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How Much Does Man Pains the Earth? A Conservative and Left-Wing Reading of Ethical Dilemmas About Nature

„Nothing is sadder than to watch the absolute urge for the unconditional in this altogether conditional world.” (Goethe)²

I. The Nature in Modernity, the Nature of Modernity

„Man pains the Earth.”³ Exactly 175 years have passed since Mihály Vörösmarty put these paradigmatic words on paper, which have not lost their relevance since then. However, when we examine the dubious nexus of Earth and man, we may also encounter much more ‘archaic’ sources (even if the activity of man did not hurt the Earth so much in those days): In the chorus of Sophocles’ *Antigone*, for example, we can read about how man disturbs the Earth, „Forever undestroyed and / Unwearying, highest of all the gods , he / wears away, year after year as his plows/ / Cross ceaselessly back and forth, turning/ Her soil with the offspring of horses.”⁴

Man did indeed work persistently to tear his soul away from the Earth with which – at least according to the Jungian interpretation – he was originally dependent, or to which he had at least a kind of religious reverence. According to Gustav Jung, by seeking to become the conqueror of the Earth, mankind has moved away from the unconscious spiritual bond that binds them to the Earth, and thus from their historical definiteness, which inevitably leads to rootlessness at the end. „That is the danger that lies in wait for the conqueror of foreign lands, and for every individual who, through one-sided allegiance to any kind of -ism, loses touch with the (...) earthy ground of his being”– he warned.⁵ The Western worldview has been dominated for many centuries since Francis Bacon’s activity by the optimistic atmosphere of rationalism, which subsequently proved to be panglossic. In accordance with the dogma of infinitive evolution, the doctrine proclaimed that nature can be folded into the yoke of man, and it can be defended by man (in Spengler’s words: “under torture with the lever and screw”),⁶ so coincidence can be shackled. The violent invasion to the cosmic order, the ‘rape’⁷

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² Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von: *Maxims and Reflections*. Translated by Elisabeth Stopp. Penguin Book, London, 1998 124. p.

³ Although the poem was not published until 1847, it was written in 1846. Cp. Vörösmarty Mihály: Az emberek [On mankind]. In *Vörösmarty’ minden munkái [Complete works of Vörösmarty]*. Vol. 8. Kilián György, Pest, 1847, 258. o.

⁴ Sophocles: *Antigone*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003. Translated by Reginald Gibbons–Charles Segal. 68. p.

⁵ Jung, Carl Gustav: Mind and Earth. In C:G: Jung The Collected Works. Vol. X., Routledge, London–New York. 4353. p.

⁶ Strauss, Leo: *The City and Man*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London, 1964, 7., 16. p. ; Spengler, Oswald: *Der Mensch Und Die Technik. Beitrag Zu Einer Philosophie Des Lebens*. C.H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München, 1931, 67. p.

⁷ Jonas, Hans: *The Imeprative of Responsibility*. In *Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*. Translated

of nature in parallel with the civilization of human, is also due to the fact that „There is as yet no ethic dealing with man’s relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it. Land, like Odysseus’ slave-girls, is still property. The land relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but not obligations.”⁸ The crisis literature that unfolded in the late 19th - early 20th centuries also emphasizes the importance of ethical parameters; it looked like the triumphant path of scientific progress began to become an amok run when „they lost sight of the moral meaning of knowledge and information”.⁹ The rupture of rationality into hegemony, the ‘making the world non-magical’ – to use this Max Weber formula – ultimately resulted in that knowledge, i.e. science¹⁰ „has inevitably become an instrument of domination over nature and our fellow human beings”, and an approach to constant gain and exploitation of nature has cut across the path for “traditional, mythical and religious opportunities which can give shape to life”. The ecological crisis, which has become quite acute for our time, had (and has) deep-rooted moral bases and implications, so in this approach we can also speak of a moral crisis. According to Lányi, we are no longer able to perceive the moral nature of the crisis directly, and we will only be aware of the “roughest changes in physical condition” that occur in nature. „ It is due to this dullness that today we are talking about the crisis of the environment or the biosphere, and only few people talk about the essence: what Konrad Lorenz calls the decline of our humanity.”¹¹

Following the advent of ominous shadows, this decline began to accelerate with the Industrial Revolution, which, like the slave ladies already mentioned above, sought to take possession of nature. Man tried to interfere in the functioning of nature even before the industrial revolutions, but due to the lack of scientific apparatus, which would have been important for this – and due to the superficiality of knowledge – these experiments proved unsuitable to disturb the constant balance of nature.¹² Even for Friedrich Ratzel, it seemed like evidence that „Nature is constant, the destiny of people is changing, and in the enthusiastic moments of the story it almost shakes off the buzz of nature, but it can never get rid of it permanently because it is rooted in it.”¹³ However, the industrial revolution, which emerged from a rationalist, enlightened, technical, scientific approach (also) ultimately made this project a success, and in the developed West, in addition to culture, it fascinated people with the image of industry, transport network, high population density and big city (in a word: a society conceived in the Tönnies sense, realizing the mere coexistence of independent persons). At the same time, it suppressed the peasantry that turns the land into a motherland, which could offer a positive pattern of behavior to broad sections of society: they didn’t want to rob nature, they just wanted to change it, to become its friend.¹⁴ By now, nature appears to us only as the opposite of the artificial world of big cities, by no means, of course, in the sense

Hans Jonas–David Herr. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago–London, 1984, 2. p.

⁸ Leopold, Aldo: A Sand County Almanach and Sketches Here and There. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968. 203.

⁹ Lányi András: Bevezető [Introduction]. In Lányi – Jávör: i. m., 7. o.

¹⁰ Doorman, Maarten: A romantikus rend [The Romantic Order]. Translated by Tamás Balogh, Miklós Fenyves. Typotex Kiadó, Budapest, 2006, 131. o.

¹¹ Lányi: i. m. 8. o.

¹² Jonas: i. m. 3. p. We may add that the idea of the subjugation of nature and the possibility of belief in infinitive evolution were not entirely unknown to ancient thinkers (Xenophon, Empedocles or Plato) either, however, it was discarded because of its unnaturality and inhumaneness (its destructiveness to humanity). See: Strauss, Leo: On Tyranny. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London, 2013, 178. p.

¹³ Ratzel Frigyes: A föld és az ember [The Earth and the Man]. Translated by Jenő Simonyi. Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Budapest, 1887, 48. o.

¹⁴ Moeller van der Bruck, Arthur: Das Recht der jungen Völker. R. Piper & Co. Verlag, München, 1919, 101. p.; Spengler, Oswald: The Decline of the West Vol. 2. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1927, pp. 89-90.; Tönnies, Ferdinand: Community and Society. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, 21. p.

of the romantic attitude of idealizing nature; the world of technology is, in the eyes of many, merely the antithesis of ‘wild, barbaric,’ nature, free from the (supposed) beneficial effects of civilization.¹⁵ By finally being able to ‘restrain’ nature that was previously essentially free of human influences, man made himself vulnerable to the artificial, fabricated environment he brought to life in the course of technological developments. „Today Man finds himself genuinely in danger of being destroyed by a Frankenstein’s monster which is the work of his own hands. He has now inflicted himself magnitudes, quantities, and speeds which may be more than a match for the human nature which, so far, Man has not been able to modify to offset his revolutionary modification of Nature’s non-human sector” – summed his opinion Arnold J. Toynbee in 1969, predicting that due to the depopulation of the world’s rural population and the explosion of the population, Ecumenopolis (the merged metropolises) „will always be packed as full with human beings as a beehive is with bees and a termityary with termites”.¹⁶

The nature of human action has undergone fundamental changes due to the developments described above. To illustrate the scale of this change, we should recall that man, as a result of his nature-damaging activities, even ‘gifted’ Earth history with an era named after him; at the turn of the millennium, the American Stoermer and the Dutch Crutzen introduced the term anthropocene.¹⁷ Due to the increased customer demand based on the cult of technology, the belief in the unlimited economic freedom, the raising of the principle of competition comes from individual selfishness to a normative level, the idealization of *homo oeconomicus*, the ‘greedy pursuit of the unconditional’, the ‘conspicuous consumption’,¹⁸ the overcrowding, the globalization and (also) the large-scale growth of population, the climate and ecological catastrophe may have become a threat. So, it would be evident that once the scope of human action extends to the biosphere as a whole, the extent of human responsibility should also increase drastically¹⁹ – in theory, at least. According to Aldo Leopold, the only promising results in this area would be to finally extend the community range and boundaries of ethics to agricultural land, water, plants and animals (which would be synonymous with the institutionalized land ethic). Leopold clearly declares the mission of land ethic: „A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these »resources«, but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state... In short, a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizens of it.”²⁰ Hans Jonas also thought that the biosphere as a subject to our human power „has something of a moral claim on us not only for

¹⁵ Schmitt, Carl: Römischer Katholicismus und politische Form [Roman Catholicism and Political Form]. Hellerau, Jakob Hegner, 1923, 14. p.

¹⁶ Toynbee, Arnold J.: Hogyan válik az emberiség az általa létrehozott mesterséges környezet rabjává? [Man’s Self-enslavement to his Man-made Artificial Environment.] Translated by Márton Mesterházi. In Toynbee, Arnold J.: Válogatott tanulmányok [Selected Studies]. Gondolat, Budapest, 1971, 376-377. o.

¹⁷ See: Crutzen, Paul J. – Stoermer, Eugene F.: *The „Anthropocene”*. In *Global Change Newsletter*, No. 41. (2000), pp. 17-18. We can be proud that Tibor Mendöl saw the signs of all this vividly, long before the climate crisis became clear: “In the worldview of our time, naive anthropomorphism has often been replaced by slightly exaggerated anthropocentrism. We feel very much in the middle of the universe, perhaps we are too proud of our self-consciousness and will, our spiritual abilities and culture, the restraint of the wild forces of nature.” Mendöl, Tibor: *Ember és táj. Az emberföldrajz áttekintése*. [Landscape and People. An Overview of Human Geography]. Magyar Szemle Társaság, Budapest, 1932, 3. o.

¹⁸ According to Veblen, the individual no longer strives for the maximum benefit of the moment, he makes his consumption decisions independently of others, but does so based on the desires found in competing with others. So instead of meeting needs, it becomes important that others think we have paid a lot for a particular asset. The norm of ostentatious consumption thus seems to be becoming increasingly unquestionable. See: Veblen, Thorstein: *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007, 45. p.

¹⁹ Jonas: i. m., pp. 6-8.

²⁰ Leopold: i. m. 204. p.

our ulterior sake but for its own and in its own right. If this were the case it would require quite some rethinking in basic principles of ethics.” According to the Jonas concept, one would be endowed with a kind of ‘stewardship’ role after ethical ‘fine-tuning’: „It would mean to seek not only the human good but also the good of things extrahuman, that is, to extend the recognition of »ends in themselves« beyond the sphere of man and make the human good include the care for them.”²¹ This fine-tuning does not completely marginalize the economic aspects which inevitably arise on the part of man; According to Leopold, it is much more about that „Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”²²

In our view, Leopold and Jonas wanted to reflect on the same problem in the middle of the last century: in an age where technology has begun to gain ethical significance and has previously pushed the boundaries of the artificial environment beyond comprehension, virtually absorbing its natural sphere,²³ we need a complete paradigm shift in a moral sense (as well). Entering the 21st century, of course, we also understand the dangers of the fundamentalization of this perception. In 1972, Christopher D. Stone, in connection with the ‘legalization of the rights of natural objects,’ argued that trees, forests, oceans, rivers, and all ‘natural objects’ also entitled to have legal status.²⁴ These findings may even could be paralleled by Leopold’s desire; at the same time, *animal studies* poses a much bigger source of danger, as a sector of post-humanism, which would not only institutionalize animal rights, but also seek to transcend and ‘deconstruct’ the anthropocentric, people-centered approach, expressing that “all life forms has its own goals, perspectives, functions and worlds of life that only partially cover the sphere of human pragmatism”. Some pour this even more drastically into words, encouraging one to abandon the ‘Übermensch’ attitude in the ‘beautiful new world’ they have devised and to ‘degenerate’ themselves into ‘Untermensch’, slipping back into “animality, the radical lowliness of the Earth”. (D. H. Lawrence).²⁵ The radical new left-wing canon is trying to arouse guilt in the whole humanity with astonishing rhetorical twists and turns: Jacques Derrida described the mass extermination of animals and industrial animal husbandry as a tragedy of civilization comparable to the Holocaust,²⁶ Giorgio Agamben, on the other hand, was hysterical about the fact that certain organizations working to protect animals only care about ‘animal species that are aesthetically appealing from a human point of view’, neglecting animals that are ‘not cute enough’ for potential donors.²⁷ However, the most extreme position was presumably taken by Donna Haraway, author of the *Companion Species Manifesto*, who, by emphasizing reciprocity and equality between the human and non-human races, drew the contours of an ‘interracial society’. After turning to the relationship between man and dog, she came to the conclusion that it is unnecessary for a man to raise his dog, since man and dog mutually shape each other, opening up to each other ‘even in a physical sense’, creating an ‘almost erotic sensual relationship’.²⁸ Whatever this means in Haraway’s ‘retelling’ narrative, raising such a perverse thought goes, to put it mildly, well

²¹ Jonas: i. m. 8. p.

²² Leopold: i. m., pp. 224-225

²³ Jonas: i. m. 9. p.

²⁴ Christopher D. Stone: *Should Trees have Standing? Law, Morality and the Environment*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010. 5. p.

²⁵ Horváth Márk – Lovász Ádám – Nemes Z. Márió: *A poszthumanizmus változatai. Ember, embertelen és ember után [Variants of Posthumanism. Man, Inhuman and After Man]*. Prae Kiadó, Budakeszi, 2019, 42., 102. o.

²⁶ Derrida, Jacques: *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Fordham University Press, New York, 2008, pp. 25-26.

²⁷ Agamben, Giorgio: *The Open. Man and Animal*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2004. Quotes: Horváth et al.: i. m. 123. o.

²⁸ Haraway, Donna: *The Companion Species Manifesto. Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. Prickly Paradigm Press, Chicago, 2003, 4. o.

beyond a healthy and tolerable boundary, and does not serve the dog's development and interests.

We believe the truth can be found somewhere in the middle ground. It is fully acceptable and supportive that we have to radically change the norms that govern our behavior towards the natural environment; to stop putting the materialist conception on a pedestal and the fetishization of consumer culture. The view that man must rule over nature must be abandoned; since man cannot be the lord of nature, at most only its citizen. At the same time, it must be considered that the use of nature by man is acceptable to a limited extent, and certain tendencies of the posthumanist conception can be described as particularly harmful. So we can and we should argue about how to try to court in order to win the graces of the goddess Gaia (again), on the other hand, it is beyond dispute that fierce compliments can no longer be postponed.

II. The Displacement of Human

The above stated criticism of the modernity is just one side or possible approach of this story: the conservative reading of calamities of Modern Age. However there has been a left wing (rooted mainly in the Marxist theoretical framework) criticism of it. The Modern Age as philosophical-political structure was marked by the individual human Subject's privileged position in the world: every step in the rationalization was driven by a specific concept of self and the derived political system it created. The object-subject dichotomy detach humanity from the nature, the modern reason objectifies and the reifies its surroundings first, and in our contemporary times its own body as well. This objectification has taken everything as means to an end for enrichment and progress of humanity.

In our short paper we could only outline the main waves of this left-wing critics of Modernity, so we would like to concentrate one issue on the concept of humanity and its place in the world. It is very emblematic that how we reach from the Renaissance humanism to the point where some scholars now argue against the concept humanity or the radical shift in the emphasis of human-centric world.²⁹ This theoretical approach we illustrate with Jacques Derrida who in his long career many times addressed the problem of human-animal dichotomy and its problematic nature.

The concept of alienation first articulated by Karl Marx in his early writing. The most concrete definition and description of this phenomenon has been written down in his work titled Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844, and Later it was reexamined is The German Ideology.³⁰ By the industrialized labour the worker is alienated from himself: "The worker puts his life in the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object. Hence, greater the activity, the greater is the worker's lack of objects. Whatever the product of the labour is, he is not. Therefore the greater the product, the less is he himself. The alienation of the worker in his product means not only his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists *outside him*, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him; it means that life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien."³¹

Marx with the concept of the alienation made a powerful statement on the modern industry-driven and urbanized societies and their inherent malady. In the 19th and 20th Century philosophers and social scientist from various ideological backgrounds has started to address

²⁹ Peter Singer: Animal Liberation. New York, HarperCollins Publisher, 2002, pp. 185-212.

³⁰ Marx, Karl – Engels, Friedrich: The German Ideology. New York, Prometheus Books, 1998.

³¹ Marx, Karl: Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844. Translated by Martin Milligan. New York, Prometheus Books, 1988, 72. p.

these issues and their inherent danger on mankind. I would only name Simmel's theory of money³² or Durkheim's theory of social anomie³³ These theories can be disputed but we cannot deny that the Marxist critic of Modernity formed an alternative criticism of Modern Age's ruling ideology of Democracy and Capitalism and its kind of utopic view of social and scientific Progress. But we must remark that most of the Marxist criticism of the Liberal Utopia was just a replacement with another one³⁴ with horrific consequences in the real world especially in Eastern and Middle Europe.

In 20th Century the critique of Modernity which aimed to liberate the society and treat the social ills like alienation, inequality and oppression was step-by-step overtaken the same tendencies that they fought against. One can question whether the Frankfurt School and other theorist were just the chroniclers of great social changes or they were inadvertently pushed the collective theoretical idioms that describe our society and pushed even further into the wrong direction.

The critique of Cartesian Subject (which is the Modern Subject) was an attack on the liberal individualism as well. As it was outlined by great philosophers of the Enlightenment were on the position of doubt and scepticism but in the end they believed that by the virtue of Reason we as human beings are capable of knowing. As Ricoeur summarises: "The philosopher trained in the school of Descartes knows that things are doubtful, that they are not such as they appear; but he does not doubt that consciousness is such as it appears itself; in consciousness, meaning and consciousness of meaning coincide. Since Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud this too has become doubtful. After the doubt about things, we started to doubt consciousness."³⁵

This doubt of consciousness by the above-mentioned thinkers (Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud) had an underlying structure: they doubted that that is stable core what we can call "I", "Self-Consciousness" or "Subject". They doubted the full mastery over our own consciousness and started to lay the groundwork of what we could call the "Death of the Subject" or the death of Man as an unproblematic being. Marx suspected that the working system of Capitalism creates class consciousness which creates false view on the reality. Nietzsche questioned the whole Western philosophical tradition and the possibility of objective morality as "slave morality". And in the end Freud last nail in the Cartesian Cogito's coffin: what if consciousness is not a singular entity but a fractured complex of self-censorship hidden layers of terra incognita which subtly rules over the thing what we naively call "Self". When this notion won over the Zeitgeist and intellectual circles we were on the road to the self-deconstruction (or self-destruction?) of the Concept of Man.

The Frankfurt School was organised around the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main's Faculty of Sociology, on Marxist theoretical grounds they proposed a social theory on great crises of the 20th Century states and societies. The School and their thinkers had a huge influence on the postmodern thought that formed the post-structuralist movement that created Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida and the whole French Continental Philosophical School. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno in their classic work titled *Dialectic of Enlightenment* have pessimistic take on the capitalist society and offer a resigning panorama where we have reached since and by the Enlightenment. "Enlightenment's program was the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dispel the myths, to overthrow fantasy with

³² Simmel, Georg: *The Philosophy of Money*. Translated by Tom Bottomore–David Frisby. London–New York, Routledge, 2004.

³³ Durkheim, Émile: *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Translated by John A. Spaulding–George Simpson. London–New York, Routledge, 2005.

³⁴ Mannheim, Karl: *Ideology and Utopia*. Translated by Louis Wirth–Edward Shils. London–New York, Routledge, 1979, 215. p.

³⁵ Ricoeur, Paul: *Freud and Philosophy. An Essay on Interpretation*. Translated by Denis Savage. New Haven–London, Yale University Press, 1970, 33. p.

knowledge.”³⁶ This program of knowledge and mastery over the nature around us was deeply rooted in the individualistic somewhat selfish concept of Subject which was (for the Marxist theorists) clearly originated from the liberal free market capitalism in its ideological “lies”. “The »happy march« between human understanding and the nature of things that he envisaged is a patriarchal one: the mind, conquering superstition, is to rule over disenchanting nature. Knowledge, which is power, knows no limits, either in its enslavement of creation or in its deference to worldly masters. Just as it serves all the purposes of the bourgeois economy both in factories and on the battlefield, is it at the disposal of entrepreneurs regardless their origins. Kings control technology more directly than do merchants: it is as democratic as the economic system with which it evolved. Technology is the essence of this knowledge. It aims to produce neither concepts nor images, nor the joy of understanding, but method, exploitation labour of others, capital. [...] What human beings seek to learn from nature is how to use it to dominate wholly both it and human beings. Nothing else counts.”³⁷

Horkheimer and Adorno were very pessimistic about the possibility of a fruitful critique of the modernist ideology. The Frankfurt School saw the situation of the Subject at clearly nested in the current social circumstances that commodify the individual and make it seen its own position as normal by the power of the ideology. A Subject has limited power on its self-realisation, and the possibility for revolutionary action is minimal. Herbert Marcuse in his book the *One-Dimensional Man* has seen some hope to defeat the social forces that would slowly strip humanity away from any real connection.³⁸ Habermas’ theory of deliberative democracy, though based on the Frankfurtian teachings, has shown a possible “escape route” from the system that disintegrate the society and the individual.³⁹

This historical course was also went hand in hand with the linguistic turn of the philosophy, which destabilized our understanding of reality and society. The structuralist linguistics based on Saussure’s theory of semiology took over the social sciences, which lead the philosophical understanding of thought as a more language-based approach. From now on the reality and the subject cannot be isolated from language and signs which constitute our understanding. This intellectual tendency was reached to a closure with the concept of “social construction”, which turned every social phenomenon into a culturally created prejudice of a contingent social order.⁴⁰ The concept of social construct does not mean that there is no objective reality, but they do say that the meaning of the objective processes are purely created by social powers, which is mostly dominated by certain social powers.⁴¹

The postmodern thought mostly based on these intellectual grounds and created a unique view on reality but we will concentrate only on Derrida’s view of human-animal dichotomy.

Derrida’s philosophy often accused of antihumanism for his frequently misinterpreted saying of “nothing is outside of the text”⁴² which is often interpreted as the pre-existence of the text and the textual view of reality. This is quite far away from the true meaning of Derrida’s saying but it is true that for the French Philosopher has worked with and extensive

³⁶ Horkheimer, Max– Adorno, Theodor W.: *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2002.

³⁷ Horkheimer–Adorno: i. m. 2. p.

³⁸ Marcuse, Herbert: *One-Dimensional Man*. Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society. London–New York, Routledge, 2002.

³⁹ Habermas, Jürgen: *Theory of Communicative Action Volume Two. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston, Beacon Press, 1987.

⁴⁰ Berger, Peter L.– Luckmann, Thomas: *The Social Construct of Reality. A Treatise in the sociology of Knowledge*. London, Penguin Books, 1991, 149. p.

⁴¹ Foucault, Michel: *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York, Pantheon Books, 1978, pp. 92-98.

⁴² Derrida, Jacques: *Of Grammatology*. London–New York, John Hopkins University Press, 1997, 158. p.

meaning of texts (written, oral or visual marks and traces etc.) that could interfere each other by their inevitable intertextuality.

The French philosopher's later papers and books were mostly concerned about political issues and its opening was his lecture on the Cardozo School of Law in New York, called "Force of Law" this lecture mainly tried to deconstruct the dichotomy of legal force and the unlawful violence but lay the ground works of Derrida's notion on the human and animal dichotomy: "In the space in which I'm situating these remarks or reconstituting this discourse one would not speak of injustice or violence toward an animal, even less toward a vegetable or a stone. An animal can be made to suffer, but we would never say, in a sense considered proper, that it is a wronged subject, the victim of a crime, of a murder, of a rape or a theft, of a perjury-and this is true *a fortiori*, we think, for what we call vegetable or mineral or intermediate species like the sponge. There have been, there are still, many "subjects" among mankind who are not recognized as subjects and who receive this animal treatment (this is the whole unfinished history I briefly alluded to a moment ago). What we confusedly call "animal," the living thing as living and nothing else, is not a subject of the law or of law (*droit*). The opposition between just and unjust has no meaning in this case. As for trials for animals (there have been some) or lawsuits against those who inflict certain kinds of suffering on animals (legislation in certain Western countries provides for this and speaks not only of the rights of man but also of the rights of animals in general), these are considered to be either archaisms or still marginal and rare phenomena not constitutive of our culture."⁴³

The paradigm that Derrida outlines is clear: humanity is above the animals and there is no ethical implication to our relationship with the vast and diverse mass of animals. The animal signifies the mere living things that can be used. They feel the pain, but this pain is different from the pain of human beings.

Jacques Derrida in his later writing calls out the European philosophical tradition which denounces the animal life and under-observes it. It is our western thinking the phenomenon called "animal" was mostly put to the sidelines or denied their importance amongst the things that inhabit this world.⁴⁴ Descartes was called the animals soulless automatons and for they have no voice (language to communicate) are below the humans and as the whole world they are objects of human interests. Even when they were called living beings that inhabit this world with us they were only mere life [Nur-Lebenden]⁴⁵ that can be exploited: "In our culture, carnivorous sacrifice is fundamental, dominant, regulated by the highest industrial technology, as is biological experimentation on animals-so vital to our modernity. As I have tried to show elsewhere, carnivorous sacrifice is essential to the structure of subjectivity, which is also to say to the founding of the intentional subject and to the founding, if not of the law, at least of law (*droit*), the difference between the law and law (*droit*), justice and law (*droit*), justice and the law here remaining open over an abyss. I will leave these problems aside for the moment, along with the affinity between carnivorous sacrifice, at the basis of our culture and our law, and all the cannibalisms, symbolic or not, that structure intersubjectivity in nursing, love, mourning and, in truth, in all symbolic or linguistic appropriations. If we wish to speak of injustice, of violence or of a lack of respect toward what we still so confusedly call animals-the question is more topical than ever, and so I include in it, in the name of deconstruction, a set of questions on carno-phallogocentrism-we must reconsider in

⁴³ Derrida, Jacques: The Force of Law. The Mystical Foundations of Authority. In Cardozo Law Review, Vol. 11. 1989-1990, 951. p.

⁴⁴ Derrida, Jacques: The Animal Therefore I Am (And More To Follow). Translated by David Willis. Fordham University Press, New York, 2008, 32. p.

⁴⁵ Heidegger, Martin: Sein und Zeit. Tübingen, Max Neimeyer Verlag, 1967, 346. p.

its totality the metaphysico-anthropocentric axiomatic that dominates, in the West, the thought of just and unjust.”⁴⁶

But no matter how radical Derrida’s attack on the animal-human dichotomy his investigation always tracks back to the subtle oppression of other human subjects: “This injustice supposes that the other, the victim of the language’s injustice, is capable of a language in general, is man as a speaking animal, in the sense that we, men, give to this word language. Moreover, there was a time, not long ago and not yet over, in which »we; men« meant »we adult white male Europeans, carnivorous and capable of sacrifice.«”⁴⁷

His later lectures called *The Beast and the Sovereign* were marked by this linguistic play of the masculine sovereign (*le souverain*) and the feminine beast (*la bête*). The animal as a concept is an umbrella term (for it contains a whole and diverse set of living creatures)⁴⁸ which was put on the margins of existence no matter that we share the whole world.⁴⁹

The subtle oppression of language is working under the concept of “capable of speaking” in the terms that it is allowed to speak. The deconstruction of the human-animal dichotomy would lead us to a more nuanced worldview of the living things. One where systematic and mechanised killing of animals would be outlawed. One could argue for such kind of world but in the end. It is rightful concern that the displacement of human would lead us for the devaluation of human life and the human body.

On a whole different theoretical approach Peter Singer has reached a similar conclusion. Singer’s disputed classic *Animal Liberation* uses the language of the anti-discriminatory legal movements for protection of the animals. According to Singer our culture is based on speciesism that denounces animal life.⁵⁰ Singer tries to change our conceptual framework to human and nonhuman animals that would toppled our cultural hierarchy that constitutes our violent handling of animals. If human and nonhuman animals are on the same level of moral personality it would be only a species oppression to exploit other animals. And it is not just an animal issue according to Singer: “cruelty to animals leads to cruelty of human beings.”⁵¹

However we argue that the theoretical emptying of the Human Subject eventually will lead to more problems that should be solved. Also the so-called trans- or posthumanism already argues for a more exploitative yielding of the human body.⁵² Upon the moral concerns we argue that on the bases of our late capitalist society, that would only lead for an even uneven society and it’s moral implication we haven’t considered.

For conclusion we argue that postmodern and leftist narratives are tried to overcome the limitations of the Modernity’s false claims of Subject lead us to our contemporary ecological crisis. However, it seems that all the theoretical progresses didn’t made us pass through Modernity but an even more sinister realization of it. We can see slowly and steadily as the human body and consciousness became the objects and working materials of technological progress.

⁴⁶ Derrida: i. m. (1989-1990), pp. 951-953.

⁴⁷ Derrida: i. m. (1989-1990), 951. p.

⁴⁸ Derrida: i. m. (2008), 41. p.

⁴⁹ Derrida: i. m. (2017), 8. p.

⁵⁰ Singer: i. m. 222. p.

⁵¹ Singer: i. m. 244. p.

⁵² cf. Wolfe, Cary: *What is Posthumanism?* Minneapolis–London, Minneapolis University Press, 2010.; Hayles, N. Katherine: *How We Become Posthuman*. Chicago–London, The University of Chicago Press, 1999. Frivaldszky János: *Transhumanismo y dignidad – mejoras terapéuticas no terapéuticas*. In Miguel, Ayuso (ed.): *¿Transhumanismo o post humanidad?: la política y el derecho después del humanismo*. Madrid, Marcial Pons, 2019, pp. 139-155.