

CENTER FOR REFLECTION ON THE SECOND LAW

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James F. Berry
Advisory Board
American Teilhard Assoc.

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There follows a few quotes pertinent to upcoming discussions and conferences:

We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of the land is the same to him as the next, for he is the stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it he moves on. He treats his mother, the earth, and his brother, the sky, as things to be bought, plundered and sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert.
Chief Seattle.

In the Second Vatican Council "Nostra Aetate"....the statement is made that (non-christian) religions often reflect a "ray of that truth which enlightens all."Throughout past centuries substantially the same things have been said, although now, through religious studies, we are able to identify in greater detail wherein these other religions reflect not only a "ray" of the divine light but even floods of light illumining the life of the human community. Thomas Berry - essay on non-christian religion.

The problem with Christianity lies in the unassimilated elements of paganism.
Also Thomas Berry.

When one looks around today and meditates on the great evil of our time one sees that it is not mother religions that have spawned it, but an era of excessive patriarchy in education, science and religion itself. The wisdom the earth demands for her own survival will never come from patriarchy or patriarchal institutions alone. Until their arrogance ceases, wisdom will never arise. And Earth will continue to be wasted and sinned against. The ecumenical work of bringing Earth religions together is just one sign of some good news happening in our time.
Matthew Fox. Institute for Culture and Creation Spirituality.

In Antiquity every tree, every spring, every stream, every hill had its own "genius loci", its guardian spirit. These spirits were accessible to men, but were very unlike men; centaurs, fauns, and mermaids show their ambivalence. Before one cut a tree, mined a mountain, or damned a brook, it was important to placate the spirit in charge of that particular situation, and to keep it placated. By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feeling of natural objects....The spirits in natural objects, which formerly had protected nature from man evaporated. Man's effective monopoly on spirit was confirmed and the old inhibitions to the exploitation of nature crumbled.
Lynn White, Jr.

The truth is exactly the opposite. Contrary to the opinions of Lynn White and Arnold Toynbee, it was only when western civilization "liberated" itself from Christianity and its traditional doctrinal restraints that the door was opened for the ecological disasters of the present day....The problem lies in the phenomenon of "modernity"....an unprecedented psychological and spiritual rupture of a people from its cultural and spiritual roots. The roots of western culture are Judeo-Christian:

the radical reversal of this historical hierarchy of values in the West resulting in the Renaissance, the Reformation, the so-called Enlightenment and the industrialization and secularization of society produced the modern world as we know it. Rev. Vincent Rossi, Holy Order of MANS.

Thanks largely to Lynn White the liberation of nature is now unavoidably before us as a theological theme. Rev. Paul H. Santmire in the Christian Century.

The need for a theology of nature has become clear only during recent decades--as the difficulties inherent in the "modern" but now obsolete view of nature have become manifest. Thus the project of searching out and developing a viable theology of nature represents a significant new theological frontier. Rev. Claude Y. Stewart. Nature in Grace - A Theology of Nature. Mercer Press.

Bioregionalists, creation spiritualists, deep ecologists, social ecologists, Greens, and animal liberationists....have in a sense sought to invent a new religion and from it a systemic ethic....But is it possible to invent a new religion? Peter Borrelli. Amicus Journal.

What are the implications of an ecological ethos for spirituality? How do liberation theology, creation theology, and women's spirituality relate to social ecology? What lessons can be learned from older animistic and polytheistic tribal religions? Margot Adler. Institute for Social Ecology.

These quotes relate to the subject matter of upcoming events.

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August 21st The first of a new series of discussions spaced about two months apart.
7:30 p.m.
at the Professor Don VanDeVeer on experimentation on animals. Prof. VanDeVeer is a colleague of Prof. Tom Reagan who talked to the group on animal rights in 1981. This subject is critical to the whole problem of how the human fits into the world; whether human interests take precedence over animal rights and to what degree. Studying how the human relates to the natural world is the whole objective of this Center. Prof. VanDeVeer is a recognized leader in this area of philosophy. Please come.

November Professor Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, Professor of Economics, Vanderbilt
at the Center University and author of The Entropy Law and the Economic Process.

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ECOLOGY - THE SPIRITUAL IMPERATIVE

Halloween weekend . . . October 31st, November 1st and 2nd . . . Camp New Hope
Margot Adler ----- Peter Borrelli
Speeches ** Discussions ** Music ** Dance ** Ceremony ** Celebration
Write CFRSL (flyer in preparation)
Registration \$25 -- Bed and Board about \$60 -- You may commute or camp.

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