

METAGENESIS / METAPHYSICS

ISNESS: The Me that I Know

Individually, we are repositories of past experience carrying the past in the present and forward into the future. For weal and for woe, the future depends on the present, on us.

Our connection with the past helps us make sense of the present. By fidelity to the good sense of past thinking we move forward into the future preparing and securing the way for others. More than body fabric, the “in-sides” of our body fabric is the otherness of our selves, the “meta” component that birth gives us.

We are so much more than the chemistry of the physical body that houses our self, “the me I know.” Because of the other in me, I am experienced and empowered to know and to learn, and to be true to myself, to the other in me. What we are by birth is “two-ness in one.” Our “meta” genesis, which inheres in and coheres (holds together) the physical body, is the conscious soul, the captured translucence of the “noosphere”. The “meta” mind in the physical body embraces and takes responsibility for the other-inheritance that we are destined to pass on.

Except we intentionally inform our selves in “the ground of vitality” (the feminine half of our two-ness) we lack authentic means of transmitting inherited fidelity to others yet-to-come. What is the “ground of our being?” It is the joined capacity of intuitional awareness and rational analysis to complement each other and to communicate authentically with each other.

Intuitional awareness and the capacity for reason are the “meta” energies of genesis and reflective living. In exercising reason, it grows in capacity, and we become empowered to reflect on our personal life-experiences and to ground them in the sense of intuitional wisdom gathered within us. Women are the main repositories of intuitional sense, which is passed on to children; fathers are communication-partners who correlate contingent experiences and reason. Together, mother and father (body/ mind, intuition/ reason) build new consciousness fortified to cope with contingencies yet-to-come.

Female/ male alienation, cultured in patriarchal religions, is a radical and persisting fault that unsettles intuition and disables reason. By such disablement, humankind loses its capacity of being a safe repository of otherness, and it loses its capacity for the honest dialog of intuitional consciousness and a true sense of rational experience.

Walter Brueggemann rightly identifies the root challenge to human authenticity, namely, cultural muddling the “meta” mind of female/ male mutuality, complementarity and subsidiarity, and frustrating the God/ Man/ Land Covenant. <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2331>

Human ecology is the “meta” elaboration of natural ecology. In our personal genesis we carry the same substance and history that is carried in genes of flowers and trees, bugs and bees, fish and reptiles, birds and bunnies, wallabies and chimps. Their future lies in the “meta” otherness of our responsibility, for while they and we are of common heritage, we are a threat to them and they are not a threat to us. The mass extinctions of other life speak to human wrongdoing — a burden and responsibility we bear.

Ours is to heal female/male alienation, the heritage of metagenesis and the menagerie of life to which we belong.

METAGENESIS, the Word

“Metagenesis” is used here in its scientific meaning and (philosophical) word-association meaning. Its likeness to metaphysics can't be missed. Consider this philosophical sense. In the 100 years since the publication of Einstein's quantum-electric theories, science has developed way beyond the simplistic soul/ body division implicit in metaphysics. All matter is understood not to be just energy-derived but to be energy.

The change of energy and the transfer of energy change are by way of the wave/particle structuring of nature; wave energy is also light-particle (photon) energy.

Matter is about the “particle-izing” of light and the energetic charging and discharging of particle-light's electrical potential, about attraction, convergence, divergence and emergence. Electrical charge is part and parcel of light dynamics, properties of the electromagnetic spectrum. All life is qualified by, depends on and returns physically to spectrum origins, i.e., the realm of light. In Christian theology, God is understood as Word, Light and Love, the Source of communication, consciousness and conscience.

As a term of science, “metagenesis” refers to the reproductive way of the “alternation of generations” as in early and continuing plant life. The flowers of plants provide the male and female components that produce the seed. <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2350>

METAPHYSICS, the Word

The understanding behind the word was developed by the Greek Philosopher Aristotle. In his time, “lovers of wisdom” (philosophers of his school) believed that the order of nature was material and that an outside energy, power, controlled life, consciousness and the diversity of life on Earth. Human beings, for example, operated in both realms, the realm of the physical and the meta-physical, what is “spiritual”. Animal life differed from other life in that it possessed a soul (Latin, anima), a spiritual force that enfolds and unfolds being “along with” (meta) the physical.

“ANCESTRAL GRACE, Meeting God in Our Human Story”

Diarmuid O'Murchu, © 2008
Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545

“Christianity...sought out what seemed the most persuasive and credible cultural container through which it could sell its message to a wider world... Greek philosophy... offered clarity in its conceptual framework, a logical and rational way of dealing with knowledge (epistemology), a metaphysical worldview, and a hierarchical sense of order with a strong appeal to the dominance and control so endemic to the politics of the time.

“Had Christianity adopted the Hebrew culture, things would have been very different. The sacredness of creation would be much more to the fore, with a stronger sense of divine working through creation than inhabiting distant heaven. The oneness of everything, rather than dualistic divisions, would occupy a more central place... human personhood would be notably different — much more congruent with ancestral grace and capable of honoring the evolution of humanity over the 7-million-year story. (pg 133)

Our concept of autonomous personhood (each person stands alone in his or her uniqueness) may well be the greatest delusion from which we humans suffer.

“...the notion of separateness came to the fore. This is the basis for the severe alienation that humans experience today, especially in the so-called developed nations of the West. By delineating ourselves from nature and setting ourselves over nature, often with the blessing of formal religion, we effectively cut ourselves off from the sustaining womb to which we intimately and integrally belong.” (pg 134)

“Christ in Evolution”

Ilia Delio, O.S.F., © 2008

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545

“[Thomas] Merton...described Christ as the “Self” of redeemed humankind, restoring to it its being in the Word. Christ, who is the Word of the Father, in the express image of God in which the plenitude of the Godhead is reflected; thus, each human being, each particular image, reflects the divine light according to its capacity. Bede [Griffiths] claimed, ‘Because the Word in whom exists the plenitude of being is the center of Trinitarian love, we are plunged in the ocean (of divine love), we are immersed in it.

“...Bede realized that ‘Christ is incarnate in every person, or rather he is incarnate in the whole universe. For as all are one person and from the body of Christ, so the whole universe is one body, one organic whole, which comes to a head in the human person... Christ is the indwelling Spirit, the Self, of the universe, who redeems it [self] from the dispersion in space and time, and unites all its diverse tendencies in one body in himself. (pg 117)

“Faith After Darwin”

WORD&WORLD, Winter 2009

www.luthersem.edu/word&world

“Our Primal Fear and Confidence, Reinterpreting the Myth of the Flood as the Climate Changes”

Stewart W. Herman, pp 63-74

“Myths work to evoke appropriate fear and then to break through a crust of ignorance to reorient listeners to deeper truths. The biblical flood story did this in the face of the ‘wickedness’ and ‘violence’ of its own day and it can do so again in the face of the wickedness and violence of our pollution of earth...(63)

“The extension of human society into virtually every ecosystem has also accelerated the extinction of species at a rate not seen since the last mass extinctions recorded in geologic history...(63)

“...there may come a point when even the most diehard advocates of unrestrained growth recognize that we are headed towards a crash, or even when the most diehard advocates of renewables realize that new technologies cannot save us from ourselves, that enduring political divisions will prevent a powerful united response of the sort needed. (64)

“...we humans present a threat to the sustainability of natural systems but are trapped in denial, willful ignorance, and quite possibly despair. A mythic rendering of catastrophic climate change might enable us to articulate and feel the power of empirically validated fears of the damage that rising levels of greenhouse gases are all but certain to do to human societies...

“Survivors [of the flood, of climate change] need more than a word of comfort to experience genuine confidence; they need answers to the questions prompted by their anxiety. They need to hear the truth about the causes of the disaster they experienced (66)

“...the runaway trends of major climate change must evoke another round of primal fear: Are we doomed?... During the past five decades, it has become abundantly clear that the power to destroy the earth has been usurped by humanity using nature as a proxy... Perhaps on plundering nature, our pollution of earth, and finally our rough interference with the climate have effectively cancelled the mandate of benevolent dominion that was conferred by God in Gen 1: 28, and we are no longer welcome. (67)

“Ecologists’ see natural systems as having value independent of human needs, interests, and priorities, and so are keenly aware of how human pretensions of interdependence have worked against the survival and flourishing of nonhuman creatures...(70)

“The conundrum faced by God is how to cope with a humanity that cannot be deterred from wickedness even by a massive die-off, yet is too fragile to live with the possibility that any future rain or flood might be freighted with God’s will that they all perish again. Rainfall recalls the threat of collective annihilation; the rainbow that immediately follows is a reminder that God has taken God’s own violence off the list of pressing human anxieties... The rainbow, delicate and fleeting against the dark receding storm clouds, conveys the tangled relation between God’s abiding love for creation and God’s anger against those who violate earth. (71-72)

<http://www.secondenlightenment.org/THE%20WAY%20FORWARD.pdf>

“...God’s act of depleting the use of lethal force to humanity has become deeply problematic, given that we are in the process of abusing that concession by destroying the conditions for our own existence... The optimists...might join the pessimists in suspecting that God, under the moral cover of not to destroy humanity through active effort, is choosing to sit passively by while humanity destroys itself.

“...The firmest base for human confidence lies in discerning and following the model God sets. Trusting and loyal creatures are more likely to internalize restraints on their behavior than, say, alienated creatures who are anxious only to stave off punishment.
(73)

“In its own sober realism, the myth...supports the science of climate change by asserting that there is indeed a close link between human action and nature’s reaction, and builds upon that affinity...

“God promises no interference of a destructive sort; the responsibility therefore devolves upon human societies to develop the means to keep ourselves from self-destructing through corruption of the earth and the murder of each other... if we internalize God’s fiercely protective concern for the whole of creation, we may just have a fighting chance.
(74)