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Anthropocentrism: An Egoistical Ideology

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Abstract--The debate over anthropocentrism is crucial in the research on the causes of environmental crises. Most of the researchers take anthropocentrism negatively, as it is concerned with giving justification to human behaviour, which endangers the environment. These situations resulted in the emergence of a strong claim for a different and more sufficient attitude towards nature. An environmental-ethics seem as a reply to these requirements. In the contemporary period, anthropocentrism constitutes a fundamental and controversial issue. Anthropocentrism is a failed ideology because of its egoistic approach. It has seen every type of anthropocentrism centred around the concept of egocentric behaviour. All theories are indirectly involved with the concept of the ego. All anthropocentrism theories have one aspect in common, i.e. Human Values rather than non-human values.

Keywords--Environmental Ethics, Anthropocentrism, Human Supremacy, Nature, Rights

I. INTRODUCTION

As a moral being, man's attitude towards nature should be smooth. But in the anthropocentric worldview, man is the centre of this universe, it became vice-versa. The cruel nature of human beings tortures non-humans, who are devoid of moral sense. Man's behaviour can be judged as admirable as a moral being. Man can distinguish what is good and what is bad. They have moral obligations towards their fellow beings. But the problem arises in environmental ethics i.e. whether human beings have any duties to other species or non-humans. In the prior time, nature is everything to man. He worshipped nature. But in the change of time, as his mind or thinking power developed, he wanted to control nature. This kind of superior and egoistic nature of man, he started to exploit nature. He thought that the environment has not any intrinsic value like him.

II. DOES EARTH HAVE A RIGHT?

Earth rights can be seen first and foremost as articulating an ethical demand. They are not principally legal or proto-legal, and even though they have inspired legislation, this is a further fact rather than their constitutive character. Roderick Nash supports this statement in his historical survey of the origin and philosophical development of earth rights. In particular, Nash credits the natural law tradition as the foundation of modern rights discourse.

Here are the important points of engagement between the rights of the earth, animals, and humans. In the context of the 'Bolivian declaration', "the central tension is what is meant by the term nature"?

It has been addressed that 'Berry offers a starting point in proposing a flexible and complementary understanding of rights'.

He notes that "all rights in the non-living form are role-specific; rights in the living form are species-specific and limited." Thus, Berry expressed that "rivers have river rights", "birds have bird rights", and "humans have human rights".

III. WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT?

We care about the environment due to some practical and emotional reasons. People like to enjoy some time with the environment. We should protect the habitats, species because the earth is beautiful and valuable for us. The environment is destroyed by the exploitation of natural resources. We need environment for many purposes like medicine, food, materials, fuel etc. and also there are many natural materials which we have not yet discovered. It has seen the bio-geo-chemical cycles are very important for human being. By destruction of natural resources, we are damaging ourselves. There are many important resources, which we don't know, so we must preserve the bio-diversity as much as possible. Hence it is difficult to relaunch many species on planet, once the habitat is damaged.

IV. SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS RAISED HERewith

- How far we prepared to protect environmental future degradation effect? In practice and theory?
- Is there any effect for the loss of species? Why?
- Is it justified to construct dams for the purpose of water supply to people by destroying many plants and animals?
- Is there any matter to prioritise to other's life than humans?

V. ANTHROPOCENTRISM

Anthropocentrism can be said to be the default Western view towards environmental ethics, given the fact that much of Western philosophy is dominated by the perspective that only humans have intrinsic value and so are the only subjects of moral concern. Many theorists of environmental ethics have been accused of working within that traditional framework, and not having a sufficiently "environmental" focus. Under this view, all duties toward the environment are merely indirect duties, contingently based on the presumption that the environment is instrumentally valuable to humans.

It is an attractive view to many because it does not necessitate a major shift from traditional Western moral theory. However, it is said that anthropocentrism fails to capture the essential nature of what we hope for in an environmental ethic.

VI. FORMS OF ANTHROPOCENTRISM

Anthropocentrism has many forms, i.e. cosmological, teleological, epistemological, moral, etc.

- *Cosmological:* Cosmological anthropocentrism emphasises that humans are at the centre of the universe. It has put man in the centre stage of global living as a privileged one over others.
- *Teleological:* Teleological anthropocentrism believes that the world's existence is owed to humans because of their intellect and planning. The evolution of animals and plants is only beneficial to humans. Humans are the pinnacle of evolution and the rightful owners of everything that lives.
- *Epistemological:* it means man is unique because he is not only self-conscious but has rational power. Since he has 'reason' played an important role in the hierarchy of species.
- *Moral:* Moral anthropocentrism is the belief that humans are the only beings with intrinsic value and that other beings are only valuable if they serve humans. It's a human-centred point of view that's been developed throughout history and is rooted in Western and Eastern philosophical traditions.

VII. DEFECTS IN ANTHROPOCENTRISM

Many people criticise anthropocentrism from a theoretical perspective for not according to our considered judgments. Anthropocentrism fails from a theoretical perspective; it can be criticised for being "speciesist", or giving unjustified preference for humans. Without a principled justification for the otherwise arbitrary preference for humans, anthropocentrism is based on a metaphysical divide that is difficult to establish.

Furthermore, from a practical perspective, it is unhelpful in guiding action. If we consider the practical projects that can be associated with the anthropocentric, shallow ecological perspective, we quickly see that the view is of little use. When contemplating how we should deal with the problems of resource depletion, pollution reduction, water clean-up, etc. we typically do not have the foresight we need to avoid or solve these problems.

Consider global warming, radioactivity exposure, untreated waste from big cities ending up in drinking water, and other environmental problems we face; they tend to be the results of practices that fulfill immediate human interests (for industry, financial gain, convenience, etc), but which ultimately are not successfully anthropocentric. To create more productive decisions, we should consider the wider effects of our actions.

Anthropocentrism is far more than an academic exercise of debating the dominant cultural motifs of placing humans at the center of material and ethical concerns. The dominant beliefs, values, and attitudes guiding human action constitute a significant problem in the present context.

The meaning of *Anthropos* in the center is the displacement over time. In history, it is innumerable facts but might be grounded into two categories: - the ideational and the material dislocations of non-humans i.e. sub-humans and wild nature – earthly landscape and human mindscape alike.

The ideational displacement has been instigated through the Western cognitive framework that has regularly inquired into the nature of the human. Here one question arises - how are humans different from all other life forms? The dominant ideas of the Western traditions have primarily not only illustrious man and his attributes but also made non-humans deficient by comparison.

The hierarchical notions have been the material displacement of the other-than i.e. Civilised Human World. The world, we live in, is a series of civilization empires and societies that have destroyed forests, grasslands, deprived wetlands, diverted and controlled rivers, dominated-lakes and overall, roundly used nature for material ends. Wild animals have been killed and enslaved. Some humans have been treated as animals, sub-humans, or savages. In brief, wild nature, wildlife, and inferior people have been subjected to incremental and large-scale physical dislocations.

VIII. CONCLUSION

All forms of anthropocentrism are framed on egotistical ideology. Because in every form, the concept of value is only about humans. The discussion is all about human reason and the human soul. As the term *Anthropos* meant for humans only have intrinsic value it seems egoistic by nature. It has been criticized for the non-humans who are part of the nature. As an important part of nature, they tortured the non-human beings who have only instrumental value. As a moral being, he should possess moral awareness for the environment.



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