

The Creative Union of Person and Community

A Geo-Humanist Ethic

Joseph A. Grau

I. Introduction

A. A Global Agenda

Political economist Robert B. Reich, as he charts the course for his 1987 book, *Tales of a New America*, lays out the fundamental challenge he sees before him:

. . . to define jointly promising endeavors and to forge durable ties of mutual obligation and responsibility. To a greater extent and for subtler reasons than either modern conservatism or modern liberalism appreciate, life on this planet has become less a set of contexts in which one party can be victorious, and more an intricate set of relationships which either succeed or fail—we win or we lose together.¹

Over half a century ago, on board ship en route to China from San Francisco, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., stimulated by the vitality and tensions of the world he saw emerging, wrote in his essay, "The Spirit of the Earth,"

The resources at our disposal today, the powers that we have released, *could not possibly be absorbed* by the narrow system of individual or national units which the architects of the human earth have hitherto used. . . . *The age of nations has passed. Now, unless we wish to perish, we must shake off our old prejudices and build the earth.* (Emphasis Teilhard's.)²

In the following study I respond to the challenges both Reich and Teilhard describe. The response is Teilhardian, in that it is drawn from research and reflection on his thought. But it is not intended as just an exposition of his original views or what I think he would have said at this time. Rather I have tried, in the spirit of Teilhard, to ex-