

RESPONSES TO CRITICS OF *TAKING TURNS WITH THE EARTH*

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ABSTRACT

This paper responds to five critics (Eva Buddeberg, Scott Marratto, Michael Naas, Janna Thompson, and Jason Wirth) and their commentaries on my *Taking Turns with the Earth. Phenomenology, Deconstruction, and Intergenerational Justice* (Stanford University Press, 2018). In relation to the book's argument, my response seeks to clarify and elaborate the role of indigenous philosophies; the meaning and value of the concept of earth; the ontology-ethics interface and the emergence of normativity with birth and death; the practical feasibility and motivational force of the book's proposals for conceptualizing justice for future generations, namely asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns; and the role of democratic institutions for justice between generations in view of the global capitalist economy.

KEYWORDS

Intergenerational justice, indigenous philosophy, climate change, earth, gift, reciprocity, Anthropocene.

Let me begin by expressing my profound gratitude to Prof. Ferdinando Menga and the editors at *Ethics and Politics* for selecting my book for this journal issue, and for being such good editors. It's a great honour for me to have my work read so closely by five outstanding scholars. Their commentaries are so many returns that for me are gifts in reciprocal exchange, gifts I can only return by passing them on to my respondents and readers. I sincerely thank the five critics for their willingness to study the dense pages of *Taking Turns with the Earth* (TT); I can honestly say that I feel well understood by them, and wish to begin, as a way of acknowledging my debt to them, by picking my favourite phrases from their commentaries.

With the pregnancy of a formulation I wish I had achieved, Michael Naas calls TT "a book for our time" that makes a plea "for what is noncontemporaneous within the contemporary." Eva Buddeberg suggests importantly that, "For just as the question of justice is not to be understood in national contexts alone but as a global question, so

too its temporal focus on the present should be overcome.” Janna Thompson sums up the book’s ontology in the claim that, “Who we are cannot be understood in isolation from what is outside of and different from us, and identities are always ‘haunted’ by what is past and open to what is to come.” Jason Wirth links my critique of short-termist individualism to what he calls the Kleptocene; as he puts it, TT argues “*we are given the earth, but not to own*. The question of justice consequently challenges us to consider that we have stolen the gift precisely by claiming that, in receiving it, it is ours to own.” Finally, Scott Marratto rightly sees the book’s ‘politics of nature’ summed up in that “‘earth’ emerges as the irreducible ontological matrix for the constitution of our identities and agentic capacities.”

Among the generous comments and suggestions for (re)elaboration, I distinguish five overarching issues: (1) the role of indigenous philosophies in my account of intergenerational justice (IGJ) and its relation to land and earth; (2) the meaning of ‘earth’ in its relation to land and to the sun; (3) questions regarding the ontology-ethics interface and the sources of normativity, esp. as regards obligations to the dead and the unborn; (4) concerns about the practical feasibility of my IGJ models, asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns, and their capacity to motivate individuals; and, last but not least, (5) questions and comments about the place of democracy and global economy. I apologize in advance for some repetition across the five sections, and for the fact that some issues will receive more of a treatment than others. This selectivity is motivated in part by my attempt at clarifying central arguments, but also by my attempt to make my responses comprehensible even to readers who may not have studied the book.

1. THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHIES IN MY ACCOUNT OF IGJ

Wirth and Thompson in particular refer to similarities between my account of IGJ and indigenous philosophies, the Australian Yarralin in Thompson’s case and Ojibwe, Nishnaabeg, Dene and other North American indigenous peoples in Wirth’s commentary. These similarities concern the gift of mortality, the role of ancestors and responsibilities to them in view of the future, and the place of land or earth in accounts of IGJ. I note at the outset that the generalizing and homogenizing category of ‘the indigenous’ is of course not unproblematic, and that, as the white settler that I am, I fear that seeking to learn from indigenous knowledges may seem to add a cultural extractivism to the resource extractivism that, across the globe over the last 500 years at least, has driven so many peoples from their land: having messed up this stolen land, settlers now come for indigenous cultures to fix it (Whyte, Caldwell, Schaefer 2018; Whyte 2018). Here only self-critical dialogue with indigenous people, and the

willingness to act supportively on its results, may help, perhaps the kind of exchange which Buddeberg suggests may be linked to taking turns.

Based on my limited knowledge, I'm happy to accept these similarities, and merely add that TT already references indigenous philosophies in three places. First, the introduction argues against the wide-spread idea, held by Stephen Gardiner and others, that IGJ is, *grosso modo* and at least in the context of climate change, a new and unique problem, given that earlier moralities were designed for small groups and short temporal timeframes. To counter this idea, I point to indigenous accounts of selfhood and sociality, which do not bear out these limitations (TT 4). Framing IGJ and climate ethics as an entirely new problem, I suggest, may be part and parcel of a capitalist modernity that not only championed the more or less isolated individual, un beholden to others before and after him, but also bequeathed to us an 'Anthropocene' that may be better thought of as what Wirth felicitously calls the Kleptocene, profoundly marked by stealing land in colonialism, imperialism, and today's land grabbing. Hence, the task of thinking together, not only racist capitalism and what (as Marratto recalls) MacPherson once called "possessive individualism" (TT 110), but presentism and extractivist resourcism, often corroborated by the view of earth's land as dead matter free for the taking.

The second reference to what today we call indigenous philosophy (and the one Wirth discusses at some length) comes in chapter 3 on Mauss's account of archaic gift practices. I mobilize the gift and its relation to the Maori '*hau*' (TT 108ff.) as a 'spirit' that is nestled in the thing given and connects donor and recipient to the land as well as to ancestors. TT seeks to show that only by way of these unmasterable, spectral links does the gift demand a return. Further, I argue the gift is required for human agency, so that human beings are implicated (or "in-terred", as I say in chapter 5) in ancestors and earth. I will say more about the gift below, esp. its connection to the sources of normativity. However, it will be good to recall that what motivated Mauss to study indigenous gift practices was to cast doubt on the political-economic histories the modern West likes to tell about itself (TT 110), stories that take self-interested individuals as the basic datum. A mistaken theory of human nature, Mauss's book argues, cements the status quo in the form of a retrospective historical teleology. Apologetic political economists suggest that sale for money, and eventually our own more advanced economy built on credit, developed, as if by a necessary law of history, from the barter system. Mauss's ethnographic study counters Western political economy and what Marx called its "Robinsonades" (Marx 1993, 83) by exposing its lack of historical evidence: Instead of self-interested barter, what we in fact find in pre-modern, indigenous societies is the prevalence of gift relations that already imply a complex system of credit and suggest a more interrelated human being than the utility-maximizing *homo*

economicus against which Janna Thompson's own work on IGJ has argued so persuasively (Thompson 2006, 2009, 2013).

As the third reference to the indigenous, in explicit contrast to Robinson Crusoe's (and political economy's) individualist self-understanding that Marx so memorably picks apart in the *Grundrisse*, chapter 5 discusses what Val Plumwood called the "indigenous imaginary" in relation to mortality. With Plumwood, I call for a conception of death that places it beyond monotheism and atheism, so as to better grasp our embodied, in-terred and interring existence as manifesting a certain reciprocity with earth. Citing Glen Coulthard, Wirth refers to "the land as system of reciprocal relations and obligations." In contrast to such views, Plumwood identifies a "Western problematic of death" that conceives the self either in its reductive naturalist version as ending completely with death, or as a disembodied spirit, one that sees life as a battle against death rather than accepting that death is a part of life. The argument in the final chapter follows Plumwood (and Derrida's *la vie la mort*, the way I read it) in proposing a third way in which human beings learn to appreciate their 'own' dead body as a return gift to the earth (TT 196). Here, the 'indigenous imaginary' would help us to see life as "in circulation, as a gift from a community of ancestors" so that we can also see "death as recycling, a flowing on into an ecological and ancestral community" (Plumwood, cited TT 197). Thompson discusses the Yarralin idea of the gift of mortality in strikingly resonant ways; the story of the Dingo and the Moon that she cites maintains that "our bones nourish country, giving life back to the places and species that sustained us... and death, for all that it may be unwelcome, is one of life's gifts."

Drawing on Plumwood, I seek to counter the view of earth as mere external resource with which human generations take turns as if with a merely external object of use. Instead, the indigenous imaginary is to help motivate the idea that not only human generations take turns with the earth, but that the earth, too, takes turns with us (I will come back to this). Together, then, these references amount to seeing land and earth as a connecting force, and a source of normativity, not only between all those today united by the climate and other global environmental catastrophes, but also across generations. Naas finds a related view in some beautiful passages from Homer, for which I wish to thank him specifically. Though not counting as indigenous by today's definitions (such definitions usually reference a period of conquest, dispossession, and colonial oppression, see e.g. Whyte, Caldwell & Schaefer 2018, 154—here, Adorno & Horkheimer, in their reading of Homer's *Odyssey*, accuse the ancient Greeks of already distinguishing themselves from the 'indigenous' and engaging in sea-faring conquest; 2002, 49-59), Naas reads passages from the *Iliad* that not only affirm the 'essential intergenerationality of human existence,' but link this insight to the changing of the seasons, thus the earth's own taking turns with the living.

Now Wirth connects his references to indigenous philosophies with what I take to be a question, perhaps even a challenge, for the argument in TT. He associates taking turns with a “temporal axis” which (if I see correctly) he opposes to space and place: “[F]or indigenous peoples it is place, not time, that occupies the highest meaning. Without place, we cannot realize the temporality that constitutes the intergenerationality of gift giving”. Indeed, as both Thompson and Wirth recall, many indigenous peoples’ spiritual and collective life sees the cultural relation to land as central to intergenerational connections (see e.g. Watene & Yap 2015, Watene & Merino 2018). As Thompson puts it, “The Law—the basis for relationships between individuals, society and the land—is the centre around which Aboriginal generations turn.”

Now, if the very definition of ‘indigenous’ includes reference to colonial dispossession, then to dialogue and possibly, respectfully learn today from indigenous peoples demands grasping the processes that robbed them of their lands and of their self-determination with respect to it. As Wirth puts it so well:

The land base of many indigenous people was not land that they owned, but it was land that was given to them and, as such, constituted them. Colonization and genocide stole the futurity of indigenous worlds not only through murder, but also through dividing and appropriating the lands that constituted indigenous worlds. This is to steal the time of the future by stealing the place of a human future (inhabitable earth), as was the case in the dispossession of indigenous lands, but which is also the case in the stance of humanity as the ‘master and proprietor of nature.’

Place theft is also “to steal the time of the future”, and so calls for thinking time and place together. At stake, as Wirth rightly notes, is for me the attempt to think “the world” as not just given, but as gift—from earth/nature, from ancestors, and even, dare I say, from future people, on whom we are drawing an advance credit even as we disregard their legitimate claims. Thus, apart from noting the similarities between indigenous views and my accounts of IGJ, my commentators’ discussion of indigenous philosophies, if I see correctly, is motivated by two concerns: (A) the importance of supplementing intergenerational time with space, or of thinking together the time of generations and the space of land and habitable earth (possibly so as to glean what Wirth calls “clues for alternative political economies”); but also, (B) incorporating into taking turns with the earth the dispossession and colonial oppression many indigenous peoples suffered and continue to suffer, which Wirth rightly links to what Marx called ‘primitive accumulation’: the separation of the ‘immediate producers’ (serfs, peasants, indigenous peoples, and so on) from the land, by way of the European slave trade, colonial dispossession, the destruction of peasant housing and driving them off the land. This separation was the precondition for the capital relation: it freed the land for capital accumulation, reducing it to mere property and profit making, and forced the

populations to work as slaves or for wages—cheap nature and cheap labour, as Jason Moore calls it (2016)—thereby installing the cash market as the only viable way to live (Marx, *Capital* vol. 1, Part VIII, chapters 26 to 33).

(A) Ontologically, then, the challenge is to think together time and space, generations and land, in their co-implication. The book stresses throughout, beginning with the ‘world constitution’ problems in chapter 1 (highlighted by Marratto) and ending with the discussion in chapter 5 as to how the earth turns human generations about, that IGJ always takes place in spatial contexts that I name earth as history and habitat of life. This issue will be addressed more fully in the next section (section 2).

(B) Normatively, I think the challenge is to grasp:

- (i) how normativity emerges with this timespace;
- (ii) how violence in the past (here, dispossession, colonialism, genocide) affect forward-looking obligations to future people, on my IGJ models of asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns;
- (iii) how and what we can learn from indigenous conceptions for a global world economy.

To the extent (B.iii) asks how we might re-organize a global world economy so that it better respects and more consciously elaborates double turn-taking, it is a big question, clearly relevant to the concerns raised in my book, but still a question perhaps too large to address here. As I do not want to lose sight of it, I will say a little about it along the way, and return to it under the heading of democracy (section 5). (B.i) will be more fully addressed under topic 3, the question of normativity, but I will say here what I think is needed to address (B.ii).

(Bi) My book faults most IGJ accounts for neglecting to think generations as taking place in environments, both cultural and natural, that are shared (in a differential way—not just as the same) with past and future generations (TT 60ff.). It is misleading, I argue—and contributes to the many ontological problems I discuss in chapter 1—to construe sustainability and IGJ as a two-way relation between the present generation and future people. This construal disregards past generations (hence, the importance of asymmetrical reciprocity as a three-way relation, as Thompson, Marratto, and Buddeberg stress), but it also fails to understand that life in general is characterized by what Tim Clark has called an ‘originary environmentality’ (Clark 2018, 89, 96). The present generation cannot but draw on an inherited world and enabling life context that will exceed it toward the future. I then point out that in fact, this worldhood is central to grasping IG normativity in the right way. For IG normativity emerges precisely with inheriting that which obligates, but in such a way that the obligation cannot but also be inappropriable, unpossessable, and thus turned toward the future (TT 62; this

argument is elaborated in chapter 3 on the gift and chapter 5 on the relation between earth and world).

Marratto and Wirth reformulate the argument regarding the gift very well, and in view of the treatment in section 3, below, I will recap it only briefly here. The present generation, the argument goes, is in a position to give (that is, to have donor-agency in the first place) only by inheriting from its ancestors; the intergenerational gift is co-constitutive of moral subjectivity. Because the gift also, and necessarily, comes from earth and world as enabling context, it is not fully appropriable. Some of the gift must be left for the future, and this ‘must’ can be lived and unfolded in better or worse ways, providing a foothold for further normative elaboration. That is what asymmetrical responsibility and taking turns are meant to accomplish. In fact, ‘asymmetrical’ is, among other things, meant to indicate this unpossessability of the sources of the normative, this incalculable excess in its link to earth and world. In taking turns, the unmasterability of earth as normative source comes to the fore most explicitly in the claim that the earth, for its part, takes turns with human generations—the claim that Naas had related to Homer’s changing seasons and falling leaves. Drawing on the Maori, Mauss names the inappropriable excess the *hau* or the ‘spirit’ of the gift; my reading, links it further to Heidegger’s gift of being as unmasterable ‘timespace’ and Derrida’s *différance* as the gift beyond law and right (TT 134), a gift of world that, as Wirth recalls, is meant to undo the economic (and often self-aggrandizing) assumption that land and earth are simply there for the taking (TT 153). Thus, in responding to the ontological challenge in (A), above, my argument does not oppose time and space, generations and land, but tries to think their inextricability as the source of the normative for the interred and interring, natal-mortal beings that we are.

In this context, and in addition to Leanne Simpson and Winona LaDuke, Wirth invokes the work of Glen Coulthard, who stresses the significance of land in the critique of colonialism: land as resources, but also “land as identity” and as “relationship” (Coulthard 2014: 171). Coulthard cites the Dene elder Philip Blake:

We have lived with the land, not tried to conquer or control it or rob it of its riches. We have not tried to get more and more riches and power, we have not tried to conquer new frontiers, or out-do our parents or make sure that every year we are richer than the year before. We have been satisfied to see our wealth as ourselves and the land we live with. It is our greatest wish to be able to pass on this land to succeeding generations in the same condition that our fathers have given it to us. We did not try to improve the land and we did not try to destroy it. That is not our way. I believe your nation might wish to see us, not as a relic from the past, but as a way of life, a system of values by which you may survive in the future. This we are willing to share (Coulthard 2014: 171-2).

Coulthard comments: “When Blake suggests in his testimony that as ‘Indian people’ we must reject the pathological drive for accumulation that fuels capitalist expansion,

he is basing this statement on a conception of Dene identity that locates us as an inseparable part of an expansive system of interdependent relations covering the land and animals, past and future generations, as well as other people and communities (...) I suggest that it was this place-based ethics that served as the foundation from which we critiqued the dual imperatives of colonial sovereignty and capitalist accumulation that came to dictate the course of northern development in the postwar period” (Coulthard 2014: 174-5).

I hope my work on asymmetrical responsibility and taking turns, in their link to earth as history and habitat of life, is congenial to this ‘place-based ethics.’ While Blake’s formulation might not give full due the changing nature of an earth and a land turning us about, his claim “to pass on this land to succeeding generations in the same condition that our fathers [sic] have given it to us,” reflects some of the normative implications of asymmetrical reciprocity. The asymmetry in question, as indicated, indeed stems from the fact that land is not ownable completely, and links generations precisely by this unmasterability, rather than by remaining the same for different generations as seen from the standpoint of a neutral (e.g., not itself land-based) perspective.

If it can be said that, by and large, indigenous philosophies incorporate originary environmentalism—how our identity is wrapped up with the land and the earth—better and more clearly than others, then colonialism as what Coulthard calls “a form of structured dispossession” (2014: 36) and Marx’s ‘primitive accumulation’ (on which Coulthard draws extensively, 2014: 37ff.) indeed not only robbed indigenous peoples (as well as European serf-peasants and Africans who were sold into slavery) of their land, but deprived them and others of these important knowledges and insights into generational, terrestrial being. That is why many indigenous scholars insist that, for example, UN sustainability targets should not, as they usually do, leave out culture, esp. indigenous cultures and ways of knowing (see e.g. Watene & Yap 2015; for non-indigenous work linking Marx, colonial capitalism, and the environmental crisis, see Moore 2015, 2016). And that is why the introduction to TT, in a passage that Wirth cites (TT 3-4), complains that most work on IGJ produced in the modern West not only tends to construe it as a two-way relation (us and future people), but sees the current environmental crisis as an entirely new problem that pre-modern ethics had little way of addressing. By contrast, the brief comments in the introduction should be taken to suggest, with the help of Wirth’s gentle prompting, that it is precisely capitalist modernity that not only generated the crisis, but with its short-termism, social atomism, and divorce from the land also suppressed the knowledges to avert and address such a crisis.

(Bii) This then brings us to the question how violence in the past, esp. colonial violence to indigenous peoples, affects forward-looking obligations to future generations. How can the models of asymmetrical responsibility and taking turns address past

violence and dispossession? My first response is to recall what, with the help of Wirth, I just reconstructed as the framing context of the argument in the book. These models demand that we look at the past in thinking about the future. They incorporate backward- and forward-looking obligations in the terrestrial context, and so demand, in their very make-up and generation, that we consider past relations with the land to further determine responsibilities to the future. Just as human life, like any life, cannot be understood apart from its habitat, so the past cannot be severed from the future; we should not content ourselves with the comforting sentiment that we should let the dead bury the dead, as Marx wrote in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*.

The issue of historical violence (the subject of my previous book) should have been given more room in TT, I find, though some consideration of the bearing of past oppression did make its way into the discussion of the gift and turn-taking. Chapter 3 notes the danger of historical reciprocities passing on oppressive lifeworlds, and responds by arguing that uncovering the ontologically constitutive role of such reciprocities at least has the advantage of calling for vigilance on the part of heirs to avoid passing on inherited wrongs (TT 151). Chapter 4 elaborates the normative content of taking turns and supplements it with what I call the compensation argument. The chapter argues that the question of a turn's normative content (what is a fair turn?) can be answered in at least three different ways: the turn takers should hand over the 'object' of turn-taking (which in the case of climate and the earth as a whole is of course no mere passive object) in a condition at least as good as inherited (equivalence); they can also focus on it functioning well for their successors, and/or they can be guided by letting the 'object' flourish as the kind of thing that it is. With respect to equivalence in particular, I then argue that this would not mean that present turn-takers could not come under an obligation to improve the 'object'. For instance, if a previous user damaged a bicycle by overuse but made some profit of the overuse (e.g., by delivering newspapers with the bike), which she also passed on, then, *ceteris paribus*, the subsequent bike user should use the inherited profits to fix the damage for the sake of the third turn-taker. I then suggest that, with respect to climate change and the environmental crisis more broadly, this is indeed the situation in which the current generation in the developed world finds itself: having inherited the benefits of industrialization and colonization, it must now compensate for the associated climate damages and environmental injustices (TT 180). Drawing on the other two ways of fleshing out what a fair turn is, esp. the functional one that is focused on the future turn-taker, might help us to strengthen and flesh out these responsibilities.

I would suggest that this argument from liability for compensation can and should also be applied to the legacy of colonialism. To take a fair turn means to owe compensation to those who were robbed of their fair turn, e.g. by being robbed of their land. It

would be important to reflect further on what compensation might mean in the case of a fair turn, where what it is at stake is not merely or primarily monetary, but would first of all consist in returning a turn with self-determination to peoples who understand territorial sovereignty in marked difference from Western conceptions; here too, the White Earth Nation to which Wirth refers has done most interesting work (see Vizenor, Doerfler & Wilkins 2012). But we should also recall that land and earth are not the same. While the latter appears universal, the former is specific and thus tends to divide, as Levinas worried with respect to Heidegger's references to land and people, human beings into natives and strangers (Levinas 1990). That is why Dene Blake's suggestion, cited above, is so crucial: the willingness to share the system of values, the place-based ethics, in self-critical dialogue that embeds sovereignty in democratic procedures (I will get back to this). But we should also note the many obstacles to such dialogue, even in the interest of averting climate change, for 500 years of colonial oppression may have undermined cooperative trust between indigenous peoples and settlers to such an extent that it cannot be mended easily or in time (see Whyte 2019).

2. THE EARTH BETWEEN LAND AND SUN

The role of indigenous views brought up the question of the human (and esp. inter-generational) relation to land and to earth. As the notion of earth generated further comments by my generous discussants, I will try to say a bit more about it. Let me first assemble some of the issues commentators raised in this area. We already heard Wirth worry that taking turns with the earth might give precedence to time over space. Naas finds earth too comforting a notion, and ends up contrasting it with the sun. Thompson worries that the book suggests a possible environmental, universal cosmopolitanism, which would demand that we see the earth as bearing "fixed meaning or value." Only as such, one might think, could earth provide a stable and unifying identity to us as earthlings; however, my anti-essentialism disallows such a fixed meaning. She also wonders whether earth has intrinsic value in my account, while Marratto suggests that earth challenges the traditional distinction between nature and value.

In wondering about the precise meaning of earth in TT, Naas helpfully assembles various definitions from the book. As what TT calls the history and habitat of life, earth names what Naas calls the "exterior in general" that precedes and exceeds life, the environment in 'originary environmentality'. But given that this preceding-exceeding contextuality is constitutive of living beings, it does not remain on the outside, in the environment, but marks their very interior. Living beings must set themselves off from it, but cannot split off completely; that is why I say that earth is "one name for the 'hetero' in the auto-hetero-affection that defines life" (TT 186), or "the self-differentiating force

in the habitat and history of life” (TT 209). (In fact, as Naas points out, I also define earth as “the context in which *différance* plays out” (TT 194), and the discussions of *différance* in chapters 3 and esp. chapter 5 explain in greater detail how interior and exterior, separation and belonging, auto and hetero hang together here.)

Naas then, again very helpfully, writes that “‘earth’ is thus something that includes but is not the same as this big round ball of air, soil, water, and molten lava.” If what I call earth includes (without being reducible to) the planet ‘earth’, I often hear at this point, then what if humans were to relocate to other planets? Should we not see ourselves as free of earth, or at least as merely living on its surface, as Kant suggested, longing for other stars (TT 187)? If humans some day ‘settle’ (in this word we may hear the problematic legacy of colonialism in our relation to world) on Mars or another planet (a vision against which chapter 5 warns), then not only do they have to ‘terraform’ those planets (so turn them into something like earth), but these other planets would function like the preceding-exceeding context of life that my book calls earth. We must begin where we are. The transcendental (thus universally necessary) condition of life is ‘quasi-transcendental’ in that it cannot but be made manifest in the particular context that forms the history and habitat of life today (on the notion of the quasi-transcendental, see Fritsch 2005, chapter 2, and Fritsch 2011, the latter of which being discussed at some length by Marratto).

In the discussion of indigenous philosophies, I already indicated why I think land and earth are not totally appropriable. As a constitutive condition, total assimilation would annul the assimilator. Hence, the references to Levinas’s “strangeness of the earth” and its “elementality” (TT 99). But this does not make of the earth a kind of dark, immovable, unchanging mass or force with a fixed meaning that provides universal humanity a stable identity. Rather, as the field in which the differences between life and its context, between separation and belonging, get played out, there is a sort of reciprocity between life and earth, the reciprocity we alluded to with Plumwood’s ‘indigenous imaginary.’ This reciprocity is lived, for example, in eating and defecation, in breathing in and out, and in birthing and dying. Individuals are born of earth into a human generation, while returning to earth as corpse (TT 14, 153, 171, 210). While earth co-constitutes living beings, humans included, these beings also form and re-form earth. Hence, my misgivings about a mechanistic or causalist view of evolution; referring to work done by Vicki Kirby and Francesco Vitale, I suggest that adaptation or natural fitness just is another name for the interplay between the outside making up its very inside as the self-difference that I named earth (TT 210). We should not understand evolution according to what the biologist Richard Lewontin has criticized as a Darwinian “lock-and-key” model (Lewontin 2000): as if organisms merely adapted to pre-existing environments, treating the former as active subject and the latter as static

object. Rather, organisms affect their environments, in ways that always range from the planned or desired to the inadvertent, rendering the metaphysical distinctions active-passive, subject-object, no longer helpful for grasping the processes in question (see also Fritsch 2019, and TT's discussion of the middle voice at TT 149).

With these preliminary remarks in place, we can turn to more explicitly addressing specific questions regarding the earth. Naas suggests supplementing my earth with the sun, for despite my precautions, he finds that "one can easily imagine the earth as an encompassing or even a comforting whole"—one that we not only take turns with but can take care of, which we cannot do with the sun. He further associates the sun with fire, and thus with cremation rather than burial in the earth, and worries that I stress burial over cremation. However, he also notes that 'interment' (the title of the last chapter) already includes cremation and all other ways of handling the corpse: the earth will get it no matter what we do to the corpse. There will be a remainder that is not only not at the disposal of its bearer during lifetime, but also not under the control of those future generations that receive the corpse. That is what earth also names: the non-human recipient of the corpse, from the crocodile that bit Val Plumwood to the maggots and ash-processing nutrient cycles (on this, see the excellent Afeissa 2019).

Somewhat on the other end of the spectrum, Thompson challenges: "But if the project of reshaping earth to fit humanity's idea of itself as the conqueror of nature is morally unacceptable, then what resources does Fritsch's holism have to condemn it?" As I mentioned, the worry seems to be that my environmental cosmopolitanism and my anti-essentialism don't make for a good fit. The former seems to demand that we see the earth as bearing "fixed meaning or value" and as providing a stable and overarching identity for human earthlings. However, my anti-essentialism denies such a strong concept of value-conferring, unifying identity that trumps other, more particular identities.

To force the issue a little, we might say Thompson wishes to pull me in the direction of more particular identities, down from earth to land and communities, while Naas pulls the other way, toward the sun as even more foreign and inassimilable than earth, with the added worry—in a sense, the mirror image of Thompson's worry—that the earth is in my view too comforting, too much able to be cared for by human stewards, and thus too shapeable by us. The spectrum, if it is one, would thus reach from relatively stable communal identity (e.g. conferred by land with relatively fixed meaning and value) to the foreign, the entirely inappropriable and unshapeable by human interference. My 'earth' would satisfy neither.

I'm not sure there is a middle ground, but I hope my introductory account has given some indication that what I mean by earth is, like the sun's fire, unmasterable and yet, volatile, shifting, and to some limited extent amenable to human influence, including

for the worse and for the better. This does not make of the earth a merely passive object of our reshaping, nor does it have a fixed meaning. As you will have seen, I don't think earth has a stable meaning that humans cannot or should not refashion. Earth is altered by living beings, and, as we have come to realize in our times of environmental tipping points and climate instability, it twists and turns about not only in turning around the sun, as the Copernican revolution taught us. In fact, what I mean when I say that the earth takes turns with us, and turns us about, could be extended toward what some call a second Copernican revolution, which would consist in seeing the earth not only moving around the sun, but as *internally* on the move—from plate tectonics and climate changes to mass species migrations—and so is not a stable background, and never was, as we had to learn (Clark, Crutzen & Schellnhuber 2004; see also Clark & Gunaratnam 2016).

Does this notion of the earth leave us any resources to condemn “the project of reshaping earth to fit humanity's idea of itself as the conqueror of nature”? I think it does. To see which resources, we should recall what was said above, in the context of indigenous views, about the source of the normative in the gift of earth and ancestors (see also the next section). Living beings—and humans are no exception despite claims to the Anthropocene—can only live against an enabling background (here called earth) that, in affirming themselves (as life as auto-affection demands), they cannot but also affirm, as the ‘hetero’ in auto-hetero-affection (TT 165, 181, 207; on double affirmation, see also Fritsch 2017, 2018). With every breath of our very existence, humans affirm the participation in a history and habitat of life to which we belong but from which we also must seek to extricate ourselves. The participation is neither comforting nor fully masterable. In our very existence, we thereby affirm a gift that outstrips our lives toward the future. Spatially and temporally, with respect to past and future, the earth exceeds humans, and (along with traditions, languages, and so on) links generations to one another. The excess of earth makes it inappropriable by us, as indicated, for instance, by the link between earth and corpse that Naas stresses.

On this view, to think we can “reshape earth to fit humanity's idea of itself as conqueror of nature”, as Thompson puts it so well, easily slides into the hubris of forgetting the unpossessable excess. If we understand ourselves as the natal-mortal earthlings that my book argues we are, then we should engage in any such ‘reshaping’ only in view of the finitude and responsibility for the vulnerabilities we share with future human beings and other earthlings. In this sense, the earth is that which we share in an each time singular, thus differential way: it unites us, including animals and plants, in what Derrida calls the mortality of the place of habitation (see TT 202), but at the price of also separating us, rendering us singular and vulnerable to each other and to earth's claim upon us. This claim is another way of thinking reciprocity with the earth, for not only do the

living lay claim to earth for food and habitat, but earth, too, claims the living. Our finitude ties us to the earth as preceding-exceeding, enabling and disabling context. The stress on the earth's claim to the corpse (TT 171, 200, 209) also highlights the vulnerability of living beings: as necessarily mortal, we are wandering corpses, already in life vulnerable to being treated like the dead object we will indeed leave to our descendants and the earth. If life is self-affirming, then it cannot but also affirm the earth, which responds with a claim of its own.

The book under discussion tries to develop the normativity of double affirmation (of past and future, as well as of self and earth) into the IGJ models of asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns (see also the next section). The latter is the more encompassing model applicable to quasi-holistic objects like the earth, and is the one that I suggest is 'triggered' by the environmental and the climate crises. In short, I think generations have always been taking turns with the earth and its climate, but once a 'crisis' in the 'object' emerges, the normative content of turn-taking calls for further elaboration, motivation, and action (TT 5). This elaboration should be at a level appropriate to the 'object' (namely, earth and earthlings) and in a way that permits us to individuate a generation (I suggest beginning around 1990, TT 5). As Naas puts it so well, "What is contemporary will have thus helped 'crystallize' recognition of what will have always already been the case, namely, that we are fundamentally intergenerational beings and we have a relation to the earth as turn-takers." That we should not only take turns with the earth, but also take care of it, is historically contingent to this extent. The environmental crisis calls on all human adults to recognize their turn-taking obligations to future generations (human and non-human)—that is what the Anthropocene discourse, however problematic it is in other respects, promises to at least register.

To the extent the 'Anthropocene' suggests a united humanity causally and morally responsible for the crisis, it is belied already by what we said about the history of primitive accumulation and its colonial dispossession as well as its results in today's obscene global inequalities in wealth, power, and crisis vulnerabilities (see Malm & Hornborg 2014, and the response by Chakrabarty 2017). We need to differentiate humanity spatially and globally, but, as TT suggests, also temporally, understanding responsibilities to be, not before humanity and its survival, but before the most vulnerable generations. Another problem with talk of the Anthropocene is that humanist and anthropocentric notions of humans as conquerors of nature easily pour into these collective notions. Such hubristic infiltrations can be misunderstood as authorizing the 're-shaping' of earth Thompson mentions, and thus divert attention away from the normative content of fair turns and associated responsibilities, whose necessary differentiations I began to discuss above with the argument from compensation and in the light of colonialist

murder and dispossession as well as capitalist inequalities in affluence and power that have resulted from the violence of primitive accumulation.

Perhaps Naas's sun can help us push back against such infiltrations where needed. In fact, as he writes, the sun and its all-consuming fire is "out of our orbit, beyond our sphere of influence, in a way that the earth is not". I agree that the earth's dependence on the sun indicates its unavailability to human mastery and conquest even more powerfully. The sun that will absorb the earth, and consume it in its ever-expanding and self-destructive fire, seems even more exterior and non-totalizable than the earth whose own (sun-induced) finitude Derrida underlines in the passage from *Advances* that I discuss in the book (TT 213). Lucky me, for Naas perceptively notes that, as the 'hetero' in life's auto-hetero-affection, what I call earth already includes the sun. But, as you will have noticed, I would also like to think the 'hetero' on the very inside of life, not so far away. The most exterior—earth—is in fact in us, as our corpse: the vulnerability that connects us to others today, and the mortality that separates us from, but also links us to, future earthlings after us. The link between earth and corpse—which Naas traces so well—also indicates unmasterability, and it hits closer to home: on the most interior of our life, we are already tied to the mortality of and in the place we inhabit (TT 202).

This is how I understand a "place-based ethics". As for the question of whether earth has 'intrinsic value': Marratto writes that "Fritsch's proposals concerning the meanings of "environment," "world," and "earth," entail a fundamental challenge to the traditional bifurcation of nature and value". I will say a bit more about this in the next section.

3. THE ONTOLOGY-ETHICS INTERFACE

Again, I begin this section with a brief overview of issues. Buddeberg traces the book's "social ontology of the ineluctability and origin of normativity" and stresses the three levels of normativity I distinguish later on in the book. Thompson wonders under what conditions intergenerational gifts can obligate the recipients, and Marratto stresses the constitutive nature of the gift: that the present generation owes itself in part to what they accepted from previous generations.

In light of Marratto's helpful claim that the argument in my book entails "a fundamental challenge to the traditional bifurcation of nature and value", let me first confirm that I think we should not too quickly accept the fact-value distinction. Heidegger famously responded to the demand for an ethics by questioning the demand itself, which seems to presuppose a problematic division between logic, physics and ethics. Heidegger's ontology of being-in-the-world, which TT discusses in chapter 1 and 2, seeks to overcome this division. As Marratto puts it, my use of Heidegger's ecstatic

temporality—and then, its transformative critique by Levinas, Arendt, Derrida, and others—entails that “simply *to be*, as an agentive “I can,” is always already to have been, so to speak, *assigned a task* of being oneself” so that Heidegger’s insight “problematizes the distinction between ‘is’ and ‘ought.’” On Heidegger’s telling, the distinction is part and parcel of modern nihilism, which first reduces all physical being to mere matter and mechanistic forces, thereby denying things their own coming forth, and then re-values nature selectively by projecting human values on to it. This value subjectivism—which Charles Taylor (2003) and John McDowell (2001) have equally criticized (see also Calder 2008)—gives rise to the illusion, today perhaps expressed in the geological notion of the Anthropocene, that wherever they look, human beings encounter only themselves (Heidegger 1977, 27; see also Heidegger 2002, esp. 195ff.).

Elsewhere, and largely in the context of deconstruction, I have discussed what problems can be caused by making the fact-value distinction, and the assumption that ontology is foundational and ethics secondary, the starting point for reflections on ethics and politics in phenomenology and post-phenomenology, esp. in Derrida (Fritsch 2013a, 2014, 2011). Marratto goes the extra mile by drawing, in enlightening ways, on pre-TT work of mine and others in this area to get clearer on my account of the sources of normativity. He’s right that I don’t wish to enter those particular debates in TT—I won’t do so here either—in part because I want to focus on the central issue of IGJ, but also because it is not centrally important to me to claim that my account is Heideggerian, Levinasian, deconstructive, or Derridian. Without needing to frame this by the usual references to Derrida’s argument that to be faithful to a thinker or a tradition calls for an innovative faithlessness, I’m quite comfortable saying my account is inspired by phenomenology and deconstruction but far from doctrinaire: in the end, I’ll have to take responsibility for it.

In the discussion of earth above, I already indicated the worrisome notion of earth as dead matter free for the taking, and mobilized a specific understanding of a ‘place-based ethics’ in response. The fact-value distinction, I worry, is often related to the presentist atomism and ‘methodological individualism’ criticized in my book, for the latter typically assumes that individuals exist as the basic building block of the social, and the challenge is to show that moral demands stick to this primitive datum. The social ontologies I mobilize in the book, as we have seen, including indigenous philosophies of the gift, challenge this assumption—as Marratto points out (and Wirth recapitulates well, too), “A key point here [i.e. finding out why the gift obligates a return] is the fact that our own agency is itself dependent on the gift” (TT 122).

The basic issue concerns the question: Why should we care about (non-overlapping) past and future people, who we will never meet? How does intergenerational normativity emerge? Marratto reconstructs my argument well: as he sums it up, “Fritsch’s

claim [is] that it is insofar as we are natal-mortal, generational, beings that we are moral beings". The argument over the first two chapters is, roughly, that birth and death are crucially involved in constituting us as moral beings: beings who are vulnerable and whose suffering matters, but who are also imputable, that is, can be held responsible for their actions. Birth permits freedom, the creation of the new, and death makes us vulnerable to change but also permits us to take over our lives as ours in ways that permit criticism. Birth and death, however, also link us to preceding and to succeeding generations. Thus, moral beings are generational beings. Our very vulnerability and imputability link us to the dead and the unborn. As a result, intergenerational ethics is not an applied area, requiring extensions from conceptions of justice that (often via an unreflected social ontology) assume the contemporaneity of moral agents and patients.

Now, one might ask, isn't this still descriptive? Marratto cites a passage (from TT 119) in which I seem to claim that the prescriptive "follows from" the descriptive, and I now find my own wording misleading. As Marratto knows and shows, the description of what or who we are (in this case, generational beings) is inseparable from (and so does not 'follow from') the 'assignation' or 'prescription' to be that very being (namely, a moral intergenerational being). If our existence is not just given, presently, but always to be achieved in response to the assignation, this means that at the heart of our existence, a call to be who we are resounds. Given the impossibility of ever discharging one's obligation once and for all, this call re-emerges at every turn, including the interpellation to understand ourselves as the generational beings that we are.

It may then be important to address another type of objection that e.g. David Enoch has articulated in relation to Christine Korsgaard's (otherwise very different) "constitutive" account of the sources of normativity (Enoch 2006). To show that we *are* generational beings, or moral beings, one might say, does not entail that we should be *good* generational beings. This would merit further discussion, but I think the phenomenological and post-phenomenological accounts on which I draw, and which reject the modern ontology of a sharp fact-value distinction, do not only show that we are X, but that to be X is to be subject to the demand to be that being. The prescriptive demand is not added on to the description, but is built into it. The demand thus calls for its own recognition as a demand resounding at the heart of our being. To be who I am demands that I understand my being as how I am.

And further, this self-understanding as response to the call of recognition of who we already are, can be enacted in worse or in better ways. That is the basis for my reasoning above that not only have human beings always taken turns with the earth, but the environmental crisis activates the normativity in turn-taking and calls for its unfolding. Given the historical contingency of this specific form that the call takes, I find it possibly misleading to phrase the normativity, as Buddeberg does, in terms of corresponding better

to our ‘essence’, where this term tends to carry ahistorical and unchanging connotations. But she is right to stress that, along these lines, I try to distinguish three normative levels for heuristic purposes (TT 181), levels that correspond to this gradually richer unfolding of the normative: from double affirmation (level 1) and its application in specific areas (in my case, the two models of IGJ on level 2), to further fleshing out, as when we ask (on level 3) what just reciprocity entails or what it is to take a fair turn.

If this general picture of the ontology-ethics interface may be accepted for the sake of argument now, I turn to more specific issue regarding the gift raised by my commentators. To begin with, Thompson asks whether involuntary gifts can obligate. In the book I argue in some detail that the return obligation does require intentionality (TT 128, 136), but gifts also require an inherited, long-term, enabling, constitutive background (including nonmaterial goods, such as cooperative institutions, language, customs, as well as the natural environment). In part because of its own mobility and change, this background cannot be brought to full awareness and tabulation, and so is always also to some extent non-intentional (TT 150-1). To give intentionally thus calls for recognizing, for integrating into my awareness, that my intentionality is enabled by my non-intentional links with previous generations and with the earth. Thompson gives the example of greedy predecessors who involuntarily leave wealth to their successors only because their death forced them to let it go—would this be a gift that still obligates paying forward? The greedy in Thompson’s example may not give their wealth to next generations intentionally, so what they leave behind may not obligate directly. However, it could still obligate indirectly, by way of the constitutive background of wealth, including contemporary enabling institutions (the market is not wholly free and cannot exist in a vacuum) and contributors (e.g. exploited workers) to the wealth of the rich. It may be esp. important, in our times of offensive inequalities and low taxes on the rich, to recall these backgrounds and demand that they be foregrounded, as Mauss’s indigenous sources did.

One may object that some of these claims make a different point, namely about the sources of affluence, and they do not make of the greedy’s legacy an intentional gift. However, these enabling institutions and of course the terrestrial ‘environment’ on which they also depend, including the way it has been worked up by previous generations (e.g. the tilling of land, the breeding of seeds, agricultural knowledge), *are* typically inherited, and so return us to the question of IGJ. For one might say that some of these institutions and activities have been handed down intentionally, not by the greedy but by those who contributed to the enabling background. In fact, Thompson herself presents such an argument with the help of Annette Baier; Gosseries (2009, 129) even speaks in this context of a progressive intergenerational collectivization of the human heritage. In a chapter that did not make it into the book for reasons of space, I treat

Gosseries' argument at length and conclude such intentions most plausibly pass by way of care work for children, the kind of work I highlight in TT with respect to Levinas, Kittay, and others. The idea of intending production efforts for subsequent generations seems most at home in care for minors, and care's individualizing pathways stand in mutually implicating relations to more general benefits (tradition, language, institutions, collective goods, etc).

Thompson's discussion here of when inherited gifts obligate is rich and sophisticated, and most reminiscent of the literature on reciprocity regarding, not the voluntariness of giving, but (the suspension of) the so-called voluntary receipt requirement. Under what conditions, scholars ask, do gifts I did not voluntarily accept still obligate a return? I do not want to enter the details of these discussions here, but allow me to recall that the argument TT makes in this context (with and against Brian Barry, and with Mauss) is that involuntary receipt can still obligate if the gift-giving is part of an established, inherited practice (TT 120ff.; see also Fritsch 2017), and if, as mentioned (as Heidegger's and Derrida's notion of the gift can help us see, and as Marratto reminded us) the gift is also co-constitutive of the recipient. Thompson's discussion here rightly includes further reasons for suspending the return obligation, as when the project of predecessors is valueless, impractical to continue under present conditions, or interferes strongly with the autonomy of the heirs. Another important consideration from the literature that could help here is the attempt on the part of some to argue that the gift must be 'presumptively beneficial' to the recipient, such as a habitable biosphere, ordered political institutions, and so on (Page 2007, Klosko 1992). This consideration too, I tried to integrate by viewing part of the gift as 'quasi-transcendentally' co-constitutive (see Fritsch 2017 for more details). My response leaves open answers to some of the particular questions Thompson raises, but still renders the gift in general indispensable and obligating, thus demanding the contextual-historical fleshing out of intergenerational duties for which I have been calling throughout this section.

Some such fleshing out, as we heard in section one, concerns the colonial violence of primitive accumulation, esp. the dispossession of indigenous lands. These earlier comments about the role of historical violence might also help address some of Thompson's questions about the relation between past and future in asymmetrical reciprocity. As suggested, the two models I develop demand that we look at the past in considering the future. That is why I don't agree that I do "not include duties discharged to the dead in [my] account of asymmetric reciprocity". I would like to avoid being "like most philosophers who discuss intergenerational justice" who assume "that we have no duties to those who cannot be benefited." Given my previous work on recalling the victims of history (esp. of primitive accumulation, see my *The Promise of Memory: History and Politics in Marx, Benjamin, and Derrida*), I would be remiss if I

thought we had no obligations to the dead. It's true that in TT the focus is on future generations in the context of global heating and capitalist modernity, but the basic argument is that in our obligations to the future, responsibilities to the past are inextricably implicated, in ways that in the end cannot be neatly assigned a time of origin in past, present, or future.

I try to show that the differential timespace of world disclosure (see above) confounds distinctions between past, present, and future to the extent these rely on linear time (TT 148). If the past is co-constitutive of members of the present generation, then whenever we give to the future, we also discharge a debt to the past (see e.g. TT 150). If we were to insist on sharply distinguishing owing due to a past donation from owing to the future for the sake of the future and its interests, then our misunderstanding, I would say, is first of all ontological, for it misconstrues the temporality of our generational, natal-mortal being. That is why chapter 3 offers the four types of intergenerational reciprocities and seeks to show their inextricable and rich overlay in the 'groundless ground' of non-linear timespace (TT 148).

But I also try to show that both asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns call for further fleshing out (see below), and this elaboration may bring in an emphasis on the moral interests of future generations. Understandably, this prompts Thompson's question, "But if future-directed interests are the main motivation for accepting requirements of intergenerational justice, then what role is played by the gifts of predecessors?" I would not say such interests are the main motivation, but that the ontological basis of both models calls, by itself, for further normative complements, and these may focus on futural interest even if the debt to the past is still at work. As I seek to flesh out in a forthcoming article (Fritsch, forthcoming a), and as chapter 3 merely hints, asymmetrical reciprocity changes the basic logic of reciprocity: it is no longer one from contribution to entitlement, but from reception (for instance, inheritance) to obligation. Indirect reciprocity does not address the agent as someone who is entitled to receive benefits as a result of her or his contribution, but rather asks about how this contribution itself was (or will be) possible, and what debts came about in its emergence. The theory addresses agents as historically situated and interdependent subjects who received benefits and so are ('always already') obligated to give to others. In determining entitlements, the first question to ask is not "Who contributed fully (and how much)?" but "Who received (and how much)?"

The addition of the third party then brings on another question, namely, "To whom should the recipient of benefits give back?" In a certain sense, this question regarding potential recipients now displaces the question about the contributors, who are no longer primarily relevant in determining entitlements, shares, and so on. This is so because indirectness means that the contributors need not be the ones (and in most

cases in fact are not the ones) to whom entitlement accrues first and foremost. Rather, indirectness opens up the question of who should be the recipient of benefits. Given that indirect reciprocity allows a (potentially non-contributing) third party to benefit from the cooperation, it displaces the centre of attention, away from the contributor and toward the third party (“who to give back to, and how much to give back?”). It is in view of this question that asymmetrical reciprocity calls for normative supplements, that is, moral, political, social, juridical and economic accounts of need and desert, of equality and freedom, and so on. Similarly, such fleshing out comes into play when we ask not only in what state we received an object of turn-taking from the past, but what it would take for it to function well for the next turn taker. It is these supplements that, I think, may then make it seem as if “future directed interests are the main motivation” for intergenerational justice.

For the reasons just indicated, I want to say that what Thompson calls “an ethics that is both forward and backward looking” is not just “implicit” in my two IGJ models, but is its explicit focus, beginning with the deconstruction of the linearity of historical time. The upshot of that account is that the past and the future are not simply absent, but ‘spectrally’ present in the present, which is therefore never simply present, but also affected by absence. Our existence as natal-mortal beings points forward and backward in history in intermingling, criss-crossing ways, ways that would not permit a global distinction between forward- or backward-looking duties, though of course we can make such distinctions on lower levels of analysis.

4. PRACTICAL FEASIBILITY OF MY APPROACH TO IGJ

In the penultimate section, I turn to my commentators’ questions regarding the feasibility of my approach and the practical realizability of my models. Buddeberg wonders whether ontological reflections and fundamental learning processes, of the sort I make central, might not be too basic, and take too much time, to deal with the burning ecological threats of our time. Relatedly, Thompson is concerned about the allegedly high level of theoretical abstraction and my two models’ applicability to “the political and social environment” in which IGJ accounts must be situated (we already heard about some of her “questions and doubts” that have to do with such “problems of application”). Thompson poses these questions largely in terms of meeting Gardiner’s dual challenge: that of better “conceptualizing intergenerational justice”, and of finding sources of motivation for treating future people fairly.

The worries about abstractness and in-time applicability are always a little embarrassing for a political philosopher, and I anticipate I won’t be able to dispel them here. Massive menaces tend to call for rethinking fundamental assumptions of our traditions

and ways of life, and neither urgency nor applicability should prevent us from undertaking such basic but seemingly abstract tasks. I think, in fact, that the two prongs of Gardiner's challenge—ethical theorizing and moral motivation regarding IGJ—need not be that separate. Part of what makes some accounts of IGJ conceptually better is that they make the intergenerational problem less abstract, and less what my book calls extensionist (TT 39): extending existing theories of justice, arrived at by assuming more or less atemporal humans, to cover future people. Many extant accounts still abstract from generational overlap and treat birth and death, as well our historicity and fecundity or generativity—the fact that future people will be *of us*—as mere accidents that should have no bearing on theory construction. A conceptually—as I would say, ontologically—more convincing theory of IGJ brings it closer to possibly motivating accounts of who we are. In this sense, what was important to me from Stephen Gardiner's great book *The perfect moral storm* was above all his call (a call his book does not try to answer) for 'deep analysis' (see TT 1) to overcome the theoretical inadequacies of extant approaches.

TT seeks to engage in 'deep analysis' by attempting to describe the human condition in a way that we should in principle be able to recognize as our own condition. All of us are born from others and will die to leave to world to others. We all have parents and other forebears whose inheritance we live in a somewhat defining way; some of us have children or care for minors by other pathways, and most of us, I think, can imagine how little sense would be left for a substantial number of our activities—such as basic philosophical research, including perhaps this exchange here—if we did not tacitly count on the future to inherit them. Also, most of us would probably describe ourselves as democrats, and I have endeavoured to show that turn-taking, including with generations, is basic to the democratic heritage (see the final section, below). Many of us understand ourselves, to varying degrees, as belonging to some community (ethnic, linguistic, vocational, familial, religious, etc.) that draws its defining power from being transgenerational, that is, from having existed before us and continuing after our lives have ended (TT 4).

As Naas indicates, for me the ecological crisis brings to the fore, in our individual self-understanding but also in the political identities of democratic societies, something that has been the case all along: we have accepted inheritances as a gift and continue to take turns with the earth; the present crisis should motivate us to elaborate its moral, juridical, and political implications. I'm not sure this rethinking of who (I claim) we've been all along is best described, in Buddeberg's words, as a "fundamental learning process at the ontological level" that we must anticipate to have a chance of succeeding only over generations, thus taking the time we might not have in the face of urgently looming catastrophes. TT does offer a list of possible reasons for our contemporary

short-termism, and as this belongs more to the question of democracy, I will treat it in the next section.

Some of Thompson's, Buddeberg's, and Gardiner's concerns, then, can be phrased in terms of motivation: can my account of generational being as well as the two models encourage, inspire, provoke and arouse ethical and political action that addresses the short-termist intergenerational buck-passing that characterizes our present? Thompson finds my approach "distant ... from political and social realities" although I'm happy to hear she also thinks it "points to sources of ethical motivation to which a better politics might be able to appeal." Perhaps it helps my case if I highlight and embellish some of these sources as they are touched upon in the book.

First, TT points to empirical, socio-psychological data that shows three factors seem to motivate pro-futural allocation decisions the most (of course, there are many factors that motivate presentism, including the collective action problems Gardiner discusses at length): (a) death awareness and associated generativity or legacy creation (TT 47); (b) seeing oneself as the beneficiary of past gifts (TT 3, 218), and (c) understanding oneself as belonging to transgenerational groups (TT 54, 172). The reconsideration of who we are that TT calls for highlights all three of these factors. With respect to transgenerational groups, a chief task, I think, is to see oneself not exclusively as belonging to a family or a nation whose children it is fine to favour over those who suffer the most from global inequality and environmental injustice. I have indicated the role a crisis in the object of sharing—e.g. the world-wide climate—can play in triggering such transgenerational belonging as earthlings and world citizens, despite the legitimate worries that the alleged universal has been a masked particular. Surely more work, empirical and conceptual, needs to be done on what could motivate such object-specific and crisis-specific group belonging, including in the face of the differentiations I mentioned and that my account of differential, double turn-taking (toward self and toward other) makes inevitable on conceptual grounds (see also Fritsch 2005). In the context of the middle to long term future, it might perhaps help to recall that every other, no matter how far away today, might become a co-citizen, a member of my group, or the parent of my grandchildren.

Further to the point of motivation and practical realizability, although it is not its main focus (as it might be in Anglo-American political theory), the book does begin to develop, on what I called the third level of normativity, specific norms that further concretize asymmetrical reciprocity and taking turns (e.g. norms of equivalence and functional specifications regarding what a fair turn with democratic institutions and land or climate might be, a turn that works for future turn-takers). Such norms could be developed further and enshrined in constitutions, laws, and policies. Instead of further specifications, TT proceeds from the ontology-ethics interface as discussed above. The

relation of these norms to natal mortality and double affirmation is supposed to show that they have some hold on us that is not the result of them being chosen in an ideal choice situation or some other more or less ahistorical procedure. Rather they should, I argue, result from reflection on what it is to be born into transgenerational groups, institutions, and environments, born of previous generations so as to leave the world to future people on whose existence we draw an advance credit. Such historical situatedness makes these reflections, and the norms they produce, context-specific, for instance with respect to the balancing between reciprocity and turn-taking, deciding among the three responses to what a fair turn is (equivalence, functionality, flourishing), and the role of the liability for compensation argument. I am happy to concede that these specifications are overdetermined (TT 180) and depend on further (democratic) deliberation and decision-making in specific contexts—as I think will be the case with most such theoretical proposals.

Finally, I offer the stirrings of a political-democratic theory regarding environmental future-oriented responsibilities; after all, I developed taking turns starting from democratic office rotation (more on this below). Grasping environmental and intergenerational justice, not as moral problems for the individual agent alone, but as societal problems calling for political responses, should lead to wider public discussion and promises the tool of enforceable law, including revising constitutions to explicitly protect future generations (see Gonzales-Ricoy & Gosseries 2016, Fritsch 2013b). In response to Gardiner's diagnosis of an intergenerational arms race, I agree that we need longer-lasting enforcement mechanisms against presentism, and here law can be particularly useful. Recently, there have been promising cases—such as the Urgenda case in the Netherlands, which forced the shutting down of all coal power plants within two years (<https://www.urgenda.nl/en/themas/climate-case/>)—in which legal challenges forced short-termist governments to protect the environment for the sake of future generations (Greenpeace lists further such cases here <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/16715/four-climate-cases-are-changing-climate-change/>).

This discussion of political theory will be expanded in the final section.

5. DEMOCRACY

A number of commentators highlight the role of democracy in my account of IGJ. Naas reconstructs very well how TT views democracy as the source of generations taking turns with the earth (though we should note that neither Plato and Aristotle, nor Derrida in his discussion of them, speak of generations taking turns, nor do they apply sharing by turns to objects like the earth, but rather restrict it to sharing offices and institutions). Wirth and Buddeberg wonder about which aspects of democracy might

help to better recognize and pay forward the debt of the earth. While Wirth links this question to “clues” for an alternative world economy, clues he wishes to glean from North American indigenous view above all, Buddeberg wonders whether and how democratic institutions can shift in weight from a movement of self-return to one more open to temporal and spatial alterity, including the rights of future generations. Helpfully, she suggests that increasing recognition of humility (from Latin *humus*, earth) as I treat it—as expressing the dependency of democracies on life-supporting earth—may help to shift the weight.

I will first say a bit more about the role of democracy with respect to motivation and applicability. Thompson worries that my view, which roots intergenerational obligations in our very being, has an even harder time explaining “the problem that most concerns Gardiner: selfishness and short-sightedness, particularly of people in affluent countries”. And while she thinks “understanding why this ethical failure exists is probably not the job of philosophers”, TT does offer a number of reasons why democratic-capitalist societies may be particularly vulnerable to individualist presentism (TT 158-61). I focus this discussion on democracy, as it is often identified as the chief culprit, and because I wanted to suggest that there are other, more pro-futural resources in the democratic tradition, esp. around taking turns.

If I may review the possible reasons for democratic short-termism briefly here, we should first of all mention the connection of modern Euro-American democracy with what we discussed as the legacy of colonialism and of capitalism-kickstarting primitive accumulation, namely violent divorce of aboriginal peoples from the land and its terrestrial and cultural linkages with non-present generations. Further, presentism has been traced to the short-term thinking that can be said to be brought on by democracy’s relation to free market competition, in particular in so-called ‘post-Fordist’ and ‘post-modern’, increasingly global capitalism since the 1960s, and by the fact that state power is beholden to special economic interests. These interests are often pushed by economic actors who exert a lot of power on states (e.g., by way of the dependence on corporate taxes and investment and the creation of employment) and on politicians (in particular if public financing of electoral campaigns is insufficient). Under competitive conditions, these economic agents tend to operate with very short and accelerating time frames. The resulting “economic dependence” of democratic political systems (Caney 2016, Boston and Lempp 2011) may have become worse during the very time period that environmental crises became so pressing. As Naomi Klein argues specifically with respect to global warming, neoliberalist policies since the 1960s, from deregulation of markets to shrinking of governments, has made concerted action on climate change seem so intractable by weakening the democratic state in the face of increasingly post-national economic actors facing global competition (Klein 2014).

Such competitive conditions contribute to the instrumentalization of rationality and of action, and thus a favouring of narrow interests in the present (Habermas 1984, 1985). While instrumental reasoning, as the focus on the means toward given ends, is important to all action, the so-called Frankfurt School of critical social theory argued that in modernity it comes to progressively eclipse independent rational goal-setting (Horkheimer 1974). In political terms, democratic collective determinations of overall (and typically longer-term) goals are sidelined by the pursuit of all-purpose means, such as money and profits (Schechter 2010). The instrumentalization of action orientations applies in particular to economic agents, individual and collective, who find themselves in competitive conditions, but also to democratic nation-states to the extent they compete with each other for attracting capital investments (Przeworski & Wallerstein, 1988; Przeworski 2010).

In my view, Gardiner's own focus, in *The perfect moral storm* that I took as a starting point in TT, on the intergenerational intensification of the well-known "tragedy of the commons" (which presupposes instrumentally oriented, selfish actors), should be seen in light of this historical account of increasingly self-interested players, both individuals, corporations, and governments. These players are placed in competition on the market for jobs, resources, and profit, with the globally linked cash nexus—the historical product of primitive accumulation—the only access for most to economic necessities. Economic dependence and instrumental reason may be further enhanced by the growing social acceleration that has gripped all societies in the process of industrialization, in particular since World War II (Connolly 2002; Scheuerman 2004; Rosa 2010).

In forthcoming work (Fritsch, forthcoming b), I argue more extensively than in TT that most of these reasons and forces stem from democracy's relation to the capitalist, increasingly global economy. Primitive accumulation, economic dependence of democratic state institutions, instrumentalization of action, and social acceleration — these factors are inseparable from the history and economic organization of the capitalist mode of production and distribution, as well as the path dependence regarding fossil fuels and other infrastructure. Thus, capitalist markets tend to render democratic self-government short-termist. This, in essence, would be my response to Thompson's challenge to explain selfishness and short-sightedness, esp. in affluent countries, given that I claim our ontological make-up is generationally constituted. If I'm right about the latter, it could motivate us to unfold intergenerational and terrestrial being in this historical context so as to defend democratic institutions from capitalist encroachments. This would be part of my attempt to respond to Wirth's crucial question: "What manner of democracy enables us to pay forward the debt incurred by the gift of the earth...?" and his helpful claim (discussed above, though still insufficiently) that to

answer this question “some clues for alternative political economies can be found in some indigenous cultures.”

Among the reasons for short-termism, there’s one exception to this relation between capitalism and democracy, for it concerns a reason that is internal to the democratic heritage. (I only know of one other principle that could be construed as internal in this way and that has been used to ‘green’ democracy—the principle of all affected, for example in its Habermasian version (Eckersley 2000; Jensen 2015). Perhaps something like this is what Buddeberg has in mind when she intriguingly suggests a kind of family resemblance between democratic, discursive, and intergenerational turn-taking. I will be happy to return to this in future work.) Here, the internal reason concerns the shortsightedness of elected representatives who are motivated to look no further than the next election. Presentism has been related, including by Gardiner himself (2011), to the frequent change of guards required by the electoral cycles of representative democracy (Garvey 2008; Dryzek 1996). But this reason, TT suggests, can also be seen as a danger with links to a saving grace—and it is here that I would see one of the linchpins for, in Buddeberg’s words, shifting the weight of democracy toward the longer term and for the sake of future generations.

For, so the argument goes, the change of guards is rooted in a turn-taking that in principle applies to generations, too. Drawing on Plato and Aristotle in particular, as Naas recalls, TT seeks to argue that taking turns among rulers and ruled is a normative idea inherent to the concept of democracy. The upshot of my discussion is that democracy implies the principled consent to others ruling after ‘my’ turn. And this principled assent to the possibility of others having a turn at governing entails a commitment to share one’s turn with future generations — those who not only may, but will have a turn with the institutions we are already in the process of leaving to them (TT 156, 170). To consent to someone else ruling after my turn is to consent to a generation having its turn with governance after my death. In short (and I know I’m merely summarizing a longer argument in TT and beyond), a commitment to democracy entails a commitment to preserve democratic institutions for future people. Now, if such turn-taking can then be shown (as attempted in TT’s chapters 4 and 5) to be inseparable from what I’ve been calling the earth’s turn with us (that is, if you wish, the dependency of social life and political institutions on the earth), then this democratic commitment to future people also implies a commitment to preserving the earth for them in ways that enable democratic life. This might help us to give greater contours to the response to Wirth’s question, “What would the global General Economy of the Gift look like?” For a general economy, in Bataille’s and Derrida’s technical usage to which Wirth is appealing here, is one that accepts the excess of the earth’s and ancestors’ gift over the narrow calculations of economic exchange, and for this reason recognizes that it owes to the

future. To generalize ‘world economy’, as TT argues (153), is to call out restricted capitalist economies on their externalities and to confront them with their—incalculable but responsabilizing—starting conditions in family, inheritance, and earth.

I’m afraid I will have to leave it at these remarks. I cannot thank my critics enough for their careful study and willingness to go along with me for a while. I truly benefited from their reformulations and questions, questions that prompt me to establish linkages and elaborate where my book failed to be sufficiently clear or coherent as well as challenges that merit further research and promises future avenues. I will continue to seek to do justice to the generosity of my commentators.

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