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At the end of *I am the Truth*, Michel Henry laments a technology which "extends its reign to the whole planet, sowing desolation and ruin everywhere."[1] He pictures an entirely automated world where real affective experience is replaced by simulacra and where genuine life is denigrated and excluded. Such exclusion of authentic life by its artificial replacement causes enormous problems in society, as it removes us from real life, from each other, and from our own selves. Experience becomes entirely *mediated*, and is no longer immediate or grounded in real fleshly materiality. Henry's critique of technology, articulated in multiple works from his 1987 text *Barbarism* to his final work *Words of Christ*, is trenchant and illuminating. Integral to it is a critique of the vision and analysis of life proposed by contemporary science and a recovery of the immediate passionate and ultimately divine Life of humans. This seems to suggest that his critique of technology is directed solely at the impact technology has on humans and disregards the ways in which it also sows "desolation and ruin" for non-human life and indeed for the "whole planet." Yet, are humans the only living beings, as Henry seems to assert? Can his phenomenology of immanent Life not also have implications for non-human life? In this paper I seek to show that Henry's critique of technology can be used against his own stark divisions between human and non-human life and consequently can become useful for a more inclusive ecological vision that would help us address the havoc wrought upon our planet by the unbridled use of technology. The first part of the paper lays out Henry's critique of technology in some detail, highlighting the ways in which it contains important insights for our contemporary situation. The second part of the paper explores the stark division Henry draws between human generation from the divine life and the creation of everything else, including his rejection of any identification of humans with "protozoa and honey bees," which would seem to suggest a complete lack of concern for non-human life.

The final part of the paper seeks to find a way beyond this dichotomy by showing how Henry's proposal, despite his own anthropocentric focus, can provide resources for ecophenomenology by extending his critique of technology in environmentally conscious ways without losing sight of his phenomenological insights about life and the human condition.

Henry's Critique of Technology

Technology kills life and empties it of pathos. That is Henry's most fundamental contention. Technology is artificial, renders life inauthentic, and denies us access to true reality. It separates us from our own fleshly and immanent experience and instead mediates experience in artificial ways that are no longer grounded in material reality. It also makes us unfeeling, uncaring, unloving, ultimately inanimate. These claims are grounded in a larger assumption about the contemporary scientific enterprise. According to Henry, starting with Galileo, science has assumed the mantle of truth. Instead of remaining in its own limited sphere, it has posited itself as the only true access to reality and invalidated all other approaches, especially those of the humanities.[2] Yet, it is not science as such that is the problem for Henry, but the idea that a Galilean conception of science may become the only truth and that all other truths would be subordinated to it and judged on its terms: "It is not scientific knowledge that is in question; it is the ideology joined to it today which holds that it is the sole possible knowledge and that all other ones must be eliminated."[3] From Galileo onward, reductionistic accounts of life and the world predominate: all human passions and joys become reduced to purely scientific accounts of molecules, neurons, chemical transmitters, and so forth. Contemporary techno-science is the direct result of this Galilean exclusion of what might be called "phenomenological life" in favor of scientific and mechanized accounts of life. In consequence, Henry draws an absolute distinction between contemporary science in the form of technology, which claims to deal with life but actually does not, and culture, which is the harbinger of true life and sensibility.[4] He outlines this argument the most fully in *Barbarism*, a text that reads like a manifesto and evoked plenty of controversy when it was first published in France. Technology is the very root of barbarism and destructive of culture and of the intellectual life which sustains and animates it. In fact, science and technology are destructive of life in several of its facets: First, they attack economic life and eliminate authentic labor and meaningful work. Second, they destroy culture, particularly art and intellectual life, ultimately forming an attack upon the university. Third, especially in their manifestation as media technology, they invade social and personal life and render us less than human and incapable of genuine relationships. Hence, most fundamentally, contemporary techno-science transforms and maybe even eliminates genuine human life and identity.

First, as "technique" invades labor and the processes of production it eliminates life. Production is no longer a "living" work and the relationship between workers and their labor in all its physical manifestations is severed. This constitutes a real material change, as robots and machines take over from real people and their physical bodies engaged with the material. Information technology exacerbates this situation and removes us even further from actual life.[5] Henry indicts technology as "nature without the human being... abstract nature, reduced to itself," which becomes a self-actualization of nature exclusive of the human being.[6] The technological revolution eliminates life and reduces everything to mechanical processes. All rationale for production and value of work disappears. Henry makes a similar argument in *I am the Truth*. Technology severs work from life and action and turns it into inanimate and anonymous processes. This has dire consequences: Workers are excluded from economic and social life in an "uncontrolled capitalism." As technology "sweeps man away from the surface of the earth" it manifests itself as the "anti-Christ" in its negation of life.[7] Henry employs the example of a flight simulator to illustrate this removal from real life and its material and affective manifestations, concluding that this leads to a "madness" in which the difference between reality and appearances or simulation can no longer be perceived.[8] In all these ways human identity as traditionally shaped through meaningful labor is alienated from itself and rendered artificial through its mechanization.

Second, technological progress is tantamount to murder of aesthetic, intellectual, spiritual and moral life. Techno-science feeds on an internal contradiction because it is a mode of life that opposes life. Its way of "sensing and experiencing oneself" turns against itself.[9] He calls it an ideology, a positivism, a flight from self.[10] Only culture (and phenomenological analysis) has access to true life as the intimate auto-affection of our sensibility. As in his work on Kandinsky, Henry employs art as a critique for science, showing how art captures the reality of life more fully and more authentically than the abstract objectivity of Galilean science.[11] Television especially shows our current self-delusion and the obsession with images characteristic of the contemporary flight from the self.[12] Media, science and technology here become practically equated for him or at least closely connected. Technology dominates all other domains of thought and imposes its way of operating upon them. True affect is eliminated and the projected image, which has no genuine substance but is only a fleeting appearance, becomes the sole reality. The "ontological essence of television" is destructive of life and essentially negates it.[13] The "actual," which television constantly portrays in its obsession with contemporaneity, is incoherent and insignificant: "The more absurd television becomes, the better does it fulfill its function."[14] Even when it treats important matters, it renders them essentially meaningless. All existence becomes mediated and thus is no longer authentic experience of

life.[15] Henry brings these arguments together again by arguing at the end of his treatment that technology destroys universities and university life, which loses its essential task of educating people for life. This is why he calls this contemporary destruction of life barbaric. Our world has become inhuman and insensible. It has undergone an ontological upheaval, so that society is no longer rooted in life, but in the "processes and procedures that have set aside life so that they can be established and used."[16] Freedom of the press and of information supplants and replaces genuine freedom of cultural expression.

Yet, television and other media not only destroy art and meaningful labor, but also attack our very humanity by destroying social relationships and alienating us from ourselves. The visual image transposes real affective experience into simulacra, trivializes them and presents them in their most violent form. It becomes a "voyeurism" that replaces genuine experience and ultimately eliminates life.[17] Again, Henry carries this criticism even further in *I am the Truth*, where he provides a portrayal of technology's substitute for life, which produces pleasures in purely artificial fashion and brings with it various social ills that become essentially invisible to us:

> People debased, humiliated, despised and despising themselves, trained in school to despise themselves, to count for nothing—just particles and molecules; admiring everything lesser than themselves and execrating everything that is greater than themselves. Everything worthy of love and adoration. People reduced to simulacra, to idols that feel nothing, to automatons. And replaced by them—by computers and robots. People chased out of their work and their homes, pushed into corners and gutters, huddled on subway benches, sleeping in cardboard boxes. People replaced by abstractions, by economic entities, by profits and money. People treated mathematically, digitally, statistically, counted like animals and counting for much less. People turned away from Life's Truth, caught in all the traps and marvels where this life is denied, ridiculed, mimicked, simulated—absent. People given over to the insensible, become themselves insensible, whose eyes are empty as a fish's. Dazed people, devoted to specters and spectacles that always expose their own invalidity and bankruptcy; devoted to false knowledge, reduced to empty shells, to empty heads—to "brains." People whose emotions and loves are just glandular secretions. People who have been liberated by making them think their sexuality is a natural process, the site and place of their infinite Desire. People whose responsibility and dignity have no definite site

anymore. People who in the general degradation will envy the animals. *People* will want to die—but not *Life*. It is not just any god today who is still able to save us, but—when the shadow of death is looming over the world—the One who is Living.[18]

This is a heavy indictment: technology denies, ridicules, mimics, simulates life, but ultimately kills all pathos and renders us empty shells devoid of life. *Barbarism* had already ended on a similar note: "They would like to transmit this culture, to enable one to become what one is, and to escape the unbearable boredom of the techno-media world with its drugs, monstrous growth, anonymous transcendence. But it has reduced them to silence once and for all. Can the world still be saved by some of them?"[19] *I am the Truth* now responds to this question: we can be saved by the "Living One"—Christ. The only alternative to the dangers of technology for Henry is the one who brings Life and who can help us participate in this life, a life of love and pathos. The "ethic" of Christianity, he suggests, is an ethic of love, the "words of Christ" are words of life, which communicate pathos and love to us. Christ's message is one that challenges our false ways of being (which cannot even be called living) and provides us with a different vision of life, one that turns our entire lives upside down. We will explore this "solution" to the evils of technology more fully momentarily, but should focus briefly on the important insights gained from Henry's critique of technology.

While one may well remain doubtful about Henry's claim that Christianity *alone* provides access to genuine life,[20] what is maybe most insightful about his treatment is the fundamental critique of science and technology he launches instead of a merely cosmetic critique of some of the direst consequences of technology, which would continue to regard it as intrinsically benign and necessary. He takes seriously that technology has become our *de facto* way of life in the world in such a way that alternatives become impossible or at least practically unthinkable. This is precisely the reason why any challenge to its pervasive influence is immediately dismissed as romantic and unrealistic. Alternatives to lives of TVs, cell-phones, computers, and countless other even more recent technological gadgets can no longer even be envisioned by many people. This basic assumption that technology is somehow not only inherently good but also "here to stay" and thus a non-negotiable issue, makes any challenge to or serious discussion about it practically impossible. Henry realizes this by acknowledging that our very questioning of this system always arrives too late.[21]

Instead, Henry recognizes that our current technological life involves a fundamental transformation of human identity and search for meaning. Although he puts this primarily in terms of machines and automata (as he died before the revolution in social networking and other media-related technology), this transformation is heightened by information technology.[22]

Labor is now often conducted almost entirely via screen. People are spending increasingly larger percentages of their lives in artificial "friendships" in a virtual space that they regard as reality and assume to be authentic relationships. Pleasures and pains are experienced in mediated fashion. We are displaying our most intimate emotions through machines and yet these gadgets are no longer even recognized as machines, but are simply taken to be extensions of ourselves.[23] The inauthentic, virtual reality presented to us in cyberspace has become our supposedly normal way of being in the world, a simulacrum of authentic life. Alternatives no longer exist, can hardly even be envisioned, and are often made practically impossible through the ways in which the contemporary world has become structured. Henry is not simply "technophobic," but recognizes that the "world" and "truth" of science and technology is precisely a *world* with its own *truth* that functions in many ways like a religion by providing an all-encompassing worldview and life. He is not advocating a "romantic" return to some supposedly pristine prior non-technological state.[24] Rather, he provides a trenchant analysis of the ways in which technology has actually reconfigured our lives today. This constitutes not a facile dismissal of technology, but a real recognition that within the present worldview non-technological alternatives are no longer possible. What makes his critique particularly valuable is, on the one hand, this insistence that technology has become the *only* truth, posited as an alternative not only to religion but also to artistic, cultural, and academic life, and, on the other hand, his proposal for a return to human materiality and concrete affectivity instead of some docetic or Gnostic flight from the material world.[25] Unlike many other critics, Henry perceives what is central in technology: a reconfiguration of what it means to be human and how humans experience their reality and relations with others.[26] To address these far more fundamental—and indeed absolutely crucial—issues, a mere focus on a few isolated detrimental consequences of technology is not sufficient.

Divine Life and Generation

Henry argues, then, that most of Western thinking, whether scientific or philosophical, has missed the issue of Life and misunderstands what life is. He sees this as particularly true of Galilean science, but also criticizes Heidegger's *Dasein*-philosophy (by which he is certainly also informed in important ways) as the culmination of philosophy's ignoring of phenomenological life. He claims that this direct relationship between consciousness and its auto-affectivity has never been discovered or considered seriously in the history of Western philosophical thought. Science, by examining molecules and atoms, has made matters far worse, by reducing life to material particles instead of real experience: "*In biology there is no life; there are only algorithms.*"[27] Even Heidegger's analysis of "being-in-the-world" still considers life from the outside and does not realize its power of self-revelation. Henry criticizes what he calls "the very disturbing link

between these diverse ways of slandering life."[28] He therefore proposes what he considers a radical phenomenology of the flesh, where life is understood as auto-affection, experiencing oneself as affected.

This phenomenology of the flesh refers not to the visible materiality of the body, but to the experience of auto-affectivity, as it is expressed in emotion and action. In his view Western science and philosophy have made an arbitrary and false distinction between life (as visible molecules and biological processes) and the ego exercising power over (or being subject to) these external processes and materials. Rather, to Henry, Life refers to something internal and invisible: it is what generates me and makes me myself, I participate in it and it makes possible all my experiences. There is an essential passivity to this experience: we "suffer" life because we do not give it to ourselves, instead we are affected by it. Humans are not primarily beings in the world, but rather they are generated by "Life" itself. Henry explicates this "Life" (which he equates with "truth" and "reality") as quasi-divine. He links "God" as the source of "Life" with humans as "living beings" who are generated by this Life and live only within it through an analysis of Christ as the "arch-son" who gives access to Life for all other living beings by being eternally generated in the divine life (and thus showing all other sons how to realize their participation in this source of Life).

Henry employs what he calls the "Christian Truth" as an alternative to the false truth of the world, represented by Galilean science. These contrasts are starkly drawn in *I am the Truth*, *Incarnation*, and *Words of Christ*. He claims that Christianity alone has preserved the immediacy of life, that it speaks forcefully and authentically of the auto-affection of the flesh, and that Christ proclaims this truth directly and without any need for mediation. Yet his concern in these works—ostensibly about Christianity—is far less to justify Christianity as somehow "true" or to exhort people to Christian faith, than to employ its message in service of his phenomenology of the flesh and his critique of technology.[29] Christianity, as he interprets it, provides an alternative vision of life that stands in contrast to the technological mirage of the world, which is a denial of life. In these late works on Christianity, Henry basically reiterates his criticism of technology that he had laid out in *Barbarism*, but now puts it in contrast to what he interprets as the Christian message. *Words of Christ* probably carries this argument the furthest.[30]

Henry contends that Christ—as a fully human being speaking human words and being apparently nothing but human—challenges our conceptions of the world and turns them upside down. It is precisely this challenge to our life that makes Christ's hearers wonder about his true identity. *Words of Christ* goes on to focus on the words of life Christ speaks and on establishing his (and ultimately our) divinity in the self-affecting connection to the divine Life. Yet in the course of this larger argument Henry is emphatic about the ways in which this word of life challenges the

apparent (and false) truths of our world, frequently employing the terms "*décomposition*" and "*bouleversement*" (which roughly mean "undoing" or disintegration and "turning upside down" or upheaval, but have a much stronger force in French than in English). In two early chapters (which include those terms in the respective titles) Henry attacks the false humanism of contemporary society, which he judges incapable of grounding any sort of ethics. Christ in his message does not merely try to "better" things a bit, but rather pulls them completely apart. It is a radical transformation, a kind of transubstantiation, a re-generation, a new birth. This includes a complete rupture of standard human relationships that turns hierarchies upside down and results in a cataclysmic upheaval of our assumptions and expectations about the human condition. Here Henry attacks especially the reciprocal nature of human relationships that rely on a kind of "tit-for-tat" version of social and economic relationships. He argues that Christ's message completely overturns these conceptions and instead shows an interior relation to the divine life.[31] Christ's words, Henry suggests, can become life in us, as we hear the divine life in our sufferings and joys. The issue is not "believing" in this word, but rather experiencing its life as we feel and experience ourselves. The gift of life, offered by Christ, delivers us from evil and gives us access to true life.

Christianity is hence interpreted as offering a solution of redemption to the contemporary destruction of life. It can return us to the phenomenological immediacy of self-affective life where we experience our joys and sorrows directly without having them mediated (and thus rendered insensate) via technology and especially the media. Far from being world-denying or disembodied, Henry claims that Christianity alone offers access to true life and reality, including an authentic experience of one's own flesh in all its unmediated passions and sensations. As explored in the first part of this paper, it is technology that is life-denying by removing us from the "real" world (of work and culture) and the authentic experiences of our own flesh. At the same time Henry argues that the Christian life gives access to true community as we discover ourselves all part of the divine life generated by the source of this life. Our passions and affections are intimately connected. Although *Words of Christ* is ostensibly about showing how Christ is divine, it ultimately returns to our ability to hear the divine word about our own identity. Henry is not finally interested in a theological statement about the incarnation, but in a phenomenological analysis of the human condition. Hearing Christ's words becomes a way of recovering our divine source of life that allows us true auto-affectivity, relations with others and a genuinely material, fleshly life that authentically experiences passions, suffering and joy. Although this is expressed as an affinity with the divine that reveals us to be "sons of God" and supported by references to multiple Gospels texts, these "Christian" references are exploited for their phenomenological content. Ultimately, all this is about the "self-revelation of absolute Life" in our "hearts"—our centers of auto-affectivity.[32] Hearing the

"words of Christ" means to access the interior (and only real) life of our "impressions, desires, emotions, wants, feelings, actions, thoughts."[33] Genuine action and passion, indeed true humanity, are only possible in this way.

Henry emphatically insists that this interpretation of life/flesh is not "world-denying" and that it does not ignore materiality. Instead, it opens up the only proper path to materiality and fleshly reality, a path that has been ignored or denied by scientific and philosophical thought. He judges artificial and incoherent the usual division established between the real (material, visible) and the imaginary (unreal, invisible). For Henry, there is only the one reality of life and the flesh, a concrete (but invisible) materiality, namely that of joy and suffering, of pleasure and pain, thus of our most immediate experiences and actions. One might say that for Henry the world and the body are part and parcel of life itself. It is Western science, instead, that stresses a false reality of "evidence" and "visibility" or "appearance" but is blind to the actions and feelings that underlie it and alone make it possible: "In the field opened by Galilean science, there are material bodies, microphysical particles, molecules, amino acid chains, neurons, and so on, but no Self. In the field opened by modern science, there is no person."[34] In contrast to this emphasis on "material bodies" and "particles," which separates artificially between "soul" and "body" or "materiality" and "consciousness," Henry advocates a more unified view. Only the flesh can grant ipseity to the Self. He asserts, for example, that "because it designates the phenomenological effectuation of the auto-revelation of Life in the ipseity in which each transcendental Self maintains its possibility, because it is nothing other than the phenomenological materiality of revelation of self which makes of each Self a Self, the flesh is linked to it as its most interior phenomenological condition of possibility, to the point where it becomes identical with it. There is no Self without flesh—but no flesh that does not carry in it a Self."[35] Self and flesh are one. This reality of the flesh is one of suffering and affection, constituted by the experiences of joy, sadness, pleasure, pain, and so forth. Our experience of the flesh is a direct experience of material reality. The flesh is so immediate to us that we cannot separate from it.

Central to this "solution" is a strong distinction between our *generation* in the divine life and the *creation* of everything else. While the world (and presumably nature) is "created," humans are "generated." He describes this as an "abyss" separating birth and creation.[36] Humans participate in life and have flesh not by virtue of their physical birth (since no human can actually create or give birth to another human) but only by their participation in the essence of life (i.e., in God): "The living comes forth in Life by depending on the very coming forth of Life in itself, by identifying itself with it—with the self-revelation of life itself that is identical with the revelation of God."[37] There is no real birth in the world: "To be born is not to come into the world.

To be born is to come into life," to be generated by Life.[38] This life is communicated by the Arch-Son, Christ, to all other sons who are hence not merely created but are generated from within the divine Life. Both materialism and phenomenology fall short: Material scientific reductionism treats humans as created material within the world. Phenomenology recognizes that humans are not objects in the world, but experience it. Humans are "open" to the world, "have" a world.[39] Henry goes even beyond this phenomenological analysis to argue that humans are not of the world at all nor maintain a relation with the world as something exterior to them, but instead experience themselves within the immediacy of the divine life in which and by which they are generated. The human is "in fact *not* created," but engendered in the divine Life.[40]

Although Henry does not make this explicit, it seems that animals and the rest of the natural world are here lumped together with "world" and its creation, not with generation in "life." He repeatedly contrasts human lives with "stone, air, fire" or other inanimate objects in the world.[41] Other living beings are rarely mentioned. Yet Henry's definition of the human being as "transcendental Self generated in the self-generation of absolute Life and in its essential Ipseity—Self taking its ipseity from Life and Life alone" does seem to separate the human being from all other living beings.[42] He consistently speaks of "man" as "son of God," identified with the Arch-Son, Christ, via a "transcendental birth."[43] All this seems to separate our life definitely and absolutely from that of all non-human beings, whether alive in the traditional sense or not. "Living beings" for Henry, are humans, not animals or plants or ecosystems. While this proposal for a renewed phenomenology of life or the flesh in his view successfully solves the problem of inter-subjectivity, such intersubjectivity is primarily human and for all intents and purposes does not include any other living beings. Henry does, in fact, occasionally acknowledge this separation explicitly: humans are different and separate from natural beings and from the world.[44] As indicated above, they participate in and are generated from Life in a way in which no other being (even one we might conventionally call "living being") is. We receive ipseity and individuality through our participation (and generation) in absolute life or flesh. Henry does reject any "care" or "concern" for the world in favor of a focus on invisible Life.[45] Although this is not "world-denying" in the traditional sense, as it is fundamentally concerned with the materiality of our feelings and passions, it does seem to reject concern for non-human materiality.

This division between human and non-human life may be due to the way in which Henry aligns humans with the divine, and therefore not with the natural. This is partially the case because he criticizes so strongly a reduction of "Life" to "living organisms." He wants us to examine our own experience of life, instead of that of "protozoa, or, at best, honeybees."[46] Yet that often leads him to imply that nothing and no one besides divine and

human participate in "Life" in any sense of the term.[47] It seems, then, as if Henry permanently excludes all non-human beings—regardless of whether they are animate or inanimate—from the divine Life which is the only real and authentic life. They are part of the world and the kind of false simulacrum of life that modern science investigates. Honeybees, apparently, are not truly "alive." Sentient animals, who surely do experience *pathos*, both joy and pain, at least on some level, do not appear on Henry's radar screen. Henry's phenomenology, then, despite its stark and insightful critique of technology, appears not to be useful for environmental thinking that would be more attentive to the impact of technology on the earth and its living creatures. Yet, so I want to suggest in closing, although Henry himself does not include non-human animals in his vision of Life, his phenomenology of life can still provide important resources for a more inclusive proposal. Henry can provide us with useful eco-phenomenological insight, even if he himself did not push his philosophy in such a direction.

Can Henry's "Life" Have Implications for Non-Human Life?

Henry does not explicitly consider animals in his treatment. The stark contrasts he draws are usually between objects in the world on the one side and humans on the other. The above mention of honeybees is together with a brief critical exploration of our experience of a dog and a tree, the only mention of non-human living beings in his text.[48] Yet, his exclusion of nature or the earth seems neither intentional nor particularly fundamental to his emphasis on materiality, but rather arises out of his strong criticism of Western fascination with the scientific and technological enterprise. As we have seen, Henry's critique of science and its pre-occupation with data and reduction of everything to processes provides important insights for our contemporary situation. Although the way in which he formulates it often seems to lead to a rejection of the environment, the earth, and nature (either as wrapped up with the scientific outlook that focuses on "molecules" and "honeybees" or as insignificant because not concerned with affection and Life), such a rejection does not appear absolutely necessary for his project. Life, Henry insists, is transmitted "to all possible living beings." While such living beings for him are ones characterized by individual ipseity, auto-affection, and affirmation (or acknowledgment) of Life, his account of Life may well prove fruitful beyond the living beings on whom he himself concentrates. Let me suggest two possible ways of applying Henry's phenomenology of Life to non-human "living beings," the first taking its inspiration from his critique of technology, the second from his material phenomenology of self-affected Life. This is not to argue that Henry himself makes or would have made these applications, but to show how his phenomenology provides resources for a more eco-phenomenological focus.[49]

First of all, the core of Henry's critique of technology actually applies in very important ways to non-human nature. Technology has turned nature into a resource to be exploited at will. It has similarly treated its subjects as simulacra devoid of life. Nature is no longer experienced immediately, but is mediated through technology, both to us and to its other members among themselves. Animals, especially in the meat factories, are treated as objects without feeling or context. The land is regarded as entirely inanimate, as a mere locus for food production. Its plant life is to be razed, its nutrients killed with pesticides and other toxic chemicals, and artificial, highly manipulated cash crops are then raised through infusion of fertilizers that violate the integrity of the soil. The cultural and living context of earth and land has been murdered, just as the natural, symbiotic relationships that used to exist between humans and animals have been destroyed, so that they now seem not only foreign but practically inanimate to us. A view regarding nature as alive or even as a person is dismissed as romantic or mythical.

All of Henry's insights regarding technology (except maybe the one explicitly concerned with university life) can be directly applied to non-human life as well. The way in which technology has alienated us from our labor corresponds to the way in which it has alienated us from the land. The objectification of economic labor is, in fact, particularly visible in modern agribusiness with its mono-cultures and objectification of the land and in the industry of meat-production. Both eliminate human relationships to animal life and the land and make labor not only deeply alienated but ultimately meaningless and violent. Instead of living in a symbiotic relationship with the land and the animals as traditional farming communities did, the labor is done with mega-machines that turn nature into an automaton, a passive object. Meaningful labor and genuine care for one's surroundings have been eliminated. This alienation from land and labor is depicted most forcefully by Wendell Berry who already in the 1970s described modern agriculture as a crisis of character, agriculture and culture.[50] He provided detailed descriptions of the ways in which modern agribusiness in particular is not only ecologically destructive but alienates us from the land and ultimately from ourselves.[51] Similar alienation characterizes information-technology, which has severed all contact with the earth and operates in a virtual reality where all experiences are mediated.

The loss of culture Henry sees as resulting from technological replacement of genuine meaning similarly extends to our relationship to nature. Painting need not be purely pastoral to be rooted in a connectedness to the earth.[52] Heidegger already pointed to the need for rootedness in the ground in order for genuine creativity to be possible.[53] The speed of contemporary life, which Henry sees as a particular detrimental effect of technology, as it makes the kind of creativity necessary for genuine cultural contributions almost impossible, similarly affects our relation to nature. Not

only does this apply to fast-food, which dehumanizes nature (from highly processed ingredients that no longer go bad to the cutting of the rainforest in order to produce the meat necessary for this diet), but also to the ways in which we experience nature when we do decide to venture into it (the average time spent in a national park—usually considered as the epitome of "real" nature as "wilderness"—is only a few minutes).[54] No genuine encounter with nature can take place in such highly manufactured tourism and, in fact, every effort is made to reduce any uncomfortable intrusion of nature into the experience, which is enjoyed from the car or the tourist center and results primarily in digital memories in virtual space.[55]

The third critique Henry provides of technology can also be applied to non-humans. On the one hand, technology radically changes the relationships animals have with each other, both their own species and their traditional habitats. Again the meat industry, which separates veal calves almost immediately from their mothers or packs hens into tiny cages by the dozens, provides a particularly vivid example of this. But technology also fundamentally alters the relationships animals have with the land by killing and destroying it, whether through pesticides and other chemical treatments, which precisely try to rupture the relationship of certain undesirable plants and animals to the soil, or whether via the destruction of habitats through development, pollution, and climate change. And most obviously, it alters human relationships with and experience of non-human creatures.[56] To many people, especially the increasingly larger percentage of urban dwellers, nature appears only as something foreign, either a resource to be exploited at will, a menace in the form of severe weather events, or a possible tourist destination, a pretty backdrop for the "real"—virtual—experience. Cyberspace is far more real to many people than plants or animals are or the habitats in which they and ultimately we live. Our environment has become an entirely artificial one, where we control the temperature and the ambiance, simulating eternal spring.[57] Due to the large-scale transportation of food over long distances, food consumption is no longer linked in any recognizable way to the seasons. Harvest time has become a meaningless category. This is a loss of a life-world that affects our culture and our humanity in deeply troubling ways, even apart from the damage it does to land and animals.

This also has a visual component that is linked to Henry's criticism of our televised obsession with images. Food and nature are "sold" online.[58] Images are purchased, even within stores where the advertising and presentation matters as much as the actual items purchased (apart from the fact that most products displayed in our grocery stores are highly processed and have little resemblance to real food and even supposedly perishable items are often heavily manipulated to the point where it takes them an unnaturally long time to rot and where seeds are either non-existent or cannot be used for growing new plants). Even supposedly living things such

as fruits and vegetables are essentially dead when they reach our table. In all these ways, Henry's critique of technology sheds important light also on the destruction it wreaks on nature and not just on human life. Contemporary technology destroys life and it does so in even deeper ways than Henry himself recognizes in his exclusive emphasis on *human* culture. Henry's critique, then, is eminently helpful for a more "ecological" reading. Can the alternative he proposes also be fruitful for a more inclusive vision? Let me explore a preliminary suggestion for doing so.[59]

Life, according to Henry, is immanent, immediate and subjective. It is what allows us to experience our own passions, joys, and sufferings most intimately. We *are* auto-affectivity. He rejects visions of life that reduce life to something other than itself in the form of molecules, amino-acid chains, and neurons. These try to explain why we experience emotions and desires, but are not themselves affectivity. Henry calls for a rich description and experience of life, such as it is expressed in culture: great literature and art, religion and ethics convey life and give us direct access to it. Such an apparent distinction between "nature" and "culture" is characteristic also of much environmental discourse. Social ecology in particular tries to overcome this dichotomy by interpreting social evolution as continuous with biological evolution. Leopold's land ethic and various versions of deep ecology also call us to recognize ourselves as part of the web of life and as intricately connected to all other beings. But this often feels like a reduction of humans to biology or ecology. Culture becomes only a step in the evolutionary process and humans a mere parasite in the ecological web. Henry's conception of life might provide a useful alternative here because it elevates life to culture instead of reducing culture to biology. Much eco-phenomenology similarly struggles with expressing ways in which we might articulate affinities with other creatures: Do they exert a call upon us—à la Lévinas—or do they also make a world—contra Heidegger—or do they participate in intercorporeity in Merleau-Ponty's sense? Henry's notion of Life might provide a "thicker" or richer account of affectivity or sentient life for eco-phenomenological thinkers, one in which other living beings participate from the first in life instead of having to extend it to them via arguments based on analogy or similarity.

Most obviously, one could argue for a continuity of affectivity between human and non-human animals. Many animals do experience *pathos* in the immediate way Henry outlines for humans. In fact, their experience of joy and suffering may be more obviously immanent and immediate than our own, which at least has the appearance of being mediated through consciousness and reflection. Henry tries to overcome the apparent distance for human consciousness in favor of an identification of phenomenon and phenomenality, while he remains silent on the ways in which other sentient species might already be self-affected in precisely the manner he advocates for humans. It is also significant that this unreflected immediacy of animal

experiences of suffering has in fact often been used precisely in order to substantiate our superiority over and fundamental distinction from non-human species. The fact that we can think about joy and pain and do not merely give in to them is taken to confirm the superiority of our human consciousness, one supposedly not shared by animals. While much recent ethological research, such as that of Mark Bekoff, has suggested that such convictions about fundamental human-animal distinctions must be revised, it is interesting that Henry reverses this traditional view and now sees the immediacy of the auto-affection of our flesh that allows no reflective distance as somehow uniquely human. As far as I can see he does not provide any argument, however, as to why non-human sentient species would not experience joy and suffering in similar immanent and non-mediated fashion. Although it seems that animals do not participate in the divine life as Henry articulates it, he does not provide any actual argument for (or outright denial of) why they could not experience immediate auto-affectivity. Affectivity, as immanent immediacy of joy and suffering inseparable from their very experience in our flesh, connects us to rather than separates us from other sentient species.[60]

Furthermore, this account of affectivity, despite Henry's own emphasis on culture, actually requires the natural elements that are always involved in any experience of pleasure and pain. While this is obvious for animals, it is also true of human experience. Although my suffering is inextricably and immediately mine, a truly rich account of pleasure and pain requires nature in obvious and subtler ways. A phenomenologically "thick" description of pleasure or satisfaction, hunger and thirst, fatigue or joy, cannot be provided without speaking of nature or experience grounded in earthly materiality. Many of our joys and pleasures involve nature and physical materiality: the texture of the dough I knead, the smell of the freshly baked bread, the hardness of the crust, the full taste of the first bite. What about the peculiar joy of a sunrise or the fatigue inspired by a long hike in the fresh air? How about the excitement of a toddler over a ladybug, the texture of a leaf, the colors of a butterfly, the sweet taste of chocolate, the smell of freshly ground coffee beans? Passion, whether as suffering or emotion, cannot be described fully without an appeal to nature or at least without a description of the materiality and physicality of pleasures and passions.[61] My experiencing myself experiencing implies the real textures and flavors of nature (and it often requires their experience as "alive" in some way—the joy over the butterfly is experienced rather differently, especially by the young child, when a pin is stuck through its body in a museum than when it flutters over spring flowers, regardless of whether the butterfly has any sense of suffering or joy in one or the other experience).[62]

While Henry himself does not stress the "earthiness" of our experience and, in fact, his constant condemnation of Galileo and biological reductionism can suggest the opposite, his account of affectivity is indeed

about "reality" as we experience it in all its physicality. It is explicitly *material* and *fleshly*. In Henry this materiality becomes elevated as Life itself. It is our very identity as creatures of *pathos*. "Matter" is not "the other of phenomenality but its essence."[63] And this Life is subjectivity: "Life is absolute subjectivity inasmuch as it experiences itself and is nothing other than that experience."[64] Instead of reducing human life to biological or ecological processes, Henry elevates all of material Life to affectivity. Life is a mystery of auto-affectivity: "That is the mystery of life: the living being is coextensive with all of the life within it; everything within it is its own life. The living being is not founded on itself; instead it has its basis in life. This basis, however, is not different from itself; it is the auto-affection in which it auto-affects itself and thus with which it is identical."[65] It is this life and pathos, Henry argues, which enables genuine community. Can this community be extended beyond humans?

Henry's own account actually makes that much easier than traditional attempts at extending consideration to other creatures. Sharing of experience in Henry does not require representation or analogy, because it is always a direct and immanent experience of life. Life is not an accumulation of particles marked by genetic information, but the rich complexity of fleshly and material fears, desires, and emotions that constitute our experiences as living beings—our active enjoyment of life and passive suffering of it. And this is why in at least one place Henry can say: "Inasmuch as the essence of community is affectivity, the community is not limited to humans alone. It includes everything that is defined in itself by the primal suffering of life and thus by the possibility of suffering. We can suffer with everything that suffers. This pathos-with is the broadest form of every conceivable community."[66] Our suffering of life is connected to the suffering of all other creatures—at least inasmuch as they experience suffering—and it is a suffering of the real, material world (albeit not the false, "represented" world of Galilean science). In this way, we experience "pathos-with" the entire cosmos and all its living and suffering inhabitants. Although Henry himself never returns to this suggestion of community with other creatures, but the Christian language he adopts in his later works actually serves to reinforce distinctions between humans and other living beings, his material phenomenology opens a much wider possibility for shared suffering and joy among living creatures. An environmental ethics inspired by Henry's philosophy, then, would not need to posit artificial connections to other living beings, attempting to bridge a distance via knowledge of their evolutionary development, genetic similarity or ecological connectedness, but the connection is *always already there* as we each individually, subjectively, but in community, *together*, suffer the life that is in each one of us and that is being destroyed by contemporary techno-science. We need not "recognize" the distant "call" of the tree or deliberate whether animals have "faces," but we share already in the community of all suffering subjects of life. Their flesh—and their fate—is ultimately ours, too.

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[1] Michel Henry, *I am the Truth: Toward a Philosophy of Christianity*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 271.

[2] In the preface to *Barbarism*, he describes this as follows: "This situation is just as dramatic as it is mysterious. It can be clarified by going back to its source at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, when Galileo declared that the knowledge that human beings had always trusted was false and illusory. This knowledge is the sensory knowledgethat leads us to believe that things have colors, odors, tastes, and sounds that are agreeable or disagreeable, in short, to believe that the world is a sensory world. But, the real world is composed of un-sensed material bodies that are extended and have forms and figures. Its way of being known is not the sensibility that varies from one individual to another and thus only offers appearances, but the rational knowledge of these figures and forms: geometry. The geometrical knowledge of material nature—a knowledge that can be formulated mathematically (as Descartes demonstrated right afterward)—is the new knowledge that takes the place of all others and rejects them as insignificant." Michel Henry, *Barbarism*, trans. Scott Davidson (London/New York: Continuum, 2012), xiii.

[3] Henry, *Barbarism*, 23.

[4] He insists: "The relation between science and culture is a relation of mutual exclusion" (*Barbarism*, 58).

[5] He claims that it turns us into "morons" or idiots (*Barbarism*, 51).

[6] Henry, *Barbarism*, 52.

[7] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 272.

[8] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 273.

[9] Henry, *Barbarism*, 66.

[10] Henry, *Barbarism*, 107. He articulates this argument regarding science even more fully in *I am the Truth* (especially chapters 1 & 3).

[11] Anyone doubting that technology replaces culture need only compare the amount of school budgets devoted to technological "improvements" to the percentage devoted to art and music education or the comparatively small amount of money spent on the arts in society more generally. We would much rather produce versions of Bill Gates or Steve Jobs than of Shakespeare or Mozart.

[12] "That television is the flight [from self] under the form of a pro-jection into exteriority, this is what one expresses in saying that it drowns the spectator in a flood of images" (*Barbarism*, 109).

[13] Henry, *Barbarism*, 111.

[14] Henry, *Barbarism*, 112.

[15] Henry argues that "the ultimate contact with the life of the technical world and the media world is the will of life to flee itself" (*Barbarism*, 113).

[16] Henry, *Barbarism*, 120.

[17] "The instincts remain undeveloped and in their coarsest manifestation for television viewers—force as violence, love as eroticism, eroticism as pornography. When these instincts are reduced to their simplest expression, they cannot be actualized for the good but only obtain some imaginary derivative. The media world in general is this imaginary satisfaction. For these reasons, television finds its fulfillment and its truth in voyeurism. In the 'scoop' of the century, we see the collective death of dumb spectators at a football match, an assassination in a spectacular wedging in, compression, crushing, stuffing, trampling, and asphyxiation. It is a horrible sight to see life knocked over, walked on, crushed, flattened and negated! But this negation of life is no different from what occurs each day with the gathering of millions of human beings in front of their screens. The horror of this negation is no different from the horror of the spectacle that was offered for their delight that night. That is the truth of the media world. For an instant, it is their own truth that appears before their hallucinating eyes" (*Barbarism*, 113; emphasis his).

[18] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 275; trans. modified.

[19] Henry, *Barbarism*, 142.

[20] In fact, he himself seems to suggest that art can accomplish a similar task. See especially his work on Kandinsky [*Seeing the Invisible*] and the sections on art in *Barbarism*.

[21] "Television takes place in the world of technology. Its principle is the self-development of technology, its autonomy. This means that it is a system and has no need to challenge manifestations like television. This system as such must be called into question. But, as a system, that is precisely what it cannot do. Every regard that would seek to evaluate it would be taken into it. In reality, it would only ever be its own regard, or its own reflection, a reflection of the system on itself. Every critique then arrives too late, if it believes itself capable of judging that for which it is ultimately only an effect, an avatar" (*Barbarism*, 107-08).

[22] Henry previews this in his preface to the second edition of Barbarism: "In this communication, no one communicates with anyone else, and its content becomes poorer as the speed increases. This communication of information is multiple,

incoherent, cut off from any analysis, from any criteria of evaluation, from criticism, from history, from its genesis, and from every principle of intelligibility—it is without rhyme or reason" (Barbarism, xviii).

[23] This is in particularly true of the internet, which is prominently regarded as a virtual reality that no longer involves physicality. The fact that it relies heavily on machines that consume enormous amounts of energy is often not recognized. The digital "cloud," in which data flows and is supposedly stored, actually exists physically in huge data centers of computer storage facilities that currently consume the equivalent energy of that generated by thirty nuclear factories. See the recent series of articles on this topic in *The New York Times* (Sept. 20-30, 2012).

[24] Humans have always employed quasi-technological tools of various sorts and often altered their environments in fundamental ways. Yet, as McNeill convincingly argues, the current pace and extent of technological change makes it something qualitatively different from the "technologies" of previous societies and generations. See John McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth Century World* (New York: W.W.Norton, 2000).

[25] One must always keep in mind that Henry's account of the "alternative" life is fully material and physical. It is technology that denies our physicality and concrete material existence.

[26] This is particularly obvious in some of the language used in the cyborg literature, which clearly conceives of this as a "transhumanist" project conceiving new ways of being human that are "beyond" our present humanity and alter it in fundamental fashion.

[27] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 38; emphasis his.

[28] He outlines three: "The first, improperly attributed to biology by many of those who think they speak in its name, consists of reducing life to material processes. The second, which pretends to be philosophical, oscillates between the confusion of the living with a being made manifest through being-in-the-world and the definition of the phenomenality proper to the living by attributing it to a fallen and almost hallucinatory form of this same being-in-the-world. The third makes life the metaphysical principle of the universe, but by stripping it of the capacity to reveal itself, to experience and to live, by stripping it of its essence. Life is only a blind entity, like the processes to which Galilean science reduces it. Underneath these diverse ways of despising life, it is easy to recognize the common root: the incapacity to construct a phenomenology of life" (*I am the Truth*, 49-50).

[29] For a useful critique of Henry on this issue, see Antonio Calcagno, "The Incarnation, Michel Henry, and the Possibility of an Husserlian-Inspired Transcendental Life," *Heythrop Journal* 45:3 (2004): 290-304.

[30] Michel Henry, *Words of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012).

[31] This new conception of human relationships within the divine life is his earlier philosophy of community (e.g., the final chapter of *Material Phenomenology*) now translated into Christian terminology.

[32] Henry, *Words of Christ*, 105.

[33] Henry, *Words of Christ*, 107.

[34] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 262.

[35] Michel Henry, *Incarnation: Une philosophie de la chair* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), 178.

[36] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 103.

[37] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 55.

[38] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 59.

[39] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 96.

[40] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 103; emphasis his.

[41] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 96.

[42] He stresses: "Life has the same meaning for God, for Christ, and for man" (*I am the Truth*, 101; emphasis his).

[43] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 125.

[44] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 145.

[45] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 145ff., 234-58.

[46] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 47.

[47] In fact, in at least one instance he explicitly reduces plants to "things" that do not have life: "Life feels and experiences itself in such a way that there is nothing in it that would be experienced or felt. This is because the fact of feeling oneself is really what makes one alive. Everything that has this marvelous property of feeling itself is alive, whereas everything that happens to lack it is dead. The rock, for example, does not experience itself and so it is said to be a 'thing.' The earth, the sea, the stars are things. Plants, trees, and vegetation are also things, unless one can detect in them a sensibility in the transcendental sense, that is to say, a capacity of experiencing itself and feeling itself which would make them living beings. This is life not in the biological sense but in the true sense—the absolute phenomenological life whose essence consists in the very fact of sensing or experiencing oneself and nothing else—of what we will call subjectivity" (*Barbarism*,

6; emphases his). This would suggest, however, that sentient animals are not things. Henry does not discuss this possibility.

[48] Henry, *I am the Truth*, 41.

[49] It is also not to contend that human and non-human "living beings" ought to be entirely equated or conflated with each other. I am here merely arguing against the apparently absolute distinctions drawn between human and non-human lives in Henry's account, not against any possible distinctions whatsoever. Henry himself has struggled to articulate the ways in which all human lives can be distinguished from each other in their common participation in the divine life (or indeed how the individual "sons of life" can be distinguished from the "Arch-Son," Christ). An account of common sharing in life without complete identification that erases any specificity is a genuine and important difficulty. Although it cannot be explored in any detail here, as I am mostly concerned to give some first pointers for ways in which Henry's analysis might prove fruitful for eco-phenomenology, all of which will have to be explored much more fully, it is an important issue that must be confronted and addressed. (It is also a larger problem in environmental thinking, not limited to any particular engagement with Henry's phenomenology as John Llewelyn points out: "The challenge is to maintain respect for an ecological justice that allows for difference without dominance" ["Prolegomena" in *Eco-Phenomenology: Back to the Earth Itself*, ed. Charles S. Brown and Ted Toadvine (Albany: Suny Press, 2003), 64].)

[50] Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977); *The Gift of Good Land* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1981). Many of his other books also pursue this argument.

[51] For one striking example, see his description of the anonymity of the "modern household" in the section "The Domestication of Absence" (*The Unsettling of America*, 51-53). Although Berry does not use phenomenological language and explicitly focuses on ecological implications, the parallels to Henry's account are striking. It is interesting that Berry also proposes a "spiritual" solution to these problems, appealing explicitly to the Christian tradition. See especially his essay "The Gift of Good Land," the final essay in the book with the same title. Like Henry's *Words of Christ*, Berry's essay ends with an allusion to the Eucharist that highlights the interplay of life and death: "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. In such desecration we condemn ourselves to

spiritual and moral loneliness, and others to want" (281). Although Henry does not speak of the life of creation, he describes the desecration and loneliness caused by technology in similar stark terms.

[52] For several contemporary attempts to ground art in nature more explicitly, see David Macauley's discussion in his *Elemental Philosophy: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water as Environmental Ideas* (Albany: SUNY, 2010), especially 338-45. See also Edward S. Casey, "Mapping the Earth in Works of Art," in *Rethinking Nature: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*, ed. Bruce V. Foltz and Robert Frodeman (Bloominton, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 260-69.

[53] See especially his "Memorial Address" in the *Discourse on Thinking* or his famous essay "The Origin of the Work of Art."

[54] The attitude that sees only "wilderness" as "real nature" and relegates it to parks that become objects of consumption raises its own problems. This is not to denigrate the important work the national park movement has accomplished in raising consciousness of environmental issues and protecting many species from extinction, including the lands on which they live.

[55] Jacques Ellul provides an insightful critique of how photography removes us from real experience and eliminates our enjoyment of the places we photograph so avidly (and this critique precedes the invention of digital photography which greatly exacerbates the situation by severing the connection with materiality even further). His critique of television and other visual media also parallels and supplements that of Henry in important ways. See Jacques Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, trans. Joyce Main Hanks (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 121-24. His *The Technological Society* and *Propaganda* are also useful in this context. A similar critique is offered by Jean Baudrillard in several of his essays. See, for example, "Simulacra and Simulations" in *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001). For a more recent discussion, see H. Peter Steeves, *The Things Themselves: Phenomenology and the Return to the Everyday* (Albany: Suny Press, 2006), especially the chapter on Disneyworld.

[56] Jeremy Bendik-Keymer also makes this argument about factory farming in the context of his larger argument that an ecological perspective is essential to a meaningful and full life in *The Ecological Life: Discovering Citizenship and a Sense of Humanity* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006). Michael Pollan's well-known *The Omnivore's Dilemma* makes the argument on a more popular level.

[57] Jean Baudrillard has probably made this argument the most forcefully in his writings on the artificiality of consumerism. The most well-known is his "Consumer Society" in *Selected Writings*, 32-59.

[58] "Selling" here refers not merely to the activity of purchase, but also to the manner of its visual presentation.

[59] These are, of course, only very preliminary suggestions. Much more work would need to be done to develop them into a full eco-phenomenological proposal.

[60] This resembles a Utilitarian argument for animal ethics, which argues for the inclusion of sentient species in the moral community because they experience pleasure and pain, which hence deserve moral consideration. The critiques of this kind of moral extensionism must be heard in this context and be taken seriously in any further pursuit of this argument. Another problem in this context is presented by the fact that phenomenology examines our consciousness and not that of animals. Thus one must think carefully about how animals might experience pathos. Recent eco-phenomenology and Derrida's final writings on animals might suggest a path forward.

[61] In fact, in some ways Henry's account of pathos is often curiously disembodied in that it gives few concrete examples. In his critique of automata at the end of *I am the Truth* he provides a brief description of the sensual experience of touching a woman's body (273), but this is one of the few examples. Most of the time he merely speaks of joys and sorrows, pain and pleasure in fairly general fashion.

[62] This importance of the elemental in phenomenology is experienced in vivid detail by Macauley in his *Elemental Philosophy: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water as Environmental Ideas*. See also Irene Klaver's "Phenomenology on (the) Rocks," in *Eco-Phenomenology*, 155-69 and John Sallis, "The Elemental Earth," in *Rethinking Nature*, 135-46.

[63] Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, trans. Scott Davidson (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 42.

[64] Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, 120.

[65] Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, 132.

[66] Henry, *Material Phenomenology*, 133.