

Humane Sustainable Culture and "doing the right thing"

Humane sustainable culture does not come about merely from a sense of doing the right thing. *Sustainable* and *culture* are words that evoke long periods of time, and huge breadths of activity. We would like to reflect on the idea that our "cosmology" or sense of the universe as a whole and its form or nature as a system, has a powerful and sometimes invisible impact upon our culture. This "cosmology" or story about where we came from and what its all about, directly influences the way in which humans relate to this home planet and to the other species that share it all.

Science, which is now revealing new information about our place in the universe, is intimately tied up with society. At the same time, ideas about society and about events here on earth, directly affect ideas about the universe. Eric Lerner comments on this in his new book [The Big Bang Never Happened](#), stating, "This interaction is not limited to the world of ideas. A society's social, political, and economic structures have a vast effect on how people think; and scientific thought, through its impact on technology, can greatly change the course of economic and social evolution."

Present day cosmology, from a scientific base, holds that the universe erupted in one flashing instant from nothing, into shining existence and must inexorably move towards final expansion, or collapse back in to a final end. This expression is imbedded deep in our history. An example would be the Foundation Stone in Jewish culture and mythology. The Holy Temple is the center of Jerusalem with the Ark of the Tablets in its center and in front of the Evven Shetiyah, the Stone from which the Earth Sprang Forth, the Foundation Stone. This stone is regarded as "the center of the universe" based on "the teaching that creation began *at a single point*, and from this point, the universe unfolded until God decreed that it should stop. So the Universe flashed into being from a single point and time was created, sounding very much like the present day cosmic story involving the Big Bang theory.

Previous epochs in human history have had different cosmologies. One of these involves seeing an infinite universe evolving over infinite time. This "cosmology" is now receiving a rebirth in some scientific circles with what is being learned in the field of plasma physics. Many of the principles of the Big Bang and its predicted observable effects are being called into question by scientists around the world. These two approaches to cosmology today involve different orientations to a radically deepening ecological crisis and humane sustainable culture. There is tremendous significance embodied in which "cosmology" is at work as the foundation for a culture and its people.

Humane sustainable culture at one time was a relatively simple and reachable goal for both the individual and groups within their immediate region. However, current societal complexity and our cultural divorce from the earth and its sacred nature allows us to rape the earth's resources at will in order to promote lifestyle, jobs and more and more humans. We are left with a massive task to begin approaching humane sustainable culture again.

Without a "cosmology" underlying our thoughts, perception, and actions that naturally illuminate and enhance the interconnectedness of humans to the stars-to the earth and its processes- to each other- and to the plants and animals-there is less cultural orientation for a corporation, a

country, or an individual to make choices aimed at "doing the right thing".
With
a cosmology of connection there is hope.

2 M Gerlitz, *All About the Midash*, Oraysoh, Jerusalem, 1985, pg. 20.

3 Arey Kaplan, *Jerusalem: The Eye of the Universe*, NCSY/UOJC 1976, p.79