

THE DIGNITY OF NATURE, THE FOUNTAINHEAD OF HUMAN LIFE

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Human culture is the record of Man's endeavor to harmonize with Nature. Humans have often been deprived of their lives through the fury of Nature, and we call such events natural calamities, sometimes challenging Nature itself in an attempt to overcome them. At times we succeed, and at others we fail, but through a repetition of success and failure, we are still exerting ourselves to the utmost trying to find the key to the control of Nature. This may be considered Man's confrontation with Nature.

However, since in the first place, mankind itself is no more than a part of Nature, it is not reasonable to think that Man can exist in opposition to Nature.

In the past Man has lived in harmony with Nature as a matter of course. The culture on which we now pride ourselves developed from this same harmony but the wisdom of Man can hardly be considered sufficient to realize the limits to the utilization of Nature. The culture of our forefathers, however, was formed while struggling with harmonizing with Nature, and at the least, they never destroyed the natural environment necessary for their existence.

Modern Man, however, intoxicated with the vast techniques of nature-utilization provided for him by Modern Science, is ruining Nature, overlooking the conditions for his own existence. Man, who has fouled the rivers, whittled away the mountains and polluted the air in defiance of Nature's providence, has also, since time immemorial, been endeavoring to find happiness. Now, however, his very efforts are leading to a disruption of Nature which may lead to his own inevitable destruction.

Mankind has at last begun to reflect on what constitutes true happiness. Herein lies the reason for raising the question of the

so-called "environmental disruption".

The happiness of mankind, in the first place, is consummated when material and spiritual needs are fulfilled and in balance. Great philosophies, religions, literature and art may flourish, but they have never been agencies of a direct destruction of Nature. Rather, the sustainers of these humanities have been great apostles of the sanctity of Nature, the cradle of all philosophies and art.

Because so many yearn for the dazzling glories of materialistic life, such sacred voices went unheeded, understandable from the preponderance of natural science over the social sciences.

I am daily engaged in the production of chemical products as one of the manufacturers in the chemical industry. Every research laboratory and chemical plant discharges a considerable quantity of pollutants, but in our firm, they are being disposed of completely through our individual responsibility. Elimination of environmental pollution has been thoroughly practised by our company on the basis of a steadfast belief that any ability to create a product also carries with it a similar ability to prevent pollution. I also subscribe to the humanistic management principle that Man's endeavors are significant and permissible only when they bring happiness to society.

This idea of mine was conceived about twenty years ago, quite naturally in the course of business life, and without any external pressure. My business ethics could have prevented today's environmental pollution.

Even prior to the dualistic coordinate consciousness that Nature must be protected from disruption, the aims of technology must be examined to see how they may affect the harmony with Nature, and here

we see the need for raising social morality.

Only when life, which one receives but once, is held in supreme respect, do all cultural achievements become meaningful. No technology with the slightest semblance of denying life must ever be permitted.

The outrage of Nature-destruction begins where the illusion arises that Nature, the cradle of Mankind, has fulfilled its duty and is now unnecessary. Man, in his insatiable arrogance, has begun to dig his own grave.

As scholars have pointed out, living things, be they plants or animals, create the conditions for self-destruction when they reach the peak of their prosperity.

In modern times, we created the vast capacity of science and technology and we are justly proud of this as the fruit of human wisdom.

How will Man's footprints on the surface of the Moon be reflected back to Earth? The exploration of Man's relation to the

heavenly bodies must be turned to an exploration of the closer-to-home "harmony between Nature's earth and Culture's mankind."

Man must take another good look at the fact that life is essentially fostered and nurtured by Nature, for the conditions which nurture life are found only in Nature, not in Science.

It is proper for people to respect each other, but this falls within the framework of human relations; it does not mean human dignity pitted against Nature.

We must never forget to respect Nature as the fountainhead of life. When the wisdom of Modern Man leads him to a reappraisal of Nature, then and only then will Mankind continue to prosper into eternity.

Nature exists today and will exist tomorrow, in all innocence, but only as Man's wisdom pleases-as the true life-line of Mankind.