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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Environmental philosophy has its roots in the New World. Even though some European philosophers (for instance Hans Jonas) have long been involved in thinking about the environmental crisis, the earliest philosophers concerned with environmental problems typically came from North America and Australia (Val and Richard Routley, Holmes Rolston III, Christopher Stone, to name just a few). As a result, many of the philosophical debates about conservation and preservation of nature have been highly influenced by New World preoccupations, such as with the concept of wilderness. Famous authors like John Muir, Henri Davis Thoreau, and Aldo Leopold have deeply influenced public self-understanding of the human nature relationship in the New World. The idea of wilderness is deeply connected with the frontier – the wild world is the land of endless possibilities, the place of freedom where everything is still possible: in wilderness lies the preservation of the world.

Compared to this New World attitude with its energetic, activist approach to politics and its general sense of optimism, the Old World of Europe might appear to some as tired. Certainly, there is a sense of weariness or historical relativism in the way Europeans tend to think of themselves.

Cultural diversity lies at the core of the European identity. Moreover, European culture is a deeply historicized culture, and conversely, the European landscape a deeply historical landscape. Moreover, Europeans tend to be more aware of the fact that they have a long history, and that many of the things we aspire today have been aspired before.

Add to that other differences, such as the strong tradition of analytic philosophy in North-America and Australia, with its emphasis on universalistic approaches and concepts, and the importance of continental thought within Europe, with its emphasis on language, history and plurality. As much as these differences can divide environmental philosophers across the globe, they can also

be a source of fruitful exchange; the different approaches can learn from each other and challenge each other's blind spots.

But, despite these differences, both New World and Old World approaches struggle with the same kind of problems. On the one hand, the New World idea of a pristine wilderness devoid of human effects has been deflated when it became apparent that many wilderness areas had been profoundly affected by humans before European conquest and settlement. On the other hand, it is clear by now that preserving the typical Old World cultural-historic landscapes is becoming more and more expensive and difficult.

In this introduction we will first sketch the main difference between Old World and New World approaches, and show that both approaches struggle with similar problems (1.2). Next, we will indicate how New Worlders and Old Worlders respond to these problems (1.3). And finally, we will give a brief outline of this volume (1.4).

1.2 Primitive and pastoral Arcadia

New World and Old World conservationists use different baselines. Ecological restoration in the New World comes down to returning habitats or ecosystems to the way they were when Europeans arrived to settle the area – for North America the year 1492 is a holy baseline, for Australia it is 1770 when Captain Cook first landed there. Ecological restoration in the Old World on the other hand uses the pre-industrial (and not the pre-settlement) landscape as baseline and aims to return ecosystems to their condition prior to large-scale modernization.

These different baselines correspond to Simon Schama's distinction in *Landscape and Memory* between two kinds of Arcadia, the *primitive* and the *pastoral*. "There have always been two kinds of Arcadia: shaggy and smooth; dark and light; a place of bucolic leisure and a place of primitive panic" (Schama, 1995, 517). Whereas primitive Arcadia is inhabited by people who behave like wild animals, pastoral Arcadia is a place from which all dangerous creatures (such as the snake and the lion) have been banned and the ideal animals (such as the cow and the bee) behave like conscientious and industrious citizens. Primitive Arcadians are "hunters and gatherers, warriors and sensualists" (ibid., 527), who seek shelter against the elements in caves or simple huts; pastoral

Arcadians, on the other hand, are agriculturists, who have replaced hunting and gathering by farming and herding, and who have exchanged nomadic life for sedentary life.

1.2.1 A post-wild world

The contrast between primitive and pastoral Arcadia, between the hunter-gatherer who is supposed to live a hand-to-mouth existence, never staying long enough in any one place to leave lasting human imprints, and the agriculturalist who completely transforms wildland environments, has had a profound impact on the American perception of wilderness as a pristine nature devoid of human effects.

As Kat Anderson has noted in her book *Tending the Wild* about native American knowledge and the management of California's natural resources, early European and American explorers and settlers saw in California's landscape an ever-full horn of plenty that gave the native people no need to be industrious. "In their eyes, native people were merely the reapers of this abundance, not the sowers" (Anderson, 2006, 241). But this was a totally false impression, because without an Indian presence, these early explorers and settlers would have encountered with less spectacular wildflower displays, fewer large trees, fewer park-like forests, vast grasslands et cetera. Instead of a pristine, virtually uninhabited wilderness, they had arrived in "a carefully tended 'garden' that was the result of thousands of years of selective harvesting, tilling, burning, pruning, sowing, weeding, and transplanting" (ibid., 125/6).

A case in point is one of the great symbols of American wilderness, Yosemite Valley, established in 1864 as the nation's first natural park. This valley was occupied by the Miwok Indians till 1853, when they were evicted from the valley in the interest of gold miners. Soon after their expulsion it became clear that their land management practices, especially those involving burning, had an important ecological impact. The lack of burning led to the accumulation of detritus and bush which in turn made for much more violent fires and ruined the very scenic views that were meant to be preserved (Olwig, 1996).

The cult of pristine wilderness, where indigenous people, under the influence of late-19th century anthropologists, were considered as part of the fauna – ‘half man, half beast’ -, is still popular among many conservationists and the general public, although it has long been exposed as a cultural construction. But the idea that it is time to move beyond romantic notions of pristine wilderness is increasingly gaining ground. As Emma Marris has argued with great passion, to save nature in a post-wild world, we should replace such antiquated notions with “the concept of a global, half-wild rambunctious garden, tended by us” (Marris, 2011, 2). Europeans will find this concept attractive because they have always thought of ecological restoration very much as gardening, or even more as farming.

1.2.2 Half-nature under pressure

European conservationists have always had much less seemingly pristine land to work with than their American, Canadian, and Australian colleagues. Here, not the primitive Arcadia of hunters and gatherers was considered the ideal baseline, but the pastoral Arcadia of farmers and herders. Marris has noted with some amazement that “Europeans even run their dedicated nature reserves a bit like farms” (ibid., 139). Not, however, like modern farms where intensive and industrial agriculture is predominant, but like traditional farms where small-scale extensive agricultural activities have produced picturesque landscapes with a wide variety of plant and bird species.

After the Second World War, the Dutch biologist Victor Westhoff introduced the term *half-nature* to characterize these pre-industrial agricultural landscapes. The management of these landscapes comes down to a continuation of traditional agricultural techniques such as hunting and fishing, reed and brushwood cultivation, tree planting and felling, mowing and turf cutting, the setting up of duck decoys and the use of water mills.

A good example of a pre-industrial agricultural landscape is the inland drift sand landscape of Northwestern Europe. Drift sands represent a typical man-made landscape which emerged with the shift from nomadic farming to sedentary farming and the introduction in the 12th century of the so-called ‘plaggen’ agricultural system. Forests were cut to create health lands to be grazed by sheep

during the day. Their manure was collected in deep litter stables (the 'potstal') where the animals spent the night. Heather sods (the 'plaggen') were cut and used as bedding material in the deep litter stables where it was soaked by the manure. The mixture of manure and sods was used to fertilize the arable fields where rye was grown, the main staple food in those days. This medieval system was a vulnerable system – due to intensive sheep grazing and sod cutting much of the heather disappeared and the bare soil became exposed to wind erosion which initiated sand drifting.

The territorial expansion of the inland drift sand landscape reached its peak in the 19th century. But with the introduction of artificial fertilizers and cheap wool from Australia, this landscape was doomed to gradually disappear. Because the use of sheep and sheep-manure was no longer required, extensive heath lands became superfluous; they were reforested or prepared and used for raising crops.

Currently, inland drifting sands are a typically Dutch phenomenon – more than 90% of Europe's drifting sands, also called 'Atlantic deserts', are found in the Netherlands. Whereas there were still some 80,000 ha of drifting sands in the Netherlands around the middle of the 19th century, today only 1,500 ha (2 percent) remain. It is increasingly realized that these small remaining areas represent a unique ecosystem characterized by a special floral and faunal composition adapted to extreme environmental conditions.

But the preservation of these drifting sands is under increasing pressure. Climate change has a disruptive impact on plant and animal life. Entire populations are being confronted with the alternative to move outside their historic ranges or to go extinct. This makes it difficult, if not impossible to guarantee the survival of specific target species in specific places. The increased nitrogen deposition, caused by car traffic and fertilizer application, leads to acidification and eutrophication of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and causes open sand areas to become overgrown at an astonishing rate of three hectares per year, driving back some plants and animals into ever smaller areas.

1.3 Two opposing reactions

It is evident that historical baselines or reference states, be they of a more primitive or a more pastoral kind, are always arbitrary. What is more, historical baselines are increasingly being dismissed as irrelevant as strong anthropogenic drivers such as climate change, nitrogen deposition, and habitat fragmentation make it difficult, if not impossible, to preserve or recreate historical ecosystems. There are two widely diverging reactions to this situation: whereas one wing of the restoration movement has abandoned history entirely, shifting the focus from the past to the future, another wing has moved the baseline back to an even deeper, more distant past (see Alagona et al., 2012).

1.3.1 From a historic to a futuristic approach

A growing number of members of the conservation community feel that we have entered an era characterized more and more by so-called ‘novel ecosystems’ (Hobbes et al., 2013). Novel or non-analog ecosystems may contain new, non-historical combinations of species that arise not only through the impact of the deliberate and inadvertent introduction of species from other regions but also through land-cover change, pollution, and especially through rapid climate change. Because novel ecosystems have unknown functional characteristics, it is virtually impossible to turn back the clock to some prior condition.

In a world that is in ever-greater flux, restoration to a historic standard is becoming more and more anachronistic. It is estimated (by Perring & Ellis, 2013) that about 35 percent of the world’s ice-free land is currently covered by novel ecosystems. Hence the suggestion that we should drop the term ‘restoration ecology’ with its historical focus, and replace it by the term ‘intervention ecology’. This substitution of restoration by intervention signifies a shift from a ‘historic’ to a ‘futuristic’ approach to ecosystem management (Choi, 2004; Choi, 2007; Choi et al., 2008). Rather than looking nostalgically to a past that is impossible to restore, “we should intervene with an eye to the future and toward managing for future change” (Hobbes et al., 2011, 444).

The most important management goal for interventions in novel ecosystems concerns the protection and development of ecosystem services and goods. There is a broad and growing consensus

among ecologists that this management goal might be the best alternative for the “nostalgic recompositions of the past” (Choi, 2007, 352).

The attractiveness of the concept is understandable in an era of unprecedented global environmental change. On the other hand, as Higgs (2012, 95) has cautioned recently, an approach “that focuses on ecosystem services at the expense of historical fidelity and ecological integrity could look a lot like gluttony” – an over-emphasis on satisfying our own desires. Although the concept of ecosystem services appeals to many in the scientific community and beyond, it may not be a panacea for our current natural resource management ills. The recent rise to ascendancy of the concept of ecosystem services among environmentalists and ecologists may well have some highly undesirable consequences for both society and nature (see Keulartz, 2012; Keulartz, 2013).

It is no coincidence that the concept of novel ecosystems has originated in the New World, because for Europeans novel ecosystems are anything but new. To quote Emma Marris once again: “In places like Europe, I don’t think people care as much about novel ecosystems, because they don’t have the same obsession with pristineness and purity that the Americo-Australian-Pacific Island group does.”¹

1.3.2 Back to a deeper past

Rewilding – the other response to the baseline problem and the growing incapacity to restore historical ecosystems – points in a direction that is diametrically opposed to the one taken by the supporters of a futuristic, forward-looking approach to conservation. Far from abandoning history altogether and dismissing the past as an inaccurate indicator for the future, the rewilders try to reach back to a deeper history.

Whereas the preoccupation with novel, non-analog ecosystems is mainly limited to North America and other parts of the New World, there clearly is growing momentum for rewilding on both sides of the Atlantic.

¹ Quote from interview in Leaf Litter Newsletter, 2011, Vol. IX, Edition 4.
<http://www.biohabitats.com/newsletters/novel-ecosystems-2/>

In North America, Josh Donlan and colleagues (2005; 2006) have launched the idea of ‘Pleistocene Rewilding’. They blame most conservationists and management agencies for suffering from a ‘post-Columbian bias’. They typically turn to Columbus and the year 1492 for a restoration baseline. If, however, we accept as benchmark for restoration measures the arrival of people from the Clovis Culture, at least 13,000 years ago, we could consider introducing surrogates for some of the North America megafauna that went extinct after the arrival of these people.

Pleistocene rewilders recognize that Earth is nowhere pristine, and that, in fact, human-induced environmental impacts are now unprecedented and show alarming signs of worsening, with the result that the megafauna that has already disappeared from Europe, Australia and the Americas, will eventually also disappear from Africa and Asia, the only places where megafauna are still relatively intact. Given this risk of further extinction, the rewilders propose using megafauna from these regions, such as camels, cheetahs, elephants and lions, as proxies for extinct American species.

On the other side of the Atlantic, rewilding has also gained considerable momentum. Several developments have contributed to the rising enthusiasm for rewilding. One important development was the fall of the Iron Curtain, which revealed large natural areas in Central and Eastern Europe, and created opportunities to turn them into government-protected areas. Another major development was the change in Europe’s common agricultural policy, which has led to significant conservation opportunities in depopulated rural areas (Martin et al., 2008).

In Europe, rewilding has gone Dutch, to paraphrase a chapter title of Andrew Balmford’s 2012 book *Wild Hope*. Balmford refers to the Oostvaardersplassen, a polder situated 5 meters below sea level and just half an hour from Amsterdam. Reclaimed from the sea in 1968, this marshy area of 6,000 ha was initially earmarked for industry, but soon evolved into a perfect habitat for plant and bird species that had become very rare in the Netherlands, or had completely disappeared from the country.

The site became a nature reserve of international importance, where Frans Vera and his colleagues initiated a management approach of rewilding with large ungulates. In 1983 they introduced 34 Heck cattle and 20 Konik horses, the closest relatives to their extinct wild predecessors, the aurochs and the tarpan respectively. In 2012, a helicopter count revealed about 350 Heck cattle

and 1,150 Konik horses alongside 3,400 red deer, that were introduced in 1992. Because of these large numbers of free-roaming ungulates the German magazine *Der Spiegel* has called the Oostvaardersplassen ‘the Serengeti behind the dikes.’ The rapid adoption of the ideas behind the Oostvaardersplassen project by agencies from other European countries, especially the UK, gives an indication of the influence that the work of Vera and colleagues has had.

Although the rewilding projects on both sides of the Atlantic have much in common, they apply different baselines (see Marcus Hall in this volume). Whereas Donlan and colleagues moved the baseline back to the pre-human past, Vera and colleagues stay closer to human history and use a pre-agrarian baseline; they argue that many species, such as wolves, lynx and bison, have been decimated, or, like the aurochs and tarpan, went extinct altogether as early farming cleared the natural vegetation and gradually replaced it with agriculture.

It is clear from this short overview that there is a growing number of uncertainties with respect to conservation policy and practices on both sides of the Atlantic. Should we go back to pre-human, pre-settlement, pre-agrarian or pre-industrial times? Or should we give up the notion of ‘restoration’ altogether and instead focus on ‘intervention’ for the sake of securing the provision of ecosystem goods and services? Should rewilders only facilitate the return of existing animal species, like the wolf, the bear or the lynx, or should they also make use of proxies for extinct animals such as aurochs, tarpans, mammoths and saber-toothed tigers?² Doesn’t the concept of rewilding reinforce the line between humans and nature, rather than blurring it? And if so, doesn’t rewilding represent a serious challenge for traditional cultural ecosystems?

Because these questions are equally acute in the New World and the Old World, it is high time for a transatlantic dialogue, in which experiences and insights with respect to conservation issues can be exchanged. This volume sets out to show what a meeting between Old World and New World perspectives in environmental philosophy can contribute to such a dialogue.

² Currently, scientists are trying to bring back extinct animals with the help of synthetic biology. For instance, leading synthetic biologist George Church is working, in partnership with ‘Revive and Restore’, on a ‘de-extinction’ project of the Long Now Foundation, to bring back to life the iconic extinct passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*). (<http://rare.longnow.org/projects.html>)

1.4 Outline of this volume

This volume is divided in three parts of four chapters each. In the first part, the authors take the question of the relation between the New and the Old World perspective on nature and landscape head on. The second part highlights the meaning of ecological restoration in old historical *cultural* landscapes. The third part focuses on wildness, and its representative: the wolf.

1.4.1 Wilderness and Cultural Landscapes

In ‘Extracting culture of injecting nature? Rewilding in transatlantic perspective’, Marcus Hall argues that ecological (or environmental) restoration, as the project of repairing damaged ecosystems, is now a worldwide pursuit that poses a range of practical and theoretical challenges. Not only do restorers seek a keen biological knowledge of every ecosystem they hope to restore, they must also settle on restorative goals that are both reasonable and appropriate. Choosing a goal that aims to reproduce an earlier, pre-degraded state can seem arbitrary for some ecosystems, or irrelevant for others, as there are many pre-degraded states, be they pre-industrial, pre-agricultural, pre-Columbian, or pre-human. This chapter focuses on the practice of ‘rewilding’ on both sides of the Atlantic, aiming to see how it is being practiced differently according to needs, assumptions, and values. A series of historical comparisons across the Atlantic serves as a way to emphasize that rewilding usually means very different things for Europeans and Americans. It is concluded that rewilders generally aim to bring back *wilderness* in America, whereas they hope to bring back *wildness* in Europe.

In ‘Restoration and Authenticity Revisited’, Marion Hourdequin and David Havlick focus on one of the central worries raised in relation to ecological restoration: the problem of authenticity. Robert Elliott, for example, has argued that restoration ‘fakes nature’. On this view, restoration is like art forgery: it deceptively suggests that its product was produced in a certain way, when in fact, it was not. Restored landscapes present themselves as the product of ‘natural processes’, when in actuality, they have been significantly shaped by human intervention. For Elliott, there seem to be two sources of inauthenticity in ecological restoration. First, the restored landscape is inauthentic because its natural genealogy has been disrupted by the intervention of humans: it has lost its authentic natural

identity. Second, the restored landscape is inauthentic because it pretends to be something it is not; it obscures its own history. Hourdequin and Havlick argue that the first sense of inauthenticity is problematic; however, the second concern – about obscuring history – is important. Using case studies involving the naturalization of former military lands, Hourdequin and Havlick tease out more fully the ways in which landscapes can be ‘inauthentic’ by misleading observers about their genealogy. In such landscapes, it is not departure from ‘the original’ *per se* that is the source of inauthenticity; rather, restored landscapes fail to be authentic when they deceptively obscure critical elements of their past.

In ‘The earth is humankind's garden; get used to it!’, Scott Cameron contends that the North American and European perspective on nature conservation both capture essential but partial truths. The North American focus on wilderness occludes two very different perspectives under which the world was ‘always already’ humanized: the ancient, biblical view of the first humans as co-creators of the world (Adam and Eve as the namers, analogues of which are still common in many aboriginal wisdom traditions), and Nietzsche’s post-modern variant celebrating our recreating the world by re-naming and re-valuing it. On both views, the Earth is originally ours, both as home and in trust as our garden. There is, nonetheless, an important warning in the romantic aspiration to commune with nature unsullied. Cameron’s goal is to highlight an inescapable but productive tension between understanding the world as already humanized and desiring to respect its inherent value. He stresses that we can achieve the latter only by recognizing the former.

Finally, in ‘Wilderness revised: out of control in nature’, Robert Scotney argues for an alternative conception of wilderness to the so-called ‘received wilderness idea’. It defines wilderness as the kind of environment that is free from human control in the sense that it does not have human activity as its dominant shaping feature. Scotney agrees with Callicott and others that the received wilderness idea fails to reflect the reality of natural environments, and is even harmful in some of its applications. But he doesn’t agree with these critics that the objections raised against the received wilderness idea necessarily have to lead to the conclusion that the concept of wilderness should be abandoned altogether.

Scotney's alternative definition of wilderness as environments free from human control as their dominant shaping factor does no longer force us to think of wilderness and civilization as sheer opposites. In fact, this definition allows us to recognize the possibility of 'wilderness civilizations', i.e., meaningful human cultures which may develop ways of living in wild environments that adapt to rather than destroy their wildness.

1.4.2 Restoration of Value and Meaning to Cultural Ecosystems

Most philosophical debates on ecological restoration have been strongly influenced by North-American thought, in which the concept of wilderness played a central role. Robert Elliot's and Eric Katz's criticisms of ecological restoration have already been discussed by Hourdequin and Havlick earlier in this book. Both Elliott and Katz argue that the effort to restore nature is doomed to fail because nature (or the genesis of a natural ecosystem) can never be reproduced. Humanly influenced landscapes lack the value that 'original' nature has. Andrew Light and Eric Higgs, among others, have criticized the dualism implicit in Elliot's and Katz's criticism from a pragmatic perspective, but a full philosophical reflection on the value of the human-made, cultural landscape is still largely absent in environmental philosophy. The second part of this volume seeks to fill this gap, by focusing on a topic that is typical for the historic cultural landscapes that we can find in Europe and elsewhere in the Old World. The perspective that is introduced in this part is also relevant for New World contexts, because on closer inspection, even those landscapes that appear to be pristine wildernesses, have a cultural history of their own.

The cultural landscapes of Europe provide a challenge to many of the influential philosophical ideas regarding ecological restoration. What if what is being restored is *not* an untouched natural system, but a humanly created testimony, a product of history? What if these restored landscapes are valuable not just because of their natural values but also because of their cultural significance? Does that turn them into mere human artifacts, comparable to artworks, buildings and the like? If so, then why should we talk about ecological restoration in the first place,

and not merely about the restoration of cultural landscapes? Or does nature still have a meaning in the contexts of cultural landscapes?

The authors of this part argue, each in their own way, that these old cultural landscapes are not merely artifacts, but that they testify to a complex interaction between humans and nature, which has moral significance as well. The meaning of these cultural landscapes cannot be fully grasped by referring to their ecological value, but is neither exhausted by their cultural-historical meaning.

Instead, these landscapes are hybrids, that testify to the various ways in which human history and the natural world are deeply interrelated. Philosophical debates about practices of ecological restoration so far have neglected these Old World landscapes, and the practice of restoring cultural ecosystems

In ‘Cultural landscapes, ecological restoration and the intergenerational narrative’, Paul Knights argues that there are reasons for a critical reassessment of two current movements in UK conservation – ‘creative conservation’ and ‘rewilding’ – that emerge from an examination of the ontological, axiological and ethical status of restored cultural ecosystems. He first argues that the famous criticism advanced by Robert Elliot against the ontological status of restored *natural* ecosystems results in unreasonable demands regarding the properties that must be restored to cultural ecosystems, and argues that where they *do* meet the more demanding conception of authenticity, they seem to have greater value as items of cultural heritage. Lastly, he bases a novel ethical justification upon an often overlooked type of value for the restoration of cultural ecosystems, which is grounded in the obligations we bear to our predecessors to understand and appreciate their values.

In ‘Enduring nature’, Glenn Delière tracks the paradoxical role that “nature” plays as an evaluative criterion in New World restoration practices. On first sight “nature”, understood as “that what has not been manipulated by human hand”, can no longer play any meaningful role in Old World conservation, as the landscapes of the Old World are all “humanly mediated”. Yet, Delière demonstrates that “nature” does still play a role as an evaluative criterion. Through a critique of Eric Katz’s work on restoration, Delière argues that when “nature” is evoked as a criterion, it does not refer to “nature” as an ontological category (of things “not manipulated by human hand”) but to a rejection of the (complete) instrumentalization of what one is aiming to restore. As such, the

restorative act is not primarily an act of manipulation, but of interpretation: how to do justice to that what one aims to restore. Yet because the meaning of nature is always embodied in concrete material forms, it is subject to transformations over which we have no ultimate control. Both nature restoration and preservation therefore have to endure the tension between keeping the meaning nature has present through manipulation, and recognizing that such manipulation can destroy what it sought to conserve or presence in the first place.

In ‘Seeking nature's permission’, Alan Holland discusses the reclamation of the ‘lost’ gardens of Heligan in Cornwall (UK), hailed by the *London Times* as “the garden restoration of the century”. Holland shows that this description poses something of a conservation conundrum. For exactly those processes that constituted the ‘loss’ – the encroaching bramble, the self-set trees and so forth - can be seen from another perspective to constitute the ‘self-restoration’ of nature. The appearance of conflict is defused by reflecting that both the original garden, and its restoration, have been conducted in a certain way – a way that can be said to involve the ‘seeking of nature’s permission’. This reflection is generalized to make the case that gardening in a way that involves active and attentive engagement – call this ‘Old World engagement’ - is as respectful of nature as ‘letting nature be’ – call this ‘New World disengagement’. Holland argues that although many gardening practices involve human manipulation they can still be conducted in a way that is wholly natural, as distinct from unnatural.

In the final chapter of part two, ‘Green Managerialism and the erosion of meaning’, Simon P. James argues that nature can be harmed, degraded, destroyed, but also restored, preserved or in some other way looked after, but that this also holds true of nature’s meanings. It is in many cases possible to look after or ‘cultivate’ the political, religious, personal, mythic and historical meanings of natural things, events, processes and places. James argues that it is not simply the case that nature’s meanings *can* be cultivated: there is sometimes a *need* for such cultivation. In support of this claim, he considers the modern tendency to talk, write and presumably think about our relations with nature in a ‘managerial’ way – in terms, that is, of the all-too-familiar idiom of objectives, targets, key performance indicators, and the like. This sort of approach is, he suggests, poorly equipped to do justice to nature’s semantic richness. Hence, in light of the increasing tendency to conceive

environmental issues in a myopically managerial way, there is, James contends, a special need to look after or cultivate nature's meanings.

1.4.3 Wolves and Wildness

After centuries of absence, wolves are reemerging in the more urbanized regions in Western Europe. What can be learned from earlier experiences in North America? In 1992 wolves were introduced in Yellowstone. The case of wolves in Yellowstone confronts us with serious societal and moral questions. The papers in this part all discuss the re-emergence of wolves in the landscape, both in the Old World of Western Europe and New World of North America, and reflect about the contrasts and similarities.

In 'The wolf is coming! Emplacing a predator that is not (yet) there', Martin Drenthen discusses debates about the possible return of the wolf to parts of Europe where they were absent for over 150 years. He argues that the return of wolves challenges perceived notions, not only about what nature is, but also about human's place within nature. Drenthen discusses various perspectives towards the newly arriving wolves, that all imply not just an image of what a wolf actually is, but also a view about the landscape and human's proper place in it. He finds that *all* parties appear to have difficulty emplacing the wolf. Wolves challenge the idea of many wolf opponents that wolves are essentially inhabitants of the wild that intrude human land. Returning wolves do not care about a neat division between cultural landscapes and wild land, and in doing so undermine the very foundation of a worldview in which the domestication of nature is seen as essential for being human. The world view of many wolf lovers is equally challenged by wolves, however. Many regard wolves as victims of modern society and the human desire to subdue nature, but deem possible a relationship of peaceful coexistence with wolves as long as humans can control their aggression towards the natural world. The resurgence of the wolves, however, forces us to reconsider what it means to be part of an ecological network in which predators exist as well, and reveals that a particular kind of love for wolves can only exist *in abstractum*. Finally, the return of the wolf also challenges the dominant approach of nature managers and professional wolf experts who, in an effort to ease societal tensions surrounding the resurgence of the wolf, take the wolf as an essentially *normal* animal that can be

managed rationally. But in doing so, wolf managers display an obsession with order in nature that contrasts with the very meaning that the wolf as a wild animal seems to have.

In 'Eating Wolves', Thomas Thorp examines the reintroduction of wolves into the Yellowstone ecosystem in the 1990's, after having been exterminated decades before. The reintroduction sparked a violent political and cultural backlash that is still a defining feature of the political landscape of the American West. Thorp shows that in their attempts to study the wolf, the sciences inevitably encounter another wolf, the one that lives in myth and popular belief. Thorp argues that the terms in which this phenomenon are expressed need to be challenged. Instead of a distinction between the actual wolf studied by the sciences and the mythical wolf of public opinion, this phenomenon of the "double Wolf" calls for a deeper philosophical account of the ways that human beings make sense of their world. In his chapter, Thorp turns from the sciences and from the politics of the New World to a close reading of a narrative account of a wolf-attack in the Old World. He traces hyperbolic wolf-loathing back to two truths: just as humans must simultaneously re-present and repress the truth of their own demise, so too do the extractive industries of the American West rest upon a similar political and economic gesture of self-delusion.

In 'Blurring boundaries: freedom, enclosure, and death', Brian Seitz argues that many of the traditional boundaries with which we understand the world and our relation to the nonhuman have collapsed in modernity. Seitz argues that this development is literally embodied in the mutation of wildlife habitat; in the New World things have gone fundamentally haywire. In relation to this mutation Seitz considers the ambiguous and continually shifting dynamic between the rural and the urban. This dynamic might be linked to the distinction between Old World and New World, provided this distinction refers to differing configurations of bioregionality, addressed in terms of history and evolving culture/nature.

In 'The hero, the wolf, and the hybrid: Overcoming the overcoming of uncultured landscapes', Nathan Kowalsky reconnects the wolf as a symbol for the wild, with some of the themes that were developed earlier in this volume. Kowalsky criticizes the idea that cultural landscapes such as the rural landscapes of Europe are hybrids that step outside the binary thinking of humanity vs.

nature, and thus offer grounds for a more cosmopolitan and cross-culturally relevant environmental ethic. To the contrary, he argues, the equation of cultural with agricultural landscapes reinforces the very dichotomy it proposes to dissolve. Kowalsky uses Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" to show that putatively cultural landscapes are defined by domestication of animals and opposition to undomesticated landscapes as inappropriate for human involvement. The bucolic peace of rural Europe where "humanity" and "nature" appear to co-operate in mutually beneficial harmony is, in fact, a result of the successful domination of the wild other in both extirpating the wolf and relegating wildlands to largely aristocratic estates. Kowalsky argues that domesticated rural or urban landscapes do not exhaust the meaning of human culture, and that recognizing hunting as a landscape culture forces post-dichotomous thinking to be more critical: some landscape cultures may be less dominating and/or more natural than others.

This volume presents the first collection of essays in which Old World and New World approaches and perspectives within environmental philosophy are brought into conversation with each other. It shows that Old World and New World traditions still have an impact on conservation theory and practices today, but it also reveals that these different and sometimes diverging traditions are being challenged by the same kind of problems, such as the difficulty to select relevant baselines, and the problematic feasibility of habitat and species protection in an environment in a state of ever-greater flux as a result of powerful anthropogenic drivers. Given these common problems, a transatlantic exchange of ideas and insights among environmental philosophers can stimulate a learning process that may open up the path that leads to fruitful solutions.

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