

## The Ecological Thought of "Guan Zi" and Its Modern Significance

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*Abstract: The issue of the relationship between man and nature is a hot topic in current academic research, and "anthropocentrism" and "nature-centered theory" are the focus of controversy. Both have rationality and limitations. However, the ecological wisdom of "Guan Zi" integrates and surpasses the two. It takes man-nature as the theoretical basis. It not only affirms the value of mankind, but also respects the intrinsic value and right of existence of all things in nature, and is a new concept of establishing the relationship between man and nature. Provides a value orientation.*

*Keywords: "Guanzi"; anthropocentrism; nature-centrism; integration; transcendence.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

"Guan Zi" is written by Guan Zi under the name of Guan Zi. It is actually a collection of works of the Guanzhong school of the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period. It has historical value and is of significance for contemporary research and reference. In particular, the strong ecological consciousness and precious ecological wisdom contained in the book are correct for us to resolve the dispute between "anthropocentrism" and "nature-centrism". Ecological ethics and speeding up the construction of ecological ethics have important enlightening significance.

1. "Anthropocentrism" and "Nature-centrism" are the two most controversial views in the current research on the relationship between man and nature. They are both reasonable and limited.

"Anthropocentrism" or anthropocentrism, is the dominant ethical value about the relationship between man and nature formed since modern times. It refers to "people-centered, human beings are in a position of dominance and dominance, natural objects are in a position of dominance and dominance, and the relationship between people and things is an unequal relationship." [1] Anthropocentrism fundamentally advocates Everything is human-centered, and the interests and values of human beings are the most lofty and unique. All things in nature have only use value for humans, allowing them to be dominated and governed by humans; humans are the only objects worthy of moral care, outside of human life There is no moral relationship, and people do not have any moral obligations to natural objects. Under the influence of this kind of thinking, people began to conquer nature on a large scale indefinitely for their own benefit in practice, which eventually caused the evil consequences of an ecological crisis.

"Naturomorphism" or natural centrism, is a new ethical value orientation established by people on the basis of rethinking anthropocentrism. It believes that natural objects have their inherent intrinsic value

as well as their use value to humans. This value means that each natural object plays its own role in the ecosystem. Therefore, they are in the ontology of human beings. In theory, an equal survival partnership even exists before human beings. Humans are not the ruler of nature, and nature is not the object of human conquest and rule. Humans have an ethical relationship with nature. In other words, human beings have the obligation to care and consider them morally, and extend the vision of ethical care to the relationship between man and nature.

It should be noted that anthropocentrism and naturalism have their own reasonable side, but also have their own limitations. Anthropocentrism has awakened the subjective consciousness of mankind. Encouraged by it, mankind gave full play to their subjective initiative, actively transformed and utilized nature, and created today's highly developed material civilization. However, if human beings blindly worship the infiniteness of their ability to transform nature, excessively control, damage nature and even destroy the other side, then humans themselves will lose the conditions for survival. Therefore, in the process of transforming nature, human beings must abide by the laws of nature. Nature-centrism advocates ethical care for all things in nature, which to a certain extent helps human beings live in peace with other species and avoid human beings' destructive plunder of nature. But it overcorrects, overemphasizes the unity of man and nature, and weakens man's subjective position. Therefore, natural centrism also has its own theoretical one-sidedness and practical limitations.

2. Faced with these two diametrically opposed views, what should we do? The ecological wisdom of "Guan Zi" has given us useful enlightenment. In a sense, the ecological thought of "Guan Zi" is an integration and transcendence of the above two theories. The so-called integration and transcendence means that both have the rationality of the two components, but also break away from their misunderstandings. They are not entangled in whether human beings are the center or nature is the center, but human-nature is the theoretical basis. Because of the emphasis on the value of nature, the interests of mankind are cancelled, and the value of nature is not neglected because of the emphasis on human interests, thus establishing a scientific ecological ethics of man and nature.

In terms of value orientation, "Guan Zi" neither insists on being human-centered nor nature-centered. Instead, it regards the relationship between man and nature as a whole constituted by human practice activities, and man is conforming to the laws of nature. On the premise, to enjoy the right to use nature reasonably, while at the same time expanding the horizon of ethical care from human society to the natural field, taking nature as the object of care and fulfilling the obligation to maintain nature, which is based on man-nature as the theory. The basic point is to pursue the coordinated development of man and nature. "When the sky is in the sun, the land is suitable, the loyalty is the harmony of the people, so in the wind and rain, the grains are solid, the vegetation is beautiful, and the six animals are abundant." [2] "Heaven, earth and people" is the coordinated development of heaven, earth and people, "Guan Zi" This passage is the best expression of his ecological thought of harmony and unity between man and nature.

Specifically, the ecological wisdom of Guanzi is as follows:

First of all, "Guan Zi" opposes the inaction and passive thinking of human beings in front of the natural interface, "being not acting as the way, acting together, avoiding the world, not enterprising" [3], but advocating to give full play to the subjective initiative and creativity of human beings. Use nature to benefit mankind, "Heaven (earth), nothing can gain and loss. However, the righteous person,

the earth is also." <sup>[4]</sup> However, "Guanzi" also realizes that human Subject's initiative is not absolute and infinite. In the practice of transforming nature, people cannot play to their own initiative, blindly and indiscriminately, but can only regulate and regulate their own practice by knowing and obeying the laws of nature. This is because the existence of nature and its movement and changes have their objectivity, independence and reality. "The sky does not change as it is, the ground does not change its rules, spring, autumn, winter and summer do not change, ancient and modern." <sup>[5]</sup> In the process of exploring nature, only by acting in accordance with objective laws can we achieve good results, otherwise we will suffer. "If you don't care about the sky, you won't make money; if you don't care about the place, you will lose money in your warehouses.... The Tao is set up, and the body is also transformed. Those who are full and the sky, those who are in danger and people...The way to lose the heavens if you want the world, the way to gain the heavens is not available, but the kings are too. The way to gain the heavens is actually natural; the way to lose the heavens is uneasy. Only then can we maintain long-term abundance, grasp the laws of nature, and succeed in doing things naturally; on the other hand, if the laws of nature are violated, the accumulation of wealth will not be discussed. Even if it succeeds for a while, it will eventually become poor, and it will be impossible to win the world. For example: in agricultural production, we must strictly follow the laws of nature and follow the farming time. ""<sup>[6]</sup>...If you don't miss the time, then you can get rich,..." <sup>[7]</sup> You can get rich without delaying farming. The "Quanxiu" advocated that "the fishermen should have a degree, but the use should be limited"<sup>[8]</sup>, which is to take into account that agricultural production must adapt to the weather, and to ensure that farmers have enough time to engage in field work, and "do not seize the people." "Immunity" even stated: "Give widows, loneliness, loanlessness, and no riches, so they persuade the weak. Give five positives, forgive sins, get out of prison, and relieve grudges. Sheng Gu Ye."<sup>[9]</sup> Advocated the release of those who were detained for misdemeanor crimes, so that they should not miss the farming season. In addition, the state has to take various measures, such as helping the widows and widows, relieving loneliness, and lending seeds to the poor, so that the poor and weak can not miss the farming time. In the management of the land, due to the certain differences in land resources, people should arrange farming according to their natural conditions. Let the five grains, mulberry, and hemp be in their place."<sup>[10]</sup> As for the overgrown weeds and the unsuitable places for grain growth, they are good pastures for raising elk, cattle, and horses. Animal husbandry can be used to make up for the lack of grain planting. : "The soil of the koala is not born of grains. The land of elk, cattle and horses, spring and autumn prosperous to kill the elders, stand to guard the grains, this is a useless soil to win the people." <sup>[11]</sup> This fully demonstrates respect for objective laws.

Secondly, "Guanzi" requires human beings to consciously assume their own moral obligations and responsibilities when they exert their subjective initiative and obtain wealth from nature. This is because in Guanzi's view, the natural world represented by heaven and earth is the creator and nurturer of all things and people in the world. "Industry" when talking about the formation of human beings said, "The life of a mortal is that the sky comes out of its essence, and the earth emerges from its shape, so that we can be regarded as a person." <sup>[12]</sup> Means that the heaven and the earth have formed the form of human beings. And spirit. Not only does human life come from nature, but human existence also depends on nature. "The earth is born at four seasons, and the earth produces wealth to support all things" <sup>[13]</sup> "Born by the husband and the people, clothing and Food is born. Where food

is born, water and soil are also." <sup>[14]</sup> Fully affirmed that the natural resources provided by heaven and earth are the basis for human survival and development.

At the same time, "Guan Zi" believes that since nature is closely related to human survival and development, while people enjoy nature in compliance with the laws of nature, they must also fulfill their obligation to protect nature, give it ethical care, respect and give to those in the natural world. The minimum survival rights of animals and plants, pay attention to maintaining ecological balance and protecting the living environment of mankind. Only in this way can people and everything get what they want. "Although the mountains and forests are wide, the vegetation is beautiful, there must be a time for banning..." <sup>[15]</sup> Here, "Guanzi" clearly points out several measures to protect natural resources: First, protect mountain and forest resources with "time". In terms of seasons, spring and summer are the seasons for tree growth and sprouting. In order to ensure the normal growth of forest trees, it is strictly forbidden to cut trees in spring and summer. "Mountain and forest Liangze, banning hair from time to time is not correct" <sup>[16]</sup> "Revising the fire constitution, respecting the mountain, Lin Tau collect grass. The husband's wealth is out, and the time is forbidden to send out" <sup>[17]</sup> "Time" refers to the spring and summer seasons. Second, in order to protect animal resources, extinct captures are prohibited. "Although the rivers and seas are wide, the ponds are abundant, and although there are many fish and turtles, there must be righteousness, and the boat net cannot be made from a single fortune." <sup>[18]</sup> "Don't kill animals, don't scab their eggs, don't Logging, don't squeeze the rod, so you can breathe for a long time." <sup>[19]</sup> That is to say, to show love to the things in nature, to give them a degree, in order not to affect the continuous existence and sustainable use of all things in nature, Extinct capture cannot be used.

Not only that, "Guan Zi" also advocates extending the horizon of human ethical care from interpersonal to between man and nature. "Question" clearly puts forward the proposition of "land morality is the head" and regards land morality as the first of all morals. It says: "The way of governing the country is led by land and morality." Therefore, Guan Zi even regards the attitude to land as one of the main contents of morality. "Water Land" says: "The earth is the origin of all things, the root of all beings, and the beauty and evil, the virtuous, and the foolishness are born. The water is the blood of the earth, like the veins and veins. Therefore, it is said: Water is the material....Where is the original material? Water is also. All things are born,...the origin of all things." <sup>[20]</sup>

Land is the origin of all things, and water is the blood of all things, which is goodness." The ugliness and ugliness are inseparable from it. People who don't treat the land and landscape well are actions that harm oneself and are evil and not virtuous actions.

In short, on the issue of the relationship between man and nature, Guan Zi believes that: on the one hand, nature is a place where man lives and lives, and man should love nature and protect everything; on the other hand, nature will not take the initiative to meet man's needs, and man must give full play to his own needs. On the basis of respecting nature and obeying the laws of nature, the subjective ability of the people through their own active creative activities, namely practical activities, transforms and utilizes nature and makes it serve mankind. In this way, the ecological wisdom of "Guanzi" not only absorbs the reasonable elements of anthropocentrism to exert the subjective initiative of human beings, but also discards the deficiencies of anthropocentrism that infinitely exaggerate the rational ability of human beings and lead to the destruction of nature; it also absorbs

the anthropocentric claims. Respect the intrinsic value and right of existence of all things in nature, apply reasonable elements of ethical care to it, and abandon the nature-centrism that weakens the dominant position of human beings, and essentially cancel the shortcomings of human practical initiative, thus making "Guan Zi" It realizes the integration and transcendence of the two in the value orientation of ecological ethics.

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