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### Does the Anthropocene Require Us To Be Saints?

In the spirit of this workshop conference, I shall not today advance a thesis or propose any answer to my question. You will hear a problem and the reason this problem should matter to us. A signal-flare from the cubbyhole of academic theory in which I work will accompany the presentation of this problem. For, although I have what I think is an answer to the problem, my views come from the domain of philosophy of history. This is a field and a discourse that is unknown to most American philosophers. Indeed, it is at best severely misunderstood, and by consequence it hardly exists in this country as a professional interest, although in fact many philosophers use it or do it all the time. It is, in my view, a subsuming field—that is to say, it is a fundamental philosophical inquiry that cuts across all topics in so far as they have a diachronic, or roughly “historical,” aspect. In any case, the