



The Cosmology of Peace, by Thomas Berry

“The issue of interhuman tension is secondary to earth-human tensions. If humans will not become functional members of the earth community, how can humans establish functional relationships among themselves?”

It is not exactly the question of whether the nations can survive each other, nor is it even the question of whether intelligent beings can survive the natural forces of the planet; it is whether the planet can survive the intelligence that it has itself brought forth.

My proposal is that the cosmology of peace is presently the basic issue. The human must be seen in its cosmological role just as the cosmos needs to be seen in its human manifestation. This cosmological context has never been more clear than it is now, when everything depends on a creative resolution of our present antagonisms.

I refer to a creative resolution of antagonisms rather than to “peace” in deference to the violent aspects of the cosmological process. Phenomenal existence itself seems to be a violent mode of being. Also, there is a general feeling of fullness bordering on decay that is easily associated with “peace.” Neither “violence” nor “peace” in this sense is in accord with the creative transformations through which the more splendid achievements of the universe have taken place.

As the distinguished anthropologist A.L. Kroeber once indicated: The ideal situation for any individual or any culture is not exactly “œbovine placidity.” It is, rather, “œthe highest state of tension that the organism can bear creatively.”

-- Thomas Berry in "The Dream of the Earth"