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ON SCULPTING IVORY: THE IDEA OF NATURE IN A THEOLOGY OF CULTURE

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In this essay, the author seeks to understand the way in which a theology of culture can develop an understanding of nature. He begins by giving a definition for a theology of culture, using the work of Paul Tillich. It is in defining, next, what is meant by nature that many of the peculiarities and problems within this subject are discovered. Finally, it is only by looking at the notion of historicity that he finds the answer to the question.

The story of Pygmalion and Galatea deserves close examination by theology, for it brings to light many questions of theological import. One quotation in Ovid's telling of the story might pique interest:

[W]ith wondrous art he successfully carves a figure out of snowy ivory, giving it a beauty more perfect than that of any woman ever born.... Often he lifts his hands to the work to try whether it be flesh or ivory; nor does he yet confess it to be ivory.¹

Pygmalion, in his sculpting, beckons us to ask how we can understand the relation between nature and culture, between that which is humanly manufactured and that which is conceived without fabrication by human hands. And so, in light of Pygmalion and his love, we ask: What can a theology of culture tell us about nature?

In developing an answer, my argument will proceed in five steps. The first step is providing a brief definition of a theology of culture, based on Paul Tillich's work. Next, a definition of nature, as it is understood by theology, will be discussed. However, an unambiguous definition of nature cannot be given; instead, I must recognize that nature is understood through two con-

tradictory definitions. The third step of the argument will examine part of the foundation of these two definitions. Both definitions of nature are structured around two tensions found in the conception of nature. It is only through recognizing the underlying cause of these tensions that one can understand what is meant by the ambiguous concept of nature. The basis of these tensions therefore allows the place of nature in a theology of culture to be recognized. The fourth step of this argument is to explicate such a basis in the concept of historicity, using Gordon Kaufman's understanding of biohistoricality and the description of history as both event and narrative. The final step of this argument, closely tied to the fourth, will show that human persons are simultaneously historical and natural beings—but that nature, too, is historical and biological. Therefore, a theology of culture must negotiate an understanding of nature in light of two different dimensions of history: (1) nature as non-participatory in the transcendence of the dimension of narrative, and (2) nature as participatory in the historicity of event. Through this argument, I will show that na-

ture and humanity share certain dimensions of historicity, while other dimensions of historicity allow a transcendence of humanity over nature. Since history provides the foundation for culture, a theology of culture can understand nature by recognizing that culture and nature share a common historicity (as event), while humanity finds its transcendence from nature through historicity (as narrative).

A theology of culture

The starting point is a brief definition of a "theology of culture." Paul Tillich begins

his essay, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," by describing the relationships between various disciplines in light of cultural analysis. With this beginning, Tillich wishes to acknowledge a possible starting point to aid in understanding what is meant by a theology of culture. Here, Tillich's interpretation of the difference between the study of culture and the natural sciences is found: contrary to the natural sciences, the cultural sciences are based on the fact that "the standpoint of the systematic thinker belongs to the heart of the matter itself."² There are no strictly universal concepts within the study of culture—these universals (if not useless) are simply hidden or disguised normative concepts with some form of concrete basis in reality.

Thus, one is directed by Tillich to a very specific definition of a theology of culture: a "religious interpretation of the autonomous culture and its development" that is based on "the presupposition...that in every cultural creation...an ultimate concern is expressed, and that it is possible to recognize the unconscious theological character of it."³ Another way to explain the idea of a theology of culture, in Tillich's terms at least, is to recognize that culture must be viewed in light of religion as "ultimate concern." He writes:

Religion as ultimate concern is the meaning-giving substance of culture, and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself. In abbreviation: religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion.

A theology of culture, recognizing that theology has no domain solely for itself, is the task of finding the "depth dimension" within the human sphere.

From the standpoint of this definition—and recognizing that it holds certain limitations—what is the relationship between a the-

Our experience of nature must be based on categories and concepts that we place upon it, such that nature becomes raw material (or "standing-reserve" in Heidegger's words) or a completely mysterious, devotional Other.

ology of culture and "nature"? Tillich, in "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," says:

At this point now the question could be raised why the whole of the work [of a theology of culture] is limited to the analysis of culture and why nature (or technology) is excluded. The answer is that for us nature can only become an object through the medium of culture, if at all.... The essence of nature is quite out of our reach, and we cannot even comprehend it sufficiently to be able to speak positively of such an essence. But as nature only becomes a reality to us through culture, we are justified in speaking exclusively of "cultural theology" and in rejecting a concept such as "natural theology." Any religious substance or import that may exist in nature lies in the cultural functions insofar as these are related to nature.⁴

Though it might seem from this quotation that nature (as an object of study, at least) is possibly beyond the reach of a theology of culture, Langdon Gilkey's work, *Nature, Re-*

ality, and the Sacred, shows that a theology of culture can be utilized to look at the relationship between nature, science, and theology. For the present purposes, it is important to note that nature has a role in theology because, among other things, nature is part of the structure of culture:

Thus all of culture—art, myth, morals, politics, practical crafts, and even science, all of the facets of spirit and reason—stretches back into the dimness and mystery of matter, of nature as our source and ground.⁵

The following discussion attempts to take seriously the insights of Tillich and Gilkey, by exploring the place of nature in a theology of culture—in other words, by exploring the relations that make possible a discovery of a sense of the divine in nature, taking religion as Tillich saw it: “Religion is not a special function of man’s spiritual life, but it is the dimension of depth in all of its functions.”⁶

On the very concept of nature

While defining a theology of culture might seem relatively straightforward, finding a suitable definition of nature is not. In fact, the very concept of nature is embedded within a paradox, as Ezarim Kohák points out in terms of an understanding of the human ecological place:

Humans cannot be both the species that sets the rules for the world (anthropocentrism)—and at the same time just one species among many within that world (ecocentrism).⁷

It must be conceded that there is always an ambiguity in a concept of nature, because in the our relationship to nature we are unable to ascertain the being of nature qua nature. Our experience of nature can never be of a sort that relates strictly to an essence of nature, since we can experience nature—however we define it—only through cognitive and cultural schema. Theologically and philosophically, the result of this ambiguity is that we have not one operative definition of nature, but two. These two definitions are somewhat contradictory, but both are used in our conception of nature.

The first definition stems from what Kohák identifies as the anthropocentric: it is the definition of nature as separated, independent, and Other. It is nature as that which is not part of the cultural and societal world of the human person. Kohák reveals the implications of this definition when suggesting three ways of experiencing nature in this light: “as an awesome presence to be placated and worshipped, as a working partner to be understood and respected, and as a raw material to be used and exploited.”⁸ In each of these, the human person is seen as separated from nature, while able to manipulate or otherwise relate to it as an object of perception. This manipulation shows how nature as Other, as against the human cultural sphere, must be taken into the cultural. Ultimately, nature is subverted into a sameness with the cultural. This objectification of nature has scientific, philosophical, and religious consequences. Harold Oliver comments that, since the Enlightenment, the concept of nature has been under the “custody” of Newtonian science as a mechanistic and deterministic object, “bereft of its vitality and value.” In light of this, Oliver continues, the view of nature by theologians also hardened:

Theologians were made increasingly aware that many religions of the world stressed harmony with nature, but could discount this as paganism, just as they rejected Romanticism’s flirtation with nature as an excrescence of paganism.⁹

Nature, as understood through this first definition, contains an aspect that has no positive definition; instead, it is defined as that which is not culture—the raw, untreated and unmediated object, which is found prior to its human transformation into artifact or tool. Joyce Carol Oates expresses this definition of nature—and the paradoxical need to explain this facet of nature as the Other through cultural means—in the essay, “Against Nature”:

It has no sense of humor: in its beauty, as in its ugliness, or its neutrality, there is no laughter. It lacks a moral purpose. It lacks a satiric dimension, registers no irony. Its pleasures lack

resonance, being accidental; its horrors, even when premeditated, are equally perfunctory, "red in tooth and claw" et cetera. It lacks a symbolic subtext—excepting that provided by man. It has no (verbal) language. It has no interest in ours. It inspires a painfully limited set of responses in "nature-writers"—REVERENCE, AWE, PIETY, MYSTICAL ONENESS. It eludes us even as it prepares to swallow us up, books and all.¹⁰

This side of nature, insofar as we confront it as a radical Otherness that is apart from the cultural framework of the human, is experienced only after it is mediated through a cultural transformation into "our image"—our image as builders, producers, etc. In other words, our inability to see this Other as itself comes from our separateness and estrangement from it; our experience of it must be based on categories and concepts that we place upon it, such that nature becomes raw material (or "standing-reserve" in Heidegger's words) or a completely mysterious, devotional Other. In either case, nature is to be used as material for cultural upbuilding. At the same time, nature as Other is not only that material which we use for the upbuilding of culture—it is also what reminds us that we are alienated and separated from nature by virtue of the very same upbuilding.

But I have shown only one side of nature. A second definition, as equally valid as the first, assumes that nature is the totality of all objects and processes—in other words, it is a regulative idea similar to Kant's understanding of world, as Gordon Kaufman suggests.¹¹ This second definition resonates with what Kohák identifies as the ecocentric. Perhaps the most important aspect of this definition is this: because nature is a totality, there is no differentiation between the natural and the non-natural. According to this definition of nature, nothing can be classified in the latter category; nature, in this sense, is the sum total of every process and object. Nature, in this second sense, is in many respects contrary to the nature portrayed by the first definition. By the second definition, nature cannot be Other, nor can it be simply raw mate-

rial, nor is it separated from the human cultural sphere. In sum, another side of nature is present, insofar as we are participants in the processes of nature, i.e., in the totality of the world. Through being, we share a degree of relation to all other beings; therefore, we need not mediate our relation to other objects through cultural manipulation and transformation of otherness, so long as we all participate in the common structure of nature.¹²

As stated above, both definitions are used in an overall conception of nature, though the two are contradictory in some respects. Just as the first definition presents the human as separated from the world, the second definition presents the human as part of nature, finding the human world continuous with the natural. While the first definition presents the cultural structures of humanity as using the natural for raw material, the second definition points out that, in some sense, the very fact that human beings participate in nature means that human culture is a natural process. In sum, we should value Gordon Kaufman's treatment of the meaning of nature as, in some sense, bifurcated. Kaufman points out that the concept of nature has come to be portrayed as a "double entendre," with humans at home in nature and yet above it.¹³

Two tensions in these definitions of nature

Theologically speaking, both of the above definitions are integral parts of an understanding of nature. Therefore, in order to resolve the conflicts that are present between these two definitions of nature, some of the structural elements of this "double entendre" must be understood. Interestingly, we perhaps already can understand how this step will lead to the final goal of understanding the relation between a theology of culture and nature. For the following is not a discussion of nature in its essence, but instead a reflection upon how to identify and conceptualize the essence of nature—yet conceptualization is in some ways a cultural phenomenon. Thus, I now turn to a delineation of two tensions that participate in the ambiguity of the concept of nature: first, a tension in what it means to know nature;

and second, a tension in the understanding of the human relationship with nature.

The first tension comes from speculation upon how the essence or the ontological import of nature can be accessed. In other words, the question that must now be asked is how we are able to know nature. We are confronted with an epistemological question regarding our intuition of nature reminiscent of the problem Kant seeks to answer in the *Critique of Pure Reason*; namely, the question of the conditions for the possibility of any knowledge—essential or phenomenal—about the world we presume to perceive through our senses. Therefore, this first tension in the definition of nature finds concrete manifestation in the ambiguity of the description of nature as either a mechanistic and quantifiable object, or as that which is untamed by human technique—as vibrant, as awesome.

If the first tension is in terms of how we come to know nature both in form and content, then the second tension is centered on how we human beings come to relate to nature. This second tension is a bit more complex, as might be surmised by the fact that

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the definitions of nature are often reducible to the relationship we assume humankind is to have with nature. This tension is not epistemological, in that it is not based on our ability to comprehend or make conceptual descriptions of nature. Instead, this second tension is anthropological, because it develops in light of our conception of the human condition. We have already encountered the con-

crete example of this tension in certain aspects of Kaufman's "double entendre": humanity is a part of nature, yet humanity transcends nature. In religious and theological circles, the question of the human relationship with nature has been much discussed as a consequence of Lynn White's lecture published in *Science*, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis."¹⁴

The problem that the second tension confronts is this: what is primary in theological anthropology—participation or transcendence? Neither answer seems tenable on its own, as exemplified in Alfred Crosby's book, *Ecological Imperialism*. Crosby explains the background, propagation, and ultimate dominance of invasive European plant and animal species throughout temperate zones around the globe. While Europeans brought cultural artifacts and institutions which supplanted their counterparts in the native societies of colonized lands, there was a similar conquest occurring—in some cases by design, in others by accident—on the natural level. The historical importance of these "natural" transplants are paramount, such that Crosby assumes anyone attempting to explain the suc-

cess of European advance must not only take into account the "demoralization and often the annihilation of the indigenous populations," but also "must explain the stunning, even awesome success of European agriculture," including newly introduced crops, animals—and

concomitantly the weeds—that transformed naturally occurring ecosystems in their own image. Thus, Crosby sets forth a dialectic between culture and nature: culture (in the form of European expansion) stands over and influences the so-called natural surroundings, even as culture (in the form of native societies) is often helplessly and inextricably present within the overall natural sphere. In the con-

temporary world, there are similar situations showing the continuing ambiguity of the human relationship with nature, from the problem of introduced Zebra mussels in the Great Lakes, to the invasion of North American coastal salt marshes by the Eurasian invasive plant species *Phragmites australis*, to the alteration of the culture of the Hill peoples of Orissa in light of a change in their natural world.¹⁵

Of history in nature, and nature in history

At this point, two very different tasks have been accomplished. First of all, a

History, as an aspect of the human condition, functions as the ground and ordering of value, as that which mediates the experience of life—in other words, as the ground of the cultural life within which humanity finds itself inextricably meshed.

Tillichian theology of culture has been described. Secondly, the fact has been set forward that we often have two definitions of nature. Not only has the content of these definitions been summarized, but also the two tensions structurally working behind them. Now, I would like to move to another structural question: what stands at the crux of these two tensions? In answer, I would like to suggest that it is history that stands between the two. Further, in order to understand nature, the role that history plays in both nature and humanity must be understood. In order to accomplish this task, I would like to first look at Gordon Kaufman's idea that humans are "biohistorical" beings, as defined through a description of the "theological problem of nature" in his influential article, "The Concept of Nature: A Problem for Theology." Next, I would like to explore briefly Jan Patočka's concept of history, particularly in

light of his statement that history is both event and narrative. Patočka provides a helpful emendation for Kaufman's work. We find through Kaufman's work that human beings must relate to the world through the historical. Yet nature, in its relationship with culture, has some participation in history as well. Also, historicity can be understood both as event and narrative. Through this discussion of the historical, a better understanding is provided of both the above-described tensions. History, then, assists in better defining nature and, in so doing, points out the way that nature can be understood by a theology of culture.

Kaufman does not wish to construct an ecological theology in "The Concept of Nature," but instead attempts "to get clearer the structure, connections, and implications of the concept of nature as these bear on its theological employment."¹⁶ As I have already said, Kaufman

points out the ambiguity of the concept of nature. He explains that this double entendre illustrates the following:

Nature appears to be a nonteleological, nonaxiological order within which emerges purposive and valuing activity.¹⁷

In other words, while nature can be viewed as a complex of processes and functions, this value-free system of nature participates in the creation and sustenance of a teleological order of value within which humanity finds itself. This participation by nature shows the unique problem that nature presents for theology. Nature, "which does not have built into it the dimensions of purpose, value, and meaning..." is a backdrop for human life.

The notion of God, on the other hand, as an agent characterized by freedom and purposiveness and love, is based on the model of human freedom and agency as experienced within society and culture.¹⁸

Already, a clear break between the human sphere and nature may be seen, based on the presumption that nature is bereft of teleology and a matrix of value. Teleology and value are based in culture and are, thus, at home only in human cultural structure.

Until the modern era, God and nature could be related to each other through the theological concept of creation—meaning, a finite nature dependent on an infinite God. However, the Enlightenment ushered in a conception of nature as infinite. The conception of nature as infinite is present in the second definition of nature, insofar as this definition sees nature as an all-encompassing totality of past, present, and future processes and objects. Because our worldview cannot have two infinities, the conceptualization of nature as infinite initiated a struggle between the concepts of God and nature. But in this struggle, notice that human persons remain, in some sense, transcendent of nature. To justify this transcendence, Kaufman highlights the importance of humanity as historical—in other words, as developing out of social and cultural processes in addition to biological ones. Borrowing from Hegel, Kaufman sees that freedom, morality, and consciousness develop only in light of history, meaning that humans have “another, new ‘historical nature.’”¹⁹ In sum, the importance of history must be recognized through the demarcation of humankind as distinctively “biohistorical.” To be sure, human beings are shaped through evolutionary and biological processes. However, as Kaufman writes:

In significant respects, thus, our historicity...is a distinctive mark of our humanness: we are beings shaped decisively by a history that has given us power ourselves to shape future history in significant ways.²⁰

The conclusion is the following: humans, as biohistorical beings, by necessity interface with the world through the historical. Certainly, humans have a natural aspect, but transcend the natural through a dimension of history. History, as an aspect of the human condition, functions as the ground and ordering of value, as that which mediates the experience of life—in other words, as the ground of

the cultural life within which humanity finds itself inextricably meshed. Thus, Kaufman—by claiming that humans are biohistorical—is asserting the following:

...that it is, above all, the high development of our historicity that gives our existence its most distinctively human character.²¹

This insight into the historical gives insight into the problem of what was described as the second, anthropological tension in the definition of nature, by providing an avenue to overcome the apparent antinomy presented in that tension. Indeed, in some respects the human is participant in nature and continuous with it, yet the human is able to transcend nature in some way, by virtue of the historical.

Yet, we still have not found an understanding of the first tension described above, but have only discovered an avenue toward comprehending the second. In other words, we use the historical to show how humans can be both participating in nature and simultaneously transcendent of it. However, this difference does not show how we can understand nature in terms of our first tension—in part because we have not explored the relationship between nature and historicity. History acts as ground of cultural structures and forms—but is history itself mediated through culture, and is there a sense in which nature also is mediated by historicity? With this question, we are left with a question concerning Kaufman’s conception: could value or freedom—regarded as manifested through culture—be found within nature qua nature? Could history not in some way ground value and freedom within nature, just as it has done within the human cultural sphere?

Jan Patočka’s *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History* might be able to assist us at this point. Patočka, in a work heavily influenced by Husserl and Heidegger, seeks to describe the transition from what he terms as the prehistorical to the historical. Within this movement from one to the other, we go from a naïve acceptance of nature in the prehistorical to a “problem of the natural world” present in the historical.²² Writing in a Heideggerian vein, Patočka states the following:

The things we encounter are grasped as themselves, though not independently of the emergence of essential concealment into openness. In the play of manifestation/unconcealment, they show themselves as what they are, thus demonstrating their seriousness. Their manifestation, however, is itself historical, in two ways: as the uncovering of what is and as the emergence of the structures of being which thus cannot stand out into openness other than historically.²³

The natural world, by participating in unconcealment (a concept illuminated by Heidegger in such works as “The Question Concerning Technology”²⁴), must be contextualized within history. The natural world is, in some sense, also biohistorical—at least after the human has gone through the passage from the naïve prehistorical to the historical.

However, this recognition of the historicity of nature does not negate Kaufman’s hypothesis that the human person holds a unique, transcendent place in the world. Rather, through Patočka’s differentiation between the meaning of events and the meaning of narratives we find how humans transcend nature.

However, the meaning of a narrative about events is different from the meaning of what is narrated. The meaning of events is an achievement of those who act and suffer, while the meaning of a narrative lies in understanding the logical formations pointing to those events.²⁵

The historical human comes out of a development of a narrative that mediates the historical event; for Patočka, the *polis*, the concept of *polemos*, the development of Christianity, and finally the modern scientific/mathematical outlook all have decisively influenced the narratives that are overlaid on nature and the events of history. Meanwhile, nature still participates in history as event, thereby allowing the human relationship to nature to be conducted within the events of the world, while we are able to transcend the historicity of event through the human ordering of the historicity of narrative.

A better understanding of nature can perhaps be developed if no attempt is made to col-

lapse the meaning of history as event into that of history as narrative. Indeed, by assuming that history as event can be present in nature qua nature, then nature is seen to participate at least indirectly in the structuring of culture, because culture is developed on the basis of history. At the same time, human persons are seen to be distinct from nature in their historicity. This relationship between humanity, nature, and history has ramifications regarding the two tensions mentioned above, for implicit in those two tensions is the fact that nature is conceptualized both as necessarily mediated through culture and yet as independent of culture. In order for an understanding of the second tension to be comprehended in light of the concept of biohistoricity, then, we can be seen to relate to nature through history. At the same time, it must be accepted that there is a bifurcation within the concept of history between the event and narrative, with nature participating in the event of history but not in the narrativity of history. Therefore, neither participation nor transcendence can have the final word in our relation to nature; instead, both are participants in a dialectic of history. As a result of this dialectic, the first tension finds new significance. I would like to suggest that a historical understanding of freedom and teleology are aligned with the narrative, while value and meaning are embedded in the events of history themselves (unfortunately, due to space, we cannot explore this alignment further). By virtue of these alignments, we can understand nature mediated in terms of human freedom and teleological development as found in the enculturedness of history as narrative. We are also able to experience (within this cultural embeddedness of history) nature directly in terms of value and meaning as found in history as event. In other words, to say that we are simultaneously historical and natural beings can make sense only insofar as the historical can attempt to ascertain the natural through both dimensions of history: through the separateness of culture in terms of the transcendence found in the historicity of narrativity and through the participation and presence of both nature and culture in the historicity of event.

Just as new meaning is found within the structural features (as seen in light of two tensions) of the conception of nature, renewed meaning and complementarity are also found in the two definitions of nature. By virtue of this grounding of culture in history, a theological understanding of nature can be utilized that comes from both definitions given above: (1) nature in its function as raw material and Other, and (2) nature as totality and continuous with the human cultural sphere. It is here that the potential religious dimension present within nature begins to be appreciated, as seen in an insight from Erazim Kohák's important work, *The Embers and the Stars*. Kohák sees that value and meaning enter into the world through an inbreaking of eternity into time. This vertical dimension appears in the natural world, insofar as the natural world is a world bounded in time and history as event. Therefore, the divine is found in the inbreaking of eternity into the events of history, into a dimension of history in which nature and humanity are conjoined.

Further, the historicity of nature is found to allow nature to be the bearer of value, insofar as nature participates in the inbreaking of eternity. Nature acts as an avenue for a recovery of value, since, as Kohák writes:

To recover the truth of value it is crucial to bracket the reductive framework of temporal sequence and to see being in its reference to the eternity which ever intersects with time, defining the now within it. Within time, that now would be indistinguishable from the endless series of such nows. It stands out as the moment in which eternity intersects time.²⁶

Thus, nature has what Kohák calls a moral sense—something to which we can enter into relation in time:

The moral sense of nature, and not that alone, but all whereof we have spoken, is not its own, generated by its processes. It is the presence of God—the Christians would speak of the Holy Spirit—and a gift of Nature's Creator. Nature's gift to humans, in turn, is not its own but God's gift which nature mediates.²⁷

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Endnotes:

1. Ovid, p. 83.
2. Tillich, "On the Idea," p. 155.
3. Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, p. 27.
4. Tillich, "On the Idea," p. 174.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
6. Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, p. 5. Further illuminating this concept, Tillich explains the meaning of "depth" by saying that depth "means that the religious aspect points to that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in man's spiritual life" (p. 7).
7. Kohák, "Varieties," p. 167.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

9. Oliver, pp. 379-80.
10. Oates, p. 236.
11. Kaufman, "Problem for Theology," pp. 343-5. As Kaufman sees it, "nature functions in much the same way as Kant's 'world.'" The main difference is that "nature is concrete in a way that world is not" (p. 344). Kaufman reminds us that, in addition to the inexperienceable whole to which nature refers, it can also denote the concrete "qualities or dimensions" of the whole.
12. This calls to mind Tillich's exposition on being—as well as the religious ramifications of this—in *The Courage to Be*, esp. ch. 2 and 6.
13. Kaufman, "Problem for Theology," pp. 339ff.
14. See the opening chapters of Santmire, *The Travail of Nature*, where Santmire gives a similar dichotomy, showing the difference between the ecological motif and the spiritual motif. Also of interest is Gill, who highlights some of the implications and problems of White's article, particularly the fact that it "has been very effective in alerting theologians to some of the unintended consequences of their ideas" (Gill, p. 409).
15. Regarding the latter, Jagannath Dash has commented, "The physical environment...is in all possible ways related to the culture and behavioral patten of a forest-based community. Therefore, any change in the physical environment has direct or indirect bearing on the way of life of a forest-based people" (Dash, p. 545). In fact, I imagine that works like Crosby's show this to be true for many, if not all, societies.
16. Kaufman, "Problem for Theology," p. 338.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 343.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 346.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
20. Kaufman, "Ecological Consciousness," p. 11. Note that Kaufman's terminology shifted slightly from his initial work in "The Concept of Nature," where he refers to human beings as "historico-natural," to his

later works, where he refers to them as “bio-historical.” While a discussion on the significance of this change would be of interest, let me simply note that the two terms taken together seem to point to a parity between the historical and the natural, at least in terms of human development.

21. Kaufman, “Ecological Consciousness,” p. 12.

22. In another work, Patočka describes the philosophical problem of the natural world in ways that are reminiscent of Heidegger, as well as the epistemological problem we confront in the present paper: “*L’homme moderne n’a pas du monde une conception unifiée. Il vit dans un monde double: dans son environnement, qui lui est naturellement donné et, en même temps, dans le monde que depuis l’ère moderne créent pour lui des sciences fondées sur ce principe que les lois de la nature sont d’essence mathématique.*” *Le Monde Naturel Comme Problème Philosophique*, p. 1; see also pp. 5-6.

23. Patočka, *Heretical Essays*, pp. 9-10.

24. Technology of any type is a bringing-forth, a presencing that occurs when something that is previously concealed is brought into unconcealment—in sum, it finds itself as part of the ground of causality as *alētheia*, or revealing. Technology in its instrumental sense is seen to be based on revealing: “The possibility of all productive manufacturing lies in revealing” (Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 12). This means that technology is not simply a means, but also can be a bringing-forth in the realm where the truth (not simply the correct) happens. However, modern technology is not only a revealing, but a challenging forth that makes its object into a “standing-reserve”—and it is this challenging that bring both the danger and the possibility of a saving power, simultaneously.

25. Patočka, op. cit., p. 28.

26. Ibid., p. 180.

27. Ibid., p. 183.

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