

Extending Biosemiotics



What does 'Anthropocene' mean?

The Problem of Consciousness

Evolution without Inheritance

Peirce, Whitehead and Bohm

Consequences

What does 'Anthropocene' mean?

The 'Anthropocene' is not a geological era

It's a geopolitical condition









‘Anthropocene’ means greed, injustice and ecocide

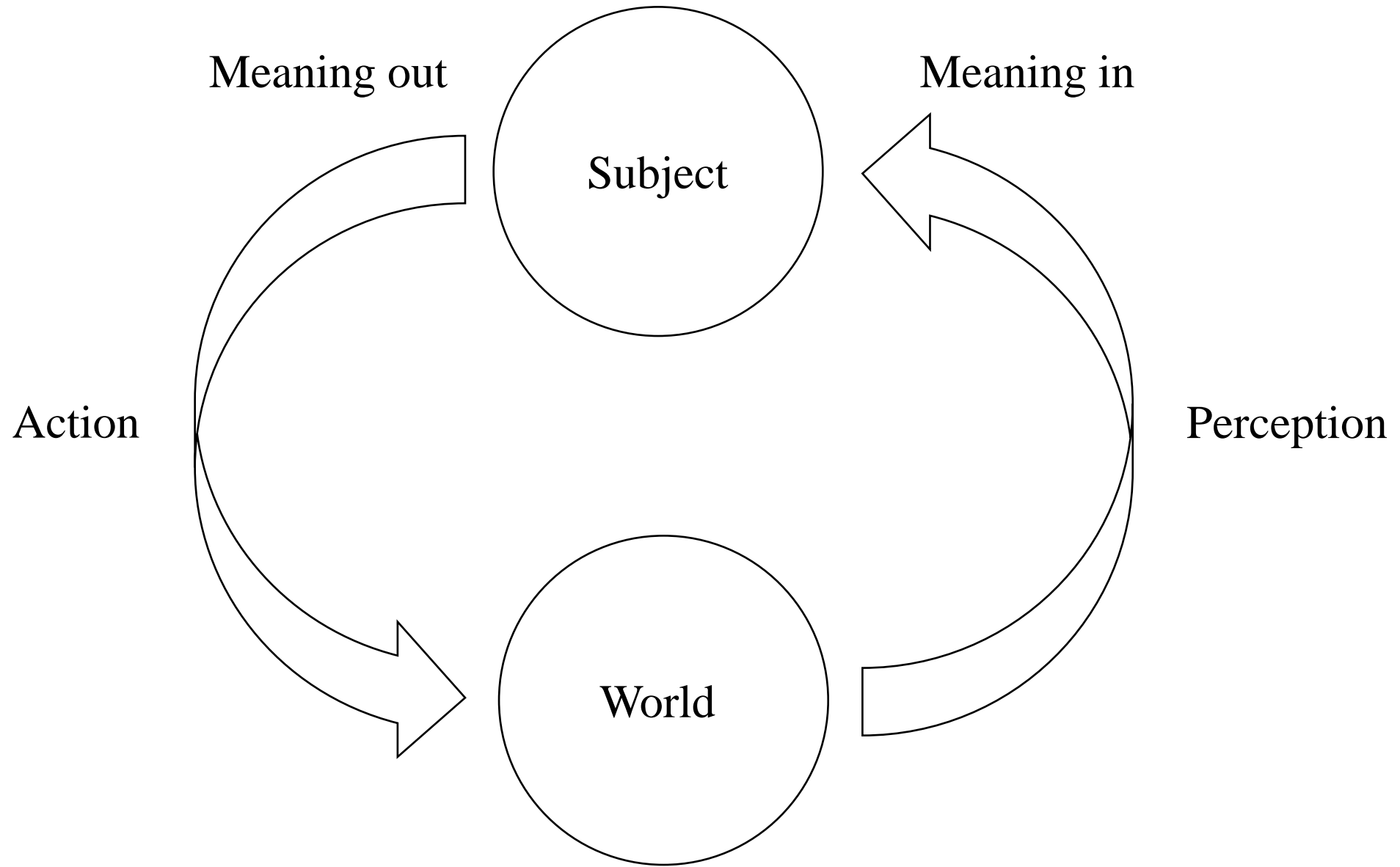
Biosemitotics can help, if extended

The Problem of Consciousness

Thomas Nagel

Consciousness is what makes the mind-body problem really intractable.

Consciousness implies a subject



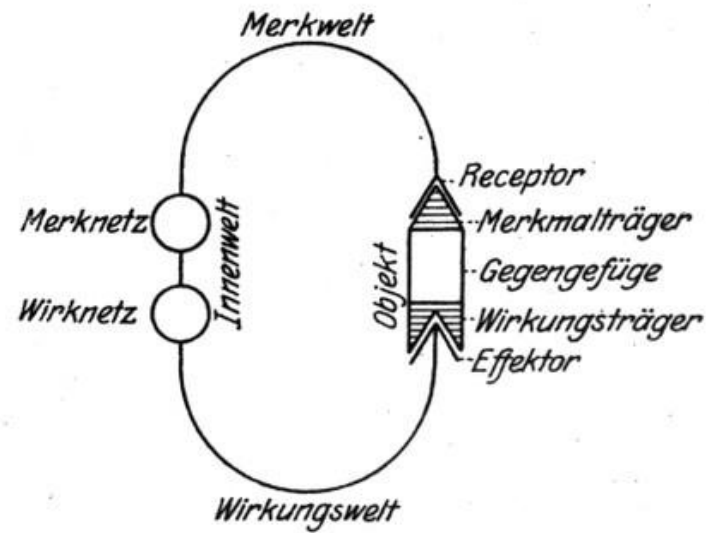


Abb. 3. Schema des Funktionskreises.

This world is full of subjects, and something must have created them.

Jesper Hoffmeyer

Emergence is not an explanation, it only describes the problem

Ex nihilo nihil fit

The solution is Panpsychism

Max Planck

*I regard consciousness as fundamental.
Matter is derivative from consciousness.*

Erwin Schrödinger

*Consciousness is absolutely fundamental.
It cannot be accounted for in terms of anything else.*

Recent advocates for Panpsychism:

Koch, Chalmers, Strawson, McGilchrist ...

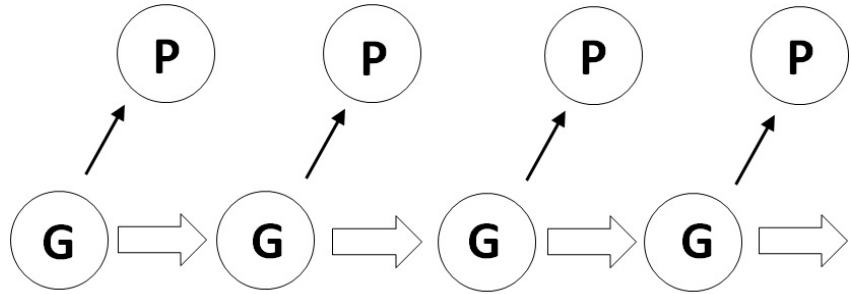
Evolution without Inheritance

Tim Ingold

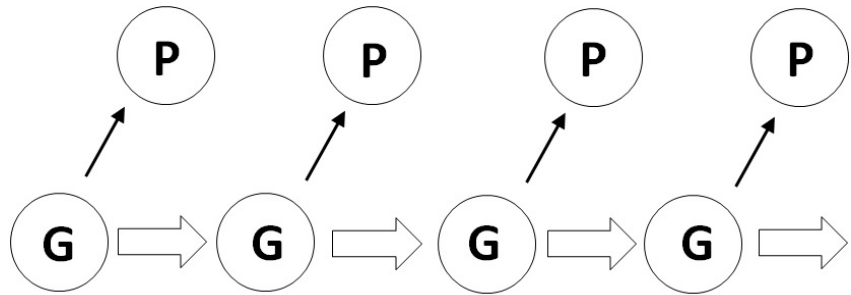
Evolution without Inheritance: Steps to an Ecology of Learning

*Attempts to integrate human culture, history, or symbolic imagination into a comprehensive theory of evolution have, up to now, foundered on a **bifurcation between mind and nature** deeply embedded in the project of modern science.*

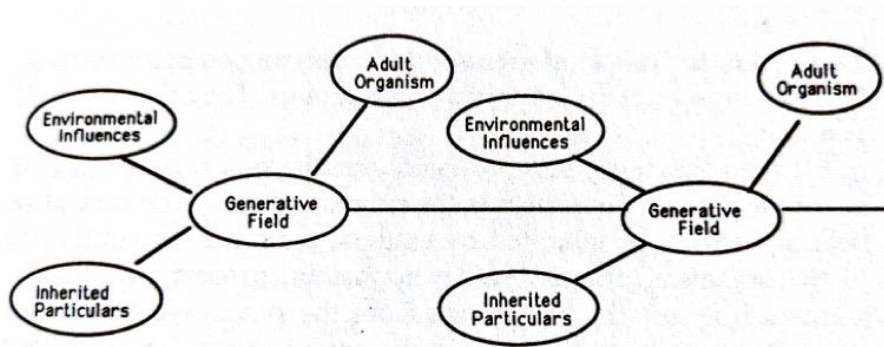
To resolve the impasse ... I propose ... a revitalized theory of learning that promises to unify the fields of evolution and ecology.



1892 Weissman's Barrier



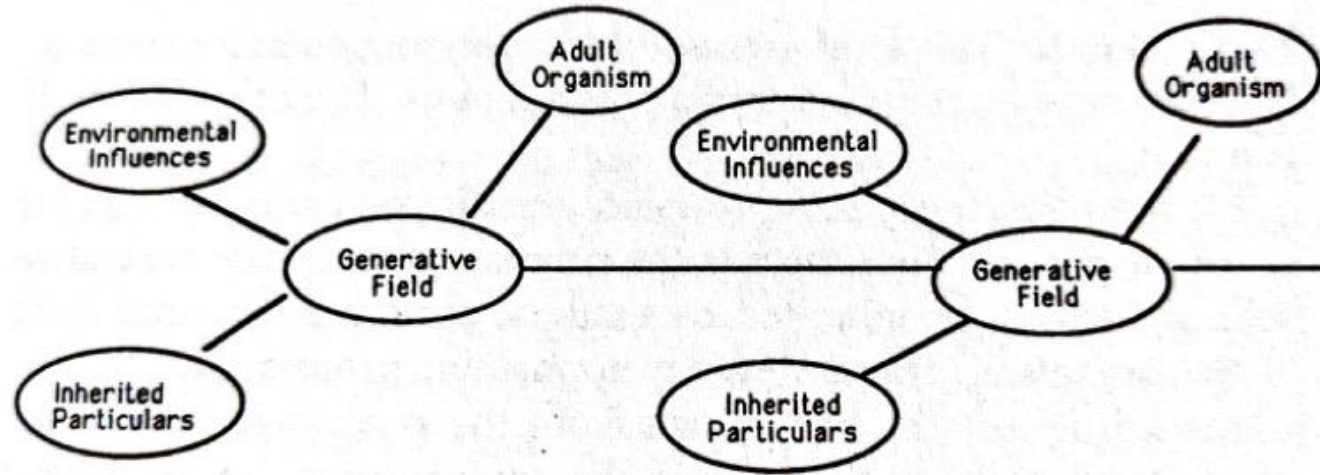
1947 Modern Synthesis



2023 Extended Evolutionary Synthesis

*Life continues to evolve, not because of what each individual contributes to the pool of inherited variation but because each, in its way, helps to carry on the **relational matrix** within which all are inextricably enmeshed.*

In and through their activities, living beings of all sorts, human and nonhuman, continuously shape the conditions of development for themselves, one another, and their successors.



Generative Field = Relational matrix

Evo-Devo; Cultural evolution; Epigenetic inheritance;
Niche construction; Baldwin effects; Technicity ...

Peirce, Whitehead & Bohm

Peirce's Panpsychism

*The entire universe ... is perfused with signs,
if it is not composed exclusively of signs.*

... thought is not necessarily connected with a brain.

It appears in the work of bees, of crystals, and throughout the purely physical world...

Tychism: God does play dice

Synechism: There is no separate existence

Whitehead's Panpsychism

The ultimate constituents of reality are subjects, not objects

There is no separate existence

Reality is creative

*What I am essentially protesting against
is the **bifurcation of nature into two systems** of reality ...
namely into the nature apprehended in awareness and
the nature which is the cause of awareness.*

Is this “just metaphysics”?

David Bohm

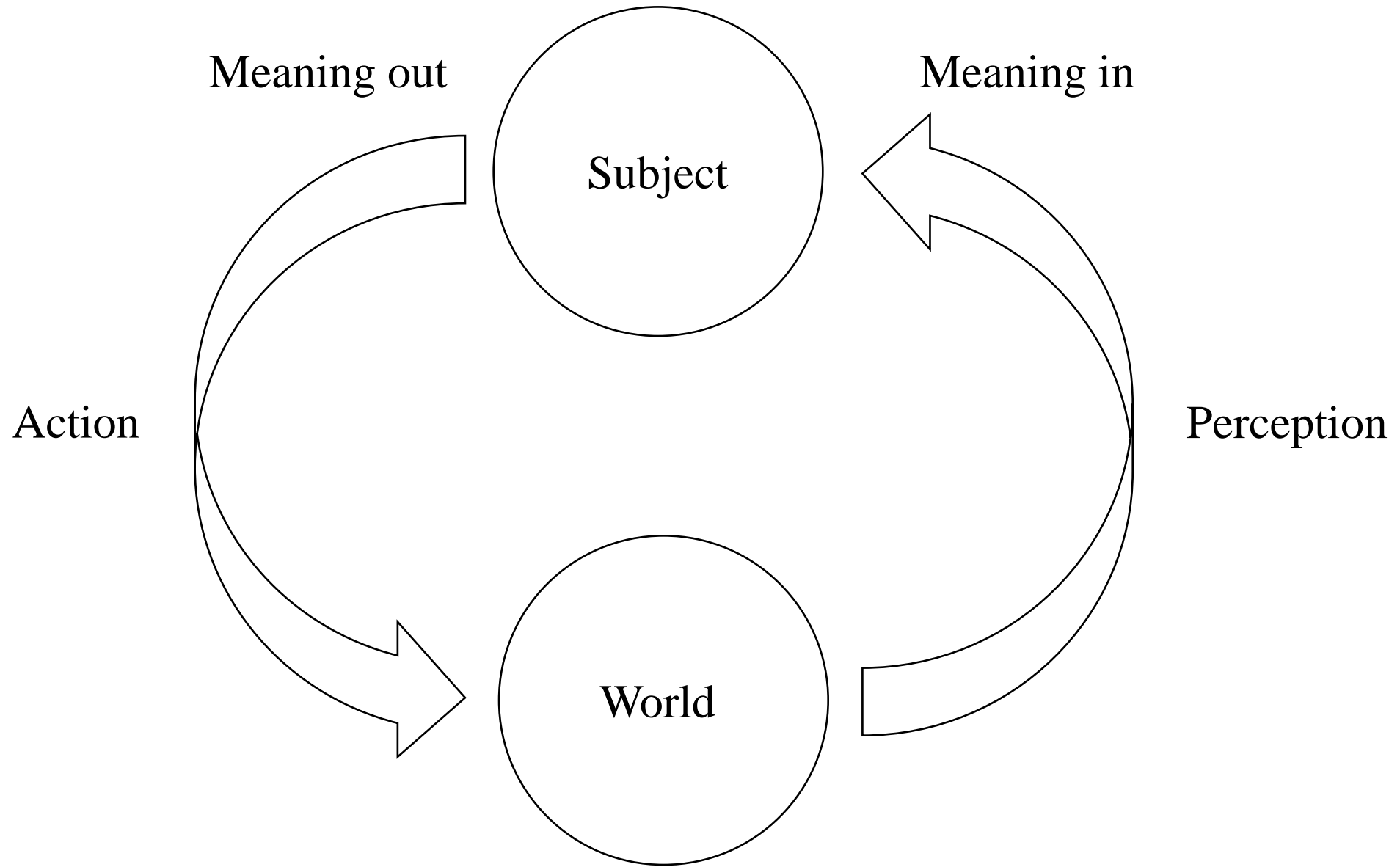
... everyone has got some kind of metaphysics, even if he thinks he hasn't ...

*... the practical “hard headed” individual ... has a very dangerous kind of metaphysics,
i.e. the kind of which he's unaware.*

... a rudimentary mind-like quality is present even at the level of particle physics ...

... relationships with nature and with the cosmos flow out of what they mean to us.

*These meanings fundamentally affect our actions toward nature,
and thus indirectly, the action of nature back on us is affected.*



Consequences



Metaphysics matters

Alfred North Whitehead

*The western world is now suffering from the limited moral outlook
of the three previous generations ...*

*The two evils are:
one, the ignorance of the true relation of each organism to its environment;
and the other, the habit of ignoring the intrinsic worth of the environment ...*

Ulrich Mohrhoff

Which is more likely to ensure our survival as a species?

The belief that what is ultimately real is worthless dust ...

or the belief that what is ultimately real is a unitary, all-containing consciousness?

Jeremy Lent

*If someone defines themselves as an isolated individual,
they will feel entitled to pursue their own happiness at the expense of others.*

*If you identify primarily with all life, you're likely to devote your existence
to work for the benefit of all sentient beings.*

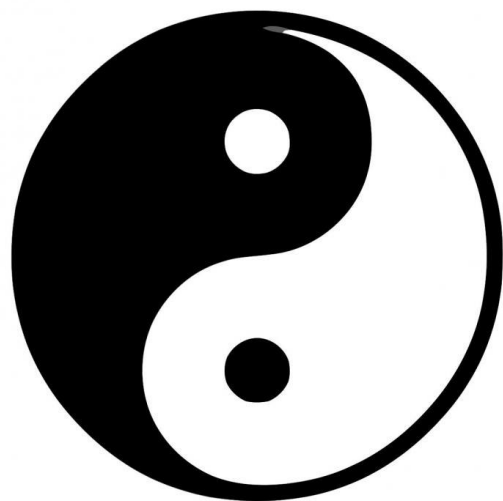
*Far from being separate from the rest of nature,
we are part of an endless meshwork of life going back over billions of years.*

Lynn White

What people do about their ecology depends on what they think about themselves in relation to things around them.

Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny, that is, by religion.

Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not.



Taoist Ecological Principles

Help everything to grow according to its own way; let nature be itself.

Excessive use of nature will bring about disaster.

Bio-diversity is affluence, so take good care of nature.

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Thanks for listening

