

Ecologic/ Economic Reciprocity

Nature is at the same time prodigal and thrifty, forgiving and unforgiving—but in different ways. Nature’s prodigality and forgiveness have to do with openness to undeveloped potentials, but she is decidedly jealous in safe-guarding established patterns of common sustainability. The economics of life are part and parcel of the ecologies of life; ecologic interdependency values natural economics, natural thriftiness.

Ecologies suppose economics as economics suppose ecologies; the fate of humankind supposes the fate of natural symbiosis as the fate of natural symbiosis supposes the fate of humankind. Human wastefulness is fundamentally wasteful of natural ecologies and the communal self.

Humankind too easily maltreats natural ecologies for two very prevalent and obvious reasons: first, people are largely ignorant of and blind to the deep symbiotic connections of diverse organisms in sustaining health and vital diversity; and secondly, the human passion to dominate and possess overrides good judgment and drives people to obsession and control, a very old survival mechanism advanced from the deep past of trial-and-error necessity, but now a threat to survival.

Humankind’s relationship within web-life has two main legitimacies (rights) which pertain to personal/ communal wellbeing. These legitimacies apply to present generations and to future generations. The present generations have moral rights and obligations with respect to resource use for the wellbeing of present and future life. It is because of moral obligations to present and future generations that personal and communal conscience needs to be guided by and to apply itself in an informed way toward “secular” reality, toward natural and necessary codependencies, i.e., humanely and symbiotically, what is also the universal mandate of love (Christian humanism).

Communal necessity in the matters of secular reality (the second legitimacy) has priority over personal choosing and self-serving judgment. Except people individually are guided by motives of love also for the “communal other”, they act self-destructively and with disregard for the unforgiving codes of genetic determination in the DNA of every cell.

In greed and in ignorance, religions have conspired politically with the selfish interests of ignorance and habits of dominion, thus enabling self-destructive passions to exploit the largesse of nature with total insensitivity for essential symbiosis.

The corrective needed for this lethal blunder is collective, conscionable sensitivity for the uncompromising necessity of intentional symbiosis, and the turning of people to hands-on care and restoration of nature. May a universal turning to symbiotic necessity be the out-come of Pope Benedict XVI’s 2010 appeal for the **Care of Earth**.

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