

david triggs' long view



For those interested in the establishment of economic justice it is important to mark the vital role that love plays in human affairs. A moment's reflection, recollection or observation confirms to us that those actions that are inspired by pure love bring generosity, lightness, impartiality, equality and justice. They lead to bliss and happiness for all. Similarly we may see that those actions that are inspired by a love which is not pure but which are characterised by infatuation, attachment or claim, do not bring happiness for all because they are inevitably partial and preferential. They cannot lead to justice.

We experience the power of love in a variety of different ways. As a child we depend upon the love we receive from our parents and those who care for us whilst we are incapable of caring for ourselves. We experience the reciprocal aspect of love as we grow to love those who show love to us and those around us but we also experience a love that extends to all those people, creatures and things that are presented to us every day through our intercourse with nature. We notice the unifying power of love where it manifests in a family or our ever enlarging circle of social acquaintances. We may notice also the disintegrating and debilitating influence that operates where attachment to, or claim by, an individual, family or social circle seeks to limit the manifestation of love—selfishly holding on to that which would naturally be universal.

As young adults we experience the power of love in a form which manifests throughout the animal kingdom and which is critical to the continuation of the species. We experience the power of love also when our minds and hearts are moved to wonder by the beauty of nature, through seeing, hearing, tasting, touching or smelling what it brings. We experience the same power of love when we make beautiful things or enjoy the works of a true artist. Here, as Henry George reminds us, is where we resemble the 'all maker', come to realise our own true nature, and may see the link between love and law. The wonder and joy we experience in such moments of heightened awareness are accompanied by a recognition of something well known but mostly ignored or submerged beneath our habitual concerns for *me* and *mine*. We may see beyond the particular forms in view, to that which is common to all phenomena; we may, for a moment, see that this universe and all that is within it, is lawful! Is this the real work of the artist—to reveal the laws of nature in a form that others might otherwise miss? If so we might expect the work to be in praise of the source of the law rather than an ego trip. So we appreciate George as a true artist as well as a genuine scientist. Here, though, we may see again the hazard associated with our propensity to claim—*me and mine*—the same claim barrier that underpins the idea of obligation-free property in land and obliges governments to erect counterclaims for the collection of public revenues through immoral and arbitrary taxes.

At root, economic justice is concerned with the laws of property. What is properly the property of the individual? What is properly the property of society at various levels? And what is properly the property of all creation? A key to this is how far love is extended beyond the individual, family, community, state, nation and humanity itself. Pure love naturally extends to all. As with a good mother of many children, or a wise government of a great nation, it may then manifest as knowledge and rules consistent with the laws of nature—it will then work as justice.