

BOOK REVIEW

Ecology: Welcome Home

Algis Mickunas, PhD - Professor, Department of Philosophy, Ohio University, Ohio, USA

Zilvinas Svigaris - Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania

The book combines philosophical debates concerning the prevalent conception of “reality” with a broad and principled articulation of the existential challenges currently confronting humanity. Thinkers, philosophers, and scientists of many countries wonder what awaits humanity if it does not awaken and fundamentally rethink its path. What can help us to throw off the shackles of the ideology of progress, including irresponsible expansion of consumption? What are the fundamental principles of the world, principles that can reveal that humans are not the supreme rulers of the planet, that we are arbitrarily destroying the environment as if we were not part of it and dependent upon it? New wars demanding new weapons and technically invented plagues keep us busy, distracting us from the awareness that these very weapons and plagues are parts of the continuous destruction of the environment—of our true home, which no new weapons or vaccines can protect. We are running faster and faster up the mountain of progress without realizing that we are actually sliding down into an abyss of self-destruction. The outburst of weaponization and vaccination urges the dramatic transformation of our awareness of our world and our genuine home.

Here ecology is not simply caring for nature and the environment. Instead, what is articulated in this book is a broad philosophical and anthropological awareness constituting a new yet archaic thinking that has always been with us. The book calls for resurrecting and actualizing this global awareness, along with its sacrality and wholeness—a legacy that pervades the common heritage of humanity, yet has been overshadowed by shallow modern scientific and economic rationality. The text discloses the importance of ritualistic human activity based on understanding the holiness of social order as well as of true harmony with the world and all live events. People of earlier civilizations knew how to communicate with the gods and the powers of nature. The knowledge they accumulated and transmitted must help us overcome the entrenched nature-culture divide that supports the illusion of humankind’s arbitrary technical omnipotence. The manifestations of such knowledge that are traced in the book are concretized by considering the contemporary undercurrent of integral consciousness, which defies the fragmenting logic of modern capitalism and communism. The authors play their philosophical instruments surprisingly harmoniously, complementing each other in such a way that they inevitably involve the reader. Regardless of our philosophical-cultural imagination and life experience, global challenges and problems are already at home in each of us.

Dr. Vytautas Rubavičius

LKTI – Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, Vilnius, Lithuania