INTRINSIC VALUE IN NATURE: SOME CONTEMPORARY DEBATES *

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Introduction:

One of the most common tasks of environmental philosophers is to frame some theories according to which nature including non-human entities possesses intrinsic value. However, from time to time we have seen efforts to refute the claim being that not only are the particular theories as suggested inconsistent, but the very idea of intrinsic value in nature - at least in some allegedly important sense of "intrinsic value" - is in principle indefensible.

Environmental philosophy is one among several new sorts of applied philosophies, which arose during the seventies. That is, it may be understood to be an application of well-established conventional philosophical categories to emergent practical environmental problems. It may be understood to be an exploration of alternative moral and even metaphysical principles, forced upon philosophy by the magnitude and dimension of these problems. If defined in the former way, then the work of environmental philosophy is that of a traditional philosophical task; if defined in the latter way, it is that of a theoretician or philosophical architect. However, in ethics if interpreted as an essentially theoretical, not applied discipline, the most important philosophical task for environmental ethics is to develop anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism that inculcate a value theory in application. Indeed, as the discussion which follows will make clear, without a non-anthropocentric direction the innovatory aspirations of theoretical environmental ethics would be let down and the whole initiative would collapse in to its everyday routine to the applied counterpart.

Intrinsic value signifies recognition of fundamental goodness in the world. Though it may appear quite basic at first glance, the concept of intrinsic value is complex, with philosophically rich ontological, epistemological, and ethical dimensions. Philosophers have characterized these dimensions differently, and it would be misleading to suggest any one, monolithic concept of intrinsic value emerges from the philosophical literature. One may distinguish between two major schools of thought on intrinsic value, one generally aligned with the work of G.E.

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Moore, and the other more closely aligned with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. These two camps diverge primarily in identifying different types of things as bearers of intrinsic value, which in turn leads to different ideas about how humans ought to conduct themselves in relation to intrinsic value.

The Concept of Intrinsic value:

Intrinsic value has traditionally been thought to lie at the heart of ethics. Philosophers use a number of terms to refer to such value. The intrinsic value of something is said to be the value that thing has "in itself," or "for its own sake," or "as such," or "in its own right." Extrinsic value is value that is not intrinsic. The term 'intrinsic value' and the less-used alternative term 'inherent worth' mean, lexically speaking, pretty much the same thing. According to the *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, "intrinsic" means "belonging to the essential nature or constitution of a thing" and "inherent" means "involved in the constitution or essential character of something intrinsic." The word "value" comes from the Latin word "*valere* to be worth, to be strong"; and "worth" comes from the old English word "*weorth* (worthy), of value." Lexically speaking, to claim that the value (or worth) of something is intrinsic (or inherent) is to claim that its value (or worth) belongs to its essential nature or constitution.

According to G.E. Moore[1] "To say that a kind of value is 'intrinsic' means merely that the question whether a thing possesses it, and in what degree it possesses it, depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in question." He says that intrinsic value is not subjective, but objective. Intrinsic value does not depend on the human beings valuing them. He makes a distinction between intrinsic value and intrinsic property. Examples of intrinsic value are beauty, goodness, etc. In *Principia Ethica*, Moore argues that the existence of beauty apart from any awareness of it has intrinsic value, but he allows that beauty on its own at best has little and may have no intrinsic value[2]. In *Ethics* Moore implicitly denies that beauty on its own has value[3]. Whereas examples of intrinsic property are yellowness, redness, etc. Intrinsic value

[1] Moore, G. E; The Conception of Intrinsic Value; *Philosophical Studies*, Rutledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1922, p. 260- 266.
[2] *Ibid.* 1-2, p. 53-54.
[3] Moore, G. E *Ethics* London: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 107.

constitutes a unique class of predicate because they do not have anything in common with other kinds of predicates of value. Both intrinsic property and intrinsic value depend on the intrinsic nature of the thing possessing them. However intrinsic value is not identical with intrinsic property, they are different. There is something in intrinsic value which is not present in intrinsic property. To conceptualize intrinsic value, Lemos,[4] tries to give a detailed account of intrinsic value and examine that intrinsic value is such that which is explicated in terms of the notions of ethically 'fitting' or required emotional attitudes such as love, hate and preference. Lemos elaborates that some properties are intrinsically good and some properties are intrinsically bad[5]. For example, pleasure and wisdom are intrinsically good and pain is intrinsically bad. Chisholm also says that 'state of affairs' is the bearer of intrinsic value.[6] Lemos suggests that it is not pleasure or perfect justice, considered as abstract properties that have intrinsic value. According to him wisdom, pleasure, beauty are 'good making properties'[7]. The distinction between 'intrinsic' and 'non-intrinsic' value for Chisholm, has been questioned in many ways and sometimes it became ridiculous. Chisholm, in course of his deliberation, tried to define what intrinsic value is and in doing so, he is concerned with the qualification that makes value intrinsic. In saying so, Chisholm states that the state of affair under which something is considered to be valuable is to be kept in isolation and such value is considered as 'extrinsic' and not intrinsic since in such cases the value is dependent on the states of affair.[8] For Chisholm, if a state of affairs is intrinsically good then it is intrinsically good in every possible world in which (or is true). But a state of affairs that is instrumentally good need not to be instrumentally good in every possible world in which it obtains.[9] He, in this context, mentions that all intrinsic value concepts may be analyzed in terms of intrinsic preferability.

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[4] Lemos, Noah M; *Intrinsic Value: Concept and Warrant*, DePauw University , Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 3-19
[5] *Ibid*, p.3-19.
[6]Charles Stevenson, Richard Brant 'Values and Morals*: Essays in honor of William Frankena*, edited by Alvin I. Goldmen and Jaegwon Kin, Springer Netherlands, 1978.
[7] Lemos, Noah M; *Intrinsic Value: Concept and Warrant*, DePauw University , Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.3-19
[8] Chisholm, Roderick M; Defining Intrinsic Value: *Analysis, Vol. 41, No.2* Apr., 1981, Oxford University Press: p.99-100
[9] *Ibid*, p. 99-100

Thus, we can see that intrinsic value is a multifaceted concept that can be considered from various angles of philosophical inquiry, in the following manner:

1. Ontological: What is intrinsic value? What sorts of things possess intrinsic value? Are there degrees of intrinsic value and can intrinsic value be summed or otherwise aggregated?
2. Epistemological: How can we recognize intrinsic value and, if relevant, differences in degrees of intrinsic value? Is intrinsic value a discoverable, objective property of the world, or a subjective attribution of (human) valuers?
3. Ethical: What obligations or duties do moral agents have in relation to intrinsic value? How should we balance these duties/obligations against other ethical considerations (e.g., issues of justice or rights)?

Ontology, epistemology, and ethics are the three major dimensions of intrinsic value, which philosophers use to develop and explain their particular interpretation of the concept. Different theories will be characterized by different ideas about the ontological, epistemological, and ethical status of intrinsic value.

Contemporary Approach of Intrinsic value in Nature:

In environmental philosophy, it is necessary to perceive environmental issues from different philosophical directions. Philosophers and ethicists have obligation to formulate a passable worldview through which the problems are seen, how we see nature and suggest norms by which our interactions with the environment are to be judged. A proper analysis shows that traditional Western ethics is basically anthropocentric. Human life is not comparable with any other lives. For them, only humans are intrinsically valuable. But contemporary environmental philosophy begins with 'moral extentionism' and deals with questions like 'to what extent of the nature/environment, is to be accorded intrinsic value? What is the criterion of according moral value?' Some philosophers like, Peter Singer, favours the criteria of "sentience"[10], while conservationists speak of biospheric egalitarianism. According to them, trees and plants have non-felt goals of their own. Even in an eco-system, species are to be accorded moral value. To ask whether to accord equal moral worth

[10] Singer. P., *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press. 1993, p. 264-65

to all beings, or accept degrees of value? Some accept degrees while others claim that this is an undue partiality.

While dealing with the debate related to welfarism vs conservationism questions like 'can we accept killing some wild beasts in order to maintain ecological balance' are asked. The welfarists' response is obviously negative. Conservationists permit keeping in view the integrity of the system. Some thinkers like Warwick Fox, do not find any necessary connection between value ascription and conservation. They think deep self-realisation is a prerequisite.[11]Some claims that environmental values are not universal and support relativist environmentalism. On the other hand third world environmentalism is different. Let us elaborate the debates thoroughly and comprehensively. The first debate is whether moral worth can be extended to the non-human entities and if it is then what is the criteria of such extension. The argument, in favour of those who support moral extension beyond human, may be put forward in the following way.

- Moral concern deserves for anyone who has an interest in, or desire for, their own well-being.
- Humans show a desire for their own well-being, and thus they deserve moral respect. That is, the well-being of other beings ought to be respected and protected, because these other beings have a desire for their own well-being just as we do.
- Yet humans are not the only entities possessing such interests or desires. Other animals also show a desiring interest in their own well-being, and thus they too deserve moral respect just as humans.

The first and second assumptions are the basic premises of many ethical discussions, while the third one is the important extension in the reasoning of environmentalists and animal rights advocates. If both human and nonhuman beings desire their own well-being and have a sentient capacity for experiencing pain; then both kinds of beings, in similar ways, can be either benefited or harmed. Hence, both kinds of beings qualify for moral concern. To grant moral respect to the one kind, but not the other, is inconsistent. However, this extension limits only to the *sentient*

[11] Fox, Warwick; 1993; "What Does the Recognition of Intrinsic Value Entail?" *Trumpeter* 10, p.101.

beings whereas environmental ethicists go beyond sentient beings. Aldo Leopold makes a significant entry in this regard in 1949 with the celebrated *A Sand County Almanac*. Leopold advanced the idea of biotic right, the concept that everything on this planet, including soil and water, is ecologically equal to man and shares equally in "the right to continued existence." Thus Leopold became the most important source of modern bio-centric or holistic ethicist. Leopold holds that there is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it. The extension of ethics to this third element in human environment is an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity.[12]

Rolston's Approach:

Rolston[13] argued that there is no better evidence of nonhuman values and valuers than spontaneous wild life, born free and on its own. Animals hunt and howl, find shelter, seek out their habitats and mates, care for their young, flee from threats, grow hungry, thirsty, hot, tired, excited and sleepy. They suffer injury and lick their wounds. Here we are quite convinced that value is non-anthropocentric. These wild animals defend their own lives because they have a good of their own. There is somebody there behind the fur or feathers. Our gaze is returned by an animal that it has a concerned outlook. Here is value right before our eyes, right behind those eyes. Animals are value-able, able to value things in their world. They maintain a valued self-identity as they cope through the world. An animal values its own life for what it is in itself, intrinsically. Humans have used animals for as long as anyone can recall, instrumentally. And in most of their moral traditions, they have also made place for duties concerning the animals for which they were responsible, domestic animals, or toward the wild animals which they hunted. Animal lives command our appropriate respect for the intrinsic value present there. But this is only an ethic for mammals, perhaps for vertebrates, and this is only a fractional percentage of living things.

Rolston mentioned that a plant is not a subject, but neither is it an inanimate object, like a stone. Plants, quite alive, are unified entities of the botanical though not of the zoological kind, that is, they are not unitary organisms highly integrated with

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[12] Leopold, A. (1949). *A Sand Country Almanac*: *With Essays on Conservation from Round River*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 238-9

[13] Rolston, Holmes; *Art, Ethics and Environment: A Free Inquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature*. Newcastle. UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006. p. 1-11

centered neural control, but they are modular organisms, with a meristem that can repeatedly and indefinitely produce new vegetative modules, additional stem nodes and leaves when there is available space and resources, as well as new reproductive modules, fruits and seeds. Plants make themselves; they repair injuries; they move water, nutrients, and photosynthate from cell to cell; they store sugars; they make toxins and regulate their levels in defense against grazers; they make nectars and emit pheromones to influence the behavior of pollinating insects and the responses of other plants; they emit allelopathic agents to suppress invaders; they make thorns, trap insects. A plant, like any other organism, sentient or not, is a spontaneous, self-maintaining system, sustaining and reproducing itself, executing its program, making a way through the world, checking against performance by means of responsive capacities with which to measure success. On the basis of its genetic information, the organism distinguishes between what *is* and what *ought to be.*The organism is an axiological system, though not a moral system. So the tree grows, reproduces, repairs its wounds, and resists death. A life is defended for what it is in itself. Every organism has a *good-of-its-kind;* it defends its own kind as a *good kind.* The plant, as we were saying, is involved in conservation biology. Does not that mean that the plant is valuable, able to value itself on its own?

Edwin P. Pister's Approach:

Edwin P. Pister[14], a retired Associate Fishery Biologist by profession with the California Department of Fish and Game, worked long and hard to save from extinction several species of desert fishes living in small islands of water in an ocean of dry land. He and his allies took the case of the Devil's Hole pupfish - threatened by agro business persons pumping groundwater for irrigation - all the way to the United States Supreme Court; and won. Pister argues for *moral* responsibility to save them from extinction without considering about whether they had instrumental value or not but they had, Pister believed, *intrinsic value*. But this "philosophical" concept was hard to explain to colleagues and constituents. As one put it, "When you start talking about morality and ethics, you lose me."[15] Finally, Pister found a way to put the

[14]Pister, P. Edwin; 1985, "Desert Pupfishes: Reflections on Reality, Desirability, and Conscience." *Fisheries*, 10/6:10-15.

[15] Pister, P. Edwin, 1987, "A Pilgrim's Progress from Group A to Group B," in *Companion to A Sand County Almanac*, J. Baird Callicott (edit.). Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987, p. 228

concept of intrinsic value across clearly. To the question *What good is it?* he replied, *What good are you?* That answer forces the questioner to confront the fact that he or she regards his or her own total value to exceed his or her instrumental value. Many people hope to be instrumentally valuable - to be useful to family, friends, and society. But if we prove to be good for nothing, we believe, nevertheless, that we are still entitled to life, to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness. (If only instrumentally valuable people enjoyed a claim to live, the world might not be afflicted with human overpopulation and over-consumption; certainly we would have no need for expensive hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and the like.) Human dignity and the respect it commands - human ethical entitlement - is grounded ultimately in our claim to possess intrinsic value.

Callicott's Approach:

Drawing the line of Pister, J. B. Callicott[16] called this the phenomenological proof for the existence of intrinsic value. The question "*How do we know that intrinsic value exists?"* is similar to the question "*How do we know that consciousness exists?"* We experience both consciousness and intrinsic value introspectively and irrefutably. Pister's question "*What good are you?"* simply serves to bring one's own intrinsic value to one's attention. More importantly Callicott mentioned that if we fail to establish intrinsic value in nature then there is no meaning of environmental ethics as because intrinsic value is the most distinct feature of environmental ethics. If nature, that is, lacks intrinsic value, then environmental ethics is but a particular application of human-to-human ethics. He also acknowledged about moral truth to justify that nature has intrinsic value by refuting Bryan Norton's[17] anthropocentric approaches towards nature. In this context Callicott referred the instances of voluntary freeing the slaves of plantation owners in Southern America during the period of Abraham Lincoln. The concept is that if the slaves are freed then they will get a chance to form, re-form and improve their value system. The same argument can be produced in case of environment. Human beings, we

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[16] Callicott, J. Baird;1995, Intrinsic Value in Nature: a Meta-ethical Analysis, The Electronic Journal of Analytic Philosophy, vol. 3, Spring, Presbyterian College.

[17] Norton, Bryan (1992). 'Epistemology and Environmental Value.' *Monist* 75: 208-26.
(Notes: Bryan Norton fairly asks why we should want a *distinct*, non-anthropocentric environmental ethic. There is the intellectual charm and challenge of creating something so novel. And that, combined with a passion for championing nature, is reason enough for me, a

believe, have intrinsic value. Therefore, we think that to enslave human beings is wrong. And besides, slavery is economically backward. Similarly, other species, we are beginning to believe, are also intrinsically valuable. Therefore, to render other species extinct is wrong. And besides, we risk injuring ourselves and future generations of human beings in a wide variety of ways if we do not vigilantly preserve other species.

Callicott also put forwarded teleological argument for the existence of intrinsic value in nature.[18]The argument appears to be analogous to Aristotle's at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* for something - human happiness, Aristotle believed - that is an end in itself. The existence of means, in short, implies the existence of ends. Though one means may exist for the sake of another - say, a forge for the making of shovels - the train of means must, Aristotle argued, terminate in an end which is not, in turn, a means to something else: an end-in-itself. Otherwise the train of means would be infinite and unanchored. And since means are valued instrumentally and ends-in-themselves are valued intrinsically, if ends-in-themselves exist - and they must if means do; and means do - then intrinsic value exists.

Arne Neass' Approach:

Arne Naess took a strong stand questioning the venerable German philosopher Immanuel Kant's insistence that human beings are never used *merely* as a means to an end. But why should this philosophy apply only to human beings? Are there no other beings with intrinsic value? What about animals, plants, landscapes, and our very special old planet as a whole?

Arne Neass, a revolutionary environmentalist mentioned that there is existence of greatness in nature other than human. For him, "To meet a big, wild animal in its own territory may be frightening, but it gives us an opportunity to better understand who we are and our limits of control: the existence of greatness other than the human."[19]

Furthermore, Neass elaborates that there is one process that perhaps is more important in this respect than any other: the process of so-called *identification*. We

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[18] Callicott, J. Baird; 1995, Intrinsic Value in Nature: a Meta-ethical Analysis, The Electronic Journal of Analytic Philosophy, vol. 3, Spring, Presbyterian College.

[19] Naess, A. 2005; The heart of the forest. In A. Drengson& H. Glasser (Eds.), *Selected Works of Arne Naess, X:* 551-553). Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer

tend to see ourselves in everything alive. We observe the death struggle of an insect, but as mature human beings we spontaneously also experience our own death in a way, and feel sentiments that relate to struggle, pain, and death. Spontaneous identification is of course most obvious when we react to the pain of persons we love. We do not observe that pain and by reflecting on it decide that it is bad. What goes on is difficult to describe; it is a task of philosophical phenomenology to try to do the job. Here it may be sufficient to give some examples of the process of identification, or "seeing oneself in others." A complete report on the death struggle of an insect as some of us experience such an event must include the positive and negative values that are attached to the event as firmly as the duration, the movements, and the colors involved.[20] So, for him, there is a substantial majority with quite far-reaching ideas about the rights and value of life forms, and a conviction that *every life form has its place in nature* that we must respect. Neass, in the first of eight points charter what he coined as "the platform of deep ecology," or rather, one formulation of such a platform stated that the flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth has inherent value. The value of nonhuman life forms is independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes. In oppose to these views propagated by the philosophers as has been discussed so far, there are group of thinkers who have drawn a different line of thoughts in regard to the moral extension to non-human world.

Elliot's Approach:

Robert Elliot, taking into account of consequentialist and deontologist position, claimed to conceive that if wild nature has intrinsic value, then there is an obligation to preserve it and to restore it. There is a connection between value and obligation. If wild nature has intrinsic value it is because it exemplifies value adding properties. Elliot's favourite candidates are naturalness and aesthetic value. The aesthetic value draws together various other suggested value-adding properties other than naturalness, such as diversity, stability, complexity, beauty, harmony, creativity, organization, intricacy, elegance and richness. Particular such properties might be value-adding in their own right, but additionally they might, in conjunction with other properties, constitute the property of being aesthetically valuable, which is likewise

[20] Naess, A. 1993; Intrinsic value: Will the defenders of nature please rise. In P. Reed & D. Rothenberg (Eds.), *Wisdom in the Open Air* (p.70–82). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

value-adding. In this context Elliot focuses on naturalness and considers some objections to naturalness and considers some objections to the claim that it is value-adding.[21]

Bryan Norton's approach:

Another advocate of this debate is Bryan Norton[22] and for him nature serves us in more ways than as a pool of raw materials and a dump for wastes. It provides priceless ecological services, many of which we imperfectly understand. And, undefiled, nature is a source of aesthetic gratification and religious inspiration. When the interests of future generations as well as of present persons in the ecological services and psycho-spiritual resources afforded people by nature are taken into account, respect for human beings or for human interests is quite enough to support nature protection, Norton argues. Thus, anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric environmental ethics "converge"; that is, both prescribe the same personal practices and public policies. Let us turn to the second debate i.e. whether to accord equal moral worth to all beings, or accept degrees of value? Some accept degrees; others say this is undue partiality.

Aldo Leopold, Homes Rolston III, Arne Neass favour equal moral worth to all beings, whereas Moorean group is talking about degree of values. Again, Charles Cockell and some other debated that environmental policy has a size bias. Small organisms, such as microorganisms, command less attention from environmentalists than larger organisms, such as birds and large mammals, hence they bear less "degree" of intrinsic value. The campaigns for the protection of endangered creatures almost always focus on those that are large and impressive. The list of species whose decline or abuse has caught the attention of environmentalists includes: Rhinos, elephants, tigers, whales, seals, lions, turtles, polar bears, many types of birds, domesticated animals, animals used for vivisection, and so on. Evident within the history of environmental ethics and environmental policy is the consistent importance of the size of organisms. Environmentalists do not often concern themselves with the

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[21] Elliot, Robert; 'Intrinsic Value, Environmental Obligation and Naturalness', The Monist, Vol. 75, No. 2, *The Intrinsic Value of Nature* (April,1992), p. 138-160; Oxford University Press

[22] Norton, Bryan; 1991, *Toward Unity among Environmentalists* New York: Oxford University Press.

decline of small rodents, insects, or crustaceans.[23] There are some notable exceptions. The protection of the monarch butterfly has been an ongoing concern for the North American Butterfly Association, and it is an example of a small creature that has attracted the attention of environmentalists and policy makers. In the United States, each state has a symbolic state insect, illustrating that some small organisms have.

To move on to the debate related to both welfarism as well as conservationism a massive contradiction between anthropocentricism and non-anthropocentricism is vividly acknowledged. To shift to the question "can we accept killing some wild beasts in order to maintain ecological balance?" has occupied a significant place in environmental ethics. Legally animals have no rights. Property rights are still the premier means of addressing the environment. But man centered approach towards environment is an illegitimate way of giving preference to human interest only. Specisism is discrimination on the basis of species only, without sufficient moral reason. Non-anthropocentricism helps to get rid of traditional attitude towards animals. The fact that it fails to mitigate the dichotomy between biotic and abiotic is mere abstraction and it leads to eco-centrism. Some sort of Anthropocentrism is unavoidable; a 'perspectival' anthropocentrism is objectionable. The main *objectionable* concern of Anthropocentrism is the human interest at the expense of non-human animals and non-inclusion of *intrinsic value* to non-human world. That only the human has reason, capacity of communication is factually incorrect. In this context a lot of examples like monkey and Rhinoceros can be provided. Even some non-anthropocentric approaches cannot go deep to the issues of endangered species and the ecosystem. Moral standing of the whole nature, including abiotic part is to be acknowledged. But at this juncture, we are in a pendulum of "The life boat ethics", where ethics is on one side and development is on the other side. The reason why this dichotomy continues is as because the welfarists say, 'no' to any damage to the non-human world and the conservationists permit keeping in view the integrity of the system.

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[23] Cockell,Charles S; Environmental Ethics and Size; Ethics and the Environment, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Spring, 2008), pp. 23-39, Indiana University Press

Criteria for acknowledging intrinsic value in nature:

The question 'what are the criteria of acknowledging intrinsic value in nature? needs to be answered in the light to grasp the very idea of intrinsic value in nature. The criterion will perhaps serve the required demand for the debate related to the value ascription and subjective objective dichotomy.

Before proceeding to examine the epistemological status of attributions of independent value to natural objects, it is necessary to distinguish two important different theories regarding that value. Some advocators of independent value in nature believe that nature is valuable in the strong, "intrinsic" sense that natural objects have value entirely independent of human consciousness. According to this theory, the value in nature existed prior to human consciousness and it will continue to exist even after human consciousness disappears. Other theorists adopt a less heroic version of the hypothesis, accepting that valuing is a conscious activity and that value, therefore, will be only "inherent" in nature. According to the inherentists, nature has value that is independent of the values and goals of human evaluators - it is not merely instrumental to human ends - but this value is attributed by conscious valuers, either human or otherwise.

Hence the question of intrinsic value reflects a long-standing conflict between rival epistemologies, with realists and relativists squaring off in a new arena. For their part, neo-pragmatists adopt an anti-foundationalist stance: the moral and ontological status of nonhuman nature need not be settled - indeed cannot be settled - before engaging in collective action on behalf of the environment. Radical pluralism at the level of conceptual frameworks need not preclude a workable accord on policy. On this view, solutions to environmental problems what Norton called contextual sensitivity which is different from metaphysical certainty.[24] In this context Norton assumed two concerns:

i) The Epistemic Question: Can environmentalists claim that their goals and the value claims that support them are epistemically justifiable, that they are more than merely subjective preferences?

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[24] Nunez, Theodore W.; Rolston, Lonergan, and the Intrinsic Value of Nature, The Journal of Religious Ethics, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring, 1999), p. 105-128, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

ii) The Locational Question: Can environmentalists' values be located "out there" in the world itself, independent of human consciousness?

From the above two issues, it can be understood that defenders of independent value in nature are unified by a commitment to a particular conception of objectivity. According to this conception: For any characteristic, can be objectively attributed to an object x, only if subject S "finds," or "locates," in x; both and must, that is, exist independently of human consciousness. Because they share this basic criteriological assumption, the positions of Callicott and Rolston fall in direct opposition to each other: Rolston believes, but Callicott denies, that it is possible to achieve "objectivity" for environmental values, according to this locational criterion. Callicott, for example, states the issue as follows: "the very sense of the hypothesis that inherent or intrinsic value exists in nature seems to be that value inheres in natural objects as an intrinsic characteristic, that is, as part of the constitution of things. To assert that something is inherently or intrinsically valuable seems to entail that its value is objective." Callicott, however, believes that there are "insurmountable logical impediments to axiological objectivism."[25] Rolston begins his essay, "Are Values in Nature Subjective or Objective?" with a quotation from William James with which Callicott would agree. It concludes: "Whatever of value, interest, or meaning our respective worlds may appear imbued with are thus pure gifts of the spectator's mind."[26] Rolston states that "Nature, indeed, is infinitely beautiful, and she seems to wear her beauty as she wears colour or sound. Why then should her beauty belong to us rather than to her?"[27] He goes on to note that science itself seems hard to put maintain "objectivity."

For Ernest Partridge, the best approach to justify the intrinsic worth of wilderness may be through an account of the experience of wilderness. It should be an account detached, as much as possible, from second-hand reports of the experience, and based, as much as possible, upon the recollection of feelings evoked directly by that experience. To do this, one will call upon the nearest and most vivid source at his disposal: one's own experience. One needs to attempt, at the outset at

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[25] Callicott, J. B.; In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 159.
[26] Rolston H. III; *Philosophy Gone Wild* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986), p. 91.
[27] *Ibid*, p. 91.

least, to relate this experience with the least possible amount of preconception or post-analysis. Thus Partridge's approach is *phenomenological*. Following this exercise, phenomenological "brackets" has to be removed and attempt to be made to account for and qualify this experience. This is, of course, as Partridge said a thought-experiment that one might wish to try himself.[28]

Conclusion:

There is a dilemma in most of our fundamental beliefs about intrinsic value are in direct conflict with the anticipated changes in environment/nature. This in fat is a big the challenge in any discussion on Intrinsic value. Thus, the debates on the concept and warrant of intrinsic value go right from the consequalists' form to the deontologists' structure that leads to the root of our basic thinking. In Environmental ethics ethicists have tendency to substitute our anthropocentric thinking with ecocentric thinking. Anthropocentric philosophy considers everything from the point of view of mankind, and the inalienable right to pursue his fortune as he sees fit. The egocentric person thinks only of himself in a social context as opposed to an ecocentric philosophy, which advocates respect for all nature and all creatures' basic rights. This issue is at the very heart of philosophy and religious beliefs. European philosophy and Christianity is founded on anthropocentric concepts. However, philosophically speaking this is the anthropocentric thinking which was the driving core of the approach to life. There was little concern for nature and other creatures as equal partners. This is seconded in European philosophy by our Greek heritage. This started with the sophistic thinking, which took its starting point in the human being and his ability to think as opposed to a competing concept of the human being in an all-embracing cosmos. From this developed the roots of logic and scientific thinking. In this regard, environmentalists in particular are antagonistic to Descartes, for his statement: "Cogito ergo sum". Everything starts with man and his ability to think. All values, all concepts are derived from man. It is thought provoking that the most basic and scientifically fundamental considerations of the renaissance were devoted to something as "useless" as astronomy. Galileo Galilei proved that the earth circled the sun and not the other way around and was condemned by the Church. He introduced experiments and applied mathematics, further developed by Isaac Newton, Pierre de

[28] Partridge, Ernest; 1970, *Meditations on Wilderness, The Wilderness Experience as Intrinsically Valuable*.

Fermat, G. W. Leibniz and many others to follow. Science became one of the pillars in European philosophy and formed the basis for the industrial revolution of the last century. In this context, the result was the western concept to conquer the world-not only the world in a geographical sense, but also in the sense of mastering the universe. Man can shape his own destiny without constraints. This anthropocentric attitude is quite understandable in view of what has been achieved. But that becomes one sided doctrine and has equally (rather more strongly) been criticized. The antipode to anthropocentric thinking is frequently associated with philosophers like Arne Neass, Homes Rolstom III and many others along with the American Indian. In Indian philosophy, man is intermingled with nature and must live in harmony with it. The spirits are the nature in all forms.

The Western human-nature dichotomy has long been criticized by environmental ethicists as a fundamental problematic of the modern age, which must be dissolved to curb the trend of increasing and irreversible environmental degradation. Dismantling the dichotomy could potentially de-center humans from the moral universe, into a more evolutionarily and ethically accurate position alongside the rest of the biota. And yet, if humans come to view themselves as part of nature, why or on what grounds would we ever limit the human enterprise? The great potential of a non-dichotomized view of humans and nature is balanced by an equally great risk, that the use of important conservation strategies like protected areas often justified by ethical appeals presupposing a separation of humans and nature may no longer be utilized even though these strategies may still be effective and justifiable on other ethical grounds. Therefore, the intellectual shift toward socio-ecological systems thinking, “humans and nature”, is both promising and precarious. While this shift has begun to blur the boundaries between humans and nature, it also necessitates a careful and creative ethical framework suited to the unique challenges of protecting the complex world we inhabit.

Some thinkers made an effort in this direction, proposing new normative postulates for modern conservationists in a paper that stimulated lively discussion and debate. Two years later, however, this debate was stifled by the pragmatic call for conservationists to stop bickering over values, embrace their differences, and focus on outcomes on the ground. This pragmatic turn is somewhat puzzling, in that it suggests conservation is more of a practice than a mission, or more of a means than

an end. In its pragmatic stance, conservation appears to operate with the primary agenda of "working," a normative pursuit whose only principled commitment is to be effective. But we might stop to ask, effective to what end? What actually constitutes success? As individuals and as a community, how do conservationists define their mission in the 21st century?

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