

Identity and Alterity: Summons to a New Axial Age Perspective on the Earth Charter Movement Douglas Sturm

We are gathered here this afternoon to honor the work of Steven C. Rockefeller, most particularly his indefatigable labors on behalf of the Earth Charter Movement. Initiated over a decade ago, the Earth Charter Movement, you must understand, is of far-reaching significance as a constructive response to the central crisis of the modern age, a crisis that cuts across all dimensions of our common life, a crisis whose resolution will dictate the shape of our common life far beyond the foreseeable future.

My objective, in these remarks, is not to trace the trajectory of this movement as it has passed through various stages of its life, although that story bears its own interest and must, someday, be undertaken. Rather, my objective is to probe the inner meaning of the movement as expressed through its efforts to draft an authoritative charter on behalf of the entire community of life, a charter that emerges, in a sense, from the deepest sentiments of all peoples of the world, formulated for their own guidance and direction. More precisely, I intend to set out, from a theological perspective informed by the tradition of process thought, a way of comprehending the profound import of the Earth Charter Movement.¹

The Earth Charter Movement, we must acknowledge, does not stand alone. It is part of an impressive array of efforts, philosophical and political, scattered throughout the cultures of the human world to provoke us all into a radical reconsideration of the shape of our lives together. These oppositional efforts, however diverse at their beginning points and in their particular concerns, are all motivated by the conviction that prevailing social trends are, despite their seeming promise to the contrary, of an ultimately annihilative character. The resolve of the Earth Charter Movement, drawing on the energies and insights of these several efforts, is to bring them to sharp focus, providing thereby a common sense of direction. As such, the Earth Charter Movement is, I would claim, a summons to a new axial age, whose character, as I shall explain later, would entail a radical shift in both human consciousness and social practice.

This summons is, as I have already intimated, born of an apprehension of crisis. The crisis, which calls the modern age into serious question, is not altogether new although it has deepened and intensified in recent decades. Its manifestations are protean—ranging from patriarchalism and neo-colonialism to class struggle and a propensity to ecocide. But, from the perspective that I am here representing, the crisis of the modern age may be epitomized in a single phrase: a crisis of alterity. In its simplest form, the question we must confront afresh is how to construe the character of otherness.

While the question of otherness, cast in this simplest of forms, may not always be uppermost on our minds, it confronts us as an existential reality at every moment

of our life, from our birth to our death. Who is the other that confronts me? What have I to do with the other? What difference does the other make to me? Why should I worry about the other? In what way is the other of importance to my destiny? In all dimensions of our life's tenure—personal and institutional, political and cultural—we must of necessity address this set of queries. How we respond to them on a quotidian level is of grave import both to the other and, reflexively, to our selves, for what we, both other and self, are and can become is contingent, in large part, on the quality of our interaction.

As I would render its most basic supposition, the Earth Charter, in response to the crisis of alterity, is expressive of a principle of internal relations, according to which relations are not extraneous to an agent; they are, in important ways, constitutive, albeit not wholly determinative, of an agent's being and character.

In its many iterations over the course of its composition, the Earth Charter has affirmed that, whatever else is true about us, we are all denizens of an ongoing community of life. We do not live alone. We cannot live alone. Solitariness is, to be sure, a vital dimension of our creatureliness, and we cannot help but live within the immediate context of a particularized history which marks us and sets us apart from others. But we are not isolated monads. We are participants together with many other forms of life in a complex interplay of forces and possibilities, reaching far beyond the boundaries of our conscious awareness, that constitutes this world. The other, human or non-human, may be in some sense a stranger or even an enemy, but never wholly so, for, if we are at all sensitive to the fullness of life, we know that we belong together, however destructive our immediate relationship might be.

The principle of internal relations, as I am here representing it, is ontological and ethical. It is an affirmation of who we are and, as such, it is a declaration of how we ought to pattern our lives. We are, in our fundamental reality, relational beings, co-creators of an evolving universe, bestowed by our inheritance with the special powers of humankind, and therefore held responsible, so far as we are capable, for the flourishing of the entire community of life—in part, at least, for the sake of our own flourishing. That is our calling and, we might say, that is our appointed destiny. We are to live in congruence with the creative spirit of life, granting the uncertainties of what that means and the limitation of our energies and perspectives. In this process, the other is our companion even in those circumstances in which we may stand in opposition to each other. The principle of internal relations, so understood, with its correlative ontological and ethical dimensions is, I would maintain, the most comprehensive way of casting the Earth Charter Movement's response to the crisis of alterity.

Given the backdrop of this broad thesis about the significance of the Earth Charter Movement, I intend to explore the following five themes.

First, the modern age, in its radical turn toward the principle of subjectivity, has

served a valuable function in human history. But ironically that principle, as it has tended to play out in history, has had profoundly destructive effects in its understanding and treatment of the other. The Earth Charter Movement, in its response to those effects, is a summons to a new axial age.

Second, that summons entails new understanding of the identity of subjectivity as not simply a unique center of consciousness and action, but as an interactive agent within an evolving universe. We are, in this sense, members of each other within an extensive community that embraces untold numbers of forms of life, human and nonhuman, each dependent on the others for sustenance and fulfillment.

Third, in its manner of construing our identity as interactive agents, the Earth Charter Movement brings together the complementary concerns of the social question and the ecological question. Moreover it provides thereby a way to reconcile two oftentimes strongly contrasted traditions—social ecology and deep ecology—both of which are concerned with the fate of nonhuman nature.

Fourth, while the immediate concern of the Earth Charter Movement is to formulate a cluster of normative principles as a common vision supported by peoples throughout the world however diverse their religious traditions or cultural identities, these principles are expressive of an apprehension of the reality of spirit as the communal matrix out of which the adventure of life is continuously born and sustained.

Fifth, even in its stated strategy—to provoke, to expand, to deepen a worldwide dialogue about how we ought to construct our lives together into the future—the Earth Charter Movement seeks to emulate its own governing concern: to create a culture of peaceful conviviality. A dialogic strategy, that is, respectful of difference and dissent remains ever mindful of and faithful to our interdependency and relational identity.

I. Context and Reconstruction

I have declared that the Earth Charter Movement is a summons to a new axial age. "As never before in history," the Charter propounds in its concluding paragraphs, "common destiny beckons us...to seek a new beginning."

We must, of course, acknowledge that the division of history—both human and natural—into distinct ages is always contestable, but it is not implausible. Within the human community, patterns of social consciousness and social practice are not static, however much they may seem so. They are always in process, susceptible to change in response to the struggles and discongruities that permeate them. From time to time fundamental transformations are initiated, giving rise to novel cultural possibilities and alternative institutional forms, inaugurating, in some sense, a new age.

Fifty years ago, shortly following the end of World War II, in reaction to the fury of modern fascism with its nationalist fervor and racist intent, Karl Jaspers concocted the concept of an axial age as a specific historical category, but in order to make what, in effect, was a political declaration for the twentieth century and beyond.²

On one level, the construct of an axial age was Jaspers' effort to provide an appropriate name for a curious historical happening during a span of time between 800 and 200 BCE. In Jaspers' rendition, during that period, in several independent areas of the world—including East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Europe—a radically new dimension of human consciousness emerged, giving shape to a possibility that has persisted throughout all subsequent generations as an ideal awaiting full realization: the possibility of a unified human community. Acknowledging important differences, Jaspers nonetheless insisted that Confucius and Lao-Tzu, the Upanishads and the Buddha, Zarathustra and Plato, Isaiah and Jeremiah along with their associates were all profoundly grasped by a vision of the unity of humanity conjoined with a will to instantiate that vision in history. That vision of universal human solidarity has haunted peoples throughout the world ever since. It has become a stubborn moral benchmark against which the conflicts and struggles among classes and groups of people have been judged. In that sense, Jaspers declares, the principle of human solidarity has constituted an important axis on which the understanding of history has turned throughout subsequent centuries.

On another level, of course, Jaspers' construct of an axial age was not merely an effort to name a historical curiosity. It was intended as a political affirmation, designed in the aftermath of two world wars and a massive effort at systematic genocide to revivify the vision of human unity and to urge all nations of the world to collaborate toward its actualization. Honoring a critical moment of the past, Jaspers' primary concern was to press for the reconstruction of our common life in the future, moving humankind beyond its propensity for divisiveness and oppression intensified dramatically in dominant events of the twentieth century toward the creation of a new kind of world order, a world order in which the human dignity of all peoples would be fully honored and respected. Jaspers was not alone in affirming this vision. In 1948, for instance, the newly created United Nations adopted as its fundamental political mission a Universal Declaration of Human Rights centered on the principle that all humans, whatever their identity in other respects, are born equal in dignity. The Declaration was presented explicitly as a common norm for all nations and peoples.

Four decades later, Ewert Cousins appropriated the concept of an axial age to launch a new claim. Without at all proposing that the vision of the first axial age had lost its pertinence, Cousins sought to deepen and to broaden its reach. The threats with which we are now confronted, he suggested, are not just to the survival of certain groups of people; they are threats to the survival of all

humankind, even more extensively to the earth itself. "Many of us," he wrote, "sense deep in our being the anxiety of destruction from nuclear weapons, from pollution of the environment, and from the dehumanization of millions of people through economic, political, and social oppression."³ Cousins insisted that these times have stimulated, in dialectical reaction to the anxiety of annihilation, the emergence of a new global consciousness—a new vision that extends beyond the human community to encompass the entire community of life. Whatever their unique capacities, humankind cannot live apart from this more embracing community and are accountable for its health and welfare. In the emergence of this global perspective we have been, intriguingly, instructed by primal peoples of the world who have long celebrated a keen sense of earth as a singular, living whole with its own embracing moral claim upon us all. That global vision of earth as a living whole whose journey through time is to be cherished, Cousins claims, marks the beginnings of a second axial period, stretching the boundaries of the initial axial age to embrace the entire realm of nature. It is, as such, a new moral index for us and for all future generations.

Cousins's claim is not without merit. However, if I am correct in my surmise that the Earth Charter Movement is informed on its most basic level with a principle of internal relations, then—understood as a summons to a new axial period—it adds an important twist to Cousins's thesis, a twist addressed specifically to a flaw in the character of the modern age which Cousins does not address explicitly. While the question of the breadth of the moral community is critical, the question of the quality of relation between self and other is at least of equal importance. That is a key question that the Earth Charter Movement is addressing to the modern moral sensibility.

I am here taking Immanuel Kant's depiction of the inner drive of the Enlightenment as indicative of the dominant historical ideal of modernity. In the opening paragraph of his famous essay on the meaning of enlightenment, Kant wrote:

Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from his self-incurred minority. Minority is inability to make use of one's own understanding without direction from another. This minority is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere aude! Have courage to make use of your own understanding! is thus the motto of enlightenment.⁴

The genius of the Enlightenment was its insistence on self-understanding. In this insistence, the Enlightenment positioned itself over against the organic traditionalism of the previous age which it designated as "medieval." Human maturation requires that we progress beyond those middle times to a more advanced stage in our development. It demands a shift from heteronomy to autonomy, from status to contract, from inherited obligation to self-generated action. A particular person may, for special cause, appropriately postpone

enlightenment, but to renounce the principle of enlightenment would be "to violate the sacred right of humanity and trample it underfoot."⁵ We are meant to be free. That is the original and universal vocation of humankind. We are—each of us as individuals—intended to define ourselves, to direct our own actions, to be unrestricted in presenting our understanding of things and our concerns in the public realm, to pursue our own life projects in a way we have determined is best fit for that purpose.

Central to the modern age, so understood, is what I have designated as the principle of subjectivity. That is, human beings are best defined as individual subjects, creative centers of thought and action. The principle of subjectivity is the impetus infusing the emergence of modern science and technology, modern philosophy, modern economics, and modern democracy. In keeping with the central spirit of modernity, in all of these realms of human thought and action, we are to be free to pursue our personal course, unencumbered by forces and constraints external to our own individual consideration. This is the spirit that permeates the classical affirmations of human rights during the eighteenth century, affirmations that are elegant in their vision and in their appeal.

Yet, however much those affirmations betokened a revolutionary mood at the time and have provided moral leverage for oppressed peoples in subsequent generations, they had, as they played out in institutional and ideological form, a perverse effect. That's the central thesis of Max Horkheimer's and Theodor W. Adorno's study of the "dialectic of enlightenment": the enlightenment intended to promote human liberation, but it concluded in widespread domination.⁶ In brief, modern science and technology, as the Earth Charter observes in its Preamble, have expanded our knowledge of the world, but for purposes of manipulation and control of both nature and humankind. Liberal democracy has favored political freedom and the self-determination of nations, but through its imperialist reach and sophisticated military technology it has subjugated other nations and whole classes of people. Capitalism, with its ideology of free enterprise, eschewed regulatory constraints and government control, but all the better to transform citizens into consumers and employees. More recently, Cornel West summarized the dark side of modernity when he listed the "life-denying forces in our world" as "economic exploitation (resulting primarily from the social logic of capital accumulation), state repression (linked to the social logic of state augmentation), bureaucratic domination (owing to the social logic of administrative subordination), racial, sexual and heterosexual subjugation (due to the social logics of white, male and heterosexual supremacist practices) and ecological subjection (resulting, in part, from modern values of scientific manipulation)."⁷

In sum, the principle of subjectivity, in its dominant modern modality, has proven insufficient to deter agents from the appropriation and exploitation of the so-called external world, nonhuman and human, in keeping with the agents' determinations. We are instructed to think for ourselves. We are authorized to act for ourselves. We are therefore led to consider all things that surround us—

nonhuman and human—as instruments for our manipulation, even those things that may claim their own subjectivity. That's at least one way to characterize the flaw in the dominant character of the modern age, a flaw that is addressed by the principle of internal relations which, with its intersubjectivist turn, invites a radical reconstruction of how we are to live our lives together. It is by invoking that principle that the Earth Charter Movement is a summons to a new beginning in human history.

II. Identity and Alterity

I have imputed to the Earth Charter Movement a principle of internal relations as its normative response to the crisis of alterity, even though the specific language of internal relations is not appropriated in the charter itself. But the principle, I suggest, is implicit in key passages of the charter. The preamble, in its opening gambit, stresses the increasing interdependency of all forms of life throughout the entire Earth community, affirming that "in the midst of diversity, we are one Earth community." Even more emphatically, the initial principle of the charter pledges to "respect Earth and all life, recognizing the interdependence and intrinsic value of all beings."

I am assuming that, whatever else the motifs of interdependency and community are intended to signify in this context, they convey the conviction that no form of life within the evolving universe—including human life—exists in utter isolation. While, institutionally and culturally, the interdependence of peoples has become increasingly dense over the past century, yet on a profound ontological level, interdependency has always been and shall always be an inescapable feature of our being, indeed, of life itself. We are all, in some sense, caught up in an interactive process through which the destiny of any one entity is contingent to some degree, however negligible, on the impingement of all other entities within the existing world. We are communal beings.

At this point, we must be cautious. Interdependency is our lot. But interdependency does not in itself detract from our individuality. Rather it sets the context for our individuality. It provides the stuff of our experience and the setting for our agency. We are communal beings, but we are also solitary beings, capable of inexpressible joy and immense suffering, capable as well of contributing in distinctive and irreplaceable ways, positively and negatively, to the lives of others. In the midst of this interplay between interdependency and individuality, we find whatever is of value in existence, are brought to affirm the "intrinsic value of all beings," and are provoked to assess how well that "intrinsic value" is honored. That is a judgment we must explore further on.

For the moment, however, we should observe how this understanding of relatedness appears belied by everyday experience which, at first glance, might be more appropriately characterized by metaphors of conflict and opposition than by a seemingly bland principle of universal interdependency. We are confronted

in our everyday experience with a politics of difference. In that politics of difference, our most vivid identities, whether or not fully acknowledged as such, are located in groups. Iris Marion Young distinguishes groups from associations. Where associations are formed by individuals as they agree to gather together to fulfill some objective, groups are constitutive of individuals. At least in the initial impact on individuals, they are not so much chosen as they are given. As given, they set their mark on the individual. They shape critical features of the individual's character. More generally, groups impress their members with a past, a present, and a future, that is, a history of what has been; a way of thinking, feeling, and acting in the moment; and an anticipation of what is to come.⁸ Through group affinities, we are identified by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, nationality. Each of these identities positions us in the conflux of events. Each of them as a social construction separates us from and sets us over against others. Our subjectivity is merged with a very particularistic group identity.

In this understanding of the politics of difference, some form of the principle of internal relations makes sense. We are in our several identities—whether delineated by forces outside our immediate control or designed in part by our own creative powers—not simply individuated beings. We are joined with others at the roots of our self-understanding. We are embedded within an ongoing community or cluster of overlapping communities. Granting that such communities are not static—they are susceptible to influence and change—nonetheless they tend to dominate our understanding and our intentions, even blinding us to alternative possibilities. In that sense the politics of difference is compatible with some form of a concept of internal relations.

Yet these communities are bounded. The identities they impose entail a line of demarcation between us and them, self and other: bourgeois and proletariat; black and white; woman and man; straight and gay; Asian and Western; imperial power and colonized people. The identities are, in a word, oppositional. Their articulation signals a politics of struggle captured—in the language of subordinate groups—in categories of domination and liberation. In this politics of struggle among oppositional identities, each party tends to view the other as threat—a threat to be avoided, or perhaps (where thought useful) controlled, or (in the extreme) annihilated. The dynamics of contemporary institutional and cultural life are, unfortunately, representative of this form of the politics of difference or, as sometimes termed, the politics of identity.

Whether the politics of difference belies the principle of universal interdependency, however, depends on how it is construed on a more fundamental level of comprehension. From a separatist perspective, as in a Hobbesian-like understanding of the world, that principle of universal interdependency is but a description of how events might turn out over the course of life, an eventuality to be celebrated if the other is a resource but resisted if the other remains a threat.

From a comprehensive relational perspective, on the other hand, that principle (of universal interdependency) is an affirmation about the very condition of life. We are correlative beings. As Carol Gould casts it, in our most basic character, we are "social individuals."⁹ The politics of difference does not negate that understanding. On the contrary, it can be taken as a keen demonstration of it. The politics of difference emerges precisely because of the connectedness of groups that stand in tension with each other. Subordinate groups engage in oppositional politics because they are caught up in a network of relations which has an oppressive effect on them. The unity of opposites, we are taught in the logic of dialectics, is a basic principle of our being. We cannot escape our interdependency even when that interdependency is delimiting or destructive in its impact. But we can, within the limitations of our power as agents, transform its quality.

That's the proper intent of oppositional politics: not to exploit or to subdue the other, but to press toward reciprocity, a quality of interaction through which self and other, respectful of their radical differences, are, in their togetherness, ever more deeply enlivened. That's, after all, the meaning of friendship, is it not? More generally, reciprocity as a quality of interaction is an indication of the character of the overarching good from a relational standpoint. Our identity as social beings is such, the genuine good of the self and genuine good of the other are not antithetical, they are conjunctive. Out of the tradition of liberation theology, Leonardo Boff proposes a similar thesis in his assertion that according to the "logic of human life" we are made not merely for the fulfillment of immediate necessities or for the pursuit of momentary pleasures; we are made for creativity, participation, communication, solidarity.¹⁰ That's why, Boff argues, the dominant technological approach to the economic development of deprived nations is seriously inadequate in its objectives and methods—save insofar as it calls on the direct experience, decisive participation, and active cooperation of the people, particularly those who have been socially marginalized.

Where Boff concentrates on the good in human relations, Peter Miller addresses the more embracing and difficult question of the "intrinsic value of all beings," human and non-human.¹¹ He develops, I suggest, a similar response but in the language of richness. Value is situated, he avers, in the richness of life. Richness is a function of several features: availability of resources, degree of accomplishment, diversity of functions, breadth of integration, and generosity toward others. Richness is a matter of creative participation within context. It entails a give-and-take between subject and other. It involves receptivity of surroundings and contribution to the ongoing adventure of life. It is a quality of interplay between individuality and interdependency. It assumes that each entity is, in some degree, an agent, but a social agent whose subjectivity is constitutively related to context. How well richness—the intrinsic value of things—is promoted is a function of both agent and context.

In sum, the good of life is the promotion, so far as possible in any given circumstance, of qualitative attainment and the enjoyment of that process. The things that surround us are not adequately understood as merely instruments for our manipulation; they are, with us, participants in a common enterprise. In this connection, David Griffith constructs the idea of an "ecological self." In its full depth, each experience of a self "is a microcosm, taking into itself, at least to some degree, all prior events." For the self "to realize its true nature is to realize that it is akin to all other things"¹² and therefore, I would add, the goodness of the self is intrinsically related to the goodness of the other, human and non-human.

This is the ground on which the Earth Charter Movement bemoans those "dominant patterns of production and consumption" that "are altering climate, degrading the environment, depleting resources, and causing a massive extinction of species." Moreover, this is the ground on which, in response, it calls for us to "care for the community of life in all its diversity" while acknowledging that that care "takes different forms for different individuals, groups, and nations." Care for the other, from this perspective, is not merely an altruistic gesture; it is a contribution to that communal matrix out of which each individual emerges and in relation to which we find our own identity.

III. Sociality and Ecology

From its beginnings, the Earth Charter Movement has made a deliberate effort to conjoin two broad questions of public policy whose directions have tended to diverge, sometimes with seeming irreconcilability: the social question and the ecological question. A supposition underlying the Earth Charter Movement is that these two questions of public policy bear on each other and that a satisfactory response to either one must address the other as well.

In its approach to that task, the Movement, on a deeper level, repudiates a dominant tendency in the modern understanding of the world to sustain a principle of radical bifurcation between realms of history and nature. In contrast, according to the underlying cosmology of the Earth Charter Movement, as I comprehend it, concepts of history and nature cannot, in the final analysis, be separated from each other. History and nature, distinguishable for some reasons, are in reality fused. That is, Earth, the category which occupies pride of place in the Earth Charter, designates a holistic process through which humans and nonhumans, in their interactions with each other, assume ever new shapes as they proceed from past to future. That holistic process may properly be considered as, at one and the same time, history and nature. For that underlying reason, the social question and the ecological question must be conjoined in a way whose full political and economic implications have yet to be fully explored.

The social question emerged in the nineteenth century in the West in response to the effects of the industrial revolution on the working class, although in its

connotations and ramifications, the question was pertinent to other dimensions of our common life as well. It was, in its furthest reach as I would construe it, a factor in movements to abolish slavery in North America, to secure political and economic rights for women, and to emancipate colonized peoples throughout the world. But in its primary formulation it was directed to the experience of workers.

Under conditions of industrial capitalism, society was increasingly split into classes, particularly, as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels asserted, into two dominant classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat—those who controlled the means of production and those who, for the sake of sustenance, were increasingly forced to participate in an economic system in which their agency was subservient to the direction and benefit of others. Conditions of life for the working class were degrading and inhumane. The working day was long. Wages were low. Risks of injury were high. Young children were pressed into the workplace. Unemployment was common. Worker organizations were resisted often with violence.

Out of such working conditions, the labor union movement emerged, driven by a concern for social justice. That concern, on its most immediate level, was meliorative, seeking to soften, in very particular ways, the everyday sufferings of labor. On a deeper level, the concern for social justice was redistributive, intending to effect a thoroughgoing reallocation of the benefits and burdens of the economic system, gaining for the working class a more equitable proportion of economic resources and political power. On its most fundamental level, the concern for social justice was reconstructive, driven to smash structures of alienation through which workers are forced to contribute their life's energies to systems that are, in their innermost significance, anti-human and to create new institutional forms through which the free development of each and every person is an essential condition for the free development of all. At each of these levels—meliorative, redistributive, and reconstructive, the concern for social justice has persisted and expanded throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, directed to all those structures—patriarchy, racial and ethnic supremacy, colonialism and neocolonialism, heterosexism—whose oppressive forms have a constrictive and dehumanizing effect on the aspirations of subordinated peoples.

The social question, most broadly put, is how to reconfigure the fundamental forms—cultural and institutional—of our common life to make them more conducive to the flourishing of all people's human potentialities. As a critical reaction to prevailing economic and political structures, the social question is properly perceived as transformative, even revolutionary, in its intent. But however revolutionary, it is, taken by itself, thoroughly anthropocentric. It ignores nonhuman forms of life save insofar as they constitute an obstacle or a resource for specifically human ends. It may, out of concern for human rights, seek to modify and constrain productive processes in particular ways, but may well promote ever increasing exploitation of natural resources out of an interest in increasing productivity and capital accumulation. As such, in its anthropocentric

character, the social question stands in fundamental conflict with the deepest drive and purposes of the ecological question.

The ecological question, although presaged in earlier decades, became prominent only in the nineteen sixties, a decade astir with multiple movements of intense concern about conditions of life throughout the world. The question in its contemporary form emerged in response to a double recognition: that prevailing practices of economic production and consumption were effecting widespread deterioration of the natural world and that nonrenewable resources of the earth on which those practices depend were suffering from rapid depletion.

This double recognition had a shocking effect on the consciousness of important segments of the public, provoking the creation of numerous associations in lands across the world, together forming what is often termed, singularly but inaccurately, the environmental movement. It sparked the formulation of theories about limits to growth. It provoked new thinking about the meaning and status of nature. It induced points of opposition by radical ecological groups and concerned neighborhoods against the policies and practices of corporate industries and governments. It occasioned legislative initiatives protective of the environment and restrictive of industrial action. It exacerbated tensions between poor and rich and between indigenous peoples and modernizers.

But the environmental movement, seemingly united in its concern with doing justice in some sense to the realm of nature, is in fact deeply divided in its understanding of what that means. It ranges from groups primarily committed to economic progress (modified only as necessary for the conservation of natural resources) to groups committed almost exclusively to the integrity of ecological systems (and, for that reason, strongly opposed to any but the most minor forms of human intervention). From the former perspective, nature has instrumental value. From the latter perspective, nature possesses intrinsic value which, in the extreme, means that appropriation of the things of nature is inherently exploitative and must be minimized. Where the former perspective is anthropocentric, the latter is biocentric. On the spectrum between these two polar positions are many other ways of approaching the ecological question: movements for "wise use," against environmental racism, for animal rights, seeking to safeguard first growth forests and wilderness areas, favoring ecological democracy and transpersonal ecology. To each, however, from its own perspective, the ecological question—how to reshape social policies and practices out of concern for the environment—is a significant moral desideratum.

In their origins, the social question and the ecological question, particularly in their more far-reaching forms, emerged in response to agonizing experiences of domination, exploitation, suffering. They were formulated out of a keen sense of something having gone awry and of the urgent need for change. On the surface, however, given their different origins and the specific kinds of suffering to which they were responding, they appear divergent in their primary foci if not

inconsistent in their respective aims. Yet their divergence is, at least in part, a result of their common way of comprehending the world according to which history and nature are separate realms of being even where they may happen to impinge on each other.

Precisely at this point, the Earth Charter Movement—resting, as I have asserted, on a principle of internal relations—intends to direct us toward an alternative way of comprehending the world. In this move, the Earth Charter is reflective of an effort by diverse groups over the past three decades to integrate concerns for social justice and environmental responsibility in a more holistic understanding of the crisis of the modern age, an effort sometimes encapsulated in the category of "eco-justice."¹³ The Earth Charter Movement, acknowledging the legitimacy of this effort, seeks, in effect, to give sharp voice to its underlying principle and to promote that principle as of vital importance in a radically revisionary self-understanding for all peoples and cultures..

Earth, in this new comprehension of the cosmos, is not a symbol for nature as a realm separate from history. It is more exactly a symbol for the entire interactive community of life—human and nonhuman—as it proceeds from past to future. It is an effort to lure us beyond the boundaries of anthropocentricity and biocentricity toward ecocentricity. That is, what is central is neither humanity as such nor vitality as such, but that creative process in which varying forms of life and agents collaborate in the shaping of ever new moments. That's the construct through which the social question and the ecological question are properly merged, requiring the Earth Charter Movement explicitly to embrace concerns for ecological integrity, economic equity, and participatory democracy as belonging intimately together.

Given this new direction, whose full import has yet to be developed, the Earth Charter Movement constructs a setting in which central themes from two ecological traditions that have often been at odds with each other, Deep Ecology and Social Ecology,¹⁴ might be interfused. In this connection, Deep Ecology's forte is its ontological affirmation. On this point, Arne Naess develops, over against the more prevailing modern image of humanity-in-environment, a "relational, total field image" according to which entities are "knots in the biospherical net or field of intrinsic relations."¹⁵ ?Intrinsic relations? in Naess' usage is synonymous with the doctrine of internal relations. Likewise, the Deep Ecology Platform affirms an embracing understanding of intrinsic value:

The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on earth have value in themselves.... These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.¹⁶

Who we are and what is of importance cannot be understood apart from our embeddedness in a thick complex of interrelatedness that encompasses the total

sphere of life and that is part and parcel of our identity and destiny.

The genius of Social Ecology, for its part, is its insistence that the ecological crisis is rooted in the social crisis. That is, the etiological origins of the ecological crisis reside in the hierarchical and dominative structures of human history and therefore, to resolve the ecological crisis, these structures must be transmuted into a new social form characterized by mutuality, complementarity, inclusiveness, direct support of each by all others. "We are clearly beleaguered," Murray Bookchin declares, "by an ecological crisis of monumental proportions—a crisis that visibly stems from the ruthless exploitation and pollution of the planet. We rightly attribute the social sources of this crisis to a competitive marketplace spirit that reduces the entire world of life, including humanity, to merchandisable objects, to mere commodities with price tags that are to be sold for profit and economic expansion."¹⁷ The key point of entry for those committed to the cause of environmental justice is social justice, but a kind of social justice that moves us beyond our obsession with capital accumulation and nationalist protection toward the creation of new structures of production, consumption, and distribution that might prove beneficial for the entire community of adventure in which we are participants.¹⁸

IV. Spirituality and Adventure

In the most recent formulations of its guiding principles, the Earth Charter Movement has declared that they are, taken altogether, "principles for sustainable development." At first blush, this designation seems curious, given the origins of that concept. In its appropriation, however, the intention of the movement, it would seem, is to transform its meaning and so to direct our energies toward a new comprehension of what is important in life, including a new understanding of progress. To delineate this point, we may, I suggest, distinguish two concepts of sustainable development: thin and thick. Where the thin concept is governed by economic concerns, rendering economy in a relatively narrow modern sense, the latter is focused on the spiritual depths of life, understanding spirituality in a radically immanent and dynamic way.

Shortly following World War II, W. W. Rostow, in his influential theory of the stages of economic growth, composed as a "non-communist manifesto," outlined a version of the thin concept of sustainable development that, with some modification, has retained its valence over the decades.¹⁹ Its impress is discernible at the present time in the drive of neo-liberal forces to create a globalized economy. Rostow distinguished five stages of growth beginning with traditional society, moving through a take-off period, culminating in an age of high mass-consumption. Where traditional society is constrained by many factors, cultural and technological, in the take-off period, new visions and new institutions allow productivity to expand; society is infused with an eagerness to modernize. With a mature economy, we arrive at time when affluence is the rule; basic needs are met; consumer sovereignty governs. This theory of the stages of economic

growth is the kind of vision that has informed the oft-employed classification of nations as underdeveloped, developing, and highly developed.

Development, in this framework, signifies the movement of an economic system toward ever-increasing productivity, driven by a (presumably rational and eminently sensible) interest in the increase of wealth. It is a strictly human process—but a process in which humans are viewed as producers and consumers, and nonhuman realities are appropriated as instrumental resources. Given this comprehension of development, the primary criterion of sustainability is continuous economic growth. Sustainable development, that is, constantly and reliably augments the wealth of nations. That is its purpose and its meaning.

However, in decades following World War II, as the ravages of pollution became increasingly evident and natural resources began to run the risk of depletion, a secondary criterion of sustainability was invoked: the careful and efficient management of ecosystems. Moreover, as concerns for poverty, ill-health, and illiteracy across the nations became pressing and seen as potentially jeopardizing the effectiveness of the marketplace, some voices urged the adoption of a tertiary criterion: the equitable distribution of economic possibilities. Yet, even with the important addition of these criteria—of environmental protection and equitable distribution—the concept of sustainable development has an anthropocentric cast, and tends to lend the economic factor a place of paramountcy in our human identity. So, for instance, the opening principle of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) reads: "Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature."²⁰

Recently, Larry Rasmussen, finding the thin concept of sustainable development not only inadequate, but wrong-headed, proposed in its stead a concept of sustainable community.²¹ He would, in his words, "reverse [the] ordering of economy and ecology." The issue before us at this critical moment is "not how to alter environments so as to serve the economy and yet be sustained but how to alter economics to serve comprehensive environments ordered around healthy communities." His distinction marks "the difference between an economic approach that begins with a notion of an 'open', even 'empty' and basically unlimited world, and an ecological approach that begins with a notion of a 'full' and limited world that can only operate on a principle of borrowing" or, alternatively phrased, "between viewing the whole world as sets of industrial and information systems that need to be managed globally as human and natural capital, and local and regional communities attending to home environments in a comprehensive way around the basic needs and quality of life."²² The basic difference, I would add, bears on the question of the fundamental meaning and ultimate destiny of our being as humans.

In Rasmussen's lexicon, the principles promoted by the Earth Charter Movement are more properly indicative of the concept of sustainable community than

sustainable development. Its introductory principle as already noted concentrates on Earth as an encompassing community of interdependence, human and nonhuman, each participant in which is deserving of respect. Its concluding principle, which may as well be termed its culminating principle, promotes a culture of peace—understood as that "wholeness created by balanced and harmonious relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which we all are a part." All other principles, including those that pertain to economic order, rest in between and, I would argue, are to be comprehended within the framework constructed by this beginning and this end. Earth is made for peace. Economic development, in some sense, is not unimportant, but it must be defined in such a way that serves a more encompassing meaning of development.

That more encompassing meaning, as I would construe it in keeping with the paramount vision of the Earth Charter Movement, derives from the principle of internal relations. This requires that the metaphor of development be recentered. Its appropriate setting is neither economic nor humanistic, but ecocentric. Its dominating concern is neither to increase the wealth of nations nor to actualize the talents and yearnings of individuals as such. Rather it is to advance those kinds of interactions in which the lives of each and all will be increasingly enriched through the unfolding of new possibilities. That's the central concern of the thick concept of sustainable development which, I would suggest following Betty Reardon's useful distinction between negative and positive peace,²³ embraces both a more negative and a more affirmative task. Negative peace, in Reardon's usage, is the absence of violence, including structural violence. Positive peace is the presence of justice. Pursuing that line, the negative task of sustainable development is remedial and preventative, countering the points at which and the ways in which the community of life is distorted and degraded by current policies and practices. The positive task is reconstructive and creative, instituting ways through which the energies and insights of all life might be mutually enhancing.

At this point, I would venture, with some hesitation, that the idea of positive peace as an index of the thick concept of sustainable development presses us to consider an even more profound dimension of the principle of internal relations, a dimension that is perhaps most appropriately expressed in the language of spirituality. In adopting this language, we must proceed with care. By spirituality I am referring not to one's relation to some higher, transcendent realm. Rather I am referring to that communal matrix out of which all life has emerged and in which all life participates, even in those moments in our everyday existence during which that source is ignored, or, out of frustration and anger, denied.²⁴

A people's spirit is that which binds it together. It consists of an inherited past, a vivid present, and an anticipated future. It is the dynamic grounding of our being that, when we are alive to its presence, is discerned as gift bearing with it a host of meanings and possibilities that sustain us and encourage us. It is, when

received with appreciation, our deepest identity which, all too often, is neglected given the pressures and considerations of our day-to-day existence. It is, in its buoyancy, the delightfulness and joy we discover in the ongoing adventure of our togetherness. But it is, when repressed by forces of insensitivity and indifference, domination and oppression, the reason for the pains of alienation. The reality of alienation is the dark side of the presence of spirit. Ironically, the sufferings of the alienated are, at times, the keenest evidence we may possess of the reality of spirit.

From another angle, the depth of our sensitivity to the presence of spirit is correlative with the degree of our receptiveness to the other, our empathy with the conditions of life throughout the world, our responsiveness to suffering and need wherever it is present. But our sensitivity to spirit is also correlative with our ability to break through encrusted traditions and to reach out for new forms of conviviality, forms through which our minds are awakened and the life of the whole community of Earth might be quickened. Alfred North Whitehead dubs this process the quality of adventure: a community "preserves its vigour so long as it harbours a real contrast between what has been and what may be; and so long as it is nerved by the vigour to adventure beyond the safeties of the past. Without adventure civilization is in full decay."²⁵ Going beyond Whitehead in this proposition, however, I would claim that in designating the communal matrix of our being, spirit is not only a dimension of human civilization; it is a dimension of the entire evolving community of life, resident in the continuing flux and flow of our interactions with each other.

Our spirituality from this perspective is measured in several ways: by the intimacy of our communion with the intricate rhythms of life as they are caught up from moment to moment in our existence; by the depth of our sensitivity to the profound tragedies that attend the evolving patterns of the universe; by the amplitude of our openness to new possibilities of mutual interaction and readiness to participate in their advancement; by our willingness to loosen the boundaries of our narrow egoisms, personal and collective, and to become agents of the creative energy that surges through all life. Spirituality so comprehended is fundamental to sustainable development in the thickest sense of that concept.

To be sure, the Earth Charter Movement has taken care to solicit support for its vision from peoples of diverse spiritual traditions throughout the world, drawing on their respective histories and symbols to demonstrate or at least to encourage the congruity of these traditions with the principles of the proposed charter. But in this very process, the movement, it seems, rests on a significant empirical claim, namely, that underlying all these traditions, albeit expressed in variable ways and to varying degrees, is a profundity of experience to which we must all become sensitive if we are to progress in our relatedness toward a more constructive future. That, I take it, is the connotation of the proposition in the Charter's preamble: "The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life will be

strengthened if we live with reverence for the sources of our being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in the larger scheme of things."²⁶

V. Dialogue and Difference

The Earth Charter Movement, particularly in the form it has assumed since the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro (1992) under the auspices of the United Nations, has adopted by intention a strategy for its work that, I would contend, is of more than strategic significance. That strategy is itself, understood in its profoundest meaning, an expression of the principle of internal relations, bringing to consciousness dimensions of our experience too often ignored, even at times denied. The strategy is to foster a global dialogue as a procedure for the shaping of a set of critical moral considerations integral to the formation of an encompassing community including denizens both human and nonhuman. The movement intends, through its dialogic pattern, to help mold and give voice to an emerging civil society of global reach that will legitimize and, in increasing measure, realize the substantive principles of the charter itself. In adopting this strategy, the Earth Charter Movement demonstrates its commitment to a procedural norm of far-reaching political implication, namely, that means and ends must be commensurate: one must, in seeking peace, do so peacefully.

In pursuing this dimension of the Earth Charter Movement, we must take note of what seems, on the surface, to be an incongruity in the current Benchmark Draft of the Charter. In its preamble, the draft commences with a bold declaration: "We are. . .one Earth community with a common destiny. . .Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life" (*italics added*). But then, following a litany of things having run badly amok, the draft announces "the urgent need for a shared vision of basic values that will provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community" (*italics added*). And, in its epilogue, presented as a call for "A New Beginning," the draft asserts that "Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles, which are the outcome of a worldwide dialogue in search of common ground and shared values," which dialogue stands in need of "expanding and deepening" (*italics added*). In short, the Earth community is presumed as a given reality; but, in some sense, it remains to be constructed. It is, but it is not yet.

The name for this seeming incongruity, I propose, is alienation. Alienation signifies the rupture of a relationship that, even under conditions of malformation, retains its vitality, albeit in anguished manner. The Earth community, given its tortured state, stands in desperate need of reconstruction and revivification. The principles in the process of formulation through global dialogue have, by implicit claim, a kind of constitutional authority. In their schematic directionality, they point the way beyond structures of alienation, the way through which the Earth community might be re-constituted and re-stored.

This presumption about the current state of our common life across the world as characterized by alienation, however, runs afoul of a long-standing controversy in moral theory, a controversy centered in the claim of cultural relativism. The controversy over cultural relativism which has swelled in recent decades invariably accompanies affirmations of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for instance, proclaims itself to be "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations." However, since its promulgation in 1948, it has been charged by some of its opponents as ethnocentric—as the imposition of Western imperialism upon all other peoples.

Recently, David Little, addressing this controversy as it pertains particularly to the affirmation of human rights, has argued that cultural relativism, in its usual version, seems to assume the validity of two theses: "(1) the diversity thesis, which holds that the world is divided up into separate, fixed, internally coherent and unified, and significantly diverse cultural units, and (2) the dependency thesis, which holds that moral beliefs (including beliefs about human rights) are determined by prior (and necessarily diverse) cultural commitments."²⁷ However, Little insists, nowadays a more realistic comprehension of cultures and civilizations portrays them "in more dynamic, pluralistic terms, as provisional and shifting coalitions of people unified on the basis of varying degrees and kinds of ('overlapping!') consensus, but also as constantly subject to conflicting influences and tensions emanating from many different sources. So understood, civilizations and cultures appear as systems of competing subunits, themselves made up of complex and fluctuating combinations of interest and ideal rather than as something 'fixed and internally coherent and unified.'"²⁸

If Little is correct in his depiction of cultures in these times, then they are susceptible to appeals to principles of human rights as a critical measure of prevailing laws and mores out of the conviction that those principles may prove to be an advance in moral insight. That is the tack adopted by Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im and others in their "cross-cultural approach to the universal cultural legitimacy of human rights."²⁹ Through both internal discourse and cross-cultural dialogue, it may be possible to nudge the cultures (and religions) of the world toward increasing acceptance of the sensibility of the human rights standard. But it may also be possible to move toward a refinement of that very standard as cultures give voice to their traditions and perspectives on the common good. An-Na'im's cross-cultural approach is, by intention, thoroughly dialogic, assuming, as an initial step, the authenticity of both inherited cultures and the human rights tradition, pressing them, through their deepened comprehension of each other, with whatever modifications seem cogent, towards some kind of synthesis or convergence.

Richard Falk modulates An-Na'im's cross-cultural approach significantly through his insistence in such dialogue on "taking suffering seriously,"³⁰ while granting that, in some respects, suffering is itself a culturally contentious experience. "Taking suffering seriously," he writes, "is the Archimedes point for intermediation

between the universal claim and the particular practice when it comes to resolving antagonisms between widely endorsed human rights norms and culturally ordained patterns of behavior."³¹

Falk promotes two ways of taking suffering seriously in cross-cultural discourse, concentrating respectively on the what and the who—that is, first, positioning the issue of intolerable suffering (what it means) at the heart of the dialogue, but, even more critically, empowering suffering peoples (those who claim to be oppressed) to participate directly in that dialogue and entrusting them "with a critical role as agents of their own liberation."³² In the final analysis, Falk seems to argue, to pursue the full logic of An-Na'im's dialogic project compels us to push toward the extending and deepening of the principle of democracy, a democracy that is eminently respectful of difference and dissent. That, I would conjecture, is the import of Falk's affirmation that "We must make full use of our ingenuity and democratic opportunities to discuss what is intolerable, trusting in freedom of communication to be itself clarifying and hence liberating. As such, human rights, cultural renewal, and participatory democracy are implicated, for better or worse, in a common destiny."³³

A similar logic, I mean to suggest, underlies the strategy of the Earth Charter Movement. The global dialogue that it has engendered may be seen, from a more churlish angle, as but a means to garner votes for its cause. But, I would prefer to think that the dialogic method of proceeding has been adopted as itself instantiating, at least in an elemental way, the kinds of principles it intends to promulgate. A dialogue, in this more generous interpretation, is a form of interaction through which participants enter deeply into the lives of each other as a result of which, even during moments of vigorous dissent and encounter, the lives of each and all are enriched. Moreover, the very possibility of dialogue in this sense rests on an assumption that, whatever our differences and however much we may stand in opposition to each other, we are already and have always been members of each other and find our fulfillment only in and through forms of creative intercommunication.

In the process of creative intercommunication, relativity and universality are not antithetical postures. The doctrine of relativity means that each concrete circumstance has its own unique character and contains its own unique kind of goodness. But the doctrine of universality implies our interrelatedness and would have us reckon how our own goodness might be conjoined with and contribute to others in the ongoing adventure of life in which we are all participants. That is the point, if I understand aright, of the principles, the procedure, and the purpose of the Earth Charter Movement. Given the current state of affairs throughout the world—a state of affairs rampant with structures of alienation and annihilation—it is a point in desperate need of vigorous affirmation in both theory and practice. The Earth Charter Movement, in sum, is calling us back to ourselves. And that, I am bold to declare, is the theological significance of this movement so ably directed by Steven C. Rockefeller.

APPENDIX

Identity and Alterity: Summons to a New Axial Age

(Perspective on the Earth Charter Movement)

Douglas Sturm

****Problematique: Crisis of Alterity**

****Constructive Response: Principle of Internal Relations**

Set of Five Intervening Planes

I. Context and Reconstruction

An Issue of History: Present and Future

II. Identity and Alterity

An Issue of Ontology: Self and Other

III. Sociality and Ecology

An Issue of Cosmology: History and Nature

IV. Spirituality and Adventure

An Issue of Axiology: Economy and Community

V. Dialogue and Difference

An Issue of Strategy: Means and Ends

1 See Appendix above for an outline sketch of the lecture.

2 Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), originally published in German 1949.

3 Ewert Cousins, "Three Symbols for the Second Axial Period," in Steven Friesen, ed., *Local Knowledge, Ancient Wisdom: Challenges in Contemporary Spirituality* (Honolulu: East-West Center, 1991), p. 23.

4 Immanuel Kant, "An answer to the question: What is enlightenment?," in Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, transl. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 17. Ital. is original.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

6 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. by John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1969). Original copyright, German edition, 1944.

7 Cornel West, *Keeping Faith: Philosophy and Race in America* (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 132-133.

8 Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 44-45.

9 Carol Gould, *Rethinking Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 105.

10 Leonardo Boff, *Ecology & Liberation: A New Paradigm*, trans. John Cumming (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995), pp. 126-27.

11 Peter Miller, "Value as Richness: Toward a Value Theory for an Expanded Naturalism in Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* vol. 4 (Summer 1982), 101-114.

12 David Griffith, "Whitehead's Deeply Ecological Worldview," in Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim, eds., *Worldviews and Ecology* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), p. 198.

13 The eco-justice movement has been instantiated in diverse forms, theoretical and practical, over the course of the past thirty years. Peter W. Bakken, Joan Gibb Engel, and J. Ronald Engel trace its manifestations in the Christian community in a highly informative and systematic format in "Critical Survey: The Struggle to Integrate Ecology, Justice, and Christian Faith" in their text, *Ecology, Justice, and Christian Faith: A Critical Guide to the Literature* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), pp. 3-38. Robert Gottlieb, contrasting the principles and strategies of mainstream environmental associations (e.g., the so-called Big Ten) with "alternative movements," argues that the concept of eco-justice is more characteristic of the latter than the former in *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Washington DC: Island Press, 1993). Jim Schwab, in *Deeper Shades of Green: The Rise of Blue-Collar and Minority Environmentalism in America* (San Francisco: Sierra Books, 1994), demonstrates, through a series of eight case studies, how local grassroots environmental groups and coalitions have tended to represent a more radical

principle of eco-justice than mainline environmentalism. He calls particular attention to the "Principles of Environmental Justice" adopted in October 1991 by the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held in Washington DC (see pp. 441-443). I am indebted to Dieter Hessel and J. Ronald Engel for insisting that the Earth Charter Movement must be interpreted as, in some sense, an outgrowth of this long-standing eco-justice tradition.

14 Proponents of each of these movements have expressed strong reservations of the other. Articles illustrating the critique of Social Ecology from the perspective of Deep Ecology include the following: Robyn Eckersley, "Divining Evolution: The Ecological Ethics of Murray Bookchin," *Environmental Ethics*, vol. 11 (Summer 1989) 99-116 & Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," *Environmental Ethics*, vol. 11 (Spring 1989) 5-25). Articles expressing the critique of Deep Ecology from the angle of Social Ecology include the following: Murray Bookchin, "Social Ecology versus 'Deep Ecology'," *Green Perspectives*, Nos. 4 & 5 (Summer 1987) 1-23 & Murray Bookchin, "Will Ecology Become 'the Dismal Science'?", *The Progressive* (December 1991) 18-21.

15 Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement," *Inquiry*, vol. 16 (1973) 95.

16 Quoted in George Sessions, "Deep Ecology as Worldview" in Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim, eds., *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy, and the Environment* (Maryknoll: Orbis Press, 1994), p. 212.

17 Murray Bookchin, *The Modern Crisis*, Second Revised Edition (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1987), p. 49.

18 See David Harvey, *Justice, Nature & the Geography of Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 397-402.

19 W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, third edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Initially delivered as lectures in 1958, the first two editions of this text were published in 1960 and 1971. An earlier version of the same thesis was published by Rostow in 1952, *The Process of Economic Growth* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1952).

20 Compare as well the opening paragraph of Agenda 21: "Humanity stands at a defining moment in its history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being. However, integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfillment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and

a safer, more prosperous future. No nation can achieve this on its own; but together we can - in global partnership for sustainable development." Quoted by Nicolas Robinson, "Evolving Principles for Sustainable Development," in Steven C. Rockefeller, *Principles of Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development: Summary and Survey*, prepared for the Earth Charter Project (revised April 1996).

21 Larry L. Rasmussen, *Earth Community Earth Ethics* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 15

22 Ibid., p. 137. See also Larry Rasmussen, "Next Journey: Sustainability for Six Billion and More," in Daniel C. Maguire and Larry L. Rasmussen, eds., *Ethics for a Small Planet* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998), pp. 67-140).

23 Betty Reardon, *Women and Peace: Feminist Visions of Global Security* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), especially chapters 2 and 3. Betty Reardon's use of this terminology, it must be noted, varies from that of Martin Luther King, Jr. See, e.g., James M. Washington, ed., *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), pp. 50-51, 295. To King, negative peace signifies an imposed tranquility, where positive peace means the presence of justice. For a more intricate and systematically developed scheme of these categories closer to Reardon than King, see Birgit Brock-Utne, *Feminist Perspectives on Peace and Peace Education* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), pp. 39-68.

24 See Bernard Eugene Meland, *The Realities of Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), chapter X, "The Reality of Spirit."

25 Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), p. 279. Compare the following themes from Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992): "The adventure of the universe depends upon our capacity to listen" (p. 15) and "The basic obligation of any historical moment is to continue the integrity of that creative process whence the universe derives, sustains itself, and continues its sequence of transformations" (p. 251).

26 In this connection, see John Haught's distinction among three ways in which Christian theologians have responded to the ecological crisis: (i) the apologetic approach; (ii) the sacramental approach; and (iii) the eschatological approach. This grid might be employed, *mutatis mutandi*, to other religious communities as well. The apologetic approach engages in a revisitation of traditional symbols and stories, stressing those whose meanings might be interpreted as having an ecological significance. This is, incidentally, the approach adopted by Larry Rasmussen, whose work is cited above. The sacramental approach concentrates less on inherited traditions than on the presumed sacral significance of the cosmos itself. Matthew Fox's writings constitute an example. Haught favors the

eschatological approach which stresses less the symbolic character of the cosmos as given than it does the proleptic character of the cosmos, its "promise" for the future. This last approach is both more existential and prophetic than the first two. See *The Promise of Nature: Ecology and Cosmic Purpose* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993), chapter 4.

27 David Little, "Rethinking Human Rights: A Review Essay on Religion, Relativism, and Other Matters," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 27.1 (Spring 1999) 156, italics removed.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 170.

29 Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, ed., *Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Quest for Consensus* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 2.

30 According to Virginia A. Leary, Uprenda Baxi of India, alluding to a well-known text by Ronald Dworkin, coined the phrase, "taking suffering seriously" as a way of indicating what it means to "take rights seriously." See Leary, "Postliberal Strands in Western Human Rights Theory," in An-Na'im, ed., *op. cit.* at footnote 28, pp. 108, 130. In his article, Falk does not acknowledge this source.

31 Richard Falk, "Cultural Foundations for the International Protection of Human Rights," in An-Na'im, ed., *op. cit.* at footnote 28, p. 50.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 59, italics removed.