

## Demystifying Churchocracy

Nuclear family is the avatar of communal authenticity, harmony. The schism of female/male mutuality corrupts religious/ civil culture... The nuclear family paradigm supposes parental mutuality/ authority; “churchocracy” fails fatally in the supposition of parental mutuality. Dominion authority is modeled on male autocracy and the radical alienation of women from the mutuality of parental (priestly) authenticity.

Christian sermonology habitually uses a grammar of a long gone worldview that fails to inform and inspire in matters of present day urgencies; it is more obscure than current in its iterations of thoughts and language that date from Aristotle’s time, from “Holy Roman Empire” times. Credit should be given where credit is due, but when the jargon of another time means to be the vehicle of moral consciousness, without being updated in the modern context, it is not satisfying. It is inauthentic

The jargon of churchology encodes and advances the intentional purposes of patriarchal overreach, what is “churchocracy.” While patriarchy is insidious from the perspective of alienating women and wasting nature, it isn’t fair to say that it is totally malevolent. Nevertheless, its malevolence cannot be denied, and its grammar of overreach needs to be dissected if human potentials are to be developed and common life is to be rescued from cultural malevolence. [It’s curious and telling that the Latin words “mal” (evil) and “volens” (willful) together spell “male willfulness.”]

In order to decode churchology’s jargon one must know it from experience, and knowing it means experiencing it in real life and understanding where it came from and where it is taking us. Where does it come from? In its deep origins it has advanced in the context of human evolution in a highly competitive environment; evolution encodes the way of consciousness from sentience to intelligence, to self-reflection. The journey process of life is written and remembered in DNA, and historical accounts of the human cultural venture are passed on generationally. The Bible uniquely speaks to conscious self-discovery.

In the modern time one gets a sense that churchology intends to be mysterious, even dark and disconnected from the “secular”, and to be in a “supernatural” realm that is self-justifying and above the mundane—the root of male arrogance, the “pride of the Fall.” Demystifying the grammar of churchocracy is a challenge; it’s an effort I’ve been working at for more than fifty years. In his Introduction to my book **GREEN RELIGION, Inside the Cultural Spectrum**, Dr John Andersen says this:

“Steffen’s work is challenging because he is breaking new ground and uncovering new thoughts as he discovers linkages between various ideas and perspectives that haven’t been identified before. Perhaps because he’s not expressing the “same old thoughts,” his language may seem unconventional, his phraseology surprising... Steffen talks about his quest to reconcile faith and reason, religion and science. My view is that he succeeds in using his knowledge of science and his powers of reasoning to give new meaning to fundamental religious understandings. To do this requires firm grounding in science and faithful belief in religious truth. Steffen not only can “talk the talk” of science and religion, but he validates the “talk” by the way he lives his life—in other words, by the way he “walks” the “talk.”

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“Updating”, as Vatican II insists, is constantly necessary even if difficult because of habit and resistance to change.

I readily admit that I use church jargon and that because I do it isn't easy to break through the thicket and find clarity. Compounding the challenge is that culturally we in the Western world are steeped in church jargon and acclimated to churchocracy, and we resist dealing with it because we don't realize how we are hurtfully controlled by it.

What does my decoding of church jargon boil down to? It boils down to connecting the evolution of morality (church language) with universal evolution and the ascendancy of self-reflective consciousness. The “method of evolution” is a physical/ psychical process in which the “psychical supposes the physical as the physical supposes the psychical”; these two aspects of human reality (spirituality and materiality) evolve co-dependently, essentially and necessarily. Artifices of disconnecting them puts the individual person in irresolvable self-conflict. Consciousness, personal and social, is really about the journey of self-reflection to discovery of conscience—Godlikeness.

Evolution and consciousness/ conscience proceed by the same means, what I call trimorphic resonance (TR). TR is a three-step process of communication, consciousness and conscience that supposes human agency acting in fidelity to rational/ moral outcomes at each step along the way. Truthful communication forges trust relationships (faith); the outcome of informed (raised) consciousness is hopefulness; hope in the future is sustained in the conscionable fidelity of people and communities acting in concert, faithfully seeking the common way of wellbeing (symbiosis). The principle of reciprocity recognizes that “the morality (rationality) of personal living supposes the morality (rationality) of communal living even as the rationality (morality) of communal living supposes the rationality (morality) of personal living.” This is the meaning and justification of codependency, of female/ male mutuality, complementarity, subsidiarity.

The reciprocal codependency of personal and communal living wholly depends from/on ecologic/economic sustainability. Human ecology is unthinkable except in context of/with nature's ecology. Human ecology and Earth's bio-diverse ecology co-evolve, and are totally interdependent in/on the common dynamics of cosmic evolution. In their mutual dependency, human ecology and Earth ecology advance (or decline) together; successful, sustainable evolution is a process of “intentional symbiosis”, what is the mandate of “Christian Humanism” — “do unto other as you would have others do unto you.”

To engage in wasting nature for purposes of personal advantage is to act unfaithfully to self, to others, and to nature. Such behavior repudiates conscience, violates nature and corrupts personal, communal wellbeing. Corporate capitalism is fundamentally flawed by its unleashing of the unfettered exploitation of nature for purposes of personal selfishness and greed—an inheritance of patriarchy's dominion theology/ politics. This fatal flaw is documented in the ecologic/ economic implosions now happening. The status-quo is unsustainable.