

Systemic Dehumanization in the Age of Pandemic Terrorism

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Abstract: Systemic existential conditions are indelible aspects of a client's reflective and non-reflective modes of consciousness, and therefore fall within the purview of philosophical counseling. This paper focuses on the experience of the dehumanization that is a function of the monetization of all aspects of post-modern neoliberal society. Monetization demands radical self-abandonment, self-anesthesia, auto-aggressive self-exploitation and addiction for functionality within the system. The bankrupt logic of pandemic terrorism confirms that monetization has become the preeminent measure of value. Monetization distorts both reason and value, concealing a covert nihilism masquerading as the new metaphysics. The symbiotic natural world evidences a level of cooperation and coexistence that escapes monetization. Therefore, a monetized society is a society at odds with the world ecosystem and life itself. Caught in a labyrinth of monetized dehumanization, clients often participate in the fictional metanarrative of belief in unlimited individual possibility as a hedge against anxiety, depression, powerlessness, anomie, and the logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

Key words: philosophical counseling, monetization, terrorism, cognitive dissonance, dehumanization.

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Part I: Five Theses

In *Part I*, I advanced four theses:

1. The 21st century is the century of terror. Paradoxically, it is also the century of belief in unlimited individual possibility.
2. Current global existential conditions have induced a radical, chronic sense of terror in the population at large. This is most often translated into anxiety, depression, and powerlessness. Belief in unlimited individual possibility is a reaction formation constructed as a defense against existing conditions.
3. Reflective awareness magnifies terror and therefore anxiety, depression, and powerlessness. Reflective awareness also serves to highlight the absurdity of belief

in unlimited possibility. Individuals take measures to reduce reflective awareness in order to minimize terror, anxiety, depression, and powerlessness.

4. The monetization of all facets of society effectively produces an artificially created Hobbesian state of nature. The pathologies advanced in theses 1 through 3 are consequences of this artifice.¹

In this paper I would like to add a fifth thesis:

5. Dehumanization/monetization produces anomie, a belief in unlimited individual possibility, and an irreducible logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

Part II: The Methodology of Listening

As a result of listening to philosophical counseling clients for thousands of hours over the last twenty-three years, I have concluded that the etiology of many of the issues for which clients seek counseling is systemic rather than intrapersonal. Clients who are non-reflectively aware of this experience anxiety, depression, powerlessness, and anomie. Clients who are reflectively aware of this experience the logical loop of cognitive dissonance when they seek to take responsibility for a problem that is systemic rather than personal. In doing so, they wear themselves out trying to imagine and cognize a solution to a problem that is, within the scope of their individual freedom, insoluble. A reflective apprehension of this insolubility heightens depression, anxiety, powerlessness and anomie, so it is not uncommon for clients with such apprehension to adopt a belief in unlimited individual possibility as a hedge against negative affect. Adoption of this belief is encouraged by and serves the interests of those who benefit from a system that is inherently dehumanizing.

Clients engage in a range of behaviors designed specifically to block awareness of systemic conditions of dehumanization. These behaviors include addictions to prescription and non-prescription drugs, alcohol, food, work, sex, exercise, pornography, cults, gambling, hate groups, conspiracy theories and, more recently, addictions to electronic devices, video games, social media, day trading and sports betting. Addictions are now so ubiquitous that they could be said to be the norm. These behaviors are intended to self-anesthetize and block reflective awareness of systemic dehumanization; they have become a basic requirement for functionality within the system.

The age of partial attention is giving way to an age in which there is, effectively, no attention at all. This condition of non-attention begins with the self. Paradoxically, what has been called the age of narcissism is rooted in a radical abandonment of the self. Dehumanizing neoliberal values of productivity, performance, achievement, competition and efficiency have supplanted humanitarian values such as self-knowledge, fairness, justice, equity and community. Listening is the basis for community. Self-development is not possible in the absence of community. What we confront is an age of systemic nihilism cloaked in the mantra of freedom

and unlimited individual possibility. Systemic dehumanization demands self-suppression in the name of productivity. Consequently, our age of hyper-communication is an age in which dialogue is no longer possible.

Part III: Anomie and Cognitive Dissonance

What is anomie? Anomie (From the Greek *anomia*, lawlessness) is an experience that results from the breakdown of moral, legal and social norms and values. It is a sense of rootlessness. It is the experience of the absence of legal or ethical *terra firma*. It is an experience of alienation. The inability to square the experience of anomie with cultural proclamations of unlimited individual possibility induces the endless logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

What is cognitive dissonance? When thoughts rooted in experience conflict with the narrative of unlimited individual possibility, and the latter fails to quell the distress of the former. The present dehumanizing situation is unacceptable, with no clear path to remediation. The future situation will—at best—be the same as the present situation. Therefore, the future situation is unacceptable. An unacceptable future is a future without hope, and a future without hope is unacceptable—in fact, unthinkable. It is not possible to consciously cognize or assent to an unacceptable future. Consciousness must be altered in such a way that awareness of the unacceptability of the future is suppressed. This is if and only if consciousness is unable to reinterpret unacceptability as acceptability through a total revamping of conscious awareness. Such revamping, if possible, alleviates one from having to acknowledge the facts and the meaning of those facts. Thus, the advent of (1) bad faith and (2) false consciousness.

Part IV: Case Study

Many years ago, I was contacted by a woman interested in philosophical counseling. **We'll call her Jane.** In her mid-thirties, Jane was not happy with her life situation. Over a period of years, we discussed her childhood, family, employment history, relationships, and beliefs. Raised on a farm outside a small town in the Deep South in a conservative evangelical Christian home, she attended church services three times a week. Her social life and influences came from family, church, and to a lesser extent, public school. She was an average student, but managed to get a scholarship to a liberal arts college far enough away to break some of the ties with her close-knit family. After college, she moved to a large city about 400 miles from her hometown, got an apartment, got an hourly job in the health care industry, and rarely visited her family back home.

During our initial consultation, Jane told me that she had wanted to become a millionaire before the age of thirty. Now in her mid-thirties and with little or nothing to her name, it was clear that she had missed the mark. She was frustrated and angry that she had not met her goal. She had to re-set her timetable. Now, she wanted to become a millionaire before forty, as a step on the way to becoming a multi-millionaire. Although she spoke frequently about the Christian beliefs with

which she was raised, she said she was no longer a Christian. Christianity just got in the way of her **achieving her goal, she said, so she had to dispense with it. She didn't mind feigning belief**--if and only if it helped her achieve her financial goals. She expressed real contempt for true Christianity, since, she said, it simply impeded her ability to make money. Friendships and potential romantic relationships were evaluated in terms of a cost-benefit analysis, as was philosophical counseling. In each case, evaluation took place in light of her goal of becoming a millionaire. Her personal life in its totality--including clothing, personal care, exercise, sleep, and diet--was evaluated in light of this same goal. She made use of herself in order to achieve her long-term objective. She dismissed out of hand any suggestion that she may have been mistreating herself in so doing, or that her long-term goal might need to be revised in the interest of her own humanity.

At times, Jane expressed regret. An example of such an instance was when she gave up an extra twelve-hour overtime shift in order to go out on a date. Although Jane reported that the date went well, she was angry and disgusted that she had lost money by going out on the date instead of accepting the overtime shift. Relationships, she claimed, were simply a financial liability. She berated herself for being stupid enough to fall for the date when she already knew better. She denied feeling lonely. Simply put, she looked at every hour of her life as an hour in which she could get closer to her goal of amassing a million dollars. She used herself as a tool in the service of this long-term objective.

Jane would frequently bring up well-known wealthy individuals and argue that the main difference between herself and these individuals was the fact that she still had a conscience. She was annoyed by the fact that she still had a conscience. Conscience was the main impediment on her journey to amassing a million dollars, she claimed, and something needed to be done about it. **If only she wasn't raised with those strict Christian beliefs, if only she didn't have the temperament she had, because she was only getting in her own way. Wasn't there a way to eliminate her conscience, she wanted to know?** She feared that as long as she had a conscience, she could never make her financial goals a reality.

During one session, Jane posed a hypothetical in order to illustrate how much she loved money. She said that she would give up two years of her life if she could have a million dollars today. **"I'd be sick the last two years anyway, so it wouldn't really matter if they were cut off,"** she said. When I asked her if she would give up four years of her life for two million dollars, she said yes.

Jane was not significantly closer to amassing a million dollars when our sessions drew to a close. Nevertheless, she had not lost sight of her goal. She had simply moved the finish line as the years went by, but had not decided to stop playing the dehumanizing game of total monetization. Jane appears as an extreme example, if only because her motivations seem conscious and overt. Her voice, however, poignantly shouts out the playing field upon which we now all find ourselves, even if we work to consciously opt out. For Jane, as for many, internalization

of this form of systemic dehumanization becomes their best conceivable defense, and, in the end, the self has nowhere to go.

Part V: Dehumanization, the Fundamental Reality

Systemic dehumanization is a function of the monetization of all facets of society. Value, as such, is monetary rather than human. It is a privileging of the economy over human life, the sacrificing of human life for the greater purpose of *keeping the economy healthy*. Thus the inversion of the human and the inhuman: the health of the economy is granted de facto precedence over the health of the human being. The *system* takes precedence over the *individual*. Existential awareness of this inversion can produce anxiety, depression, powerlessness, a feeling of anomie and an irreducible logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

A stark example of privileging the economy over human life: In a recent article titled “Evictions Caused More Than 10,000 Covid Deaths,” Jeff Andrews writes that “Researchers led by Kathryn Leifheit of UCLA published a paper Monday asserting that evictions between the beginning of the pandemic and the CDC’s national eviction moratorium in September led to 433,700 excess COVID-19 cases and 10,700 additional deaths.”² In point of fact, evictions have continued even under the “moratorium,” a moratorium now set to expire on January 31st. The point is clear: monetization is the preeminent value, not human life. Human life has no independent, intrinsic value. Only commodified human life has value. Awareness of such conditions generates anxiety, depression, powerlessness, and anomie. Any attempt to “rise above” such conditions ensnares one in the logical loop of cognitive dissonance, as any attempt to escape would entail a monetized lifeboat on an endless sea of monetization.

A second example of commodification: the “gig economy” ride hailing services, Lyft and Uber. In the November 2020 election California voters passed Proposition 22, which classifies app-based drivers as independent contractors, not employees. Uber spent over \$205 million in support of Prop 22, which allows companies like Uber to shift all overhead costs onto the driver.³ After Prop 22 passed, Uber announced that it was discontinuing its development of the self-driving car.⁴ The cost-benefit calculus is clear: when humans are legally categorized as subcontractors, the cost of their labor is lower than that of the self-driving car, which has a labor cost of zero. The human vehicle-commodity turns out to be cheaper than the machine itself. If human drivers don’t accept being treated as nothing more than machines competing with other machines, they can always exercise their freedom to quit, or move to another state. The problem with this is that each state, in turn, will have its own Prop 22, as will each sector of the economy—**if these aren’t already in place. At present, the monetized driver’s sub-subsistence wage is ensured—unless cheaper self-driving vehicles appear on the scene, at which time “market forces” will dehumanize drivers into oblivion. Thus, the planned obsolescence of the subject is built into the structure of techno-capital development.**

Byung-Chul Han writes in *The Disappearance of Rituals* that “Values today ... serve as things for individual consumption. Once considered universal goods in themselves, values such as justice, humanity, or sustainability are now **exploited for profit.**”⁵ The commodification and exploitation of value signifies the monetization of the immaterial. The space that is transcendent consciousness, reflective consciousness, is now commodified and exploited, endangering consciousness itself. Monetization requires self-exploitation, as consciousness bids for opportunity, productivity, visibility, and value. Dehumanization is inherent in the commodification of value. As the space of consciousness narrows to exist within the parameters of monetization, consciousness turns against itself.

Self-dehumanization involves the stripping away of solidarity with the self, and **participation in the manipulation of one’s thoughts and feelings.** The Delphic oracle’s exhortation, “**Know Thyself**” falls on deaf ears. Unless, that is, self-knowledge can be monetized, in which case, the knowledge of self is used to heighten productivity, bringing forth Byung-Chul Han’s achievement-subject.⁶ *Care* of the self is supplanted by *use* of the self. The self, as such, gradually goes opaque as self-knowledge, even as an aspiration, fades from the radar.

Part VI: Auto-Aggressive Self-Exploitation

As of the last day of 2020, over 350,000 Americans had died from the COVID-19 virus,⁷ arguably to avert a long-term shutdown of the economy. The health of the system is the preeminent value, while the subject languishes in the netherworld of nonexistence. Subjects, in fact, have transmuted into projects, engaging in aggressive auto-exploitation to comply with the dictates of continued self-commodification during this time of international duress. The sacrifice of life, it is said, is necessary for the preservation of the machine. The induced terror and precariousness of everyday life is intensified by the proximate danger of the pandemic. Thus pandemic terrorism takes a more pronounced form than the terrorism of everyday life. It is one more opportunistic instantiation of Naomi Klein’s *shock doctrine*.⁸ Byung-Chul Han writes in *Psychopolitics* that “Freedom will prove to have been merely an interlude until this too turns out to be a form of coercion.” He continues: “Although the achievement subject deems itself free, in reality it is a slave. In so far as it willingly exploits itself without a master, it is an *absolute slave*.”⁹

Auto-aggressive self-objectification is a failure in principle, yet is held out as *the* necessary mode of being-in-the world. Caught in a labyrinth of contradictory demands, the achievement subject seeks meaning and value by means of the constriction of freedom. This is the Procrustean bed of addiction. At root is a thought disorder which is itself rooted in systemic dehumanization. It is the Stockholm syndrome writ large, for without belief, the project becomes transparent and collapses as desire attenuates. Since the project can have no end, it is itself a performance, as much for oneself as for others. Anxiety, depression, powerlessness, and anomie may be held at bay by means of performative self-projectification. The auto-aggressive subject throws itself toward a would-be future of meaning and value, and in the very process denies the meaning and value of present lived experience (*erlebnis*).

Without projection of oneself into the future, there can be no value. Without projection from one's lived experience, there can be no real projection. Real projection is replaced by a market-driven project, a projection rooted in the narrative of self-effacement veiled as the project of unlimited individual freedom. But such "freedom" operates within the context of dehumanization and is therefore rooted in radical self-rejection. Is it surprising that the bulk of the population regularly experience anxiety, depression, powerlessness, and anomie? This self-rejection is offered under the guise of authenticity, mindfulness, self-realization and similar techniques of self-control. Even emotion is packaged, optimized, and monetized. The interior becomes the exterior as both are flattened out in a plenum of monetization.

Dehumanization is a function of a system that monetizes everything, including human relationships. Millions enthusiastically give their personal data to social media, which slices and dices the product, selling freely given information to monetize again and again. Confessional tweets and posts are collected, analyzed, and monetized. The relationship of the self with itself exists within the sphere of monetization. Even the female orgasm has been monetized.¹⁰ The space of non-monetizability is now the empty set. A pre-reflective *apprehension* of this brings with it depression, anxiety, anomie, and a sense of powerlessness. An increasingly reflective *comprehension* induces the endless logical loop of cognitive dissonance. Byung-Chul Han writes that: "The neoliberal regime deploys emotions as resources in order to bring about heightened productivity and achievement. Starting at a certain level of production, *rationality*---which is the medium of disciplinary society---hits a limit. Henceforth, it is experienced as a constraint, an inhibition. Suddenly, it seems rigid and inflexible. At this point, *emotionality* takes its place, which is attended by the feeling of liberty---the free unfolding of personality."¹¹ Even one's emotions have been conscripted in the service of the dehumanization of the self.

Dehumanization is objectification. Objectification, that is to say, commodification, violates both formulations of Kant's Categorical Imperative: respect for self and others as *ends-in-themselves* (that is to say, subjects) and the *universalizability of the maxim* upon which one intends to act (treating self and others as subjects rather than objects).¹² Commodified value has become value-in-itself, as the subject (being-for-itself) becomes the object (being-in-itself) through the project of self-commodification.¹³

Part VII: The New Metaphysics

The new metaphysics denies the possibility of metaphysics, but not the *pretense to* metaphysics. It passes itself off as *the* metanarrative, rooted in science, technology, intelligence, statistics, data and reason. But how can objectivity, empiricism, description, data---that is to say, what is purported to be the case---go beyond itself to interpret and create a metanarrative of meaning? Jean-Paul Sartre spent his life trying to demonstrate the impossibility of just such a thing: one cannot construct a believable and satisfying narrative---let alone a metanarrative---from any of

the various permutations of materialism, be they dialectical, atomistic, physicalistic, or otherwise. This is an *a priori* truth and an *a posteriori* truth. *A priori* because we cannot think the contradiction of discrete “objective” analysis while at the same time extracting synthetic, narrative meaning. Meaning is not objective, at least not in a metaphysical sense. *A posteriori*, because we experience only the absence of coherence, meaning, and narrative we would need to become fully realized characters in our own lives.

The recognition of the absence of metanarrative, Sartre tells us, is the experience of the fundamental absurdity of human life. This recognition induces *nausea*: a visceral response to the apprehension of the meaninglessness of being.¹⁴ The feigned metanarrative of monetization fails to accord with experience, reason or nature.

Part VIII: Monetization, Reason, and Insanity

In *The Hidden Life of Trees* Peter Wohlleben writes, “When you know that trees experience pain and have memories and that tree parents live together with their children, then you can no longer **just chop them down and disrupt their lives with large machines.**”¹⁵ Trees are one of the planet’s most prevalent monetizable resources. To what degree are ecosystems disrupted or destroyed when trees are cleared and new ones planted? What effects does this have on the species that rely on such ecosystems? In what ways does such “harvesting” affect humanity? “**There are more life forms in a handful of forest soil than there are people on the planet.**”¹⁶ As our planetary ecosystems are degraded through human encroachment, pollution, and exploitation, nature itself must be enlisted to **save our planet and ourselves.** Wohlleben writes: “**If we want to use forests as a weapon in the fight against climate change, then we must allow them to grow old.**”¹⁷ Letting be is the one thing that monetization cannot allow. Dehumanization is but one facet of monetization. The larger facet is ecocide.

In 1997, forest researchers published a paper in the journal *Nature* which first revealed the existence of what they called the “**wood wide web**”: **trees, it turns out, communicate with each other and work together to solve their existential problems of living.**¹⁸ This discovery upended the previously held belief that each tree was on its own, working against others in a fight for survival. Monetization is inherently competitive and non-cooperative. In the face of the demise of our planet, any viable concept of reason or intelligence would of necessity be rooted in a concept of the symbiotic nature of all things, in co-existence rather than competition. It would be rooted in what we can learn from the natural world.

But this is not the case. What passes for reason, intelligence, sanity, turns out to be none of these things, unless measured within the parameters of the bankrupt system itself. We see an inversion of value and with it an inversion of reason. The inextricable connection of value and reason makes this inevitable. Our society pays lip service to reason, while subordinating it to the dictates of monetization. The yardstick for reason is not reason itself.

Sara Derouin writes for *Livescience*¹⁹ that “The World Bank estimates that about 3.9 million square miles (10 million square km) of forest have been lost since the beginning of the 20th century. In the past 25 years, forests shrank by 502,000 square miles (1.3 million square km) — an area bigger than the size of South Africa. In 2018, *The Guardian* reported that every second, a chunk of forest equivalent to the size of a soccer field is lost ... The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) estimates that an area the size of Switzerland (14,800 square miles, or 38,300 square km) is lost to deforestation every year.”

What are the effects of deforestation? Derouin reports that “According to a 2018 FAO [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations] report, three-quarters of the Earth’s freshwater comes from forested watersheds, and the loss of trees can affect water quality. The UN’s 2018 State of the World’s Forests Report found that over half the global population relies on forested watersheds for their drinking water as well as water used for agriculture and industry.”

United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, in a recent speech at Columbia University, stated that “Humanity is waging war on nature. This is suicidal. Nature always strikes back – and it is already doing so with growing force and fury. Biodiversity is collapsing. One million species are at risk of extinction. Ecosystems are disappearing before our eyes ... Human activities are at the root of our descent toward chaos.”²⁰ What has been our response to this overwhelming scientific consensus? Damian Carrington, the environmental editor at *The Guardian*, provides a succinct summary of a recent international study: “The world’s governments are ‘doubling down’ on fossil fuels despite the urgent need for cuts in carbon emissions to tackle the climate crisis.”²¹

A report by Public Citizen, Bailout Watch and Friends of the Earth released on November 23, 2020 shows that billions in pandemic relief went directly to the fossil fuel industry.²² The report found that the “fossil fuel industry received up to \$15 billion in COVID-19 direct relief ... [The fossil fuel industry] also received nearly \$95 billion in indirect support through federal bond-buying programs and private bond sales, bringing the benefit tally to \$110 billion.” These facts should cause us to question accepted notions of reason, including notions of sanity itself. How can overt, systemic and sustained destruction of the conditions necessary for life be considered a rational course of action?

Emmanuel Goldstein, the clandestine author of *The Book* inside George Orwell’s novel *1984* argued that in a system in which “the Ministry of Peace concerns itself with war, the Ministry of Truth with lies, the Ministry of Love with torture, and the Ministry of Plenty with starvation ... the prevailing mental condition must be *controlled insanity*.”²³ Vigorously crushing and harvesting and packaging all of nature—including ourselves—in a way that is by all accounts unsustainable is the very definition of *controlled insanity*. Control is exerted through various mechanisms in the surveillance state to ensure and optimize a model of unsustainable production that will inexorably lead to the destruction of our species and our planet. What can it mean to be

reasonable within such a system? When monetization is the supreme value, *reason is effectively reduced to no more than controlled insanity*. Any attempt to think oneself out of this conundrum is to involve oneself in the endless logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

Part IX: Cognitive Subterfuge as Response to Dehumanization

Bad faith: a lie to oneself within the unity of a single consciousness (self-deception),²⁴ and false consciousness, i.e., a near-global denial of the facts. Bad faith must focus on the lie in order to **suppress it. False consciousness is more “panoramic,” replacing consciousness itself with a facsimile, a mural of the landscape rather than the landscape itself.** The mural, in the end, is an insufficient stand-in for the thing itself. The auto-aggressive achievement subject engages in bad faith within a setting of antecedent false consciousness. External and internal pressures converge as the endless logical loop of cognitive dissonance exhausts the subject, leading to the choice of self-deception. Other choices involve variations on the theme of self-abuse. Self-abuse and self-deception are synergistic — each implies the other.

Part X: Self-Anesthetization as Response to Dehumanization

Various means of self-anesthetization are used to block awareness of the anxiety, depression, powerlessness, anomie and cognitive dissonance that result from the collective trauma of dehumanization. One of the most prevalent ways of numbing oneself is everywhere and near at hand: *food*. Food serves as an anesthetic, a mood elevator, a mood stabilizer, a companion, a friend, a savior, hope in a world of darkness. The food supply has become infused with thousands of chemicals, in addition to added sugars and fats, effectively transforming food into a drug.²⁵ The FDA list of legal food additives includes synthetic flavors, veterinary drugs which may leave residue in edible tissues of animals or in edible animal products, solvents, solubilizing and dispersing agents, chemical preservatives, hormones, fungicides, substances used in conjunction with flavors, substances under the Food Additive Amendment added directly to feed, sanitizing agents for food processing equipment, fumigants, pesticides other than fumigants, inhibitors, and herbicides. Of the thirty-five categories of legal food additives, one is titled “**nutrients.**” The line between foods and drugs has become increasingly blurred. What we ingest is less and less a food, and more and more the result of the chemical engineering that will keep the achievement subject productive. We often eat alone. As the nutritive value of food decreases because of soil depletion, contamination, and chemical engineering, the more it functions as a drug.

Eating disorders have become the norm in a world where eating itself has become pathologized. In a fully monetized society, there is no longer time to eat. Bingeing has replaced the meal. Bingeing has become the mode of ingestion for all aspects of life. This reflects an absence of a profound sense of attention, as bingeing serves to self-anesthetize. *The absence of the meal has also replaced the meal* as individuals starve themselves for control.

Part XI: Conclusion

Let us highlight and underscore the two-fold split/double valence of the bifurcated consciousness of the achievement-subject: (1) Monetization, i.e., objectification, of the subject produces irreducible cognitive dissonance as the subject apprehends that (a) the project of monetization has become the measure of valuation (b) that monetization requires self-objectification, that is, dehumanization, and (c) the project is a failure in principle.

(2) Belief in unlimited individual possibility in tandem with the realization of conditions of monetization/dehumanization produces a bifurcated, double valence of consciousness, is inherently contradictory, and therefore *itself produces* irreducible cognitive dissonance. Monetization ensures that the self will never be the source of its own valuation and will be forever devalued by a system that fails to recognize the subject as such. The achievement subject, therefore, in accepting the terms of monetization, must offshore its valuational criteria. This maneuver of complicit self-rejection induces anxiety, depression, powerlessness, anomie, and the endless logical loop of cognitive dissonance.

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¹¹ Byung-Chul Han, *Psychopolitics*, 45.

¹² See Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, trans. H. J. Paton (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 88 – 98.

¹³ *Being-for-itself* (free being, subject) and *Being-in-itself* (unfree being, object) are concepts developed by Jean-Paul Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1966).

¹⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Lloyd Alexander (New York: New Directions, 1969), 21. See also Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*.

¹⁵ Peter Wohlleben, *The Hidden Life of Trees*, trans. Jane Billinghurst (Berkeley: Greystone Books, 2016), xiv.

¹⁶ Wohlleben, 2016, 86.

¹⁷ Wohlleben, 2016, 98.

¹⁸ S.W. Simard, D.A. Perry, M.D. Jones, D.D. Myrold, D.M. Durall, and R. Molina, “Net Transfer of Carbon between Tree Species with Shared Ectomycorrhizal Fungi,” *Nature* 388 (1997): 579 – 582.

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