

Killing Our Children's Children: From Humanitarianism to Biotarianism in Earth-Theology¹

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ABSTRACT

As the global ecological crisis mounts and climate-related disasters escalate, humanitarian responses ought to include environmental wellbeing in their political agenda. Aside from exploring the paradigm shift in humanitarianism from apolitical to political causes, the article advocates the transformation of humanitarian activities from anthropocentric commitments to *biotarianism* – that is upholding the sanctity of all bio-kind as the basis of all humanitarian actions. In addition to locating the ecological crisis in human attitudes toward the natural world, the article argues that *biotarianism* ought to challenge the global economic inequalities which compromise the lives of the poor and the environment. The article ends with some lessons on the implications of the ecological crisis on Earth and the poor.

Introduction

Climate-related disasters – heatwaves, storms, floods, landslides, soil erosion, wild-fires, droughts and famines among many other environmental disasters – are constantly making international headlines, yet humanity is deafened by such catastrophes. The headlines such as “floods kill hundreds and displace 200,000 in Malawi”, “the heatwave kills thousands in Asia”, and “Typhoon Haiyan displaces millions”, do not shock us. If anything, they are now part of our social existence. Of course, they make international headlines for a while, but disappear as soon as new climate-related disasters strike, and so do humanitarian problems which accompany them. These disasters, however, are indicative of the environmental

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