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"Nature, Purity, Ontology"

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Standard defences of preservationism, and of the intrinsic value of nature more generally, are vulnerable to at least three objections. The first of these comes from social constructivism, the second from the claim that it is incoherent to argue that nature is both "other" and something with which we can feel unity, whilst the third links defences of nature to authoritarian objectivism and dangerously misanthropic normative dichotomies which set pure nature against impure humanity. I argue that all these objections may be answered by recasting the relationship between man and nature into a tripartite spectrum of ontological form between nature and artifact, with the key question being the extent to which nature has been humanised in accordance with certain modes of strongly instrumental rationality, these in turn being defined by reference to the split between abstract reason and natural feeling which was exacerbated by specific elements in the Enlightenment period. This new model may grant normative force by linking external nature to a broader conception of human psychological wellbeing than that offered by the quantitatively orientated models of human rationality and agency.
— Text from The White Horse Press website

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