



THE ROLE OF SPIRITUAL AND CONSCIOUS ASPECTS OF HUMAN ESSENCE IN ECOLOGY

***Baharyan F.F., ** Sargsyan A. A.**

***Armenian State University of Economics
American University of Armenia (AUA)

***Summary:** This article is about how the change of the people on the level of their consciousness and spirit will ultimately bring to a change of a whole system, mainly concerning the environment and people's interpretations of the environment. The work concentrates on different contributing aspects that create the essence of humans and aims to reveal the needed changes in those fundamental aspects. The expected outcomes are demonstrated, philosophical analysis of the situation is presented, which follows the goal of profound examination with expectance of pinpointing the basic causes of the current situation in ecology. The work integrates the ideas from ecology, philosophy, environmental ethics and psychology as well as some moral norms and tries to discuss this amalgamation in a proficient and reasoned way, by unleashing some invisible links between these spheres which can be the keys to solving some major ecological problems.*

***Key words:** spiritual ecology, environment, human essence, ego, moral values and norms, consciousness, spirit, nature, environmental problems, meanings, interpretation of reality.*

Environment is an inseparable part of human lives and the tremendous problems concerning it are great threats to humanity and the world generally. The current ecological reality is very upsetting: global warming, ozone layer holes, air pollution, deforestation, and this list is quite long. These are great problems which require some quick solutions. For finding solutions we should first understand the causes: a key step in many algorithms aimed to solve a problem. When people come to the point of dealing with this abominable situation, that is the perpetual deterioration of environment, they mainly fail. They fail greatly because of the collapses of values. Many businessmen get huge incomes from different factories, mines or other spheres which contribute to the pollution of the environment. At the same time, they do realize the evilness of their actions. However, they do not stop doing what they do. And the reason of this is deep inside their soul and consciousness. So, the main cause of the environmental problems is not the factories or mines but is the human essence. Human essence, people's conscience and consciousness are the roots of the environmental problems [1]. Thus, the solution should be started right from there.

The egocentric essence of human beings, that make them always lean towards the side they get instantaneous benefit from, is one great aspect which brings to different environmental problems. People just think about getting their benefit as soon as possible and do not think about the consequences in a long run. People have just become blind followers of materialistic values [1]. This way of thinking just contributes to the multiplication of the number of industrial organizations, like factories and mines, which destroy the environment. Take the example of cars, which bring problems not only on the level of manufacturing but also when used. According to OICA, the number of cars increases year by year across the world (www.oica.net). This talks about the fact that environment is overlooked by people. For raising the importance of the ecology in humans and for making people more cognizant towards the environmental questions, some amendments are needed in the spirits and

consciousness of people. They should feel that importance by their spirit and do shape their realities based on some environmental-moral norms and rules of ethics.

Spiritual ecology is the basic concept which needs to be taken into consideration for solving so many environmental problems we have today. If the system of the ethics and values changes, then the whole world system will change. Since there have not been any indispensable changes in ethics and value systems without some internal change in people's intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections and convictions, we need to start from reshaping human essence [2]. In a psychological manner, if the values in people's superego (in other words, the bank of values) is changed, their ego will no longer be able to detour from the right way. If people start to be caring on their sub-conscious and unconscious levels, their consciousness will automatically change to the direction of the formers. But a question arises, how they should be changed. Of course, this is quite difficult process and may require several generations to accomplish, but it is achievable, and it needs to be achieved. First, knowledge about the situation should be given to people in a right and authentic way. If people start to hear about the ecological situation in a regular basis, this will penetrate up to their sub-conscious levels. Then the realization of responsibility would raise. As a matter of fact, for realizing the problems and responsibility one should first understand the meaning of ecology, which is found not only in the courses described by ecological labels, but also in other various fields [2]. So, for accomplishing this aim a multifaceted and profound educational system is needed, which will enlighten the overshadowed links between ecology and many other fields. From very early ages, people should be taught that they are responsible for their environment and they should care about it. They should have the profound understanding of the concept of ecology. This small idea injected into the minds of people will eventually turn into values, values that they will pursue during their lives, since they will become a part of their essence. Nature is inherently a part of humans and humans are a part of nature. This bond has some special meaning. People cannot keep destroying something that is closely related to themselves. This itself contradicts to the essence of people, who always seek their welfare. This can just mean that people, across many decades, have lost the feeling of this bond with nature. To reinforce that feeling, people should find harmony in spiritual level. In other words, people should introspect, and do it very deeply, so that they are able to reach the very bottom of their spirit and find the nature in themselves. This process is not a very easy task, and for different individuals it can be achieved differently; and the only one who knows how to reach it is the individual himself. After feeling this bond, people will perceive nature as a part of themselves in a level of sub-consciousness. This will affect their every action; and the egocentrism present in human nature will then be useful since the understanding of ego will also include the nature.

The change in human essence and consciousness can also be viewed from another perspective, that is the change of interpretations and establishment of some moral norms. People do not live in the reality, they live in the meaning of the reality which they interpret, and which is unique for every person [3]. In these unique meanings, the role of diverse phenomena is different. Thus, for solving the ecological problems, the interpretation of ecology and nature and therefore their meanings and importance should be changed among people. This change should most probably be made by some moral rules and norms. For solving the ecological problems, people should start to feel some limits and borders. This feeling will eventually give birth to the realization that there are some borders and limits that should not be crossed. This interpretation can be achieved by means of some moral norms, regarding ecology. Nietzsche thinks that moral values restrict the way nature can express itself [3]. However, the expression of the nature is revealed in the consciousness of humans, who are the ones who set the boundaries for the expression. Even without the existence of norms regarding the nature and ecology, the expression of nature is not absolute. Thus, moral norms just set reasonable and sane boundaries on humans' interpretations, consciousness and therefore behavior. Humans are also a part of nature, and an idea may follow that since the norms restrict humans who are a part of nature, they indirectly restrict the nature. However, nature is much more compound entity, and it is not right to generalize the ideas applied on one particle of it to the whole system. So, establishment of the right

moral values and norms, will put people on some reasonable limits and will guarantee the change of the interpretation of nature, for the sake of the good ecological status. At the same time the existence of norms will not in essence restrict the nature or its expression, as it may be thought.

Having talked about all of this, an intuitive abstract formula can be represented, to make this system of interconnected notions be more comprehensible. Let ψ be the measure of cognizance and morality, τ be the measure of technological advancement, σ be the measure of the quality of education, be the measure of other influencing factors (the concepts which are not related to the main context of this paper), and ε be the measure of the ecological welfare. Then,

$$\varepsilon = \omega \frac{\psi^{\frac{1}{\tau}} \sigma}{1 + \tau}$$

where all variables are within the interval(0,1).

From here we can see, that the state of environment and ecological sustainability is proportional to the quality of education, and level of cognizance and morality, which can become greater and greater alongside with the technological advancement. On the other side, technological advancement can contribute not only in a good way. In many cases, due to the technological advancement new ways of damaging are found. The notion of the technologies is given a special emphasis within this context because nowadays technologies have penetrated through various levels of our lives, and in some manner have become a part of our consciousness. In other words, in many cases technologies act as a magnifier for people's consciousness, by enhancing the influence of its and giving it more space to augment. However, as already mentioned, their role is not absolute, and they can also bring a lot of damage to the environment. Anyways, they have an idiosyncratic meaning in today's reality and should be taken into consideration for most of the cases.

To sum up, it is quite intuitive now that if we want to solve many environmental and ecological problems, we should start from the root, from solving problems inside us, in our spirits and consciousnesses. A great paradigm shift is needed, which will change the basic perceptions and interpretations of ours at least towards the environment. Change it in the way, that people start to give as much importance to the environment and ecology as they deserve. If we want to see a shift towards finding solutions for ecological problems, we should first see change in the meanings of reality for different people. Not only the meaning of reality but also the meaning of the components in that reality should be amended. This change of meanings and interpretations will be followed by the change of the levels of consciousness and the moral values, which in its turn will prepare a ground for dealing with the problems. If the environment of our spirit and mind is pellucid, the environment surrounding us will surely be clear, protected and in a good condition...

References

1. Leopold A. *A Sand County Almanac, With Essays on Conservation From Round River*. New York: Ballantine, 1970.
2. Vaughan-Lee L. *Spiritual Ecology*. // Seven Pillars House of Wisdom, 2009, August.
3. Drenthen M. *The Paradox of Environmental Ethics. Nietzsche's View of Nature and the Wild*. // Environmental Ethics, 1999.