

The Western Environmental Ethics Development Were Reviewed

ZHENG Bo^{[a],*}; SUN Daojin^[b]

^[a]School of Political Science and Public Administration, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

^[b]Professor, Center for Studies of Economic and Social Development, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Received 16 February 2015; accepted 3 May 2015
Published online 26 June 2015

Abstract

The main characteristic of environmental ethics is human moral objects from the people and society field expands to life and nature; It is the basic problem of: Confirm the value of life and nature, life and the rights of nature, so as to respect the nature, protect nature, to ensure sustainable use of natural human. Environmental ethics is the first to rise in the west, along with two main points, four major factions, research from different angles from person to person, the relationship between human and society.

Key word: The environment ethics learns; Western; Naturally

Zheng, B., & Sun, D. J. (2015). The Western Environmental Ethics Development Were Reviewed. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 8(6), 7-10. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/7058>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7058>

INTRODUCTION

Modern ethics is the social ethics, which is about people, moral relation between man and society. It does not involve the relationship between human, life and nature. Because life and nature are considered to be of little value and human use of objects, people don't need to their morality. It argues that the only people in the world have value, and only for morality. The discerning academic thinkers realized that: Human behavior has been excessive damaged to life and nature. We need to have a new ethics

constraint of life and the behavior of nature, to adjust the relationship between human and nature. Then we give some environmental ethics questions.

Environmental Ethics, is a comprehensive science emerging between ethics and environmental science. Its birth, survival and development activity in humans and the living environment of the system after the occurrence of sharp opposition, in order to meet coordinate the relationship between humans and the living environment of the system, to obtain the product of the social needs of humans and the living environment of the system of common sustainable development. Conflict between humans and the living environment of the system — environmental pollution, destruction and deterioration of other issues, in the final analysis, is the result of human behavior, is a social problem. For the ultimate solution to this problem, we must mention the actors - the Human Environment Ethics height to recognize and treat possible. Therefore, environmental ethics, will become one of the key areas of scientific research and decisions affect people and the environment while achieving sustainable development in the 21st century.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Study occurred in the interaction between people, society and the natural phenomenon of the three moral science, people, society and nature of the three respective internal law of motion is not the same, which makes the study of environmental ethics content with the complexity and breadth.

Social environment is constituted by the human individual, it's survival and development, and the individual does not have a fully integrated interest objectives. In general, the survival of individual interests and social interests of humanity at the macro should be consistent, but there is often a specific action on the microscopic sharp contradiction and confrontation, thus

generating a human individual for their own gain and not conducive to the overall interests of the community to take unethical behavior. How to coordinate this moral relations, environmental ethics is the first part of the study.

Before humans not fully understand and master this law, the natural reaction of the human environment acting on their various unethical behavior is often behave quite blind and random. Before people could not manage this blind randomized feedback mechanism, people mainly from the regulation of human individuals and groups to the ethical behavior of the natural environment systems begin to get a harmonious coexistence of humans and the natural environment, until together to form a whole, to the future Universal Century transition, which is the second part of the study environmental ethics content.

In summary, the research of environmental ethics and moral behavior as the first subject of environmental awareness, environmental ethics, environmental ethics emotional, environmental and moral beliefs, principles of environmental ethics, environmental ethics and a series of human subjective introspective Environmental Ethics theory of the content. The second part includes the basic research of environmental ethics as a human environmental ethics and moral evaluation is a non-standard environment, environmental ethics, ethical behavior and environmental controls measurement indicator system — environmental policies, regulations and the like. Also, to grasp the movement of natural environmental systems and certain natural scientific knowledge, otherwise we can not understand it correctly, grasp and predict the outcome of human, social, environmental ethics relationship between natural variation caused by three.

Since the middle of the 20th century, the western environmental ethics, there are two main points, four major factions.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECOLOGY ETHICS

The traditional attempts to people-centered ethics of extensive ethic extends outward ,For future generations, non-human animals, all sentient life, even for the whole of nature, moral recognition and protection, However, this concern for non-human life and nature and moral recognition, Because it's good for human beings to do that. In this view, if it does not involve the evaluation main body, the nature has no value, only one value.

Holism based on ecological environment science, ecological centered. This point of view on the basis of ecology about all forms of life have relativity, the correlation between them and depend on each other, and their dependence on the basic processes such as photosynthesis, think non-human creatures and nature has intrinsic value, the law of human and ecological joint has made headlines in discipline, ecology is a kind

of ethics. Environment as a whole, that the ecological environment problem is essentially the idea of people, the priority of environmental philosophy should be internally from ontology to value and ethical level for a thorough cleaning. This requirement clearly could not have got support from orthodox tradition philosophy. In fact, they are not going to get support from the orthodox philosophy. Because they have been found from the ecology view to its appropriate comments. This is better than philosophy persuasive.

The ecology of the 20th century reveals the natural landscape of a totally different from the industrial age, emphasized the central idea is the whole and contact, this is called a holistic view of nature constitute the environment overall reflection on the ecological crisis, criticism of anthropocentrism values is the most important theoretical basis. Ecology being able to provide value for the social and cultural criticism, known as “subversive science”. It is in this sense, the word “ecology” in the west often equated with any based on the ecological thoughts of the environmental movement.

3. THE BASIC MORAL PRICIPLE OF THE ETHICS

Main representative of modern anthropocentrism is the American botanist Mort, American philosopher NORTON et al.. They think that the roots of environmental crisis are not anthropocentrism, it is a cultural crisis. We believe in the value of the human and the creation of the people's great potential, it is completely correct. People bring up the question of human moral responsibility for the environment, is mainly due to the concern for human survival and social development, for human existence must depend on nature. This is a fact. We protect nature is to protect their own interests. The consequences of environmental crisis showed that what people do to nature, is to do it himself. Anthropocentrism, on the basis of human interests and needs, but not everyone's interests and needs are reasonable, human morality to restrict unreasonable aspects.

Human moral concern is due to human happiness depends on the environmental quality, Natural environment is the human to achieve your goals and value means. In other words, people give to creatures and the whole nature of moral concern, recognition and protection, of life and nature of moral responsibility, this is because of the protection of life and nature is to protect ourselves, is to care for the interests of the human beings including future generations.

Animal liberation or animal rights theory of environmental ethics is also called the ethics of respect feeling, Is the main representative of Australian philosopher singh. He advocated the liberation of the animal, give animals equal rights. Moral line should be

drawn in, he thought, beings with the ability to feel there. All beings with the ability to go feel qualified to become the object of moral rights. He argues that all animals are equal, but is not to say that humans and animals have the same rights, the rights of the people and animals are distinct. Discriminating the equality, namely the equality is the basic principle of “equality” of concern.

Biological centralism environmental ethics is a kind of thinking organism has its own “good”, thus advocated expanded the range of moral objects to people outside of the biological theory of environmental ethics. Its representative has French thinker: Witz, the United States environmental philosophers Taylor, etc.. Witz put forward in the fear of life ethics, he said: “In essence, the command by the fear of life is consistent with the ethical principles of love. Just the fear of life itself contains the commands and according to the of love, and sympathy for all creatures. “Therefore, it is not only the ethics scope expanding, and it is the transition of the nature of ethics. The ethics of respect for life, he thought, the principle is: “Good is to maintain life, promote life, makes the life of development to achieve its highest value. Evil is the destruction of life, injury, suppress the development of life. This is inevitable, universal and absolute ethical principles.”

Taylor proposed “biological egalitarian ethics”. The main point: (a) All creatures are inherently resist increasing process of entropy, to keep yourself organized, maintain their own survival, life have identity; (b) To maintain their own survival, is the center of all the organisms life purpose, it is the intrinsic value of the organism, is the “goodness” of the organism; (c) Although different organisms have different ways of self organization, they are in their own ways to maintain survival, but have the same intrinsic value, thus has the equal rights of morality, should be moral recognition, care and protection.

Ecological centralism environmental ethics theory, Species and the ecological system as a whole are more important than the individual organisms that have moral priority, advocate a holism environmental ethics thought. Leopold and Rolston main representative advantage.

Leopold thinks, “the earth ethics just expanded the boundary of the community, including land, water, plants and animals in her, or sees these as a complete set: The earth.” He put forward “the community” concept, He said: “The earth is a community. This is the basic concept of ecology. The earth is a lovely and should be respected. This is an extension of ethics.

He argues that ethics morals, need to adjust the relationship of the people, or the relationship between man and society, extended to adjust the relationship between the human and the earth (nature), the moral right to animals, plants, soil, water and other natural entity, confirm them in a natural state’s right to exist. This is the biological and nature should be right. Change the status of the human earth ethics. Shift from he is the

conqueror of the earth - social, for he is a member of ordinary and citizens. This means that human beings should respect fellow creatures, but also with the same attitude to respect the earth society.

From what is moral and what is moral rights, at the same time what is means of dealing with economic point of view, to test every question. When a thing help protect biological community harmony, stability, and beauty, it is correct, when its opposite, is wrong.

This is the basic moral principle of the land ethics. He thinks, this kind of moral principles, “From the point of view of ecology, it is on the freedom of action in the survival competition; from philosophical point of view, is the social and the identification of antisocial behavior.”

3. THE NEW DEFINITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Environmental ethics is about the relationship between man and nature of ethical beliefs and moral attitudes and behaviour of theoretical thoughts and practice, is a new ethics respect natural value and natural rights. Based on modern science reveals the regularity of interaction between human and nature, with moral means to coordinate the people from the whole social relations, the ecological relationship between man and nature, people and natural harmony of ecological civilization.

The main characteristic of environmental ethics The main characteristic of environmental ethics is of expanding the range of moral objects, from the relationship between people, people and society field, extended to the fields of relationship between man and nature. Therefore, it was assumed that need to change the concept of two crucial: (a) The concept of ethics “misconduct”, must be from expanding into the life and nature and society, calls for concern and respect life and nature itself, “When things tend to protect the integrity of the biological community, stability and beautiful, it is correct; otherwise it is wrong.” (b) Moral rights concept, must be the people and the interests of the society, to the benefit of the life and nature, confirm the life and the entity and process of nature, In a natural state’s right to exist. And as the moral object scope and expand people’s moral activities, man’s moral principles and ethics, moral standards and moral goal changes—to develop a new ethics — environmental ethics.

The fundamental problem of the environmental ethics performance on the theory and practice two basis points.

In theory, its theoretical requirement is: (a) Establish and nature life value theory - “natural value theory”. This is the basic theory of environmental ethics. It says, people not only valuable, has value of life and nature, including its extrinsic value and intrinsic value. The extrinsic value of life and nature are, in the cultural level, it has commercial and non commercial value to the person,

tool is used as a man of value; Intrinsic value is, in the life and the level of nature, Life on earth, according to the ecological law of survival, the meaningful existence is reasonable, thus has intrinsic value. (b) Establish the life and the theory of natural rights, theory of “natural rights”. This is the natural right to natural value validation confirmation: Life and nature have intrinsic value, so it is needed to respect, to have the right to exist.

“Moral rights” concept, from human life and the natural world to expand to, Recognition of the rights to life and the natural world in a state of nature persists, saying “natural rights.” It has two aspects: First, life and survival benefit of nature, it’s right to life should be respected; Second, the life and power of nature, the violation of their right to challenge the behavior. Environmental pollution and ecological destruction, is the nature of life and the violation of their right to challenge the behavior. To undermine the role of the blind laws of nature in the form of human retaliation.” Natural rights” concept of content and features: (a) Nature of natural rights. All species under certain natural conditions, sharing life together with other ecological resources of the earth, to participate in the basic ecological processes and become part of the Earth’s life support systems. It has the right to maintain the conditions necessary for survival. This is certainly true, naturally. (b) Consistency of rights and obligations. This is caused by the natural rights of its performance. All living things, one is their own survival (right) while for other organisms to survive Service (obligation), both of which are unified. For example, plants - Animals - micro-organisms through the food chain to show his consistency while living otherness survival. (c) The right to equality. Organisms evolved countless lives organizational level, the infinite diversity of species, life forms composed of a sequence. It has evolutionary significance, but there is no distinction or distinction, has a natural right to equality. Various biological occupy a specific position in the ecosystem, The use of a particular space and resources, plays a specific role in the material cycle of ecosystems, energy conversion, and information transmission. They are indispensable. Their survival should be respected.

In practice, the practice of environmental ethics requirements, or its meaning is: Protection of life on Earth and the natural world. Its main objectives are: (a) Protection of basic ecological processes on Earth and life support system is stable, sound and complete; (b) Maintain the diversity of biological genes, species and ecosystems; (c) Ensure the sustainable use of human ecosystems and biological species.

Environmental ethics is a new ethics Environmental ethics as a science ethics, It is not the promotion of ethical relationships, not simply interpersonal ethics applied to environmental protection and resource development to go. Nor is the Environmental Protection ethics, or resource development and utilization of ethics, although they play an important role in environmental ethics, but this is still a part of the environment and resources subordinate aspects of human interests. It is a new ethics to ethics paradigm shift. It proposed a new paradigm of ethics, including basic theory, moral principles, moral standards and behavior norms. Thus it is not generating a simple extension to the traditional ethics and areas of natural environment, but human reflection on the basis of environmental issues a new ethics.

CONCLUSION

A famous American scholar Rolston said: “The welfare of the old ethics only to emphasize one species; new ethics must focus on the welfare of the evolution of life on earth for millions of species. In the past, human beings were the only species get moral treatment, he only act in accordance with their own interests, and does other things in their own interests; New ethics, increase the respect for all species. Therefore, if a species only thinks of themselves as supreme, treat everything else in accordance with their own purpose and treated, live in this framework, then, is a kind of “moral innocence”. Respect for the life needs a new ethics. It is not only care about the welfare of people, but also cares about the welfare of other things and the environment. Environmental ethics put forward further respect for life whether there is a responsibility of non-human object. We need a kind of ethics of the natural world. It is and culture together and even needs about the ethics of wild nature.

REFERENCES

- Schweitzer. (1955). *Reverence for life*. Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Publishing House.
- Leopold. (1997). *Yearbook of sand county*. Changchun, China: Jilin People’s Publishing House.
- Yang, Y. J. (n.d.). *Integration and beyond: Environmental ethics towards non-anthropocentric*.
- Xu, C. D. (1999). *Advances in environmental ethics: Comments and explanation*. Beijing, China: Social Sciences Academic Press.