

Chapter 14

The Dawning of the Environmental Ethics and the New Holistic Paradigm for Peace

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter we want to discuss the new holistic paradigm for peace that blossomed with the dawning of the Environmental Ethics in the 20st and 21st century, on the framework of “Meaning and Concept of Peace Education”. We introduce to the debate the question of “Political ethics” and the problem of “political alienation”, trying to answer the key question of “Holistic Peace: Need of Hour” - Why must environmental ethics prevail, over democratic and socialist politics, modern science and international right? The topics and concepts of “Pedagogical Paradigms of Peace Education”, connected to the “Models and Strategies of Peace Education” and “Peace Education in Class-Room Practice” will be discussed in the context of literacy to a new paradigm for the science and civilization, report the case-study of Portuguese CEFOP.Conimbriga (R&D).

INTRODUCTION

If every systematic-philosophical construction is built on an intrinsic foundation, a fundamental intuition or attraction to an objective, then the starting point of the philosophical renewal in the 20th century was the concept of environment.

The main purpose (*desideratum*) of this philosophical renewal is to justify, while invoking the concept Kant’s “reason”, why the Environmental Ethics should prevail over the most advanced achievements of science, the blindness of science face moral and ethics. And also to prevail over Liberal Democracies and Socialism in the past 20 centuries, which are responsible together for the environmental crisis and conflicts. However, this reason is no more the Kantian reason; a new concept of the reason emerged, which we call “Environmental reason”.

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If the object of science is to explain the world machinery, then scientific laws are amoral, and the answer to the categorical imperative of “how to live in the world” belongs to the domain of philosophy and ethics. In this sense, the environmental ethics enquire the value of science and the value of social development, not only in an anthropocentric dimension but also according to the new ethics principles: Life before Man and Earth before Life!

We want to analyze how the modern Philosophy of Nature, and later, the Environmental Philosophy, allow a new ontology critique of the anthropocentrism, and a new epistemology, based on the critique of the ethnocentrism and create a new ethical theory, which, in our opinion, has a universal value and practical ethics that are applicable to all the social fields.

From this perspective we could rethink the concept of reason, increasing its meaning to the concept of “Environmental reason”, a critical reason of the principle of anthropocentrism and of the principle of ethnocentrism.

The critique of the anthropocentrism considers the Judeo-Christian culture responsible for the arrogant attitude of the human beings against others species and Nature. We believe that this relationship is not linear and immediate and our critical perspective and contribution wish to enlarge the scope of this debate.

The critical perspective of environment philosophy toward the ethnocentrism claims the following:

Ethnocentrism is an emotionally conditioned approach that considers and judges other societies by their own culture's criteria. It's easy to see that this attitude leads to contempt and hate of all ways of life that are different from that of the observer. (Dias, 1961, p. 219)

The critique of ethnocentrism not only justifies the respect for all national cultures and all forms of classical and popular cultural expression, but also rejects any notion of superiority from a certain model of society, race or ethnicity.

Our focal point is the main questions that Spinoza's philosophy placed on the advent of our modernity: How to think about the rational explanation of man's existence and universe? How to adapt the philosophical thinking to the *raison d' être* of everything that exists and how to transform spiritual life into full understanding and peaceful enjoyment of life to their limits? Espinoza (1667) replied that everything that doesn't compete for the supreme human perfection must be seen as a useless. This answer cost the *excommunicio* for the Jew philosopher (born in a Portuguese family refugee in Amstelveen) from their own community.

As in the philosophy of Spinoza, which opened the “universe of reason”, the fundamental pushes for environmental philosophy reflect the ethical and moral issues.

The “environmental reason” formulates a new categorical imperative for human action, beyond the Kant maximum of shaping individual ethics of acts with the principle of a universal law, a new ethical framework, which stems from the need to configure the human conduct within the limits that safeguard the continuity of life and their diversity.

As with the philosophy of Espinosa (XVI century) and later of Antero de Quental (XIX century) and Hans Jonas (XX century), the fundamental impulses of the environmental philosophy reflection were the ethical issues and the moral problems.

Since the pages of Spinoza's Ethics have been published, there are two juxtaposed conceptions of the world in philosophy: the Universe of Imagination, dominated by an anthropomorphic conception of God in the Aristotelian-scholastic continuity of world representation, and the Universe of Reason, which, ac-

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