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**ECO-ETHICS AS AXIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF HUMAN
EXISTENCE IN THE GLOBAL WORLD**

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Abstract

The research examines ecological and axiological aspects of human being in the context of the global world development. The authors discuss an essence of ecological ethics, its modern state and philosophical foundations. Eco-ethics is analysed as an integrative discipline uniting both anthropocentric and bio-centric moral systems in its problem field. Relative conceptions of coevolution and global evolutionism are another important subject of discussion. To make these theoretical models practically applicable it's necessary to focus humanity on the new, ecologically oriented values. This becomes possible due to the development of axiology of eco-ethics and axiosphere of ecology. The last one is structured in three levels – biological, anthropological and social – which interact and complement one another. It's hypothesized that axiosphere of ecology is a continuous system with the open boundaries that make possible to include or exclude from them a variety of traditional and emerging values. Axiosphere of ecology is an important basis for the most productive interaction between nature, human and society at the stage of the global development. To make its functioning successful two priority procedures must be taken into account: modern environmental values must be transferred to next generations and the new eco-ethical values must be created. They determine much the possibility and conditions of life on the planet and the very existence of humanity, society and the biosphere.

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1. Introduction

In the middle of the XX century, ecological problems have acquired the status of «global crisis» and even «environmental disaster». The reason for this is an aggressive anthropogenic impact on nature causing irreversible changes of the environment as the only suitable place for human life. Today human activity is a main factor that determines existence of the surrounding world and sets the conditions for human being in it. During the process of civilization development humanity has created a special dimension composed of both material and spiritual components in its structure. The last ones contain a system of values forming an integral part of spiritual life. The fact is that the humans have transcended nature and gone away from it into their own social world – the world of meanings, symbols and values. But this world is still the scene of action of natural (physical and biological) laws. So, humanity isn't independent of nature.

Transformative activity of modern humans is extremely strong. This causes various kinds of negative trends such as the dangerous ecological situations and the environmental crisis (Guryanova, Astafeva, Filatova, Khafiyatullina, & Guryanov, 2019). All of them threaten the very human existence as a biological species. For this reason modern experts are developing different strategies and recommendations for overcoming the crisis situation, for example the same: it's necessary to create another, alternative value system and to apply it to social life (Pecherskaya, Averina, Karanatova, & Kozhevnikova, 2019). This initiative is proposed in order to re-harmonize the contradictory relations between civilization and nature, to make the value of nature existence a rightful part of the modern value system. But, despite of the progressive initiatives, the growth of human-made disasters shows that all efforts in this area are insufficient yet.

2. Problem Statement

The whole history of humanity is an attempt to transform nature – everything that was given for the humans naturally and initially. The rate of these transformations has increased significantly since the XVII century – the period of the first scientific revolution that set the course for nature conquering and forming technological society. This has led to an unprecedented growth of scientific knowledge and the progress of scientific technology, especially in the XVIII-XIX centuries. In the modern global world (the XXI century) it's obvious that technological innovations have caused the emergence of a significant number of axiological and ethical problems (Guryanova, Smotrova, Makhovikov, & Koychubaev, 2020). The main of them are pointed in «The Program of Digital Economy Development in Russia». These are, for example, the problems with water and food, the climate changes, the widespread using of genetically modified products, the possibility of artificial biological weapons and all sorts of invasive synthetic organisms creating (Russian Federation Government, 2017). All this and each of them separately can lead to the destruction of the biosphere and the humanity itself.

Today, there is no doubt about the relevance and necessity of eco-ethics and a number of relating worldview conceptions such as coevolution and global evolutionism. So, they need complex consideration and integrative analysis which are just carried out in the present research.

3. Research Questions

The main research questions are the same:

What are the eco-axiological foundations of human existence in the global world?

What kind of discipline ecological ethics is? What is its problem field and axiology?

What is the worldview meaning of coevolution and global evolutionism conceptions?

What is an axiosphere of ecology? What values does it include in its structure?

4. Purpose of the Study

- The present research is focused on the following tasks solution:
- To analyse the socio-ecological foundations of human existence in conditions of globalization;
- With that aim in view to characterize the problem areas of eco-ethics, coevolution and global evolutionism;
- To identify and describe an axiology of eco-ethics;
- To consider an axiosphere of ecology and to find out its structure elements.

5. Research Methods

- The research is based on the following methods:
- dialectical method which helped to present a system of eco-axiological foundations in their movement and development;
- methods of analysis and synthesis, which helped to organize and systematize the material of the research;
- classification method, with a help of which the levels of the axiosphere of ecology have been structured;
- comparative method, which allowed to find out and to describe the relative conceptions concerning both ecological ethics and axiology.

6. Findings

6.1. The essence of eco-ethics

Eco-ethics is a system of moral norms regulating human environmental activities. It's also a doctrine of due in relations between the humans and the natural world. Meanwhile, nature is interpreted as a subject, its moral status is accepted, the inner values and the integrity of nature are rated highly, the rights of nature and the limitation of human rights are postulated. The essence of eco-ethics is to transfer and extend the moral norms not only to the relations between the humans or between the human and the society, but also between the human and the surrounding nature. Some modern authors also try to consider eco-ethics as an extended version of the «ethics of nonviolence».

Eco-ethics is very important today because it recognizes the inner value of natural phenomena and the forms of human responsibility towards nature. As it is known, anthropocentric ethics believes that the main value is the human: the value of nature is considered by relation with him as a consumer. Eco-ethics

is constructed on a fundamentally different basis: the value of nature isn't limited by its resources and consumer relations only. It isn't also limited by measuring the value of nature for human existence. Every natural phenomenon contributes to preserve the integrity, diversity and beauty of the natural world. So, it contains the real value in itself, without depending on the human consumption.

At the first sight, it may seem that eco-ethical knowledge has an applied nature. However, that isn't true, because the development of eco-ethics as a special form of scientific knowledge is based on serious philosophical and axiological foundations. Its content is focused on respectful and careful attitude to all forms of life. Such a worldview was typical for the ancient mythological consciousness ensouling the whole world and uniting the nature and the humans. Such a mythological worldview can be characterized as spontaneously ecological. In the process of further development of civilization its main ideas have been constantly manifesting in various forms of religions and philosophical doctrines (Shestakov, Noskov, Tikhonov, & Astafeva, 2017).

Today eco-ethics is immanent to the achievements of modern social and philosophical sciences: it includes conceptual prerequisites and foundations which are an organic part of the modern intellectual situation. We can mention among them Lev Tolstoy's moral doctrine of «non-resistance to evil by force», George Moore's «meta-ethics», Albert Schweitzer's «ethics of reverence for life», Aldo Leopold's «ethics of the earth», etc. The essence of these conceptions is that the human has no right to proclaim himself the sole and universal «measure of all things». If such an attempt is still made, the consequences will be destructive, devaluating the natural values and the humanity itself (Pilon, 2017).

The similar ideas we can see in the works of Teilhard de Chardin (2008). In his famous «Phenomenon of Man» he wrote that humanity must become intellectually united in order to understand and to conquer the forces around it. In this case only it'll pass the danger of facing the external limit of its development. The French philosopher is sure the strength of the human and the humanity is their planetary unity, ability to protect freedom and individuality through the knowledge of their own essence – transcendent and universal. According to Teilhard de Chardin (2008) the energy of life must always be directed in a positive direction. So, evil and all sorts of destructive tendencies are only deviations from the general course of progressive development.

Philosophical views of Teilhard de Chardin (2008) belong to the tradition of philosophical humanism which considers every human as a subject of evolution and a highest value. This tradition is intensively developing in conditions of the modern global world.

6.2. Coevolution of nature and global society

In fact, eco-ethics based on the above mentioned philosophical conceptions is the ethics of sustainable development. Its aim is to synthesize both anthropocentric and bio-centric moral systems in their problem fields. So, criteria of anthropocentrism and biocentrism can be considered the axiological basis of modern eco-ethics. This leads to future formation of socio-natural co-evolutionary system that should be able to resolve a major part of the global problems manifested by the modern society. There is also a need to make sustainable development a strategy of survival and continuous evolution of humanity, to preserve the natural environment and the biosphere itself.

Today the principle of coevolution between nature and society is one of the most important elements of the modern eco-ethics. For the first time it was manifested in the field of biological researches. Then the concept of «coevolution» has quickly entered the categorical apparatus of the related scientific disciplines, after that – the humanities. Eventually it has got the status of general science. Coevolution involves the process of joint development of human society and the biosphere. The interests of both participants should be optimally taken into account during their interaction, and no extremes should be allowed. To secure the future, humanity is called not only to change the biosphere, but to transform itself adapting to the objective requirements of nature.

To reach the state of sustainable coevolution of society and the biosphere it's necessary to focus civilization on new, ecologically oriented values. Most of them have already been created in the modern culture, manifesting themselves in various concepts, principles, programmes, legal norms and moral attitudes. These are the values of life and non-wars, biological diversity and integrity of the biosphere, ecosystem sustainability, environmental management and resource saving, ecological safety and other values of environmental consciousness and behaviour. To follow these values the human must limit his increasing consumer habits and stop technocratic aggression towards the natural world (Shestakov, Stotskaya, Mingulov, & Zaitseva, 2017) in order to allow its objects develop free and spontaneous, without any violence from the side of humanity. «Freedom» here means an ontological way and implies a sense of reverence for all forms of life. This principle is a real foundation for the axiology of eco-ethics.

6.3. Axiology of eco-ethics and its main values

Axiology of eco-ethics includes both natural and human values which are considered separately in ethics and ecology. Its main idea is to unite environmental problems with human values. So, the convergence of natural and anthropometric values forms an axiological basis of eco-ethics. From its point of view, ethical and axiological reasons of the ecological crisis are the dominance of consumerism values and the human egoism manifesting itself invariably in relation to the natural world (Akaev, 2017). An opportunity to overcome the crisis lies in the following projects: to develop the new value-normative strategies increasing the value of natural resources, to overcome the alienation of human from nature, to unite the world of nature and the human world, to develop a new ecological worldview and a new environmental ethics.

Eco-ethics in the global world is responsible for the development of the most important values and ways of human existence that should help to prevent environmental disaster (Seth & Barrett, 2017). To make them possible and effective it's necessary to accept the value of nature, to develop human responsibility for the ecological balance in the world, to form a new, eco-centric worldview of the modern humanity. Eco-ethical ideas have become very popular today (Qu, Sun, Guo, & Yu, 2016). Eco-ethics acts as a universal moral regulator of human activities and nature transforming, a fundamental element of the new worldview system of the global society. It orients social consciousness to the ideal of harmonious relations in the process of joint development of society and nature. It's also an important condition for overcoming the modern ecological crisis.

6.4. Global evolutionism as a strategy of development

In the natural sciences and philosophical literature of the recent years global evolutionism and its problem field are actively discussed. Global evolutionism is a complex, interdisciplinary area of scientific research where an integrative understanding of the world is forming. It makes the synthesis of scientific concepts and laws, of technical and humanitarian hypotheses. It's characterized by a significant degree of generality and prognostic capacity. The followers of global evolutionism generalize private scientific concepts of development and try to find out the motive forces and mechanisms of the different evolutionary processes.

Global evolutionism considers development of the Universe from the Big Bang to the emergence of human civilization as a single process. It's characterized by genetic and structural continuity of different types of evolution (cosmic, social, etc.) Therefore, modern human should be considered not only as an individual or a member of society, but as a necessary element of the general evolutionary process. Humanity is one of its branches, as well as a certain form of the matter organization. Its progress is widely connected by its coevolution links with many other trends and directions of development – biosphere, technosphere, infosphere, etc.

The beginning of scientific discussion of the problems of global evolutionism is presented in classical works of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Edouard Le Roy and Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky. The name of the Russian scientist is usually associated with the materialistic interpretation of «noosphere» (Guryanova et al., 2019). As it is known, the concept «noosphere» was first proposed by the French mathematician and philosopher E. Le Roy in 1927. With a help of this concept, together with philosopher and theologian Teilhard de Chardin (2008), he analyzed evolution of the ideal sphere up to the emergence of the consciousness phenomenon. Unlike the French scientists, Vernadsky (1991) was interested not only in human consciousness but in the consequences of its development manifesting on a planetary scale. The Russian scientist analyzed the phenomenon of noosphere complexly, taking into account not only the biological but also the geological content of the system components of the planet.

According to Vernadsky (2017) the essence of modern environmental changes is that we are transforming the biosphere towards the noosphere that is a real kingdom of reason. Russian scientist interprets the noosphere as a historically inevitable stage in the evolution of the biosphere. The humanity can control the process of rational transformation of the biosphere leading to the harmony between the human, society and nature. In modern conditions when the planet's territory and mineral resources are intensively used by humanity for its vital needs no system is able to maintain a harmonious balance of its elements without the active control influence of the human. The cardinal transformation of the biosphere into a qualitatively new state is caused, first of all, by the influence of scientific thought and human labor.

6.5. Axiosphere of ecology and its structure

Axiosphere of ecology is a special area of social life where integration of the whole system of values connecting the natural world takes place. It contains the experience of many centuries of human interactions with the natural environment. We assume that modern axiosphere of ecology can be structured into three value levels.

The first of them is biological. It plays a role of basis for the new values formation during the process of human cognition and development of the biosphere. At this level observation of natural phenomena and processes takes place, main ecological problems are fixed, the relations between human activity and the environment are discovered, and the values determining human behaviour in the natural world are formed. Here we mention the «values-goals» that reflect the main directions of human impact on the biosphere and the «values-means» that determine the degree of this impact and the level of its irreversibility.

The second value level is anthropological. Within this level a human feels himself a part of nature united with the biosphere. The main role here is played by the special «values-interactions». With a help of them human behaviour in the biosphere is regulating and the feeling of personal responsibility for what is done is forming.

The third level is social. At this level interaction between people is based on the principle of coevolution development genetically related to the principle of «reverence for life». It's also claimed the social responsibility of each member of the society for the emergence and solution of the environmental problems of any complexity and variety. The social level implies the unprecedented value of environmental knowledge that allows every human to adapt himself to the natural environment, to be ready to solve the problems he is faced in the global world with its great scientific and technological innovations.

The three value levels – biological, anthropological and social – interact with each other and complement one another. In that way they realize specific values and form the structure of the axiosphere of ecology. They constitute together a special eco-axiological space. Within this space the values of the biological level determine the specificity of anthropological values, and the last ones, in their turn, form an axiosphere of ecology at the social level. This model has a continuous character because the boundaries of all value levels are always open. So, it's possible to include and exclude from it all the re-emerging values of the global world.

7. Conclusion

Axiosphere of ecology is a basis of the most productive interaction between nature, human and society at the modern stage of the global world development. To make functioning of the axiosphere of ecology successful two priority ways of its development must be realized: first of all, it's necessary to transfer modern environmental values to other generations; secondly, the new eco-ethical values must be created in the process of the natural world cognition and the constant human interaction with all its components.

Ecological and axiological foundations of the global world are multilevel and multidimensional. In the situation of the modern environmental crisis they determine the possibility and conditions of life on the planet, as well as the very existence of humanity, society and the biosphere. The eco-ethical values are produced in conceptions of philosophy and axiology, coevolution and global evolutionism. They both play an important role in the process of axiosphere development. This changes much the reality of the global world.

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