herr K. und die Natur

Befragt uber sein Verhaltnis zur Natur, sagte Herr K.: "Ich wurde gem mitunter aus dem Hause tretend ein paar Baume sehen. Besonders da sie durch ihr der Tages- und Jahreszeit entsprechendes Andersaussehen einen so besonderen Grad an Realitat erreichen. Auch verwirrt es uns in den Stadten mit der Zeit, immer Gebrauchsgegenstande zu sehen. Hauser und Bahnen, die unbewohnt leer, unbenutzt sinnlos waren. Unsere eigentumliche Gesellschaftsordnung lafit uns ja auch die Menschen zu solchen Gebrauchsgegenstanden zahlen, und da haben Baume wenigstens fur mich, der ich kein Schreiner bin, etwas beruhigend Selbstandiges, von mir Absehendes, und ich hoffe sogar, sie haben selbst fur den Schreiner einiges an sich, was nicht verwertet werden kann."... (Bertolt Brecht, 1967, pp. 381-382)

Mr K and Nature

Asked about his attitude to Nature, Mr K said: "Now and then I like to see a few trees on coming out of the house. Particularly because they achieve such a special de-

gree of reality by looking so different according to the time of day and season. Also, as time goes on we city dwellers get dazed by never seeing anything but use-objects, such as houses and railways which, if unoccupied, would be empty, if unused, meaningless. Our peculiar social system allows us to regard even human beings as such use-objects; and so trees, at any rate for me, since I am not a carpenter, have something soothingly independent about them, outside myself, and as a matter of fact I hope that for carpenters, too, they have something about them which cannot be put to use."... (1961, p. 110)

2. The Argument

1. To aesthetically contemplate a picture, a landscape, or a piece of music means to enter into a not instrumentally guided, active perception of the picture, the landscape, or the piece of music (Kambartel, 1989d, p. 109). Whoever looks at a picture, to estimate its worth for an auction, for example, does not aesthetically contemplate the picture. The perception of the picture is functionally guided and so the viewer does not let himself or herself sink into it.

2. Aesthetic contemplation is a universal basic option for a good human life. It is of eudaemonic intrinsic value. In other words, it is something we engage in *for its own sake.* Thus, aesthetic contemplation is characterizable as intrinsically valuable on two different levels: firstly, aesthetic contemplation is not an instrumentally guided activity; secondly, this activity is of intrinsic value to us.

Apart from its being a basic option for a good human life, aesthetic contemplation is also of pedagogic value, both for other aspects of our hap-piness and for our moral competence. In aesthetic contemplation, we practice placing intrinsic value in something other than in our own passive pleasure (of which most people are capable). This ability is a prerequisite for moral conduct, where intrinsic value is placed in the good life of others.

3. While everything can be aesthetically contemplated, even a dust heap or a matchbox, there are objects or situations which "invite" more aesthetic contemplation than others. Of these favored objects of aesthetic contemplation, we say that they have aesthetic intrinsic value, in a derived sense.

4. In nature much invites aesthetic contemplation, delicate roses, bizarre rock formations, majestic redwood trees, the horizon of the sea. Beautiful and sublime nature is of aesthetic intrinsic value.

5. With growing industrialization, the building of more and more roads, houses, hotels, we damage and even destroy beautiful and sublime nature. This loss cannot be made up by artificial substitutes.

6. Eudaemonic reasons as well as moral respect for others justify the conservation and cultivation of aesthetically attractive nature.

1. The Aesthetic Intrinsic Value of Nature

Whereas the previous, *aisthetic* argument spells out the passive aspect of the aesthetic experience of nature, the aesthetic contemplation argument emphasizes its active aspect. The *aisthesis* argument explores *passive pleasure* and nature's instrumental value for passive pleasure; the aesthetic contemplation argument envisions a noninstrumental activity which is of intrinsic value to human beings and which, like all other intrinsically valuable activities, goes along with the feeling of *joy* or *active pleasure.* In part I., the section on ethics, we distinguished "joy" from "passive pleasure" by the fact that joy comes about only when it is not directly pursued, when we are absorbed in an activity to the point that we forget about our other interests and projects.

The aesthetic intrinsic value accorded by the argument to the beautiful and sublime in nature is not independent from its being an object we like to contemplate aesthetically. Nature's intrinsic value is derived from our practice of aesthetic contemplation. Thus the argument is not only morally anthropocentric in the extensional and epistemic sense but it also presupposes an *epistemic aesthetic value anthropocentrism,* the view that aesthetic value comes into the world with human beings and their aesthetic practice. To better understand what this means we contrast "aesthetic intrinsic value," in our sense, with three other proposals to conceptualize the aesthetic value of nature: 1. nature is an aesthetic resource, 2. nature is absolutely beautiful and sublime, and 3. nature's aesthetic intrinsic value is moral intrinsic value.

A. Nature Is Not an Aesthetic Resource

To conceptualize nature as a means, a resource, or an instrument for aesthetic contemplation (Birnbacher, 1980, p. 133; Callicott, 1986, p. 140; Johnson, 1991, p. 273) misses a central element of the grammar or phenomenology of aesthetic contemplation. In aesthetic contemplation, we value entering into a relationship with the object that is not instrumentally guided. We allow ourselves to sink into the object so that it is experienced as if it were "speaking" to ourselves, as if it were "subject"-like or "autonomous." Reformulations of this kind, however, easily mislead. The understandings of nature's aesthetic intrinsic value explored in B. and C. fall victim to this misleading terminology.

B. Nature Is Not of Absolute Aesthetic Value

It is tempting to move from the insight that nature's aesthetic value is not instrumental to our aesthetic experience, to the claim that the aesthetic value of nature must reside in nature itself, independently of any subjects who value nature's beauty and sublimity. This claim is often supported by a last human being thought experiment: Would the last human being on earth commit a wrong if he or she destroyed nature? In section IV., four, the following nature argument, we will closely examine the idea of something being of value without being of value to any human (or other) valuer. Here we only point out that there is a perfectly good alternative to the move from the view that nature is not of instrumental value for our aesthetic experience to the view that nature is of absolute aesthetic value. The alternative is to understand nature's aesthetic value as an aesthetic intrinsic value *for us.* Nature's aesthetic intrinsic value is then not external to our practice of aesthetic contemplation. It is not an absolute,

but relational. The intrinsic value this noninstrumental practice has for us, "rubs off," so to speak, on its favorite, most suitable objects. The view that nature's aesthetic intrinsic value is "only" intrinsic value for us does not imply that we are free to decide what we regard as aesthetically attractive in nature. In finding it intrinsically valuable to contemplate something, we respond to qualities which inhere in it, its enormous size or power (giant redwood trees, waterfalls) or its structural complexity (bizarre rock formations), or its freedom from marks of instrumental human activity (the sea, the desert, the sky).

C. Nature's Aesthetic Intrinsic Value Is Not Moral Intrinsic Value

Moral intrinsic value is an instance of intrinsic value for us; it is internal to our moral culture. Sometimes nature's aesthetic intrinsic value is confused with moral intrinsic value, and people move from the claim that nature is not of instrumental value for our aesthetic experience directly to the claim that nature is consequently of intrinsic value for us and its good must be conserved for its own sake. This move is only tempting if you fail to realize that there are other intrinsic values for us than moral intrinsic value. Nature's aesthetic intrinsic value derives from the intrinsic value of the aesthetic contemplation of nature to the contemplating subjects. The conservation or cultivation of what is aesthetically attractive in nature is, therefore, something morally owed to the contemplators but not to nature itself. The good life of the contemplators is of moral intrinsic value, while the good of nature is not, at least not by the force of the aesthetic contemplation argument. (Sometimes, aesthetic intrinsic value as well as other types of eudaemonic intrinsic value [see the anthropocentric arguments five and seven] are termed "inherent" values [Frankena 1979, fh. 23; Hampicke 1996, p. 150] to distinguish them clearly from moral intrinsic value.)

3. The Universality of the Aesthetic Contemplation of Nature

The aesthetic contemplation argument presents the aesthetic contemplation of nature as a universally accessible basic option for a good human life. Against the universal accessibility of the aesthetic contemplation of nature, it is now and then objected that to contemplate nature aesthetically is a specifically modem phenomenon. Joachim Ritter, for example, suggests in his well-known essay *"Landschaft"* that Petrarch's ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1335 is the first instance of the aesthetic contemplation of nature. Before that time, nature was rather an enemy to be fought than an object of aesthetic admiration (Ritter, 1974, pp. 161162). This thesis can be repudiated by citing counterexamples which are not too difficult to fmd: consider the passage from Homer's *Odyssey* quoted above, Sappho's nature lyrics, the beginning of Plato's dialogue *Phaedrus,* Theocritus's shepherds poems, Horace's Soracte ode, or old Chinese paintings.

4. The Irreplaceability of Nature as an Aesthetic Object

If nature were aesthetically replaceable without loss, the aesthetic contemplation argument would only lead to the imperative to substitute art for any part of aesthetically attractive nature damaged or destroyed (provided the aesthetic status quo is justified). People could experience aesthetic contemplation in museums or concerts. And moral respect for their good life would not require anything in terms of nature conservation or cultivation. To defend the thesis that nature is aesthetically irreplaceable, we would have to explore all the differences between Natural Beauty and Artificial Beauty. We cannot accomplish this here (for a thorough inquiry into these differences see Seel, 1991a), but will confine ourselves to several rather general observations.

A. The Simultaneous Activation of Many Senses

The first observation concerns the circumstance that in nature all or many of our senses are usually activated simultaneously, while works of art mostly privilege one sense over the others. The interplay between our different senses as well as the stimulation of senses like the sense of touch, which plays a minor role in the aesthetic appreciation of art, contribute to the specific quality of our aesthetic experience of nature. To substitute for nature's aesthetic attractions, therefore, it does not suffice to build more museums and organize more concerts and poetry readings. Works of art dedicated to stimulating a variety of senses at the same time *("Gesamtkunstwerke")* would have to be created. While this is in principle possible, in practice it is, no doubt, easier to conserve and cultivate the nature which is already there.

B. Aesthetic Masterpieces

The second observation is that aesthetic masterpieces are never replaceable. Every masterly poem, or string quartet, or portrait is unique. The suggestion that there could be substitutes is ridiculous. A Rembrandt or Leonardo da Vinci painting which is damaged, destroyed, or stolen from a museum would not be replaced if someone offered to donate a van Gogh to make up for the loss. What holds true for works of art, holds true for the aesthetic masteipieces of nature. There can be no substitute for Yosemite Valley, the Sinai Desert, or the Black Forest.

C. Natural Genesis

Our third point relates to the fact, well illustrated by Brecht's Keuner story, that aesthetic appeal has something to do with objects or situations that *bear no marks of instrumental action.* While the starry sky, the horizon, and trees invite us to aesthetic contemplation, utensils like a tooth-brush or a bus ticket are harder to contemplate aesthetically. Their function is so obvious that it is difficult to enter into a noninstrumental relationship with them. When contemplating a landscape, we are sometimes disturbed when we realize that what we took to be a tree is really a transmission pole or that what we took to be a natural forest is a tree plantation. *(Wild) nature,* as that which has not been made by human beings, does not bear marks of human action. In

this respect, nature at least in a relatively wild or untouched state is superior to all human-developed aesthetic objects. Although our aesthetic culture involves putting works of art in surroundings which stress their "uselessness," by hanging them in museums the most perfect arrangement cannot always prevent us from noting instrumental features about the works of art and adopting an instrumental attitude toward them. We may wonder how much the museum paid for a certain picture and whether this question should not be addressed at the next town council when arguing that more money be set aside for the town's kindergarten. Or, in looking at a painting, we may notice artist-, nation-, or epoch-relative stereotypes in the representation of women as either asensual and pure maidens or as voluptuous seductresses and wonder how much of this stereotyping was intended to contribute to keeping women in their subordinate social position.

D. The Sublime

Our last observation concerns the status of the sublime in nature as opposed to art. Examples of the sublime in nature are churning seas, violent thunderstorms, towering waterfalls, giant trees, high mountains, and seemingly endless deserts. We may, following Immanuel Kant, distinguish two variants of the sublime, the *mathematical sublime,* which on account of its immense size impresses, and the *tfynamic sublime,* which on account of its overwhelming power attracts *(Critique of Judgement,* part one, section one, book two, paragraphs 23-29). While both the mathematical and the dynamic sublime can be found in the human-developed world - the Golden Gate bridge, the Strasbourg Cathedral, great emperors, many Caspar David Friedrich paintings, or Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony - the sublime that human beings have created is unimpressive when compared with the abundance of sublimity in nature. To substitute for the loss of the mathematical sublime in nature, artefacts as high as the Alps, for example, would have to be built. This may be in principle possible, but the expense for it would obviously be out of proportion to the expense of conserving nature.

With regard to dynamic sublimity in nature, artificial substitutes can never, even in principle come close to replacing it. Any dynamically sublime, any extremely powerful object or situation which is in our power to bring into existence is less powerful than a comparable natural power which simply exists whether we want it or not. Moreover, the fact that we can construct something powerful gives us some control over the way it operates. This control detracts from its power. That the human-developed dynamic sublime can never reach the natural dynamic sublime not only means that we cannot substitute it and should therefore conserve it, but also that having to conserve the natural dynamic sublime in natural parks demonstrates that its power and sublimity is already irretrievably diminished. Bernard Williams sees a paradox here:

What many conservation interests want to preserve is a nature that is not controlled, shaped, or willed by us, a nature which, as against culture, can be thought of as just *there.* But a nature which is preserved by us is no longer a nature that is simply not controlled. A natural park is not nature, but a park; a wilderness that is preserved

is a definite, delimited, wilderness. The paradox is that we have to use our power to preserve a sense of what is not in our power. Anything we leave untouched we have already touched. It will no doubt be best for us not to forget this, if we are to avoid self-deception and eventual despair. It is the final expression of the inescapable truth that our refusal of the anthropocentric must itself be a human refusal. (1995, p. 68; see also Clark, 1983, pp. 187-188)

The question why the experience of the mathematical and dynamic sublime is of intrinsic value to us, why we like to contemplate what is bigger and more powerful than we are, demands an answer because feelings of dissatisfaction with our nothingness, with our inability to grasp the enormity of nature, or fear and alarm about the threat posed to our existence and to human culture in general, would be easier to understand. To the difficult question why we like to contemplate the sublime, we can only venture some rather tentative thoughts (for classical explanations stressing the positive experience of human transcendence over nature cf. Kant's *Critique of Judgement* [1989] and Schiller [1970]). Provided we ourselves are not in acute danger, overwhelming power and enormous size may elevate us (Latin: *"sublimere"* = to elevate) above the many worries, interests, and projects of our everyday lives. For a moment, all these worries and strivings may appear to be of relatively minor importance, and we may realize that we can find greatness, importance, value, meaning in the world without conferring meaning on the world through our manifold minor interests and projects. The knowledge that we need not confer value on the world for it to be experienced as valuable is an insight into ourselves as valuing subjects, not an insight into an absolute value which nature has irrespective of any valuing subjects. Once we have had this insight into ourselves with regard to the case of the sublime, we can try to extend this insight to our lives and to the rest of the world. Whoever manages to experience all of his or her life and all of the world as intrinsically valuable, however insignificant or even dreadful it may seem, has the eudaemonically best attitude toward life and the world as a whole. For he or she will not despair at the failure to achieve fundamental ends because of severe illness or the betrayal of a lover or friend, or the breaking out of war. This person can, in spite of all this, still see value and meaning in life and in the world. He or she experiences the true joy of living. We will return to this kind of attitude toward life and the world in section seven, the meaning of life and the true joy of living argument.

Four: The Natural Design Argument

(Friedrich Kambartel [1989d])

1. Classical Thoughts

One of the most important problems in conferring (a practically *fixed}* meaning upon the present use of the word "art" is that we (must) give the situations and means of our life a *form (Gestalt),* which is not (cannot be) determined by our life's goals: neither does the use of an (use-)object generally determine its appearance, material, and so on, completely; nor are, say, the kind and arrangement of situations (especially spatial ones), in which life takes place, (each) determined by the tasks which we have to master in these situations. That means that there are, as a rule, *functionally equivalent* objects and situations, which *beyond this* are essentially different from each other...

We can deal with the problem of aesthetic form in different ways: We can, for example, *imitate* or (as in postmodem architecture) eclectically *combine* existing solutions. - We can leave to *chance* that which cannot be determined by fiinction or economic considerations. - And finally, we can assume *aesthetic responsibility,* which means taking the problem of aesthetic form seriously, with practical consequences...

Nature shows us solutions to problems of aesthetic form. One need only think of the sight of a river, a mountain, a tree, a flower, the grain and color of wood, and so on (and the classic idea of God as a creative artist). (Friedrich Kambartel, 1989d, pp. 104-106, my translation)

2. The Argument

1. Whenever human beings create an artefact, they are faced with the problem of aesthetic form or design. The problem of aesthetic design results from the fact that the function of an artefact does not determine its design. Whoever wants to produce or acquire a tea cup, for example, has to choose among yellow, red, or green tea cups. Its function, namely to serve as a receptacle for hot beverages, does not determine its color.

2. The problem of aesthetic design is usually experienced as something we feel responsible for solving. That is, we usually do not leave the way in which the problem is solved to chance. Imagine someone who enters a shop in order to buy a shirt. When the salesperson asks what kind of shirt he or she is searching for, an answer such as, "Oh, I don't mind, I just came to buy a shirt," would strike us as odd.

3. Wilderness has a design of its own. Think of the shape of bark or of cobwebs, the route a small creek takes through a hilly area, the songs of warblers. Human beings are not responsible for nature's design. In wilderness, they are relieved of aesthetic responsibility. Our disappointment, when we go for a walk into a forest and find the forest in a mess because of the work of lumbeijacks, may serve as an example of our implicit expectation to be relieved from facing design problems in nature.

4. The feeling of being relieved of aesthetic responsibility is a universal basic option for a good life.

5. Out of concern for our own good as well as for the good of others, we should conserve wilderness in order to allow for relief of aesthetic responsibility.

3. Comments

Although universally accessible, the feeling of being relieved of aesthetic responsibility in the wilderness is not a very common basic option for a good human life. Probably, its importance rises with the degree of suffering experienced from neglected aesthetic responsibility both in humanly transformed nature and in our artificial environment.

The natural design argument does not presuppose that we differentiate between function and design aspects in wilderness, as we did in the example of tea cups, whose function is to serve as receptacles for hot beverages and whose design is their color. For the argument, it is enough to remark that wilderness does not confront us with the problem of aesthetic design. Wilderness has a form of its own, it is for the most part not chaotic, but well-formed. (Even chaotic wilderness, a dynamically sublime river, for example, does not present us with the problem of aesthetic design, since it defies all expectations of form.)

Although the argument does not presuppose that we differentiate between function and design aspects in wilderness, it is possible that we make such a differentiation. Trees have bark to protect them. But that a certain tree has a bark of exactly the shape it has cannot be explained by its function. Other shapes would have functioned equally well.

Whoever looks thus at wilderness, will in many cases admire how nature has solved the problem of aesthetic design. This admiration does not presuppose that we believe that someone, or God, has created nature. We can admire nature's solutions to the problem of aesthetic design while believing - with Charles Darwin - that all of nature developed by accident. Admiring nature for its ingenious solutions to the problem of aesthetic design is different from feeling relieved of aesthetic responsibility in nature.

The two may come together, but they need not. Admiring nature for its design is an instance of the aesthetic contemplation of nature. Thus it belongs to the previous argument.

In allowing us to feel relieved of aesthetic responsibility, wilderness cannot be replaced by artefacts or by cultivated nature. To suppose that it could, would be to make a logical mistake as well as be utopian. For even if we had the time, the money, and the ideas to design aesthetically appealing parks of artefacts, there would obviously be no relief of aesthetic responsibility.

The natural design argument is the second to demonstrate that *wilderness* is in principle irreplaceable. The dynamic sublime in wilderness, the fact that wilderness does not bear any marks of instrumental human activity, and that it has a form of its own, may explain our fascination for wilderness (for rival explanations see Elliot, 1982; 1992; Goodin, 1992, pp. 37-39). The other anthropocentric arguments concern both wild and cultivated nature.

Five: The Heimat Argument

(Hermann Lubbe [1977; 1985, p. 11; 1989, p. 34], Klaus Michael Meyer- Abich [1984, 12.4.], Janna Thompson [1995])

1. Classical Thoughts

You ask us to think what place we like next best to this place where we always lived. You see the graveyard there? There are our fathers and our grandfathers. You see that Eagle-nest mountain and that Rabbit-hole mountain? When God made them, He gave us this place. We have always been here. We do not care for any other place ... We have always lived here. We would rather die here. Our fathers did. We cannot leave them. Our children were bom here - how can we go away? If you give us the best place in the world, it is not so good as this ... This is our home ... (Cecilia Blacktooth, 1972, p. 28)

2. The Argument

1. Human beings tend to develop positive feelings toward the natural (and artificial) environments in which they have lived for long periods of their lives: These places provide feelings of familiarity and security. In addition to these feelings, the *Heimat* usually contributes to the identity of those who live there. When asked who they are, many people answer by talking about, among other things, the landscape where they come from, be it the Rhine valley, the Black Forest, or the Scottish Highlands.

2. While it is a universal basic option for a good human life to experience the positive feelings of familiarity and security in a native landscape, the need for individuality, for being different from others, for having a particular identity, belongs to the core of a good human life. Understanding yourself in terms of a native landscape is a common form of expressing individuality.

3. Considering both our own good and the good of others, nature should be conserved if it is part of the home of humans.

3. Comments

As a city designer once claimed, people stop feeling familiar in their city or village when more than 2-3 % of the buildings have been changed (Huber, 1974). This feeling of alienation is probably most intense when you return to the city or village of your childhood after having been a long time away. What holds true of our artificial environment, also holds true of our natural environment. Roads look naked and strange without the trees which once lined them. The valley has lost its peaceful character now that you hear the noise of the cars from the new highway. Because of the quick pace of modem civilization, we become more aware of our desire for familiar surroundings. This desire could, in principle, be fulfilled by providing people with stable, purely artificial surroundings. Only while there are still people used to having nature around them does concern for their welfare include conserving their natural surroundings as well. For the reasons given in the previous arguments we should, however, hope that there will always be people of this kind.

While the longing for familiar surroundings is a fairly basic one, one we share with many animals, the way nature contributes to human identity is a more complex matter, frequently mediated by art, by regional literature or songs praising our native lands. As with the feeling of familiarity, it is due to modem civilization and especially its tendency to assimilate things - think of McDonald's or Hilton Hotels located all over the world - that we become increasingly aware of our wish to be and remain different from others. There are other geographically-bound forms of grounding your identity than love for your native landscape: love for the local dialect, the cuisine, feasts, architecture. And there are forms of grounding your identity (as the example of Jews in the Diaspora shows) which succeed without any geographical link.

It has been argued, most forcefully by Hermann Lubbe, that current nature conservation movements are not really motivated by concern for nature for its own sake or by any of the other reasons usually presented, but by our rather selfish endeavor to compensate for the alienating and assimilating tendencies of modem civilization. As Lubbe reports, the number of museums and architectural monuments erected in the last few decades has exploded. In 1971, Germany had 1,539 museums; ten years later, the number had reached 1,800. In Austria, the number of people visiting museums in the 1980s was three times the number of people attending football games. Nature conservation must be seen in this context, Lubbe assumes, namely as the transformation of nature into a museum (*"Naturmusealisierung, "* Lubbe, 1985, p. 11). That we create museums of nature and culture to ensure ourselves of the roots of our identity, is an interesting idea, but it is certainly wrong to understand present nature conservation movements solely or even primarily in this light. Basic needs, *aisthetic,* and aesthetic reasons - not to speak of the arguments to come - play a larger role in nature conservancy, and justifiably so.

Six: The Pedagogic Argument

(Michael Schlitt [1992, pp. 97-98], Ernst Tugendhat [1993, ch. 9])

1. Classical Thoughts

A propensity to wanton destruction of what is *beautiful* in inanimate nature *(spiritus destructions)* is opposed to man's duty to himself; for it weakens or uproots that feeling in man which, though not of itself moral, is still a disposition of sensibility that greatly promotes morality or at least prepares the way for it: the disposition, namely, to love something (for example, beautiful crystal formations, the indescribable beauty of plants) even apart from any intention to use it.

With regard to the animate but nonrational part of creation, violent and cruel treatment of animals is far more intimately opposed to man's duty to himself, and he has a duty to refrain from this; for it dulls his shared feeling of their pain and so weakens and gradually uproots a natural predisposition that is very serviceable to morality in one's relations with other men. (Immanuel Kant, 1991, pp. 237-238)

2. The Argument

1. Nature has equipped human beings with biological inhibitions and drives, inhibitions which prevent them from inflicting pain, from killing, from destroying something without need, and with the drive to take care of things and beings, to have compassion for the sorrows of others. In our struggle for a moral world, one with as little human suffering and oppression as possible, we cannot afford to blunt these biological inhibitions and drives. Rather, we must cultivate and make use of them to efficiently reduce human suffering and oppression.

2. In cultivating these biological dispositions as well as in exercising other, socially-learned practices toward nature (the aesthetic contemplation of nature, for instance), human beings become more susceptible to rational eudaemonic and moral imperatives. For all these practices teach human beings to exert control over their immediate, self-regarding passions and to take interest in other beings and things. As the virtue of *Gelassenheit* (non-obsessiveness, calm) illustrates, the ability to look beyond our immediate self-interest is of eudaemonic importance for anybody (Kambartel, 1989c). The ability to transcend immediate self-interest and to take interest in others is even more

relevant for morality, since moral respect requires furthering the good life of others for their sakes. Moral imperatives are easier to follow for a self-controlled and compassionate person than for a person who has to struggle with conflicting desires each time.

3. Eudaemonic and moral reasons, therefore, support cultivating biologically-grounded and socially-learned practices which involve respect both for the integrity of natural beings, things, and systems, and for the well-being of sentient animals. Cruelty toward animals and the vandalism of nature brutalizes and corrupts the human character. Compassion for animals and care for nature refines the human character.

3. General Comments

As an argument for the conservation of nature, the force of the pedagogic argument is fairly limited. The argument's call for respect for the integrity of natural beings and things can also be applied to technical equipment, furniture, or tea cups. Vandalizing artefacts also corrupts human character, while treating them with care refines it. Thus we are not dependent on nature for improving our character, but may also use artefacts to fulfill this aim. Only for evoking compassion there is yet no good substitute in the world of artefacts, though dolls with sweet, helpless faces may serve this function up to a certain point. Furthermore, provided that there is a good reason to damage or destroy an artefact, to protect a child from the sharp edge of a cracked tea cup, the pedagogic argument does not forbid destruction. Similarly, it does not forbid damaging or destroying natural things or beings, provided there is a good reason. When workers on a construction site fell trees to make space for a new building, they obviously do not do anything which corrupts their character. They do not vandalize nature. Only someone who damages or destroys nature without good reasons, someone who leaves an empty Coca Cola can lying around in a field, or who steps on a beetle or a flower, which could easily have been avoided, vandalizes nature.

In the following, we defend the argument (within the limits indicated above) against a popular objection (4.) and conclude with a caveat concerning animals as means of training human compassion (5.).

4. The Channelling Aggression Objection

Some argue that to think human beings can be educated to completely master their passions is unrealistic. Aggression is part of every human being. Instead of educating people to care for nature, we should let them vent their aggression in nature. For it is, after all, better that they vandalize nature and harm animals than that they harm other

humans. Aggression can and should be chanelled into the relatively unproblematic area of nature.

The channelling aggression argument is a *non-sequitur.* For even if it is likely that we will never succeed in eliminating aggression from our world, it does not follow that we should not do what we can to eliminate it. We do not live in paradise, but it does not follow that we should do nothing to improve our situation. We should do our best to educate others and ourselves so that the tendency toward aggressive responses decreases. Of course, when we teach people not to vandalize nature, not to harm animals or human beings, we have to be clear that the last is much worse than the first, so that an incorrigibly aggressive person will have learned to be aggressive in nature rather than toward other humans.

What makes the channelling aggression argument so tempting is the mechanical nature of the metaphor, relating human aggression to a fixed amount of water in a river bed. This water can either flow through the river bed or be channelled to flow somewhere else. What the channelling metaphor does not allow for is a decrease or an increase in the amount of water. The pedagogic argument is based on the belief that, through training, the amount of aggression can be reduced, while by unleashing it channelled or not, the amount of aggression will remain constant or perhaps increase. Although there is as yet no conclusive scientific evidence in favor of this belief (for example, studies on the effects of showing hardcore pornography and violence on television are ambiguous), it is clearly more plausible than the idea that each person possesses a fixed amount of aggression (Nolting, 1978): For, if there were really such a fixed amount, you would expect people who are not aggressive toward other people to be aggressive in nature and vice versa. Aggression must come out somewhere. But this hypothesis is at odds with everyday experience where aggression toward people, the vandalism of nature, and cruelty toward animals go together, while concern for people and care for nature go together. We may, therefore, conclude that the channelling aggression objection is mistaken.

5. "Is It Only for Practice that We Should Have Compassion for Animals? " A Caveat

To say that an object of moral respect is only good for training our moral character is offensive, although it cannot be denied that with every moral action we train our moral character. Consider someone who, in a discussion about the moral rights of the severely disabled, proposes to ground their rights to curative care on the fact that everything else would brutalize us. To all who believe the severely disabled are members of the moral universe such a proposal is offensive. In the same vein, the proposal to ground respect for animals solely on their usefulness as objects for training human moral character, as put forward by Kant, is regarded as offensive by all who believe animals

to be members of the moral universe. This latter group includes Arthur Schopenhauer, whose famous response to Kant begins this section - "Is it only for practice that we should have compassion for animals?" (1979, paragraph 8, my translation). In the pathocentric argument (IV., one) we will follow Schopenhauer and argue that the capacity to suffer which qualifies animals as particularly good objects for training morality does, in fact, qualify animals as direct objects of moral respect. With the caveat that there is more to be said about respecting animals than that not respecting them would brutalize us, the pedagogic argument is acceptable.

Seven: The Meaning of Life and the True Joy of Living Argument

(Friedrich Kambartel [1989b])

1. Classical Thoughts

Tung-kuo-tzu inquired of Chuang-tzu "Where is it, that which we call the Way?" "There is nowhere it is not." "Unallowable unless you specify." "It is in molecrickets and ants." "What, so low?" "It is in the weeds of the ricefields." "What, still lower?" "It is in tiles and shards." "What, worse than ever!" "It is in shit and piss." Tung-kuo-tzu did not reply...

(Chuang-tzu, 1981, p. 161)

Therefore, make a start with yourself, and abandon yourself. Truly, if you do not begin by getting away from yourself, wherever you run to, you will find obstacles and trouble wherever it may be. People who seek peace in external things - be it in places or ways of life or people or activities or solitude or poverty or degradation - however great such a thing may be or whatever it may be, still it is all nothing and gives no peace. People who seek in that way are doing it all wrong; the further they wander, the less will they find what they are seeking. They go around like someone who has lost his way; the further he goes, die more lost he is. Then what ought he to do? He ought to begin by forsaking himself, because then he has forsaken everything. Truly, if a man renounced a kingdom or the whole world but held on to himself, he would not have renounced anything. What is more, if a man renounces himself, whatever else he retains, riches or honors or whatever it may be, he has forsaken everything. (Meister Eckhart, 1981, pp. 249-250)

Der Zweck des Lebens ist das Leben selbst. (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1968, p. 215)

The meaning of life is life itself (my translation).

Religious speech and practice recalls the correct attitude to our life as a whole: That nothing *in* life, neither people, tasks, situations, objects nor events (really) bears our life in serious situations, only the insight that we have to free ourselves from the idea of such secure "possessions." This idea and the search that guides it creates the problem whose solution gives both (the idea and the search) up.

That the *meaning (Sinn)* of our life as *life itself is* constantly present to us; and that, faced with the unfathomable wonder of the appearances in our life itself, it does not need any explanation which we could fmd beyond it, lying beneath it. Here is no curtain we still need to thrust back; or only the one which has drawn a false understanding of the situation of humankind before life. When we have seen the mystery of life (life) undissembled, we can die in peace, beyond that there is nothing new in the world which death could rob us of. That is the consolation of religion. (Friedrich Kambartel, 1989b, p. 101, my translation)

2. The Argument

1. Most of the time we act as if the meaning of our life depends on successfully achieving some fundamental ends, finding a spouse or having a career. This approach to finding meaning in life is, however, imprudent. You may always fail to achieve fundamental ends, through illness, the betrayal or death of a lover, the occupation of your country. Whoever does not adequately take into account the role of fate in life (its *Wideifahrnis-chancter,* Kamiah, 1973, pp. 34-40) the fact, that control of your life is not firmly in your hands, risks concluding that life is devoid of meaning and falling into despair.

2. In the face of such risk it is more prudent not to let the meaning of life depend on the success of life projects but to try and live life for its own sake, regard life itself as the meaning of life, accord life intrinsic value. Whoever manages to do so, experiences the true joy of living or *beatitudo,* as the tradition has called it.

It is not easy to attain this wise attitude toward life. It requires the ability to overcome, or distance yourself from your ego, to "let go." This ability can be trained through meditation, aesthetic contemplation, and moral conduct.

3. Experiencing life as intrinsically valuable involves experiencing all that makes up the world, natural as well as human, as bearing intrinsic value, as something to be revered, as "sacred." For the wise person nothing is trifling enough to be without intrinsic value.

4. The instrumental attitude to nature, to animals, plants, rivers, or the air, is therefore not the best attitude for human beings to adopt. They should revere nature.

3. Comments

There are people who do not live life for its own sake but who are still lucky enough to live all in all good, meaningful lives: they do not fall severely ill, their family and friends are well, they are intelligent and get the jobs they want. For this reason, we cannot claim that living life for its own sake belongs to the core of the good life of all human beings. Good lives are possible without this attitude. However, it would

be a mistake to regard this attitude toward life as nothing more than a basic option or alternative for a good human life. It is an alternative which should be chosen by everyone. No one can be sure that he or she belongs to the lucky few who lead good lives anyway. This is not the case for other alternatives of the good life. In choosing one alternative, political engagement, you often forego others, a rich family life. There is no general argument which says that the first alternative should be chosen by everyone. A life without it has all chances to be a perfectly happy life. Thus, if we call living life for its own sake a basic option for a good human life, we should always add that it has a privileged status among all basic options.

As an argument for nature conservation, the argument from the meaning of life is not a strong argument. It asks us to assume a reverential attitude to everything that makes up our life. The tree in front of the house is, however, no more "sacred" than the tea cup on the table or the toothbrush in the bathroom. Nature is not exceptional. Moreover, holding nature or anything else sacredly, does not conflict with using it as an instrument or damaging and even destroying it. If a good reason exists for throwing away a tea cup or for cutting down a tree, we may do so. In this regard, the argument from the meaning of life is parallel to the previous, pedagogic argument. Both arguments give reasons for conserving nature which are of so little weight that they become practically effective only when there are no good reasons on the other side.

It is a common misunderstanding of the meaning of life argument that the wise attitude to life amounts to an uncritical *conservatism.* The wise person does not surrender fundamental interests and projects in life. He or she does not ignore bodily and emotional needs and may even enjoy eating well, may fall in love. This person may be politically active on all sides of the political spectrum. It is not that interests and projects are less important to such a person. Rather, there is more that is of importance to this person than to others who do not find life intrinsically valuable. This prevents such people from falling into crises of meaning, which is, after all, a plus also for political engagement. While his or her political colleagues may in extreme situations despair of politics, life, the world, he or she may be the only one who is able to do what needs to be done, if things are not to get even worse.

The importance of the meaning of life argument lies in its attempt to spell out, in strictly anthropocentric terms, the widely-held belief that technocratic cultures which regard nature as nothing but a resource or commodity miss out on gaining a deeper understanding of human beings and their world, that there is something spiritually lacking in them. People who draw attention to the *spiritual dimension* of human life usually claim that there is no way to make sense of this dimension and a reverential attitude to nature inside the anthropocentric framework. They urge, for example, that we need a more holistic view of the self as being one with nature, the great "Self' (III.), or that we must accord to nature moral intrinsic value (IV., one to three) or an absolute intrinsic value which resides in nature irrespective of any human (or other)

valuer (IV., four), or, finally, that we need to believe again in a transcendent God (IV., five).

In contrast, the meaning of life argument as it is developed here shows that it is possible to make sense of the spiritual dimension of human life and a reverential attitude to nature without moving away from extensional and epistemic anthropocentrism. The intrinsic value, or sacredness, the meaning of life argument accords to nature is a kind of derivative intrinsic value similar to the derivative aesthetic intrinsic value of art objects and beautiful or sublime nature. As aesthetic intrinsic value derives from the intrinsic value aesthetic contemplation has for human beings, the sacredness of nature derives from the intrinsic value the contemplation of life and the world as a whole has for human beings. Sacredness is not an absolute value (or a moral intrinsic value), but, like aesthetic intrinsic value, internal to the human value perspective. To accord nature sacredness does not, thus, go against epistemic and extensional anthropocentrism. The insight into the best attitude toward life and nature arises from the human value perspective. It is for us that it is best to hold nature sacred.

Eight: Summary of Part II. and Preliminary Results

Part II. presents seven anthropocentric arguments for the conservation and cultivation of nature. These arguments are anthropocentric in both the extensional and epistemic sense. Each argument is, upon close examination, a convincing argument.

The most obvious reason to conserve and cultivate nature is that satisfaction of basic human needs like nourishing the body and maintaining health depends on it *(IL, one, the basic needs argument).* Two versions of the basic needs argument, in contrast to the standard version, add intrinsic value claims for nature: "nature knows best" and the motivational version, which are rejected.

The arguments examined in IL, two to four are aesthetic arguments. The *aisthesis argument, IL, two,* bases the need to conserve and cultivate nature on nature's sensual attractions for us, the pleasure for instance we take in breathing fresh mountain air. Two objections, the first concerning the replaceability of nature through artificial means and the second holding that future generations who do not know nature's sensual attractions will not miss them, are overruled.

The *aesthetic contemplation argument, IL, three,* asserts the intrinsic value aesthetic contemplation has for us and the intrinsic value of beautiful and sublime nature which derives from that. The derivative aesthetic intrinsic value of nature is contrasted with instrumental value, absolute intrinsic value, and moral intrinsic value. Against the objection that nature is aesthetically replaceable, four counterarguments are made, the two most important ones drawing attention to the difference in quality between the human-developed sublime and the sublime in nature, and to (wild) nature's freedom from marks of human instrumental activity.

The *natural design argument, IL., four,* discovers value in the fact that nature has a form of its own, thus relieving us from the aesthetic responsibility to create form which we face concerning anything else in life, in furnishing an apartment, building cities, and buying clothes.

The *Heimat argument, IL, five,* bases the need to conserve nature on the role the native landscape plays with regard both to feelings of familiarity and security as well as to our identity. Nature must be conserved so as to compensate for the alienating and assimilating tendencies of modem civilization.

The *pedagogic argument, IL, six,* discusses the brutalizing effect of cruelty toward animals and the vandalism of nature. The objection that it is better to vent aggression in nature than to turn it toward other human beings is repudiated. There is also

a caveat that according animals no more than pedagogic value could be considered offensive.

The last argument, the *meaning of life and the true joy of living argument, IL, seven,* applies ideas from the mystic tradition to nature conservancy issues. According to the mystics, the wise person does not instrumentalize life for some end(s), be it a career or the love of a person. Because of the role fate plays in the lives of human beings, we may not succeed on the terms we set out for ourselves. Still, each person can live his or her life for its own sake. In the wise, contemplatory attitude to life everything including nature has some intrinsic value or "sacredness."

The anthropocentric case for nature conservation and cultivation is often misrepresented as according nature only *instrumental value.* While II., one, two, four, five (the section on feelings), and six focus indeed on the instrumental value of nature - for the satisfaction of basic human needs, for human physical and emotional pleasure, for relief from aesthetic responsibility, for feelings of familiarity and security, and finally, for training human character - in IL, three, five (the section on identity), and seven, nature is accorded *intrinsic value.*

The *aesthetic intrinsic value* of beautiful and sublime nature, to start with the most important case, derives from the intrinsic value the aesthetic contemplation of nature has for human beings and from the fact that the aesthetic contemplation of nature involves entering into a noninstrumental relation to the object. Whoever calls nature an instrument for our aesthetic contemplation and regards nature's aesthetic value as only instrumental misses a constitutive element of aesthetic contemplation. In contrast to looking at pictures to select bright or comforting ones for a hospital, contemplating pictures aesthetically involves losing yourself in them.

The aesthetic intrinsic value of art and of nature is a type of intrinsic value different from both moral intrinsic value and absolute intrinsic value. It derives from the intrinsic value the act of contemplation has for the subject. Thus to conserve art and nature is something morally owed to contemplators and not to art and nature themselves. Without people to appreciate them, art and nature would be devoid of intrinsic value, that is, their aesthetic value is neither moral nor absolute. The same holds true for the intrinsic value of the *"Heimat"* - it makes no sense to attribute only instrumental value to what is *part* of your identity - and for the *sacredness* the wise accord to nature.

Before even considering the physiocentric arguments for nature conservation, we are in a position to rule out the first alternative answer to the question we began our inquiry with. The question was: Is nature's value only instrumental value for human beings or does nature also have intrinsic value? We can see now that the first alternative is false because nature has aesthetic intrinsic value, *Heimat* value, and sacredness. The question to be investigated in parts III. and IV. will be whether nature has only these kinds of intrinsic value or, in addition, moral intrinsic value and absolute intrinsic value. It is by now evident that much of the ecoethical debate from the early 1970s up to today has suffered from a *lack of differentiation in the concept of value.* The opposition: "instrumental" versus "intrinsic" value is indeed far too simple, not only

because, as was already argued in part L, three, moral and absolute intrinsic value must be distinguished, but also because, as we came to realize in part IL, there are other types of intrinsic value than moral and absolute intrinsic value. Only on the basis of a *rich typology of values* can we hope to find a satisfactory answer to the basic, ethical question about the value of nature.

The typology we have developed so far includes:

Instrumental Value

The value something has based on its usefulness for achieving another end which is in turn of intrinsic value

In other words: the answer to the question, "why care for x?", refers to the fact that y is a desired end and that x helps to bring y about

Examples: the value of forests for the quality of air and thus the health of human beings; the value of an apple for the pleasant sensation of taste

Intrinsic Value

The value something has in itself

In other words: there is no real answer to the question "why care for x?" ("why care for pleasure?"), other than that x represents what is an ultimate end of a meaningful, good and right human life

Types:

- *Eudaemonic Intrinsic Value* (good life value): passive or active pleasure, pleasure of satisfaction *(hedonistic intrinsic value},* communication, autonomy, aesthetic contemplation *(aesthetic intrinsic value),* identity *(Heimat value), sacredness*

- *Moral Intrinsic Value* (right life value): the intrinsic value the good life of all is accorded within human moral culture

- *Absolute Intrinsic Value:* the intrinsic value something has independently of its value to human beings

Some of the anthropocentric arguments provide reasons both for *conserving and cultivating* nature (IL, one, two, three, and six), while others justify only conservatory measures (IL, four, five, and seven).

That the natural design argument, II., four, is a clear case of a nature conservation argument is due to the special value it accords to *wilderness* as opposed to cultivated nature. Wilderness can only be conserved. If it is cultivated, it loses its status as wilderness and, hence, its special value. The question why we find wilderness so attractive is a fascinating one, and three reasons for the special appeal of the wilderness are offered: it has a form of its own and relieves us from feeling aesthetic responsibility (IL, four); it does not bear any marks of human instrumental activity and invites aesthetic contemplation (IL, three); and it is sublime (IL, three).

Part III: A Hermaphroditic Argument for the Value of Nature

One: The Holistic Argument

(Deep ecology: Arne Naess [1973; 1979; 1986; 1989], George Sessions [1981], Bill Devall / George Sessions [1985], Warwick Fox [1990, esp. chs. 7 and 8], Freya Mathews [1988; 1991]; *Ecqfeminism:* Vai Plumwood [1986; 1991; 1993], Karen J. Warren [1990; 1991], Carolyn Merchant [1980], Maria Mies [1987], Maria Mies / Vandana Shiva [1993], Marti Kheel [1985], Jim Cheney [1987]; *Land ethic:* J. Baird Callicott [1980; 1986; 1987]; Stephen R.L. Clark [1983; 1987], Holmes Rolston [1975; 1988], Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich [1979; 1984; 1990, esp. ch. 4; 1995], Robert Spaemann [1989, esp. pp. 155-156], Andrew Brennan [1986], Manon Andreas-Grisebach [1991])

1. Classical Thoughts

Whoever sees the same Reality in all things, who sees himself in all creatures and all creatures as in himself he is the man who is truly integrated in yoga. *(The Bhagavad Gita,* 1988, p. 94)

I was sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling in and feeling the rhythm of my breathing, when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic cosmic dance. Being a physicist, I knew that the sand, rocks, water, and air around me were made of vibrating molecules and atoms, and that these consisted of particles which interacted with one another by creating and destroying other particles. I knew also that the earth's atmosphere was continually bombarded by showers of "cosmic rays," particles of high energy undergoing multiple collisions as they penetrated the air. All this was familiar to me from my research in high- energy physics, but until that moment I had only experienced it through graphs, diagrams, and mathematical theories. As I sat on that beach my former experiences came to life; I "saw" cascades of energy coming down from outer space, in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses; I "saw" the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in this cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and I "heard" its sound. (Fritjof Capra, 1988, p. 33)

A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise. (Aldo Leopold, 1949, p. 217)

2. The Argument

1. At the basis of all our environmental problems and all our attempts to solve these problems lies a *false ontology.* Nature is opposed to humanity as if nature and humanity were two separate entities. *Opposing* humanity to nature is only one instance of this false ontological thinking. Other instances are opposing subject to object, mind to body, or man to woman. The roots of dualistic thinking may be found in Christianity, Patriarchy, and Cartesian philosophy.

2. To overcome dualistic thinking, a new *holistic ontology* must be developed. For this project we can draw on various sources: mystic experience, feminine thinking, systems thinking, as in ecology, and the new thought-paradigms in quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity.

3. According to the new holistic ontology, humanity is not opposed to nature, but part of nature. We are nothing but an element in the deeply integrated system of nature, a knot in the biotic web, a dancer in the cosmic dance of energy, a member of the natural community; or, to move beyond this still too dualistic or atomistic language, we are one with nature.

4. There can be no good life for human beings at the cost of the good of the whole system. Human self-realization goes hand in hand with the self-realization of the whole.

5. Thus, in order to ensure our own good, we must care for the good of the whole. Human beings must finally recognize that beyond a narrowly-defined human good, the good of the whole has intrinsic value.

3. General Comments

The holistic argument is the most popular argument outside professional philosophy for the intrinsic value of nature. Enter any Deep Ecologist, New Age esoteric, or ecofeminist group of nature activists, and you will probably hear a variation on the following:

What irritates me about all the official environmental crisis blah-blah is that nobody seems to realize that humanity is not the manager of a resource called "nature" but is itself part of the deeply integrated system of nature. What is good for the system, is good for humanity and vice versa. It is because people are still caught up in male, Western, dichotomous thinking that they do not understand this simple truth. Everything is related to everything. All is fundamentally one. Humanity is nothing but the ear or the nose, or whatever of the huge organism Gaia. Strengthen the organism and you strengthen the ear. Damage the ear and you damage the whole organism. What we need is not a new ethics of managing nature, but a new ontology, a new world-view.

Inside professional philosophy, it is often felt that the holistic "argument" is too confused to be taken seriously. Are not its philosophical flaws obvious? Is it worthwhile for professional philosophers to criticize this untidy mishmash?

Here we will expose some of the philosophical mistakes of this popular argument, for firstly, it is deplorable that the energy of more and more people who started as radical critics of patriarchal power relations and the exploitative logic of capitalism is absorbed by the exploration of the feeling of being one with nature and experimenting with such life-styles. Engaged practical professional philosophy should not simply stand by and let this de-politicization happen. Secondly, the image of professional philosophy is tarnished when something like the holistic argument poses as "philosophy" in the popular media. And thirdly, there are well- regarded professional philosophers, like Arne Naess in Norway and Klaus Micheal Meyer-Abich in Germany, who formulate more philosophically sound versions of the holistic argument.

The main problem with the holistic argument is that the claim that humanity is part of nature is notoriously unclear. It can mean quite a number of different things, some of which make sense while others are absurd or even dangerous. One of the reasons why this argument is so popular may be just this ambiguity. Who would object to the claim that humanity is part of nature?

We differentiate between three conceptions of this claim. The first and most radical is ontological identity. The second admits ontological difference, but holds that the good life of humanity cannot be had without furthering the good of the whole of nature. The vision of nature here is that of a huge symphony orchestra. The third, and most moderate interpretation, regards only certain natural conditions as necessary for the good life of human beings. We argue that only the last interpretation is correct. This interpretation does, however, not lead to any new intrinsic value claims than those considered in part II.

1. The Ontological Identity Thesis

The ontological identity thesis claims that humanity is one with nature. If this is to mean that there is *no difference* between one person or all people taken together, and a natural being or thing, or all of nature taken together, then the claim is absurd. Human beings have two legs while elephants have four. Human beings have feelings while a tree presumably has none. Human beings act and are usually held responsible for their actions while a stone is not held responsible if it falls and kills a person. Someone who is unwilling or unable to grasp these and similar distinctions will be unable to cope with life. This person might try to convince a virus to leave his or her body, while trying to get rid of an annoying person by controlling him or her with heavy drugs.

As such an absurdity cannot be what is intended with the ontological identity thesis, we should search for a different reading. In a second understanding, the holistic argument objects not to differences or distinctions between people and nature as such, but only to *dichotomizing or opposing* one to the other. A dichotomy differs from a distinction in that a distinction allows for similarities, interdependencies, as well as stages of transition between the phenomena in question, whereas a dichotomy sees only difference. Opposing humanity to nature is wrong, the holist holds, because there are multiple similarities, interdependencies, and stages of transition between them. If this is the holist's claim, it is no doubt right. The human stomach, for example, is quite

similar to the stomach of a chimpanzee or a dog. All three stomachs function according to the same principles. They are all three the product of evolution. What holds true for the human stomach, holds true for the whole of the human body, including the brain. As to the *interdependencies,* it is obvious that human beings depend on the well-functioning of the body as well as on external natural conditions for health and the ability to think and act. If we did not have brains and enough oxygen, we would not be able to think or act. And, as is evident from ecological problems caused by humankind, like the destruction of forests, the well-functioning of natural beings and ecosystems is also dependent on what people do or rather on what they do not do, pollute the atmosphere with auto exhaust, for example. According to what you take to be the distinguishing mark of humanity, be it language, the ability to act, or intelligence, you will always find that there are beginnings of this in the animal world. There is no clear dividing point, but many *stages of transition* between nonhuman animals and human animals.

But who would want to dispute all that? If the holist's objection is indeed that there are not only differences, but also similarities, interdependencies, and stages of transition between human beings and nature, the enemy is only a phantom.

Moreover, expressing this point in terms of ontological oneness is misleading. Where there is difference, there is no ontological oneness, but at most these similarities, dependencies, and stages of transition.

Thus it seems that the holist must be after something else. The point may be that while, on a superficial, everyday level, there are differences between human beings and nature, on a deeper, more fundamental level there is unity: In everything which exists, be it a person or a stone, the same universal power, will, or spirit is active. Or to paint a different picture, everything which exists is a microcosm which mirrors and so contains in itself the macrocosm. What befalls one being befalls the whole, and what befalls the whole befalls each individual. It is only in *appearance* that humanity is different from nature, in *essence* we are one with nature.

As every trained philosopher knows, it is important to distinguish between two conceptions of "essence." According to the first one, found in Aristotle among others, the essence of a being or thing is the total of the characteristics which necessarily hold for the being or thing to be what it is. It is part of the essence of a tree, in this sense, to grow upward and not downward. The opposite of essential qualities are accidental qualities. "Essence" in the second sense, found in Plato and Francis Bacon, is opposed to "appearance." The essence of a being or thing is what the being or thing *really* is. Seen from outside, we may note only what the being or thing appears to be. Inside, however, lies its hidden essence.

Talk of "essence" in the second sense is usually indicative of *bad metaphysics.* The way to deal with claims about the hidden essence of something is to insist on evidence which is *accessible to all* who are knowledgeable and willing to consider the claim. Where generally accessible evidence can be provided, there is no longer any need for the "hidden inside," "real" vocabulary. What seemed to be an x at first, is found to be a

y upon closer investigation. Where only esoteric "evidence" can be given, claims about a hidden essence should be regarded as on a par with the fairy-tales we tell children. In fairy-tales, trees sometimes have spirits who talk and venture upon various things. There is nothing wrong with anthropomorphizing trees in fairy-tales, but when a fairy-tale world is proposed as a serious alternative to the time-tested orientations of our life-world and of science, things start to go wrong. A grown-up who refuses to lead a normal life because of what the tree spirits have said needs to be given a "talking-to."

Without further argument, the claim that in essence we are all one with nature, instances of a universal will or spirit, may be regarded as a fairy-tale. It is at odds with our usual understanding of ourselves and of nature. In the physiocentric arguments to come, we will question this understanding by inquiring into the criteria for ascribing will, spirit, and feeling to others. To anticipate the outcome of this inquiry, the most we can say is that many animals are sentient and that some animals even have a will. Hence, it is bad metaphysics to see a universal will active in all of nature. It is neither the essence of nature nor the essence of humanity to be an instance of such a universal will. Rather, it is an important element of the essence of humanity and some higher animals that they have a will, that they can act freely, while it is an important element of the essence of much else in nature that it functions according to causal principles.

There is an argument, popular with authors inspired by Critical Theory, to the effect that *anthropocentrism is inconsistent,* which relies on the ontological identity thesis and is therefore equally unacceptable (for "Critical Theory and nature" see Schmid Noerr, 1990). Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich, for example, writes:

The inconsistency in the anthropocentric view of life lies in the fact that the reduction of the natural world *(Mitwelt)* to material or to a sack full of resources goes hand in hand with a reduced view of human beings. In this view of the world, human beings appear other than that the world view says. They in no way play the central role in it which they are promised...

For Marx as well as for Dilthey and the other Caballeros del Espiritu to the same extent, securing human beings their humanness amounts to our escaping from a nature that, because we have denied it in our self-understanding, has been degraded to a mere resource. We act as if we did not belong to it. However, the world *(Mitwelt)* which has been subdued to a resource asks us in return how we want to deal with our own belonging to nature. Are not human beings just as much flesh and blood as the rest of the biosphere, are they not subjected to the same laws as it is, and do we not even like to remember this when we are sick? Medications work on biophysical systems and only on these according to the laws of nature. (1984, p. 76 and p. 81, my translation)

The main steps of the inconsistency argument are as follows: 1. For anthropocentrism, humanity is the master of the universe, and modem science is the most important support of humanity's regime over nature. 2. Modem science has mechanized nature, so everything in nature is said to function like a machine. 3. Yet humanity is part of nature. 4. According to modem science, humanity must also be understood as functioning like a machine. 5. If humanity is nothing but a machine it cannot be the master of

nature. 6. Anthropocentrism, therefore, is inconsistent, and physiocentrism is a better alternative.

If step 3 is not understood as meaning identity in essence, the inconsistency does not follow. For you can agree that human beings are part of nature, while insisting on essential differences between them and nature, the difference between human self-determination and nature's determination by causal laws. A mechanical view of nature can incorporate the view of humanity as free agent and master of nature.

The inconsistency argument confuses what is only a danger with a logical necessity. With the rise of modem science there has always been the danger that humanity and society might be conceptualized after, and treated according to, the same machine-model as nature. The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Max

Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (1972) and Martin Heidegger's philosophy of technics (1977) are but two of the many famous attacks on this naturalistic or scientistic tendency. But naturalistic reductionism is best overcome by pointing out the essential differences between the human world of freedom and the natural world of necessity, not by offering yet again a model of nature which is untenable. Both naturalizing humanity and spiritualizing nature must be avoided.

4. The Harmony of Good Lives Thesis

The second more moderate reading that humanity is part of or one with nature admits ontological difference but holds that the good life of human beings depends on the good of nature: Whoever tries to further the good life of human beings at the cost of the good of nature makes a mistake. Nature is like a huge symphony orchestra. The good of the clarinets or the violas lies in contributing their share to the good of the whole. If the clarinets or the violas set out to pursue their "good" at the cost of the whole, by leading where they should only accompany, the result would be bad, not only for the whole, but also for them.

Two objections to this position, familiar also under the term of "ecocompatibilism" (Aiken, 1984), should be noted. The first objects to the idea of nature as a whole having a *good.* Even on a minimal, only functional understanding of this expression (see part IV., two, 4. and 5. below), nature as a whole does not seem to have a good in the way that cars or computers do. The good of cars lies in their transporting us, that of personal computers lies in their processing our texts. What is the functional good of nature? We would like to believe that it is to further existence, to provide stability, the maintenance and reproduction of life in form and variety. But what about natural catastrophes like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, glacial epochs, and whatever caused the extinction of the dinosaurs? We can only *hope* that nature is not a self-destructive mechanism. While the functional terminology is suitable to describe the processes of growth and reproduction in individual animals or plants, the functioning of their parts

or organs, and the processes which go on in ecosystems, in talking about nature as a whole, for lack of evidence, we had better stick to the language of causation.

The second more powerful point concerns the *false harmony* inherent in the idea of nature as a "community," a "deeply integrated system," a "cosmic dance," or a symphony orchestra. In the performance of a symphony, the clarinets do not need to chase, hurt, eat, or destroy the violas to play their part. The number and identity of instruments and players before and after the symphony is usually the same, whereas in the "natural symphony" at least 90% of the species that have ever existed on earth have gone extinct and new species have evolved. Nature is not a harmonious whole, where the good of all individuals fits wonderfully together. Rather, nature is often "cruel" and destructive. The survival of human beings is threatened by dangerous viruses and natural catastrophes like floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. People cultivate and destroy nature to gain room for houses, schools, hospitals, and theaters. If we are to share the lot of 90% of the earth's species, we will become extinct at some time in the future. To claim, in the face of all this, that the survival and the good life of humanity is best furthered by promoting the good of nature is dangerous nonsense. If a doctrine which uncompromisingly subjects the good of individuals to the good of a community, by making the individuals believe that their real good lies in the good of the community, is termed "fascist," the ecocompatibilist doctrine that the good life of humanity is best achieved by furthering the good of nature may be termed *"ecofascist"* (Regan, 1983, p. 396; for attempts to defend holism against this charge see Clark, 1987; Johnson, 1991, pp. 175-178).

The charge of ecofascism applies, for example, to the *land ethic.* Callicott (1987) claims that natural selection selects universally altruistic sentiments, where "universally" today comes to include "the land." The main problem with Callicott's and in fact all evolutionary approaches to ethics is that human beings are free to ask whether or not they want to secure reproductive success for themselves, their group, their species, or the land. The land ethic submits the good of individual human beings and animals to what furthers the reproductive success of the whole: the land.

Yet, we do not wish to deny that there are some cases where furthering the good life of a natural being, a dog, for example, means to further the good life of a human being. A child may partake in the dog's joys and sorrows; its happiness may depend on the dog's happiness. To take delight in the happiness of another is part of or at least an important option for a good human life. Whoever truly loves another accords the good life of the other intrinsic value. Yet, as we do not love AIDS viruses and cockroaches - and there is absolutely no reason why we should love them - nothing follows in terms of intrinsic value for all of nature. You cannot argue for the intrinsic value of all of nature in the manner Robert Spaemann does:

The sadness that overcomes us when we hear that, on a foreign continent, hundreds of butterfly species are going extinct has nothing to do with a loss in profit. It does not even have to do with a decrease in aesthetic enjoyment, as we probably would not ever have been able to see them. And nevertheless, we have become poorer because of

their disappearance, as our being fulfils itself in relationship to this reality, which we ourselves are not. *Delectatio in felicitate alterius* - this Leibnizian formula does away with *(hebt auj)* the opposition between anthropocentrism and love of nature "for its own sake." To love something for its own sake: it is exactly this, which is the specific means of human self-realization. (1989, pp. 155-156, my translation; see also Partridge, 1984)

5. The Dependency Thesis

The most moderate interpretation draws attention to the fact that humanity is part of nature in order to warn us not to underrate the connection between the flourishing of humanity and natural conditions. In radically interfering with nature by industrializing, there is a great danger of harming human beings. The depletion of the ozone layer, the pollution of the air, the water, and the soil, radioactive waste, all pose serious risks to human health. But dependency on natural conditions is not restricted to the satisfaction of humanity's *basic needs* (IL, one). In order to find *aisthetic or sensual delight* (IL, two), to engage in the practice of *aesthetic contemplation* (IL, three), to feel relieved of *aesthetic responsibility* (IL, four), or to feel at *home* in the world (IL, five), people depend on nature. Of cultures or of individuals who do not offend against these and other natural conditions, we could say that they act or live *"in agreement with"* or *"in harmony with "* nature or that they *"follow nature."*

The anthropocentric arguments listed under part II. argue for the instrumental value of nature, for its aesthetic intrinsic value (IL, three), for its *Heimat* value (IL, five), and for its sacredness in a nontranscendent sense (IL, seven). The holistic argument aims at intrinsic value in a different sense. After having rejected the ontological identity thesis and the harmonistic idea of nature, we are left with the moderate understanding of humanity as a part of nature. On the basis of this last understanding, no intrinsic value claim for nature other than the aesthetic, the *Heimat,* and the sacredness claims can be justified. The holistic argument, thus, fails.

Two: Summary of Part III.

The holistic argument asserts the intrinsic value of nature on the ground that the good of humanity cannot be had at the cost of the good of nature, because humanity is part of or one with nature. Three interpretations of this claim are distinguished: first, the ontological identity thesis is rejected for various reasons, notably the charge of faulty metaphysics; second, the symphony orchestra interpretation is criticized for its false harmonism; third, the dependency interpretation is accepted, but it amounts to the anthropocentric insight into the dependency of humanity on certain natural conditions. The holistic argument does not establish a new intrinsic value for nature.

Part IV.: Five Physiocentric Arguments for the Value of Nature

One: The Pathocentric Argument

(Peter Singer [1975; 1976; 1979, ch. 3], Tom Regan [1983; 1986], Ursula Wolf [1988; 1990], Steve F. Sapontzis [1987], Stephen R.L. Clark [1977; 1979], Bernard E. Rollin [1981], Mary Midgley [1984], Gunther Patzig [1987], Dieter Bimbacher [1980; 1991], Robert Spaemann [1984], Donald VanDeVeer [1979], Rosemary Rodd [1990], Jean-Claude Wolf [1992]; Joel Feinberg [1974])

1. Classical Thoughts

The day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny. The French have already discovered that the blackness of the skin is no reason why a human being should be abandoned without redress to the caprice of a tormentor. It may one day come to be recognized that the number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the os sacrum, are reasons equally insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the same fate. What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or perhaps the faculty of discourse? But a frill-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week, or even a month, old. But suppose they were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they reason? nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer? (Jeremy Bentham, .1970, p. 283)

2. The Argument

1. The intersubjective criteria for the attribution of sensations and feelings to other human beings can be applied to animals. In trembling, groaning, and struggling to escape the source of pain, animals demonstrate that they experience sensations like pain. Apart from such physical sensations, mental sensations or feelings like fear, expectation, as well as boredom can also be attributed to some animals.

Where an animal behaves just like a human being in pain, philosophical doubts such as those Rene Descartes raised about whether or not the animal is really in pain - it could after all be a machine with a special trembling and groaning program - are out of place. Whoever is willing to attribute sensations to other human beings on the basis of their behavior - they could also be machines which differ from animals only in

having a language program - must not pose as a philosophical skeptic with regard to animals.

2. Sensations and feelings differ from perceptions in that sensations and feelings always include an *evaluative element.*

As we argued before (in section IL, two, 5.), the feeling of cozy warmth, for example, which strikes you on entering a warm bar from the cold outdoors, does not consist of two separate acts: 1. the detached perception of your bodily state, and 2. the subsequent evaluation of this state as pleasurable. Rather, in sensing the warmth, you simultaneously evaluate it. The evaluation does not date back to a decision in the past, but belongs, where it is not the product of socialization, to the "nature" of human beings. To a large extent, the evaluation is not in your power. You usually do not succeed in experiencing a shrill noise, the stench of rotten eggs, oppressive heat, or a splitting headache as pleasant.

We can say of all sentient life that it has a subjective quality. Positive sensations enhance, negative sensations impair our enjoyment of life. In a broad sense of *"interest,"* sentient beings have an interest in x if x enhances their *subjective good life.* The statement that an animal which feels pain has an interest in ending the pain, is then a conceptual truth.

3. What we mean when we say that someone lives his or her life morally, we could put in the following formula: someone lives morally if he or she respects the good life of all human beings.

4. But animals also have a good life, at least in the restricted sense of well-being, which could be respected morally. To exclude animals from the moral universe because they are not members of the human species is as arbitrary and thus as unjustifiable as the exclusion of blacks on account of their race or the exclusion of women on account of their sex. Anthropocentrism or human *speciesism* is as immoral as racism or sexism.

5. Therefore, a person should be said to live morally only if he or she respects the good lives of human beings and animals.

In other words, the good lives of animals have moral intrinsic value, they must be respected for their own sakes and not only for the sake of human interests. We

have moral duties toward as well as with regard to animals. Animals belong to the moral universe.

3. Practical Consequences: The Case of Animal Experimentation

The practical consequences following from the pathocentric argument depend to some extent on whether the moral formula in step 3 is understood according to utilitarianism or Kantianism or the ethics of compassion or yet some other moral theory. We have to limit ourselves here to the task of exploring the practical consequences

which follow from a substantial-Kantian reading (see part I., two, 6.). According to this reading, moral respect for the well-being of animals means that experimenting on animals or raising animals for food is morally justifiable only if it does not infringe on, but furthers the basic good lives of animals, that is, if it does not involve severe or constant bodily pain, considerable fear, continual isolation, extreme restrictions of movement and does involve a fair amount of good food, emotional contact with partners or offspring. (This general list of what a basically good animal life includes must, of course, be worked out by biologists for each and every animal species. One cannot "lump" all animals together.)

By the moral standards set by the pathocentric argument, much of what goes on in the laboratories of cosmetic and medical research institutions, on factory farms, on animal transports, in slaughterhouses, on rodeos, and hunting trips is deeply immoral.

We choose one of these issues, *animal experimentation,* and investigate it in some detail. To begin with, a couple of fairly obvious points should be made clear: Experiments on animals which infringe on their basic well-being are morally condemnable

1. if they do not serve basic human interests but only *luxury interests,* as is the case with cosmetics, or only career interests, as happens occasionally in medical research institutions, or only economic interests, as is arguably the case in many of the weapons and pharmaceutical industries;

2. if they concern *self-inflicted diseases* as those which result from smoking; whoever knowingly risks his or her health must not expect others to sacrifice their basic good lives to help him or her out;

3. if they could easily be avoided by a shift in emphasis to *preventive medicine* both in medical research and in patient education and treatment;

4. if the same ends could be reached by *alternative research methods,* such as computer simulation or experiments with cellular tissue;

5. if they need not involve as much suffering as they in fact do because personnel are not trained well enough, are careless, or because the animals do not receive painkillers or are badly housed.

We now turn to the philosophically more difficult question of whether experiments on animals, which infringe on the animals' basic well-being but serve to cure and save human patients from terrible diseases and death, are morally justifiable. Our answer must be "no." We do not and certainly should not expect human beings to sacrifice elements of their basic good lives in order to improve the situation of the severely and terminally ill. How could we then morally allow animals to suffer this fate?

This is not to say that if human beings volunteer for painful or risky medical research, 1. out of sheer self-interest - a terminally ill AIDS or multiple sclerosis patient may do that; 2. out of love for their ill partners, children, sisters, brothers, or friends; or 3. out of a heroic concern for the fate of ill people, they should be withheld for moral reasons (as they are today in Germany). Instead, the point is that nothing of this kind can be expected or demanded of anybody.

Medical experiments which do *not* infringe on the basic good life of animals or human beings can be morally justifiable. For example, donating blood on a regular basis could be expected of anybody. Even if it would be as unproblematic to use animal blood for human medical purposes as it is with other "parts" of animal bodies, there would still be a moral argument for using human blood instead. Human beings are subject to moral imperatives to help others who need help whereas animals are not. Moreover, for many human beings moral respect is part of their happy life. They *enjoy* helping others. It makes them feel good. Animals who are not moral subjects and who do not understand the purpose of the experiments they are subjected to, cannot feel that way. For them, the negative elements involved in "donating" blood are not compensated by some positive moral element (Teutsch, 1979).

In summary, the position on animal experimentation advocated here is *not absolutionist.* Some animal experiments can be morally justified. But it cannot be hidden that the position is rather radical. It requires our doing without some new medical drugs and operating techniques which could cure human illness and prevent human deaths. What we have said about medical experimentation on human beings and what we will say about the painless killing of animals and the status of early human life in section IV., three partly mitigates this moral sacrifice. Yet the sacrifice is still a large one.

4. The Question of Criteria for the Attribution of Sensations and Feelings

As it is formulated above, the pathocentric argument only refers to animals. There are, however, some ethical nature theorists who claim that plants, or even nature as a whole, also have sentience (Sprigge, 1984; 1987). The world view of the Native Americans is sometimes used as an example for the last position:

You ask me to plow the ground. Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's breast? Then when I die she will not take me to her bosom to rest.

You ask me to dig for stone. Shall I dig under her skin for her bones? Then when I die I cannot enter her body to be bom again.

You ask me to cut grass and make hay and sell it and be rich like white men. But how dare I cut off my mother's hair? (Smohalla, 1972, p. 56)

If we insist, as we should, on behavioral manifestations of all sensations, it is evident that nature on the whole does not fulfill the criteria for the attribution to it of any physical or mental sensations. The farmer who ploughs the ground or the fisher who rows his or her boat is not confronted with a groaning, trembling, or repulsing ground or sea. The claim that either feels pain is, thus, false.

When we turn to plants, the questions become more difficult. Although everyday experience tells us that plants are not sentient, it cannot be ruled out that more subtle

biological studies may reveal that, at least, some plants have sensations as was claimed in the famous book *The Secret Life of Plants* (Tompkins/ Bird, 1974; for a criticism cf. Galston / Slayman, 1979). This issue as well as the issue of where exactly bodily and mental sentience begins in the animal world - Do fish or insects feel pain? Can a mouse be bored? - are not philosophical issues. It is up to biologists to discover this. Philosophers would extend themselves beyond the boundaries of their training if they tried to answer these questions.

We should briefly note three popular objections to our criterial approach to sentience in nature.

A. The Fallibility Objection

But what if the biologists make mistakes, they ask. What if they only think fish feel no pain and therefore fishing is unproblematic, while in reality fishing is torture? Had not we better start from the assumption that all animals (and all plants) are sentient?

The problem with this objection is that due to human fallibility it is possible to add the comment, "But maybe they are mistaken," to any human claim to knowledge. In spite of this possibility, we usually do not withhold the label "true" from well-justified claims or let "maybe" orient our actions. Only where there is evidence which suggests that a claim to knowledge is not well-founded - and this again is up to biological experts to discover - should we consider precautions for our actions.

B. The Feeling Objection

But what if I just feel that my philodendron is happy or unhappy or is in pain, someone may ask.

Feelings are no reliable guide to knowledge. Most people have at one time or another projected their own feelings of joy or depression on others only to later learn they were wrong. To avoid false projections, to separate reality from fantasy, we need intersubjective criteria.

C. The Anti-Anthropocentric Objection

But what, it may be asked, if all animals and plants feel pain, but we cannot find out that they do, because their ways of feeling or expressing pain are so different from human ways? Is it not anthropocentric to conclude from the fact that some animals and all plants do not exhibit *human* pain behavior that they do not feel pain at all? Why let human criteria be the measure of all things?

What no human being can ever learn can play no role in our attempt to understand the world and to orient ourselves in it. The only effect such speculations have is to distract us from pressing questions such as our responsibilities to animals and the rest of nature.

Where our criteria for a concept, be it the concept of "a house," "big," or "pain," do not apply to an object, we say that the object is not a house, not big, or not in pain. Whoever speculates that an object - which according to our criteria is not a house but a swimming pool - is actually just a different kind of house, could speculate that anything may still be something else. This would mean opening the door to total chaos.

But what if someone proposed a list of new intersubjectively accessible criteria x and y for this new concept of "a house," so that not anything may be a house any more, but only those things which satisfy the new criteria?

If the new criteria x and y (filled with water, usually blue) do not have the remotest resemblance to our standard criteria for "a house," we should refuse to call a thing which features x and y "a house."

Similarly, considering the concept of "pain," an object which satisfies a new set of criteria, none of which has the remotest resemblance to any criterion on our standard list, does not have a different way of feeling or expressing pain, but does not feel or express pain at all. A swimming pool is not a different kind of house, but simply not a house. Similarly, the phenomenon characterized by the new list is not a different kind of pain, but not pain. If there is as yet no word for it, it is better to invent a new word, "bim," than to use the word "pain." While it matters morally whether or not a being is in pain, it is not of obvious moral relevance whether or not a being is in "bim."

In trying to understand the world, we can only employ our human concepts and criteria. What no human being can ascertain has no part to play. The human biological make-up and the state of our cultural development give rise to our picture of the world. This picture is anthropocentric in a general epistemic or conceptual sense. Yet general epistemic anthropocentrism is not a bad thing, as the objection insinuates. On the contrary, we cannot go beyond it, if we want to continue our attempt to understand the world and to orient ourselves within it. General epistemic anthropocentrism is the necessary condition of any human knowledge about the world.

This is not to say that we should not always be ready to refine our standard lists of criteria for concepts. It is sometimes objected, that the reason we do not ascribe sentience to insects is simply that they are too small for us to see their faces and to read them. Or, the reason we do not ascribe sentience to plants is simply that they move too slowly for us to realize that they are moving at all. Filmed with a time accelerator we would, it is claimed, easily recognize familiar patterns of behavior. If these claims were substantiated, we should revise our standard list. But a revised list is still a human list, a list of criteria identifiable by humans.

In our discussion of anthropocentrism in part I., three, we distinguished between extensional and epistemic anthropocentrism, defining extensional anthropocentrism as the position that only the good life of human beings has moral intrinsic value. The pathocentric argument asserts that extensional anthropocentrism must be overcome, because the well-being of animals has moral intrinsic value as well. Extensional anthropocentrism is to be replaced by extensional *pathocentrism.*

As we have just seen, the pathocentric argument is, however, epistemically anthropocentric, that is, it takes the human point of view as constitutive for human judgements. To be more precise, we must (as we did in I., three) differentiate between *three versions of epistemic anthropocentrism:* general epistemic anthropocentrism, epistemic value anthropocentrism, and epistemic moral value anthropocentrism. Following our argument above regarding concepts and criteria, *general epistemic anthropocentrism* is

correct. Our picture of the world is a human picture in the sense that the concepts and the criteria we employ to understand the world must be accessible to human beings.

But what about *epistemic value anthropocentrism?* The pathocentric argument holds that the life of sentient animals has a subjective quality, that, in other words, sentient animals are *hedonistic valuers.* Thus, it is not true that all values come into the world with human valuers. Epistemic value anthropocentrism must be rejected.

In the last conception of epistemic anthropocentrism, the pathocentric argument is still anthropocentric. It rests on *epistemic moral value anthropocentrism* as it follows the "extensionalist strategy" and not the "absolute strategy." It takes the human moral point of view for granted and argues that, properly understood, this point of view requires that we extend moral respect to animals.

We now address six objections to the pathocentric argument.

5. The No Language, No Interests, No Rights Objection

The second step of the pathocentric argument introduces a broad notion of "interest": a being has an interest in x if x enhances its good life. Equipped with this broadly-defined notion, it is easy to combat an objection raised most famously by Raymond G. Frey (1979; 1980). The objection is as follows:

Animals may be credited with positive and negative sensations, but they lack interests and thus moral rights. For interests presuppose language and animals lack language. Whoever has an interest must be able to make propositions concerning present and possible future states, for example, "I am presently in state v," "I could be in state x," "state x is more pleasant than state v," "I therefore wish to be in state x." Animals, lacking language, cannot make such propositions. Morality is concerned with conflicting interests. Since animals have no interests, they drop out of the picture. They cannot have moral rights.

This objection relies upon a narrow conception of "interest." But why should this narrow intellectualist conception be relevant for moral respect? Once we employ an alternative, more broadly-defined notion of "interest," the objection stands in need of further justification (Regan, 1983, ch. 3.2; Sapontzis, 1987, part IL, ch. 7; Johnson, 1991, ch. 3, pp. 75-96). (We leave the additional problem of animals and thought and language aside [Davidson, 1982; Malcolm, 1972; Stich, 1979; Regan, 1983, ch. 2]. Considering the successes in teaching sign language to primates [Eckholm, 1976], the claim that all animals lack language and thought is probably mistaken.)

6. The Contractualist Objection

It is argued: If you understand the moral formula in step 3 of the pathocentric argument (moral respect equals respect for the good life of all human beings) according to utilitarianism or the ethics of compassion, you encounter no difficulty including animals in the moral universe. It is not by chance that two of the first animal ethicists were the utilitarian, Jeremy Bentham, and the proponent of the ethics of compassion, Arthur Schopenhauer. But these two moral theories are problematic. Only contractualism is justifiable and following the contractualist understanding of the moral formula the pathocentric argument is invalid. According to contractualist moral theory, moral norms are conceived as the outcome of an implicit contract of more or less self-interested subjects. People form and abide by a contract with others, so they can thereby gain advantages, security, for example, for themselves. As animals cannot be parties to a contract, they have no moral standing. The moral formula, therefore, applies only to the good life of those who are parties to a contract. The well-being of animals is covered only indirectly via the contracting parties' interests in the well-being of some animals.

The contractualist objection as well as the objection to come, the Kantian objection, lead directly into the heart of theoretical moral philosophy. Here we can only note a couple points. The first and main objection against contractualism (at least in the basic, nonideal version) is that contractualism is not a moral theory at all. It is nothing but a theory of cooperation grounded in self-interest. For moral concern, overcoming self-interest is obligatory. The good life of others must be accorded intrinsic value which is not reducible to instrumental value. Contractualism reduces the value of others to instrumental value, thus missing the central tenet of our moral culture.

The second objection draws attention to the fact that contractualism cannot account for our moral intuitions concerning human beings who are temporarily or permanently unable to enter into contracts, the so-called human marginal cases (fetuses, babies, the severely ill, the mentally handicapped, the insane, the senile), the dead, and future generations. Should such beings be at the mercy of the interests others may have or may not have in their good life (Tugendhat, 1993, pp. 72-77)?

7. The Kantian Objection

The Kantian objection parallels the contractualist objection, this time it is Kantian moral theory which is the more fitting moral theory, not contractualism. Kantians like Jurgen Habermas (1982, pp. 238-250; 1991, pp. 219-226), Karl-Otto Apel (1992), and Ernst Tugendhat (1993, ch. 9; 1997) claim: According to Kantianism a moral norm is justified if everyone can autonomously want it as a universal law or, in the modem variant of discourse ethics, everyone affected can assent to it in a free discourse (principle D: "only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with

the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse" [Habermas, 1983, p. 103, my translation]). As animals are neither autonomous nor discursive beings, concern for their good falls outside the realm of morality and belongs to the realm of feelings like compassion. These feelings (both natural as well as morally cultivated in order to create harmony between the rational demands of the categorical imperative and the emotional side of human beings) explain why the pathocentric argument is found tempting by some people. Yet the point is that the categorical imperative does not *demand* that we include animals. There is no rational justification for pathocentrism.

The Kantian objection advances a certain understanding of Kantian ethics which is not the only interpretation available, although it must be conceded that Kant himself - considering, for example, his remarks about animals (see IL, six above) - may have shared, at least in part, this understanding (Broadie / Pybus, 1974; Hayward, 1994). We answer the Kantian objection by advocating a different version of Kantian ethics and by accusing the proponents of the Kantian objection of confusing various levels of universality: 1. the universality of performative consensus versus the universality of insight (cognitive consensus); 2. the universality of insight versus the universality of the material of insight; and 3. the universality of moral duty versus the universality of the material of moral duty. (For more on "discourse ethics and nature" see Whitebook, 1979; Dryzek, 1990; Eckersley, 1990; Kettner, 1992; 1995; Ott, 1993, part 1; 1995; Seel, 1995, pp. 256-320; Vogel, 1996, ch. 6; Krebs, 1997a; on Tugendhat see Krebs, 1997b.)

A. The Universality of Performative Consensus versus the Universality of Insight (Cognitive Consensus)

A tendency in the discourse-ethical variant of Kantian ethics is to confuse two meanings of "consensus." "Consensus" can refer to either performative consensus *(Einigung)* or cognitive consensus, insight *(Einsicht,* Kambartel, 1993b; 1997, pp. 177-179). If "consensus" is meant to signify performative consensus, discourse ethics comes close to contractualism and misunderstands morality as a question of compromising under certain ideal conditions. With this misunderstanding, the pathocentric argument cannot be engaged. Yet if "consensus" is meant to refer to insight, there is place for the pathocentric argument. We will sketch the general distinction between "performative consensus" and "insight" and claim that Kantian morality should be understood in terms of insight.

An example of a *performative consensus* is when feminist philosophy students come to an agreement with the faculty on a compromise to settle a conflict regarding the number of feminist philosophy courses. A consensus is the formation of a common will, which overcomes a conflict. It is performative in character: the action of raising your hand or saying "yes" *constitutes* the consensus like the "I do" in the church seals the marriage. The conditions under which a consensus comes about may or may not be free. Absent people may be represented by appointed delegates.

An example of an *insight* is when a child in a mathematics class suddenly understands why the teacher's calculation of 3 x 5 - 15 is correct while the child's own

calculation is wrong. Other examples of insight are the proposition that the German reunification took place in the year 1989 and the claim that to not suffer from hunger and to have a roof over your head are necessary conditions for a good human life. The action by which we indicate an insight is not performative but expressive in character. An insight is something which happens to us or befalls us; it is an event and not an action, usually prepared by arguments. But arguments do not cause the insight. If "arguments" cause an "insight," we do not have an argument, conviction, or insight at all, but a case of manipulation. Whether or not someone has an insight expresses itself not only in a person assenting to a claim in a discussion, but also in his or her practical conduct. If practical conduct does not correspond to the insight and there are no psychological factors or contrary insights which explain why this is so, we may determine that this person had no real insight. Unlike performative consensus, insights cannot be delegated. I can no more ask you to have an insight for me than I can ask you to bear my pains. While performative consensus binds or is valid only for those who have assented (or were represented), insights hold for everybody. To call something an insight and to claim, at the same time, that this insight is not open to, cannot happen to all willing and capable human beings, is to make a conceptual blunder. Insights are not private or particular or esoteric, but universal. Because of the fallibility of human beings, it is advisable to *control* what you take to be an insight and thus universally accessible in a free discourse with others. The results of such free discourses are, however, not constitutive of insights. As insights cannot be caused, there is no guarantee that all others in such discussions will achieve the insight. They may be inhibited by the presence of someone, have difficulties in concentrating, lack the relevant personal experiences to truly understand what is at stake, or simply fail to have an idea that would solve the problem.

Animals are incapable of giving performative consensus and of having insights. Yet, whereas with a consensus-conception of morality the only critical standard for moral norms is that they be acceptable to everyone capable of consensus - that is, to factory farmers, hunters, medical researchers as well as to vegetarians and opponents of animal experimentation - in an uncoerced discussion; on an insight-conception of morality, the free consensus of all capable of consensus can still be subject to rational criticism. It is here and only here that the pathocentric argument can be engaged. Kantian morality can and should be understood in terms of insight rather than performative consensus.

1. The Universality of Insight versus the Universality of the Material of Insight

Insight is universal in the sense that it carries with it the claim that the insight is open to everyone willing and able to consider it. The universality of insight does not, however, carry over to the material level of what is justified. Universal material statements such as "all swans are white" or "all electrons have a negative charge," can be true although the justifications for them are not open to swans or electrons. What is evident in the case of factual statements is no longer evident when we move to moral statements. Sometimes the fact that moral statements can only be justified to rational subjects, those willing and able to consider justifications, is taken to imply that only

rational subjects can be the objects of moral statements, but this does not follow. Moral statements involve the good life of all. Universality on the material moral level includes all beings capable of having a good life, that is, not only human beings but also sentient animals. The fact that universality on the level of insight does not and cannot include animals is irrelevant for the material moral level.

2. The Universality of Moral Duty versus the Universality of the Material of Moral Duty

It is possible to distinguish between moral statements which spell out what belongs to the basic good life of all and the duty to orient your life toward the basic good life of all. One way Kantians ground moral duty is by refering to the moral form of life, the moral "game," where we are bound by one another to submit to the rules of the game (Kambartel, 1993c). People who offend against these rules must reckon with sanctions. The rules of the moral game hold only for players, not for outsiders. Since animals are not players in this game, we do not owe it to them to adhere to the rules of the game, when they are involved. There are no moral duties toward animals.

Yet, universality on the formal level of duty - which may indeed exclude animals - does not carry over to the material level of what the duty is a duty to. Moral duty is a duty to respect the basic good of all. This includes the good of animals. The good life of animals has moral intrinsic value and is to be furthered for its own sake. This moral duty may hold only -*with regard* to animals and *toward* the players of the moral game. The same would have to be true for some human marginal cases.

If this is so, the usual twofold distinction between an ethics which includes only human beings in the moral universe and a pathocentric ethics which also includes animals is too simple. It should be replaced by a threefold distinction between an anthropocentric ethics which attributes moral intrinsic value only to human beings, a pathocentric ethics which additionally attributes moral intrinsic value to animals, but knows only duties with regard to them, and finally, a pathocentric ethics which also acknowledges duties toward them. Correspondingly, we could distinguish between moral rights for animals in a weak sense and moral rights in a strong sense. "Weak" and "strong" do not reflect differences on the material moral level, but only the distinction on the formal level of duty, between "duty with regard to someone" versus "duty toward someone."

8. The Anti-Egalitarian Objection

Some object that although tfie pathocentric argument's plea for consideration for sentient animals is welcome, the requirement to take the good of sentient animals as seriously as the good of human beings overshoots the mark. The good of human beings is, due to their reflective, rational, and moral capacities, of more value than the good of animals. Pathocentrism is acceptable only in a nonegalitarian, hierarchical version. This is not "speciesism," they explain, because the reason for esteeming the human

good more highly than the good of animals is not biological species membership but the superior reflective, rational, and moral qualities of human beings. There may indeed be, they continue, human beings who lack characteristic qualities of the human species. The good life of these human marginal cases is consequently less valuable than the good life of the so-called normal human beings. Nevertheless, for reasons of political misuse, possible brutalization, and concern for their family and friends, human marginal cases must be treated differently than animals.

In order to come to terms with the anti-egalitarian objection, we have to differentiate between five understandings of and rationales for the claim that the human good is morally more important than the good of animals.

A. The Reflection Objection

It is argued that for human beings comparable bodily pain is, because of their reflective capacities, always worse than for animals since in human beings the pain is multiplied through reflection (Patzig, 1986).

This argument misses the fact that the reflective abilities of human beings can both increase and decrease bodily pain. A person can accept the pain at the dentist's office knowing that it is for a good cause, that it will soon be over, that there are always painkillers if it gets too bad, or that others have bom similar pain patiently. Reflective beings can, to some extent, distance themselves from their pain, and this makes pain easier to bear. Yet it would be false to turn the tables and claim that animal pain is always worse than human pain since animals are entirely at the pain's mercy for they lack the ability to distance themselves from their pain through reflection. To say of an animal, firstly, that it is totally at the pain's mercy and suggest that this is a terrible state to be in is problematic. The experience of being at the mercy of something is dramatic only for beings who can compare this state with a more distanced state. Secondly and more importantly, reflection can make bodily pain worse. The fear that the pain will never go away again, that it indicates a life threatening disease, or the sometimes lifelong traumatic remembrance of the pain can make such experiences horrific (Bimbacher, 1991, p. 312; Singer, 1979, ch. 3; Wolf, 1990, p. 115).

B. The Lack of Dimensions Objection

Some people point out that human good life knows dimensions which are unparalleled in animal good life; they ask which animal has an interest in political participation?

This is correct. But egalitarian pathocentrism would only require that the interests of animals be treated equally with human interests where animals do indeed have like interests. No proponent of pathocentrism would dream of demanding rights of political participation for animals.

C. The Greater Sum of Negativity and Positivity Objection

It is claimed: As human good life has more dimensions (and possibly more depth or intensity in various dimensions) than animal good life, one and the same measure which has negative effects on the beings in question, for example, a medical experiment, will as a rule affect human beings more adversely than animals. The negative aspects of the

various dimensions add up in human beings, while in animals there is negativity only in one or two dimensions. In a medical experiment, an animal may, for example, feel only bodily pain, whereas a human being may, in addition to that, also experience fear (of death, for example), desperation, bitterness, boredom, and resentment for being confmed to bed and thus unable to work, participate in family life, or travel. This difference in levels of negativity (the same holds for positivity) between human and animal good life must be accounted for in morality. Human good life must be given greater moral weight (VanDeVeer, 1979).

Even if we agreed to all this, we could still insist that egalitarian pathocentrism can and must indeed account for these differences in levels of negativity and positivity. According to egalitarian pathocentrism, *like* interests are to be treated equally. What the consideration above shows is that what at first sight seems to be like interests are in fact not like interests. While utilitarians usually take this line of *interest-egalitarianism,* anti-utilitarians like the Kantian philosophers reject the consideration above as offending against moral equality. On their account (and indeed on our account as sketched in part I., two), every being in the moral universe has the same dignity, the same claim to have its basic good life respected, the same basic moral rights to health care, a place to live, education. Ranking basic moral rights, as envisaged above for the case of animals, would, for the case of human beings, lead to first- and second-class human beings. The sensitive, the multi-talented, the reflective, the young would enjoy a privileged moral status in comparison to the insensitive, the primitive, the handicapped, the old. In cases of conflict, one kidney available for transplantation and two peopled suffering from renal failure, this second class would always be the losers, undermining the idea of moral equality. If moral respect is extended to animals it must therefore be extended in a truly egalitarian, that is *rights-egalitarian,* manner.

D. The Rationalist Objection

Some hold that rational or moral beings have a greater claim to moral respect for they are the bearers of rational or moral culture. Without them there would be no morality, no pathocentric argument.

Is rationality a good reason for treating comparable suffering differently? Let us first discuss the case of technical rationality. There are beings who quickly leam how to maximize their benefit, and there are beings who are rather slow when it comes to mastering new situations. Is it moral to weigh the bodily and emotional good of the intelligent more heavily than the good of the unintelligent? Are, for example, Nobel prize-winners more entitled to medical help than those who have not won the prize? No, privileging the more rational is contrary to what morality requires.

What about the other case, moral rationality? Is, for example, Mother Teresa more entitled to medical help than a rapist? Again, no. Privileging the more moral is also contrary to what morality requires. The moral point of view is characterized by taking the good of all beings equally seriously. In the moral universe, equality reigns. There are no classes. If this is so with regard to relations between human beings, it cannot be otherwise once we turn to animals. Most animals are less intelligent and less morally

competent than most human beings, but this is no reason to accord their good with less seriousness.

E. The Absolute Objection

Other people claim that rational or moral beings have greater absolute value. Human beings may find it important that the good of all concerned should be treated equally, but in matters of global, and not only human interest, we must leave the human value system behind. From a global point of view, the good of rational beings is much more important than the good of more primitive life forms. A world in which rational beings follow their rational projects is a much better world than one in which need inhibits the ability to exercise their rationality or, even worse, than one in which there are no rational beings at all, but only brutes. And make no mistake, "better" does here not mean better from the human moral point of view, but absolutely better or better from the point of view of the universe.

What are we to make of this claim about absolute value? Does the universe have a point of view? If so, which human being is to know the point of view of the universe? Can he or she be criticized? If not, what if he or she claimed that whites or males or females or noblemen or musicians have more absolute value? As these critical questions show, claims about absolute value, especially if they are put forward by interested agents, in our case human beings trying to defend the abuse of sentient animals, should arouse our suspicion. The move from the human point of view to an allegedly absolute point of view is more often than not the move of those who have run out of arguments and are yet unwilling to acknowledge defeat.

Polemics are not a substitute for argument. The argument against absolute value claims will be presented in section IV., four.

We have discussed five readings of the anti-egalitarian claim that human interests are morally more important than animal interests. Only the second reading, that animal life lacks dimensions which human life has, was accepted, but this reading is in accord with egalitarian pathocentrism.

9. The "First Comes the Food, then Come the Morals" Objection

A common objection to the pathocentric argument is: The proposal to put the interests of animals on an equal footing with the interests of human beings sounds indeed very nice. "Ein guter Mensch sein, ja wer war's nicht gem?" [A good person, yeah, who wouldn't like to be one?] The trouble is that it is too nice. It relies on a fairy-tale picture of nature where animals live in harmony with each other and the rest of the world. Real nature, though, is not so harmonious. There is a bloody antagonism of interests. Human interests are often opposed to the interests of animals, of lions, poisonous snakes, rats, mosquitos, cockroaches. Ethics has no place in the natural

struggle for survival. “Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral.” [First comes the food, then come the morals.] Our relationship to animals is part of that natural struggle for survival and, therefore, our relationship to animals should remain free of moral imperatives. Everything else neglects our role in nature and is harmonistic and idealistic in the negative sense.

Yet we may respond that bloody antagonisms are not restricted to the humananimal relationship. There are extreme situations where a person may defend his or her life and satisfy basic needs only through harming or killing other human beings. In these extreme situations, moral imperatives to respect others become ineffective. Nobody can be blamed when acting in self-defense. In the same vein there are situations where human beings can save their lives or satisfy their basic needs only by harming or killing animals. Yet these extremities are no longer the norm in the civilized countries of the modem world. Most Europeans, for example, could live quite pleasant and productive lives without consuming meat. There is scope for moral regard in the human-animal relationship. Whoever denies this is out of touch with the realities of the twentieth century.

The naturalizing strategy is also popular in other contexts. For example, moral discussions on human sexual practices such as pornography, prostitution, and rape have long since been blocked by the argument that in sexuality men and women meet as natural beings. This argument, like its counterpart with regard to animals, obviously serves the purpose of veiling an immoral practice of exploitation.

10. The Policing Nature Objection

Some argue: As was already noted in the last objection, nature is not harmonious, but often cruel. There is an awful lot of suffering going on when, for example, beasts of prey attack and devour their prey. Should we then go into the forests and protect the prey? Should we give tofu-burgers to tigers and build hospitals for injured rats? Let us consider - soberly - what we would think of a person who did this, who left the house every morning well-equipped to go into the forest in order to improve the lot of the suffering creatures. Would we not smile about or pity this person? Would we not say that he or she must be one of those people who cannot manage life, who cannot accept that life and the world are hard now and then? Would we not wonder whether this person were a bit crazy? There must be something wrong with the pathocentric argument if it leads to such ridiculous consequences. Nature and ethics just do not seem to fit together, so we had better stick to the human realm with our ethics and let animals be what they are, natural beings.

Yet, is “policing nature,” where it does in fact lead to less suffering, really ridiculous? When a forester finds a mortally-wounded animal and kills it to put an end to its suffering, is this so obviously ridiculous? No, only policing nature on a larger scale - “tofu-burgers” and “hospitals” - is misguided. But large-scale policing of nature does not

follow from the pathocentric argument. For the chances are that large-scale policing of nature leads to more rather than less suffering. Human "police" would destroy countless natural habitats and upset countless ecological relations which, in turn, would lead to more suffering, both for animals and humans. It is presumptuous to think human beings can rearrange nature so that it functions according to human moral laws. Yet these presumptuous attitudes have nothing whatsoever to do with the pathocentric argument. The pathocentric argument only urges us to help where we can.

That policing nature should be wrong only for empirical reasons does not quite capture the intuition that it is something absurd. To get to the core of the matter, another answer seems to be called for. Possibly, this answer is to be found by exploring the idea of the limits of what we can take the responsibility for. Where the weight of responsibility becomes too great, it is justifiable to refrain from trying to influence the course of events. This is a nonreligious formulation of the religious idea that we may sometimes leave things "in the hands of God." To give an example, recent advances in medicine, especially in intensive care, organ transplantation, and genetic engineering may have led us to the limits of what we can take the responsibility for. We have become quite good at lengthening the process of dying, at least, for those who can afford it financially. We may soon be in the position to influence the physical features of children (their sex, the color of their eyes, their tallness) by genetic engineering. Is it reasonable for our society to march on in this direction or had we better stop and leave these things "in the hands of God?" You could argue that what goes on in forests, lakes, deserts, or the deep sea lies beyond that for which we can take responsibility.

Two: The Teleological Argument

(Robin Attfield [1981; 1983, p. 145], Paul Taylor [1981; 1986, pp. 119-129], Lawrence E. Johnson [1991, pp. 141-147], Konrad Ott [1993, pp. 153-155], Dietmar v. d. Pfordten [1995, pp. 241-244; 1996, pp. 203-255], [Hans Jonas, Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich, Holmes Rolston, Stephen R.L. Clark] - the authors listed in [square] brackets believe that nature is teleological but for them teleology is not of moral but of *absolute* intrinsic value; they are thus, strictly speaking, proponents of the absolute following nature argument IV., four below; it is often difficult to decide which of the two arguments, the extensionalist IV., two or the absolute IV., four, an author really puts forward; not all ecophilosophers are as clear as Hans Jonas about the step from ends in nature *(Zwecke in der Natur)* to absolute values in nature *(Werte an sich in der Natur);* for these authors' relevant writings see IV., four)

1. Classical Thoughts

A difficulty presents itself: why should not nature work, not for the sake of something, nor because it is better so, but just as the sky rains, not in order to make the corn grow, but of necessity? (What is drawn up must cool, and what has been cooled must become water and descend, the result of this being that the com grows.) Similarly if a man's crop is spoiled on the threshing-floor, the rain did not fall for the sake of this - in order that the crop might be spoiled - but that result just followed. Why then should it not be the same with the parts in nature, for example, that our teeth should come up of necessity - the front teeth sharp, fitted for tearing, the molars broad and useful for grinding down the food - since they did not arise for this end, but it was merely a coincident result; and so with all other parts in which we suppose that there is purpose? Wherever then all the parts came about just what they would have been if they had come to be for an end, such things survived, being organized spontaneously in a fitting way; whereas those which grew otherwise perished and continue to perish, as Empedocles says his "man-faced oxprogeny" did.

Such are the arguments (and others of the kind) which may cause difficulty on this point. Yet it is impossible that this should be the true view. For teeth and all other natural things either invariably or for the most part come about in a given way; but of not one of the results of chance or spontaneity is this true. We do not ascribe to chance or mere coincidence the frequency of rain in winter, but frequent rain in summer we do; nor heat in summer but only if we have it in winter. If then, it is agreed that things

are either the result of coincidence or for the sake of something, and these cannot be the result of coincidence or spontaneity, it follows that they must be for the sake of something; and that such things are all due to nature even the champions of the theory which is before us would agree. Therefore action for an end is present in things which come to be and are by nature. (Aristotle, 1984a, p. 329)

2. The Argument

1. The intersubjective criteria for the attribution of ends (Greek: *"telos"* = end) to other human beings can be applied to animals, plants, ecosystems, and (possibly) all of nature. A tulip, for example, which draws water from the ground and blossoms follows the ends of self-preservation and reproduction.

2. Leading your life according to your own ends is part of good human life. As nature follows ends, it too has a "good," which can be aided or impeded.

3. Traditionally, a person is said to act morally when he or she respects the good life of all human beings concerned.

4. But teleological nature also has a good which could be respected morally. The exclusion of teleological nature from moral respect because it is not human is as arbitrary, and thus as unjustifiable, as prejudice toward blacks or women because of their race or sex.

5. Therefore, a person acts morally when respecting the good of humanity and of teleological nature. The good of teleological nature is of moral intrinsic value; it is to be furthered for its own sake and not only for the sake of human interests. Teleological nature belongs to the moral universe.

3. General Comments

Quoting Aristotle at the head of this section calls for an explanation since Aristotle himself is not a proponent of the teleological argument. As the following passage from his *Politics* shows, he holds an anthropocentric position:

It is clear that the rule of the soul over the body, and of the mind and the rational element over the passionate, is natural and expedient; whereas the equality of the two or the rule of the inferior is always hurtful. The same holds good of animals in relation to men; ... Where there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals ... the lower sort are *by nature* slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the rule of a master...

Plants exist for [the sake of animals, while] animals exist for the sake of man, the tame for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them, for food and for the provision of clothing and various instruments. Now if nature makes nothing

incomplete, and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man. (1984b, 1254b and 1256b)

Yet most present day proponents of the teleological argument refer to Aristotelian teleology when they spell out their views. For this reason we quote Aristotle here.

As the formulation of step 1 of the teleological argument (''animals, plants, and (possibly) all of nature") suggests, there are *different versions of the teleological argument* depending on what segment of nature is regarded as following ends: only higher animals like dolphins or chimpanzees; all animals; all living beings (individualistic biocentrism); the genes of all living beings; all species; the system of life (holistic biocentrism); ecosystems; the earth as a whole (Gaia); all natural beings and things (individualistic radical physiocentrism); natural forces, spirits, or souls; nature as a whole (holistic radical physiocentrism). The most popular versions of the teleological argument are individualistic biocentrism (Attfield, Taylor, Jonas) and holistic radical physiocentrism (Meyer-Abich). The claim that certain higher animals deserve moral respect not only for their well-being but also for their agency good is no less popular than the first two, but it is usually not advanced as a "teleological argument." Since there seems to be no good reason for this - the argument is exactly the same whether it be applied to animals or plants, or nature as a whole -, we here discuss moral respect for animal agents.

The *logic of the teleological argument* is parallel to that of the pathocentric argument. Both are *extensionalist* arguments. They claim that nature shares some elements of the good human life and that it would be arbitrary and so unjustifiable to limit moral respect for these elements to the human species. While the pathocentric argument extends respect for the *well-being aspect of* the good human life, the teleological argument extends respect for the *agency aspect.* As was noted in part I., the section on ethics, a person's *agency good* consists in his or her ability to follow and achieve ends which are of personal importance, irrespective of the feelings (passive or active pleasure, satisfaction) they may bring. Examples of what may belong to the agency good are communication, education, moral projects, private and political autonomy.

Hedonists, who do not accept the distinction between well-being and agency good and reduce the importance of ends to the feelings they bring, usually make short work of the teleological argument. For them it is nothing but an appendix to the pathocentric argument. In their eyes, proponents of the teleological argument, who urge moral respect for the ends of nonsentient beings, which are incapable of feeling pleasure or satisfaction, fall victim to a conceptual mistake. As we argued, hedonism is a distortion of our experiences and you therefore cannot make such short work of the teleological argument.

4. The Ambiguity of the Concept of "End"

All versions of the teleological argument except the version which concerns certain higher animals are mistaken since they rest on a confusion about the concept of "following ends." This concept is ambiguous. You have to distinguish between "ends" in a practical sense and "ends" in a functional sense. All the evidence usually cited in favor of nature following ends only justifies attributing functional ends to nature, and functional ends are morally irrelevant. The attribution of morally relevant practical ends to nature is, then, only an instance of unacceptable anthropomorphism. In what follows, we clarify the practical and functional meanings of the term "end" and argue that only practical ends are of moral relevance (4.). Thereafter, we formulate the thesis (5.) that nature, with the exception of certain higher animals, does not follow practical ends and does, therefore, not deserve moral respect. Finally, this thesis is defended against two objections (6.), the complexity objection and the autonomy objection.

A. The Practical Meaning of "End"

The practical meaning of "end" is best illustrated in contexts where people act in certain ways and others have difficulty understanding the reasons for their actions. When, for example, someone enters one of the new German Inter-City Express trains at a train station and leaves the train again two minutes later, a conductor may ask the person why he or she left the train. The person may reply, "I didn't want to go anywhere by train, I only wanted to get an impression of the new stylish interior I had read about in the newspaper." On the basis of this information, the conductor can understand the strange behavior of the person. A "practical end" or "project" can be defined as that state of affairs which an agent wants to bring about by his or her *action.* In our example, the practical end of the agent is to form a personal impression of the interior design of the new trains.

An "action" must be distinguished from an "event." While an *action* is something where the agent could have acted otherwise and can be held responsible, an *event* is something which happens even if the agent tries to prevent its happening. As Wittgenstein formulates it in the *Philosophical Investigations:*

I should not say of the movement of my arm, for example: it comes when it comes, etc. And this is the region in which we say significantly that a thing doesn't simply happen to us, but that we do it. "I don't need to wait for my arm to go up - I can raise it." And here I am making a contrast between the movement of my arm and, say, the fact that the violent thuddering of my heart will subside. (1963, paragraph 612)

(For more on the distinction between "action" and "event" see Kamiah, 1973; von Wright, 1974; Kambartel, 1989a; contrast Davidson, 1980.)

B. The Functional Meaning of "End"

"Ends" in a functional sense are most apparent in technical contexts. Apparatus like thermostats are said to follow functional ends or to have functions. We may pick out a certain state S, a room temperature of 20® Celsius, of an apparatus A, a thermostat, with regard to which we have an interest in maintenance or enhancement. Apparatus A (or part of apparatus A) is functional with regard to S, or has a function with regard to S, if A contributes to the maintenance or enhancement of S. S is a functional end of the apparatus A.

Two types of functional organization may be distinguished: 1. *mechanical organization* and 2. *self-organization.* Mechanically organized apparatus like thermostats contribute to the maintenance or enhancement of functional ends by fixed, built-in response mechanisms. Self-organized apparatus, like "learning" chess-computers, can modify their response mechanisms via built-in feed-back systems in order to improve their contributions to the maintenance or enhancement of functional ends. (Self-organized apparatus are, finally, also mechanically organized.)

Functional ends differ from practical ends in that functional ends are the final states of *causal processes or events,* whereas practical ends are the final states which orient *actions.* An agent is *responsible* for his or her actions, whereas an apparatus is not responsible for its functions. An agent *cares* about practical ends; in situations of choice a person tends to choose what promotes his or her ends. An apparatus does not care about its functional ends. To a personal computer, for example, the fact that it is interrupted in the middle of a program by a power failure is of no importance. It is only to users of personal computers that this interruption may be of importance.

That an agent attains his or her practical ends is of *moral relevance.* For moral respect for others is respect for what matters to them, for their subjective good. As apparatus do not care about their functional ends - they have only a functional or objective good - it is of no direct moral relevance that they reach their functional ends. Only in the users' interests in the functional ends of apparatus can it attain moral relevance.

The functional vocabulary is not applied to all causal processes but only to a subclass of them. When a plate falls to the ground, for example, we do not attribute a functional end to the plate. Instead, we explain the event through causal factors: someone bumping into the table, a rough sea, an earthquake. The functional vocabulary is used only where the causal factors are too complex to be grasped but nevertheless tendencies to maintain or to promote a certain state stand out. A causally complex but undirected process is not accounted for functionally, nor is a causally simple but directed process. Thus the major distinction is one between:

practical contexts | and causal contexts

_____ _____ i_____ |

practical ends explain actions	1 1 1

functional contexts: nonfunctional contexts: functional ends causes explain events explain events | *** 5. Nature Follows Functional, Not Practical Ends

In nature, we encounter tendencies or patterns which are too complex to be explained causally. We explain, for example, the processes which go on in ecosystems as aiming at equilibrium or the processes which bacteria or plants perform as aiming at self-preservation and reproduction. Since there is no evidence for these processes being *actions* - they could not have happened otherwise (all things being equal), we do not hold bacteria or plants responsible for what they "do" - we must conclude that the tendencies evident in nature are of a functional and not of a practical kind. Nature performs functions, but does not follow practical ends. If we reserve the concept of "teleology" for practical ends, eliminating the source of confusion over the concept of "teleology" due to its ambivalence, we may argue that the concept of "teleology" has no place in nature; nature is not a teleological agent.

Since for some *higher animals* the thought that they could have acted otherwise makes good sense - dogs or cats can hesitate, decide, feel guilty - they should be regarded as teleological agents. Their *agency good* should be morally respected. Preventing a dog or a horse from leading a fulfilled life by keeping them in cages or isolating them from fellow animals is as immoral as hindering a human agent from following a central life project. Rainer Maria Rilke's poem *"Der Panther"* may serve to illustrate this point:

Der Panther

Sein Blick ist vom Vorubergehen der Stabe so mud geworden, daB er nichts mehr halt.

Ihm ist, als ob es tausend Stabe gabe und hinter tausend Staben keine Welt.

Der weiche Gang geschmeidig starker Schritte, der sich im allerkleinsten Kreise dreht, ist wie ein Tanz von Kraft um eine Mitte, in der betaubt ein grofler Wille steht.

Nur manchmal schiebt der Vorhang der Pupille sich lautlos auf Dann geht ein Bild hinein, geht dutch der Glieder angespannte Stille - und hort im Herzen auf zu sein. (1986, p. 451)

The Panther

His gaze those bars keep passing is so misted with tiredness, it can take in nothing more. He feels as though a thousand bars existed, and no more world beyond them than before.

Those supply-powerful paddings, turning there in tiniest of circles, well might be the dance of forces round a centre where some mighty will stands paralyticly.

Just now and then the pupil's noiseless shutter is lifted. - Then an image will indart, down through the limbs' intensive stillness flutter, and end its being in the heart. (1964, p. 89)

Apart from the exception of some higher animals, the teleological argument cannot justify moral respect for nature. The merely functional ends of lower animals, plants, and ecosystems are of no more direct moral relevance than are the functional ends of computers, cars, and thermostats.

The question of how far the functional terminology can be extended to nature - does it make sense, for example, in the face of the natural catastrophes to talk about a tendency of the earth to further variety or life? - is, as is clear by now, of no direct moral relevance. However, it is of some conceptual importance for understanding what "nature conservation" can mean. The best way to define "nature conservation" is caring for nature's *junctional good* (see part I., one, 3.). If the functional terminology cannot, however, be extended to natural things, like stones or mountains, or the earth or nature as a whole, we would not know what to do in order to conserve them. The concept of "nature conservation" would only be applicable to living things and ecosystems. The question whether we should conserve natural things, the earth, or nature as a whole for their own sakes, could not, then, for conceptual reasons, irrespective of the problem of justification, have a radical physiocentric answer. This conceptually flawed issue would have to be reformulated to question if we should "cultivate" nature for nature's own sake, that is, work upon nature so that it allows for a better human (and animal) life for nature's own sake. The answer is obviously "no, we ought to cultivate nature for the sake of humans (and animals)."

This means that if our analysis of nature's good as functional good is more or less along the right lines, there is a *conceptual,* nonmoral argument against radical physiocentrism.

6. Two Objections to Our Criticism of the Teleological Argument

Both of the objections which we consider now point to the implausibility of conceptualizing nature essentially as a machine. According to the first objection, there is a huge difference in *complexity* between apparatus we have built and nature.

There is no denying the difference in complexity, but we may ask in response to the complexity objection whether this difference is really as big as the objection holds. We could point to the successes of molecular biologists like the Nobel prize-winner Manfred Eigen in performing important steps in creating life from inanimate matter, as well as the advances in computer technology, in creating selforganized apparatus.

Apart from that, the complexity objection introduces a new moral consideration, namely about the intrinsic value of complexity. This new moral criterion must be taken seriously and we will address it in section IV., four. To jump ahead, it is easy to repudiate by citing counterexamples, the immensely complex atomic bomb or the

immensely complex AIDS virus. Peace campaigners and doctors who work to rid the world of these things do not do anything at all morally objectionable.

The second objection stresses that whereas apparatus like cars and computers are built to serve human ends, nature has its own ends, a good of its own. It is this *"autonomy"* or self-identity of nature which calls for moral respect (Taylor, 1986, p. 124; Johnson, 1991, pp. 145-146).

Again, there is no denying the difference that the autonomy objection stresses, but the crucial question is: is this difference morally relevant? The moral status of a thing is connected to its having a good of its own. But "good of its own," in the morally relevant sense, means that there is something which matters to the being, that there is "an inside" to its life, that it has a subjective good. Nature does not have a good of its own in this sense. That nature's functional good is not derived from human interests but "autonomous" has no direct moral bearing. The temptation to think that it does may stem from confusing moral intrinsic value with aesthetic intrinsic value. As was argued in the aesthetic contemplation argument, II., three, it is, among other things, nature's "autonomy," its freedom from marks of human instrumental action, which qualifies nature for aesthetic contemplation and confers aesthetic intrinsic value on nature. But nature's aesthetic intrinsic value is, as we argued, of no direct moral relevance. To conserve and cultivate nature because of its aesthetic intrinsic value is something we owe to all those beings to whom nature is of aesthetic intrinsic value. We do not, however, owe it to nature itself.

Three: The Reverence for Life Argument

1. Classical Thoughts

The elemental fact, present in our consciousness every moment of our existences, is: I am life that wills to live, in the midst of life that wills to live. The mysterious fact of my will to live is that I feel a mandate to behave with sympathetic concern toward all the wills to live which exist side by side with my own. The essence of Goodness is: Preserve life, promote life, help life to achieve its highest destiny. The essence of Evil is: Destroy life, harm life, hamper the development of life.

The fundamental principle of ethics, then, is reverence for life. All the goodness one displays toward a living organism is, at bottom, helping it to preserve and further its existence. (Albert Schweitzer, 1966, p. 26)

2. The Argument

1. Humanity is only one among many species on the earth; humanity, animals, and plants have in common their status as life.

2. The principle which underlies our traditional moral culture is to revere and further human life.

3. The exclusion of animal and plant life from moral concern because they are not members of the human species is as arbitrary and thus as unjustifiable as would be the exclusion of women for their sex or of blacks for their race.

4. Therefore, moral concern must be extended to all forms of nonhuman life. The basic moral principle must be reformulated as: "You should respect and nurture all life!"

1. Refutation of the Reverence for Life Argument

The reverence for life argument is the third and last *extensionalist* argument we examine. There are also non-extensionalist, absolute variants of grounding reverence for life. These we will discuss in the following nature argument (IV., four) and the theological argument (IV., five). The extensionalist reverence for life argument is extremely popular outside professional moral philosophy, yet among moral philosophers it is difficult to find anyone to support such an argument, probably because the argument is too easy to refute. We start by rehearsing two well-known lines of criticism and

then finally tackle the difficult question of animals and death. This section concludes with a discussion of abortion and infanticide as well as the right to life of the gravely ill, the senile, and the severely mentally disabled.

The ethics of reverence for life takes as the basic principle underlying traditional moral culture the principle that we should revere and further human life. Such a "first" principle, however, is problematical. Consider the case of suicide: A person in the terminal stage of cancer commits suicide; we do not judge this person a criminal. The same can be said in the case of a comatose person with no hope for recovery. Many of us do not wish to be kept alive if we fall into such a coma, and feel as well that it is immoral to withhold scarce medical resources from other patients in order to keep the incurably comatose patient living. If the principle to revere and further human life was indeed the only and fundamental moral principle, we would have to judge that suicide or withholding medical aid to incurably comatose patients is immoral. Or, consider the case of euthanasia: The action of a doctor or a relative who helps to end the incurable and intolerable suffering of another human being has, no doubt, *some* moral principle, namely the will to alleviate the intolerable pain of another. The fact that many of us hesitate to accept euthanasia as a morally justified practice shows, at best, that we sense there to be a conflict between two moral principles: the principle to further the life of another and the principle to further his or her well-being and ends. While the case of euthanasia makes it clear that reverence for human life cannot be the *only* basic moral principle, the cases of suicide and the incurably comatose suggest that reverence for human life is no basic moral principle at all but has a derived moral status.

As we proposed in part I., two, our traditional moral culture is founded upon the principle that we should further the *good* life of all human beings, where this includes, among other things, extending a person's life as long as it is worth living.

The implausibility of reverence for life ethics becomes even more evident when we follow its argument to its final conclusion that not only human life but all forms of life ought to be nurtured. There is, first, the obvious difficulty that unacceptably misanthropic consequences follow from this principle. The bacteria which destroy a human body or the plants and animals which human beings rely on for nourishment are, after all, also living beings, and if their right to life is considered equal to the human right to life, medical treatment and farming would constitute immoral actions. Yet, if the right to life of the bacteria and plants is not rated on equal terms but graduated according to physiological complexity, for instance (Attfield, 1983, p. 154), reverence for life is no longer the only and fundamental moral principle and the additional principle may, in turn, lead to other misanthropic consequences, in the case of complexity respect for atomic bombs and AIDS viruses. Moreover, however the right to life of grass haulms, trees, or ants is graduated (the right to life of a grass haulm = 1/n-th of the right to life of a person), it follows that the lives of n+1 grass haulms are more valuable than the life of one person (Bimbacher, 1991, p. 283).

Second, the suggestion that an entity which exhibits the three classical criteria of biological life - reproduction, metabolism, and variability or mutageneity - should be

treated with moral respect begs several questions. What is it about metabolism, reproduction, and variability that would justify according it intrinsic value? Why do not more primitive material entities like crystals deserve moral respect? These questions become even more pressing in the face of the successes, already mentioned in the last section, of molecular biologists like Manfred Eigen in producing life from inanimate matter as well as advances in our ability to build complex machines. Technically speaking, we could build a machine - a computer or robot - which can exchange defective screws by moving to a heap of screws, selecting one ("eating" it), and "digesting" it, so that it fits the function needed, circulating it to the place needed, and if there is waste from the digestion, passing out the waste. This machine would have a "metabolism." The same holds for reproduction. We could build machines which reproduce themselves by building new small machines both from internal as well as external material. Implanting a random processor in addition, gives us an equivalent to variability or mutageneity. We do not build machines which can perform all these functions, but if we did, would we call them "alive" and treat them accordingly? The fact that we would not even want to call them "alive" indicates that there is a concept of "life" different from the biologically defined one. Another indicator for such a different practical concept of life is that we talk about "killing persons" and "killing animals" but not about "killing plants." This concept of "life" must be remembered. We suggest the following two criteria as candidates for defining a practical concept of "life": perception and sentience (Kambartel, 1996). A definition of life as sentience would, as was argued in the pathocentric argument, have direct moral relevance. That a sentient being deserves concern for its pains and pleasures is, after all, much more evident than that reproduction or metabolism should make the moral difference!

In sum, the ethics of reverence for life presents a simplistic misunderstanding of the basic tenets of our moral culture. The moral right to life is not the fundamental moral principle but must be understood on the basis of moral respect for good life. In what follows we investigate how the moral right to life can be justified on the basis of moral respect for good life. Once we begin to see how this can be done we will be nearer to an answer to the question of whether animals may be killed.

3. The Moral Justification of the Right to Life

Two major arguments for the moral right to life exist, one is pathocentric and the other teleological in character. Our claim will be that the teleological grounding of moral respect for life, "the future orientation argument," is correct, while the pathocentric, "the privation of future good life argument," can be shown to lead to absurd consequences.

A. The Future Orientation Argument

According to this argument, a being has a moral right to life if it has a substantial positive orientation toward the future. That is, if its future matters to it, it has

(hedonistic or non-hedonistic) projects for the future and does not live entirely for the present, is not merely a center of biological life, but of biographical life. Whereas killing a being with a substantial future orientation is doing a moral wrong to the being, killing a "being of the present" involves no moral wrong. Killing a being of the present does not reduce its quality of life because a future plays no role in its life (Rachels, 1983; Hoffe, 1984; Schlitt, 1992, pp. 110-114; Rippe, 1993; Hoerster, 1995, pp. 11-28; Singer, 1979, chs. 4 and 5; Tooley, 1972). As Robert Spaemann puts it:

The killing of animals must also be justified, but it can be justified. Animals have no relationship to themselves in the sense that they could comprehend the entirety of their being and join together individual states of their being to an identity over time. (1984, p. 77, my translation)

To have a substantial future orientation and thus a moral right to life, a being need not have the concepts of "death" and "life," need not have the wish not to die or live its life as long as it is worth living. It suffices that it has substantial projects for the future, that what it does today is oriented toward what it intends to do tomorrow or next year.

It is sometimes argued that all life, even plant life, has *a -will to live,* that it wants to maintain itself and is, thus, obviously oriented toward the future (see the quotation from Schweitzer at the head of this section). This attempt to teleologically ground the moral right to life falls victim to the confusion between functional ends and practical ends already analyzed in section IV., two. To go on living is a functional end of all living beings, it belongs to their functional good. But it is the subjective good, the well-being and the following, and achieving of practical ends, which is the cornerstone for moral respect. It is difficult to find out whether a process directed toward the end of maintaining life - the squirrel's laying in of a winter stock - is only functional, a program, so to speak, or an action, which the animal could have omitted and cares for. Yet against the generalized will to live argument, we must insist that only in the latter case may a moral right to life come into play.

There is a *famous objection to the future orientation argument* (dating back to Epicurus and Lucretius), which we should address. The objection is this: The future orientation argument cannot justify the moral right to life, as it has nothing to offer against the killing of a being with a future orientation where it is ensured that the being does not realize that it is to be killed and, of course, does not suffer. Before and during the killing, the being's future projects are not frustrated and after the killing there is no longer anyone whose projects could be frustrated.

After what we have worked out about the difference between well-being and agency good (see part I., two, 4.), there is an obvious immediate response to this objection. The objection rests on a hedonistically distorted picture of good human life, as if the importance of projects to an agent was exhausted by the positive feelings they arouse, notably the satisfaction to have achieved particular ends and the avoidance of negative feelings, notably the frustration at not achieving these ends. Moral respect

for other agents involves respect for their ends outside of their feelings of satisfaction and frustration.

As the objection can, however, be restated in a nonhedonistic fashion, stressing only that what agents do not know about cannot affect their subjective good life (their well-being as well as their agency good), a second answer is called for: The objection works with too narrow an understanding of the subjective good of a being, reducing it to the epistemic perspective a being has on its good at a particular moment in time, which may differ from its real good for various reasons, for example, too much alcohol, extreme feelings like rage or despair, lack of relevant information, or deception. A moral agent does not take advantage of another's lack of insight, let alone bring it about in order to take advantage of it, but acts to further the other's real good. The killing of a person with a positive future orientation in the manner envisaged in the objection is really a case of deception with no possibility of the deceived realizing what was taken away. It can be compared to the case of offending against the Last Will of the dead. If the objection was sound, the practice of testaments would be an irrational practice. (For some classical answers to the Epicurean paradox see Nagel, 1979; Williams, 1973.)

B. The Privation of Future Good Life Argument

Proponents of this argument (Regan, 1983, ch. 3.5.; Johnson, 1976; Rodd, 1990, p. 126; Leist, 1990, p. 147; Singer, 1979, chs. 4 and 5) reason as follows: The future orientation argument may be all right as far as it goes, but the problem is that it does not go far enough. What about the right to life of beings who lack future orientation? Although they themselves do not know that there is good life for them in the future, do not know what they are missing, *we* know it! By killing them we knowingly deprive them of their future good life. It is hard to accept that exploiting their intellectual deficiency, their dumbness is not a morally objectionable action. The moral right to life must be grounded in sentience, not in future orientation. It is wrong to kill a sentient being because, in killing it, we deprive the being of its future good life.

The problem with the privation argument is that it is one dangerous step too external, too objective in its specification of the good of others. It transcends the moral perspective of respect for the *subjective* good of others and is therefore susceptible to a *reductio ad absurdunv.* If it is morally wrong to "deprive" a sentient being of future good sensations and feelings without its being able to value not being deprived, it must also be morally wrong to "deprive" a nonsentient being which will soon be a sentient being of its future good sensations and feelings. Furthermore, it must then also be morally wrong to omit opportunities to bring into existence a nonsentient being, which will eventually be a sentient being and have good sensations and feelings. As Jonathan Glover (1977, p. 122) argues, if it is the cake which matters, the wrong you do in throwing away the dough is hardly greater than the wrong you do in throwing away the ingredients before they are mixed into the dough. So we have reached the absurd consequence that we have a duty to propagate and to produce as many sentient animals and human beings as the earth can carry. The one dangerous step away from the subjective good of others leads, in the end, to a position where others as individual

objects of moral concern or duty disappear from view and make room for the sum total of pleasure in the world. The problems with this position are well-known: there is not only the duty to propagate but also the impossibility of morally condemning sacrificing the good and even life of individuals or groups for the maximization of the sum total of pleasure in the world and the absurdity that any killing, especially the killing of the unhappy, can be made up by replacing the killed being with a new one. The privation argument is not a sound alternative to the future orientation argument.

A proponent of the claim that the moral right to life depends on sentience could accept this criticism and still insist on the claim, arguing that beings of the present are a philosophical invention. There are no beings who have positive sensations and who do not form the desire for these sensations to last. Having a positive sensation means wanting it to last. This analysis of positive sensations may be correct for a few selected cases, the case of a swelling sensation, for example. You could argue that it belongs to the quality of a swelling sensation that it strives toward a future peak. But for other cases of positive sensations, it is dangerously intellectualist to require that the sentient being has the wish that the sensation go on in the future. For you may have to conclude that a being which, as we can tell from its behavior, lacks the concept of "the future" cannot have positive sensations. In sections IL, two and IV., one, we struggled to avoid conclusions of this kind. Yet, even if this analysis of positive sensations were correct, it could not justify a moral right to life. For all that would follow is a proviso that we should not kill beings when they are in a state of contentedness.

Only interrupting such states would be wrong, waiting until the being was in a neutral or miserable state and then killing it would involve no moral wrong. To carry the objection to an extreme: if having a positive sensation means wanting it to last, having a negative feeling presumably means wanting it to stop. Killing an unhappy being would then not only involve no wrong but constitute a moral good.

One way around this consequence would be to postulate a positive feeling of being alive, a joy of living, a life instinct *(Lebenstrieb)* for all living beings which is constantly there and which must not be interrupted. Yet, like its teleological counterpart "the will to live," "joy of living" cannot be attributed to living beings simply on the basis of the performance of processes directed to the end of selfmaintenance. These processes are evidence only of functional organization. For the attribution of a positive life-feeling we require further evidence. The beings in question must manifest sentience and, furthermore, knowledge of the concepts of "life" and "death." There can be no feelings of joy in *life* or fear of *death* without the grasp of what "life" and "death" mean. It is sometimes said that young animals which obviously enjoy playing with each other manifest joy in life and that animals which panic when they smell the blood of other animals at the slaughterhouse or when they are attacked by a predator manifest fear of death. Strictly speaking, these animals only manifest joy of play and fear of suffering. Without further evidence of the animals having the concepts of "life" and "death," joy of life and fear of death cannot be ascribed to them. This means that the joy of life grounding of the moral right to life, if correct, reaches fewer rather than more

beings in comparison to the future orientation argument, because the future orientation argument does not require that beings have the concepts of "life" and "death."

4. Animals and Death

What follows from the future orientation argument with regard to the killing of animals? It follows that all animals which have a substantial future perspective should not be killed. AIDS experiments with chimpanzees who might even have the concepts of "life" and "death" are then out of the question, while keeping cattle and chicken for food may be all right, since their future perspective is probably negligible. Vegetarianism is thus not required. There may, of course, be pathocentric reasons for vegetarianism. Keeping farm-animals badly, transporting, and killing them under inhumane conditions is morally objectionable. If there were no alternative to so treating farm-animals, vegetarianism would be required. But there is an alternative. Also, important medical experiments which involve little or no suffering but killing are morally justifiable. With regard to animals without any future orientation as well as all nonsentient animals and plants, there is no moral problem in killing them painlessly. Picking flowers and eating vegetables is not morally objectionable.

Although the future orientation argument is *the* fundamental grounding for the moral right to life, there are other less weighty *indirect* moral arguments to be taken into account. Indirect moral arguments against killing beings show why killing them offends against the moral rights of others. One argument is that we owe it to the emotional well-being of fellow animals, the young or the partner of an animal, not to kill it because the fellow animals may suffer from the loss. Other indirect arguments are the anthropocentric arguments spelled out in part IL, most importantly the pedagogic argument. Killing animals is morally problematic because it blunts our natural inhibition from killing.

5. Digression on Human Abortion, Infanticide, and the Moral Right to Life of the Gravely III, the Senile, and the Severely Mentally Disabled

According to the future orientation argument the killing of any being without a substantial future perspective seems to be morally justifiable. Human fetuses, babies, some severely ill, senile, and mentally disabled people lack a substantial future orientation. May they be killed? And if not, does not this discredit the future orientation argument?

They should not be killed, we will argue, but this does not discredit the future orientation argument. For other direct and indirect arguments come into play and

supplement the future orientation argument. Two supplementary arguments will be sketched in the following. (For basic reading on abortion see Thomson, 1971; Tooley, 1972; Glover, 1977, chs. 9-11; on the moral right to life and death of the gravely ill, the senile, and the severely mentally handicapped see Singer, 1979, ch. 7;Kuhse, 1991.)

The first supplementary consideration is a direct moral consideration, related to the second answer we gave to the Epicurean objection. The claim is that respect for the life of others cannot be grounded on their *actual state* alone, but must take into account what others were before and will be in the future (Leist, 1990, pp. 152-159). A newborn baby, for example, as Bernard Williams once put it, is not just "a chimp without fur." The *entirety* of this being's life must be considered. If we did not consider the entirety of the lives of others, any sleeping person or any severely ill person who might need, say, two months or even two years to regain a substantial future orientation could be killed without this raising any direct moral problems. Furthermore, in educating children, parents and teachers treat children with respect to the mature persons they should later be. If morality required them to treat children only with respect to their actual states of development, morality would endanger education. Early childhood, illness, and old age are stages of human life and moral respect for a fully developed human life with its moral right to life extends to these states. Such a consideration rules out abortion (as we will suggest only from a certain stage on), infanticide, and the killing of the senile and the severely ill. It does not rule out the killing of the permanently mentally disabled.

It is often said that a human life starts with conception and that, therefore, conception is the obvious point for the entirety argument to take effect. Yet, as we have argued before, a more sensible definition of "life" than the standard biological one of metabolism, reproduction, and mutageneity turns on perception and sentience. The human fetus does not start to perceive and feel before the beginning of the second trimester of pregnancy. In the first trimester, it is not "alive" according to our definition, and the most obvious point for the entirety argument to take effect is hence not conception, but the beginning of its life. An abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy raises, therefore, no direct moral problems.

With regard to the case of the permanently mentally disabled who lack a substantial future orientation, the strongest supplementary argument seems to be the indirect *brutalization argument.* To kill a being who has a human face, a *Menschenantlitz,* blunts our biological inhibition from killing other human beings, and this, to a degree, much more than the killing of animals. We cannot afford this blunting if we seek effective means of preventing human subjects with a future orientation from killing or being killed.

Four: The Following Nature Argument

(Hans Jonas [1979, ch. two, V.- ch. four, I.], Klaus Michael Meyer-Abich [1984, ch. 4; 1990, ch. 4], Vittorio Hosle [1991, pp. 71-74], Ronald Dworkin [1993, ch. 3], Holmes Rolston [1988, pp. 112-117; 1994], Stephen R.L. Clark [1983], Nicholas Rescher [1980])

1. Classical Thoughts life in agreement with nature (Zeno of Citium, after Diogenes Laertius, 1925, p. 195)

2. The Argument

1. The standard physiocentric arguments for the conservation of nature, the pathocentric, the teleological, and the reverence for life argument, all have one thing in common: they try to *extend* to nature elements of interhuman morality. These three arguments open the whole or parts of nature as a field of application, as periphery, or "suburbs" of interhuman morality. Nature, its good and its values, come into view only where they are analogous to those of humankind. What humankind values is used as the measure of all things. What is of no value to human beings is regarded as of no value at all.

2. Imagine the millions of years before the first human being appeared on earth. Was there no value in the world? Or imagine the millions of years after the last human being leaves earth. Will the world then be without value? Would the last human being commit no wrong if he or she decided to destroy the earth?

What hubris! How can any being in the world be so arrogant as to believe that everything which is exists only for its sake? The standard extensionalist brand of animal and environmental ethics is still mired in anthropocentric arrogance. Instead of getting rid of anthropocentrism once and for all, this brand of ethics sinks deeper into the anthropocentric swamp. Like Miinchhausen, it attempts the impossible, namely to pull it up by its bootstraps. To overcome anthropocentrism, we have to look in an altogether different direction, transcend the human value perspective. When we have developed a new sensitivity for nature as it is, for nature as "the other" of humanity, then we will discover the higher value perspective of nature. By assuming our place

in that higher order, by following nature, we will eventually be on the right path and then be able to overcome the environmental crisis.

3. In the higher value perspective of nature, everything which exists or lives or is complex or diverse or stable or well-ordered or harmonious or a systemic whole or integer or healthy or old or unique or rare or beautiful or wild or conscious or sentient or teleological or autonomous or creative or has a language or is rational has equal absolute intrinsic value (egalitarian version). Or the absolute value of everything depends on its grade of complexity, (bio)diversity, stability, well- orderedness, harmony, systemic character, integrity, health, age, rarity, beauty, wildness, consciousness, sentience, teleological capacity, autonomy, creativity, language, or rationality (nonegalitarian version). Human beings as human beings have no special place in the order of nature.

4. To follow nature means to respect the absolute intrinsic value not only of human beings but of all nature.

3. General Comments

A rather simple mistake underlies the following nature argument: Two possible reasons exist why people are concerned with only what is of value to themselves and others of their kind. The first is that they take their species to be the greatest thing in the universe. The second is that they believe the members of their species to be the only valuers in the universe, the only beings to whom things matter. The second reason does not imply the first: If human beings are the only valuers around, it does not even make sense to talk about a value which is not a value to human beings, in particular, it makes no sense to think that the human species is of greatest importance to the universe. Only if we suppress the second motivation for moral extensionalism (which is, as we will see, the correct one), can the following nature argument seem seductive at all.

We start in section 4. by showing that nature is no valuer, that there are no values-as-such, and that, even if nature were a valuer and there were values-as- such, we ought not to follow those values. The resulting position, that the human moral value perspective is untranscendable, is further explored in section 5. The sixth section draws attention to an important disanalogy between the concepts of "sexism," on the one hand, and "anthropocentrism," on the other. This disanalogy revolves around the inevitability of epistemic moral anthropocentrism. Since the general verdict of species extinction is usually grounded on the following nature argument, we address in section 7. the moral issue of species extinction, especially the case of the extinction of the human species. Section 8. demonstrates that candidates for absolute value, complexity, stability, diversity, and so on, are not good candidates for moral intrinsic values either. The concluding remark offers a reading of the imperative to follow nature which differs

from the one fostered in the following nature argument, a reading which makes good sense, but remains purely anthropocentric.

4. Why We Cannot and, Even if We Could, Should Not Follow Nature

We *cannot* follow nature because *nature is not a valuer.* There is nothing which is of value to nature, no higher value order or perspective within nature, and no absolute values asserted by nature which we could discover and respect.

How do we know that nature is not a valuer? We know the criteria for deciding whether or not someone values something, whether or not it matters to him or her. The criteria fall into two classes, one for pathocentric valuing (lust, joy, contentment, hope) and the other for teleological valuing (deliberating and choosing, arguing and fighting for certain things). In section IV., one, we argued that pathocentric valuing is to be found among animals, but not in the rest of nature. The following nature argument asks us to follow nature, not to follow animals. In section IV., two, we showed that agency and teleological valuing is to be found only among higher animals. Within die rest of nature the thought that it could have acted otherwise does not apply and thus there is no teleological valuing in the rest of nature. To put this point in anthropomorphic terms: a universe which allows anything to happen, the beauty of a spring morning or the ugliness of an open wound, happiness or hardship, life or death, justice or oppression, must be an indifferent universe.

Yet, could there be values in nature which are not values *to* nature, but *values- as-suchl* Do values exist which are values irrespective of their being values to any valuer? And would the following nature argument better be rephrased as calling for respect for values-as-such?

Let x be a value-as-such. Human beings do not care about x, otherwise x would already be a part of the human value perspective and the following nature argument would be superfluous. There is no other valuer in the world to whom x matters. Since the fact that nobody thus far cares about x is hardly a reason for us to start caring about x - we do not want to place value in anything that includes extreme pain, ugliness, or a square shape - there must be a way to distinguish what is of value, like x, and what is of no value, like ugliness or a square shape. How is this sorting out to be done? Nature is, after all, no book in which all the good things are marked with a star and from which we can simply read off what is valuable. The long list of different candidates for allegedly absolute values in nature is ample evidence for this complication. If values-as-such are not readily apparent, we stand in need of criteria for the identification of values-as-such. Without criteria the concept would be of no use, because we would not know what is and is not of value. Such values could play no role in our attempt to orient ourselves in the world. Thinking about them would be nothing

but idle speculation. The criteria familiar from the usual concept of "value," namely that someone manifests either pathocentric or teleological concern for something, are of no help. For value x is conceived to be independent of any valuing subjects. If other criteria are suggested, that something is selected by evolution, for example, we may respond by asking why this should be called "value?" Values that no subject cares about seem like cars which cannot be driven or ice-cream which cannot be eaten. It would be better to use another word, "eulav," to mark the difference and prevent confusion. If the word "eulav" is used, it is, however, no longer evident why nature ethicists or activists should worry about "eulav." (This argument parallels the argument against a non-anthropocentric concept of "pain" in IV., one, 4.C.)

But what about the reports of *visionaries* who tell us that nature cares or that there are values-as-such and that the intuition or insight into this is not open to all but only to certain elected people? Insight, as we discussed above, is open to all willing and capable subjects, so we should treat these reports as we usually treat claims for which we have no positive evidence and for which we likely can find none. We should reject them as false, regard them as lies or fantasies, or, if they are interesting enough, as fiction. Consider what could happen if we allowed esoterically accessible "insights" of such a kind to govern our conduct! A visionary may preach that nature cares most for the white race or the male sex, and we would have to accept these values. We would certainly do better to insist on universally accessible evidence. This evidence speaks against nature as a valuer and against values-as-such.

Yet even if we assume, for a moment, that nature was indeed a valuer or that there were knowable values-as-such, *we ought not to follow* nature's values or those values-as-such, at least not blindly. Nature may be malicious or unjust, and thus have reprehensible values. The same holds for values-as-such. In order to find out whether or not absolute values are good values we have to know beforehand what distinguishes good from bad values. This means that we are referred back to the human moral value perspective, to what is of moral value to us. We cannot transcend this perspective. Whoever ignores the question of whether or not the values he or she holds are really good values - someone who follows the church or some other authority *blindly* - does not transcend the human moral value perspective, but simply begs the question about what is good. Rather than investigate (perhaps out of laziness or cowardice, or because of some material advantage of not doing so), such a person prefers to live with and propagate half truths. Such people usually do not upset our beliefs. Similarly, we should not let our beliefs in the morally good be upset by people who follow nature blindly. Following nature blindly is no real alternative to the human moral value perspective.

5. The Inevitability of Epistemic Moral Anthropocentrism

The view that we cannot transcend the human moral value perspective has been called *"epistemic moral anthropocentrism"* in part L, three. Epistemic moral anthropocentrism denies any claims about the importance or value of anything to nature or to the universe, or "as such." It does not, therefore, accord with the belief that humanity is the most valuable thing in the universe, the "crown of creation." The following nature argument charges epistemic moral anthropocentrism with this kind of human hubris. This charge is therefore besides the point.

As should be clear from the extensionalist arguments in sections IV., one to three, epistemic moral anthropocentrism does not imply *extensional anthropocentrism* or *speciesism* - the view that only human beings are members of the moral universe. From the fact that all value is value to us, it does not follow that the good of nonhumans cannot be of moral intrinsic value to us. "Value to us" does not equal "instrumental value to us." It includes "intrinsic values (to us)," among others "moral intrinsic value (to us)." That humanity has developed a moral perspective according to which the good life of all others is of intrinsic value is the necessary condition for overcoming speciesism. The conclusion is not: "epistemic moral anthropocentrism implies speciesism," but: "without epistemic moral anthropocentrism there is no overcoming speciesism."

6. The Disanalogy between "Anthropocentrism" and "Sexism"

Drawing an analogy between the phenomenon of sexism and the project of the women's liberation movement, on one side, and anthropocentrism and the project of the nature or animal liberation movement, on the other, is popular with many nature ethicists, especially with ecofeminists (for ecofeminist writings see the holistic argument in part III.). We will try to pinpoint a lack of analogy by distinguishing between epistemic and extensional sexism according to the model of our distinction between epistemic and extensional anthropocentrism. We then see what happens when we apply the transcendental thesis of epistemic moral anthropocentrism as necessary condition for overcoming extensional anthropocentrism to the issue of sexism.

Epistemic (moral) sexism, or androcentrism, is the view that there is no transcending the male moral value perspective. *Extensional sexism* is the view that only biological males are (full) members of the moral universe. Applying the transcendental thesis we arrive at the conclusion that epistemic moral sexism is the necessary condition for overcoming extensional sexism. This absurd conclusion trivializes, even more it ridicules, the project of women's liberation. While for animals the best that can happen to them is that we extend *our* moral standards to the animal world and live up

to them, it would be absurd to claim that the best that can happen to women is that men extend their moral standards to them. To be sure, it would be a significant step if male moral standards were finally extended impartially to all women everywhere in the world, but this one-sided extension would be only a first step in the project of liberating women. The true liberation of women requires more, namely that women are not only regarded as equal moral objects, but also as equal epistemic moral subjects. The female value perspective, whether it be grounded in women's different social experience or in their different biology, is an integral part of the human moral value perspective. Esoterically male moral action, as in most politics, and esoterically male theorizing, as in most moral philosophy, must no longer be allowed to pose as the human moral perspective. The "different voice" (Gilligan, 1982; Jaggar, 1990) of women ought to be heard.

This different voice may, for example, say that all moral theories which define "the moral" through (performative) consensus in a free discourse or through contracts between rational subjects are untrue to the moral experience of many women. For the traditional social role of women includes care for all those human beings who are not yet, or who for a period are not, or who are no longer capable of rational consensus or contracting. In caring for fetuses, babies, the sick, and the old, women know that their well-being has moral intrinsic value and is to be furthered for its own sake. Moral theories which cannot do justice to this female intuition must be rejected as epistemically sexist. In relying on experiences in traditionally male spheres where rational subjects interact, as in politics or economics, consensualist and contractualist ethics offer a human moral perspective that is actually only a male moral perspective (Krebs, 1995).

The different voice may also say that the male concept of "economic work," as "paid activity" or "production," is epistemically sexist since it excludes the unpaid, reproductive work of women in the home. The concept must be transformed so that it accounts for the work-character of female work in the home (Kambartel, 1993a; Krebs, 1993; 1996).

As these two examples indicate, overcoming sexism requires not only moral extensionalist progress, the enlargement of the boundaries of the moral universe, as is the case with the overcoming of speciesism, but also moral epistemic progress, the transformation of the official standards of human moral culture on the basis of female experience. Another way to make the same point is to say that the liberation of women is a true case of *liberation* with all the critical, threatening potential liberation has for an oppressive culture, while the so-called "liberation" of animals or nature is only a one-sided extension, is only "parasitical" to our existing human moral culture. Feminists and all who fight for the liberation of human subjects from oppression - anti-racists, anti-classists, anti-imperialists, and others - should reject the rhetoric of animal and nature "liberation," should reject the unreflected drawing of an analogy between the great human liberation movements and the fight for a better treatment of animals and nature. For drawing this analogy trivializes what true liberation movements involve.

There is a passage in Bernard Williams's work *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (1985, pp. 118-119), which highlights this point. Williams employs the term "speciesism" for what we have called "epistemic moral anthropocentrism."

The word "speciesism" has been used for an attitude some regard as our ultimate prejudice, that in favour of humanity. It is more revealingly called "humanism," and it is not a prejudice. To see the world from a human point of view is not an absurd thing for human beings to do. It is sometimes said that such a view implies that we regard human beings as the most important or valuable creatures in the universe. This would be an absurd thing to do, but it is not implied. To suppose that it is, is to make the mistake of identifying the point of view of the universe and the human point of view. No one should make any claims about the importance of human beings to the universe: the point is about the importance of human beings to human beings.

A concern for nonhuman animals is indeed a proper part of human life, but we can acquire it, cultivate it, and teach it only in terms of our understanding of ourselves. Human beings both have that understanding and are the objects of it, and this is one of the basic respects in which our ethical relations to each other must always be different from our relations to other animals. Before one gets to the question of how animals should be treated, there is the fundamental point that this is the only question there can be: how they should be treated. The choice can only be whether animals benefit from our practices or are harmed by them. This is why speciesism is falsely modeled on racism and sexism, which really are prejudices. To suppose that there is an ineliminable white or male understanding of the world, and to think that the only choice is whether blacks or women should benefit from "our" (white, male) practices or be harmed by them: this is already to be prejudiced. But in the case of human relations to animals, the analogues to such thoughts are simply correct.

Our arguments have to be grounded in a human point of view; they cannot be derived from a point of view that is no one's point of view at all. It is not, as the strongest forms of ethical theory would have it, that reason drives us to get beyond humanity. The most urgent requirements of humanity are, as they always have been, that we should assemble as many resources as we can to help us to respect it.

7. The Preservation of Species

In the attempt to provide a physiocentric justification for the duty to preserve endangered species, the following nature argument plays a major role. It is often said that we owe it to nature to conserve the variety and complexity of nature, that it is not up to us to decide which species may exist, that there is a higher order with which we should not interfere.

By now we understand that the rhetoric of human hubris is a faulty, unsubstantial polemic. The preservation of rare species must be based on anthropocentric reasons, like aesthetic, medical, or culinary reasons. Pathocentric reasons will be of no great help

here, as they concern individual animals and not animal species. If the well-being of certain animals is seriously impaired by the extinction of rare species, this pathocentric reason should, of course, be taken into account. (For literature on species preservation see Rescher, 1980; Sober, 1986; Callicott, 1986; Norton, 1987; Rippe, 1994.)

The proposition that we owe to no one except ourselves (and sentient animals) to preserve endangered species also holds true for a special case of species preservation, namely the preservation of the human species. If humanity decided to stop procreation today, would it be doing something objectionable? Would the world be worse off if there were no longer any human beings around? The range of philosophers who give an affirmative answer to these questions is interestingly wide: it includes utilitarians like Richard Hare (1993) and Dieter Bimbacher (1986), the metaphysicians Hans Jonas (1979, ch. two, IV.3.) and Vittorio Hosle (1991, p. 15), and the discourse ethicist Karl-Otto Apel (1992). Yet the correct answer is: No, the world does not care. Provided no living human being (and animal) is wronged by such a decision, there is nothing morally objectionable about it. We have a duty to conserve nature for the sake of future generations only under the probable assumption that there will be future generations. We have no duty to bring future generations into existence (Patzig, 1993).

"That there be mankind!" is thus not only not the first categorical imperative for the technological age, as Hans Jonas would have it, but not a categorical imperative at all. There is an interesting additional argument of transcendental character in Jonas (1979, p. 155), Hosle (1993), and Apel (1992, p. 240), which we should briefly comment on. The argument is as follows: Whoever objects to the claim that humanity must be preserved on account of its superior teleological capacities commits a performative contradiction. For in objecting a person acts teleologically and shows that he or she values teleology. It is a contradiction to at the same time value teleology and object to the value humanity has on account of its teleology.

This argument involves a logical flaw. It confuses *value to oneself* and to others of one's kind with *absolute value.* Whoever objects to anything is manifesting that teleological action is of value to him or her. The decision to stop procreating, with the result that in the world of tomorrow there will no longer be any subjects who raise objections and value teleology, is compatible with valuing teleology for oneself.

8. Complexity, Stability, Age

From our criticism of the following nature argument, it follows that complexity, stability, age, and so on are neither of value to nature nor values-as-such. This does not, however, rule them out as candidates for intrinsic values to us. Beauty, for example, which is often presented as having absolute value, is of aesthetic intrinsic value to us, yet, as an aesthetic intrinsic value alone, it cannot ground moral standing. Moral duties to aesthetic objects are grounded exclusively in moral respect for subjects who value beauty (see part IL, three). The same holds true of all other types of intrinsic

value except for moral intrinsic value. The question must now be whether complexity, stability, age should be regarded as viable alternatives to what we have sofar advanced as the best candidate for moral intrinsic value, namely the subjective good of all. Are the formulas that we should respect either complexity or stability or age better characterizations of the basic tenets of our moral culture than our good life formula?

Consider the following counterexamples: An atomic bomb is far more *complex* than a sling. Does this added complexity give the atomic bomb a (higher) moral status? The AIDS virus is an extremely complex entity, so complex that it can trick the human immune system. Does this give it a moral status? Do medical researchers who try to find ways to destroy the AIDS virus intend anything morally questionable?

Or is the fact that a patient is in a *stable* but bad condition any better, morally speaking, than when he or she is in an unstable, sometimes improved, sometimes worsening condition? Is a stable totalitarian regime better, morally speaking, than a less stable democratic society?

Or, to turn to the question of *age,* should old people have more moral rights than young people? Is die view that women are inferior to men better than the view that neither sex is inferior to the other simply because the first view has a long history? (For a much liked example of arguing with the age of nature see Paul Taylor's mapping of life on earth on a football field with humans occupying not more than the last six inches [1986, pp. 207-208].)

Is a *diverse* human culture which features women presidents as well as widowburning morally better than a less diverse human culture which features only women presidents and no widow-burning? What about the diversity of dumping grounds?

Or what about the *uniqueness of* Adolf Hitler?

Or what about the moral rights of the sick and the disabled as compared with those of the *healthy!*

We need not continue, since the point is clear by now. Complexity, stability, age, diversity, health, and so on are of no moral intrinsic value.

9. "FollowingNature?"

Thus is the imperative to follow nature, live in harmony or agreement with nature, to be "natural" completely worthless? Is a doctor who tells us that we should "listen" to our body and live in harmony with it talking nonsense? That we cannot and, even if we could, ought not to follow nature seems to say exactly this. And it is this consequence which John Stuart Mill drew from his inquiry into the idea of following nature in his popular essay "Nature" (1969). Mill argues that the imperative to follow nature is either superfluous or morally objectionable. It is *superfluous* if it means that we should follow the natural laws where we are subject to them, because where we are subject to natural laws we cannot but "follow" them. It is *morally objectionable* if it asks us to imitate what we see in nature, for a lot of "cruelty" and destruction goes on in nature.

As was already hinted in section III., one, the holistic argument, it is possible to give the imperative to follow nature a positive interpretation. That we should follow nature means that we should not forget about the manifold ways in which our good life depends on natural (including our own bodily) conditions and offend against them. A philosopher who works at a desk all day and does absolutely nothing to exercize his or her body, for instance, does not live in harmony with the body but offends against the bodily conditions of his or her (future) good life, including his or her philosophizing. Of a culture or society which destroys healthy, *aisthetically,* and aesthetically attractive nature through intensive industrialization, we may say that it does not live in harmony with nature but instead offends against the natural conditions of the good life of its members. Understood in this way, the following nature imperative is nothing but a heading for the anthropocentric arguments developed in part II.. No moral standing for nature arises from it.

Five: The Theological Argument

(Michael Schlitt [1992], Bernhard Irrgang [1992], Alfons Auer [1984], J. Baird Callicott [1986, pp. 145-148])

1. Classical Thoughts

The creation of the universe

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was a vast waste, darkness covered the deep, and the spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light; and God saw the light was good, and he separated light from darkness. He called the light day, and the darkness night. So evening came, and morning came; it was the first day.

God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters, to separate water from water." So God made the vault, and separated the water under the vault from the water above it, and so it was; and God called the vault the heavens. Evening came, and morning came, the second day.

God said, "Let the water under the heavens be gathered into one place, so that dry land may appear"; and so it was. God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the water he called sea; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth produce growing things; let there be on the earth plants that bear seed, and trees bearing fruit each with its own kind of seed." So it was; the earth produced growing things: plants bearing their own kind of seed and trees bearing fruit, each with its own kind of seed; and God saw that it was good. Evening came, and morning came, the third day.

God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the heavens to separate day from night, and let them serve as signs both for festivals and for seasons and years. Let them also shine in the heavens to give light on earth." So it was; God made two great lights, the greater to govern the day and the lesser to govern the night; he also made the stars. God put these lights in the vault of the heavens to give light on earth, to govern day and night, and to separate light from darkness; and God saw that it was good. Evening came, and morning came, the fourth day.

God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the heavens." God then created the great sea-beasts and all living creatures that move and swarm in the water, according to their various kinds, and every kind of bird; and God saw that it was good. He blessed them and said, "Be

fruitful and increase; fill the water of the sea, and let the birds increase on the land." Evening came, and morning came, the fifth day.

God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures, according to their various kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, all according to their various kinds." So it was; God made wild animals, cattle, and every creeping thing, all according to their various kinds; and he saw that it was good. ... *(Genesis,* 1989, p.l)

2. The Argument

1. God created the world and "saw that it was good."

2. God appointed humanity as steward over his creation.

3. Humanity ought to follow God's will, and ought to conserve and cultivate God's creation. Human beings must not forget their proper place in God's order and "play God" themselves. They should not act as if the whole of creation existed only for their sake. Instead, they ought to respect the intrinsic value of the whole of creation.

3. Comments

The theological argument is the second absolute argument. It does not require extending interhuman moral values to nature. Rather, it points to a transcendent higher order of values which should be respected. This higher order does not originate from nature itself, as in the following nature argument, but from God as the creator of nature and humanity.

The theological argument, however, is open to the same criticism as the following nature argument, for the claim that we should follow God is as problematic as the claim that we should follow nature.

First of all, it is known that the world was not created by a superior being called "God." From biological findings we know that the first woman was not created out of the first man's rib, the first man was not created out of loam, animals and plants were not created one by one, but that all life evolved from inanimate matter. To hold fast to the claim that God created human beings is *irrational,* in the face of the evidence Charles Darwin and others have presented to show that humanity evolved from the apes. The origin of the universe and the earth, as well as the evolution of life and human beings, can be explained in strictly scientific cosmological, geological, or biological terms. If human beings and nature are not God's creation, God cannot want humanity to serve as steward over it.

We should not let religious visionaries, who claim that the "truth" was revealed to them, talk us out of what we know to be false. We should deal with their stories as we deal with other stories we know to be false: regard them as lies or as fiction.

Secondly, even if we assume that a superior being called "God" existed and still exists, and who created the world and wanted, and still wants humanity to play a certain role in his creation, we should not follow this God blindly. He may be an evil God with evil plans. To find out whether he is a good or an evil God, we have to judge his plans in light of our own values. We are, then, referred back to the human moral point of view. There is no transcendent higher value order. The highest value order is the one highest to us. Thus there is no absolute intrinsic value of nature to be respected by us.

As the theological justification for the intrinsic value of nature is no good, we need not go into the heated debates in theological circles about which role God really wants humanity to play in his creation. That humanity is to act as steward over God's creation is, after all, only one of many possible interpretations of the *Bible* and other religious texts. *Genesis* 1:26-28: '"Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness, to have dominion over the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, all wild animals on land, and everything that creeps on the earth.'... 'Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it,...'" certainly sounds more like an argument for anthropocentrism than for the intrinsic value for all of God's creation. It was this thesis - that the *Bible* sanctions anthropocentrism and is to be blamed for the ecological crisis, famously formulated in Lynn White's 1967 *Science* paper - which called forth the debate in theological circles.

To preclude a misunderstanding, repudiating the theological argument for the absolute intrinsic value of nature does not imply that we should do away with the *Bible,* with all of religion, and with God. The theological argument, as it is presented here, depends on understanding the *Bible literally.* Taken literally, *Genesis* has, as we argued, been proven empirically false. An argument for the absolute value of nature which is built on empirically false premises is a faulty argument.

There is, however, a well-known distinction between *"belief'* and *"faith"* in the philosophy of religion which advocates another understanding of religion and religious texts. According to this distinction, religious statements which describe the origin of the earth and life on earth, for example, should not be misunderstood as expressing beliefs, empirical hypotheses which are on a par with and must compete with scientific hypotheses. Instead, religious statements should be understood as expressions of "faith," which denotes a basic practical attitude to the world and your life as a whole. This attitude is best captured by metaphors, like the world and your life being a "gift" to which you respond with "gratitude" to the "creator" of the world (Kambartel, 1989b).

In section IL, seven, the meaning of life and the true joy of living argument, we in fact argued in favor of this religious attitude to the world and human life as a whole. Our argument was meant to show that this religious attitude is the eudaemonically best attitude for human beings to assume in the face of the fatecharacter of life. The argument made no use of any absolute or transcendent "knowledge," or of a transcendent God who created the universe or of a divine order of values. It also did not argue

for the absolute value of nature but for its epistemically anthropocentric, eudaemonic intrinsic value ("sacredness").

If religious texts, like the *Bible* or the *Koran,* are understood metaphorically, as expressions of faith, much can be learned from them about human eudaemonia and the meaning of life and the world. Religious practices like regular praying, singing, dancing, and meditation help to attain and keep this knowledge. Our criticism of the theological argument was, to sum up, directed only against a certain absolute or transcendent understanding of religion, not against religion as such. On a nontranscendent understanding of religion no absolute value for nature, however, follows.

Six: Summary of Part IV.

Part IV. presents five arguments for respecting the good of nature for its own sake. The first three *extensionalist* arguments argue for the *moral intrinsic value* of nature. The following two *absolute* arguments argue for the *absolute intrinsic value* of nature.

The *pathocentric argument, IV, one,* extends moral respect for the physical and emotional *well-being of* human beings to *sentient animals.* Six objections to the pathocentric argument are raised and rejected. The first objection holds that sentient *animals lack interests,* because they lack language, and that without interests they do not qualify for moral standing. This objection is answered by a wide definition of the term "interest," which does not presuppose linguistic ability. According to this definition, a being b has an interest in x if x contributes to b's (subjective) good life.

The following two objections, the *contractualist* and the *Kantian objection,* claim that the pathocentric argument is invalid. From a contractualist understanding, moral respect for the good life of all others includes only the good life of those who are parties to a contract. A Kantian understanding recognizes only the good life of autonomous, rational, or discursive subjects.

In response to the *contractualist objection,* two standard criticisms of contractualist moral theory are brought, the first urging that contractualism misses the central element of our moral culture, namely, that the good life of others is accorded *intrinsic value,* the second pointing to the problems contractualism has with accounting for moral intuitions regarding the so-called human marginal cases (fetuses, babies, the insane, the mentally handicapped, and others), who, like animals, cannot be parties to a contract.

In response to the *Kantian objection,* a version of Kantianism is defended which can include sentient animals in the moral universe. We charge versions of Kantianism which exclude sentient animals with confusing one or more of the following three meanings of universality: 1. the universality of performative consensus versus the universality of insight, 2. the universality of insight versus the universality of the material of insight, and 3. the universality of moral duty versus the universality of the material of moral duty. On the basis of the last distinction, we suggest a differentiation between moral rights in a weak sense which animals have, and moral rights in a strong sense which animals may not have.

The *anti-egalitarian objection* to the pathocentric argument maintains that although the interests of animals are of some moral importance, they are of less moral importance than the interests of reflective, rational, moral human beings. Five rationales for this are discussed and found to be unconvincing. A utilitarian egalitarianism of inter-

ests which gives reflective, rational, moral subjects more moral rights than animals is rejected in favor of a Kantian egalitarianism of dignity which gives animals (where at all applicable) the same moral rights.

The *"First Comes the Food, then Come the Morals "* objection argues that the pathocentric argument is naively harmonistic, that there is a bloody antagonism of interests between animals and human beings, and that where there is such a bloody antagonism moral norms are not called for. In response to this objection, it is claimed that the objection does not accord with the realities of the human-animal relationship in the twentieth century, which leaves plenty of room for moral norms, for instance for vegetarianism.

Lastly, the *policing nature objection* points to the absurd consequences which seem to follow from the pathocentric argument, namely that we are obliged to relieve the suffering of wild animals by protecting prey from predators and building hospitals for injured wild animals. To invalidate this objection, we argue that such large-scale policing nature would lead to more rather than less animal and human suffering, by upsetting countless ecological relations. Thus large-scale policing nature is not implied by the pathocentric argument.

The *teleological argument, IV., two,* extends moral respect for the ends, the projects, the agency good of human beings to *teleological nature.* The teleological argument, however, is criticized for working with an ambiguous notion of "end." Once the two meanings of "end," the practical and the functional meaning, are distinguished, it becomes apparent that nature (with the exception of some higher animals) is not a teleological agent. Two further considerations which claim that the *complexity* or the *autonomy* of nature's functional organization calls for moral respect are repudiated.

The *reverence for life argument, IV., three,* extends moral respect for the *life of* human beings to *animate nature.* In criticism of this argument, the reverence for life ethics is revealed to be a simplistic misunderstanding of human moral culture, firstly, by looking at moral reflections on suicide and euthanasia and, secondly, by asking why the standard criteria of "biological life" (reproduction, metabolism, and mutageneity) should have intrinsic value rather than some other set of criteria, for example complexity and equilibrium. We claim that computers could be built which satisfy all three classical criteria for "biological life" but to which we would not only not accord moral standing, but which we would also not call "alive." This last point prompts us to search for an alternative definition of "life" through perception or sentience. We then turn to the question of *how moral respect for life can be justified on the basis of a good life ethics,* an ethics the basic formula of which is that you should respect the *good* life of all others. The two major routes to justify the moral right to life seem to be: the future orientation argument and the privation of future good life argument. The *future orientation argument* holds that respect for life derives from respect for the projects someone has for the future. "Beings of the present" lacking future orientation, lack also a moral right to life. The *privation of future good life argument* does not require that a being have a perspective on its future, but only that we know it could have a positive

future. The privation argument is rejected for leading to absurd consequences, the duty to propagate among others. This means that the painless killing of sentient animals without future orientation is morally justifiable. This consequence cannot, however, be automatically transferred to the question of the killing of human beings without future orientation since supplementary considerations, the entirety consideration and the brutalization argument, come into play.

The *following nature argument, IV., four,* suggests moral extensionalism is simply human arrogance, because it implies that the universe was devoid of value before human beings appeared and will again be devoid of value after they are gone. To overcome such an arrogant stance, we must, the argument asserts, discover the higher value order of nature according to which biodiversity, stability, age, and other features of nature are of absolute value. The fundamental mistake which underlies this argument is that there are two possible reasons why people talk only about what is of value to people, the first is arrogance - they believe themselves to be the "crown of creation" - the second is that values are always values to valuers and that no other moral valuers other than human beings exist. The second reason is valid and the accusation of arrogance is therefore out of place. We argue that nature is not a valuer and that there are no values-as-such and that, even if nature were a valuer and there were values-as-such, we should not follow these values blindly. These values could be malicious or unjust and, to exclude this possibility, we are referred back to the human moral value perspective. This establishes the inescapability of epistemic moral anthropocentrism. Since epistemic moral *androcentrism* (male-centeredness) is not inescapable, we draw attention to an important lack of analogy between the concepts of "anthropocentrism" and "sexism," which are so often claimed to be analogous in the nature-ethical literature. Stability, complexity, and so on are not absolute intrinsic values, but they could still be thought to be moral intrinsic values. That they are not moral intrinsic values either, is demonstrated by such counterexamples as the complexity of atomic bombs and of the AIDS virus or the stability of totalitarian regimes.

The *theological argument, IV., five,* parallels the previous argument and merely substitutes "God" for "nature." Thus it is open to the same criticisms: There is no valuer called "God" who created the universe and appointed humanity as steward over his creation. And even if there were, we should not follow this God blindly, but assess this God's values in terms of our human moral value perspective. The well-known distinction in the philosophy of religion between "belief' and "faith" suggests a different understanding of religion and religious texts, namely as metaphorical expressions of a certain practical attitude toward the world and life as a whole (faith). This alternative understanding does not, however, lead to any absolute value for nature, but only to sacredness in the nontranscendent sense (see section II., seven).

In conclusion, our review of physiocentric arguments for nature conservation is that the pathocentric argument justifies moral respect for sentient animals while the teleological argument justifies moral respect for certain higher animals but not for lower animals, plants, ecosystems, and the rest of nature. The reverence for life argument is

an unconvincing argument. Respect for life must be grounded on respect for good life and, more particularly, respect for future projects. Animals with future projects have a moral right to life, animals and plants without such projects have no moral right to life. The two absolute arguments are both untenable. Thus moral respect for nature for nature's sake is restricted to sentient and teleological animals.

Conclusion

The question with which we started our inquiry into the ethics of nature was, Is nature of intrinsic value or is it only of instrumental value? Should the ethics of nature be anthropocentric or physiocentric?

The key to answering this question involved resisting the usual reductionist identification of "anthropocentrism" with "instrumental value for nature" and "physiocentrism" with "absolute value for nature." Between these two distortions, *instrumentally-truncated anthropocentrism* and *absolute physiocentrism,* lies the truly important terrain of enlightened anthropocentrism and extensionalist physiocentrism

Enlightened anthropocentrism does not reduce nature to an instrument for human pleasures but accords nature various kinds of eudaemonic intrinsic value: aesthetic intrinsic value, *Heimat* value, sacredness. *Extensionalist physiocentrism* does not accept the absurdity of absolute values which are of value to nobody but extends elements of human moral culture, notably respect for the well-being of others, to nature.

Since virtually the entire appeal of absolute physiocentrism rests on the failure of instrumentally-truncated anthropocentrism to account for the richness of our attitudes and feelings toward nature, absolute physiocentrism loses its appeal once we explore the intermediate terrain of enlightened anthropocentrism and extensionalist physiocentrism. On the basis of these two approaches, the whole range of human attitudes and feelings toward nature, including reverence for the sacredness of nature, the non-instrumental attitude characteristic of the aesthetic contemplation of nature, and the disgust for the maltreatment of animals, can be made sense of and justified.

What then is the *value of nature?* Nature has *instrumental value* for the satisfaction of basic human needs (IL, one), for physical and emotional well-being (IL, two and four), and for training moral and eudaemonic competence (IL, six). Nature has *eudaemonic intrinsic value* in the sense of aesthetic intrinsic value (IL, three), *Heimat* value (II., five), and sacredness (IL, seven). There is also *moral intrinsic value* in nature: The good of sentient animals (IV., one) and of teleological animals (IV., two) has moral intrinsic value. There is nothing in nature, as indeed there is nothing in the world, of *absolute value.*

Should the ethics of nature be *anthropocentric or physiocentric?* The ethics of nature should not be anthropocentric in the instrumentally-truncated sense but neither should it be anthropocentric in the extensional sense. Rather, it should be moderately physiocentric, more precisely *pathocentric.* The ethics of nature must, however, remain *anthropocentric in the epistemic sense.*

Those who press for a radical change, a paradigm shift, in our moral attitude toward nature, in our world-view, and brand anthropocentrism as the source of all ecological evil in the world are therefore wrong. When they condemn the "domination" or "rape" of nature by humanity, they employ a language which is out of place. There is nothing bad about orienting our conduct toward nature based on the good of those beings, animal and human, who have a subjective good, who now live, and who will in the future live on the earth. The world as it is presently politically, legally, and economically organized does not correspond with this standard. The moral challenge the ethics of nature poses to politics, law, and economics is to make it correspond more to this standard rather than trying to overcome it.

[Back Matter]

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