

AN ANALYSIS OF THE VALUE DEBATE
IN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study is to give a general understanding about the value approaches in environmental ethics. I will analyze non-anthropocentric theories based on intrinsic value and pragmatist approach to values and evaluate their advantages and disadvantages separately. In conclusion, I will argue that neither of them provides a comprehensive and coherent suggestion at the same time, because environmental problems stem from a different reason than the ones that they pursue.

Keywords: value, intrinsic, moral, environmental, ethic

ÖZ

ÇEVRE ETİĞİNDEKİ DEĞER TARTIŞMASININ BİR ÇÖZÜMLEMESİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, çevre etiğindeki değer kavramına ilişkin farklı yaklaşımları anlamaktır. Bu bağlamda, kendinde değer üzerine kurulmuş insan-merkezci olmayan teorileri ve değer kavramının faydacı anlayış içerisindeki yerini çözümleyip; her ikisinin avantajlı ve dezavantajlı yanlarını değerlendireceğim. Sonuç kısmındaysa, her iki yaklaşımın da çevre sorunlarına aynı anda kapsamlı ve tutarlı bir öneri getiremediğini, çünkü çevre sorunlarının bu yaklaşımların hedeflediğinden daha farklı bir sebebi olduğunu iddia edeceğim.

Anahtar Kelimeler: değer, özsel, ahlak, çevresel, etik

To my beloved family, friends and niece/nephew who is about to come into the world

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There are lots of different environmental arguments that fall under different dualities such as intrinsic value/instrumental value, conservationism/preservationism, anthropocentrism/non-anthropocentrism, objectivism/subjectivism, individualism/holism etc., however, they are all searching for answers to following questions: Should we use the environment for our well-being? If the answer is yes, then how far should we go? I think the reasonable reply to the first question would be yes, since otherwise human beings would cease to exist – in a way, it helps to overcome our problems. But, as far as the second one, no definite answer yet to be given.

I think invading the line between consumption and overconsumption is what creates environmental problems and an environmental ethic must give a vivid explanation for why one should seek for satisfaction of his/her individual desires; but also, should be careful not to destroy all other living or non-living beings along the way.

I take the debate over values as a crucial element in this discussion, therefore my purposes here are to give an understanding of intrinsic value, since it is at the center of the disagreement, to see why and how it cannot come up with a master principle and, lastly, why the most powerful alternative – pragmatism based on value pluralism – does not stand a chance to replace it.

As doing so, I should elaborate on what the concept of intrinsic value is and how it is used in ethics before our environmental concerns are piled up. Thus, in the Chapter 2, I will first present the nature of the concept to the extent that it makes it clear what it means to have intrinsic value, what limits it has and how it is classified according to the features that it possesses.

After that, I will try to discuss the usage of the concept in the course of traditional ethics starting from the Ancient Greek and ending in the modern times, namely virtue ethics, utilitarianism and deontology; but only briefly. My main purpose in this chapter is to be able to see the roots of the concept as it is used in environmental ethics.

Then, I will move onto a more specific subject and examine the applicability of intrinsic value to four monistic and non-anthropocentric theories. Here, it is going to be a gradual extension of morality from human beings to non-human beings as I will be discussing the theories of Peter Singer, Tom Regan, Paul Taylor and J. Baird Callicott, respectively. My reason for choosing these four philosophers is that their theories are the most widely accepted ones under their respective labels. Singer is an extensionist whose ideas are influenced by the utilitarian thought. Regan is an extensionist, too, but his argument is grounded in the deontology. Both Singer and Regan defend that only a certain part of animal kingdom should be accepted to the moral family. Paul Taylor, on the other hand, intends to widen the moral circle to all individual living beings and constructs his biocentrism accordingly. And last but not the least, Callicott offers ecocentrism which is a holistic understanding of morality unlike the other three individualistic thinkers. Through the examination of these four theories, I think, a wide area of the usage of intrinsic value in non-anthropocentrism can be covered. I will argue in this section that individualistic approaches are not suitable for our relationships with the environment while the holistic approaches are not comprehensive enough to the extent that they do not regard natural values other than intrinsic value to be a part of our decision processes.

In the Chapter 4, I will explore the counter arguments of Bryan G. Norton and Peter Wenz to monism, particularly to Callicott's monism, which shape the basic arguments of environmental pragmatism especially of Norton's. Here, I will speak of Wenz's classification of pluralisms – minimal, moderate and extreme – first. Then, Norton's objection to moderate moral pluralism – or theoretical monism as Norton calls it – will take place to show the insufficiency of monistic theories.

So, in the chapter 5, it will be pragmatist thought under the microscope. I am going to discuss their approach to the concept of value in general through the debate between objectivism and subjectivism that will be touched on in the fourth chapter, as well. Environmental pragmatism is influenced by five pragmatists: Charles S. Peirce, John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, Josiah Royce and William James. Although they have their differences, the fundamentals of their theories are alike. And in the field, it is generally the fundamentals of pragmatism that is referenced. So, I chose Dewey, the most cited pragmatist in environmental ethics because of his value theory, to explain value concept in pragmatism. I will try to use his rejection of ends/means and object/subject dualities to understand his point of view about the concept of value.

And finally, the Chapter 6 will be reserved for my own approach to the two questions that I stated in the first paragraph of this chapter over Norton's example – the environmentalists' dilemma. I will defend that under the current economic system, that is capitalism, human beings are pushed to not only use the environment but also make profit from it. And, any theory of the environmental ethics that aims to answer the question "how far should we go?" must exclude capitalism and its most basic form; money, because the very existence of money contradicts with purposes of environmental ethics. I will use Karl Marx's well-known study, *Capital*, to explain why the contradiction occurs. First, I will discuss the concept of exchange value. We will see that exchange value is independent of the commodity that is exchanged and therefore, eventually, leads to a reduction of all values and qualities that the commodity has to a third concept: abstract human labor. Then, I will elaborate on how the abstract human labor materializes and take the body of an object. At the third step,

we will see that the materialized human labor becomes the universal equivalent – that is gold – in all exchanges. And lastly, the money-form will replace with gold. Through the process of generation of money-form, it will be evident that all the qualities and values – *e. g.* intrinsic, instrumental etc. – lose their forms and reduce to a mere quantity of the money-form. I will also maintain that the capitalist system is not the only reason for the “bad attitude” of humans toward nature, but the system makes it impossible to dig into the problems of anthropocentrism, the human will to dominate nature, because it also causes the capitalists to dominate other humans as Hayward correctly points out.¹

¹ Hayward discusses the human dominance over a group of humans by reference to their attitudes toward the environment, though. He thinks that only a group of people damage the environment in serious and unacceptable way while the others condemn their actions. See Hayward, 1997, pp. 57-58.

CHAPTER 2

INTRINSIC VALUE: WHAT IS IT? WHAT HAS IT?

Discussions on intrinsic value often seek for answers to two basic questions eventually: What is intrinsic value and what has intrinsic value? Chronologically, in the history of philosophy, searching an answer to the latter precedes the former.² But I will reverse the order and start with the more fundamental question of what intrinsic value is.

According to the online dictionary of Meriam – Webster, “intrinsic” has its roots in the Latin word *intrinsecus* which means “inwardly”.³ In the philosophic discourse, the word is used in a quite same meaning that is “for its own sake” or “in its own right”.

Aristotle, in *Nicomachean Ethics*, speaks of non-derivational *good* as intrinsic *goodness*.⁴ According to him, a derivational good is something that derives its good either from another derivational good or from a non-derivational good. It can be thought that derivational goods make up a pyramid of ends which eventually lead to a non-derivational good like health in medicine or victory in military science.⁵ This kind of goodness can be seen as *intrinsic* goodness in Aristotle’s thought.

² See <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic/index.html#ref-4>.

³ See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intrinsic>.

⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094a.

⁵ Aristotle’s own examples. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1094a.

Correspondingly, there is a tendency to understand intrinsic value in contrast to extrinsic value or instrumental value. Callicott cites Richard Sylvan and Val Plumwood:

Some values are instrumental, i.e., a means or an instrument to something else that has value, and some are not, but are non-instrumental or intrinsic. Some values at least *must* be intrinsic, some objects valuable in themselves and not as means to other ends.⁶

The founder of the Deep Ecology Movement, Arne Naess, seems to agree with this standpoint as he comparatively defines intrinsic value with instrumental value in the first point of the Eight Points of the Movement: “The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.”⁷

Dale Jamieson examines this justification by calling it “the regress argument” after dividing intrinsic value into four categories whose classification resembles to John O’Neill’s.⁸

The first sense Jamieson sees intrinsic value is as an end that the utility of all other things is determined by this end. This is the sense that is described above. O’Neill, in his paper “The Varieties of Intrinsic Value”, classifies this type as the first sense, too – though he classifies intrinsic value under three categories unlike Jamieson.⁹ As for the second sense, Jamieson says that intrinsic value is used as “a ticket that admits something to the moral community.”¹⁰ Singer’s approach can exemplify this sense which is to be discussed in the next section. The third sense is related to G. E. Moore’s

⁶ Callicott, 1999, p. 241. Emphasis added by Callicott.

⁷ Naess, 1995, p. 68.

⁸ Jamieson, 2008, pp. 68-75.

⁹ O’Neill, 2003, p. 131.

¹⁰ Jamieson, 2008, p. 70.

definition – which will be mentioned, after discussing the regress argument in the next paragraph – and it is the second definition of O’Neill’s classification. “[...] in this sense the value of something depends entirely on what inheres in the thing itself.”¹¹ It should be noted that value in this sense depends on the non-relational properties of the thing. However, Jamieson states that someone could argue that this type of intrinsic value might be attributed to the relation itself such as the experience of Grand Canyon. Although this experience is valuable for the subject and eventually involves both a subject and an object, it is arguable that “the value is intrinsic to the experience, even though the experience itself is a relation.”¹² The forth and the last sense of intrinsic value excludes valuers. Jamieson points out the difference of the third and the forth senses as it follows: “In this fourth sense of intrinsic value, relationships or things that stand in relationships can be intrinsically valuable, so long as the relationship is not one of “being valued by.””¹³ O’Neill classifies this one as a part of his discussion of meta-ethics and uses it as a synonym with “objective value”.¹⁴

Under the light of these four senses, according to Jamieson, the regress argument has two soft spots. First one is the duality of intrinsic value and instrumental value. He claims that there are things that do not neatly fall into either category – that is valuable either intrinsically or instrumentally.

For example, I value the photograph of my mother because it represents my mother. I value the tail-wagging of the dog next door because it reminds me of the cheerful exuberance of my childhood dog, Frisky. I value my lover’s smile because it embodies her kindness and generosity. I value each step of the ascent of Mount Whitney because it is part of the valuable experience of climbing the mountain. While there is much to say about these examples, the important point for present purposes is that none of them seems simply to be a case of instrumental or intrinsic value.¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 71.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ O’Neill, 2003, p. 132. Callicott also uses this terminology to describe deontological understanding of intrinsic value. See Callicott, 1999, pp. 249-251.

¹⁵ Jamieson, 2008, p. 72.

The second criticism of his to the regress argument is that there is no necessity for the existence of intrinsic value if the chain of instrumentality is actually a closed circle.

On this picture, A is instrumentally valuable because it conduces to B; B is instrumentally valuable because it conduces to C; and C is instrumentally valuable because it conduces to A. If the world were like this, someone might want to say that the entire complex A–B–C is of intrinsic value, but this would invite the further question of how an item could be both of instrumental value and a constituent part of what is of intrinsic value.¹⁶

Although Jamieson finds the regress argument not persuasive enough, he also adds that, even if the justification would be a proper one, it only proves the existence of intrinsic value in the first sense.¹⁷

Another effectively used justification of intrinsic value is “the isolation test” of G. E. Moore.¹⁸ Moore basically isolates the thing in question from its current conditions and asks whether it is valuable by itself or not. If the answer is “yes” then the thing is determined to be intrinsically valuable. This test searches for an intrinsic value in the fourth sense of Jamieson’s and the third sense of O’Neill’s classification, because if the thing has intrinsic value in this sense, its value becomes subject-independent or objective. Perhaps, the most remembered projection of this test in environmental ethics is “the last man argument” by Routley. The argument is fairly simple:

Suppose that Fred is the last sentient creature on the planet and he knows that, for whatever reason, sentient life will never again appear on this planet. Just before exiting the scene, Fred destroys all of the planet’s geology and biology. What he destroys is of great beauty and majesty, but he defends his action by saying that it doesn’t matter, since it will never again be appreciated or valued

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 72-73. Anthony Weston makes a similar objection in his famous paper “Beyond Intrinsic Value: Pragmatism in Environmental Ethics”. See Weston, 1996, p. 293.

¹⁷ O’Neill also makes the distinction between the different senses of intrinsic value in his paper, but he discusses the situation over the duality of subjectivism and objectivism. See O’Neill, 2003, pp. 132-134.

¹⁸ Moore, 1993, p. 142.

by anyone. Do we accept Fred's justification, or do we think that what he did was wrong?¹⁹

The example is originally designed to emphasize human chauvinism in the traditional way of ethical thinking.²⁰ But one of the related debates following this example is the objectivity of values in nature as I stated above. I believe we can classify arguments under three main approaches regarding the example: objectivism, non-anthropocentric subjectivism²¹ and the approach of environmental pragmatism which is generally accepted as subjectivism which, I think, would be a wrong label for the reasons I will explain momentarily. The first two positions hold that Fred's action would be wrong and try to find grounds for their assertions while the last one questions the reliability of the argument itself. Objectivism defends the idea that there is an intrinsic value in the non-human world independent of a valuing subject and it should be protected, hence, Fred's action would be wrong. Non-anthropocentric subjectivism claims that although there is no value independent of a valuer, the existence of valued objects is still a necessity for the occurrence of values – intrinsic value in our case – and should be protected by Fred for their own sakes.

Jamieson criticizes the last man argument from a subjectivist perspective, as well. But his opinion on the example shows similarities with the pragmatists for he finds this kind of justification unreliable:

For we who are contemplating the world without valuers are ourselves valuers, and indeed we are contemplating the loss of something that we find very valuable. Even if it is stipulated that we will never experience this world in either its preserved or its destroyed state, we are already experiencing these

¹⁹ Jamieson, 2008, p. 74.

²⁰ Routley, 1973, p. 207.

²¹ By this, I specifically mean Callicott's understanding of intrinsic value. He explicitly states that "intrinsic value is not wholly objective" (p. 260), in the sense that a valuer actualizes the potentiality of intrinsic value of the valued thing. I believe Callicott's concerns over anthropocentrism makes him to give such an explanation, so I called it non-anthropocentric subjectivism. This is a very similar understanding of Rolston's intrinsic value who defends that "intrinsic objective value is, valued *by me*, but *for* what is *in itself*." Yet, Rolston sees himself as an objectivist. See Callicott, 1999, p. 260 and Rolston, 1982, p. 146. I should also note that Callicott can easily be labelled as an objectivist – like Jim Cheney labels him – but I think it would miss the point that Callicott chooses, so to say, "partial objectivism" only because he tries to avoid anthropocentrism. See Cheney, 1991, p. 318.

states in our imagination, and it seems plausible that this is what governs our response to this thought-experiment.²²

Lastly, I will quote from Anthony Weston to exemplify the pragmatist approach to the last man example but more to be discussed about environmental pragmatism in later sections:

What would it actually be like, after all, to value a conscious experience for itself, “in absolute isolation”? Clearly it could qualify only in so far as it approximates the Cartesian self-sufficiency of dreams and visions: it could not matter whether the experience is connected to anything else in the world. But it is not obvious that this self-sufficiency makes an experience good at all, let alone good intrinsically – and the reasons are precisely the considerations that the self-sufficiency criterion requires us to rule out. What can exist and attract in isolation from everything else may be, for just that reason, *bad*: like the dream world of the drug user, it seduces us away from the complexity of our lives, substitutes solipsism for sociality, divides certain parts of our lives from the rest. We should prefer a conception of values which ties them to their contexts and insists not on their separability but on their relatedness and interdependence.²³

Now, I believe the question “what is intrinsic value?” is sufficiently discussed to make connections with some of its metaphysical and epistemological presumptions and explanations. Searching for an answer to the other question – what has intrinsic value – will help us to understand how to place the concept in a moral theory and I would like to search it while discussing moral theories of Ancient Greeks, Bentham and Kant.

Dale Jamieson replies the question of how intrinsic value is used in moral discourse by finding a resemblance with the use of gold in monetary transactions.

Intrinsic value is the “gold standard” of morality. Just as gold is what is of ultimate monetary value, so what is of intrinsic value is what is of ultimate

²² Jamieson, 2008, p. 74.

²³ Weston, 1996, p. 294. I should also add that, unlike most pragmatists, Weston states that environmental pragmatism is a subjectivist approach. I will elaborate on this point while discussing pragmatist value theories, as well.

moral value. In the case of both money and morality, other things obtain their value by their relations to what is of ultimate value.²⁴

The attribution of intrinsic value to entities or relations, in the above sense, is a way to ground morality. And non-anthropocentric theories are mainly based on this ground. Tom Regan defines an inherent worth for higher animals – namely mammals – and extends the moral circle accordingly, while Peter Singer claims that all sentient beings possess intrinsic value and deserve moral consideration for it.²⁵ On the other hand, J. Baird Callicott ascribes intrinsic value to the wholes like ecosystems. But one thing that is common for all these philosophers is that they use intrinsic value as a recognition mark for an end that its good should be pursued, at least, for itself.

Raphael Demos, in his review paper “Plato’s Idea of the Good”, maintains that “in discussing the Good, we are not talking of moral virtue; the Good is value in general, of which moral virtue is only a particular instance. We are dealing with the theory of value, not with ethics.”²⁶ In their book *Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy*, Callicott and Frodeman confirms the interpretation of Demos by demonstrating how Plato identifies the supreme human good under three headings:

[...] first and foremost, virtuous qualities of character (the good of the personal soul), physical health and well-being (the good of the personal body), and a just and well-organized society (the good of the body politic). These in turn “participate” in the cosmic Form of the Good, the general principle of order and harmony in the universe.²⁷

²⁴ Jamieson, 2008, p. 69.

²⁵ It should be noted that Singer seems to avoid using the term “intrinsic value” in his earlier works – even though his standpoint was never far from the concept – but, according to an interview published in the *Journal of Animal Issues* by the end of the 20th century, he explicitly embraces the concept by saying “Yes, for me sentient beings have intrinsic value. Anything that is not a sentient being can only have instrumental value; but it may have very great instrumental value of course.” See Russell and Singer, 1997, p. 43.

²⁶ Demos, 1937, p. 245.

²⁷ Callicott and Frodeman, 2008, p. xxx.

Then, I think it can be said that Plato draws a schema of extrinsic and intrinsic goods which all end up in “the cosmic Form of the Good” – this thought is in line with the regress argument and the below quotation from Demos’ review, one of the first usages of the concept of being intrinsic shows itself in relation to the means-ends distinction:

Analogous to the distinction between the immediate and the abstract good, or between good as effect and good as cause, is that between good as means and good as end. There are things which are sought for the sake of something else; and there are things on account of which other things are sought (Phil. 53e, Rep. 375b). The first represents the class of instrumental goods. When one object has value as a means for another object, and that for a third and so on, there must be something which has value in itself. There can be no infinite regress (Lysis 219C). Unless there are intrinsic goods, there can be no instrumental goods either.²⁸

Here, it should be noted that what Demos calls as “intrinsic goods” can be any activity reached through reason – that is *a priori*. He immediately puts in the picture the relationship between a statesman and a general in a war situation as an example to clarify the role of reason:

The military officer knows how war may be waged, but it is the task of the statesman to decide whether war *should* be waged. Indeed, military science is a servant of political science in a double sense. The statesman both chooses the ends and initiates the activity of the general (Pol. 304-5). In sum, the statesman contemplates the Good; the general, the means to the Good.²⁹

Greeks search for an answer to the following question that can be considered as their ethical thinking: How should one live? It is obvious that Plato – and Socrates – answered the question as “in accordance with reason”. Aristotle – while not disclaiming the role of reason – pursued for a life that is objectively desirable, which fulfills one’s proper function.³⁰ And, as the successor of Plato, he revealed the

²⁸ Demos, 1937, p. 246.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Jamieson, 2008, p. 86.

metaphysical implications of Plato's ethics. The chief emphasis was still on the mean-end distinction:

He [Aristotle] held that, although ethics was the fruit of philosophical reflection on practical wisdom, the principles that grounded our ethics must be sought among the cosmic "causes" – especially the final cause, which pertains to the ultimate end, goal, or purpose.³¹

And Aristotle thought that supreme good for the case of humans is *eudaimonia*. It is often ineffectively translated as "happiness". But, in direct translation, *eu-* means well and *daimon* means spirit. So, a more accurate translation would be *well-spirited* even though it cannot still catch the spirit of its Greek origin.³² Then, following from Callicott and Frodeman, the purpose of all human actions is directed towards to the good condition of soul which can be reached by an alliance of reason and animal desires. Aristotle thought that our animal desires pull us to the extremes such as gluttony and abstemiousness or fury and diffidence. Reason helps us to find the means of these extremes. By this analysis,

Aristotle derives the cardinal virtues commonly recognized among his contemporaries: Temperance is the mean between eating and drinking too little (abstemiousness and teetotalism) and too much (gluttony and inebriation); courage is the mean between cowardice and rashness; generosity is the mean between stinginess and prodigality; and so on. Thus, a functionally good human being is a morally good human being, from an Aristotelian point of view, as well as a happy human being.³³

So, the cardinal virtues – temperance, generosity, courage etc. – are intrinsically good and have their places in ethics through *eudaimonia*.

³¹ Callicott and Frodeman, 2008, p. xix. Brackets added.

³² Ibid., p. xxx.

³³ Ibid., p. xxxi.

In contrast to virtue ethics – that all actions are directed towards to promote virtues in the self – utilitarianism only cares about the consequences of actions. Modern utilitarianism has its roots in hedonism. In the fifth century BCE, Greek philosophers constructed a theory which sees pleasure as the end of all good human actions and pain as the end of all bad human actions. About a hundred years later, Epicurus and his followers classified pleasures as “purer” – unassociated with attendant pains such as lung cancer as a result of the pleasure of smoking tobacco - and “higher” – the pleasure of the soul in comparison to the body.³⁴

Stemming from the above thought – though for him there were no purer or higher pleasures – Jeremy Bentham constructed his theory of consequentialism which aims happiness as the result of each action for persons. According to this theory – *i.e.* act consequentialism – each action of humans results in either pleasure or pain aesthetically, intellectually, physically etc. And most importantly, pleasure and pain are the only two things that are intrinsically good and bad, respectively. So, the morally right action is the one that yields more pleasure than pain while the morally wrong one yields more pain than pleasure. But it should be noted that although modern utilitarianism calculates pleasure and pain individually, the total of this calculation is what it matters.³⁵ So, it is universal and gives equal consideration to all people. And as a result of this, according to Callicott and Frodeman, utilitarianism has had a central role in the development of animal ethics:

Because animals too can experience pleasure and pain, the utilitarian principle of equal consideration of equal interests requires, according to Peter Singer, that we give equal consideration to the interest that all animals—not just human animals—have in enjoying pleasure and, more especially, in living free of pain.³⁶

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ See <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/>.

³⁶ Callicott and Frodeman, 2008, p. xxxii.

The exact opposite of utilitarianism in modern times is Immanuel Kant's deontology which has no direct relation to Greek philosophy, unlike utilitarianism, but similar with both in the way that it integrates intrinsic value into morality. Deontology excludes the effects of consequences and concentrates on the moral maxims of actions.

According to Kant, subjects of morality are rational agents –in practice; human beings. And rational agents should act in accordance with the categorical imperative that applies to us unconditionally unlike conditional commands or hypothetical imperatives such as “if you want to get top grade in your class, study well” or “if you intend to undergo an aesthetic surgery, see doctor X”, respectively.³⁷

One of the famous formulations of Kant is “the formulation of universal law”. It basically says that “if you want to know whether some act is permissible, you should formulate the maxim on which you propose to act and see whether you could will this maxim to be universal law. If you cannot, then the act is impermissible.”³⁸ But the most important thing about these maxims is that they should be “willed”, not desired or wanted, since good will is intrinsically valuable unlike desiring or wanting which can only be instrumentally valuable to an end as means.³⁹ Perhaps, the distinction between ends and means is the most apparent in Kant's philosophy, which has also a big impact on the development of environmental ethics, considering the history of philosophy. Kant's “kingdom of ends” includes rational agency that only humans possess – it is also the fourth formulation – and according to Callicott and Frodeman, the concept of intrinsic value in environmental ethics can be traced back to Kant. They explain the impact as below:

Because rational beings possess intrinsic value, they deserve to be treated as ends in themselves, according to Kant, not as means only to the ends of others. Human beings routinely treat nonhuman organisms as mere means, as “natural resources.” Some environmental philosophers think that one way to

³⁷ Jamieson, 2008, pp. 92-93.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

³⁹ See <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic/index.html#ref-4>.

expand Kant's "kingdom of ends"—so that it would include some nonhuman organisms—is to find some property other than reason on which intrinsic value might supervene.⁴⁰

The two leading philosophers of this thought in environmental ethics are Tom Regan and Paul Taylor. Basically, Regan claims that all "subjects of a life" should be considered as ends who possess inherent value – he extends it to mammals – while Taylor thinks that all individuals that have a "good of their own" should be under such consideration – Taylor's definition includes all living beings.

Having mentioned of these milestones of ethics in the Western tradition, as it can be seen in what Taylor, Regan and Singer targeted in their theories, the main objection of environmental ethics is to *anthropocentrism* of the Western tradition. Until the end of 19th century, ethical debates have considered only humans as morally considerable beings in nature. For example, Kant explicitly says that animals are only means to human ends and harming them is basically wrong because it shows that whoever harms another being is also capable of harming a person.

In one of the leading papers of the field, "Is There a Need for a New, Environmental Ethic?", Richard Routley aims to show some unfavorable features of the Western ethical systems from an environmental perspective, especially by reference to human chauvinism, and uses Passmore's classification to claim that it can either be a despotic or a perfector, but the position of humans in nature should be revised because of its anthropocentric assumptions.⁴¹

In another highly-cited paper of the field, "Historical Roots of Ecological Crisis", Lynn White Jr. asserts that the basic problems which end up with the ecological crisis are the result of a change from paganism to Christianity. White thinks that anthropocentric

⁴⁰ Callicott and Frodeman, 2008, p. xxxiii.

⁴¹ Routley, 1973, p. 206.

essence of Christianity – humans are the protector of the natural world and they can use it as they please – created a different, human-dominant world:

Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen. As early as the 2nd century both Tertullian and Saint Irenaeus of Lyons were insisting that when God shaped Adam he was foreshadowing the image of the incarnate Christ, the Second Adam. Man shares, in great measure, God's transcendence of nature. Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.⁴²

To sum up, it is evident that ethics, until the environmental crisis of the world, have been strongly anthropocentric and used the concept of intrinsic value to create an action set which is supported by the intrinsically valuable thing(s). So, environmental ethicists have been trying to change the anthropocentric essence of traditional theories by diversifying the usage of intrinsic value in their theories. In the next chapter, I will analyze some theories of non-anthropocentric thought based on intrinsic value of entities or relations and try to show how the concept of intrinsic value falls short, by itself, of constructing an environmental ethic.

⁴² White Jr., 1967, p. 1205.

CHAPTER 3

NON-ANTHROPOCENTRIC INTRINSIC VALUE THEORIES

As I will be discussing in this chapter, the established balance of intrinsic value and traditional ethics will cause some trouble while trying to broaden the attribution of intrinsic value to non-humans – anthropomorphism for Singer and Regan, an inequalitarian understanding of nature for Taylor and a slight deviation from non-anthropocentrism for Callicott.

3.1. The Role of Intrinsic Value in the Individualistic Consequentialism of Peter Singer

According to Singer, “the moral basis of equality among humans is not equality in fact, but the principle of equal consideration of interests, and it is this principle that, in consistency, must be extended to any *nonhumans* who have interests.”⁴³ When he uses the word “non-humans” he refers to non-human animals and I will touch on this below. But now, let me continue with the subject of equal consideration of interests.

Singer’s one and only aim is to extend the circle of moral consideration to non-human animals as opposed to speciesist views. And equal consideration of interests paves the way for him, since having an interest – in the full sense of the term – is only possible

⁴³ Emphasis added. Singer, 2003, p. 57.

if the being in question possesses a capacity for subjective experience or consciousness which eventually leads to the experiences of pain and pleasure. In his own words, “[...] consciousness, or the capacity for subjective experience, is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for having interests.”⁴⁴ From a utilitarian perspective, what he does is basically recognizing experience of pleasure and pain as an animal feature beyond humans and expanding the moral circle to animals who have self-interests. It should be noted that Singer’s ethics sets its egalitarian ground of consideration for sentient beings by accepting the utilitarian presumption that the experience of pleasure and pain is intrinsically valuable. So, I think Singer’s way of use of intrinsic value is the most primitive form in the field in the sense that he does not need to make big changes the way it is used before environmental ethics. And this seems like a consistent argument, especially from the standpoint of animal liberationism, but Singer disregards non-sentient animals, plants and all other living organisms as parts of moral community:

When we go beyond vertebrates to insects, crustaceans, mollusks and so on, the existence of subjective states becomes more dubious, and with very simple organisms it is difficult to believe that they could be conscious. As for plants, though there have been sensational claims that plants are not only conscious, but even psychic, there is no hard evidence that supports even the more modest claim.⁴⁵

In fact, he makes trees and cars equal in the below example:

While there may be a loose sense of the term – having an interest – in which we can say that it is in the interests of a tree to be watered, this attenuated sense of the term is not in the sense covered by the principle of equal consideration of interests. All we mean when we say that it is in the interests of a tree to be watered is that the tree needs water if it is to continue to live and grow normally; if we regard this as evidence that the tree has interests, we might almost as well say that it is in the interests of a car to be lubricated regularly because the car needs lubrication if it is to run properly.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

I think, from a non-anthropocentric perspective, Singer's suggestion is too narrow to be considered as an environmental ethic. As a matter of fact, Kenneth Goodpaster articulates this objection more elegantly than I can ever do. After stating that he fails to understand the necessity of sentience as a criterion for having moral considerability instead of using *life* for the basis of moral considerability, Goodpaster expresses his thoughts from a biological standpoint:

Biologically, it appears that sentience is an adaptive characteristic of living organisms that provides them with a better capacity to anticipate, and so avoid, threats to life. This at least suggests, though of course it does not prove, that the capacities to suffer and to enjoy are ancillary to something more important rather than tickets to considerability in their own right.⁴⁷

I should note that I have my reservations for attributing intrinsic value to life as an end, particularly in an individualistic context, but nevertheless, I share the idea that it is more persuasive to attribute intrinsic value to life rather than the experience of pleasure.

I believe there is another problematic side of drawing the line for moral consideration by sentience. I think attributing intrinsic value to sentience, if one looks from a different angle, is anthropomorphic. Human beings are the only species that we are certain of their capacity for moral life and Singer searches for a way to extend a similar moral capacity to non-humans by sentiency. However, to say that sentient animals should be considered as a member of moral community just because they can experience pain and pleasure is also to say that trees and other non-sentient life forms should be excluded from the moral community since they do not bear a resemblance to human beings. So, Singer seems to construct his ethic on human characteristics, and this is something that an *anti-speciesist* should like to avoid.

⁴⁷ Goodpaster, 1978, p. 316.

We can see a similar problem in the writings of an animal rights ethicist, Tom Regan, as well. And I will have a brief look at his individualistic deontology now.

3.2. The Role of Intrinsic Value in the Individualistic Deontology of Tom Regan

The difference of this position from the previous one is the rejection of consequentialism. Here, what matters as valuable is the individual organism itself rather than the states of affairs, such as sentience, it has.⁴⁸ Although Regan brings attention to the pain and suffering of animals through human actions, it should be noted that, he sees these sufferings as symptoms of a bigger systemic problem. In his own words: “They are symptoms and effects of the deeper, systematic wrong that allows these animals to be viewed and treated merely as means to human ends, as resources for us – indeed, as renewable resources.”⁴⁹

Inherent value of Regan is quite similar to Kant’s usage of intrinsic value as described above. For Kant, only persons – rational agents – should be treated as ends in themselves while all other things are mere means to their ends. But, Kant’s “persons” refers to the human beings who can make autonomously rational choices in a situation. It entails from the last two sentences that only such persons are morally considerable. Regan criticizes the extent of Kant’s implicit use of intrinsic value by stating that it fails to consider mentally disadvantaged children, late-term human fetuses, newborn children and humans who lack intellectual capacities as having rights to be treated morally.⁵⁰ And he suggests “subject-of-a-life criterion” instead of Kant’s “persons as rational agents” and defines it as the following:

⁴⁸ Palmer, 2003, p. 21.

⁴⁹ Regan, 2003, p. 97.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 82.

Not only are we all in the world, we all are aware of the world, and aware as well of what happens to us. Moreover, what happens to us whether to our body, or our freedom, or our life itself matters to us because it makes a difference to the quality and duration of our life, as experienced by us, whether anybody else cares about this or not. Whatever our differences, these are our fundamental similarities.⁵¹

It is obvious that Regan shares Singer's conviction that experiencing the world and feelings like pain and pleasure is not only a human feature. However, Regan places inherent value in the subject itself rather than its capability to experience. According to him, humans have moral rights not because of their species or because they are persons in Kantian sense – e.g. human infants are aware of their surroundings, but they are not persons.⁵² Humans have moral rights because they are “subjects of a life”. By this way, Regan includes some non-human animals to the moral community:

Are any other-than-human animals subjects-of-a-life? Yes, of course. All mammals and birds, most certainly. All fish, most probably. Why? Because [...] these beings satisfy the conditions of the kind of subjectivity in question. Like us, they are in the world, aware of the world, aware of what happens to them; and what happens to them (to their body, their freedom, their life) matters to them, whether anyone else cares about this or not. Thus do these beings share the rights we have mentioned, including the right to be treated with respect.⁵³

But Regan fails to construct a comprehensive environmental ethic like Singer by leaving a very large part of animals and all other species out of consideration. And more importantly, the criticism of anthropomorphism can be directed to Regan, as well. Regan states that his way of looking morality is “Kantian in spirit” but “not in letter.”⁵⁴ I believe what he means is that he thinks that Kant's perspective for morality is satisfying but its scope is too narrow. So, Regan gives a broader understanding of morality by changing the place of intrinsic value – inherent value in Regan – without becoming too distant to humanitarian notions like self-awareness and freedom. And I

⁵¹ Regan, 2013, p. 120.

⁵² Regan does not disregard the importance of the word person since it indicates something similar to what he thinks, but he also finds it too narrow to construct an ethic upon it.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 121.

⁵⁴ Regan, 2003, p. 67.

think from this point of view, it is an example of anthropomorphism in the same way that Singer's argument is.

Paul Taylor, on the other hand, suggests a life-based ethic which includes all individual living beings. And I can now examine his individualistic approach and see how new solutions lead to new problems.

3.3. The Role of Intrinsic Value in the Individualistic Deontology of Paul Taylor

Taylor, basically, considers that all organisms are teleological centers of life and they pursue their own good. So, every being that have "a good of its own"⁵⁵ – that is capable of benefiting from other things or be harmed by them – possess inherent worth. For example, a tree has a good of its own because it can benefit from the sun for photosynthesis or be harmed by a timber company, but a pile of sand cannot be harmed in any ways since it is not that kind of an entity. Then, it can be said that Regan's "subject of a life" criterion is replaced with the concept of "the good of a being" in Taylor. To understand upsides and downsides of Taylor's use of inherent worth, it is important to know his biocentric outlook that is based on the definitions of moral agent and moral subject.

3.3.1. The Status of Moral Agents and Moral Subjects

Taylor gives a direct and common description – both from human-centered and life-centered standpoints – for being a moral agent:

A moral agent, for both types of ethics [human-centered and life-centered theories], is any being that possesses those capacities by virtue of which it can act morally or immorally, can have duties and responsibilities, and can be held

⁵⁵ The general concept of the "good" here, is a central thought of Aristotle.

accountable for what it does. Among these capacities, the most important are the ability to form judgements about right and wrong; the ability to engage in moral deliberation, that is, to consider and weigh moral reasons for and against various courses of conduct open to choice; the ability to make decisions on the basis of those reasons; the ability to exercise the necessary resolve and willpower to carry out those decisions; and the capacity to hold oneself answerable to others for failing to carry them out.⁵⁶

After this detailed and convincing description of moral agency, Taylor notes an important point that although these criteria seem to be indicating that moral agency is a capacity for only humans, it might not be true. There are two types of cases supporting Taylor's claim. The first one is that not all humans are capable of separating right from wrong or any other point mentioned in the above passage. Human infants and mentally or emotionally retarded persons are the examples of Taylor for that matter. The second is that there might be other beings who might have the capacity to be moral agents that we are not aware of yet. It might be our animal fellows – whales, dolphins, elephants or primates – as well as an extraterrestrial conscious being.⁵⁷

Moral subjects, on the other hand, are the entities toward which moral agents have duties or responsibilities. Then it follows that, to be a moral subject, the thing in question should be an entity such that it can be harmed or benefited by the actions of a moral agent which points out the set of the entities who have a good of their own. So, it may well be said that all living beings are moral subjects whereas some of them are also moral agents. But it is important to acknowledge that they are equal in terms of moral consideration since the basic principle is to have “a good of their own”. And it is the same condition to possess inherent worth.

3.3.2. The Concept of Inherent Worth in the Biocentric Outlook

⁵⁶ Taylor, 1989, p. 14. Brackets added.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

As I stated above, all entities that have a good of their own possess inherent worth.

Taylor explains the concept as below:

A state of affairs in which the good of X is realized is better than an otherwise similar state of affairs in which it is not realized (or not realized to the same degree), (a) independently of X's being valued, either intrinsically or instrumentally, by some human valuer, and (b) independently of X's being in fact useful in furthering the ends of a conscious being or in furthering the realization of some other being's good, human or nonhuman, conscious or nonconscious.⁵⁸

In other words, inherent worth belongs to all individual living beings regardless of any other value that they might have. In addition, Taylor states that inherent worth leads to two moral judgements: “(1) that the entity is deserving of moral concern and consideration, or, in other words, that it is to be regarded as moral subject, and (2) that all moral agents have a prima facie duty to promote and preserve the entity's good as an end in itself and for the sake of the entity whose good it is.”⁵⁹

Then, it can be said that Taylor seeks for an egalitarian ethic based on inherent worth and its two important points. While accepting the point (1), point (2) seems to be causing a problem – a problem I wish to call moral inviolability⁶⁰ – by asserting that moral agents have a duty to promote the good of moral subjects as Taylor argues in the following: “[...] each [wild animals and plants] is never to be treated mere means to human ends, since doing so would contradict – would amount to a denial of – its status as a bearer of inherent worth.”⁶¹

So, I would not be wrong if I claim that since all living beings have inherent worth and they cannot be used as “mere means to human ends”, a moral agent should not kill for

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.75.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Inherent worth in Taylor – or intrinsic value in environmental ethics generally – is used to point out the thing that should not be violated except for certain conditions. This is what I call moral inviolability. I will mention two of these conditions examined by Taylor in a moment.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 79. Brackets added.

food, otherwise, s/he would perform an immoral act, according to Taylor's egalitarian argument. In addition, all moral agents – not just humans – must feed on another living being, which is also a moral subject, to pursue his/her/its own good regardless of the moral subject's inherent worth – or intrinsic value of any kind. Taylor, of course, recognizes this incompatibility and puts forward the priority principle of distributive justice to solve such conflicting claims. But, as it can be seen below, his efforts are not enough to avoid this problem of moral inviolability:

Consider, for example, the hunting of whales and seals in the Arctic, or the killing and eating of wild goats and sheep by those living at high altitudes in mountainous regions. [...] For if humans refrained from eating animals in those circumstances they would in effect be sacrificing their lives for the sake of animals, and no requirement to do that is imposed by respect for nature. Animals are not of greater worth, so there is no obligation to further their interests at the cost of the basic interests of humans.⁶²

In essence, Taylor claims that a moral agent can pursue its good in a situation that moral weights of the agent and subject is equal. In other words, he states that it is acceptable for a moral agent to satisfy its basic needs even if that leads to the violation of other living beings' inherent worth and "good of their own". But Taylor can still argue that such acts do not disprove his egalitarianism, because moral subjects would do the same thing to moral agents in the contrary case. However, in the priority principle of minimum wrong, Taylor states that it might be permissible for humans to pursue their non-basic interests over the basic interests of non-humans such as building an art museum in exchange of the destruction of a natural habitat:

Sometimes the non-basic human interests concerned will not be valued highly enough to outweigh the bad consequences of fulfilling them. In that case a person who has respect for nature would willingly forgo the pursuit of those interests. Other times the interests will be so highly valued that even those who genuinely respect nature will not be willing to forgo the pursuit of the interests.⁶³

⁶² Ibid., pp. 293-294.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 276.

So, Taylor seems to retract from his total egalitarianism which is based on inherent worth and its implication of moral inviolability for all moral subjects.

I tried to show how Taylor avoided the problems of Singer and Regan by including all living beings to his ethics and by substituting “subject of a life” principle of Regan with the concept of “good of a being”. Yet, his efforts lead to another problem which is the result of individualism that he pursues. And now, I would like to proceed to the argument of an advocate of holistic environmental ethics, J. Baird Callicott who has developed one of the most influential theories of intrinsic value.

3.4. The Role of Intrinsic Value in the Holism of Callicott

In this section, I will explain the most basic aspects of Callicott’s argument and how he manages to avoid the problems of individualistic approaches. Yet, at the end, we will see that Callicott will face the problem of ecofascism and to avoid this problem, he will have to compromise on non-anthropocentrism.

In the first three chapters of his book *In Defense of the Land Ethic*, Callicott criticizes the individualistic approaches from a similar perspective.⁶⁴ He brings up the non-inclusive characteristics of utilitarian and deontological individualisms several times. In the following passage, he objects to the former:

The humane moralists, like the moral humanists [the position which regards only humans as having moral standing], draw a firm distinction between those beings worthy of moral consideration and those not. They simply insist upon

⁶⁴ I must remark that, although Callicott never mentions the problem of anthropomorphism for Regan and Singer, it can be said that he would not stand against such interpretation for the case of utilitarianism according to the following passage: “To be fair, the humane moralists [the theoreticians of the animal liberation movement] seem to suggest that we should attempt to project the same values [based on pain and pleasure] into the nonhuman animal world and to widen the charmed circle – no matter that it would be biologically unrealistic to do so or biologically ruinous if, per impossible, such an environmental ethic were implemented.” See Callicott, 1989, p. 33. Brackets added.

a different but quite definite cut-off point on the spectrum of natural entities, and accompany their criterion with arguments to show that it is more ethically defensible (granting certain assumptions) and more consistently applicable than that of the moral humanists.⁶⁵

As for the deontological individualism, Callicott specifically argues against Regan after quoting a passage from *The Case for Animal Rights* where Regan suggests that a cotton tail rabbit, which belongs to a species that is plentiful, should be saved instead of two Furbish louseworts which are members of an endangered plant species in a prevention situation:

Adding insult to injury, Regan goes on to say that even if it were a matter of sacrificing “the last thousand or million members” of a species, members who do not qualify for rights, to prevent grave harm to a single individual mammal, then according to his theory, such a sacrifice would be mandated.⁶⁶

However, the most notable argument of Callicott against animal liberationists is about the value debate. As I stated above repeatedly, according to animal liberationists⁶⁷ that I mentioned, valuable things are individuals rather than wholes. Callicott, on the other hand, asserts that what is of value are wholes such as the ecosystems.

Leopold’s famous dictum is the ultimate guide for the holistic argument of Callicott: “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”⁶⁸ And “the good of the community”, as Callicott states, “serves as a standard for the assessment of the relative value and relative ordering of its constitutive parts [...]”.⁶⁹ So, it is permissible for

⁶⁵ Callicott, 1989, p. 20. Brackets added.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

⁶⁷ I, here, call Regan as animal liberationist because in his article “Animal Rights: What’s in a Name?”, after criticizing the limits of animal welfare for his rights theory he states that: “People who share my view can, and often do, describe themselves as being in favour of Animal Liberation.” But it should be noted that Regan is often called – by Callicott, too – as animal welfare ethicist, which Regan criticizes in the same paper, or animal rights ethicist – as I did earlier in this thesis.

⁶⁸ Leopold, 1949, pp. 224-225. Although it can be seen as common knowledge by now, I should note that Callicott’s argument of holism is essentially bounded to Leopold’s land ethic.

⁶⁹ Callicott, 1989, p. 25.

Callicott to sacrifice individuals for the good of the community because, although they are the beneficiaries of a land ethic, what is of moral considerability is the biotic community as a whole. But the survival of animals, plants, mountains etc. that constitute the biotic community “cannot be logically separated”⁷⁰ from the well-being of the whole, as well. Nevertheless, this moderation in his thoughts did not protect Callicott from the accusation of ecofascism.

Those who charge Callicott by ecofascism – rightfully, I believe – basically stated that if individuals can be sacrificed for the good of the wholes of which they are part, then, it is permissible to kill humans when it is needed to. So, it may well be said that Callicott’s argument leads to misanthropy.⁷¹⁷²

Callicott’s reply to this accusation defends Leopold’s land ethic by claiming that it includes and transcends the traditional ethics: “The land ethic is an accretion – that is, an addition – to our several accumulated social ethics, not something that is supposed to replace them.”⁷³ What I understand from the this quotation is that Callicott retreats from his strong holistic position that sees individuals only as a means to ends, and integrates the human ethics into his land ethic – or Leopold’s –which will become problematic when Callicott asserts the following:

The land ethic may well require the subordination of some individual human interests to the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community – those that are weak or trivial – but the ethic of democratic nation-states and that of the global village *uphold* the rights of individual human beings to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 26.

⁷¹ I will not go into details of these charges because they are outside of my scope here. For further discussions on these arguments against Callicott, see Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (1983); K. Shrader-Frechette, “Individualism, Holism, and Environmental Ethics,” *Ethics and Environment* 1 (1996).

⁷² To be fair, I should also add that, after the accusation of misanthropy, Callicott stated that “I never actually endorsed such a position [...] and I now no longer think that misanthropic prescriptions can be deduced from the Leopold land ethic.” See *Beyond the Land Ethic*, (1999), p. 147.

⁷³ Callicott, 1999, p. 71.

⁷⁴ Callicott, 2013, p. 66. Emphasis added.

I believe this is one of the most convincing arguments in the field only if it were put forward by an anthropocentrist. But as a leading non-anthropocentrist, Callicott seems to accept, partly, a human centered environmental order. On the one hand, he recognizes that “the ethic of democratic nation-states and that of global village” grants rights to humans. On the other hand, he asserts that other individual members of the biotic community do not possess similar rights.

Even if the land ethic is considered to include current human cultures and their ethical principles – and this is a big if – Callicott seems to slightly drift away from his non-anthropocentrism as he puts the interests of the smallest groups of land community – families – before the interests of other communities – tribes, nations, biotic community and so on. I think one of the reasons that puts Callicott in such a situation is the difficulty of applying a single moral value to all principles and cases. So, I will be examining the debate between monism and pluralism over Callicott’s monism and the objections of Wenz and Norton will show that, hopefully, single value-based monism has flaws and it should either be revised or rejected.⁷⁵

In the following, I give the direct quotation from Callicott while concluding this section: “Rather, what we need – and need desperately – is an *anthropocentric* Earth ethic in this time of imminent global climate change to complement the non-anthropocentric land ethic.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ As a last reminder, Callicott, in his recent book *Thinking Like a Planet*, seems to accept that an environmental ethic, which solves our practical problems with the environment as well as the theoretical ones, should include an understanding of anthropocentrism – an anthropocentric Earth Ethic – as a complementary of the Land Ethic. However, it should be noted that his sense of anthropocentrism does not assume “a higher class” of human beings in nature or centralizes human beings in their worldview. On the contrary, it is humans who need to protect themselves from nearly catastrophic changes like global climate change that are created by human beings in the first place. So, his anthropocentric Earth Ethic includes an understanding that humans should clear their mess. See Callicott, 2013, pp. 234-237. Also look for Margulis (2001) to see how Callicott is affected by the idea of protecting “humans from humans”.

CHAPTER 4

REJECTION OF MONISM IN ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Before I start to examine pluralist objection to monism in relation to the value type(s) that monists and pluralists prefer to use, I should note that, I will restrict my analysis to Callicott and the difficulties of his theory because his sense of monism contains pluralist elements regarding the principles and a sensible objection to his monism also applies to the more conservative ones *i.e.* “the principles monism”⁷⁷ as Norton calls them.

Having mentioned of Callicott’s usage of intrinsic value, here, I will connect this with his monism. Once we see the monistic structure of his argument that uses intrinsic value as the only relevant value for his ethics, Norton’s objection, as a pluralist, can be understood, easily.

While non-anthropocentric ethicists are centralizing the concept of intrinsic value in their theories as I tried to explain above, they seek for an answer to the question below posed by Callicott:

By working with *one* ethical theory, chosen to accommodate our special concern for the environment, how can we also account for our traditional interpersonal responsibilities and social duties, accommodate all these intermediate new moral

⁷⁷ Norton, 1996, p. 133. First footnote.

concerns to boot, and then order and mutually reconcile the whole spectrum of traditional and novel ethical domains?⁷⁸

His answer to this question is a form of communitarianism:

At once, each of us is a member of a family, a civic society, a nation state, the global village, Midgleyan "mixed communities" (that include domestic animals), and local, regional, and global biotic communities. Each of these memberships generates peculiar duties and obligations. Thus, we can hold a single moral philosophy and a univocal ethical theory, but one that provides for a *multiplicity* of community memberships, each with its peculiar ethic. The ethical obligations generated by our many community memberships often conflict, but, since all our duties to people, to animals, to nature are expressible in a common vocabulary, the vocabulary of community, they may be weighed and compared in commensurable terms.⁷⁹

I would like to emphasize one thing in the above quotation that is Callicott's confirmation of a requirement for a kind of *multiplicity*. Although the one he suggests is not a plurality of values, he is clearly aware of a need to give different care for different kind of communities. Multiplicity of principles makes room for Callicott to infer moral obligations from his communitarian theory either toward its individual members or wholes.

Peter Wenz classifies pluralistic arguments under three categories: minimal moral pluralism, moderate moral pluralism and extreme moral pluralism. Wenz simply defines the first category as the following: "For a theory to be pluralistic in this sense, it is sufficient that the theory merely lacks a universal algorithmic decision procedure."⁸⁰ Wenz gives this definition based on Christopher Stone's description of monism. According to Stone, monism expects us to evaluate our arguments under one set of axioms or principles and act in accordance with the procedure given by these axioms or principles.⁸¹ Wenz claims that there is no monistic moral theory considering

⁷⁸ Callicott, 1999, p. 144.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 173.

⁸⁰ Wenz, 2003, p. 221.

⁸¹ Stone, 2003, p. 195-196.

the description of Stone and tries to establish his point by arguing against “moral pluralism’s Achilles Heel”⁸², Callicott’s well-known objection to pluralism. Callicott asserts that pluralism creates ambiguity in theory – since it lacks a master principle and specific guidance inferred from it – and in practice by “incoherent or mutually cancelling actions”⁸³. Wenz, on the other hand, holds that even two of the most influential ethics which are presented as monistic, Kantianism and utilitarianism, are not monistic in this sense.⁸⁴

Before the second category, I would like to touch upon the last one, namely extreme moral pluralism. This one is also defined over Stone’s thoughts. Extreme pluralism employs different ethical theories for different contexts and conditions. Wenz quotes from Stone:

[...] a senator, for example, might rightly embrace utilitarianism when it comes to legislating a general rule for social conduct (say, in deciding what sort of toxic waste program to establish). Yet, this same representative need not be principally utilitarian, nor even consequentialist of any style, in arranging his personal affairs among kin or friends, or deciding whether it is right to poke out the eyes of pigeons.⁸⁵

Maybe it is easier to apply a utilitarian principle to a public problem and a deontological one to a personal situation since both are individualistic and disregard environmental aspects of conclusions and duties – though it would still be very hard to make such conversions. According to Wenz, Callicott’s objection of ambiguity can be directed to this view properly, because it is nearly impossible to adopt an individualistic ethic for one case and an environmental holistic one, say land ethic, for another. And Wenz further argues that it is the only type of pluralism that can be strongly rejected.

⁸² The title of a subdivision in the article “The Case Against Moral Pluralism”. See Callicott, 1999, p. 153.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 154.

⁸⁴ Wenz discusses the subject over the arguments of R. M. Hare. See Wenz, 2003, p. 221, and see Hare, 1981, p. 38 for Hare’s further discussion about utilitarianism and its master principle.

⁸⁵ Wenz, 2003, p. 222.

Moderate moral pluralism, the second category of Wenz, is essentially a single ethical theory which adopts different principles on different occasions. So, it is pluralistic only in comparison to the description of minimal moral pluralism. Wenz discusses it over the variety of action guiding principles, such as honesty and consideration of other people's feelings, in different contexts:

When I am asked to join a toast to salute the beauty of a bride, for example, the principle of honesty is outweighed by the principle of consideration for people's feelings. However, when evaluating a student's work, honesty takes precedence. Some hurt feelings are acceptable if they unavoidably accompany honest communication.⁸⁶

And his claim is that this is the kind of ethical approach endorsed by Callicott in his communitarian ethic.⁸⁷

Although Callicott accepts that he is not looking for a single moral principle since it leads to an extreme monism and misanthropy that he wishes to avoid, he refuses to be announced pluralist. So, Norton, a leading pragmatist, names Callicott's position as *theoretical monism* while rejecting it with some strong arguments, that I wish to discuss now, by centralizing the concepts of intrinsic value and moral considerability in Callicott's non-anthropocentrism.

Up to now, both Wenz's and Callicott's theories are concerned with the compatibility of actions and theories/principles on which they are based. However, Norton directs our attention to an assumption that is shared by "Callicott and his monistic colleagues":

Given the project of applied philosophy [environmental ethics must answer the question of "what beings are morally considerable?"], it is not surprising that non-anthropocentrists believe that, whatever monistic principle or theory turns out to be the correct one, this principle will fulfill two conditions: (1) The principle/theory must satisfy what objects in nature are considerable.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 225.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Interestingly, success in this specification has been identified with the task of identifying which objects in nature “own” their own inherent worth, of which more below. (2) The principle/theory must also provide some *motivation* for moral beings to protect natural objects. The universal, underlying principle is that moral individuals act to protect inherent value, wherever it is determined to reside.⁸⁸

And Norton concludes from the above analysis that Callicott “claims a unified theory because he relates all obligations to a moral ontology in inherent value.”⁸⁹ But, when the conflicts arise between the interests of communities in Callicott’s communitarianism, Norton argues that “inherent value must come in grades” to resolve the conflicts in practical cases, but Callicott has never attempted to do such ranking. Then, until a gradation between intrinsic values of different communities and ecosystems in which these communities reside is made – and it might not be possible to “quantify” such a concept at all – Norton claims that Callicott’s theory will be unable to recognize exactly what we are morally obligated to protect. Therefore, a monist worldview – even one of the most liberal ones – will never be able to solve the practical problems of the environment and ethics of it, because it narrows down the applicable cases by reducing all other values to one. He calls this problem “Callicott’s dilemma” but it might easily be “monists’ dilemma”, too, since the rest of monist theories are more conservative in comparison to Callicott’s. And I completely agree with Norton on this analysis. However, I am not sure whether the alternatives suggested by pluralists can do the job that monism could not, either. In any case, it is worth to discuss what they can bring on the table.

⁸⁸ Norton, 1996, p.110. Brackets added. Norton’s understanding of inherent worth in the quote is a synonym for intrinsic value in its basic definition that the value inheres in objects.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 114. He uses inherent value in the meaning explained in the previous footnote.

CHAPTER 5

PRAGMATIST APPROACH BASED ON VALUE PLURALISM

While monistic intrinsic value theories in environmental ethics is best understood by the dichotomies of intrinsic value/instrumental value, anthropocentrism/non-anthropocentrism and individualism/holism – as I tried to discuss above – the best way to comprehend value pluralism of pragmatistic theories is to investigate the debate between objectivism/subjectivism.

Pragmatism holds that value neither belongs to a subject nor an object. But rather, it comes into existence by the relation of subject and object which are bounded to their natural context – for a human being, cultural context, too. In other words, values are contextual desires and beliefs held by subjects about objects they encounter, and it is the very same objects that make it possible for the subjects to have these desires and beliefs by creating the context in which the experiences of the subjects take place. And the word “object” in these sentences refers to different parts of environment. So, it is pragmatists’ claim that environmental ethics is possible from a pragmatist perspective, as well, unlike non-anthropocentrists asserting that environmental ethics is only possible from a non-anthropocentric point of view which grasps the value of nature for or in itself.

Kelly Parker argues for pragmatism as an environmental ethics by stating that intrinsic and instrumental values are not mutually exclusive.

The being of any existent thing, human or non-human, is constituted in its relations with other things in a context of meaningful connections. Thus anything that is good is *both* instrumentally valuable (it affects some goods beyond itself) *and* intrinsically valuable (it is good for what it is, a significant entity essential to the constitution of these relations).⁹⁰

At this point, I should turn back to the discussion of *ends* and *means* and show the distinct approach of pragmatism, because values are generated through a similar process with ends and means.

I already showed the difference between ends and means considering both traditional and environmental ethics in the Chapters 2 and 3. Either it would be a deontological or utilitarian ethics in modern times, or virtue ethics of Ancient Greeks, ends were final entities and the existence of means were morally meaningful only in relation to these ends – in their various shapes like pain and pleasure for utilitarianism and rational agency for Kant. This kind of moral considerability and comprehension of intrinsic value stemming from it, are the main assumptions of monistic non-anthropocentrism as Norton argued in the previous section.

John Dewey, on the other hand, states that ends and means are meaningful in the traditional sense only if one thinks about them in a single context. But, as the contexts change, the disposition of ends and means change with it. This way of looking at these concepts make them context-dependent and overrules the transcendental understanding of ends. Dewey explains how ends develop in the context of an activity and become means to some other ends developed as a result of the previous activity over an example of shooting and targeting:

Men shoot and throw. At first this is done as an “instinctive” or natural reaction to some situation. The result when it is observed gives a new meaning to the activity. Henceforth men in throwing and shooting think of it in terms of its outcome; they act intelligently or have an end. Liking the activity in its acquired meaning, they not only “take aim” when they throw instead of

⁹⁰ Parker, 1996, p. 34.

throwing at random, but they find or make targets at which to aim. This is the origin and nature of “goals” of action. They are ways of defining and deepening the meaning of activity. Having an end or aim is thus a characteristic of *present* activity. It is the means by which an activity becomes adapted when otherwise it would be blind and disorderly, or by which it gets meaning when otherwise it would be mechanical. In a strict sense an end-in-view is a *means* in present action; present action is not a means to a remote end. Men do not shoot because targets exist, but they set up targets in order that throwing and shooting may be more effective and significant.⁹¹

It is important to acknowledge that “present action is not a means to a remote end”, because, the defended view locates objects and subjects in their contexts, accordingly:

Mind is not apart *from* the world; it is a part *of* the world. “Knowing the world” is not a detached activity. It is rather, a mutual transaction between the organism and its surroundings. [...] Subjects and objects are not absolute entities; knower and known are inextricably twined together from the beginning. Subjects and objects are nexus of relations in an ever-shifting universe of complex relationships.⁹²

In this “mutual transaction”, the organism, the subject of action, is an element within experience; not the other way around – *i.e.* experience is not a part of an isolated subject. And its surroundings – I believe we can safely call this environment – is a construct of this experience but it is not just such construction.⁹³ Environment is also the place where these experiences occur.⁹⁴ It is a fundamental part of the contexts.

So, with these kinds of experiences, subjects become able to grow meaningful connections with objects which eventually lead to generating values in specific contexts.⁹⁵ But, similar with the disposition of ends and means in differing contexts,

⁹¹ Dewey, 1930, pp. 225-226.

⁹² Parker, 1996, p.23.

⁹³ Hickman, 1996, p. 53.

⁹⁴ Parker, 1996, p. 29.

⁹⁵ It is also interesting to see that Rolston, a leading non-anthropocentrist and monist, gives a similar explanation regarding the emergence of natural values. He explicitly states that experience is a necessity to reach value and “valuing is not apart from the whole; it is a part in the whole. Value is not isolable into a miraculous epiphenomenon or echo, even though some valued events may be happenstance.” But of course, his understanding of intrinsic value transcends experience, at the end.

values change when the context changes. In other words, experience sets the ground for subjects to value or disvalue objects, but they are all meaningful only in a context which contains all mentioned elements. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that objects and subjects are not capable of generating any value by themselves. But when they find themselves in a shared context, subjects use their capacities to value objects according to the condition with which they face. Then it follows that, *valuing* is not an activity of an isolated subject but rather it is a product of the relations between subjects and objects. From this perspective, the debate between objectivism and subjectivism seems disoriented.⁹⁶ This feature of pragmatism leaves us with a pile of values as Weston argues:

Pragmatism insists most centrally on the *interrelatedness* of our values. The notion of fixed ends is replaced by a picture of values dynamically interdepending with other values and with beliefs, choices, and exemplars: pragmatism offers, metaphorically at least, a kind of “ecology” of values.⁹⁷

This is the kind of pluralism that pragmatists offer; not sum of a diverse, traditionally formed ethics: “[...] what pragmatism is not suggesting is a metaphysical pluralism or a pluralism of ‘absolute’ principles, but rather a metaphysics and epistemology which demand pluralism.”⁹⁸ In other words, if one takes monistic theories of intrinsic value to be in the direction from theory to practice, then it can be said that pragmatism reverses the direction.

While discussing pluralism against monism, we saw that, regarding the monistic theories based on intrinsic value, all other kinds of values that one can find in nature – such as instrumental, aesthetic, transformative⁹⁹ etc. – are reduced to one type, that is

⁹⁶ Though I should note that Weston, as a leading pragmatist, claims that pragmatism is a form of subjectivism whereas most environmental pragmatists embrace this thought to avoid traditional dualisms in environmental ethics like objectivism and subjectivism.

⁹⁷ Weston, 1996, p. 285.

⁹⁸ See the footnote 9 in Rosenthal and Buchholz, 1996, p. 48.

⁹⁹ Transformative value refers to the potential value of an entity for changing in kind such as demand value to aesthetic value. See Norton (1987) to see his explanation. Sarkar uses the concept under a different name: transformative power. See Sarkar, 2012, pp. 55-56, for his discussion on the subject.

intrinsic value. And I also discussed how it narrows down the applicability of this kind of morality considering the conflicting cases while analyzing intrinsic value based environmental approaches.

I join pragmatists in their criticism that monistic theories ignore the plurality of values in nature – which is a necessity to include them if the desire is constructing a comprehensive theory for the environment – but their view is also open to a contradiction which has its roots in the capitalist system that we live in and I intend to explore this contradiction in the next section.

CHAPTER 6

A SOLUTION TO ENVIRONMENTALISTS' DILEMMA

So far, I have examined two theories in environmental ethics that differ on the basis of value types they use but they search for an answer to the very same question: How should we deal with environmental problems? One line of thought replies by reference to moral considerability of nature which is based on the concept of intrinsic value. An important drawback of this approach is that it requires a reduction of all values in nature and culture to intrinsic value and faces practical and theoretical hurdles that I discussed in the Chapters 3 and 4.

Another possible answer is a context-dependent value system which considers that values in nature and culture are interlinked with each other and, subsequently, neither of them should be excluded from the decision processes of moral situations. However, as a result of taking every value type into consideration, all the problems that sprang from the same context which created these values in the first place, cannot be solved unless some radical change in the context is made.

In our case, I believe we can change the context by excluding a type of value, namely exchange value¹⁰⁰, that causes “contradiction in terms”¹⁰¹ and creates most of the

¹⁰⁰ I will use the phrase “exchange value” hereafter both for simplicity and to emphasize the misconception of our economic relations which gives rise to environmental problems at the end. However, it is actually the “money-form” that causes our struggle as I will be discussing in the rest of this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Marx, 1982, p. 126.

practical problems we try to solve. While claiming that conservation thought is doomed to failure because of its anthropocentric assumptions, Leopold states that “we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”¹⁰² Although Marx would affirm Leopold’s view – at least Leopold’s objection to anthropocentrism – he saw capitalist system in our societies as an obstacle on the way to change our approach to the environment.¹⁰³ David Harvey expresses this as it follows:

From Marx's perspective the land ethic that Leopold has in mind is a hopeless quest in a bourgeois society where the community of money prevails. Leopold's land ethic would necessarily entail the construction of an alternative mode of production and consumption to that of capitalism.¹⁰⁴

I think environmentalists’ dilemma – told by Norton as an example to explain the situation in the hands of environmentalists – presents a perfect case study to explain the role of money in environmental problems. One day, at the beach in Florida, Norton sees an eight-year-old girl holding a dozen of fresh sand dollars which are captured by her mother and older sister in the knee-deep water thirty yards away from herself. While the mother and her elder daughter continue to look for more sand dollars, Norton goes to the girl and asks whether she knows the sand dollars are alive. She says that her mother puts them in Clorox when they get home and make things out of them to earn some money. There, Norton is caught between two fires:

[...] it was a dilemma, not because I did not know what I wanted the little girl to do, but because I could not coherently explain *why* she should put most of them back. If I chose the language of economic aggregation, I would have to say she could take as many as she could use, up to the sustainable yield of the population. On this approach, more is better—the value of sand dollars is their market value, and I could not use this language to express the moral

¹⁰² Leopold, 1949, p. viii.

¹⁰³ As I will be restricting the discussion to the concept of value, Marx’s understanding of the conflict between society and nature will not be mentioned in this thesis. But, for a detailed analysis, see Foster (1999).

¹⁰⁴ Harvey, 1996, p. 120.

indignation I felt at the family's strip-mining sand dollars and hauling them away in their powerboat. To apply, on the other hand, the language of moralism, I would have to decry the treatment of sand dollars as mere resources; I would have to insist that the little girl put *all* of them back. Neither language could express my indignation *and* my commonsense feeling that, while it was not wrong for the little girl to take a few sand dollars, she should put most of them back—the aggregationist approach to valuing sand dollars would prove too little, and the moral approach would prove too much.¹⁰⁵

Norton's own approach favors intergenerational sustainability as the method for resource management to be able to explain *why* he wants what he wants from the little girl at the beach. Sustainability most basically holds that, in practice, consumer societies should limit their desire for consumption of the materials in which they are interested by taking responsibility for future generations. If we – all consumers – can design our thinking according to this method, there would be no buyers for the things made from sand dollars and the family would not need so much of them.¹⁰⁶

But I think there is a big problem about the nature of economic relationships and values generated in them. The use of money in human societies is in contradiction with our environmental goals. For Sarkar – and for the majority of other environmentalists – it is a problem of economic model rather than a problem of capitalist economy in general: “The contrast here is with economic development that leads to the exhaustion of non-renewable resources, which has been the characteristic model of development since the Industrial Revolution.”¹⁰⁷ I think it is a more fundamental problem about “money” that its effect is enhanced after the Industrial Revolution with globalization. We need a closer look at the relations between commodities in trade situations which are explained by Karl Marx in the middle of 19th century, to see this fundamental problem.

Marx defines commodities as objects outside us and things that have their intrinsic properties such as shape and color. These properties might be used by us in certain

¹⁰⁵ Norton, 1991, pp. 3-5.

¹⁰⁶ As I introduced its pragmatism roots in the earlier chapters, Norton claims that it is a false dilemma and the imposed duality should not necessarily be followed. See Norton, 2004, pp. 31-41. And I do not intend to examine the sustainability method thoroughly, here, but for further discussions, see Norton (2004), Norton (2005) and Minter and Sarkar (2018).

¹⁰⁷ Sarkar, 2012, p. 157.

situations, but they are possessed by the commodity, *i.e.* intrinsic to them.¹⁰⁸ And their utility creates their use value which is a type of value that cannot be considered independently of the intrinsic properties of the commodity itself.¹⁰⁹ A chair or a carpet, for that matter, as a commodity, has a use value for us and this value actualizes only by our use. “In the form of society to be considered here they are also the material bearers [*Träger*] of . . . exchange-value.”¹¹⁰ To explain the relationship between exchange value and commodities, Marx gives the example below:

A given commodity, a quarter of wheat for example, is exchanged for x boot-polish, y silk or z gold, etc. In short, it is exchanged for other commodities in the most diverse proportions. Therefore, the wheat has many exchange values instead of one. But x boot-polish, y silk or z gold, etc., each represent the exchange-value of one quarter of wheat. Therefore, x boot-polish, y silk, z gold, etc., must, as exchange-values, be mutually replaceable or of identical magnitude. It follows from this that, firstly, the valid exchange-values of a particular commodity express something equal, and secondly, exchange-value cannot be anything other than the mode of expression, the ‘form of appearance’, of a content distinguishable from it.¹¹¹

Then, there is something common to all commodities which get into the equations in the above quote and this “something” does not belong to them intrinsically. It also follows from that, it is something common in quantity rather than quality, since the quality of the things in question is determined by their intrinsic properties, *i.e.* use values. For instance, the use value of silk comes from its fabric while gold’s use value is generally related to its conductance or its aesthetic appearance. In that case, “the exchange relation of commodities is characterized precisely by its abstraction from their use values.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ To avoid any confusion, Marx’s use of the word “intrinsic” means merely a possession of property like shape or color.

¹⁰⁹ “Use value” can be thought as an equivalent of instrumental value in environmental ethics in its broad definition.

¹¹⁰ Marx, 1982, p. 126.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

This is one of the most important aspects of Marx's theory, because it shows us that any material that is equal to more than one material separately, in an exchange, creates itself a new form that is independent from all of its intrinsic properties and values. Although Marx does not mention any other values that the object might have other than the use value, I think it would not be a mistake to add aesthetic, intrinsic, transformative and any other types of value that living or non-living beings might possess. Then, I can easily say that our environment and the parts of it – animals, plants, beaches, lands etc. – become a commodity that is to be exchanged with other commodities in this context. As a result of the creation of this common something that is independent of the values that the commodity has, the labor types – such as tailoring and weaving – lose their distinctive qualities and become abstract human labor:

With the disappearance of the useful character of the products of labor, the useful character of the kinds of labor embodied in them also disappears; this in turn entails the disappearance of the different concrete forms of labor. They can no longer be distinguished but are all together reduced to the same kind of labor, human labor in the abstract.¹¹³

At this point, I must correct a common mistake in liberal thought about instrumental value and its engagement to economics. Despite the reduction of all qualities to quantity in a trade – which makes it possible to measure everything in a single unit – value in quality and abstract human labor are still held as equivalents in the minds of liberalists and environmentalists who tries to include economics into their theories. For example, Freeman *et al.* seems to make the mistake:

The term “value” can have several different meanings. For example, economists and ecologists often use the term in two different ways in discussions of environmental services and ecosystems. One common use of the term is to mean “that which is desirable or worthy of esteem for its own sake; thing or quality having intrinsic worth” (*Webster's New World Dictionary*). In contrast, economists use the term in a sense more akin to a different definition, “a fair or proper equivalent in money, commodities, etc.” (*Webster's* again), where “equivalent in money” represents the sum of money that would have an equivalent effect on the welfare or utilities of individuals.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 128.

These two different uses of the word correspond to a distinction made by philosophers between *intrinsic* value and *instrumental* value.¹¹⁴

In fact, since they consider only consumers, they have a right to relate instrumental value and abstract human labor because consumers actually use them. But for the seller, the purpose of this transaction is only to gain money – the material abstract human labor. And we know that already it does not include any instrumental or intrinsic value as well as no qualities. Now, I should explore what abstract human labor is and how it objectifies in money.

In an equation of commodities, different kinds of human labor are reduced to quantity next to their value forms. When we say that 20 yards of linen is worth as much as 1 coat,¹¹⁵ tailoring and weaving are also held equal to each other and reduced to human labor in general while the two activities require different abilities:

This is a roundabout way of saying that weaving too, in so far as it weaves value, has nothing to distinguish it from tailoring, and, consequently, is abstract human labor. It is only the expression of equivalence between different sorts of commodities which brings to view the specific character of value-creating labor, by actually reducing the different kinds of labor embedded in the different kinds of commodity to their common quality of being human labor in general.¹¹⁶

Having said that, if we look at the equation “20 yards of linen = 1 coat”, one can see that linen is expressed in terms of coat, in essence. This makes coat “equivalent” of the linen while only the value of linen is expressed. In other words, at the exact moment that the equation exists and only that moment, the material body of the coat becomes the body of value that human labor produces. As we change the body – e.g. from coat to sugar or fowl – the expression of the linen changes relatively, but the value that is produced by human labor does not. So, as a use, aesthetic, intrinsic or transformative

¹¹⁴ Freeman *et al.*, 2014, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ I will use the example Marx gives for simplicity.

¹¹⁶ Marx, 1982, p. 142.

value – assuming it has – linen and coat differ from each other, but as the *value* in economists’ sense they are the same thing:

[...] this expression itself therefore indicates that it [linen] conceals a social relation. With the equivalent form the reverse is true. The equivalent form consists precisely in this, that the material commodity itself, the coat for instance, expresses value just as it is in its everyday life, and is therefore endowed with the form of value by nature itself. Admittedly, this holds good only within the value-relation, in which the commodity linen is related to the commodity coat as its equivalent. However, the properties of a thing do not arise from its relations to other things, they are, on the contrary, merely activated by such relations. The coat, therefore, seems to be endowed with its equivalent form, its property of direct exchangeability, by nature, just as much as its property of being heavy or its ability to keep us warm. Hence the mysteriousness of the equivalent form, which only impinges on the crude bourgeois vision of the political economist when it confronts him in its fully developed shape, that of money.¹¹⁷

When we extend the relation between linen and coat to sugar, corn, tea etc., the accidental relationship that we had will disappear. Consider 20 yards of linen to be equal to 1 coat, $\frac{1}{2}$ kg of sugar, 250 gr of tea and 3 kg of corn at the same time. While the quantity of linen does not change, the equivalents of the linen alter from commodity to commodity. Then, it can be said that “It becomes plain that it is not the exchange of commodities which regulates the magnitude of their values, but rather the reverse, the magnitude of the value of commodities which regulates the proportion in which they exchange.”¹¹⁸ All the properties and values that sugar, tea, coat and corn possess is expressed by a magnitude of a single unit. If we reverse the equation and put linen to the equivalent form, we get such results: $\frac{1}{2}$ kg of sugar = 20 yards of linen and 3 kg of corn = 20 yards of linen. Now, the linen is the body of abstract human labor and over 20 yards of linen, we can tell 3 kg of corn and $\frac{1}{2}$ kg of sugar are equal in value. As a result, linen becomes the universal equivalent in its social context: money-commodity. Moreover, if we replace linen with gold as the universal equivalent, we reach the “money-form” of the abstract human labor. “[...] in other

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 149. Brackets added.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 156.

words, the universal equivalent form, has now by social custom finally become entwined with the specific natural form of the commodity gold.”¹¹⁹

As it is obvious now, the very existence of the money-form – which constitutes the fundamentals of our economic system – requires a reduction of all values and properties of commodities to a human act in its abstract form. To emphasize again for my purposes here, it can either be intrinsic or instrumental, value loses its quality – which is basically all it has – and becomes a quantity merely expressed in the body of money-form when the object that possesses the value is placed in the capitalist economy. So, when Rolston states that “Marxists often argue that natural resources should be unpriced, for in fact resources as such have no economic value”¹²⁰, he is mistaken because nature have all kinds of value when it is not a part of capitalist relationship from a Marxist perspective.

Norton’s dilemma is indeed a *false* one¹²¹, but it is not because we can find a middle way between the two sides like Norton argues. It is false because one side suppresses the other, *i.e.* capitalist economy disvalues intrinsic nature of things. Money-form – exchange value in its most basic shape – creates a value which can be expressed only in quantity. And all values and qualities are reduced to this quantity during transactions. When someone buys a pencil, pencil disappears as a tool that helps us to write and becomes 5 pounds, for instance. Or a chicken loses its intrinsic value while someone buys it from a farm. However, there is a significant distinction between money-form and exchange value. In a simple trade – let’s say one person needs a book while another one needs some bread – both sides consider their requirements and do the trade for a property or value that the commodity has. On the other hand, at least one side, in a trade that involves money-form, does not mind any value or property that the commodity possesses, because the only goal for he/she is to gain more money as capitalism necessitates. In other words, exchange value appears while using it to

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 162.

¹²⁰ Rolston, 1980, p. 3.

¹²¹ Norton, 2004, p. 31.

access the commodity itself, whereas the money-form – the most basic form of capital – is traded with a commodity only to sell the commodity back.¹²² Now, it is obvious that for a capitalist who looks for investments in the sectors of mining or medicine, the land or the guinea pigs are mere means to gain money. And they do not have any shape, color or value other than the materialized abstract human labor in the eye of the capitalist. From this perspective, the contradiction between current system of economy and environmentalism is evident.

But, does it mean that our problems with the environment are only caused by the capitalist system? I think the answer is no. We would still have to restrain our desires, personally and socially, and learn to live in a different way if we decided to change our economic system. But there would be two benefits of leaving a system that forces us to consume everything we encounter. First one is that we would stop seeing the environment as a profitable thing – a capital – and use it for its actual instrumental value. And, as a result of the first point, since there would be no pressure to reach wider areas for bigger earnings, there would be time for the environment to restore itself.

There is a crucial point that would make non-anthropocentrists a little happier, nevertheless. It is no secret that our cultural codes are written in the language of anthropocentrism as Lynn White Jr. and many other philosophers argued. But the economic aspect of anthropocentrism – at least in practice – did more damage than any other implementation of it. In our current system, it is the abstract “human” labor to which all values are reduced. I think environmental problems stemming from anthropocentrism is not stimulated by the instrumental use of nature against the common conviction, but by the loss of nature’s instrumental value at the first place. The problem is, so to speak, appearance of anthropocentrism in quantity. It means that if someone uses a tree for its instrumental value, unlike the money-form dictates us, the tree would not lose its intrinsic or aesthetic value. It is like using a postman to get

¹²² Marx, 1982, pp. 247-248.

mails. When he/she is used for our purposes, he/she continues to be a subject of human rights; not only a mere means to our ends.

I would like to end this discussion by a quote from Murray Bookchin who shows the effects of capitalism to society which gives us the necessary materials to evaluate our environmental problems:

Graduated to the level of competing capitals, of grasping and warring bourgeois enterprises, the market place dictates the ruthless maxim: "Grow or die" - he who does not expand his capital and devour his competitor will be devoured. In this constellation of ever-regressive asocial relationships, where even personality itself is reduced to an exchangeable object, society is ruled by production for the sake of production. Equivalence asserts itself as exchange value; through the mediation of money, every artistic work, indeed every moral qualm, is degraded to an exchangeable quantum. Gold or its paper symbol makes it possible to exchange the most treasured cathedral for so many match sticks. The manufacturer of shoe laces can transmute his wares into a Rembrandt painting, beggaring the talents of the most powerful alchemist.¹²³

¹²³ Bookchin, 1980, pp. 80-81.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

How to place and use intrinsic value in our relationship with nature occupies a wider area than it already looks like. Although intrinsic values of individuals and wholes are an essential aspect of our normative claims, the discussion over moral considerability also makes us to think about instrumental, aesthetic and transformative values of nature – as well as all other values emerge from our relationships with nature. The choice of intrinsic value to base moral considerability is not an arbitrary one, but exclusion of other types of value delimits its potential to reach a comprehensive ethical network. On the other hand, pragmatism develops a contextual understanding about humans and nature in which we reside. Even though I find this approach more comprehensive, it is, in fact, too comprehensive, because, while including all the things in our current context, they seem to appeal to the conditions that created the problems at the beginning. I think neither is a monistic approach based on intrinsic value enough to solve our environmental problems, nor is the involvement of the current economic system into the problem-solving decision process viable. We must cut out the concept of money from our relationships before discussing the role of values in environmental degradation, because the values that form our normative claims are consumed by it along with the environment.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

I

Çevre etiğindeki problemleri ele aldığımızda, bunların genellikle ikilikler üzerinden çözümlenmeye çalışıldığını görürüz (nesnelcilik/öznecilik, insanmerkezci/insanmerkezci olmayan, bireycilik/bütüncülük vb.). Ancak bu ikilikler üzerinden geliştirilen argümanlar henüz “çevreyi nasıl kullanmalıyız?” sorusuna geçerli ve kapsayıcı bir yanıt üretememiştir ve bu yanıt üretilmeden kurulacak her argüman bir yanıyla eksik kalacaktır.

Bu tezin amacı, şimdiye kadar bu soruya verilen cevapları irdelemek ve neden yeterince kapsayıcı veya tutarlı bir yanıtın henüz üretilmediğini; dahası, içinde yaşadığımız sistemin bunu nasıl olanaksız kıldığını göstermeye çalışmaktır. Çevre etiğindeki değer kavramı (hepsi ama özellikle özsel değer), bu sorunu görünür kılmak açısından oldukça faydalı tartışmalar ve fikirler içermektedir.

II

İkinci bölümde, çevre etiğinde en çok başvurulan değer kavramı olarak özsel değeri ve bunun çevre etiğine ulaşana kadar geçirdiği dönüşümü ele aldım.

Felsefe tarihinde özsel değer iki temel soru üzerinden incelenmiştir: Özsel değer nedir ve ne özsel değere sahiptir? Latince kökeni *intrinsicus* (içten, içe dahil olan) olan “özsel” ifadesi, günümüzde de anlamını koruyarak “kendisi için, kendi iyiliği için” gibi anlamlarda kullanılmaktadır.

Aristoteles, “özsel” sıfatını “iyilik” kelimesiyle birlikte kullanarak, “türetilmeyen iyi” kavramının “özsel iyi” olduğunu iddia etmiştir. Geriye kalan “türetilen iyiler” ise anlamlarını türetilmeyen iyilerden alırlar. Bu bağlamda, çevre etiğindeki özsel değer de; tıpkı Aristo’nun türetilmeyen iyi kavramı gibi, dışsal değer veya araçsal değer kavramlarına anlam kazandırdığı argümanlar sıkça görülmektedir. Richard Sylvan, Val Plumwood ve Arne Naess’in çalışmalarında bu ilişki açıkça ifade edilmiştir.

Dale Jamieson ve John O’neill gibi düşünürler özsel değer in çevre etiği alanındaki kullanımına ilişkin kategorilendirmeyi yaparlarken, özsel değer in bu özelliğine atıfta bulunmuşlardır. Bu anlamda, araç/amaç ikiliği (belki karşıtlığı) özsel değer in ifadesinde önemli bir yer tutar. Öyle ki; insanmerkezciliğe gelen en büyük eleştirilerde bile (son insan örneği gibi) özsel değer in bu özelliğini dolaylı olarak kavrayabiliriz.

Özsel değere neyin/nelerin sahip olduğu sorusuysa bizi, bu kavramın daha önce hangi etik argümanlarda kullanıldığı sorusuna götürür.

Bu bağlamda Aristoteles ve Platon felsefelerindeki *eudaimonia* (iyi yaşam, mutlu yaşam) kavramının özsel değere sahip olduğu söylenebilir. Raphael Demos iyiden iyi yaşama uzanan yolu irdelemiş ve ikisi arasındaki bağlantıyı açıkça ortaya koymuştur. Callicott ve Frodeman da erdem etiğinin, iyi yaşam kavramı üzerinden özsel değere sahip olabileceğini ortaya koymuşlardır.

Genellikle Epikür ile anılan hazcılık ise özsel değeri iyiden uzaklaştırıp haz ve acı duyabilme yetisine yaklaştırmıştır. Buna göre, haz duymak bütün iyi insan davranışlarının amacıyken (son noktası, ulaştığı yer); acı duymak bütün kötü insan davranışlarının amacıdır. Bu bakış açısı, modern dönemde faydacılık akımına da yol göstermiştir. Dahası, faydacı filozoflar özsel değeri direkt olarak haz ve acı duyabilme yetisiyle ilişkilendirerek etiğin konusunun sadece bunu kapsaması gerektiğini iddia etmişlerdir. Peter Singer felsefesinin, özsel değer bu ifadesini çevre etiğine taşıdığı söylenebilir.

Öte yandan, faydacılığın tersi olarak kabul edilebilecek Kant'ın deontolojisinin de özsel değer amaç/araç ikiliğini yansıttığı söylenebilir. Kesin Buyruk (Kategorik İmperatif) ve bunun evrenselleştirilebilirlik yasası, bu ikiliğin rasyoneli eyleyen kişi üzerinden deontolojik etiğe dahil olmasını sağlar. Bu argümanın çevre etiğindeki uzantılarıyla Tom Regan'ın ve Paul Taylor'ın çalışmaları görülebilir.

III

Tezin ikinci bölümünde, insanmerkezci olmayan özsel değer teorilerinden Singer, Regan, Taylor ve Callicott'un çalışmalarını, belirtilen sırayla inceledim. Buradaki amacım, çevre etiğinin (insanmerkezcilik karşıtlığıyla beraber) merkezine koyulan özsel değer halihazırdaki argümanlarının yetersizliğini ön plana çıkarmaktır. Dolayısıyla Singer'ın faydacı anlayışını, Regan ve Taylor'ın birbirinden belli noktalarda ayrılan deontolojik felsefelerini ve nihayet Callicott'un bütüncü yaklaşımını değerlendirerek oldukça geniş bir yelpazeyi gözden geçirmek imkanına erişebiliriz.

Singer'a göre insanlar arasındaki eşitliğin ahlaki temeli, bireylerin eşit olmasına değil; onların ilgilerinin eşit değerlendirilmesi ilkesine dayanır. Şayet insandan başka canlıların da bir şeylere ilgi duyabilmesi mümkünse çevre için de bir etik mümkün olabilir. Bir başka deyişle, bazı insandan başka hayvanların da tıpkı insanlar gibi bir öznel tecrübe ya da bilinçlilik kapasitesine sahip olduğu varsayılırsa, onların da etik alana dahil edilmesi gerekir. Bu da aslında faydacı etiğin haz ve acı duyma deneyimini insanla sınırlı tutmayıp bazı başka duygu sahibi hayvanlara da uygulanabileceğini gösterir. Yani özsel değer atandığı şey değişmeden, ahlaki alanın sınırları genişlemiş olur. Bu anlamda Singer'ın özsel değeri kullanımını çevre etiğindeki an ilkel kullanımlardan biridir zira özsel değer argümanı için tekrar tasarlanması gerekmez.

Ancak Singer'ın argümanının iki önemli dezavantajı vardır. İlk olarak, yalnızca duygu deneyimine sahip hayvanların ahlaki önem kazanması, geriye kalan bütün canlıların sömürülmesinin önüne geçemeyecektir ve argümanı kapsayıcılıktan uzaklaştıracağı gibi (Goodpaster'ın itirazı da bunu vurgular) çevre sorunlarına yeterli çözümü üretebileceği ihtimalini de sorgulatacaktır. İkinci problemse, aslen türçülüğe karşı geliştirilen bu teorinin beslendiği kaynağın insan benzeri (antropomorfik) sayılabileceğidir. Eldeki duruma farklı bir açıdan yaklaşmak gerekirse, duygu deneyimine sahip hayvanları ahlaki değerlendirmeye katmanın, bir bakıma, diğer canlıları duygu deneyimine sahip olmadıkları için ahlaki açıdan önemsiz olarak nitelendirmektir. Başka bir ifadeyle, insanın sahip olduğu duygu deneyimine sahip olmayan diğer bütün canlıların ahlaki açıdan önemsizleşmesine yol açmaktadır. Bu da türçülük karşıtı bir argümanın insan karakterine dayalı bir çözüm ürettiğini gösterir ki; Singer için ciddi bir sorundur.

Tom Regan'ın bireyci deontolojisi de benzer sorunlardan muzdariptir. Bu teorinin bir öncekinden en önemli farkı özsel değer, bireyin herhangi bir deneyiminden ziyade direkt olarak kendisine bağlı olmasıdır. Her ne kadar Regan da tıpkı Singer gibi hayvanların çektikleri acılara ve sömürülmelerine önemli ölçüde dikkat çekse de; bunun aslında daha büyük bir sistemik problemden (hayvanların insan amaçları için sadece bir araç olarak kullanılmaları problemi) kaynaklandığını ileri sürmektedir.

Regan bunun önüne geçmek için geleneksel olarak kullanılan özsel değer yerine özünde değer ifadesini tercih eder ve bunu, Kant'ın rasyoneli eyleyen kişisi gibi "bir yaşamın öznesi olma" kriterine bağlar. Regan'a göre insanların dünyayı ve duyguları deneyimlemelerinin ötesinde, bu deneyimlerin farkında olmaları onların temel benzerliklerini oluşturur. Dolayısıyla bu farkındalığın sahibi olan bütün canlılar "bir yaşamın öznesidirler" ve ahlaki olarak insanlarla aynı şekilde muamele görmeyi hak ederler.

Ancak, tıpkı Singer gibi Regan da bu şekilde en çok memelilere kadar ilerler ve geriye kalan bütün canlıları ahlaki değerlendirmenin dışında bırakır. Ve yine Singer gibi Regan da insan benzeri bir karakteristikten yola çıkarak çevre etiği kurmaya çalışmaktadır. Bu da Regan'ın güçlü insanmerkezcilik eleştirisiyle tezat oluşturur.

Öte yandan Paul Taylor ise bireyci deontolojisini bütün canlıların yaşamın teleolojik merkezleri olduğu ve kendi iyiliklerini gözederek yaşamaları gerektiği düşüncesi üzerine kurar. Yani "kendi iyisi" olan her canlı diğer şeylerden yarar ya da zarar görme potansiyeline sahiptir ve özünde değere de (*inherent worth*) bu yolla sahip olur. Taylor'a göre özünde değer bütün canlılarda eşit olarak bulunur. Regan'ın "bir yaşamın öznesi olma" ilkesi, Taylor'da yerini "bir canlının iyiliği" ilkesine bırakır.

Taylor için bütün canlılar ahlakın öznesi olsalar da bunların bir kısmı ahlaki eyleyenken (*moral agent*) tamamı ahlaki eylenenlerdir (*moral subject*). Ahlaki eyleyenlerin, ahlaki eylenenlere karşı görev ve sorumlulukları vardır çünkü eyleyenler doğru ve yanlış birbirinden ayırt edebilecek kapasitelere sahipken eylenenler bu yetiye sahip değildirler. Ahlaki eyleyenler kümesi rasyonel insanlarla beraber bazı başka canlıları da barındırabilir (balinalar, yunuslar, primatlar, filler vs.).

Bütün bunları düşünürsek, Taylor'a göre özünde değer iki ahlaki yargı için ön ayak olur: Özünde değere sahip olan varlık ahlaki önemi ve değerlendirmeyi hak eder; yani ahlaki eylenen statüsü kazanır ve bütün ahlaki eyleyenlerin ilk bakışta, özünde değere sahip olan varlıkların iyiliklerini, onlar insan amaçlarına sadece bir araç oldukları için

değil; onların kendi iyilikleri için korumaları ve geliştirmeleri, görevleridir. O halde Taylor'ın özünde değeri (geleneksel kullanımıyla özsel değeri) temel alan eşitlikçi bir etik tasarımı olduğu iddia edilebilir. Ancak özsel değer bu şekildeki kullanımı Taylor için eşitlikçi bir etiğe izin vermemektedir.

Taylor'ın kullanımı ve tanımına göre özünde değere sahip olan bireyler diğer bireylerin amaçları için feda edilemezler, zira her biri için ortak ve aynı özünde değer atfedilmiştir. Ancak bu aynı zamanda canlıların hayatta kalmak için birbirlerini yemesi gerektiği gerçeğiyle çelişir ve Taylor bu tür çelişkileri aşmak için dağılımsal adalet önceliği ilkesini ortaya atar. Bu ilke, temel ihtiyaçlarla temel olmayan ihtiyaçlar arasında kalındığında temel ihtiyaçların tercih edilmesi gerektiğini belirtir. Ancak bu ilke aynı zamanda insanın temel ihtiyaçlarıyla (beslenmek gibi) diğer canlıların temel ihtiyaçlarının çeliştiği durumlarda insanın seçilebileceğini söyler. Hatta bir başka öncelik ilkesi olan minimum yanlış ilkesinde, Taylor kimi zaman insanların temel olmayan ihtiyaçları için diğer canlıların temel ihtiyaçlarını ve dolayısıyla özünde değerlerini hiçe sayacak davranışlarda da bulunabileceğini öne sürer. Açıktır ki bu durum kendisinin özünde değer odaklı eşitlikçi argümanını sekteye uğratmaktadır.

Bu bölümün son kısmı Callicott'un bütüncülüğünü özsel değer açısından incelemektedir. Callicott özsel değeri bireylere değil bütünlere atfeder. Bunu yaparken Leopold'un toprak etiğini rehber edinmiştir. Bu bağlamda bireyler, özsel değere sahip bütünlük için (ekosistem gibi) feda edilebilir. Bir başka deyişle ahlaki öneme sahip olan tek şey bütünlüktür. Ancak Callicott'a göre, bütünlük meydana getiren bireylerin sağ kalmaları da mantıksal olarak biyotik topluluklardan ayrı düşünülemez. Argümanındaki bu yumuşamaya rağmen Callicott'a ekofaşist olduğu yönünde eleştiriler gelir. Callicott ise ekofaşizmden kaçmak için insanmerkezci karşıtlığından ödün vermek durumunda kalır. Buna da insan etiğini toprak etiğine dahil ederek ulaşır.

Temel olarak Callicott demokratik ulus devlet etiğinin bireysel insan haklarını koruyacağını; dolayısıyla da bütüncü bir toprak etiğinin ekofaşist olamayacağını ileri sürer. Ancak bu bakış açısına göre demokratik ulus devletleri insanlardan başka hiçbir

canlıya bu hakları tanımadıkları için toprak etiği içerisinde insanların diğer canlılardan ayrı bir yeri olduğu iddia edilebilir. Özsel değer etik teori içerisinde dikkate alınan tek değer olması sonucu ekofaşizme savrulan Callicott; bu sorunu çözmek isterken insanmerkezci karşıtlığından ödün vermek zorunda kalmıştır.

Sonuç olarak, özsel değer tek başına kullanıldığı durumlarda etik teorilerin kapsayıcılıktan uzaklaştığını ve başka değişikliklere ihtiyaç duyduğunu artık açıkça görebiliriz.

IV

Bu bölümde Callicott'un tekçi teorisinden hareketle, çevre etiğinde tekçi değer teorisine getirilen ciddi eleştirileri tartıştım (Wenz ama özellikle Norton). Buna ek olarak, bir önceki bölümde çevre problemlerine karşı üretilen tekçi değer teorilerini irdelerken karşılaşılan sorunların o argümanlara özgü olmadığını; tekçi değer teorilerinin dayandığı varsayımların bu sorunları hazırladığını savundum.

Callicott'un toplumsal etiği, aileden başlayarak ekosisteme doğru genişleyen, iç içe geçmiş çemberler gibi dışa çıktıkça önceliği geri plana atılan ahlaki bir hiyerarşi içerir. Burada birden fazla ilkenin yeri olsa da her bütün tek ve aynı özsel değeri taşır. Bir başka deyişle Callicott, özsel değer üzerinden eşitlenen farklı toplumsal yapıları (biyotik toplum da dahil olmak üzere) ve şartlara göre farklı ilkeleri kullanma yoluyla sorunlara çözüm üretmeye çalışır.

Callicott'un itirazına rağmen Peter Wenz onun argümanını ılımlı ahlaki çokçuluk olarak isimlendirir. Wenz'e göre farklı ilkelere dayanan davranışların farklı şartlar içerisinde ahlaki olarak doğru kabul edilebilmesi bu kategorinin ayırıcı özelliğidir. Ancak bütün farklı ilkeler sonunda tek bir büyük ilkede birleşirler. Yine de bu durum insan davranışlarının çokçu yapısının önüne geçemez. Örneğin bazı olaylarda dürüst

davranmak gerekirken, bazı durumlarda karşındakinin duygularını incitmemek adına beyaz yalanlar söylenebilir.

Öte yandan Bryan Norton Callicott'un pozisyonunu teorik tekçilik olarak nitelendirir. Norton'a göre Callicott'un teorisi iki önemli varsayıma dayanır. Bunlardan birincisi teorinin doğada neyin/nelerin ahlaki olarak değerli görülmesi gerektiğini belirtme zorunluluğudur. Bu zorunluluk, hangi şeylerin özsel değer taşıdığını belirlemekle eşit görülmüştür. İkinci varsayımsa teorinin ahlaki varlıkları diğer doğal objeleri koruması gerektiği yönünde motive etmesi zorunluluğudur. Dolayısıyla en temeldeki evrensel ilke ahlaki bireylerin, nerede bulunursa bulunsun özsel değeri koruması gerektiğidir.

Bunun üzerine Norton, Callicott'un toplumcu etiğinin içindeki bütünler arasında çıkabilecek olası çelişkilerin ancak ve ancak özsel değer derecelendirilmesiyle aşılabileceğini fakat Callicott'un şu ana kadar böyle bir girişiminin olmadığını belirtir. Böyle bir derecelendirme olmaksızın Callicott'un teorisi bizleri neyi korumamız gerektiği konusunda aydınlatamayacağından, tekçi bir değer teorisi çevre sorunlarına nihai çözüm üretemeyecektir.

V

Tezin beşinci bölümünde tekçi değer teorilerine alternatif olan çokçu teorilerin pragmacı kökenlerini aktardım. Pragmacılık, değer kavramını tekçi değer teorilerinin tersine ne özne ne de nesnel bakış açısıyla ele alır. Onlara göre değer, öznenin ve nesnenin belirli bir bağlamda kurduğu ilişki sonucu ortaya çıkar. Bir başka deyişle değerler, aslında özne tarafından nesneyle karşılaşıldığı anda meydana getirilen bağlamsal istekler ve inançlardır. Ancak öznenin isteklerini ve inançlarını bir bağlama oturtup oluşmasını sağlayan şeyler nesnelere. Bu tanımdaki nesnelere çevrenin farklı elemanlarını oluşturur ve çevre de bu yolla değer üretiminin bir parçası haline dönüştürülür.

Kelly Parker pragmacı çevre etiğinin olanaklı olduğunu savunurken özsel ve araçsal değerlerin birbirini dışlamadıklarını öne sürer. Tekçi anlayışın araç/amaç ikiliği pragmacılıkta sadece ve sadece kendi bağlamları içerisinde anlamlıdır. Bağlam değiştikçe nesnelere ve öznelere araç ve amaç nitelikleri de değişebilir. John Dewey bunu atıcılık eylemi üzerinden örnekle açıklamıştır. Dewey'nin örneğine göre sezgisel bir kaynaktan ortaya çıkan atma eylemi, bir şeyin vurulmasıyla birlikte yeni bir anlam kazanır ve atıcılık halini alır. Bu andan sonra hedef almak işin içine girer ve önceki bağlam değişmiş olur; zira artık eylem rastgele atmak değil, belirlenen hedefi vurmaktır. Hedefler, eyleme derinlik ve anlam katar. Yani insanlar hedefler var olduğu için atıcılık yapmazlar; hedefleri, atmak ve vurmak eylemlerini daha verimli yapabilmek adına kendileri koyarlar.

Bu durumda zihin dünyadan ve onun bilgisinden ayrı ele alınamaz. Dünyayı bilmek eylemi, özne ile çevresinin beraber deneyimlediği bir eylemdir. Tıpkı araç ve amaç ilişkisinde olduğu gibi özne ve nesne de bağlamları içerisinde anlamlarını kazanırlar. O halde özne deneyimin bir parçasıdır; deneyim izole bir öznenin parçası değildir. Çevreyse bu deneyimin gerçekleştiği yerdir; birbiri ardına gerçekleşen bağlamların en temel parçalarından biridir.

O halde, değer kavramı da işte tam olarak bu şekilde iç içe geçen özne/nesne ve araç/amaç ikilikleriyle anlam kazanır ve bağlam değiştikçe o da bağlamla birlikte değişir. Bu durumda, pragmacılara göre oluşturulacak çevre etiği, bağlamları ve o bağlamlarda beliren her türlü değeri (sadece özsel değeri değil) kapsayıcı bir teori üretmelidir.

VI

Tezin altıncı bölümünde çevre etiğinin şimdiye kadarki argümanlarının neden henüz yeterli ve kapsayıcı bir çözüm üretmediğini, Marx'ın değişim değeri ve para analizi

üzerinden tartıştım. Marx'a göre halihazırdaki çevre sorunlarının kaynağı burjuva toplumların diğer toplumlarla ve çevreyle kurdukları çarpık ilişkilerdir. David Harvey, toprak etiğinin kendisini nihai çözüm olarak kabul etsek bile, bu alternatifin şu andakinden çok daha farklı üretim ilişkilerini gerektireceğini söyler. Ben de bu fikre katılarak; çevre sorunlarını kapitalist sistemin değer üretimi ve bunun niceliksel karşılığı olan paranın meydana geliş yolu üzerinden tarif edip, para formunun bulunduğu sistemlerde çevre sömürsünün durmayacağını, tam aksine, olsa olsa artabileceğini iddia ettim.

Çevre sorunlarının en güzel ve temel örneklerinden birini, Bryan Norton çevrecilerin ikilemi adı altında ele alır. Norton hikayede, küçük kızın kum dolarlarını kullanım şekli ve kullanılan kum dolarlarının sayısı ile ilgili rahatsız olsa da kıza bunu söyleyemez, çünkü bu tezin başından beri tartıştığım gibi, kıza yeterli ve kapsayıcı bir argüman sunamayacaktır. Norton duyduğu rahatsızlığı gidermenin yolunu hem ekonomik hem de çevresel sürdürülebilirliği kurmaya çalışmakta bulur ve devamında bu alana yönelir. Ancak bana göre, yukarıda da belirttiğim gibi, ekonomik sürdürülebilirlikle çevresel sürdürülebilirlik birbirlerini dışlayan kavramlardır. Bu sorunun temeli de para formunun oluşumunda yani insan emeğinin soyutlaşmasındadır.

Marx, ünlü kitabı *Kapital*'de, burjuva toplumunun üretim ilişkilerini analiz ederken, bu üretim ilişkilerinin yarattığı sorunların en basit ifadesinin değişim değerinde vücut bulduğunu gösterir.

Marx'a göre metalar bizim dışımızdaki nesnelere özgü nitelikleri vardır (renk, koku, şekil vs.). Bu nitelikler metaların sahip oldukları kullanım değerlerini meydana getirirler. Marx tartışmayı kullanım değerleriyle sınırlasa da; çevre etiği perspektifinden bakıldığında araçsal ya da özsel değer de bu tartışmaya rahatlıkla eklenebileceğini iddia etmek yersiz olmaz sanıyorum.

Ancak bu metalar, bütün saydığım ve sayabileceğim değerlerinin yanında, şu andaki üretim ilişkilerini yaratan toplumlar içerisinde fazladan bir değere daha sahiplerdir: değişim değeri. İki meta (buğday ve ayakkabı boyası diyelim) takasa girdiğinde birbirlerinin cinsinden ifade edilirler. Bu sayede x kadar buğday, y adet ayakkabı boyası ile takaslandığında, her iki meta da değişim değeri üretmiş olur. Eğer bu eşitliğe başka metalar da sokulacak olursa (örneğin kumaş ve altın), değişim değeri üreten bütün metaların, tek bir meta üzerinden ifade edilebilmesi olanağı ortaya çıkar. Artık y adet ayakkabı boyası sadece x kadar buğdaya değil; z kadar kumaşa ve t kadar altına da eşit sayılır. Ve bu eşitlikler kuruldukları andan itibaren ayakkabı boyasının hangi renk olduğu, buğdayın ne kadar karbonhidrat içerdiği ve altının iletken özelliği anlamlarını yitirirler. Yani eşitlik içindeki metaların kullanım değerleri, eşitlik kurulu kaldığı sürece değişim değerleri üzerinden ifade edilir. O halde; eşitlik içindeki metalar, kendilerine özgü ve kendileriyle ilgili bütün değerlerden soyutlanmış olurlar, buna özsel değer de dahildir. Çevre ve çevreyi meydana getiren parçalar (hayvanlar, ağaçlar, dereler, denizler vs.) da bu eşitliğe sokuldukları zaman bütün araçsal ve özsel değerlerinden soyutlanarak kendi değişim değerlerine indirgenmiş olurlar.

Marx bu soyutlanma sırasındaki insan emeğinin yapısına ve değişimine odaklanır. Daha önce terzilik becerisi ya da dokumacılık becerisi ile halı ya da gömlek olabilen ve aldığı son hale göre yeni bir kullanım değeri üreten metalar, eşitlik kurulduğu andan itibaren aynı zamanda kendilerine eklenen insan emeğinin niteliğini de yitirirler. Dokumacılık sonucu meydana getirilen meta ile terzilik sonucu meydana getirilen meta da bu niteliklerden bağımsız olarak; soyut insan emeğine indirgenmiş olurlar.

O halde; 20 yarda keten kumaş bir adet cekete eşittir dediğimizde, ceket keten kumaşın eşdeğeri olur. Bir başka deyişle, eşitliğin kurulduğu anda ve sadece o anda, ceket kendi niteliklerinden sıyrılıp keten kumaş üreten dokumacılığın, yani insan emeğinin ve fakat soyut insan emeğinin cismi haline gelir. Bu cismi şekerle ya da tavuk etiyle değiştirirsek, keten kumaşın ifadesi değişse bile soyut insan emeğinin ürettiği değer (değişim değeri) değişmeyecektir.

Şayet ceket ve keten kumaş arasındaki eşitliği başka metaları da ekleyerek çoğaltırsak bütün metaları ortak bir soyut insan emeğine indirgeme olanağına erişiriz. Artık 20 yarda keten kumaş sadece bir adet cekete değil; yarım kilo şeker, 250 gram çaya ve 3 kilo mısıra da eşitlenmiş olur ve bu andan itibaren keten kumaşın niceliği, diğer metaların soyut insan emeklerinin ifadesi olma özelliği kazanır. Bir başka deyişle, artık metaların takaslanması onların niceliksel değişim değerlerini oluşturmaz; tam tersine, metaların değişim değerlerinin nicelikleri, metaların o takasa hangi oranda girdiklerini belirler. 3 kilo mısırı, yarım kilo şeker, 20 yarda keten kumaş üzerinden eşitleyerek, 20 yarda keten kumaş soyut insan emeğinin cismine dönüştürmüş oluruz. Bu da keten kumaş, evrensel eşdeğer formuna taşır: bir başka deyişle para-meta. Eğer keten kumaş da altınla değiştirirsek, soyut insan emeğinin cismi ve evrensel eşdeğer altın haline gelmiş olur bu da para formunu meydana getirir.

Para formunun oluşum sürecinden anlaşılacağı gibi, paranın varlığı, metaların kendilerine ait bütün değerlerinin, değişim değeri üzerinden soyut insan emeğine indirgenmesini zorunlu kılar ve bu andan itibaren, metaların takas içerisindeki değerlerini belirleyen şey bu soyut insan emeğinin niceliği haline gelir.

Marx'ın çözümlemesinden hareketle, Norton'ın çevrecilerin ikilemi sorusuna üretilebilecek yanıtın ancak, küçük kızın kum dolarlarıyla ilişkisini ekonomik düzlemde ayrı tuttuğumuz durumda mümkün olabileceğini söyleyebiliriz. Zira küçük kızın kum dolarlarını kullanma sebebi onlardan bir kullanım değeri üretmek değil; aksine onların tüketiciler için olan kullanım değerlerini kullanarak soyut insan emeği (para) sahibi olmaktır. Ve küçük kızın tüketiciyle girdiği alışverişte, kum dolarlarının değerini paranın miktarı belirleyecektir. Yani küçük kız ne kadar çok kum doları öldürürse o kadar çok para kazanacaktır. Buradan bakarsak, ekonominin sürdürülebilirliğinin çevresel sürdürülebilirlik hedefiyle çelişmesini açıkça görebiliriz.

Her ne kadar kapitalist sistem dışında da aynı ya da benzer çevre sorunlarıyla karşılaşabilecek olsak da; bu sistemin içerisinde bir çözüme ulaşamayacağımız kesindir.

VII

Özsel değer nereden bulunduğu ve doğayla olan ilişkilerimize onu nasıl dahil ettiğimiz gördüğünden de geniş bir alan kaplamaktadır. Normatif iddiaların önemli bir kısmı bu ilişkilerden çıkarıyor olsak da; ahlaki değerlendirmeyle ilgili süren tartışmalar doğada bulunan diğer değerlerle ilgili de sorular sormamıza ön ayak olmuştur. Özsel değer ahlaki değerlendirme kriteri olarak seçilmesi gelişigüzel bir seçim olmamakla birlikte; diğer değer türlerinin dışarıda bırakılması, kurabileceğimiz çevre etiğini kapsayıcılıktan uzaklaştırmaktadır. Öte yandan pragmacıların sunduğu ve bağlamı öne çıkararak alternatif kapsayıcı gibi görünse de; çevre sorunlarını yaratan nedenleri de sorunların çözümü için kullanmayı gerektiriyor. Zira bana kalırsa, parayı ve onun bulunduğu sistem içerisindeki kullanımını ortadan kaldırmadan, çevre sorunlarının insanmerkezci karşıtı ve özsel değer tabanlı çözümleri havada kalacaktır.

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