

Similarly, the ecozoic points to the underlying natural order of things, and it is also the 10,000 named things that manifest this order. As did the *Dao* for the Chinese, the ecozoic has a civilizational imperative and calls for a new order of things. The ecozoic has meaning for all of the economic, political, and cultural processes of humans.

One aspect of the ecozoic is that we are, as Bruno Latour would say, *Earthbound* (we have nowhere else to live than Earth), and another is that we are, as Thomas Berry would say, *Earthlings* (we are born of Earth and its vital and spiritual processes and are one with them). Humans are awakening to these awarenesses in a postmodern way. Modernity gave us a dead Earth of matter (objects) in motion to be manipulated for human benefit. The ecozoic gives us the scientific, technical, and social heritage of modernity but with an awareness of the Earth as being alive, interrelated, and full of diversity and subjectivity. Modernity was a culture of death to overcome the hardships of Earthly life. The ecozoic is a culture of life in celebration of the gifts of existence.

There is, it would seem, no one particular religious or civilizational heritage that can bring into being the new ecological planetary civilization. Only an awakening to the grandeur of existence and the precarious, preciousness of our living Earth can do this. Awakening to the vision of the beloved community as Earth community calls us to realize the possibility of ecological civilization not just once but over and over again.

Today people speak approvingly of being *woke*, which means being alert to injustice in society, especially being alert to racism. Being woke in the ecozoic sense extends being woke to being alert to injustice in the Earth community, especially to being alert to speciesism (anthropocentrism). We must become integral with the Earth community and with the human community as a part of that larger community. Our human future depends on this. The future of all life on Earth depends on this.

In conclusion, the ecozoic is the postmodern revelation for our time. It can be expressed in 10,000 ways . . . indeed it is the 10,000 ways and the 10,000 things and the 10,000 relationships and dynamics.

It is beautiful—it is the sense of ultimate communion.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ECOZOIC JOURNEYS, COMMUNITIES, AND CONVERSATIONS

By Herman Greene

There are many things that are important in the world. Playwrights are important and tailors are important. Operas are important and notes on refrigerators are important. Running a corporation or serving in public office is important and serving on a church committee or being a teacher's aide is important.

Sometimes there are niches to be filled and that gives the niche-fillers importance. For example, the leaders of Black Lives Matter have filled such a niche and they are important. We believe there is a niche to be filled called “love-of-life.” Filling this ecozoic niche involves *sentipensar* (thinking-feeling) from the Earth. It involves bottom up thinking. It involves retracing our history through time to what is fundamental. Early people learned from the Earth and learned to live in harmony with it. Earth was the great teacher, the great wisdom. For example, we learn from Earth to only ask for what we need.

One becomes an ecozoan when one experiences this overwhelming feeling that he or she is embedded in Earth community and that it is beautiful. One literally falls in love with life in all of its diversity and amazing forms. Earth loses its national borders and highway maps and emerges as bioregions and cultures shaped by place. We know this by experience. We also know it by science. Bruno Latour wrote that science is the new aesthetic because it sensitizes us to life. It exposes us to the grandeur of existence in a new way.

We feel ourselves being rushed back into time, into early humans, the early Earth, and even beyond to planets and stars and galaxies. We feel ourselves propelled into the future in part because we know the fragility of life. We are shocked to discover that the history we have been taught is a lie, and we begin to re-tell our geostory and re-pair.

As we carry out a conversation on

How are we to live well on Earth so as to enable a transition to an ecological age?

we may yearn for global solutions and strategies to bring about change. This is in part because we have accepted what is real, what is realistic, and what is possible. We must accept, however, that perhaps within this current framework of what is real and what is possible, there are no sufficient solutions or strategies. Perhaps, however, there are other ecozoic reals that are real and other ecozoic possibles that are possible.

Now I am writing to the privileged, like me, of the West: We may feel there is little in our Western history or experience to draw on. Nonetheless, we must find in our past the voices to guide us—Emerson, Thoreau, Dickinson, the romantics, the Quakers, the Shakers, the Amish, Whitehead, King, Eiseley, Berry, Macy, and others (who would you name?)—our ancestral wisdom of living well and combine it, albeit awkwardly, with the modern skills we will need to bring about an ecozoic future. We may also learn from trees, plants, and animals, rivers, lakes, seas, and the land who are also part of our ancestral wisdom. With care, and avoiding cultural appropriation, we may also learn from native people.

This inner work is different from, though not unrelated to, such practical tasks as building a new energy grid and restoring ecosystem. This living into an ecozoic way of knowing, doing, and

being is important. Ecozoic communities and conversations that allow this to happen are important, they do not need to be practical. They are simply necessary.

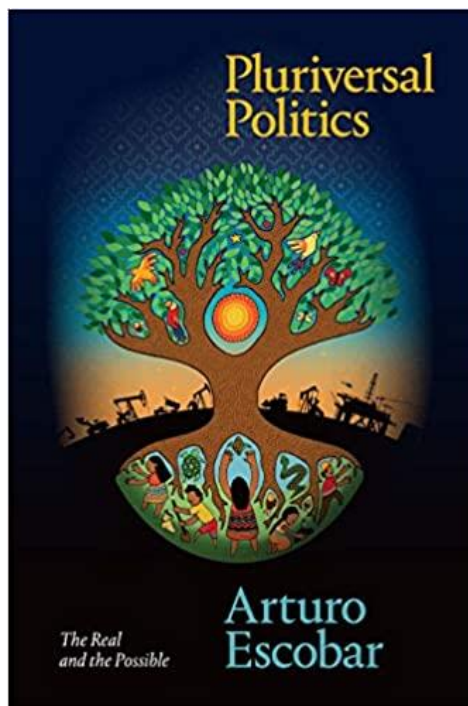
This immense journey inward and outward is our part in *pluriversal politics*. (See the article in this issue on “Pluriversal Politics.”) It is our differentiation. It will be different in each community and conversation. Other reals and possibles will seep into us. The ecozoic will emerge like seeds from the dark ground.

We should always ask of ourselves, “What difference does this make?” and abandon useless work. Faith in the ecozoic will enable us to see the importance of ecozoic journeys and the communities and conversations that sustain them.

REVIEW OF ARTURO ESCOBAR, *PLURIVERSAL POLITICS: THE REAL AND THE POSSIBLE*

(Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020)

By Herman Greene



An English translation of Arturo Escobar’s book on *Pluriversal Politics* was published in spring 2020 by Duke University Press. Upon reading this book I realized that the Center for Ecozoic Studies was moving along the lines he was describing, and he gave helpful language for understanding this.

He writes of the long duration of patriarchy, heterosexism, racism, capitalism, modernity, and Western civilization and of escalating crises around racism, inequality, the environment, xenophobia, poverty, energy, and meaning. Collectively these amount to a civilizational crisis, which is a relatively rare occurrence.

Then he writes of approaches to addressing these crises in which he contrasts modernist or universal approaches to ontological or pluriversal approaches. One modernist approach is strategies conducted in the name of progress to improve people’s conditions. This is the developmentalist approach and it is huge. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and a host of NGOs,

national aid funds, and private and public consulting groups carry on this work. A second modernist approach concerns strategies for social justice. People involved in this work include the protest groups and movements working on human rights, environmental rights, inequality, and oppression.