

2013

Theological Foundations for an Ethics of Cosmocentric Transfiguration: Navigating the Eco- Theological Poles of Conservation, Transfiguration, Anthropocentrism, and Cosmocentrism with Regard to the Relationship Between Humans and Individual Nonhuman Animals

Ryan Patrick McLaughlin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

McLaughlin, R. (2013). Theological Foundations for an Ethics of Cosmocentric Transfiguration: Navigating the Eco-Theological Poles of Conservation, Transfiguration, Anthropocentrism, and Cosmocentrism with Regard to the Relationship Between Humans and Individual Nonhuman Animals (Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/913>

This Immediate Access is brought to you for free and open access by Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection. For more information, please contact phillips@duq.edu.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR AN ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC
TRANSFIGURATION: NAVIGATING THE ECO-THEOLOGICAL POLES OF
CONSERVATION, TRANSFIGURATION, ANTHROPOCENTRISM, AND
COSMOCENTRISM WITH REGARD TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
HUMANS AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Ryan Patrick McLaughlin

May 2013

Copyright by
Ryan Patrick McLaughlin

2013

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR AN ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC
TRANSFIGURATION: NAVIGATING THE ECO-THEOLOGICAL POLES OF
CONSERVATION, TRANSFIGURATION, ANTHROPOCENTRISM, AND
COSMOCENTRISM WITH REGARD TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
HUMANS AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

By

Ryan Patrick McLaughlin

Approved March 25, 2013

Daniel Scheid, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Theology
(Committee Chair)

Anna Floerke Scheid, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Theology
(Committee Member)

James Bailey, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Theology
(Committee Chair)

James C. Swindal, Ph.D.
Dean, McNulty College and
Graduate School of Liberal Arts
Professor of Philosophy

Maureen R. O'Brien, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Theology
Professor of Theology

ABSTRACT

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR AN ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC
TRANSFIGURATION: NAVIGATING THE ECO-THEOLOGICAL POLES OF
CONSERVATION, TRANSFIGURATION, ANTHROPOCENTRISM, AND
COSMOCENTRISM WITH REGARD TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
HUMANS AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

By

Ryan Patrick McLaughlin

May 2013

Dissertation supervised by Daniel Scheid, Ph.D.

In the past forty years, there has been an unprecedented explosion of theological writings regarding the place of the nonhuman creation in ethics. The purpose of this dissertation is to propose a taxonomy of four paradigms of eco-theological thought that will categorize these writings and facilitate the identification, situation, and constructive development of the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration. This taxonomy takes shape within the tensions of three theological foundations: cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology. These tensions establish two categorical distinctions between, on the one hand, conservation and transfiguration, and, on the other, anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism. The variations within these poles yield the four paradigms.

The first paradigm is anthropocentric conservation, represented by Thomas Aquinas. It maintains that humanity bears an essentially unique dignity and

eschatological *telos* that renders the nonhuman creation resources for human use *in via* toward that *telos*. The second is cosmocentric conservation, represented by Thomas Berry. It maintains that humanity is part of a cosmic community of intrinsic worth that demands protection and preservation, not human manipulation or eschatological redemption. The third is anthropocentric transfiguration, represented by Orthodox theologians such as Dumitru Staniloae. It maintains that humans are priests of creation charged with the task of recognizing the cosmos as the eternal sacrament of divine love and using it to facilitate communion among themselves and with God. The fourth is cosmocentric transfiguration, represented by both Jürgen Moltmann and Andrew Linzey. It maintains that humans are called to become proleptic witnesses to an eschatological hope for peace that includes the intrinsically valuable members of the cosmic community.

Cosmocentric transfiguration, while under-represented and underdeveloped, provides a unique opportunity to affirm both scientific claims about the nature of the cosmos and the theological hope for redemption. In addition, it offers a powerful vision to address the current ecological crisis with regard to humanity's relationship to both individual nonhuman life forms and the cosmos at large. This vision calls for humans to protest the mechanisms of death, suffering, and predation by living at peace, to whatever extent context permits, with all individual creatures while at the same time preserving the very system they protest by protecting the integrity of species, eco-systems, and the environment at large. These findings warrant further research regarding the viability of cosmocentric transfiguration, in particular its exegetical warrant in scripture, its foundations in traditional voices of Christian thought, its interdisciplinary potential for integration of the sciences, and its internal coherency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the invaluable help of my director, Dr. Daniel Scheid, as well as the consideration of my readers, Dr. Anna Floerke Scheid and Dr. James Bailey.

This work was made possible by the generous McAnulty Dissertation Fellowship Award.

I personally thank my family and friends, who supported me in this work. A special acknowledgement goes to Melissa McLaughlin, Brenda Colijn, Casey Kustra, Mary Ann McLaughlin, and J. Paul Pepper, for reading sections of this work and contributing to its final form.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Melissa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	iv
Dedication	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
SITUATING THE PROJECT	3
CLASSIFICATIONS OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS	3
CLASSIFICATIONS OF ANIMAL ETHICS	13
AIM AND SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT WITHIN THE FIELD OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS	17
THREE THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS FOR A NEW TAXONOMY OF ECO- THEOLOGICAL ETHICS	18
WHY THESE THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS?	18
COSMOLOGY	20
<i>The Goodness of Creation</i>	22
<i>The Fallenness/Incompleteness of Creation</i>	23
ANTHROPOLOGY	34
ESCHATOLOGY	42
<i>The Scope of the Eschatological Community</i>	42
<i>Eschatology and History</i>	45
<i>Eschatology and Ethics</i>	48

<i>Continuity and Discontinuity between the Present and the New Creation</i>	49
<i>In Sum</i>	50
FUNDAMENTAL TENSIONS AMONG COSMOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND	
ESCHATOLOGY	51
ANTHROPOCENTRISM VERSUS COSMOCENTRISM	52
<i>Defining the Terms</i>	53
<i>Why not Theocentrism?</i>	58
CONSERVATION VERSUS TRANSFIGURATION	62
FOUR PARADIGMS OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS	64
THE FOUR PARADIGMS IN OUTLINE	64
THE PRIMARY UNIT OF MORAL CONSIDERATION: PARTICULAR-CENTRIC VS.	
GENERAL-CENTRIC	67
RATIONALE FOR ENGAGING PARTICULAR THEOLOGIANS	
AND PROJECT OUTLINE	75
WHY THESE THEOLOGIANS?	75
PROJECT OUTLINE	77
OTHER METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS	79
ANIMAL-TALK	80
THE DANGERS (AND PROMISES) OF PROPOSING A TAXONOMY	81
THE SUPERIORITY OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION?	82
CHAPTER 1 - SITUATING COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION:	
EXPLORING THE OTHER PARADIGMS	83
ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION: HUMAN COMMUNITY AND	

NONHUMAN RESOURCES	83
THOMAS AQUINAS’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF ANTHROPOCENTRIC	
CONSERVATION	84
<i>The Controversy over Aquinas’s Eco-Theological Contribution</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Theological Foundations for Aquinas’s Anthropocentrism</i>	<i>92</i>
<i>Theological Foundations for Aquinas’s Conservationism</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>An Eco-Theological Ethics of Anthropocentric Conservation</i>	<i>100</i>
ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS ...	102
ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION IN SUMMATION	103
COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION: A GOOD AND ORDERED COMMUNITY	
OF CREATION	104
THOMAS BERRY’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC	
CONSERVATION	106
<i>The Cosmocentrism of the “New Story of the Universe”</i>	<i>107</i>
<i>Conservation of a Cosmos without Need of Redemption</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>An Eco-Theological Ethics of Cosmocentric Conservation</i>	<i>116</i>
COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS	121
COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION IN SUMMATION	123
ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION: THE COSMOS AS THE ETERNAL	
SACRAMENT	124
DEVELOPED FOUNDATIONS IN MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR	125
CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOX THOUGHT	129
<i>Transfiguration in the Schema of Creation, Fall, and Redemption</i>	<i>130</i>

<i>Anthropocentrism in the Schema of Creation, Fall, and Redemption</i>	136
<i>An Eco-Theological Ethics of Anthropocentric Transfiguration</i>	143
ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN	
ANIMALS	145
ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN SUMMATION	147
ANOTHER OPTION: COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS	
THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS	148
CHAPTER 2 – COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN THE	
THEOLOGY OF JÜRGEN MOLTMANN: THE ADVENT OF A	
MAXIMALLY INCLUSIVE ESCHATOLOGICAL PANENTHEISM	152
JÜRGEN MOLTMANN: A BRIEF SKETCH	153
PERTINENT DIMENSIONS OF MOLTMANN’S THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	154
THE SOCIAL TRINITY’S HISTORY WITH THE WORLD	155
<i>The Trinity as Social Trinity</i>	155
<i>The Social Trinity as Open Trinity</i>	158
THE CREATION AS DYNAMIC AND TELEOLOGICAL	159
<i>The Dynamism of God’s Creation</i>	160
<i>The Community of God’s Creation</i>	164
<i>The Teleological Nature of God’s Creation</i>	167
EVIL AS SUFFERING AND DEATH	169
<i>Protology and the Fall</i>	169
<i>Suffering, Death, Evolution, and Redemption</i>	171
CHRIST AS THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TURNING POINT	176

<i>The Cross as Trinitarian Contradiction</i>	177
<i>The Eschatological Promise and the Resurrection</i>	179
<i>Christ’s Future as the Redemption of Evolution</i>	181
PNEUMATOLOGY AS BOTH DIVINE IMMANENCE	
AND ESCHATOLOGICAL ADVENT	182
<i>The Spirit as Divine Immanence</i>	183
<i>The Spirit as Prolepsis of God’s Future</i>	184
ESCHATOLOGY AS MAXIMALLY INCLUSIVE PANENTHEISM	186
<i>The Redemption of Time and Space: Eschatological Panentheism</i>	187
<i>The Maximally Inclusive Eschatological Community of Creation</i>	193
<i>“Already” and “Not Yet” Versus Advent and Novum</i>	198
ECCLESIOLOGY AS HOPE AND MISSION	201
MOLTMANN’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC	
TRANSFIGURATION	203
COSMOCENTRISM AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY	204
(CONSERVATIONIST) LAW AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY	206
TRANSFIGURATION AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY	208
<i>The Law, Nature, and (New) Creation</i>	209
<i>The Law of New Creation and Historical Praxis</i>	211
MOLTMANN’S COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL	
NONHUMAN ANIMALS	212
MOLTMANN’S COSMOCENTRISM AND THE HUMAN UNIQUENESS	213
<i>Moltmann and the Image of God</i>	213

<i>Humans, the Image of God, and the Nonhuman Creation</i>	214
<i>Human Dignity and Cosmic Dignity</i>	215
COSMOCENTRISM AND THE RIGHTS OF (INDIVIDUAL) NONHUMAN ANIMALS	216
HUMANITY AS THE PROLEPTIC WITNESS TO A PARTICULAR	
ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE	217
<i>The Church Revisited</i>	218
<i>The New Law of Resurrection and Transfigurative Ethics</i>	219
<i>Moltmann’s Inconsistency: The New Law of Resurrection</i>	
<i>and Meat-Eating</i>	220
IN SUM	222
CONCLUSION	223
CHAPTER 3 – COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF	
ANDREW LINZEY: THE HUMAN ROLE AS PROLEPTIC WITNESS	
TO THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM	225
ANDREW LINZEY: A BRIEF SKETCH	225
LINZEY’S THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	228
THE CENTRALITY OF THE TRINITY	228
THE GOD WHO SUFFERS	230
COSMOLOGY: THIS IS OUR FATHER’S WORLD	232
PROTOLOGY AND THE FALL: ORIGINAL HARMONY AND THE DISRUPTION	
OF NATURE	234
<i>The Essentiality of the Doctrine of the Fall</i>	234
<i>The Fall and the Law of Nature</i>	237

<i>The Etiology of Nature’s Corruption</i>	238
<i>In Sum</i>	242
ESCHATOLOGY: THE SENTIENT-INCLUSIVE PEACEABLE KINGDOM	243
<i>Creation and Redemption</i>	243
<i>Sentient-Inclusive Eschatology</i>	244
<i>Eschatology, History, and Ethics</i>	246
CHRISTOLOGY: THE BEARER OF THE KINGDOM	249
<i>The Incarnation and God’s Cosmic Eschatological Embrace</i>	249
<i>The Incarnation, Suffering, and Liberation</i>	250
<i>In Sum</i>	252
PNEUMATOLOGY: THE IMMANENCE OF THE DIVINE	252
ANTHROPOLOGY: THE PROLEPTIC WITNESS OF THE KINGDOM OF THE	
SUFFERING GOD	254
<i>Human Uniqueness and Moral Differentiation</i>	254
<i>Linzey’s Functional Anthropocentrism</i>	257
<i>Eschatological Witness: Possibilities and Limitations</i>	262
LINZEY’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC	
TRANSFIGURATION	264
MORALLY RELEVANT GRADATIONS OF BEING	264
THE STATUS OF NON-SENTIENT, NONHUMAN LIFE	266
WHAT OF SPECIES, ECOSYSTEMS, AND THE EVOLUTIONARY SYSTEM?	269
LINZEY’S COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL	
NONHUMAN ANIMALS	270

THE NATURE OF LINZEY’S CONCERN FOR INDIVIDUAL, SENTIENT NONHUMAN ANIMALS	270
<i>The Language of Rights and Its Foundations</i>	270
<i>Deontology or Utilitarianism?</i>	272
<i>The Sentience of Nonhuman Animals</i>	274
<i>The Right to Life Versus the Right to Non-Suffering</i>	276
MANNERS OF PROLEPTIC WITNESS	277
<i>Living in a Fallen World</i>	277
<i>Nonhuman Animal Experimentation</i>	279
<i>Hunting</i>	281
<i>Fur-Trapping and Farming</i>	284
<i>Vegetarianism</i>	285
<i>Letting Be</i>	290
<i>Against Institutionalized Suffering</i>	294
SOME ISSUES IN LINZEY’S THEOLOGICAL ETHICS	295
AN INADEQUATE APPEAL TO THEOCENTRISM	296
THEOS-RIGHTS AND THE LANGUAGE OF “GIFT”	297
THE INCARNATION, THE ESCHATON, AND NON-SENTIENT DEATH	298
CONCLUSION	299
CHAPTER 4 – TOWARD A VISION OF COSMOCENTRIC	
TRANSFIGURATION: THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS,	
CHALLENGES, AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES	301
JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN AND ANDREW LINZEY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS	301

THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS	302
ETHICAL ANALYSIS	307
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION	309
THEOLOGY PROPER: GOD AS THE COMMUNITY OF LOVE	310
COSMOLOGY: THE GOD OF SUFFERING AND PURSUING LOVE	311
PROTOLOGY AND THE FALL: COSMIC CONSECRATION, COSMIC ISOLATION	312
CHRISTOLOGY: VICTORY OVER ISOLATION, THE RESTORATION OF	
CONSECRATION	324
PNEUMATOLOGY: THE SANCTIFYING BREATH OF ETERNAL LIFE	326
ESCHATOLOGY: COSMIC RESTORATION AND COMMUNION	328
TIME AND ETERNITY: THE ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EVERY MOMENT	331
ANTHROPOLOGY: PRIESTS OF RESTORATION, SACRAMENTS OF	
ESCHATOLOGICAL COMMUNION	334
POSSIBLE CRITIQUES OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION	337
COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS UNBIBLICAL	337
COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS A REJECTION OF TRADITION	340
FALLENNESS AND ESCHATOLOGY AS A REJECTION OF SCIENCE AND	
DENIGRATION OF NATURE	346
THE RESURRECTION AND ETERNITY OF INDIVIDUAL ANIMALS AS	
NONSENSICAL	352
THE HOPE FOR VEGETARIAN LIONS AS THE DISSOLUTION OF THE	
LION SPECIES	357
ESCHATOLOGY AS A SOCIAL PROGRAM DOOMED TO FAILURE	363

TOWARD AN ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION	365
THE TENSIONS OF A CREATION <i>IN VIA</i> AND THE ETHICS THAT	
PERTAINS TO IT	366
<i>What Does “Necessity” Mean?</i>	367
<i>Proportionalism and Virtuous Violations of the Good</i>	372
PRESERVATION AND PROTEST: COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND	
ITS CONCRETE APPLICATION IN HISTORY	376
<i>What of Individual Sentient Creatures?</i>	377
<i>What about Individual Non-Sentient Animals and Plants?</i>	379
<i>What of the Cosmos, Species, Eco-Systems, and the</i>	
<i>Mechanisms of Evolution?</i>	381
CONCLUSION	385
CONCLUSION: COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS THE	
“BEST OF BOTH WORLDS”	388
RESTATING THE PARADIGMS	388
RESTATING THE SYSTEMATIC CONSTRUCTION OF	
COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION	392
CONCLUSIONS BASED ON FINDINGS	394
<i>Evaluation of the New Taxonomy</i>	394
<i>Evaluation of Systematic Construction of Cosmocentric Transfiguration</i>	395
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY	396
THE FINAL ANALYSIS	399
BIBLIOGRAPHY	401

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table I-1	28
Table 1-1	148
Table 1-2	149
Table 3-1	257
Table 4-1	317
Table C-1	391
Table C-2	391

INTRODUCTION

In the late twentieth century, many accusations have been leveled against Christianity regarding its ecological viability. In his now ubiquitous essay, Lynn White writes that Western Christianity is dominantly disparaging to the nonhuman creation and largely to blame for modern abuses of it.¹ Peter Singer lays at the feet of Christianity the dismissive attitude toward sentient nonhuman life forms.² Others concur, at least in part, with these accusations.³

In response to such claims, theologians have sought to retrieve the more promising aspects of Christian history with regard to ecological concern. Numerous writers have offered detailed defenses of thinkers like Augustine and Aquinas against indictments that they are callously anthropocentric.⁴ Eastern Orthodox theologians have

¹ Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," reprinted in *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*, R. J. Berry, editor (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-varsity Press, 2000), 31-42.

² See Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York, NY: Avon Books, 1975), 197-209.

³ For example, though Richard Ryder notes the potential for Christianity to espouse concern for nonhuman animals and the traces of this potential in the lives of certain saints, he ultimately criticizes Western Christianity's anthropocentric tendencies. See Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes towards Speciesism* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989), chapter 3. Paul Waldau, while acknowledging the complexity of the Christian tradition, still maintains that its dominant position has been that of speciesism. See Paul Waldau, *The Specter of Speciesism: Buddhist and Christian Views of Animals* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapters 8 and 9. Robert Wennberg, while acknowledging the diversity of opinion regarding nonhuman animals in the early church, nonetheless claims that Augustine establishes a legacy of anthropocentrism that continues to dominate today. Robert N. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 302-7. See also Charles Birch, "Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature," in *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*, Charles Birch, William Eakin, and Jay McDaniel, editors (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); John Passmore, "The Treatment of Animals," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36, 2 (1975), 195-218.

⁴ Medieval thinkers, and most commonly Aquinas, have often received from modern scholars critique regarding their view of the cosmos. On this point, see my discussion of Aquinas in chapter 1. Roger D. Sorrell argues that the complexities of the views of medieval thinkers concerning nature "have been subjected to a very great deal of partisan distortion and mythologizing." He maintains that "the legacy of this treatment is very much with us." See Roger D. Sorrell, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988), 3. Sorrell traces this history of misreading to the work of Edward Gibbon, who denigrated monasticism with the accusation of the demonization of nature. *Ibid.*, 3-4. For his part, Sorrell attempts to draw out the complexity of the medieval view of the corporeal world, noting the wide diversity of views both within and without the monastic tradition. See *ibid.*, 9-38. While certain aspects of these views do

re-emphasized the historical notion of creation's sacramentality.⁵ This position has gained favor among contemporary Western theologians as well.⁶ Other modern writers have acknowledged the less favorable aspects of Christian history while critically retrieving its positive ecological features.⁷

Collectively, these responses have yielded an unprecedented explosion of theological writings regarding the place of the nonhuman creation in ethics over the last forty years. Within this context, the purpose of this dissertation is two-fold. First, it proposes a taxonomy consisting of four paradigms of eco-theological ethics that will categorize these writings. Second, in conjunction with this taxonomy, it aims to facilitate the identification, situation, and constructive development of one of these paradigms, which remains under-engaged in the field.

betray an attitude that today is widely perceived as negative (ibid., 9) one of the more constant themes within this array of views is an appreciation for the beauty of creation. In an even stronger fashion than Sorrell, Elizabeth Johnson maintains that “appreciation of the natural world in Christian thought reached its zenith in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries” when “medieval theologians applied themselves to constructing an all-embracing view of the world.” Elizabeth A. Johnson, “Losing and Finding Creation in the Christian Tradition,” in *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 6. In Johnson's view, it was in the wake of the Enlightenment that the doctrine of creation slipped out of theological focus. Ibid., 8-11.

⁵ For considerations, see Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973); Mathai Kadavil, *The World as Sacrament: Sacramentality of Creation from the Perspectives of Leonardo Boff, Alexander Schmemmann and Saint Ephrem* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); John Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament: Insights from Orthodox Christian Theology and Spirituality,” in *The Orthodox Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, Roger S. Gottlieb, editor (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 92-114.

⁶ See, for instance, John Hart, *Sacramental Commons: Christian Ecological Ethics* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Kevin Irwin, “Sacramentality and the Theology of Creation: A Recovered Paradigm for Sacramental Theology,” *Louvain Studies*, 23 (1998), 159-79; Dorothy McDougal, *The Cosmos as the Primary Sacrament: The Horizon for an Ecological Sacramental Theology* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2003); Theodore Runyon, “The World as the Original Sacrament,” *Worship* 54 6 (1980), 495-511.

⁷ See, for instance, Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985); David Kinsley, *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), chapters 8 and 9. Jame Schaefer offers an historical consideration along these lines—though far less critical than Santmire. See Jame Schaefer, *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic & Medieval Concepts* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009).

SITUATING THE PROJECT

Before delineating my own categorical paradigms, it is pertinent to explore other existing classifications and divisions. This exploration will include both ecological and animal theologies.⁸ It will summarize the state of the question by examining current voices in these fields. In doing so, it will both establish a basic framework for the discussion of eco- and animal theologies and provide an opportunity to justify this project's aims within that framework.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

In their student-focused text on environmental ethics, Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler explore four categories of ecological thought based primarily on the criteria of value and moral consideration.⁹ The first category is anthropocentrism, which intimates the chief or sole relegation of intrinsic value to humans. This category is represented first and foremost by René Descartes, who solidified a sharp and essential dividing line between human life and all nonhuman entities by defining the latter as mere machines. The second category is individualism, which entails the rejection of the relegation of ethical import to species, ecosystems, or the cosmos at large. This category is represented by animal rights advocates such as Tom Regan. The third category is ecocentrism, which places both the earth and the land into the category of intrinsic value. Armstrong and Botzler include both Aldo Leopold's land ethic and Arne Naess's deep ecology here. The fourth category is ecofeminism, which includes the political dismantling of hierarchical claims in favor of an egalitarian view of the cosmos.

⁸ This claim already adumbrates one major divide in the field. Scholars typically differentiate between environmental/ecological theologians and animals theologies. See below.

⁹ The following is taken from Susan J. Armstrong and Richard G. Botzler, *Environmental Ethics: Divergence and Convergence*, third edition (New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2003), 271-463.

A similar centric and value-based distinction is offered by William French in his categorization of contemporary Catholic thought.¹⁰ French highlights two basic categories: subject-centered and creation-centered approaches to ecological ethics. Subject-centered approaches emphasize the significance of both human subjects (including the capacities of their being) and human history.¹¹ French categorizes Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in this category for his optimistic evaluation of human progress in the evolutionary emergence of the universe.¹² He also includes the writings of Vatican II, stating that “the council follows the generally anthropocentric scale of the natural law tradition.”¹³ Finally, he includes both the political theologian Johannes Baptist Metz and Pope John Paul II on account of their interest in transforming the world for common human benefit.¹⁴

While there are variations within this category (French distinguishes between Chardin’s “sovereignty-within” model and the “sovereignty-over” model of the other voices), French draws out a basic commonality: both models bear

(1) A processive, eschatological focus, (2) a *homo faber* anthropology, (3) a wide-ranging endorsement of technology, industry, and science, and (4) a buoyant optimism regarding our possibilities for progress.¹⁵

Though he recognizes the value of an affirmation of individual human subjects, French ultimately criticizes the subject-centered approach for its “triumphalist endorsement of technology, economic development, and historical transformation.”¹⁶

¹⁰ See William C. French, “Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms in Recent Catholic Thought,” *The Journal of Religion*, 70/1 (January 1990), 48-72.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

¹² *Ibid.*, 53-54. While French acknowledges that Chardin is “a creation-centered thinker,” he maintains that he is the “dean of Catholic subject-centered theology because of his insistence that humanity is called to further the ‘personalization’ of the planet by ‘building the earth.’” *Ibid.*, 53.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 55-57.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 58.

Creation-centered theologies “do not dispense with emphasizing subjectivity and history; rather, they highlight their interrelation with embodiment and creation.”¹⁷ Under this category, French includes the creation spirituality of Thomas Berry, the feminism of Rosemary Radford Ruether, and the liberation theology evident in the Filipino bishops’ “Pastoral Letter on Ecology.”¹⁸ Berry replaces a *homo faber* (“human as creator”) anthropology with one in which humans must live with, rather than transform, the earth. Ruether replaces an anthropocentric hierarchy of value with a holistically cosmic egalitarianism. The Filipino bishops call for preservation of the earth rather than its transformation. Again, French detects two sub-categories: the stewardship model of the Filipino bishops and the “ecological egalitarian” models of Berry and Ruether.¹⁹

Not all classifications center on value. Willis Jenkins offers a soteriological approach. He suggests that Lynn White’s essay regarding Christianity’s culpability for ecological degradation rests on three assumptions concerning religious worldviews: “that they generate social practices, that they should be measured by the criteria of intrinsic value and anthropocentrism, and that salvation stories threaten environmentally benign worldviews.”²⁰ This “remarkably generative thesis set the agenda for Christian environmental theologies in the following decades,”²¹ an agenda that focused on either recovering nonanthropocentric cosmologies or constructing new cosmologies.²² For Jenkins, such an agenda is problematic as it encourages eco-theologians “to downplay

¹⁶ Ibid., 61.

¹⁷ Ibid., 50.

¹⁸ Ibid., 62-68.

¹⁹ Ibid., 69. French opts for the stewardship model.

²⁰ Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11.

²¹ Ibid., 11.

²² Says Jenkins: “By casting suspicion on salvation and organizing debate around criteria of anthropocentrism and nature’s value, White’s assumptions keep the focus away from soteriological roots while at the same time determining the acceptable content of decent worldviews.” Ibid., 12.

talk about salvation” in order to avoid the stigma of anthropocentrism. In response to this problem, Jenkins maps the field of eco-theological thought according to soteriological concepts of grace. In doing so, he seeks to avoid the common use of anthropocentrism as the sole litmus test for viable environmental contributions.

Jenkins employs the notions of sanctification, redemption, and deification to classify eco-theological thought. Drawing on the taxonomical work of the sociologist Laurel Kearns, he traces these soteriological terms to three strategies for environmental ethics. These three strategies are ecojustice, stewardship, and creation spirituality, each of which loosely corresponds to ecclesial traditions.²³

Sanctification corresponds to the strategy of ecojustice, most typically practiced by Roman Catholicism.²⁴ This strategy predicates human duty to the environment on account of its being God’s creation.²⁵ Ecojustice theologians emphasize the integrity of creation, claiming that God’s designed cosmos demands respect from humanity.²⁶ However, it is unclear what respecting creation’s integrity means. Does that integrity include mechanisms of evolution such as predation, suffering, and death? Or are these evils that occur in nature?²⁷ Ultimately, Jenkins seems concerned that ecojustice replaces

²³ Ibid., 18-19.

²⁴ Among the advocates of this view, Jenkins lists the Lutherans Larry Rasmussen and Jürgen Moltmann and the Episcopalian Michael Northcott. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 66-75. Given this choice of interlocutors, it may seem odd that Jenkins links sanctification and ecojustice to Catholicism. However, he argues that Thomas Aquinas provides the best foundation for ecojustice on account of his understanding of the significance of biological diversity. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, chapters 6 and 7. I will engage these chapters of Jenkins’s work in chapter 1.

²⁵ Ibid., 64-66.

²⁶ See *ibid.*, 64-70.

²⁷ On this point, see Jenkins’s discussion on natural evil. *Ibid.*, 70-71. See also Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 8-9.

justice to nature (i.e., creation as it is exists in its present state) with justice to what we hope nature will become (i.e., a protological Eden or an eschatological new creation).²⁸

Sanctification corresponds to the strategy of stewardship, most typically emphasized in Protestant circles.²⁹ Whereas ecojustice emphasizes creation's integrity, advocates of stewardship emphasize God's command to humanity to care for the earth. Humanity is responsible for the earth before God. Jenkins notes that critics of stewardship worry that this responsibility "amounts to religious license for anthropocentric domination."³⁰ This anthropocentrism takes on a functional dimension, frequently linked to the *imago Dei*, taking forms such as obedience to Christ's commands, following Christ's example of kenotic love, or living up to Christ's salvific work.³¹ For Jenkins, this approach risks the same issue as ecojustice; namely, it must answer the question: "does stewardship aim to establish the Kingdom's shalom or to, say, manage for healthy patterns of predation?"³²

Deification corresponds to the strategy of creation spiritualism, most typically embodied in Eastern Orthodoxy.³³ This strategy locates environmental concern in both

²⁸ Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 70-74.

²⁹ See *Ibid.*, 78-80. Jenkins cites thinkers like Calvin DeWitt, Wendell Berry, and John Douglas Hall as advocates of this strategy. He also engages Anabaptist thought. *Ibid.*, chapter 4. He spends most of his time, in later chapters, focusing on the work of Karl Barth. *Ibid.*, chapters 8 and 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 85-86.

³² *Ibid.*, 89.

³³ Jenkins spends most of his initial discussion of this strategy focusing on creation spiritualists like Matthew Fox, Thomas Berry, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 93-108. He does engage Orthodox thought, initially mostly through Maximus the Confessor, Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch, John Zizioulas, and a musing on the sophiologists. See *ibid.*, 108-111. This emphasis continues in his later chapters, one devoted to Maximus and the other to Sergei Bulgakov. I remain unconvinced that most Orthodox theologians would accept either the cosmocentric outlook or the affirmation of a nature unfallen or not in need of actual *eschatological* (by this claim I mean more than existential) transfiguration. It is rather odd that Jenkins notes how ecojustice and stewardship advocates risk longing for something other than nature as it currently exists but makes no mention of Orthodoxy's nearly ubiquitous claim that the cosmos requires eschatological redemption from its fallenness. I also remain unconvinced that Thomas Berry would accept the salvific term deification if it meant anything more than

the communion within the cosmos and between the cosmos and God. Said differently, it is in the relationality—the in between of one and another in a “fully Christian personhood”—that environmental issues arise.³⁴ Says Jenkins, “Environmental laments and redress begin from a primary spiritual communion of humanity and earth, assumed into personal experience with God.”³⁵ This strategy formally arose out of dissatisfaction with the anthropocentric leanings of ecojustice and stewardship.³⁶ Jenkins points to sacramental ecology as an example of this dissatisfaction, noting that it draws the nonhuman creation into liturgical communion.³⁷

Michael Northcott begins tracing the post-Enlightenment rise of secular environmental ethics with the Romantics. From here, he delineates three common paths and advocates the superiority of a fourth. The first is consequentialism, evident in the work of both the animal liberationist Peter Singer and the environmental ethicist Robin Attfield.³⁸ The second path is deontology, evident in the work of the aesthetics environmentalist Eugene Hargrove, the animal rights activist Tom Regan, and the environmental ethicist Holmes Rolston III.³⁹ The third path is ecocentrism, which attempts to establish, through a more mystical approach, the “total integrity of the land, and...the moral significance of ecosystems considered as total communities of

the already existent divine infusion into nature. He would certainly not accept the notion that humans have a salvific role for nature.

³⁴ Ibid., 93.

³⁵ Ibid., 93; also 100-101.

³⁶ Ibid., 96.

³⁷ Ibid., 99-100.

³⁸ Michael Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 93-97. This approach is unsatisfactory in Northcott’s estimation because it is unable to provide a non-subjective valuation of natural systems (e.g., ecosystems). That is, the adjudication of consequences is predicated fully on human estimation. Ibid., 92-93.

³⁹ Ibid., 98-105. Like Singer’s utilitarianism, Northcott argues that Regan’s deontology fails to account for non-sentient life forms and the whole that is comprised of individuals. Ibid., 101-102. Rolston fares better because he emphasizes will and teleology, which allows him to account for more than sentient individuals. Ibid., 103-104.

interdependent life including both humans and non-humans.”⁴⁰ Northcott lists four main advocates and forms of this path: Aldo Leopold and his land ethic, James Lovelock and his Gaia hypothesis, Arne Naess and his deep ecology, and ecofeminism.⁴¹

Northcott’s dissatisfaction with modern and mystical ethical approaches leads him to affirm, in line with the work of the Australian ecofeminist Val Plumwood, a relational ontology in conjunction with a virtue ethics.⁴² The feminist emphasis on relationality fits well within both the Hebrew worldview and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.⁴³ An ethics of virtue places the conversation in the realm of character and being as opposed to act and consequence. Northcott maintains that, together, these views will aid humans to

recover a deeper sense for the relationality of human life to particular ecosystems and parts of the biosphere, and where communities of place foster those virtues of justice and compassion, of care and respect for life, human and non-human, of temperance and prudence in our appetites and desires, which characterise to this day many of those surviving indigenous communities on the last frontiers of the juggernaut of modernity.⁴⁴

Regarding the classification of eco-theological thought, Northcott establishes three fluid terms: humanocentric, theocentric, and ecocentric.⁴⁵ For Northcott, these terms are not about value but rather framework. A humanocentric framework is one that approaches ecological issues with an emphasis on human issues and needs. A theocentric framework considers environmental concerns vis-à-vis God’s relation to the cosmos, emphasizing the import of creation for God and the ethical ramification of this import.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 106.

⁴¹ Ibid., 106-114. Northcott is critical of these mystical approaches because of their “emphasis on self-realisation and the extension of the self to the Whole of nature.” Ibid., 115.

⁴² Ibid., 116-123.

⁴³ Ibid., 120-121.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 122-123.

⁴⁵ See Ibid., chapter 4. Northcott describes the terms as fluid because ethicists and theologians shift back and forth between them. Ibid., 124.

An ecocentric framework develops around the cosmos itself, emphasizing the nonhuman creation in its own right.

Under “humanocentric,” Northcott lists Teilhard de Chardin’s vision of humanity as the pinnacle of evolutionary development, Francis Schaeffer’s evangelical emphasis on humanity as *imago Dei*, Robin Attfield’s accentuation of human stewardship over nature, Eastern Orthodoxy’s understanding as humans as priests of creation, Pope John Paul II’s link between the ecological crisis and human sin, and finally Rosemary Radford Ruether’s ecological critique of patriarchy.⁴⁶ He also links humanocentric approaches with the notion of stewardship.⁴⁷ Under the term “theocentric,” Northcott categorizes Jürgen Moltmann’s emphasis on pneumatological immanence in the cosmos, James Nash’s vision of God’s love that establishes the intrinsic value of the cosmos, Stephen Clark’s incarnational understanding of God’s intimacy with the world, and Andrew Linzey’s emphasis on God’s relation to sentient creatures as the foundation for animal rights.⁴⁸ Lastly, under the term ecocentric, Northcott lists the process theologies of John Cobb and Jay McDaniel, the pantheistic creation spirituality of Matthew Fox, and the divine embodiment metaphor of Sallie McFague.⁴⁹

Another important classification of eco-theological thought is offered by Celia Deane-Drummond.⁵⁰ Her taxonomy is couched within a geographical framework in which she explores and evaluates voices from the North, South, East, and West. She then draws from this array of views to explore pertinent facets of eco-theological thought

⁴⁶ Ibid., 125-141.

⁴⁷ See Ibid., 128.

⁴⁸ See Ibid., 141-147.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 147-161. I am unclear as to why Northcott labels McFague’s eco-theology as eco-centric. By his criteria, it seems she could more easily be classified as theocentric.

⁵⁰ Celia Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008).

(biblical studies, christology, theodicy, pneumatology, eco-feminism, and eschatology) that enable her to begin the construction of her own contribution to the field. Here, my interest is her review of the literature.

Drummond explores three forms of ecological ethics from the Northern hemisphere (which includes “most notably the United States”).⁵¹ These forms include Aldo Leopold’s land ethic; Arne Naess’s deep ecology; and the creation spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, and Thomas Berry.⁵² Drummond’s evaluation of these voices ultimately suggests that they all “fail to consider adequately the issue of global poverty and oppression, alongside the suffering of the planet earth.”⁵³

Leopold’s land ethic “was one that stressed stability, harmony and interdependent relationships.” He thus emphasizes the whole over the individual.⁵⁴ Yet Drummond notes the short-comings and dangers of Leopold’s ethic, including the derivation of an “ought from an is,” the failure to account for the dynamism of cosmic processes in the call to preserve what currently exists, and the risked dissolution of the individual into the cosmic whole.⁵⁵

Deep ecology, which Drummond traces back to Naess, emphasizes the “ultimate norm” of “self-realisation and biocentric equality,” which intimate respectively an acceptance of one’s relational identity within the cosmic community and the affirmation that “all organisms have equal weight and intrinsic value.”⁵⁶ For Drummond such

⁵¹ Ibid., 32.

⁵² Ibid., 32-42.

⁵³ Ibid., 43.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 33-34.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 36.

“sweeping claims...are too hard to endorse” within a cosmos that requires competition amongst various interests.⁵⁷

Creation spirituality, under which Drummond includes Teilhard de Chardin, Matthew Fox, and Thomas Berry, tends toward the affirmation of the natural processes of the cosmos in its emerging existence. Human beings exist only as part of these unfolding processes, as members of the creation community. Critically, Drummond notes that the cosmic affirmation of creation spirituality tends to embrace too easily the violence of evolutionary emergence.⁵⁸

With regard to voices from the South, Drummond admittedly only scratches the surface. Her two basic explorations engage liberation theologians and indigenous thought. She first considers Leonardo Boff’s appropriation of the Gaia hypothesis in conjunction with his critique of Western consumerism. While in his earlier works Boff focused almost exclusively on human needs, his later work establishes the import of human beings in the context of a larger cosmic community.⁵⁹ Even so, Drummond notes that Boff continues to prioritize human needs, a facet of his thought that leaves him open to the ongoing charge of anthropocentrism.⁶⁰ Drummond next examines indigenous ways of thinking, which in her view “seek to stress primarily *identification with the land*, rather than radical economic critique of capitalism through socialist ideology.”⁶¹ Such views tend to emphasize the import of the cosmic whole, including natural cycles. However, they also place human development, including culture, within the scope of those cycles.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 37. Drummond also suggests that deep ecology risks abstraction with its syncretistic combination of religious principles.

⁵⁸ See, for instance, Ibid., 42.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 47-48.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 49.

⁶¹ Here Drummond is obviously comparing this strand of thought to liberation theology. Ibid., 50.

Thus, humans are to participate actively *with* creation *in* creation—a slightly different perspective from a stark conservationist policy.⁶² Drummond’s only critique of indigenous views is their uncritical syncretism and lack of systemization.⁶³

In her examination of contributions from Eastern thought, Drummond basically delineates approaches of Eastern Orthodox eco-theology. She includes the liturgical emphasis of Elizabeth Theokritoff, John Zizioulas’s vision of humans as the priests of creation, the revelatory value of the cosmos as expressed in the work of Kallistos Ware, the sophiology of Sergii Bulgakov, and the monastic and ascetic tradition of Saint Symeon.⁶⁴ Many of these approaches emphasize the sacramentality of the cosmos in which humanity is brought to communion with each other and God.⁶⁵ Drummond’s critique of Orthodox thought tends to focus on certain ambiguities regarding the manner that nonhumans participate in the divine.

Drummond limits her initial engagement with Western thinkers to socio-political writers.⁶⁶ She very briefly explores Northcott’s natural law critique of modernity, Murray Bookchin’s social ecology that critiques capitalistic hierarchies in both human and nonhuman realms in favor of “eco-anarchy,” and Peter Scott’s theological (and more specifically, trinitarian) appropriation of Bookchin’s work.⁶⁷

CLASSIFICATIONS OF ANIMAL ETHICS

In his work, *God, Animals, and Humans*, Robert Wennberg limits the focus of his thesis:

⁶² Ibid., 53.

⁶³ Ibid., 54.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 57-66.

⁶⁵ E.g., as priests, humans offer the cosmos to God, and, in that offering, experience the divine. Ibid., 60. Or again, the expression of divine reason in the order of the cosmos reflects the divine to human intellect. Ibid., 61-62.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 69.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 69-74.

This is a book on animal advocacy. It is not a book on ecology nor is it an attempt to construct an environmental ethic, for animal advocacy and environmentalism are not the same thing. Indeed, according to some, they are not only not the same thing, but they are seriously at odds with each other, so much so that ultimately one will have to choose between the agenda of the animal advocate and that of the environmentalist.⁶⁸

Wennberg is not alone in noting this difference within the larger field of nonhuman ethics,⁶⁹ one which is exacerbated by his acknowledgment that “the environmentalist has a higher standing in the community, both inside and outside the church, than does the animal advocate, who is often viewed with suspicion.”⁷⁰ For Wennberg, the main difference between an environmentalist and an animal advocate pertains to the unit of primary moral concern—more specifically, whether the individual animal has any moral claims.⁷¹

Under the category “animal advocate,” Wennberg notes two general divisions, and subdivisions within each.⁷² The general division is between direct or indirect moral concern.⁷³ The latter category includes Immanuel Kant’s emphasis on personhood, Aquinas’s moral hierarchy, and social contract theory.⁷⁴ The former category includes

⁶⁸ Wennberg, *God, Animals, and Humans*, 29.

⁶⁹ See, for instance, Lisa H. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 13; Stephen Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom: Toward a Better Theology of Nature,” *Soundings* 79/1-2 (Spring/Summer 1996), 239-52; Andrew Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God: Explorations in Animal Theology* (New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2009), 29-44.

⁷⁰ Wennberg, *God, Animals, and Humans*, 30. Wennberg offers three reasons for this difference. First, animal advocacy is linked in the minds of many to violence. Second, “animal advocacy is viewed as anti-scientific.” And third, animal advocacy is always anti-anthropocentrism. *Ibid.*, 30-32.

⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 32-36. Also, Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 21 I will address this point in detail below. It is important to note, as Linzey does, that “not all ecologists are anti-animals and vice versa.” Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 37.

⁷² Wennberg also distinguishes amongst three kinds of environmental ethics. The first is anthropocentric. The second is “sentientism,” which entails that “whatever is sentient, but only what is sentient, has moral standing.” The third is deep ecology. See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 36-42.

⁷³ Regan also makes this general distinction. See Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, chapters 5 and 6.

⁷⁴ Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 119-37.

Regan's animal rights approach, Singer's utilitarianism, Linzey's theos-rights, Hall's vision of stewardship, and various virtue theory approaches.⁷⁵

In the *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, three entries delineate the difference between animal welfare (welfarism) and the animal rights movement. Tom Regan addresses the general difference. "Animal welfare holds that humans do nothing wrong when they use nonhuman animals...if the overall benefits of engaging in these activities outweigh the harms these animals endure."⁷⁶ Animal rights, on the other hand, maintain that "human utilization of nonhuman animals...is wrong in principle and should be abolished in practice."⁷⁷ Regan further connects welfarism to utilitarianism and rights to deontology.⁷⁸ David Sztybel differentiates various welfarist approaches. These variations include efforts to keep exploitative practices humane, the "commonsense animal welfare" in which people offer vague concerns for animal well-being, a more specific and disciplined call for some abolition and some humane exploitation, Peter Singer's liberationist view, the "new welfarism" of many contemporary rights activists, and finally Richard Ryder's refusal to distinguish between rights and welfare.⁷⁹ Gary Francione examines the "new welfarism" of many modern

⁷⁵ Ibid., 137-79. It seems to me that both stewardship and virtue could both fall under direct or indirect moral concern.

⁷⁶ Tom Regan, "Animal Rights," in *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, Marc Bekoff and Carron A. Meaney, editors (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 42.

⁷⁷ Ibid..

⁷⁸ For Regan's detailed thoughts on these divisions, see *The Case for Animal Rights*, chapters 3, 4, 7, and 8.

⁷⁹ David Sztybel, "Distinguishing Animal Rights from Animal Welfare," in *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, Marc Bekoff and Carron A. Meaney, editors (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 44.

rights advocates who promote a progressive approach that begins with welfare and aims (only idealistically) toward rights.⁸⁰

In his work, *The Moral Menagerie*, Marc R. Fellenz traces extensionist animal ethics by categorizing their development within the framework of traditional Western ethical categories. He thus devises a taxonomy of animal ethics by delineating utilitarian, deontological, virtue, and contractual approaches.⁸¹ Utilitarian approaches include the work of Jeremy Bentham and Peter Singer.⁸² Fellenz explores the work of Tom Regan—because he seeks to establish animal *rights*—as a deontological approach.⁸³ As an example of a virtue approach to animal ethics, Fellenz considers Bernard Rollin’s retrieval of Aristotle and Lawrence Becker’s systematic virtue ethics for animals.⁸⁴ Fellenz’s engagement with contractualism focuses on developments of John Rawls’s veil of ignorance and the meaning it might have for animal ethics.⁸⁵

Fellenz juxtaposes these approaches to those of continental philosophy, deep ecology, and ecofeminism, suggesting that these alternatives provide a superior framework to account for the excess with which the animal accosts human thought.⁸⁶ The continental philosophies, for example that of Jacques Derrida, “embody the enigma that the animal presents to philosophy.”⁸⁷ Deep ecologists such as Aldo Leopold, Arne Naess, and Holmes Rolston III provide nuanced visions of reverential living within the

⁸⁰ Gary L. Francione, “Animal Rights and New Welfarism,” in *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, Marc Bekoff and Carron A. Meaney (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 45.

⁸¹ Marc R. Fellenz, *The Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 57-117.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 57-67.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 82-87.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 92-102.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 108-116

⁸⁶ The term “excess” entails that the subject—in this case a nonhuman animal—cannot be conceptually exhausted or mastered by human thought. Such a view is a direct challenge to a Cartesian reduction of the nonhuman animal to a machine.

⁸⁷ Fellenz, *The Moral Menagerie*, 155.

mysteriousness of relational and embodied existence.⁸⁸ Ecofeminists augment deep ecology by providing nuanced visions of an eco-egalitarian worldview that replaces androcentric hierarchies, which remain even in deep ecology.⁸⁹

AIM AND SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT WITHIN THE FIELD OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Between general classifications of eco-theological and animal ethics, there exists a great host of alternatives regarding human engagement with the nonhuman creation. While contemporary authors have offered various means of categorizing these alternatives, there remains a level of ambiguity regarding central tensions in the field. For example, while Jenkins emphasizes soteriology in his erudite classification and French emphasizes the question of intrinsic value in terms of centrism, neither approach engages both dimensions of soteriological *telos* and intrinsic value. Oddly, French seems to equate subject-centered paradigms with transformation and creation-centered paradigms with preservation.⁹⁰ Northcott's approach is helpful in terms of framework, but is somewhat misleading in terms of content (e.g., the common categorization of Ruether and Pope John Paul II as humanocentric). Drummond's survey of the field is also helpful, but does not really offer a taxonomy in terms of comparative ethics. The contrast between ecological ethics and animal ethics with regard to the emphasis of individuals or species/ecosystems makes classification all the more difficult.

What is needed is a taxonomy that accounts for these difficulties. This project aims to address the central tensions I have detected in surveying various theologies of the nonhuman creation and the ethics that these theologies ground. These tensions exist at the level of cosmology (i.e., the status and purpose of the nonhuman creation),

⁸⁸ See *Ibid.*, 161-173.

⁸⁹ See *Ibid.*, 173-183.

⁹⁰ See French, "Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms," 58-59.

anthropology (i.e., the status and purpose of human beings), and eschatology (i.e., the extent of God's redemptive aim for the created order). Collectively, these three theological facets address issues of both salvation and value. They include (and surpass) the somewhat narrow (though still valuable) approaches of Jenkins and French. They furthermore help bridge the gap between ecological ethics and animal ethics within a theological framework. On account of these benefits, this new taxonomy is warranted in the face of an ever-growing corpus of eco-theological writings.

THREE THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS FOR A NEW TAXONOMY OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Here I intend to explain why I find cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology useful for constructing a taxonomy of eco-theological ethics. First, I will explain why I emphasize these particular dimensions. I will then explore each one, focusing on its import for this project.

WHY THESE THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS?

In his effort to develop an eco-theology that is at once faithful to the history of Christian thought and pertinent to the contemporary environmental crisis, Stephen Bouma-Prediger explores the theological and philosophical loci of anthropology, ontology, and theology proper.⁹¹ To facilitate this exploration, he examines the theologies of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler, and Jürgen Moltmann. This examination supports Bouma-Prediger's three-fold theological vision. First, anthropology must reflect a non-dualistic worldview, especially with regard to nature and

⁹¹ See Steven Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology: The Ecological Models of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler, and Jürgen Moltmann* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995).

history.⁹² Second, ontology must be conceived relationally and theocentrically for both human and nonhuman components of the cosmos.⁹³ Third, theology proper must take the form of a doctrine of the social Trinity that rejects both androcentric and anthropocentric hierarchies and recovers the immanence of the divine in the created order.⁹⁴

There are similarities between Bouma-Prediger's book and this project. The most important of these is the use of three theological categories to frame the discussion. We both engage anthropology. His exploration of ontology is not that dissimilar from my use of cosmology—especially with regard to an emphasis on relationality and various centric possibilities. His third category is theology proper. While the doctrine of God does not constitute a specific category of exploration in his project, it is nonetheless a ubiquitous theme. For all theology is related to theology proper—that is, the doctrine of God. As this project unfolds, it is important for the reader to know that my categories of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology should be understood as *theological* categories (i.e., categories within a larger framework that implies theology proper). My engagement of Jürgen Moltmann and Andrew Linzey, as well as my own constructive work in the final chapter, will evince the significance of theology proper.

I noted above that Jenkins avoids classifying eco-theological thought according to centric value systems and instead employs a soteriological categorization. While soteriology is not one of the three theological dimensions of this project, it is present at the intersection of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology. Theological cosmology expresses fundamentally what the created order was and is in relation to both God and itself. Theological anthropology expresses fundamentally what humanity was and is

⁹² Ibid., 266-74.

⁹³ Ibid., 274-83.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 284-301.

within the framework of theological cosmology. Eschatology expresses fundamentally what the cosmos (including humans) is becoming and will, in a final sense, be in relation to both God and itself.⁹⁵

The theological dimensions of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology thus embrace the entire temporal and spatial scope of the Trinity's history with the cosmos and therefore include both theology proper and soteriology. They furthermore account for the relationality of the cosmos both spatially (each part of the cosmos in relation to others and each part and the cosmic whole in relation to God) and temporally (the relation among protological claims about the cosmos, the present condition of the cosmos, and the future God desires for the cosmos). Lastly, these theological dimensions are dominant driving forces (even when they are excluded from a theological framework) of eco-theological ethics. It is for these reasons that I adopt these three dimensions as the framework within which to form a taxonomy of eco-theological thought.

COSMOLOGY

Traditionally, the term creation refers to all that is not God. Yet in most explorations of cosmology, anthropology is relegated to a seemingly separate category (or at least essentially distinct sub-category). I am here honoring that distinction for the sake of clarity. Inasmuch as cosmology is the doctrine of the Creator's creation, it is also the doctrine of human beings. There can be no sharp partition here.⁹⁶ Anthropology can only be the doctrine of human beings in, with, and as the Creator's creation.

⁹⁵ Thus eschatology bears similar themes to Jenkins's soteriological focus.

⁹⁶ See Anne M. Clifford, "Creation," in *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin, editors (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 202. As Stephen Webb notes, conservationist efforts that call for a strict absence of human presence from nature ironically maintain—if only in some sense—this division. Webb, "Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom," 239-40, 248-49.

The Christian doctrine of creation has always been influenced by the historical context of theologians. Early Christian cosmologies reflect both a milieu of blended Jewish and Greek thought and challenges raised by groups like the Gnostics and Manicheans.⁹⁷ Within this general context, they address questions concerning the goodness of creation, the fallenness/distortion of the cosmos, the purpose of the created order, and the relationship between God and the world. Questions concerning these facets of cosmology continue to be central in modern Christian thought. However, contemporary theologians are influenced by new contexts, most particularly the findings of science and the earth's present ecological disposition.⁹⁸ I here aim to delineate and explicate the broad dimensions of cosmology pertinent to the purpose of this project. These dimensions are the goodness of creation and the order of the cosmos in tension with the doctrine of the Fall and the hope for eschatological redemption.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ For a brief historical consideration from patristic to medieval thought, see Clifford, "Creation," 214-23.

⁹⁸ For a summary of the various dimensions of this disposition, see The Worldwatch Institute, *Vital Signs 2012: The Trends That Are Shaping Our Future* (Washington DC: Worldwatch Institute, 2012). On the contextual influence of this disposition on theology, see Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 1-32; Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 1-31. The rise of eco-theological thought from the 1960s to the present has led, in the words of Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, to an awareness of the need for "an ecological reformation, or eco-justice reorientation, of Christian theology and ethics." "Introduction," *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), xxxvii. On the significance of the context of the ecological crisis, see xxxiii-xxxix.

⁹⁹ Another dimension of cosmology that will arise, especially with reference to Moltmann, is nature of the ontological relationship between God and the cosmos. Typically, this relationship is established along a spectrum between divine transcendence and divine immanence. In their work delineating recent trends in theology, Stanley Grenz and Roger Olson use this spectrum to categorize various theological approaches. Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992). Theologically speaking, the most extreme form of transcendence is Deism. *Ibid.*, 23. However, in more conventional theological circles, an emphasis on transcendence can be found in the works of giants like Karl Barth, whose emphasis on God as wholly other denies even the possibility of natural revelation. *Ibid.*, 65-77. On the other side of the spectrum is pantheism, the convolution of God and the world. Grenz and Olson note that process theology moves in the direction of pantheism, yet retains a level of divine transcendence inasmuch as "the divine being is logically, not chronologically, prior to the world" (137). Even so, within process thought, "one cannot conceive of God apart from the world" (142). This nuance places process theology in a category between a Barthian emphasis on transcendence and the extreme immanence of pantheism. This category is the broad space of panentheism. Here one frequently finds the work of Eastern thinkers—and

The Goodness of Creation

A strong affirmation of the goodness of the cosmos has rarely, if ever, been absent in Christian history. The biblical claim of the creation's goodness is firmly imbedded in the first creation narrative.¹⁰⁰ In the second century, Irenaeus of Lyons defended creation's goodness against the criticisms of Gnosticism, which viewed matter as a degradation of spirit.¹⁰¹ In the fifth century, Augustine maintained the goodness of the entire created order against his once fellow Manicheans, who believed that the physical creation represented a fundamental barrier to the spiritual (i.e., incorporeal) *telos* of humanity.¹⁰² In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas preserved the notion of cosmic goodness, arguing that the creation's hierarchical order evinces God's fundamental concern for human beings.¹⁰³ These three examples are among many in the Christian narrative.¹⁰⁴ Each of them maintains that the creation is good inasmuch as it is the creation of a good Creator.¹⁰⁵ The physical world is not the mistake of some lesser God, as the Gnostics and Manicheans held.¹⁰⁶ It is rather the mode of existence in which

those influenced by them. Hence, concerning the Orthodox view, Kallistos Ware states, "As Christians we affirm not pantheism but 'panentheism.' God is *in* all things yet also *beyond and above* all things." Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, Revised Edition (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 46. Ware cites Gregory Palamas in favor of this claim. Andrew Linzey tends to maintain an emphasis on transcendence, disavowing any claim that the created order is sacred. Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 51-53. Moltmann, on the other hand, maintains a balance by reinterpreting the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* in a panentheistic manner. Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 86-89.

¹⁰⁰ E.g., Genesis 1: 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31.

¹⁰¹ See Irenaeus of Lyons, *Irenaeus: Against Heresies*, Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, editors. Vol. 1, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), Book 1. For a concise exploration, see Matthew Craig Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Redemption* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2008), 1-15, 21-38.

¹⁰² On Augustine's position, see Schaefer, *Theological Foundations*, 18-27.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*. On this point, see also chapter two of the present work.

¹⁰⁴ For a more detailed consideration of the names mentioned, among others, see Schaefer, *Theological Foundations*, 17-42.

¹⁰⁵ See, for instance, Augustine, *The Enchiridion: On Faith, Hope and Love*, translated by J. F. Shaw, Henry Paolucci, editor (Chicago, IL: Regnery Gateway, 1961), 10:10-11.

¹⁰⁶ See Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation*, 22-38.

humanity comes to communion with God.¹⁰⁷ In modern contexts of ecological concern, an affirmation of the goodness of creation is strongly emphasized in ecclesial statements of Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant theology.¹⁰⁸

The dominant theological claim in Christian history concerning creation's goodness signifies that Christianity is not necessarily an unfriendly voice with regard to environmental issues. While certain strands of Christian thought may indeed be partly to blame for the development of an anthropocentric and utilitarian view of nature, it is not without viable retrievable strands that suggest a contrary worldview. At the same time, the claim that creation is good highlights one of the main tensions in eco- and animal theology thought regarding nature. Namely, are all aspects of creation—e.g., evolutionary mechanisms that require gratuitous suffering and predation—good? Or is there something *not good* about the cosmos?¹⁰⁹

The Falleness/Incompleteness of Creation

Nearly as common as the claim concerning creation's goodness in Christian history is the notion that the created order is in some manner fallen, distorted, and/or

¹⁰⁷ In his sermons on the gospel of John, Augustine even defended the existence of apparently “useless” creatures like frogs and flies by preaching that it is “because of pride, in fact, God made this smallest, most useless of creatures to torment us.” *Homilies on the Gospel of John 1-40*, translated by Edmund Hill, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (New York: New City Press, 2009), 1.15 (pp. 50-51).

¹⁰⁸ See, for instance, Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I, *Common Declaration on Environmental Ethics*. 2002. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2002/june/index.htm. Internet; accessed September, 2009; Pope John Paul II, *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all of Creation*, Message on World Day of Peace, 1990. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/index.htm. Internet; accessed September 2009; “An Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation,” printed in *The Care of Creation: Focusing Our Concern and Action*, R. J. Berry, editor (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 18-22.

¹⁰⁹ Consider Wolfhart Pannenberg's eschatological remark concerning creation's goodness: “The verdict of ‘very good’ does not apply simply to the world of creation in its state at any given time. It is true, rather, of the whole course of history in which God is present with his creatures in incursions of love that will finally lead it through the hazards and sufferings of finitude to participation in his glory.” Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, volume 3, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 645.

incomplete.¹¹⁰ Irenaeus maintains the historicity of Eden and the cosmic effects of Adam and Eve’s sin.¹¹¹ Theophilus of Antioch argues that predation among nonhuman animals evinces that they followed humanity into sin.¹¹² Ephrem the Syrian writes that the relationship between humans and the nonhuman world—and within the nonhuman world itself—was greatly harmed by sin.¹¹³ Regarding Adam’s naming of the animals before the Fall, he writes that the animals “were neither afraid of him [Adam] nor were they afraid of each other. A species of predatory animals would pass by with a species of animal that is preyed upon following safely right behind.”¹¹⁴ These thinkers, among others, maintain that the nonhuman creation, while remaining in some sense good, is at once in some sense fallen.

Yet the creation’s fallenness is by no means unambiguously affirmed in Christian history. One of the most dominant voices of Western Christianity, Thomas Aquinas, for instance, maintains that the nonhuman creation is not fallen.¹¹⁵ Predation among animals is part of the divine order of the nonhuman cosmos—though, he does maintain that animal aggression toward humans is a result of human sin.¹¹⁶ Thus, while the goodness

¹¹⁰ The ambiguity in Christian history regarding the state of the cosmos after human sin is further evident in the question of redemption. I will explore this issue below under the heading of Eschatology.

¹¹¹ See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.33.4.

¹¹² Theophilus states that “when man transgressed, they [i.e., nonhuman animals] also transgressed with him.” Theophilus of Antioch, *Letter to Autolytus*, in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers*, Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, editors, volume III (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1880), II.16-17 (83-84).

¹¹³ Compare, for instance, Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis*, in *St. Ephrem the Syrian: Selected Prose Works*, Kathleen McVey, editor, translated by Edward G. Mathews and Joseph P Amar (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994), 2.9.3 (103) and 6.9.3 (139).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.9.3 (103).

¹¹⁵ See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Benziger Brothers, 1947), 1.96.1.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.72.6.

of the cosmos was rarely challenged in Christian thought, the notion of cosmic fallenness is less consistent.¹¹⁷

This ambiguity is further complicated in contemporary thought by the natural sciences' dismantling of the validity of an historical Eden.¹¹⁸ That is, it is scientifically problematic to hold onto the biblical/theological notion that there was an historical period in which predation, death, and violence did not exist.¹¹⁹ Scientifically speaking, human sin cannot be the cause of a cosmic Fall that introduces predation and death into existence.¹²⁰ Furthermore, theologians have noted that without facets of evolutionary emergence such as the violent destruction of stars, the competition and predation among species, and ultimately the death of all that are alive, there could not be the complexity and diversity of life that exists.¹²¹ In fact, as John Polkinghorne notes, it was only because of the destruction of the dinosaurs that "little furry mammals, who are our ancestors, were given their evolutionary opportunity."¹²² Based on such claims, Neil Ormerod claims that evolutionary suffering is not synonymous with evil but rather "has an intrinsic relationship to finitude."¹²³

The question of cosmic fallenness stands alongside the issue of what exactly creation was at the beginning. Origen's vision of creation and the Fall takes the form of a

¹¹⁷ Holmes Rolston notes this point. Holmes Rolston III, "Does Nature Need to be Redeemed?" *Zygon* 29 (1994), 208.

¹¹⁸ For their part, biblical scholars have questioned whether or not the notion of a "Fall" is actually present in the early narrative of Genesis. See, for instance, Patricia Williams, *Doing Without Adam and Eve: Sociobiology and Original Sin* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001).

¹¹⁹ See Christopher Southgate in *The Groaning of Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 5, 28-29; Arthur Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming—Natural, Divine and Human* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 222-23.

¹²⁰ After all, human sin cannot have caused the extinction of the dinosaurs. *Ibid.*, 28.

¹²¹ See Southgate, *the Groaning of Creation*, 29;

¹²² John Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 6.

¹²³ Neil Ormerod, *Creation, Grace, and Redemption* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 14.

Platonic distortion of static perfection.¹²⁴ Irenaeus's vision is starkly different, suggesting rather that the creation was made in a state of dynamism that required growth. Adam and Eve were created as children whom God intended would grow into adulthood.¹²⁵ Thus, for Irenaeus, the Fall is more a straying from the path to the proper *telos* of the cosmos than a loss of perfection.

Irenaeus's cosmology has been taken up, whether purposefully or not, by modern thinkers who want to emphasize the dynamism and relational nature of the cosmos, a vision more generally consummate with science than that of Origen.¹²⁶ David Fergusson maintains that both scripture and science witness to the dynamism of the cosmos. In both accounts, "the good creation is not one which is already perfect. It is fit for its purpose and displays the constant love of God for creatures... Yet its destiny awaits it in the future."¹²⁷ Theologically, Vladimir Lossky states that "the primitive beatitude was not a state of deification, but a condition of order, a perfection of the creature which was ordained and tending towards its end."¹²⁸

Yet many of these appropriations of Irenaeus's cosmology separate his understanding of the Fall from his vision of the eschatological dynamism of creation. Thus his protology and eschatology are carved away, leaving only his development view of creation. The main reason is that Irenaeus's protology does not square with biological

¹²⁴ On this point, see Colin E. Gunton, "Between Allegory and Myth: The Legacy of the Spiritualising of Genesis," in *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy*, Colin E. Gunton, editor (New York, NY: T&T Clark International, 2004), 53-58.

¹²⁵ See Irenaeus of Lyons, *Irenaeus' Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation*, Iain M. Mackenzie with the translation of the text of the *Demonstration* by J. Armitage Robinson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 12, 14.

¹²⁶ See John Polkinghorne, "The Demise of Democritus," in *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 15-31; Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age*, 41-70.

¹²⁷ David Fergusson, "Creation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance, editors (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 76.

¹²⁸ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 1976), 99.

evolution. Yet evolution presents its own problems, both biblically and theologically. In the words of Northcott,

The vision of nature's original goodness and harmony in the first chapters of Genesis contrasts with other Ancient Near Eastern myths of origin, and it contrasts significantly with modern scientific accounts of human society and the non-human world.¹²⁹

What is at stake in this protological tension is the very character of God. To express this point, consider the first creation narrative (Genesis 1:1 – 2:3). Conventional wisdom in biblical scholarship suggests that the narrative draws on a milieu of myths from the Ancient Near East.¹³⁰ One such myth is the *Enuma Elish*.¹³¹ This cosmogony is of import because it belongs to the Babylonians by whom Israel was taken into exile in the 6th century BCE. The earliest form of the *Enuma Elish* comes as seven stone tablets that were once part of the library of Assurbanipal, an Assyrian king.¹³² The narrative has the gods at war with each other prior to the creation of humanity. In a final battle, Marduk, the Babylonian God, defeats his rival, Tiamat. He splits her body and uses it to create the world. With the cosmos in place, Marduk creates human beings as slaves so that they might facilitate divine ease.¹³³

The significance of this point for Genesis 1 is the juxtaposition of *Elohim* with Marduk. Ellen van Wolde points out that the Genesis account does not present human beings as slaves of the gods, but rather as a royal representation of God on earth.¹³⁴ Similarly, J. Richard Middleton skillfully argues that Genesis 1 does not fit the category

¹²⁹ Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 174.

¹³⁰ See John J. Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 25-45.

¹³¹ A translation of the *Enuma Elish* is available in Ellen van Wolde, *Stories of the Beginning: Genesis 1-11 and Other Creation Stories* (Ridgefield: Morehouse Publishing, 1995), 189-194.

¹³² Wolde, *Stories of the Beginning*, 188.

¹³³ See *ibid.*, 193.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

of *chaoskampf* (denoting creation through a struggle with chaos) as does the *Enuma Elish*. Indeed, whereas Marduk must pursue and defeat the dragon Tiamat, *Elohim* sets the sea dragons (Hebrew *tannînîm*) free.¹³⁵ Whereas Marduk creates by overcoming others with power, *Elohim* creates by empowering others to be.¹³⁶ Marduk creates slaves; *Elohim* shares his image and likeness. Marduk engages in war; *Elohim* creates harmony devoid of even natural predation.

The process and realization of Marduk’s creation reflects Marduk’s character. The same is true for *Elohim*. This juxtaposition is theological in the most proper sense, for it addresses the very nature of the divine. Consider this juxtaposition alongside an evolutionary—and more specifically, Darwinian—worldview evident in **Table I – 1**:

TABLE I – 1			
	Divine Identity	Creative Action	Cosmic Identity
Narrative/Myth “A” (Genesis 1:1 – 2:3)	<i>Elohim</i>	Creates through peaceful divine fiat	A world of empowered creatures absent of predation
Narrative/Myth “B” (Enuma Elish)	Marduk	Creates out of a divine war for existence	An enslaved and competitive world for divine benefit
Narrative/Theory “C” (Darwinian Worldview)	???	???	A world that, while displaying high levels of cooperation among species, nonetheless requires suffering, predation, and death in order to function ¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Middleton says they are “part of God’s peaceable kingdom.” *The Liberating Image*, 264. Ruether offers a similar assessment regarding the relationship between God and matter (at least in the eyes of the priestly writers). Less similarly, she interprets the Genesis 1 as emphasizing divine sovereignty over the world. See Ruether, *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1992), 19-22. An even greater disparity exists in the work of Catherine Keller, who argues for the centrality of the creation from chaos motif in Genesis 1. See Catherine Keller, *The Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003).

¹³⁶ See J. Richard Middleton, “Created in the Image of Violent God? The Ethical Problem of the Conquest of Chaos in Biblical Creation Narratives,” in *Interpretation* 58/4 (October 2004): 341-55; also Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, chapter 6. See also Clifford, “Creation,” 204-205.

¹³⁷ I intend here Sideris’s claim that, “despite disagreements about the details of evolution, few scientists would deny that suffering and struggle play an important role in evolution.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 19. Or again, Rolston’s claim that biologists “find nature stark and full of suffering, sometimes dreadful.” Rolston, “Does Nature Need Redeemed?” 207.

The theologians of Israel differentiate *Elohim* (“God A”) from Marduk (“God B”) by juxtaposing both the process of creation and nature of the world they created (“World A” versus “World B”). “God A” (*Elohim*), through peaceful means (“Act A”), creates a world that reflects “God A”: a peaceful world (“World A”).¹³⁸ “God B” (Marduk), through chaotic struggle, murder, and death (“Act B”), creates a world that reflects “God B”: a world of struggle and slavery (“World B”).

But if there has never been a “World A,” but only a “World C,” which reflects more elements of “World B” than “World A,” how can one affirm the *theological* vision of Genesis 1?¹³⁹ Yet arguing that there was in fact an historical “World A” predating what we now experience (“World C”) does not match the findings of science.¹⁴⁰ In my

¹³⁸ On this peaceful world, see Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg), 164.

¹³⁹ Concerning what I describe as World C, Denis Edwards writes: “Loss and death on an unthinkable scale are built into the way things are in an evolutionary world.” Denis Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls to the Ground: The Cost of Evolution and the Christ-Event,” *Ecotheology* 11/1 (2006), 104.

¹⁴⁰ Rolston writes that the Genesis creation myths are “rather congenial with the evolutionary genesis. The real problem is with the Fall, when a once-paradisiacal nature becomes recalcitrant as a punishment for human sin.” Rolston, “Does Nature Need Redeemed?” 205. Northcott explores the difference between the creation accounts of primeval history in Genesis and the *Enuma Elish*—which is representative of a milieu of Ancient Near Eastern accounts that present the creation of the cosmos in the form of a war. He notes that, in the *Enuma Elish*, “the order of the world is not established by the peaceable word of God but by the chaotic disorder of war between the gods. Reality is fundamentally chaotic, and order only attainable through violence.” Michael Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 174. He compares this etiologial vision to “modern scientific myths of origin,” which “have been utilised to characterise the origins and nature of life, both non-human and human, as essentially violent, aggressive and competitive, ‘red in tooth and claw.’” *Ibid.*, 175. Northcott’s ultimate position is that humans can (and ought to) live in harmony with the cycles of nonhuman nature, which are more cooperative than competitive. See *ibid.*, 196-198. See also chapters seven and eight in which Northcott attempts to recover the import of natural law for ecological ethics. I find Northcott’s proposal unsatisfying for two reasons. First, in line with the critique offered by Lisa Sideris, his understanding of nature overemphasizes the cooperative dimensions against the competitive ones. See Lisa H. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 84-89. Second, Northcott’s ethics tends toward conservationism despite his claim that the significance of the resurrection anticipates “the ultimate transformation of created order into the Hebrew prophet’s vision of the peaceable kingdom of justice where enmity and violence will be no more.” Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 202. Not only does the resurrection anticipate this peace, it reveals creation’s true form—its proper *telos* to which it is even now, in the historical realm, directed and drawn by God’s redemptive activity. *Ibid.* It seems to me that his conservationist ethics stands in a stark tension with his transfigurative theology. See *ibid.*, 196-98.

opinion, this tension represents the crux of the issue of protology and the Fall. That is, one is all but forced by scientific evidence to reject the historicity of “World A.” At the same time it is unclear how such a rejection does not at the same time necessitate the *theological* rejection of “God A.”¹⁴¹ For, as David Hull writes, “The God of Galapagos is careless, wasteful, indifferent, and almost diabolical.”¹⁴² Or, in the worlds of James Rachels: “Countless animals have suffered terribly in the millions of years that preceded the emergence of man, and the traditional theistic rejoinders do not even come close to justifying *that* evil.”¹⁴³ Said differently, “World C” is more commensurable with Marduk than *Elohim*. Furthermore, how does God create this world that requires suffering, predation, and death? By divine fiat? Through some struggle with primordial chaos? By necessity? At any rate, this divinity is no *Elohim*, at least according to Genesis 1.

How can this theological tension be relieved? There are three prominent options: (1) Reinterpret the doctrine of the Fall in a manner that takes scientific evidence seriously and thereby maintains in some sense the identity of both “World A” and “God A”; (2) Interpret the doctrine of God in such a way as to lessen divine culpability; and (3) Interpret the Hebrew worldview of Genesis 1 so that “World C” and “God A” are not incompatible.¹⁴⁴

The first option is taken in the approaches of Moltmann and Linzey. Thus, I will explore it in detail in chapters two, three, and four. The second option is significant and

¹⁴¹ The force of this point is captured well by Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 1-10.

¹⁴² David L. Hull, “God of the Galapagos,” *Nature* 352 (August 1992), 486.

¹⁴³ James Rachel, *Created from Animals: The Moral Implications of Darwinism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 105.

¹⁴⁴ For instance, Northcott suggests that the “heuristic function of the Genesis myth” is to reveal that neither human nor nonhuman nature is essentially violent. Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 179. See also Wennberg’s discussion of deep ecology in Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 43-49.

utilized to varying degrees by a host of theologians.¹⁴⁵ Here, however, it is the third route I wish to explore.

Creation spiritualists, for instance Matthew Fox and Thomas Berry, maintain that the mechanisms that facilitate the emerging of the universe are not only not fallen, but good. Fox's "Eucharistic Law of the Universe" suggests that the great law of existence consists of evolutionary transformation through sacrifice—more specifically, by "eating and being eaten." Thus he contends, "We too will be food one day for other generations of living things. So we might as well begin today by letting go of hoarding and entering the chain of beings as food for one another."¹⁴⁶ Berry, whom I will engage in much greater detail in chapter 1, maintains that the violent episodes of evolutionary emergence are "cosmological moments of grace."¹⁴⁷

Certain ecofeminists, for instance Ruether, maintain that death ought to be embraced as part of the beautiful cycle of life rather than an enemy resulting from some cosmic Fall from grace. One living thing dies while another receives life. Thus, when an individual dies, his or her "existence ceases as individuated ego/organism and dissolves back into the cosmic matrix of matter/energy, from which new centers of the

¹⁴⁵ Such is the approach of process theologians and relational theologians. See, for instance, John B. Cobb and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976); David Ray Griffin, *God, Power, and Evil* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004); John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998).

¹⁴⁶ Matthew Fox, *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1991), 51. This position is similar to that of Wendell Berry, who writes that "to live, we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation." Wendell Berry, *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1981), 281.

¹⁴⁷ Thomas Berry, "Wisdom of the Cross," in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, editors (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 89.

individuation arise.”¹⁴⁸ Death is an “essential component” of cosmic existence and is therefore “a friend of the life process.”¹⁴⁹

Lisa Sideris critiques certain theologians, most especially Ruether, Sallie McFague, and Northcott, for overemphasizing the cooperative aspects of nature while downplaying the competitive aspects.¹⁵⁰ Sideris maintains, critically, that

there is a tendency, especially among some Christian environmentalists, to invoke a model of nature as a harmonious, interconnected, and interdependent community. This ‘ecological community,’ as it is often called, resonates more with pre-Darwinian, non-Darwinian, and Romantic views of nature than it does with evolutionary accounts.¹⁵¹

Taking his lead from Sideris’s critique of ecological thought, Jenkins writes,

It is not just the religious right voicing skepticism of the natural sciences. Whenever a theological ethicist privileges interdependence, balance, and cooperation in nature over evolution, predation, or death, she appears to let theological criteria determine her view of the natural world, in the face of credible scientific reports.¹⁵²

In doing so, “a number of environmental theologians rewrite descriptions of the natural world even as they call Christians to respect creation on its own principles.”¹⁵³ Thus, a number of eco-theologians have sought to remedy the disparity between “God A” and “World C” by re-envisioning the latter in a manner that it is less offensive to the former. Yet, as Sideris notes regarding the tension between the affirmation of God’s goodness and the reality of evolution, “Something must be given up: either the traditional

¹⁴⁸ Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward A Feminist Theology* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1983), 257.

¹⁴⁹ Ruether, *Gaia and God*, 53. On this claim, see also Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 106-107; Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 8.

¹⁵⁰ See Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 45-90.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2. Sideris goes on to claim that “many eco-theologians do not take seriously that the so-called balances within nature “are maintained at great cost to *individual* animal lives.” Said differently, “the ecological community... does not aim toward the good of each individual within that community, as (ideally) human communities do.” *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁵² Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 70-71.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*.

understanding of God must be altered or the processes of evolution must be reinterpreted along less Darwinian lines.”¹⁵⁴ Thus, an “ecological” emphasis at the expense of the reality of suffering, predation, and death, does not hold the scientific high ground—even though its advocates often make such a claim.¹⁵⁵

Approaches like that of Christopher Southgate are better balanced. He explicitly rejects appealing to the doctrine of the Fall. Yet at the same time he is more honest and troubled than other eco-theologians concerning the elements of predation and suffering in the created order.¹⁵⁶ He opts for the position that

the sort of universe we have, in which complexity emerges in a process governed by thermodynamic necessity and Darwinian natural selection, and therefore death, pain, predation, and self-assertion, is the only sort of universe that could give rise to the range, beauty, complexity, and diversity of creatures the Earth has produced.¹⁵⁷

Regardless of the solution, the import of the cosmological tension surrounding the notion of the Fall for eco-theology can hardly be overstated. At its heart is the question of what we understand as tragic. In the words of Wennberg:

What we view as sad or regrettable or deplorable or tragic, or, for that matter, wonderful or admirable or praiseworthy, goes some considerable way to defining our moral character, determining who we are as more and spiritual beings.¹⁵⁸

Phrased differently, the question is whether or not the world as we experience it, and most notably the darker dimensions of evolution, is the way God desires it to be. If so,

¹⁵⁴ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 279, n. 19.

¹⁵⁵ However, Sideris affirms the struggle in creation as good. She concurs with J. Baird Callicott’s positive estimation of the “the biotic pyramid” because while “individual organisms live and die continually...the species line continues. There is a certain stability to this structure but not harmony.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 175. Furthermore, in holistic systems (e.g., ecosystems), “the hierarchal structure of the system is sustained by the deaths of its individual members.” Ibid., 176.

¹⁵⁶ Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 28-35.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 29. While Southgate is influenced by process thought, his position, like my own, is disparate from this framework primarily on account of his dismissal of the “Whiteheadian metaphysic,” which emphasizes “the primacy of creativity and openness of process over even the will of God.” See *ibid.*, 22-25. Said differently, the cosmos is not co-eternal with God. Nor is God under a compulsion to create.

¹⁵⁸ Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 48.

how does one make sense of God's eternal goodness?¹⁵⁹ Of Christ's victory over death?

If not, how are these mechanisms of evolution set into motion, if not by God?¹⁶⁰

Furthermore, if certain facets of creation, such as predation, are not good, then Christians cannot justify their participation in those facets by an appeal to cosmic goodness.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Multiple issues surrounding theological anthropology arise with regard to eco-theology. Are humans essentially unique creatures in the cosmos? If so, does that uniqueness constitute the exclusion of other creatures from direct moral concern, as anthropocentric worldviews tend to maintain? Does the nonhuman cosmos, by divine design, exist solely for the sake of human well-being? How do these questions align with the theological claim that humans were created in the *imago Dei* ("image of God") and that the first verb used to describe their relationship with nonhuman life is *radah* ("rule" or "have dominion over")? How does the new creation story, and most specifically its evolutionary dimensions, reshape theological anthropology—especially with regard to the above questions?

It is proper to begin approaching these questions with an investigation of the doctrine of the *imago Dei*. This phrase actually receives very little explicit attention in the Hebrew Scriptures.¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, it has received a great deal of interest in Christian

¹⁵⁹ For considerations on theodicy and the plight of nonhumans, see Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 46-51; Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 1-15; Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 114-28.

¹⁶⁰ Haught is adamant that "a theology of evolution maintains that whatever the immediate causes and mechanisms operative in Darwinian process may be, the *ultimate* explanation of evolution and of the cosmic process that sponsors it is God." Haught, *God after Darwin*, 173.

¹⁶¹ The only explicit appearances of "image" in the context of "image of God" are Genesis 1:26, 28; 9:6 (in deuterocanonical works, both Wisdom of Solomon 2:23 and Ecclesiasticus 17:3 make mention of *selem* in this context).

history. This interest has resulted in multiple interpretations.¹⁶² Authors such as J. Richard Middleton identify three major categories for these interpretations: substantive, relational, and functional.¹⁶³

The substantive interpretation is the dominant view, historically. Stanley Grenz provides a good overview of its rise and perpetuation. He begins by noting its Hellenistic influence:

Although most Christians today would be likely to assume that this view arises directly out of the Bible, the idea was actually introduced into Christian thought by those church fathers who were influenced by and grappled with the Greek philosophical tradition.¹⁶⁴

Grenz notes the propensity toward the substantive view in Irenaeus, which provides a path for subsequent thinkers.¹⁶⁵ In the East, these include Clement of Alexandria,

¹⁶² For some considerations on the history of the interpretation of the *imago*, see David Cairns, *The Image of God in Man*, revised edition (London, UK: Collins Press, 1973); J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005), 15-29; F. LeRon Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology: After the Philosophical Turn to Relationality* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 220-42; W. Sibley Towner, "Clones of God: Genesis 1:26-28 and the Image of God in the Hebrew Bible," *Interpretation* 59 (October 2005), 343-49.

¹⁶³ See Middleton, *The Liberating Image*. These categories are also evident in the work of Douglas John Hall in *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986). For theological considerations from Protestants, note the introductory text, Don Thorsen, *An Exploration of Christian Theology* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008), 130-33; also Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, second edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 520-29. It is worth noting that Grenz identifies only the substantive and relational as major categories of interpretation. See Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 142; however, elsewhere he includes the functional reading as a major interpretation. See Stanley Grenz, "Jesus as the Imago Dei: Image-of-God Christology and the Non-Linear Linearity of Theology," *JETS* 47 4 (Dec 2004): 617-28. While those of the Orthodox tradition do not seem to make explicit use of these categories, they are implicit in Orthodox discussions of *imago Dei*. However, most Orthodox theologians are careful to view the categories not as necessarily separate interpretations but as complimentary dimensions of a single interpretation. See Nonna Verna Harrison, "The Human Person as the Image and Likeness of God" in *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, edited by Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 178-86; see also Constantine N. Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 44-47; John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 138-49. The documents of Vatican II also blend these categories as dimensions. See *Gaudium et Spes* 12, 19, and 34 (available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm; Internet, accessed April, 2009).

¹⁶⁴ Grenz, *The Social God*, 143.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 144-48.

Gregory of Nyssa, and finally John of Damascus. In the West, Augustine sets a firm groundwork for a substantive view of the *imago*. He argues that the *imago* includes rationality and sets humans over the nonhuman creation.¹⁶⁶ Grenz traces Augustine's influence through Aquinas, who ascribes at least an aspect of the *imago* to all humans on account of the mind.¹⁶⁷ After a lull in this interpretation with early Reformers like Luther and Calvin, subsequent Protestants returned to it.¹⁶⁸

Advocates of the substantive interpretation of the *imago* view it as primarily a declaration about human essence. More specifically, human nature bears a substantial commonality with the divine.¹⁶⁹ Frequently, those who emphasize this approach express the substantial commonality in terms of the rational human soul and freedom of the will.¹⁷⁰ These characteristics not only constitute an ontological similarity between humanity and God, but also—at least in the view of many advocates of the substantive view—a discontinuity between humanity and the rest of creation. As Augustine states, “God, then, made man in His own image. For He created for him a soul endowed with reason and intelligence so that he might excel all the creatures of the earth, air, and sea, which were not so gifted.”¹⁷¹

Hence, concerning the substantive interpretation, Middleton states, “Most patristic, medieval, and modern interpreters typically asked not an exegetical, but a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 149-52.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 158.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 170-73.

¹⁶⁹ Hall, *Imaging God*, 89.

¹⁷⁰ For historical considerations, see Grenz, *Social God*, 142-61; Shults, *Theological Anthropology*, 221-26; Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), 369-70. The Catechism states, “Created in the image of the one God and equally endowed with rational souls, all men have the same nature and the same origin.” *The Catechism of the Catholic Church: With Modifications from the Editio Typica* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 1934. Also, *Gaudium et Spes*, 17. While the image is not exhausted by substantive concerns for the Catholic Church, it remains partly defined by them.

¹⁷¹ Augustine, *City of God*, 12:24, in *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, volume II, ed. Whitney J. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948).

speculative, question: In what way are humans *like* God and *unlike* animals?”¹⁷²

Middleton’s comment is not without warrant.¹⁷³ Douglas John Hall’s assessment is similar. He states,

It can readily appear—if one follows the history of the interpretation of this symbol closely—that the whole enterprise of defining the *imago Dei* in our Christian conventions centers on the apparent need to show that human beings are different from all other creatures.¹⁷⁴

In this sense, the *imago* has served as a tool to demarcate boundaries. Its use is primarily for the purpose of exclusion.¹⁷⁵ This use has led to realized dangers in the substantive approach. Hall notes two in particular. First, that the boundaries created by the *imago* necessarily denote a difference between greater and lesser creatures in which

‘different’ almost invariably implies ‘higher,’ ‘nobler,’ ‘loftier,’ ‘better’; for it is hardly possible to adopt the kind of inherently comparative language involved in this approach without placing strong value judgments on the characteristics that are singled out as constituting the locus of the *imago* in the human creature.¹⁷⁶

Second—and related to the first danger—ascribing greater worth to humanity on account on nonmaterial qualities seems to serve as a polemic against physicality.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 18-19 (emphasis original).

¹⁷³ This anxiety about maintaining a sharp distinction between humans and animals is evident in the Catechism, which draws heavily upon the documents of Vatican II. Humanity, as the image of God, “occupies a unique place in creation” (355) because only the human can “know and love” God and is created by God “for his own sake” (both quoted in the *Catechism* 356 from *Gaudium et Spes*, 12 and 24). Moreover, as this uniqueness is “the fundamental reason for [humanity’s] dignity,” animals are necessarily excluded from this dignity. The *imago* places humanity in the category of person, apart from all other things, including animals (357).

¹⁷⁴ Hall, *Imaging God*, 90.

¹⁷⁵ This exclusion has affected women as well. For considerations, see the essays in *The Image of God: Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, ed. Kari Elisabeth Borresen (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

¹⁷⁶ Hall, *Imaging God*, 90. For considerations on Augustine, Chrysostom, and Aquinas, see Jame Schaefer, “Valuing Earth Intrinsically and Instrumentally: A Theological Framework for Environmental Ethics,” *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 783-815. Schaefer argues that, though hierarchal, these thinkers viewed the creation as intrinsically valuable as it reveals God to humanity and also because each aspect of creation fulfills the created order according to God’s purpose. Even so, “the higher type of creature is considered more valuable than the lower, primarily because of the higher’s innate capabilities.” In this sense, “The lower and less capable exist for the sake of the next higher type of being in the hierarchy... and all are needed to internally maintain the universe.” *Ibid.*, 791.

¹⁷⁷ Hall, *Imaging God*, 90.

In the relational interpretation, favored in contemporary theology, the *imago* denotes humanity's relational capacity. Humans, as *imago Dei*, have the ability to relate to each other and respond to God.¹⁷⁸ Hall links this view to Luther and Calvin, both of whom view the *imago* not as a substance intrinsic to humanity but a reality derived from a proper relationship with God.¹⁷⁹ In this sense, the *imago* depends on the relationship between God and humans. Without that relationship, it is not realized.¹⁸⁰ Thus the *imago* is not an intrinsic possession of all humans, but rather a calling to response in the face of divine openness to the cosmos.

This relational interpretation is evident in the work of Karl Barth. As the image of God, humanity is fundamentally relational, evident in the “male and female” of Genesis 1. This relationality reflects the relationality in the Trinity, the “I and the Thou of God Himself.”¹⁸¹ Emil Brunner makes comparable claims in his systematic theology.¹⁸² Hence, similar to the early Reformers, for Barth and Brunner humans cannot

¹⁷⁸ In some cases, the horizontal element of the *imago* includes a relationship to the nonhuman creation as well. I provide examples below.

¹⁷⁹ One stark difference between the Reformers and other theologians who preceded them is that they did not differentiate between “image” and “likeness.” Many contemporary theologians today, following fathers such as Irenaeus, maintain a distinction between the “image,” which denotes a permanent fixture to human being, and “likeness,” which is a calling to live up to the existence of the image. For instance, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “Disfigured by sin and death, man remains ‘in the image of God,’ in the image of the Son, but is deprived ‘of the glory of God,’ of his ‘likeness’” (705).

¹⁸⁰ See Hall, *Imaging God*, 98-108.

¹⁸¹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, editors (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958), 191-96. In sum, he states, “We have argued...that it [the prototype of the *imago*] is in the relationships and differentiation between the I and the Thou in God Himself. Man is created by God in correspondence with this relationship and differentiation in God Himself: created as a Thou that can be addressed by God but also as an I responsible to God; in the relationship of man and woman in which man is a Thou to his fellow and therefore himself and I in responsibility to this claim.” *Ibid.*, 198.

¹⁸² See Emil Brunner, *Church Dogmatics II: The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* (Cambridge, UK: James Clark and Company, 1952), 55-61. Brunner rejects any distinction between “image” and “likeness” and, along the same lines, the identification of “image” with a substantive quality such as rationality. He also rejects Barth’s identification with the *imago* with sexual differentiation. As a sort of *via media*, Brunner differentiates the Old Testament *imago* (which rests in humanity’s call and ability to respond to God as a genuine “I”) and the New Testament *imago* (which is lost in sinful man and is only regained through redemption in which humanity responds appropriately to the original call). Thus,

lose the image as it is not a possession natural to humanity.¹⁸³ However, humans can fail to inhabit or fully realize it.¹⁸⁴

Modern biblical scholars tend to favor the functional interpretation of the *imago*, as exegetical factors of Genesis 1 substantiate it.¹⁸⁵ In this reading, the *imago* places humans in a relationship to the nonhuman creation. Specifically, God calls all humans to a position of both royal dignity and responsibility as co-regents in the created order. Advocates of this position claim that the human responsibility denoted by the *imago* is representational. Humans represent the presence of God in the created order. As Middleton states,

The *imago Dei* designates the royal office or calling of human beings as God's representatives and agents in the world, granted authorized power to share in God's rule or administration of the earth's resources and creatures.¹⁸⁶

Even more concise is Ellen van Wolde's statement: "The human being is created to make God present in his creation."¹⁸⁷

These three interpretations highlight the dominant voices in the field.¹⁸⁸ With regard to eco-theology, each presents unique opportunities and problems. The

for Brunner, the *imago* is thoroughly relational (as it can only exist in relation to God) but is never fully lost because God remains open to and seeks this relationship.

¹⁸³ Because Barth holds that the *imago* has no essential bearing for the human, he argues that the prohibition against murder in Genesis 9:6 does not reflect a belief of intrinsic human dignity. Rather, murder of another human is an affront on divine dignity as the murderer disrupts God's "intention and action in the creation of man." Barth, *Dogmatics*, III/1, 198.

¹⁸⁴ Barth does not delineate how the Fall affects the *imago* specifically. See Barth, *Dogmatics*, III/1, 200. See also on this point Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*, 234.

¹⁸⁵ For instance, one finds a functional interpretation of the *imago Dei* in Middleton, *The Liberating Image*; Hall, *Dominion As Stewardship*; Towner, "Clones of God"; Terrance Fretheim, *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 48-53; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation, ed. James L. Mays (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 32; see also E. H. Merrill, "Image of God" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, eds. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 441-45.

¹⁸⁶ Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 27.

¹⁸⁷ Wolde, *Stories of the Beginning*, 28.

¹⁸⁸ However, one other interpretation warrants mention—though it can be subsumed into other interpretations. It is the christological/eschatological interpretation. Grenz presents just such a view in his work, *The Social God and the Relational Self*. He maintains that the *imago Dei* is an eschatological calling

substantive interpretation, as already noted, tends toward an emphasis on the essential and incorporeal uniqueness of human beings, which in turn grounds the exclusion of *all* nonhuman life from anything akin to direct moral concern.¹⁸⁹ This position is furthermore problematic when juxtaposed with evolutionary biology. For instance, in *Humani Generis*, Pope Pius XII maintains that the human soul cannot be the result of evolutionary development.¹⁹⁰ Such a concession would weaken essential human uniqueness, a result that scholars such as Hoggard Creegan accept.¹⁹¹

The relational interpretation renders the ontological difference between humans and nonhumans less important. The anxiety of separating “us” from “them”—at least in theory—diminishes. However, at times this view altogether separates the nonhuman creation from the discussion of the *imago*. The focus becomes the relationship between humans and God and humans and each other to the exclusion or at least diminishment of

(representative/functional) concretized in Jesus Christ, the true *imago Dei*, and enabled in the present by the Spirit (relational), by which humanity becomes “new humanity,” or more specifically, the *imago Christi*. This present imperative, deriving from a christological future indicative, establishes an ethical dimension to the *imago* in which humanity is called to true humanity (true self-hood) via community, or, for Grenz, the Church. Thus the self is ultimately the ecclesial self *in via*. Elsewhere, Grenz combines the christological/eschatological interpretation with the functional one, suggesting that Jesus is the image of God because Jesus fulfills the eschatological vocation of humanity. See Grenz, “Jesus as the *Imago Dei*,” 617-628.

¹⁸⁹ See Fergusson, “Creation,” 84. In Theodore Hiebert’s view, Origen and Augustine read the priesthood and dominion imagery of Genesis 1 within a Hellenistic framework and thereby grounded a legacy of ontological hierarchy in Christian thought: “The view of the human position in the world constructed by Origen and Augustine, based on the priestly perspective of Genesis 1 and amplified by a philosophical dualism that distinguished spirit from matter, has become Christianity’s prevailing legacy.” Theodore Hiebert, “The Human Vocation: Origins and Transformations in Christian Traditions,” in *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 142.

¹⁹⁰ Clifford, “Creation,” 233. This point is later reiterated by John Paul II. *Ibid.*, 234.

¹⁹¹ On this point, see Hoggard Creegan, “Being an Animal and Being Made in the Image of God,” *Colloquium* 39/2 (November 2007), 185-203. While most investigations into the *imago* have delineated the boundary between the divine and the human, frequently highlighting the substantive similarity, Creegan considers the “shadow of the *imago Dei*” that stretches back into the evolutionary development of humanity. Said differently, Creegan balances the faith recognition of human spirituality *and* the scientific recognition of evolutionary contingency in the human creature. For Creegan, this approach recognizes the traces of the *imago* in the nonhuman creation and grounds concern for animals in a manner that the sharp divisions of the past have failed to do.

nonhumans.¹⁹² While this possible danger exists, it is not instantiated by all proponents of the relational view.¹⁹³

Positively, the functional interpretation directly places human beings in relation to the nonhuman creation. It is quite anthropocentric with regard to the environmental role of humanity—though not necessarily with regard to value.¹⁹⁴ This interpretation also, following Genesis 1, tends to define humanity’s role in terms of “dominion.” Even so, modern advocates of the functional interpretation, including those who understand dominion in terms of stewardship and those, like myself, who view humanity’s role as rendering present in history the eschatological peaceable kingdom, tend to dismantle the notion that the nonhuman creation exists for humanity.¹⁹⁵ In fact, some such interpreters maintain the opposite: humans exist, at least in part, for the sake of cosmic well-being.

Collectively, these three interpretative strands highlight two fundamental anthropological questions. First, what is the nature of the constitution of the human being (substance)? Second, what meaning does this constitution bear for human activity in the cosmos (function/relation) vis-à-vis the human disposition before the divine (relation)? These questions highlight the contributions theological anthropology will make to the exploratory framework of this project.

¹⁹² For example, in his consideration of the *imago* Barth tends to focus exclusively on the relationships among humans and between humans and God. Barth, *Dogmatics*, III/1, 194-96. Hence, Middleton is not even certain how to include the nonhuman creation in his diagram of the relational interpretation. Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 23.

¹⁹³ See, for example, Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction to Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 84-85. David Kelsey approaches the *imago* strictly in terms of the human community and God. David H. Kelsey, “Human Being” in *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*, edited by Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 176-78. However, he also claims that “human nature has a teleological dimension.” Specifically, “we have a calling, a role to play in creation,” which he connects to stewardship. Kelsey, *Christian Theology*, 175. See also Shirley C. Guthrie, *Christian Doctrine*, revised edition (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1994), 196-197, 197-210.

¹⁹⁴ See, for instance, Hall, *Dominion as Stewardship*.

¹⁹⁵ On stewardship, see Hall, *Dominion as Stewardship*. On eschatological perspectives, see Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 72.

ESCHATOLOGY

Eschatology has perhaps received more attention than any other doctrine in the twentieth century. This vigorous exploration is due largely the work of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer, both of whom highlighted the significance of eschatology for Jesus's life and ministry.¹⁹⁶ While the claims of both scholars have been widely contested with regard to their christological implications, my interest here consists of other issues that have arisen in their wake—namely, the scope of the community for which eschatological redemption bears significance, the interplay between eschatology and history, and the extent of both the continuity and discontinuity of the present creation and the new creation.¹⁹⁷

The Scope of the Eschatological Community

The question of what parts of the cosmos will persist in the eschaton yields a wide variety of answers in Christian history, which can be expressed in the form of expanding circles of inclusion.¹⁹⁸ The first circle is the inclusion of the individual human soul/spirit. Yet modern theologians tend to decry an exclusively spiritualized eschatology by emphasizing the importance of the resurrection of the flesh over and against the Platonic immortality of the soul.¹⁹⁹ The future of humanity is an embodied one, not simply a

¹⁹⁶ See Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 107-115. For an overview of the interplay between explorations of apocalyptic christology and modern eschatology, see Benedict T. Viviano, "Eschatology and the Quest for the Historical Jesus," in *The Orthodox Handbook of Eschatology*, Jerry L. Walls, editor (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 73-90.

¹⁹⁷ Apart from the significance of the resurrection of the flesh and its cosmic implications, I am here leaving aside the anthropological question in eschatology concerning the constitution of the human person and the so-called intermediate state because I have already explored the issue of dualism above. I am also omitting a detailed exploration of the traditional four "last things" (i.e., death, judgment, heaven, and hell).

¹⁹⁸ This imagery is my own.

¹⁹⁹ See, for instance, Oscar Cullman's classic work: *The Resurrection of the Dead or the Immortality of the Soul?: The Witness of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2010). For a survey and consideration of this trend, see Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*,

spiritual one.²⁰⁰ Thus, the second circle of inclusion is the individual human body—the flesh.²⁰¹

The third circle of inclusion is exemplified in Joseph Ratzinger's *Eschatology*, in which he explicitly works to highlight the communal dimension of eschatology.²⁰² He rejects, for instance, the possibility of an instant resurrection of the dead upon the death of the individual through an appeal to eternity as diachronic time, because such downplays the communal significance of history's unfolding.²⁰³ While Ratzinger thus moves beyond individualistic eschatologies to include the human community, he is less developed in his cosmic eschatology.²⁰⁴ This limited focus is evident in his description of the "task of contemporary eschatology," which is "to marry perspectives, so that person and community, present and future, are seen in their unity."²⁰⁵

second edition, translated by Michael Waldstein (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 104-61. Ratzinger's own view is that the dilemma between a Hellenistic immortality and a Judeo-Christian resurrection is largely overstated as most orthodox Christian interpretations of the immortality of the soul emphasize not simply humanity's intrinsic quality, but humanity's being before God. See *ibid.*, 150-61. Wolfhart Pannenberg takes a similar line in *Systematic Theology*, 3:570-73.

²⁰⁰ This claim corresponds to an anthropological view in which human beings are fundamentally embodied creatures. See, for example, John Polkinghorne, *Scientists as Theologians: A Comparison of the Writings of Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke and John Polkinghorne* (London, UK: SPCK, 1996), chapter 3. See also his discussion of embodiment, continuity of identity, and the soul. *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁰¹ The inclusion of human flesh opens the door for the participation of the cosmos in human redemption, a point which Aquinas had already maintained. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Joseph Kenny, editor (New York: Hanover House, 1955-57), IV.97.5. This position also appears in Ratzinger's text. See Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 168-94. However, this inclusion is not without difficulties. Karl Rahner notes one such difficulty when he examines the scientific knowledge concerning the rate of human metabolism and the replacing of cells. He maintains, in a Thomistic fashion, that the form (i.e., soul) of the person can take on any matter (i.e., flesh), such that the resurrection is the imposition of a person's form onto transfigured matter. See Karl Rahner, "The Resurrection of the Body," *Theological Investigations*, volume II (Man in the Church), translated by Karl Kruger (Baltimore, MA: Helicon Press, 1963), 203-216. In this manner, the inclusion of cosmic matter in the eschaton becomes primarily, if not exclusively, about the resurrection of human individuals.

²⁰² Ratzinger, *Eschatology*.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 251-55. Wolfhart Pannenberg makes a similar claim in *Systematic Theology*, 3: 546-47.

²⁰⁴ Moltmann critiques Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) for failing to address adequately the question of the salvation of the nonhuman creation in his encyclical *Spe Salvi*. See Jürgen Moltmann, "Horizons of Hope," *The Christian Century*, May 20 (2009), 31-33.

²⁰⁵ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 12.

The cosmic dimension of eschatology, which constitutes the fourth inclusive circle, is the beginning of the most important dividing marks with regard to this study. Cosmic eschatology is strongly present in thinkers influenced by Eastern thought. This geographical distinction traces back through Christian history as well. In the East, Irenaeus explicitly includes nonhuman animals in his eschatological purview, adamantly insisting on a literal translation of Isaiah's peaceable kingdom.²⁰⁶ Likewise, Ephrem the Syrian contends that the earth will share in the redemptive movement of God.²⁰⁷ Contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologians tend to maintain consistently that the entire cosmos will be included in eschatological redemption through divine transfiguration.²⁰⁸ Contrarily, in the West theological giants such as Augustine and Aquinas reserve eschatological redemption for humans (and inanimate elements).²⁰⁹ In modern times, however, some theologians in the West have taken up a more cosmic eschatology.²¹⁰

Yet often cosmic eschatologies are vague in the exact nature of the nonhuman creation's participation in the eschaton. They are unclear if eschatological community includes simply cosmic matter and energy, or an earth-like environment, or plants, or

²⁰⁶ See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.33.4.

²⁰⁷ Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise*, introduction and translation by Sebastian Brock (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Press, 1989), IX.1.

²⁰⁸ See, for instance, Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 136-137; Andrew Louth, "Eastern Orthodox Eschatology," in *The Orthodox Handbook of Eschatology*, Jerry L. Walls, editor (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 237-238.

²⁰⁹ See Augustine, *Miscellany of Eighty-Three Questions*, The Works of Saint Augustine, Part I Volume 12, ed. Raymond Canning, introduction, translation, and notes by Boniface Ramsey (New York City Press, 2008), XXX; Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV.97.5.

²¹⁰ For example, see John Wesley, "The General Deliverance," available online at <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/sermons/>; Internet, accessed March, 2010; Linzey, "C. S. Lewis's Theology of Animals," *Anglican Theological Review*, 80 (Winter 1998), 60-81; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:551; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, especially chapters 4-5; Stephen H. Webb, *Good Eating* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001), chapter 3; Stanley Hauerwas and John Berkman, "A Trinitarian Theology of the 'Chief End' of 'All Flesh'" in *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel, editors (New York: Orbis Books, 1993), 62-74; Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 1993), 198-202. For a collection of writings (including Wesley's sermon) addressing the general issue of an eternal *telos* for particular nonhumans, see *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings*, Andrew Linzey and Tom Regan, editors (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1990), Part 3 (81-109).

nonhuman animals. Furthermore, they remain unclear—regarding plants and animals especially—if there is a bodily resurrection of those entities that existed during history—whether some or all—or a generic eschatological representation of each species.²¹¹

One of the reasons I find Moltmann to be an important voice on this issue is because of his claim that every single living creature will be resurrected.²¹² His is perhaps the most inclusive eschatology in the field.²¹³ Even so, as we will see, Moltmann’s ethic does not properly align with the scope of his eschatological community.

Eschatology and History

A cosmic eschatology bears significance for eco-theological ethics only to the extent that eschatology bears meaning for how humans live within the flow of history. This point raises the question: what is the relationship between the present and the eschatological future?²¹⁴ In contemporary theology, I detect five general approaches: existentially-oriented, future-oriented, present-oriented, hope-oriented, and politically-oriented.²¹⁵

Ratzinger suggests that Karl Barth’s transcendental eschatology paves the way for the existentially-oriented approach inasmuch as it renders eschatology fully transcendent

²¹¹ Polkinghorne permits that all kinds of nonhuman life/creation may participate in the eschatological consummation, but not that every instantiation of life will. See Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope*, 122-23.

²¹² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 69-70.

²¹³ Linzey tends to advocate for the resurrection of sentient creatures and is thus less inclusive than Moltmann. See Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 133, n. 13.

²¹⁴ Ratzinger suggests that this relation may be *the* issue in contemporary eschatology. As Ratzinger states, “It is...possible in our day to write an eschatology which would be nothing but a dialogue...with the theology of futurity, the theology of hope and the theology of liberation.” Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 4. Ratzinger’s task is to recover the contributions of the eschatology in Christian history, including the Middle Ages, and place these contributions in dialogue with contemporary concerns. See Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 1-15.

²¹⁵ I am here combining into my own categories insights from Ratzinger, Schwarz, and Moltmann.

to time and immanent to existence, facilitating the crisis of encounter between humanity and God.²¹⁶ This emphasis on encounter is taken up by Rudolph Bultmann, in whom “eschatology is stripped of any temporal component” and defined essentially as “an act of self-abandonment.”²¹⁷

In juxtaposition to existential approaches that emphasize encounter at the expense of temporality stands future-oriented approaches, which place temporality at the heart of eschatology.²¹⁸ An example is Oscar Cullman’s “salvation history” approach to eschatology in which time is divided into the pre-Christ-event, the already/not yet of the Christ-event, and the future hope to come—the “not yet”.²¹⁹ In this schema, “Faith means entering into solidarity with salvation history, taking up its ‘already’ and, on that basis, working towards the ‘not yet.’”²²⁰

Present eschatologies bear a semblance to existential ones in their application of eschatology to the here and now. The difference is between “here” and the “now.” Whereas existential eschatologies emphasize personal encounter (the “here”), present eschatologies emphasize the presence of the future in history (the “now”). There is overlap here with both Cullman’s futurist approach and theologies of hope. However, C. H. Dodd’s “realized eschatology” warrants a separate category. For Dodd, the Christ-event accomplished the work of rendering God’s kingdom present on earth.²²¹ Thus, the

²¹⁶ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 47-48.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48-49. For a good summary of Bultmann, including his exegetical approach to eschatology, see Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 120-27. In Moltmann’s view, both Barth and Bultmann transport eschatology into a transcendent eternity. Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 13-16, 19-22.

²¹⁸ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 51.

²¹⁹ See Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 53-55; Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 136-37.

²²⁰ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 54.

²²¹ Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 130. There is a stark difference here between Dodd and Barth. For Barth, the Christ-event—as Parousia—is still awaiting its final completion. See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, volume IV (The Doctrine of Reconciliation), translated by G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962), 3/2, 903-905.

Church's celebration is less a looking forward and more a looking back.²²² For "in Jesus the eternal entered decisively into history," forcing the "hour of decision."²²³ Hans Schwarz classifies Dodd's approach as transcendentalist because history has already witnessed the coming of the kingdom. Therefore, the future hope is not at all future, but beyond history altogether.²²⁴

In Moltmann's view, whereas Barth transported eschatology into eternity, rendering it wholly other than time and history, future-oriented approaches mistakenly subsume eschatology into time.²²⁵ Thus Moltmann, along with Wolfhart Pannenberg, advocates a different approach—one oriented around hope. Moltmann's earlier work, especially *Theology of Hope*, has been greatly influential in the rise of political theology.²²⁶ Yet there is a distinct difference between both Moltmann and Pannenberg and strictly political theologies that transport eschatology into time in an effort to construct utopian societies.²²⁷ There is also a difference between Moltmann's eschatology and the future-oriented eschatology of Cullman,²²⁸ for Moltmann differentiates between the phenomenological future (the irreversible time of history) and the eschatological future, which "is God's coming and his arrival."²²⁹ Thus, for Moltmann, God's coming is the presence of the eschatological future, which is the source of phenomenological time, within history. This coming transforms time (and history)

²²² Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 55-56.

²²³ Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 130.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 132.

²²⁵ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 10-12.

²²⁶ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 58.

²²⁷ See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 195; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:585-86.

²²⁸ See *ibid.*, 12-13. I therefore think Schwarz incorrectly labels Moltmann under "future-oriented" eschatologies. Only if Moltmann's novel understanding of the eschatological future is taken into account can such a claim be made.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

itself. Thus, the eschaton is both transcendent and immanent—it is present in history while at the same time being history’s horizon.²³⁰

Finally, there are the politically-oriented eschatologies of liberation theology.²³¹ These forms are influenced by the work of Johann Baptist Metz.²³² Many of them furthermore bear some affinity with existential approaches in that they tend to demythologize eschatology, rendering it more a call to work toward social utopias that are possible within the flow of history.²³³ Said differently, eschatology is often deprived of its transcendence.²³⁴ It becomes a fully historical, political, and ethical endeavor. This tendency is also evident in certain feminist approaches to eschatology, most notably that of Ruether.²³⁵

Eschatology and Ethics

Intimately connected to the question concerning the relationship between history and eschatology—and equally important for this project—is the relationship between eschatology and ethics.²³⁶ To what extent does eschatology inform morality within the unfolding of history? It is just at this point that Ratzinger is critical of political theologies; for “the realization of God’s Kingdom is not itself a political process.”²³⁷ Even more harshly, to make eschatological hope an achievable goal within history entails

²³⁰ Christologically, this vision is different from Pannenberg, who maintains that God’s coming in Christ is the prolepsis of the still future kingdom. Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 145. While this difference is significant, there is a practical overlap between Moltmann and Pannenberg in which eschatology vastly affects human activity in the flow of history. Pannenberg states that “By the Spirit the eschatological future is present already in the hearts of believers. His dynamic is the basis of anticipations of eschatological salvation already in the as yet incomplete history of the world.” Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:552.

²³¹ For an overview, see Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 152-66.

²³² See *ibid.*, 152-53.

²³³ See Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 57-59. Ratzinger, in my view, wrongly classifies Moltmann here.

²³⁴ See Schwarz’s engagement with Gustavo Gutierrez in *Eschatology*, 159-60.

²³⁵ See, for instance, her mixture of agnosticism (about the future) and existentialism regarding personal eschatology in *Sexism and God Talk*, 257-58.

²³⁶ Moltmann addresses this issue, along with the question of the continuity of the present and future creation, within the context of millenarianism. See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 129-202.

²³⁷ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 58.

“the emasculation of Christian hope.”²³⁸ For Ratzinger, the kingdom of God bears meaning for politics, but not by way of eschatology. Thus he maintains that “the setting asunder of eschatology and politics is one of the fundamental tasks of Christian theology.”²³⁹ To the extent that eschatology ought not to become a political program in which the full realization of eschatological hope is transported into history and realized through human effort, I concur with Ratzinger’s position. However, if he intends to claim that eschatology has no bearing on moral theology, his stance is much less tenable.

On the other hand, a complete relegation of eschatology into ethics and politics—which is what Ratzinger seems to fear—is also problematic. In the words of Barth, the undeniable “not yet” of history is the shattering of “the great Constantinian illusion.”²⁴⁰ For Barth, Christians are called to hope for the future kingdom in the midst of inevitable conflict.²⁴¹ This vision leans toward the approaches of Moltmann and Pannenberg. Schwarz summarizes Pannenberg’s eschatological ethics well: “Since we are able to participate proleptically in the promised future, we are encouraged to anticipate this future proleptically.”²⁴²

Continuity and Discontinuity between the Present and the New Creation

Also connected to the question of the relationship between history and eschatology is the issue concerning the level of continuity (and discontinuity) between the present creation and the new creation. This issue is further complicated, however, by the introduction of an inbreaking eschatological future in which the radically new accosts

²³⁸ Ibid., 59.

²³⁹ Ibid..

²⁴⁰ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/3/2: 918.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 917-19.

²⁴² Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 145. This position is consummate with Schwarz’s own constructive proposal. See *ibid.*, chapter 7.

history—for example the resurrection of Jesus *within history*. The question, then, is two-fold. First, to what extent will the new creation be continuous with the present creation? Second, to what extent does the Christ-event, including the ongoing work of the Spirit, enable the new to break into history? These questions will be of great significance in my discussion of Moltmann and Linzey and in my constructive work in chapter four.

At stake in these questions are both the object and nature of eschatological salvation. Is the present cosmos the object of salvation? Phrased differently, will the “new creation” be numerically identical—and thus continuous—with the present creation? Or, will the “new creation” replace the present one? If there is numerical identity between the present creation and the new creation, will the new creation be genuinely new—and thus discontinuous—or a mere evolutionary development of the present creation?²⁴³

In Sum

I have explored the following dimensions of eschatology:

- 1.) The scope of the community of eschatological redemption
- 2.) The nature of the relationship between eschatology and history.
- 3.) The nature of the relationship between eschatology and ethics.
- 4.) The degree of continuity and discontinuity between the present and new creation

Collectively, these dimensions reveal much about one’s eco-theology.²⁴⁴ Non-cosmic eschatologies tend to render the nonhuman creation less important—or important only

²⁴³ These questions are important to John Polkinghorne, who offers his scientific expertise as a framework to address them. For Polkinghorne, “It is the element of discontinuity—the expectation of the unexpected—that distinguishes theological eschatology from a secular futurology.” Polkinghorne, *God of Hope*, xxiv. These elements include freedom transience, suffering, and death for all individual humans who, through the continuity of their soul, are re-embodied at the resurrection. Yet there is also continuity. Here, Polkinghorne draws on his scientific roots as a physicist to emphasize the eternal significance of physicality, process, and temporality. See, Polkinghorne, *God of Hope*, 14-26; John Polkinghorne, *Science and the Trinity: The Christian Encounter with Reality* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 143-69. For a summary of Polkinghorne’s view, see Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 81.

²⁴⁴ On this point, see Santmire, *The Travail of Nature*, 216-18.

insofar as it contributes to human well-being. Yet a cosmic eschatology that includes even the resurrection of individual creatures holds meaning for moral practice in history only if eschatology is not purely transcendent. Furthermore, existentially and politically oriented eschatologies tend to work toward only that which is achievable in the natural evolution of history. They are thus open to the restructuring of human communities. But they cannot logically bear the strain of the transfiguration of nature itself. If, however, an eschatology contains a cosmic scope (thus including nature), a transcendent dimension (thus offering hope for future beyond what the natural unfolding of history can provide), and a manner in which the “future” is somehow present within history (thus rendering the hope for the kingdom impactful for human practice within history), then it becomes cosmically significant *to history* without being completely subsumed *in history*. It is just such a vision that both Moltmann and Linzey offer.

FUNDAMENTAL TENSIONS AMONG COSMOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND ESCHATOLOGY

At the intersection of the theological dimensions of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology, two fundamental tensions arise. The first burgeons out of the interplay between the historical telos of the nonhuman creation and that of the human creation.²⁴⁵ Why does each exist? Does the nonhuman find its meaning and value only in the human? Or, does it have, each part or creature according to its capacity, some relation with God in and of itself? Has God endowed the nonhuman cosmos with any meaning or value apart from its being in relation to humanity? I use the terms anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism to refer to this tension.

²⁴⁵ By “historical telos,” I intimate the purpose of a thing or groups of things within the unfolding of the present creation. The term stands in juxtaposition to an “eternal” or “ultimate” telos, which denotes the eschatological destiny of a thing or group of things.

The second tension derives from the divine intent for the created order (both human and nonhuman), the eternal telos of the nonhuman creation, and the manner in which these factors shape how humanity ought to engage the nonhuman world. Is the nonhuman world the way God desires it to be? Or, is it in some sense fallen or incomplete? What is the ultimate end God desires for the nonhuman world? Does it have place in eternity or is it exhausted in the temporal realm? If it has a place, how much of the nonhuman creation will that place accommodate? Individuals? Species? Simple building blocks of matter? Time? For this tension I use the terms conservation and transfiguration.

ANTHROPOCENTRISM VERSUS COSMOCENTRISM

Jenkins rightly notes that anthropocentrism has been the dominant taxonomical divider for eco-theological thought. He is furthermore correct, in my view, that it should not be the only one employed in mapping the field of eco-theological thought or adjudicating the potential contributions of voices within that field. However, anthropocentrism is an important categorical marker in that it highlights significant divergences in eco-theological theory and practice. It is for want of his use of this categorical marker that Jenkins's taxonomy of grace faces its own challenges.²⁴⁶ Namely, Jenkins categorizes voices together that share little in common. Indeed, he notes that there are wide variations within ecojustice regarding natural evil.²⁴⁷ These differences are not inconsequential—a point of which Jenkins is well aware. Furthermore, the stark distinction between Moltmann and Aquinas ought to elicit

²⁴⁶ To be fair, Jenkins never claims that his map of the field is absolute or exhaustive.

²⁴⁷ See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 70-71.

curiosity at their common categorization.²⁴⁸ The reason I will continue to distinguish between these centrisms is because I believe the question of intrinsic value, while not the only pertinent distinction in eco-theological thought, remains a key one in establishing common eco-theological categories. Adding this key establishes clearer classifications than Jenkins achieves without it.

Defining the Terms

There are multiple ways to use terms like “anthropocentric” and “cosmocentric.” For instance, Northcott uses the term “humanocentric” to denote a conversational framework and a methodology of engaging ecological issues. For example, Ruether approaches ecological issues within the framework of a sociological and theological critique of patriarchy. Because she starts with this critique of *human* thought, Northcott labels her humanocentric.²⁴⁹ Pope John Paul II approaches ecological issues from a concern for universal human dignity—also a human-based category. It is this commonality that leads Northcott to place Ruether and the Pope in the same category. Similarly, Northcott categorizes Moltmann as theocentric because his “doctrine of creation is derived primarily from a new reading of the doctrine of God as Trinity.”²⁵⁰ Thus, Northcott uses centric terms to describe method as opposed to value.

²⁴⁸ To be fair, Jenkins’s taxonomy has more to do with strategies that correspond to theological notions of grace than theological principles themselves. That is, his starting point is the manner in which theological notions are taken into practical strategies. This method explains why such divergent theological foundations are grouped together. I believe that an at least equally helpful method involves combining the question of centrism that Jenkins wants to avoid with the issue of eschatological salvation. At any rate, I question Jenkins’s categorization of Moltmann under ecojustice. My reading of Moltmann suggests he would fit better in the Orthodox camp of creation spirituality and deification. This possible misreading of Moltmann may be why Jenkins sees his view as problematic for ecojustice. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 73-74.

²⁴⁹ Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 137.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 350, n. 53.

Another use—which tends to have theological connotations—of anthropocentrism is concerned with functional roles. For instance, anthropocentrism can mean that humans bear a central role in the preservation and/or development of the cosmos, whether as stewards or co-creators.²⁵¹ Some of the thinkers that are cosmocentric with regard to *value* are anthropocentric with regard the *functional role* of humanity.²⁵² This form of anthropocentrism stands in contrast to an anthropocosmic view.²⁵³

²⁵¹ The stewardship model tends to take up the functional role of human as preserver. However, it is also possible for this model to emphasize humanity's role of transforming nature alongside the role of conservation. See Hall, *Imaging God*, 53-60, 198-201. On the whole, though, the Orthodox notion of human as priest and co-creator takes up the form as developer. See John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington DC: Corpus Books, 1969), 105; Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 49-50. The notion of human as developer is furthermore taken up by certain Catholic thinkers, including Teilhard de Chardin, Johannes Baptist Metz, and Pope John Paul II. On this point see French, "Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms in Recent Catholic Thought," 51-57. For an extreme example of functional anthropocentrism, see Webb, "Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom." Paul Santmire is critical of an overemphasis on the functional role of humanity in the cosmos. See his critique of stewardship in H. Paul Santmire, "Partnership with Nature According to the Scriptures: Beyond the Theology of Stewardship," *Christian Scholar's Review* 32/4 (Summer 2003), 381-412.

²⁵² This is mainly true of Moltmann and Linzey, as I will show in chapters two and three. My constructive proposal in chapter four also bears this form of anthropocentrism. Sideris, following Rolston and Gustafson, offers a kind of middle way between the functional anthropocentrism of stewardship models and the complete dissolution of a unique human role in nature. Human beings, for Sideris, are neither the co-creators nor co-redeemers of nature. They are not its steward, defender, or its priest. See Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 245. Rather, humans are participants in nature. They are in dependent upon it and interdependent with it. Thus, Sideris maintains that "it is not our place to intervene in order to control nature or to prevent the destruction of life that occurs naturally, no matter how distasteful it may seem." *Ibid.*, 225. But humanity does have a *participatory* role in the cosmos. Humans are to love the created order. Sideris acknowledges that "it is often impossible for us to preserve the wildness that is loved by doing nothing, because our previous actions have already compromised natural values. Therefore, loving wild nature is not simply letting it be. A general response of love requires specific actions." *Ibid.*, 254. In particular, humans have to reflect upon their difficult decisions regarding how best to participate in nature. This concept is very similar to my discussion of Berry's emphasis on "living-with" nature.

²⁵³ Anthropocosmism denotes the mutuality between humans (*anthropos*) and the world (*cosmos*). For a good summary, including a consideration of the etiology of the word, see Sam Mickey, "Contributions to Anthropocosmic Environmental Ethics," *Worldviews* 11 (2007), 226-47. Says Mickey: "Rather than placing value on a particular center (e.g., anthropocentric, biocentric, ecocentric) and thus excluding and marginalizing something of peripheral value, an anthropocosmic approach to ethics seeks to facilitate the mutual implication of humanity and the natural world, thereby affirming the interconnectedness and mutual constitution of central and peripheral value." As I will show, my use of cosmocentrism includes mutuality in that it refuses to separate humanity from the cosmos—thus, the "cosmos" of cosmocentrism includes both humans and nonhumans. That is, humans and nonhumans are part of the same cosmic community and are therefore interconnected. Suggesting, as I do, that humans bear an important role in the redemption of the nonhuman creation is not to suggest that there is no reciprocity in this matter. For these reasons—and for the sake of continuity in terms—at this point I remain focused on the term cosmocentric (with my qualifications) as opposed to anthropocosmic.

Yet another form of centric terms is offered by Lisa Sideris.²⁵⁴ She writes that “The distinction between an ethic derived from nature and one extended to nature becomes blurred in the writings of some ecotheologians.”²⁵⁵ This statement highlights the crux of Sideris’s understanding of various -centrisms. For her, a -centrism is defined by its frame of reference for the establishment of value. In conjunction with James Gustafson, she states that “anthropocentrism constitutes a refusal to accept and respect a natural ordering that is neither of our own making nor completely under our control.”²⁵⁶ An anthropocentric ethic is thus one in which humans apply their subjective values and hopes to nature.²⁵⁷ She thus defines any failure to affirm the goodness of the natural order, any reading of the natural order in an anthropomorphic sense, and any hope for an eschatological transfiguration of nature as anthropocentric.²⁵⁸

An ecocentric ethic, which Sideris strongly favors, is one in which humans allow nature to reveal its own set of principles and formulate from this revelation an ethic that respects those principles. Says Sideris: “an ecocentric ethic demands that we value the

²⁵⁴ Though, Sideris seems either unconvinced or unaware that she is using the terms differently. But that such is the case seems likely in the face of her disagreement with the way these authors categorize theologians in their terms. She does not find Gustafson’s claim that process theology can be essentially theocentric to be true. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 206. She furthermore approves of Northcott’s labeling of Ruether as “humanocentric” but does not engage his labeling of Moltmann as theocentric. Ibid., 212-13.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 46.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 201.

²⁵⁷ For instance, Ruether is anthropocentric “insofar as her ecological ethic is filtered through the experiences and claims of women as an oppressed group.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 85. Northcott does not avoid the brand of anthropocentrism because his “desire for peace, harmony, and justice in the natural realm constitutes a human agenda imposed on nature as much as (if not more than) Ruether’s efforts to understand nature through the lens of women’s oppression.” Ibid., 88. Advocates of process theology (namely, Birch and Cobb) are anthropocentric because they maintain that “value in nonhuman life is assessed in terms of categorical experiences...that take human experience as their reference point.” Ibid., 207. Lastly, Sideris is adamant that Moltmann is anthropocentric but acknowledges, in light of works like *God in Creation*, that his theology has a cosmic scope. But she maintains that he remains anthropocentric because, while he includes the cosmos into his theological framework and even acknowledges it has value beyond its purpose vis-à-vis humanity, “his theology retains the basic goal of eliminating those conditions of life (both human and animal life) that generate suffering and conflict.” Ibid., 213-14.

²⁵⁸ Sideris includes a wide variety of thinkers in this camp, including Ruether, McFague, Northcott, Moltmann, Charles Birch, and John Cobb.

processes that generate species, even when this process does not suit human moral preferences.²⁵⁹ Sideris thus highlights the possible difference between ecocentric and biocentric ethics.²⁶⁰

In Sideris's view, a theocentric ethics (by which she seems to mean the particular theocentric ethics of Gustafson) is one in which humans permit the order God has established in nature to reveal the framework for human engagement with nature. Such a perspective "fosters a sense of dependence, awe, and gratitude... for powers that sustain human life and life as a whole."²⁶¹ It thus does not denigrate the natural order, which is divinely established. Nor does it seek a better world: "However unappealing the perspective may be at times, a theocentric construal does not force God and nature into roles that better suit our own preferences for harmony and justice."²⁶²

In the absence of any validity to an historical Fall from an edenic paradise, Sideris maintains that this divinely-established order must include the mechanisms of evolutionary emergence, including suffering, predation, and death. Therefore, any eco-theological ethic that fails to affirm the *goodness* of these mechanisms cannot ultimately be ecocentric as it denies the order revealed in nature. Nor can it be theocentric as it also denies the divine intent inherent in that order. Such an ethic—whether in emphasizing cooperation over and against competition or in hoping for an eschatological redemption

²⁵⁹ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 175.

²⁶⁰ "Although some environmental ethicists use the terms *ecocentric* and *biocentric* interchangeably, I give preference to the former term throughout this work. A biocentric, or 'life-centered,' approach may take into account characteristics of nonhuman life (and locate values in those characteristics) yet fail to understand these values in a holistic or systemic fashion. In *Respect for Nature* Paul Taylor, for example, understands organisms as 'teleological centers' with inherent value of their own, but his ethic remains focused on individual lives and more biocentric than ecocentric." Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 270, n. 5.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 201.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 214.

of some cosmic fallenness—is for Sideris ultimately and inevitably anthropocentric because it replaces the values inherent in nature with human values and hopes.

Most commonly, however, terms like anthropocentrism, biocentrism, androcentrism, and cosmocentrism refer to the issue of intrinsic value.²⁶³ For example, Paul Taylor distinguishes between two kinds of environmental ethics: anthropocentric and biocentric.²⁶⁴ He maintains that an anthropocentric approach “holds that our moral duties with respect to the natural world are all ultimately derived from the duties we owe to one another as human beings.”²⁶⁵ Such a view makes ecological conservation a moral issue because of both the present and future human community. Contrarily, a biocentric approach maintains that

our duties toward nature do not stem from the duties we owe to humans...the natural world is not there simply as an object to be exploited by us, nor are its living creatures to be regarded as nothing more than resources for our use and consumption. On the contrary, wild communities of life are understood to be deserving of our moral concern and consideration because they have a kind of value that belongs to them inherently.²⁶⁶

Thus, centric terms differentiate between direct and indirect moral concern for the nonhuman cosmos—between viewing nonhumans primarily as creatures of value in their own right and nonhumans viewing them primarily or exclusively as resources, the *telos* of which is realized in the facilitation of human well-being.

In this project, I have Taylor’s value-based understanding of these terms in mind. I specifically use cosmocentrism as opposed to biocentrism in order to maximize moral inclusiveness—that is, not only living creatures but non-living matter and the cosmos

²⁶³ In the words of Armstrong and Botzler, “*Anthropocentrism* is the philosophical perspective that ethical principles apply to humans only and that human needs and interests are of the highest, and even exclusive, value and importance.” Armstrong and Botzler, *Environmental Ethics*, 271.

²⁶⁴ Taylor, *Respect for Nature*, 10-11.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

itself.²⁶⁷ However, by the term cosmocentrism I do not intend that *only* the cosmos as a whole has value or even that the cosmos as a whole has primary value.²⁶⁸ I thus seek to avoid the critique labeled against “nonanthropocentric ethics” noted by Sam Mickey:

While anthropocentric ethics foster exploitative and manipulative attitudes toward the environment, nonanthropocentric ethics like eco- and bio-centrism threaten to become misanthropic and socially irresponsible as they marginalize problems faced by disenfranchised economic classes and ethnicities.²⁶⁹

By cosmocentrism I mean that both the cosmos as a whole and *all* of its individual components (including ecosystems, species, and individual creatures, both human and nonhuman) have *intrinsic* value.²⁷⁰ It thus entails the moral recognition of the nonhuman creation for its own sake.²⁷¹ Contrarily, by anthropocentrism I intimate that humans bear intrinsic value and the value of the nonhuman creation is derivative of both the temporal (i.e., historical) and ultimate (i.e., eschatological) import of humanity.

Why not Theocentrism?

Referring to Joseph Sittler’s eco-theological ethics, Bouma-Prediger maintains that

only such a theocentrism in which God is affirmed as the source of being and existence of ultimate meaning and value is able both to preserve human uniqueness and affirm the interdependence of creation and thereby avoid both an anthropocentrism that fails to acknowledge the commonality of humans with other creatures and a cosmocentrism that refuses to admit human distinctiveness.²⁷²

²⁶⁷ For instance, Andrew Linzey is times better understood as sentiocentric as opposed to cosmocentric.

²⁶⁸ See below my discussion on the primary unit of moral consideration.

²⁶⁹ Mickey, “Contributions to Anthropocosmic Ethics,” 227.

²⁷⁰ I will address the question of whether or not all the cosmos and its separate components can together occupy *center* (thus rendering nothing peripheral and the center somewhat meaningless altogether) in chapter four.

²⁷¹ Concerning animals, Wennberg defines “moral recognition” as follows: “There are things we are not to do to animals even when it is in our interest to do them.” Wennberg, *God, Animals, and Humans*, xii.

²⁷² Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 278.

Bouma-Prediger is not alone in this sentiment. The notion that a theocentric worldview shatters both anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism is quite common. Defenders of Aquinas's contribution to eco-theological ethics argue his theocentrism trumps charges that he is anthropocentric.²⁷³ The Orthodox theologian Radu Bordeianu critiques Thomas Berry for being cosmocentric as opposed to theocentric.²⁷⁴ Other theologians, such as Moltmann and Linzey, define themselves as theocentric rather than cosmocentric or biocentric.²⁷⁵

Yet it is unclear why theocentrism should be categorized with anthropocentrism or cosmocentrism for many of these thinkers. This world is God's world. God is its source of value and meaning. If these claims are what is meant by theocentrism—which seems most often to be the case—then they have done little to stymie the *practical anthropocentrism* of many theologians in history. In fact, theocentrism sanctions such praxis. If God is indeed the source of value and meaning for creation, and God orders the creation such that the nonhuman exists for the human, then theocentrism has in fact grounded anthropocentrism within the cosmos.

Thus, with regard to the issue of intrinsic value, theocentrism is not one option among anthropocentrism or cosmocentrism. Theocentrism deals with *the foundation*—or

²⁷³ See, for instance, John Berkman, "Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality," in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London: SCM Press, 2009), 24; Mark Wynn, "Thomas Aquinas: Reading the Idea of Dominion in the Light of the Doctrine of Creation" in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, editors (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 156–162.

²⁷⁴ See Radu Bordeianu, "Maximus and Ecology: The Relevance of Maximus the Confessor's Theology of Creation for the Present Ecological Crisis," *Downside Review* 127/447 (2009), 115.

²⁷⁵ See chapters two and three of the present work.

lack thereof—for the value and meaning of creatures.²⁷⁶ It is thus the framework within which either anthropocentrism or cosmocentrism is justified. Michael Hauskeller makes just this point:

Both anthropocentrism and biocentrism (in a strong sense) require some sort of theocentric background. One cannot really believe that humans are at the centre of the universe (that is, that we matter or our existence has intrinsic value while nothing else does) if one does not believe (however vaguely) that we have been put there by some higher, cosmic authority. Similarly, one cannot really believe that all living beings matter and deserve moral consideration if one does not believe (again, however vaguely) that there is something in the universe that gives weight to those beings and to what is being done to them. Thus theocentrism is actually not a third position in addition to anthropocentrism and biocentrism but a background presupposition of intelligibility for both of them.²⁷⁷

Thomas Aquinas's anthropocentric hierarchy of creation is couched within a theocentrism as is Thomas Berry's biocentrism. The question, then, is not: Should theology be theocentric, cosmocentric, or anthropocentric? The question is: does theocentrism ground an anthropocentric or cosmocentric worldview?

In my reading, this critique of theocentrism is actually conducive to the work of James Gustafson. Regarding the context of his own work, Gustafson states that “culturally, religiously, theologically, and ethically, man, the human species, has become the measure of all things; all things have been put in the service of man.”²⁷⁸ This statement expresses what Gustafson intimates with the term anthropocentrism. He contends that “the dominant strand of Western ethics, whether religious or secular, argues that the material considerations for morality are to be derived from purely human points

²⁷⁶ For instance, in the case of Sideris it seems to me that what she actually praises is not theocentrism, but the possibility that theocentrism can ground—as it does in Gustafson—a holistic ecocentric ethics. See, for instance, Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 254.

²⁷⁷ Michael Hauskeller, *Biotechnology and the Integrity of Life: Taking Public Fears Seriously* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 88-89. On this point see also Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and Its Discontents*, 1–2.

²⁷⁸ James Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 1:82.

of reference.” In other words, the foundational question for morality is “What is good for man?”²⁷⁹ Gustafson notes that alternative strands have also developed. These alternatives ask “What is good for the whole of creation?” Furthermore, these alternatives “have been stated in purely religious terms: God, rather than man, ought to be the measure of all things.”²⁸⁰

In my view, Gustafson here acknowledges that what I intimate with the term cosmocentrism is compatible (as opposed to contrary) with his notion of theocentrism. Indeed, he acknowledges that one can maintain even an anthropocentric worldview in which “what God wills is what is good for man” within theocentrism if “the good of human beings coincides with the ultimate divine purpose.”²⁸¹ Thus, theocentrism and practical anthropocentrism are not *necessarily* at odds with one another. They are not, *in theory*, mutually exclusive.

Gustafson’s goal is thus one of reinterpreting what a theocentric world *should* look like—which is quite different from the anthropocentrism of the past. A more proper theocentrism, in Gustafson’s view, accepts that “*all* things are ‘good,’ and not just good for [humans].”²⁸² It accepts such a view because “what is right for man has to be determined in relation to man’s place in the universe and, indeed, in relation to the will of God for all things as that might dimly be discerned.”²⁸³ Furthermore, an anthropocentrism in which human beings are the measure of all things “implies a denial of God as God—as the power and ordering of life in nature and history which sustains

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 1:88.

²⁸⁰ Ibid..

²⁸¹ Ibid., 1:91.

²⁸² Ibid., 1:109.

²⁸³ Ibid., 1:99.

and limits human activity, which ‘demands’ recognition of principles and boundaries of activities for the sake of man and of the whole of life.”²⁸⁴

At any rate, Gustafson’s aim is a redirecting of methodology²⁸⁵—a de-centering of human beings as the measure of all value. He describes this aim as “the turn from anthropocentrism to a *more* theocentric focus of attention.” The word “more” here further acknowledges that what Gustafson proposes is something he understands to better correspond to the notion of theocentrism, which actually tends toward a cosmocentric or ecocentric worldview. Thus, again, the question is not between anthropocentrism and theocentrism, but rather what kind of ethical centrism theocentrism grounds.²⁸⁶

CONSERVATION VERSUS TRANSFIGURATION

The juxtaposition of conservation and transfiguration may appear odd at first. Conservation is a very common term in both secular and theological ethics. Transfiguration is not. Whereas my use of anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism pertains fundamentally to the question of intrinsic value and moral worth, my use of conservation and transfiguration pertains fundamentally to the question regarding the nature of human interaction with the nonhuman creation. Said differently, these latter terms denote *how*

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 1:84.

²⁸⁵ On methodology, Gustafson is adamant about acknowledging the limits of knowledge on account of human finitude. “What one sees and does not see is related to where one stands.” Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, 3. This limit ought to engender caution in all theological endeavors. “A theology has to be careful to avoid making excessive claims for the knowledge it proposes; it must be worded in such a way that this fundamental character of the human experience of God is not oversimplified or essentially violated.” Ibid., 35.

²⁸⁶ Sideris argues that, in an attempt to decentralize humans, Gustafson “proposes that ethics and theology... attempt to discern what is good for a larger whole: the human species, other species, or nature broadly construed.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 203. This vision of theocentrism is not necessarily at odds with my definition of cosmocentrism. I thus think Sideris in error when she suggests a direct equivalence between theocentric ethics and Gustafson’s delineation of this ethics (and then suggests that a theocentric ethics overlaps, apparently merely by being theocentric, with ecocentric ethics). See Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, chapter 6.

humans ought to engage the nonhuman dimensions of the cosmos. The former terms denote *why* humans ought to do so.

By conservation, I intimate the notion that the proper human interaction with the nonhuman creation is preservation of what exists, including the elements of evolutionary emergence. In this view, the natural cycles of the cosmos, including those like predation, are typically envisioned as good—theologically speaking, unfallen with regard at least to the nonhuman cosmos—and therefore not in need of redemption. Humans bear the role of living within these cycles in such a manner as to permit the continued facilitation of nature’s integrity.²⁸⁷ Humans must limit their actions so that their presence does not disrupt the natural cycles of the cosmos. Perpetuation, not redemption, is the mantra of conservation.

In his delineation of Orthodox eco-theology, Andrew Louth draws out the meaning of transfiguration for the cosmos. “To speak of the transfiguration as the goal and purpose of creation is to suggest a genuine transformation, but not a transformation *into something else*, rather it is a transformation that reveals the true reality of what is transfigured.”²⁸⁸ In Christ’s transfiguration, he “is revealed as he really is.”²⁸⁹ So also, “to see the cosmos as transfigured is to see it as it really is.”²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ By “nature,” I intend something akin to Taylor’s definition of the “the natural world”: “the entire set of natural ecosystems on our planet, along with the populations of animals and plants that make up the biotic communities of those ecosystems.” Taylor, *Respect for Nature*, 3. I prefer this definition initially because it is descriptive and amoral. As will become evident, the definition of nature is a contentious point in relation to creation theology. For instance, Moltmann differentiates between “nature,” which denotes the present state of the cosmos, which is in some sense distorted and in some sense incomplete, and “creation,” which entails the entire scope of the cosmic narrative, including its eschatological future. See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 37-40. Linzey maintains that an understanding and interpretation is one of the stark differences between “animal theologians and ecological theologians,” who “do not *see* the same things when they peer into ‘nature,’ or even if they see them, they ‘count’ them in different ways.” Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 30.

²⁸⁸ Andrew Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration: The Environment in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition,” *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives* (David

In line with this view, by transfiguration, I intimate the notion that proper human interaction with the nonhuman creation is defined not by what is, but rather by what will be, eschatologically. In this view, parts of nature's cycle, including evolutionary dimensions such as predation, suffering, and death, are often viewed as fallen (or evidence of creation's incompleteness) and in need of redemption. Humans bear the role of being counter-natural with regard to such dimensions, if only by means of witness within the evolutionary process. Humans ought not to live according to the "rule of nature," but rather in a manner that witnesses to creation's eschatological destiny. Prolepsis protest, not mere preservation, is the mantra of transfiguration.

FOUR PARADIGMS OF ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Having established the import for the three theological dimensions and defined the terms involved within the poles of tension that these dimensions facilitate, I am now able to construct, in basic form, the four paradigms of eco-theological ethics. Here, my aim is merely to establish the manner in which these paradigms take shape within the tensions outlined above. With this basic framework in place, I will then address the question of the primary unit of eco-theological concern (i.e., individual animals, species, eco-systems, or the cosmos as a whole) and why this question is not presented as one of the fundamental tensions in this project.

THE FOUR PARADIGMS IN OUTLINE

The tensions between anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism, on the one hand, and conservation and transfiguration, on the other, provide a framework to establish four

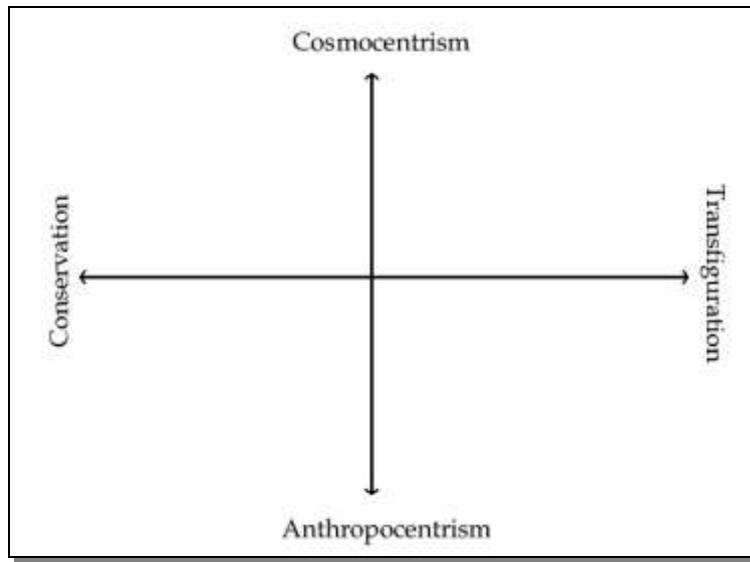
G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, editors (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 216.

²⁸⁹ Ibid..

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 217.

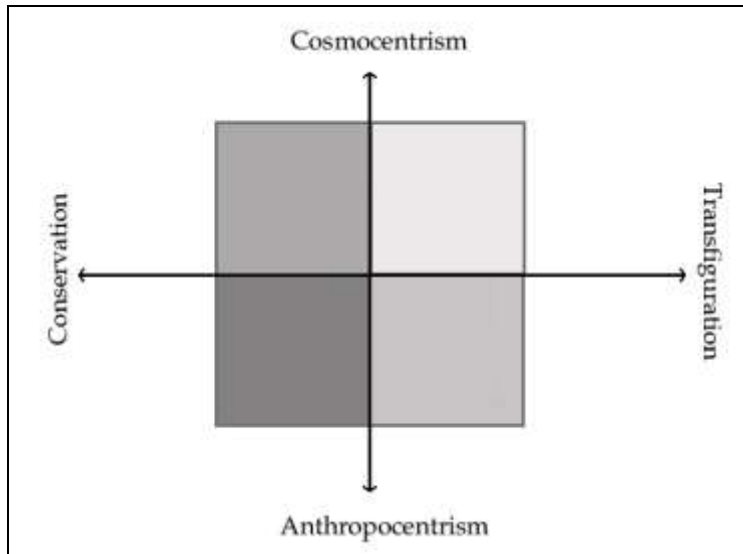
paradigms of eco-theological ethics. This framework is evident in **Illustration I – 1**, a Cartesian coordinate diagram in which the X-axis represents the tension between conservation and transfiguration and the Y-axis represents the tension between anthropocentrism and cosmocentrism.

Illustration I – 1:



With this coordinate plane, a position can be charted according to where it falls with regard to these two tensions. If, for instance, a thinker advocates a conservationist viewpoint as opposed to one of transfiguration (and thus falls in the [-X] dimension) while at the same time advocating a cosmocentric worldview as opposed to an anthropocentric one (and thus falls in the [+Y] dimension), that thinker would then occupy the quarter of the coordinate plane that represents one of the paradigms, *cosmocentric conservation*. There are thus four possibilities, evident in **Illustration I – 2:**

Illustration I – 2



For the sake of clarity, I label each paradigm according to its location on the plane. Thus, the (-X, -Y) coordinates are anthropocentric conservationism, a view which I will establish through an engagement with the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The (-X, +Y) coordinates are cosmocentric conservationism. To present this view, I will examine the work of the Passionist priest, Thomas Berry. The (X, -Y) coordinates are anthropocentric transfiguration, a view which is best represented in the work of Orthodox theologians like Dumitru Staniloae and John Meyendorff. Lastly, the (X, Y) coordinates are cosmocentric transfiguration.

I delineate the first three paradigms in chapter one. It is the last paradigm—cosmocentric transfiguration—I seek to develop constructively in chapter four. To do so, I will engage the work of both Jürgen Moltmann (chapter two) and Andrew Linzey (chapter three).

THE PRIMARY UNIT OF MORAL CONSIDERATION: PARTICULAR-CENTRIC VS. GENERAL-CENTRIC²⁹¹

One final issue that is implicitly evident in this project is the tension between an emphasis on the moral standing of individuals and the moral standing of the system or community of which individuals are a part. As Daniel Cowdin states, the question of whether or not the nonhuman world bears moral worth

has been explored along a spectrum ranging from individual organisms as exclusively considerable, on the one side, to species, ecosystems, and natural processes as exclusively considerable, on the other. Animal welfare as well as broader reverence for life approaches fall on the individualistic side of the spectrum, while a land ethic approach falls on the systematic side.²⁹²

The central question in this issue is whether, in making ethical decisions, moral priority should rest with a particular individual life or the larger system that makes possible the existence of all individual lives.²⁹³ More basically still, what is the primary unit of moral consideration? Individuals? A species? Ecosystems? The cosmos as a whole? Should practices be considered morally illicit if they violate the life of a single living organism? In that case, hunting could have no moral grounds. Or, should practices be considered morally illicit if they interfere with either natural processes or endangered ecosystems? In this case, hunting is morally licit provided it does not endanger a species or vital part of an eco-system.

²⁹¹ The terms “particular-centric” and “general-centric” are my own. I use them to highlight that the issue in the consideration of the primary unit of moral consideration is not an either/or, but rather one of emphasis. In short, which demand—and thus occupies the center of—moral priority, the particular or the general?

²⁹² Daniel Cowdin, “The Moral Status of Otherkind in Christian Ethics,” in *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 268.

²⁹³ Says Sideris: “Perhaps the most important question is whether individuals—as opposed to a collective entity such as species, populations, or biotic communities—are or ought to be the unit of moral consideration in environmental ethics.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 21.

This issue raises a host of other considerations, perhaps the most significant of which is the shift to dynamic and relational ontology. In science, philosophy, and theology, there is heavy emphasis on the importance of the interrelatedness of individual aspects of the cosmos with one another. Scientifically, this claim bears both micro- and macroscopic dimensions. In the introduction to his edited volume concerning the relational turn in scientific inquiry in conjunction with trinitarian theology, John Polkinghorne writes, “The history of twentieth-century physics can be read as the story of the discovery of many levels of intrinsic relationality present in the structure of the universe.”²⁹⁴ All life is constructed of atoms formed at the origin of the universe and in the destruction of stars. In this sense, life is only possible because of the interrelatedness of microscopic atoms which form various chemicals, which in turn is only possible because of the interrelatedness of macroscopic entities and forces like stars, gravity, dark matter, etc. At the biotic level, appropriations of Charles Darwin’s evolutionary thought suggest that human beings are relatives of other species—one particular form of evolutionary development among many. Thus the essential uniqueness of humanity is replaced with a difference of degree as humans are placed firmly within the matrix of the biotic community. Furthermore, the interactions, both competitive and cooperative, among species within ecosystems and across the planet make the both cyclical and dynamic development and sustenance of the biosphere possible. In short, science has revealed the irreducibly relational nature of the cosmos, including human life.

²⁹⁴ John Polkinghorne, “Introduction,” in *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), vii. Polkinghorne continues to draw out this insight, which grinds against atomistic and mechanistic visions of the cosmos, in his essay in the same volume: “The Demise of Democritus,” in *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 15-31.

Philosophically, the shift takes the form of a rejection of a static and substance-based ontology to a dynamic and relational-based one.²⁹⁵ Theologically, the relational turn is most evident in the contemporary re-emphasis on trinitarian thought and renewed explorations of the *imago Dei*.²⁹⁶

This shift to relationality is important because it provides the possible—though by no means necessary—grounds for an emphasis on the cosmos as a whole over its individual members.²⁹⁷ And it is this emphasis that forms one of, if not *the*, fundamental distinctions between many eco-theologians and animals rights activists. Marc Fellenz notes this distinction:

Whereas ecocentric criterion requires deep ecologists to place a *prima facie* higher value on the lives and interests of members of endangered species, animal advocates, while not insensitive to the issues of species extinction, generally have been hesitant to follow suit for fear of violating principles of moral quality.²⁹⁸

There is thus a divide between animal advocates and deep ecologists—and most eco-theologians in general. Cowdin favors the systematic side over the individual side.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ See Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*.

²⁹⁶ For considerations, see Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 116-121. Shults addresses how the turn to relationality permits a rethinking of theological anthropology. See Shults, *Reforming Theological Anthropology*. Of course, one cannot discuss this theological turn to relationality without mentioning John Zizioulas. See his classic work, John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York: Crestwood, 1985). Based on his relational ontology, Zizioulas states elsewhere, “There is no model for the proper relation between communion and otherness either for the Church or for the human being other than the Trinitarian God.” John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, Paul McPartlan, editor (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 4. Also, in his work on the Trinity in contemporary theology, Stanley Grenz devotes an entire chapter to what he calls the “Triumph of Relationality.” Stanley Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), chapter 4. Grenz explores the work of Leonardo Boff, Zizioulas, and Catherine Mowry LaCugna. Other examples of the relational interpretation of *imago Dei* include Mark S. Medley, *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human* (New York: University Press of America, 2002); Guthrie, *Christian Doctrine*, 197-210; Daniel Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, second edition (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 141; David H. Kelsey, “Human Being,” 177; Hanson, *Introduction to Christian Theology*, 84-85.

²⁹⁷ Though, this move is by no means necessary. See, for instance, Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom,” 239-40.

²⁹⁸ Fellenz, *The Moral Menagerie*, 163.

²⁹⁹ Cowdin, “The Moral Status of Otherkind in Christian Ethics,” 268.

He is thus critical of animal rights thinkers like Linzey who emphasize the moral standing of individual creatures. For Cowdin, “exclusive moral concern for individual animals becomes incoherent at the level of land management.”³⁰⁰

The import of this distinction for the formulation of ethical principles can hardly be overstated.³⁰¹ For instance, Drummond writes that Leopold’s ethic

began to challenge the focus on the individuals’ needs...His focus on the ecological whole showed an underlying philosophical holism, so that hunting and other activities were still permitted as long as the ecology was not disturbed.³⁰²

While Leopold’s land ethic emphasizes the import of considering a violation of “the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community” as morally illicit,³⁰³ there is no inherent wrong in taking the life of an individual in that community. Thus, Wennberg rightly notes that the

environmentalist is fundamentally concerned with the preservation of animal *species* and with the *role* of animals in delicately functioning ecosystems, whereas the fundamental concern of the animal advocate is with the *individual* animal and its welfare.³⁰⁴

Northcott argues that the tension concerning the primary unit of moral concern establishes a divide between rights advocates, who tend to “privilege competition over co-operation, individuals over collectivities and moral claims over moral relationships and responsibilities,” and other forms of ecological ethics.³⁰⁵ Thus, whereas Leopold

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 271.

³⁰¹ See, on this point, Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 32-57.

³⁰² Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 33.

³⁰³ Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac—and Sketches Here and There* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 224.

³⁰⁴ Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 32-33.

³⁰⁵ Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 102.

emphasizes the group or the system, animal rights activists like Tom Regan emphasize the individual “subject of a life” as the basic unit of moral concern.³⁰⁶

Lisa Sideris wavers on this division. She notes that

ecotheologists tend to speak in broad terms of liberating and healing ‘life’ in general or ‘nature’ as a whole, whereas Singer and Regan typically focus on animals only, and often their concern is directed toward the plight of animals in very particular circumstances. Ecotheologists express much greater interest in, and concern for, the well-being of a large, ecological ‘community’ of organisms or as a ‘web of life’ (although they fail to understand why this focus is inconsistent with an ethic of liberation or care for each individual ‘subject’ within that community).³⁰⁷

This claim by Sideris seems to be at odds with her assessment only a few pages later in which she states that ecotheologists ignore the debate regarding the ethical primacy of the individual versus that of the whole and “continue to concern themselves with issues of animal suffering, sentience, and liberation.”³⁰⁸ Is Sideris suggesting that an environmental holism cannot concern itself with the suffering of individual animals? Or is she saying that ecotheologists give primacy to individuals? She seems to suggest just this point later, writing that “many ecotheologists view ecosystems as subordinate to the needs of the individual members (human and nonhuman) of the community.”³⁰⁹ But does not this claim contradict her earlier claim about eco-theology’s holistic emphasis? This inconsistency aside, it seems to me her critique is that eco-theology is, on the whole, *unaware* that there is a tension here at all. That is, they write as if there were no conflict between the interests of individuals and the interest of the whole. That said, most ecotheologists still write in a manner that emphasizes the whole, even if this emphasis is

³⁰⁶ See Tom Regan, *The Case for Animals Rights*, second edition (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 243-50.

³⁰⁷ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 132.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

ultimately inconsistent. Furthermore, they tend to promote a conservationist ethics, which favors the whole over the individual. As Sideris herself notes, both Ruether and McFague shy away from vegetarianism, which seems a logical outcome of their radically egalitarian claims.³¹⁰

It ought to be noted that there is not an “either/or” with regard to the question of value. One can value intrinsically individuals, species, eco-systems, the land, and natural processes.³¹¹ The issue is not one of intrinsic value, but of the *primary unit of value*—the “locus of rights or value.”³¹² For one cannot hold both the individual creature and the species/ecosystem/cosmos to be the primary unit of moral value and concern, since the good of individuals and the good of the whole are at least often at odds with one another.³¹³

Given this divide in the field, should there not be another dimension added to my coordinate plane? It would contain a Z-axis—evident in **Illustration I – 3**—representing the tension between the general (e.g., species, eco-systems, etc.) and the particular (e.g., individual nonhuman plants and animals).

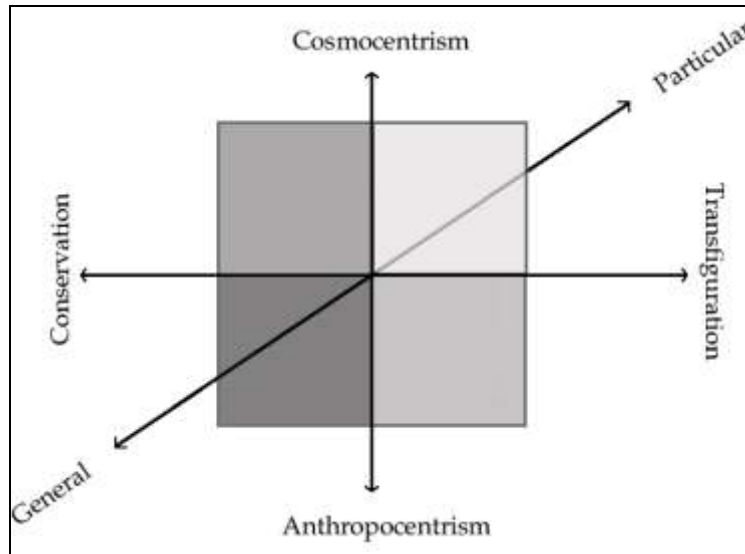
³¹⁰ Ibid., 78.

³¹¹ Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 35-36.

³¹² Ibid., 35.

³¹³ Ibid., 36. For many eco-theologians, the notion of interdependence holds together the good of the system with the good of its individual members, as if there were no longer a conflict between the general and the particular. Gustafson is critical of this view. See Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, 2:239-43. Sideris is critical of such views, noting that “ecosystem interdependence is seen as a solution to a set of problems—the problem of suffering, power asymmetries, and domination that have attended our efforts to abstract ourselves from the web of life...but for Darwin struggle and competition were the very strands out of which the web of life was woven. In this sense interdependence is not so much a solution to strife and suffering as it is a *source* of it.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 221. This critique is, in my view, a good one. Its corollary is the recognition that “ecotheologians’ interpretation of interdependence fails to recognize that the good of the parts and the good of the whole cannot be harmonized.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 265.

Illustration I – 3



It seems that this three-dimensional plane should elicit eight, as opposed to four, paradigms of eco-theological ethics. The reason I do not find it necessary to present this project within such a framework is that my research has yielded, with regard to the question of the primary unit of moral concern within the nonhuman creation, certain tendencies among the already existing paradigms with regard to this tension.³¹⁴

With regard to the nonhuman creation, anthropocentric worldviews tend to emphasize the general. When the central concern is the well-being of human individuals, it is not all that important whether an individual cow lives or dies. However, the cow as a

³¹⁴ I emphasize here the nonhuman creation because, with regard to humans, anthropocentric paradigms tend to emphasize the individual. It is only with regard to nonhumans that the general overshadows the particular in ethical matters. Wennberg touches on this point when he juxtaposes deep ecology, sentientism, and traditional (anthropocentric) moral frameworks. For the latter, “ethical individualism applies to humans and ethical holism applies to animals.” For sentientism, “ethical individualism applies to both humans and animals.” For deep ecology, “ethical holism applies to both humans and animals.” Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 44-45.

This point is qualified in Roman Catholicism with its emphasis on the common good. See David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Even so, the magisterial position of the Roman Catholic Church remains that each individual human’s dignity is inviolable in all cases. For example, the second Vatican council affirms the “growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are *universal and inviolable*.” *Gaudium et Spes*, 26 (emphasis added). Thus, there is a stark differentiation between the individual human in relation to the human community and the individual nonhuman in relation to the species, ecosystem, or cosmos.

species out to be protected because it provides sustenance for the present human community (and will continue to do so for future generations). Likewise, a beautiful creature that is endangered will be protected so that future generations can appreciate the beauty of that species.

In a similar manner, conservationist worldviews emphasize the general. The mechanisms of evolutionary emergence, after all, do not evince much concern for individual creatures, which die all the time—and often in horrific deaths. Even so, the system as a whole trudges forward in all its complexity and diversity. Hence, the conservationist tends to accept the loss of the nonhuman individual for the sake of the species, the eco-system, or the cosmos as a whole.³¹⁵ This position reflects the evolutionary process itself, as Daniel Deffenbaugh notes:

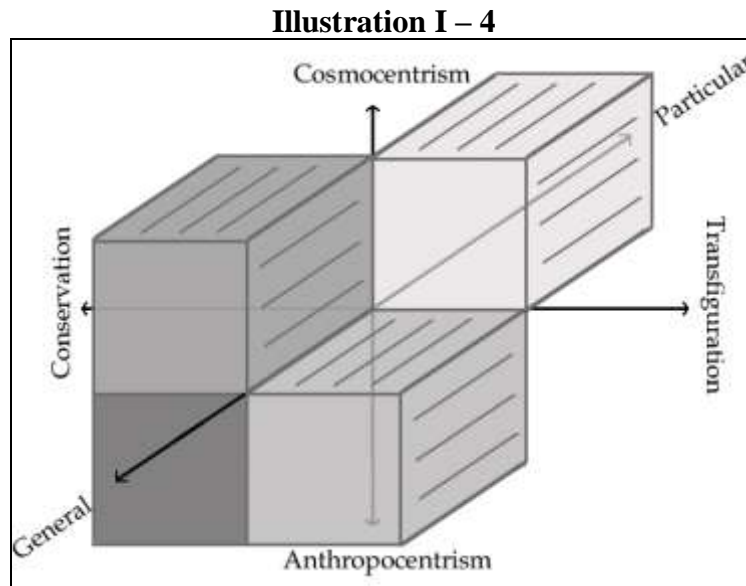
From an evolutionary perspective, the isolated organism is merely a token, a representative, which plays a small part in the propagation of a living historical form: the species. This is the real unity of evolution and therefore the more significant reality which demands human respect.³¹⁶

Theologically speaking, only the combination of cosmocentrism and transfiguration tends to emphasize the particular, positing individual creatures as the basic unit of moral concern. This point will become further evident in chapters two through four. For now, it suffices to note that the introduction of the tension between the general and particular (the Z-axis) does not necessarily change the four paradigms, as each tends strongly toward one direction of that axis (as displayed in **Illustration I – 4**

³¹⁵ A conservationist might be inclined to respond that individuals can only exist within the system. Thus, protecting the system is the best means of protecting its individual inhabitants. After all, if one saves an individual but wrecks an eco-system in the process, countless other individuals will die. This point must be conceded. But it still stands that the loss of a particular individual (e.g., *this* elephant) is acceptable (and indeed inevitable) for the sake of the system.

³¹⁶ Daniel G. Deffenbaugh, “Toward Thinking Like a Mountain: The Evolution of an Ecological Conscience,” *Soundings* 78/2 (Summer 1995), 255.

below). For this reason, I will maintain the four paradigms while noting each paradigm's tendency concerning the primary unit of moral concern.



RATIONALE FOR ENGAGING PARTICULAR THEOLOGIANS AND PROJECT OUTLINE

Here, I seek to explain why I have chosen certain theological voices as representatives of these paradigms as opposed to other voices. This point is mainly methodological as it pertains to the scope and nature of my research. Next, I provide a brief outline of this project.

WHY THESE THEOLOGIANS?

I have already noted which theologians I will engage for each paradigm. My choice of these theologians has mainly to do with my previous research. This project is the culmination of years of exploration through various voices with regard to eco-theological ethics, particularly concerning nonhuman animals. As I explored the work of those like Aquinas, Moltmann, and Linzey, I began to note what I perceived to be the most important differences between them. The discovery of Aquinas's value for conservation helped me to distinguish between approaches commensurable with Aquinas

and those that emphasize the transfigurative dimension of Christian thought. Aquinas also taught me that practical anthropocentrism (within a theocentric framework) is not incompatible with a strong eco-theological ethics of conservation.

As I explored the work of creation spiritualists and other cosmocentric thinkers, I felt unsettled by their ecological ethics that sought only to preserve the integrity of the natural order.³¹⁷ Such a view seemed to me to overlook the central import of eschatology for Christian theology. It was in these encounters that I came to the personal conclusion that a shift to cosmocentrism was not theologically sufficient. As I read the work of Thomas Berry, I saw a clear expression of the issues that had only partially formed in my mind up to that point.

At first, I intended only three paradigms of eco-theological ethics. I expected to include all Orthodox thought in a large category of transfiguration that stood in tension with conservationist paradigms. When I began to read the work of Maximus the Confessor, Dumitru Staniloae, and John Meyendorff, however, I realized that transfiguration and anthropocentrism were not mutually exclusive terms. It was then that I included a fourth paradigm.

Finally, my first interactions with both Moltmann and Linzey occurred early in my explorations into animal theology and ethics. I found both of them important expressions of my own theological and ethical leanings. Yet it was only when I was able to juxtapose them to the aforementioned thinkers that I understood the potential significance of their contributions.

³¹⁷ One important development for me was hearing Calvin DeWitt give a series of talks years ago. He was a conservationist, marveling at the predatory nature of the cosmos. I felt quite unsettled by his position. It was during this experience that I first realized the extent to which eco-theological ethics could differ from one another.

This brief rationale reveals that my proposed categories of eco-theological ethics arose from inductive searches into individual theologians. After having moved from individual examples to the general paradigms, I thought it best to return to the thinkers who most influenced this generalization. Such a return would enable me to take the reader on a similar journey that I experienced. It is for this reason that I emphasize these particular theologians.

PROJECT OUTLINE

In chapter one of this work, I delineate three of the four eco-theological paradigms, using the dimensions of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology explored above as an interpretive key. The first paradigm is anthropocentric conservation. It is skillfully represented in the work of Thomas Aquinas and constitutes the dominant strand of eco-theological ethics in Western Christianity. With regard to anthropocentrism, this ethics maintains that humans possess an essentially unique dignity. The entire nonhuman creation, lacking this unique dignity, constitutes a good and ordered network of resources that has been gifted by God for the well-being of the entire human community, including future generations. Ethically, then, humans must conserve the nonhuman network of resources for the sake of all humans.

The second eco-theological paradigm is cosmocentric conservation. It is powerfully represented in the writings of the Passionist priest, Thomas Berry. With regard to conservation, this ethics de-emphasizes the need for eschatological redemption by claiming that the current order of the nonhuman world, including its continuing evolutionary emergence, is fully good. With regard to cosmocentrism, all living creatures—and indeed the earth itself—constitute the community of creation that God

values intrinsically. Hence, conservation is not merely for human benefit. Ethically, humans must engage in both a gracious “letting be” of the world and a reverential “living with” all of its inhabitants.

The third paradigm is anthropocentric transfiguration. It is most evident in the writings of certain Eastern Orthodox writers, including the Romanian priest Dumitru Staniloae. In this view, the *telos* of the entire creation is transfiguration, which, in light of the Fall, entails eschatological redemption. However, the role of the nonhuman creation in the eschaton is to be the eternal sacrament for the divine-human drama. The paradigm is thus anthropocentric in that the transfiguration of the nonhuman creation is for the sake of humanity in relation to God. In the present, humans bear the ethical responsibility to act as priests over the sacramental world by offering it back to God through reverential use.

These three paradigms of eco-theological ethics point toward the possibility of a fourth: cosmocentric transfiguration. In chapters two and three I engage (respectively) Moltmann and Linzey, in order to highlight the broad parameters of this paradigm. Chapter two is devoted to Moltmann, whose work provides theological foundations for this ethics by advocating hope for an eschatological panentheism in which the Trinity and the world, including every individual creature, will interpenetrate one another in eternity. Thus every instantiation of life will experience God’s eternal peace. Furthermore, this future is, on the one hand, realized concretely in the incarnation, in which Christ becomes the redeemer of evolution, and, on the other hand, cosmically inaugurated through the presence of the Spirit. Hope for this future motivates humans to witness proleptically to it in the present. Chapter three is devoted to Linzey, whose work provides theological

foundations for cosmocentric transfiguration by appealing to the dominant view in Christian history that the cosmos is in disarray. For Linzey, all sentient creatures endure the consequences of sin, in particular suffering, and therefore long for redemption. In Christ, God reveals a willingness to suffer with and for all creatures by taking on flesh, suffering, and death. In doing so God dies the death of all sentient beings. Yet his resurrection adumbrates their eschatological resurrection and thus their freedom from the effects of sin. For Linzey, Christians who live peacefully toward individual animals, especially by engaging in vegetarianism, approximate the eschaton through their witness.

Having delineated fully the taxonomy of eco-theological ethics and emphasized the contours of cosmocentric transfiguration, in chapter four I engage in a critical comparison of Moltmann and Linzey, both theologically and ethically. At the intersection of their eco-theological frameworks, I constructively develop the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration. In this, I attempt to take seriously insights from the natural sciences—particularly a Darwinian evolution—and theology—particularly cosmic eschatology. I also apologetically defend this paradigm against potential critiques. Ultimately, the vision that emerges from this paradigm is one in which humans bear responsibility to witness proleptically to the maximally inclusive eschatological hope of the cosmos. Such a witness entails increasing practices of peace and diminishing practices that elicit suffering for both the earth and its human and nonhuman inhabitants.

OTHER METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this final section, I aim to address other issues regarding this project. I begin with a consideration of terminology. Next, I offer a word of caution concerning the

endeavor of categorization. Finally, I present a methodological caveat regarding my constructive work in comparison to the other paradigms.

ANIMAL-TALK

In Andrew Linzey's view, terminology for nonhuman animals (e.g., brutes, pests, beasts, etc.) has perpetuated abuse. Even the term "animal" "is itself a term of abuse" because it "hides the reality of what it purports to describe, namely, a range of differentiated beings of startling variety and complexity."³¹⁸ Linzey sees one of the challenges of the animal theology/rights movement as the advancement of terms that do not perpetuate oversimplification or denigration to nonhuman creatures. Similarly, Northcott suggests that both deep ecology and process theology run the risk of "a homogenising view of the natural world" that "undermines the legitimate difference and otherness of the different orders of matter and life in the cosmos."³¹⁹ Such a danger has also been highlighted by the continental philosopher Jacques Derrida.³²⁰

It is thus important to address the language I will use concerning animals in this project.³²¹ I use terms such as "nonhuman creation" and "nonhuman animal." While I acknowledge that these terms run the risk of downplaying the differences among nonhumans, I use them mainly to highlight the traditional separation between the two categories of corporeal creation: human and nonhuman. The use of "nonhuman" is meant mainly to express the reality that human beings are part of creation, and more specifically of the animal kingdom. I am not aiming at the homogenization of the nonhuman

³¹⁸ Linzey, *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, 44-45.

³¹⁹ Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 150.

³²⁰ Jacques Derrida, "The Animal That Therefore I Am," printed in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Marie-Louise Mallet, editor, translated by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 29-35, 47-48.

³²¹ For an enlightening discussion on this topic, see Wennberg, *God, Animals, and Humans*, 23-26.

creation. As evidence, I will at times consider more specifically the role of sentience, consciousness, and life, as differentiating elements within the nonhuman cosmos. Most often, however, I use more generalized terms in order to participate in traditional conversations. The reader should be aware of my intention with these uses.

THE DANGERS (AND PROMISES) OF PROPOSING A TAXONOMY

Categories always risk (and perhaps inevitably end in) oversimplification. They furthermore hazard inadequacies and inaccuracies. I want here to highlight my awareness of these dangers. What I offer in this project is *my interpretation* of particular theologians and *my categorization* of those interpretations into a taxonomy of paradigms that I have constructed. Whether or not the individual theologians (or those who have spent many years studying their work) would agree with my categorization is open to debate. For this reason, I offer this project not as the “final word” but as a beginning word—the opening for a clearer dialogue concerning eco-theological ethics. Said more frankly, I do not harbor the hubris of thinking I have perfectly and without remainder defined all eco-theological possibilities.

These issues notwithstanding, taxonomies such as the one I am proposing offer promise to the field. For even if other scholars disagree with my classification, the act of classifying itself opens the door for further dialogue regarding the criteria used to structure the taxonomy. Furthermore, it allows to other thinkers in the field to examine their own positions vis-à-vis the new taxonomy. In this sense, a well-structured taxonomy aids in the clarification of the field.

THE SUPERIORITY OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION?

Lastly, I want to acknowledge my experiential bias. I find the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration to be the most satisfying of those presented here. However, that does not mean that I find the other paradigms to be objectively wrong or inadequate. While in my conclusion I will make a case that cosmocentric transfiguration offers a vision that accounts for both theological doctrines and scientific evidence, I do not maintain that it is in any sense the only—or even the obvious—choice for Christian eco-theological ethics.

CHAPTER 1
SITUATING COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION:
EXPLORING THE OTHER PARADIGMS

In order to situate the paradigm of eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration, I must first delineate the fundamental tenets of its counterparts. It is my aim, in doing so, to avoid fully abstract presentations of the theological foundations of these alternate ethics. Thus, my approach for each paradigm will begin by identifying, in an introductory fashion, the overall schema of these views with regard to anthropology, cosmology, and eschatology. Then, I will spend the majority of my effort engaging particular theologians in order to present concretized examples of the paradigms.

**ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION: HUMAN COMMUNITY AND NONHUMAN
RESOURCES**

Three core principles inform anthropocentric conservation. First, the nonhuman creation exists, in the temporal realm, for the sake of humanity. Second, the nonhuman creation exists, in the temporal realm, for the entire human community, both present and future. Third, the eschatological *telos* of sharing in God's own life is reserved for rational creatures (and the elements/matter necessary to facilitate this *telos*).

In this schema, the role of the human creature is to use properly the gift of the cosmos, which entails taking account of both the *telos* of that cosmos (temporally, as an ordered source of sustenance and divine revelation for the entire human community) and the human creature (temporally, a life of virtue in community before God, and ultimately, a sharing in God's own eternal life). Thus the role of the nonhuman creation is that of a good and ordered network of resources or gifts that exist for the well-being of all humans on their journey toward their essentially unique and ultimate *telos*.

THOMAS AQUINAS'S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION

The various foundations of this view have numerous representatives in the Christian tradition.¹ However, it is Thomas Aquinas who gives this theological ethics one of its clearest expressions. Aquinas's monumental genius commands respect. His appropriation of Aristotelian philosophy; his heavy reliance on major Christian thinkers like Augustine, Dionysius, and Peter Lombard; his mastery of Christian scripture; and his engagement with medieval Jewish (e.g., Maimonides) and Muslim (e.g., Avicenna) philosophers provides a coherent framework of faith and practice from his historical context.²

Given Thomas's lasting and significant impact on Christian thought, his work has elicited a large corpus of secondary literature, even with regard to focused issues like eco-theological ethics. Hence, establishing Aquinas as a concrete example of anthropocentric conservation requires first situating his theological framework within this corpus. This move will allow me to dialogue with the secondary literature as I engage Aquinas's writings.

The Controversy over Aquinas's Eco-Theological Contribution

When it comes to Aquinas's potential contribution for widening concern for ecological issues, scholars provide a diverse interpretative spectrum. Many of these interpretations follow Lynn White's 1967 essay in which he posits the accusation that

¹ See Gary Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and Its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 116-123; Morwenna Ludlow, "Power and Dominion: Patristic Interpretations of Genesis 1," in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, edited by David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 140-153.

² An appreciation of Aquinas's historical context is important for appreciating the nuances on his theological framework. For considerations, see Servais-Théodore Pinckaers, "The Source of Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, Stephen J. Pope, editor (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 17-28.

“Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen.”³ In the wake of White’s contribution, “anthropocentrism” has become an inherently pejorative term. This climate framed one of the central debates concerning Aquinas: Is his theological framework anthropocentric?

Many within the animal rights movement accuse Aquinas of contributing to an abusive human attitude toward nonhuman animals. Peter Singer, in his seminal *Animal Liberation*, claims that Aquinas excludes nonhuman animals from the realm of morality with the one exception in which harming them may result in harm to humanity. Says Singer: “No argument could reveal the essence of speciesism more clearly.”⁴ In *The Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, Joyce Salisbury argues that, for Aquinas, “here on earth there [is] no need to preserve animals that [are] seen as ‘useless.’”⁵ In Richard Ryder’s estimation, Aquinas’s thought has provided the justification for “several centuries of outstanding cruelty” toward animals.⁶ In his book arguing for a widened scope of moral concern from within Christianity, Robert Wennberg claims that Aquinas adheres to a moral theory “that has no place for animals.”⁷

Andrew Linzey, perhaps the leading voice in the field of animal theology, is also rather critical of Aquinas. In his earlier *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, Linzey cites Aquinas in conjunction with the “deeply anthropocentric” nature of contemporary

³ Lynn White, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,” reprinted in *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*, Roger S. Gottlieb, editor (New York: NY: Routledge), 189.

⁴ Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York, NY: Avon Books, 1975), 203-204.

⁵ Joyce E. Salisbury, “Attitudes toward Animals: Changing Attitudes throughout History,” *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare* (EARW), Marc Bekoff and Carron A. Meaney, editors (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 78. On my critique of this claim, see below.

⁶ Richard D. Ryder, *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes towards Speciesism* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 43.

⁷ Robert N. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 121.

Christianity.⁸ In *Animal Theology*, he summarizes Aquinas as follows: “Considered in themselves animals have no reason and no rights, and humans no responsibility to them.”⁹ In Linzey’s view, Aquinas’s speciesist viewpoint “has left a bitter legacy in Christian theology.”¹⁰

Other theologians have also critiqued Aquinas. Paul Santmire balances negative and positive views of Christianity’s potential contribution to ecological sensitivity by exploring both harmful and promising voices in Christian history.¹¹ He labels Aquinas’s theological framework as an “intramundane anthropocentrism” in which “nature is seen more as an object for human use, which satisfies biological needs and serves spiritual knowledge, than as a subject in its own right.”¹²

Voices from other perspectives also depict Aquinas negatively with regard to animals and the environment. David Kinsley, in his cross-cultural exploration regarding the convergence of the intersection of nature and spirituality, places Aquinas in the chapter entitled “Christianity as Ecologically Harmful.”¹³ Kinsley critiques Aquinas’s hierarchical view of the world, in which the natures of nonhuman animals “are defined in terms of their subservience to human beings.”¹⁴ J. Claude Evans claims that Aquinas represents the “classic statements of anthropocentrism.”¹⁵ Similarly, Gary Steiner, in his

⁸ Andrew Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1987), 22.

⁹ Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 15. In this work, Linzey goes as far as to suggest that Aquinas permits humans to cause unnecessary pain to animals. See Linzey’s comparison of Aquinas and Humphry Primatt (17).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 19. On Aquinas’s influence, see also 64–65.

¹¹ Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985).

¹² *Ibid.*, 91–92. Here Santmire contrasts Aquinas with his more positive reading of Augustine.

¹³ See David Kinsley, *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 103–107.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 109–110. Given this critique, it is not overly clear how Kinsley so effortlessly classifies Augustine as a positive ecological voice in Christianity (118–120).

¹⁵ J. Claude Evans, *With Respect for Nature: Living as Part of the Natural World* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), viii.

work tracing the dominance of anthropocentrism in Western philosophy, categorizes Aquinas as “the apex of medieval anthropocentrism.”¹⁶ His legacy is an essential distinction between humans and nonhuman animals that establishes an ethics of dominion in which humans have no direct duties to animals.¹⁷

These critiques of Aquinas tend towards the claim that he contributes to a milieu enabling ecological degradation by advocating an anthropocentrism that renders the nonhuman world a resource for human benefit. In response to such accusations, defenders of Aquinas have sought to highlight his cosmological theocentrism. This response challenges simplistic charges of anthropocentrism in Aquinas’s theological framework.

In the introduction to *Creaturely Theology*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough critique Linzey’s edited volume *Animals on the Agenda* because, in their view, its historical investigations are structured only “to set up certain theologians as instigators and culprits of a negative attitude toward animals.”¹⁸ This critique is no doubt aimed in part at Dorothy Yamamoto’s essay on Aquinas.¹⁹ As a remedy to such allegedly biased interpretations of Thomas, Drummond and Clough turn to John Berkman’s essay in their

¹⁶ Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and Its Discontents*, 126.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 130–131.

¹⁸ See Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, “Introduction,” in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London: SCM Press, 2009), 6–7. See Dorothy Yamamoto, “Aquinas and Animals: Patrolling the Boundary?” in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*, Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, editors (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 80–89.

¹⁹ Yamamoto attempts to critique presuppositions in Aquinas’s thought on two fronts: (1) the ability to observe nature purely and objectively and thereby derive universal moral principles and (2) the establishment of an essential and unproblematic line of demarcation between all humans and all nonhumans. Yamamoto critiques the first presupposition from a consideration of the historically-located observing subject. She critiques the second by acknowledging again the location of the observing subject, the ambiguity in the larger tradition, and deeper understandings of animal life in modern thought. See Yamamoto, “Aquinas and Animals,” 80–89.

text as a “critical, but far more sensitive, reading of Aquinas.”²⁰ Berkman acknowledges Aquinas’s justification of human utility of the nonhuman creation in the temporal order. But he quickly qualifies this acknowledgement with an affirmation of Aquinas’s theocentrism. Berkman ultimately argues that, for Aquinas, “God’s plan in creation... is by no means anthropocentric.”²¹

In Anne Clifford’s view, “a major part of Aquinas’s legacy to the Roman Catholic tradition is his sacramental view of material creation.”²² In light of this view, Clifford argues that critiques of Aquinas’s anthropocentrism are viable only when passages from his writings are “read in total isolation from other passages in which he affirms the inherent goodness of all creatures as unique manifestations of the Trinity and if his theology is interpreted ahistorically.”²³

Drummond claims that Aquinas’s affirmation that “creation is an expression of God’s wisdom” suggests that God’s wisdom is still at work in the ongoing processes of the created order.²⁴ She acknowledges that his understanding of the cosmos requires adjustment in light of evolutionary biology.²⁵ Even so, Drummond defends Aquinas against “simplistic” views that criticize his damaging influence on eco-theological thought by acknowledging the interplay between grace and nature in his theology.²⁶

²⁰ Drummond and Clough, “Introduction,” 7.

²¹ John Berkman, “Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality,” in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London: SCM Press, 2009), 24. Berkman goes on to offer a fine exploration of Aquinas’s understanding of nonhuman animal capacities (25–33).

²² Anne Clifford, “Foundations for a Catholic Ecological Theology of God,” in *“And God Saw That It Was Good”: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer, editors (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996), 38.

²³ Clifford, “Foundations,” 40. Clifford’s critique is specifically aimed at Santmire (see 46, n. 44).

²⁴ Celia Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008), 159.

²⁵ *Ibid.*.

²⁶ See *Ibid.*, 103–104, 213–214, n. 23.

Jame Schaefer acknowledges and concedes accusations of anthropocentrism in Aquinas's theology.²⁷ However, she also criticizes such accusations, claiming that they "have not been explored sufficiently from several perspectives," the dominant of which is contextual differences between modern readers and ancient writers. Schaefer continues: "Nor do these criticisms take into consideration the constraints that patristic and medieval theologians imposed on human use of Earth's constituents and their teachings about the faithful's responsibility to their neighbors and to God for how they regard and use other creatures."²⁸

William French is also a qualified defender of Aquinas.²⁹ French concedes that Aquinas's instrumental view of animals in conjunction with his refusal to extend to them direct moral concern "helped establish a tradition of misnaming which has plagued Catholic moral theology until only very recently."³⁰ Even so, French laments simplistic critiques of Aquinas that miss his cosmological theocentrism. He sees in Aquinas's theological framework an interconnected cosmos in which each part contributes to the good of the whole, which has God as its final *telos*.³¹

In a collection of essays deriving from a research project at the University of Exeter, Mark Wynn begins by examining both critical (e.g. Linzey) and sympathetic (e.g. Drummond) readings of Aquinas.³² Wynn contextualizes Aquinas's anthropocentrism

²⁷ Jame Schaefer, *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic & Medieval Concepts* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 8–9.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁹ See, for instance, William French, "Catholicism and the Common Good," in *An Ecology of the Spirit*, ed. Michael Barnes, (University Press of America Press, 1993), 182–83, 191; French, "Beast Machines and the Technocratic Reduction of Life," in *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, eds. Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel (New York: Orbis Books, 1993), 24–43.

³⁰ French, "Beast-Machines," 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 37–38.

³² Mark Wynn, "Thomas Aquinas: Reading the Idea of Dominion in the Light of the Doctrine of Creation" in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G.

within his cosmological theocentrism.³³ Creatures, in their variety of being, reflect God's subsistent existence (i.e., that God *is* being itself). This reflection constitutes the good of the cosmos as a holistic system, of which all things are integrally a part and nothing is without meaning. Hence, the individual parts of the created order have a good *telos* that, in Wynn's estimation, "cannot simply consist in their service to human beings."³⁴

Rather, Wynn claims that "the fulfilment of the nature of 'lesser' creatures, and even of non-animate creatures, can count as a good, even when this results in a human being suffering some deprivation of good."³⁵

Willis Jenkins also laments overly simplistic critiques of Aquinas. From the perspective of soteriology—as opposed to cosmology—Jenkins offers Aquinas as an influential foundation for ecojustice, a view which he claims is dominant in the Roman Catholic tradition and draws on the notion of sanctifying grace.³⁶ Ultimately, Jenkins seeks to

demonstrate that [Aquinas] escapes facile categorization by cosmological centrism. Instead he harmonizes (or resists the use of) anthropocentrism, theocentrism, and ecocentrism, precisely because he sees that God chooses to move creation to Godself by inviting humans into a friendship shaped by their intimacy with all creation.³⁷

In Jenkins's view, "those who think that Thomas's anthropocentrism offers only problems for environmental theology miss the way he sets humans within a cosmos of creatures bearing their own integrity."³⁸ Within this integrity, all creatures bear a

Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavropoulou, editors (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 154–167.

³³ Ibid., 156–162.

³⁴ Ibid., 157.

³⁵ Ibid., 162.

³⁶ Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 16–17.

³⁷ Ibid., 150.

³⁸ Ibid., 118.

“common dignity” inasmuch as they seek the good together as a whole.³⁹ For humans, unique in the created order, desire for God includes knowing the world and using it properly, primarily in the contemplative sense.⁴⁰ Thus humanity acquires, through grace, an “ecological literacy.”⁴¹ Such literacy requires a genuine engagement with the created order—which Jenkins defines as charity. Thus, for Jenkins, charity qualifies Aquinas’s anthropocentrism with a theocentrism in that virtuous humans will view creation as an invitation to divine friendship.⁴²

In my view, almost all of the interpretations of Aquinas’s eco-theological potential bear some dimension of truth. At the same time, most of them also contain a certain lack of clarity.⁴³ Aquinas’s critics tend to miss his sacramental understanding of the nonhuman world and the impact this understanding has for human behavior. Aquinas’s defenders often too easily sidestep his anthropocentric tendencies and sanctify his work with an appeal to either context or theocentrism.⁴⁴ In what follows, I will engage Thomas’s writings, particular his *summas*, to provide an example for the theological foundations for anthropocentric conservation. When necessary, I will defend where my interpretation clashes with voices in the secondary literature.

Theological Foundations for Aquinas’s Anthropocentrism

³⁹ Ibid., 123.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 125–127.

⁴¹ Ibid., 127.

⁴² Ibid., 142.

⁴³ Perhaps the greatest exception to this lack of clarity is the work of Francisco Benzon. He quite brilliantly examines the foundations for Aquinas’s exclusion of the nonhuman creation from direct moral concern and critiques one of the central pillars of this foundation, anthropology. See Francisco J. Benzon, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul: Aquinas, Whitehead, and the Metaphysics of Value* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), parts I and II.

⁴⁴ As with all great thinkers, the tradition that follows Aquinas (i.e., the Thomistic tradition) is not necessarily the same as his original thought. Thus, a contemporary expression of eco-theological ethics could draw on the Thomistic tradition while at once not accounting for every dimension of Aquinas’s thought. My evaluations of the aforementioned positions are with reference to Aquinas’s original thought, not necessarily the tradition that follows.

For Aquinas, the multiplicity of formal distinctions in the created order is an aspect of the goodness of the cosmos.⁴⁵ However, “formal distinction always requires inequality” (*ST*, 1.47.2). Thus Aquinas affirms a hierarchical order within the cosmos. Within this hierarchy, Aquinas posits three classifications of soul: vegetative, sensitive, and rational.⁴⁶ Connected to these souls are the attributes of nutrition, sentience, and reason, respectively.⁴⁷ The human soul possesses the qualities of both the vegetative and sensitive souls; but it augments and excels them on account of rationality.⁴⁸ For Aquinas, it is this unique rational dimension of the human creature that constitutes the *imago Dei*.⁴⁹

Aquinas’s delineation of the hierarchical order of creation translates into a hierarchy of *teloi*.⁵⁰ The human has a two-fold *telos*.⁵¹ The first pertains to temporal matters. The second is the ultimate *telos* of humanity, which Aquinas defines as “happiness” (*ST*, 1|2.1.8).⁵² For Aquinas, “God alone constitutes man’s happiness” (*ST*, 1|2.2.8). Thus, God is the ultimate *telos* of the human creature. Moreover, God is the end of every individual human creature in a manner unique to humanity’s nature. For the rational

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (hereafter *ST*), Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Benziger Brothers, 1947), 1.5.3 (subsequent quote references will appear in the text in parentheses). Furthermore, creatures are good (and indeed have being) only by participating in God’s own goodness (and therefore God’s own being). However, for Aquinas all beings participate in God’s goodness in diverse ways. This participation determines the level of their perfection. See *ST*, 1.44.1; 47.2.

⁴⁶ See *ST*, 1.78.1. See also Judith Barad, *Aquinas on the Nature and Treatment of Animals* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publication, 1995), 29–30.

⁴⁷ Aquinas ascribes three types of power to the vegetative soul: nutritive, augmentative, and generative. See *ST*, 1.79.2. On the lack of rationality of all nonhuman animals, see *ST*, 1.78.1; *Summa Contra Gentiles* (hereafter *SCG*), Joseph Kenny, editor (New York: Hanover House, 1955–57), II.66.

⁴⁸ On the difference of animal capacities in both animals and humans see *ST*, 1.78.4; 1.79.6; 1.81.3. The human contains all dimensions of the soul because she is both corporeal and incorporeal, a microcosmic being that “is in a manner composed of all things” (1.91.1; also 1.96.2). And for Aquinas, “what belongs to the inferior nature pre-exists more perfectly in the superior” (1.76.5).

⁴⁹ Aquinas claims that all creatures bear a likeness to God in that they reveal a trace of God’s design. See *ST*, 1.45.7. Even humans, in their physical bodies, bear this trace. For nonhuman animals, the trace is the limit of their likeness to God. In humans, only the rational component—the mind—bears the likeness of God as image. See *ST*, 1.93.6.

⁵⁰ Concerning the link here, Benzoni states that “it is only in light of Thomas’ teleology that the moral import of his ontology becomes clear.” Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 41.

⁵¹ *ST*, 1|2.62.1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1|2.1.8.

creature, happiness is a shared life with God in which the rational soul contemplates the divine.⁵³ Says Aquinas, “Final and perfect happiness can consist in nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence” (ST, 1|2.3.8).⁵⁴ In short, for Aquinas, the ultimate *telos* appropriate for humans is the Beatific Vision.

Regarding the temporal *telos* of humanity, Aquinas posits that an imperfect happiness is possible in the temporal realm. This happiness “depends, in a way, on the body” (ST, 1|2.4.5). Furthermore, “For imperfect happiness, such as can be had in this life, external goods are necessary, not as belonging to the essence of happiness, but by serving as instruments to happiness, which consists in an operation of virtue” (ST, 1|2.4.7).⁵⁵ This passage indicates that the temporal ends of humans (1) include care for the body⁵⁶ and (2) are directed toward their ultimate end.⁵⁷ It also reveals the centrality of teleology in Aquinas’s understanding of virtue.⁵⁸ For a human to live virtuously in the temporal realm is for her to live toward her proper *telos*, whether temporal or ultimate.⁵⁹ This point will bear significance when we consider whether or not humanity’s ultimate *telos* is shared with nonhuman animals.

⁵³ On the communal dimension of happiness, see Bonnie Kent, “Habits and Virtues (Ia IIae, qq. 49–70)” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, Stephen J. Pope, editor (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 126.

⁵⁴ Aquinas goes on to link happiness to “union with God.”

⁵⁵ Happiness in the temporal realm is always imperfect for Aquinas. See SCG, III.48.

⁵⁶ This dependence stems from humanity’s possession of nutritive and sentient souls. See ST, 1.79.2.

⁵⁷ See ST, 1|2.1.6.

⁵⁸ Stephen J. Pope, “Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas,” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, Stephen J. Pope, editor (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 32. Alasdair MacIntyre has provided important contributions to the recognition of Aquinas’s teleological view of virtue. See Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, third edition (University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 53, 185.

⁵⁹ Like Aristotle, Aquinas understands the cardinal virtues as directed toward temporal ends. Aquinas, SCG, III.34–35. For Aquinas, perfection of the cardinal virtues occurs when, with and by the theological virtues, they are redirected to humanity’s ultimate *telos*. See Kent, “Habits and Virtues,” 118; David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 123.

What of the *telos* of the nonhuman world? For Aquinas, all life is teleological.⁶⁰ The *telos* of a creature is its good.⁶¹ And God is the ultimate good for the entire creation.⁶² Therefore, the entire creation has God as its end. In this teleological sense, there is a commonality between humans and nonhumans.⁶³ But God is not the *telos* of a flower in the same way that God is the *telos* of a human being.⁶⁴ The foundation of this difference is predicated upon the formal distinctions within nature.⁶⁵ Thus, “Reasonable creatures...have in some special and higher manner God as their end, since they can attain to Him by their own operations, by knowing and loving Him.”⁶⁶

The nonhuman creation glorifies God by acting according to the multiplicity of the variegated natures that compose it as a whole.⁶⁷ Says Aquinas,

For He brought things into being in order that His goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them; and because His goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone, He produced many and diverse creatures, that what was wanting to one in the representation of the divine goodness might be supplied by another. For goodness, which in God is simple and uniform, in creatures is manifold and divided and hence the whole universe together participates the divine goodness more perfectly, and represents it better than any single creature whatever (*ST*, 1.47.1).

For Aquinas, then, God is the ultimate good of the entire creation because God provides creatures with variegated natures predisposing them toward the appropriate *teloi* for which they live. In living thus, the created order, in the multiplicity of its formal distinctions, reveals the goodness of God.⁶⁸ Thus all life is derived from and directed

⁶⁰ *ST*, 1.2; *SCG*, III.2. See also Pope, “Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas,” 32.

⁶¹ *ST*, 1.5.1.

⁶² *SCG*, III.17.

⁶³ See *SCG*, III.18-19; also *ST*, 1.4.3; 1|2.1.8.

⁶⁴ See *ST*, 1|2.1.8; *SCG*, III.18.

⁶⁵ See *ST*, 1.91.3; *SCG*, III.22. See also Schaefer, *Theological Foundations*, 22–24.

⁶⁶ *ST*, 1.65.2; also, 1|2.1.8.

⁶⁷ *ST*, 1.47.2; 1.65.2.

⁶⁸ See Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 42-43.

toward God. But the manner in which God is the end of nonhumans is predicated upon their natures.

Of the three classes of souls Aquinas delineates (vegetative, sensitive, and rational), he applies greater goodness to the creatures with the capacities entailed by the higher souls.⁶⁹ These creatures are more perfect than those below them; and for Aquinas, “the imperfect are for the use of the perfect” (*ST*, 1.96.1). Because of their lower disposition in the hierarchy of the created order, non-rational animals are “naturally under slavery” (*SCG*, III.112).⁷⁰ Thus Aquinas follows Aristotle in claiming that humans can hunt nonhuman animals as a “natural right” *qua* humans.⁷¹

It is here that many defenders of Aquinas’s theocentrism too easily rescue him on account of his affirmation that the entire nonhuman creation has God as its end. This claim is only true inasmuch as the nonhuman creation has God as its end *for the sake of humanity*.⁷² Thus I take issue with Berkman’s claim that, “for Aquinas, God’s plan in creation, while hierarchical, is by no means anthropocentric.”⁷³ Says Aquinas, “The intellectual nature is the only one that is required in the universe, for its own sake, while all others are for its sake” (*SCG*, III.112.3).⁷⁴ In short, the nonhuman creation is *for God*,

⁶⁹ *SCG*, III.20.3.

⁷⁰ Thomas’s view of slavery denotes that nonhuman animals are, by nature, at the disposal of humanity’s pursuit of the good. This pursuit must, of course, be informed by the virtues.

⁷¹ See *ST*, 1.96.1. Aquinas also grounds this view in scripture. See *ST*, 1.91.4.

⁷² See Santmire, *Travail of Nature*, 91; Kinsley, *Religion and Ecology*, 109. Benzoni qualifies this claim by noting a tension in Aquinas’s thought. According to Benzoni, Aquinas holds—contra Origen—that the multiplicity of the life in the cosmos is for the perfection of the cosmos itself, as opposed to human well-being. Yet Aquinas’s anthropocentrism renders this perfection for the sake of human well-being—thus the contradiction. Benzoni claims that Aquinas’s eschatology resolves this conflict by claiming that the perfection of the temporal world (i.e., changing/moving world) is wholly predicated to the good of the final world (i.e., the incorruptible world). See Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 49-58.

⁷³ Berkman, “Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality,” 24.

⁷⁴ Based on passages such as this one—even contextually considered—I find Schaefer’s position that Aquinas’s sacramental view of the cosmos imbues it with intrinsic value untenable. See Jame Schaefer, “Valuing Earth Intrinsically and Instrumentally: A Theological Framework for Environmental Ethics,” *Theological Studies* 66 (2005), 783-814. Without humanity, the created order would have no value *for*

through humanity. In this sense, Aquinas’s cosmological theocentrism actually reinforces his ethical anthropocentrism; for the justification of humanity’s use of nonhuman animals is, for Aquinas, solidified by the providential ordering of the cosmos.⁷⁵

There is still a question as to *how* nonhumans exist for God through humanity. There are two primary manners. First, the nonhuman creation provides bodily sustenance (e.g., food and clothing) for humanity.⁷⁶ Second, the nonhuman creation provides a sacramental revelation of God’s goodness.⁷⁷ Thus Aquinas’s redactor in the Supplement to the Third—which is derived from Aquinas’s commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*—appropriately represents him:

We believe all corporeal things to have been made for man’s sake, wherefore all things are stated to be subject to him. Now they serve man in two ways, first, as sustenance to his bodily life, secondly, as helping him to know God, inasmuch as man sees the invisible things of God by the things that are made (*ST*, S3.91.1).

Ironically, here one of the very points that defenders of Aquinas use to exonerate him from accusations of anthropocentrism backfires.⁷⁸ It is true that the entire created order, in its multiplicity, reveals the glory of God better than one life form could.⁷⁹ Yet for Aquinas this revelation can only have meaning to those with the capacity to

anyone. See Aquinas, *SCG*, III.112.3; *ST*, 2|2.64.1. In this sense, the value of nonhuman animals in particular is fully predicated on their value *for*, in this case for humanity. On this point see Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 44.

⁷⁵ Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 47-48; Andrew Linzey, *Why Animal Suffering Matters: Philosophy, Theology, and Practical Ethics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 14.

⁷⁶ *ST*, 1.96.1; *SCG*, III.112. Aquinas follows Aristotle in claiming using nonhuman animals for human benefit—even as food—constitutes a good. *ST*, 2|2.64.1.

⁷⁷ *ST*, 1.47.1.

⁷⁸ See Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 56.

⁷⁹ E.g., Wynn, “Thomas Aquinas,” 158–162.

appropriate it through contemplation (i.e., rational creatures).⁸⁰ Thus even this revelatory showing forth is always a showing forth *for humanity*.

Theological Foundations for Aquinas's Conservationism

I have delineated what I take to be the anthropocentric dimension of Aquinas's theological framework. His cosmological theocentrism does maintain that the entire cosmos has God as its end. However, this foundation only solidifies Aquinas's anthropocentrism in the temporal realm. By divine ordering, the non-rational creatures of the cosmos fulfill this *telos* in their service to humanity.

Aquinas's conservational dimension is evident in two manners. First, the nonhuman creation, apart from the elements, is wholly relegated to temporal realm and is good *as it is*.⁸¹ Second, the good cosmos belongs to the *entire* human community.

Two fundamental notions inform the first point. First, Aquinas does not view predation as a facet of fallenness.⁸² Says Aquinas,

In the opinion of some, those animals which now are fierce and kill others, would, in that state, have been tame, not only in regard to man, but also in regard to other animals. But this is quite unreasonable. For the nature of animals was not changed by man's sin, as if those whose nature now it is to devour the flesh of others, would then have lived on herbs, as the lion and falcon (Aquinas, *ST*, 1.96.1).

Not only is predation not a sign of the fall, it is part of the good order of the cosmos inasmuch as humans may kill other creatures if such killing is done in a manner conducive to the *telos* proper to human nature.⁸³ Because predation of nonhuman animal

⁸⁰ *ST*, S3.91.1.

⁸¹ See Susanne M. DeCrane, *Aquinas, Feminism, and the Common Good* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 44-45.

⁸² *ST*, 1.65.1.

⁸³ *SCG*, III.112; *ST*, 1.91.6. Jenkins argues that Aquinas balances the goodness of creation with the ambiguity of death and suffering by the principle of double effect. That is, God wills the goodness of creatures (e.g., the ferocity of a lion) with the indirect "evil" effect that the lion then devours the gazelle. Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 137, 144-145. Jenkins makes an even stranger claim when he writes that humanity, in innocence, would not have used animals for food. He provides no reference to Aquinas on this

(whether from other animals or humans) is good, there is no need for an eschatological redemption for creatures in this cycle.

This needlessness for eschatological redemption is further solidified by the second notion. Aquinas's redactor claims that, apart from the elements, the nonhuman creation lacks an eschatological *telos*.⁸⁴ The temporal function of nonhumans (i.e., sustenance and revelation for humanity) will cease to be necessary in eternity.⁸⁵ The redactor writes, "[I]f the end cease, those things which are directed to the end should cease. Now animals and plants were made for the upkeep of human life... Therefore when man's animal life ceases, animals and plants should cease" (*ST*, S3.91.5).⁸⁶

While this point is made most forcibly by Aquinas's redactor in the Supplement, it accurately represents Aquinas.⁸⁷ He follows Augustine in claiming that "man's last end is happiness... but 'happiness is not possible for animals bereft of reason'... Therefore other things do not concur in man's last end" (*ST*, 1|2.1.8). Aquinas is explicit that happiness, in the ultimate sense, is an end suited only for humans.⁸⁸

In short, for nonhumans, the temporal realm is the extent of their existence. Thus Aquinas writes that "death comes to both [humans and nonhumans] alike as to the body, but not as to the soul."⁸⁹ The death of a nonhuman body is the annihilation of its sensitive soul, which in Aquinas's view are necessarily and wholly dependent on their

point (135). In my view, Jenkins's reading is unfounded and in fact contradicted in Aquinas's own writings. For God has ordered the less perfect for the perfect in terms of bodily sustenance. I can thus see no reason why such a hierarchical relationship would not exist in humanity's innocence. After all, "There is no sin in using a thing for the purpose for which it is." *ST* 2|2.64.1.

⁸⁴ *ST*, S3.91.1. See also Aquinas, *ST*, 1.65.1.

⁸⁵ *ST*, S3.91.1.

⁸⁶ See also, *SCG*, IV.97.5.

⁸⁷ On humanity's animal life ceasing, see Aquinas, *SCG*, IV.83–86. Also, see Benzoni's enlightening engagement with Aquinas's *On the Power of God*. Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 54–57.

⁸⁸ *ST*, 1|2.1.8. See also Carlo Leget, "Eschatology," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow (Notre Dame University Press, 2005), 370.

⁸⁹ *ST*, 1.75.6; also, *SCG*, II.79.

physicality.⁹⁰ Hence, referencing the incorruptibility that humanity (and the inanimate creation in service to humanity) will attain in the eschaton, Aquinas states, “But the other animals, the plants, and the mixed bodies, those entirely corruptible both wholly and in part, will not remain at all in that state of incorruption” (*SCG*, IV.97.5). Thus Aquinas excludes the nonhuman creation—apart from the elements—from the eschatological community. He furthermore maintains that dimensions of the nonhuman order such as death and suffering are not evil, but rather part of its goodness.

Regarding the second point, for Aquinas the nonhuman creation exists for all humanity.⁹¹ This point is most evident in his affirmation of the common good.⁹² For Aquinas, part of the good for humanity is that which is required for human bodily sustenance. Yet Aquinas claims that society cannot function unless, as individuals seeking this good, it is also established for the entire community.⁹³ Thus, in his admonition to the king of Cyprus, Aquinas writes that it is a requirement of the king to “see that there is a sufficient supply of the necessities required to live well.”⁹⁴ Susanne DeCrane notes these requirements include “physical goods necessary to maintain life.”⁹⁵ Furthermore, Aquinas claims that “each one is entrusted with the stewardship of his own things, so that out of them he may come to the aid of those who are in need” (*ST*,

⁹⁰ *ST*, 1.75.6; also *SCG*, II.82.

⁹¹ On this point, consider Hollenbach’s strict and repeated exclusion of nonhuman animals from the moral concern predicated on the common good. *The Common Good*, 82–83, 123, 127, 130–132, 149, 151, 159, 182, 198, 202, 222.

⁹² For a good summary of Aquinas’s understanding of the common good, see DeCrane, *The Common Good*, 42–84.

⁹³ Aquinas, *On Kingship*, translated by Gerald B. Phelan, revised edition (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949), 1.1.8.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.4.118.

⁹⁵ DeCrane, *The Common Good*, 64.

2|2.66.7).⁹⁶ The point is that the created order, which constitutes a good for the entire human community, must be conserved so that all members of that community can make use of it.

An Eco-Theological Ethics of Anthropocentric Conservation

Aquinas's theological framework elicits four fundamental concerns with regard to the nonhuman creation. Each of these concerns derives from concern for the welfare of the human being and human society *in via* through this temporal world toward an eschatological *telos*. As such, all moral concern for the nonhuman creation is indirect.

First, because in its multiplicity the nonhuman creation reveals God's goodness, if humans abuse a part of the created order to the point of eradication, we diminish the revelation of God's goodness.⁹⁷ For Aquinas, no creature is without purpose, for all creatures participate in revealing God's goodness more fully.⁹⁸ Because this revelation is for humanity, harming creation to the point of eradication *is* the same as harming humanity.⁹⁹ Thus, one can rightly claim that utilization with disregard for conservation is morally reprehensible for Aquinas.¹⁰⁰

Second, Aquinas is concerned about human property. Because nonhuman animals "are ordered to man's use in the natural course of things, according to divine

⁹⁶ Aquinas goes on to say that it is licit for someone to take the possessions of another out of dire need. *ST*, 2|2.66.7. See also DeCrane, *The Common Good*, 77-79.

⁹⁷ Clifford, "Foundations," 39; Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 125-131.

⁹⁸ I make this point contra Salisbury, "Attitudes toward Animals," 78.

⁹⁹ Many critics of Aquinas miss this point. See Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and Its Discontents*, 131; Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 121. Although, Benzoni makes a strong case here. He writes that, according to Aquinas, it is God's providence that sustains species as opposed to humanity's moral actions. Thus, deriving a conservationist ethics with regard to species is, for Benzoni, a bit specious. Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 53-54. Thus, Aquinas's emphasis on providence with regard to the perfection of the universe renders his position less helpful in establishing conservationist ethics.

¹⁰⁰ *ST*, 2|2.141.3; *SCG*, III.129. Also, Shaefer, "Valuing Earth Intrinsically and Instrumentally," 792. Aquinas holds that God charges the human creature (as rational) with maintenance of the created order. *SCG*, III.78; *ST*, 1.64.4; Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue*, 61, 178.

providence” (SCG, III.112), Aquinas maintains that “he that kills another’s ox, sins, not through killing the ox, but through injuring another man in his property” (ST, 2|2.64.1).

Here again, harming part of the nonhuman creation is tantamount to harming humans.

Third, and regarding specifically nonhuman animals, Aquinas expresses concern that humans causing them gratuitous harm might lead to the desensitization of the one causing the harm. This desensitization, in turn, could lead to violence toward other humans.¹⁰¹ In other words, causing harm to sensitive creatures that have no basis for direct moral concern could lead to causing harm to sensitive creatures that do have such a basis.

Fourth, human use of the nonhuman creation must adhere to the propriety of virtue. In particular, humans must not engage in immoderate use of resources that are meant first and foremost to direct them to their proper *telos*, both temporal and ultimate. Jame Schaefer makes this point well, noting how Aquinas taught that

humans should use God’s creation in proper ways for the purposes they fulfill in the scheme of creation. Plants exist for animals to eat, animals exist for other animals, and all exist for human to eat or use in other ways to bring up children, support a family, and meet other bodily needs...However, an individual who possesses or desires to possess immoderate amounts of material goods sins against another with the sin of avarice, because an individual cannot have an abundance of external riches without other individuals lacking them.¹⁰²

This point fundamentally concerns the just distribution of nonhuman resources for the entire human community.¹⁰³ This anthropocentric emphasis on ecological social justice remains an important part of modern magisterial documents.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ SCG, III.112.13.

¹⁰² Schaefer, *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics*, 199.

¹⁰³ On this point, see Benzoni’s discussion of Aquinas and justice. Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 63-73

¹⁰⁴ For instance, *Gaudium et Spes* states: “God intended the earth and everything in it for the use of all human beings and peoples. Thus, under the leadership of justice and in the company of charity,

ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

I have already adumbrated much of what can be said about the place of individual nonhuman animals within the eco-theological paradigm of anthropocentric conservation. The nature of nonhuman animals renders them resources meant to meet the needs of human creatures, both contemplative and bodily, as they journey toward God.¹⁰⁵ Nonhuman resources, lacking the dignity of human nature, have no grounds for direct moral concern. Thus Aquinas echoes Aristotle: “There is no sin in using a thing for the purpose for which it is.... Wherefore it is not unlawful if man use plants for the good of animals, and animals for the good of man, as the Philosopher states” (*ST* 2|2.64.1).¹⁰⁶ More than “not unlawful,” on account of God’s providential ordering of the cosmos, this use of plants and animals is good.

Aquinas’s view of the nature of nonhuman animals also excludes them from the eschatological community. This exclusion bears ethical consequences, a point consistent with Aquinas’s teleological understanding of virtue. Thus, Aquinas claims that the extension of charity to nonhuman animals is improper because “charity is based on the fellowship of everlasting happiness, to which the irrational creature cannot attain” (*ST*, 2|2.25.3).¹⁰⁷ In part, then, Aquinas does not consider nonhuman animals as subjects of

created goods should flow fairly to all.” See paragraph 69. On this point, see also Michael Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 135-36.

¹⁰⁵ The term “resources,” albeit anachronistic, adequately describes Aquinas’s view.

¹⁰⁶ On Aquinas’s understanding of sin and nonhuman animals (and more specifically how humans cannot sin against them), see Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 62-63.

¹⁰⁷ Aquinas delineates two further reasons why one should not (or cannot) extend charity to nonhuman animals. First, “friendship is towards one to whom we wish good things, while, properly speaking, we cannot wish good things to an irrational creature.” Second, “all friendship is based on some fellowship in life....[and] irrational creatures can have no fellowship in human life which is regulated by reason.” *ST*, II-II, Q 25 A 3. Therefore, Jenkins argument that Aquinas’s view demands charitable engagement for the nonhuman creation for its own sake lacks validity. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 140–141.

direct moral concern because their nature precludes them from the purview of God's redemptive scope.

Individual nonhuman animals exist in the temporal realm for the sake of the well-being of the entire human community. Their suffering and death, deriving from the natural order that includes human use, is part of the goodness of the cosmos. While a species as a whole would be protected as a revelatory expression of the divine, use of individual animals is subject only to concerns of property and desensitization.¹⁰⁸ As such, the suffering of the individual nonhuman creature needs to be embraced, not redeemed.

Humans, on the other hand, are proper subjects of direct moral concern on account of their rational nature, which is directed toward their ultimate *telos*.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Aquinas states that rational creatures “stand out above other creatures, both in natural perfection and in the dignity of their end” (*SCG*, III.111). Furthermore,

[T]here should be a union in affection among those for whom there is one common end. Now, men share in common the one ultimate end which is happiness, to which they are divinely ordered. So, men should be united with each other by a mutual love (*SCG*, III.117.2).¹¹⁰

ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONSERVATION IN SUMMATION

An eco-theological ethics of anthropocentric conservation establishes a sharp distinction between the human community and nonhuman resources. The human community is made of up of essentially unique creatures that constitute the central aim of

¹⁰⁸ Benzoni rightly notes that, for Aquinas, the species is far more important than the individual with regard to the nonhuman creation. “It is the species of creatures that are primarily needed for the universe to be perfect because this perfection consists in the order of diverse ‘grades of goodness’ (that is, species) to one another. Corruptible individuals are important only in the secondary sense that they are necessary for the sake of preserving their species in existence. Corruptible individuals are for the sake of their species.” Benzoni, *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul*, 52.

¹⁰⁹ *SCG*, III.117.2; also 117.3.

¹¹⁰ See also Hollenbach, *The Common Good*, 149, where Hollenbach grounds Aquinas's vision of the common good in humanity's “common origin and destiny.”

divine concern. Only humans have a particular eternal *telos* that is communion with God. The nonhuman creation is a good and ordered network of resources that enable all humans to move toward their eschatological end by aiding them with regard to bodily sustenance as food and clothing and with regard to contemplative matters as a means of divine self-disclosure. In short, the nonhuman world, including individual animals, exists for the well-being of humanity. This function, predicated upon its nature, exhausts its temporal *telos* and renders an eternal *telos* moot.

Within this paradigm, humans must use the nonhuman creation properly. Proper use entails a concern for one's own end (i.e., using in a manner consistent with virtue) and the end of one's fellow humans (i.e., permitting them access to the goods of creation so that they might also use them properly). There is no sin or evil in killing an individual animal as long as these requirements are met. Such killing is in fact part of the good order of the cosmos. It helps perpetuate the divinely established system in which all nonhuman animals, along with the rest of the created order, exist for well-being of self and neighbor.

COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION: A GOOD AND ORDERED COMMUNITY OF CREATION

Jenkins rightly notes that, in the wake of Lynn White's critique of Christianity, most eco-theological thinkers accepted that one of the most fundamental aspects of retrieving Christianity's environmental potentials entailed exploring whether or not it is bound to a human-centered worldview.¹¹¹ Subsidiary to this exploration are questions regarding the role of science in the construction of an eco-theological ethics. On the one hand, a complete relinquishment of truth to the realm of science often engenders a demystification of the nonhuman cosmos. This demystification provides the groundwork

¹¹¹ Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 11-12.

for an anthropocentric worldview in which nonhumans do not attain to the status of direct moral concern.¹¹² On the other hand, a staunch rejection of science enables a blind affirmation of the essential uniqueness of the human creature by overlooking the stark similarities between humans and our closest genetic ancestors. The disregard for this evidence also grounds an anthropocentric worldview.

In response to the aforementioned new task, theologians, ethicists, and biblical scholars have turned to various authoritative historical sources to recover strands of Christian thought that resist accusations of anthropocentrism. In many cases, only a critical retrieval of these sources renders them relevant today. Attempts of critical retrieval have, in certain cases, led to the paradigm of eco-theological ethics that I label cosmocentric conservation. In this view, the insights of science are sought to inform the manner in which theological claims apply to the relationship between humanity and the nonhuman cosmos. In particular, new understandings of the interconnectedness of the created order, including common origins and historical struggles through the evolutionary process; the interdependency of life within particular ecosystems and the effect the loss of one creature can have on the larger created order; and the shocking similarity on the genetic level between humans and nonhuman animals, have led to a dethroning of humanity with regard to an essentially unique dignity. Humans are no longer transcendent, above the creation, and unique in the possession of intrinsic value. Rather, they are creatures within the cosmic community, which includes all living creatures and the earth itself.

¹¹² Such a result is evident in a Cartesian framework. See French, “Beast Machines and the Technocratic Reduction of Life,” 24–43.

THOMAS BERRY'S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION

The basic parameters of cosmocentric conservation have numerous representatives across denominational lines.¹¹³ However, one of the most artful representatives is the late Roman Catholic Passionist priest and self-proclaimed “geologian,” Thomas Berry.¹¹⁴ While Berry is Roman Catholic, he is adamant that his tradition has certain shortcomings that must be redressed.¹¹⁵ Thus Peter Ellard identifies the “radical nature of Berry’s view” by referring to it as “dark green.”¹¹⁶

Berry’s amendments to these shortcomings developed under the influences of various world religions, most notably indigenous religions of the Americas, Asian religions, and Indian religions.¹¹⁷ Berry has also been influenced by scholars of history, most notably Giambattista Vico and Christopher Dawson.¹¹⁸ Regarding Christianity,

¹¹³ Many of these representations have been developed through the work of Teilhard de Chardin and, to varying degrees, Thomas Berry. The ex-Catholic priest and creation spiritualist Matthew Fox provides an example in *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1991). In Protestant thought, cosmocentric conservation is evident in the work of Calvin DeWitt. See *Earthwise: A Guide to Hopeful Creation Care*, third edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2011). In Liberation theology, Leonardo Boff’s work suggests this paradigm. See *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*, translated by John Cumming (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995). In feminist thought, the work of Rosemary Radford Ruether and Dorothy McDougall are examples. See Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992). See also Ruether’s existentialist eschatology in *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward A Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983). On McDougall, see *The Cosmos as the Primary Sacrament: The Horizon for an Ecological Sacramental Theology* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2003).

¹¹⁴ For consideration of Berry’s context and his influences, including other religious traditions, Aquinas, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, see Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim’s introduction in *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth* [hereafter *CFFE*], Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, editors (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), xiii-xxvii. See also Tucker’s foreword in Thomas Berry, *The Sacred Universe: Faith, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-First Century* [hereafter *TSU*], Mary Evelyn Tucker, editor (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), ix-xiii.

¹¹⁵ Peter Ellard, “Thomas Berry as the Groundwork for a Dark Green Catholic Theology,” in *Confronting the Climate Crisis: Catholic Theological Perspectives*, Jame Schaefer, editor (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2011), 313-314.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 301.

¹¹⁷ For a good biographical summation of Berry, including the influences upon him, see Mary Evelyn Tucker, “Thomas Berry: A Brief Biography,” *Religion and Intellectual Life*, 5/4 (Summer 1988), 107-114. See also Thomas Berry, “The Universe as Cosmic Liturgy” (2000), *CFFE*, 96-102.

¹¹⁸ Tucker, “Thomas Berry,” 109-111.

Berry provides an example of a critical appropriation of the work of Thomas Aquinas.¹¹⁹ His later ecological works, however, are most strongly influenced by the Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who provides a scientific cosmology to frame Berry's understanding of history.¹²⁰

The Cosmocentrism of the "New Story of the Universe"

"It's all a question of story," writes Berry.¹²¹ Our precarious ecological context has arisen from a story developed "within a culture that emerged from a biblical-Christian matrix."¹²² In Berry's estimation, the Western version of this story is particularly harmful, with chapters including the work of René Descartes, Francis Bacon, the colonialism of early America, and the Industrial Revolution.¹²³ Thus Berry affirms, to some degree, White's critique of Western Christian thought.¹²⁴

For Berry, such thought too often evinces anthropocentric tendencies that denigrate the nonhuman world. The Christian story as developed within the West has negated intimacy with the world. Berry claims this negation occurred in three phases. The first stage was "the meeting of early Christian spirituality with Greek humanism to

¹¹⁹ Berry appreciates passages in Aquinas's corpus that emphasize the importance of the cosmos as a whole. Berry, "Christian Cosmology," 31. However, he clearly rejects the notion of anthropocentrism we detect in Thomas's theological framework. Oddly, Berry is critical of Augustine on this point, but much less so of Aquinas. See Berry, "Wisdom of the Cross," 85-87; "The Universe as Cosmic Liturgy," 105-107. Given my evaluation of Aquinas's theological framework, I find Berry's eco-theological vision fundamentally incompatible with Thomas's.

¹²⁰ Tucker identifies five major emphases that Berry derives from Teilhard: "(1) his comprehensive view of evolution as both a psychic and a physical process; (2) his discussion of the human as the consciousness of the universe; (3) his shifting of theological concerns from redemption to creation; (4) his desire to activate human energies for building the earth; (5) his emphasis on the important role of science in understanding the universe." Tucker, "Thomas Berry," 113. Michael Northcott, who considers Chardin to be humanocentric on account of his emphasis on human uniqueness and praise of technological advancement, writes that Berry "takes the Teilhardian approach in a much more ecocentric direction." Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 347, n. 7.

¹²¹ Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 123.

¹²² Berry, "The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth" (1989), in *CFFE*, 35.

¹²³ Berry, "The Sacred Universe" (1998, 2001), *TSU*, 153-161.

¹²⁴ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 80.

form the basis of a strong anthropocentrism.” Second, the Black Plague gave rise to an escapism from a condemned world in need of redemption. Finally, the triumph of industrialism rendered the world merely “a collection of objects.”¹²⁵

Berry insists that, in the midst of ecological degradation, Christian theology requires a new shape for its cosmology, one formed within the parameters of the “New Story of the universe.”¹²⁶ This New Story does not obliterate the foundations of the old stories—the religious myths of creation. However, it enhances and develops these myths by being attentive to the “voices of the natural world” often silenced in Christian theology.¹²⁷ That is, the story is developed within the parameters of the discoveries of science, which for Berry constitute a primary form of revelation.¹²⁸

Even so, the story does not succumb to the scientific tendency of reducing the world to an exhaustively calculable object.¹²⁹ Berry is adamant that a scientific approach that demystifies the world is as dangerous as a faith perspective that ignores the mysterious “voice of the world.”¹³⁰ Thus Berry seeks to move beyond Deep Ecology.¹³¹ Says Ellard, “Nothing short of great spiritual traditions—or current traditions greatly transformed—are in order in response to the current terror.”¹³² In Berry’s view, the confident claims of both science and religion regarding their calculations of the nonhuman world and the resulting conceptualization of that world as “thing” ground our

¹²⁵ Berry, “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 60-63; *The Dream of the Earth*, 125-128.

¹²⁶ For a good summary of Berry’s ecological emphases based the New Story, see McDougall’s list of thirteen Berrian principles. McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 22.

¹²⁷ Berry, “The Christian Future,” *CFFE*, 38.

¹²⁸ Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 303.

¹²⁹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 130-131; “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 62-65.

¹³⁰ See Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 130-131; “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 62-65; “Wisdom of the Cross,” *CFFE*, 82-83. See also Berry’s enlightening discussion on personhood and language in “The Universe as Divine Manifestation,” *TSU*, 145.

¹³¹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 2.

¹³² Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 302. Ellard goes to write that theologians “need to mythologize scientific findings” (304).

ecological crisis. “We no longer have a world of inherent value, no world of wonder, no untouched, unspoiled, unused world. We think we have understood everything. But we have not. We have *used* everything.”¹³³

Thus Berry draws on religion and science. Dorothy McDougall summarizes his view well: “Berry seeks to integrate postmodern scientific insights into a functional cosmology which can guide human aspirations and action *within* the governing principles of the universe.”¹³⁴ Berry’s balanced combination of religious myth, science, and a nature mysticism elicits a worldview in which the “integral universe...constitutes the sacred community par excellence.”¹³⁵

For Berry, integrating Christian thought into the New Story is “the Great Work to which Christianity is called in these times.”¹³⁶ This New Story is a unifying story. In a literary sense, it is the metanarrative from which all other narratives—religious, political, and economic—derive.¹³⁷ Hence Berry frames his theological explorations within this narrative framework.¹³⁸

Berry describes the New Story as the tale of “a sequence of irreversible transformations” spanning around fourteen billion years.¹³⁹ The plot gives special attention to human beings, “that being in whom the universe in its evolutionary

¹³³ Berry, “The World of Wonder” (2001), *TSU*, 171.

¹³⁴ McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 2.

¹³⁵ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 34.

¹³⁶ Berry, “The Role of the Church,” *CFFE*, 53.

¹³⁷ See Berry, “The Christian Future,” *CFFE*, 41; *The Dream of the Earth*, 136. See also Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 304.

¹³⁸ For a more developed version of this “New Story,” leading from the birth of the universe through the development of stars and chemicals to the rise of humanity and the dawning of the “ecozoic era,” see Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flashing Forth to the Ecozoic Era—A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1994).

¹³⁹ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 29.

dimension became conscious of itself.”¹⁴⁰ Yet the narrative is never dominated by these late arrivals.¹⁴¹ In fact, “the Earth has a privileged role” because it is the space with which the entire interconnected biotic community develops.¹⁴² Furthermore, whatever unique qualities exist in the human species derive from the common history of living beings in the world.¹⁴³ As Ellard states, “We do not live *on* earth. We *are* earth as it has expressed itself in a unique way, an amazing way—self reflective and aware.”¹⁴⁴

For Berry, this derivative nature of the human being not only acknowledges the inescapable earth-ness of humans, but also the spiritual-ness of the entire cosmos.¹⁴⁵ This claim bears two important corollaries. First, it contradicts any scientific reductionism that treats the nonhuman cosmos as nothing more than the amalgam of its physical components. In other words, there is a mysteriousness to the cosmos—an excess that empiricism cannot calculate.

Second, it disrupts the dualistic dichotomy between humans as physical/spiritual and nonhumans as merely physical. In the words of Ellard, “All material interactions before humans arrived had a psychic component, a mind component, a soul component in them... This psyche/mind/spirit/soul aspect of all material things remains in all things.”¹⁴⁶ Thus the uniqueness of humanity is always uniqueness within the evolutionary emergence of the cosmos. The New Story is not anthropocentric, but rather radically cosmocentric. It draws all life into a community. More than that, it unveils a cosmic

¹⁴⁰ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 128. See also “The Christian Future,” *CFFE*, 42-43.

¹⁴¹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 14.

¹⁴² Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 29-30. I write “with which” purposely to denote that the earth is more than the setting for biotic development.

¹⁴³ Berry, “The Role of the Church,” *CFFE*, 48.

¹⁴⁴ Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 308-309.

¹⁴⁵ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 29; “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 65.

¹⁴⁶ Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 306.

family; for human beings are “cousins to every other living being.”¹⁴⁷ One could perhaps even point to a greater intimacy in which “everything *in* the universes *is* the universe.”¹⁴⁸ That is, all that exists in the cosmos is irrevocably united both materially and spirituality. One senses here an Eastern influence on Berry.¹⁴⁹ Though, Berry does not reject selfhood. Rather, he subsumes it into the “Great Self” or “greater self” in which it is united with all things.¹⁵⁰ As Ellard writes, “More than the fact that we are cousins to everything else, we are everything else. Everything else is part of our ‘Great Self’ identity.”¹⁵¹

Conservation of a Cosmos without Need of Redemption

I have demonstrated Berry’s cosmocentrism. The cosmos constitutes a community in which all share in the materiality and spirituality of one another. The hierarchy of Aquinas is fully dismantled in Berry’s view. To establish the conservational dimension of Berry’s eco-theological ethics, I must address his views concerning eschatological redemption.

¹⁴⁷ Berry, “Wisdom of the Cross,” *CFFE*, 84; *The Dream of the Earth*, 1.

¹⁴⁸ Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 304.

¹⁴⁹ For Berry’s engagement with Eastern thought, see Thomas Berry, *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future* (New York, NY: Bell Tower, 1999), 70-93.

¹⁵⁰ Berry, *The Great Work*, 70; Berry, “Prologue: Loneliness and Presence,” in *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton, editors (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 5. Berry has been accused of pantheism. For instance, see Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation* (Waco: TX, Baylor University Press, 2010), 82-83. See also Loren Wilkinson’s critique that Berry and other creation spiritualists have overreacted against transcendence, thus overshadowing it with immanence. Loren Wilkinson, “The Making of the Declaration,” in *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*, R. J. Berry, editor (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 55. Berry is defended against such accusations by Ellard, who writes that Berry’s view is not pantheistic but theophanic. That is, humans encounter the divine not *as* the creation, but *in* the creation. This sacramental emphasis suggests a divine element beyond the cosmos. See Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 305. Though, Ellard notes that Berry does go to great lengths to downplay transcendence (313-14). He furthermore states that “the divine, in a Berrian system, will be largely devoid of...theistic underpinnings” (311). Thus the accusations are not fully without warrant.

¹⁵¹ Ellard, “Dark Green Catholic Theology,” 309.

Ellard claims that Berry's critique of Christianity is sharpest with regard to the notions of transcendence and redemption.¹⁵² Here my emphasis is redemption. For Berry, the New Story of the universe is the necessary framework for all Christian claims, including redemption. Within this framework, redemption is neither rescue from cosmic evolutionary processes nor the mechanisms that enable them. Rather, redemption, if there is such a thing in Berry's view, is the realization of these processes, even in their "awesome violence."¹⁵³ The violent occurrences in the natural world are not consequences of a cosmic fall or sin, but rather "cosmological moments of grace."¹⁵⁴ They correspond to Christ's sacrifice on the cross, for they are a "primary necessity in activating the more advanced modes of being."¹⁵⁵ Thus the violence of the evolutionary process is a manifestation of the wisdom of the cross whereby sacrifice enables life.¹⁵⁶ For Berry, "every living being is sacrificed for other living beings."¹⁵⁷ In line with this incarnational understanding of violence, Ellard highlights the revelatory function of violence in the cosmos:

Violence is one of the ways that the universe creates and it is part of the context. This means, of course, that, just like the universe, the divine is both wonderful and violent. The divine is life-giving and life-taking. The divine is made manifest through destruction, through cancer, and through plague. We need to take comfort in this.

¹⁵² Ibid., 314.

¹⁵³ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 89. See also McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 121.

¹⁵⁴ Berry, "Wisdom of the Cross," *CFFE*, 89.

¹⁵⁵ Berry, "Christian Cosmology," *CFFE*, 33. This vision fits within the parameters of Berry's truncated christology. Christ is evident in the unfolding cosmos and the unfolding cosmos finds expression in Christ. Berry, "Christian Cosmology," *CFFE*, 32-34. Furthermore, there can be no incarnation without this christic universe.

¹⁵⁶ Berry, "Wisdom of the Cross," *CFFE*, 88-91.

¹⁵⁷ Thomas Berry, *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation between Humans and the Earth* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991), 68.

Ellard's point is that, for Berry, violence and goodness are not opposed. Thus he also writes, "There is little talk of intrinsic evil within a Berrian system. In a real sense, there is no room for it." That which occurs in nature (i.e., natural evil) is part of the order of nature, which is good and therefore in need of neither transcendent escape nor eschatological redemption.¹⁵⁸

Thus, for Berry, death is part of the necessary, good, and divinely ordained mode of progress in the unfolding creation.¹⁵⁹ There is no "Fall" of the nonhuman universe.¹⁶⁰ For this reason, humanity should not lament the violence of nature. For cosmic peace, which entails the sustaining of the balanced order within the creative emergence of the universe, requires it.¹⁶¹ Far from lamentation, Berry calls for liturgical outlets that enable "celebration of the evolutionary transformation moments."¹⁶² Doing so would remedy one of Berry's critiques of Western religions: that they "have been so occupied with redemptive healing of a flawed world that they tend to ignore creation as it is experienced in our times."¹⁶³ Furthermore, such liturgical acts would incorporate our religious story into the story of the universe; for "the universe, by definition, is a single gorgeous celebratory event."¹⁶⁴

On account of the goodness of the ordered cosmos, Berry seeks to surmount the notion that Christianity necessitates "redemption from a flawed world."¹⁶⁵ It is here that he demonstrates the conservational dimension of his cosmocentrism. Nonhumans are not

¹⁵⁸ There is, however, a need for the repentance of humans for their violation of nature's balanced cycles. Thus, Berry maintains a strong sense of moral evil alongside his dismissal of natural evil.

¹⁵⁹ "The divine creates a phenomenal world with the power to develop greater complexity through emergent processes." Berry, "Christianity and Ecology," *CFFE*, 64-65.

¹⁶⁰ See Berry's discussion on redemption in *The Dream of the Earth*, 124-126.

¹⁶¹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 216-220.

¹⁶² Berry, "The Universe as Cosmic Liturgy," *CFFE*, 111.

¹⁶³ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 25.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁶⁵ Berry, "The Christian Future," *CFFE*, 39.

excluded from the community of eschatological redemption, as was the case in Aquinas's theological framework. Nor are they included, as will be the case in Orthodox theology. For Berry, there is no community of eschatological redemption, nor is there need for one.¹⁶⁶ A chief human mistake, grounded though it is in Christian thought, is that human beings seek to overcome the order of nature.¹⁶⁷ But the laws of this order, established by God, require human assent, not correction. "The universe is the primary law-giver."¹⁶⁸ The ecological crisis does not need "a human answer to the earth problem, but an earth answer to the earth problem."¹⁶⁹ Humanity, like all species, must fit into the mysterious whole.¹⁷⁰

Many theologians critique Berry—along with others of the so-called creation spirituality category such as Matthew Fox—for overlooking the suffering in creation. Sallie McFague acknowledges the power of Berry's vision. Yet she levels the following critique:

What Berry and other creation spirituality writers lack is a sense of the awful oppression that is part and parcel of the awesome mystery and splendor. The universe has not been for species, and certainly not for most individuals within species, a 'gorgeous celebratory event.' It has been a story of struggle, loss, and often early death.¹⁷¹

McFague's critique is common. Celia Deanne-Drummond approvingly notes that "many would see that [Berry's] vision is overly idealistic, ignoring some of the more

¹⁶⁶ Consider David Toolan's comparison of Moltmann and Berry with regard to the value of biblical promise and eschatological hope. Toolan, *At Home in the Cosmos* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 150 n. 22.

¹⁶⁷ Berry, "The Role of the Church," *CFFE*, 47.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁶⁹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 35.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

¹⁷¹ Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 71.

unsavoury, destructive aspects of evolutionary and cosmic history.”¹⁷² In line with this critique is another: the place of eschatology in Berry’s framework. In McFague’s estimation, the beauty of creation spirituality ought to be its eschatological promise. That is, it should represent the world as it ought to be, a community of intimacy.¹⁷³ Yet John Haught critiques the absence of such an eschatological promise in Berry’s thought.¹⁷⁴

In my estimation, McFague and others miss Berry’s point. Berry is well aware of the violence in the created order:

The universe, earth, life, and consciousness are all violent processes. The basic terms in cosmology, geology, biology, and anthropology all carry a heavy charge of tension and violence. Neither the universe as a whole nor any part of the universe is especially peaceful.¹⁷⁵

Thus Berry clearly recognizes that “there is a violent as well as a benign aspect of nature.”¹⁷⁶ The significant point to be made is that, for Berry and others like him, “the ‘cosmic-earth’ process...and the process of ultimate human transformation are one in the same.”¹⁷⁷ That is, the evolutionary emergence of the cosmos is neither superseded by eschatological redemption from outside of history nor a burgeoning millennialism from within it. Rather, any notion of redemption is subsumed into the New Story. If anything, the cosmos itself is the harbinger of redemption through the very mechanisms of death and suffering that many theologians seek to redress by an appeal to eschatology.¹⁷⁸ For

¹⁷² Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 42.

¹⁷³ McFague, *The Body of God*, 72.

¹⁷⁴ See John Haught, *The Promise of Nature* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993), 104-105.

¹⁷⁵ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 216.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁷⁷ Kusumita Pedersen, “Inclusion and Exclusion: Reflections on Moral Community and Salvation,” in *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church’s Response*, Dieter Hessel and Larry Rasmussen, editors (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 50.

¹⁷⁸ See Berry’s discussion on hope in *The Dream of the Earth*, 221-223. See also Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 42.

Berry, “the supremely beautiful is the integrity and harmony of the total cosmic order.”¹⁷⁹ As this order not only includes but currently *requires* violence, death, predation, suffering, and evolutionary waste, these dimensions of the cosmos constitute part of its beauty and goodness. The human fault is the rejection of this beauty and goodness in pursuit of some future hope that leaves this natural order behind. In short, humans erred when we convinced ourselves that “we deserved a better world.”¹⁸⁰

An Eco-Theological Ethics of Cosmocentric Conservation

I have established that Berry’s vision of the world rejects both anthropocentrism and the need for an eschatological redemption of the cosmos. Concerning the latter, the cosmos is not a fallen realm of ugliness; rather, it is a beautiful emergence of celebration. Concerning the former, the cosmos is not divided between ensouled, spiritual, thinking beings and “things.” Based on these foundations—and with regard to this project—Berry’s eco-theological ethics has one fundamental core with three practical corollaries. The core is the recognition of an egalitarian cosmic community of intrinsic value. The practical corollaries are the dismantling of human dominion, the vision of humanity’s “living-with” the cosmos, and finally the extension of rights to the nonhuman creation in conjunction with the limiting of human rights.

Regarding the dismantling of dominion, Berry’s notion of the cosmic community rescinds the unique and transcendent identity of humanity as above nature.¹⁸¹ As McDougall notes, for Berry, “the universe is the primary sacred reality—the *imago*

¹⁷⁹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 129.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁸¹ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 30; *The Dream of the Earth*, 125-128.

*Dei.*¹⁸² Thus, Berry posits a democratization of the *imago*. This democratization grounds the dismissal of a functional anthropocentrism (i.e., human dominion):

Apart from the primary intention of the scriptures, the practice of Westerns Christians has been to consider that every earthly reality is subject to the free disposition of humans insofar as we are able to assert...dominion. We do not feel responsible precisely to the world about us since the natural world has no inherent rights; we are responsible only to the creator and to ourselves, not to abuse anything...Only in this detached situation could we have felt so free to intrude upon the forces of the natural world even when we had not the slightest idea of the long-range consequences of what we were doing.¹⁸³

Berry's dismantling of human dominion even challenges the model of stewardship. For Berry, this model is "too extrinsic a mode of relating"; for "it strengthens our sense of human dominance" and "does not recognize that nature has a prior stewardship over us as surely as we have a stewardship over nature."¹⁸⁴ Thus, in Berry's view, the role of the nonhuman world is one of mutuality with humans; for "humans and the universe were made for each other."¹⁸⁵ The human expresses the conscious appreciation and celebration of the universe. The universe, on the other hand, constitutes the primordial sacrament.¹⁸⁶ It is the "primary revelation of the divine."¹⁸⁷ In this mutuality, "human beings find their fulfillment in the universe even as the universe finds its fulfillment in the human."¹⁸⁸ There is rather a sacramental reciprocity between the human and the nonhuman. The celebration of the cosmos finds unique expression in humanity. Human fulfillment, in turn, depends upon the "Book of Nature," which is an

¹⁸² McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 65.

¹⁸³ Berry, "The Christian Future," *CFFE*, 40.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, *CFFE*, 41. On this point, see also McDougall's juxtaposition of the stewardship approach to Christian eco-theology with the ecological egalitarian approach of feminism. McDougall, *The Cosmos as the Primary Sacrament*, chapter 2.

¹⁸⁵ Berry, "Loneliness and Presence," 6.

¹⁸⁶ Berry, "Christian Cosmology," *CFFE*, 31-32.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁸⁸ Berry, "The Sacred Universe," *TSU*, 166.

essential counterpart to other forms of divine revelation.¹⁸⁹ In other words, Berry's egalitarian value system is coupled with a functional egalitarianism in which humans express cosmic consciousness while at once being intrinsically and indissolubly dependent upon the cosmos. As such, there can be no claim of any form of functional anthropocentrism, even stewardship.

If dominion/stewardship is not the appropriate model of human interaction with the cosmos, what is? The model that Berry suggests is that of an "Ecozoic era, a period when humans [are] present to the planet in a mutually enhancing manner."¹⁹⁰ Humanity's role, apart from appreciation and celebration, is preservation, a humble living with and within the order of the cosmos, a letting be of the natural world.¹⁹¹ The nonhuman world is not a network of resources for human consumption, but rather a vast mystery, a good and ordered community of intrinsic value with a spirit-imbued history that long predates humans. Even so, humanity's reverential "letting be" does not negate utility. Rather, it qualifies it with a harmonious "living with" the nonhuman world in which harmony suggests struggling for human survival without unhinging the community that enables that struggle.¹⁹² Berry calls for balance between a gracious "letting be" of the cosmos and a reverential "living with" it, as it is in its beautiful evolutionary emergence. The following sentiment constitutes the heart of cosmocentric conservation:

To learn how to live graciously together would make us worthy of this unique, beautiful, blue planet that evolved in its present splendor over some billions of years, a planet that we should give over to our children with the assurance that

¹⁸⁹ Berry, "The Christian Future," *CFFE*, 38-39, 42; "The Universe as Divine Manifestation," *TSU*, 146.

¹⁹⁰ Berry, "The Role of the Church," *CFFE*, 47.

¹⁹¹ Berry, "The Role of the Church," 48; "Wisdom of the Cross," *CFFE*, 93-94.

¹⁹² Berry, "Reinventing the Human at the Species Level," *CFFE*, 119.

this great community of the living will lavish upon them the care that it has bestowed so abundantly upon ourselves.¹⁹³

Note the multiple and interconnected dimensions of this ethics. Humans are not simply responsible for the cosmos; they are responsible *as the cosmos*. They do not simply protect the nonhuman creation; they *need the nonhuman creation*. Human celebration is not an act toward the cosmos. It is rather a participation in the cosmos—a “living-with.” Thus preservation cannot simply be an “us” (i.e., humans) protecting “it” or even “them” (i.e., nonhumans).¹⁹⁴ It is rather an act within the sacred community itself. In short, Berry replaces dominion, which is an extrinsic model of the human/nonhuman rapport, with a model of reverential “living-with,” which emphasizes human immanence in the place of transcendence. In Mary Evelyn Tucker’s terms, Berry calls for “a shift from an anthropocentric sense of domination to an anthropocosmic sense of communion with all life forms.”¹⁹⁵ This aim of reverential living-with constitutes to Great Work of humanity—an opening and embracing of cosmic mutuality. Says Berry, “The Great Work now... is to carry out the transition from a period of human devastation

¹⁹³ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 12.

¹⁹⁴ Regarding the “it,” Berry is adamant that “nothing is simply an object to be used.” Berry, “The Role of the Church,” *CFFE*, 55.

¹⁹⁵ Mary Evelyn Tucker, “A Communion of Subjects and a Multiplicity of Intelligences,” in *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton, editors (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 646. As I noted in the introduction, an anthropocosmic worldview is similar, with regard to value, to my use of cosmocentrism. The term connotes, beyond the issue of value, a strong sense of mutuality between humanity (*anthropos*) and the world (*cosmos*). However, the question of mutuality is, in my view, less important than the issue of intrinsic value. For a strongly anthropocentric worldview can have a symbiotic understanding of humans and the cosmos. It can even maintain a strong sense of human immanence in the created order. Thus the notion of mutuality does not necessitate the dismantling of a centric value system. Nor does an extensive value system require equal mutuality (e.g., consider the relationship between a parent and a child). At any rate, a cosmocentric view, at least as I am using it, denotes mutuality in the sense that humans are not “other than” the cosmos. They are part of the cosmos. It furthermore denotes that this cosmos, along with its various components—including humans—bears intrinsic value.

of the Earth to a period when humans would be present to the planet in a mutually beneficial manner.”¹⁹⁶

Once the essential transcendence of humanity is dismantled, Berry is able to extend the notion of rights to the entire cosmos. When there is no longer “I” and “it” or even “us” and “them,” then the “nonhuman nature is merely a ‘good’ to be distributed evenly.”¹⁹⁷ Rather, “the basic referent in terms of reality and of value is the universe in its full expression in space and time.”¹⁹⁸ Herein lies the “primary law of the universe.”¹⁹⁹ Value belongs to the entire cosmic family in its irrevocable interconnectedness.²⁰⁰

Thus Berry staunchly rejects an anthropocentrism in which one measures value only with reference to humanity.²⁰¹ On the contrary, he advocates a biocentrism, a term related to my notion of cosmocentrism, in which the value of the nonhuman world is as intrinsic as the value of humanity.²⁰² All other anthropocentric approaches ground the industrial triumph of utility over communion.²⁰³ Berry’s biocentrism entails the rejection of the position that rights apply only to humanity.²⁰⁴ In fact, the rights of nonhumans require “limited rights” for humanity.²⁰⁵ While this use of the language of rights does not denote equal rights, it does denote rights for all: “Each being has rights according to its mode of being. Trees have tree rights, birds have bird rights.”²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁶ Berry, *The Great Work*, 3.

¹⁹⁷ McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 70. In my view, McDougall rightly connects this anthropocentric vision of sacramentality to the work of John Paul II. On the negative dimensions of sacramental theology for eco-theology, see also 87, 107.

¹⁹⁸ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 31.

¹⁹⁹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 202.

²⁰⁰ Berry, “The Role of the Church,” *CFFE*, 48-49, 53; “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 60; “The Sacred Universe,” *TSU*, 152.

²⁰¹ Berry, “Christian Cosmology,” *CFFE*, 31.

²⁰² Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 21; “The Christian Future,” *CFFE*, 44.

²⁰³ Berry, “Christianity and Ecology,” *CFFE*, 63.

²⁰⁴ Berry, “The Universe as Cosmic Liturgy,” *CFFE*, 118-119.

²⁰⁵ Berry, “The Role of the Church,” *CFFE*, 50.

²⁰⁶ Berry, “Wisdom of the Cross,” *CFFE*, 91.

COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

Within the paradigm of cosmocentric conservation, the human species is part of an evolutionary process that depends on predation, suffering, and death. In this cycle, “each individual life form has its own historical appearance, a moment when it must assert its identity, fulfill its role, and then give way to other individuals in the processes of the phenomenal world.”²⁰⁷ These dimensions of existence are not the result of sin or the fall, but rather cosmic grace in the unfolding of the universe. Thus they are not in need of redemption.

Because predation and death are part of the good order of nature, it seems that the killing of individual nonhuman animals for survival is not only acceptable, but, pending the context, good. However, a human-induced extinction of a species, even for great human benefit, is not.²⁰⁸ As Berry notes, extinction is “not like the killing of individual lifeforms that can be renewed through normal processes of reproduction.”²⁰⁹

It is crucial to note that, for Berry, nonhuman animals are part of the cosmic family and thus kin to humans. The reverence due their dignity is profound. In Berry’s words, “Every being has its own interior, its self, its mystery, its numinous aspect. To deprive any being of this sacred quality is to disrupt the larger order of the universe. Reverence will be total or it will not be at all.”²¹⁰ Furthermore, Berry claims that animals “belong in our conscious human world in a special manner.”²¹¹ The treatment of animals

²⁰⁷ Berry, “Loneliness and Presence,” 6.

²⁰⁸ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 8-9; “The Sacred Universe,” *TSU*, 156. An evolutionary extinction of species is, of course, another matter. Such is part of the awesome violence of evolutionary emergence.

²⁰⁹ Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 9.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 134.

²¹¹ Berry, “Loneliness and Presence,” 6.

within the milieu of our ecological pathology certainly falls under Berry's critique.²¹² Berry even maintains that vegetarianism is "one of the most effective things... we can do on an individual scale" to stymie the ecological degradation of the natural world.²¹³ In my view, the intensity of Berry's critique would reach deep into the magisterial documents of the Catholic Church. Berry never uses the word "gift" (and certainly not "resource") to describe the nonhuman creation with reference to humanity. He replaces this unilateral language by claiming that humans and nonhumans participating in "a constant exchange of gifts to each other."²¹⁴

Berry's critique notwithstanding, reverence is not necessarily opposed to killing just as beauty is not opposed to violence. To the point: only as part of the natural order, within its ebb and flow, can humans ethically use the nonhuman creation.²¹⁵ Thus, the justification for practices such as hunting and meat-eating is not based on a unique spiritual dignity deriving from human transcendence. In fact, the justification is based on the opposite, human immanence within a cosmos that is macroanthropos.²¹⁶ That is, humans engage in the mechanisms of evolution, including predation, because we are

²¹² See Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, 203.

²¹³ See Thomas Berry, "Every Being Has Rights," available online at <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/documents/Berry%20-%20Every%20Being%20has%20Rights.pdf>; Internet, accessed January 2012.

²¹⁴ Berry, "Loneliness and Presence," 8.

²¹⁵ Deane-Drummond writes that "human care for the earth stems from a cosmic caring that is embedded in evolutionary processes." Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 41.

²¹⁶ In *The Great Work*, Berry defines humans as "a mystical quality of the Earth, a unifying principle, and integration of the various polarities of the material and the spiritual, the physical and the psychic, the natural and the artistic, the intuitive and the scientific. We are the unity in which all these inhere and achieve a special mode of functioning." Orthodox theologians (and many others) claim that humanity is the microcosm of the universe—and here Berry agrees. But Berry goes further in claiming that humanity does not transcend the cosmos. Such is the meaning and significance of the cosmos as macroanthropos. Humanity is a unique concentration of the many facets of the universe. But the universe is itself a vast amplification of these facets. See Berry, *The Great Work*, 174-75.

participants in the integral order of the cosmos, an order that requires violence.²¹⁷ This engagement is good and therefore not in need of redemption. It requires reverence, wonder, awe. But it does not require the cessation of violence in all its forms. For, in the words of McDougall, “The primary intention of life is neither one of peace nor conflict, but creativity.”²¹⁸

COSMOCENTRIC CONSERVATION IN SUMMATION

This exploration into the work of Thomas Berry provides a concrete example of the eco-theological paradigm I label cosmocentric conservation. While many other scholars from across denominational lines and hermeneutical emphases including creation spiritualists, liberation theologians, and eco-feminists, do not share the exact claims of Berry, his eco-theological vision nonetheless provides a broad framework into which many such writers fit. Within this framework, there are six central tenets. The first four pertain to cosmocentrism while the other two pertain to conservation.

First, the cosmos is a community of subjects in mysterious interconnectedness. Second, each member of this community participates in the goodness and mystery of the whole and thereby is due the reverence of a common dignity. Third, human beings are no longer the transcendent ones, unique in the possession of psyche, spirit, soul, or even the *imago Dei*. Rather, humans are members of the cosmic community, kin to all living creatures, and participants in the pervasive mystery of existence. Fourth, only as members of this community can humans properly engage the cosmos, engagements that

²¹⁷ I thus view Berry’s position on, for instance, hunting, to be that of other deep ecologies such as Aldo Leopold who maintain that hunting is a means of placing humanity in the context of the natural order. See Marc R. Fellenz, *The Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 164-166.

²¹⁸ McDougall, *The Cosmos as Primary Sacrament*, 22.

must balance a gracious “letting be” with a reverential “living-with” fellow members of the community, including the earth.

Fifth, the earth community is good and ordered as it is, and is therefore in no need of an eschatological redemption that fixes or changes nonhuman nature. Sixth, because humans await no eschatological redemption, human engagement of the earth must derive from the laws of nature evident in the emerging temporal cosmos. These laws do not negate use or predation, for each of these dimensions of existence is part of the good and ordered cosmos. Rather, the laws mandate humility in such use, recognizing that human benefit does not constitute the primary purpose of the nonhuman cosmos.

ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION: THE COSMOS AS THE ETERNAL SACRAMENT

Cosmocentric conservation provides a critique to its anthropocentric counterpart for an overemphasis on the temporal importance of humans. Anthropocentric transfiguration, on the other hand, critiques it for an under-emphasis on the eschatological import of nonhumans. Unlike cosmocentric conservation, the fundamental foundation for anthropocentric transfiguration is not science but scripture and tradition, particularly as it developed in the East.²¹⁹ In this paradigm, the whole of the cosmos has always been destined for transfiguration, which denotes in some sense an eschatological participation in God’s eternal life. However, the nonhuman creation’s participation in the eschatological community is primarily—if not solely—for the sake of the divine-human

²¹⁹ Though, it would be wrong to suggest that the two facets of knowledge are opposed in Orthodox thought. In light of the cosmic dynamism of early Eastern thought, John Meyendorff notes that Basil of Caesarea “would not have objected to modern theories of evolution, as long as the origin of the evolution’s dynamism would not be seen as ontologically autonomous but would be attributed to divine will.” John Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” *St. Vladimir’s Theology Quarterly*, 27/1 (1983), 29. See also John Zizioulas’s quite positive assessment of science, especially regarding its dismantling of a Western emphasis on rationality in the work of Charles Darwin. Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation: Three Lectures on Theology and Ecology,” *King’s Theological Review* 12 (1989), Part I, 4.

drama. That is, the cosmos serves both temporally and in eternity as a sacrament for the sake of humanity's relationship with God.²²⁰

This paradigm is best represented within Eastern Orthodox theology.²²¹ However, not all Orthodox theologians explicitly uphold its fundamental tenets.²²² Some are unclear regarding whether or not the nonhuman creation will share in God's life for its own sake or for the sake of humans. Others seem to suggest that the cosmos will be included for its own sake, advocating something more akin to the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration. While it would thus be inaccurate to classify all of Orthodox theology as an example of anthropocentric transfiguration, it is nonetheless the case that this paradigm finds its clearest expression from within Orthodox thought. Thus, establishing concrete examples of the paradigm will require an exploration of Orthodox theology. In this section, I will examine the theological foundations for this eco-theological ethics as developed in the work of Maximus the Confessor and how these foundations have been appropriated in contemporary Orthodox thought.

DEVELOPED FOUNDATIONS IN MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR

While Augustine and Aquinas excluded most of the nonhuman creation—including plants and nonhuman animals—from the eschatological community, many other thinkers in Christian history explicitly deny this exclusion. Irenaeus, following

²²⁰ John Haught acknowledges that referring to nature as a sacrament that will be eschatologically transfigured does not necessitate the abandonment of a value-based anthropocentrism. He thus maintains that “we must reflect further on what it means to say that the whole cosmic story—and not just human history—is defined by God's promise.” Haught, *God after Darwin*, 167.

²²¹ Though, there are interesting parallels with certain strands of Roman Catholicism that emphasize humanity's role as the transformer of the cosmos. See William C. French, “Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms in Recent Catholic Thought,” *The Journal of Religion*, 70/1 (January 1990), 48-72.

²²² In this section, my emphasis will be on the Orthodox school of neo-patristic synthesis. Meyendorff notes that this theological approach, which developed largely in response to the Russian sophiologists, dominates in present Orthodox thought. Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 33.

Theophilus of Antioch, wrote that animals and humans would return to the peaceful relationships of Eden in the eschatological future.²²³ Other Fathers, such as Ephrem the Syrian, held similar positions.²²⁴ These voices provide a historical foundation for the transfiguration of the entire cosmos in eschatological consummation. Thus Meyendorff states that “the patristic doctrine of creation is inseparable from eschatology—the goal of created history, of time itself, is oneness in God.”²²⁵

One important proponent of this inclusive eschatological vision is Maximus the Confessor, who, in the words of Elizabeth Theokritoff, “remains to this day the single most important figure in Orthodox cosmological thought.”²²⁶ Similarly, John Meyendorff writes that “Maximus can be called the real father of Byzantine theology”²²⁷ and that his work on creation provides “criteria for all later Byzantine thought.”²²⁸ As this authority, Maximus provides the developed foundations for contemporary Orthodox theologians who provide examples of anthropocentric transfiguration.

²²³ *Irenaeus' Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation*, Iain M. Mackenzie with the translation of the text of the *Demonstration* by J. Armitage Robinson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), paragraph 61.

²²⁴ See Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, introduction and translation by Sebastian Brock (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Press, 1989), IX.1. Esther Reed suggests a differentiation between patristic thought and Aquinas concerning nonhuman animals in the economy of salvation. Esther D. Reed, “Animals in Orthodox Iconography,” in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London, UK: SCM Press, 2009), 68-72. For a developed examination of Irenaeus and Ephrem, along with other considerations of transfiguration in Christian history, see my work, “Evidencing the Eschaton: Progressive-Transformative Animal Welfare in the Church Fathers,” *Modern Theology* 27, 1 (January 2011), 121-46.

²²⁵ Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 29-30.

²²⁶ Elizabeth Theokritoff, “Creator and Creation,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*, Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff, editors (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 66.

²²⁷ John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington DC: Corpus Books, 1969), 99.

²²⁸ Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 29.

For Maximus, the entire created order participates in God as material instantiations (plasticized *logoi*) of the divine *logoi*, toward which all things move.²²⁹ This natural movement, or mode of existence, is the *tropos* (i.e., the proper direction or way) of a created entity.²³⁰ This *tropos* is directed toward God, the *telos* of the cosmos.²³¹ As Meyendorff states, “For Maximus, the ‘movement’ or dynamism of creation is initiated by God, but it also has God as its ultimate aim.”²³² In other words, all actual created entities—living and nonliving—naturally move toward the divine intention for them, which is a participation in God.²³³

Human beings, unique in the possession of the image of God—and destined for their own *logoi* as the likeness of God through divination—have the ability to decipher the *logoi* of creation and therefore bear the responsibility to facilitate their natural movement (*tropos*) through a synergistic cooperation with the divine.²³⁴ As humanity engages in this deciphering, the nonhuman creation functions as a sacrament for humanity, revealing the divine wisdom and facilitating the divine-human drama. Human beings are well-suited for their task because, as both material and spiritual, we are

²²⁹ Drummond defines *logoi* as “the principles and ideas in the sensory world as we know it in different manifestation, but which ultimately express their source in the divine Logos.” Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 61.

²³⁰ See Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, 7, 42. Sections from *Ambigua* are taken from *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert L. Welken (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003). See also Radu Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology: The Relevance of Maximus the Confessor’s Theology of Creation for the Present Ecological Crisis,” *Downside Review* 127, no. 447 (2009), 104-107; Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 101-102.

²³¹ Maximus, *Ambigua*, 7.

²³² Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 29.

²³³ The natural dynamism in Maximus’s cosmology strikes against the Platonism of Origen. See Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 99-101.

²³⁴ Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 103-105; Andrew Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration: The Environment in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition,” in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavropoulou, editors (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 217-219.

microcosms of the created order. As such we are able to gather up all dimensions of the created order before the divine in our own being.²³⁵

This gathering, for Maximus, constitutes the role of humanity. Humans are priests of the sacramental world, the ones called to unite the cosmos with the divine.²³⁶ Maximus describes this priestly role more specifically as a uniting of the five divisions in the cosmos: “uncreated and created, intelligible and sensible, heaven and earth, paradise and the world, male and female.”²³⁷ The gathering of all creation into humanity constitutes the movement of the cosmos toward the divine. The cosmos’s movement toward the divine leads to its transfiguration, in which it becomes that which God intended to be, a transparent revelation of the divine in eternity.²³⁸

Thus, humanity, for Maximus, plays a crucial role in the transfiguration of the cosmos.²³⁹ In turn, the cosmos, as the sacrament of divine presence, plays a crucial role in the transfiguration of humanity. “The relationship between humanity and the world is mutual: humans sanctify creation, and creation helps us in our salvation.”²⁴⁰

Yet humanity strayed from its role, causing a corruption in the *tropos* of creation.²⁴¹ This straying constitutes the cosmic Fall. Thus, in the present state of nature,

²³⁵ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Press, 1976), 108-109.

²³⁶ Maximus, *Ambigua* 41, in Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 117.

²³⁷ Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 111. See also Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 105; Theokritoff, “Creator and Creation,” 66-67.

²³⁸ Louth, citing Maximus, compares Christ’s transfiguration on Mount Tabor to the transfiguration of the cosmos in that transfiguration reveals what each truly is. Regarding the cosmos, Louth claims it is the revelation of the divine. Thus, “transfiguration...sums up everything that theophany represents: God’s self-manifestation in creation, in his communication of himself in revelation.” Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration,” 215-216. See also Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1973), 102.

²³⁹ Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 105; Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 110-111.

²⁴⁰ Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 117. Also Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 105.

²⁴¹ Maximus, *Ambigua*, 8.

“a disorderly kind of movement is perpetuated.” For “the movement of Adam determines the direction in which the rest of creation moves.”²⁴² As humans bear the responsibility of facilitating the proper *tropos* of the cosmos, when humans stray from the path to God, the cosmos follows them.

Human priesthood has been compromised by sin. Yet in Christ the task has been realized. For in Christ the divisions of the created order are overcome.²⁴³ Thus the incarnation enables humans to return to their proper role and in turn draw the cosmos back to its *tropos*, the path to transfiguration. Humanity, functioning properly as priests, can detect the *logoi* of created reality and, through cooperation with the divine, correct the corrupted *tropos*.²⁴⁴

CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOX THOUGHT

The work of Maximus has in modern times been appropriated by many Orthodox theologians as a powerful Christian response to improper attitudes concerning the nonhuman creation.²⁴⁵ While there are definite nuances among these voices, there are also consistent similarities. These similarities pertain largely to the cosmic dimension of transfiguration. However, there are also numerous examples of anthropocentrism.²⁴⁶ It is necessary to develop these similarities within the theological framework of creation, fall, and redemption.²⁴⁷

²⁴² Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 109.

²⁴³ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 110.

²⁴⁴ Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 109.

²⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, 103-126.

²⁴⁶ Though, these examples are less pervasive in contemporary Orthodox thought than cosmic transfiguration.

²⁴⁷ On the appropriateness of this step, see John Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament: Insights from Orthodox Christian Theology and Spirituality,” in *The Orthodox Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, Roger S. Gottlieb, editors (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 98-99.

Transfiguration in the Schema of Creation, Fall, and Redemption

The doctrine of creation in Orthodox theology begins with the fundamental tension between divine transcendence and immanence.²⁴⁸ It begins here because all talk of God begins here. Orthodox theologians express the tension of trinitarian otherness and nearness with the distinction between the divine essence and divine energies.²⁴⁹ As Lossky notes, this distinction is neither a division within God nor a distinction between God and not-God:

We...recognize in God an ineffable distinction, other than that between His essence and His persons, according to which He is, under different aspects, both totally inaccessible and at the same accessible. This distinction is that between the essence of God, or His nature, properly co-called, which is inaccessible, unknowable and incommunicable; and the energies or divine operations, forces proper to and inseparable from God's essence, in which He goes forth from Himself, manifests, communicates, and gives Himself.²⁵⁰

It is within this distinction that God can create (an act of absolute freedom deriving from the divine nature enacted through the divine energies) and remain unchanged (in the divine nature). This distinction also permits an aporetic tension between divine immanence and transcendence vis-à-vis the creation. On the one hand, the act of creation is the product of the divine energies carrying out the divine will without actually being ontologically the same as those uncreated energies. Thus the cosmos is other than God.²⁵¹ On the other hand, the divine *logoi*—which according to Lossky exist in the divine energies but derive from the *Logos*, the second hypostases of

²⁴⁸ Theokritoff, "Creator and Creation," 64.

²⁴⁹ See Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, chapter 4.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

²⁵¹ Orthodox writers tend to stress the importance of *creatio ex nihilo*. See Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, chapter five. Ware qualifies this view: "Rather than say that [God] created the universe out of nothing, we should say that he created it out of his own self, which is love." Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, Revised Edition (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 44. See also Chrysavgis, "The Earth as Sacrament," 101-104.

the Trinity—are in some sense present in the created order itself.²⁵² Hence, “every created thing has its point of contact with the Godhead; and this point of contact is its idea, the reason or *logos* which is at the time the end toward which it tends.”²⁵³ Or, as Kallistos Ware states, “The whole universe is a cosmic Burning Bush, filled with the divine Fire yet not consumed.”²⁵⁴ For in Ware’s admittedly panentheistic view, “God is *in* all things as well as *above and beyond* all things.”²⁵⁵ Likewise, within the tension of transcendence and immanence, Chryssavgis can claim that the Holy Spirit “safeguards the intrinsically sacred character of creation” without lapsing into pantheism.²⁵⁶ Meyendorff notes that God’s transcendence will remain even in the oneness of “the ultimate eschatological union.”²⁵⁷

The pervasive tension of divine transcendence and immanence in Orthodox cosmology establishes two key theological points. First, with regard to transcendence, the creation was not created complete. The very real distance—and that not only ontological—between God and world suggests that the latter was created *in via* toward its divinely intended *telos*. Thus even before the Fall, there was a “not yet” of the created order. Says Lossky, “The primitive beatitude was not a state of deification, but a condition of order, a perfection of the creature which was ordained and tending towards its end.”²⁵⁸

²⁵² On the relation between the Logos and *logoi*, see Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 28-29.

²⁵³ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 98. See also, Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 102.

²⁵⁴ Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 118.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 46; emphasis original.

²⁵⁶ Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament,” 97.

²⁵⁷ Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 30.

²⁵⁸ Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 99.

Second, with regard to immanence, the sharp distinction between nature and grace dissolves.²⁵⁹ Within this dissolution, the entire cosmos, as expression of the divine *logoi*, becomes a sacrament.²⁶⁰ That is, it becomes the revelatory means of communion with the divine.²⁶¹ The sacramental dimension of the entire nonhuman creation is not exhausted in the temporal realm—as was the case with Aquinas. Rather, the cosmos will be the final sacrament, necessary for the divine-human drama even in eternity.²⁶² Thus there is an irrevocably cosmic dimension to human existence, even in eternity.²⁶³

Within the order of the good and sacramental cosmos, humanity has an essentially unique role. Following Maximus, Orthodox theologians consistently use the images of priest and microcosm to describe this role.²⁶⁴ On this point, Alexander Schmemmann is worth quoting at length:

The only *natural* (and not “supernatural”) reaction of man, to whom God gave this blessed and sanctified world, is to bless God in return, to thank Him, to *see* the world as God sees and—in this act of gratitude and adoration—to know, name and possess the world. All rational, spiritual and other qualities of man, distinguishing him from other creatures, have their focus and ultimate fulfillment in this capacity to know, so to speak, the meaning of the thirst and hunger that constitutes his life. “*Homo sapiens*,” “*homo faber*” . . . yes, but, first of all, “*homo adorans*.” The first, the basic definition of man is that he is *the priest*. He stands in the center of the world and unifies it in his act of blessing God, of both

²⁵⁹ In conjunction with this tension is the dialectic between grace and nature. For Orthodox theologians, the two are never opposed. Meyendorff, *Christ*, 87; Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, 101.

²⁶⁰ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 14-15.

²⁶¹ Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 42; Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 44-45.

²⁶² See Dumitru Staniloae, *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, Volume 2 (The World: Creation and Deification), translated and edited by Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer (Brookline, MA: Hold Cross Orthodox Press, 2000), 77-78, 212-213; Bordeianu, “Priesthood Natural, Universal, and Ordained: Dumitru Staniloae’s Communion Ecclesiology,” *Pro Ecclesia* 19, no. 4 (2010), 409; Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 14-16; Louth, “Eastern Orthodox Eschatology,” in *The Orthodox Handbook of Eschatology*, Jerry L. Walls, editor (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 212-213.

²⁶³ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 110.

²⁶⁴ This position is the central subject of John Zizioulas’s lectures at King’s College. These lectures appeared later in *King’s Theological Review*. On this point, see also Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 49-50, 53-55; Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 108; Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 85; Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration,” 214-216; Bordeianu, “Priesthood,” 407-411.

receiving the world from God and offering it to God—and by filling the world with this eucharist, he transforms his life, the one that he receives from the world, into life in God, into communion with Him. The world created as the “matter,” the material of one all-embracing eucharist, and was created as the priest of this cosmic sacrament.²⁶⁵

The nonhuman cosmos is a sacramental gift from God to humanity. Humans act as priests of the sacramental cosmos by offering it back to God as a return gift in liturgical worship.²⁶⁶ In this act of offering, the cosmos becomes communion between God and humanity.²⁶⁷ As the object of gift exchange that facilitates communion, the nonhuman cosmos itself is drawn into the divine life.²⁶⁸

Yet humanity’s role as priest of the good world has been corrupted by human sin, which bears a strong ecological component.²⁶⁹ In conjunction with this corruption, the movement along the path to the transfiguration of the cosmos, dependant as it is in some sense on the role of humanity, was derailed.²⁷⁰ In the words of Meyendorff, “The fall of man, who had been placed by God at the center of creation and called to reunify it, was a cosmic catastrophe that only the incarnation of the Word could repair.”²⁷¹ Thus, in the face of the disrupted order of the cosmos, it is the incarnation that constitutes the historical realization its destiny, which is union with the divine.²⁷² Furthermore, this new reality enables humanity to return to the position of priest and thereby redirect the cosmos toward the divine.²⁷³ This redirection of the cosmos requires a synergistic effort between

²⁶⁵ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 15; emphasis original.

²⁶⁶ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 1-5; Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 49-50.

²⁶⁷ Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 54.

²⁶⁸ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 21-22; Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 53-55; Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 111.

²⁶⁹ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 87, 106-108; Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 16-18, 61; Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 65, 185-187; Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 59-63.

²⁷⁰ See Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 61.

²⁷¹ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 108.

²⁷² Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration,” 216.

²⁷³ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 88-89; Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 3, 65.

God and humanity.²⁷⁴ In this act of cooperation, which is essentially a gift exchange between the divine and the human, there is both a remembrance of the protological past and a prolepsis of the inaugurated future.²⁷⁵

The heart of eschatological transfiguration lies at the intersection of creation and the fall. The entire cosmos is the necessary sacrament for the divine-human drama. This role constitutes its destiny.²⁷⁶ Without the cosmos, humans cannot commune with God. Humans are not only irrevocably embodied; we are irrevocably encosmised.²⁷⁷ Thus, regarding the eschatological community, contemporary Orthodox theologians consistently maintain that the entire cosmos will be transfigured in the eschatological consummation.²⁷⁸ According to Lossky, the creation “can have no other end than deification.”²⁷⁹ Ware writes, “In the ‘new earth’ of the Age to come there is surely a place not only for man but for the animals: in and through man, they too will share in immortality, and so will rocks, trees and plants, fire and water.”²⁸⁰ The participation of the sacramental nonhuman cosmos in eternity requires its transfiguration, in which it will become that which God always intended it to be. The task of humanity is to “transform the whole earth into paradise.”²⁸¹ Thus Lossky claims, “In his way to union with God,

²⁷⁴ Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament,” 99; Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 23.

²⁷⁵ See Theokritoff, “Creator and Creation,” 70; Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament,” 100; Louth, “Eastern Orthodox Eschatology,” 237.

²⁷⁶ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 120.

²⁷⁷ This term is my own, but certainly fits Zizioulas’s vision. See John Zizioulas “Ecological Asceticism: A Cultural Revolution,” *Sourozh* 67 (1997), 24.

²⁷⁸ Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 136-137; Louth, “Eastern Orthodox Eschatology,” 237-238. It is significant, though, that regarding deification, Meyendorff states it is “proper to man only.” Meyendorff, *Christ*, 97. On the other hand, Lossky holds that deification is the destiny of the entire world. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 99-101. A further question concerns the place of *particular* nonhuman animals in the eschaton. In most writings, this point is unclear, suggesting that the transfiguration of *all* creation need not include every instantiation of life. See Louth, “Eastern Orthodox Eschatology,” 236-238; Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 137; Reed, “Animals in Orthodox Iconography,” 61-77.

²⁷⁹ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 101.

²⁸⁰ Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 137.

²⁸¹ Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 109.

man in no way leaves creatures aside, but gathers together in his love the whole cosmos disordered by sin, that it may at last be transfigured by grace.”²⁸²

Such a transformation of the cosmos is what distinguishes anthropocentric transfiguration from its conservational variants. Zizioulas in fact critiques Augustine on this very point, claiming that under his influence “the human being was singled out from nature as being not only a higher kind of being but in fact the sole being that mattered eternally.”²⁸³ This rejection of the eternal significance of the cosmos, in Zizioulas’s view, led to Descartes’s sharp distinction between the thinking subject and the non-thinking machine.²⁸⁴ Thus, on account of an affirmation of the transfiguration of the cosmos, Orthodox theologians differ from advocates of anthropocentric conservation.

The disparity between the cosmos as it is now and as it will be in eternity leads many Orthodox writers to critique a purely conservationist framework.²⁸⁵ Of particular import is Bordeianu’s critique of the biocentrism of both Deep Ecology and Thomas Berry.²⁸⁶ In Bordeianu’s view, Maximus would reject the cosmic-centered position of Berry:

Biocentrism and geocentrism cannot be the solutions to the ecological crisis; on the contrary, they are precisely the cause, or at least part of the cause of today’s environmental destruction, since Adam looked for stability in creation and thus regarded it as the purpose of his movement, when in fact only God can offer stability and purpose.²⁸⁷

²⁸² Ibid., 111.

²⁸³ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 3.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., Part I, 3-4. Zizioulas maintains that Lynn White’s accusation against Christianity with regard to ecology was accurate in the case of Western Christianity. See Zizioulas “Ecological Asceticism,” 22.

²⁸⁵ See Schmemmann’s critique of the acceptance of death. Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 97-101. See also Staniloae’s view of humanity improving the static laws of nature, *Creation and Deification*, 45-52, 65.

²⁸⁶ Bordeianu, “Maximus and Ecology,” 106-107, 114-115.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 115. In defense of Berry, his view is developed within a theocentric cosmology.

In a similar manner, though without specifically naming Berry or any other potential representatives of cosmocentric conservation, Zizioulas critiques the foundations of the paradigm. He even goes so far as to equate its manner of recovering the sacredness of the cosmos with paganism:

The pagan regards the world as sacred because it is permeated by divine presence; he therefore respects it (to the point of worshipping it explicitly or implicitly) and does not do damage to it. But equally, he never worries about its fate; he believes in its eternity. He is also unaware of any need for transformation of nature or transcendence of its limitations: the world is good as it stands and possesses in its nature all that is necessary for its survival.²⁸⁸

Anthropocentrism in the Schema of Creation, Fall, and Redemption

If the transfigurative dimension of Orthodox thought is clear, at least in the general sense that the nonhuman cosmos is and will be taken into the divine life, the anthropocentric dimension is more complicated. On the one hand, Orthodox writers are consistent in affirming a functional anthropocentrism in which humanity performs a central role—that of microcosm and priest—in the transfiguration of the cosmos.²⁸⁹ Thus Zizioulas states that “the solution of the problem [of the survival of the cosmos] lies in the creation of Man.”²⁹⁰ On the other hand, they maintain that any form of anthropocentrism divorced from a theocentric anthropology is untenable.²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation: Three Lectures on Theology and Ecology,” *King’s Theological Review* 12 (1989), Part III, 5. Granted, Zizioulas’s claim that the pagan does not worry about the fate of the world because it has no beginning or end could not be farther from Berry’s work. That point aside, every other emphasis in the quote seems in complete agreement with Berry’s eco-theological understanding. Berry does emphasize divine immanence in the cosmos. He does accept the nonhuman world is good as it is. He would also disavow a functional anthropocentrism that voids meaning of the nonhuman creation in the absence of humanity.

²⁸⁹ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 105-106.

²⁹⁰ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part III, 1. See also Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration,” 214.

²⁹¹ On this point, see Zizioulas’s critique of Augustinian anthropocentrism. Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 3. See also Theokritoff, “Creator and Creation,” 71-73.

In this project, however, my question regards specifically whether or not the nonhuman cosmos, including particular nonhuman animals, exists primarily (or exclusively) for the sake of humanity in relation to God. With regard to Orthodox theology the question is not whether or not the cosmos is included in the eschatological community—it is—but rather *why* it is included. More poignantly: does nonhuman cosmos exist, and will it be included in the eschatological community, to facilitate the gift exchange of the divine-human drama?

Orthodox theologians provide a gamut of answers to this question. Furthermore, at times the answers seem ambiguous. According to Lossky, the world was “created that it might be deified.”²⁹² Lossky furthermore posits a sacramental view of the cosmos entailing that “revelation for theology remains essentially geocentric.” And yet such revelation is “addressed to men.”²⁹³ Thus it appears that the deification of the cosmos is connected to the geocentric nature of revelation—even in the eschaton—which is in turn for humanity in relation to God.

From his liturgical approach, Schmemmann states that the earth is a gift to humanity for communion with God: “In the Bible the food that man eats, the world of which he must partake in order to live, is given to him by God, and it is given as *communion with God*.”²⁹⁴ Humanity’s (or more accurately “man’s”²⁹⁵) role as priest is to “know, name and possess the world.” In doing so the human creature is “receiving the world from God and offering it to God.”²⁹⁶ Schmemmann’s words later in the same work

²⁹² Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 101.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 105.

²⁹⁴ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 14.

²⁹⁵ For Schmemmann’s seemingly androcentric view of natural priesthood, see Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 85.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

are revealing. The cosmos is “an essential means both of knowledge of God and communion with [God], and to be so is its true nature and its ultimate destiny.”²⁹⁷ Thus the inclusion of the nonhuman creation in the eschatological community is anthropocentric inasmuch as “its true nature and its ultimate destiny” are exhausted by being the necessary sacrament that facilitated the divine-human drama.

Zizioulas does not deny the superiority of human beings, only that such superiority rests in the quality of rationality. Rather, it rests in humanity’s tending toward that which is beyond what is “given” (i.e. creation) and commune with God, which entails “freedom.”²⁹⁸ Zizioulas rejects an anthropocentrism in which humans, as individuals, engage in utility of the cosmos for the sake of “self-satisfaction or pleasure.”²⁹⁹ But he affirms a doxological anthropocentrism in which the human encounters the cosmos and—as a person within it—offers it back to God.

In this approach, “man would still use creation as a source from which he would draw the basic elements necessary for his creation as a source of life, such as food, clothing, building of houses, etc. But to all this he would give a dimension which we could call *personal*.”³⁰⁰ In short, use becomes reverential or liturgical, drawing creation into the communion between humanity and God.³⁰¹ In this sense, humanity is not the end of the nonhuman creation—which was also true of Aquinas’s theology. Rather, in the priesthood of humanity the cosmos finds its teleological aim: a means of communion. “A human is the priest of creation as he or she freely turns it into a vehicle of communion

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 120.

²⁹⁸ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 2; Part III, 2-3.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., Part III, 4; “Ecological Asceticism,” 22. Aquinas would concur with Zizioulas on this point.

³⁰⁰ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part III, 4; emphasis original.

³⁰¹ Zizioulas “Ecological Asceticism,” 23. On liturgical engagement with the cosmos, see Schmemmann’s stunning chapter on the Eucharist in *For the Life of the World*, 23-46.

with God and fellow human beings.”³⁰² Thus, Zizioulas states that when we receive back what we have offered to God (e.g. in the formal celebration of the Eucharist), “we consume them no longer as death but as life.”³⁰³

Meyendorff’s anthropocentrism is at times obvious. He writes, “[T]he ultimate aim of the divine plan is...*man*’s deification.”³⁰⁴ On the other hand, at times his affirmations are ambiguous. Citing Maximus, he claims that “all creatures are destined for communion with” God.³⁰⁵ Though again, citing Maximus he writes that only “in the case man” does God grant “an eternal existence.”³⁰⁶ Notwithstanding this ambiguity, the question is whether or not “all creatures are destined for communion” with God for their own sake. Or do they simply facilitate a sacramental role for the divine-human drama?

Meyendorff claims that Orthodox theology finds common ground in a “theocentric anthropology” and an “anthropocentric cosmology.”³⁰⁷ The former claim denotes that, even as *imago Dei* and whatever attributes that implies, humanity is only truly human in relation to God, and ultimately in deification.³⁰⁸ For Meyendorff, “the ‘theocentricity’ of man makes it inevitable that the whole of creation be considered as anthropocentric.”³⁰⁹ Meyendorff continues:

Man—and man alone—if liberated by baptism from his fallen state of dependence upon nature, possesses in himself a restored image of God. This changes his entire relationship with created nature. The ancient Orthodox liturgical tradition is very rich in various sacramental acts through which nature is ‘sanctified.’ However, all these acts affirm the lordship and responsibility of man, exercised *on behalf of* the Creator. The eucharistic bread and wine become the body and blood

³⁰² Zizioulas “Ecological Asceticism,” 23. Note that communion with the creation itself is not part of this equation.

³⁰³ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part III, 5.

³⁰⁴ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 109; emphasis mine.

³⁰⁵ Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 29.

³⁰⁶ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 104.

³⁰⁷ Meyendorff, “Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology,” 34-37.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

of Christ because they are *human* food. Baptismal water—or water sanctified on other occasions—is holy because it serves as means of cleansing and drinking. Oil is blessed as an instrument of healing. Examples here can be multiplied. They all point to the restoration, in the Church of God, of the original, paradisiac plan of relationships between God and creation, with man serving as mediator, as servant and as friend of God.³¹⁰

Thus anthropocentrism does not mean that human beings are all that matter within a world of matter. In fact, Meyendorff's central point is that it as human *creatures*, as material subjects, that humans matter (as opposed to as the impersonal notion of human nature). In other words, value is not, for Meyendorff, relegated to humanity's incorporeal dimensions.

Meyendorff's anthropocentrism is first and foremost functional. It regards humanity's role in the cosmos.³¹¹ And yet this point entails a position in which, in a manner ironically similar to Aquinas's position, the nonhuman creation matters to God *through human beings*. Humans sanctify the nonhuman creation and thereby mediate the proper relation between it and God by *using it properly*.³¹² Thus Meyendorff can claim that a "positive" achievement of "the modern scientific and technological revolution" is that it entails "the reaffirmation, more explicit than ever, of man's rule over creation."³¹³

Even more so—or at least explicitly more so—than the above authors, the position of Dumitru Staniloae, the Romanian theologian persecuted under a Communist regime, evinces anthropocentrism. On this point, Staniloae is unapologetic: "The world as nature is created for the sake of human subjects and has an anthropocentric

³¹⁰ Ibid..

³¹¹ Meyendorff, *Christ*, 104-105.

³¹² On this point, see also Meyendorff's description of the double movement of salvation. The first is God's movement to humanity through the world. The second is humanity's movement to God. Meyendorff, *Christ*, 109.

³¹³ Meyendorff, "Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology," 36.

character.”³¹⁴ In his view, nature is “an object or... succession of objects.” Furthermore, “God creates this ensemble of objects... *for the sake of a dialogue with humans.*

Otherwise, their creation would have no point.”³¹⁵ Elsewhere, Staniloae makes the same claim regarding nonhuman animals: if the rationality evident in these creatures “did not have as its purpose the service of man, it, too, would be without meaning.”³¹⁶

Yet Staniloae is clear that the nonhuman cosmos participates in deification:

“Nature as a whole is destined for the glory in which men will share in the kingdom of heaven.”³¹⁷ Likewise, humanity experiences deification through the cosmos.³¹⁸ Says Bordeianu, “Staniloae refers to the sacramentality of creation in the sense of visible sign and instrument through which grace is communicated.”³¹⁹ This sacramental role of the nonhuman creation will continue in the eschaton. And it is as the necessary sacrament facilitating this drama that the cosmos is included in the eschaton.³²⁰ Thus the nature of nonhuman participation in the eschatological community is indirect, for it always remains for the sake of divine-human drama.³²¹ Thus, perhaps ironically, Staniloae and Aquinas only disagree about the eschatological community with regard to degree. That is, the main difference is *how much* of the nonhuman creation is included in the eschaton. Concerning the *why* of its inclusion, they are nearly identical.

³¹⁴ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 20.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 14; emphasis added.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3, 18-19, 25, 58-59.

³¹⁸ On this reciprocity between humanity and the nonhuman creation, see Bordeianu, “Priesthood,” 410.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 409.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 1. It is significant that Staniloae connects his view to Maximus. See *Creation and Deification*, 20. See also Bordeianu, “Priesthood,” 407-408.

For Staniloae, the nonhuman cosmos “finds it meaning in” humanity.³²² It is an object of gift-exchange that facilitates love between God and humanity and among humans.³²³ In a manner that is strikingly similar to Aquinas, Staniloae writes, “The rationality of things has this double purpose: first, to be useful to man in maintaining his biological existence; second, and equally, to foster human spiritual growth through the knowledge of meanings.”³²⁴

Ultimately, for Staniloae, the world is “only a framework,” a “field” created so that humanity “might raise the world up to a supreme spiritualization, and *this to the end that human beings might encounter God within a world that had become fully spiritualized through their own union with God.*”³²⁵ In other words, the transfiguration of the cosmos remains anthropocentric in that it is for the sake of the divine-human drama. In short, the world is the necessary and eternal sacrament *for humanity.*³²⁶

Elizabeth Theokritoff defends both Meyendorff and Staniloae against the charge of anthropocentrism, qualifying their use of the term.³²⁷ Ultimately, she suggests that the Orthodox position is thus: “if the world exists ‘for humanity’, it is no less true that humanity exists for the sake of the universe.”³²⁸ This claim is significant. However, it is difficult to maintain in light of Staniloae’s comment: “Nature itself proves itself to have been made for the sake of consciousness, not consciousness for the sake of nature.”³²⁹ Regardless, my point is not to classify all Orthodox theology—and the appreciation for the aporetic mystery of the divine-world drama within Orthodox thought resists a sharp

³²² Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 13.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 21-27, 71; Bordeianu, “Priesthood,” 410.

³²⁴ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 40.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 62-63; emphasis mine.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 77-78, 212-213; Bordeianu, “Priesthood,” 409.

³²⁷ Theokritoff, “Creator and Creation,” 70-71.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

³²⁹ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 6; see also 20.

categorization.³³⁰ I only maintain that, based on my explorations, *some* Orthodox theologians evince a concretized form of anthropocentric transfiguration.

An Eco-Theological Ethics of Anthropocentric Transfiguration

What does an eco-theological ethics of anthropocentric transfiguration look like in practice? Answering this question is difficult, as Drummond notes that Orthodox theologians resist the construction of a system of ethics.³³¹ Still a humble effort must be made here.

First and foremost, such an ethics would be grounded in the notion that one ought to treat the sacramental cosmos in a manner akin to how one treats the elements of the Eucharist itself. Thus Ware states that humanity's "vocation is not to dominate and exploit nature, but to transfigure and hallow it."³³² Chryssavgis suggests living by a "sacramental principle, which ultimately demands from us the recognition nothing in this life is profane or unsacred."³³³ For Zizioulas, any engagement of the nonhuman creation that violates its sacramentality constitutes a sin.³³⁴ To treat the world as a sacrament is to celebrate the inbreaking of eschaton in the resurrection of Christ, a point that Chryssavgis sees in liturgical prayers of Orthodoxy.³³⁵ Thus Chryssavgis states: "There is... no

³³⁰ I acknowledge that certain Orthodox thinkers are better categorized in cosmocentric transfiguration. For example, see Issa J. Khalil, "The Orthodox Fast and the Philosophy of Vegetarianism," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 35, 3 (1990), 237-259. I will address this possibility in the final chapter.

³³¹ Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 56. For an example, see Zizioulas, "Preserving God's Creation," Part I, 1-5.

³³² Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 54.

³³³ Chryssavgis, "The Earth as Sacrament," 92-93.

³³⁴ Though, for Zizioulas, the sin derives from "disrespect towards a divine gift," on the one hand, and obstructing human fulfillment, on the other. Zizioulas, "Ecological Asceticism," 24.

³³⁵ Chryssavgis, "The Earth as Sacrament," 108-110.

greater estrangement from the world than in its use in a manner that fails to restore the correct vision of the world in the light of the resurrection.”³³⁶

But what does this vision entail? It cannot be separated from the notion of creation itself. Thus Louth’s words are illuminating:

The doctrine of creation...means that our created environment is touched by the hand of God, is a place where we can encounter God, and still in some way bears the traces of the paradise of delight that God intended his creation to be. Human sin obscures our perception of this, and encourages an attitude to the created order that ceases to take seriously the fact that it is created, seeing it rather as a resource to be exploited for our own purposes. As we do that we begin to misconstrue the world around us, our attitude becomes destructive, we cease to see the world as a gift, and instead begin to compete with one another in fashioning our own worlds, which encroach on one another, so that it becomes a matter of contention whether this is mine or yours, as we forget that it is God’s—and so both mine and yours, as a gift to share, or neither mine nor yours, as a possession to grasp and hold.”³³⁷

Louth’s comment maintains the reverential respect for the cosmos. Yet at the same time it highlights another dimension of this eco-theological paradigm: the manner in which we hallow that cosmos. For world is not a resource for the human community to abuse for self-gratification. But the world is a gift to the human community. We must use it as such.

In Zizioulas’s estimation, reverencing the cosmos implies a world-affirming or ecological asceticism.³³⁸

An ‘ecological asceticism’...always begins with deep respect for the material creation, including the human body, and builds upon the view that we are not masters and possessors of this creation, but are called to turn it into a vehicle of communion, always taking into account and respecting its possibilities as well as its limitations.³³⁹

³³⁶ Ibid., 110.

³³⁷ Louth, “Between Creation and Transfiguration,” 213.

³³⁸ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 5.

³³⁹ Zizioulas, “Ecological Asceticism,” 24.

Such asceticism demands that humans—and more accurately, contemporary humans influenced by modernity’s mechanistic understanding of nature—reevaluate our “concept of quality of life.”³⁴⁰ In short, it requires a simple living in which we do not take more than we need. And what we do take, we must take reverentially. Thus Chryssavgis states that asceticism “is a communal attitude that leads to the respectful use of material goods.”³⁴¹

In this sense, the ethical consequence of anthropocentric transfiguration is a reverential use of the material cosmos. All matter becomes liturgical in the hands of human priests, who engage it humbly and always with ultimate reference to God. Such engagement entails a use of creation in which it is transformed into communion with God and within the human community.³⁴²

ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

Where do individual nonhuman animals fit into this ethics? Schmemmann claims that the sacramentality of the cosmos recovers a reverence for eating. Yet food is still food.³⁴³ Do animals fall into this category of that which humans both reverence and eat? Chryssavgis suggests that humanity’s proper relation to the environment is evident in Adam’s naming of the animals, which entails “a loving and lasting personal relationship.”³⁴⁴ Yet this notion implies that the sacramental eating of plants is not at odds with such a relationship.

Zizioulas notes how hagiographies depict compassion of saints to animals, even weeping over their death. He continues, “Even today on Mount Athos one can encounter

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 24.

³⁴¹ Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament,” 110.

³⁴² Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 2-3, 44, 48-49, 82; Zizioulas, “Ecological Asceticism,” 23.

³⁴³ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, 15-16.

³⁴⁴ Chryssavgis, “The Earth as Sacrament,” 105.

monks who never kill serpents, but co-exist peacefully with them—something that would make even the best Christians among us shiver and tremble.”³⁴⁵ Likewise, Lossky quotes

Isaac the Syrian as an example of the Eastern Orthodox view of the cosmos. Says Isaac:

What is a merciful heart? ...The burning of the heart unto the whole creation, man, fowls and beasts, demons and whatever exists; so that by the recollection and the sight of them the eyes shed tears on account of the force of mercy which moves the heart by great compassion. Then the heart becomes weak and it is not able to bear hearing or examining injury or any insignificant suffering of anything in creation. And therefore even in behalf of the irrational beings and the enemies of the truth and even in behalf of those who do harm to it, at all times he offers prayers with tears that they may be guarded and strengthened; even in behalf of the kinds of reptiles, on account of his great compassion which is poured out in his heart without measure, after the example of God.³⁴⁶

There is, then possibility of a non-violent response to nonhuman animals as a reverent appreciation of their goodness. Indeed, Issa Khalil notes that the Orthodox faithful are vegan for more than half the year on account of liturgical fasts. Furthermore, Orthodox monks are vegetarian for most of the year.³⁴⁷ Khalil notes that the Orthodox foundation for this fast is not primarily the sentience of the animals; rather, it is self-control. Yet he also notes a “deeper theological meaning of the fast.” It is “an act of repentance towards the animals, as well as an act of reconciliation, prefiguring life in paradise where the lamb shall lie with the wolf and not be hurt, and especially lie with the worst predator of all, and not be eaten.”³⁴⁸

These notions notwithstanding, it is necessary to note that, among many Orthodox theologians, individual nonhuman animals are subject to reverential use for the sake of the human-divine rapport. And such a use does not seem to reject the possibility of

³⁴⁵ Zizioulas, “Preserving God’s Creation,” Part I, 5.

³⁴⁶ Isaac of Nineveh, *Mystic Treatises*, translated from Bedjan’s Syriac text with an introduction and registers by A. J. Wensinck (Wiesbaden: 1969), LXXIV (p. 341). See Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 110-111.

³⁴⁷ Khalil, “The Orthodox Fast,” 257.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 259. I am not convinced all Orthodox would acknowledge this point.

killing individual nonhuman creatures. For example, in Staniloae's theological view, the nonhuman animal is part of the sacramental world and thus part of the "succession of objects" that facilitates "the dialogue of the gift" between God and humanity.³⁴⁹ At the very least, I maintain that an eco-theological ethics of anthropocentric transfiguration more easily tends toward a permissiveness to harming individual animals than its explicitly cosmocentric counterpart, which I explore in subsequent chapters.

ANTHROPOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN SUMMATION

This exploration through the work of various Orthodox theologians teases out the possibility of a paradigm of eco-theological ethics that I label anthropocentric transfiguration. It would be a misnomer to identity all Orthodox theology with this particular paradigm. Nonetheless, the theological foundations of anthropocentric transfiguration are most evident in concrete form in the work of certain theologians within the Orthodox tradition.

These foundations include the following: first, an affirmation of the sacredness or sacramentality of the entire cosmos, which in turn renders the nonhuman creation necessary for temporal and ultimate human fulfillment; second, an inclusion of the cosmos in the eschatological community through humanity; third, an emphasis on the purpose of the nonhuman world as existing in order to facilitate the divine-human drama through a gift-exchange.

The picture arising from these foundations is one in which humans use the creation reverentially, offering it back to God in worship. While the created order is not merely a machine for human pleasure, neither does it have a purpose or integrity separate from its benefit to humanity. Ultimately, the cosmos is the eternally necessary sacrament

³⁴⁹ Staniloae, *Creation and Deification*, 20, 22.

for humanity in relation to God. Its inclusion in the eschatological community is ultimately for that relationship.

ANOTHER OPTION: COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

I have considered three of the four eco-theological paradigms of my proposed taxonomy. My exploration has provided concrete examples of these paradigms within Christianity. Among the most important differences between the paradigms are the role and status of the human being (anthropology), the role and status of the nonhuman creation (cosmology), and the scope of the eschatological community (eschatology). At this intersection, one senses the real contrast between the eco-theological visions.

Table 1 – 1 summarizes this contrast:

TABLE 1 - 1			
	Anthropocentric Conservation	Cosmocentric Conservation	Anthropocentric Transfiguration
Anthropology: Central Status/ Role of Human Beings	Essentially unique moral dignity; Subject of ultimate divine concern	Enhanced dignity; Member of creation community	Essentially unique moral dignity; Microcosm, co-creator, and priest
Cosmology: Central Status/ Role of the Nonhuman Creation	Network of good and ordered resources/gifts for human well-being	Good and ordered interconnected community of intrinsic value	Necessary and ultimate sacrament for divine-human drama
Scope of the Eschatological Community	God and humanity; Angels and elements/matter	Eschatology de-emphasized in favor of current order of world and its goodness	Cosmos (human and nonhuman)
The Primary Unity of Moral Consideration (General or Particular)	Particular humans; General nonhumans	General	Particular humans; General nonhumans
Ethical Human Engagement of the Nonhuman Creation	Proper use <i>in via</i> toward uniquely human <i>telos</i>	Balance of a “letting be” and a reverential “living-with”	Reverential use as sacramental gift that facilitates communion with others and God
Some Representatives	Augustine; Thomas Aquinas; Roman Catholic Magisterium	Thomas Berry; Matthew Fox; Rosemary Radford Ruether	John Meyendorff; Dumitru Staniloae

The differences between these paradigms underline the possibility for a fourth. Note the fundamental categories. On the one hand, a paradigm can be either anthropocentric—understood as claiming only humans have intrinsic value before God—or cosmocentric—understood as the entire cosmos including both human and nonhuman having intrinsic value before God. On the other hand, a paradigm can be either conservational—understood as the preservation of the current good and natural order—or transfigurative—understood as the movement of a fallen and/or incomplete creation toward its eschatological *telos*. Thus a fourth paradigm naturally forms, as is evident in **Table 1 – 2**:³⁵⁰

TABLE 1 – 2			
		Why does creation have value/dignity?	
		<i>Utility to human beings</i>	<i>Intrinsic value</i>
What is the responsibility of human beings toward creation?	<i>Preserve the goodness and order of the unfallen cosmos.</i>	Anthropocentric conservation	Cosmocentric conservation
	<i>Guide the fallen and/or eschatologically incomplete cosmos toward its telos.</i>	Anthropocentric transfiguration	???

I naturally label this fourth paradigm as cosmocentric transfiguration. Although this eco-theological ethics has been underdeveloped, in my view it represents a promising path forward as a theologically grounded Christian ethics.

I describe cosmocentric transfiguration as “the best of both worlds” in a double manner. First, it combines the common dignity of all creatures evident in cosmocentric conservation with the eschatological import of the entire cosmos in anthropocentric transfiguration. Second, it has the potential to pay heed to a scientific worldview, even

³⁵⁰ I am grateful to Brenda Colijn for drawing up this chart after discussions concerning this project.

the New Story of the Universe, without rejecting the theological value of eschatology. It provides a balance of creation and redemption.

This second point is especially important and draws out the particular wordplay of the phrase “the best of both worlds.” On the one hand, cosmocentric transfiguration appreciates the goodness and order of the cosmos. It thus guards against a simplistic escape from the world. On the other hand, it advocates the teleological claim that the entire cosmos, including every individual instantiation of life therein, is moving toward an eschatological participation in God’s own life. Thus it guards against a simplistic naturalism that condemns all creatures to their gratuitous suffering in the evolutionary emergence of the cosmos. In this sense, cosmocentric transfiguration navigates the “already” and the “not yet” of eschatological thought in a manner that neither disregards the voice of the earth nor the revelatory voice of God’s future. Within this paradigm, humans become proleptic witnesses to that future by living as peacefully as possible within the emerging and evolutionary system of the cosmos. For humans can recognize the “groaning of creation” (Romans 8:22) in juxtaposition to the divine promise of a future freedom from that groaning (Isaiah 11:1-9; Romans 8:18-21) and, by witnessing to the future within that recognition, became a theophany of God’s peace for the cosmos.

Because this paradigm is underdeveloped, I will explore two concrete examples of the theological foundations for it in depth. First, I will engage the thought of the Lutheran theologian of hope, Jürgen Moltmann. Second, I examine the work of the premier animal theologian, Andrew Linzey. By comparing and contrasting these two Christian thinkers, and placing them in dialogue with the three paradigms developed in

this chapter, I will ultimately be able to point toward the construction of a developed ecological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration.

CHAPTER 2

COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN: THE ADVENT OF A MAXIMALLY INCLUSIVE ESCHATOLOGICAL PANENTHEISM

“If I have theological virtue at all, then it is one that has never hitherto been recognized as such: curiosity.”¹ This sentence provides an insight into Jürgen Moltmann’s (b. 1926) methodology, which is unapologetically subjective, personal, dialogical, and experimental.² Even so, Moltmann’s influence on the landscape of theology in the 20th and today can hardly be overstated.³ His seminal work, *Theology of Hope*, launched him into international recognition, and his following works have not disappointed in their ingenuity.

In this chapter, I seek to delineate the theological foundations Moltmann provides for an eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration. In order to do so, I begin by very briefly sketching Moltmann’s major works and his influences. I then attempt to provide an overview of theological themes in his thought that are pertinent to cosmocentric transfiguration.⁴ Finally, with these pieces in place, I explore Moltmann’s ethics with regard to ecology in general and nonhuman animals in particular. Here, my aim is mainly what Moltmann does say in his works; though, I also hint at what I believe he *should* say given his theological foundations.

¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology* (hereafter *CoG*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), xiv. All citations of quotes will henceforth appear parenthetically in the text unless they are the first citations for that source.

² For Moltmann’s self-reflection on his methodology (and the subject of methodology in general), see Moltmann, *Experiences in Theology: Ways and Forms of Christian Theology*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000). See also Jeremy Law, “Jürgen Moltmann’s Ecological Hermeneutics,” in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G. Horrell Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate, and Francesca Stavropoulou, editors (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2010), 227-28.

³ Seventeen years ago, Miroslav Volf calculated that Moltmann’s work had been the topic of over 130 dissertations. See Miroslav Volf, “A Queen and a Beggar: Challenges and Prospects of Theology,” in *The Future of Theology: Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann*, Miroslav Volf, Carmen Krieg, and Thomas Kucharz, editors (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), ix-x.

⁴ While I am cognizant of the development in Moltmann’s theology, in this section my outline is thematic rather than chronological.

JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN: A BRIEF SKETCH

Moltmann's first three works—*Theology of Hope* (1965),⁵ *The Crucified God* (1973), and *The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit* (1975)—each “look at theology as a whole from one particular standpoint.”⁶ In his later six volume set, he seeks to make contributions to theological themes pertinent to systematic theology without constructing a concrete system.

I now viewed my ‘whole’ as a part belonging to a wider community, and as my contribution to theology as a whole. I know and accept the limits of my own existence and my context. I do not claim to say everything.⁷

This set of contributions includes, in order of publication, *Trinity and the Kingdom* (1980), *God in Creation* (1985), *The Way of Jesus Christ* (1989), *The Spirit of Life* (1991), *The Coming of God* (1995), and *Experiences in Theology* (2000). Moltmann has of course written many other works, the most recent of which, *Ethics of Hope* (2010), he refers to as “the close of my contributions to theological discussions.”⁸

Moltmann's influences are vast and diverse.⁹ He is quite impacted by Jewish thought, both in thinkers like Ernst Bloch, Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, and Abraham Heschel; and in Kabbalism.¹⁰ His affiliation with Bloch evinces Moltmann's

⁵ These parenthetical dates reflect the year of the original German publication.

⁶ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (hereafter *TKG*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), xi. These works constitute a trilogy in the Moltmann corpus.

⁷ Moltmann, *TKG*, vii.

⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope* (hereafter *EH*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), xi.

⁹ For more extensive considerations, see Richard Bauckham, *Moltmann: Messianic Theology in the Making* (Basingstoke, UK: Marshall Pickering, 1987).

¹⁰ See Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (hereafter *TCG*), translated by R. A. Wilson (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 5; Moltmann, *CoG*, 29-46; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (hereafter *WJC*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), xvi. Also, Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 3-22; Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power: The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, translated by John Bowden (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 42-

debt to Karl Marx—a debt further evident by his affinity with the Frankfurt School.¹¹ He was instructed by both Karl Barth and Karl Rahner.¹² His biblical scholarship bears the marks of Gerhard von Rad.¹³ His works evince dialogue with contemporary theologians such as Wolfhart Pannenberg and Hans Urs von Balthasar.¹⁴ In later works especially, he is heavily influenced by Eastern Orthodox theology.¹⁵ Finally, it must be said that Moltmann has been influenced by his own life experience, including his stint as a German soldier in World War II.¹⁶ Ultimately, Moltmann's theology is an experiential and thus subjective contribution amidst the great community of theologians and thinkers to whom he acknowledges his indebtedness.¹⁷

PERTINENT DIMENSIONS OF MOLTSMANN'S THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

My first task in delineating Moltmann's potential contribution to an eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration is exploring theological themes of his work that are pertinent to this ethics. My focus is limited. What follows is not a summary of Moltmann's theology. My hermeneutical engagement with these themes is

43; Eugene B. Borowitz, *Contemporary Christologies: A Jewish Response* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1980), 83-84, 87-88.

¹¹ See Moltmann, *TCG*, 5. The Frankfurt School, initially the *Institute of Social Research at Frankfurt University*, formed in 1923 and advocated a Neo-Marxist approach to social issues. For historical considerations, see Gerald L. Atkinson, "About the Frankfurt School," available online at <http://frankfurtschool.us/history.htm>.

¹² Moltmann, *TKG*, viii.

¹³ See Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 47-48.

¹⁴ Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 93-96.

¹⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (hereafter *CPS*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 36-37; *TKG*, xv; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (hereafter *SL*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), xi. Moltmann's *History and the Triune God* is dedicated to Dumitru Staniloae.

¹⁶ For these biographical considerations, see Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 15-39. Of course, Moltmann's autobiography is a fine source for understanding his influences, both his dialogues with various voices and his personal experiences. Jürgen Moltmann, *A Broad Place: An Autobiography*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008).

¹⁷ Moltmann, *TKG*, vii-viii.

aimed at how, for Moltmann, the relationship between humans and nonhumans is shaped by God's relationship with the world.

THE SOCIAL TRINITY'S HISTORY WITH THE WORLD

Moltmann begins to develop his thoughts on the Trinity in his earlier works. In *Theology of Hope* and *The Crucified God*, he focuses mainly on the relationship between the Father and the Son and its significance for Christian thought and practice. In *The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit*, he more clearly brings the pneumatology that was latent in those previous works into the forefront. However, it is with *The Trinity and the Kingdom* that he fully focuses on contributing to the doctrine of the Trinity and delineates his social understanding of the Trinity.

The Trinity as Social Trinity

In Moltmann's view, two forms of emphases on divine oneness have dominated Western thought. The first is substantialistic. This view "was given by Greek antiquity, continued to be given in the Middle Ages, and still counts as valid in the present-day definitions of the Roman Catholic Church" (*TK*, 10). The divine persons share in a common substance that underlies them. This substance vouchsafes the divine unity and logically precedes it. Thus, writers in the West tend to begin with the attributes of God (i.e., qualities that belong to the divine substance and are thus shared by all the persons) and only afterwards discuss the trinitarian persons.¹⁸

¹⁸ A similar judgment is rendered by Karl Rahner. Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, translated by Joseph Donceel (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005), 15-21. Indeed, Moltmann evinces a progressive understanding of Rahner's dismantling of the distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity. There is not an immutable substance hidden behind the divine persons revealed in history. See Moltmann, *TKG*, 158-62; also Richard Bauckham in *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 156.

The second form emphasizes God's subjectivity. This view develops in the wake of the metaphysical shift in anthropology beginning with Immanuel Kant.¹⁹ Based on the modern notion of "person" as a sovereign subject, advocates of this position claim that it is no longer appropriate to think of Father, Son, and Spirit as persons. Moltmann identifies his mentor Karl Barth as one of the promulgators of this view.²⁰ Barth argues that sovereignty belongs to the whole of the divine—to "God"—not individually to its persons.²¹

Moltmann claims that both of these approaches to trinitarian thought miss the complexity of the biblical view of the divine by surrendering the doctrine to H. Richard Niebuhr's "radical monotheism."²² Such views are reductionist for Moltmann because they do not give primacy to God as Trinity and therefore do not do justice to the self-disclosure of God in the history of the world.²³ In other words, they prioritize abstract considerations of what God must be according to reason and nature (general revelation) over God's self-disclosure in history (special revelation).²⁴ This reduction is also dangerous in that it leads to oppression in the natural and political spheres vis-à-vis an emphasis on the sovereignty of a singularity over and against the community.²⁵

¹⁹ Moltmann, *TKG*, 13-15.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

²¹ *Ibid.*.

²² See Moltmann, *TCG*, 215. On Niebuhr's view, which maintains that all reality comes from and returns to one ultimate reality, see H. Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture—with Supplementary Essays* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1970).

²³ Jürgen Moltmann, *History and the Triune God: Contributions to Trinitarian Theology* (hereafter *HTG*), translated by John Bowden (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1992), 84-85.

²⁴ Moltmann, *TKG*, 17; *HTG*, 82-84; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 142.

²⁵ Moltmann, *TKG*, 10-12, 191-202; Jürgen Moltmann, *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology* (hereafter *GSS*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 97-98; Timothy Harvie, *Jürgen Moltmann's Ethics of Hope: Eschatological Possibilities for Moral Action* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 123-30; M. Douglas Meeks, "The Social Trinity and Property," in *God's Life in Trinity*, Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, editors (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 15.

In response to these emphases on God's oneness, Moltmann aligns his own thought with the Eastern Fathers who focused on the relationships of the trinitarian persons.²⁶ In line with this thinking, he seeks "to start with the special Christian tradition of the history of Jesus the Son, and from that to develop a historical doctrine of the Trinity" (*TK*, 19). Within this framework, Moltmann develops his social doctrine of the Trinity. He argues that God's eternal existence is always and already a trinitarian existence of mutual love. Drawing on the imagery of perichoresis developed by John Damascene, Moltmann maintains that God's oneness originates in the intimacy of the persons with and in one another.²⁷ "God is a community of Father, Son, and Spirit, whose unity is constituted by mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration" (*TK*, viii; also 174-75). In other words, the perichoretic union of the divine community of persons is what vouchsafes the claim that God is one.²⁸ Neither a common substance nor a single subjectivity is required in the face of perichoresis.²⁹

²⁶ Moltmann, *TKG*, 19; *HTG*, xi-xii. John Meyendorff approvingly reviews Moltmann's view with reference to the Cappadocian Fathers. See "Reply to Jürgen Moltmann's 'The Unity of the Triune God,'" *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28/3 (1984), 183-188. However, Meyendorff explicitly differs with Moltmann's claim that each person of the Trinity has a will and an intellect. He maintains that they share a single will and intellect perichoretically. *Ibid.*, 187. He also differs with Moltmann in claiming that the persons share a common and immutable nature. *Ibid.*, 188.

²⁷ Moltmann, *TKG*, 174.

²⁸ Moltmann, *CoG*, 298. This social view of God notwithstanding, Moltmann does adhere to the monarchy of the Father as the source of divinity in the Godhead. See Moltmann, *TKG*, 162-70. The Father begets the Son and spirates the Spirit from eternity. Without this distinction, trinitarian thought would lapse again into monotheism; for the divine persons would end up being three repetitions of the same. For example, if the Father does not uniquely beget the Son, how could the Father be uniquely Father in relation to the Son? Likewise, if the Spirit also begets the Son, the Father's unique relational identity is compromised. Yet Moltmann is clear that the Father's primacy refers only to the generation of the divine persons. *Ibid.*, 165. There is neither primacy nor subordination in the actual lived interaction of the divine persons. On this point, see Moltmann's critique of Pannenberg's monarchial view of the Trinity in Moltmann, *HTG*, xviii-xix. Harvie maintains that Moltmann's acceptance of the monarchy of the Father implies his acceptance of an essential similarity in substance among the divine persons. Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 113-17.

²⁹ Moltmann, *TKG*, 175. In *The Way of Jesus Christ*, Moltmann summarizes his effort in *Trinity and the Kingdom of God* as an attempt "to free the Christian doctrine of God from the confines of the ancient metaphysics of substance." Moltmann, *WJC*, xv.

For Moltmann, this union is what John means when he writes, “God is love” (1 John 14:16).³⁰ This communitarian view of God correlates to the kind of union that God desires for the created order.³¹ Whereas monotheism justifies the sovereignty of the one over and against the many, the social Trinity, in safeguarding the uniqueness of the divine persons in relation to one another, places the individual within the community without dissolving her individuality.³²

The Social Trinity as Open Trinity

The Trinity is not a closed-gate community. The relational life of God is open to that which is other than God—namely, the creation. God is open to share God’s life with the cosmos.

The Trinity’s openness takes two forms for Moltmann, both of which highlight a facet of his panentheism. First, the Trinity opens a space “in God” for creation to be itself. Says Moltmann, “The trinitarian relationship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is so wide that the whole creation can find space, time and freedom in it” (*TK*, 109). Thus the Trinity’s openness permits the protological act of creation and enables the creation’s ongoing existence. Second, the Trinity is open to perichoretic union with the created order. The trinitarian love that constitutes the divine unity seeks to incorporate

³⁰ See Moltmann, *TKG*, 57-60. For a summary of Moltmann’s view, see Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 173-82.

³¹ See Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* (hereafter *GC*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 16-17; *TKG*, 191-202; *CoG*, 301-02. Bauckham is critical of Moltmann for reintroducing an immanent Trinity that differs from the history of God with the world. Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 155-66; 173-79. See also Tim Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God: Eschatology, the Trinity and Mission in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann and Contemporary Evangelicalism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), 37-40. Steven Bouma-Prediger is also critical of Moltmann on this point. See, *The Greening of Theology: The ecological Models of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler, and Jürgen Moltmann* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995), 260-61. Harvie suggests that the solution to this criticism rests in the notion of participation. The Spirit draws creation into the Trinity’s life and in doing so begins to conform the community of creation to the divine communion. Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 133-34.

³² Moltmann, *TKG*, 191-222; *HTG*, xii-xiii. Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 147-50.

the created order into itself without obliterating creation's integrity.³³ This openness renders Moltmann's trinitarian theology eschatological.³⁴

The openness of God means that the history of the world is simultaneously the history of the Trinity.³⁵ For it is within history that God desires the world and seeks its companionship.³⁶ This seeking is only possible because the Trinity opens itself to cosmic history. Within this framework, the doctrinal facets of the economy of salvation, including creation, evil, christology, pneumatology, and eschatology, are all expressions of the Trinity's dynamic history with the world. This economy impacts the life of the created order and the life of the triune God by constituting the history of each.³⁷

THE CREATION AS DYNAMIC AND TELEOLOGICAL

Moltmann does not pay particular attention to the doctrine of creation in his earlier works. However, like many other themes that develop more explicitly later, his interest in cosmology is always evident: "A new doctrine of creation had been on my

³³ Moltmann, *CPS*, 55-56.

³⁴ See *HTG*, 86-87. It also makes it soteriological. See Joy Ann McDougall, *Pilgrim of Love: Moltmann on the Trinity and Christian Life* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 122-25.

³⁵ Moltmann develops this thought over time. The central core of it is that the events between the world and God are absolutely meaningful to both. See Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 106-10. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 58-60. Müller-Fahrenholz notes that the history of the Trinity with the world is the outlining principle of Moltmann's first trilogy of works. See *The Kingdom and the Power*, 81.

³⁶ See Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 137-47.

³⁷ Such a history requires both mutability and passibility in the Trinity. See Moltmann, *CPS*, 50-65; Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 110-13. Here Moltmann's thought bears a greater similarity with "relational theologies" like process theology and open theism (sometimes called "freewill theism") than traditional theism. On process theology, see John B. Cobb Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976). For a good review of open theism, see Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger, *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1994). On the distinction between process theology and open theism, see the collection of dialogical essays in *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue Between Process and Free Will Theists*, John B. Cobb Jr. and Clark H. Pinnock, editors (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), especially chapter 4. These similarities notwithstanding, Moltmann is explicit about his rejection of traditional theism (which he simply labels "theism"), especially with regard to impassibility. See Moltmann, *TCG*, 207-19.

agenda ever since I wrote *Theology of Hope* in 1964” (*GC*, xi).³⁸ Moltmann distinguishes between three phrases of creation: *creatio originalis*, *creatio continua*, and *creatio nova*.³⁹ Here, I use this structure to consider the dynamic community of creation and its teleological (i.e., eschatological) orientation.

The Dynamism of God’s Creation

Historically, the doctrine of creation tends toward an understanding of the “six days” of God’s creative work.⁴⁰ Moltmann views this formulation of the doctrine as reductionist in three manners. These manners pertain to both cosmology and theology proper and point beyond the original act of creation to creation’s dynamism toward its eschatological *telos*.

First, *creatio originalis* is itself preceded by a divine decree and act. Moltmann adapts the traditional notion of *creatio ex nihilo* by addressing what the presence of “nothing” means. Drawing on the kabbalistic notion of *zimzum*, Moltmann maintains that the nothing within which the created order takes shape is necessarily preceded by God’s

³⁸ In my view, William French is mistaken when he suggests a radical change in Moltmann’s view between *Theology of Hope* (in which, according to French, he devalues history and the created order in favor of eschatology) and *God in Creation* (in which, according to French, he recovers the value of the created order). See William C. French, “Returning to Creation: Moltmann’s Eschatology Naturalized,” *The Journal of Religion*, 68/1 (1988), 178-81. Moltmann’s eschatology was never escapist or world-denying. French’s representation of Moltmann misses the broader scope of his theology—an irony given his defense of Aquinas I noted in the first chapter.

³⁹ See Moltmann, *GC*, 208; Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 110-14. Alan Torrance is critical of Moltmann’s use of these terms in conjunction with his appropriation of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. Torrance offers three critiques. First, Moltmann locates the act of original creation in space and time. Second, Moltmann establishes too sharp a divide between original, continuous, and “new” creation. Third, Moltmann introduces a linear temporality into God. See Alan J. Torrance, “*Creatio Ex Nihilo* and the Spatio-Temporal Dimensions, with Special Reference to Jürgen Moltmann and D. C. Williams,” in *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy*, Colin E. Gunton, editor (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 1997), 91-93.

⁴⁰ See Moltmann, *GC*, 55.

decree to withdraw the divine presence in order to create space for the cosmos.⁴¹ This act precedes the creation of the cosmos, which is the filling of the “nothing” with something.

This claim leads naturally to Moltmann’s dismantling of divine passibility, a dismantling that is one of the central tenets of Moltmann’s theology.⁴² In order to create, God must first be passible, able and willing to suffer the space necessary for the created order.⁴³ Thus, not only *can* God suffer, but, in order for creation to exist in genuine rapport with the divine, God *must* suffer. Yet this suffering is God’s own doing: “Only God can limit God.”⁴⁴ Because God embraces God’s own passibility in order to give creation its own space, God’s suffering is “part of the grace of creation” (*CoG*, 306). That is, it is God’s suffering that makes creation’s rapport with God possible.

Moltmann’s view is firmly embedded in his trinitarian theology, most evident in his theology of the cross.⁴⁵ It is the cross that calls for “the revolution needed in the concept of God” (*TCG*, 4) in which the Trinity revealed therein replaces the Hellenistically derivative immutable deity of “theism.”⁴⁶

The trinitarian passion not only makes creation possible, but also drives forward the common history of God and the world. Again, this point is evident at the cross: “It is

⁴¹ Moltmann, *GC*, 86-89; *CoG*, 297; *TKG*, 109; Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 65-67.

⁴² Moltmann has been critiqued on this point. See, for example, Daniel Castelo, “Moltmann’s Dismissal of Divine Impassibility: Warranted?” *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 61/4 (2008): 396-407.

⁴³ See Moltmann, *TKG*, chapter 2, 109-110. Moltmann derives the notion of God’s passibility from the history of God with the world. He thus overturns the Hellenistic notions of God as immutable. See Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology* (hereafter *TH*), translated by James W. Leitch (London, England: SCM Press, 2002), 127-28; *TCG*, 207-19; *HTG*, xvi; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 58-61; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 77-79.

⁴⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, “God’s Kenosis in the Creation and Consummation of the World” (hereafter “GKC”) in *God and Evolution: A Reader*, Mary Kathleen Cunningham, editor (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 279. Here, Moltmann reveals a difference between his own thought and that of process theologians. For Moltmann, God is only limited by choice as opposed to necessity. On process theology’s view of God, see Cobb and Griffin, *Process Theology*, 41-62.

⁴⁵ Moltmann, *HTG*, xvi-xvii; *TCG*, 242-47.

⁴⁶ Moltmann, *TCG*, 207-219. See also the link between this “theistic” notion of God and atheism (219-27).

one divine passion which leads to the pain of the Father, the death of the Son and the sighing of the Spirit: the passion of love for lost creatures” (*HTG*, xvi). Because creation is preceded by the Trinity’s willingness to suffer creation its own space, Moltmann can say that *creatio ex nihilo* is simultaneously *creatio ex amore Dei*.⁴⁷ For “God loves the world with the very same love that he himself is in eternity” (*TK*, 57). Thus the act of creation is both an act of freedom and one of nature (i.e., love), a point consistent with Moltmann’s panentheistic view of the cosmos.⁴⁸ Based on this view of creation, Moltmann notes that God’s self-limitation of omnipotence and omnipresence is simultaneously a delimitation of God’s goodness.⁴⁹

Second, Moltmann claims that a strict six-day understanding of God’s creative work neglects the actual crown of the original creation: God’s sabbath rest.⁵⁰ I will develop this point under Moltmann’s eschatology. Third, God’s creative activity does not cease even with the sabbath. Moltmann rejects any relegation of the doctrine of creation to *creatio originalis*. In his view, this relegation would constitute a reduction of the doctrine’s significance for both the created order and for God.⁵¹ The act of creation

⁴⁷ Moltmann, *GC*, 75-76; *EH*, 122. Torrance remains unconvinced that Moltmann’s understanding of *ex nihilo* settles the dilemma between nature and will. See Torrance, “*Creatio Ex Nihilo*,” 89.

⁴⁸ See Moltmann, *TKG*, 106-8. On Moltmann’s consideration of divine decree versus emanation, see Moltmann, *GC*, 79-86. Moltmann’s own position is evident on 84-86. See also Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 34. Ryan Neal suggests that Moltmann missteps at this point, setting up a false dialectic between freedom and necessity as opposed to freedom and faithfulness. Ryan A. Neal, *Theology as Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of Jürgen Moltmann’s Doctrine of Hope* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009), 137-40. It seems to me that such is not the case. Moltmann’s dialectic is ultimately freedom and nature (i.e., love, which certainly includes faithfulness).

⁴⁹ *TKG*, 119.

⁵⁰ Moltmann, *GC*, 187. Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 156-58.

⁵¹ Moltmann has in mind here Scholastic theology and its legacy: “Ever since Thomas Aquinas, the Christian doctrine of creation... in its theological account, has always expounded ‘the six days’ work.” Moltmann, *GC*, 55. Moltmann critiques this theology, stating that its advocates have “not sufficiently noticed that the stories about creation in the Priestly writings and in the Yahwist’s account do not as yet present a *Christian* doctrine of creation, for the messianic orientation is here not yet overtly present.” *Ibid.* For Moltmann, the term “creation” must embrace *creatio originalis*, *creatio continua*, and *creatio nova* in order to be truly messianic. *Ibid.*

in the beginning is the secondary stage of creation. It is followed by *creatio continua*, God's ongoing creative engagement with the world. Furthermore, creation is aimed toward *creatio nova*, the consummation of the cosmos in the eschaton, the new creation.

Creatio continua has two components. First, the created order has a dynamic self-development within the space and time God has ceded to it.⁵² That is, creation has its own integrity by which it moves within its space. It has randomness and unpredictability. For Moltmann, creation's integrity includes the evolutionary development of life in which it organizes itself into increasingly complex life forms.⁵³ Second, God remains involved in the created order. Moltmann's pneumatology maintains that, while giving creation its own space to develop (transcendence), God is nonetheless present as the affirmation of life in all living things (immanence).⁵⁴ Thus, God is both transcendent, a condition necessary for the created order's integrity, and immanent, a condition necessary for the created order's life and well-being.

I must mention one more point here. Creation's integrity has meaning for God. While *creatio originalis* is an act of both divine will and nature that is constitutive for the created order, it is also, in some sense, constitutive for God inasmuch as it requires divine self-limitation. This reciprocation continues with *creatio continua* because the Trinity's own history is now a history with and within the unfolding of the created order—an "other" with its own integrity.⁵⁵

⁵² Moltmann, *GC*, 198-200.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 200-1, 206-7.

⁵⁴ On this balance, see Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 114-19.

⁵⁵ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 58-60.

The Community of God's Creation

For Moltmann, at all stages of its existence, the created order, like its Creator, is a community. Thus, just as there can be no Father isolated from the Son, so also there can be no humanity isolated from the nonhuman creation.⁵⁶ This point is true in the beginning, when humanity is created within the world. It also holds true at the end. On this point Moltmann adjusts Cyprian's famous quip as follows: "*nulla salus sine terra*" (*CoG*, 274). The physical creation is essential for human creation, existence, and salvation.⁵⁷

This understanding of the community of creation bears three significant corollaries. First, it suggests that humans cannot truly exist, either now or in eternity, without bodily form.⁵⁸ Human beings both *have* bodies (a claim that avoids scientific reductionism) and *are* bodies (a claim that avoids a Platonic or Gnostic escapism).⁵⁹ Second, it suggests that human beings are relational. Humans are em-personed, which is to say always and already in relation with others. This point is solidified in Moltmann's

⁵⁶ Moltmann validates this point both theologically and scientifically. See Moltmann, *GC*, 185-90.

⁵⁷ Based on the intrinsic relationality of the cosmos and the ontological significance of that relationality for human identity, John Haught concurs with Moltmann on this point. See *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, second edition (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 169-170.

⁵⁸ Moltmann, *GC*, 244-47. Here Moltmann diverges from any attempt to ground human continuity in an immortal or subsistent facet located within human beings, a strategy he traces back to Plato's *Phaedo*. See Moltmann, *CoG*, 58-60. Such a view stands in contrast to the hope for the resurrection of the flesh, for which death is not the release from bodily corruption but rather the final enemy of life. *Ibid.*, 65-66. This hope leads humans not to an attempt to "cling to their identity through constant unity with themselves" but rather to "empty themselves into non-identity, knowing that from this self-emptying they will be brought back to themselves again for eternity." *Ibid.*, 67. This self-emptying entails the acceptance that the "I" "shall die *wholly*" and "rise *wholly*." *Ibid.* Yet at the same time in death the totality of a person's being, for which Moltmann uses the German term *Gestalt*, "remains in God's relationship to that person." *Ibid.*, 76. This *relational subsistence* is for Moltmann the meaning of being "with Christ" in death. See *ibid.*, 104-5. Moltmann thus seems to discard any intrinsic subsistence of the human soul in favor of a relational understanding of the *Gestalt's* endurance with God until the resurrection, in which all individual components of the *Gestalt* will return in their fullness.

⁵⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 187; *EH*, 52-53. Prediger critiques Moltmann here, claiming that his distinction risks introducing a metaphysical dualism back into theology. Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 220-23. Ironically, he also critiques Moltmann's claim about the similarity between humans and nonhumans on account that it risks a scientific reductionism of humanity. *Ibid.*, 225-26.

relational interpretation of the *imago Dei*, which is “first of all God’s relationship to the human being, and then the relationship of human beings, women and men, to God” (*CoG*, 72).⁶⁰ For human beings are not the *imago Dei* as isolated monads, but rather as a community.⁶¹ In this manner, humans are the image of trinitarian love, or the “image of [God’s] inward nature” (*GC*, 241).⁶² With this claim Moltmann establishes a trinitarian *imago*—a “social image of God” in which no one can embody the *imago* outside of the human community—in contrast to Augustine’s emphasis on the individual as the *imago trinitatis*.⁶³

Moltmann’s relational understanding of the image of God also embraces the nonhuman creation. Human beings are not the *imago Dei* as a community isolated from creation, but rather as part of the cosmic community.⁶⁴ Humans are both *imago Dei* and *imago mundi*.⁶⁵ As the former, they are meant to bring peace to the cosmos.⁶⁶ Humans “stand before God on behalf of creation, and before creation on behalf of God” (*GC*, 190). This functional dimension reveals that, for Moltmann, the *imago* has meaning for God, humanity, and the nonhuman creation.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Moltmann’s understanding of the *imago* corresponds to his dynamic and relational ontology, which is juxtaposed against a static and substantive one. See Moltmann, *GC*, 230-34.

⁶¹ Moltmann, *EH*, 68.

⁶² Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 160-63. The *imago* also has an eschatological dimension in which humans become *imago Christi* and finally *gloria Dei*. See Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 170-80. Even when he considers the overall process of the *imago*, for Moltmann the doctrine remains always relational, eschatological, and primarily derivative of the Trinity. Moltmann, *GC*, 215-43. Also, Law, “Moltmann’s Ecological Hermeneutics,” 229; McDougall, *Pilgrim of Love*, 113-17.

⁶³ On Augustine’s understanding of the individual human as *imago trinitatis* in his *On the Trinity*, see Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 154-57. Grenz notes that for Augustine “the Trinity is prefigured in the structure of the human mind, specifically, in the three faculties of memory, intellect, and will.” *Ibid.*, 156. On the difference between this view and Moltmann’s see Moltmann, *HTG*, 60-63; *GC*, 234-40; McDougall, *Pilgrim of Love*, 115-16.

⁶⁴ Moltmann, *GC*, 29-31.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 185-86,

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 29-31, 187-88.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 77-78, 188-90. Dominic Robinson is critical of Moltmann’s notion of the *imago*. He claims that Moltmann’s functional emphasis of the *imago* in which humans represent God in the cosmos is

The significance of the *imago* for the nonhuman creation adumbrates the third corollary: embodied and em-personed human beings are also en-cosmosed.⁶⁸ That is, humans exist as part of the community of creation.⁶⁹ In this community, there is a sacramental reciprocity between humans and the nonhuman world. The creation is sacramental for humanity in that it makes possible humanity's relationship with the divine—though this sacramental role exhausts neither its purpose nor its value. Humans are sacramental to creation because they reveal God's eschatological hope to the cosmos. Thus the creation of the cosmos precedes (and makes possible) humanity and the redemption of humanity precedes (and, in some sense, makes possible) the redemption of the cosmos. In this sense, "creation has its meaning for human beings, and human beings have their meaning for the community of creation" (*GC*, 189).⁷⁰

This affirmation of the cosmic community correlates to an affirmation of the intrinsic value of the nonhuman creation.⁷¹ The community has its own integrity in which human beings participate.⁷² Furthermore, all members of the community have a right to a life for their own sakes.⁷³ It thus shatters the modern expression of anthropocentrism, which Moltmann consistently claims is detrimental to the cosmos.⁷⁴

anthropocentric as it renders humans the primary revelation of God. Dominic Robinson, *Understanding the "Imago Dei"* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 133-34. He also claims that Moltmann's emphasis on divine passibility and immanence leads to a reconfiguration of anthropology that negates the seriousness of sin with regard to salvation. *Ibid.*, 140-43, 151-56.

⁶⁸ "Em-personed" and "en-cosmosed" are my terms. Though I feel they aptly describe Moltmann's view.

⁶⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 31.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷² Moltmann likens the ecological community to the community of the Trinity. Moltmann, *GC*, 16-17.

⁷³ Moltmann, *GSS*, 111-13; *GC*, 289-90.

⁷⁴ See Moltmann, *CoG*, 92-93; *GSS*, 94-101.

The Teleological Nature of God's Creation

Moltmann's cosmology is "messianic" in that it "sees creation together with its future—the future for which it was made and in which it will be perfected" (*GC*, 5). That is, it does not isolate the realities of *creatio continua* from the hope for *creatio nova*. Thus, the community of creation is not simply all created things existing at any particular time. Rather, it encompasses all creation from all times. The present creation, both human and nonhuman, is united as a community in part because it suffers together the contradictions of its current state as it longs for *creatio nova*.⁷⁵

A messianic cosmology cannot consider the cosmos "as it is", isolated from its eschatological destiny, which is perichoretic union with the divine and among its own members.⁷⁶ Thus, for Moltmann the hope of cosmic christology cannot simply be the

supposedly existing 'harmony of the world', for its starting point is the reconciliation of all things through Christ; and the premise of this reconciliation is a state of disrupted harmony in the world, world powers which are at enmity with one another, and threatening chaos. (*WJC*, 278)

It is this eschatological dimension of his cosmology that stands in stark contrast with theologians like Thomas Berry.⁷⁷

Moltmann's teleology rejects the notion of a perfect original creation. He adheres to an Irenaean cosmology in which God creates the entire cosmos in an infancy requiring development.⁷⁸ The creation is meant to grow into its *telos*—or, more properly, to

⁷⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's Future for Humanity and the Earth* (hereafter *SRA*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 70-71.

⁷⁶ This *telos* is captured in Moltmann definition of the kingdom of God, which is "the perfected perichoretic unity of God and world" (*SRA*, 30).

⁷⁷ See Moltmann, *GC*, 7. However, Moltmann also offers a positive response to cosmic spirituality. See Moltmann, *GSS*, 101-106.

⁷⁸ On Irenaeus's cosmology, see Matthew Craig Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Redemption* (Boston: Brill, 2008), 145-49.

encounter the advent of that *telos* within its history.⁷⁹ In this growing process, God “suffers the contradiction of the beings he has created” and continues to work in creation by “opening up the systems that are closed in on themselves” (*GC*, 210-11).

On account of this teleological view of the cosmos, Moltmann establishes a stark contrast between the notions of “nature” and “creation.”⁸⁰ The former is that which one can observe in *creatio continua*: “Theologically, we call ‘nature’ the state of creation which is no longer creation’s original condition, and is not yet its final one” (*CoG*, 91). As it is, “nature” is “full of beauties and full of catastrophes” (*SRA*, 68). It is not only open to newness; it requires newness *as redemption*. For “nature...knows no sabbath” (*GC*, 6).

Unlike “nature”, the term “creation” refers to the temporal *and* eternal scope of the cosmos, thus including its eschatological redemption. Moltmann’s cosmology does not define God according to nature (i.e., the way things are), but rather defines creation (understood teleologically) according to God.⁸¹ He thus claims that

the messianic understanding of the world is the true natural theology. In the messianic light, all earthly things and all living beings can be discerned in their forfeiture to transience and in their hope for liberation to eternity. (*GC*, 60)

This understanding is messianic in part because it depends on Christ’s return: “the coming of Christ in glory is accompanied by a transformation of the whole of nature into its eternal discernible identity as God’s creation” (*WJC*, 280). In the meantime, nature is embedded within the cycles of suffering, predation, and death, all of which for Moltmann constitute evils.

⁷⁹ Thus, for Moltmann, eschatology is not a return to protology. See Moltmann, *TCG*, 261; Moltmann, *CoG*, 296-308.

⁸⁰ Moltmann, *GC*, 37-40; *WJC*, 253.

⁸¹ Moltmann, *GC*, 53.

EVIL AS SUFFERING AND DEATH

Moltmann defines evil as “the perversion of good, the annihilation of what exists, the negation of the affirmation of life” (*GC*, 168). Thus his struggle with evil tends to center on the problem of death. Here I consider how Moltmann understands death vis-à-vis the original creation, the ongoing creation, and the new creation.

Protology and the Fall

Moltmann commonly refers to the current state of the created order (i.e. “nature”) as disrupted.⁸² He accepts some form of its “fallenness.”⁸³ But this fallenness takes the form of a (*pre-human*) straying from the path towards the *telos* of the dynamic cosmos rather than an event that shatters protological harmony.⁸⁴ Thus, the eschatological resurrection entails both “surmounting the consequences of the Fall” and “the consummation of creation-in-the-beginning” (*SRA*, 67). Regardless, the corruption entailed by this straying is systemic, affecting every particle of the cosmos.

But when/why/how did this “Fall” occur? In his earlier works, Moltmann seems to suggest that there can be no answer to these questions.⁸⁵ The only response he offers is that, in the face of suffering and death, God, through the incarnation, engages in compassion—co-suffering and even co-death.⁸⁶ In the Spirit, too, God suffers alongside the cosmos.⁸⁷

⁸² Moltmann, *WJC*, 281. See also *HTG*, 71-72.

⁸³ Moltmann, *SRA*, 67. His theological framework is more congruent with a creation *in via* toward eschatological fulfillment. See *TKG*, 114-18. For a critique of Moltmann’s notion of the Fall in conjunction with his dismantling of the distinction between the economic and immanent trinity, see Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 44-49.

⁸⁴ Moltmann, *CoG*, 261-67; Richard Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 17.

⁸⁵ Moltmann, *TKG*, 50-51; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 82-91. For the context of Moltmann’s “eschatological theodicy,” see *ibid.*, 71-82.

⁸⁶ Moltman, *TCG*, 146-53; Borowitz, *Contemporary Christologies*, 83-84.

⁸⁷ Moltmann, *SL*, 51; *GC*, 96-97; *SRA*, 206; *TKG*, 111.

Yet in later works, Moltmann seems to suggest that the forces of annihilation in the created order result from the integrity of the space and time that God allots to the world.⁸⁸ Already in *Trinity and the Kingdom* he maintains that “God creates the world by letting his world become and be in *himself*: Let it be!” (TK, 109) In his later *Sun of Righteousness*, he specifically links this “letting be” to the existence of evil:

Why is this creation of God’s threatened by chaos and why has it fallen victim to annihilation? Because the creator is by no means ‘the all-determining reality’ of what he has created—in that case creation would be itself divine—but because he has conferred on creation its own scope for freedom and generation. (SRA, 205)

The space of creation includes its freedom and generation. But this space also necessitates the possibility of disruption, even *before humans arrive*.⁸⁹ Thus, Moltmann maintains that “we even have to talk about the ‘sin’ of the whole creation, which has isolated itself from the foundation of its existence and the wellspring of its life, and has fallen victim to universal death” (WJC, 283).⁹⁰ The Fall may thus be interpreted as the straying of *the nonhuman creation*, both in randomness and, much later, in will, from the

⁸⁸ See Moltmann, *GC*, 164-69.

⁸⁹ For this position, see Moltmann, “GKC,” 273-83. This point, I believe, counters Chester’s critique that Moltmann advocates a Hegelianism in which evil is necessary to the becoming of God. Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 46-48. Evil is potential in the history of God in relation with a world to which God permits its own time and space. Such a view finds its roots in Irenaeus, not Hegel. On this point, see John Hick, “An Irenaean Theodicy,” in *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*, Stephen T. Davis, editor (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 40-42. Regardless, this point highlights a tension, highlighted well by Drummond, in Moltmann’s thought. He seems to appreciate the randomness of evolution. Yet he also claims that the Spirit is the working principle in evolution. This ambiguity detracts from Moltmann’s evolutionary theodicy. Celia Deanne-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 46-47. On Moltmann’s difference from Hegel, see also Celia Deanne-Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic Press, 2008), 172.

⁹⁰ Polkinghorne thus misreads Moltmann in claiming he does not adhere to the notion of fallenness. Polkinghorne, “Moltmann’s Engagement with the Natural Sciences,” 61-62. In fact, the very space that God grants creation through the kenotic act of creation denotes chance. The presence of chance in the cosmos is, as Polkinghorne notes, favored by science. *Ibid.*, 62-63. Polkinghorne claims that God works within these conditions. *Ibid.*, 67. But it should also be noted that God is also willingly *conditioned by these conditions*. Hence, the possibility of a disruption of the path toward the *telos* of the created order reappears, though not in the form of human will and sin. It appears in the very potentiality of the created order affects God in a way God had not intended—to isolate itself, as it were, by straying from the path toward eschatological consummation, and thereby constitute part of God’s trinitarian history.

path toward eschatological consummation.⁹¹ Human sin, then, can be interpreted not as the cause of this Fall, but rather as both the embracing of it and, in this embrace, the intensifying of the straying of the cosmos.⁹²

But what exactly is entailed by this Fall? Is it the cause of evolutionary mechanisms such as suffering, predation, and death? Or did God ordain these mechanisms for the created order?

Suffering, Death, Evolution, and Redemption

The question of suffering and especially death presents a great difficulty for Moltmann. On the one hand, he wants to state unequivocally that neither suffering nor death pertain to the eschatological future of creation. Thus he states that “the living God and death are irreconcilable antitheses” (*SRA*, 81). On the other hand, he wants to take seriously the findings of science, which suggest that neither suffering nor death can have originated with human disobedience.⁹³ Thus he asks: “Did the dinosaurs become extinct because of the sin of the human beings who did not yet exist?” (*CoG*, 83) In light of this reality, Moltmann acknowledges that “there is sin without death in creation [i.e., the

⁹¹ Regarding the question of God’s foreknowledge concerning the creation’s integrity, Moltmann augments the self-limitation of God implied in creation. As God withdraws his eternity and presence to give the creation its time and space, he also limits his foreknowledge to give creation its integrity. “God does not know everything in advance because he does not will to know everything in advance. He waits for the response of those he has created, and lets their future come” (“GKC,” 281).

⁹² Moltmann’s theology clearly alters the role of sin. Such alteration has led to critique. For instance, see Robinson, *Understanding the “Imago Dei”*, 144-146. While Moltmann’s theology does displace sin as the *central* issue regarding salvation, this displacement does not necessitate that he does not take sin seriously. Sin hinders the realization of the world’s *telos*, which makes death and suffering all the more potent. Thus, salvation must account for sin and the Fall fully. See Moltmann, *SRA*, 67. Moltmann’s soteriology goes beyond sin, however, in claiming that all suffering and dying creatures are drawn into Christ’s fellow-suffering and resurrection, which is God’s triumph over death. Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 160.

⁹³ Moltmann, *GC*, 22; “GKC,” 273; John Polkinghorne, “Jürgen Moltmann’s Engagement with the Natural Sciences,” in *God’s Life in Trinity*, Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, editors (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 61-62. Willis Jenkins is critical of Moltmann’s use of science, writing: “Even though Moltmann insists natural science and revealed theology do not compete, his practical response to earth relies much more upon theological experience than natural science.” Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 73.

angels], and death without sin [i.e., nonhuman animals]” (*CoG*, 90). He also accepts that human beings were mortal from the beginning.⁹⁴

Thus, death cannot be the consequence of sin.⁹⁵ Still, Moltmann does not want to accept that suffering and death are part of God’s good creation.⁹⁶ The difficult question that arises is: Who introduces these facets of existence into creation? The question, “From whence evil?” effectively becomes “From whence suffering and death?” Or simply “From whence transience?”

Moltmann engages biblical material with reference to this question but finds an ambiguity therein. Death at times appears the negative result of sin. Elsewhere it is the natural end of life.⁹⁷ This ambiguity is reflected in Moltmann’s own thought.

For all his disdain of suffering and death, Moltmann remains ambiguous on the extent to which they are, in and of themselves, enemies. In fact, he acknowledges that they are, in some sense, “natural.”⁹⁸ They pertain to the transient stage of the creation—*creatio continua*. In *The Coming of God*, Moltmann claims that they are “characteristics of a frail, temporal creation which will be overcome through the new creation of all things for eternal life” (*CoG*, 78). He frequently refers to the biblical image of a grain of wheat that brings forth fruit, thus suggesting a positive dimension to death when it is not

⁹⁴ Moltmann, *CoG*, 90-91.

⁹⁵ Thus, while Lisa Sideris rightly notes Moltmann’s ambiguity regarding the etiology of nature’s distortion, she at once incorrectly claims that his theology implies “that creation was perfect in its original form...and became corrupted with the fall of humans.” Lisa H. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 103. Moltmann is fairly adamant that such is in fact *not* the case.

⁹⁶ Moltmann does at times draw on the language of an original creation free from violence as a prolepsis of messianic peace. For instance, see *WJC*, 127-28. However, these occurrences are more a mythic indulgence than affirmations of historicity.

⁹⁷ Moltmann, *CoG*, 78-83.

⁹⁸ Here, one must understand Moltmann’s differentiation between “nature” and “creation.” Here Moltmann has this corrupted understanding of “nature” in mind. For elsewhere he claims: “The death of all the living is neither due to sin nor is it natural” (*CoG*, 92). See also Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 206.

isolated from the vast sweep of created existence.⁹⁹ Death is neither the salvation of the soul from the body nor the separation of the human from God; it is rather the necessary point of transformation from transient life to eternal life.¹⁰⁰ “Death de-restricts the human being’s spirit in both time and space” (*CoG*, 77).¹⁰¹

This acknowledgement notwithstanding, Moltmann claims that suffering and death will be destroyed in the redemption of the cosmos. For “new creation is new from the root up only if it issues from the cosmic annihilation of the death of created being” (*WJC*, 252). Thus, to the extent that death is “natural,” it is also the enemy in juxtaposition to resurrection hope.¹⁰² Says Moltmann:

Even if death is part of temporal creation, it does not have to be called ‘natural’ in the sense of being self-evident of a matter of course; and if it is called natural, this ‘nature’ by no means has to be taken as final. If we turn back from the end to the beginning, then the death of all the living is a sign of the first, temporal and imperfect creation. (*CoG*, 91)

Because death stands in contrast to the divine intention for the cosmos, blithely embracing it is an affront to Christian cosmology.¹⁰³ Death should elicit grief and protest (as it did for Christ on the cross, evinced in the cry of dereliction).¹⁰⁴ Thus Moltmann

⁹⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 269; *SRA*, 64-65; *WJC*, 248-49. Read in isolation from his corpus Moltmann is here not all that different from either Berry or Ruether. See the introduction and chapter one. He is also similar to Holmes Rolston. See Rolston, “Disvalues in Nature,” 250-78.

¹⁰⁰ Moltmann, *WJC*, 249-50.

¹⁰¹ Although, for Moltmann death is not an impenetrable boundary between transience and eternity. See *CoG*, 291-92.

¹⁰² Moltmann, *CoG*, 65-66; Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 18.

¹⁰³ Such claims elicit the critique of Willis Jenkins, who maintains that Moltmann’s theological schema is problematic in that it creates a “discontinuity between nature as it is and nature as God would have it.” This discontinuity elicits three issues. First, what Moltmann wants to save is not nature as it is, but nature as it is intended to be. This disparity places a greater emphasis on special revelation to the detriment of general revelation. Second, Jenkins notes that emphasizing such a discontinuity “may unwittingly evince some restless distaste for our present environment.” Third, Moltmann offers no hermeneutic of adjudicating appropriate action in nature based on the hope for God’s coming and the new creation. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 73-74.

¹⁰⁴ Moltmann, *SL*, xii.

claims that death “is a fact that evokes grief and longing for the future world and eternal life” (*CoG*, 92). Why? Because “all life is intended to live and not to die” (*WJC*, 253).

But the question remains: Did God ordain these mechanisms of evolution?

Moltmann displays further ambiguity on this question—particularly between *God in Creation* and *The Way of Jesus Christ*.¹⁰⁵ On the one hand, he sees many positive dimensions of the evolutionary process.¹⁰⁶ It produces higher forms of life. It requires a level of cooperation in the cosmos. It suggests an openness to the future.¹⁰⁷ Thus creation and evolution are not opposing concepts per se.¹⁰⁸ It even seems as if God is the author of evolution: “There is a creation of evolution, because evolution is not explicable simply in terms of itself” (*GC*, 19).¹⁰⁹ Indeed, Moltmann claims that “the Spirit is the principle of evolution” (*GC*, 100).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 190-98. I believe Bauckham is correct in interpreting Moltmann’s positive assessment of evolution within the boundaries of its requiring redemption. *Ibid.*, 194. Even so, Moltmann’s ambiguity has led to critique. See Law, “Moltmann’s Ecological Hermeneutic,” 235; Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 107.

¹⁰⁶ Sideris maintains that Moltmann overemphasizes the positive aspects of evolution. While she overstates her case on account of citing only *God in Creation*, she nonetheless has a point that it is unclear whether (or why) the mechanisms of evolution are in place for Moltmann’s cosmology. He “posits suffering and struggle in nature as forces that the spirit of God overcomes, but it is not clear where these forces come from, since selection has no significant role to play in his theory of evolution.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 100. Sideris’s critique of the place of natural selection in Moltmann’s thought is interesting but overstated. She notes that Moltmann’s “ecological concept of space essentially resembles a pre-Darwinian economy of nature in which every living thing occupies a particular spot and displays a near perfect fit to its given location with that larger economy.” In Sideris’s view, such a concept “leaves little for natural selection to do.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 97. Again, Sideris’s understanding of Moltmann’s view is myopic because she only engages *God in Creation*.

¹⁰⁷ Moltmann, *GC*, 100, 196-97; *SRA*, 218; *EH*, 126-27.

¹⁰⁸ Moltmann states in *God in Creation* that pneumatology is “well suited to help us to stop thinking of creation and evolution as opposing concepts” (*GC*, 19).

¹⁰⁹ In his most recent work, *Ethics of Hope*, Moltmann writes that “the earth possesses the energy for the evolution of life.” Moltmann, *EH*, 112. Thus evolution pertains to the space given to the earth itself in the act of creation. God has granted the earth this space within which to develop. But God does not appear to be the sovereign cause of the violent processes of evolution. These processes pertain to the integral space of creation.

¹¹⁰ Also, Moltmann, *SRA*, 207; *EH*, 122-23. Drummond suggests that Moltmann shifts his pneumatology regarding the question of evolution between *God and Creation* and *The Way of Jesus Christ*. Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 132-33. My engagement somewhat concurs with this assessment. I think it is better to claim that Moltmann’s intention in *God in Creation* is best interpreted in light of his thought in *The Way of Jesus Christ*.

On the other hand, Moltmann consistently claims that evolution can exhaust neither the divine aim for creation nor the means of realizing that aim. Evolution has too many victims.¹¹¹ Thus, he claims that “Christ brings human beings into harmony with God’s good creation. Orientation toward the forces of nature, which are themselves in need of redemption, does not help” (*SRA*, 68).¹¹² Bauckham notes here a “sharp rejection of Teilhard de Chardin’s thorough-going identification of the evolutionary process with salvation history.”¹¹³ This rejection implicitly applies as well to Berry.

Despite the above ambiguity, for Moltmann, neither suffering nor death is an acceptable condition for the created order. Thus, he maintains that, in the eschatological redemption, this transience will be destroyed.¹¹⁴ The entire cosmos will be freed from its corrupted state. While there is a positive dimension to evolution in which the Spirit is at work, because evolution as it occurs in nature requires suffering and death—and

¹¹¹ Moltmann, *WJC*, 294; *SRA*, 223.

¹¹² William Schweiker critiques Moltmann, saying that he conflates the reverence that humans must have for life on account of its sanctification with the ambiguous harmonious action humans must take in light of this reverence. See William Schweiker, “The Spirit of Life and the Reverence for Life,” in *God’s Life in Trinity*, Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, editors (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 26-31. Schweiker’s error is that he reads Moltmann’s view as eschatological and pneumatological, but not christological. The cross of Christ teaches Christians to protest death. In this protest, reverence leads to action that anticipates the harmony of the eschatological kingdom in which death will be no more (evident in Christ’s resurrection). Schweiker thus seems to commit the error Bauckham warns against: he reads Moltmann’s eschatology apart from his christology by reading *The Coming God* (and, in this case, Moltmann’s pneumatological works) apart from the eschatology developed in *The Way of Jesus Christ*—an error solidified by an examination of the sources Schweiker cites. On this error, see Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 3-4. Ultimately, Schweiker’s plea for the “integrity of life,” which consists of living out one’s own life by seeking that which is required for continued existence and facilitating an environmental ethos in which other creatures may do the same, is very similar to the cosmocentric conservation of thinkers like Berry. See Schweiker, “The Spirit of Life,” 29-31. His position differs from Moltmann (and my own) in his primary claim that “the world around us is neither a ghastly drama [a phrase taken from Albert Schweitzer] nor is awaiting its true creation.” *Ibid.*, 31. Schweiker’s position seems amenable to that of Holmes Rolston. See Holmes Rolston III, “Disvalues in Nature,” *The Monist* 75 (April 1992), 250-78

¹¹³ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 194. See also Moltmann, *WJC*, 293-97; *SRA*, 209.

¹¹⁴ Moltmann, *CoG*, 90-91.

gratuitously so!—it cannot be the final word on the doctrine of creation.¹¹⁵ Even the Spirit’s experience of evolution is part of the divine “sighing” for redemption: “The evolutions and the catastrophes of the universe are also the movements and experiences of the Spirit of creation. That is why Paul tells us that the divine Spirit ‘sighs’ in all created things under the power of futility” (*GC*, 16). In short, evolution cannot be redemptive; for it must be redeemed. For Moltmann, its redeemer is Christ, the victim par excellence of evolution.¹¹⁶

CHRIST AS THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TURNING POINT

Christology is arguably the central theological theme of Moltmann’s work.¹¹⁷ Even his emphasis on eschatology is fundamentally derivative of christology.¹¹⁸ Cosmologically, the Son is the Logos of creation, its wisdom.¹¹⁹ But in the incarnation, the Son becomes the concrete divine assumption of the world’s contradictions. He suffers the wounds of all the suffering. He dies the death of all the dying. Yet he also is resurrected, an event which renders possible the resurrection of all the dead. Thus Christ is the eschatological turning point in history—that point in which the power of death fails

¹¹⁵ Given Moltmann’s position regarding the gratuitous suffering entailed by evolution, it is unfathomable to me that Sideris can write, “In positing a direct involvement for God in ‘creation,’ Moltmann tends to deemphasize evil and suffering, interpreting nature as predominantly harmonious.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 92. Or again that Moltmann’s work “relies heavily on an assumption of harmony in nature.” *Ibid.*, 96. I believe Sideris can only maintain this rather false notion because she only cites *God in Creation*, ignoring Moltmann’s larger theological corpus. For Moltmann would certainly her acknowledgement that “nature does not provide for individual beings.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 265. After all, his central issue with evolution is the sheer vastness of its victims.

¹¹⁶ Drummond astutely identifies Moltmann’s identification of the Spirit with the creative side of evolution and Christ with the darker sides. Deanne-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution*, 46. However, Moltmann also identifies the Spirit with the suffering implied in evolution. See Moltmann, *GC*, 16.

¹¹⁷ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 4-5.

¹¹⁸ Moltmann, *TH*, 178-81; Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 2-10.

¹¹⁹ Moltmann, *SRA*, 30-31.

in its encounter with the divine affirmation of life.¹²⁰ Hence, “Christianity stands or falls with the reality of the raising of Jesus from the dead” (*TH*, 152).

The Cross as Trinitarian Contradiction

Moltmann’s earlier works viewed the various dimensions of Christian theology as facets of eschatology. His seminal *Theology of Hope* parses the significance of God’s messianic promise that has come to fruition in Christ’s resurrection in dialogue with Ernst Bloch’s philosophy of hope.¹²¹ In *The Crucified God*, he explores the significance of Christ’s crucifixion for the life of God and the life of the world.

For Moltmann, the cross constitutes the gathering of the contradictions of the world into a contradiction in the history of the Trinity. At the cross, Jesus takes on the entirety of creation’s corrupted condition.¹²² He experiences the abysmal depths of suffering, the pain of God-forsakenness, and ultimately the finitude of death.¹²³ As Moltmann’s social doctrine of the Trinity begins with the persons in communion as opposed to the oneness of God’s substance or subjectivity, he can claim that the cross reveals the passibility of God.¹²⁴ Likewise, it constitutes a real “death in God” (*TCG*,

¹²⁰ Moltmann, *EH*, 55-56.

¹²¹ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 41-46; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 46-57.

¹²² Moltmann, *TCG*, 246.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 146-53. For Moltmann, the suffering of God is the only adequate response to what he describes as “protest atheism” and the problem of suffering. See *TCG*, 219-27; *TKG*, 47-52.

¹²⁴ Moltmann, *TCG*, 204-5. On this christological point, see Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 47-49, 60-65; Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 45-50; Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 36-37. Bauckham notes the distinction between “God’s incarnate suffering” and “God’s non-incarnate suffering” (60-67). There is indeed this difference in Moltmann’s thought. However, in my reading, Bauckham may only be incorrect when he relegates God’s “non-incarnate” suffering to “empathy” (67). Moltmann does state that Spirit is “*God’s empathy*, his feeling identification with what he loves” (*SL*, 51). However, God the Spirit suffers the contradictions of the world *as the Spirit in the world*. Empathy, which denotes actual suffering that is *vicarious*, seems too transcendent a term to describe God’s suffering in the Spirit because the Spirit actually experiences the events and sources of suffering. That is, God suffers not vicariously, but directly, in the Spirit. Thus Moltmann states, “Through the presence of his own being, God... participates in the destiny of his own creation. Through the Spirit he suffers with the sufferings of his creatures. In the Spirit he experiences their annihilations.” Moltmann, *GC*, 96-97.

207).¹²⁵ It is in this manner that the central contradiction of creation (i.e., life and death) becomes a contradiction *within* the Trinity. The entirety of one of the persons of the Trinity—the *Logos*—dies on the cross.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the Father uniquely suffers the experience of the death of the Son: “The Son suffers dying, the Father suffers the death of the Son” (*TCG*, 243).¹²⁷ And the Spirit protests the separation of each.¹²⁸ In this event, all of the suffering of the created order is taken into the perichoretic union of the Trinity.¹²⁹

But the suffering of Trinity at the cross is not the final event. For Moltmann, the cross is a dialectic event with the resurrection.¹³⁰ The cross reveals the present state of creation; the resurrection reveals its eschatological hope.¹³¹ When Jesus takes on the condition of the world, he also heals it in his resurrection.¹³² Thus, “the transfiguration of Christ’s dead body is the beginning of the transfiguration of all mortal life” (*WJC*, 251). It is in this sense that Ryan Neal notes, “The ground of Moltmann’s hope is the dialectic of the cross and the resurrection.”¹³³

¹²⁵ The phrase “death in God” is Moltmann’s trinitarian resolution of the monotheistic phrase “death of God.” See *TCG*, 200-207.

¹²⁶ Moltmann, *TCG*, 193, 205-06; *TKG*, 79-80.

¹²⁷ Based on this point, it is my opinion that the criticism leveled against Moltmann by Dorothee Soelle is misplaced. The Father is not the “ruling, omnipotent” sadist who causes the suffering of the Son. See Dorothee Soelle, *Suffering*, translated by Everett Kalin (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1975), 26-28. If anything, at the cross the Father experiences a new level of impotence. Consider the question: Would a parent rather die or watch his or her child die? It may be that the suffering of the Father, while different from the Son’s, was nonetheless greater in its own way!

¹²⁸ For the inclusion of the Spirit, see *TKG*, 80-83; *SL*, 60-73.

¹²⁹ Moltmann, *TCG*, 244-47. Moltmann states, “Even Auschwitz is taken up into the grief of the Father, the surrender of the Son and the power of the Spirit” (*Ibid.*, 278). The suffering experienced by God is not limited to humanity, however. It includes all creatures. See Moltmann, *WJC*, 157; *SL*, 75-77.

¹³⁰ Moltmann, *TCG*, 178-87; *TH*, 210-15; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 32-33.

¹³¹ Moltmann, *TH*, 6; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 34.

¹³² On this soteriological dimension of christology, see Moltmann, *WJC*, 44-45. Also, *TCG*, 182-86.

¹³³ Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 1.

The Eschatological Promise and the Resurrection

The concept of promise is significant for Moltmann's messianic theology. "It is from promise that there arises that element of unrest which allows of no coming to terms with a present that is unfulfilled" (*TH*, 89). The promises of God constitute hope and all hope rests on God's promises. For Moltmann, promise, in a sense, constitutes history in that it opens history to a new future.¹³⁴ But in the resurrection, the messianic promises of God regarding the future of creation come to fruition.¹³⁵ Hence, Christ "is the pioneer and leader of the life that lives eternally" (*CoG*, xi). The resurrection is the concrete realization of God's eschatological promise—the burgeoning of a new creation in which death is no more.¹³⁶ In short, "Christ's resurrection is the first day of the new creation" (*HTG*, 77).

Christ's resurrection is thus not merely an interruption of history, but rather the actual advent of the eschaton.¹³⁷

If Christ has been raised *from* the dead, then he takes on proleptic and representative significance *for* all the dead... The process of the resurrection of the dead has begun in him, is continued in 'the Spirit, the giver of life', and will be completed in the raising of the those who are hid, and of all the dead. (*CoG*, 69)

In Christ's resurrection, there occurs a "conquest of the deadliness of death" (*TH*, 196) within history.¹³⁸ The Trinity opens to the cosmos in a new manner—not simply to

¹³⁴ See *TH*, 103-4. For a good reflection on this function of promise in Moltmann's thought, see Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 13-22, 151; Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 12-15; Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 147-48.

¹³⁵ See Law, "Moltmann's Ecological Hermeneutics," 226.

¹³⁶ Moltmann, *TCG*, 171; Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 20.

¹³⁷ See Moltmann, *TH*, 181; *CoG*, 25-29; *WJC*, 250; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 50-51. Moltmann rejects Pannenberg's claim that Christ's resurrection is an historical prolepsis of the coming resurrection. Christ's resurrection is not simply a foretaste, but the actual beginning of the resurrection life coming to the world from God's future. See *CoG*, 195. For considerations of Moltmann in comparison to Pannenberg, see Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 41-42; Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 8-12.

¹³⁸ Moltmann, *WJC*, 252-53.

permit the world a space “in God,” but to bridge that distance and share in perichoretic communion.¹³⁹ The resurrection happens *in history* as *novum*; it thus also happens *to history*.

Christ is the advent of the fulfilled promise for new creation. Yet the promise was given to the “old” creation. Thus, in order for the promise to be fulfilled, there must be continuity between *creatio continua* and *creatio nova*. Christ is the fulfillment of promise at just this point: the new creation of his resurrection is as continuous with the present creation as the resurrected Christ is with the crucified God.¹⁴⁰ For Moltmann “the risen Christ *is* the historical and crucified Jesus, and *vice versa*” (*TCG*, 160). Yet the risen Christ bears a radical newness; for he is *transfigured*.¹⁴¹ Cosmologically, then, Moltmann can say that the eschatological consummation pertains to *creatio originalis* in that it is the fulfillment of *that* creation.¹⁴² *Creatio nova* does not intimate two creations, only this creation transfigured in resurrection, which is “the negation of the negative” (*TH*, 201), the destruction of death and even hell.¹⁴³ Hence, “the end is much more than the beginning” (*CoG*, 264). In Neal’s words, “While creation in the beginning was very good, the new creation in the future will be much more than very good.”¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ Moltmann, *TKG*, 121-22. For the germinal form of this thought, see *TCG*, 274-75.

¹⁴⁰ See Moltmann, *TH*, 184-85; *CoG*, 84-85.

¹⁴¹ Moltmann, *TCG*, 126-27; *CoG*, 28-29.

¹⁴² Thus Prediger is incorrect when he suggests that Moltmann’s category of *novum* robs *creatio continua* of its value and even threatens to annihilate it. Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 244-48. Brian Walsh makes a similar misguided claim. Brian J. Walsh, “The Theology of Hope and the Doctrine of Creation: An Appraisal of Jürgen Moltmann,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 59/1 (1987), 56-57. The “new” comes *to the old* as *novum* and transfigures *it*. The consistency of complete newness of the “new” and the continuity of the “old” with that “new” hinges on this point. The “new” is the eschatological future—God’s coming to the created order. In that radically new event, the created order (“old”) is transfigured and participates in the new, thus being *creatio* (“old”) *nova* (“new”). Because nothing in the old is lost other than the negation of the negative (i.e., transience and death), everything in the old is completely affirmed, but never in isolation from its eschatological *telos*.

¹⁴³ Moltmann, *SRA*, 57; Moltmann, *HTG*, 78.

¹⁴⁴ Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 216.

Christ's Future as the Redemption of Evolution

In his earlier works, Moltmann does not emphasize the importance of christology vis-à-vis the doctrine of creation. His later developments are implicit in some cases and germinal in others. Yet the full development of this line of thought does not surface explicitly until later works such as *God in Creation* and *The Coming of God*.

This development includes what I have already noted above concerning evolution and evil. Moltmann contrasts his own position with that of Teilhard de Chardin by claiming that Christ cannot be merely the pinnacle product of evolution. He also rejects the notion of an “omega point” in which the evolutionary process comes to an historical head.¹⁴⁵ Evolution cannot be a redemptive process. It has too many victims.

Furthermore, the positive outcomes of the evolutionary process do nothing to redeem the suffering of those left in its wake. Those like Teilhard de Chardin and Berry seem to accept that all suffering is redemptive inasmuch as it contributes to the upward movement of the cosmic community through participating in its evolutionary emergence.¹⁴⁶ But for Moltmann, the question is not whether or not all suffering is redemptive in the sense that it is the seed for something greater, but rather whether or not all suffering is redeemed for the individuals that suffer.¹⁴⁷ Thus Bauckham:

In identifying with the godforsaken the crucified God does not sanction their suffering as part of his purpose, because the dialectic of the cross and resurrection still remains. God's purpose is liberation from suffering, promised in the resurrection.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ See Moltmann, *WJC*, 293-97.

¹⁴⁶ On Teilhard de Chardin, see Deanne-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution*, 45. On this point, see also Holmes Rolston III, “Does Nature Need to be Redeemed?” *Zygon* 29 (1994), 205-229. This statement is also true, in a non-evolutionary sense, of Aquinas's thought.

¹⁴⁷ Moltmann, *WJC*, 302-3. I believe Borowitz misses this point in his criticism of Moltmann's dialectics of the cross. See Borowitz, *Contemporary Christologies*, 90-94.

¹⁴⁸ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 87. Also, Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 172.

If any of the victims of evolution are left in their graves, then their suffering is not redeemed.¹⁴⁹

Thus, in contradistinction to Teilhard de Chardin, Moltmann describes Jesus not as the apex of evolution, but rather as its ultimate victim.¹⁵⁰ In the incarnation, Christ suffers the suffering of all the victims of evolution. He dies the death of all the dead, human and nonhuman.¹⁵¹ But in doing so, through his resurrection he becomes the new beginning in which the divine promise of messianic redemption actualizes in history.¹⁵² “Christ died the death of all the living in order to reconcile them all (Col. 1.20) and to fill them with the prospect of eternal life” (*CoG*, 92-93). Christ’s death gathers up the death of the entire cosmos. Likewise, his resurrection will gather up the life of the entire cosmos, drawing it into God’s own triune life. Any less extensive christology is, for Moltmann, too anthropocentric.¹⁵³ Moltmann carries this christological dismantling of anthropocentrism into his pneumatology, maintaining that the Spirit, in various modes of relation to the cosmos, draws all creation into the life of the divine.

PNEUMATOLOGY AS BOTH DIVINE IMMANENCE AND ESCHATOLOGICAL ADVENT

Before *The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit*, discussion of the Spirit was somewhat limited in Moltmann’s thought—a point that opened him to critique.¹⁵⁴ Yet his later work on the Spirit is, like his cosmology, in nascent form in his earlier works.¹⁵⁵ Moltmann’s development of the social doctrine of the Trinity in *Trinity and the Kingdom*

¹⁴⁹ Moltmann, *WJC*, 296.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*. For Moltmann, Jesus could not be the apex of evolution because the incarnation constitutes a genuine *novum* in history. Therefore it must be more than what evolution could ever offer as an apex. One could even say that, for Moltmann, Jesus is not the culmination of the past but rather the future itself—God’s coming and his arrival.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 255.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 253.

¹⁵³ Moltmann, *WJC*, 45; *CoG*, 92-93.

¹⁵⁴ Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 110.

¹⁵⁵ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 151-57.

provides further engagement with the Spirit as a personal member of the Trinity.¹⁵⁶ He continues this trend in *God in Creation*, in which he discusses the significance of pneumatology for cosmology; *The Way of Jesus Christ*, in which he develops a pneumatological christology; and *the Coming of God*, in which he addresses the interplay between pneumatology and eschatology. But his clearest exploration in pneumatology is in his originally unplanned addition to his contributions to systematic theology, *The Spirit of Life*.

The Spirit as Divine Immanence

Cosmologically, Moltmann maintains that the Spirit “has to do with life and its source” (*SL*, 7). In Moltmann’s view, the Spirit, as the breath of God, is the principle of life present in all living things.¹⁵⁷ To establish this position, he draws on the linguistic connection of the Hebrew *ruach*, which translates as breath, wind, and/or spirit. The breath of all creatures is the Spirit, who constitutes the principle of life.¹⁵⁸

Everything that is, exists and lives in the unceasing inflow of the energies of and potentialities of the cosmic Spirit. This means that we have to understand every created reality in terms of energy, grasping it as the realized potentiality of the divine Spirit. Through the energies and potentialities of the Spirit, the Creator is himself present in his creation. He does not merely confront it in his transcendence; entering into it, he is also immanent in it. (*GC*, 9)

The Spirit is thus active in the protological act of creation as the initial principle of life. The Spirit is also present and active in *creatio continua*, preserving the cosmos as

¹⁵⁶ On the personhood of the Spirit, see Moltmann, *TKG*, 125-26.

¹⁵⁷ Moltmann, *SL*, 35. Northcott critiques Moltmann’s panentheistic approach to environmental ethics because it cannot differentiate value on account of the Spirit’s ubiquity. That is, “God as Spirit is in everything including presumably the smallpox virus and the louse.” Michael Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 142. In my view, Northcott’s critique is flawed in that he does not take into account the various modes of the Spirit’s presence in Moltmann’s theology. I will draw this point out below.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 40-43; *HTG*, 72-75. Also, Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 63; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 184-86.

its ongoing principle of life.¹⁵⁹ As the presence of God in the unfolding history of creation, the Spirit is also the manner in which God suffers the fate of the created order.¹⁶⁰ Because the Spirit is the immanence of God in a world subjected to the futility of evolution, the Spirit is “*God’s empathy*, his feeling identification with what he loves” (*SL*, 51). Thus the Spirit is within all sighing in the cosmos—all longing for redemption.¹⁶¹ This sighing is the openness of all creatures in *creatio continua* to *creatio nova*.¹⁶² Furthermore, it is pneumatological immanence that constitutes the community of creation.¹⁶³ The Spirit “indwells both every individual creature and the community of creation,” which entails that all things have a “self-transcendence” (*GC*, 101). Thus the divine Spirit entails a commonality between humanity and the nonhuman creation:

To experience the fellowship of the Spirit inevitably carries Christianity beyond itself into the greater fellowship of all God’s creatures. For *the community of creation*, in which all created things exist with one another, for one another and in one another, is also *the fellowship of the Holy Spirit*. (*SL*, 10)

In this sense, pneumatology shatters anthropocentrism.¹⁶⁴

The Spirit as Prolepsis of God’s Future

If the Spirit is the immanent divine presence in the cosmos from the onset of creation and through its ongoing existence, what is the significance of Pentecost? Moltmann delineates three modes of the Spirit’s indwelling presence to answer this

¹⁵⁹ Moltmann, *HTG*, 75-77; *GC*, xiv, 10.

¹⁶⁰ Moltmann, *SL*, 51; *GC*, 96-97.

¹⁶¹ Moltmann, *SRA*, 206; *TKG*, 111.

¹⁶² The Spirit is further present in history as the facilitator of creation’s openness to its eschatological consummation. Moltmann, *SRA*, 207. French, rightly in my opinion, notes the danger of Moltmann’s thought here. Some eco-systems are so fragile that any openness endangers their integrity. Thus, the notion of creation’s openness to the eschatological future runs the risk of ignoring the plight of creatures that rely on the delicate balances in nature. French, “Returning to Creation,” 83-84.

¹⁶³ Moltmann, *GC*, 11.

¹⁶⁴ Moltmann, *SL*, 37.

question: cosmic, reconciling, and redemptive.¹⁶⁵ I have already noted the Spirit's creative and sustaining role, evident in the Spirit's presence as the principle of life in all things. But the Spirit also has reconciling and redemptive roles. These roles involve the Spirit rendering present the new creation within history and ultimately consummating the cosmos in its eschatological *telos*.¹⁶⁶

Moltmann develops the Spirit's reconciliatory role in his pneumatological christology (and christological pneumatology).¹⁶⁷ The Spirit is present in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ and made present in the world in a new manner through that same life, death, and resurrection.¹⁶⁸ In Bauckham's words,

the Spirit, whose mission derives from the event of the cross and resurrection, moves reality towards the resolution of the dialectic, filling the God-forsaken world with God's presence and preparing for the coming kingdom in which the whole world will be transformed in correspondence to the resurrection of Jesus.¹⁶⁹

Because Christ's death and resurrection constitute, on the one hand, the contradictions of the world being taken into the very life and history of the Trinity and, on the other hand, the new creation burgeoning into the very life and history of the world through the healing of those contradictions, Moltmann associates the Spirit's presence with the new creation. The Spirit is a "sacrament of the kingdom."¹⁷⁰ In the redemption that pours out from the life of Christ, the Spirit becomes the principle of *new* life—eternal life—for the entire created order. In this sense, the Spirit of God pertains to both the

¹⁶⁵ Moltmann, *GC*, 12. Moltmann makes a similar distinction between the modes of Christ's presence in the cosmos. See Moltmann, *WJC*, 286. Corresponding to this distinction, Moltmann also differentiates between both the Spirit's manifestation in history and the Spirit's efficacy in history. On these distinctions, see Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of the Theology*, 127-34.

¹⁶⁶ Thus the same Spirit is present and active cosmologically and eschatologically. Moltmann, *SL*, 9.

¹⁶⁷ On this link between pneumatology and christology, see *ibid.*, 17-18.

¹⁶⁸ Moltmann, *GC*, 95-96; *EH*, 38.

¹⁶⁹ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 5.

¹⁷⁰ See Moltmann, *CPS*, 199-206.

sustaining of the cosmos and its transfiguration. With the Spirit, the entire created order is already drawn into the life of the Trinity. The Spirit's presence is thus the prolepsis of the new creation already within history—the “advance pledge of foretaste of the coming kingdom of glory” (*SL*, 74). In the Spirit, God is more than a conservationist.¹⁷¹ Thus, the new modes of the Spirit's indwelling presence permit dimensions of a transfigurative ethics even within the flow of history.

Finally, the Spirit's eschatological role is not relegated to the present. The Spirit will bring to consummation the indwelling of God in the cosmos.¹⁷² Such is the Spirit's redemptive role in the economy of salvation. It is by the Spirit that the resurrection and transfiguration of the cosmos are completed.¹⁷³ Thus the Spirit preserves creation in its groaning, draws it proleptically into its future, and will ultimately consummate that future eschatologically. In the end, the Spirit “will make petrified conditions dance” (*SL*, 74).

Moltmann's christology and pneumatology both highlight that the end (i.e., the *eschaton*) is that event in which all of creation, even the systems of life themselves, will be transfigured into the life of Christ through the Spirit. It is the transfiguration of creation, the healing of its wounds and its perichoretic union with the divine. It is a maximally inclusive panentheism.

ESCHATOLOGY AS MAXIMALLY INCLUSIVE PANENTHEISM

In *Theology of Hope*, Moltmann views the entire scope of Christian theology through the lens of eschatology vis-à-vis the resurrection of Christ. He maintains that, “from first to last, and not merely in the epilogue, Christianity *is* eschatology, is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and

¹⁷¹ Moltmann, *GC*, 209; *HTG*, 77-79; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 188-89.

¹⁷² Moltmann, *GC*, 149-150.

¹⁷³ Moltmann, *TKG*, 123-24.

transforming the present” (*TH*, 16). Yet Moltmann’s eschatology diverges from the traditional “last things.”¹⁷⁴ Here, I explore this divergence in three dimensions: first, the import of sabbath and Shekinah for Moltmann’s eschatology; second, the scope of the eschatological community in his theology; and third, his understanding of the advent of *novum* in relation to phenomenological future.

The Redemption of Time and Space: Eschatological Panentheism

Already in *Theology of Hope*, Moltmann writes about an “all-inclusive eschatology which expects... a new being for all things” (*TH*, 190). He develops this view in *The Coming of God* in which he argues that such an eschatology must include both time and space. I here consider each inclusion in turn.

The subject of time is a complex dimension of Moltmann’s thought.¹⁷⁵ On the one hand, he understands phenomenological time—the “time of creation”—as being created with the created order. In the act of creation, “God withdrew his own eternity into himself in order to take time for his creation and to leave his creation its own particular time” (*GC*, 114). On the other hand, God’s eternity is not without time.¹⁷⁶ In favor of Boethius’s view, Moltmann claims that eternity is not the absence of time but its fullness—all time gathered together.¹⁷⁷ Eternity is thus a qualitative qualifier of time, not

¹⁷⁴ In Schwarz’s estimation, “Moltmann moves so far away from a one-sided emphasis on the so-called ‘last things’... that he almost forgets to mention these last things.” Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 149.

¹⁷⁵ For a good summary, see Richard Bauckham, “Time and Eternity,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), especially 158-73.

¹⁷⁶ On this tension, see Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 147-48.

¹⁷⁷ For a summary of Boethius’s view as well as a challenge to understandings of it that draw upon the notion of duration, see Garrett J. DeWeese, *God and the Nature of Time* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 134-45. On Moltmann’s view, see Moltmann, *SRA*, 62-63; *CoG*, 280-81, 291. This view of eternity as cyclical time in a diachronic present also applies to the cosmic experience of eternity. See Moltmann, *CoG*, 71. Polkinghorne offers a good critique of Moltmann on this point, stating that eternal time should still be thought of as linear. See Polkinghorne, “Moltmann’s Engagement with the Natural Sciences,” 62-66.

a quantitative one.¹⁷⁸ Creation is indeed subject to change in time. It is this mutability that endows the cosmos with an openness for the new future God desires for it.¹⁷⁹ But this mutability is neither identical with time nor antithetical to eternity. Thus, God's eternity is not inimical to change; rather, "God's eternity...means God's unrestricted and perfect livingness and his inexhaustibly creative fullness of life" (*SRA*, 63). Because time, eternity, and change are not contradictory terms, Moltmann can speak of "eternal time," which is the time of consummated history. Concerning this time, he states that it is

permissible to assume that in the kingdom of glory there will be time and history, future and possibility, and these to an unimpeded degree... This of course means thinking of change without transience, time without past, and life without death. (*GC*, 213)¹⁸⁰

But the concept of time is more complicated still on account of the priority Moltmann ascribes to the future.¹⁸¹ He follows Georg Picht and Bloch in claiming that the past is that which is complete and unalterable—realized being. The future is that which may actualize within history—potential being. The present is that moment of "now" in which potential becomes real and unalterable (i.e., it happens) or becomes unrealized (i.e., it does not happen)—actual being.¹⁸² This flow of time gives priority to the future; for

¹⁷⁸ Moltmann, *EH*, 58.

¹⁷⁹ Moltmann, *CoG*, 283; *GC*, 197-214. Bauckham refers to this openness as the positive side of historical time, the negative side being transience. See Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 173, 183.

¹⁸⁰ Bauckham suggests—rightly in my opinion—that Moltmann must clarify the manner in which eternal time can account for mutability while not slipping into transience. Prediger seems to doubt such a possibility. Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 237. But I believe Bauckham makes a fine point in suggesting that "time without past" could mean the possibility of newness (i.e., future) without the transient threat of nothingness (i.e., past). Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 162-63, 183-86.

¹⁸¹ See Moltmann, *GC*, 118-24. Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 202-3. For a consideration of this preference and its development in Moltmann's thought in critical dialogue with Pannenberg, see Bauckham, *Messianic Theology*, 93-96.

¹⁸² Moltmann, *CoG*, 286.

if reality is real-ized potentially, then potentiality must be higher ontologically than reality. If out of the future there is past, but out of past there is never again future, then the future must have pre-eminence among the modes of time. (*CoG*, 287)

This move permits Moltmann to give absolute precedence to the eschatological future, which differs from the phenomenological future in that it never becomes the past.¹⁸³ This future “is the transcendent possibility of time in general” (*CoG*, 287). It is the source of all time and that for which time is destined. In brief, that eschatological future is nothing other than the Trinity’s openness to cosmic time in eternity.¹⁸⁴

The Trinity’s openness to time is an openness to the unique (i.e., non-eternal) time of the cosmos. This openness is the foundation for the eschatological possibilities of phenomenological time. Yet the openness itself is costly for God. For phenomenological time is, in the unfolding history of the world, a time of transience—that is, a time of suffering and death. The divine openness to this time entails that these darker sides of it will affect the divine in eternity. This cost is evident both in the Spirit who suffers the contradictions of history and in the cross. God’s willingness to bear this cost entailed in the Trinity’s openness to cosmic time renders possible the inclusion of the transient cosmos in eternity. The Trinity is open to include and transfigure phenomenological time into eternity.

This inclusion is evident in the sabbath, the true crown of God’s created work in which the entire created order shares in God’s rest, the pure enjoyment of life. In this

¹⁸³ However, Moltmann’s preference for the future is true both within phenomenological time itself and with reference to the eschatological future. See Jürgen Moltmann, “The Bible, the Exegete and the Theologian,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 228.

¹⁸⁴ As promise, this eschatological future constitutes historical time, which becomes messianic time with the Christ event. The intersection of historical and messianic time constitutes eschatological time, which will become eternal time when the future fully transforms history in line with the divine promise. Moltmann, *GC*, 124.

sense, the historical sabbath is the proleptic link between *creatio continua* and the *creatio nova* of eschatological consummation.¹⁸⁵ In Moltmann's words, "The sabbath opens creation for its future. On the sabbath the redemption of the world is celebrated in anticipation" (*GC*, 276). Thus, the redemption of time is already evident in the first creation narrative through the crown of God's creative work. In the sabbath, God sanctifies time. For as Moltmann frequently points out, the sabbath has no night.¹⁸⁶ The divine rest thus encompasses the scope of time within it.¹⁸⁷ The sabbath also evinces the Trinity's openness to time. For in creating it, God does not begrudge his creatures a share in trinitarian rest.

What about space? Again, because God is the Creator, nothing created can fall away in the new creation. Thus, not only time, but also all space must be drawn into God's life. Just as the Trinity opens itself to time, so also it opens itself to space.

I have already explored the Trinity's openness to space in the cosmological exploration of Moltmann's appropriation of *creatio ex nihilo*. This appropriation is significant here and warrants revisiting. As with time, the divine openness to space is adumbrated in the first creation narrative in which God withdraws in order to make space (i.e., *nihilo*) for the created order to fill. This withdrawal necessitates a distance between God and the cosmos.¹⁸⁸ Hence, the created order is not divine; for God's openness here entails withdrawal for the sake of the integrity of the other. Yet this distance does not denote a divine absence. Rather, God gives the cosmos its own space by allowing it to

¹⁸⁵ Moltmann, *WJC*, 119-22; *CoG*, 266; *EH*, 121; Moltmann, "The Liberation of the Future and Its Anticipations in History" (hereafter LTF), in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 279-80.

¹⁸⁶ Moltmann, *GC*, 277.

¹⁸⁷ See Law, "Moltmann's Ecological Hermeneutics," 230-31.

¹⁸⁸ Moltmann, *CoG*, 296-97.

exist “in God”—that is, in the absolute space of God.¹⁸⁹ In this sense, Moltmann couples his notion of the immanence of the divine Spirit in creation with the divine transcendence that is necessary for the creation’s integrity. Without the space created in the divine withdrawal and the resulting distance this space necessitates, the created order could not be a genuine partner before God.

In order to describe this tension between immanence and transcendence, Moltmann draws on the notion of God’s Shekinah, which he appropriates from rabbinic and kabbalistic thought.¹⁹⁰ The term denotes a division within God that allows God to be both present in the created order and transcendent to it. Says Rosenzweig, “God cuts himself off from himself. He gives himself away to his people.”¹⁹¹ Moltmann states that “the same thing is true in its own degree of the indwelling of God in the creation of his love: he gives himself away to the beings he has created, he suffers with their sufferings, he goes with them through the misery of the foreign land” (Moltmann, *GC*, 15). Moltmann links the Shekinah specifically to God the Spirit.¹⁹² He goes as far as to say that, as the Spirit/Shekinah, God is in exile with the created order, suffering all of its contradictions in history.¹⁹³ In this sense, Moltmann maintains that God is open to the creation in both opening the divine space to make a unique space for the created order and in cutting God’s own self off in order to share that cosmic space with the creation.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 147-57; *CoG*, 299.

¹⁹⁰ He is particularly influenced by Rosenzweig at this point. See Moltmann, *GC*, 15.

¹⁹¹ Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung*; quoted in Moltmann, *GC*, 15.

¹⁹² See Moltmann, *GC*, 15, 96; *SL*, 47-51.

¹⁹³ Moltmann, *GC*, 97.

¹⁹⁴ In this sense, Moltmann’s use of the term Shekinah—along with his pneumatology—guards against the hesitation of Christopher Southgate that Moltmann’s understanding of *creatio ex nihilo* might imply “that there is an ontological ‘space’ to which God is not present.” Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 59.

Just as the sabbath proleptically evinces God's openness to share God's eternal time with the created order, so also the Shekinah proleptically evinces God's openness to share with it the divine space.¹⁹⁵ Hence, the distance between God and the world is not the final destiny of the creation. If the redemption of phenomenological time is the dismantling of transience through the perichoretic union of phenomenological time and eternity, the redemption of space is the traversing of the distance implied by cosmic space through the perichoretic union of the Trinity and the cosmos. The eschatological *telos* of the cosmos is a perichoretic indwelling with the Triune God. This mutual indwelling occurs when God comes to dwell in the spaces of the world.¹⁹⁶ As the persons of the Trinity interpenetrate each other in a perichoretic union, so also the Trinity and creation will interpenetrate one other in the eschaton.¹⁹⁷ So the world becomes "*God's eternal home country.*" Conversely, God becomes "*the eternal home of everything he has created.*"¹⁹⁸

Thus the original divine self-limitation implied by *creatio ex nihilo* corresponds to an eschatological de-limitation in which God comes to earth in order to be at home.¹⁹⁹ Yet this divine traversing of the original distance between God and creation—which is literally the negation of the original "nothing" of creation—obliterates the uniqueness of neither the Trinity nor the world: "In the consummation, everything in its unique character (and therefore without losing itself) will dwell within the Deity beyond" (*IEB*,

¹⁹⁵ Moltmann, *CoG*, 283.

¹⁹⁶ Moltmann, *CoG*, 306.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 278, 307; Moltmann, *In the End, the Beginning: A Life of Hope* (hereafter *IEB*), translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 103.

¹⁹⁸ Moltmann, *IEB*, 157-58.

¹⁹⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 88-89. See Moltmann, *CoG*, 294, for a concise explanation of his view on the eschatological moment and time and space.

158). Said differently, “The world will find space in God in a worldly way when God indwells the world in a divine way.”²⁰⁰

The Maximally Inclusive Eschatological Community of Creation

As noted, the scope of Moltmann’s eschatology includes not only time and space, but all the times of all spaces. According to Moltmann’s cosmology, the creation is allotted its time and space by divine withdrawal. Time and space are then filled with life infused with the Spirit. This life, too, is the subject of God’s redemptive scope.

Eschatology thus embraces all things. Bauckham notes this all-inclusive eschatology has three underlying foundations.²⁰¹ First, God is both Creator and Redeemer; therefore, all creation must be redeemed. Creation and redemption, cosmology and eschatology, are intricately and irrevocably linked. For Moltmann, “without cosmology, eschatology must inevitably turn into a gnostic myth of redemption” (*CoG*, 260). Second, Christ died for all; therefore his resurrection must apply to all.²⁰² Third, all creation is interconnected; therefore, the resurrection of part of the creation implies the resurrection of the entire creation. Thus, Moltmann’s eschatology establishes a link between his cosmology and christology: “Unless *the whole* cosmos is reconciled, Christ cannot be the Christ of God and cannot be the foundation of all things” (*WJC*, 306).²⁰³ In short, every single instantiation of life that has ever lived must be gathered up into eschatological redemption.

²⁰⁰ Moltmann, “The World in God or God in the World?” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 41.

²⁰¹ Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 12-13.

²⁰² On this claim, see Moltmann, *CoG*, 69-70; *WJC*, 193-94.

²⁰³ See Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 16-17.

Regarding humanity, Moltmann's inclusive eschatology has two key facets. First, humans are saved as embodied.²⁰⁴ As already noted, Moltmann rejects the notion of the immortality of the soul in favor of the notion of the resurrection of the flesh.²⁰⁵ Second, Moltmann's theology naturally gravitates toward a universalism in which Christ redeems both the victimized and the victimizer.²⁰⁶ "As the crucified one, the risen Christ is there 'for all'. In the cross of the Son of God, in his abandonment by God, the 'crucified' God is the human God of all godless men and those who have been abandoned by God" (*TCG*, 195). This claim leads Moltmann to critique juridical interpretations of eschatological judgment, which for Moltmann is "not retaliatory justice...that gives everyone their 'just deserts'" (*CoG*, 250), but rather the divine setting right of all that has gone astray.²⁰⁷ In judgment, nothing will be left behind or unredeemed.²⁰⁸ In Schwarz's words, "There are no dark spots left on the landscape."²⁰⁹ Thus a universal resurrection of all life is essential to the very idea of justice, for neither the victimized nor the victimizers can be left in their graves.²¹⁰ For the sake of judgment, "all the disrupted conditions in creation must be put right so that the new creation can stand on the firm ground of righteousness and justice, and can endure to eternity" (*SRA*, 141). This putting right "embraces the

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁰⁵ Moltmann, *CoG*, 58-77; T. David Beck, *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things: Pneumatology in Paul and Jürgen Moltmann* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007), 130-31.

²⁰⁶ Moltmann, *SL*, 129-37; *SRA*, 136-37; *HTG*, 44-53; *CoG*, 251. Moltmann notes that both the double outcome of judgment and apokatastasis are attested to in scripture. See Moltmann, *CoG*, 237-43. While Moltmann leans in the direction of apokatastasis, he maintains that understanding justice as God's setting all things right does not necessitate a universal reconciliation. See Moltmann, *WJC*, 338.

²⁰⁷ Moltmann, *CoG*, 235-37, 250-51; *SRA*, 4. For an overview, see Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 47-51. It is therefore a mistake when Beck states that nonhumans will not experience judgment because they lack moral capability. Beck, *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things*, 131. Beck here seems to misread Moltmann's notion of judgment as juridical punishment. Judgment pertains to all things inasmuch as all things require justice as victims of transience.

²⁰⁸ Moltmann distinguishes between "apocalyptic Christianity," which views justice as retaliation, and "Christian eschatology," which views justice as rehabilitation. Moltmann, *WJC*, 337-38.

²⁰⁹ Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 151.

²¹⁰ Moltmann, *SRA*, 41; *WJC*, 296-97.

universal reconciliation of human beings and the *bringing again of all things* into the new eternal creation” (SRA, 141). If all is not set right, then judgment is not complete. Thus, God’s “‘Last Judgment’ has no ‘double outcome’, but serves the universal establishment of the divine righteousness and justice, for the new creation of all things” (CoG, 243).²¹¹

Moltmann’s claim that humans will be saved only as embodied is coupled with his claim that they will be saved only as en-cosmised. “There is no resurrection of the dead without the new earth in which death will be no more” (CoG, 69). Regarding the nonhuman creation, then, Moltmann maintains that eschatological consummation and the transfiguration of the cosmos, including its systems of development, are irrevocably connected. Furthermore, Moltmann emphasizes that *all flesh* will experience resurrection and redemption.²¹² He is explicit that the word “all” includes nonhuman animals.²¹³ Furthermore it is not simply all species of animals, but every individual animal that has ever lived, that will participate in God’s eternity without losing its individual particularity.²¹⁴ Not only will each individual creature be resurrected, but all times of each creature will be resurrected and experienced by that creature diachronically. Bauckham refers to this eternal existence as Moltmann’s “novel concept of resurrection” in which “all creatures as they are diachronically in the process of their history and in all their temporal relationships with other creatures, will be resurrected and transfigured in eternity.”²¹⁵

²¹¹ On this point see also Jürgen Moltmann, “The Logic of Hell,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 43-47.

²¹² Moltmann, *CoG*, 69-70.

²¹³ Moltmann, *WJC*, 335.

²¹⁴ Moltmann, *CoG*, 306-8.

²¹⁵ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 210.

Thus, for Moltmann, the resurrection is the resurrection of “all the living.”²¹⁶ Moltmann is so adamant about this point that he claims that “if we were to surrender hope for as much as one single creature, for us God would not be God” (*CoG*, 132). Thus, “the new creation will not only manifest in the liberty of the children of God. It will also bring ‘the deification of the cosmos’ through the unhindered participation of all created beings in the livingness of God.”²¹⁷

Moltmann’s emphasis on the resurrection of all flesh derives from his christological claim that Jesus is the ultimate victim of evolution. In his death, Christ dies the death of all the victims of evolutionary emergence.²¹⁸ Likewise, his resurrection is the hope for a new future for all of those victims. Redemption thus “runs counter to evolution” as “the divine tempest of the new creation, which sweeps out of God’s future over history’s fields of the dead, waking and gathering every last created being” (*WJC*, 303). In running counter to evolution, redemption actually encompasses evolution within it; for “the forces of nature...are themselves in need of redemption” (*SRA*, 68).

The nature of Christian resurrection hope thus constrains “every personal eschatology... to press forward to ever-widening circles to cosmic eschatology.”²¹⁹ Thus, for Moltmann the scope of eschatological redemption is quite broad. It includes both time and space. It includes every single life. The effect of Jesus’s resurrection is so extensive that it includes “plants, stones, and all cosmic life-systems” (*WJC*, 258) in the

²¹⁶ Moltmann, *CoG*, 69-70.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 92.

²¹⁸ Moltmann’s claim that Christ dies the death of all those that die is grounded upon two fundamental claims. The first is that the hope for the resurrection of the “flesh” “reaches out beyond the human dead, according to Old Testament language; for the Old Testament formula ‘all flesh’ or ‘no flesh’... does not just mean human beings in their physical constitution; it means animals too—that is, ‘all the living.’” Moltmann, *CoG*, 69-70. The second claim is that death is the enemy for all creation, not simply humanity. In assuming flesh in general, Jesus takes on death for all creatures. In his resurrection, consequently, he offers the hope for the resurrection for all flesh. Moltmann, *WJC*, 193-94.

²¹⁹ Moltmann, *CoG*, 70.

hope for eternal existence. Furthermore, because Moltmann's vision of the creation is thoroughly relational, even the beautiful needs redemption in its relation to that which is not beautiful.²²⁰ The cooperation of nature needs redeemed in the face of nature's bloody competition. So maximally inclusive is Moltmann's notion of eschatological redemption, even God is included in it inasmuch as God's "exiled Shekinah" is finally able to come to rest in proper relationship with the created order.²²¹ Because God suffers the creation its own space, "the deliverance or redemption of the world is bound up with the self-deliverance of God from his sufferings" (*TK*, 60). The consummation of cosmic history is constitutive for trinitarian history as well.²²² In this sense, there is nothing, neither creation nor God, that is not swept up in the hope for redemption.²²³

²²⁰ Thus Moltmann claims that "nature" is, by definition, that which needs to be redeemed. Moltmann, *CoG*, 93.

²²¹ Moltmann, *CoG*, 305-6; *SL*, 48-49. Elsewhere, Moltmann talks about the "divine 'need'" that results from the initial kenosis of the creative act. See *TKG*, 58-60. Of course, such need is not the same as the utter contingency of human need. As Moltmann himself notes, "In Christian theology one would not go so far as to declare God 'in need of redemption'" (Moltmann, "GKC," 281). See also, Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 124-28.

²²² For a clarification on this language, see Moltmann's position in juxtaposition with others that he rejects concerning the significance of eschatology for God. Moltmann, *CoG*, 323-39.

²²³ This maximally inclusive eschatology—particularly the claim that every single instantiation of life will be the subject of Christ's redeeming work and will thus be resurrected—has been the subject of critique. See, for instance, John Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 122-23. Polkinghorne permits that all kinds of nonhuman life/creation may participate in the eschatological consummation through species representation, but not that every instantiation of life will. In Bauckham's view, Moltmann's "theological basis is plainly inadequate for the ethical distinctions that need to be made... It makes death as such an undifferentiated evil in the face of which all creatures have the right to life." Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 211. Moltmann would respond, I believe, by saying that justice requires every individual victim of the evolutionary process to be redeemed. Bauckham himself recognizes this logic. Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 183. For Moltmann, the "resurrection of nature... is not a romantic wonder-world, but a realistic matter of right and justice" (*EH*, 114). If the suffering of any victim is left unredeemed *for that victim*, God cannot be genuinely just. Thus, every life victimized either in the unfolding evolutionary emergence of existence or in relation to humanity's misuse of creation must be brought to rest in God. Southgate notes the stark difference on this point between Rolston and Moltmann. Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 82-83. Rolston accepts that individuals are continuously redeemed in the progressive movement of the whole. See Rolston, "Does Nature Need to be Redeemed?" 205-29. At any rate, even if this view seems inadequate for ethical differentiation in cosmic time, this inadequacy does not negate its theological validity. Yet this judgment is dependent upon the manner of Moltmann's understanding of how eschatological hope affects history.

“Already” and “Not Yet” Versus Advent and Novum

One of the Moltmann’s achievements is portraying the significance of eschatology for history. He does not develop his eschatology in a vacuum. He is affected by the historical millenarianism of Constantinian Christianity and the 19th century Christian optimism that he rejects and in contrast to which he affirms eschatological millenarianism.²²⁴ He is likewise affected by the general recovery of eschatology from Albert Schweitzer to Karl Barth.²²⁵ Yet he distances his own view from theirs. In *The Coming of God*, Moltmann states,

in dispute with consistently futurist eschatology and the absolute eschatology of eternity, I propose to follow the line taken in *The Theology of Hope*, and put forward *Advent* as an eschatological category, and the category *Novum* as its historical reverse side. (*CoG*, 6)

A futurist eschatology transports eschatology into time, thus rendering it merely a “not yet” of the “already.”²²⁶ An absolute eschatology of eternity risks surrendering the significance of history in the crisis entailed by a wholly other eternity breaking into time.²²⁷ In contradistinction to these two positions, Moltmann suggests that “the eschaton is neither the future of time nor timeless eternity. It is God’s coming and his arrival” (*CoG*, 22). By this claim, Moltmann intends to distinguish eschatology from phenomenological time and thereby emphasize its genuine newness. The eschaton neither develops naturally out of the flow of history nor has no meaning for the flow of

²²⁴ See Moltmann, *CoG*, 146-202; Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 45; Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 150-51; Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 21-22. For a summary and critique of Moltmann’s view, see Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 207-13.

²²⁵ See Moltmann, *TH*, 23-81; Bauckham, “Time and Eternity,” 155-57, 174-78.

²²⁶ Moltmann places both Albert Schweitzer and Oscar Cullmann in this category. Moltmann, *CoG*, 7-13.

²²⁷ Moltmann, *CoG*, 13-14. On both accounts, see Bauckham, “Time and Eternity,” 157.

history. To explicate this position, he offers the related notions of *adventus* and *novum*.²²⁸

Novum is that which is genuinely new and thus cannot merely burgeon out of the latencies of history (i.e., the pregnancy of the past).²²⁹ It must meet history from the future, permitting “eschatological surprise.”²³⁰ Because *novum* meets history, the new must not discard the “old.” Thus *novum* cannot obliterate history in its coming. It must meet history within history and transfigure it. *Novum* comes from *adventus*, which Moltmann juxtaposes to *futurum*. *Futurum* is that which develops out of and within the flow of historical time.²³¹ *Adventus*, on the other hand, is the eschatological future that comes to phenomenological time and encounters it. In this encounter, the entirety of the “old” is transformed into the genuinely “new”—*novum*. Hence Moltmann can say that *adventus* is “*God’s* future...the future of time itself.”²³² This newness neither occurs from within history itself nor without history itself.²³³ Because newness is possible in the eschatological advent, there can be genuine proleptic experiences of it in history. However, these experiences are only anticipations that “correspond to the future of the coming God,” for the kingdom is not a matter of human effort in history.²³⁴ This hope for genuine newness and its *anticipations* even within the ebb and flow of historical time

²²⁸ The following discussion derives from Moltmann, *CoG*, 25-29. For a discussion of these terms in relation to Moltmann’s historical context, see Beck, *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things*, 121-26. For the influence of Bloch at this point, see Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 27-32.

²²⁹ Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 21.

²³⁰ Beck, *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things*, 126.

²³¹ Moltmann, *CoG*, 25; Bauckham, “Time and Eternity,” 163-64.

²³² Moltmann, *LTF*, 265.

²³³ Moltmann, *GC*, 132-33.

²³⁴ Moltmann, *LTF*, 289. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 104-6; Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 23; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 93.

permit Moltmann to avoid, on the one hand, a mere conservation of the world as it is and, on the other, efforts to progressively complete the kingdom within history.²³⁵

As an example of this newness, Moltmann refers to the resurrection.²³⁶ The resurrected Christ does not evolve naturally from the crucified Jesus. But neither is the resurrected Christ anyone other than the crucified Jesus, transfigured.²³⁷ Thus, the new is not bound to the unfolding sequence of the old. Neither is the old obliterated with the coming of the new.²³⁸ In Bauckham's words, "Historical time cannot produce it [the eschatological future], but nor is it unrelated to historical time: it comes to time to transform it."²³⁹ Such is the image of God's coming to the created order. Advent enables *novum*, which implies transfiguration—"a glorifying and a transformation" (*TK*, 123)—but never a replacement.

How does eschatology impact the present? One of the clearest ways is the work of the Spirit within the church. Thus it is pertinent to consider briefly Moltmann's ecclesiology.

²³⁵ See Moltmann, *LTF*, 276-79. Lisa Sideris is extremely critical of any appropriation of eschatological theology into ecological ethics. See, for example, Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 189-93. But she seems almost always to misrepresent uses of eschatology in both theology and ethics. This failure is most evident in her critique of Moltmann, whom she profoundly misreads. First, she argues that Moltmann's eco-theology is grounded upon a "hope for restoration to *pre-Fall conditions*." Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 191; italics added. This claim is problematic on two counts. In the first place, while Moltmann at times uses the imagery of Eden in a mythic sense, he is adamant in the denial of its historical existence. Second, Moltmann's cosmology is more influenced by Eastern thinkers like Irenaeus than those who claim creation fell from perfection. That is, Moltmann does not hope for a restoration of something in the past; he hopes for something genuinely *novum*. On both these points, see above. Indeed, the concept of *novum* (newness) is so central to Moltmann's thought, it is curious that Sideris could equate it with "an eschatological restoration of nature to its original state." Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 191.

²³⁶ Moltmann, *CoG*, 28-29.

²³⁷ See Moltmann, *TH*, 206-7; *TCG*, 160; *TKG*, 123.

²³⁸ See Bauckham, "Eschatology in *The Coming of God*," 5-7.

²³⁹ Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," 157.

ECCLESIOLOGY AS HOPE AND MISSION

Between his understanding of what constitutes the church and his vision of the relationship between the church and Israel, Moltmann's ecclesiology is complex.²⁴⁰ My aim here is not at all a comprehensive overview. Rather, I seek only to establish Moltmann's general understanding that the church is the community of hope that witnesses proleptically to the eschatological future. The church is thus "the agent of eschatological unrest."²⁴¹

In the wake of the resurrection, the Spirit works to draw all creation from the suffering of the cross into the glory of the resurrection.²⁴² In this sense, the creation is not statically awaiting eschatological redemption. It is rather immersed in the burgeoning of that redemption by the presence of the Spirit.²⁴³ For Moltmann, humanity, and most visibly the church, is to proclaim in word and deed the new creation in the present.²⁴⁴

The church's

universal mission is to prepare the way for this future. Christianity prepares for it now by already drawing everything into its worship of God, and by respecting everything, each in its own right, in 'reverence for life.' (SRA, 32)

Bauckham succinctly summarizes Moltmann on this point:

Christian eschatology is the hope that the world will be different. It is aroused by a promise whose fulfilment can come only from God's eschatological action transcending all the possibilities of history, since it involves the end of all evil, suffering and death in the glory of the divine presence indwelling all things. But it

²⁴⁰ For competent summaries of Moltmann's ecclesiology, see Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 119-50; Müller-Fahrenholz, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 80-106; Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical and Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2002), 126-33.

²⁴¹ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 102.

²⁴² See Moltmann, *TKG*, 89; *SL*, 234.

²⁴³ The present reality of redemption preceded Moltmann's full theological development of the Spirit's role in new creation. See *TH*, 139; *TCG*, 168-170, 278. However, on the inclusion of the Spirit, see also *TH*, 211-12; *TCG*, 244-46.

²⁴⁴ Moltmann, *CPS*, 76-84, 189-96; *TH*, 20-22; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 13-14.

is certainly not therefore without effect in the present. On the contrary, the resurrection set in motion a historical process in which the promise already affects the world and moves in the direction of its future transformation. This process is the universal mission of the church.²⁴⁵

The church is centered on the notion of hope, the role of which can hardly be overstated in Moltmann's thought. Hope pertains to the essence of Christianity.²⁴⁶ It is that which makes eschatology the subject of advent. As such, eschatology is always a combination of hope and praxis.²⁴⁷ There is no real hope without ethics.²⁴⁸ For Christian conversion is conversion to God's future. It is "the anticipation of life in the kingdom of God in the conditions of the old world" (*WJC*, 102).²⁴⁹ This conversion is made possible by God's coming, which is the ultimate subject of hope.²⁵⁰

If this anticipatory life of hope is true of the Christian, it is also true of the church: "The church in the power of the Holy Spirit is not yet the kingdom of God, but it is its anticipation in history" (*CPS*, 196). Because the church is not yet—nor can it be—the kingdom, it must anticipate the kingdom by suffering the contradictions of the world as an exiled community.²⁵¹ In these contradictions, it endures the fellow-suffering of the entire created order in love. This solidarity with all creation drives the church to act as a herald of the eschatological future.²⁵² In this manner, "the *pro-missio* of the kingdom is the ground of the *missio* of love to the world" (*TH*, 209). Such is the church's essentially "eschatological orientation" (*TH*, 309).

²⁴⁵ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 10; also, Moltmann, *SL*, 230-31.

²⁴⁶ Moltmann, *TH*, 308-9.

²⁴⁷ This combination is at the heart of *Theology of Hope*. Moltmann, *TH*, 16; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 6.

²⁴⁸ Moltmann, *TH*, 18.

²⁴⁹ For a good reflection on the function of the phrase "kingdom of God" in Moltmann's thought, including its irrevocable connection to christology, see Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 39-55.

²⁵⁰ Schwarz, *Eschatology*, 150.

²⁵¹ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 146-50; Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 31-36; Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God*, 77-85.

²⁵² See Moltmann, *GSS*, 105; Neal, *Theology as Hope*, 78-85.

Part of this witnessing entails contradicting the world by alleviating the suffering of creatures. “Those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it” (*TH*, 7). Moltmann draws on the Orthodox notion of humans as priests of creation as a way of discussing this role of alleviating suffering.²⁵³ In the Spirit, members of the church are led “into solidarity with all other created things. They suffer *with* nature under the power of transience, and they hope *for* nature, waiting for the manifestation of liberation” (*GC*, 101). Says Moltmann:

Faith may be able to free us from the religious fear of death, if that means fear of judgment... But *love* brings us into solidarity with the whole sad and sighing creation. We die into the earth, which is need of redemption and awaits it. *Hope*, finally, means that we cannot come to terms with dying at all, or with any death whatsoever, but remain inconsolable until redemption comes. (*CoG*, 93)

Hope for a future without death leads the church to be the life-embracing witness to that future.²⁵⁴ But what does this witness entail? It entails “resistance against the forces of death and unconditional love for life” (*EH*, 55). In a world of death, the church is a proleptic witness to the eschatological future of the world evident in the resurrection of Christ. In its life-affirmation in the Spirit, the church’s hope is transformative for the world.²⁵⁵

MOLTMANN’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

To this point, I have offered an explication of dimensions of Moltmann’s theology pertinent to my thesis. Here I delineate Moltmann’s general ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration, particularly with regard to the whole—the cosmic community. In the next section I will examine his ethics with regard to individual nonhuman animals and

²⁵³ See Moltmann, *GC*, 189-90; *WJC*, 307-12.

²⁵⁴ Moltmann, *TH*, 17.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 311-12; *CPS*, 191-96; Harvie, *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope*, 89.

suggest why I believe this ethics is inconsistent with the theological foundations I have outlined above.

COSMOCENTRISM AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY

Moltmann specifically targets anthropocentrism as a central culprit in the ecological crisis.²⁵⁶ He furthermore acknowledges (Western) Christianity's part in this philosophical legacy.²⁵⁷ The radical monotheism of Western theology validates hierarchal views of the world in which nature becomes merely the object of human use. It is just this human-centered worldview that Christianity must shed if it is to have anything relevant to say in its current context.²⁵⁸ Humans must learn about other creatures not for the sake of domination, but rather to know how best to love them for their own sakes.²⁵⁹ The shedding of anthropocentrism begins with God's social nature, which replaces the rule of the one with the community of the many.²⁶⁰

Moltmann's rejection of anthropocentrism in favor of a cosmic community is similar to Berry's position.²⁶¹ This rejection in no way lessens concern for human well-being.²⁶² Moltmann is adamant: "The dignity of human beings is unforfeitable" (*GC*, 233). But the dignity of humanity is not categorically unique. It is a manifestation of the dignity of the created order. In the cosmic community, each individual member has its own intrinsic dignity as part of the whole. The individual is not dissolved into the whole. Neither is the whole disregarded on account of individual ambition. Rather each member

²⁵⁶ Moltmann, *SRA*, 190-92; *GSS*, 96-101; *SL*, 29-31; *WJC*, 271-72; *EH*, 61. See also Law, "Moltmann's Ecological Hermeneutics," 23-25.

²⁵⁷ Moltmann, *GSS*, 98; *SL*, 36-37; *EH*, 135-36.

²⁵⁸ Moltmann reviews both creation spirituality and the Gaia hypothesis positively inasmuch as they both move toward this shedding of anthropocentrism. See Moltmann, *GSS*, 101-110; *EH*, 109-11.

²⁵⁹ Moltmann, *GC*, 69-70.

²⁶⁰ Moltmann, *EH*, 68.

²⁶¹ Moltmann is very close to Berry's "New Story" of the cosmos in Moltmann, *WJC*, 246-47.

²⁶² Moltmann, *SRA*, 144-46; Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 181-87.

is drawn into the other members in a manner of love that reflects God's communal existence.²⁶³ Everything has worth in itself. But everything is related as a whole; and the whole also has worth in itself.²⁶⁴

In positing this cosmic community, is Moltmann cosmocentric? He does not explicitly embrace cosmocentrism—which he seems to understand only in its pre-industrial context.²⁶⁵ Rather, he claims that Christianity must recover its theocentrism.²⁶⁶ However, while Moltmann is critical of cosmocentrism divorced from theocentrism,²⁶⁷ his description of theocentrism matches what I have defined as cosmocentrism within a theocentric framework.²⁶⁸ That is, all creatures have value apart from their utility to one another.²⁶⁹ “Life is an end in itself...it is beyond utility or uselessness” (*EH*, 59). No creature is simply a chain in evolutionary emergence.²⁷⁰ No creature is merely a resource for human use. Thus, Moltmann can write: “It is not the human being that is at the center of the earth; it is life” (*EH*, 61-62). Moltmann's cosmocentric (according to my definition) worldview is grounded by his theocentrism: “If this earth, together with all living things, is *God's creation*, then its dignity must be respected for *God's sake*, and its continued existence must be protected for its *own sake*” (*GSS*, 111). Whereas for

²⁶³ Moltmann, *EH*, 68, 137.

²⁶⁴ On the worth of the whole, see Moltmann, *GSS*, 101.

²⁶⁵ See Moltmann, *GSS*, 130.

²⁶⁶ Moltmann, *GC*, 30-31, 139; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 189-90, 93; Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 231.

²⁶⁷ See Moltmann, *WJC*, 271-72.

²⁶⁸ Thus Moltmann's affirmation of theocentrism is similar to that of James Gustafson inasmuch as theocentrism serves to unhinge a rampant and unqualified anthropocentrism. On Gustafson, see the introduction of the present work. On Moltmann, see Moltmann, *GSS*, 129-31; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 158, 200-3. See also Bauckham's description of Moltmann's “theocentric eschatology,” which also fits my notion of cosmocentrism. Bauckham, “Eschatology in *The Coming of God*,” 24-25. For a more positive view of cosmocentrism in Moltmann's thought, see Moltmann, *WJC*, 46-47. In this same work, Moltmann contends that both christocentrism and theocentrism necessarily include the cosmos. *Ibid.*, 276.

²⁶⁹ This point is further evident in Moltmann's discussion of the sabbath as a time when creatures are no longer considered for their usefulness. Moltmann, *GC*, 286.

²⁷⁰ Moltmann, *SRA*, 222-23; *EH*, 128.

Aquinas the nonhuman creation existed for God by existing *for humanity*, for Moltmann the nonhuman creation, including each individual creature, exists for God *for its own sake*.²⁷¹ This theocentrically based cosmocentrism bears legal ramifications for Moltmann.

(CONSERVATIONIST) LAW AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY

Moltmann's affirmation of a community of creation in which all individual members bear a unique dignity coupled with his dismantling of anthropocentrism places him firmly in the cosmocentric category as I have delineated it. There is one cosmic community. But community relies on law, which safeguards the integrity of its members. Law is especially necessary for creatures that cannot make formal legal protests themselves. Thus, Moltmann calls for a legal solidification of the rights of the various parts of the cosmos for their own sakes.²⁷²

What should the law of the cosmic community look like? Living in this community certainly entails conservation. Humanity cannot live by destroying the world.²⁷³ Humans must, in some sense, let nature be nature. Moltmann makes this appeal with reference to the sabbath:

In the sabbath stillness men and women no longer intervene in the environment through their labour. They let it be entirely God's creation. They recognize that as God's property creation is inviolable; and they sanctify the day through their joy in existence as God's creatures within the fellowship of creation. The peace of the sabbath is peace with God first of all. But this divine peace encompasses not merely the soul but the body too; not merely individuals but family and people; not only human beings but animals as well; not living things alone, but also, as the creation story tells us, the whole creation of heaven and earth. (*GC*, 277)

²⁷¹ Moltmann, *GSS*, 104; *EH*, 127-28.

²⁷² Moltmann, *GSS*, 112-13. This point is solidified by the sabbath. Moltmann, *GC*, 289-90. My emphasis here is on cosmic rights in general. For a brief overview of Moltmann's view of human rights, see Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 113-17.

²⁷³ Moltmann, *GC*, 46-47.

In line with this sabbatical letting-be, Moltmann offers general boundaries and guidelines for the law of the cosmic community.²⁷⁴ The sabbath laws imply a peace in the cosmic community.²⁷⁵ But they also demand compassion within the human community itself. Thus Moltmann's theology mandates a balance with regard to utilization of the earth between first and third world nations.²⁷⁶ He is also adamant about the rights of individual humans, human communities, and future humans.²⁷⁷ This balance includes a law of compensation for the sake of the entire cosmic community:

The first ecological law is that for every intervention in nature there must be a compensation. If you cut down a tree you must plant a new one...If your city builds a power station, it must plant a forest which produces just as much oxygen as the power plant uses up. (*GSS*, 94)

Thus Moltmann advocates conservationism; for "every intervention in nature which can never be made good again is a sacrilege" (*GSS*, 105).

In addition to sabbath laws, Moltmann also highlights the significance of divine immanence. Because Christ is the wisdom of creation, "the person who reverences Christ also reverences all created things in him, and him in everything created." Correspondingly, then, "what we do to the earth, we do to Christ" (*GSS*, 103). Likewise, a recognition of the presence of the Spirit in the cosmos "leads to a cosmic adoration of God and an adoration of God in all things" (*GSS*, 104).

²⁷⁴ On these guidelines, see also Moltmann, *LTF*, 280-89. French argues that Moltmann's ethical notions are insufficient in the face of the ecological crisis. French, "Returning to Creation," 84-85.

²⁷⁵ Sideris rightly notes that Moltmann here "combines the Jewish recognition of the significance of the Sabbath with a Christian, messianic eschatology." Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 95. Moltmann would himself acknowledge this combination. Moltmann, *GC*, 55. Though, Jeremy Law correctly highlights that Moltmann's eschatological reading of the sabbath is partly based on the notion that the sabbath has no night and therefore "holds a permanent meaning for all the days of creation." Law, "Jürgen Moltmann's Ecological Hermeneutics," 230. At any rate, it ought to be noted that the sabbath itself need not have messianic overtones. In fact, in many ways, the idea of the sabbath more naturally lends itself to an affirmation of the repeating cycles in nature.

²⁷⁶ Moltmann, *GSS*, 92-95.

²⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, 110, 117-29.

In line with these sabbatical principles and the immanence of God in creation, in *Ethics of Hope*, Moltmann delineates four general rights of the inanimate creation.²⁷⁸ First, it has the right to existence, which Moltmann defines as “preservation and development.” Second, it has the right to the integrity of its ecosystems. Third, it has the right to its own development apart from human intervention with the exception of justified and legitimate cases.²⁷⁹ Finally, rare ecosystems are under absolute protection. These rights pertain to the eschatological future of the cosmos as the temple of God’s Shekinah.²⁸⁰

TRANSFIGURATION AND THE COSMIC COMMUNITY

The cosmic community is a community of law. Thus, all members of the community bear rights that are consistent with the manner of their unique existence. Yet for Moltmann the present existence of the cosmos cannot be isolated from the totality of its existence, including the future hope of *creatio nova*. Thus there is a tension within the law of the community between the law of nature (as we encounter them in our experience of *creatio continua*) and the law of creation (which is revealed as *novum* in the advent of God’s eschatological future). I here explore the tension Moltmann’s eschatology causes for his ethics.

²⁷⁸ The following is from Moltmann, *EH*, 144-45.

²⁷⁹ Concerning the criteria of justification and legitimacy, Moltmann states that interventions “are only permissible if the conditions for the intervention have been established in a democratically legitimate proceeding and with regard to the rights of nature, if the concern behind the intervention is weightier than the concern for an undiminished preservation of the rights of nature, and if the intervention is not excessive.” Furthermore, “after any damage, nature must be restored once more whenever possible.” Moltmann, *EH*, 144. It seems to me that these guidelines are quite vague and would require a wealth of interpretation to yield specific and concrete applicability.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

The Law, Nature, and (New) Creation

To draw out this tension, it is pertinent to revisit the distinction between nature and creation in Moltmann's thought. One of the tasks of theology is to "show how nature is to be understood as God's creation" (*GC*, 38). Because "nature" is the distorted condition of the created order, theologically—and ethically—any talk of "creation" must not develop a static ethics based on observable nature. Nature is not to be theologically discarded, for "the present world is a real symbol of its future" (*GC*, 56).²⁸¹ But as such a symbol, nature cannot be seen as an ethical set of immutable laws and cycles. It is rather both distorted and open to the eschatological future.²⁸² The law of *nature* cannot be the ultimate law of *creation*;²⁸³ for "Christian ethics are eschatological ethics" (*TLF*, 289).

What does the eschatological law of creation look like? In a word: resurrection. In Christ, "resurrection has become the universal 'law' of creation" (*WJC*, 258). The resurrection of Christ permits humanity to see nature anew, according to its eschatological destiny. More specifically, Christ's resurrection reveals nature as creation. Because the entire cosmos is included in the hope for the eschatological resurrection, "all those who hope for a resurrection [are] under an obligation to remain true to the earth, to respect it, and to love it as they love themselves" (*SRA*, 72). Thus the law of creation (i.e., resurrection) establishes a new community of creation—the community of *creatio nova* in which "mutual destruction is replaced by a community of peace in which all created being are there for one another, with one another and in one another" (*WJC*, 255).

²⁸¹ For Moltmann's analysis of the relationship between natural and revealed theology, see *GC*, 57-60.

²⁸² Moltmann, *WJC*, 251; *GC*, 63, 197-206. See also *ibid.*, 158-69, where Moltmann discusses the significance of heaven for the cosmic openness to God's eschatological future.

²⁸³ The juxtaposition of the "law of nature" and the "law of creation" is my own interpretation of Moltmann; though, it well-grounded in his understanding of eschatology, creation, and nature.

How does Moltmann resolve the tension between the law of nature and law of creation? He cannot relegate the latter to a transcendent future. For Moltmann's cosmology makes the present cosmic order inseparable from the eschatological consummation which comes to meet it in history. Furthermore, because this new future breaks into history (as *adventus*) already with the redemptive presence of the Spirit in the wake of the Christ event, the entire community of creation is now open to proleptic moments of *novum* in the unfolding of history. Thus, to subsume creation into nature isolates what is (*creatio continua*) from God desires and what will be (*creatio nova*) and is thus theologically myopic.

Yet Moltmann's eschatology makes it clear that the eschatological kingdom is not a matter of human effort. Thus one cannot discard the law of nature and attempt to force *creatio nova* in the midst of *creatio continua*. Moltmann resolves this tension by maintaining that the law of creation (again, my phrase) challenges the law of nature by way of *anticipation*:

The hope for God's eschatological transformation of the world leads to a transformative ethics which tries to accord with this future in the inadequate material and with the feeble powers of the present and thus anticipates it. (*EH*, xiii)

In the midst of *creatio continua*, there exists a "*creatio anticipavita*" (*GC*, 209), the prolepsis of *creatio nova* in the presence of the Spirit. Moltmann is careful to distinguish anticipation from fulfillment. Yet anticipation is nonetheless "already the presence of the future in the conditions of history" (*CPS*, 193).

The Law of (New) Creation and Historical Practice

It is clear that Moltmann's notion of a cosmic community governed by law cannot be limited to conservation of "nature." Indeed, Moltmann is critical of such ethics. For example, in critique of Ruether's eco-feminism, he writes:

Deep respect for 'the good earth' does not mean that we have to give ourselves up for burial with the consolation that we shall live on in worms and plants. It means waiting for the day when the earth will open, the dead will rise, and the earth together with these dead will 'be raised' for its new creation. (*CoG*, 276-77)

Such a critique clearly applies to those like Teilhard de Chardin and Berry as well.

In contrast, Moltmann consistently claims along with Eastern theologians that the eschatological *telos* of the cosmos is deification or transfiguration.²⁸⁴ Thus conservation in the present does not do justice to the community of *creation*. Moltmann's eco-theological ethics moves, at least in theory, beyond conservation to incorporate transfiguration. Preservation remains important.²⁸⁵ It pertains to a realistic worldview. But it does not exhaust human responsibility to the cosmos, which includes witnessing to new possibilities in hope through proleptic, transforming action.²⁸⁶

The transfigurative dimension of Moltmann's ethics is qualified by his cosmocentrism. In this way, his position is not the same as many Orthodox writers. Though he cites Dumitru Staniloae frequently, he especially differs from him. As I have already shown in chapter 1, for Staniloae and many Orthodox theologians, the inclusion of the nonhuman creation in the eschaton remains anthropocentric in that it serves as a means of divine communion *for humans*. The nonhuman creation is the final sacrament. Yet Moltmann does not define creation's eschatological inclusion according to this

²⁸⁴ Moltmann, *WJC*, 47-48, 302. See also Moltmann's exploration of possible visions for the *telos* of the cosmos. Moltmann, *CoG*, 267-79.

²⁸⁵ See Moltmann, *GSS*, 92-101.

²⁸⁶ Moltmann, *EH*, 3-5; *CPS*, 191-96.

sacramental role.²⁸⁷ On the contrary, in the eternal kingdom “God will be directly and universally manifest through himself, and creation with all created things will participate directly and without any mediation in his eternal life” (*GC*, 64). The creation is not merely a sacrament for the divine-human drama. Rather, every instantiation of life, every particle of matter, is included in God’s communal life *for its own sake*.

This ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration suggests that the human role is to witness to the eschatological kingdom of God, which Moltmann defines as “God in all things and all things in God” (*SRA*, 32). It is in this manner that Moltmann can say that “creation is to be redeemed through human liberty” (*GC*, 69). The nonhuman creation experiences redemption here and now through humanity’s Spirit-enabled witness to the perichoretic communion of the eschatological future. This human role is not predicated upon creation’s sacramentality, but rather upon God’s desire for the creation for its own sake. Humans do not love the creation in order to love God; they love God by loving the creation for its own sake.²⁸⁸ God desires the human being to be *for the created order for its own sake*.

MOLTMANN’S COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

My delineation of Moltmann’s general eco-theological ethics points toward how that ethics would affect humanity’s relation to nonhuman animals. Animals are part of the cosmic community. God desires them for their own sake. They share a destiny *with humanity*: transfiguration and a perichoretic indwelling with the Trinity. Here, I seek to

²⁸⁷ Though at times he does use language more compatible with Orthodox thought (e.g., Moltmann, *GC*, 70-71), he consistently speaks—even in the midst of his Orthodox similarities—of all life’s intrinsic value, even saying all creatures should be loved for their own sakes (Moltmann, *GC*, 69-71).

²⁸⁸ See chapter 1 to compare this claim to that of Staniloae and John Meyendorff.

examine more closely Moltmann's engagement with nonhuman animals and critically suggest where his ethics *should go* based on his theological framework.

MOLTMANN'S COSMOCENTRISM AND THE HUMAN UNIQUENESS

The affirmation of a cosmic community in which all living creatures participate does not entail that all creatures are the same. There are important commonalities—especially regarding the *telos* of life—but there are also differences.²⁸⁹ Moltmann's anthropology maintains that “human beings must neither disappear into the community of creation, nor must they be detached from that community” (*GC*, 190). He maintains this balance by an appeal to the *imago Dei*.

Moltmann and the Image of God

For Moltmann, humanity's central uniqueness is expressed in the doctrine of the *imago Dei*.²⁹⁰ But unlike much of the substantialistic *imago Dei* tradition before him, for Moltmann this difference does not afford humans a unique privilege over and against animals.²⁹¹ He is explicit that the *imago Dei* denotes neither despotism nor dominion.²⁹² In conjunction with relational interpretations of the *imago*, Moltmann maintains that it entails that humans exist *with and before* God. In conjunction with functional interpretations of the *imago*, Moltmann maintains that it entails that humans exist *with and before* the created order. As already noted, humans have a “priestly calling.” They “stand before God on behalf of creation, and before creation on behalf of God” (*GC*,

²⁸⁹ For a general though dated overview, Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology*, 223-30.

²⁹⁰ However, Moltmann also views humans as unique with reference to awareness of death: “Unlike other living things, human beings know about their deaths while they are still alive, and adjust themselves to death” (*CoG*, 54). Animals (and plants) are not aware of their own impending death throughout life. Moltmann links sin to death in that it is the fear of death that grounds humans' desire to sin: “Death is only the consequence of sin inasmuch as sin exists because of death” (*CoG*, 91). Animals lack awareness of their death; thus, they do not sin. Moltmann, *CoG*, 93.

²⁹¹ On this point, Douglas John Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 90.

²⁹² Moltmann, *EH*, 67-68.

190).²⁹³ This priestly function is for the creation's own sake. But what exactly does this function look like vis-à-vis nonhuman animals?

Humans, the Image of God, and Nonhuman Animals

As already noted, Moltmann's anthropology is Irenaean.²⁹⁴ He claims that, while *imago Dei*, human beings are called to *become the imago Christi* in the world.²⁹⁵ But this image bears different meanings for animals than it does for the earth. Says Moltmann:

The prophetic visions of the messianic kingdom of peace (Isa. 11.6ff) give sublime and ultimate form to [the] initial peaceful order between animals, human beings and the plants of the earth. But the beginning teaches that human lordship over the animals has to be distinguished from human subjection of the earth for the purposes of nourishment, and distinguished more clearly than is the case in the traditional theological doctrine of the *dominium terrae*; for this doctrine throws the two together and intermixes them, with disastrous consequences for the world. (*GC*, 224)

For humans bearing the *imago*, subduing the earth means “nothing but the injunction to eat vegetable food.” But for animals it is different: “there is no mention at all in the creation accounts of enmity between human beings and beasts, or of a right to kill animals. Human beings are appointed as ‘justices of the peace’” (*GC*, 188). Thus, with regard to nonhuman animals, the priestly role of humanity implied by the *imago* is one of reverential servantry that reflects Christ's own eschatological ministry.²⁹⁶ Moltmann's understanding of the *imago* suggests that not only do animals *not* exist for the sake of

²⁹³ Thus Moltmann evinces a functional anthropocentrism in his thought.

²⁹⁴ See Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation*, 101-52.

²⁹⁵ See Moltmann, *GC*, 225-28; Harvie, *Moltmann's Ethics of Hope*, 172-74. It is this dynamic dimension of Moltmann's anthropology that Walsh misses when he states, “One wonders what human beings were at the beginning if they only become human at the end.” Walsh, “Theology of the Hope,” 61.

²⁹⁶ On a few occasions Moltmann references—at least within the symbols of biblical mythology—the vegetarian diet of protological humans. Moltmann, *GC*, 29-31, 187-88, 224. While Moltmann rejects the historicity of this edenic state, he nonetheless accepts that it provides a prolepsis of the eschatological future. Thus, the peaceful vision of creation in Genesis 1 envisions the eschatological kingdom of Christ. It is to this kingdom that humans must witness.

humans—as both Aristotle and Aquinas maintained—but humans exist functionally for their well-being. Anything less is an affront to the God whose image humanity bears:

As the image of the Creator, human beings will love all their fellow creatures with the Creator’s love. Otherwise, far from being the image of the Creator and lover of all the living, they will be his caricature. (GSS, 132)

Human Dignity

Thus, while Moltmann maintains there is a difference—both ontological and functional—between humans and animals, this difference is *not* one of dignity.²⁹⁷ The difference is not the difference proposed by modern anthropocentric followers of Emmanuel Kant. Moltmann is extremely critical of the distinction between “person” and “thing” with regard to nature generally, but especially with regard to animals.²⁹⁸ Says Moltmann, “An animal is not a human ‘person’, but it is not a ‘thing’ or a ‘product’ either. It is a living being, with its own rights, and it requires the protection of public law” (GSS, 131).²⁹⁹

Rather, the difference is one of function. Humans are the priests of the earth, the heralds of the eschatological kingdom. This priestly and eschatological role entails that human beings witness to a deeply significant commonality between humans and nonhuman animals: Christ died for both. This claim draws all creatures into a common *telos* and a common dignity. Says Moltmann:

If Christ has died not merely for the reconciliation of human beings, but for the reconciliation of all other creatures too, then every created being enjoys infinite value in God’s sight, and has its own right to live; this is not true of human beings alone. If according to the Christian view the unfringeable dignity of human beings is based on the fact that ‘Christ died for them’, then this must also be said

²⁹⁷ In fact, humanity’s unique dignity is only recognizable as part of the dignity of the cosmos. Thus Moltmann states that “we can talk about special human dignity if the premise is our recognition of *the creation dignity* of all other creatures—not otherwise” (GSS, 132).

²⁹⁸ Moltmann, GSS, 129-30.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 131.

of the dignity of all other living things. And it is this that provides the foundation for an all-embracing reverence for life.³⁰⁰ (*WJC*, 256)

On account of Christ's death and resurrection, "every created being" has "infinite value" and "its own right to live." Thus, the theological grounding of creation's dignity leads to a political dimension of humanity's priestly role vis-à-vis nonhuman animals: animal rights.

COSMOCENTRISM AND THE RIGHTS OF (INDIVIDUAL) NONHUMAN ANIMALS

From Moltmann's understanding of Christ's death, it follows that he speaks positively of animal rights. He claims that "a Universal Declaration of Animal Rights should be part of the constitutions of modern states and international agreements" (*GSS*, 131).³⁰¹ Yet like many of his ethical claims Moltmann is vague in his description of animal rights.³⁰² He maintains that they must include a prohibition on factory farming and GMOs.³⁰³ He wavers on animal experimentation, calling for reduction through the development of alternative methods, but not cessation.³⁰⁴ He does not—nor could he—reject that humans can "use" animals.³⁰⁵ Yet use is qualified by this eschatological

³⁰⁰ Moltmann borrows the terms "reverence for life" from Albert Schweitzer. Moltmann, *SL*, xiii; *WJC* 256. Even so, Moltmann critiques Schweitzer's eschatology and anthropocentrism. See Moltmann, *TH*, 24-25; *EH*, 140. I am not convinced the difference between the two is as great as Moltmann seems to think. For Schweitzer, reverence for life is "The ethic of reverence for life is Jesus' ethic of love widened to universality." Albert Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought: An Autobiography*, translated by Antje Bultmann Lemke (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990), 235. This widening of Jesus's ethic of love is exactly what Moltmann does, extending the *Shema* as follows: "You shall love God and this earth and all your fellow creatures with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might!" (*SL*, 72)

³⁰¹ See also Moltmann, *WJC*, 256, 307-8.

³⁰² Drummond notes this vagueness in conjunction with his theological claims of a maximally inclusive and death-free eschatological vision. Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 173. Likewise, Jenkins notes that Moltmann does not sufficiently delineate how a human's participation in Christ informs that human's participation in nature. Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 74. I find this critique particularly true in Moltmann's ethics regarding animals.

³⁰³ Moltmann, *GSS*, 131; *EH*, 156-57.

³⁰⁴ Moltmann, *GSS*, 131.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.

caveat: “God wants all he has created to live in peace with one another ‘each according to its kind’” (*WJC*, 311).

Moltmann’s vagueness derives partly from his agnosticism:

It is not yet fully clear what it means to withdraw from human beings the right of disposal over the creatures which they are in a position to dominate. But it quite certainly includes the protection of species. (*WJC*, 311)

It seems to me that he is clear about the conservationist side of ethics (protection of species). In *Ethics of Hope*, he claims that all animals have the right to “preservation and development of its genetic inheritance” and “a species-appropriate life” (*EH*, 144).³⁰⁶ His vagueness—which I maintain is a hesitancy to follow his own theological thought to conclusion—seems to arise with reference to what individual nonhuman animals, who have “*infinite value*” and a “*right to live*” (*WJC*, 256), are due in actual praxis. It is here that I will critique Moltmann’s ethics.

HUMANITY AS THE PROLEPTIC WITNESS TO A PARTICULAR ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE

While Moltmann embraces, however vaguely, the notion of animal rights in a conservationist sense, I submit that his eschatological theology mandates that he go further in order to be consistent with his own framework. That is, while his theology relies heavily on the notion of cosmic transfiguration—including every instantiation of life that has ever lived—his ethics toward nonhuman life is at times astonishingly conservationist. Here, I aim to delineate what I believe to be ethical principles that are consistent with Moltmann’s theology. I then argue that Moltmann’s own ethics are inconsistent in light of these principles.

³⁰⁶ It is interesting (and perhaps ironic) to note that, for all his theological differences with Aquinas, Moltmann seems to suggest an ethics with regard to nonhuman animals that is rather Thomistic.

The Church Revisited (for Nonhuman Animals)

As already noted, for Moltmann it is humans who, in Christ, are able to see the world as a new cosmic community of peace that reflects resurrection as the new “universal ‘law’ of creation” (*WJC*, 258) for all life.³⁰⁷ More specifically, it is the church that is meant to be the heart of this new community in history. It becomes as such by opening itself to the suffering of others within the contradictions of the world:

When the weaker creatures die, the whole community of creation suffers. If the church sees itself as representing creation, then it will feel this suffering of creation’s weaker creatures as conscious pain, and it will have to cry out in public protest. (*GSS*, 105)³⁰⁸

The church is to represent the new creation and the new law of resurrection by embracing the suffering of all life as its own and lamenting death, whether human or nonhuman.

This fellow-suffering leads to protest—to action on behalf of those that suffer. It is a refusal to become numb to the death of nature’s law. Says Moltmann:

We have got used to death, at least the death of other creatures and other people. And to get used to death is the beginning of freezing into lifelessness oneself. So the essential thing is to affirm life—the life of other creatures—the life of other people—our own lives...the people who truly affirm and love life take up the struggle against violence and injustice. They refuse to get used to it. They do not conform. They resist. (*SL*, xii)

Therefore, while ultimate justice remains eschatological, the church, in hope, willingly suffers and protests in the midst of the contradictions of history. In that suffering, the church becomes a prolepsis of the future. And that future is the reverse of the suffering itself:

³⁰⁷ Moltmann, *WJC*, 255. Trevor Hart refers to this notion as the imagination of humanity set loose by the Spirit. See Hart, “Imagination for the Kingdom of God? Hope, Promise, and the Transformative Power of an Imagined Future,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 61-76.

³⁰⁸ Also, Moltmann, *TH*, 183; *SRA*, 64. In this reference, Moltmann is engaging creation spirituality and is most likely referring to the “weaker creatures” in a general sense (i.e., the loss of a species).

Anyone who lives in necessary contradiction to the laws and powers of ‘this world’ hopes for a new world of correspondences. The contradiction suffered is itself the negative mirror-image of the correspondence hoped for. (CoG, 200)

Witness to the eschatological future entails becoming the “mirror-image” of the contradictions that creatures suffer in history. Thus is the eschatological mission of the church. But what should this “mirror-image” look like with reference to nonhuman animals?

The New Law of Resurrection and Transfigurative Ethics

Given Moltmann’s position regarding the new law of resurrection and the new community it establishes, it seems quite accurate to claim that Christians ought to live in such a way as to protect all creatures from suffering and death and also attempt to shape public policy along these lines. Surely this protection ought to take the shape of a deeply transfigurative ethics.³⁰⁹ After all, Christ reveals that neither suffering nor death pertain to the eschatological future of *any* individual creature. If such is the case, then no one can justify killing by appealing to the *naturalness* of death. There is a new law—a law of life. There is a new community—a community of peace. This community includes all creation and entails a cosmic sympathy—a suffering together that “banishes fear and the struggle for existence from creation” (*GC*, 213).

Therefore, the suffering and death of any and every creature should cause lament. For such transience is antithetical to God’s kingdom, of which the church is a proleptic witness. Because every life is part of the community and sighs for redemption, every life

³⁰⁹ While Harvie’s *Moltmann’s Ethics of Hope* is commendable in elucidating how hope grounds practice in the human community, it is unfortunately wanting with regard to ecology and nonhuman animals.

taken out of necessity should elicit a “metaphysical sadness,” which Moltmann defines as “a feeling for the tragedy of history” (*EH*, 75).³¹⁰

Yet even more can be said when one adds Moltmann’s understanding of eternity to his christological eschatology and the new cosmic community it entails. For Moltmann, eternity is the fullness of time—all time gathered up into an eternal present. As such, a nonhuman animal’s participation in eternity entails that the totality of its cosmic times be gathered up into God’s life. The entire history of that creature is gathered into the eternal present.³¹¹ But this point suggests that *every moment of time of every creature’s life bears eternal significance*. Each moment of every individual creature’s life is sacred. Therefore, to cause one creature even a moment of suffering is to embrace the order of transience. While at times such actions might be necessary, it seems to me that they should never be considered good.

Moltmann’s Inconsistency: The New Law of Resurrection and Meat-Eating

Moltmann’s theology thus provides the grounds for a radical ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration. Yet whether or not Moltmann adheres to such an ethics with regard to nonhuman animals is unclear. In fact, his ethics seems to suffer from a lack of consistency vis-à-vis his theological framework. This inconsistency is evident in his views on vegetarianism.

If the eschatological future is seriously a category of *novum*, then every proleptic witness to it is simultaneously an act of rebellion toward some reality pertaining to the

³¹⁰ Moltmann is here discussing medical ethics and focusing on humanity. Yet I believe the point is consistent with his understanding of all victims of suffering and death. While I remain suspicious about any language of “justifying killing,” in my opinion Moltmann’s theological foundations suggest he should say the same thing about nonhuman animals as he does about a fetus: “It can very well be that a life has to be killed in order that a life can be saved. But then one should justify the act of killing, not disparage the object to such an extent that it is no longer a question of killing at all.” Moltmann, *EH*, 85. This is not to say the two are equated in all senses, but rather simply that this principle should also apply to animals.

³¹¹ Moltmann, *CoG*, 75.

present—a “mirror-image” of the “contradiction suffered” (*CoG*, 200). So, if “an ethics of hope sees the future in light of Christ’s resurrection” and “points the way to transforming action so as to anticipate as far as possible, as far as strength goes, the new creation of all things” (*EH*, 41); if this new creation entails a cosmic peace between humans and animals that precludes predation; and if so many humans on the planet today eat meat out of luxury and not necessity; then it seems an inevitable conclusion that vegetarianism is a higher form of proleptic witness than meat-eating. The same reasoning that Moltmann applies elsewhere (e.g., regarding fair trade prices) applies here. Just prices in a global economy are not “already the kingdom of God itself; but...they correspond to the kingdom more closely than unjust prices” (*TLF*, 288). It seems to me that, following the same logic, vegetarianism better corresponds to the eschatological kingdom—in which peace will reign and death will be no more—than meat-eating.³¹²

Moltmann does not make this link between the eschatological future and vegetarianism explicitly. He does claim that vegetarianism is a better way to live; but, like Berry, this claim seems more about preservation than eschatological witness.

It is...useful not to eat the goods which top the good chain but to move away from meat to vegetarian dishes. How much grain has to be used in order to produce one kilo of meat? It is not just cheaper to eat vegetarian food but fairer too, and healthier in addition. No one must suddenly become a vegetarian if his body cannot cope with the changeover to vegetarian food, but everyone can reduce his consumption of animal food to some extent, as long as this is not distasteful. (*EH*, 157)

The qualification of “as long as this is not distasteful” strikingly undermines any notion that vegetarianism is optimal for Christian living. It makes sense for Moltmann to suggest that people hindered by health issues should not “suddenly” switch to

³¹² This conclusion only applies to those who are able to do it, however. On Moltmann’s balance between amorphous and rigid ethics, see Moltmann, *EH*, 74.

vegetarianism. But for Moltmann, one *does not even have to* “reduce his consumption” of meat if it is “distasteful” to do so! The weakness of this claim betrays a lack of direct concern for the nonhuman creatures involved.³¹³ It takes the form of a half-hearted suggestion that aims not to offend. I contend that this weakness evinces a blaring inconsistency in Moltmann’s thought.³¹⁴

IN SUM

Moltmann’s vague ethics of nonhuman animals can be summed up as follows. All members of the community of creation should be protected under law. Each animal is a member of the community that is meant to reflect the perichoretic love of the Trinity. Each sighs under the chains of evolutionary emergence—under the transience of death. Each is imbued with the Spirit that awakens its life and opens it to the eschatological future. Each is the subject of Christ’s redemptive action on the cross and in the resurrection. Each will have all of the moments of its life gathered up into the fullness of

³¹³ How Moltmann can offer this weak view in light of his christology is confusing. He states, “Unless *the whole* cosmos is reconciled, Christ cannot be the Christ of God and cannot be the foundation of all things. But if he is this foundation, then Christians cannot encounter other creatures in any way other than the way they encounter human beings: every creature is a being for whom Christ died on the cross in order to gather it into the reconciliation of the world” (*WJC*, 307). How can one encounter an animal in the same way “they encounter human beings” and eat it?

³¹⁴ Sideris notes a similar inconsistency in the work of both Ruether and McFague. She notes that, in Ruether’s egalitarian model, “vegetarianism is an option, but it’s not required.” She goes on ask, “But why isn’t vegetarianism *required* of this model? After all, it would seem that the model involves loving others as one loves oneself and other humans; this model . . . involves treating others as ends in themselves, not as objects to be used by us, to our own ends.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 78. McFague similarly argues for a subject-based view of animals. Again, Sideris asks, “How can one justify eating another subject, even if raised and killed humanely?” She deems that “McFague really has no answer to this question in terms that are consistent with the Christian ethic she wants to extend to nonhuman animals. Instead, she defers to Native American customs.” Sideris (rightly in my view), argues that this response is inadequate because “Native Americans are not Christians seeking to love nature in keeping with Jesus’s ministry of love, healing, and caring for all subjects.” *Ibid.* Ultimately, Sideris frankly judges that McFague “presents a picture of nature that is scientifically inaccurate and then develops an ethical translation of that picture (love and care for all subjects *as* subjects) only to depart from this ethic when it demands something radically different in our treatment of nonhuman animals.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 79. As I have already noted with regard to Sideris, I do not believe that Moltmann’s worldview is scientifically inaccurate. Yet whatever critiques apply to Ruether and McFague regarding the inconsistency of their theological ethics vis-à-vis nonhuman animals and vegetarianism are, in my view, vastly amplified in Moltmann’s work.

eternal life at the resurrection. Each will participate in God's eschatological kingdom of interpenetrating love. For all of these reasons, each individual animal has its worth and dignity and therefore has the right to live. Every violation of the eschatological destiny of all creatures requires some form of justification. Humans do not have the right to kill animals; they have the responsibility to serve them as proleptic witnesses of a future in which all the negatives in history will be negated in the coming of God.

CONCLUSION

Moltmann's theological vision as it pertains to my thesis may be summarized as the history of the triune God and the world. The beginning of this history is the self-limitation of God, which is an outpouring of the eternal love that constitutes the unity of the social Trinity. This limitation enables the space within which the created order develops in its own integrity. The ongoing nature of this history is the dynamism in which God moves in and toward the cosmos—which is in some sense both corrupted and incomplete (i.e., it is “nature”)—from the eschatological future. The ultimate *telos* of this history is an eschatological panentheism in which the Trinity and the totality of the created order perichoretically indwell one another in eternity. Within this history, the Son and the Spirit act in unique manners in order to bring the created order to its *telos*. The Son is both the wisdom of the created order and, in the incarnation, the historical concretization of its *telos*. The Spirit is the principle of life and the reinvigorating principle of new life. Because the Spirit and the Son (through the Spirit) continue to be active in the history of the created order in a redemptive fashion, the eschatological consummation continues to move toward the world in history, making it new without obliterating it. The church is the proleptic community of this movement, bearing witness

to the genuine newness of the inbreaking kingdom of God. Humanity's experience of redemption calls them to participate in proclaiming eschatological hope by living in solidarity with all who suffer and engaging in efforts to alleviate that suffering. The picture Moltmann envisions is a perichoretic community of creation analogous to God's own communal life. Because all life constitutes the community, the division between community and resource dissolves.

Based on this theological vision, Moltmann's eco-theological ethics fits in the category of cosmocentric transfiguration. It cannot bear anthropocentrism. Nor can it bear mere conservationism. Human beings should act as proleptic witnesses to the eschatological future in which all creatures will participate together in the Trinity's communion and will thereby live in eternity. The dimensions of transience that pertain to the present order of creation—death and suffering—will be no more in the kingdom of God. Because it is *this kingdom* to which humanity is called to be a witness, because it is *this kingdom* we render proleptically present through anticipation, the manner of mission must be life-affirmation. This affirmation pertains to humans, nonhuman animals, and the earth itself.

CHAPTER 3

COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF ANDREW LINZEY: THE HUMAN ROLE AS PROLEPTIC WITNESS TO THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM

In chapter two, I explored the theology of Jürgen Moltmann and the eco-theological ethics deriving from that theology. To further establish the eco-theological paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration I will here examine the work of the preeminent animal theologian Andrew Linzey (b. 1952). I have chosen thusly because Moltmann and Linzey will complement one another well when I move toward a systematic construction of cosmocentric transfiguration in chapter four. While Moltmann thrives in theological ingenuity but is rather non-concrete (and inconsistent) in his ethics, Linzey's ethics are, more often than not, specific and definite. However, Linzey tends to be less developed in his theological explorations than Moltmann.

Here, I will draw out pertinent dimensions of Linzey's theological framework. I will then consider the general ecological ethics of his work, including the place (or lack thereof) he provides for individual non-sentient creatures, species and ecosystems, land, and cosmic systems. Next, I will emphasize the abstract and concrete ethical assertions he makes with reference to individual nonhuman animals. This emphasis will include his engagement with particular issues such as hunting and animal experimentation. Lastly, I will critically draw out some of the tensions and ambiguities that are evident in Linzey's writings.

ANDREW LINZEY: A BRIEF SKETCH

Throughout his career, Linzey acknowledges that his work entails a "continued wrestling" that requires ongoing development.¹ Those who read individual works of his

¹ Andrew Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (hereafter *CRA*), (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1987), 2-6; Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (hereafter *AT*), (Chicago, IL: University of

without referring to other installments in his extensive corpus often miss these developments along with nuances of his thought.² Here, I do not pretend to engage everything Linzey has written. I do, however, take close account of the major works he has authored.³ These works include *Animal Rights* (1976), *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (1987), *Animal Theology* (1994), *After Noah* (1997), *Animal Gospel* (1998), *Creatures of the Same God* (2007), and *Why Animal Suffering Matters* (2009).⁴

As was the case with Moltmann, in what follows my arrangement of material is topical as opposed to chronological. On some points, Linzey remains rather consistent throughout his writings. On other issues, there is development. In these cases, I will draw out the difference in Linzey's earlier and later thought, especially when these developments seem to constitute a tension or shift in his position.

Linzey has many influences. He acknowledges his debt to the animal welfare movement in general.⁵ He is also influenced by particular ethical and theological voices, including Rosalina Godlovitch, whom Linzey suggests may be "the intellectual founder of the modern animal movement" (*WASM*, 158)⁶; Karl Barth, whose theology constituted

Illinois Press, 1994), vii, 20-22; Andrew Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God: Explorations in Animal Theology* (hereafter *CSG*), (New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2009), x-xi. First citations will appear as footnotes. Afterwards, direct quotes will appear as in-text parenthetical references.

² Linzey, *CSG*, 55-56. As of 2007, Linzey's corpus includes twenty books and over 180 articles.

³ Most of Linzey's books either are a collection of or contain revised previously written articles, presentations, and essays. Furthermore, the books tend to contain work from different periods of Linzey's life. See, for instance, *AT*, vii; Linzey, *Animal Gospel* (hereafter *AG*), (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 5; Linzey, *CSG*, xix; Andrew Linzey, *Why Animal Suffering Matters: Philosophy, Theology, and Practical Ethics* (hereafter *WASM*) (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), vii. I take these collections, along with his other books, to be the best representation of the development of his thought. Linzey himself acknowledges in 2005 that his "important works" include (here leaving aside works he edited): *Animal Rights*, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, *Animal Theology*, *After Noah*, *Animal Gospel*, and *Animal Rites: Liturgies for Animal Care*. See Andrew Linzey, "The Divine Worth of Other Creatures: A Response to Reviews of *Animal Theology*," in *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 124, n. 12. All of these texts I engage thoroughly with the exception of *Animal Rites*.

⁴ These parenthetical dates represent the original publication dates.

⁵ Linzey, *AR*, viii. Linzey also recognizes his debt to the International Fund for Animal Welfare, an organization that funds his fellowship in theology and animal welfare. See Linzey, *AT*, x.

⁶ See also Linzey, *AR*, 30-31.

the center of Linzey's dissertation⁷; Albert Schweitzer, whose "reverence for life" Linzey describes as "the most penetrating contribution made to our subject [i.e., animal rights] by a person from within the Christian Tradition" (*AR*, 42)⁸; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, to whom Linzey credits the genesis of his notion of theos-rights⁹; Tom Regan, whose "intellectual grasp" regarding issues surrounding the rights of nonhuman animals, is, for Linzey, "without rival in the movement" (*CRA*, ix).¹⁰ Linzey also draws upon central thinkers of the Christian tradition, though mostly from the East.¹¹

Linzey currently holds the International Fund for Animal Welfare's Senior Research Fellowship at Mansfield College, Oxford, which is directed specifically toward Christian theology and animal welfare. His post is the first of its kind. He also is the founder and director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, "an international and multi-disciplinary center at Oxford dedicated to the ethical enhancement of the status of animals through academic research, teaching, and publication" (*CSG*, xix). While mainly

⁷ Linzey acknowledges positive dimensions in Barth's theology for animals. However, he is consistently critical of Barth's "deficient christology" (*AT*, 11), claiming that his limitations of the significance of the incarnation to human flesh truncates the Christ event itself. See Linzey, *AT*, 9-12. Linzey also sees this anthropocentric tendency at work in Barth's covenantal theology. *CRA*, 29-30.

⁸ On this influence, see also Linzey, *AR*, 42-45; *CRA*, 14-16; *AT*, 4-12. While Linzey clearly appreciates Schweitzer and defends his impact of Christian thought, this appreciation is not uncritical. See *AT*, 9.

⁹ See Andrew Linzey, "C. S. Lewis's Theology of Animals" (hereafter CSLTA), *Anglican Theological Review* 80/1 (Winter 1998), 60-81; *AT*, 23; *CRA*, 70-71.

¹⁰ Linzey also recognizes his development alongside other members of the animal rights movement, including Peter Singer. Yet Linzey is clear on distinguishing his own position from both Regan and Singer. Linzey, *CRA*, 82-83; *CSG*, 55. Also, Lisa Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency: Ethics and Animals* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2006), 270-271; Michael Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 147. In addition, his work is prior to or at least contemporary with these thinkers. Thus it is without warrant, as Linzey himself notes, to claim, as Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough do, that Linzey "attempts to illuminate the links between Christianity and the philosophy of Regan by attaching to it a particular theological rationale." See their introduction to *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough (London, UK: SCM Press, 2009), 4. Linzey does not merely start with Regan and then add theology.

¹¹ See Linzey, *CRA*, 17-18, 32; *AT*, 10-12.

an animal theologian/ethicist, Linzey has also published on child rights, human violence, embryonic research, and justice for homosexuals.¹²

LINZEY'S THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

“For me the choice has always been between theism and nihilism. There is either reason to hope or nothing to hope for; good news or no news at all” (AG, 1). While this claim evinces the import of religion for Linzey’s thought, his first work, *Animal Rights*, is much less theologically explicit than his later works. He further acknowledges a development in his appreciation for the Christian tradition. In self-critique, he states that his early work “failed to grapple sufficiently with the theological tradition about animals that we have inherited” and thereby offered “moral critique with insufficient theological understanding” (CRA, 5). So much does his view shift that, in his second work, he writes that “the best the Christian tradition has to offer cannot, I judge, be bettered elsewhere” (CRA, 5).¹³ Linzey’s theological emphasis continues into *Animal Gospel*, in which he claims: “I believe that without faith in the Gospel we are inexorably led to a fundamental kind of despair about animal suffering” (AG, 2).¹⁴

THE CENTRALITY OF THE TRINITY

In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey concludes his introduction with a personal credo, which is thoroughly trinitarian. It affirms God as the Creator of all, Jesus as the “Word made flesh”, and the Spirit as the animator of all life.¹⁵ He ends with a trinitarian prayer: “May

¹² See Linzey, *CSG*, xiii.

¹³ Also, Linzey, *AT*, vii-viii; *CSG*, xii. On this point, see especially Andrew Linzey, *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology* (hereafter *AN*), (Herndon, VA: Mowbray, 1997), 62-113.

¹⁴ Michael Hauskeller, although not a theist, concurs with Linzey’s assessment in the general sense that, without some religious framework, there can be no intrinsic value of all creatures. See Michael Hauskeller, *Biotechnology and the Integrity of Life: Taking Public Fears Seriously* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 77-90.

¹⁵ Linzey, *AG*, 7. Linzey thus distinguishes his approach from that of both Singer and Regan. See Linzey, *CRA*, 82-83. Linzey claims that his theos-rights places him on “a very different track” than Singer

God the Holy Trinity give me strength to live out my commitment to this day” (AG, 8).

This creed evinces that, like Moltmann, Linzey’s theology is grounded in the Trinity.¹⁶

He derives three important points from this doctrine: that God’s nature is love and is open to the created order; that this love grounds rights; and that God’s openness is the ground for eschatological hope.

Linzey claims that God’s openness to creation is fundamentally predicated upon trinitarian love. “God is *for* creation. I mean by that that God, as defined by trinitarian belief, cannot be fundamentally indifferent, negative or hostile to the creation which is made” (AT, 24). God’s trinitarian nature, which is love, opens itself to creation, thereby allowing creation to be itself. But this space is ultimately meant to be overcome, evident in the incarnation: “The Trinity is that community of love which has already taken creation to itself, to bind it, and heal it, and make it whole” (AN, 77).

For Linzey, the Trinity not only grounds all theology, it also grounds the validity of rights.¹⁷ God’s trinitarian love establishes rights for the created order.¹⁸ Thus, Linzey’s view of animal rights is, especially in his later works, predicated upon the rights of the Creator as opposed to the creation itself, a view to which he refers to as theos-rights.¹⁹ It is the Trinity’s shared narrative with the world in the economy of salvation that permits Linzey to extend his understanding of rights to nature.

and Regan, a track that does “not come with (or agree with) much of the philosophical baggage that accompanies them” (CSG, 55).

¹⁶ While Moltmann and Linzey are contemporaries, there is very little engagement between them. To my knowledge Moltmann never engages Linzey’s work. Linzey does engage Moltmann, but very rarely and never in any great detail. See Linzey, *CRA*, 11; *WASM*, 164. Furthermore, many citations are critical in nature. See Linzey, *AT*, 25, 159 n. 96, and 191 (Linzey’s annotations on *The Crucified God* and *God in Creation*).

¹⁷ Again, Linzey is less emphatic about this point in *Animal Rights*.

¹⁸ Linzey, *AT*, 24, 95.

¹⁹ I will explore this notion in more detail below. Here, I seek only to note the connection between theos-rights and Linzey’s trinitarian theology.

The Trinity's nature, as love, also grounds the economy of salvation for the created order, including its eschatological hope. Said differently, the ultimate hope of the created order is predicated upon God's story with it, a story in which the Trinity works toward the eschatological consummation of all things. Says Linzey:

God the Father gives life; God the Son in his passion, death, and resurrection rescues this life from its own folly and wickedness, thereby reconciling it again to the Father; and God the Spirit indwells in this life preserving it from dissolution, working towards the redemption and consummation of all created things. (*CRA*, 71)²⁰

Thus, the Trinity grounds both the creation's current existence and its eschatological hope. Only because the suffering of the entire cosmos is taken into the Trinity in Christ can there be any hope that "*all* suffering can be transformed by joy" (*CRA*, 45). Nihilism is averted only because God indwells the cosmos in the Spirit. In this manner, the Trinity is imperative for Linzey's theology, his understanding of animal rights, and his hope for the future.

Linzey's view of the Trinity and its outreaching love that seeks communion with the created order has an important corollary. The God who loves the world is willing to suffer with the world in its history. Thus, the Trinity's love is a suffering love, which entails that God must be passible.

THE GOD WHO SUFFERS

In *Animal Theology*, Linzey writes that the

'for-ness' of God toward creation is dynamic, inspirational, and costly. It is dynamic because God's affirmation of creation is not a once-and-for-all event but a continual affirmation otherwise it would simply cease to be. It is inspirational because God's Spirit moves within creation—especially within those creatures that have the gift of a developed capacity to be. It is costly because God's love does not come cheap. (*AT*, 25)

²⁰ See also Linzey, *CSG*, 53.

Evident in this quote is Linzey's position that the original act of creation is a risk for God inasmuch as it entails the inauguration of an ongoing dynamism that is at least in part free from divine control.²¹ In a manner similar to Moltmann, Linzey maintains that creation necessitates a God who is willing to suffer the cosmos its own integrity. Thus, the creation must begin with an act of kenosis.²² But the initial decision of kenosis continues throughout creation's narrative. For the Trinity continuously safeguards the integrity of the cosmos. God continues to suffer in this narrative, particularly with reference to sin and redemption. Hence, Linzey affirms unequivocally that God suffers.²³

For Linzey, this scope of God's co-suffering with the creation is maximal. God's suffering is open to all suffering.²⁴ Thus, the Trinity encompasses the travails of individual nonhuman animals—at least the travails that are bound up in the notion of sentience, which Linzey defines as “sense of perception *and* the capacity to experience pain” (*AR*, 26).²⁵ It is this openness that ultimately shapes Linzey's theology of animals: “Only the most tenacious adherence to the passibility of God may be sufficient to redeem us from our own profoundly arrogant humanistic conceptions of our place in the universe” (*AT*, 57). In this manner, God's ability to suffer—and God's willingness to suffer with and for animals—is central to Linzey's theological concern for the well-being of nonhuman animals.

²¹ Linzey, *CRA*, 12.

²² Though, Linzey draws this point out less obviously than does Moltmann.

²³ However, he avoids the theological problem of how that suffering might be reconciled with other claims about the divine (e.g., omnipotence or impassibility). He merely argues that “the insight derived from God's self-definition in Jesus Christ leads inescapably to the view that God really and truly enters into suffering” (*AT*, 50).

²⁴ See Linzey, *AT*, 52.

²⁵ In later works, he refers to this combination of attributes as suffering, which also includes the psychological effects of deprivation—that is, when an animals are denied “some aspect or condition of their natural life without ameliorating compensation” (*CRA*, 110). For a more detailed description, see Linzey, *WASM*, 9-10, 47. Linzey acknowledges that proving this dimension of animal suffering is quite difficult. *CRA*, 112.

COSMOLOGY: THIS IS OUR FATHER'S WORLD

I have already noted Linzey's similarity to Moltmann with regard to the act of creation, divine risk, and divine passibility. Here, I want to draw out the significance that Linzey applies to the fact that God is the Creator. That is, it is God who creates; therefore, the creation belongs first and foremost to God. This position qualifies any claims that humans can make vis-à-vis the nonhuman creation.

In line with this qualification, Linzey maintains that one of the most pressing issues for animal theology is to help humans to understand "properly the nature of the creation around us and our part within it" (*CRA*, 7). Essential in this understanding is the dismantling of a value-based anthropocentrism. In *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, Linzey makes a case for this dismantling based on the theological notion of blessing: "To affirm the blessedness of creation is to affirm an independent source of its worth. In this sense *all* creation has an irreducible value" (*CRA*, 8).²⁶ As the Creator, God establishes value—and God has blessed all things.

This claim highlights a unique dimension of Linzey's theological view of animal rights. The *intrinsic* value of all creatures is grounded *relationally*—in particular every creature's relationship to God.²⁷ Linzey refers to this notion as theos-rights. In short, "All creation, large and small, intelligent and unintelligent, sentient and non-sentient, has worth because God values it" (*CRA*, 9). Later in the same work, he offers three definitive

²⁶ In *Animal Theology*, Linzey argues that the classical doctrine of God as Creator necessitates the intrinsic value of creation. Linzey, *AT*, 95-97. Because all creation is "good", Linzey infers that all creation must have intrinsic value. I confess I do not follow his reasoning here. Both Augustine and Aquinas advocate the goodness of creation without necessarily advocating the intrinsic value of the nonhuman creation, which was good inasmuch as it ordered to God through humanity. Thus, the intrinsic value of creation does not logically follow from its goodness, which could be contingent upon its utility and therefore not intrinsic.

²⁷ I do not concur with Kemmerer's assessment that Linzey denies the intrinsic value of all creatures in favor of a claim that only God has value. See Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 270-271. An intrinsic value relationally grounded is, in my view, much closer to Linzey's position.

facets of theos-rights. First, “God as Creator has rights in his creation”; second, “Spirit-filled, breathing creatures, composed of flesh and blood, are subjects of inherent value to God”; and third, “these animals can make an objective moral claim which is nothing less than God’s claim upon us” (*CRA*, 69). The point is that the rights of individual creatures do not simply derive from some intrinsic and unchanging essence, but rather from their relational existence as God’s creatures.²⁸

Thus, theos-rights are not grounded in a contractualism that requires an equal capacity for duties on all parties involved. The community of life is important. It is where rights bear meaning. However, “while rights are grounded in the existence of Spirit-filled lives, what constitutes their rights is the will of God who desires that they should so live” (*CRA*, 75). It is therefore not capacity that grounds dignity, but rather a creature’s being before God.²⁹

It is the combination of Linzey’s emphasis on God as Creator and his relational view of rights that entails the rejection of anthropocentrism. For all creation belongs not to humanity, but to God. It is God’s rights in creation that are protected by animal rights.³⁰ It is thus Linzey’s theological cosmology that leads him to claim that “Christians are precluded from a purely humanistic, utilitarian view of animals.” Humans cannot be the measure of value; for “God alone is the source of the value of all living things” (*AG*, 37).

But could it not be possible that God created a world and designed value hierarchically? After all, as I have already shown, evolutionary biology suggests that the

²⁸ Linzey, *AT*, 23-25. Also, Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 232-235.

²⁹ While Linzey makes this claim, he does accept that the capacity to suffer grounds rights in a unique manner. See Linzey, *WASM*, 10-11.

³⁰ Linzey, *CRA*, 55.

stronger have always advanced, at least in part, through the suffering of the weaker. Is such a world compatible with Linzey's claim that animal rights are predicated on the notion that "God desires that [animals] should so live"? If God desires animals to live, why are suffering, predation, and death biologically necessary? Linzey addresses this problem by appealing to nature's disruption.

PROTOLOGY AND THE FALL: ORIGINAL HARMONY AND THE DISRUPTION OF NATURE

Although Linzey is adamant that creation is good and blessed by God, he is equally as adamant in claiming that the entire cosmos is, in some sense, fallen and incomplete.³¹ In *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, he juxtaposes the goodness of creation, represented by the aforementioned notion that creation is blessed, with the corruption of that good creation, which Linzey represents with the notion of curse.³² This latter notion sums up for Linzey the meaning of cosmic fallenness. Here, I aim to delineate Linzey's view of the Fall. I explore two consistent points in his thought. First, that it is essential to Christian faith. Second, that it renders nature unfit as a "moral textbook." Then, I examine a much more ambiguous dimension of this thought: the etiology of nature's fallenness.

The Essentiality of the Doctrine of the Fall

Linzey maintains that the Fall is a "vital key" in Christian theology.³³ In particular, "Classical Christian theism teaches that the wickedness of man throws the system of intending order into disorder, harmony becomes engulfed in meaninglessness

³¹ Linzey, *CRA*, 33.

³² See Linzey, *CRA*, chapter one.

³³ Christopher Southgate argues, contra Linzey, that the Fall is not only not essential, but unhelpful in our contemporary Darwinian context. See Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 28-35. He prefers an "only way" theodicy in which an evolutionary world such as ours "is the only sort of universe that would give rise to the range, beauty, complexity, and diversity of creatures the Earth has produced." *Ibid.*, 29.

and teleology lapses into futility” (CRA, 11). So vital is the Fall that Linzey posits it as a differentiating point between Christian and non-Christian thought:

Here, we reach another parting of the ways between Christians and non-Christians. For the latter, there is no Fall, either of human or anything else. The world is simply ‘as it is,’ and we must be reconciled to it as it is. But the Gospel truth is that we do not have to accept the world as it is. We must distinguish creation from nature. (AG, 15)

Linzey’s refusal to accept the world “as it is” dramatically expresses the difference between his own position and that of advocates of cosmocentric conservation. In fact, Linzey explicitly develops his thought in juxtaposition to thinker he refers to as “anti-Fall theologians” (AG, 30).³⁴ Included in this camp are Richard Cartwright Austin and Matthew Fox.³⁵ Linzey rightly, if not quite dramatically, describes their position: “Life eating life is not some unfortunate aspect of the natural world to be tolerated in the meantime between creation and consummation. Rather, God actually wills and blesses a self-murdering system of survival. God’s will *is* death” (AT, 119).³⁶

In *Creatures of the Same God*, Linzey links a rejection of cosmic fallenness to an emphasis on general-centric ethics by marking a sharp differentiation between eco-theologians and animal theologians.³⁷ He acknowledges that these groups overlap in their rejection of anthropocentrism, which correlates to a recognition of the larger

³⁴ See also Linzey, *CSG*, 33-34; *CSLTA*, 70-71.

³⁵ See Linzey, *CSG*, 33. Linzey also includes process theologians like Jay B. McDaniel (33-35) and feminist theologians like Rosemary Radford Ruether (53) in this view.

³⁶ See also, Linzey, *CSG*, 15-16. Certainly, Linzey’s description requires qualification. The system is not self-murdering on the macro-level. Rather, it is self-murdering on the micro-level. It sacrifices creatures (self-murdering) for the sake of the whole, which makes life possible. Even with this qualification, Lisa Sideris would criticize Linzey’s view as both anthropocentric and anthropomorphic as he applies human values and terms (e.g., “murder”) to nature. See Lisa H. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 274, n. 18.

³⁷ Linzey rightly qualifies his distinction: “Not all ecologists are anti-animals and vice versa” (*CSG*, 37).

community of creation, a community that is not divided into subjects and resources.³⁸ It is just this similarity that I intimate by the term “cosmocentrism.” However, there is also this stark distinction:

Ecologists invariably look upon the system of predation as God-given and care more for ‘the whole’ than they do for individual animals. Animal theologians, on the other hand, see ‘nature’ as we now know it as incompatible with the good creation that God originally made. Nature is fallen and has a tragic quality; and individual sentients count—not just the system as a whole. (CSG, 29)³⁹

Two important and correlative points arise here. First, for many eco-theologians—whom I would categorize under the paradigms of cosmocentric conservationism—the suffering of individual animals exists for the common good of the larger system. This goodness in some ways nullifies the apparent evil itself, rendering the suffering part of the good system. Second, because suffering is part of the good system, there is no reason to speak of the fallenness of creation. To this latter point, Linzey adds the corollary that there is no need for redemption if there is no fallenness. Given these tensions, Linzey writes, “There is, I believe, no easy way to harmonize these perspectives,” which are separated by a “deep theological cleavage” (CSG, 44).

For Linzey, the position on the other side of this cleavage is untenable for Christian theology. In line with this belief, he lists four problems that would arise should the “anti-fall theologians” succeed in removing the doctrine of the Fall from theology.⁴⁰ First, “predation and parasitism [become] either morally neutral or, even worse, positive

³⁸ Linzey, *CSG*, 30.

³⁹ Linzey engages the careful thought of Annie Dillard to highlight this point. See Linzey, *CSG*, 30-32. Also, see Linzey’s discussion on animal conservationists in *WASM*, 68. Christopher Southgate argues that Linzey—as well as Singer and Regan—focus on individual animals to the detriment of the species, sparing very little effort discussing the issues of extinction. See Christopher Southgate, “The New Days of Noah? Assisted Migration as an Ethical Imperative in an Era of Climate Change,” in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*, Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, editors (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 256.

⁴⁰ Linzey, *AG*, 28-31; *CSLTA*, 70-71.

aspects of nature to be tolerated or even emulated” (AG, 28). Second, there is no longer any need for the eschatological redemption of the nonhuman world.⁴¹ For Linzey, the absence of this need is an issue on account of Jesus’s eschatological message.⁴² That is, a rejection of the Fall does not, for Linzey, do justice to the centrality of eschatology for Christian thought.⁴³ Third, humans are not ethically obliged to witness against the mechanisms of evolution, but rather should participate in the “one inexorable law of the universe,” which is “eat and be eaten” (AG, 30). Finally, “to reject absolutely the possibility of a transformed new heaven and earth in which all sentients will be redeemed is logically tantamount to denying the possibility of a morally good God” (AG, 31).

I will revisit the significance of the Fall for theology proper below. First, it is prudent to examine more closely Linzey’s rejection of nature as a moral guide for human action.

The Fall and the Law of Nature

In Linzey’s estimation, the rejection of the Fall (or at least the cosmic dimension of it) that often accompanies conservationist paradigms of eco-theological thought entails the theologically incorrect identification of the current state of nature with God’s intention. He prefers to understand nature in light of its eschatological *telos*—that is, as creation. The corollary of this rejection is that the present state of creation cannot “simply be read as a moral textbook” (CRA, 61); for the creation “it is both glorious and bestial” (CRA, 20).

⁴¹ Linzey, *AG*, 29.

⁴² Linzey, *AT*, 123.

⁴³ Southgate argues that Linzey’s appeal to fallenness and his “ignoring of the scientific evidence clouds unnecessarily” his eschatological ethics. He continues, “There is no reason to believe that just because God used a long evolutionary process to give rise to the biosphere we know, God may not have inaugurated a redemptive movement that will heal that process.” In Southgate’s reading, such is the view of Moltmann, whom he juxtaposes to Linzey’s with regard to the doctrine of the Fall. Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 179, n. 1.

For Linzey, the darker side of creation must be accounted for both theologically and ethically.⁴⁴ Creation *is* good, glorious, and blessed because it was created by a good and loving God. Yet at the same time it is *also* “bestial.”⁴⁵ While it is appropriate for humanity to seek to emulate and participate in creation’s goodness, it is at the same inappropriate for humanity to justify causing suffering, engaging in predation, or killing other creatures simply because that is nature’s way of operating.

Thus, Linzey cannot accept the conservationist view in which “we are supposed to glory in the economy of existence whereby one species devours another with consummate efficiency” (*AT*, 85). Natural law, as a means of adjudicating moral propriety, cannot be established merely by appeals to the current state of nature.⁴⁶ Rather, true natural law is better understood as “trans-natural law”—a law that accounts for God’s eschatological intention for nature.⁴⁷ So the law of fallen nature cannot be the moral code of human beings. There is real evil in nature. At this point a troubling question arises: How did God’s creation become so ambiguous? What is the etiology of its darker qualities?

The Etiology of Nature’s Corruption

Linzey acknowledges that the question of the origin of natural evil is a difficult one. Its difficulty is evident in the ambiguity of his answer, which he develops somewhat

⁴⁴ Linzey makes this point early on: “Suffering is an integral part of the natural world and, moreover, often caused through non-moral beings” (*AR*, 70).

⁴⁵ See Linzey, *AN*, 78. By the term “bestial” Linzey intimates something bad. He notes that this term is often used derogatively with references to animals. Linzey, *WASM*, 44. It thus seems Linzey maintains that what a nonhuman animal is *not* (a “beast”) the collective system of evolutionary emergence *is* (“bestial”).

⁴⁶ Neil Messer makes a similar point in his discussion of Aquinas’s appropriation of Aristotelian biology: “Biology *qua* biology gives no grounds for equating [the ends creatures seek in nature] with the good...or for concluding that they are *proper* ends.” Neil Messer, “Humans, Animals, Evolution and Ends,” in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London, UK: SCM Press, 2009), 215.

⁴⁷ Linzey, *AT*, 83-84. Linzey maintains that creation will remain unfinished “until all violence is overcome by love” (*AN*, 76).

amorphously throughout his writings.⁴⁸ In his earlier *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, Linzey states that “humans alone are properly responsible” for the curse, including “suffering and predation,” apparent in the present condition of nature (*CRA*, 18). This claim makes it seem as if Linzey adheres to the notion of an historical Eden that was free of death but disrupted by human sin. Yet in the same work he also acknowledges that evolutionary suffering, which includes predation, “seems almost essential to” creaturely life (*CRA*, 61).⁴⁹ Hence, while he maintains that there is “some connection between human sin and creaturely corruption” (*CRA*, 61), the nature of this connection does not seem necessarily one of humanity’s sole causality.

Later, in *Animal Theology*, Linzey seems to soften his emphasis on protological harmony and the Fall. He still maintains that according to Genesis, “parasitical existence is incompatible with the original will of God” (*AT*, 80). He further argues that the Genesis narrative presents God as accommodating a distorted creation by both permitting and limiting killing. However, he refers to both the Fall and flood narratives as “the great symbols of why humanity can no longer live at peace either with themselves or with other creatures” (*AT*, 81). The word “symbol” adds a level of ambiguity to his view.

Was there ever an historical state of existence absent of predation? Was there an actual

⁴⁸ Also, Linzey, *CRA*, 11.

⁴⁹ Linzey receives critique that he does not take scientific discovery seriously enough. Daniel Cowdin applies a schema of “creation, sin, incarnation, and redemption” to Linzey’s theology of animals. In critique of this schema, Cowdin writes that “our contemporary understanding of nature as a whole, and current ecoevolutionary insight, seems to lack *moral* relevance. An animal-based or even a more broadly organismic approach to moral status tends to function independently of scientific perceptions of collectivities and systems. Yet such perceptions impact our basic understanding of individual animals in the world.” See Daniel Cowdin, “The Moral Status of Otherkind in Christian Ethics,” in *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 270. His ultimate position is that “exclusive moral concern for individual animals becomes incoherent at the level of land management.” *Ibid.*, 271. Kemmerer writes that Linzey “does not reflect the teachings of science” but rather “takes for granted that the Christian God created the universe as described in Genesis.” Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 253. Linzey’s mature thought does in fact take scientific evidence into account. He does, as Cowdin notes, reject the moral potency of this evidence.

historical “Fall” from such a state? If not, did God ordain predation, contra the language of Genesis 1? Linzey summarizes the apparent dilemma:

Either [we] can accept that God did not ordain a just state of affairs, in which we can no longer postulate a loving, just deity; or, otherwise [we] have to accept that God is not—as claimed—the sovereign Creator of all things. (*AT*, 81)

Linzey argues that this dilemma is a false one, advocating an alternative possibility; namely, “that the world is really *creation*” (*AT*, 81). With this claim he intimates that creation, because it is by definition other-than-God, requires growth and development. It is, by nature, “incomplete, unfinished, imperfect” (*AT*, 81).⁵⁰ Thus he seems to back away from the image of the human corruption of an historical edenic state. Creation is “incomplete or unfinished” (*AT*, 85); but these terms are not synonymous with fallen.

Yet Linzey does not abandon the notion that the darker mechanisms of evolutionary emergence derive from some sort of Fall. In conjunction with his appeal to the incompleteness of creation, he cites E. L. Mascall’s musing that the evolutionary process resulted from an angelic fall prior to human existence.⁵¹ Linzey acknowledges that this view, while one of the “many theories that have been expounded” to explain the current state of the cosmos, has not “found complete assent within the Christian tradition” (*AT*, 98). However, in his later thought he gives this view preference over others,

⁵⁰ In line with this development, Linzey notes the positive dimensions of evolution. “Whilst it is true that there seems to be cruelty, aggression and violence in the natural world (humans included) it is also true that there is cooperation, mutual aid, even possible altruism between species, animals as well as human” (*AT*, 120).

⁵¹ See Linzey, *AT*, 167, n. 8. Linzey notes that C. S. Lewis appeals to an angelic fall because (1) human sin cannot account for the suffering of dinosaurs in a post-Darwin worldview and (2) “Lewis cannot resign himself to predation, carnivorousness and pain as the result of God’s direct will” (*CSLTA*, 64).

suggesting that evolution is in fact the result of an historical Fall, but one that predates humans.⁵²

In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey remains ambiguous about the historical nature of the Fall. He even suggests that the world described in Genesis 1 reflects the eschatological hopes of Israel evident in Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom rather than a past historical reality.⁵³ He furthermore clarified what he holds to be the "complex truth" underlying the doctrine of the Fall. This truth includes

the dual recognition that God as the Creator of all things must have created a world which is morally good—or *at least justified in the end as a morally justifiable process*—and also the insight that parasitism and predation are unlovely, cruel, evil aspects of the world ultimately incapable of being reconciled with a God of love. (*AG*, 27-28; emphasis mine)

Significantly, Linzey here accepts the possibility that the present state of existence, including the mechanisms of evolutionary progress, may be *justifiable* (which, for Linzey, is not necessarily the same as "good"). Such a justification, ultimately eschatological, would be necessary in the face of God's love and justice. At any rate, the truth behind the doctrine does not seem to necessitate a human Fall from Eden. But it does require the disavowal of any identification of suffering, predation and death with the goodness of the created order.

In *Creatures of the Same God*, Linzey's ambiguity intensifies. On the one hand, he maintains his position that "creation is good, even 'very good,' yet it is also incomplete and unfinished" (*CSG*, 36). On the other hand, he appears to reject his own earlier "third option" to the false dilemma of nature and evil: "Either parasitical nature is

⁵² See Linzey, *CSLTA*, 70; *AN*, 106. For more considerations on an angelic fall, see Robert N. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 327-330.

⁵³ Linzey, *AG*, 81.

or is not evil. Either God wills a self-murdering system of survival or God does not. There really is not a third way” (CSG, 53).⁵⁴ This dilemma leads Linzey to suggest that, while the exact nature of the Fall, and most significantly its origin, is problematic, the doctrine is necessary because “the alternative is dire beyond words” (CSG, 54).

In Sum

Linzey’s ambiguity notwithstanding, he is consistent in his claim that whatever the etiology of creation’s current state of predation and suffering—whether an angelic fall exacerbated by human sin or merely a natural outpouring of cosmic finitude—the eschatological hope for creation calls humans to a higher ethics than nature itself reveals. He is adamant that the world of suffering and predation presents a problem with regard to the affirmation of a good and loving God.⁵⁵ There can thus be no unadulterated affirmation of the goodness of this state. “It is violence itself within every part of creation that is the preeminent mark of corruption and sinfulness” (AT, 127).⁵⁶ For Linzey, “pain and suffering and death are evils *overcome* in the passion and resurrection of Christ” (CRA, 82). There is a greater intention for the cosmos—one that cannot be derived from its current state. This intention is intimated in Isaiah’s vision of the peaceable kingdom, in which the wolf will lie with the lamb and the lion will eat straw like an ox (see Isaiah 11:6-9). This vision, when coupled with the protological claims of an edenic harmony, suggests that the perfection of animal nature is not predation but

⁵⁴ Also, Linzey, CSLTA, 71.

⁵⁵ Linzey, CRA, 59. Linzey thus decries theodicies, in particular John Hick’s soul-building theodicy, that ignore or downplay the significance of nonhuman suffering. Linzey, AR, 70-71.

⁵⁶ Also, Linzey, AG, 148.

rather peace.⁵⁷ Thus, Linzey's view of fallenness corresponds to his understanding of eschatology, to which I now turn.

ESCHATOLOGY: THE SENTIENT-INCLUSIVE PEACEABLE KINGDOM

As he develops his eschatological vision, Linzey is adamant about avoiding three reductions. First, eschatology cannot be discarded by way of the claim that creation is not in need of redemption. Second, eschatology cannot be limited to the human creature. Third, eschatology cannot be relegated to a transcendent future that bears no direct meaning for history. Here, my aim is to develop these three positions in Linzey's thought.

Creation and Redemption

Even in his earliest thought, Linzey notes that anything less than cosmic redemption renders the travail of nature incoherent and pointless.⁵⁸ Thus, the notion of the Fall and the hope for eschatological redemption are intricately connected. "The logic is inescapable: no real state of fallenness, no real redemption" (*CSG*, 53). The exhaustive extent of cosmic fallenness corresponds to an exhaustive need for redemption. Because all of creation "is radically estranged from God," it "cries out for redemption" (*CRA*, 40). Thus Linzey argues, christologically, that "the act of reconciliation must...include *all* that is fallen, *all* that was previously unreconciled" (*AT*, 98).⁵⁹

What does redemption of creation look like? Because Linzey believes the fallenness of nature is evident in predation and suffering, he claims that "God's will is a redeemed creation free from parasitism" (*AT*, 76). It is this view that grounds his

⁵⁷ Linzey, *AT*, 82.

⁵⁸ Linzey, *AR*, 75.

⁵⁹ On this point, whether or not animals have willfully sinned is beside the point. Animals are affected by willful sin; they are drawn into its consequences. Therefore, redemption from that sin (and from those consequences) must bear relevance for animals. See Linzey, *AT*, 98-99.

criticism that “much ecotheology issues in a non-redeeming God and therefore a non-God, at least as traditionally understood” (CSG, 128, n. 10). For Linzey, “Gospel hope in the future is not some optional extra to moral endeavor.” Rather it is “its essential basis” (AG, 152).⁶⁰ This view represents an absolute break with those like Thomas Berry who reject cosmic redemption as a pertinent dimension of Christian theology. For Linzey, there can be no good news if there is not good news for all creatures who suffer and die in the unfolding process of evolutionary development. The cosmic dimension of eschatology, which Linzey rightly notes is well-attested in both Jewish and Christian history,⁶¹ is essential to Christianity.⁶²

Sentient-Inclusive Eschatology

While Linzey is distinct from conservationists, he also differs from many who embrace the notion of a cosmically eschatological redemption, including certain Orthodox theologians. This difference is two-fold. First, he maintains that all *individual* sentient creatures must be redeemed. Second, he maintains that these creatures are redeemed *for their own sake*. Thus, Linzey’s transfigurative ethics is coupled with both a particular-centric emphasis and a cosmocentric scope.

In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey’s creed states: “I affirm the hope of the world to come for all God’s creatures” (AG, 7). This confession suggests that all individual creatures

⁶⁰ For Linzey, God’s justice renders the redemption of animals necessary. Linzey, *CSG*, 53. Based on this claim, it is quite unclear why Kemmerer claims that Linzey “does not emphasize God’s peaceable kingdom.” Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 268.

⁶¹ See Linzey, *CRA*, 33, 49; *AR*, 74-75. Linzey also notes the cosmic eschatology evident in non-canonical literature, particularly the restoration of peaceful relationships between humans (including Jesus) and animals. *AN*, 62-70; *AG*, 26-27. Linzey also notes that, regarding animals in particular, for much of Christian thought the “*telos* of animals is assumed to be identical with human needs” (*CSG*, 11). There are thus different strands of thought here. While thinkers like Irenaeus and John Wesley included animals in their eschatological purview, those like Augustine and Aquinas certainly did not.

⁶² Linzey holds this position with reference to scripture. He maintains that “The characteristic thrust of the biblical writers is eschatological—to look forward to what God will do in the future, to complete the work of creation by grace...we can be sure that God’s will is for a transformed creation” (*CSG*, 50).

will in some manner, as individuals, participate in the eschatological redemption of the cosmos. This individually-inclusive eschatological redemption derives from his cosmology. For

nothing that God has made can be omitted in the moment of completion. Christians may be questioning and agnostic as to the precise details of this hope, but it cannot but follow from a God who creates, incarnates, and reconciles that *everything* will be made new...It must also follow that each and every hurt and harm in creation (both human and animal, in so far as each is capable of being hurt or harmed) will be made good, and that all the suffering of the present time is not worth comparing to the glory yet revealed. (AT, 99-100)

This quote links Linzey's individually-inclusive eschatology to his christology.⁶³ As he says earlier, the incarnation constitutes God's "triumph over death" and is therefore "the hope for all creatures" (AR, 130). It also reveals that, for Linzey, redemption complements (and completes) creation.

Like the import of cosmic eschatology in general, Linzey notes that the inclusion of animals in redemption is not without precedence in Christian thought. Engaging the thought of both John Wesley and C. S. Lewis, he writes, "Some form of eternal life for animals has found serious advocates within Christianity" (AT, 100).⁶⁴ Based on this tradition, Linzey maintains that, at the very least, the belief in the resurrection and eternity of individual nonhuman animals "can be supported by [doctrines of] orthodox Christian belief" and, much stronger, that "these doctrines taken together require such an affirmation" (AT, 100-101).

It is this form of reasoning that leads Linzey to his own affirmation "that all sentient beings will be redeemed in a way that compensates them for the injustice and suffering that they have had to undergo." Linzey adds, acknowledging the need for

⁶³ Linzey, *CSG*, 14.

⁶⁴ On Lewis, see Linzey, *CSLTA*, 64-66. Linzey argues that Lewis "does not go far enough" on this matter (*CSLTA*, 75).

caution: “*How* precisely that will be done, I am happy to leave to the Almighty” (CSG, 133, n. 13).⁶⁵ But *that* it happens “is required by the doctrine of a just God” (CSG, 133, n. 13); for a God who does not redeem the suffering of individual creatures has not acted righteously with regard to those creatures.⁶⁶

Linzey’s eschatological inclusion of all individual sentient creatures for the sake of divine justice highlights his break from what I have labeled anthropocentric transfiguration. These creatures are not included as a sacrament of communion between humanity and God. Rather, the recompense they receive for their suffering is their own. It is for their sake in relation to God; for “God enjoys creatures” (AN, 104) in and of themselves.

Eschatology, History, and Ethics

Linzey’s eschatology, particularly its inclusion of all individual sentient creatures in the redemption from the darker mechanisms of evolution, corresponds to a theological ethics with regard to nonhuman animals. To establish this claim, it is first pertinent to establish the somewhat unclear nature of the relationship between eschatology and history in Linzey’s thought. In short, what does eschatology have to do with the present?

Neil Messer is not, in my view, completely misguided when he writes that “Linzey’s language of ‘approximating’ the peaceable kingdom has its dangers, because it tends to obscure [the] distinction between witnessing to and establishing the kingdom.”⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Also, Linzey, *WASM*, 26-27. In Linzey’s estimation, the salvation of animals and humans differ. Humans need to be saved not only from the effects of sin, but from the reality of their own sinfulness. Animals, as amoral creatures, need only be saved from the effects of sin. Linzey, *CSG*, 52.

⁶⁶ Linzey, *CSLTA*, 65, 74. Linzey links creation and redemption in a manner similar to Moltmann: “It is quite impossible to posit a *loving* Creator who allows the life he has created, loved and sustained to be thrown away as worthless” (*CRA*, 38). Also, Linzey, *AN*, 82-84.

⁶⁷ See Messer, “Humans, Animals, Evolution and Ends,” 224. Messer does, however, misread Linzey’s affirmation of the complexity of the world and the moral ambiguity that accompanies that complexity. See 222-226. Furthermore, as I will argue, Linzey’s overall theological position (including his

Indeed Linzey writes that the Isaianic vision of the peaceable kingdom is, by the Spirit, a “realizable possibility” (*CRA*, 104). Does his mean that this eschatological peace is achievable within history via political programs? He runs the risk of this interpretation when he goes on to write that humanity’s “impossible commission to make peace” in the cosmos “is made possible” by the Spirit (*CRA*, 104). Thus, Linzey’s eschatology at times seems in danger of appearing to be one that is realizable within history.

However, in the same work Linzey also maintains that eschatological redemption, while calling for humanity’s participation and witness, is ultimately a divine activity. All creatures, including humans, “await the world that is to come” (*CRA*, 35).⁶⁸ There is thus a restriction on human activity. Living in a fallen world that is not yet redeemed impedes the experience of redemption within history. In this manner, Linzey recognizes the limitations of constructing the kingdom. This limitation notwithstanding, he writes that “Christians should never say that this world as it is, is all that we have to contend with and that God is satisfied that we stay as we are” (*CRA*, 50). As long as one maintains that the world is not as God desires it to be, the embrace of the present reality of nature can never be without qualification.

In line with this refusal to embrace the goodness of nature as it currently exists, Linzey draws on the dynamism of creation to dismantle appeals to the status quo of nature. God is working within the created order to direct it toward its eschatological *telos*.⁶⁹ Limitation is thus coupled with possibility. “Human striving cannot...by itself

development) intimates strongly a rejection of social programs to build to the kingdom by human effort. Southgate provides a better reading of Linzey than Messer on this point. See Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 120-121.

⁶⁸ See also his discussion of Hauerwas in *CRA*, 50.

⁶⁹ Linzey, *CRA*, 50.

achieve the dream [of universal peace], but we cooperate with God's Spirit in the realization of the divine dream" (AG, 71).⁷⁰

But it is here that Linzey's ambiguity is evident. Humans cannot construct the kingdom through their own striving. Yet is it possible for the eschatological future to develop *fully* within history when human striving cooperates with God's grace? Or, does the eschatological future—the fullness of the kingdom—require a decisive break with history such that even humans cooperating with grace cannot realize it now? Even in Linzey's later work, in which he more explicitly emphasizes the need for divine intervention to establish the peaceable kingdom, whether or not this intervention can happen fully within history or requires a decisive break with the laws of natural history is unclear.⁷¹ Below, I will argue that Linzey's anthropology suggests that the latter is a better image of the interplay between eschatology and history.

At any rate, Linzey neither relegates eschatology to a fully transcendent future nor subsumes it into a social program. Eschatology informs both what will be in the ultimate future and what a witness to redemption should look like within history. For Linzey, "Christian ethics is essentially eschatological... The God of Isaac, of Jacob, of Abraham, and of Jesus is not limited by what we know of elementary biology" (AG, 17).⁷² He makes this point by juxtaposing, in my words, conservation and transfiguration: "If 'eat and get eaten' is the moral law of the universe, or if predation is 'beautiful,' there can be no moral imperative to live without injury" (AG, 31). However, if there is a hope for the

⁷⁰ Also, Linzey, *CSG*, 50.

⁷¹ Linzey, *CSG*, 51, 53.

⁷² Christopher Southgate concurs on this point. See "The New Days of Noah?" 264; *The Groaning of Creation*, 116-117. Although he also qualifies his position, arguing that humane killing is a possible facet of humanity's role in the cosmos in history. *The Groaning of Creation*, 121.

resurrection and eternal life of individual sentients, then living without injury as much as possible is a Christian ideal. To act otherwise is to embrace the fallenness of the world:

Whatever the difficulties in conceiving a world without predation, to intensify and heighten—without any ethical necessity—the parasitical forces in our world is to plunge creation further into that darkness from which the Christian hope is that we shall all, human and animal, be liberated. (AT, 114)

Thus, the eschatological inclusion of individual nonhuman animals entails meaning for them even in the present. As will become evident in Linzey’s anthropology, through humanity’s moral interaction with animals, these creatures already experience a prolepsis of their eschatological *telos*.

CHRISTOLOGY: THE BEARER OF THE KINGDOM

Linzey’s christology, like his eschatology, provides a stark challenge to both anthropocentrism and conservation.⁷³ Here, I seek to explicate the manners in which Christ’s life, death, and resurrection bear meaning for Linzey’s animal theology. These manners include both a dismantling of anthropocentrism through an affirmation of God’s openness to the cosmos and an affirmation of hope for all who suffer in conjunction with a call for acts of liberation on their behalf in an embrace of the peace that Christ makes possible.

The Incarnation and the God’s Cosmic Eschatological Embrace

Linzey is critical of Barth’s christology on account of its anthropocentric slant.⁷⁴ The incarnation cannot simply be “God’s ‘Yes’” to humanity. Rather, “since the *ousia* assumed in the incarnation is the *ousia* of all creaturely being, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that what is effected in the incarnation for man is likewise effected for the rest

⁷³ His theology is thoroughly christological: “For me Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. What is given in Jesus is, in my view, determinative of our understanding of the nature of God” (AG, 47). Linzey qualifies this claim with an inclusivist understanding of the religious other’s access to truth.

⁷⁴ See Linzey, AT, 31-32, 68.

of the non-human creation” (*CRA*, 34).⁷⁵ Said differently, “The incarnation is God’s love affair with all fleshy creatures” (*CSG*, 14).

Thus, far from being merely the savior of humans, Christ is the embodiment of the cosmic nature of messianic hope found in Judaism.⁷⁶ God affirms creation in the graciousness of the decision both to create that which is other than God and to *become* (in the incarnation) that which is other than God. For this reason, “nothing God has made can be in the last resort alien to him” (*CRA*, 8-9). That is, everything that exists must come to rest in the divine community that is both Creator and Redeemer. The incarnation thus solidifies Linzey’s eschatological vision in which the creation, which is ontologically other than the Creator, “is open to God” (*AT*, 97) and God to it. The incarnation at once affirms the transcendence and immanence of God by acknowledging God’s alterity from the world and God’s at-home-ness in the world.⁷⁷

The Incarnation, Suffering, and Liberation

In the incarnation, the Son not only takes on the matter of the cosmos, but also its travails, even to the point of death. Thus, Linzey can write: “What we see in Jesus is the revelation of an inclusive, all-embracing, generous loving” (*AG*, 20). Christ’s suffering envelops the suffering of all sentient creatures. “The curse which Jesus Christ takes upon himself reverses the natural order of mortality not only for human beings but for the ‘sad

⁷⁵ See also Linzey, *AG*, 11-12. Peter Manley Scott critiques Linzey here because he does not “find some way of showing how it is that non-human animals participate in Jesus’s human flesh” by “developing an intermediate, bridging metaphysics” between humans and nonhumans. See Peter Manley Scott, “Sloughing Towards Jerusalem? An Anti-human Theology of Rough Beasts and Other Animals” in *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London, UK: SCM Press, 2009), 174.

⁷⁶ Linzey, *CRA*, 33-34; *AG*, 14-15. Linzey makes this point by appealing to a logos christology: “The Logos is the origin and destiny of all created things” (*CSG*, 14; also *AT*, 68). Linzey also maintains that Christ establishes a covenant as extensive as the Noahic covenant. Linzey, *AT*, 69-70.

⁷⁷ Linzey writes that this at-home-ness suggests that the cosmos “is the appropriate medium for [divine] self-revelation” (*AT*, 97).

uncomprehending dark' of innocent creatures" (*CRA*, 13).⁷⁸ It is in this sense that Linzey claims that Christ's suffering grounds the hope that "all innocent suffering will be transformed" (*WASM*, 164).

Therefore, Christ's work is primarily the work of liberation. In this emphasis Linzey bears the marks of liberation theology. Linzey follows Gustavo Gutierrez's basic notion that "Christ's work is understood as recreating or making a new creation" (*AR*, 74). He differs from many liberation theologians, however, in his answer to the key question: "What or whom is to be liberated?" (*AT*, 62) Linzey is critical of liberation theology, accusing many of its central advocates—including Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff—of a staunch anthropocentrism deriving from a "deficient christology."⁷⁹ In Linzey's reading, "Gutierrez does not maintain this emphasis upon the inclusive nature of cosmic redemption" (*AT*, 64). Indeed, some under the banner of liberation theology fall rather well into the paradigm of anthropocentric conservation, claiming that all creation is to be conserved and justly distributed to all peoples.⁸⁰ In this manner, liberation theology at times excludes animals from the realm of liberation.⁸¹ This exclusion betrays an anthropocentrism, "albeit qualified and seemingly sympathetic to environmental concerns" (*AT*, 67).

⁷⁸ Also Linzey, *AR*, 76.

⁷⁹ See Linzey, *AT*, chapter 4; *AR*, 75.

⁸⁰ This anthropocentric slant continues in liberation thought with the work of Leonardo Boff. Linzey, *AT*, 65-67. *Animal Theology* was written before Boff's later works *Ecology and Liberation* (1995) and *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (1997), both of which point toward a more inclusive moral paradigm. At any rate, Linzey argues that while Boff evinces an awareness of the cosmic dimension of Christ's work, he fails "to recognize its moral dimension" (*AT*, 70). Linzey also includes Jon Sobrino in his christological critique. *AT*, 68.

⁸¹ Linzey, *AT*, 67.

In Sum

For Linzey, Christ's work must include every individual sentient in order to be a genuine liberation from suffering. Contra anthropocentrism, Christ's person draws in the *ousia* of all flesh into the life of God. Contra conservationism, Christ's redeeming work assumes and promises to redeem the suffering of all sentient creatures. This redemption begins already in the work of the Spirit, who makes possible both present existence and new creation.

PNEUMATOLOGY: THE IMMANENCE OF THE DIVINE

Linzey's pneumatology bears two significant dimensions. First, the Spirit has a cosmological role as the vitality of all life. Second, the Spirit bears an eschatological role in the wake of the Christ event, opening new possibilities of peace between humans and animals.

In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey confesses his belief in "the life-giving Spirit, source of all that is wonderful, who animates every creature" (AG, 7). Again, "It is the Spirit immanent in creation that gives life and in so doing develops all beings into their particular fullness" (CRA, 9).⁸² This presence of the Spirit in breathing creatures constitutes their unique claim of theos-rights.⁸³ As the breath of all sentient creatures, the Spirit draws them into a community. This commonality is evident biblically in the notion of *nephesh*, which Linzey links both to the soul of humans and animals and to the presence of the Spirit in these creatures.⁸⁴

⁸² Also, Linzey, *CSG*, xii.

⁸³ Linzey, *CRA*, 69.

⁸⁴ See Linzey, *CSG*, xii. The commonality of *nephesh* in humans and animals leads Linzey to the eschatological assertion that "whatever hope there might be for a future life for humans applies equally to animal life as well" (*CRA*, 37).

The cosmological presence of the Spirit is also the manner of divine immanence in the fallen cosmos. “Through the Holy Spirit, the giver of life and inspirer of all, God experiences the creation as it were *from the inside*, and sees and feels through all the creatures of the earth” (CSG, 14). The Spirit is God’s manner of suffering in creation even prior to the incarnation. This presence of the Spirit is the catalyst of a dynamism in which the cosmos is open to and moving toward God’s desire.⁸⁵

The Spirit’s cosmological role of vitalizing, sustaining, suffering, and developing takes on new eschatological significance in light of the incarnation. It is this redemptive presence of the Spirit that enables new forms of living within the world—forms that make for peace between humanity and nonhumans.⁸⁶ The Spirit is “moving creation forward, however mysteriously, to the realization of God’s hope for us and his world” (CRA, 103).

In light of these considerations, Linzey maintains that Christians must not dismiss Isaiah’s vision of the peaceable kingdom (Isaiah 11:6-9) either as a future or present possibility. For this vision of the cosmos “is not simply presented...as a future state, but a realizable possibility through the Holy Spirit” (CRA, 104).⁸⁷ The Spirit enables humans to become more than “mere spectators of the world of suffering” (AT, 56). In the power of the Spirit, humans cooperate in the world’s redemption as the continuation of God’s

⁸⁵ Linzey, *AG*, 141.

⁸⁶ Linzey, *AR*, 74; *CRA*, 49; *AT*, 72.

⁸⁷ Two potential problems arise here with Linzey’s thought. First, his hermeneutical identification of Isaiah’s use of the spirit with the Christian notion of the Holy Spirit is a leap that is exegetically ungrounded. Second, his use of the word “realizable” is problematic. However, as already noted, Linzey is clear that the eschaton must not be subsumed into a historical endeavor. He furthermore qualifies his position by claiming human effort must go “as far as we are enabled by the Spirit” (CRA, 104). Regardless, Linzey’s meaning of the presence of the peaceable kingdom possible in human action would be better served by a consistent use of the language of proleptic witness. Theologically speaking, one might say that humans are sacraments of the eschaton for the nonhuman creation, but, as sacraments, never exhaust the eschaton itself.

incarnate work⁸⁸—even if a full living out of that future peace is impossible within history.⁸⁹

ANTHROPOLOGY: THE PROLEPTIC WITNESS OF THE KINGDOM OF THE SUFFERING GOD

In chapter two, I addressed Moltmann's ecclesiology as it pertained to the nonhuman creation. While Linzey's work is not absent of similar ecclesiological claims, it will be more fruitful here to address his understanding of human beings vis-à-vis the nonhuman creation. In particular, I will explore his rejection of a value-based anthropocentrism and his embrace of a functional anthropocentrism, his understanding of the boundaries of humanity's role within history, and finally his claim that humans are to witness to eschatological hope in their practices.

Human Uniqueness and Moral Differentiation

Linzey does not deny that there are differences between humans and nonhuman animals. In fact, the arch of his eco-theological ethics depends on it. However, he argues that the differences have been misappropriated. First, many supposed distinctions are little more than cultural assumptions.⁹⁰ Second, the claim to human uniqueness, whether valid or not, is used to promote an anthropocentric agenda.

Linzey incriminates the dominant voices of Western Christianity on both of these accounts.⁹¹ He often centers this critique on the Roman Catholic tradition.⁹² In *Animal*

⁸⁸ Linzey, *AN*, 109; *AG*, 32. This understanding leads Linzey to affirm that the Spirit is at work wherever practices of peace are being promulgated toward nonhuman animals. Such a position opens fruitful possibilities for interreligious dialogue. See Linzey, *AG*, 140-141; *CSG*, chapter 1.

⁸⁹ See Linzey, *AT*, 88-89; *AG*, 24.

⁹⁰ The two most basic assumptions are that humans are masters of nature and that animals have no valid claims to direct moral consideration. Linzey, *AR*, 4.

⁹¹ Linzey, *CRA*, 22-23.

⁹² See Linzey, *AR*, 5; *AT*, 12, *AG*, 34-36, 56-63; *CSG*, 11-13; *WASM*, 16-17. Linzey's critique is directed to the magisterium. However, he also rightly acknowledges positive voices in the Roman Catholic tradition. Linzey, *CSG*, 26. He frequently engages Cardinal Henry Newman's sermon that compares the

Gospel, Linzey engages the most recent Roman Catholic Catechism as an example of Christian thought perpetuating cruelty “because it represents in a clear and dramatic way how unenlightened official Christian teaching still is about animal welfare” (*AG*, 57).⁹³ He often references Pope Pius IX’s refusal to open an animal protection office in Rome because of his belief that humans have no direct duties to nonhuman animals.⁹⁴ In Linzey’s view, this tradition has, at least magisterially, taken up the position of Thomas Aquinas, whom he chastises more than any other theologian on account of his Aristotelian anthropocentrism.⁹⁵ It is in this manner that Linzey claims Aquinas “leaves Christianity theology with a bitter legacy” that has “helped support years of indifference and wantonness towards animal life” (*CRA*, 27-28).⁹⁶

Other Western traditions are similarly culpable.⁹⁷ Says Linzey in his earliest work, “Very few, if any, Catholic and Protestant theologians have questioned man’s right to exploit animals and to use animal life for the needs of man” (*AR*, 9). Thus, Linzey also

suffering of animals to the suffering of Christ. See Linzey *AG*, 64-67; *WASM*, 38-39. See also Linzey’s praise of James Gaffney’s “welcome piece of Catholic self-criticism” in *Animals on the Agenda* (65-66).

⁹³ For Linzey’s critique of the Catechism’s engagement with animals, see Linzey, *AG*, 56-63. In sum, Linzey claims that it acknowledges animals as God’s creatures that are due kindness but also embraces “a wholly instrumentalist understanding of their status as resources for human use” (*AG*, 61). He also suggests that “It is absolutely vital that all who care for animals make known their opposition to this *Catechism*” (*AG*, 62).

⁹⁴ See Linzey, *AR*, 9; *CRA*, 23; *AT*, 19; *AN*, 10; *AG*, 19-20.

⁹⁵ See Linzey, *AR*, 10-12; *CRA*, 22; *AT*, 12-15, 17-19, 46-47; *AN*, 6-7; *AG*, 19-21; *CSG*, 11, 15; *WASM*, 14-17. In my opinion, Linzey oversimplifies Aquinas’s position. Drummond concurs with this assessment. See Celia Deane-Drummond, “Are Animals Moral? Taking Soundings through Vice, Virtue, Conscience and *Imago Dei*,” in *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, editors (London, UK: SCM Press, 2009), 198. For a more detailed critique of Linzey’s reading of Aquinas, see Mark Wynn, “Thomas Aquinas: Reading the Idea of Dominion in the Light of the Doctrine of Creation,” *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, edited by David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010), 154-167. Linzey also accuses Augustine promulgating a “negative tradition” toward animals in Christian thought. Linzey, *CSG*, 26.

⁹⁶ Even when Linzey qualifies his critique of Aquinas, for instance acknowledging his context (as in Linzey, *CRA*, 27) or referring to him as “a great scholar and saint” (*AG*, 21), his ultimate aim for engagement is to critique Thomas’s view on animals.

⁹⁷ See Linzey, *CRA*, 16-17; *AG*, 56. Linzey notes that his critiques of various Christian traditions has elicited “furious letters” (*AG*, 56).

criticizes major voices in the Protestant tradition, including Martin Luther and John Calvin.⁹⁸ Another Western religious voice Linzey frequently disparages is René Descartes, whose mechanistic view of nonhuman animals facilitates a denial of their sentience.⁹⁹ Even here, however, Linzey intimates Aquinas's accountability: "The French philosopher... carries the line of indifference to animal cruelty... already indicated by St. Thomas, to its logical conclusion" (*AR*, 12).¹⁰⁰ Though he notes exceptions to his critiques, Linzey ultimately judges that Christianity is "arguably one of the most anthropocentric of all world religions" (*WASM*, 108).

This anthropocentric history of differentiation begins to break down in the face of scientific inquiry, including an affirmation of the evolutionary development of humans¹⁰¹—though, Linzey's acceptance of some of these scientific developments is at times tentative.¹⁰² Nonetheless, he fully accepts the evidence regarding nonhuman animals' ability to suffer, which includes self-consciousness.¹⁰³ At least equally important as scientific challenges to human assumptions about nonhuman animals, however, are theological and philosophical challenges.

Throughout Linzey's work, he not only attempts to confront the ingrained assumptions about what nonhuman animals lack (e.g., sentience and rationality), but also to question the moral conclusions based on these assumptions.¹⁰⁴ Says Linzey, "The

⁹⁸ See Linzey, *AR*, 9; *AN*, 7-8 *CSG*, 11.

⁹⁹ See Linzey, *AR*, 12-14; *AN*, 8-10. Linzey believes the Cartesian rejection of animal suffering has been adopted by Western Christian thought. Linzey, *CRA*, 63; *WASM*, 45-47.

¹⁰⁰ See also, Linzey, *CRA*, 62.

¹⁰¹ See Linzey, *AT*, 46.

¹⁰² Linzey, *AR*, 5. Regarding the questions of ethics, Linzey states, "Moral issues cannot be turned into scientific ones, nor subsumed under scientific categories" (*WASM*, 61).

¹⁰³ Linzey, *AG*, 112; *WASM*, 9-10. Linzey writes that there is "ample evidence in peer-reviewed scientific journals" concerning the suffering of mammals. *CSG*, 5; also *WASM*, 47. He does not, however, provide an example for this claim.

¹⁰⁴ See Linzey, *CRA*, 54-67.

difference-finding tendency in Western tradition has undoubtedly served to minimize the moral standing of non-human creatures, and to enable us to exploit them with a clear conscience” (AT, 47). While Linzey begins this critical process early on, he develops and clarifies it in later works.¹⁰⁵ In *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, he accepts, for the sake of argument, standard assumed differences between humans and animals in order to explore “whether any of the proposed differences are *morally relevant*, that is, whether any should reasonably form the basis for differential treatment of one species over another” (WASM, 10). **Table 3 – 1** summarizes his conclusions:

TABLE 3 – 1		
Linzey’s Challenge to Moral Conclusions Drawn from Assumed Differentiations between Humans and Animals¹⁰⁶		
<i>Proposed Difference</i>	<i>Proposed Moral Conclusion</i>	<i>Linzey’s Moral Conclusion</i>
The world as a teleological hierarchy	In nature, the lesser are naturally slaves to the greater	In Christ, the greater exist for the sake of the lesser
Animals lack reason	Animals cannot suffer in the proper sense of the term	Lack of reason can intensify the experience of suffering, rendering it more morally significant
Animals lack language	Animals cannot participate in social contracts, which means they are not part of the moral community	Animals cannot consent to human exploitation such that “every act which makes them suffer is an act of coercion” (WASM, 22)
Animals are amoral	Animals cannot be part of the moral community	Animals cannot be improved by suffering as moral agents can
Animals lack an immortal (rational) soul	Animals are not of intrinsic value to God (or humanity)	Animal that suffer will not receive eternal compensation (as humans will), making their suffering more problematic
Animals lack the <i>imago Dei</i>	Humans have the right to dominate animals	Humans uniquely responsible for bearing the image of a loving God to the creation

Linzey’s Functional Anthropocentrism

As I have noted, Linzey challenges both the scientific validity of certain claims about human uniqueness and the ethical conclusions drawn from proposed distinctions between humans and nonhuman animals. But he does maintain that humans are unique in the cosmos. So what does make humanity unique? “One crucial difference is that of

¹⁰⁵ For Linzey’s earlier views, see *AR*, 10-19, *CRA*, 52-67.

¹⁰⁶ This chart is developed from Linzey, *WASM*, 11-29.

capacity for moral consciousness and responsibility” (AR, 69).¹⁰⁷ However, far from privileging humans above the nonhuman world, it is just this difference that renders humans uniquely accountable *to God for the world*. Again, “it has to be said that humans are freer in their relationship to God” than other creatures. But this “special freedom” also means that humans “are freer in their relationship with other creatures as well” and therefore elicits a “particular responsibility” (CRA, 10).

Thus, Linzey’s rejection of anthropocentrism intimates more specifically a rejection of an anthropomonistic view of value—that is, that only humans are of intrinsic value and therefore a matter of direct moral concern.¹⁰⁸ In fact, for Linzey the value of humans and the value of nonhumans are complimentary.¹⁰⁹ In this vein he writes, contra many suspicions, that

Christian animal rights advocates are not interested in dethroning humanity. On the contrary, the animal rights thesis requires the reenthroning of humanity. The key question is, what kind of king is to be reenthroned? (AG, 38)

Linzey’s answer to this question is perhaps most evident in his discussion on the term “dominion.” He rejects the prevailing anthropocentric interpretations of dominion evident in both Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther.¹¹⁰ Such a view replaces the monarchical responsibility of humanity as co-creators and co-redeemers for the well-being of the cosmos with a hierarchical status that privileges human over and against animals.¹¹¹ It is just these claims, in Linzey’s estimation, that comprise the dominant

¹⁰⁷ Also, Linzey, CSLTA, 77. Linzey’s rather consistent claim that “there is no evidence that any other species possess [the] capacity for morality” (AR, 69) seems too strong. There is, in fact, evidence to the contrary. On this point, see Drummond, “Are Animals Moral?” 190-210.

¹⁰⁸ Linzey, CRA, 61; AT, 58-59; AG, 49; CSG, 11.

¹⁰⁹ See Linzey, CRA, 76; AT, 72.

¹¹⁰ Linzey, CRA, 25. See also Linzey’s introduction to Part II of *Animals on the Agenda* (63-65).

¹¹¹ Linzey, CRA, 27; AT, 40. It is thus overly simplistic when Kemmerer writes that “Linzey maintains the traditional view of hierarchy.” Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 248. Kemmerer’s point is that Linzey accepts a special place of humanity vis-à-vis the nonhuman creation. Yet Linzey’s

view in Western Christian thought from Aquinas to the present—a view that is “unthinkingly anthropocentric” (CSG, 11).¹¹²

For Linzey, dominion can be neither despotic nor hierarchical for three reasons. First, exegetically, in Genesis 1, the notion of dominion includes a vegetarian mandate for humans (Genesis 1:29).¹¹³ This limitation detracts from any tyrannical reading of dominion. In his later thought, Linzey follows the dominant strand of biblical studies experts in linking the *imago* to humanity’s function for the cosmos.¹¹⁴ This function “is inexorably related to the exercise of dominion and the maintaining of God’s peace in creation” (CSG, 16).¹¹⁵

Second, because dominion is connected to the functional *imago* and the *imago* is the image of a particular God, the exercise of dominion is best informed by the divine condescension in Christ.¹¹⁶ In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey expounds this nature in his creed, confessing that Jesus is “the true pattern of service to the weak,” “the Crucified” in whom are “the faces of all innocent suffering creatures” (AG, 7). Christ expresses the nature of

monarchical interpretation of this place is not “the traditional view of hierarchy.” Kemmerer later intimates this point but does not develop it.

¹¹² Linzey, *AT*, 64-65; *AG*, 48-50; *WASM*, 108. As already noted, Linzey’s earlier view of the Christian tradition changes in his later thought. Contra Peter Singer and Richard Ryder, he notes that it has not been all negative. Linzey, *AT*, 54-56. It is at times ambivalent and at other times even positive. Positive examples include ancient (typically Eastern) voices, the monastic tradition, including notably Saint Francis of Assisi, and the modern work of thinkers like Humphry Primatt, William Wilberforce, Arthur Broome, and Lord Shaftsbury. See Linzey, *CRA*, 17, 32, 44-46, 52-53; *AT*, 15-19, 36; *AN*, 70-75, 91-113; *CSG*, 24; *WASM*, 10-11. Linzey claims that the hagiographies suggest that “to love animals is not sentimentality (as we know it) but true spirituality” (*CRA*, 45).

¹¹³ Linzey, *CRA*, 25; *AT*, 34, 125-126. See especially *WASM*, 28-29. Kemmerer rightly notes that this mandate is not only vegetarian, but vegan. Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 255. I would further this claim by noting that Genesis 1:29 suggests a fruitarian diet (i.e., humans can only eat *seed-bearing* plants), while nonhuman animals are permitted a more extensive diet in 1:30 (every green plant).

¹¹⁴ For a fine example of biblical scholarship on this issue, see J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005). Linzey notes that when the doctrine of the *imago* is subsumed into a capacity-based and substantive notion, the exclusion of animals from moral consideration typically follows. Linzey, *CRA*, 63. This view echoes the position of John Douglas Hall. See *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 90.

¹¹⁵ This link is further solidified in Linzey, *WASM*, 28-29.

¹¹⁶ See Linzey, *AT*, 32-33.

divine rule, which in turn expresses the intended nature of human rule. In Christ, “God’s power is expressed in powerlessness, in condescension (*katabasis*), humility and sacrificial love” (*CRA*, 28). Therefore, “to stand for Jesus is to stand for animals as God’s creatures, against all purely humanistic or utilitarian accounts of animals as things, commodities, resources, here for us” (*AG*, 11).¹¹⁷

In this condescension, the hierarchal value system of creation is reversed, which presents a new moral paradigm for humanity.¹¹⁸ “Where we once thought that we had the cheapest ride, we are now beginning to sense we may have the costliest responsibilities” (*CRA*, 29). Linzey connects this christic form of dominion to the *imago Dei* by claiming that Christ opens new possibilities for creation because he renews the divine image which has been “marred by human sinfulness and violence” (*AG*, 16).¹¹⁹ Christ restores—or at least begins the process of restoring—the divine image and thereby enables humans to assume their role as keepers of the peace in the cosmos.¹²⁰ In *Animal Theology*, Linzey argues that humans bear a central function in the cosmos as the “servant species.”¹²¹ “From this perspective, humans are the species uniquely commissioned to exercise a self-sacrificial priesthood, after the one High Priest, not just for members of their own species, but for all sentient creatures” (*AT*, 45).¹²² As already noted, this function renders humans necessary for the eschatological redemption of the entire cosmos.¹²³

¹¹⁷ Also, Linzey, *CSG*, 17.

¹¹⁸ Linzey, *AG*, 38-39.

¹¹⁹ This point highlights that, for Linzey, the term *imago Dei* bears moral connotations. See *AR*, 19.

¹²⁰ Linzey, *AG*, 149.

¹²¹ See Linzey, *AR*, chapter 3; *CSG*, 3.

¹²² Linzey’s notion of priesthood bears similarities to the Orthodox notion of natural priesthood and coheres with certain interpretations of that notion. However, on this point Linzey seems too easily to draw support from voices that are nuanced from his own. He often uses similar terms as these other voices, but in such a different way that they may not recognize his use as valid. For example, see Linzey, *AT*, 52-55. Such is the case with his view on the natural priesthood of humanity, which, as with the concept of the

Third, Linzey interprets both stewardship and dominion eschatologically.¹²⁴ Human beings are to act in light of God’s ultimate desire for the cosmos, which entails its redemption from suffering and death. When humans act peacefully toward other creatures, the eschatological future of the world becomes present by means of anticipation.¹²⁵ “We must let the Spirit, that is the Spirit of *all* suffering creatures, pray through us so that we may become a sign of the hope for which all creation longs” (*AN*, 109). Thus, against Barth’s reluctance to structure an ethics for nonhuman animals based on eschatology, Linzey proposes a balance between a realizable and a fully transcendent eschatology.¹²⁶ In his view, the doctrine of Trinity—including its economic interaction with the world—requires humans to cooperate with the redemptive movement of God within history without lapsing into a political program of completing the kingdom apart from eternity.¹²⁷

Linzey’s dominant argument is that humanity’s great uniqueness constitutes a powerful responsibility for the sake of those creatures that do not share that uniqueness. In *Animal Theology*, he captures this responsibility with the term “generosity.”

The Generosity View rejects the idea that the rights and welfare of animals must always be subordinate to human interests, even when vital human interests are at

sacramentality of creation, differs from those in the category of anthropocentric transfiguration. See Linzey, *AT*, 54-55; *AN*, 94-95. For Linzey, Christ-like priesthood is for the other’s sake. It is “an extension of the suffering, and therefore also redeeming, activity of God in the world” (*AT*, 52). As priests, humans follow Christ’s example, sacrificing their own peace by entering into the suffering of all those who can. They furthermore do so for the sake of those suffering creatures. This act points toward the eschatological solidarity of all creation. In this sense, there can be no genuine human priesthood of creation that is not *for nonhuman animals*. Drawing on the extensive solidarity of Isaac the Syrian, Linzey writes, “Only when we can say that we too have entered—however fleetingly—into the suffering of Christ in the suffering of all creatures can we claim to have entered into the priestly nature of our humanity” (*AT*, 56). Based on my work in chapter 1, I doubt Staniloae would find this depiction of natural priesthood acceptable.

¹²³ Linzey, *AT*, 45.

¹²⁴ Linzey, *CRA*, 86-89.

¹²⁵ Part of the human role, which Linzey sees as evident in the monastic tradition, entails being moved by the suffering of sentient creatures and acting to alleviate such suffering. Linzey, *CRA*, 45.

¹²⁶ On Linzey’s critique of Barth, see *CRA*, 93.

¹²⁷ Linzey, *CRA*, 93.

stake. We must be quite clear about this. Acting out the Generosity Paradigm will cost human beings. (AT, 44)

In Linzey's view, generosity is the proper outlook at the intersection of sentience and innocence, an intersection that links animals and children.¹²⁸ Like children, animals have, in some sense, a greater moral claim than adult humans. "In my view, what we owe animals is more than equal consideration, equal treatment, or equal concern. The weak, the powerless, the disadvantaged, the oppressed should not have equal moral priority but greater moral priority" (AG, 39).

Eschatological Witness: Possibilities and Limitations

Linzey consistently makes the claim humanity is central to God's redemptive movement in the cosmos. In this manner, his functional anthropocentrism bears an eschatological dimension and solidifies an ontological cosmocentrism: "New creation is man-centered...but it cannot logically be man-monistic, i.e., for man only" (AR, 75). The new creation is centered on humanity "precisely because of [humanity's] unique ability to co-operate with the Spirit" (CRA, 76). On account of this ability, "humankind is essential in order to liberate animals" (AT, 72). Thus, this functional anthropocentricity, directed toward the well-being of the nonhuman creation for its own sake, exists within the framework of a moral cosmocentricity. Human beings, following the example of Christ's kenotic sacrifice for the world, must embrace the value of all sentient life. In this manner Christ's death "is the basis for a contemporary Christian ministry to all creatures" (AG, 148).¹²⁹

¹²⁸ On the connection between animals and children in Linzey's thought, see also Linzey, AT, 36-38; WASM, 30-34, 36-37.

¹²⁹ In *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, Linzey links this functional anthropocentrism to the functional interpretation of the *imago Dei*. This position is better grounded exegetically. See Linzey, WASM, 28-29.

In *Animal Rights*, Linzey intimates his (albeit nascent) position on humanity's role as proleptic witness in the saga of cosmic redemption. "By reception of the gift of redemption, by receiving the 'first fruits' of the Spirit, man stands in a unique position responsible to God for the completion of the work of redemption" (*AR*, 74). The troubling word "completion" is softened in Linzey's later work, in which he maintains that the human role in creation is both essential and limited. On the one hand, "humans cannot redeem animals (only God can do that)." On the other hand, "they can at least become anticipatory signs of the kingdom" (*CSG*, 52).¹³⁰

The notion that humans can (and should) become "signs of the kingdom" highlights what I believe is his central and most valuable anthropological claim. Human beings, in the power of the Spirit made available in the Christ event, are uniquely capable of witnessing proleptically to the eschatological future in which all creatures will be at peace with one another. When humans engage in this witness, acting peaceably toward sentient creatures, they become *sacraments of the eschaton* for those creatures.¹³¹ In doing so, they render present the eschatological redemption in a limited but very real manner. They provide a "glimpse of the possibility of world redemption" (*CRA*, 36).

Based on this possibility, Linzey argues that, ethically, humans must "seek to become a living sign of the Gospel for which all creatures long" (*AG*, 7-8). Hence, dominion bears an ethical corollary. Says Linzey: "Living without killing sentients wherever possible is a theological duty laid upon Christians who wish to approximate the peaceable kingdom" (*AT*, 76). Here, he anticipates my distinction between cosmocentric

¹³⁰ On this point, see also the above discussion on Linzey's view of eschatology and history.

¹³¹ The phrase "sacraments of the eschaton" is my phrase. However, I believe it captures what Linzey's anthropology intimates. I also think that the word "symbol" would be of better use for Linzey than "sign" with regard to human witness.

conservation and cosmocentric transfiguration. For it is at just this point—the claim that humans must not only perceive themselves as part of nature but also as those with the capacity to witness to creation’s eschatological *telos* of peace—that he acknowledges a “major cleavage between those who advance an ‘ecological ethic’ and those who advocate a creation-based liberation theology” (*AT*, 76). For both dominion and stewardship require the exercise of eschatological imagination, which exceeds a blithe acceptance of the current state of nature.¹³² “The groaning and travailing of creation awaits the inspired sons of God” (*CRA*, 104). The fallen cosmos longs for the witness of the saints who enacted peace even in the wilderness.¹³³

LINZEY’S ECO-THEOLOGICAL ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

Given Linzey’s theological framework, what does his eco-theological ethics look like with regard to the earth at large—the system as a whole and its non-sentient components? To answer this question, it is pertinent to examine the distinction Linzey makes between sentient and all non-sentient life, a distinction to which he attaches moral significance. Given this distinction, Linzey’s opts for the exclusion of non-sentient life from theos-rights.

MORALLY RELEVANT GRADATIONS OF BEING

As already noted, Linzey accepts that humans are unique in the created order. However, he denies that this uniqueness constitutes an exclusion of sentient nonhuman animals from the moral community. With regard to non-sentient life, however, Linzey’s position is less positive.

¹³² Linzey, *CRA*, 102-103.

¹³³ Linzey, *AG*, 26-27; *AN*, 100.

Positively, Linzey claims “all creation, large and small, intelligent and unintelligent, sentient and non-sentient, has worth because God values it” (*CRA*, 9). This quote captures the extent of Linzey’s concept of value regarding the cosmos. However, he also notes that “to hold the biblical principle that all life has value is not to hold that all being has the same value or to hold that there are not morally relevant distinctions between one kind of being and another” (*AT*, 23). More strikingly, in *Animal Gospel*, he claims that God does not love all creatures equally.¹³⁴

Linzey argues that scripture evinces both an inclusion of animals into the moral community and an exclusion of plants from that community.¹³⁵ Animals “are made on the same day, recipients of common blessing, subject both to the blessing and curse of the Lord, and are both to be redeemed” (*AT*, 23).¹³⁶ Furthermore, he draws out the significance of the notion of covenant for nonhuman animals. Covenant establishes community, including moral parameters of interaction.¹³⁷ Based on these similarities, Linzey argues that it “is simply not possible to extrapolate from the biblical material the notion that God wished to create man as an *entirely* different form of life” (*CRA*, 65).¹³⁸ While God is certainly concerned for plants, Linzey argues that animals and humans belong in a common moral community that excludes plants. He summarizes his interpretation of scripture thusly: “The lilies are not to be compared with the glory of Solomon but it is the sparrows who are not forgotten by God” (*AT*, 35).

¹³⁴ Linzey, *AG*, 37-38. A generous reading would be that God does not love all creatures *in the same manner*.

¹³⁵ Linzey, *AT*, 34-35; Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 229-230.

¹³⁶ On this point, see also Linzey, *CRA*, 31.

¹³⁷ Linzey, *CRA*, 31-32. Kemmerer challenges Linzey on this point, rightly noting that the whole earth is included in the Noahic covenant. Thus, by Linzey’s own view, plants ought to be part of the moral community. See Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 277.

¹³⁸ For other positive examples of animal welfare in scripture, see Linzey, *CSG*, 12. For a good critique of Linzey on this point, see Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 272-274.

Furthermore, Linzey argues that both pneumatology and christology provide a manner of differentiating between the rights of animals and the rights of plants and other non-sentient creatures such as insects. The Spirit's unique presence in certain creatures as *ruach* (spirit/breath) coupled with the Spirit's redemptive role for individual suffering creatures permit a distinction. In addition, Christ's assumption of flesh and blood in the incarnation provides a unique vision of redemption for sentient creatures of flesh and blood.¹³⁹ While Linzey recognizes that these arguments do not provide a "watertight distinction" between sentient creatures and plants, he nonetheless suggests that the biblical view tends toward an affirmation that "through his covenant God elects creatures of flesh and blood into a relationship with himself and humanity" (*CRA*, 80).

Based on these claims, Linzey opts for an "exclusive view" of theos-rights, claiming that "only animals which come clearly within the definition of 'Spirit-filled, breathing beings composed of flesh and blood' have theos-rights" (*CRA*, 84). He remains cautious about this exclusivism, acknowledging that there is yet much to learn about the spiritual capacities of insects. Moreover, he maintains that, regardless of these capacities, "all living beings are subjects of value" (*CRA*, 85).¹⁴⁰

THE STATUS OF NON-SENTIENT, NONHUMAN LIFE

So what is Linzey's position regarding the nonhuman creation at large, including its non-sentient but living components? Does Linzey's implicit cosmocentric theos-rights

¹³⁹ Linzey, *CRA*, 79-80.

¹⁴⁰ It is somewhat troubling that Linzey excludes well over 90% of the entire animal kingdom from theos-rights. After all, 90% of "animals" are arthropods! See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 26. More troubling still is his acknowledgement that "it may be that the Spirit has found homes that we have not yet discovered or resting places in what are to us the most unlikely of species" (*CRA*, 85); for this claim acknowledges that his criteria quite possibly (and likely) excludes creatures from theos-rights that ought not to be excluded. Yet Linzey's aim is to maximize moral concern for creatures that are more obviously sentient and yet have been excluded from rights language. He seeks to avoid the caricatures that animals rights activists will soon be working toward the rights of plants as well. See Linzey, *WASM*, 53.

apply to non-sentient creatures? His answer is ambiguous. He echoes Moltmann's view of the Sabbath, suggesting that sharing in the divine rest is the *telos* of all creatures.¹⁴¹ All creatures that exist "are to be with God. They are to enjoy their life with him according to their creaturely being" (*CRA*, 10). It is this insight about the commonality of created existence that leads Linzey to claim that "*all* creation has an irreducible value" (*CRA*, 8).

Linzey also defines creation as a "gift" (see *CRA*, 8) that elicits celebration. This affirmation comes very close to the common Orthodox notion of cosmic sacramentality.¹⁴² However, in my reading, Linzey strongly departs from Orthodox thinkers such as Staniloae that maintain what I described in chapter one as anthropocentric transfiguration. This departure rests on the distinction between gift and community. As I already noted, for Staniloae, the nonhuman creation is a gift from God *to humanity*. It facilitates, as a sacrament, the communion among humanity and between humanity and God.¹⁴³ For Linzey, however, created existence itself (as an act of divine generosity) is a gift to the entire created order.¹⁴⁴

Yet, as I have already noted, Linzey excludes non-sentient creatures from theos-rights. He makes clear his distinction between sentient animals and plants in his extended discussion of sealing, in which he defends seals over and against plants.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Linzey, *CRA*, 10-11.

¹⁴² See also Linzey, *AN*, 78, 81-82.

¹⁴³ This point solidifies my earlier claim that Linzey too uncritically draws upon the Orthodox notion of priesthood.

¹⁴⁴ Perhaps one could even say—though Linzey does not explicitly make this claim—that existence is the eternal sacrament for all (at least sentient) creatures that exist. Regardless, Linzey's affinity with Eastern thinkers is limited. He is correct to note that Maximus the Confessor and Vladimir Lossky include the nonhuman creation in the scope of redemption, but I am not convinced they would agree, as Linzey implies, that "we should love our fellow creatures not for our own sake but for their own" (*CRA*, 32).

If seals were simply vegetables, that is, beings without sentience who could experience no pain, fear, or suffering and whose movements exhibited no complexity of awareness, then there would be no moral objection to using them and killing them. They might, like vegetables, have a kind of aesthetic value, but no one would think of mounting campaigns to protect them or worry about their rights. But seals do not belong to that category. On the contrary, seals are sentient and intelligent; they are highly developed social beings capable of experience intense pain and suffering. . . . It is because seals, like other mammals, are sentient. . . . that it is right to say that they have—as individuals—‘intrinsic’ or ‘inherent’ value. . . . The value of other sentient beings in the world does not rest (as in the cases of stones or cabbages) entirely or largely in their relationship to us and the uses we may put them. (*WASM*, 137-138)

What is startling about this claim is that Linzey seems to deny intrinsic value to non-sentient creatures.¹⁴⁶ How does this claim square with his view that “*all* creation has an irreducible value” (*CRA*, 8) and that “all creation, large and small, intelligent and unintelligent, sentient and non-sentient, has worth because God values it” (*CRA*, 9)? The answer is unclear. It seems to me that Linzey’s position is that an ethics of transfiguration applies to sentient life while an ethics of conservation applies to non-sentient life. In this sense, it might be more accurate to label his paradigm as sentiocentric transfiguration.¹⁴⁷ That is, Linzey accepts that a transfigurative ethics—which entails protesting dimensions of nature such as suffering, predation, and death—is appropriate for creatures that can suffer. But this ethics does not seem to apply to non-

¹⁴⁵ For the larger discussion, see Linzey, *WASM*, chapter 5. He also decries the categorization of mammals as fish. See *WASM*, 137.

¹⁴⁶ Kemmerer is critical of Linzey on this point. See Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 277-278.

¹⁴⁷ Linzey does not reject this label, though he defines it as “mammalocentricity.” See *CRA*, 84-85. Oddly, Northcott defends Linzey against his own admission of “mammalocentrism” based on his claims that God relates to all things and thereby grants them with dignity and respect. See Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 147. In my view, Northcott here misses the manner in which Linzey uses “centric” terminology. Linzey wants to claim that God’s *unique* relationship to sentient creatures establishes an essentially distinct category of value and moral concern that does not exist for non-sentient life. Wennberg describes one form of environmentalism as “sentientism,” which comes close to Linzey’s view. See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 36.

sentient life. For such life, a conservationist ethics—which entails accepting predation and death—seems sufficient for Linzey. As he states:

We have a choice here. Either we continue to talk of a general responsibility for nature (which is usually reflected in our socio-economic conservation of resources) and continue to understand moral rights exclusively as the property of human beings, or we widen our perspective to include the rights of non-humans which possess the capacity for consciousness and sentiency. (*AR*, 27)¹⁴⁸

WHAT OF SPECIES, ECOSYSTEMS, AND THE EVOLUTIONARY SYSTEM?

Linzey is certainly interested in the protection of species. However, his primary unit of moral concern is the *individual* nonhuman animal.¹⁴⁹ Thus, to return to the terms of the introduction, his thought is particular-centric as opposed to general-centric. He is adamant that a conservationism that seeks to protect a species by subordinating the rights of individual animals is problematic.¹⁵⁰ Such is the “blind spot” of conservationists who do not seek to protect each individual creature from harm (*WASM*, 138). Ultimately, he maintains that “we treat animals and humans unjustly if we proceed on the assumption that their rights can normally be sacrificed to the interest of others” (*CRA*, 133).

For Linzey, all *individual* “animals have an irreducible non-utilitarian value” (*AT*, 95). Thus, it is inappropriate to sacrifice the one for the sake of the many except in conditions of absolute necessity. It would seem that this same line of thinking would apply to ecosystems as well—although, like many animal ethicists and theologians, Linzey does not really address the moral status of systems of life. The one significant exception is the system of evolutionary emergence. It is this system that Linzey refers to

¹⁴⁸ It seems odd to me that Linzey, after making a case for the centrality of sentience, should utilize the phrase “consciousness and sentiency” here. However, such use can be explained by his desire to make certain readers are aware of his meaning of sentiency, which includes “sense of perception” (26).

¹⁴⁹ See Linzey, *CRA*, 109.

¹⁵⁰ Linzey takes specific aim at Aldo Leopold on this point. Linzey, *CRA*, 132-133. Also, *WASM*, 68, 138.

as “bestial” (*CRA*, 20), “self-murdering” (*AT*, 119), and incompatible with divine goodness.¹⁵¹ These claims aside, it is somewhat unclear how Linzey ethics would engage larger systems of life, which depend on predation for balance. What is clear is that he refuses to subsume the value or rights of the individual into a holistic ecology.

LINZEY’S COSMOCENTRIC TRANSGURATION AND INDIVIDUAL NONHUMAN ANIMALS

Linzey’s entire theological project may rightly be seen as an attempt to put nonhuman animals on the agenda for theological and ethical discussion.¹⁵² As noted above, his primary concern is for the *individual* animal—and more specifically, the individual *sentient* animal. Here, I seek to expound this concern in Linzey’s thought. I begin with a general overview of the philosophical nature of Linzey’s ethics regarding individual sentients. I then explore specific how this ethics translates into practice with reference to particular issues such as animal experimentation, hunting, fur-trapping, and the consumption of meat.

THE NATURE OF LINZEY’S CONCERN FOR INDIVIDUAL, SENTIENT NONHUMAN ANIMALS

When considering Linzey’s ethics with regard to individual sentients, a few preliminary issues arise. These include Linzey’s foundations for rights language, his moral framework (e.g., utilitarian, deontological, etc.), his emphasis on sentience, and finally the manner in which rights apply to nonhuman sentients. Here I consider each issue in turn.

The Language of Rights and Its Foundations

Linzey is interested in establishing the import of law for protecting the well-being of individual creatures. Thus, he advocates not relegating issues of animal protection to

¹⁵¹ See Linzey, *AT*, 81.

¹⁵² Linzey, *AR*, vi, 1-2.

the language of welfare. He recognizes the theological dangers of rights language, repeatedly acknowledging that such language is insufficient for the task of constructing a theological ethics that adequately addresses the problems of animal suffering.¹⁵³ Nonetheless, he maintains that such language must be *part* (but not the whole) of the discussion of animal protection.¹⁵⁴ Thus, he advocates not relegating issues of animal protection to the language of welfare.

Regarding the foundations for rights language, in his earliest work, Linzey somewhat neglects the theology. Instead, he attempts to build a rational Christian case for the inclusion of nonhumans into the sphere of rights based on sentience.¹⁵⁵ This argument includes the notion that any attempt to base rights solely on an anthropocentric and capacity-based notion of personhood (e.g., the capacity for moral duty) risks denying rights to many humans.¹⁵⁶ In later works, however, Linzey adjusts his Bentham-like approach of sentience alone in favor of the construction of a theological framework that accounts for sentience.¹⁵⁷ In this framework, rights cannot be based on “any capacities which may be claimed by the creature itself in defense of its own status” (*CRA*, 83); rather, they must be based on “God-given spiritual capacities” that remain only because of God’s ongoing relationship to the created order.¹⁵⁸ Linzey further adds to this theological dimension the claim that God’s own passion draws all suffering, regardless of

¹⁵³ Linzey, *AT*, viii-ix, 3-19, 41-42; *CRA*, 94-96; *CSG*, 56-57; *WASM*, 162.

¹⁵⁴ Linzey, *AR*, 42-46; *CRA*, 68-98; *WASM*, 160-162.

¹⁵⁵ Linzey, *AR*, chapter 3.

¹⁵⁶ Linzey, *AR*, 22-24. It should be noted that Linzey’s criteria of sentience is open to the same critique. For example, are comatose patients sentient? To his credit, Linzey acknowledges this problem (*AR*, 28) but it is less pressing, as the sentience criterion errs “on the right side” by rendering morally important all cases of actual suffering.

¹⁵⁷ See Linzey, *CRA*, 80-81. In distancing himself from the position of Bentham, Linzey also highlights the distinction between his own work and that of his contemporary, Peter Singer. For example, see *AT*, 28-41.

¹⁵⁸ Linzey, *CRA*, 83.

degree, into the sphere of moral concern.¹⁵⁹ From this standpoint, he maintains that Christian theology provides a better foundation for animal rights than secular thought.¹⁶⁰

Yet Linzey never abandons the rational case for animal rights. In fact, in his latest authored book, he calls for more development of it.¹⁶¹ But he acknowledges that “rational argument...has to begin somewhere...with something *given*” (AG, 5). In *Creatures of the Same God*, Linzey’s “given” is that it is wrong to harm sentient animals because of their

inability to give or withhold their consent, their inability to verbalise or represent their interests, their inability to comprehend, their moral innocence or blamelessness, and, not least of all, their relative defenselessness and vulnerability. (WASM, 151)

These “givens” shape Linzey’s religious worldview: “My conviction is that no religion that leads us to insensitivity to suffering can be the real thing” (CSG, 7).

Deontology or Utilitarianism?

Linzey lauds the papal encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* for its “reaffirmation of the category of ‘intrinsically evil acts’” along with its “utter rejection of consequentialism as an adequate basis for theological ethics” (AG, 66). He applies this category to “deliberate infliction of pain and suffering upon animals” (AG, 67) with the exception of aiding the animals (e.g., taking them to the veterinarian).¹⁶² He furthermore decries the use of violence by animal rights activists because, in his view, “rights theory, in contrast to utilitarianism, consists in its rejection of consequences as an adequate basis for ethics”

¹⁵⁹ Linzey, *AT*, 51-52.

¹⁶⁰ This position is a development in Linzey’s thought. See Linzey, *CRA*, 71-72. On how this claim distinguishes Linzey from Tom Regan, see *CRA*, 82-83. See also Angus Taylor, *Animals and Ethics: An Overview of the Philosophical Debate*, third edition (Buffalo, NY: Broadview Press, 2009), 66.

¹⁶¹ Linzey, *WASM*, 1-3.

¹⁶² See also, Linzey, *AG*, 95. It seems to me that Linzey has missed the mark on the notion of intrinsically evil acts. The very fact that he must make the obvious exception to his law of non-harm when the harm ultimately helps an individual animal renders the act of causing harm not intrinsically evil. For an act to be intrinsically evil, the context can make no difference. There can be no exceptions.

(AG, 88). These claims suggest an affinity with deontology and a definitive break with utilitarianism.¹⁶³ Indeed, in his later thought Linzey intimates that animal experimentation is intrinsically wrong.¹⁶⁴

However, for Linzey, rights are neither absolute nor inviolable.¹⁶⁵ While he does maintain that “taking pleasure from the cruel death of an animal is nothing less than morally evil” (WASM, 86),¹⁶⁶ he also acknowledges that “in practice...we are always inevitably speaking of rights which may be overridden if there is sufficient moral justification” (CRA, 91). For Linzey, while the violation of rights may be justified, such violation still incurs guilt. We are all guilty because evil has become a necessity in creation.¹⁶⁷ Thus, he notes that “circumstances, benefits, or compensating factors may limit the offense [i.e., causing animals suffering], but they can never make the practice morally licit” (WASM, 106).¹⁶⁸ These claims detract from a deontological worldview. After all, Kant simply would not have been Kant if he maintained it was acceptable to lie in cases of vital necessity!

¹⁶³ Regarding utilitarianism, Linzey states, “whatever may be the usefulness of this theory, when it comes to considering some aspects of the moral treatment of humans and animals, it obviously fails to recognize that certain actions are intrinsically wrong in themselves whatever the circumstances” (WASM, 93). On this point, see also Linzey, WASM, 61. See also his critique of the English government’s report on hunting (the Burns Report) in 2000. WASM, 78-83. In *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, Linzey writes that he rejects the pursuit of utilitarian calculation to establish the good because such calculations always reflect the good of the subject that calculates. That is, they are “inevitably anthropocentric” (WASM, 162). Furthermore, “the inevitable result of such calculation is permissive, i.e., it allows some form of suffering” (WASM, 162).

¹⁶⁴ Linzey, WASM, 156.

¹⁶⁵ Linzey, AR, 33-34; CRA, 89-91, 101-102; AG, 48-49.

¹⁶⁶ For Linzey, the term “cruel” denotes any form of harm caused to a sentient creature that is not for the benefit of that individual creature. See Linzey, WASM, 85.

¹⁶⁷ Linzey, AR, 33-34; CRA, 89-91, 101-102; AT, 107-112, 129.

¹⁶⁸ It is odd that in the same work Linzey writes that “accepting that animal life has value, and that it should not be destroyed without good reason, is not the same as accepting that it is always wrong to kill” (WASM, 159).

In my view, Linzey's view is best described as proportionalism.¹⁶⁹ Contra deontology, he acknowledges that "some element of calculating the good as we see it is inevitable in moral evaluation" (AT, 109). Yet he distances himself from Singer in that he refuses to appeal only to utilitarian calculations to establish proper actions.¹⁷⁰ He acknowledges that there are utilitarian values for animal abuse, including experimentation. But he also warns that "once our moral thinking becomes dominated by crude utilitarian calculations, then there is no right, value or good that cannot be bargained away, animal or human" (CRA, 120). Thus, while calculation helps us to choose a route to take, these calculations do not render an action good in itself. Perhaps killing may be necessary and therefore rights violable; but necessity does make the action of killing good.¹⁷¹ Linzey would be better served to say, with regard at least to sentient creatures, that killing is never justified; but it is at times necessary. For "we have no biblical warrant for claiming killing as God's will. God's will is for peace" (AT, 130).

The Sentience of Nonhuman Animals

As already noted, Linzey emphasizes sentience as a morally relevant distinction even in his later works. But how does one tell whether or not a creature is sentient? For Linzey, "this is in part a scientific question" (AR, 27).¹⁷² However, he recognizes the

¹⁶⁹ Within his Roman Catholic context, David F. Kelly describes proportionalism as a shift "from traditional (deontological) method to proportionality...from legalism to at least a moderate form of situationalism—though it is certainly not a radical situationalism, because rules are still of great importance." David F. Kelly, *Contemporary Catholic Health Care Ethics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 90. Of particular import is the balance of law and consequence. An act may be at once evil (i.e., it violates a good law) and yet necessary and permissible on account of the extraordinary context of the act.

¹⁷⁰ Linzey, AT, 38; WASM, 152-155.

¹⁷¹ I will offer a critique on Linzey on this point below.

¹⁷² However, he does draw certain self-evident lines: "This criterion [i.e., sentience] should certainly not include plant life and forms of life such as insects. Response to stimuli...does not constitute sentience" (AR, 27).

limits of science in establishing the sentience of certain nonhuman animals.¹⁷³ That is, some who engage in allegedly cruel practices against nonhuman animals claim that such practices should continue until absolutely clear scientific evidence proves the sentience of these creatures.¹⁷⁴

In *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, Linzey engages five arguments that reject the significance of the sentience of nonhumans for matters of moral concern.¹⁷⁵ First, there is the agnostic claim that we cannot ultimately know the reality of nonhumans and therefore cannot build a case of moral concern from their experience of suffering. Linzey replies that there are some things we can know “at least *as reasonably* as we know them in the case of most humans” (*WASM*, 50). Aside from this point, it would seem rather odd indeed to default to a position of abuse where sentience seems possible on account of epistemic uncertainty. If animal rights cannot be established because of agnosticism, why can animal abuse? Second, there is the claim that we must wait for clearer data.¹⁷⁶ Linzey’s response is that the appeal to complexity of suffering and self-consciousness could also apply to infants. Third, there is the claim that the ascription of human qualities to nonhumans muddles the discussion. To this claim Linzey responds that describing an animal as “unhappy” fits the animal’s experience of its own natural life such that practices that deprive animals of the ability to act on their instincts by definition violates their pursuit of the good. Fourth, regarding the possibility that all things are sentient, including plants, Linzey appeals to scientific evidence that establishes a distinction. The

¹⁷³ Linzey also warns against the notion that facts constitute argument. Facts, like all claims, require a hermeneutic: “All facts have to be interpreted and seen against a larger backdrop” (*WASM*, 60).

¹⁷⁴ Linzey engages this view in his discussion of the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Committee’s “Codes of Recommendation for the Welfare of Livestock.” See *AR*, 62-66. Also, *WASM*, 51.

¹⁷⁵ See Linzey, *WASM*, 49-55.

¹⁷⁶ See *ibid.*, 80.

difference is not that there is ambiguous evidence, but rather that there is no evidence that plants suffer. Finally, regarding the possibility that animal suffering is not comparable to human suffering on account of the higher mental capacities of human beings, Linzey argues (1) that scientific evidence suggests otherwise and (2) such arguments would apply to less-developed humans as well. Ultimately, Linzey maintains that, in the face of scientific evidence that suggests sentience, “we have to make ethical decisions and give animals the benefit of the doubt” (AR, 65).¹⁷⁷

The Right to Life versus the Right to Non-Suffering

In *Animal Rights*, Linzey suggests that the position of many animal-friendly Christians is as follows: “it is immoral to inflict suffering upon animals, but it is not wrong to kill them humanely” (AR, 29). This position “lies at the centre of the Christian attitude towards animal welfare” (AR, 29). Linzey assents to Rosalina Godlovitch’s notion that such a position is incoherent in that it would necessitate ending all nonhuman animal life humanely inasmuch as this action would relinquish the evil of suffering by a non-evil means (humane killing).¹⁷⁸ Linzey thus maintains that “issues of life and suffering are fundamental to any discussion of animal rights” (AR, 58). He muses that the rejection of this connection of life and suffering is likely “due to the problematic consequences of maintaining a ‘no killing’ principle” (AR, 31).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ See also Linzey’s thoughts on the burden of proof with regard to animal capacity. *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁷⁸ Linzey, AR, 30; WASM, 158. I am not convinced this logic necessarily holds primarily because it does not make the distinction between necessary and unnecessary suffering.

¹⁷⁹ In the final chapter, I will explore how such a principle is also problematic for Linzey as he seems to maintain only the intrinsic value of *sentient* life. But it is a fair question as to why, with regard only for the right to live, that such a line should be drawn.

PRACTICES OF PROLEPTIC WITNESS

Given Linzey's position, what will cosmocentric transfiguration look like in practice vis-à-vis individual, sentient, nonhuman animals? What actions best represent humanity's role to be a proleptic witness to the eschatological future? Here, I seek to answer these questions. I begin, however, with his caveat regarding the limits of moral practice in a fallen and sinful world.

Living in a Fallen World

Linzey recognizes the contradictions of the present state of reality.¹⁸⁰ He maintains that “the kind of world, cursed as it is, in which we live does make it *impossible* to respect all kinds of life all the time” (*CRA*, 19-20; emphasis mine).¹⁸¹ Human sin makes it so that “no human being can live free of evil” (*CRA*, 101). It is this admission that leads him to disavow self-righteousness, by which he intimates the feeling of superiority of animal activists because they engage in certain actions that lessen the presence of harm in the world;¹⁸² for in his view, “we are all sinners when it comes to animals” (*CSG*, xv).

Thus, Linzey does not “desire to be part of unrestrained attacks on science or scientists” (*AT*, 112) or the demonization of his opponents.¹⁸³ He does not advocate any form of hate or violence.¹⁸⁴ Rather, he claims that “if the goal is peace, then that goal must dictate the means, and one means that cannot logically be utilized is violence” (*AG*,

¹⁸⁰ Linzey, *CSG*, 34-35.

¹⁸¹ For example, see Linzey's position on self-defense. Linzey, *WASM*, 24-25.

¹⁸² Linzey acknowledges that even a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle results in the death of animals during the farming process. Linzey, *AT*, 132; *AG*, 77-79; *CSG*, xiv-xv. See also *AG*, 123, where Linzey recalls his personal experience with fishing.

¹⁸³ Linzey, *AG*, 123-125.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 21-24.

86).¹⁸⁵ In light of these views, Linzey acknowledges that he is disquieted by certain aspects of the animal rights movement, in particular the self-righteousness of some members and the violent tactics of others.¹⁸⁶ In the face of these failures, he notes, “It is as difficult for me to remain a part of the animal movement as it is for me to remain a member of the Church of England” (*CSG*, xviii).

The balance Linzey seeks is, on the one hand, the recognition that life as we know it necessitates suffering and death and therefore leads to moral conflicts for someone who seeks to alleviate and prevent such realities, and, on the other, the call to avoid normalizing suffering and death institutionally on the basis that they are, in certain situations, necessary for either human existence or the ongoing well-being of the cosmos.¹⁸⁷ Said theologically, humanity’s Spirit-filled, imaginative witness to the eschatological future remains a witness.¹⁸⁸ It is not the province of humans to construct the kingdom.

When discussing the issue of self-defense, Linzey maintains, “When there is a *direct* choice between the life of an individual human and an individual animal, we may rightly choose to save the human agent” (*CRA*, 138). He also maintains that it “is difficult to resist the need to kill” in situations where animals, including insects, jeopardize food supplies for the human community (*CRA*, 139). His view is therefore not that humans “can easily turn to live in some Edenite harmony with other creatures” (*AT*, 58). The tensions of a fallen world require eschatological redemption. On the path toward that

¹⁸⁵ See Linzey’s discussion on the necessity of animal rights activists to use moral (e.g., non-violent) means to work toward their aims. Linzey, *AG*, 86-91.

¹⁸⁶ Linzey, *CSG*, xiv-xviii. For a critique of this point, see Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 280-281.

¹⁸⁷ Linzey, *AR*, 33-42.

¹⁸⁸ Linzey, *CRA*, 35.

redemption, humans can live in solidarity with other creatures caught up in the same “structures of disorder” (*AT*, 58). But “there is no pure land” in a fallen world.¹⁸⁹ There may even be instances in which humane killing is in the best interest of a creature (e.g., euthanasia).¹⁹⁰

Nonhuman Animal Experimentation

Even though utilitarian value does not in itself constitute moral propriety,¹⁹¹ Linzey holds that the question of necessity is crucial when discussing animal experimentation. More specifically, he writes that “it is important to distinguish what human beings want and what they need”; for “many of the necessities for animal experimentation turn out not to be necessities at all” (*AR*, 53-54). An example Linzey offers is testing cosmetic products on animals.¹⁹²

Generally speaking, two criteria are imperative to establish necessity for Linzey.¹⁹³ The first is whether or not the end entailed by the action constitutes actual necessity. The second form is, provided the first criterion holds, whether or not the means (i.e., animal experimentation) is the only way to procure the actual necessity.

Regarding the first criterion, I believe the concept of necessity is more complicated than Linzey’s work permits—an issue I will address in chapter 4. Here, it suffices to note that he seems to assume that only one’s survival constitutes necessity.¹⁹⁴ Thus, looking beautiful—even though an acceptable goal—is not a necessity and cannot

¹⁸⁹ See Linzey, *AT*, 132, *AG*, 90; *CSG*, xiv.

¹⁹⁰ Linzey, *WASM*, 159. Linzey suggests that not only animals, but also humans provide these problems (in the cases of infants and comatose patients).

¹⁹¹ Linzey, *WASM*, 61. Linzey notes the common utilitarian justifications that have been offered regarding experiments not only on animals but also embryos (stem cell research) and developed humans (e.g., prisoners of war). Linzey, *CRA*, 114-120; *AG*, 93-94, 109-110.

¹⁹² “Only a cynical view of human nature could argue that humans need (as opposed to want) cosmetics, invariably tested on animals” (*AR*, 53).

¹⁹³ See Linzey, *AT*, 145.

¹⁹⁴ Linzey, Linzey, *AR*, 53; *CSG*, xi; *WASM*, 156-157.

justify violating the rights of nonhuman animals. Neither is scientific knowledge a necessity: “To say...that the gain of new knowledge is more important than the preservation of moral rights, whether human or animal, is to raise curiosity above morality” (*AR*, 51).¹⁹⁵

Regarding the second criterion, necessary ends, in order to require means that violate the rights of creatures, must have no other viable means. On this point Linzey rightly notes that the supposed necessity for certain experiments (e.g., curing ailments) at times arises from unhealthy living.¹⁹⁶ There is an irony here in that humans may gorge themselves on animal flesh, open the door for an endemic of a particular ailment, and then justify experimenting on the very kind of creatures they gratuitously eat by claiming it is necessary for their health. In other words, in some cases, a better (preventative) means of achieving human health is healthy living.

Ultimately, Linzey is consistent in his claim that nonhuman animals do not exist solely or primarily for the betterment of humanity. Therefore, a justification for utilization of animals—especially where harm is incurred—must include more than an appeal to an anthropocentric worldview.¹⁹⁷ For “to cause animals avoidable injury, either through death, deprivation, or suffering, must be seen as morally wrong” (*AT*, 107). Justification must establish a vital necessity. Such instances of necessity are rare. And even in these cases, Linzey notes that,

for some of us...would be as disinclined to support painful experimentation on animals as we would be disinclined to suppose the torture of human subjects, no matter how ‘beneficial’ the results might be. (*WASM*, 156)

¹⁹⁵ Linzey, *AT*, 109.

¹⁹⁶ Linzey, *AR*, 54-55.

¹⁹⁷ Linzey, *AT*, 107.

At the very least, then, he maintains that animal experimentation should be proscribed by law so that it does not become institutionalized.¹⁹⁸ At most, in *Animal Gospel*—in light of the notion of Christ as the “good shepherd”—Linzey delineates a “*Christian answer*” to the issue of animal experimentation. As Christians

deeply conscious of our divinely given stewardship over creation and our special bond of covenant with animals in particular, we should elect to bear for ourselves whatever ills may flow from not experimenting on animals rather than be supporting an institution which perpetuates tyranny. (*CRA*, 124-125)¹⁹⁹

Hunting

“Hunting represents the anti-gospel of Jesus our Predator” (*AT*, 114). This quote represents Linzey’s basic position with regard to hunting.²⁰⁰ Yet, as already noted, he is aware that the world is full of contradictions. Thus, he cedes provisions to his ethics of non-suffering and non-killing.

Has man the *right to kill* animals whenever his own species or other species or the welfare of the species concerned is endangered through over-population or aggression? There is no logical reason, I believe, why such a principle should not be accepted as long as the method of killing is as humane as possible and that no persons are receiving pleasure from such activity. (*AR*, 38; emphasis mine)

Here, Linzey acknowledges the possibility of necessary killing. More importantly, he claims that such killing can be viewed as a right. However, he qualifies this view by stating that no pleasure should be derived from such killing, intimating that

¹⁹⁸ See Linzey, *CRA*, 118. Linzey bases this argument on Anthony Flew’s view on torture. See *AR*, 55-57; *WASM*, 156-158.

¹⁹⁹ Also, Linzey, *AG*, 149-150. Linzey refers to animal experimentation as “un-godly sacrifice.” Linzey, *AT*, chapter 6. Hence, his view of experimentation corresponds to Linzey’s claim that the Christ-event reveals the true nature of Christian sacrifice, which “involves the sacrifice of the higher for the lower and not the reverse” (*CRA*, 43). Such a view reconfigures sacrifice, both religious and in general: “We think of [animals] as existing for us, where it seems to me that the truer, spiritual notion is that we are made for them. It is our task to sacrifice ourselves not for our own sake but for the sake of him who seeks to unite things to himself” (*CRA*, 44). For more on Linzey’s view concerning animal sacrifice, see Linzey, *AT*, 71, 103-110; Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 236-238.

²⁰⁰ For a contextual and specific example of Linzey’s view on hunting, see his detailed exploration of the Burns Report in *Why Animal Suffering Matters*. Linzey, *WASM*, chapter 3.

the killing itself is still an evil, albeit a necessary one. But can one really have the *right* to commit evil?

At any rate, Linzey maintains that

hunting offends two basic moral principles. The first is that *it is intrinsically wrong to deliberately inflict suffering on a sentient mammal for purposes other than its own individual benefit...* But there is a second, even more fundamental principle, namely, *it is intrinsically wrong to deliberately cause suffering for the purposes of amusement, recreation, or in the name of sport*" (WASM, 83-84).²⁰¹

Such a position leads to an unequivocal rejection of hunting for sport.²⁰² Indeed, Linzey refers to hunting for sport as "one of the least justifiable, and the most objectionable, of all current practices" of animal cruelty (WASM, 95). His position also leads to a moral challenge both to those who enjoy hunting for food and those who hunt for food where meat-eating is no longer a contextual necessity for human survival. For hunting is only "justifiable" in cases of vital human need. Thus, for Linzey, most modern practices of hunting falls under the category of "wanton injury."²⁰³ They are not necessary for survival, self-defense, or essential benefit.

Even species control does not constitute a genuine justification in Linzey's view. In his earliest work, he states that "a great deal more of research needs to be conducted in this area of moral necessity for animal control" (AR, 38) and that we should "always reject... 'control' of animals when this is inspired by man's selfish interests alone" (AR, 39). In his later work, Linzey takes a stronger stance on this issue, arguing that the case for hunting based on control fails for three reasons. First, "nature is an essentially self-regulating system" (WASM, 91). Second, it is unclear what balance *ought* to look like in

²⁰¹ As already noted, for Linzey these founded in reason—most notably that animals are innocent and cannot give consent to human use.

²⁰² Linzey, AR, 39-42; AT, 114-118.

²⁰³ Linzey, CRA, 104-110. On this point, see also Linzey's engagement with William H. Ammon's justification of hunting. Linzey, AT, 114-119.

nature, especially when humans encroach on an ecosystem. Third, nature has a way of compensating human efforts to cull a species.²⁰⁴

Linzey also denies that the human practice of hunting is justified because nature requires predation. Such appeals to an amoral system to establish the propriety of the actions of moral agents constitute a fallacy.²⁰⁵ Indeed, that humans are moral creatures ought to open the possibility for the opposite interpretation.²⁰⁶ Contrarily, “only if parasitical nature is to be celebrated as divinely-purposed existence can hunting for amusement be justified” (*AT*, 114). Yet neither Linzey’s eschatology nor his christology can permit such an affirmation of nature. For him, hunting violates the eschatological vision of creation and the role that humans are meant to play within that vision—a role which entails that they “live free of needless misery” (*CRA*, 108). If Jesus affirmed the mechanisms of evolutionary progress as the good means of authentic development, he would have been “the butcher *par excellence*” (*AT*, 120). Such a Jesus would not have advocated the image of a good shepherd who dies for the sake of his sheep, a vision that strikes at the heart of survival of the fittest. He would have advocated self-preservation (e.g., the hired hand who flees) and benefit through predation (e.g., the slaughter of sheep).²⁰⁷

In sum, Linzey finds very few genuine justifications for hunting. Even so, he advocates a gradual approach to culling the practice of hunting, supporting even

²⁰⁴ It is interesting that the Burns Report recognizes the lack of success in culling. See Linzey, *WASM*, 92.

²⁰⁵ Linzey, *AR*, 40-41.

²⁰⁶ On this point, see Linzey’s engagement with Schweitzer. Linzey, *AR*, 43.

²⁰⁷ Linzey, *AT*, 120. Linzey acknowledges that his presentation of Jesus’s life-affirming gospel is not the only strand of thought in the New Testament. *Ibid.*, 121. However, he rightly notes that Jesus’s life and teaching present issues for advocates of any conservationist moral theology that approves of the mechanisms of evolution.

compromises based on contextual opportunities and limitations.²⁰⁸ His foundational view, however, remains that hunting, even when justified, still violates eschatological hope and christological ethics.

Fur-Trapping and Farming

Regarding the logistics of trapping, Linzey holds that “almost all methods involved are *inherently* painful” (*CRA*, 125). This argument seems to extend also to other forms of killing animals for their products.²⁰⁹ Yet he notes that the majority of Christian voices—and all of them until very recently—that have spoken about fur-trapping have defended the practice.²¹⁰

For Linzey, the arguments in favor of fur-trapping, including that it protects indigenous cultures, facilitates economic well-being, and aids conservation, are all faulted. Regarding indigenous cultures, Linzey states, “Human traditions and ways of life may be generally worth defending, but not at any cost and certainly not when they depend upon the suffering of thousands if not millions, of wild animals every year” (*CRA*, 127). But aside from this position, Linzey notes that there is a “distinction between what is genuinely indigenous and what are indigenous skills exploited for our [non-indigenous peoples’] benefit” (*CRA*, 127).²¹¹ As Linzey notes in a later work, the aboriginal contribution to fur-trapping constitutes lower than 0.1% of global fur trade.²¹² Regarding conservation, Linzey rightly notes these arguments tend to be directed toward

²⁰⁸ See Linzey, *AG*, 133-134.

²⁰⁹ On this point, see Linzey’s detailed critique of the practice of sealing, in which he acknowledges how often regulations are violated and the lack of moral justification for the practice. Linzey, *WASM*, chapter 5. Linzey addresses trapping and fur farming in chapter 4.

²¹⁰ Linzey, *AG*, 116-117.

²¹¹ Linzey brings up cultural practices (e.g., human sacrifice) that are not preserved simply for the sake of reverencing a way of life. See Linzey, *AG*, 120-121.

²¹² Linzey, *AG*, 119; also *WASM*, 134-136.

human benefit in relation to the whole as opposed to any concern for the suffering of individual animals.²¹³

Linzey argues that fur farming includes particular forms of deprivation of natural living for animals, including “the level of stress and suffering when wild animals are restricted to small, barren cages” (*AG*, 118). His view is backed by the findings of the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare of the European Union in 2001, which claims that animals kept for fur are not provided suitable opportunity to follow basic instincts of well-being. With more confidence, Linzey writes, “it is now unreasonable to hold that fur farming does not impose suffering on animals” (*WASM*, 102).²¹⁴ Even so, “around 50 million mink...and 7 million foxes...are bred each year to meet the world demand for their skins” (*WASM*, 97).

Linzey’s dominant critique against fur-trapping and farming is that the practices do not constitute a necessity for human well-being.²¹⁵ For most humans, fur is not necessary for survival or well-being.²¹⁶ Because there is no vital justification for the practices and because they violate the hope for all sentient creatures, Linzey finds them to represent an unchristian ethics.

Vegetarianism

“Of all the ethical challenges arising from animal theology, vegetarianism can arguably claim to have the strongest support” (*AT*, 125). This support is, for Linzey, grounded in scripture and systematic theology. It furthermore challenges a majority of

²¹³ Linzey, *CRA*, 126.

²¹⁴ Linzey notes that the harm of deprivation is greater in fur-farming than other farming practices. Linzey, *WASM*, 101.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 106-107.

²¹⁶ Linzey, *AG*, 121.

contemporary meat-eating practices—all instances where it is not vitally necessary—by claiming that they fail to proclaim the gospel to sentient creatures.

Linzey notes the biblical ambiguity regarding meat-eating. Humans are limited to a diet of vegetation in Genesis 1 but permitted to eat flesh in Genesis 9.²¹⁷ Ultimately, he suggests that the permission to eat meat is an accommodation to cosmic fallenness.²¹⁸ It is furthermore limited by the mandate not to take in an animal's blood, which Linzey rightly claims denotes, in the passage's original context, the animals' life. Thus,

even within this permissive tradition, human beings are not given an entirely free hand. They do not have absolute rights over the lives of animals...the fact that man kills is a necessary consequence of sin but the act of killing itself must not misappropriate the Creator's gift. (*CRA*, 142).

In different writings, Linzey compares the human consumption of meat to vampirism—not in terms of evil, but rather in terms of nature. Drawing on Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, he notes the arguments therein in which vampires justify consuming human blood by an appeal to the natural order. Similarly, he muses whether or not vegetarians are “opposing the nature of things as given” (*AT*, 80). Yet drawing on Genesis 1-3, he claims that God's original intent for creation was not survival of the fittest, but rather “a state of perfect Sabbath harmony within creation where humans and animals are both prescribed a vegetarian diet” (*AT*, 80).

²¹⁷ Linzey, *CRA*, 141-142

²¹⁸ See especially Linzey, *AT*, 127-129. Kemmerer intimates that Linzey's solution is still potentially problematic: “There is much an atheist or Hindu might say about such a God” who accommodates human sin by promulgating nonhuman suffering. Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 242.

Linzey *may* overstep exegetical bounds when he suggests that “Genesis 1 clearly depicts vegetarianism as a divine command” (*AT*, 125).²¹⁹ However, he stands on strong exegetical grounds when he writes that

even though the early Hebrews were neither pacifists nor vegetarians, they were deeply convicted of the view that violence between humans and animals, and indeed between animal species themselves, was not God’s original will for creation. (*AT*, 126)

I also believe Linzey’s position is, while overstated, viable when he writes that “the ideal of the peaceable kingdom was never lost sight of” in Israel (*AT*, 129). That is, the protological claim of edenic peace finds a prophetic counterpart in the Isaianic hope of the peaceable kingdom.

Eschatologically speaking, the new possibilities that Christ opens for creation and to which the Spirit enables humans to witness makes vegetarianism “an implicitly theological act of greatest significance” (*AT*, 90). Says Linzey:

By refusing to eat meat, we are witnessing to a higher order of existence...By refusing to go the way of our ‘natural nature’...by standing against the order of unredeemed nature we become signs of the order of existence for which all creatures long. (*AT*, 90-91).

Even if refusing to eat meat stands against what appears to be natural in evolutionary history, Linzey maintains that, “from a theological perspective no moral endeavor is wasted so long as it coheres with God’s purpose for his cosmos” (*CRA*, 146).

As already noted, eschatology facilitates a divide between eco-theologians and animal theologians regarding vegetarianism.²²⁰ Many from the former camp do not embrace vegetarianism as a mode of living out the peace for which we hope because they

²¹⁹ The text does claim that humans are given vegetation for food. I agree that vegetarianism is implied in this gift—and that therefore one can rightly claim that God does not will meat-eating in Genesis 1. But an actual divine command is never given.

²²⁰ Linzey, *CSG*, 37-39.

accept predation as a mechanism consummate with the cosmic common good. For the latter, vegetarianism is a facet of living out the *imago Dei*.²²¹ It furthermore bears an “anticipatory character” (CSG, 38); it is a proleptic witness to a maximally inclusive eschatological hope, “an act of anticipation of the peaceable Kingdom that we seek” (CSG, 50). In this vein, Linzey challenges Matthew Fox’s “Eucharistic law of the Universe”—which embraces as good the notion that all life must eat and be eaten—by noting that Jesus’s sacrifice reverses survival of the fittest. “The significance of the eucharistic meal, therefore, is not the perpetuation of the old world of animal sacrifice but precisely our liberation from it” (AT, 122). The Eucharist is a foretaste of eschatological hope.²²² I believe more can be said here. The Eucharist, as the meal of communion *par excellence*, is a meal without animal meat. Christ takes the place of the main course, freeing humans to new encounters of peace with animals.

It should be noted that Linzey’s position is not that meat-eating is never permissible. He contextualizes his vegetarianism, arguing that killing for food “*may* be justifiable, but only when human nourishment clearly requires it, and even then it remains an inevitable consequence of sin” (CRA, 142). Linzey further acknowledges that, “given the confusing interrelationship of light and darkness, blessing and curse, it is difficult to hold out for any truths so self-evident that people who fail to see them are somehow morally culpable” (CRA, 145). In a similar vein, he claims that

the biblical case for vegetarianism does not rest on the view that killing may never be allowable in the eyes of God, rather on the view that killing is always a grave matter. When we have to kill to live we may do so, but when we do not, we should live otherwise. (AT, 131)

²²¹ See Linzey, *WASM*, 28-29.

²²² Linzey, *AT*, 122. This claim is similar to Orthodox claims noted in chapter 1.

For whenever one refuses to cause harm and incur the consequence—whether that be forfeiting entertainment or even aspects of well-being—she witnesses to the eschatological kingdom for which creation longs.²²³

This claim is theologically necessary on account of Jesus, whom Linzey notes was not a vegetarian.²²⁴ He attributes this point to the divine concession to a fallen world in Genesis 9. It is this concession that draws Jesus, as a person historically located in first century Palestine, to consume meat.²²⁵ In this manner, Linzey emphasizes the importance of acknowledging Jesus’s context and the limitations implicit in that context.²²⁶

God incarnates himself or herself into the limits and constraints of the world as we know it. It is true that one of the purposes of the incarnation was to manifest something of the trans-natural possibilities of existence, but no one human life can demonstrate, let alone exhaust, all the possibilities of self-giving love. (*AT*, 86)

True, Jesus was apparently no vegetarian. But neither did he campaign against slavery. He was not necessarily a visionary with regard to women’s welfare—in fact he derogatively referred to a Gentile woman as a dog (see Matthew 15:21-28). In short, Jesus is neither a complete “accommodation to nature” nor the exhaustive answer to every moral query that arises in history. Jesus is “a birth of new possibilities for all creation...the *beginning* of its transformation” (*AT*, 87; emphasis mine).²²⁷

²²³ See Linzey, *AT*, 132.

²²⁴ On this point, and Jesus’s likely participation in the sacrificial system, see Richard Bauckham, “Jesus and Animals II: What Did He Practice?” in *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*, Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, editors (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 50-54.

²²⁵ Linzey, *CRA*, 47-48.

²²⁶ See Linzey, *AT*, 134-137.

²²⁷ Bauckham seems to make similar claims in his essays on Jesus in *Animals on the Agenda* (see 59-60). Even so, Linzey is uncomfortable with Bauckham’s findings (see 5-6).

At any rate, Jesus's context was very different from the context of most Western Christians today. "For the first time in history of the human race vegetarianism has become a publically viable option, at least for those who live in the Western world" (*AT*, 83-84). For most of these people, meat-eating is necessary for neither survival nor optimal health.²²⁸ Furthermore, the mass consumption of animal protein renders other food sources unusable for humans, resulting in a net loss of available food for the human community.²²⁹ Based on his view of the importance of sentience, Linzey maintains that

once it is perceived that satisfactory alternatives to animal protein exist, and are sufficiently plenteous to cope with the increased world demand for food, then vegetarianism becomes a moral necessity. (*AR*, 36)²³⁰

Most of Linzey's arguments culminate in his eschatology. He writes, "Those individuals who opt for vegetarianism can do so in the knowledge that they are living closer to the biblical ideal of peaceableness than their carnivorous contemporaries." For "to opt for a vegetarian life-style is to take one practical step towards living in peace with the rest of creation" (*AT*, 132).²³¹

Letting Be

One of the most basic points of Linzey's ethics at first glance seemingly strikes against transfiguration. Humans ought to let the nonhuman creation be.²³² This "letting

²²⁸ Linzey, *AR*, 34-37.

²²⁹ Linzey, *AR*, 35-36.

²³⁰ Here, again, Linzey does not do the best job in his earliest work of making evident the religious foundations to his claims. After all, even if there are other viable options to consume protein, if God has ordained all creatures for human use (even other sentients), then such options do not make a difference regarding the morality meat consumption. Linzey makes a stronger case on this point in later works.

²³¹ Also, Linzey, *CSLTA*, 76-77.

²³² Linzey, *CSG*, 17. While this aspect of Linzey's ethics initially appears to support conservationism, he actually critiques eco-theology's form of conservation. "In the interest of the 'whole' (for they often claim to know what the interest of the whole is), they appear only too eager to sacrifice one species for another, even if this means ruthless and indiscriminate killing and the infliction of considerable suffering" (*CSG*, 40). Linzey uses two examples from his nation—that of the ruddy duck and the grey squirrel—to substantiate this critique. Linzey, *CSG*, 40-42. To clarify, Linzey is not here suggesting that one species is sacrificed *to extinction* for another's survival. Rather, he means that individuals from one

be” is the “*attitude* with which we begin” (CRA, 19). Practically, it entails “respecting at least some of the natural instincts which animals possess” (AR, 2-3).

The concept of “letting be” is a complicated one for Linzey. He is suspicious of conservationist efforts. For

the thinking behind attempts at conservation are often anthropocentric (i.e., human beings conserve other species not because they have recognized the value and rights of other animals but because they themselves will be deprived if some other species becomes extinct). (AR, 41)

This suspicion immediately separates Linzey’s earliest thought from the anthropocentric conservationism I outlined in chapter 1. Linzey furthermore separates his position from those cosmocentric voices that value the whole over the individual when he claims, “From the standpoint of theos-rights, it makes some difference but not much whether it is the very last tiger, or one of many thousands, that is gratuitously killed” (CRA, 109). Said differently, the value of an individual creature is never subsumed into the value of the whole. Each sentient creature bears the theological dignity that grounds theos-rights.

“Letting be” does not mean inactivity or refusal to interact with nonhuman nature.²³³ Linzey is adamant that it does not negate our “*active* responsibilities to animals in particular” (CRA, 19). Nor does letting be intimate blithe participation in the mechanisms of the evolutionary process (e.g., the justification of meat-eating). Letting

species that is not near extinction are sacrificed on behalf of individuals from a species that is near extinction.

²³³ Indeed, there is a place even for control in Linzey’s thought. As I have already noted, he acknowledges the validity of self-defense against animals and the protection of food supplies. Linzey, *CRA*, 138-139. These situations notwithstanding, Linzey argues, “We must not allow the legitimate justification that applies in some limited situations to be extended indiscriminately. Every case of control needs to be scrutinized” (CRA, 139). And even those are legitimately grounded in human need must be performed in a manner that is humane. Linzey, *CRA*, 140. Furthermore, situations in which human need (i.e., human survival) is not genuinely at risk, methods of control are theologically ungrounded. As an example, Linzey notes how humans will overcrowd an area, leaving no room for the wildlife to flourish, and then exterminate animals like rabbits, referring to them as encroaching pests. He maintains that the earth is a space given to humans and animals. Humans must limit their expansion accordingly. Linzey, *CRA*, 140-141.

be denotes a reverence for the blessing God has given to the nonhuman creation.²³⁴ It means letting creation be free and significant without reference to human value.

What does “letting be” look like? One dimension of it that Linzey emphasizes is the issue of captivity, most particularly zoos and circuses, which entail “the curtailment or frustration of the animal’s basic instincts and freedoms” (*AR*, 58).²³⁵ Linzey categorizes such uses of animals—alongside hunting for sport—under the heading “wanton injury.”²³⁶ Also, on farms animals must be permitted to act out their natural inclinations, including appropriate sustenance and an open environment that permits natural movement.²³⁷ Linzey later argues that the notion of theos-rights renders these permissions necessary; for “animals have a God-given right to be animals” (*CRA*, 112).²³⁸ Again, “the de-beaked hen in a battery cage is more than a moral crime, it is a living sign of our failure to recognize the blessing of God in creation” (*CRA*, 112).

In *Animal Rights*, Linzey also intimates keeping animals companions as a violation of the letting be of animality. On this point, he differentiates between “moral dominion,” which is “an attitude of respect for life and regulating human existence in such a way as to exploit as little of other sentient life as possible”, and “human patronage,” which “invites us to patronize animals as if they were in need of our moral protection” (*AR*, 67). In this early stage of his thought, Linzey maintains that “animals are not in need of our charity” (*AR*, 67). There is a large shift in Linzey’s later thought.

²³⁴ Linzey, *CRA*, 18-21.

²³⁵ See also, Linzey, *CRA*, 130-131.

²³⁶ Linzey, *CRA*, 104-110.

²³⁷ See Linzey, *AR*, 64-66.

²³⁸ Such an argument would apparently apply to predatory animals as well. In a discussion on cloning, Linzey asks whether or not humans should not be able to “manipulate animals genetically—that is, to change their God-given nature” (*AG*, 114). It is unclear, in Linzey’s theological framework, how much of a predatory animals’ nature is God-given. Moreover, it is unclear what exactly constitutes the nature of such an animal, especially if their inclusion in the eschaton entails the dissolution of their predatory habits.

This shift is evident in his emphasis on animals actually being in need of human moral protection—and indeed, such is a central role of humans.²³⁹ It is also evident in the adjustment regarding his view of companion animals. In *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, while he maintains that there are many drawbacks to keeping pets,²⁴⁰ he softens his view by claiming that only “*some forms* of pet-keeping may well be immoral” (*CRA*, 136).²⁴¹

Another dimension of “letting be”—and one that, in my opinion, is crucial to Linzey’s view—is his claim that “human beings are not responsible for what the natural world may bequeath to animals in the forms of drought, disease and death, except perhaps to alleviate the suffering caused whenever the situation arises” (*AR*, 58). The significance of this claim suggests that peaceful actions that serve as witnesses to eschatological hope can never become scientific attempts to create Eden on earth.

Yet another dimension of “letting be” concerns genetic manipulation. In *Animal Theology*, he “rejects absolutely the idea that animals should be genetically manipulated to provide better meat-machines or laboratory tools” (*AT*, 138). When it comes to manipulating creation, Christian theologians and ethicists must be more specific than “fashionable talk of the ‘integrity of creation’” divorced from more precise guidelines (*AG*, 99). Later he writes that “genetic engineering represents the concretization of the *absolute* claim that animals belong to us and exist for us” (*AT*, 143). He rightly notes that animal formulas—or more correctly, actual animals that have been formulated—have

²³⁹ Oddly, Linzey seems to make this point in his earliest work with reference to Paul’s vision of cosmic redemption in Romans 8. *AR*, 74.

²⁴⁰ See also *CRA*, 133-138.

²⁴¹ Also, Linzey, *CSG*, 86.

even been patented as property.²⁴² In the face of such developments, Linzey notes our new context in which “we now have the absolute technology to reduce animals to things” (AG, 101).

Linzey wants to balance “letting-be” with the claim that humans are instrumental in witnessing to—or even contributing to—the eschatological redemption of the world by action performed in the power of the Spirit. So what is the criterion for adjudicating between these two poles? Human interaction must accord with God’s desire for the created order without disrupting the good integrity, which exists alongside the corruption of creation, already in place in the cosmos.²⁴³

Against Institutionalized Suffering

As already noted, Linzey acknowledges the necessity—indeed in many cases the unavoidability—of violence. However, rare acts of violence driven by necessity are not the same as the institutionalization of violence. It is this legal justification of the common practice of causing millions of animals an immense amount of suffering that Linzey seeks first and foremost to restrict and ultimately eliminate.

In *Animal Gospel*, Linzey advocates six steps toward this end.²⁴⁴ First, humans must be provided with a “space for an ethical appreciation of living creatures” (AG, 127). For Linzey, this step entails encouraging the childlike intuition to protect nonhuman animals. Second, advocates must bring light to cruel practices of the various forms of institutionalized suffering. Third, animal rights scholars must engage in interdisciplinary dialogues and debates concerning their positions; for “we shall not change the world for animals without also changing people’s ideas about the world” (AG, 130). Fourth, animal

²⁴² Linzey, *AT*, 143; *AC*, 101-102.

²⁴³ See Linzey, *AT*, 144-145.

²⁴⁴ Linzey, *AG*, 126-139.

advocates must seek, as consumers, “to institutionalize informed ethical choice” (*AG*, 131).²⁴⁵ This step entails accurate labeling of products and transparency about how the various dimensions that go into that product come to reach the aggregate whole that consumers purchase. For instance, are eggs from free range chickens? Are the chickens genetically modified? Are the chickens permitted other natural tendencies (e.g., vegetarian feed)? These questions help consumers make informed choices concerning the animal products they purchase. Fifth, there must be legislation that is both gradual (i.e., not all or nothing for animals) and truly progressive (i.e., that entails more than cosmetic changes to institutionalized suffering). In a later work, Linzey notes that “only changes in laws secure lasting protection” (*WASM*, 66). Sixth, though Linzey is critical of capitalism, he argues that there are enough people who would seek alternative products if they were offered.²⁴⁶

SOME ISSUES IN LINZEY’S THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

In the last chapter, I intimated some problems with Moltmann’s ethics with reference to individual nonhuman animals. Here, I want to consider some potentially problematic areas of Linzey’s thought. Because these areas include both his theology and his ethics, I have designated them a separate section of this chapter. The problems I will address include Linzey’s identification of his thought as theocentric as opposed to anthropocentric or cosmocentric; his emphasis on creation as belonging to God in conjunction with his notion of creation as a gift; and his application of christology, pneumatology, and eschatology to sentient creatures but not to non-sentient life and the

²⁴⁵ Also, Linzey, *WASM*, 66-67.

²⁴⁶ See Linzey, *AG*, 136-137. Linzey offers reported numbers of public opinion regarding cruel practices to support his thesis.

resulting exclusion of the non-sentient creation from theos-rights. While these issues are significant, they do not deprive Linzey's work of the heart of its impact.

AN INADEQUATE APPEAL TO THEOCENTRISM

Like Moltmann and many other thinkers, Linzey attempts to appeal to theocentrism in order to dislodge the anthropocentric tendencies of Western thought.²⁴⁷ The first foundation of his theos-rights is that "creation exists for its Creator" (AT, 24). Linzey couples this claim with the belief that God is also for creation, even to the point of self-sacrifice. However, the problematic claim here is that God's main interest in creation seems to be a self-service. Is God only for creation because creation is for God? Does a theocentrism that claims the value of creation is completely reducible to its value for God really reflect the self-emptying triune God of other-affirming love?²⁴⁸ It seems to me that, if pressed, Linzey would answer both questions negatively. For while it is true that humanity is "not the centre of all that is valuable" (CRA, 17), neither is God—which the juxtaposition of theocentrism and anthropocentrism here seems to suggest. God does not hoard value. Yet such is a possible interpretation of Linzey's work, as Kemmerer evinces: "Linzey's theory protects the environment and animals from human abuse and plundering, and this is done *for the sake of God*, not for the sake of the land, seas, plants, or animals including all people."²⁴⁹ This reading is not, in my view, what Linzey intends. But his appeal to theocentrism does permit it. He should thus more plainly acknowledge that God's love of creation is not centered on what God gets out of

²⁴⁷ See Linzey, AT, 24, 66-67; CRA, 76. Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 230-231. Michael Northcott also categorizes Linzey as theocentric rather than humanocentric or ecocentric. See *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 146.

²⁴⁸ On these questions, see Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 185-87.

²⁴⁹ Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 270-271. Kemmerer uses the term "anymal" as a contraction of "any" and "animal" in order to denote an inclusive view of all animals that also captures the complexity and diversity of the animal kingdom.

it.²⁵⁰ God is the origin of all value.²⁵¹ Yet because God values that which is other than God *as that which is other than God*, a value-based theocentrism is as inappropriate theologically as anthropocentrism. In my view, only a value-based cosmocentrism couched within a theocentrism—that is, couched within the claim that it is God who establishes and upholds that all creation is valuable in itself before God—can capture the position Linzey advocates.²⁵²

THEOS-RIGHTS AND THE LANGUAGE OF “GIFT”

Linzey’s view of theos-rights is predicated upon the notion that creation is God’s creation. It does not properly belong to humans. Yet this view of God’s ownership over creation is problematic when placed in relation to his claim that creation is a gift. This problem is best expressed in the following quote: “All life, *nephesh*, is a gift from God. It belongs to him alone” (*CRA*, 30). If life is truly a *gift* from God, how can it *belong* to God alone—unless it is a gift from God to God? If not, does not the giving of a gift entail a forfeit of ownership?²⁵³

This problem seems linked to Linzey’s appeal to theocentrism. He wants to avoid anthropocentrism, so he undermines human ownership with an appeal to divine ownership. Yet if God has truly given creation its own space to be, then it seems to me Linzey would be better off to state that God forfeits absolute ownership over life in

²⁵⁰ Linzey comes close to this claim, but does not make it explicitly. See Linzey, *AT*, 25.

²⁵¹ Linzey, *CRA*, 77.

²⁵² Linzey, *CSG*, 18; *WASM*, 56. At any rate, appeals to theocentrism do not solve anything. For contra Linzey’s implication, there is no inherent contradiction in claiming that animals serve the glory of God by existing for human use. On this implication, see Linzey, *CRA*, 24. After all, Thomas Aquinas was theocentric as well.

²⁵³ John Hart offers a very similar (if not identical) critique of the use of the term “gift” in magisterial documents of the Catholic Church. See John Hart, *What Are They Saying about Environmental Theology?* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2004), chapter 2. See especially his discussion of the U. S. Bishops’ pastoral letter on climate change and their use of the “somewhat contradictory concepts” of “gift” and “stewardship.” *Ibid.*, 35-36. For a good discussion and exploration of the problematic and promising notion gift with relation to the created order, see Mark Manolopoulos, *If Creation is a Gift* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

gifting living creatures with *nephesh* in the hope that will be returned to God anew as a free gift. The original gifting is not, however, God giving creation to humanity, but rather the *gifting of creation to itself*. Thus, the return gift would not entail humanity offering creation to God, but rather the creation as a whole returning to God—to participate in God’s own life.²⁵⁴

THE INCARNATION, THE ESCHATON, AND NON-SENTIENT DEATH

As I have already noted, Linzey excludes non-sentient creatures from theos-rights. His christological, pneumatological, and eschatological foundations for these rights do not apply to creatures that cannot suffer. Christ’s suffering bears no concrete meaning for those that cannot suffer. Non-sentient life does have the *nephesh*. These creatures do not require any eschatological compensation for their plight in history.

Still, one wonders what the eschatological *telos* of fish and insects might be. They are alive and they will die. Christ’s suffering notwithstanding, does not his death and resurrection have redemptive meaning for these creatures? Should humans, in the power of the Spirit, not bear witness to this redemption in a manner similar as Linzey calls them to do so for sentients?

It appears not. For Linzey, the distinction of sentience is a morally relevant one.²⁵⁵ He argues that “lettuce do not possess responding capacities for self-awareness and are therefore not capable of being injured as we know to be true in the case of mammals and humans to say the least” (*AT*, 74).²⁵⁶ He does acknowledge that there are “grey areas” such as “slugs, snails, earthworms and the like” (*AT*, 74). While he is

²⁵⁴ In this sense, this view would be different from many Orthodox theologians’ view of natural priesthood.

²⁵⁵ See Linzey, *WASM*, chapter 1.

²⁵⁶ Again, “there is no evidence of reason...to suppose that plants are sentient” (*WASM*, 53). See also *WASM*, 137-138.

agnostic concerning the possibility of their sentience, he still maintains, “I would oppose the gratuitous slaughter of any of them” (AT, 74).

Even so, the killing of individual non-sentient creatures does not seem to be an issue for Linzey.²⁵⁷ Yet it seems problematic to me that death is not morally relevant for Linzey. If Christ conquers death in the resurrection, then why should not this theological claim apply to all creatures that die?

CONCLUSION

It seems to me that the basic question of Linzey’s entire moral theology is this: “How could it be that a God who out of love creates animals would delight in their gratuitous destruction?” (AT, 104). The question is rhetorical. The trinitarian God whose very nature is love and whose character is most fully revealed in the Son’s incarnational kenosis and the Spirit’s fellow-suffering with all sentient creatures suggests that human relations with those creatures, in order to be just, must seek their well-being in the form of the alleviation of suffering and promulgation of rights. God’s desire must be for peace, not predation; harmony, not bloody competition; kenotic love, not self-aggrandizing power.

This desire grounds the rights of all creatures relationally, for they are all creatures before the God who created them and seeks their well-being. The completion

²⁵⁷ Northcott, in my view, misreads Linzey on this point, offering an overly positive evaluation of Linzey’s ethics vis-à-vis non-sentient life. See *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 146-147. Better is Kemmerer’s reading (and critique) of Linzey’s exclusion of plants from theos-rights. See Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency*, 271-279. Linzey critiques Singer’s utilitarian ethics because it supports late term abortion and early infanticide. This view “necessitates in turn the rejection of the view that killing innocents is always wrong” (WASM, 153). Here Linzey reveals his deontological leaning. However, he also reveals the tension in his own position. Singer’s view is predicated upon sentience—including self-awareness—which he doubts fetuses and extremely young infants possess. Linzey rejects this position by appealing to innocence—it is wrong to take innocent life. Yet when it comes to plants and supposedly non-sentient animals, Linzey sets aside the notion of innocent life and appeals to sentience. Thus, Linzey is forced to argue that the *potential* for sentience makes a difference. So, his position is not that it is wrong to kill innocent life, but rather that it is wrong to kill innocent *sentient and sentient-to-be* life. WASM, 154.

of the ultimate vision of God remains an eschatological hope that remains out of the reach of human striving and political programs. In world that is fallen and incomplete, there can be no edenic state. Nonetheless, that hope has broken into the history of the cosmos with the incarnation and the new loosing of the Spirit. This breaking-in opens up the possibility for humans to more fully become the *imago Dei* by practicing peace toward nonhuman animals. Forms of this practice include the culling of animal experimentation, the fur industry, hunting, and meat-eating. They also include working toward a more just society for animals through the establishment of legal protection.

In short, the rights of God are best recognized when God's desires for the creation to which God has given space are taken up and honored by humans in the power of the Spirit. When humans act in this manner, they become sacraments of the eschaton—the peaceable kingdom in which all creatures will be freed from the darker mechanisms of evolution, most notably suffering and death. Therefore, seeking the rights of sentient animals—among other forms of seeking animal welfare—constitutes a proleptic witness to cosmic eschatological hope within history. Such is the responsibility of humans in the wake of Christ's salvific movement and the Spirit's empowering presence.

CHAPTER 4
TOWARD A VISION OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION:
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

To this point I have explored the theological foundations and ethical principles for all four paradigms of eco-theological ethics by dialoguing with particular Christian thinkers. As I wrote in the introduction, delineating and exploring this taxonomy of paradigms constitutes one of the central interests of the present work. However, I also noted that I believe cosmocentric transfiguration remains an under-engaged and under-developed paradigm in the field. As such is the case, another significant aim of the present work is to develop constructively a coherent eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration. This task is the focus of this final chapter.

To accomplish it, I will first offer a comparative analysis of Moltmann and Linzey with regard to both theology and ethics. At this intersection, I will propose a set of theological claims that can serve as the foundation for cosmocentric transfiguration. With this foundation in place, I will explore possible critiques of the paradigm, drawing on central tenets of the other paradigms. Next, in order to frame the practical application of cosmocentric transfiguration, I will propose, in an introductory fashion, that a proportionalism qualified by an emphasis on virtue is the most promising ethical framework for the paradigm. Lastly, I will suggest concrete ethical principles with regard to both the micro- (i.e., individual sentient and non-sentient life forms) and the macro- (e.g., species, eco-systems, and the cosmos at large) levels of creation. Ultimately, at the intersection of concern for individuals and concern for groups, systems, and the whole I will suggest cosmocentric transfiguration is best summarized by two poles of tension: preservation and protest.

JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN AND ANDREW LINZEY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The tensions evident among the four paradigms provide valuable insights into the promises and challenges of cosmocentric transfiguration. Before addressing these insights, however, I must first establish with greater specificity what the paradigm might look like. To this end, I will compare and contrast—with an ultimate view toward synthesizing—the work of Moltmann and Linzey on both a theological and an ethical level.

As far as I can tell, Moltmann never cites Linzey in his work. Linzey does infrequently cite Moltmann, though at times only to critique a perceived anthropocentric deficiency.¹ Given this dearth of interaction, I here seek to examine the convergences, divergences, and ambiguities that exist between their thought. In my view, Moltmann tends to provide a more thoroughly developed theological foundation for cosmocentric transfiguration while Linzey is far better for establishing how these foundations translate into practice with regard to (at least sentient) nonhuman animals.

THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Moltmann's doctrine of the social Trinity is a well-developed theological vision that draws heavily on trinitarian conversations throughout the history of Christianity. Linzey's emphasis on God's nature as love is emblematic of Moltmann, who also maintains that God's nature is best described as love. This view grounds for both theologians the nature of God's love for creation, which includes a stark challenge to divine impassibility inasmuch as God suffers in that love.² Yet Moltmann's expression

¹ See, for instance, Linzey's assessment of *The Crucified God* and *God in Creation*. Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology*, (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 191.

² On Moltmann, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*, translated by R. A. Wilson (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993);

of the Trinity as a divine community of persons whose perfect unity is established by a self-emptying perichoretic love is much stronger theologically than Linzey's more basic appeal to God as love.³ This strength correlates to a clearer expression of what trinitarian love means for creation—most particularly that the divine nature is intimated in the very act of creation, which entails a divine kenosis of withdrawal in order to seek genuinely communion with that which is other than God.⁴

At any rate, both Moltmann and Linzey claim that the Trinity desires communion with the world.⁵ Yet the world does not seem to reflect the perichoretic union of the divine. Rather, it reflects the mechanisms of evolutionary development which, while including dimensions of harmony, balance, and symbiosis on the level of eco-systems, still throughout history and in the lives of individual creatures entails competition, gratuitous suffering, and death.

Moltmann and Linzey both evince a level of ambiguity regarding the etiology of these mechanisms—and also some tension with one another. Linzey seems more anxious to maintain the traditional doctrine of the Fall, even if it must be initially relegated to an angelic corruption prior to the existence of humanity.⁶ While Moltmann desires to maintain that the mechanisms of evolution cannot be the final word from God regarding the fate of the cosmos, he is more willing to discard an historical Fall that results from

Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), chapter 2. On Linzey, see Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology*, (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 48-52.

³ See Moltmann's *Trinity and the Kingdom*.

⁴ See Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 75-86; *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 106-8.

⁵ Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 57; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 24.

⁶ See Andrew Linzey, *Animal Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 15; Andrew Linzey, "C. S. Lewis's Theology of Animals," *Anglican Theological Review* 80/1 (Winter 1998), 106. For more considerations on an angelic fall, see Robert N. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 327-330.

sin.⁷ In my opinion, neither Linzey nor Moltmann are satisfactory here. Linzey contributes something important in his refusal to credit (or blame) God for the shadowy sides of evolution. Moltmann contributes something important in his refusal to attribute evolution to some evil will, such as humans or angels. I believe there is a third possibility here that includes both contributions. I will develop this option below. At this point, it is enough to note that Linzey and Moltmann are in unity in maintaining that the mechanisms of evolution constitute an issue for divine love and justice and must be remedied through eschatological redemption.⁸

As with theology proper, Moltmann's christology is more developed than Linzey's. This point notwithstanding, both recognize the incarnation as significant for nonhuman animals, drawing on the import of Christ taking on flesh, suffering, and dying. Linzey emphasizes mainly Christ's meaning for nonhuman creatures with flesh and blood that suffer.⁹ Moltmann does not neglect this dimension of the incarnation. Christ experiences their transience as well as the disposition of humans. He becomes the ultimate victim of evolution, the sufferer par excellence, and thereby draws their plight into the trinitarian life in order to secure redemption for all.¹⁰ However, Moltmann's christology is more extensive than Linzey's, for he also stresses the import of Christ's death and resurrection for *all living things that die*. Even more generally, Moltmann claims that Christ's experience of transience bears salvific meaning for every bit of

⁷ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 91-92.

⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's Future for Humanity and the Earth*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 221; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 81.

⁹ Andrew Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1987), 79-80.

¹⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 296.

matter in the cosmos.¹¹ In this sense, Moltmann fits within the category of “cosmocentric” somewhat easier than Linzey, whose theology tends more toward a sentiocentrism.¹²

While Moltmann and Linzey both maintain that the Spirit bears a role as the vitalizing principle of life, as with christology, they diverge on the extent of this role. For Linzey, the Spirit’s vitalizing presence is primarily located in sentient creatures of flesh and blood. The Spirit suffers with suffering creatures.¹³ For Moltmann, the Spirit is the manner of divine immanence in the entire cosmos, from rocks to trees to antelopes to humans. The Spirit suffers with suffering creatures, experiences death in all life that dies, and knows the transience of all transient creation.¹⁴ This pneumatological difference in Moltmann and Linzey correlates to a disparity regarding the eschatological presence of the Spirit in creatures. In Moltmann’s framework, the Spirit renders present the advent of eternal life for all creation.¹⁵ Linzey largely limits the redemptive presence of the Spirit to sentient creatures.¹⁶ This difference aside, both Moltmann and Linzey agree that the Spirit’s eschatological presence has a unique meaning for human beings in that it establishes their ability to witness to eschatological hope within the flow of history.¹⁷ However, they differ about the nature of this witness. Linzey focuses on theos-rights,

¹¹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 253; *The Coming of God*, 92-93.

¹² Linzey acknowledges this point. See Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 84-85.

¹³ Andrew Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God: Explorations in Animal Theology* (New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2009), 14.

¹⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 51; *God in Creation*, 96-97.

¹⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 199-206; *Spirit of Life*, 74.

¹⁶ See Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 69.

¹⁷ Moltmann, *Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 196; *God in Creation*, 101; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 75; *Animal Theology*, 56.

which he limits to sentients. Moltmann focuses on the rights of the entire cosmos, though at times neglecting individual animals.

Both Moltmann and Linzey expand the traditional scope of the eschatological community. The common ground of this expansion entails the inclusion of every individual victim of suffering, human or nonhuman, that has ever lived in history.¹⁸ Therefore, the eschaton necessitates a resurrection of every individual sentient creature that has ever graced the earth with its presence. The two thinkers diverge on the issue of non-sentient life. Linzey does not reject the possibility of their inclusion, but strongly emphasizes sentient creatures on this point.¹⁹ For Moltmann suffering is not the only significant problem that a just God must overcome. God must also overcome transience, which includes death.²⁰ Therefore all *dying* life (which is to say all life) must be resurrected and freed from its transience.²¹

One major difference between Moltmann and Linzey is the issue of time. The reason for this difference is that Moltmann develops a theology of time while Linzey does not.²² Moltmann juxtaposes phenomenological time with eternal time. The latter is the gathering up of the all moments of the former into a perichoretic union of presence. Said differently, eternity renders each moment of history eternally significant.²³

Finally, both Moltmann and Linzey lay on Spirit-filled humanity the grace-enabled potential and responsibility to witness to eschatological hope in the present.

¹⁸ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 69-70, 306-308; Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 133, n. 13.

¹⁹ Andrew Linzey, *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology* (Herndon, VA: Mowbray, 1997), 82-84.

²⁰ See especially Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 252.

²¹ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 92.

²² On Moltmann, see Richard Bauckham, "Time and Eternity," in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 158-73; also, chapter 2 of the present work.

²³ While I believe Moltmann's view on time requires adjustment—as I will do below—it nonetheless provides a powerful foundation for the ethical treatment of individual animals.

Moltmann does so through his theological appropriation of Ernst Bloch's philosophy of hope. Linzey does so through an appeal to christology, pneumatology, and the lives of saints in history. The main tension of their thought here is how they express the relation between history and eschatology. Moltmann's creative expression of the categories of *novum* and *adventus* in conjunction with his detailed exploration of time helps to solidify both why and the manner in which eschatology informs ethics in the unfolding of history. That is, the eschatological future, which is God's coming and arrival, does not burgeon out of history but rather accosts history as that which is genuinely new (*novum*). This coming is already affecting history now, for history is in its *adventus*.²⁴ In the advent of God's coming and arrival, new possibilities manifest, if only as *creatio anticipativa*, within history.²⁵ The distinction between *creatio anticipativa* and *creatio nova* distances Moltmann from all attempts to establish the kingdom on earth via human efforts and political programs. Linzey at times struggles to achieve this distance.²⁶

ETHICAL ANALYSIS

Moltmann's theology grounds an ethics of transfiguration. Yet his (somewhat) concrete application of that theology is oddly conservationist. Linzey, while less theologically comprehensive than Moltmann, fares far better in my view with regard to the construction of an ethics that is consistent with his theological claims—at least with regard to sentient life.

As already noted, regarding the inanimate and non-sentient creation, Linzey remains somewhat silent. He does not deny the value of these dimensions of the

²⁴ See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 21-29.

²⁵ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 197-206.

²⁶ For example, Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 104.

cosmos.²⁷ Yet he does deny them theos-rights.²⁸ He is furthermore less concrete regarding human action in this sphere of creation. I have suggested that Linzey has no explicit ethical qualms with the death of individual non-sentient creatures—with the exception of gratuitous slaughter.²⁹ He thus seems to accept implicitly a conservationist ethics for all non-sentient creation.

Moltmann is adamant that the inanimate creation should have rights.³⁰ Here he differs from Linzey. Yet these rights, while more explicit, amount to a similar conservationist ethics. Moltmann calls for preservation, including absolute protection of endangered or rare ecosystems and respect for the integrity of natural systems, including a letting be on the part of humans.³¹

Regarding sentient nonhuman animals, Linzey and Moltmann evince a divergence. Both speak of the importance of rights for nonhuman animals.³² Oddly, while Moltmann clearly suggests that a conservationist ethics is not sufficient theologically, it is just this sort of ethics that he delineates. He hints at an eschatological ethics, but ultimately remains agnostic about its practical consequences.³³ The only concrete ethics he offers regarding sentient creatures pertains to the preservation of species, the cessation of genetic manipulation, and the promulgation of an environment that meets the natural needs and desires of nonhuman animals.³⁴

²⁷ Ibid., 8-9, 85.

²⁸ Ibid., 84.

²⁹ Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 74.

³⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 112-113.

³¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope*, translated by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 144-145.

³² Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 256, 307-8; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 19-23.

³³ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 311.

³⁴ Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope*, 144.

With regard to sentient nonhumans, Linzey is more consistent than Moltmann with regard to praxis. His concrete ethics follows the logic of his theological foundations. If the eschatological future is breaking into the present in some manner and permitting new practices of peace, then those practices ought to reflect that future. For Linzey (and Moltmann) that future is peace—the cessation of competition and violence and the end of suffering for each individual creature. Based on this vision, Linzey suggests that rights should work towards more than preservation; they should work toward eschatological peace.³⁵ Thus, he calls for the end of institutionalized suffering and the progressive disengagement of practices such as hunting, fishing, sealing, fur-farming and trapping, experimenting on animals, and meat-eating.³⁶

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

In the introduction, I delineated three theological loci for establishing a taxonomy of eco-theological ethics: cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology. Correlating to these loci, both Moltmann and Linzey concur on three foundational theological claims. First, God has created a good cosmos and desires communion with every single instantiation of life therein. Second, God has appointed humanity with a special responsibility in this creation. Third, the cosmos, while good, has become in some sense distorted (or at the very least remains incomplete and disoriented) and requires eschatological redemption, a redemption that includes every creature with which God desires communion. While these three claims are the central tenets of cosmocentric transfiguration, they benefit from a broader theological framework. Having examined the

³⁵ See Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 86-89. I make this claim partly because Linzey writes that “Christian ethics is essentially eschatological.” Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 17.

³⁶ See chapter 3 of the present work.

convergences, divergences, and ambiguities that arise at the intersection of Moltmann and Linzey, I can now develop this framework in greater detail.³⁷

THEOLOGY PROPER: GOD AS THE COMMUNITY OF LOVE

The doctrine of the Trinity may not be necessary for an animal theology, but when developed in a certain manner, it is a powerful foundation for such theology.³⁸

While the biblical grounds for the doctrine are less than obvious, the historical appropriation of scripture is not.³⁹ What remains undecided in contemporary recoveries of the doctrine of the Trinity is how to navigate the perpetual tension between God as a unity and God as a community.⁴⁰ Yet this navigation has implications for all of theology, including ecclesiology and cosmology.⁴¹

Moltmann's social doctrine of the Trinity maintains that God's oneness is constituted by the perichoretic relations of the three divine persons.⁴² Such a view provides a strong foundation for cosmocentric transfiguration. It facilitates a manner of

³⁷ Two issues arise here: one of method and one of content. Regarding method, the reader may at this point ask how I am going about constructing these foundations. Why accept one interpretation and reject another? My constructive work is a thought experiment. At the intersection of Moltmann and Linzey, I am seeking to develop a systematic theological foundation for cosmocentric transfiguration. I will address the theological validity of this view, including the question of hermeneutics with regard to both the interpretation of scripture and tradition, below.

Regarding content, the reader will note the absence of both soteriology and ecclesiology from the headings. As I noted in the introduction, my soteriological vision is implicit at the intersection of anthropology, cosmology, and eschatology. In its ultimate form, it is the perichoretic communion of creation with God and with itself. In its present form, it is the overcoming of isolation, both within the cosmos and between the cosmos and God, and the opening of the way toward communion. With regard to cosmocentric transfiguration and ecclesiology, my view is implicit in my anthropology. In short, the church is to be that community in which eschatological witness becomes most clear for the entire created order.

³⁸ On this point, see Catherine Mowry LaCugna's work on the Trinity. *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1993). She discusses the implications for the Trinity and animals briefly on page 396.

³⁹ See Franz Dünzl, *A Brief History of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Early Church*, translated by John Bowden (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2007).

⁴⁰ This tension is captured both in Moltmann's *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 10-20 and Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, translated by Joseph Donceel (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005).

⁴¹ See LaCugna's *God for Us*. See also Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Company, 1998); John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York: Crestwood, 1985).

⁴² On this development, see Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*.

navigating the tension between God's unity and community by suggesting the former is irrevocably constituted in the intensity of the latter. In this constitution, the doctrine opens the space for an appropriation of a dynamic and relational ontology as opposed to a static and substantial one. It also provides a basis for cosmology; for the love that constitutes God's unity is the catalyst for the creation of that which is other than God and the pursuit of that other for the sake of communion. On this point both Moltmann and Linzey concur.⁴³ This cosmology suggests that it is insufficient to claim that the Logos as divine reason is both the ground and destiny of the cosmos. Rather, the ground and destiny of the cosmos is the Logos as divine reason *expressed as perichoretic love*. Thus, all that is created, all that exists, is the object of divine pursuit for the sake of perichoretic communion.

COSMOLOGY: THE GOD OF SUFFERING AND PURSUING LOVE

Metaphorically speaking, pursuit and alterity necessitate at least an initial distance. Thus, for God to create and to pursue in love a cosmos that is truly other-than-God mandates a distance between God and creation. While the divine openness to creation entails divine immanence, pursuing love requires divine transcendence. This distance means that God must be able and willing to suffer the cosmos its own reality. For this reason, God's trinitarian love is, in the act of creation, *suffering love*. Moltmann's creative appropriation of *creatio ex nihilo* captures just this point.⁴⁴ Yet this suffering love is present not only at the origin of creation but also throughout the history of the relationship. Thus, God's love must suffer not only the integrity of creation but

⁴³ See Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 57; Linzey, *After Noah*, 77.

⁴⁴ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 86-89.

also the ongoing cost of that integrity, including human sin. Again, here both Moltmann and Linzey concur.⁴⁵

The social doctrine of the Trinity combined with the hope that God lovingly creates and pursues that which is other than God for the sake of communion enables a vision of the cosmos infused by divine love with genuine alterity and integrity.⁴⁶ To draw on Moltmann's imagery, God withdraws, leaving creation its own space and time in an original act of divine kenosis.⁴⁷ The time and space of creation is at once apart from God and infused with the presence of the Spirit, who vitalizes it for its own freedom. Yet both Moltmann and Linzey hold that the created order does not reflect God's desire for it. There is at least some sense in which it is fallen.

PROTOLOGY AND THE FALL: COSMIC CONSECRATION, COSMIC ISOLATION

Denis Edwards writes that the "problem of natural evil" is "greatly intensified" by "a new understanding of the size and scope of the problem of creaturely loss."⁴⁸ The etiology of the evolutionary mechanisms that facilitate such loss is one of the most difficult questions in contemporary theology.⁴⁹ It is also one of the most important and divisive issues in eco-theological thought. Are the mechanisms of evolution part of the good creation? Are they the result of a Fall from edenic harmony? Are they necessary for some greater purpose in creation?

⁴⁵ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 198-200; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 25.

⁴⁶ It also evinces the cosmocentric dimension of both Moltmann's and Linzey's theological framework. God desires the entire creation for its own sake—that is, not simply for the sake of humanity. See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 89; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 95.

⁴⁷ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 86-89.

⁴⁸ Denis Edwards, "Every Sparrow that Falls to the Ground: The Cost of Evolution and the Christ-Event," *Ecotheology* 11/1 (2006), 106.

⁴⁹ This point is made well by Christopher Southgate in *The Groaning of Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

I have already expressed in the introduction (**Table I – 1**) that the crux of this issue is best expressed in the comparison of Genesis 1, the *Enuma Elish*, and a Darwinian worldview:

TABLE I – 1			
	Divine Identity	Creative Action	Cosmic Identity
Narrative/Myth “A” (Genesis 1:1 – 2:3)	<i>Elohim</i>	Creates through peaceful divine fiat	A world of empowered creatures absent of predation
Narrative/Myth “B” (<i>Enuma Elish</i>)	Marduk	Creates out of a divine war for existence	An enslaved and competitive world for divine benefit
Narrative/Theory “C” (Darwinian Worldview)	???	???	A world that, while displaying high levels of cooperation among species, nonetheless requires suffering, predation, and death in order to function ⁵⁰

How does one maintain the theological identity of “God A” in the face of scientific evidence that “World A” never actually existed?

Linzey most often—though not always—does so by ambiguously maintaining some form of the historicity of “World A.” However, he is unclear about how “World A” became “World C,” whether by an angelic Fall, a human Fall, or by the mere finitude of creation as other-than-God.⁵¹ Moltmann moves forward by proposing that “World A” constitutes the destiny of “World C” rather than its history.⁵² Yet Moltmann is not clear why “World C” is an acceptable method of creation by a just God. Why does God create “World C” instead of “World A”?

⁵⁰ I intend here Sideris’s claim that, “despite disagreements about the details of evolution, few scientists would deny that suffering and struggle play an important role in evolution.” Lisa H. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), 19. Or again, Rolston’s claim that biologists “find nature stark and full of suffering, sometimes dreadful.” Rolston, “Does Nature Need Redeemed?” 207.

⁵¹ On the angelic Fall, see Linzey, “C. S. Lewis’s Theology of Animals,” 70. On the human fall, see *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 18. On the finitude of creation, see *Animal Theology*, 81-85.

⁵² Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 127-28. Linzey makes a similar claim in *Animal Gospel*, 81.

What is needed here is a view that can account for, on the one hand, both the goodness of the natural world and the shadowy mechanisms of evolution, and, on the other hand, both the theological claims concerning the kind of world *Elohim* would create and the scientific evidence of natural history. I believe that that a synthesis and development of Moltmann and Linzey, one which accepts both Linzey's refusal to trace the etiology of suffering, predation, and death to God and Moltmann's refusal to trace these mechanisms to angels or humans, provides a promising way forward here.

The schema of creation-fall-redemption-consummation is perhaps the most common framework for salvation history.⁵³ This schema, ultimately a hermeneutical key for reading the Bible deductively, evinces just how significant the concept of will is in Christian thought. Every aspect of the narrative requires some intentional movement of will.⁵⁴ Creation rests solely on the divine will. The Fall requires a human and/or an angelic will. Redemption requires the divine will with (in some cases) human assent. Consummation, like creation, rests solely on the divine will. Linzey evinces this emphasis on will in his effort to place the Fall at the feet of anyone other than God. Moltmann is less adamant on identifying a willful culprit upon which to lay the responsibility for the mechanisms of evolution—though his thought is at times unclear on how these mechanisms arose outside of the will of a free agent. Even so, I believe Moltmann provides the foundation for an alternative schema that can more easily house the tensions noted above concerning “God A” and “World C,” most significantly by

⁵³ The historical adequacy of this framework is debated. Peter Bouteneff, for instance, states that the schema is “difficult to trace before the eighteenth-century notion of *Heilsgeschichte*.” Peter Bouteneff, *Beginnings: Ancient Christian Readings of the Biblical Creation Narratives* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 8.

⁵⁴ I am following Wennberg here in juxtaposing intentional will with permissive will. Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 331-32.

lessening the importance of will at the stage of the Fall. This lessening is facilitated by increasing the importance of creation's integrity with regard to the notion of fallenness.

As I have already noted, Moltmann speaks positively of God's kenotic withdrawal in creation, which opens up a unique time and space for the creation to be.⁵⁵ Yet this space entails a risk. God's refusal to be the "the all-determining reality' of what he has created" suggests that "he has conferred on creation its own scope for freedom and generation."⁵⁶ This space for freedom and generation is the reason that the creation has "fallen victim to annihilation."⁵⁷ The creation "has isolated itself from the foundation of its existence and the wellspring of its life, and has fallen victim to universal death."⁵⁸ Moltmann refers to this cosmic isolation as "the 'sin' of the whole creation."⁵⁹

There are two important facets of Moltmann's thought here. First, when taken in conjunction with his claims that human sin is not the result of death, it strongly suggests that he describes the creation as engaging in "sin" prior to human existence. Second, he links both sin and death to the notion of *isolation*. This link is actually common in Moltmann's thought. He states that "death is the power of separation, both in time as the stream of transience, materially as the disintegration of the person's living Gestalt or configuration, and socially as isolation and loneliness."⁶⁰ Or again, "Life is communication in communion. And, conversely, isolation and lack of relationship means death for all living things, and dissolution even for elementary particles."⁶¹ As this quote suggests, for Moltmann the opposite of isolation is communion. Thus he writes: "If the

⁵⁵ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 86-89.

⁵⁶ Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise*, 205.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*.

⁵⁸ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 283.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁰ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 71.

⁶¹ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 3.

misery of creation lies in sin as separation from God, then salvation consists in the gracious acceptance of the creature into communion with God.”⁶² Bouma-Prediger affirms this reading of Moltmann, stating that his “understanding of salvation implies that sin is essentially the state of being closed off or closed down or isolated.”⁶³

Collectively, these points suggest that the original positive distance entailed by God’s withdrawal in the act of creation—which was necessitated in order for the creation to be other-than-God and therefore a viable partner for communion—*becomes* something altogether different (and negative) in the unfolding of creation’s integrity. The original distance becomes isolation. Yet Moltmann maintains that God, most specifically in the incarnation, traverses this negative distance in order to restore the hope for communion with creation. All of these points are evident in the following passage, which is worth quoting at length:

*Remoteness from God and spatial distance from God result from the withdrawal of God’s omnipresence and ‘the veiling of his face.’ They are part of the grace of creation, because they are conditions for the liberty of created beings. It is only for sinners, who cut themselves off from God, that they become the expression of God’s anger towards them in their God-forsakenness. If God himself enters into his creation through his Christ and his Spirit, in order to live in it and to arrive at his rest, he will then overcome not only the God-forsakenness of sinners, but also the distance and space of his creation itself, which resulted in isolation from God, and sin.*⁶⁴

In an attempt to develop and clarify Moltmann’s thought in a manner that maintains Linzey’s position that God not be the author of suffering and death, I here offer a revision to the traditional schema of salvation history by suggesting the creation is a willful act (on the part of God) of consecration—which requires distance. The Fall is an

⁶² Jürgen Moltmann, *History and the Triune God: Contributions to Trinitarian Theology* (hereafter *HTG*), translated by John Bowden (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1992), 87.

⁶³ Steven Bouma-Prediger, *The Greening of Theology: The ecological Models of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler, and Jürgen Moltmann* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995), 241.

⁶⁴ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 306; italics mine.

event that results not directly from any will, but rather via chance in creation’s development within its own integrity. Redemption is the concrete actuality of God’s desire for the cosmos in Christ, which restores the space of consecratory distance and enables new movement within that space. Finally, consummation is the final communion—the perichoretic union between God and the creation, which was the original purpose of consecratory distance. This vision provides a variation of the traditional understanding of salvation history (see **Table 4 – 1**).

TABLE 4 – 1				
Traditional Schema	Creation	Fall	Redemption	Consummation
Revised Schema	Consecration	Isolation	Restoration	Communion

As I am here dealing with the question of protology and the Fall, I will focus on the first two terms, consecration and isolation. To consecrate (from the Hebrew *qđš* and Greek *hagios*) something is to sanctify it, to make it holy, to set it apart. Thus, *there can be no consecration without separation—without distance*. But this separation, evident most clearly in the sacrificial system in the Hebrew Scriptures, *is for the purpose of communion*. Thus the broad connotation of *qđš* is “the process by which an entity is brought into relationship with or attains the likeness of the holy.”⁶⁵ That is, the *telos* of consecratory distance is relationship or communion.

Isolation also denotes separation and distance. It derives out of the Latin *insulatus*, denoting making something into an island. Unlike consecration, which entails a separation for the sake of communion, isolation suggests the notion of alienation.⁶⁶ Whereas the distance of consecration has a positive *telos* (i.e., communion), isolation is

⁶⁵ K. E. Bower, “Sanctification, sanctify” in *New Bible Dictionary*, third edition, edited by D. R. W. Wood (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 1058.

⁶⁶ Along with isolation, Moltmann refers to creation (or more properly “nature”) as alienated from God. See Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 253,

without purpose and meaning. Said differently, it is distance merely for the sake of distance, not communion.

Because there can be no communion with the divine without consecratory distance, distance is an essential prerequisite for communion between God and that which is other-than-God. For without this distance, “creation would be itself divine.”⁶⁷ Said differently, without the act of consecratory separation, union with the divine could only be possible as pantheism, which is not communion—the participation of *others* in union. Thus, the participation of creation as that which is other-than-God in God’s trinitarian life requires distance between God and the world. God must be willing to suffer the created order its own space and integrity.

Yet, as Moltmann notes, such a suffering entails divine risk. Empowering creation to be itself by divine withdrawal opens the possibility that creation’s being and becoming itself will not cohere to the divine desire for creation. This point is significant because, contra Deism and Descartes, the world is not a machine of static laws, but rather a dynamic and at times volatile system of interrelated components.⁶⁸ There is no watchmaker, only one who gives birth to a dynamic creation—an artist who loses at least some control of his work when he creates it. It is the consecratory distance that is necessary for communion that opens creation to the risk of isolation, which is creation’s embrace, anthropomorphically speaking, of its distance from God.

⁶⁷ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 301.

⁶⁸ Such a view is entailed in the scientific shift from a mechanistic (Newtonian) view of the world to a dynamic and relational (Einsteinian) one. On this point, see John Polkinghorne, “The Demise of Democritus,” in *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 15-31; Mary Judith Ress, *Ecofeminism in Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 51-55; Arthur Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming—Natural, Divine and Human* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 41-70.

The world does “fall” into isolation. Though, a better image than falling would be that of wandering. That is, instead of moving along the path to communion within the space that God has allotted to it, creation, in its integrity, strays from that path and wanders aimlessly in the open space God has allotted to it. The creation does not move toward communion in dynamic growth but rather meanders in a form of stasis. Moltmann captures this image of wandering in isolation with his claim that the “‘time of nature’ is a kind of winter of creation.” For “nature is frozen, petrified creation. It is God’s creation, *alienated* from the source of its life.”⁶⁹ In this state, the consecratory distance of creation becomes isolation as the divine hope for cosmic harmony and communion gives way to the tragic nature of the mechanisms of evolution. Thus, in isolation, the developmental space and time allotted to creation by divine withdrawal becomes transience and death. Says Moltmann: “Separation from God, the wellspring of life, leads us through our isolation to experience temporality as transience, and to see death as its universal end.”⁷⁰

The movement from consecratory distance to isolation does not entail that suffering, predation, and death were absent in some historical Eden from which humans strayed. In conjunction with Moltmann, I do not see how one can affirm such a natural history in the face of science.⁷¹ For this reason, I accept that suffering, predation, and death can be referred to as “natural.” The symbol of Eden expresses God’s desire for the cosmos, not its concrete history.⁷²

⁶⁹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 253; italics mine.

⁷⁰ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 292.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 83. I also concur with Deins Edwards, who notes that evolutionary theodicy is complicated by the scientific “discrediting of the idea that pain and biological death can be explained as the result of human sin.” Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 106.

⁷² There are elements of this schema and its implied theodicy that are consummate with Drummond’s appropriation of Sergii Bulgakov’s notion of “shadow sophia.” As far as similarities go,

Even so, it is not necessary to claim that the naturalness of evolutionary mechanisms means God has ordained them. Moltmann's de-emphasis on the divine will—at least as I am developing it—suggests that God need not be the author of the mechanisms of evolution. Contra Denis Edwards, who appropriates the work of Niels Gregersen, we need not accept that “biological death has to be attributed to the Creator.”⁷³ God has ordained a dynamic creation and set it free for the sake of communion. In its consecratory separation from God—a condition necessary for its *telos* of communion with God—the dynamism of the cosmos became a wandering in isolation, a system of suffering, predation, and death in which creatures survive at the expense of others. In this state, even the positive dimensions of the cosmos, including its interconnectedness and symbiosis take the form of the death and suffering of individuals. Thus even these positive dimensions need redeemed. Says Moltmann: “the very powers which have been perverted into what is destructive will themselves be redeemed; for their power is created power, and is as such good. It is only their power of destruction that was evil.”⁷⁴ On account of the relational reality of sin, even the beautiful needs redeemed.

Perhaps the most significant contribution this revised schema contributes—aside from the arching theme of distance upon which it draws—is that cosmic “fallenness” is not the result of any intentional movement of will, whether angelic, human, or even

Drummond maintains that the mythical symbol of the Fall “has repercussions both prior to and after the appearance of humanity.” The “prior to” entails that “the tendencies towards immorality were present long before [human existence], and seem to be constitutive of the possibility of creaturely sophia.” But shadow sophia “is not inherent in divine Sophia and exists as a latent possibility in creaturely sophia.” Thus, the *risk* of shadow is present in the expression of divine wisdom in the created order. This risk is necessary for the “teleological goal in creaturely Sophia,” which is the hope for “participation in divine Sophia.” See Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 125-28.

⁷³ Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 107.

⁷⁴ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 169.

divine.⁷⁵ I thus concur with Holmes Rolston that “human sin did not throw nature out of joint; nature does not need to be redeemed on that account.”⁷⁶ Rather, it is the result of creation’s own integrity—of randomness and chance.⁷⁷ As Polkinghorne states, “God no more expressly wills the growth of cancer than he expressly wills the act of a murder, but he allows both to happen. *He is not the puppetmaster of either men or matter.*”⁷⁸ It is as if the very instant God creates the world God surrenders control over that world and holds to hope.⁷⁹ Yet this surrendering is not a form of deism, because God remains present in the world, suffering its fate and in some sense guiding and curbing its development through the Spirit.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ I am here offering an alternative route to that of both Southgate and Wennberg in which God ordains evolution for a greater good—in the case of Southgate, complexity and diversity and in the case of Wennberg, a world fit for fallen humanity. Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 15-17; Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 334-41. This alternative also applies to Willis Jenkins’ claim that God ordains the goodness of creatures (e.g., the ferocity of a lion) with the indirect “evil” effect that the lion then devours the gazelle. Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 137, 144–145. The main distinction, as I understand it, between my view and that of both Southgate and Jenkins is that they want to link the origin of evolution to the divine will (i.e., divine ordination).

⁷⁶ Holmes Rolston III, “Does Nature Need to be Redeemed?” *Zygon* 29 (1994), 207.

⁷⁷ This point builds upon Moltmann’s cosmology in which he argues that God withdraws to give creation its own integrity. See Jürgen Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness*, 205; Jürgen Moltmann, “God’s Kenosis in the Creation and Consummation of the World” in *God and Evolution: A Reader*, Mary Kathleen Cunningham, editor (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 273-283. See also Neil Ormerod, *Creation, Grace, and Redemption* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 15-16.

⁷⁸ John Polkinghorne, *Science and Providence: God’s Interaction with the World* (West Conshohocken, PA: Temple Foundation Press, 2005), 78. Polkinghorne is here similar to Moltmann’s claim that God is not the “the all-determining reality” of what he has created.” Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise*, 205.

⁷⁹ On this point I bear a similarity to John Haught’s kenotic notion of God and the evolutionary process. See John F. Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, second edition (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 49-60. Such a view requires a thorough revision to the doctrine of God’s omniscience. After all, one cannot hold to hope (or hope at all!) if one knows the future exhaustively. I am aware that “such an a-gnosis in God is outside the normal range of theologizing about creation.” Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 7.

⁸⁰ I intend this point in a thoroughly trinitarian framework. Regarding theology proper, I accept Moltmann’s notion of God suffering the cosmos its own space. Regarding pneumatology, I accept Moltmann’s position that the Spirit is divine immanence in the unfolding of history. Lastly, regarding christology, I accept Edwards’s appropriation of Holmes Rolston III’s understanding of nature as cruciform. Says Edwards: “In light of the cross, we can begin to speak of God’s identification with the struggling emerging life of a creaturely world.” Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 108. This claim coheres with Moltmann’s understanding of Christ as the ultimate victim (and thus redeemer) of evolution.

The divine surrendering permits the “big bang,” which I hold to be the first expression of beauty through violence.⁸¹ It is here already in the very forming of the laws of thermodynamics that consecratory distance fails to develop toward communion and instead becomes a wandering in isolation. Here, my own voice becomes more prominent in an effort to alleviate Moltmann’s ambiguity.⁸² But it seems to me that if there is going to be a “sin” of the cosmos in which it strays from the path toward communion with the divine, the structuring of the laws that *require* violence and destruction (and eventually suffering, predation, and death) is a fine place to look.

At any rate, the Fall is the risk of creation—that consecratory separation could become isolation—coming to fruition. For this reason, the shadowy side of evolution, the naturalness of suffering, predation, and death pertains only to creation in isolation.⁸³

These mechanisms of evolution must be overcome in a restoration of consecration, which

⁸¹ My position is, in some sense, even more radical than that of the process theologian Jay McDaniel. He acknowledges, as is standard for process theology, that God takes a risk in forming the cosmos out of chaos; for God can only lure creation toward the *telos* God desires for it. However, at the inorganic level, God’s will is “for the most part irresistible.” Therefore, “much of what has happened in cosmic and chemical evolution may be attributed to divine intentions.” Jay B. McDaniel, *Of God and Pelicans: A Theology of Reverence for Life* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 40. For McDaniel, it is not until more complex creatures appear that “the capacities for resistance, as well as co-creativity, increase, and the divine purposes become much more like divine hopes.” It is only here that “what Christians have traditionally called a ‘fall’ becomes possible.” *Ibid.* My position is more radical because, unlike McDaniel and in conjunction with Moltmann, I argue that the space God allots the creation, even the *inanimate* creation, entails a great risk and the possibility of a “Fall.” Thus I reject that notion that cosmic and chemical evolution reflects divine intentions.

⁸² I do not know whether or not Moltmann would accept my claim about the big bang and the laws of thermodynamics.

⁸³ By this claim, I do not intend to argue that the mechanisms of evolution are not necessary for biological life as we currently experience it. The cosmos is adapted to its isolation. Furthermore, I acknowledge Edwards’s claim that, scientifically speaking, “suffering death and extinction are now seen as intrinsic to the process of evolutionary emergence. They are not simply unfortunate side-effects.” Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 106. My claim is that evolutionary emergence itself is not an “unfortunate side-effect” (that is, a *necessary* corollary of some other condition) but rather the unfortunate outcome of the divine risk taken in the act of creation itself. Edwards differs from this position, maintaining that God must be the author of biological death, which serves the purpose of rendering possible the great diversity of flourishing life, including humanity. *Ibid.*, 107.

opens the created order to its *telos* of communion, which in turn requires a final, eschatological divine intervention.⁸⁴

This revised approach to the traditional schema of salvation history provides an opening to affirm both the naturalness of evolution alongside the “kernel of truth” underlying the doctrine of the Fall.⁸⁵ Nature, including the mechanisms of evolution, is not the result of sin or some evil will.⁸⁶ Yet neither is nature, in its current state, the direct result of its Creator’s will.⁸⁷ Nor does it reflect the Creator’s ultimate desire. Nature is not evil. But neither is it complete. It is not fallen in the sense of some ontological deficiency (i.e., essentially “ungood”). But it is relationally distorted, isolated from its Creator and, in some sense, itself. In its integrity it has deviated from the path toward communion. Like a family dog that, through no fault of its own, strays into the wilderness and becomes wild, the good creation is wandering in isolation and experiencing the full effects of that disposition. Creation’s disposition requires a restoration of the *telos* of its integrity—communion with the divine. Christ achieves this restoration.

⁸⁴ Thus, whereas the import of will is mitigated with reference to the Fall, it returns in full strength with reference to eschatological redemption. This return, because it entails the centrality of the *divine* will, protects eschatology from lapsing into a natural evolution within cosmic time or a social program predicated upon human will.

⁸⁵ By this statement I in part intimate Linzey’s description of the “complex truth” of the doctrine of the Fall. Namely, that “parasitism and predation are unlovely, cruel, evil aspects of the world ultimately incapable of being reconciled with a God of love.” Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 28.

⁸⁶ In fact, there is much good in nature, including levels of cooperation and symbiosis. Though, Rolston would argue that the values of nature are only possible in light of the disvalues. See Holmes Rolston III, “Disvalues in Nature,” *The Monist* 75 (April 1992), 250-78.

⁸⁷ I make this claim contra Rolston, who writes that the “groaning in travail is in the nature of things from time immemorial. Such travail is the Creator’s will, productive as it is of glory.” Holmes Rolston III, “Naturalizing and Systematizing Evil,” in *Is Nature Ever Evil? Religion, Science, and Value*, Willem B. Drees, editor (London, UK: Routledge, 2003), 85.

CHRISTOLOGY: VICTORY OVER ISOLATION, THE RESTORATION OF CONSECRATION

Hans Urs von Balthasar describes the Son incarnate as the door that opens the way for creation to participate in the divine.⁸⁸ Kallistos Ware echoes a similar notion: “God’s incarnation opens the way to man’s deification.”⁸⁹ This aspect of christology is appropriate for cosmocentric transfiguration as I am delineating it. Along with Moltmann, I maintain that the incarnation is the concrete realization of eschatological hope. In my own words, the incarnation is already that communion—between God and that which is other than God—which constitutes the divine desire for the entire cosmos. Thus the incarnation at once reveals and, in a concrete but incomplete manner, accomplishes the *telos* of creation. In Christ, the destiny of the world is manifested in history—the door is open.

What then is the significance of the cross? It is first essential to say that the cross has no significance apart from the incarnation (or apart from the resurrection). In his passion and death, Christ draws into the divine all the transience of the entire cosmos.⁹⁰ In his resurrection, he transfigures that transience. Linzey and Moltmann agree on this point. But Moltmann goes further, reading Christ’s cry of dereliction—his claim to be forsaken by God—in conjunction with the notion of his descent into hell.⁹¹ On account of Christ’s forsakenness, all God-forsaken places are filled with divine presence in a new

⁸⁸ See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Last Act. Theo-Drama*, Volume 5. Translated by Graham Harrison. Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 1988, 374-375, 442.

⁸⁹ Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1995), 74.

⁹⁰ Again, here Drummond’s “shadow sophia” and my view overlap. She states that “the weight of shadow sophia is born by Christ on the cross.” Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 127. Similarly, I intend that the Christ becomes lost—the isolated One—in the wandering of creation.

⁹¹ See Jürgen Moltmann, “The Logic of Hell,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 46-47.

manner. For Moltmann, this claim necessitates that even hell is now a place of hope.⁹²

Thus Christ draws not only transience, but also forsakenness, into the trinitarian love and thereby opens the way to communion.

Using the language of my own framework, the cross evinces that Christ not only enters into the wandering isolation of creation but also experiences its full sting—including both the dark mechanisms of evolution and the reality of divine forsakenness that persist when consecratory distance becomes isolation. Christ is the Wandering One—the divine in isolation from the divine. Yet as the concrete communion of eschatological hope in his very person, Christ’s presence opens the possibility of restoring the state of isolation to a state of consecration. That which is restored remains separate from God, but no longer in isolation. There is distance, but no longer forsakenness. The way home is made known—the trail is blazed out of the wilderness.⁹³

Thus, as the crucified human, Christ draws the extent of creaturely being and its isolation into the life of the Trinity. As the crucified God, he draws the presence of the divine into creation’s isolation. The Son has become the world, wandering into the darkest corners of isolation, including death and, in some sense, hell. In doing so, he restores consecratory distance, which is nothing other than the way to communion.

Christ is hence the offer, for an isolated creation, of the way to communion.⁹⁴ In short, *Christus victor* over isolation.⁹⁵

⁹² Moltmann states, “If hell was the place of God-forsakenness, ever since Christ’s descent into hell it has been this no more.” Jürgen Moltmann, *Jesus Christ for Today’s World*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 66.

⁹³ In the words of Southgate, “the Cross and Resurrection inaugurate a great era of redemption of the nonhuman creation leading to the eschaton.” In this sense the Christ-event “begins the final phase of the creation in which the evolutionary process itself will be transformed and healed.” Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 76.

⁹⁴ In the words of Ware, “The incarnation...is God’s supreme act of deliverance, restoring us to communion with himself.” Ware, *The Orthodox Way*, 70. I would revise this statement to suggest that

PNEUMATOLOGY: THE SANCTIFYING BREATH OF ETERNAL LIFE

Both Moltmann and Linzey affirm the Spirit as the vitalizing principle of (at least sentient) life. This claim has its exegetical issues, not the least of which is the identification of *ruach* with the person of the Spirit. The position also has its theological issues. Linzey is somewhat unclear on the exact distinction between the Spirit's role prior to and after the Christ event. Moltmann makes this distinction more clearly, but is forced to struggle with the tension of divine withdrawal and the presence of the Spirit in all creation. Moltmann's vision of the Spirit as the source of life, while problematic, is nonetheless a beautiful manner of safeguarding divine immanence, including the providential presence of God.

I have particular interest in the sanctifying role of the Spirit—more specifically, the role of the *Holy Spirit* in opening creation up to the triune community of love by permitting consecratory distance. This sanctifying presence is significant in the original act of creation. The Spirit rests in the created order, in some sense separating it *from the divine, for the divine*. There is thus a dual movement of God away from creation in divine withdrawal and toward creation in the presence of the Spirit. Moltmann captures this image by connecting God's Shekinah with the Spirit.⁹⁶ In the Spirit, God is within the creation while remaining distant from it.⁹⁷ The Trinity experiences a sort of separation in order that God may be the immanent source of life for a creation that is at

Christ restores the consecratory distance that enables communion. Still, I believe Ware and I are making a similar claim.

⁹⁵ By this phrase, I purposefully reconfigure the notion of atonement to extend beyond the bounds of forgiveness for human sin to its cosmic dimension. See Edwards, "Every Sparrow that Falls," 108. Atonement's cosmic dimension is the same for all creatures: God overcomes all that sustains isolation—which certainly includes human sin—in order to make communion possible.

⁹⁶ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 97.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

once genuinely other-than-God. It is the Spirit that permits consecratory distance without isolation—life that is other-than-God but not God-forsaken.

But the cosmos ends up in isolation. What is the role of the Spirit in this isolation? The Spirit safeguards against annihilation; for it is the Spirit's unique presence in the world that ensures creation can never be fully isolated from God.⁹⁸ The Spirit remains present in the midst of the creation's wandering in isolation. The Spirit suffers in the suffering of the cosmos, sighing and groaning within the mechanisms of evolution. "The divine Spirit itself, which fills the whole world, is seized by a driving force and torment, for it is beset by the birth pangs of the new creation."⁹⁹ In a manner of speaking, the Spirit is lost with the world. Or, as Moltmann notes concerning Israel's exile, the divine Shekinah was in exile *from God with the people*.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, on account of Moltmann's association of the Spirit with the Shekinah, it is permissible to say that the Spirit experiences isolation from God with the world, and indeed groans for eschatological communion in that isolation.¹⁰¹

However, in the Christ event, the cosmos is reopened to its consecratory state. Yet the world is now divided. On the one hand, the presence of the Spirit-filled saints elicits a glimpse, even in the wilderness, of the future communion for which all creation longs.¹⁰² In Moltmann's words, "The experience of the Spirit does not separate those affected by it from the 'the rest of the world.' On the contrary, their experience brings them into open solidarity with it. For what they experience is...the beginning of the

⁹⁸ In the incarnation, the Son solidifies this assurance as well. But the Son's role is better defined as restoring hope for communion by achieving it rather than keeping the cosmos from annihilation in isolation.

⁹⁹ Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise*, 206. See also Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 14.

¹⁰⁰ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 48-49.

¹⁰¹ See Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 60.

¹⁰² See, for examples, Tim Vivian, "The Peaceable Kingdom: Animals as Parables in the *Virtues of Saint Macarius*," *Anglican Theological Review* 85, 3 (Summer 2003), 477-491.

world's future."¹⁰³ Similarly, Linzey writes that the Spirit enables humans to become "active participants" in creation's redemption.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, the world remains in some sense isolated, trapped within the cycle of suffering and death.

So the Spirit now fulfills a *triple role*. First, the Spirit remains the immanent presence of the divine, suffering cruel atrocities alongside an isolated cosmos to which restoration has been opened but not completed. Second, the Spirit consecrates those who step into the way opened in Christ. Third, the Spirit works through those who are consecrated to facilitate sacramental moments of eschatological communion in the midst of cosmic isolation. In this manner the Spirit facilitates the restoration of consecration in the midst of isolation. If Christ is the way, the restoration of the consecratory path toward communion, then the Spirit is the wind blowing down that path, sweeping up weary travelers and directing them home. What Christ gathers, the Spirit leads toward transfiguration.¹⁰⁵

ESCHATOLOGY: COSMIC RESTORATION AND COMMUNION

All that God creates, God consecrates for communion through separation. The world was made other-*than*-God so that it could become the other-*with*-God. When the risk entailed by the consecratory alterity of the cosmos comes to fruition (i.e., when it is isolated from the divine), restoration of that consecration becomes a necessity. While both Christ and (in the wake of the Christ-event) the Spirit open the space for restoration, this space is not yet nor can it be complete restoration. The cosmos is adapted to its

¹⁰³ Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 124.

¹⁰⁴ Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 56.

¹⁰⁵ Edwards, "Every Sparrow that Falls," 111.

isolation. Indeed, natural existence is predicated upon the very mechanisms facilitated by isolation. Such is the world as it has come to be.¹⁰⁶

It is this very world, adapted to its isolation, with which God seeks communion. The penultimate consecration of the world, which is required for communion, remains irrevocably an eschatological act. In Moltmann's terms, the penultimate restoration of consecratory separation is judgment, in which all will be set right.¹⁰⁷ Death will be destroyed and suffering will end. This final and definitive consecration makes possible the ultimate communion that God desires. It is in this movement that, per Moltmann's famous appropriation of Paul, God will be all in all.

Eschatology, in terms of the "last things," thus entails the completion of Christ's work.¹⁰⁸ It is the penultimate act of consecration and the ultimate communion between God the cosmos. This communion must either include all that God has created or, if not, must mean that God's original desire for creation will be eternally unfulfilled. As von Balthasar intimates, if there is a hell for any human, it is tragic for God who desires that human in love.¹⁰⁹ But the same must be said about all creatures, every sentient and non-sentient being and every inanimate part of the cosmos. Every creature with a narrative, regardless of their awareness of that narrative, must be swept up into the divine narrative

¹⁰⁶ While there is some level of ambiguity in their thought, both Moltmann and Linzey recognize this reality. Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 78; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 61.

¹⁰⁷ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 235-237; "The Logic of Hell," 43-47. On this point see also Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Some Point of Eschatology" in *The Word Made Flesh: Explorations in Theology I* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 263-264.

¹⁰⁸ This point is consistent with Karl Barth's christology in which Christ's return is the completion of Christ's revelation. See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics IV/3/2*, translated by G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962), 910-912.

¹⁰⁹ See Nicholas J. Healy, *The Eschatology of Hans Urs von Balthasar: Being as Communion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 215.

if God is the Creator who seeks communion with the creation.¹¹⁰ Thus eschatology intimates the resurrection and transfiguration of every speck of the cosmos.

But as Moltmann and Linzey both acknowledge, the eschaton is not simply the end of history. It is, in Moltmann's words, "God's coming and his arrival."¹¹¹ Eschatology cannot remain merely a doctrine of "last things" if the communion that God seeks and for which creation longs has been concretely realized in the incarnation. Nor can it remain so if the way of consecration has been restored in Christ and the Spirit set forth in a new manner in this restoration. Metaphorically, the Fall is a straying from the path toward communion and a wandering in isolation. In Christ, the path has been blazed anew. As such, new possibilities exist in history. Yet because the cosmos remains adapted to isolation, trapped in the mechanisms of evolution, history itself must be transfigured. That is, no amount of human will or political striving can facilitate ultimate consecration or communion. But those who are made holy by the Spirit can consecrate the isolated creation and witness to the future communion of all things. To sum up these ideas: consecration is distance without forsakenness. Isolation is distance as alienation. Restoration is alienation with the possibility of consecration. Communion is alterity without distance.

The final communion between God and the creation will make the creation new—transfigured. As Moltmann starkly maintains, this transfiguration does not intimate a numerically different creation.¹¹² However, it does denote discontinuity between the present state of creation and its state in eschatological communion. Drummond notes that

¹¹⁰ Keith Ward is correct, in my view, when he states that "immortality for animals as well as humans is a necessary condition of any acceptable theodicy." Keith Ward, *Rational Theology and the Creativity of God* (New York: Pilgrim, 1982), 202.

¹¹¹ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 22.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 84-85.

“the closest analogy here is with the resurrection event itself, so that there are lines of continuity and discontinuity.”¹¹³ Yet because the resurrection is present now in the power of the Spirit, so also moments of proleptic witness are possible—most especially in the work of those who are already, if only incompletely, being made new.

TIME AND ETERNITY: THE ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EVERY MOMENT

My engagement with the notion of isolation has centered mainly on its spatial (i.e., physically relational) dimension. To understand the full extent of isolation, however, it is important to understand it in a manner that includes the corollary of spatiality: temporality. Isolation bears a temporal dimension. I here draw on Moltmann to make this point.

As noted in chapter 2, for Moltmann, God’s eternity is not without time. It is rather all time gathered together diachronically into a cyclical and enduring present.¹¹⁴ He also maintains that the participation of the cosmos in God’s eternity entails the gathering together of all the times of creation into an eternal time. This new time—the time of *creatio nova*—is a time of future possibility without transience. That is, time that is realized in the present does not then become the past but remains forever in perichoretic union with all other times in the present. Thus, Moltmann claims that this time entails “change without transience, time without past, and life without death.”¹¹⁵ The unique time of nature, however, is the “winter of creation” in which all events—including death—after occurring, slip into an irretrievable past.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 167. As already noted, this point is important for Moltmann. See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 84-85.

¹¹⁴ Moltmann, *Sun of Righteousness, Arise*, 62-63; *The Coming of God*, 280-81, 291. This view of eternity as cyclical time in a diachronic present also applies to the cosmic experience of eternity. *The Coming of God*, 71.

¹¹⁵ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 213.

¹¹⁶ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 253; *The Coming of God*, 286.

In this time, each time is cut off from others. Humans can remember the past; but they cannot retrieve it. They can experience the present; but they cannot sustain it. They can anticipate the future, but it is ultimately beyond their grasp.¹¹⁷ Thus Moltmann looks forward to “the future of time itself,” which is God’s future transfiguring time and drawing it into perichoretic union with itself (diachronically) in eternity.¹¹⁸

Moltmann’s vision of time and eternity bears two facets I would like to develop here. The first is that cosmic time (as well as cosmic space) must be understood in its totality, which includes its future redemption.¹¹⁹ The second is that each moment of time, while fleeting in the “winter” of creation’s transience, will nonetheless be resurrected and participate in God’s eternity.¹²⁰ Thus, each moment of time—and more specifically each moment of each creature’s life—bears eternal significance.

Regarding the first point, the theological separation of creation and redemption constitutes a temporal isolation. If we unequivocally affirm the unfolding integrity of the cosmos (what Moltmann refers to as “nature”), then we isolate creation from redemption. If, on the other hand, we completely reject this integrity and flee from it, then we isolate redemption from creation. In a similar manner, if we unequivocally embrace and celebrate death, then we isolate it from resurrection. If we refuse to preserve the system that depends on the mechanisms of evolution, we isolate resurrection from death. In these forms of isolation, the past, present, and future are isolated from one another.

¹¹⁷ I draw this point from Moltmann’s differentiation between actual eternity and relative eternity. See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 287.

¹¹⁸ Moltmann, “The Liberation of the Future and Its Anticipations in History,” in *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*, Richard Bauckham, editor (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 265.

¹¹⁹ Moltmann refers to this broader understanding in which one “sees creation together with its future” as “messianic.” Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 5.

¹²⁰ See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 75; Richard Bauckham in *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 210.

When this isolation is dismantled, the way is opened for a preservation of the present (in light of its necessity) and a protest of the present (in light of its eschatological future).

Regarding the second point, the isolation of the present from its future (and its past) translates into an isolation of the present self from totality; for the self subsists in a narrative of divided moments. In this scenario, finitude becomes tragedy—the cage set against the possibility of wholeness. Likewise, death appears as the end of one’s experience of the present, of one’s potential for the future, and his or her inescapable relegation to a past that memory can recall only imperfectly. This temporal facet of isolation returns us to the spatial/relational dimension, for it intimates the isolation of the self from its own narrative.

The redemption of temporal isolation is well captured in Moltmann’s notion that, at the eschaton, all times of creation will be gathered up diachronically into a perichoretic union.¹²¹ It is thus time itself that is redeemed in its deliverance from temporal isolation.¹²² That is, the Trinity’s enduring openness to the unique time of the cosmos ensures that this time will be delivered from its temporal isolation to a temporal communion in which time is no longer lost to the past. In short, God’s victory over the present slipping into the past is the temporal analogue of God’s victory over life slipping into death.

Moltmann’s view is significant for cosmocentric transfiguration because it suggests that God will overcome isolation on both the spatial and the temporal levels. Bauckham makes this point in addressing the extent of resurrection for Moltmann. He is worth quoting at length.

¹²¹ Moltmann, *Coming of God*, 295.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 287.

All death in nature Moltmann regards not as natural, but as a tragic destiny, whose reversal at the end is anticipated in Christ's resurrection. At this point one may want to ask questions. Does death really have the same significance for every kind of creature? For elephants, who mourn their dead, it is a tragic destiny, as it is for us. But for this year's marigolds, which die in the annual cycle of death and new life that will produce next year's marigolds, is death tragic? Need we mourn the individual marigold as we certainly would the species, should it become extinct? The apparent implication of Moltmann's view that every individual creature that has ever lived—every marigold, every termite, every smallpox virus—will be resurrected in the new creation may seem bizarre, but this problem is alleviated by the novel concept of resurrection which Moltmann introduces in [*The Way of Jesus Christ*]. It is that the whole of *history* (the history of nature and human beings) will be redeemed from evil and death and transformed in the eschatological eternity in which all its times will be simultaneous. So not simply creatures in what they have become in their temporal history, but all creatures as they are diachronically in the process of their history and in all their temporal relationships with other creatures, will be resurrected and transfigured in eternity.¹²³

Moltmann's "novel concept of resurrection" is, in my own words, the overcoming of both spatial and temporal isolation in the perichoretic union of all creatures with themselves (diachronically) and with one another (relationally) within the divine. This vision of eschatological hope, predicated upon Moltmann's understanding of time and eternity, suggests not only that the life of every individual creature bears eternal importance, but also that *every moment of every individual creature's life is of eternal significance*.

ANTHROPOLOGY: PRIESTS OF RESTORATION, SACRAMENTS OF ESCHATOLOGICAL COMMUNION

Both Moltmann and Linzey draw on the Orthodox notion of humanity's cosmic priesthood.¹²⁴ As I have already noted, there is no single view about what this priesthood entails. For some Orthodox writers, it means offering creation back to God by utilizing it

¹²³ Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 210.

¹²⁴ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 189-90; *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 307-12; Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 54-55; *After Noah*, 94-95.

reverently. This reverent utilization facilitates communion between God and humans.¹²⁵ This anthropocentric image is obviously insufficient for cosmocentric transfiguration. The communion God desires extends beyond humans. Indeed, when humans use creation to achieve communion with other humans and God while at once denying communion *with creation*, they perpetuate isolation. For cosmocentric transfiguration—at least as I am delineating it—the cosmic priesthood of humanity is following the way of Christ in taking the presence of the divine into the isolated parts of the cosmos so that God can be more fully present there also.¹²⁶ It is a matter of quite literally being the *imago Dei* in the world.¹²⁷ It entails being in the midst of creation the proleptic presence of its eschatological hope.

Humanity's cosmic priesthood thus does not fully relegate the world to its sacramental role for humanity—though it need not deny that the cosmos is sacramental. It entails a sacramental reciprocity between humans and the nonhuman creation. For humanity's part, humans are *sacraments of eschatological communion*. This phrase, which I believe offers both a synthesis and development of Moltmann and Linzey, entails that humans are to become symbols of eschatological hope *for others—whether human or nonhuman*—by witnessing to the hope for cosmic peace within history. Such a view seems consummate with that of John Chryssavgis, who writes:

¹²⁵ See Dumitru Staniloae, *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, Volume 2 (The World: Creation and Deification), translated and edited by Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer (Brookline, MA: Hold Cross Orthodox Press, 2000), 21-27.

¹²⁶ In Moltmann, this christic function is most evident in Jesus's cry of dereliction, which evinces that Christ experienced the depths of hell and, in doing so, brought hope to all the forsaken. Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 204-5.

¹²⁷ I thus accept a primarily functional interpretation of the *imago* without denying the intrinsic reality of the *imago* or the unique human capacities necessary to facilitate its function. This position is congruent with both Moltmann and Linzey. See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 188-90; Andrew Linzey, *Why Animal Suffering Matters: Philosophy, Theology, and Practical Ethics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 28-29.

If we reject the world of darkness and accept living in the light of Christ, then each person and each object becomes the embodiment of God in this world. The divine presence is revealed to every order and every particle of this world.¹²⁸

When the nonhuman world encounters consecrated humans, it should sacramentally encounter peace, not terror. This point is captured well in W. Sibley Towner's discussion of the functional interpretation of the *imago Dei*:

When the other creatures look upon *adam* as a royal or even god-like figure, what will they see? A tyrant, an exterminator, a satanic figure? Or will they experience the ruling hand of *adam* as something as tender and gentle as that of their Creator?¹²⁹

Humanity's sin and ongoing participation in the mechanisms of evolution augments isolation of the cosmos. But humanity's role as priest is to be a sacrament of the eschatological peace. Thus Linzey writes that humans "must let the Spirit, that is the Spirit of *all* suffering creatures, pray through us so that we may become a sign of the hope for which all creation longs."¹³⁰ Likewise, Moltmann states that Christian hope entails "resistance against the forces of death and unconditional love for life."¹³¹ This resistance of death and love of life, whether it is directed toward ourselves, other humans, nonhuman sentients, ecosystems, or the land itself, is what I intimate by the notion of sacraments of eschatological communion. When humans affirm the life of creatures and actively seek their well-being, those creatures experience sacramentally the eschatological communion in the priesthood of humanity. Thus I affirm with Paul that the redemption of humanity bears significant meaning for the nonhuman creation.¹³² The

¹²⁸ John Chryssavgis, "The Earth as Sacrament: Insights from Orthodox Christian Theology and Spirituality," in *The Orthodox Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, Roger S. Gottlieb, editors (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 107.

¹²⁹ W. Sibley Towner, "Clones of God: Genesis 1:26-28 and the Image of God in the Hebrew Bible," *Interpretation*, 59, (2005), 348.

¹³⁰ Linzey, *After Noah*, 109.

¹³¹ Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope*, 55.

¹³² See Romans 8:18-21.

consecration of humanity opens the possibility for proleptic experiences of communion.¹³³

POSSIBLE CRITIQUES OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

In the above section, I set out in an exploratory thought experiment to delineate in brief a set of theological foundations, based on the thought of Moltmann and Linzey, for cosmocentric transfiguration. Here, I turn to common critiques of Moltmann and Linzey that also apply to my foundations. First, I will address the hermeneutics of cosmocentric transfiguration with regard to both scripture and tradition. Second, I draw out my already adumbrated response to the critique that an affirmation of fallenness and redemption denigrates science and the nonhuman creation. Third, I will address the question of whether the peaceable kingdom constitutes the dissolution of certain species. Finally, I will clarify the ethical issue regarding the manner in which eschatology informs practice within history.

COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS UNBIBLICAL

In 2003, at the annual meeting of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, a panel reviewed Linzey's book, *Animal Theology*, from the perspective of the Hebrews Scriptures, the New Testament, and theology in general. These reviews, along with a response offered by Linzey, are printed in 2005 in *Review and Expositor*.¹³⁴

¹³³ Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 124; I would not go as far as Linzey to suggest that humanity is *necessary* for the salvation of the cosmos. Such a move seems too anthropocentric (in a functional sense). While I am amenable to a functional role of human beings in the cosmos, I believe it is also important to maintain the integrity of the nonhuman creation's relationship with God. For considerations on this balance, see H. Paul Santmire, "Partnership with Nature According to the Scriptures: Beyond the Theology of Stewardship," *Christian Scholar's Review* 32/4 (Summer 2003), 381-412.

¹³⁴ David M. May, "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from a New Testament Perspective," *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 87-93; Mark McEntire, "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from an Old Testament Perspective," *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 95-99; Sally Smith Holt, "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from a Theological Perspective," *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 101-9; Andrew Linzey, "The Divine Worth of

Mark McEntire, while noting the blurry lines between eisegesis (reading meaning into a text) and exegesis (drawing meaning out of a text), nonetheless concludes that “the major ideas of *Animal Theology* seem utterly foreign to the Old Testament.”¹³⁵ He acknowledges that the same could be said for the abolition of slavery, but maintains that a hermeneutic against slavery is much more easily identifiable than one that justifies Linzey’s agenda in *Animal Theology*.¹³⁶ David May offers positive words concerning Linzey’s agenda, but pejoratively defines his use of scripture as “a proof-text method” that does not account for “social and cultural context.”¹³⁷ May ultimately claims that Linzey’s work, if it is “to be recognized by biblical scholars...will need to find a voice that is more thorough in biblical exegesis and more biblically integrated.”¹³⁸

These two reviews, when viewed with reference to the present project, raise the question as to whether or not the central tenets of cosmocentric transfiguration are biblically sound or merely derived from an agenda-based eisegesis. In conjunction with Linzey, I would not claim that the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration is *the* biblical view.¹³⁹ We are both unconvinced there is any such thing as *the* biblical view on most issues, ecology included.¹⁴⁰ Scripture, as a collection of variegated genres written

Other Creatures: A Response to Reviews of *Animal Theology*,” in *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 111-24.

¹³⁵ McEntire, “A Review of Andrew Linzey’s *Animal Theology* from an Old Testament Perspective,” 99.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*.

¹³⁷ May, “A Review of Andrew Linzey’s *Animal Theology* from New Testament Perspective,” 88.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹³⁹ On this point, see Linzey’s response to critiques of his use of scripture in *Animal Theology*. Andrew Linzey, “The Divine Worth of Other Creatures: A Response to Reviews of *Animal Theology*,” in *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005), 112-13.

¹⁴⁰ For example, Linzey is clear that there appears to be no unanimous biblical view on the matter of the morality of predation and meat-eating. Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 141-142. Concerning the variety of ecological readings of scripture, see H. Paul Santmire’s differentiation between the more traditionally accepted “spiritual motif” of interpreting scripture and the new option of an “ecological motif.” Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985), 185-215.

by many different authors over a period of hundreds of years and subsequently redacted, copied, and translated, presents a unique challenge of interpretation.¹⁴¹ Even so, along with Linzey, and contra McEntire's report from the Hebrew Scriptures, I believe that there are voices in scripture that provide the possibility of developing an animal-friendly hermeneutic.¹⁴² It is true that many biblical voices focus on human beings in relation to God.¹⁴³ But there are also passages that echo a discontent with this focus. Animals do share the sixth day of creation with humans (Genesis 1:24-31). In Genesis 2:18-19, animals are not created for utilitarian use for humans, but rather companionship. In Genesis 9, animals, as well as the earth itself, are included in the Noahic covenant. The Psalmist does claim that God saves humans and animals alike (Psalms 36:6).¹⁴⁴ Jesus does claim that his love for his followers is emblematic of a shepherd who cares deeply for his sheep (John 10:1-16). Jesus does maintain that humans are worth more than sparrows—but not that sparrows have no worth (Matthew 10:29-31). Regarding the

¹⁴¹ I am speaking here of the inevitable issue of hermeneutics. Both the issue of hermeneutics and the questions it elicits are particularly important for liberation theologies. On the methods and hermeneutics of liberation theology, see Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Book, 1987). These theologies often attempt a critical retrieval of scripture, identifying its helpful dimensions without disregarding the less helpful ones. Feminist theologies often apply a hermeneutic of suspicion, which attempts to draw out liberating notions for women (and often the environment) from passages written in a patriarchal society. See Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward A Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), chapter 1 (especially 17-33); Susanne M. Decrane, *Aquinas, Feminism, and the Common Good* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), chapter 1 (especially 39-41). It is this same kind of hermeneutical key—for instance what Rosemary Radford Ruether calls “the Prophetic Principle”—that cosmocentric transfiguration must adopt. Ruether makes a similar point about nonhumans in *Sexism and God-Talk*, 20. On the prophetic principle, see 22-26. Celia Deane-Drummond offers a hermeneutical key for a conservationist eco-theological ethics. See Celia Deane-Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008), 88-95. However, her key dismisses far too easily transfigurative dimensions of the Bible (e.g., Isaiah's peaceable kingdom, which she refers to as “more obviously metaphorical”). *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁴² Both Linzey and Moltmann draw on similar scriptural passages, most notably Paul's image of cosmic longing in Romans 8:18-22. Linzey also draws heavily upon the edenic harmony of Genesis 1, the cosmic covenant of Genesis, the vision of the peaceable kingdom in Isaiah 11:6-9, and the image of the good shepherd.

¹⁴³ Linzey does not deny this reality. Linzey, “The Divine Worth of Other Creatures,” 114.

¹⁴⁴ This passage is important for Barth's theology of animals. Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 8.

transfiguration of the cosmos, Isaiah does present an edenic vision of cosmic harmony (Isaiah 11:1-9). Paul does suggest that the entire groaning creation will participate in the glory of the liberated children of God (Romans 8:18-22). The cosmic christologies of Colossians 1:15-20 and Ephesians 4:4-10 do suggest a cosmic reconciliation.¹⁴⁵ These claims are made *despite* the dominantly human-centered context in which they arose. Linzey notes this point well with reference to the prescribed diet of Genesis 1:29-30:

It is remarkable that people who were not pacifists, vegetarians or opponents of capital punishment, felt so keenly the incongruity between violence and their belief in a holy, loving Creator—so much so that they conceived that God must have created a world free of it.¹⁴⁶

I concur that the above passages require further exegetical exploration to establish the extent of their validity regarding cosmocentric transfiguration. While such an effort would constitute a separate project,¹⁴⁷ for now I can say that they least reveal that scripture is not unambiguously unfriendly toward the value of animals and their participation in redemption. Thus, the central tenets of cosmocentric transfiguration, while not *the* biblical view, nonetheless have biblical support.

COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS A REJECTION OF TRADITION

As far as I can tell, cosmocentric transfiguration as I am describing it in conjunction with Moltmann and Linzey is nowhere explicit in the early Christian tradition. This tradition is, in my reading, dominantly anthropocentric with regard to

¹⁴⁵ See Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 100-107.

¹⁴⁶ Linzey, "The Divine Worth of Other Creatures," 114.

¹⁴⁷ And indeed, some have offered projects in this vein, whether by challenging anthropocentrism or conservationism separately. See, for example, the collection of essays—which address both biblical and historical perspectives on ecology—in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G. Horrell, Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, editors (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010); Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation* (Waco: TX, Baylor University Press, 2010); Norm Phelps, *The Dominion of Love: Animal Rights According to the Bible* (New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2002); Stephen H. Webb, *Good Eating* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001).

value and divided with reference to the extent of eschatological redemption. Thus it is appropriate to anticipate the critique that cosmocentric transfiguration entails a rejection of tradition, for the tradition itself is often blamed for providing the very foundations for ecological degradation and lack of concern for nonhumans.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, regarding the resurrection of nonhuman animals—one of the central tenets of cosmocentric transfiguration as I am delineating it—Moltmann acknowledges: “It is true that the patristic church’s acknowledgement of ‘the resurrection of the flesh’ (or body) was *always* reduced to human beings alone.”¹⁴⁹

Moltmann’s claim may be overstated. For as with scripture, there are minority traditions from the beginning of Christian history that challenge anthropocentrism and suggest that the nonhuman world will participate in the eschaton. As with scripture, these voices provide an opportunity to engage in a critical retrieval of a largely patriarchal and anthropocentric tradition that is consummate with cosmocentric transfiguration. This retrieval is further solidified in the hagiographies of many saints.

The consistently theocentric framework of the Christian tradition has grounded an anthropocentric worldview. Irenaeus claims that “creation is suited to [the wants of] man; for man was not made for its sake, but creation for the sake of man.”¹⁵⁰ Augustine assigns animals value inasmuch as they aid humanity’s progress toward God.¹⁵¹ I have

¹⁴⁸ See the introduction of the present work.

¹⁴⁹ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 70; italics mine.

¹⁵⁰ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.29.1. On this point, see also Denis Minns, *Irenaeus* (Washington D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1994), 57. Bouteneff, *Beginnings*, 77. Michael Steenberg challenges this reading, suggesting it is does not account for the manner in which humanity and the nonhuman creation mutually move toward their *teloi*, symbiotically, as it were. Steenberg, *Irenaeus*, 149. Steenberg’s point is significant regarding soteriology and eschatology. Yet it is difficult to hold that Irenaeus’s position is not anthropocentric when he writes that all creation exists for the sake of the human beings. It might be more accurate here to claim that Irenaeus’s position is consummate with anthropocentric transfiguration.

¹⁵¹ Augustine, *City of God*, 1:20. His utilitarian view of the nonhuman cosmos is further evinced in his differentiation between use and enjoyment. Augustine defines enjoyment as that which “consists in

already discussed Aquinas at length on the issues of both anthropocentrism and conservationism. Here I will only note that the magisterial teachings of the Catholic Church maintain his theocentric anthropocentrism. On this point I concur to a high degree with Linzey's assessment of the most recent Catechism,¹⁵² which states that "animals, like plants and inanimate beings, are by nature destined for the common good of past, present, and future humanity."¹⁵³ Thus, it is not wrong to use nonhuman "animal resources"¹⁵⁴ for food, clothing, and experimentation as long as these actions justly benefit the human community, both past and present.¹⁵⁵ This point is further evident in Papal messages and statements by bishops around the globe.¹⁵⁶

As I have already noted, the tension between conservation and transfiguration with regard to the cosmos is more ambiguous in the Christian tradition. Both Augustine and Aquinas reject the presence of animals in the eschaton.¹⁵⁷ Yet Irenaeus accepts it.¹⁵⁸

clinging to something lovingly for its own sake." Augustine, *Teaching Christianity* (I/11), ed. John E. Rotelle, introduction, translation, and notes by Edmund Hill (New York City Press, 1996), I.4 (107). In his view, only God is to be enjoyed. But humans can be enjoyed *in God* in the manner of companionship. But animals and the rest of the cosmos are to be used with reference to humanity and God. Augustine, *Miscellany of Eighty-Three Questions*, The Works of Saint Augustine, Part I Volume 12, ed. Raymond Canning, introduction, translation, and notes by Boniface Ramsey (New York City Press, 2008), XXX (44). Mary Clark sums up Augustine well on this point: "[T]he love of neighbour as one to be enjoyed is the right use of neighbour; subordinating non-human realities to oneself by loving them as instruments is the right use of material things." Mary T. Clark, *Augustine* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 44. Augustine's theocentrism grounds his anthropocentric worldview.

¹⁵² Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 56-63.

¹⁵³ *The Catechism of the Catholic Church: With Modifications from the Editio Typica* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 2415.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2417.

¹⁵⁶ In *Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI states that "the whole of creation is for man...to complete and perfect it by his own efforts and to his own advantage." Therefore, "every man has the right to glean what he needs from the earth."¹⁵⁶ Also *Gaudium et Spes*, 22, 69. In a pastoral letter, the Canadian Bishops write that "the bible... teaches about an equitable distribution of resources, including sharing land, animals and water. This insistence on justice is often directed towards distributing the bounty of the earth and providing for those who are marginalized." A 2003 pastoral letter, "*You Love All That Exists... All Things Are Yours, God, Lover of Life...*" Available online at <http://www.cccb.ca/site/Files/pastoralenvironment.html>. Internet; accessed September, 2009.

¹⁵⁷ On Augustine, see *Miscellany of Eighty-Three Questions*, XXX (44); *Augustine on Romans*, edited by P. F. Landers (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982), 23. Also, Steiner, *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents*, 117. On Aquinas, see chapter 1.

Indeed, as I showed in chapter 1, the Orthodox tradition traces its hope for the transfiguration of the cosmos through the Christian tradition. The presence of animals in the eschaton is evident even in Orthodox iconography.¹⁵⁹ This alternative tradition has been taken up by many contemporary theologians.¹⁶⁰ John Wesley, in a sermon based on Romans 8:19-22, writes “The whole brute creation will then, undoubtedly, be restored, not only to the vigour, strength, and swiftness which they had at their creation, but to a far higher degree of each than they ever enjoyed.”¹⁶¹ C. S. Lewis accepts the possibility (and indeed likelihood) of animals at the eschaton.¹⁶² Stanley Hauerwas and John Berkman also accept this possibility and derive ethical corollaries from it.¹⁶³ In her thought experiment on the cosmos as the body of God, Sallie McFague writes,

We live with the hope against hope that defeat and death are not the last word, but that even the least body in the universe, the most insignificant, most vulnerable, most outcast one will participate in the resurrection of the body.¹⁶⁴

Hans Ur von Balthasar critiques Aquinas’s rejection of the presence of animals at the eschaton:

¹⁵⁸ See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.33.4; *Irenaeus’ Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation*, Iain M. Mackenzie with the translation of the text of the *Demonstration* by J. Armitage Robinson (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002), 193; Steenberg, *Irenaeus*, 149.

¹⁵⁹ See Reed, Esther D. “Animals in Orthodox Iconography.” *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 61-77

¹⁶⁰ For a collection of writings addressing the general issue of an eternal *telos* for particular nonhumans, see *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1990), Part 3 (pp. 81-109).

¹⁶¹ John Wesley, “The General Deliverance,” available online at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-alphabetical-order/>; Internet, accessed March, 2010. See also Thomas C. Oden, *John Wesley’s Scriptural Christian: A Plain Exposition of His Teaching on Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 126-129.

¹⁶² Linzey, “C. S. Lewis’s Theology of Animals,” *Anglican Theological Review*, 80 (Winter 1998), 60-81.

¹⁶³ Stanley Hauerwas and John Berkman, “A Trinitarian Theology of the ‘Chief End’ of ‘All Flesh’” in *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, edited by Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel (New York: Orbis Books, 1993), 62-74

¹⁶⁴ Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 1993), 201-202. McFague derives from this hope a conservationist ethics that works for the good of the system by evoking compassion for its components.

This cruel verdict contradicts the Old Testament sense of the solidarity between the living, subhuman cosmos and the world of men (Ps 8; Ps 104; Gen 1, and so on), the prophetic and Jewish ideas of divine salvation in images of peace among the animals (Is 11:6-9; 65:25).¹⁶⁵

What remains more difficult with regard to the tradition is the hope for the resurrection of *all* individual animals *for their own sake*. Yet even here a retrieval of the tradition from its anthropocentric roots in conjunction with an emphasis on cosmic eschatology opens the door for the possibility of such a claim. If God cares for all creatures for their own sakes and seeks to redeem the cosmos from the mechanisms of evolutionary development, the hope entailed in cosmocentric transfiguration is the logical outcome.

But what about the ethical claims of cosmocentric transfiguration? Is it a slight of tradition to claim that eschatological hope should inform how we engage animals in history? I believe that such is not the case. To suggest this point, I will consider the lives of saints.¹⁶⁶

Saint Isaac of Nineveh writes that Christ has returned the possibility of peace between humans and animals.¹⁶⁷ He further suggests that the merciful heart

is not able to bear hearing or examining injury or any insignificant suffering of anything in creation. And therefore even in behalf of the irrational beings...at all times he offers prayers with tears that they may be guarded and strengthened.¹⁶⁸

Isaac suggests that, in Christ, the “humble man” and the “merciful heart” are drawn to *see creation differently*.¹⁶⁹ This new vision is evinced by the countless

¹⁶⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Last Act, Theo-Drama*, Volume 5, translated by Graham Harrison (Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 1988), 420-21.

¹⁶⁶ For a good collection of narratives about saints and animals, see Jame Schaefer, *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic & Medieval Concepts* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009), chapter 6.

¹⁶⁷ *The Ascetical Homilies of St. Isaac the Syrian*, edited by Dana Miller (Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1984), p. 383.

¹⁶⁸ Isaac of Nineveh, *Mystic Treatises*, translated from Bedjan’s Syriac text with an introduction and registers by A. J. Wensinck (Wiesbaden: 1969), LXXIV (341).

narratives of saints experiencing miraculous harmony with animals.¹⁷⁰ These examples begin with Jesus's own narrative, both in canonical and non-canonical writings, and continue in the hagiographies of the saints.¹⁷¹ Some, like Anselm and the later Silouan the Athonite, wept at the plight of animals.¹⁷² Other saints, such as Denis and Giles, provided animals with safety from human hunters.¹⁷³ Still other saints administered healing practices toward animals. Saint Jerome removed a thorn from a lion's paw and in return received the creature's faithful service.¹⁷⁴

In an article exploring animals in the *Virtues of Saint Macarius*, Tim Vivian notes how peace between the saint and animals evidences proleptically the peaceable kingdom.

Macarius, through God's enlightenment and grace, [enacts] the peaceable kingdom, where he lives in peace with antelopes, hyenas, sheep—and even snakes. The chief virtue of this kingdom, it appears, is compassion: not dogma,

¹⁶⁹ This notion of seeing is picked up by Linzey. See Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, chapter 4.

¹⁷⁰ The examples I delineate here tend toward relationships of individual saints with individual animals. For another, more communal, consideration of the monastic order with the nonhuman creation, see Michael Northcott, "'They Shall not Hurt or Destroy in All My Holy Mountain' (Isaiah 65.25): Killing for Philosophy and A Creaturely Theology of Non-Violence" in *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*, edited by Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough (London: SCM Press, 2009), 246-47.

¹⁷¹ Linzey emphasizes these narratives in his work. See Andrew Linzey, *Animal Rights: A Christian Assessment of Man's Treatment of Animals* (London: SCM Press, 1976), 74-75; *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 33, 49; *After Noah*, 62-70; *Animal Gospel*, 26-27. Per my effort of critical retrieval, I am here focusing on the more positive examples from the hagiographies. The whole tradition bears more ambiguity on this matter. For instance, see Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals, in Greek, Roman, and Early Christian Ideas* (New York: Routledge, 2006), chapters 9-10.

¹⁷² On Silouan, see Kallistos Ware, "The Soul in Greek Christianity" in *From Soul to Self*, ed. M. James C. Crabbe (New York: Routledge, 1999), 65. On Anselm, see Dominic Alexander, *Saints and Animals in the Middle Ages* (Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2008), 1.

¹⁷³ In Denis' case, the animal found refuge in the vicinity of his shrine after the saint's martyrdom. See Deirdre Jackson, *Marvelous to Behold: Miracles in Medieval Manuscripts* (London: The British Library, 2007), 35. On Giles, see Jackson, *Marvelous to Behold*, 38-40. Jackson includes a miniature of Giles and the doe he protected. The picture takes up two pages from the Book of Hours. The contrast on the two pages is worth noting. On the right, the anxious hunter looks toward his prey with anticipation, having released an arrow in the doe's direction. On the left, the doe sits nuzzled against St. Giles, who, pierced by the hunter's arrow, rests against a flowering tree topped by a bird. The picture seems to present two very disparate views toward nature. The first is the hunter who anxiously seeks to kill for his benefit; the second is the saint who is pierced for an animal's protection and sits with the creature in peace.

¹⁷⁴ Jackson, *Marvelous to Behold*, 40.

not orthodoxy, not orthopraxis, but love and empathy and mercy for others, even non-human others.¹⁷⁵

Based on these narratives, among others, Vivian concludes:

Although monks lived in close proximity with spiders, snakes, scorpions, jackals, wolves, and lions, most of them appeared to have lived quite peaceably with their animal companions in the desert. Such peaceful coexistence, and even community, has the power, therefore to point our age, made ecologically sensitive by necessity, to the possibility of better relationship with the nonhuman creature with whom we share God's creation. Just as importantly, the monks can guide us toward the possibility of a peaceable kingdom, one created by God in the Garden and reenvisioned by the prophets.¹⁷⁶

Based on these various factors, my anticipated critique that cosmocentric transfiguration entails a rejection of the Christian tradition is unconvincing. It is without doubt a critical retrieval of the tradition. But a retrieval of a tradition is not tantamount to its rejection.

FALLENNESS AND ESCHATOLOGY AS A REJECTION OF SCIENCE AND DENIGRATION OF NATURE

Lisa Sideris, following the lead of Holmes Rolston, argues that a rejection of the goodness of evolutionary mechanisms such as suffering, predation, and death entails a rejection of scientific evidence and therefore a denigration of nature. She writes that "Rolston's rejection of redemptive, eschatological improvements to nature is one of the chief strengths of his position, both scientifically and theologically."¹⁷⁷ Similarly, she argues that eschatological "hopes for nature are misguided when they distort our understanding of what nature is; more important, they obscure the issue of how much and

¹⁷⁵ Vivian, "The Peaceable Kingdom," 489.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 479.

¹⁷⁷ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 189.

what sort of responsibility humans have toward nature.”¹⁷⁸ The hope for a transfigured cosmos is tantamount to a denigration of nature.¹⁷⁹

Sideris is extremely critical of Moltmann on this point: “The denial of the given order in Moltmann’s argument in favor of a new creation (established by the spirit of God who dwells in creation) expresses his preference for a world devoid of evolutionary forces that produce struggle and strife.”¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, Moltmann’s eschatology reveals both his anthropocentrism and his “inadequate and incomplete understanding of natural processes such as evolution.”¹⁸¹ Thus, it seems that anything supernatural or eschatological is by default anthropocentric and scientifically incorrect because it does not embrace the mechanisms of evolution as fully good. Therefore, she maintains that, “although the desire to heal environments whose health has been compromised by human actions points to a worthy imperative, natural processes themselves cannot be seen as wrong, evil, or in need of redemption in an eschatological sense.”¹⁸²

In line with Sideris’s critique—and as I have already shown in the introduction and chapter 1—theologians and ethicists whom I classify under the paradigm of cosmocentric conservation often argue that the Christian emphasis on the need for redemption of nature inevitably desacralizes the cosmos.¹⁸³ To claim that nature needs to be redeemed is to criticize the very reality that enables life, including human life, to exist. These critiques concur that the notion of fallenness and the hope for eschatological

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 200.

¹⁷⁹ Sideris claims that “ecotheologians are unsure of what constitutes nature’s true nature.” Ibid., 103.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 213.

¹⁸¹ Ibid..

¹⁸² Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 200.

¹⁸³ See Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 25.

transfiguration in terms of overturning the darker mechanisms of evolution amount to the denigration of nature.

Is this critique valid? I do not believe so. My exploration suggests that the “fallenness” of the cosmos is not located in the distortion of some ontological substance but rather a relational disposition—a wandering in isolation.¹⁸⁴ Yet it is the *good* creation that wanders in isolation. There is no denigration of any single creature or species in nature—such as predators—for all creatures are bound in this isolation.¹⁸⁵ Nor is the whole itself fully denigrated, for the interrelated system is itself good and evinces many good qualities. What is *not good*—what is incomplete and still requires the grace that perfects—are the mechanisms of the system that gratuitously sacrifices its individual components. Said differently, creation (including its consecratory distance) is good, but its wandering in isolation and the dispositional effects of that wandering are not good.

And why should such a claim entail the denigration of either science or nature? It seems to me that Sideris’s claim to hold the high ground here constitutes a logical leap. In conjunction with Gustafson’s critique of Moltmann, Sideris claims that “Moltmann’s God...is expected to reorder creation in ways that better conform to human hopes.”¹⁸⁶ Thus, Sideris maintains that anything contrary to the “is” of current nature constitutes a wishful-thinking “ought” of human sensibilities. Yet it is unclear why her own thinking

¹⁸⁴ Ware offers such a view of original sin in his work, *The Orthodox Way*, 62-63.

¹⁸⁵ I thus believe Sideris is somewhat missing the mark when she contends that many eco-theologians, including Moltmann, are “often deeply ambivalent about science, both critiquing and embracing it as suits their purposes.” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 92. For many theologians, the question is not whether or not to embrace the *findings* of science, but rather whether or not to accept that the “is” that science reveals constitutes a moral “ought.” Such was the position of the American botanist Asa Gray. On Gray’s position, see Peter J. Bowler, *Evolution: The History of an Idea*, revised edition (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 223.

¹⁸⁶ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 212. She offers a similar critique of ecotheology in general: “The considerations that guide ecotheology are not drawn from a study of nature but are merely a human set of concerns and interests grafted onto nature.” *Ibid.*, 179.

is not also a presupposition demanding God to conform to human sensibilities. After all, theologically it is unclear why either a value judgment about evolution's mechanisms or a hope for a supernatural transfiguration of nature in line with Christ's own supernatural resurrection from the dead constitutes an "inadequate or incomplete understanding of natural processes such as evolution."¹⁸⁷ Both Moltmann and (in most cases) Linzey affirm the reality of the mechanisms of evolution without lapsing into an unbridled affirmation of their goodness.¹⁸⁸ I wonder if James Gustafson's caution that "those who argue from various observations about nature tend to think they have captured the essence of the Deity in their concepts" could apply, in some modified sense, to the certitude that Sideris evinces regarding the impropriety of theological concepts such as eschatology.¹⁸⁹

At any rate, Sideris's critique about nature and wishful thinking seems inconsistent to me. She refuses to apply the same line of thinking to humans. Following Rolston, she states that there is a stark ethical distinction between culture and nature.¹⁹⁰ She thus contends, as does Rolston, that an ethical analogy between human communities and ecological communities does not hold because "environmental ethics cannot ensure the well-being of each individual member of the community, regardless of those beings' degree of sentience or mental sophistication."¹⁹¹ But does this claim not hold true in human communities as well? What human community can guarantee the well-being of

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 213.

¹⁸⁸ I confess I do not understand why Sideris rejects the possibility that a theological position could affirm the findings of science regarding certain aspects of reality (e.g., predation) but refuse to accept the goodness of those findings. Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 201.

¹⁸⁹ James Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 1:34.

¹⁹⁰ See Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 252-61; Holmes Rolston III, *Environmental Ethics: Duties to and Values in the Natural World* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1988), 181-82.

¹⁹¹ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 179; Rolston, *Environmental Ethics*, 59-62.

all its members? In the best of human societies, people still die young and in horrible fashions. For nature reaches into the human community. There is no sharp divide between culture and nature. Even if the community has laws and welfare programs to protect individuals from other humans and economic strife, it cannot stop disease in all cases and for all of its members. It cannot guarantee safety for all individuals from pestilence, drought, earthquakes, and hurricanes.

Furthermore, it seems because such activity is “natural,” there is no reason why, in Sideris’s logic, humans should not simply accept this suffering and death for individuals. Why work toward curing cancer? Why eliminate smallpox and other viruses? Are not these occurrences examples of predation of the nonhuman upon the human? This question also exists on the level of law. Social order protects one individual from others by law and thus is different from nature. But is such an exhaustive ethics for individuals conducive to evolutionary development? After all, Sideris notes that “the struggle for existence is the most severe among members of the same species.”¹⁹²

To respond to this dilemma, Sideris aligns herself with Rolston in claiming that humans occupy a “post-evolutionary position” and are thus “no longer subject to the same selection pressures from nature that wild animals are.”¹⁹³ This argument, in my view, makes very little sense. Are not humans still evolving? If they not still pressured by natural selection, why do mutations like cancer continue to haunt the human species? Why are humans still preyed upon by viruses and bacteria? In reaction to this predation, could not another species arise still? At any rate, is not creating a special moral category

¹⁹² Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 295, n. 13.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 192. For an instance of Rolston’s position, see *Environmental Ethics*, 335-41.

for creatures that are “postevolutionary” simply another criteria for the limits of an extensionist ethics—at least with regard to a form of that ethics?

Furthermore, Sideris accepts Gustafson’s claim that “the source and power and order of all nature is not always beneficent in its outcomes for the diversity of life and for the well-being of humans as part of that.”¹⁹⁴ Yet it is unclear how claiming concern for all individual human beings based on their “post-evolutionary” status is in harmony with Gustafson’s position. This problem is confounded when Sideris makes the accusation that “Moltmann’s account of the stages of creation assumes that God necessarily shares his particular hopes for the casting out of all forces that create struggle and strife in human and nonhuman life.”¹⁹⁵

It seems to me that Sideris is wildly inconsistent here. First, Moltmann is as aware of his context and finitude as Gustafson. Second, Sideris seems to assume that God necessarily shares her particular vision that the forces of struggle and strife are completely good. To disagree with this position is, in her view, tantamount to denying theocentrism.¹⁹⁶ The only reason she considers her assumption better than Moltmann’s (or rather *not an assumption at all*) is that it is based on empirical observation of nature (or general revelation). Moltmann’s presuppositions are no doubt experimentally (that is, subjectively) grounded. However, his vision also finds affirmation in scripture (which Sideris acknowledges). Yet Sideris maintains that this biblical ground is insufficient.¹⁹⁷ Inexplicitly, then, she approvingly notes Gustafson’s claim that humans ought to be

¹⁹⁴ James Gustafson, *A Sense of the Divine: The Natural Environment from a Theocentric Perspective* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1996), 47; Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 203-4.

¹⁹⁵ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 214.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 228.

¹⁹⁷ See, for instance, *ibid.*, 189-91.

concerned about the rights and wellness of other humans because these concerns are biblically grounded!¹⁹⁸

THE RESURRECTION AND ETERNITY OF INDIVIDUAL ANIMALS AS NONSENSICAL

Christopher Southgate says of his creative engagement with evolutionary theodicy: “When I have presented the thesis of this book in various places it is always the eschatological dimension of the argument, in particular the notion that there might be animals (and even dinosaurs) in some version of ‘heaven,’ that has attracted the most controversy.”¹⁹⁹ This controversy would surely be augmented with Moltmann’s claim that all life must be resurrected at the eschaton.²⁰⁰ Such controversy is not without warrant. After all, what would a dragonfly do with eternity? Where should one draw the line for individual resurrection—at humans, mammals, vertebrates, arthropods, bacteria, protozoa?²⁰¹

This question intimates the critique that most nonhuman creatures, as individuals, are not fit for eternal existence.²⁰² Anthropocentric transfiguration does not have as much of an issue with regard to this critique of their cosmocentric counterparts. If the inclusion

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 214. See also 192.

¹⁹⁹ Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 78-79.

²⁰⁰ Indeed, Moltmann does receive critique on this point. See John Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 122-23. Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 211.

²⁰¹ Wennberg notes that the issue of drawing a line applies also to humans. What about infants, miscarriages, a “newly fertilized ova... that perishes”, and the severely mentally handicapped? See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 323-24.

²⁰² See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 322. As John Polkinghorne writes, “What are we to expect will be the destiny of non-human creatures? They must have their share in cosmic hope, but we scarcely need suppose that every dinosaur that ever lived, let alone all of the vast multitude of bacteria that have constituted so large a fraction of biomass throughout the history of terrestrial life, will have its own individual eschatological future.” See John Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 122. Southgate similarly concedes that “simple organisms may possess little distinctive individual experience and agency, and they may be represented in the eschaton as types rather than individuals. However, to assume that that is the situation of all creatures, including higher animals, runs the risk of not doing full justice either to the richness of individual animal experience, or to the theodicy problems that evolutionary creation poses.” Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 84.

of the nonhuman creation, including animals, in the eschaton is for the sake of humanity's relationship with God, it does not require the animal's awareness or appreciation of this function. But if cosmocentric transfiguration maintains that every individual animal will participate in the resurrection and eternal life for their own sakes, it faces the critique that such a claim is nonsensical.

What exactly makes the claim nonsensical? First, regarding animals that are not self-aware and thus, though they may experience the stimulus of pain, do not suffer (but still die), what significance would a participation in eternity have for them? If a creature lacks self-awareness, how can it appreciate eternal life? Second, even though sentient nonhuman animals are self-aware and experience both suffering and death, do they have the necessary facilities to appreciate eternity? Would animals that are self-aware but do not seem to be able to appropriate and interpret universal concepts understand their presence in eternal life?

Linzey argues that Christians must accept the possibility that, because grace perfects nature rather than destroys it, all creatures will find their eschatological place in a manner consummate with their transfigured being. Humans also require transfiguration to be fit for eternal life. Why then not also animals? Says Linzey:

All that is vital is that Christians do not eclipse the possibilities for the non-human creation by insisting that while God can transform human existence, he is sadly incapable of doing the same to animal existence... We do not know precisely how God in Christ will restore each and every creature. But we must hold fast to the reality witnessed in Christ that our creaturely life is unfinished reality—that God is not yet finished with us.²⁰³

²⁰³ Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 62.

Thus Linzey advocates an inclusive eschaton while remaining agnostic about the details of how various creatures will be included as those creatures.²⁰⁴

In my view, this line of reasoning is promising. After all, is not some agnosticism required in the face of a human resurrection? Concerning the future hope of humans, John writes that “what we will be has not yet been revealed” (1 John 3:2). Aquinas acknowledges that humans require grace to be fit for eternal life.²⁰⁵ The notion of the transfiguration and deification of humanity has a long tradition in Orthodox thought.²⁰⁶ The point is that humans require a change in form (a *trans*-formation or *trans*-figuration) in order to be fit for eternity. Regarding just this point, Paul states that all flesh “will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:52-53). Or, as Wolfhart Pannenberg states,

The participation of creatures in the eternity of God is possible, however, only on the condition of a radical change, not only because of the taking up of time into the eternal simultaneity of the divine life but also and above all because of the sin that goes along with our being in time, the sin of separation from God, and of the antagonism of creatures among themselves.²⁰⁷

Given these radical transfigurative claims, it is important to acknowledge the limits of human knowledge regarding both the extent and nature of the eschatological community—both human and nonhuman. Yet these limits should not facilitate a view that tends to discredit maximally inclusive views. But such is often the case.²⁰⁸ Denis

²⁰⁴ Linzey, *Creatures of the Same God*, 133, n. 13.

²⁰⁵ See Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 53.

²⁰⁶ See Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004).

²⁰⁷ Wolfhart Pannenberg *Systematic Theology*, volume 3, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 607.

²⁰⁸ See, for instance, Drummond, *Eco-Theology*, 173.

Edwards leans in this direction.²⁰⁹ He claims that “redemptive fulfillment of any creature will be specific to the creature involved.” But “such a fulfillment will be one that fits the nature of each creature.” Thus he concludes, “While I think it can be argued that the fulfillment of a human being will necessarily be a personal one, the fulfillment of a mosquito may be of a different order.”²¹⁰ Yet it is unclear why the “transformation” (the term Edwards uses) of a creature, if it truly entails a *trans*-formation (i.e., a radical change in form or nature), must fit “the nature [or form] of each creature” that is being radically changed. Why must the change in form (i.e., the *trans*-formation) adhere to the form that is being changed?²¹¹ Why should we question—and here “question” really takes the connotation of *doubt*—“whether bodily resurrection is necessarily the most appropriate fulfillment for bacteria or a dinosaur” based on those creature’s natures?²¹²

By this claim I do not mean to suggest that people should simply avoid any talk of eschatological hope. I concur with Southgate’s claim that a “scientifically informed eschatology must try to give some sort of account of what might be continuities and discontinuities between this creation and the new one.”²¹³ It must also

²⁰⁹ See Edwards, “Every Sparrow that Falls,” 117-19. Edwards is, to his credit, cautious to make only suggestions about the exclusion of certain individual creatures from the eschatological community.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.

²¹¹ I am not here advocating that there need not be *any* continuity between the present form of a creature and its transfigured form. Indeed, Moltmann is adamant that there be a strong continuity. But this continuity need not be assigned to some nature that transfiguration can in no way alter. It is in fact exactly here that the notion of transfiguration becomes essential, for it maintains the narrative continuity and ontological discontinuity of creatures from temporal existence to eternal existence. I will address this point further in the next section.

²¹² *Ibid.* Perhaps here it is important to note that I find Edwards’s claim that the “future of creation remains obscure and shrouded in mystery” is overextended on account of his christology. He claims that “The future of creation is not something about which we have information. What we have in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a promise. The promise does not give a clear view of the future.” *Ibid.*, 117. Here, Moltmann’s critique of Pannenberg is important. See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 195. The resurrection is not simply a promise—it is the *fulfillment* of a promise and the continual unfolding of that fulfillment. As such, the resurrection of Christ from the dead reveals the future of the cosmos: resurrection from death.

²¹³ Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 81.

try and relate the great final transforming act of God, of which the resurrection of Christ is usually regarded as the beginning, not just to continuities and discontinuities in human life but also to our understanding of God's relation to living creatures other than human beings.²¹⁴

It seems to me that the best path forward is a cautious use of the Christ-event as the hermeneutical key of new creation. Christology must be the litmus test of eschatological assertions.²¹⁵ Such is the route both Moltmann and Linzey claim.²¹⁶ Christ rose from the dead, thus conquering death. Bacteria, dinosaurs, and plants all die. Why should Christ's victory in resurrection not have literal meaning for these creatures?²¹⁷

Furthermore, it seems to me an anthropocentric hubris to argue that human existence is so naturally fit for eternity while all nonhumans (including advanced primates) have no business being included in such hope. It is simply not the place of humans to exclude creatures from eschatological life based on philosophical and scientific distinctions. We simply do not know the nature of these creatures' relationship with God.²¹⁸ Neither do we know the extent to which divine grace might transfigure their existence and make them fit for eternity. If we can recognize the human need for

²¹⁴ Ibid., 81-82.

²¹⁵ I sense here a disparity between Moltmann and Linzey's eschatological hermeneutic and that of Karl Rahner. For Rahner, eschatology begins with theological anthropology. And anthropology, within the confines of salvation and grace, provides the proper hermeneutic to adjudicate eschatological assertions. Says Rahner, "We do not project something from the future into the present, but rather in man's experience of himself and of God in grace and in Christ we project our Christian present into its future." Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, translated by William V. Dych (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998), 432. Thus, the future must cohere with humanity's experience of salvation in the present. For Moltmann, Christ is the future concretized in history. Says Moltmann, "If we look at nature from the perspective of Christ's resurrection, then the sphere in which nature is experienced moves into the horizon of expectation of its new creation." Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 252. Thus, as the hermeneutical key of eschatological assertions, Christ draws human experience into the future, reversing Rahner's dictum.

²¹⁶ See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 126-27; *The Coming of God*, 28-29; Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 33-34; *Animal Gospel*, 14-15.

²¹⁷ Though, as already noted in chapter 3, Linzey stops short of assigning any clear significance to Christ's death with regard to individual non-sentient creatures.

²¹⁸ Edwards, "Every Sparrow that Falls," 117-18.

transfiguration, why not, as Linzey suggests, accept the possibility that other creatures can be made fit for eternity through the same process?²¹⁹

At any rate, science can tell us that certain creatures suffer. And basic sense perception makes us aware of the reality that all creatures, both sentient and not, die. If—as Moltmann and, to some extent, Linzey both maintain—Christ overcomes in his passion the suffering of the sentient by drawing their unique pain into the Godhead and healing it; if Christ overcomes death by dying the death of all the living and defeating the “last enemy” (1 Corinthians 15:26) in his resurrection; then it seems theologically viable to claim that neither suffering nor death can be the final word for any creature.²²⁰ As Moltmann states, in Christ “the experiences of life’s transience and the unceasing suffering of all living things no longer end only in grief, but also already lead to hope... This eschatological reinterpretation of transience has to be concentrated on a single point: death; for death is the end of all the living.”²²¹

THE HOPE FOR VEGETARIAN LIONS AS THE DISSOLUTION OF THE LION SPECIES

In his work, *The Problem of Pain*, C. S. Lewis states:

I think, under correction, that the prophet [Isaiah] used an eastern hyperbole when he spoke of the lion and the lamb *lying down* together. That would be rather impertinent of the lamb. To have lions and lambs that so consorted... would be the same as having neither lambs nor lions.²²²

²¹⁹ It seems to me that such hubris on the part of humans is a form of return to the emphasis on the immortality of the human soul over and against the resurrection of the flesh. How else could one maintain that infants can attain eternal life while advanced primates cannot? The transfiguration of material existence permits an affirmation of an individual animal (and plant) resurrection. The immortality of the human soul rejects this possibility by locating the propriety of eternal existence in the *esse* of the humanity, an immaterial soul. For some considerations, see Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 324-25. It would therefore be rather odd for theologians who emphasize the resurrection of the flesh and embrace a dynamic and relational ontology to reject the possibility of the resurrection of individual nonhuman life.

²²⁰ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 132.

²²¹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 252.

²²² C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1996), 147.

This quote highlights an important question. Even granting the continuity and discontinuity of creaturely existence in transfiguration, how much discontinuity can a creature or species bear without becoming something else altogether? Would a vegetarian lion still be a lion? Or, would being vegetarian deny a lion its true “heaven”? As Lewis states, “If the earthly lion could read the prophecy of that day when he shall eat hay like an ox, he would regard it as a description not of heaven, but of hell.”²²³ Moule, engaging the vision of the peaceable kingdom in Isaiah 11:6-9, polemically raises this critique:

No one with a grain of sense believes that... Isa. xi is intended literally, as though the digestive system of a carnivore were going to be transformed into that of a herbivore. What blasphemous injury would be done to great poetry and true mythology by laying such solemnly prosaic hands upon it! If we believe at all in God as Creator, and in the evolution of species as part of his design, it seems we must accept universal predation as integral to it. Indeed, it would be a catastrophic dislocation of the whole ecology if the lion did begin to eat straw like the ox—or, for that matter, if the microscopic defenders within the body gave up attacking the invaders which may cause disease.²²⁴

In a similar fashion, Lisa Sideris critiques Northcott’s eschatological outlook, writing that

an environmental ethic that seeks harmonious and peaceful relations among all beings surely cannot take seriously the particular needs, the specific ways of life, of animals—take for example the needs of predators, whose means of survival [and, as others would argue, their flourishing] will apparently be revoked when the original goodness of creation is restored.²²⁵

Linzey responds to such critiques by stating that “it is not animality itself that is to be destroyed by divine love, rather animal nature in bondage to violence and predation.”²²⁶ It is in this sense that grace perfects rather than destroys nature: “It is

²²³ Ibid..

²²⁴ Moule, *Man and Nature in the New Testament*, 12.

²²⁵ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 88.

²²⁶ Linzey, *After Noah*, 75. See also, for a rebuttal, Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 295.

against the order of nature, we may say, for one species to trust another in a world that is fallen and disordered, and yet we do well to remember that grace perfects nature.”²²⁷

Grace restores the nature of predatory animals to the state that God originally intended for them. It is as if, for Linzey, the lion and the gazelle are *both* victims of predation. The gazelle is eaten. But the lion is bound to its need and desire to eat. In this sense, both are in need of redemption. This point is similar to Moltmann’s claim that divine justice must redeem both the victim and the victimizer.²²⁸

Many eco-theologians, including Thomas Berry, would find little satisfaction in Linzey’s appeal to true nature over and against distorted nature.²²⁹ Is there another way forward? I offer three responses to the issue.

First, it seems to me that the critique that a lion would no longer be a lion if it did not hunt is a rather reductionist view of a lion’s being. It appears to rely on a Platonic or Aristotelian reduction of lion to some *esse* (which is predation of all things!) that cannot be overcome without the dissolution of the lion-ness of the lion.²³⁰ It also assumes that *trans*-figuration (again, the radical change of a creature’s nature, form, or figure) cannot entail any change in its digestive system or predatory instincts. But if such were the case, could not the same critique be applied to the hope for human transfiguration? Will humans eat in eternity? Will they experience sexual drives? Will they sleep? Will they experience the past as past? Will they suffer and die? Will they cry? Will they experience temptation?

²²⁷ Linzey, *After Noah*, 100.

²²⁸ See Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 129-37.

²²⁹ See Thomas Berry, *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, editors (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 39.

²³⁰ See Marc Fellenz’s musing on the ongoing “species essentialism” of Western thought. Marc R. Fellenz, *The Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 37-40.

Polkinghorne suggests that “the ‘matter’ of [the] resurrected world will be the transformed matter of this dying universe...It will have new properties, consistent with the end of transience, death and suffering.”²³¹ If this new matter enables any of the above dimensions of human existence to be overcome in transfiguration, would a human still be a human? If the “perishable body must put on imperishability” (1 Corinthians 15:53), is it the same species? If so, then it seems the same argument for continuity could apply to vegetarian lions. If not, then the continuity of human identity is as questionable as that of lions with regard to eternal life.

Thus, Southgate is somewhat inconsistent when he claims that

it is very hard to imagine any form of being a predator that nevertheless does not ‘hurt or destroy’ on the ‘holy mountain’ of God...What could the life of a predator look like in the absence of the second law of thermodynamics, and the imperative of ingesting ordered energy to ward off the ever-present slide of decay?²³²

Why would such issues not also apply to humans, who are currently predators themselves?

Or again, Southgate notes that the notion that carnivores will eat straw is “most difficult of all for the biochemically minded.”²³³ But is it not also biochemically problematic to claim that humans will neither defecate nor die? Why should the transfiguration of a nonhuman animal from carnivore to herbivore pose such vast problems when the transfiguration of a human does not?²³⁴

²³¹ Polkinghorne, *Scientists as Theologians*, 54.

²³² Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 88.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 89.

²³⁴ Southgate does not explore this problem. To his credit, though, he does not let the issue of transfiguration exclude individual nonhuman animals from the eschatological community. He does note: “That we find it so difficult to picture these states of being may reduce confidence in their reality.” But he also maintains that both scripture and theodicy require the affirmation of some inclusion of individual nonhumans. *Ibid.*, 89.

Perhaps some eco-theologians would respond that the notions of transfiguration and eternal life are altogether incoherent for all creaturely life, including humans.²³⁵ Such a reply is, in my view, perfectly viable and consistent. However, if one wants to maintain that humans will experience eternal life, the issue of continuity in the midst of transfiguration (including the alteration of biological factors such as digestion) poses as much a problem here as it does for nonhumans. For a vegetarian lion is no more an oddity than a human who does not defecate, suffer, or die. Should the advocate of eternal life for humans appeal to mystery or remain agnostic about the exact manner of continuity and discontinuity in the midst of human transfiguration, the animal theologian should be offered the same option without ridicule.

Second, the question of the continuity of a lion's nature seems to be predicated upon the prominence of the lion species over and against the individual lion. The advocate of cosmocentric transfiguration has an advantage here in emphasizing the importance of the individual creature. For if one emphasizes the species, then the potential loss of the general notion of "lion," including its carnivorous nature, is tragic. But if one emphasizes the individual creature, then the resurrection of all lions and the transfiguration of their individual bodies ensures the continuity of that creature even if the qualities that humans identify as "lion nature" are transfigured. Thus, while some who affirm cosmic transfiguration are satisfied with the notion that a generic representation of each species will endure in eternity,²³⁶ they have no concern for the continuity of individual creatures with that generic representation. What matters is that the qualities of the species be preserved by means of some eschatological representative

²³⁵ Ruether seems to go in this direction. See *Sexism and God-Talk*, 257-258.

²³⁶ John Polkinghorne suggests that species representatives might be the manner of animal presence in the eschaton. See *The God of Hope*, 122-123.

as opposed to the individual instantiations of the species.²³⁷ If the representative eschatological lion had two legs, ate straw, and enjoyed playing chess, then the critique that such a representative fails vis-à-vis the species of lion would hold. However, for those, like Moltmann and Linzey, who affirm the resurrection of every instantiation of flesh, the continuity of a species is preserved in the common continuity of all individual instantiations of that species. Just like an exhaustive resurrection of individual humans who no longer suffer or sleep and who can teleport (see John 20:19, 26) and experience the past as present is not tantamount to the dissolution of the human species—but rather its transfiguration—so also the exhaustive resurrection of all lions as vegetarians is not paramount to the dissolution of the species of lion. As Webb writes, “Just as Christians believe that humans will be fully transformed in the afterlife, our proclivity for violence being washed away as we are made into the image of Christ, animals too will be liberated from their habits of aggression and violence.”²³⁸

Finally, this critique again highlights the question of ontology. What is it that safeguards the continuity of an individual creature throughout its existence? Is it some static *essē* buried underneath its accidental qualities? Or is it the narrative of a creature’s body-self? It seems to me that the shift to dynamic and relational ontology renders the issue of the lion-ness of a lion less viable with regard to eschatological existence; for it is the very same body-self that is transfigured. Moltmann makes this claim with regard to Jesus’s resurrection. In the resurrection, Jesus is at once the same body-self who was

²³⁷ Wennberg refers to this position as *creation de novo*. That is, God does not resurrect creatures that once lived, but creates a new individual creature that will represent the entire species in eternity. Thus, whereas all the lions that actually existed in history are not resurrected, a *new* lion is created to maintain the presence of lion-ness in eternal life. Such a view does not do justice to the sufferings of the individual creatures who are left in their graves. See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 321-24.

²³⁸ Stephen Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom: Toward a Better Theology of Nature,” *Soundings* 79/1-2 (Spring/Summer 1996), 245.

crucified (continuity) but without suffering, anxiety, and the fear of looming death (discontinuity). It is the transfiguration of a body-self that permits radical discontinuity alongside radical continuity. Just as Jesus can be resurrected as immortal and beyond suffering without losing his identity as human, so also could a lion be resurrected as vegetarian without losing its identity as lion.

ESCHATOLOGICAL ETHICS AS A SOCIAL PROGRAM DOOMED TO FAILURE

The final critique I want to address is the tension between eschatology and history, specifically with regard to ethics. Regarding eschatological vegetarianism, Karl Barth writes:

It may well be objected against a vegetarianism which presses in this direction [i.e., a caution against killing animals based on the eschatological hope of creation] that it represents a wanton anticipation of what is described by Is. 11 and Rom. 8 as existence in the new aeon for which we hope. It may also be true that it aggravates by reason of inevitable inconsistencies, its sentimentality and its fanaticism. But for all its weaknesses we must be careful not to put ourselves in the wrong in face of it by our own thoughtlessness and hardness of heart.²³⁹

Barth seems here to embrace the critique that eschatological vegetarianism is a sentimental, idealistic, and quixotic approach to the complexities of history. His eschatology grounds such a critique because history is thoroughly divorced from an ultimately transcendent eschaton.²⁴⁰ This divorce makes anticipations of that eschaton unfeasible. It furthermore renders the killing of animals a “priestly act of eschatological character” that “can be accomplished with a good conscience” if it is done with a

²³⁹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/4, translated by A. T. Mackay, T. H. L. Parker, Harold Knight, Henry A. Kennedy, John Marks (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961), 355-356.

²⁴⁰ See Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 13-16; Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*, second edition, translated by Michael Waldstein (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 47-48.

penitence that acknowledges such killing is only permissible within the confines of a history subjected to futility.²⁴¹

In this manner Barth situates himself in the vast milieu of possibilities regarding the relationship between eschatology and history. On his end of the spectrum, eschatology is wholly other than history. On the other end of the spectrum is what Moltmann refers to as futurist eschatologies, which transport eschatology into time, whether as a completed reality, a kingdom achievable through human effort, or that which remains “not yet” despite the existing “already.”²⁴²

Sideris provides a similar critique, though from the perspective of a complete rejection of the need for eschatological redemption in nature. She states that “an environmental ethic must be rooted in biological realities. We cannot hope to change nature by engaging it as though it were, or could become, a perfect ecological community.”²⁴³ Thus, *any* form of eschatological ethics is extremely problematic.²⁴⁴

As I have already noted, it is at times unclear where Linzey fits into this tension. I therefore find Moltmann’s notions of *adventus* and *novum*, both of which permit a proleptic *creatio anticipativa* without lapsing into political attempts to construct the kingdom, more helpful. It is not simply the individual creatures within time that require redemption, but time itself. It is not merely the victims of evolution that require

²⁴¹ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/4, 355.

²⁴² Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 7-14.

²⁴³ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 83.

²⁴⁴ In general, Sideris is extremely critical of any appropriation of eschatological theology into ecological ethics. See, for example, Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 189-93. But she seems to almost always misrepresent uses of eschatology in both theology and ethics. She seems unable to separate the hope for eschatological redemption from the belief in an historical Eden. She also consistently fails to understand the tensions within eschatology concerning its relationship to both history and ethics. Her exploration of Moltmann highlights this deficiency. See *Ibid.*, 191. I would venture to say that Sideris’s critique of eco-theology’s inadequate understanding of evolutionary science applies equally to her own understanding of eschatology.

transfiguration, but evolution itself. Eschatology is neither a progression within history nor a fully transcendent a-historical future; it is rather God's eschatological future that happens *to history*.²⁴⁵ Because time exists in the *adventus* of the coming God and that God's future, it is open, as history, to *novum*. This *novum* is nothing other than *creatio anticipativa* of the *creatio nova*, which is the very transfiguration of history itself.

Human beings cannot control the *adventus* of God's coming. They cannot construct the *creatio nova* anymore than they can overturn the *creatio continua*. But they can embrace the *creatio anticipativa* by witnessing to the hope of all creation. This witness is by the very nature of history's disposition incomplete and imperfect. It is indeed doomed to "inevitable inconsistencies." Such is the nature of witnessing to that which remains other. But these inconsistencies do not negate the validity of the witness itself.

As I noted above in the section on anthropology, I maintain that humans are implored by the Spirit in the wake of the Christ event to become sacraments of the eschaton. As priests, humans offer themselves to the created order and in that offering become the symbol of the redemption of the mechanisms of evolution.²⁴⁶ When a human promotes the well-being of an individual nonhuman animal instead of causing harm, that animal encounters the eschaton sacramentally from a Spirit-filled priest.

TOWARD AN ETHICS OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

Given all that has been said to this point, what are the logistics of an eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration? What I offer here is nothing more

²⁴⁵ Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 22.

²⁴⁶ I thus concur with Linzey that Christ has revealed the true nature of priesthood and priestly sacrifice. The Christ-event reveals that the true nature of Christian sacrifice "involves the sacrifice of the higher for the lower and not the reverse." Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 43.

than suggestions of how one might move toward answering this question. I make no claims to comprehensiveness. Here, my thoughts should be understood as a place to begin—a direction for future research. I will begin by considering the tensions of temporal existence and the qualifications I believe these tensions mandate. I will then consider how cosmocentric transfiguration might translate into practice for individual sentient nonhuman animals. Next, I will consider the concrete application of cosmocentric transfiguration for individual non-sentient life forms. Finally, I will consider how the ethics might be applied to the cosmos at large.

THE TENSIONS OF A CREATION *IN VIA* AND THE ETHICS THAT PERTAINS TO IT

In a good creation that wanders in isolation, there can be no perfect living. In Linzey's words, "there is no pure land."²⁴⁷ In the world as we experience it, suffering, predation, and death are necessary. Without these aspects, the biosphere and all of its eco-systems would fail. Our present existence could not endure the dissolution of the mechanisms of evolution without a transfiguration of time, space, matter, and energy.

As both Moltmann and Linzey intimate, there must therefore be the recognition that all transfigurative ethics are anticipatory in nature. They facilitate sacramental moments of the eschaton without constituting its definitive arrival. For this reason, I am hesitant to translate transfigurative ethics into rights. For it is not simply that these ethics must be violated on occasion, but rather that participation in the mechanisms of evolution—and more often than not non-volitionally— is the *norm* of human existence in this morally ambiguous and complex world.²⁴⁸ However, transfigurative ethics, in

²⁴⁷ Linzey, *Animal Gospel*, 90.

²⁴⁸ See Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 51-54; William C. French, "Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms in Recent Catholic Thought," *The Journal of Religion*, 70/1 (January 1990), 70.

assenting to a particular *telos* of all creatures, does ground certain legal protections for them. To better understand the nature of these protections, I will here explore the notion of necessity and the ethics of proportionalism.

What Does “Necessity” Mean?

Linzey argues that only genuine human need can justify the violation of another creature’s theos-rights. For him, genuine need denotes that which a human cannot live without and that which humans can obtain by no other means than by the violation of said rights.²⁴⁹ Thus, if a human cannot survive by any other means than eating meat, as is the case in certain contexts even today, then the violation of a creature’s right to life and freedom from suffering is justified. Moltmann seems to hold a similar position. While he maintains that individual nonhuman animals have “*infinite value*” and a “*right to live*,”²⁵⁰ he also accepts that this value and right can be violated in cases such as animal experimentation and consumption of meat.²⁵¹

This line of thinking—that the well-being of nonhuman animals and plants can be violated in the case of necessity—seems almost ubiquitous in eco-theological thought. Michael Northcott claims that “the moral problem is not in the eating of animals but in the avoidance of unnecessary cruelty, indignity and pain.”²⁵² Note it is acceptable to kill and eat animals provided no *unnecessary* cruelty is inflicted. Christopher Southgate’s evolutionary theodicy maintains that suffering and death are *necessary* in order to achieve the kind of world of diverse and complex life that God desired to create.²⁵³ Jame Schaefer recovers from early and medieval Christian thought the “admonitions that

²⁴⁹ See Linzey, *Animal Theology*, 145.

²⁵⁰ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 256.

²⁵¹ See chapter 2 of the present work.

²⁵² Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 101.

²⁵³ Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation*, 40-48.

Christians should use God's creation moderately to provide the necessities of life."²⁵⁴ Based on these admonitions and in conjunction with more recent ecclesial statements, Schaefer argues that "the faithful will distinguish between necessary and unnecessary uses of other animals and plants, land, and waters. They will choose to use only what they need to sustain their temporal lives as they aim for eternal life with God."²⁵⁵ Note here that necessity is better defined, taking on the meaning of the necessities to sustain temporal life. Finally, the most recent Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church states that humans, as stewards, must show animals kindness. But animals "may be used to serve the just satisfaction of man's needs."²⁵⁶ These needs include food, clothing, domestication for work and leisure, and "medical and scientific experimentation" provided it "remains within reasonable limits and contributes to caring for or saving human lives."²⁵⁷

What is true in all of these examples, from Linzey to the Catechism, is that *need* either establishes the good (i.e., it is good to kill animals if it serves human need) or justifies a violation of the good (i.e., it is permissible to kill an animal to save a human life provided there is no other manner of achieving this end). In my view, the notion of need is more complicated than these assessments acknowledge. To further clarify this point, and by way of suggesting a path forward in adjudicating the propriety of violations of the tenets of cosmocentric transfiguration in the face of the inevitable contradictions of history, I here offer a more thorough reflection on need.

Humans *need* (X) *in order to* (Y).

²⁵⁴ Schaefer, *Theological Foundations*, 197.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 213.

²⁵⁶ *The Catechism of the Catholic Church: With Modifications from the Editio Typica* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 2457.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2417.

The (X) here represents that which is necessary. But I seek to argue that necessity points toward a (Y), which is the result sought that makes the X a necessity. I therefore submit that this statement—which is an expression of Immanuel Kant’s hypothetical imperative—is the inevitable *formula of contingent need*; for such need is inherently teleological. That is, inasmuch as any one individual creature or even any one individual ecosystem (or perhaps even any one particular planet) is not *essential* to the functioning of the cosmos at large or the life of the divine, it is not needed *in and of itself*.²⁵⁸ However, it may be needed for some purpose, some “in order to”—that is, needed to achieve a *telos*.

For instance, consider the following claims:

The earth’s particular atmosphere (X^a) is *necessary*
in order for humans to survive (Y^a).

Human survival (X^b) is *necessary*
in order to ensure the well-being of the cosmos (Y^{b1}) or the divine life (Y^{b2}).

This first claim is accurate. Without earth’s atmosphere, biological human life as we know it would not be possible. The validity of the second claim is another issue. If all humans died, the cosmos would likely continue on largely undisturbed. Furthermore, God would not cease to be God in the absence of human life.

These claims suggest that the appropriate question in adjudicating ethics vis-à-vis the contradictions of history is not whether or not something is “necessary.” For *anything* can be necessary by way of a simple tautology:

I *need* to be rich (X^c)
in order to be rich (Y^c).

One could also say:

²⁵⁸ Indeed, perhaps only God is needed in this manner—that is, non-contingently.

I *need* to eat meat (X^d)
in order to be fully satisfied with my meal (Y^d).

In both of these cases, the (X) itself might warrant a negative response (e.g., “You do not *need* to eat meat”). But once the (Y) is added (“in order to be fully satisfied with my meal”), the necessity is established; for the (X) is, at least in theory, *needed* in order to obtain the (Y). The necessity of (X) is thus contingent upon a desired *telos*.

Because necessity is contingent in this manner, attempts to establish eco-theological ethics based on necessity alone fail. It is not enough to claim that necessity justifies. If it were, then the formula of contingent need would be followed by a simple “therefore, (X) is good and/or justified.” But such is surely not the case. For example, virtually no (if not literally no) eco-theologians would accept the following claim of a hunter:

I *need* to kill an endangered creature (X^e)
in order to complete my taxidermy collection (Y^e);
therefore, killing the endangered creature is good and/or justified.

There should be no doubt that the formula of contingent need is valid. But who could accept that the action is justified? The point is that *need does not in itself justify*; for every need points to some desired end. Thus the question cannot be that of necessity alone, but rather whether or not the end (Y) to which the necessity (X) coheres with a particular notion of the good. That is, the important thing to establish is *both* necessity and the good that is implied by the necessity. Consider a more complicated claim:

Humans need to kill animals (X^f)
in order to eat meat (Y^f);
therefore, killing animals is good and/or justified.

It is in fact true, sans the possibility of laboratory-created meat or taking bites out of live animals or eating carrion, that killing animals is necessary to eat meat. But does

eating meat cohere with the good? Of course the answer here depends upon one's view of the good. Inasmuch as the good is a teleological term, the answer in this case must be predicated upon the *telos* of both humans and animals. For cosmocentric transfiguration, the ultimate *telos* of both humans and animals is participation in the divine life, which entails peace (including the lack of predation) among all creatures. This *telos* is breaking into history. In doing so, it creates a new temporal *telos* for humans: becoming sacraments of the eschaton by witnessing against the shades of transience that will be overcome in eschatological communion. Thus human actions should, to whatever extent possible, adhere to this eschatological good within history.

The phrase "to whatever extent possible" brings me back to the issue of contingent necessity. Yes, humans *need* to kill animals *in order to* eat meat. But why is eating meat necessary? What is the "in order to" of the necessity of meat consumption?

It depends. The "in order to" could be, as was the case with (Y^d), a higher degree of satisfaction. But there could be other (Y's) as well. Furthermore, because in this world we inevitably kill and we will inevitably die, the various *teloi* of creatures are bound to clash. Thus, there could be a (Y) that is in fact good while also predicated upon an (X) which constitutes a violation of the good of another creature. Consider the following:

Humans need to eat meat (X^g)
in order to survive (Y^{g1});
therefore, eating meat is good and/or justified.

(X^g) is not true of all humans. But it is true of some. I have already noted that, according to the *teloi* established by cosmocentric transfiguration, eating meat is a violation of the eschatological good God desires for all the creatures eaten inasmuch as it

entails their death. But human survival is good. So here we have a conflict of teleological necessities and an inevitable violation of the good. If humans eat meat, thus killing a creature and probably causing it suffering, they violate God's desire for that creature. If they do not eat meat (under conditions in which doing so is necessary for their survival), they will die of lack of care for their own body, which violates God's desire for them. At this juncture, a violation of the good is inevitable.

*Proportionalism and Virtuous Violations of the Good*²⁵⁹

Two important questions arise here. First, how does one adjudicate which good is to be violated in such cases? Second, in what manner should the good be violated? To answer the first, I will offer, as a direction that I think cosmocentric transfiguration ought to go in the future, a brief reflection on proportionalism. To answer the second question—again only in an introductory fashion for future development—I will offer a briefer reflection on virtue.

I believe proportionalism provides the best form of ethics for cosmocentric transfiguration. Within his Catholic context, David F. Kelly describes proportionalism as a shift

from traditional (deontological) method to proportionality... from legalism to at least a moderate form of situationalism—though it is certainly not a radical situationalism, because rules are still of great importance.²⁶⁰

Proportionalism thus maintains the laws of deontology while recognizing the complexity of contexts and the importance of consequences. It introduces the possibility that a

²⁵⁹ This section is far from exhaustive and actually only scratches the surface of the issues it addresses. It is meant only as a reflection on the way forward vis-à-vis my reflection on necessity.

²⁶⁰ David F. Kelly, *Contemporary Catholic Health Care Ethics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004), 90. Kelly's claim notwithstanding, the validity of proportionalism as a viable system of ethics that escapes the dangers of consequentialism is not without dispute. See, for instance, Benedict M. Ashley, Jean Deblois, and Kevin O'Rourke, *Health Care Ethics: A Catholic Theological Analysis*, fifth edition (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006), 15-17.

violation of the law is acceptable if that violation is necessary to produce some equal or greater good. That is, when dealing with a valid formula of contingent need in which the (X) represents a violation of the good and the (Y) represents the proportionately greater good that cannot be achieved by means other than the (X), it is acceptable to choose the lesser evil for the greater good. However, significantly, the goodness of the (Y) does not alter that the (X) is a violation of the good. That is, the (Y) renders the (X) acceptable, but not necessarily justified.

But how does one makes such a decision within cosmocentric transfiguration? Richard Bauckham argues that Moltmann's theological ethics fails just here. His "theological basis is plainly inadequate for the ethical distinctions that need to be made... It makes death as such an undifferentiated evil in the face of which all creatures have the right to life."²⁶¹ As will be evident below, I disagree with Bauckham's assessment. To claim that death is a common evil for all life does not necessitate that the death of one creature could not be more tragic than the death of another. It does, however, mean that all death is tragic.

In light of this proportionalist approach, I will consider one more example of need:

Humans *need* to eat meat (X^g)
in order to be better satisfied (Y^{g2});
therefore, eating meat is justified and/or good.

Whereas survival (as is the case with Y^{g1}) constitutes a good that is at the very least proportionately equal to the violation of the good in (X^g), I do not believe this case can be made about greater satisfaction (as is the case with Y^{g2}). That is, from the perspective of

²⁶¹ Richard Bauckham in *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 211.

cosmocentric transfiguration, human satisfaction is not a good proportionately equal or greater to the necessary means of attaining meat, the killing of a nonhuman animal.

One more qualification is necessary here. Stephen Pope notes the teleological nature of Aquinas's virtue ethics. For Aquinas, "to understand anything, humanity included, depends on comprehending its end or purpose."²⁶² In Aquinas's estimation, which reflects Aristotle's understanding of virtue, to act virtuously is to act in a manner that reflects the *telos* of humans and the world.²⁶³ Thus, my discussion of necessity and the good in which each is predicated upon teleology suggests the influence of virtue ethics in my thought. Taking my lead from Aquinas, I maintain that a virtue is not established merely with reference to the end.²⁶⁴ Rather, the end expresses how a virtue ought to be manifested. One's journey is not justified by the end one achieves; rather, the end proper to one's nature informs how one ought to engage in taking the journey. In short, the end does not justify the means; the end makes clear the distinction between good and not good means. To undergo the journey in a manner unbecoming one's nature (and thus one's *telos*) is already a violation of virtue—a vice.

This point leads to a qualification of my proportionalism. It is highlighted in the question Robert Wennberg asks concerning "how the morally good person should respond to those tragic elements in our world and in our life, about which we and others can do absolutely nothing."²⁶⁵ There is a radical difference between one who, in the face

²⁶² Stephen J. Pope, "Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, (ed.) Stephen J. Pope (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 32.

²⁶³ See Aquinas, *SCG*, III.148. Also, Thomas Hibbs, "Interpretations of Aquinas's Ethics Since Vatican II" in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, (ed.) Stephen J. Pope (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 419.

²⁶⁴ Consider Aquinas' position concerning individual actions. For Aquinas, the end does inform the status of an action as good or evil, but only in conjunction with the action's genus, object, and circumstance. See *ST*, I-II, Q 18 A 4.

²⁶⁵ Wennberg, *God, Animals, and Humans*, xiii (see also 50).

of procuring a greater good, violates the good of a creature with ease or even joy and one who violates the good with grieving and sorrow. This point is similarly stated by Karl

Barth:

A good hunter, honourable butcher and conscientious vivisectionist will differ from the bad in the fact that even as they are engaged in killing animals they hear this groaning and traving of the creature, and therefore, in comparison with all others who have to do with animals, they are summoned to an intensified, sharpened and deepened diffidence, reserve and carefulness.²⁶⁶

In a similar fashion, Wendell Berry writes: “To live, we must daily break the body and shed the blood of creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration.”²⁶⁷ The difference between Berry and Barth—and between Berry and Moltmann, Linzey, and me—is the whether or not this breaking of creation’s body is part of the goodness of the cosmos.

The point is that proportionalism benefits from virtue. There is a courageous manner, a *good* way, of violating the good when such a violation is necessary—one in which the violator is steeped in penitence and compassion. There is also a cowardly manner of violating the good in necessity—one in which the violator derives pleasure from the actions.²⁶⁸ Thus it is not merely the interplay of act and consequence that establishes the good; it is also the character of the agent who acts. Thus I concur with Linzey’s early thought in which he claims that killing can be *acceptable* in cases of *vital*

²⁶⁶ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/4: 355. Today, one might be prone to question whether or not vivisection can produce any good that proportionately outweighs the harm caused.

²⁶⁷ Wendell Berry, *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural* (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1981), 281.

²⁶⁸ The suggestion that one can violate the good in a virtuous manner is not the traditional position of virtue theory (or ethics in general).

necessity “as long as the method of killing is as humane as possible and that no persons are receiving pleasure from such activity.”²⁶⁹

I believe this approach to ethics and the issue of necessity is the most promising path forward for cosmocentric transfiguration. Though, it requires much more development. Every violation of a creature’s *telos* is also a violation of the good. These violations are never justified; but they may be necessary in order to procure a proportionately greater good.

PRESERVATION AND PROTEST:

COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AND ITS CONCRETE APPLICATION IN HISTORY

Thus far, I have (1) delineated the theological foundations for cosmocentric transfiguration at the intersection of Moltmann and Linzey, (2) responded to potential critiques of these foundations, and (3) introduced the general form this ethics might take (i.e., virtue-proportionalism) in the face of the inevitable tensions of the world. It is now possible to suggest how cosmocentric transfiguration might translate into concrete practice in history.

I begin with what the ethics might mean for individual sentient animals, both humans and nonhumans. I then consider individual non-sentient life forms such as insects and plants. Lastly, I explore the meaning of the ethics for the cosmos as a whole. Collectively, these explorations will yield a tension between proleptic witness, which entails a protest of the larger systems of death by protecting individual creatures, and conservation, which entails the preservation of the very systems of death that elicit protest.

²⁶⁹ Linzey, *Animal Rights*, 38. Later he writes that “taking pleasure from the cruel death of an animal is nothing less than morally evil.” Linzey, *Why Animal Suffering Matters*, 86.

In each area, I take as my launching point four theological claims germane to cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology that arise out of my synthesis of Moltmann and Linzey:

- (1) the triune God has created a world with which the Trinity desires to share its community;
- (2) this desire must overcome the isolation of the cosmos and the dispositional effects of that isolation (e.g., suffering, predation, and death);
- (3) that this overcoming is concretely accomplished in the incarnation of the Son, including Christ's passion, death, and resurrection and is further manifested by the burgeoning future in the presence of the Spirit;
- (4) that human beings are sacraments of the eschatological hope that the mechanisms of evolution will be overcome in communion.

What of Individual Sentient Creatures?

Because a good practice/action is one that respects the *teloi* of creatures—and because the *telos* of individual sentient creatures is, on the one hand, freedom from suffering, predation, and death, and on the other hand freedom for communion—the following fundamental guideline can be formulated: any practice that witnesses to the hope of freedom from suffering, predation, and death is good while any practice that embraces suffering, predation, and death is not good. Thus, regarding sentient creatures, both human and nonhuman, the following is clear:²⁷⁰

1. Allowing a creature to live is good. Taking a creature's life is not good.
2. Mending the wounds of a creature is good. Harming a creature is not good.
3. Permitting a creature its own space and way of life is good. Going to war over space and a way of life is not good.
4. Letting a creature live in peace is good. Hunting a creature is not good.
5. Allowing a creature to live out its natural life is good. Slaughtering a creature for meat is not good.
6. Healing a sick creature is good. Experimentation that elicits suffering is not good.
7. Permitting a creature the sustenance it needs for self-maintenance is good. Trapping or farming a creature for fur is not good.

²⁷⁰ I am indebted to Linzey's work in the formation of these views. See chapter 3 of the present work.

8. Protecting a creature from harm is good. Procuring animal products (e.g., dairy and eggs) by methods that are painful or disruptive to the creature's well-being is not good.
9. Living in harmony with a creature is good. Keeping a creature in a manner that causes suffering by denying its natural inclinations is not good.

These claims follow from the fundamental guideline above. However, that guideline must be qualified by the following caveat: An action can be both necessary for witnessing to the *telos* of one creature while at the same time witness against the *telos* of another. Such actions can never be justified—that is, they are never good—but they are acceptable (as not good) if the good they procure is proportionately greater than the good they violate. In this manner, humans can participate in evil out of inevitability and necessity without calling that evil good.

The heart of the issue with regard to concrete ethics is then the question of how to adjudicate greater goods and lesser evils. I have already addressed this issue above. My point here is to say that, within the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration, the good is always the promotion of life and the alleviation of suffering. Whenever this good is violated even for a proportionately greater good that renders the violation necessary, that violation must be acknowledged as evil.²⁷¹ It must be accompanied by penitence and grieving. And if that good is violated for a good that is disproportionate to the evil, it requires repentance and conversion.

It is therefore possible for an advocate of cosmocentric transfiguration to hunt for food and eat meat where there is no other option.²⁷² Such actions remain a violation of the good, but are necessary to procure an (at the very least) equal good. But hunting and

²⁷¹ Based on Linzey's view, I affirm that, in situations in which human life is pitted against nonhuman life (e.g., self-defense), human life can be considered a proportionately greater good than nonhuman life. See Linzey, *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*, 138-39.

²⁷² Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 55.

eating meat for pleasure cannot be commensurable with cosmocentric transfiguration. Harmful experimentation—even when it is necessary—will always be evil and unjustifiable. But it may procure a good that could not be procured otherwise. However, if the good procured through such practices could be procured otherwise but is not on account of profitability or some other paltry good, the means cannot be commensurable with cosmocentric transfiguration.

What about Individual Non-Sentient Animals and Plants?

For Moltmann, death is the ultimate reality that God must overcome.²⁷³ For Linzey, the fundamental reality God must overcome appears to be suffering. What remains unclear in Linzey's thought is the theological and ethical significance of Christ's resurrection for creatures that lack sentience but are nonetheless alive.²⁷⁴ For such a strong emphasis on sentience entails that "an ecosystem consisting only of plants and nonsentient organisms would have no intrinsic value."²⁷⁵ What remains unclear in Moltmann's thought is how the killing of any individual creature—whether sentient or not—is not a violation of eschatological hope.

The four theological claims I made above, when placed in conjunction with the fundamental guideline in which a practice is good if it witnesses to the hope of freedom from suffering, predation, and death, suggest that, in order to be consistent, I must claim that it is not good to kill any organism, whether sentient or not. If Christ's death is the death of all the living and his resurrection reveals the eschatological destiny of those life

²⁷³ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 252.

²⁷⁴ Northcott, rightly in my view, critiques animal rights approaches like Regan because such approaches struggle to establish the rights of "non-mammalian species such as earthworms or non-sentient species such as trees." Northcott further notes that such approaches "can give no moral value to collectivities or communities of life, such as ecosystems or the biosphere." Northcott, *The Environment and Christian Ethics*, 102. This critique also applies to Linzey.

²⁷⁵ Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 38.

forms, then the promotion of insect and plant life is good. The killing of insects and plant organisms is not good. The abortion of a fetus, whether human or not, is not good.

To further make this point, I turn to Lisa Kemmerer's attempt to retrieve Linzey's "Generosity Paradigm" from an alleged hierarchy—by which she means Linzey's exclusion of non-sentient creatures from theos-rights. She states that this paradigm, when retrieved from its sentiocentric hierarchy, "suggests that Christians ought to approach all of creation with an attitude of service and self-sacrifice." This vision "does not require *equal* treatment for a crystal, a chrysanthemum, a bacterium, a katydid, and a capybara, only equal *regard* for each, out of duty to God."²⁷⁶

The significance of Kemmerer's point is crucial. If Christ's suffering and resurrection reveal that the *telos* of sentient creatures is freedom from suffering, then proper regard for those creatures means working to alleviate their suffering. But if Christ's death and resurrection *also* reveal that the *telos* of living things is eternal life, then proper regard for those life forms entails promoting their lives and avoiding killing them.

Said differently, I would not strive for the freedom of speech for a cockroach. Neither would I do so for a human in a catatonic state. I would not strive for a tree's escape from pruning on account of its suffering. But in all three cases, I would strive to protect the life of the cockroach, the comatose patient, and the tree. Most generally, then, I am saying that to the extent that something which exists (whether rocks, plants, insects, fish, elephants, or humans) is capable of receiving my witness to the eschatological future that is breaking into history, my regard for their existence entails that I ought to so witness when I am able.

²⁷⁶ Lisa Kemmerer, *In Search of Consistency: Ethics and Animals* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2006), 278.

Based on this reasoning, the inevitable thrust of the theological foundations for cosmocentric transfiguration as I have delineated them suggests the best dietary approximation of the kingdom is neither vegetarianism nor veganism. It is rather fruitarianism. This term has multiple meanings, so to clarify I intend by it a diet that consists of foods (typically seed-bearing) that do not kill the host organism.²⁷⁷ It is just this point—that the eating does not necessitate the death of the host organism—that makes the diet logically consistent with the theological framework of cosmocentric transfiguration.²⁷⁸ Interestingly enough, it is actually this diet that is prescribed in Genesis 1:29 for humans: “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.”²⁷⁹

What of the Cosmos, Species, Eco-Systems, and the Mechanisms of Evolution?

Daniel Cowdin maintains that an “exclusive moral concern for individual animals becomes incoherent at the level of land management.”²⁸⁰ That is, concern for individual animals is inconsistent if it is not qualified by some concern for the system at large. On par with this claim, Sideris notes that animal advocates like “Singer and (especially)

²⁷⁷ Of course, this principle cannot apply to the microscopic level.

²⁷⁸ This dietary aspect of cosmocentric transfiguration came as a surprise to me as I developed and researched this dissertation. I had originally thought vegetarianism (and veganism in situations where non-vegan products entail the suffering of animals) was the most consistent “eschatological diet.” I must acknowledge that I am not a fruitarian. Nor am I sure that I will be one. Even so, it would be intellectually dishonest for me to deny the clear logic of my own theological position, which entails that one is a better sacrament of the eschaton if one does not take life when such actions are not required for some equal or greater good.

²⁷⁹ For nonhuman creatures with the breath of life, God gives “every green plant” for food (Genesis 1:30).

²⁸⁰ Daniel Cowdin, “The Moral Status of Otherkind in Christian Ethics,” in *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, editors (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 271. In a similar vein, Sideris notes that an ethics that emphasizes the good of the individual is inconsistent with nature because “nature simply cannot meet the individual, bodily needs of each member in the ecological ‘community.’” Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 222.

Regan are adamantly *unconcerned* with the moral status of *larger* aggregates of beings such as species or ecosystems.”²⁸¹ Those who wish to emphasize the well-being of individual creatures tend to downplay the moral significance of the system that continues to give rise to such creatures.

I have emphasized that the greatest forms of eschatological witness entail refusing the comfort that causing suffering and taking life brings when such actions are not required for some equal or greater good. Thus refusing to hunt, to buy cosmetic products that are tested on animals, to eat meat, to eat living (non-microscopic) organisms, to wear fur, etc. are all form of eschatological witness. Such refusals are good—that is, appropriate vis-à-vis teleology. But these practices focus on the individual human, animal, or life form. What of the cosmos as a whole? What about the species of which the individual is a part? What of ecosystems that require suffering and death to function? What of the general movement of life that likewise requires destruction in order to facilitate life? What does cosmocentric transfiguration have to say about these macroscopic concerns?

Sideris criticizes eschatologically-oriented ethics, much like the one I am here advocating, because they seek to “put an end to the very system that creates and maintains value, beauty, sentience, and even, perhaps, intelligibility in the world we inhabit.”²⁸² Is this critique valid? Are eschatological ethics seeking to “put an end” to the system of nature?

²⁸¹ Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 133.

²⁸² See Lisa Sideris, “Writing Straight with Crooked Lines: Holmes Rolston’s Ecological Theology and Theodicy,” in *Nature, Value, Duty: Life on Earth with Holmes Rolston III*, Christopher J. Preston and Wayne Ouderkirk, editors (Dordrecht, NL: Springer, 2007), 81-90.

I do not believe so. It is my view that the paradigm must at once *preserve* and *protest* the system as a whole.²⁸³ Herein is the fundamental tension of cosmocentric transfiguration. On the one hand, it is good to promote the life and well-being of individual life forms. On the other hand, it is necessary to sustain the system that requires the suffering and death of those individual life forms for life to be possible at all.

Based on this tension, I believe cosmocentric transfiguration is bound to a conservationist dimension. Its advocates must seek to preserve eco-systems and the cosmos as a whole. They must protect the lives of predators and permit those predators to take the lives of other creatures.²⁸⁴ They must allow herbivores to live and to eat other non-sentient organisms. But this preservation is not tantamount to a moral or theological approval. It is the preservation of that which they protest—the conservation of the good creation that sighs and groans for eschatological communion by maintaining the very mechanisms that reflect its isolation.

To *preserve* will mean that advocates of cosmocentric transfiguration will protect even that which they find abhorrent. They will engage in a gracious “letting-be” of and a difficult “living-with” the natural world. These actions will include respecting the integrity of eco-systems and the natural inclinations of individual animals. Thus, it will not entail an attempt to create Eden on earth by genetically engineering vegetarian

²⁸³ Here Moltmann’s protest theology is important. Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, xii. Linzey never protests God’s creation; he simply cannot lay at God’s feet the origin of evolutionary suffering. Moltmann, on the other hand, suggests that Jesus’s cry of dereliction is the appropriate response to the sighing of the created order.

²⁸⁴ In response to Daniel Deffenbaugh, cosmocentric transfiguration need not consider predators “immoral.” But neither does it consider predation good. See Daniel G. Deffenbaugh, “Toward Thinking Like a Mountain: The Evolution of an Ecological Conscience,” *Soundings* 78/2 (Summer 1995), 248-49. See Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom,” 245-46. Though, I am a bit concerned with Webb’s claim that “animals do not need to exercise their predatory skills in order to live a full life.” *Ibid.*, 249.

lionesses or killing all predators in order to protect their prey.²⁸⁵ It is bound to the sigh that Wennberg conveys in his consideration of Isaiah 11: “It would truly be better if there were no predation but sadly that cannot be.”²⁸⁶

To *protest* will mean that these advocates will, when possible, witness to eschatological communion through their personal actions.²⁸⁷ Whereas preservation tends to happen on the holistic level, protest tends to happen at the level of individual life forms. In Webb’s words, “We should not encourage or enhance the violence in nature.”²⁸⁸ Advocates of cosmocentric transfiguration will avoid hunting a deer, devouring a cow, or injecting shampoo into the eyes of a rabbit.²⁸⁹ Cosmocentric transfigurationists preserve the system without embracing its mechanisms. For such an embrace would amount to, in the words of Webb, “a kind of Nietzschean celebration of the will to power, the recognition that the weak must be sacrificed to the strong (which is precisely the opposite of the message of Christianity, as Nietzsche well knew).”²⁹⁰ Instead, advocates of cosmocentric transfiguration protest death in personal witness to individuals without trying to overthrow its hold on nature as a whole.²⁹¹ To summarize

²⁸⁵ On this point, see Wennberg, *God, Humans, and Animals*, 50-51.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁸⁷ Jeremy Law sums up Moltmann in a manner that echoes this point: “Christian anticipation concerns the construction of representations of what is to come, resistance and protest against that which contradicts the future and solidarity with those who presently suffer.” Jeremy Law, “Jürgen Moltmann’s Ecological Hermeneutics,” in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*, David G. Horrell Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate, and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, editors (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2010), 236.

²⁸⁸ Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom,” 249. Webb goes as far as to claim that predators should not be protected at the expense of other species. *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ I think Sideris would balk at my concern over hunting a deer because it extends a similar ethics to both wild and nonwild creatures and thus fails to note the important differences between these two general types. But I am not sure her division here works. She includes nonwild creatures in the ethical realm of human society. This inclusion gives them a different status because humans have, in some sense, tamed their nature. Thus humans have responsibilities to them. See Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 252-61. I have already noted the problem with her special exclusion of culture from the realm and laws of nature.

²⁹⁰ Webb, “Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom,” 242.

²⁹¹ Sideris would certainly decry this protesting eschatological resignation as more anthropocentric wishful thinking: “The inability to resolve conflict sometimes creates a longing, especially for religiously

this tension in a pithy alliteration: advocates of cosmocentric transfiguration preserve that which they protest by protecting its integrity while they protest that which they preserve by refusing to participate in predation to whatever extent possible, thus proleptically witnessing against it.

CONCLUSION

I have offered the beginning stages of a systematic construction of the eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration by way of exploring the tensions of two separate crossroads. First, at the intersection of Moltmann and Linzey, I formulated a set of foundational theological claims that support an ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration. The paradigm maintains that the triune God has created a world with which the Trinity desires to share its community; that this desire must overcome the wandering isolation of the cosmos, including suffering, predation, and death, all of which result from the integrity God suffered the creation; that this overcoming is concretely accomplished in the incarnation of the Son, including Christ's passion, death, and resurrection and is further manifested by the burgeoning future in the presence of the Spirit; and that human beings are sacraments of the eschatological hope that the mechanisms of evolution will be overcome in communion.

Second, at the intersection of that set of claims and the three other eco-theological paradigms, I offered responses to potential tensions and critiques that might arise concerning cosmocentric transfiguration. I did not find critiques that the paradigm is not biblical satisfactory as the paradigm is commensurable with particular passages that point to the potential of a hermeneutic that favors it. Nor did I find the critique that the

minded individuals, for a world in which all values *can* be brought into harmony, and benefits can be realized by all beings at once." Sideris, *Environmental Ethics*, 224.

paradigm constitutes a denial of the tradition satisfactory as a critical retrieval of the tradition helps support its main tenets. Suspicions that cosmocentric transfiguration amounts to the denial of science or the desacralization of nature are not necessarily true given the adjustment I made to cosmology, particularly protology and the Fall. The claim that an individual animal or plant resurrection is nonsensical loses its strength once the necessity of humanity's transfiguration is considered. Likewise, the force of the claim that the resurrection of predators as non-predatory constitutes the dissolution of the species is mitigated by the hope for continuity of humanness amidst the discontinuity entailed by transfiguration.

These explorations aided in giving the paradigm a definitive shape. In order to further define it, I then proposed practical applications of the paradigm, including concrete principles for humanity's engagement with individual sentient creatures, individual non-sentient life forms, animal species, entire eco-systems, and the cosmos at large. I contended that, at the level of the individual, it is always a violation of the good to cause harm or death to a life form but that such a violation, while never justifiable in the sense of being right or good, is acceptable provided that it is necessary for the attainment of an equal or greater good. At a wider level, including that of entire animal species and eco-systems, I suggested that cosmocentric transfiguration must simultaneously preserve and protect the very mechanisms of the system that they protest. The preservation occurs on the level of a "letting-be" of the natural world while the protest occurs on the level of a proleptic witness of eschatological hope via personal actions toward individual nonhuman life forms (e.g., refusing to eat meat or to hunt).

This vision of cosmocentric transfiguration respects the integrity of the natural world without embracing the mechanisms of evolution as a divinely-ordained law. It opens up a space for a gracious letting-be while acknowledging that resurrection is the in-breaking hope for nature and all the life forms therein. It promotes practices of eschatological peace from humans without calling for the construction of the kingdom within history. It thus my contention that cosmocentric transfiguration represents the best of both worlds—that is, the natural world of history and the eschatological new creation.

**CONCLUSION:
COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION AS THE “BEST OF BOTH WORLDS”**

The aim of this dissertation was two-fold. First, I set out to propose a taxonomy consisting of four paradigms of eco-theological ethics in an effort to better classify the field. Second, I sought to develop constructively the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration in order to better represent it among the other paradigms. Having delineated the taxonomy, its paradigms, and the contours of cosmocentric transfiguration, it is now necessary to restate and evaluate my findings, offer conclusions, and suggest possible directions for further development.

RESTATING THE PARADIGMS

In chapter 1, I explored three paradigms of eco-theological ethics. In anthropocentric conservation, a paradigm I expounded through the work of Saint Thomas Aquinas, all human beings are essentially unique creatures of God with individual eternal *teloi*. The nonhuman creation constitutes a good and ordered system of resources to aid, by way of bodily sustenance and spiritual revelation, humans in history on their journey toward communion with God. Humans must learn to embrace their role, utilizing creation in a manner commensurable with their unique *telos*. This manner includes distributing the resources of the cosmos justly, which also intimates preserving them for future humans.

For cosmocentric conservation, a paradigm I examined through the work of Thomas Berry, the uniqueness of humans is extremely qualified. For all of creation constitutes a community. This community, including the evolutionary mechanisms that facilitate its development and ongoing existence, is fully good and in no need of redemption from the natural order that demands both suffering and death. Humans must

learn to embrace their identity as part of the community of creation. This embrace entails both a gracious sharing of the world with all creatures and letting the earth be itself, respecting the integrity of the natural order.

For anthropocentric transfiguration, a paradigm I established by engaging certain Eastern Orthodox theologians, humans are essentially unique in dignity. They constitute the focus of divine concern. The nonhuman creation is a gift from God to all humans meant to facilitate sacramentally the relationship among humans and between humans and the divine. This cosmic function is an eternal one, rendering the whole creation necessary even in eternity as the enduring sacrament. Humans must learn to reverence the cosmos as priests, offering it back to God and thereby realizing its sacramental *telos*. Such a reverence mandates that utilization of the cosmos is a sacred affair and must never be subsumed into economic or political gain.

In chapters 2 and 3, I explored the work of two theologians, Jürgen Moltmann and Andrew Linzey, both of whom, in different manners, highlight an often neglected fourth paradigm of eco-theological ethics: cosmocentric transfiguration. Unlike the conservationist paradigms, this view maintains that the current order of creation, while good in many ways, does not represent God's ultimate desire for the cosmos. In particular, the shadowy dimensions of evolution (e.g., suffering, predation, and death) constitute the ultimate *telos* of neither the earth nor any of its inhabitants. Thus those who fit in this paradigm maintain that God embraces the entire cosmos, which includes every individual creature that is yearning for God's redemptive intervention in the midst of evolutionary emergence, in the purview of God's eschatological vision. This vision

entails the consummation of the cosmic community in which God invites all creatures to participate, for their own sake, in the peace and harmony of God's triune life.

Moltmann provides theological foundations for this ethics by advocating hope for an eschatological panentheism in which the Trinity and the world, including every individual creature, will interpenetrate one another in eternity. Thus every instantiation of life will experience God's eternal peace. Furthermore, this future is, on the one hand, realized concretely in the incarnation, in which Christ becomes the redeemer of evolution, and, on the other hand, cosmically inaugurated through the presence of the Spirit. Hope for this future motivates humans to witness proleptically to it in the present.

Linzey likewise provides theological foundations for cosmocentric transfiguration by appealing to the dominant view in Christian history that the cosmos is in disarray. For Linzey, all sentient creatures endure the consequences of sin, in particular suffering, and therefore long for redemption. In Christ, God reveals a willingness to suffer with and for all creatures by taking on flesh, suffering, and death. In doing so God dies the death of all sentient beings. Yet his resurrection adumbrates their eschatological resurrection and thus their freedom from the effects of sin. For Linzey, Christians who live peacefully toward individual animals, especially by engaging in vegetarianism, approximate the eschaton by way of a proleptic witness.

Having explored representatives of all of the paradigms, I was able to identify their general distinctiveness. They differed fundamentally with regard to anthropology, cosmology, and eschatology. These differences elicited different understandings about what constitutes the primary unit of moral concern. Collectively, the variations yielded a very different ethics for each paradigm. **Table C – 1** summarizes these findings:

TABLE C – 1				
THE PARADIGMS ACCORDING TO ANTHROPOLOGY, COSMOLOGY, AND ESCHATOLOGY AND THE ETHICS THEY FACILITATE				
	Anthropocentric Conservation	Cosmocentric Conservation	Anthropocentric Transfiguration	Cosmocentric Transfiguration
Anthropology: Central Status/ Role of Human Beings	Essentially unique moral dignity; Subject of ultimate divine concern	Enhanced dignity; Member of creation community	Essentially unique moral dignity; Microcosm, co-creator, and priest	Enhanced dignity; Co-creator with God and co-traveler with nonhuman creation
Cosmology: Central Status/ Role of the Nonhuman Creation	Network of good and ordered resources/gifts for human well-being	Good and ordered interconnected community of intrinsic value	Necessary and ultimate sacrament for divine-human drama	Community <i>in via</i> toward shared eschatological <i>telos</i>
Scope of the Eschatological Community	God and humanity; Angels and elements/matter	Eschatology de-emphasized in favor of current order of world and its goodness	The entire cosmos	The cosmos; Individual instantiations of nonhuman life
The Primary Unit of Moral Consideration (General or Particular)	Particular humans; General nonhumans	General	Particular humans; General nonhumans	Particular
Ethical Human Engagement of the Nonhuman Creation	Proper use <i>in via</i> toward uniquely human <i>telos</i>	Balance of a “letting be” and a reverential “living-with”	Reverential use as sacramental gift that facilitates communion with others and God	Proleptic witness of the future peace God desires

The theological tensions of the paradigms also included whether or not the nonhuman creation is, in its natural state, unambiguously good or in need of either eschatological completion or redemption. When this tension was set beside the question of the intrinsic value of the nonhuman components of the cosmos, the paradigms naturally took shape. This shape is evident in table C – 2:

TABLE C – 2		
THEOLOGICAL TENSIONS OF THE PARADIGMS		
	Why should humans take responsibility for the created order?	
	<i>For the sake of human beings</i>	<i>For the sake of the cosmos and its creatures</i>

What is the responsibility of human beings toward creation?	<i>Preserve the goodness and order of the unfallen cosmos.</i>	<i>Anthropocentric conservation</i>	<i>Cosmocentric conservation</i>
	<i>Guide the fallen and/or incomplete cosmos toward its eschatological telos.</i>	<i>Anthropocentric transfiguration</i>	<i>Cosmocentric transfiguration</i>

As these tables reveal, at the intersection of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology, I was able to establish a new taxonomy of eco-theological that accounts for both the question of value and the question of eschatology/soteriological destiny.

RESTATING THE SYSTEMATIC CONSTRUCTION OF COSMOCENTRIC TRANSFIGURATION

In dialogue with both Moltmann and Linzey and in contradistinction with advocates and defenders of the other paradigms (or central principles of those paradigms), I have suggested the form a developed and systematic eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration might take. This paradigm refuses to accept suffering, predation, and death as good. It thus seeks to affirm the life of every individual animal and plant. It also seeks the well-being of inanimate nature. It traces the etiology of the darker mechanisms of evolution—along with the cosmic laws that render these mechanisms necessary—to the unique space, time, and integrity allotted to creation by God. The Fall is a symbol for the creation’s straying in isolation at the other end of the consecratory distance that was necessary for the possibility of communion in otherness.

Thus, God has not directly willed mechanisms of evolutionary emergence such as suffering, predation, and death. Nor are these mechanisms the result of an angelic or human Fall. God has willed the creation’s consecratory distance for the sake of communion, not its isolation. Thus God’s ultimate will, most evident in the Christ-event, is that these dimensions of transient existence entailed by the distance of isolation should

ultimately be healed in transfiguration, the path to which is opened anew in Christ and maintained by the Spirit. Every single individual life and speck of matter will at the resurrection be brought into communion with God's own triune life and there experience eternity in a manner consistent with its transfigured reality.

This eschatological hope is proleptically present in history through the power of the Spirit when humans witness to it in their engagements with the nonhuman creation. This presence remains only a witness of eschatological hope. Hence, humans should not expect to construct through their Spirit-empowered efforts Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom. Such a vision requires the transfiguration of the entire cosmos, including its laws. However, the proleptic witness of humans is nonetheless a symbol or sacrament of eschatological hope within history. Thus, while humans should not seek to overturn nature with any sort of finality, neither should they celebrate and embrace the darker mechanisms of evolutionary emergence.

The proper disposition of humanity toward suffering, death, and predation is one of simultaneous preservation and protest. Preservation entails the conservation of the systems that make life possible, which means protecting the balance of life and death in the world. Protest entails the refusal to participate in the darker mechanisms of evolution except when such participation is necessary to procure some equal or greater good. But even in these instances, protest mandates an oxymoronic virtuous violation of the good in which one participates in suffering, predation, and death only and always with penitence and sorrow.

CONCLUSIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

Having restated the findings of this project, I will here offer my conclusions. First, I will evaluate my proposed taxonomy. Second, I will evaluate my systematic construction of cosmocentric transfiguration.

Evaluation of the New Taxonomy

As noted in the introduction, other taxonomies of eco-theological ethics tend to use a singular focus (e.g., value, salvation, geographical locale, etc.) to classify various voices in the field. These approaches, in their singularity, often overlook central tensions in eco-theological thought. An emphasis on value alone does not account for the variety of eschatological and soteriological views. An emphasis on salvation alone does not account for the value creatures have within the cosmos. Has my taxonomy addressed these issues?

No taxonomy can be without remainder. For this reason, no taxonomy should claim to be exhaustive or exact. These acknowledgements notwithstanding, it is my judgment that my multi-leveled focus on the theological loci of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology and the dual emphasis on value and eschatological hope that these theological loci elicit provide a better taxonomy to classify eco-theological ethics than other approaches. It combines the strengths of other taxonomies and therefore creates larger and more nuanced categories for the field. It furthermore gathers eco-theology and animal theology under a larger umbrella of nonhuman ethics—thus revealing the divide between these schools of thought to be an “in house” dispute. For these reasons, I consider the proposed taxonomy successful and believe it is a viable method for clarifying dialogue within the diverse field of nonhuman theology and ethics.

Evaluation of the Systematic Construction of Cosmocentric Transfiguration

The systematic proposal I developed in chapter four, though heavily dependent on both Moltmann and Linzey, is my own thought experiment. As such, I make no claim that either thinker would wholly—or mostly—identify with my constructive and admittedly speculative work. Even so, I believe my proposal alleviates some of the inconsistencies evident in both Moltmann and Linzey's work. It draws heavily on Moltmann's theology but is far more consistent in following that theology to its logical conclusion with regard to ethics. This ethics is similar to that of Linzey, but built upon a more thoroughly explored theological foundation followed by a more detailed and consistent consideration of the non-sentient creation, including species, ecosystems, and the general system of evolutionary emergence.

How does my construction of cosmocentric transfiguration fare vis-à-vis the other paradigms? In my judgment, none of the paradigms—including my constructive work—is without issue. However, I believe cosmocentric transfiguration, as I have delineated it, provides a consistent vision of ecological ethics that is commensurable with both science and theology.

It is consistent with science because it does not deny or downplay the troubling mechanisms inherent in evolutionary emergence. Nor does it claim these mechanisms can be ultimately overthrown within history by human effort—even when that effort is aided by grace. Furthermore, it reflects the challenges to anthropocentrism entailed in scientific thought.

It is commensurable with theology because it refuses to ignore the eschatological slant of Christian thought within history. It does not sanctify what is simply because it is.

It does not deny the hope of transfiguration because it challenges present biological realities. It does not limit God's desire of the cosmos to the laws of nature. These laws will be overturned and their victims resurrected to eternal life. Thus, cosmocentric transfiguration provides stronger responses to the problem of evil than its conservationist counterparts.

Ultimately, I maintain that cosmocentric transfiguration represents the "best of both worlds" by providing grounds both to preserve the scientifically revealed realities of nature and to protest those realities (i.e., suffering, predation, and death) by way of proleptic witness. It is inclusive of all creation, extending even to non-sentient life and inanimate matter. It is inclusive of all time, ignoring neither the present realities of nature nor the eschatological possibilities of its future.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Certainly, further work needs to be done in order to assess more accurately the validity of this paradigm as I have delineated it. It is my hope that such work will constitute the subject of future writings. My recommendation for further research along these lines is five-fold.

First, it is pertinent to explore the congruency of cosmocentric transfiguration with the history of Christian thought. This exploration entails two key endeavors. On the one hand, work should be done with regard to the paradigm's viability vis-à-vis Christian Scripture. Such a task might take the form of exegeting passages that challenge anthropocentrism in favor of cosmocentrism and evince an eschatological hope for transfiguration. It might also take the form of seeking to identify something along the lines of Rosemary Radford Ruether's "prophetic principle," which could provide a

hermeneutical key for seeing the propriety of cosmocentric transfiguration in salvation history.

On the other hand, more work needs to be done in relation to the great theologians of church history. There should be engagements with voices like Augustine and Aquinas that explore the extent to which they can, through critical retrieval, support an eco-theological ethics of cosmocentric transfiguration. Likewise, scholars should examine the great voices of Eastern thought like Irenaeus and the Cappadocian Fathers who already evince cosmic visions of transfiguration. Less prominent voices should also be explored for their potential support of this ethics—for instance voices from mysticism such as Julian of Norwich. Lastly, a great deal of work is yet to be done on the lives of saints and the theological and ethical significance of their relationships to nature, which often included transfigurative dimensions.

Second, it will be obvious that I have emphasized theology more so than science in this project. More detailed examinations are needed with regard to the viability of practices of proleptic witness (e.g., vegetarianism, refusing to hunt, and the cessation of animal experimentation) in the face of the realities of biological existence. For if cosmocentric transfiguration is indeed a balance of preservation and protest, it cannot be blind to these realities, especially in situations where the very protest against death could lead to death on a larger scale by unduly disrupting natural systems. At the same time, however, protest does entail that humans ought not to use the necessity of preservation as a license to revel in the ways of nature. Scientific research should be done by scientists who remain agnostic about the goodness of the realities of biological existence with a

specific eye to the extent to which human violence against the nonhuman world, both domesticated and non-domesticated, is truly necessary for the well-being of the cosmos.

Third, and in line with my second recommendation, further consideration needs to be given to the distinction between domesticated and non-domesticated (i.e., wild or free) nature. How might the balance between preservation and protest apply in these different situations? These considerations ought to take the form of general inquiries and specific case studies.

With regard to non-domesticated nature, are practices such as hunting, fishing, and trapping truly necessary in most cases to procure some good that is equal to or greater than the violation of the nonhuman creature's eschatological *telos*? If so, how ought humans to violate this good virtuously? What reforms might be made in cases of a necessary violation of the good in order to protect the dignity of the creatures involved? It is also important to explore what cosmocentric transfiguration might have to say about human intervention in nature. Should stewards of wildlife preserves let animals suffer and die if the causes are natural? Or, is it possible to witness to eschatological hope in these cases without disrupting natural cycles?

With regard to domesticated animals, what forms might proleptic witness take? What would it look like with regard to farming? Surely factory farming would be problematic. But what about other methods of farming? Is there ever a situation in which it is necessary—in the sense described in chapter four—to eat veal? If not, do protest and proleptic witness suggest that Christians ought to refuse to buy food from farms that participate in the selling of such meats? In addition to practices of farming, work could be done on pet-keeping from the perspective of cosmocentric transfiguration.

Also, case studies about what significance the underlying principles of the paradigm might hold for zoos would be beneficial.

Fourth, further work needs to be done with regard to the viability of proportionalism and virtue vis-à-vis cosmocentric transfiguration. In chapter 4, my work scratched the surface of what ultimately remains a much larger issue that ought to constitute a separate work. In addition, this exploration must consider the appropriateness of the claim that there are inevitable and necessary evils and that one can commit these evils virtuously.

Finally, the paradigm of cosmocentric transfiguration itself requires more careful theological scrutiny. While I believe it is internally consistent, parts of it certainly require further development. In particular, more work could be done with regard to the claim that the big bang is the beginning of creation's wandering in isolation. Is such a claim convincing? How might such a claim affect theology proper? Issues such as this should be the subject of critical engagement with the paradigm.

THE FINAL ANALYSIS

There are real and stark differences among eco-theologians in the areas of cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology. It is my hope that identifying and classifying these differences will open spaces for better defined (and perhaps new) conversations within the field. Even if scholars do not agree on my classifications of particular thinkers, at the very least the act of classifying can facilitate a dialogue. In addition, other thinkers can consider their own thought with reference to this new taxonomy—or at least with reference to the issues it draws to the surface.

While there is still plenty of work to be done, I hope that my constructive proposal of cosmocentric transfiguration will further solidify its place at the table of discussion in eco-theological ethics. It is my view that this line of thinking has been under-represented and under-engaged in the field. Should such actually be the case, I hope this work, in conjunction with that of thinkers like Moltmann and Linzey, contributes to changing this dearth.

Finally, I hope this work is able to facilitate conversations among those who are comfortable with the classification of cosmocentric transfiguration regarding possible tensions within the paradigm itself. Such conversations will aid the development of the paradigm, particularly with regard to theological issues like the doctrine of God, the Fall, and eschatology. It will furthermore highlight issues of the moral framework of this ethics, including whether proportionalism is an appropriate system for the paradigm.

Here I wish to end this project with a quote that captures in its simplicity the heart of cosmocentric transfiguration. It is offered by the great Albert Schweitzer. His work, though largely absent in this project, has nonetheless been influential on my thinking for many years.

“If I save an insect from a puddle,
life has devoted itself to life,
and the division of life against itself is ended.”¹

¹ Albert Schweitzer, *Civilization and Ethics*, translated by Charles Thomas Campion, third edition (London, UK: A & C Black, 1946), 246.

Bibliography

Books:

- Alexander, Dominic. *Saints and Animals in the Middle Ages*. Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2008.
- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica*. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Benzinger Brother, 1947.
- _____. *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Joseph Kenny, Editor. New York, NY: Hanover House, 1955-57.
- Armstrong Susan J. and Richard G. Botzler. *Environmental Ethics: Divergence and Convergence*. Third Edition. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2003.
- Ashley, Benedict M., Jean K deBlois, and Kevin D. O'Rourke. *Health Care Ethics: A Catholic Theological Analysis*. Fifth Edition. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006.
- Augustine. *The City of God*. Translated by Demetrius B. Zema, Gerald G. Walsh, Grace Monahan, and Daniel Honan. The Fathers of the Church. Volumes 8, 14, and 24. New York, NY: The Fathers of the Church Inc, 1950-1954.
- _____. *Eighty-Three Different Questions*. Translated by David L. Mosher. Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982.
- _____. *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*. Volume I. Translated by John Hammond Taylor. New York, NY: Newman Press, 1982.
- _____. *On Free Choice of the Will*. Translated by Thomas Williams. Indianapolis: IN, Hackett Publishing Company, 1993.
- _____. *Teaching Christianity*. Translated by Edmund Hill. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1990.
- Barad, Judith. *Aquinas on the Nature and Treatment of Animals*. San Francisco: International Scholars Publication, 1995.
- Barsam, Ara Paul. *Reverence for Life: Albert Schweitzer's Great Contribution to Ethical Thought*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. II/2. The Doctrine of God: The Election of God; the Command of God. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957.
- _____. *Church Dogmatics*. III/4. Translated by A. T. Mackay et al. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, Editors. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1961.

- _____. *Church Dogmatics*. IV/3/2. The Doctrine of Reconciliation: Jesus Christ the True Witness. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962.
- _____. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Sixth Edition. Translated by Edwyn C. Hoskyns. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Basil the Great. *Exegetical Homilies*. Translated by Agnes Clare Way. The Fathers of the Church. Volume 4. Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963.
- Bauckham, Richard. *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*. Waco: TX, Baylor University Press, 2010.
- _____. *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 1995.
- Bauckham, Richard. Editor. *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Beck, T. David. *The Holy Spirit and the Renewal of All Things: Pneumatology in Paul and Jürgen Moltmann*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007.
- Bekoff, Marc and Carron A. Meaney. Editors. *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998.
- Benzoni, Francisco J. *Ecological Ethics and the Human Soul: Aquinas, Whitehead, and the Metaphysics of Value*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.
- Berry, R. J. Editor. *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000.
- Berry, Thomas. *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation between Humans and the Earth*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991.
- _____. *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*. Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009.
- _____. *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future*. New York, NY: Bell Tower, 1999.
- _____. *The Dream of the Earth*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1990.
- _____. *The Sacred Universe: Faith, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009.

- Berry, Wendell. *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural*. San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1981.
- Birch, Bruce C. Walter Brueggemann, Terrence E. Fretheim, and David L. Peterson. *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*. Second Edition. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005.
- Boff, Leonardo. *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*. Translated by Phillip Berryman. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997.
- _____. *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*. Translated by John Cumming. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995 (original Portuguese 1993).
- Borowitz, Eugene B. *Contemporary Christologies: A Jewish Response*. New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1980.
- Bouma-Prediger, Steven. *The Greening of Theology: The ecological Models of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler, and Jürgen Moltmann*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995.
- Boyd Gregory A. and Paul R. Eddy. *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Braaten, Carl E. and Robert W. Jenson, eds. *A Map of Twentieth Century Theology: Readings from Karl Barth to Radical Pluralism*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1995.
- Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2000.
- Brunner, Emil. *Dogmatics II: The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*. Translated by Olive Wyon. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1952.
- Cairns, David. *The Image of God in Man*. Revised Edition. London: Collins Press, 1973.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 2 Volumes. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Edited by John T. McNeil. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- The Catechism of the Catholic Church: With Modifications from the Editio Typica* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995).
- Chauvet, Louis-Marie. *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*. Translated by Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont. Colleagueville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995 (original in French, 1987).

- Chester, Tim. *Mission and the Coming of God: Eschatology, the Trinity and Mission in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann and Contemporary Evangelicalism*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006.
- Cobb Jr., John B. and David Ray Griffin. *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976.
- Cobb Jr., John B. and Clark H. Pinnock, Editors. *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialogue Between Process and Free Will Theists*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.
- Collins, John J. *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004.
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Edited by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. Washington, D.C.: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004.
- Cullman, Oscar. *The Resurrection of the Dead or the Immortality of the Soul?: The Witness of the New Testament*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2010.
- Cunningham, Mary Kathleen, Editor. *God and Evolution: A Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2007.
- Deane-Drummond, Celia. *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
- _____. *Eco-Theology*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008.
- DeCrane, Susanne M. *Aquinas, Feminism, and the Common Good*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004.
- DeWeese, Garrett J. *God and the Nature of Time*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004.
- DeWitt, Calvin. *Earthwise: A Guide to Hopeful Creation Care*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2011.
- Ephrem the Syrian. *Commentary on Genesis*. Translated by Edward G. Mathews and Joseph P. Amar. Kathleen McVey, Editor. The Fathers of the Church. Volume 91. Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1994.
- _____. *Hymns on Paradise*. Introduction and Translation by Sebastian Brock. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Press, 1990.
- Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

- Fellenz, Marc R. *The Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007.
- Fox, Matthew. *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Fretheim, Terrance. *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005.
- Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man*. Available online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers>. Internet. Accessed September, 2009.
- Grenz, Stanley J. and Roger E. Olson. *20th Century Theology: God & the World in a Transitional Age*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992.
- Grenz, Stanely. *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004.
- _____. *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Griffin, David Ray. *God, Power, and Evil*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.
- Guthrie, Shirley C. *Christian Doctrine*. Revised Edition. Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1994.
- Hall, Douglas John. *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1986 (Second Printing, 2004).
- Hanson, Bradley C. *Introduction to Christian Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Hart, John. *Sacramental Commons: Christian Ecological Ethics*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006.
- _____. *What Are They Saying about Environmental Theology?* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2004.
- Harvie, Timothy. *Jürgen Moltmann's Ethics of Hope: Eschatological Possibilities for Moral Action*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009.
- Haight, John F. *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*. Second Edition. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008.
- _____. *The Promise of Nature*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993.

- Hauskeller, Michael. *Biotechnology and the Integrity of Life: Taking Public Fears Seriously*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- Healy, Nicholas J. *The Eschatology of Hans Urs von Balthasar: Being as Communion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Irenaeus of Lyons. *Irenaeus: Against Heresies*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Vol. 1, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
- _____. *Irenaeus's Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation*. Iain M. Mackenzie with the translation of the text of the *Demonstration* by J. Armitage Robinson. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.
- Jenkins, Willis. *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Joy and Hope. *Gaudium et Spes*. Vatican II. December 7, 1965. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm; Internet, accessed April, 2009.
- Kadavil, Mathai. *The World as Sacrament: Sacramentality of Creation from the Perspectives of Leonardo Boff, Alexander Schmemmann and Saint Ephrem*. Leuven: Peeters, 2005.
- Karkkainen, Veli-Matti. *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical and Global Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2002.
- Keller, Catherine. *The Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2003.
- Kelly, David F. *Contemporary Catholic Health Care Ethics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004.
- Kemmerer, Lisa. *In Search of Consistency: Ethics and Animals*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2006.
- Kinsley, David. *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995.
- Hauskeller, Michael. *Biotechnology and the Integrity of Life: Taking Public Fears Seriously*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2007.
- Hollenbach, David. *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002

- Horrell, David G. Cheryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou. Editors. *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010.
- Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac—and Sketches Here and There*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Problem of Pain*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1962.
- Linzey, Andrew. *After Noah: Animals and the Liberation of Theology*. Herndon, VA: Mowbray, 1997.
- _____. *Animal Gospel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.
- _____. *Animal Rights: A Christian Assessment*. London, UK: SCM Press, 1976.
- _____. *Animal Theology*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
- _____. *Creatures of the Same God: Explorations in Animal Theology*. New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2009.
- _____. *Christianity and the Rights of Animals*. New York, NY: Crossroad, 1987.
- _____. *Why Animal Suffering Matters: Philosophy, Theology, and Practical Ethics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Linzey, Andrew and Dorothy Yamamoto. Editors. *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998.
- Linzey, Andrew and Tom Regan. Editors. *Animals and Christianity: A Book of Readings*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1990.
- Livingston, James C. and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza with Sarah Coakley and James H. Evans. *Modern Christian Thought*. Volume 2 (The Twentieth Century). Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Lossky, Vladimir. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 1976 (original published 1944).
- Louth, Andrew. *Maximus the Confessor*. Early Church Fathers. Series Editor, Carol Harrison. New York, NY: Routledge, 1996.
- Luther, Martin. *Lectures on Genesis*. Jaroslav Pelikan, Editor. Luther's Works. Volume 1. Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1955.

- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Third Edition. University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.
- Manolopoulos, Mark. *If Creation Is A Gift*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009.
- Martos, Joseph. *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church*. London: SCM, 1981 (expanded edition 1992).
- Maximus the Confessor. *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*. Translated by Paul M. Blowers and Robert L. Welken. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003.
- _____. *Selected Writings*. The Classics of Western Spirituality. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1988.
- McDougal, Dorothy. *The Cosmos as the Primary Sacrament: The Horizon for an Ecological Sacramental Theology*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2003.
- McDougal, Joy Ann. *Pilgrim of Love: Moltmann on the Trinity and Christian Life*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- McFague, Sally. *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Third Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001.
- Medley, Mark S. *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human*. New York: University Press of America, 2002.
- Meyendorff, John. *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1974.
- _____. *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*. Washington DC: Corpus Books, 1969.
- Middleton, J. Richard. *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005.
- Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Church in the Power in the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.

- _____. *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- _____. *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*. Translated by R. A. Wilson. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.
- _____. *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999.
- _____. *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.
- _____. *In the End, the Beginning: A Life of Hope*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004.
- _____. *Sun of Righteousness, Arise! God's Future for Humanity and the Earth*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.
- _____. *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992.
- _____. *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and Implications of Christian Eschatology*. Translated by James W. Leitch. London, UK: SCM Press, 1967.
- _____. *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.
- _____. *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990 (original German 1989).
- Müller-Fahrenholz, Geiko. *The Kingdom and the Power: The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Translated by John Bowden. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Neal, Ryan A. *Theology as Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of Jürgen Moltmann's Doctrine of Hope*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture—with Supplementary Essays*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1970.
- Northcott, Michael. *The Environment and Christian Ethics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Ormerod, Neil. *Creation, Grace, and Redemption*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007.

- Osborne, Kenan B. *Christian Sacraments In A Postmodern World: A Theology for the Third Millennium*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999.
- Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Systematic Theology*. Three Volumes. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991.
- Peacocke, Arthur. *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming—Natural, Divine and Human*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Phelps, Norm. *The Dominion of Love: Animal Rights According to the Bible*. New York, NY: Lantern Books, 2002.
- Pinnock, Clark, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger. *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1994.
- Polkinghorne, John. *The God of Hope and the End of the World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
- _____. *Science and the Trinity: The Christian Encounter with Reality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004.
- _____. *Scientists as Theologians: A Comparison of the Writings of Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke, and John Polkinghorne*. London, UK: SPCK, 1996.
- Rachel, James. *Created from Animals: The Moral Implications of Darwinism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. Translated by William V. Dych. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998.
- _____. *The Trinity*. Translated by Joseph Donceel. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*. Second Edition. Translated by Michael Waldstein. Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988.
- Regan, Tom. *The Case for Animals Rights*. Second Edition. Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 2004.
- Robinson, Dominic. *Understanding the “Imago Dei.”* Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011.
- Rolston III, Holmes. *Environmental Ethics: Duties to and Values in the Natural World*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1988.

- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.
- _____. *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward A Feminist Theology*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1983.
- Ryder, Richard D. *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes towards Speciesism*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Sanders, John. *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998.
- Santmire, Paul. *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985.
- Schaefer, Jame. *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic & Medieval Concepts*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2009.
- Schmemmann, Alexander. *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973.
- Schwarz, Hans. *Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.
- Schweitzer, Albert. *Out of My Life and Thought: An Autobiography*. Translated by Antje Bultmann Lemke. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990.
- _____. *Civilization and Ethics*. Third Edition. Translated by Charles Thomas Campion. London, UK: A & C Black, 1946.
- _____. *The Philosophy of Civilization*. Translated by C. T. Campion. 2 Parts. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1980.
- Shults, LeRon. *Reforming Theological Anthropology: After the Philosophical Turn to Relationality*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.
- Sideris, Lisa H. *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*. New York, NY: Avon Books, 1975.
- Soelle, Dorothee. *Suffering*. Translated by Everett Kalin. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1975.

- Sorrell, Roger D. *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Southgate, Christopher. *The Groaning of Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.
- Staniloae, Dumitru. *The Experience of God: Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*. Volume 2 (The World: Creation and Deification). Translated and edited by Ioan Ionita and Robert Barringer. Brookline, MA: Hold Cross Orthodox Press, 2000 (original Romanian in 1978).
- Steenberg, Matthew Craig. *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Redemption*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2008.
- Steiner, Gary. *Anthropocentrism and Its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.
- Swimme, Brian and Thomas Berry. *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flashing Forth to the Ecozoic Era—A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1994.
- Taylor, Angus. *Animals and Ethics: An Overview of the Philosophical Debate*. Third Edition. Buffalo, NY: Broadview Press, 2009.
- Taylor, Paul W. *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Theophilus of Antioch. *To Autolycus*. Translated by Marcus Dods. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Editors. Ante-Nicene Christian Library. Volume 3. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1847.
- Thorsen, Don. *An Exploration of Christian Theology*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008.
- Toolan, David. *At Home in the Cosmos*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003.
- Tsirpanlis, Constantine N. *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991.
- Volf, Miroslav, Carmen Krieg, and Thomas Kucharz, Editors. *The Future of Theology: Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.

- Volf, Miroslav and Michael Welker, Editors. *God's Life in Trinity*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006.
- von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *The Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2004.
- _____. *Spirit and Institution: Explorations in Theology IV*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1989.
- _____. *The Word Made Flesh: Explorations in Theology I*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1989.
- _____. *The Last Act. Theo-Drama, Volume 5*. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1988.
- Waldau, Paul. *The Specter of Speciesism: Buddhist and Christian Views of Animals*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Ware, Kallistos. *The Orthodox Way*. Revised Edition. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995 (original 1979).
- Webb, Stephen H. *Good Eating*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001.
- Wennberg, Robert N. *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.
- Westermann, Claus. *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.
- Williams, Patricia. *Doing Without Adam and Eve: Sociobiology and Original Sin*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Wolde, Ellen van. *Stories of the Beginning: Genesis 1-11 and Other Creation Stories*. Ridgefield: Morehouse Publishing, 1995.
- Zizioulas, John. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. New York, NY: Crestwood, 1985.
- _____. *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*. Paul McPartlan, Editor. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.

Articles and Essays:

- Bauckham, Richard. "Eschatology in *The Coming of God*." In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Richard Bauckham, Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 1-34.

- _____. "Jesus and Animals I: What did he Teach?" *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998: 33-48.
- _____. "Jesus and Animals II: What did he Practice?" *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998: 49-60.
- Berkman, John. "Towards a Thomistic Theology of Animality." *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 21-40.
- Berry, Thomas. "Every Being Has Rights." Available online at <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/documents/Berry%20-%20Every%20Being%20has%20Rights.pdf>; Internet, accessed January 2012.
- Birch, Charles. "Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature." In *Liberating Life; Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*. Charles Birch, William Eakin, and Jay McDaniel, Editors. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Bordeianu, Radu. "Maximus and Ecology: The Relevance of Maximus the Confessor's Theology of Creation for the Present Ecological Crisis." *Downside Review* 127, no. 447 (2009): 103-126.
- _____. "Priesthood Natural, Universal, and Ordained: Dumitru Staniloae's Communion Ecclesiology." *Pro Ecclesia* 19, no. 4 (2010): 405-433.
- Castelo, Daniel. "Moltmann's Dismissal of Divine Impassibility: Warranted?" *The Scottish Journal of Theology* 61/4 (2008): 396-407.
- Chryssavgis, John. "The Earth as Sacrament: Insights from Orthodox Christian Theology and Spirituality." In *The Orthodox Handbook of Religion and Ecology*. Roger S. Gottlieb, Ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006: 92-114.
- Clark, Gillian. "The Fathers and the Animals: The Rule of Reason?" *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 67-79.
- Clifford, Anne M. "Creation." In *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*. Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011, 201-254.

- _____. "Foundations for A Catholic Ecological Theology of God." *And God Saw That It Was Good": Catholic Theology and the Environment*. Edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996, 19-46.
- Clough, David. "The Anxiety of the Human Animal: Martin Luther on Non-human Animals and Human Animality." *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 41-60.
- Cowdin, Daniel. "The Moral Status of Otherkind in Christian Ethics." In *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, Editors. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, 261-316.
- Creegan, Hoggard. "Being an Animal and Being Made in the Image of God." *Colloquium* 39/2 (November 2007): 185-203.
- Deffenbaugh, Daniel G. "Toward Thinking Like a Mountain: The Evolution of an Ecological Conscience." *Soundings* 78/2 (Summer 1995): 229-61.
- Derrida, Jacques. "The Animal That Therefore I Am." Printed in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Translated by David Wills. Marie-Louise Mallet, editor. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
- Deanne-Drummond, Celia. "Are Animals Moral? Taking Soundings through Vice, Virtue, Conscience and *Imago Dei*." In *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 190-210.
- Edwards, Denis. "Every Sparrow that Falls to the Ground: The Cost of Evolution and the Christ-Event." *Ecotheology* 11/1 (2006): 103-23.
- _____. "Eucharist and Ecology: Keeping Memorial of Creation." *Worship* 82 (2008): 194-213.
- _____. "The Redemption of Animals in an Incarnational Theology." *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 81-99.
- Ellard, Peter. "Thomas Berry as the Groundwork for a Dark Green Catholic Theology." In *Confronting the Climate Crisis: Catholic Theological Perspectives*. Jame Schaefer, Editor. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2011, 301-20.

- Fergusson, David. "Creation." In *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance, Editors. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007, 72-90.
- French, William. "Beast Machines and the Technocratic Reduction of Life." In *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*. Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel, Editors. New York: Orbis Books, 1993: 24-43.
- _____. "Catholicism and the Common Good." In *An Ecology of the Spirit*. Michael Barnes, Editor. Lanham, MD: University Press of America Press, 1993: 177-194.
- _____. "Returning to Creation: Moltmann's Eschatology Naturalized." *The Journal of Religion* 68/1 (1988): 178-81.
- _____. "Subject-centered and Creation-centered Paradigms in Recent Catholic Thought." *The Journal of Religion* 70/1 (January 1990): 48-72
- Grenz, Stanley. "Jesus as the Imago Dei: Image-of-God Christology and the Non-Linear Linearity of Theology." *JETS* 47 4 (December 2004): 617-28.
- Gustafson, James M. *A Sense of the Divine: The Natural Environment from a Theocentric Perspective*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1996.
- _____. *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*. 2 volumes. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Harakas, Stanley S. "'The Earth is the Lord's': Orthodox Theology and the Environment." *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 44, 1-4 (1999): 149-162.
- Harrison, Nonna Verna. "The Human Person as the Image and Likeness of God." In *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*. Edited by Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008: 78-91.
- Hart, Trevor. "Imagination for the Kingdom of God? Hope, Promise, and the Transformative Power of an Imagined Future." In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Richard Bauckham, Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 61-76.
- Hauerwas, Stanley and John Berkman. "A Trinitarian Theology of the 'Chief End' of 'All Flesh.'" In *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel, Editors. New York: Orbis Books, 1993: 62-74.
- Hick, John. "An Irenaean Theodicy." In *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*. Stephen T. Davis, Editor. Westminster John Knox Press, 2001: 29-52.

- Hiebert, Theodore. "The Human Vocation: Origins and Transformations in Christian Traditions." In *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*, Dieter T Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, Editors. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000: 135-54.
- Holt, Sally Smith. "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from a Theological Perspective." *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005): 101-9.
- Huff, Peter A. "Calvin and the Beasts: Animals in John Calvin's Theological Discourse." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/1 (March 1999): 67-75.
- Hull, David L. "God of the Galapagos." *Nature* 352 (August 1992): 485-486.
- Ickert, Scott. "Luther and Animals: Subject to Adam's Fall?" *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 90-99.
- Irwin, Kevin W. "Recent Sacramental Theology: A Review Discussion." *The Thomist* 47 (1983): 592-608.
- _____. "Sacramentality and the Theology of Creation: A Recovered Paradigm for Sacramental Theology." *Louvain Studies*, 23 (1998) 159-79.
- _____. "The Sacramental World – Sacramentality as the Primary Language for Sacraments." *Worship* 76:3 (May 2002) 197-211.
- _____. "The Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments." In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*. Edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer. Washington, D.C.: The United States Catholic Conference, 1996: 105-146.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. "Losing and Finding Creation in the Christian Tradition." In *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, Editors. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000: 3-22.
- Kent, Bonnie. "Habits and Virtues (Ia IIae, qq. 49–70)." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Stephen J. Pope, Editor. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002): 116-30.
- Khalil, Issa J. "The Orthodox Fast and the Philosophy of Vegetarianism." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 35, 3 (1990): 237-259.
- Gunton, Colin E. "Between Allegory and Myth: The Legacy of the Spiritualising of Genesis." In *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and*

- Philosophy*. Colin E. Gunton, Editor. New York, NY: T&T Clark International, 2004, 47-62.
- Law, Jerry. "Jürgen Moltmann's Ecological Hermeneutics." *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*. David G. Horrell, Cherryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, Editors. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010: 223-239.
- Lewis, C. S. "A Case for Abolition." *Christianity and Animals: A Book of Readings*. Andrew Lizney and Tom Regan, Editors. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1990: 160-164.
- Linzey, Andrew. "C. S. Lewis's Theology of Animals." *Anglican Theological Review* 80/1 (Winter 1998): 60-81.
- _____. "The Divine Worth of Other Creatures: A Response to Reviews of *Animal Theology*." *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005): 111-124.
- _____. "Liberation Theology and the Oppression of Animals." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 46, 4 (1993): 507-525.
- _____. "The Servant Species: Humanity as Priesthood." *Between the Species: A Journal of Ethics* 6, 3 (Summer 1991):109-120.
- _____. "Unfinished Creation: The Moral and Theological Significance of the Fall." *Ecotheology* 4 (January, 1998): 20-26.
- Louth, Andrew. "Between Creation and Transfiguration: The Environment in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition." *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*. David G. Horrell, Cherryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, Editors. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010: 211-222.
- _____. "Eastern Orthodox Eschatology." In *The Orthodox Handbook of Eschatology*. Jerry L. Walls, Editor. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008: 233-247.
- Ludlow, Morwenna. "Power and Dominion: Patristic Interpretations of Genesis 1." *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*. David G. Horrell, Cherryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavrakopoulou, Editors. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010: 140-153.
- May, David M. "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from a New Testament Perspective." *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005): 87-93.
- McEntire, Mark. "A Review of Andrew Linzey's *Animal Theology* from an Old Testament Perspective." *Review and Expositor*, 102 (Winter 2005): 95-99.

- McIntosh, Adam. "Human and Animal Relations in the Theology of Karl Barth." *Pacifica* 22/1 (February 2009): 20-35.
- Meeks, M. Douglas. "The Social Trinity and Property." In *God's Life in Trinity*. Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006: 13-21.
- Messer, Neil. "Humans, Animals, Evolution and Ends." In *Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 211-27.
- Meyendorff, John. "Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology." *St. Vladimir's Theology Quarterly*, 27/1 (1983): 27-37.
- _____. "Reply to Jürgen Moltmann's 'The Unity of the Triune God.'" *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 28/3 (1984): 183-188.
- Mickey, Sam. "Contributions to Anthropocosmic Environmental Ethics." *Worldviews* 11 (2007): 226-47.
- Middleton, J. Richard. "Created in the Image of Violent God? The Ethical Problem of the Conquest of Chaos in Biblical Creation Narratives." *Interpretation* 58/4 (October 2004): 341-55.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. "The Bible, the Exegete and the Theologian." In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Richard Bauckham, Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 227-32.
- _____. "God's Covenant and Our Responsibility." In *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*. R. J. Berry, Editor. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000: 107-13.
- _____. "God's Kenosis in the Creation and Consummation of the World," In *God and Evolution: A Reader*. Mary Kathleen Cunningham, Editor. New York, NY: Routledge, 2007.
- _____. "Horizons of Hope." *The Christian Century*. May 20 (2009): 31-33.
- _____. "The Liberation of the Future and Its Anticipations in History." In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Richard Bauckham, Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 265-89.
- _____. "The Logic of Hell." In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Richard Bauckham, Editor. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 43-47.

- _____. "The World in God or God in the World?" In *God Will Be All in All: The Eschatology of Jürgen Moltmann*. Edited by Richard Bauckham. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 35-41.
- O'Daly, Gerald J. P. "Hierarchy in Augustine's Thought." In *From Augustine to Eriugena: Essays in Neoplatonism and Christianity in Honor of John O'Meara*. F. X. Martin and J. A. Richmond, Editors. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991: 143-154.
- Passmore, John. "The Treatment of Animals." *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 36, 2 (1975): 195-218.
- Pedersen, Kusumita. "Inclusion and Exclusion: Reflections on Moral Community and Salvation." In *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. Dieter Hessel and Larry Rasmussen, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001: 33-52.
- Pinckaers, Servais-Théodore. "The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas." *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Stephen J. Pope, Editor. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002: 17-29.
- Polkinghorne, John. "The Demise of Democritus." In *The Trinity and an Entangled World: Relationality in Physical Science and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010, 15-31.
- _____. "Jürgen Moltmann's Engagement with the Natural Sciences." In *God's Life in Trinity*. Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006: 61-70.
- Pope, Stephen J. "Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas." *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Stephen J. Pope, Editor. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002: 30-53.
- Power, David N., Kevin W. Irwin and Regis A. Duffy. "Sacramental Theology: A Review of the Literature." *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 657-705.
- Rahner, Karl. "The Hermeneutics of Eschatological Assertion." *Theological Investigations IV*: 323-346.
- _____. "On Christian Dying." *Theological Investigations VII*: 285-293. (Further Theology of the Spiritual Life I)
- _____. "The Resurrection of the Body." *Theological Investigations*. Volume II (Man in the Church). Translated by Karl Kruger. Baltimore, MA: Helicon Press, 1963, 203-216.

- Reed, Esther D. "Animals in Orthodox Iconography." *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 61-77.
- Reid, Duncan. "Some Ecojustice Principles in the Neo-Patristic Vision." *Ecotheology* 7 (1999): 59-70.
- Rolston III, Holmes. "Disvalues in Nature." *The Monist* 75 (April 1992): 250-78.
- _____. "Does Nature Need to be Redeemed?" *Zygon* 29 (1994): 205-229.
- _____. "Naturalizing and Systematizing Evil." In *Is Nature Ever Evil? Religion, Science, and Value*. Willem B. Drees, Editor. London, UK: Routledge, 2003: 67-86.
- Runyon, Theodore. "The World as the Original Sacrament." *Worship* 54 6 (1980): 495-511.
- Santmire, H. Paul. "Partnership with Nature According to the Scriptures: Beyond the Theology of Stewardship." *Christian Scholar's Review* 32/4 (Summer 2003): 381-412.
- Schaefer, Jame. "Valuing Earth Intrinsically and Instrumentally: A Theological Framework for Environmental Ethics." *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 783-814.
- Schweiker, William. "The Spirit of Life and the Reverence for Life." In *God's Life in Trinity*. Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006: 22-32.
- Schweitzer, Albert. "First Sermon on Reverence for Life." In *Reverence for Life: The Ethics of Albert Schweitzer for the Twenty-First Century*. Marvin and Kurt Bergel, Editors. New York, NY: Syracuse University Press: 62-69.
- Scott, Peter Manley. "Sloughing Towards Jerusalem? An Anti-human Theology of Rough Beasts and Other Animals." In *Creaturely Theology, Creaturely Theology: On God, Humans and Other Animals*. Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, Editors. London, UK: SCM Press, 2009: 171-89.
- Sideris, Lisa. "Writing Straight with Crooked Lines: Holmes Rolston's Ecological Theology and Theodicy." In *Nature, Value, Duty: Life on Earth with Holmes Rolston III*. Christopher J. Preston and Wayne Ouderkirk, Editors. Dordrecht, NL: Springer, 2007: 77-101.
- Southgate, Christopher. "The New Days of Noah? Assisted Migration as an Ethical Imperative in an Era of Climate Change." In *Animals on the Agenda: Questions*

- about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998: 249-65.
- Theokritoff, Elizabeth. "Creator and Creation." In *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*. Edited by Mary B. Cunningham and Elizabeth Theokritoff. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008: 63-77.
- Torrance, Alan J. "*Creatio Ex Nihilo* and the Spatio-Temporal Dimensions, with Special Reference to Jürgen Moltmann and D. C. Williams." In *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy*. Colin E. Gunton, Editor. New York, NY: T&T Clark, 1997: 83-103.
- Towner, W. Sibley. "Clones of God: Genesis 1:26-28 and the Image of God in the Hebrew Bible." *Interpretation* 59/4 (October 2005): 341-356.
- Tucker, Mary Evelyn. "A Communion of Subjects and a Multiplicity of Intelligences." In *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*. Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton, Editors. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006: 645-650.
- _____. "Thomas Berry: A Brief Biography." *Religion and Intellectual Life* 5/4 (Summer 1988): 107-114.
- Vivian, Tim. "The Peaceable Kingdom: Animals as Parables in the *Virtues of Saint Macarius*." *Anglican Theological Review* 85/3 (Summer 2003): 477-491.
- Viviano, Benedict T. "Eschatology and the Quest for the Historical Jesus." In *The Orthodox Handbook of Eschatology*. Jerry L. Walls, Editor. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008, 73-90.
- Volf, Miroslav. "A Queen and a Beggar: Challenges and Prospects of Theology." In *The Future of Theology: Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann*. Miroslav Volf, Carmen Krieg, and Thomas Kucharz, Editors. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996: ix-xviii.
- Walsh, Brian J. "The Theology of Hope and the Doctrine of Creation: An Appraisal of Jürgen Moltmann." *Evangelical Quarterly* 59/1 (1987): 53-76.
- Webb, Stephen. "Ecology vs. The Peaceable Kingdom: Toward a Better Theology of Nature." *Soundings* 79/1-2 (Spring/Summer 1996): 239-52.
- White, Lynn. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis." Reprinted in *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*. R. J. Berry, Editor. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-varsity Press, 2000: 31-42.

Wilkinson, Loren. "The Making of the *Declaration*." In *The Care of Creation: Focusing Concern and Action*, R. J. Berry, editor (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 50-59.

The Worldwatch Institute. *Vital Signs 2012: The Trends That Are Shaping Our Future*. Washington DC: Worldwatch Institute, 2012.

Wynn, Mark. "Thomas Aquinas: Reading the Idea of Dominion in the Light of the Doctrine of Creation." *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives*. David G. Horrell, Cherryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate and Francesca Stavropoulou, Editors. New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2010: 154-167.

Yamamoto, Dorothy. "Aquinas and Animals: Patrolling the Boundary?" *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animal Ethics for Theology and Ethics*. Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, Editors. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998: 80-89.

Zizioulas, John. "Ecological Asceticism: A Cultural Revolution." *Sourozh* 67 (Fall 1997): 22-25.

_____. "Preserving God's Creation: Parts I and II." *King's Theological Review* 12 (Spring 1989): 1-5.

_____. "Preserving God's Creation: Part III." *King's Theological Review* 13 (Spring 1990): 1-5.

Ecclesial Documents:

"An Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation." Printed in *The Care of Creation: Focusing Our Concern and Action*. R. J. Berry, Editor. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 18-22.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. *A New Earth: The Environmental Challenge*. Pastoral Statement of 2002. Available online at <http://catholicearthcareoz.net/socialjustice.html>. Internet; accessed September, 2009.

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. "You Love All That Exists... All Things Are Yours, God, Lover of Life..." Pastoral Letter of 2003. Available online at <http://www.cccb.ca/site/Files/pastoralenvironment.html>. Internet; accessed September, 2009.

Gaudium et Spes. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm; Internet, accessed April, 2009.

Nostra Aetate. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm; Internet, accessed April, 2009.

Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I. *Common Declaration on Environmental Ethics*. 2002. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2002/june/index.htm. Internet; accessed September, 2009.

Pope John Paul II. *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all of Creation*. Message on World Day of Peace. 1990. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/index.htm. Internet; accessed September 2009.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Renewing the Earth*. Pastoral Statement of 1991. Available online at <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.shtml>. Internet; accessed September, 2009.