

## Earth Renaissance: Perturbations from a Changing Planet

One single image of a risen Earth bejeweled against the blackness of space marks an indelible moment for humanity. That photo, taken in 1968 by astronauts in the Apollo 8 spacecraft as they orbited the moon provided us with the first glance of our planetary home — a home, we share in common with all earth beings.

In 1962, Rachel Carson's, *Silent Spring* set the world on fire with her warnings of environmental degradation. Decades later, in 2000, Nobel Prize-winning scientist Paul Crutzen coined the term Anthropocene - a potential new geologic epoch that begins when humankind started to alter Earth significantly. Is the starting date 1950 or 50,000 years ago? While a healthy debate ensues, many agree with 1950 citing the sharp rise of climate-warming carbon emissions.

Today, Earth Rise is a familiar image, yet, a half-century later we are still processing what it means to be a species fully interrelated, interconnected and interdependent within the Earth's planetary body.

Why have we behaved as if the changing biosphere of the planet is of no consequence? Were we so drunk with our conquest of the moon that we missed the piquancy of the moment? Did we miss the moment to restore our sacred bonds with the Earth? Or, were we seized by the triumphant-human narrative broadcasted across all media?

Remember those with whom we attribute the Renaissance Era? They were unaware of the change they incited as they imbibed new ideas once occulted. They did not foresee that the vestiges of the Dark Ages would yield to a new era as their own metanoia liberated them.

Now, early in the 21st century, signs of another obdurate wall of unquestioned, limiting world-views that have separated us from each other and severed our sacred bond with Nature are being eclipsed by a growing love for the Earth, the responsibility for future generations of all species, and the desire for true connection within the web of life.

Problematic world-views operating ubiquitously in our modern world are being hacked. They are being hacked by perturbations from a planetary being doing all it can to remain in the Holocene. Through climate as a feedback mechanism — Is the Earth signaling us, that it's time to awaken as a species? Is it time to evolve into our greater roles and assume our responsibilities as a collaborative human presence in the world?

Biodiversity within Nature underlies the Earth's resiliency and its powers of regeneration. This emerging sense of biophilia seems to come with a desire for community, a tendency toward inter-sectoral and intergenerational approaches to protect Nature, care-based economies, and a need for genuine connection. Encouraging signs of emerging frameworks aligned with Earth's Systems and boundaries seem to be the prime directive for a growing number of Earth's Citizens. They are not waiting for the challenges that we face to be resolved by governments, the elite, nor academia. Instead, they are acting on their shared values and facing their challenges creatively while implementing change.

In law, the beginnings of an evolution toward recognition of the inherent rights of Nature to exist, thrive and evolve are evident. This Earth Jurisprudence is a translation into law of deeply felt and inspired *ideas whose time has come* evoked by Earth. This people led, Earth inspired movement is the force evolving the law. Earth Jurisprudence acknowledges that the traditional environmental regulatory systems generally regard Nature as property to be used for human

benefit, rather than a rights-bearing partner with which humanity has co-evolved. Rights of Nature is grounded in the recognition that humankind and Nature share a fundamental, non-anthropocentric relationship given our shared existence on this planet, and it creates guidance for actions that respect this relationship. Legal provisions recognizing the Rights of Nature, include constitutions, national statutes, and local laws. In addition, new policies, guidelines and resolutions are increasingly pointing to the need for a legal approach that recognizes the rights and well-being of the Earth as linked with the well-being of all species.

Awakening to this view of our shared existence and what it evokes us into being as individuals, families, communities, organizations and nations can launch a new era of creativity and cooperation within humanity that harmonizes our systems of governance and livelihood with Nature itself. The mainstreaming of Earth inspired movements may bring forth Bioregional based governance structures that transcends national boundaries attuned to Earth's Renaissance.

by Myra L. Jackson

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