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HUMANKIND VERSUS OTHERS-IN-LAW

Re-Visioning Levinas for a Postmodern Hierophany

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1. Introduction

Perhaps, the core of the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas can best be termed as "one's absolute responsibility for the other" where the other unequivocally stands for human beings. Hence, one is unlikely to be wide of the mark, if Levinasian ethics, with some qualification, is designated as 'humanist'. Yet, to be labelled as a 'humanist' in the period during and after the second half of the 20th century is not altogether laudatory. For, the Enlightenment humanist project, generally believed to be an offshoot of the Cartesian Cogito, stands discredited consequent on the rude jolt administered by the anti-essentialist and anti-humanist poststructuralist upsurge. The human centrality was problematized and sidelined in the new philosophies contemporaneous with the Levinasian heyday. Vigorous ecological concerns, upon the heels of these philosophies, have not been comfortable with the exclusionary focus on 'man', due to the growing realization of the interdependence of the human and the nonhuman spheres. Deep ecologists justly accuse the 'environmentalists' as being narcissistically obsessed with the future 'human' welfare, and less with the happiness of all. For, environment is invariably taken to be a human-centred one.

Consequent on the realization of the unviability of an exclusionary humanist approach, there is a pressing need for a vision that determines the ethical status of the nonhuman. The world, it seems, is in want of an ethical vision that valourizes the nonhuman, as the Levinasian approach is rather heavily inclined to the human. This essay hazards a possible re-visioning of the celebrated Levinasian thought for an inclusionary approach to the human and the nonhuman.

The nondualist philosophies, in all likelihood, sprang from the realization of the danger of the growing wedge between the human and the

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nonhuman in the wake of the transition to agricultural and urbanized economy, from a hunting-gathering mode of life. South Asian religions, both theistic and atheistic persuasions, in their attempts to restore the interdependence, seem to have generally stressed the essential unity of everyone. However, no dispensation that holds out deliverance (*mokṣa*) as the ultimate end can consider the nonhuman at par. A viable philosophy is the one that valourizes the human and the nonhuman for the same reason, and that reason is none other than the continuity of life on earth. Any ethics worth the name should be geared to this end.

2. Poststructuralism and Diehard Humanism

Poststructuralism, in its unqualified version by its celebration of the death or end of a host of entities such as God, author, philosophy, man, and humanism, professes to valourize nothing. Yet, understandably, man and its cognate humanism, either because of their desirability and probably more because of their inevitability, refuse to be silenced. As a matter of fact, the avowed anti-humanist project of poststructuralism ended up largely as a paean to the humanist creed in terms of gender, race, class, and special interests. A humanist ethical turn, if in different forms, is insistent in leading poststructuralist thinkers like Derrida and Foucault. Derrida's later books such as *From Law to Philosophy* (1990), *The Other Heading* (1991), *The Politics of Friendship* (1994), *The Gift of Death* (1995) and Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1984) and *The Care of the Self* (1984) unequivocally reject any nihilist tones in their philosophy in favour of a humanist ethics. This valourization of the human has found singular philosophical support in Emmanuel Levinas, arguably the greatest moral philosopher in, and whose thought bears down heavily upon, the 20th century ethics.

3. The 'other' in Levinas

When Levinas, in his *Basic Philosophical Writings*, states that "the relationship with the other puts me into question, empties me of myself,"[1] or when Jill Robbins says that Levinas' ethics works essentially by "putting into question of the self by the infinitizing mode of the face of the other,"[2] the terms 'self' and 'other' in the citations are all too definitively

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[1]Emmanuel Levinas, *Basic Philosophical Writings*, eds. Adrian T. Peperzak, Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996, 350.

[2]Jill Robbins, *Altered Reading: Levinas and Literature*, Chicago: Chicago UP, 1999, xiii.

and exclusively human. Hence, Levinas' ethics that is predicated on one's infinite responsibility to the other person stresses a human individual's inherent responsibility to the inviolable and irreducible face of the human other.

Levinas, contradictorily though it might seem, is a humanist par excellence by transcending humanism, for, he considers traditional humanism less than human. Traditional humanism "has to be denounced because it is not sufficiently human,"[3] as it has not adequately taken care of the human. Without making a simplistic return to the Enlightenment humanism and by steering clear of the foundationalism of the sovereign subject, Levinas sets out to the restoration of subjectivity that has been refused by the juggernaut of poststructuralist upsurge. In his preface to *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas spells out the aim of his book as "a defence of subjectivity ... as founded in the idea of infinity"[4] and to that extent Levinas may be moving against the currents of poststructuralism as well as traditional humanism in certain significant aspects. As all ethics is predicated on value and some sort of subjectivity, Levinasian subject is defined by its exposure to an irreducible alterity. It is also a fractured subjectivity aware of its "infinite responsibility to the other person" and the impossible demand made on it by the other. Levinas goes on in his preface: "subjectivity realizes these impossible demands: the astonishing fact of containing more than it is possible to contain. This book will present subjectivity as welcoming the other, as hospitality."[5] In this originary relatedness, individual choice is possible but forbidden.

4. The Dynamics of the Levinasian Ethics

In the awareness of its exposure to the other, the self-contained sovereign self disappears. There is a disowning of the ego. In "Meaning and Sense," Levinas says that in such moments of exposure to the other, "the I loses its sovereign self-confidence, its identification in which consciousness returns triumphantly to itself to rest on others. Before the exigency of the other (*Autrui*), the I is expelled from this rest..."[6] Levinas rejects the authority of

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[3]Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1998, 128.

[4]Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1969, 26.

[5]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 27.

[6]Levinas, *Basic Philosophical Writings*, 54.

philosophy that appraises others by imposing meaning through representational structures and by condescendingly attempting to speak for the other because it works by reducing the other and hence employing violence against the other. Therefore, authentic ethics for Levinas precedes ontology and philosophy. The other, in Levinas, is the 'epiphany' of the human face that cannot be refused and which clamours for attention: "this gaze that supplicates and demands, deprived of everything because entitled to everything."[7] Notably, Levinas' ethics refuses to range beyond the human realm.

5. The Nonhuman in Levinas

The nonhuman animal, in the Levinasian oeuvre, receives little attention as allowed to a subject unworthy, as it were, of profounder analysis. Yet, his attitude to the nonhuman animal can be gathered from the essay, "The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights" and from the interview given to Tamra Wright *et al.* As small organisms, plants and non-sentient kingdom are given still less attention. One gets the feeling that Levinas is unwilling to include animals, let alone plants and inorganic world in the ethical sphere.

"The Name of a Dog" is an anecdote concerning a stray dog named Bobby that became Levinas' friend for a few days during their stint as prisoners of war in Nazi Germany. Bobby's behaviour in recognizing their humanity, a gesture that was hard to come by from their masters, is almost described as ethical: "for him, – it was incontestable – we were men."[8] Yet, the dog is not accorded any ethical status. In his *Collected Philosophical Writings*, Levinas views nonhuman animals much like Descartes did, as live machines: "an animal is a machine not only because it does not know how to utilize its organs in polyvalent way, but because it is imprisoned in its constitution."[9] The singular Levinasian human–nonhuman demarcation is being "capable of living for the other"[10] which the nonhuman is allegedly incapable. Here the same yardstick is applied to the human and the nonhuman, as the human is not so much the Aristotelian–Cartesian 'rational' animal as 'relational' animal. Rationality is downplayed: "reason speaking in the first person is not addressed to the

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[7]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 75.

[8]Emmanuel Levinas, *Difficult Freedom*, trans. Sean Hand, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1990, 153.

[9]Emmanuel Levinas, *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987, 122.

[10]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 149.

other, [it only] conducts a monologue."[11] No wonder, animals fare indeed badly in terms of the relationality benchmark!

Besides, the members of the nonhuman themselves are contradistinguished on the basis of relationality. Levinas says: "animal need is liberated from vegetable dependence, but this liberation is itself dependence and uncertainty. The need of a wild animal is inseparable from struggle and fear; the exterior world from which it is liberated remains a threat. But need is also the time of labour: a relation with an other yielding its alterity."[12] Yet, these strictures made on the nonhuman kingdom raise more questions than answer them. Is not the criterion of liberation from a "vegetable dependence," which allegedly the human alone is capable of, indefensibly speciesist? If the nonhuman realm is, as it is alleged, inherently incapable of transcending the 'vegetable dependence', isn't the humankind ethically obliged to them? Could the nonhuman, as opposed to the human, be considered as leading an unethical (i.e., ethics-neutral) life? Is one species entitled to dictate an ethical code of conduct for another? Levinas' thought tends towards a human exclusivity, as only the human other, whose face is a face of deprivation demanding obligation from us.

Regarding the human and animal face, Levinas says that we "cannot entirely refuse the face of an animal." For instance, a dog "also has a face."[13] However, there is "priority" to human face as animal face is not in its "purest form." According to Levinas, only human beings possess a face from an ethical perspective. About our obligations to animals, Levinas' view is that "the ethical extends to all living beings," the reason being the fact that "we do not want to make an animal suffer needlessly." The ability to suffer pain is a prerogative, predictably, reserved, in the Levinasian reasoning, only to the higher order animals, even as one cannot pass over the ambiguity of the term "needlessly."

6. Privileging the Human

But why is the humankind entitled to such precedence in ethics? Levinas feels that in the evolutionary stage, the human is the most advanced

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[11]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 72.

[12]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 116.

[13]Emmanuel Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Levinas" (interviewed by Tamra Wright, Peter Hughes, and Alison Ainley), trans. Andrew Benjamin and Tamra Wright, in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, eds. Robert Bernasconi and David Wood, London: Routledge, 1988, 169.

species, which accords the human a special place in the scheme of life. He says: "the human is only the last stage of the evolution of the animal ... [and] that in relation to the animal, the human is a new phenomenon."[14] This evolutionary advancement, according to Levinas, was by and large, a unique ability to transcend one's self and be related to the other. This singularizes the human. Levinas observes:

> You ask at what moment one becomes a face. I do not know at what moment the human appears, but what I want to emphasize is that the human breaks in with pure being, which is always a persistence in being. This is my principal thesis. A being is something that is attached to being, to its own being. That is Darwin's idea. The being of animals is a struggle for life: a struggle of life without ethics. It is a question of might... The aim of being is being itself. However, with the appearance of the human, – and this is my entire philosophy – there is something more important than my life, and that is the life of the other. That is unreasonable. Man is an unreasonable animal.[15]

The human, indeed, is unreasonable in the sense that it can go beyond the dictates of reason to prioritize the need of the other, though still it is an act performed through the exercise of reason. More importantly, one wonders whether Levinas gives due acknowledgement to the common fountainhead of the evolutionary grid, of which the vaunted human faculties are but one element among a varied set of coordinates that informed the course of the progress of the cosmos. If the human is a new phenomenon, it probably is not the last of such phenomena as much as the succeeding species generally has been dependent on all the preceding genera and species. Levinas' ethics does not seem to regard the possibility that the world of both human and nonhuman, reason or no-reason, is subject to the more or less same 'laws' of the universe for eons, and that it has not only been a life of togetherness, now falling in, now falling out, now relational, now otherwise, but also that the nonhuman has been the condition for human life and prosperity, which will presumably fuel further stages of evolutionary unfolding.

Besides, if the "being of animals is a struggle for life" inherently, and human life is characterized by its relation to the "life of the other" and if this is further held out as the basis of human superiority, how far can one escape the charge of genetic fallacy? Evidently, both are inherited features

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[14]Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality," 172.
[15]Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality," 172.

over which neither the human nor the nonhuman has any control. Moreover, whether the being of all the animals is a greater struggle for life than it is for human beings needs more study. Numerous studies concerning animal love for the members of its own species, its own young ones, instances of selfless sacrifice for the members of its own species and for protecting the members of other species, including the human, with varying degrees of conclusiveness have come in. (Un)fortunately, the human can only analyse with anthropomorphic tools, as much as the nonhuman approaches life with tools characteristic to them.

7. Locating the Human in the Evolutionary Grid

The impulse to privilege the human over the nonhuman tapers off as the human is viewed in the cosmic evolutionary perspective of thousands of millennia. It is commonplace that the Earth and its contents have been shaped over billions of years, that humanity itself is nature-became-self-conscious, and that the human complexity is, a chronological step ahead of and predicated on animal innocence. Even a schoolboy knows that the Earth itself is a puny planetary body, with the 'great' Sun and other planets being but tiny outstations in our galaxy which itself is only a miniscule part of the yet uncharted cosmos.

Even as Levinas draws an absolute and unbridgeable ethical divide between the human and animal that subsumes all that is nonhuman, it seems, in the evolutionary course of the human and nonhuman realms, dependency and complexity of being are directly proportional. The earlier evolutionary products are more self-reliant and hence less dependent on the later ones which owe their existence to the earlier ones. Human being the last to come and in spite of being the most complex being yet, on the world stage, are paradoxically the most dependent, if poorly acknowledged, on the earlier evolutionary products. Hence, when Levinas declares that "the prototype of this [ethics] is human ethics,"[16] it smacks, to say the least, of human chauvinism.

However, parallel to the biological evolutionary course, even the much prated human ethics appears to be predicated on the prehuman instinctual world. Nietzsche considers the entire morality as based on animality, and human as the intruder who has unlawfully appropriated the animal ethics: "the beginnings of justice, as of prudence, moderation, bravery ... are animals: a consequence of that drive which teaches us to

[16]Levinas, "The Paradox of Morality," 172.

seek food and elude enemies... [I]t is not improper to describe the entire phenomenon of morality as animal."[17] Besides, the human essence, if any, came to be defined in terms of animals: "he [human] envied the wildest, most courageous animals and robbed all their virtues; only thus did he become man."[18]

8. Towards Interdependence

The awareness of the dependence of the human upon the nonhuman is attested by all traditional societies and is best illustrated in the aboriginal totem. Totemism, a vestige of Palaeolithic life and an anthropologist's hobbyhorse, by its identification of a hunting-gathering clan with a species of plant or animal underscores its unity with the nonhuman. Totemic beliefs, a spin off from human intercourse with the nonhuman for ages, viewed nature as pulsating with life. Inorganic matter hardly existed. For most autochthonous societies, the human and the nonhuman realms were undifferentiated. Gary Snyder observes: "in Pueblo societies a kind of ultimate democracy is practised. Plants and animals are also people, and, through certain rituals and dances, are given a place and a voice in the political discussions of the humans."[19]

That the biblical 'Fall' is more an admonition about the dangers consequent on a turn from hunting gathering to agriculture than any grave transgression of a theological command is no less platitudinous than the proposition that starvation, malnutrition, warfare, and pestilence are traceable to agriculture and urbanization, both of which together, in turn, are traceable to the human-nonhuman rupture. Significantly, many major world religions make deliberate effort, if they have not sprung up precisely for this purpose, to restore the organic human-nonhuman unity of the past. The nondual philosophy expatiated upon in the South Asian religions like Hinduism, the Buddhist denial of self and God, Jainist *ahimsa* or nonviolence have long been viewed as strictures against the attendant dangers of the human-nonhuman split. Even as these religions are wary about valuing the nonhuman for its intrinsic and ultimate worth, the sacrality of the nonhuman has been fundamental to them. No wonder, all

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[17]Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997, 26.

[18]Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York: Penguin, 1980, 6.

[19]Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*, New Haven: Yale UP, 1991, 104.

enduring spiritual postures have had an abiding material underpinning that seeks to ensure best quality of life to everyone. Christianity may fare rather poorly when it comes to everyone.

In the Palaeolithic phase, the human beings were neither specially privileged nor separate from the rest of nature that was thought to be alive and filled with spirits. In such an equitable dispensation, hierarchization was uncalled for. Many scholars have referred to the Palaeolithic belief in a "primeval kinship with all creatures of the living world and to the essential continuity among them all." A sense of shared essence among all creatures marked the prehistoric era which believed that "their external forms were interchangeable." The living organism of the world "includes all that grows and all that moves about in air and sky, on earth, below the earth, and in the sea; it includes even the gods and the ever bearing earth in her totality."[20] The immanent gods of prehistory were supplanted by the transcendent ones only in the agricultural era. In South Asia, the resistance against the Vedic transcendent deities by the Jaina and Buddhist thoughts may be seen largely as an attempt to resituate humanity back on this world. Yet, as they passionately and ultimately sought liberation from the world, which to them was a bondage of sorts debunked the real status accorded to the nonhuman in such worldviews. Even the celebrated nondualist philosophies, even as they swear by the 'essential' identity of everything, locate the nonhuman only outside the centre.

The turn from hunting foraging to agriculture dealt a lasting and lethal blow to the human-nonhuman communion. Agriculture drew the boundary between natural and cultural; it made distinctions between fields and forests, seedlings and weeds, crops and wilderness, domestic and wild. The interdependence got easily snapped as the produce in agriculture was viewed as one acquired through the sweat of the human brow rather than the bounty of the earth. Max Oelschlaeger refers to the inevitability of philosophy and theology in the new epoch: "once the agricultural turn was made, philosophy and theology sprang forth with a vengeance."[21] Significantly, it is with the emergence of agriculture with its attendant philosophy and theology, the appraisal of the nonhuman occurs with abandon, and humanization enters centre stage with a bang. If anything, Levinas was against such a philosophic violence of valuing the other. As

[20]Karl W. Luckert, *The Navajo Hunter Tradition*, Tucson: Arizona UP, 1975, 133.
[21]Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness*, 29.

Levinas puts it, "the relation between the other and me, which dawns forth in his expression, issues neither in number nor in [*sic*] concept."[22] Levinas rejects the violence in conceptualizing and philosophizing the other. Levinas' ethics is basically a relationship with facing the other. "For Levinas, to decode the face in the manner of other signs would be to reduce it violently, to turn it – horribly, into a mask."[23] The prephilosophic enterprise that ethics is for Levinas, the Palaeolithic interdependence of the human and nonhuman may seem to best approximate such an ethical relation. With a little oversimplification, one might say that the Palaeolithic ethics was not only preontological, which stressed the responsibility for the other (human and nonhuman) by facing the other but performative as well.

A restoration of the communion and sacrality of the Paleo-ecologic paradigm, being well-nigh impossible, the feasibility of a postmodern hierophany is an option open before the humans. This requires the dawn of a new awareness in humans that they are – consequence of the world than its cause; not being but becoming; not the privileged children created in the image of a god but just one among numerous coordinates of creative evolutionary process; rather than arbiters of value on all others, they are a spin-off in the grid of value coordinates themselves. Human beings cannot delude themselves that creative evolution is for them or that they mark the consummation of the universe, instead, they should realize the plurality of becoming in which everyone has a vital, if not equal stake. As life on earth is viewed as a joint venture, the exclusionary humanist posture will give way to the restitution of interdependence and sacrality of the nonhuman.

9. Re-visioning Levinas

Levinas' ethics predicated exclusively on the human other, hence, breaks at its centre as it cannot take the weight of the interrelatedness of the nonhuman. A host of awareness programmes on environmental ethics is more symptomatic of the malaise than remedy, for any division into human ethics, animal ethics, environmental ethics, etc., is nothing short of tyranny of a humanized ethics. Only a comprehensive ethics based on the creative evolution of becoming in the cosmic stage alone is the answer because we live in a reciprocally constituted existential realm. Before looking into the possibility of such a postmodern sacrality and

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[22]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 194.
[23]Robbins, *Altered Reading*, 60.

interdependence, a few remarks on Levinas' views on literature are in place.

There is a definitive antipathy to art and literature in Levinas' ethics, as he considers art and literature as a representation of ontology as much removed from truth as poetry for Plato. Levinas distrusts art and rhetoric because they philosophise, represent, speak for, and in the process, manipulate the other. Literature and its critical exegesis, both being meaning conferring activities, work by violence and ontology. Narrative fiction as opposed to other literary genres, is falsification as it fails to grant due credit to the priority of the relation with the other. Colin Davis says: "Levinas' hostility to art and literature undergoes shifts ... but he does not ... soften his position on *narrative*."[24] Davis goes on to say that because of Levinas' intransigence with regard to narratives, the possibility of an encounter with the other, which is central to the Levinasian oeuvre, in novels, is missing.

Significantly, many of Levinas' own books are commentaries on the Talmud and he considers religious scriptures as pre-eminently an encounter with the other. Levinas says: "writing is always prescription and ethics, the word of God which commands me and dedicates me to other."[25] He grants the status of religious books to some "so-called national literatures, Shakespeare and Moliere, Dante and Cervantes, Goethe and Pushkin." Levinas also accepts that such national literatures "may also be inspired, in the sense of embodying an ethical exposure to the other which ensures that they are always available to fresh exegesis because they mean more than they say."[26] Evidently, Levinas accords a privileged status to some works, which he refuses to others.

Levinas rejects narratives, because they, according to him, impose meaning and, hence, stand in the way of one's exposure to the other. However, as all language use being story and rhetoric, there appears to be no viable alternative for the humans, and fighting against story is always a losing battle as Levinas' own project indicates. Nobody else was more aware of it than Levinas himself about his own un-meditated slip into narrativization in *Totality and Infinity*. Hence, the unavailing struggle to

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[24]Colin Davis, *After Poststructuralism: Reading Stories and Theory*, London: Routledge, 2004, 92.

[25]Emmanuel Levinas, *L'Au-dela du verset: Lectures et discours talmudiques*. Paris: Minuit, 1982, cited in Davis, *After Poststructuralism*, 94.

[26]Davis, *After Poststructuralism*, 94.

steer clear of emplotment and thematization in his later masterpiece *Otherwise than Being* is evidently attempting yet again the impossible. In trying to be untrammelled from the spectre of stories, *Otherwise than Being*, as Davis observes, is on course of "generating a discourse which is intensely focused on its own impossibility."[27]

If the key takeaway in Levinas' thought is the realization of the unconditional responsibility for the other in our lives, and if Levinas' own works become, as Critchley puts it, "the performative enactment of ethical writing,"[28] all works, literary or otherwise, may unwork a petrified philosophy and become an instrument of exposure to the other. The same tenor is maintained by Eaglestone who says that Levinas' book "echoes literary writing" and, hence, could form "a part of literature" and will logically lead to "opening up literature to the possibility of ethical saying."[29] This for Eaglestone is equally true of criticism, for "critical writing like philosophy must be a continual process of interruption."[30] Again, Jill Robbins argues that Levinas' aim is not to discredit art but to unwork ontology and, hence, great art, which possesses the dignity of sacred texts, exposes one to the other. Levinas is concerned about "art in relation to ethics, interruption than ontology."[31]

10. Conclusion: Acknowledging the Sacrality of the Universe

Levinasian ethics is in need of re-visioning for hierophanic postmodern life, which is deeply in fellowship with the nonhuman, much like the Palaeolithic phase, yet, conserving reason, aesthetics, and the gods. Levinas' 'other' should be a more capacious vehicle with everyone on board. A comprehensive ethics that Levinas describes as a pre-originary relation that happens in an "anteriority anterior to any representable anteriority"[32] should include everyone, human and nonhuman. Yet, Levinas has, if rather unwittingly, provided the optimal philosophical framework for upholding the moral worth of the nonhuman. Hence, the postmodern wilderness derives succour only from, as Arran

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[27]Davis, *After Poststructuralism*, 98.

[28]Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, 8.

[29]Robert Eaglestone, *Ethical Criticism: Reading after Levinas*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1997, 162.

[30]Eaglestone, *Ethical Criticism*, 168.

[31]Eaglestone, *Ethical Criticism*, 154.

[32]Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 195.

Gare puts it, "a 'polyphonic' grand narrative" that "would have all the virtues of a conception of history as a struggle for both human and animal emancipation – without having to make any dubious claims for cosmic purpose and a teleology preexisting history."[33] Finally, to know that each and everyone is intrinsically worthy and nonpareil is the groundwork for embarking on the possibility of a mutually assured survival (as opposed to mutually assured destruction) and is perhaps a good enough reason for giving the nonhuman its due.

[33]Arran Gare, "The Postmodernism of Deep Ecology, the Deep Ecology of Postmodernism, and Grand Narratives," in Eric Katz *et al*, eds., *Beneath the Surface: Critical Essays in the Philosophy of Deep Ecology*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000, 209.