ABSTRACT

A common claim in philosophy of environment is that traditional Western philosophy has failed to capture the rich complexity of human responsibility to the non-human world, and that the only solution to such a problem is a new ethic of environment. Kantian ethics, as a cornerstone of Enlightenment thinking, stands as a common target for such accusation. Kant is claimed to have no concern for the non-human world and that there exists no accountability for human action concerning ecological devastation and animal cruelty. In this paper the possibility of redefining Kant’s notions of humanity and finding responsibility not only in reason but in the possibility of reason, as stressed by Allen Wood, in conjunction with Kant’s often overlooked argument for the analogies between human and animal nature, opens a gateway to an ethics of environment that maintains a Kantian vigour and systematic style yet still yields to the concerns of the environmental movement. In stressing Kant’s logocentrism rather than his anthropocentrism we can sketch out a new account of Kantian duties towards non-rational beings.

As an ethical theory that focuses on respect for rational nature as its cornerstone, is it possible that Kantian ethics can accommodate ecological concerns? An ethics that commands duties concerning the rational self and the rational world alone would intuitively appear to be an ethic with no room for understanding environmental devastation and animal cruelty seeing as they do not share in human rationality. All that does not satisfy the notion of agency appears to hold nothing more than a purely instrumental value, thus sanctioning
the environmental damage perpetuated by the industrialist-capitalist legacy of exploitation. Would we want to say that any system of ethics that fails to capture the injustice of raping the world’s forests or cruel and unhealthy animal living conditions is any system of ethics at all? Of course not, and if that is what Kant’s system would result in, it is obviously too anthropocentric to be of any use. Fortunately, this outcome is not necessarily the case. Although a Kantian ethic fails to satisfy the demands of ecologists that seek innate values in the natural world itself, Kant is able to offer an alternative. This alternative still maintains instrumentalist undertones that run too deep to be of any practical use unfortunately. The only solution to Kant’s speciesism is to reconsider the status of what a rational agent consists in and to from here find a possibility of an ethics that takes the non-rational agent into account. Allen Wood maps the possibility of such a rescue of Kantian ethics by challenging Kant’s use of the personification principle and demonstrates the necessity of an obligation to nonrational beings through the abstraction of rational nature.

I Contemporary Environmental Ethics

An ethics of environment is one that stresses the interconnectedness of human action and its effect upon the non-human world. It demands responsibility for the well being of the earth and its inhabitants as the primary assumption in all ethical decision making. The two main movements in environmental ethics are represented in chasm between acting for the environment for the sake of the environment and acting for the environment for the sake of humanity. The first is known as a deep ecology approach while the latter is known as anthropocentrism. The major trend that runs through both schools of thought is the belief that any environmental ethics holds humanity, and humanity alone, responsible for the well being (or not-so-well being) of the planet.
In “New Dimensions in Ethics: Ethics and the Environment”, Evelyn Shirk argues that the objective of an ethics of environment is “morality confronting technology head-on and holding it accountable” (1998: 78). Shirk argues that an environmental ethic is a radical departure from classical ethics where the concern was on the self and perfection of the self. Shirk believes that ethics must focus on the global rather than the local interaction, away from the interpersonal model and towards a trans-specie communal model. Shirk implies throughout her article, implicitly and explicitly, that any ethics of environment must be one of consequences, not one of intentions. Intentions are of no concern, for what matters are practical changes in how humans interact with the world. Any ethics that refuses to accept the environment as its primary concern is useless for it fails to respect the core of our carnality: our mortality,

Environmental Ethics forgoes the luxury of pursuing happiness, recognizing the stark fact that physical survival takes precedence over all else in the order of ethical concerns, regardless of whatever martyrdom we subsequently contemplate. And in these new terms, personal welfare is inexorably linked to group welfare. (Shirk, 1998: 80)

Shirk model of environmental ethics is one that commands duty without interest in happiness. So what is the basis of this model of ethics? Against what standard are these act of morality to be measured? As Shirk refuse to accept any of the metaphysics implicit in the moral law into her account of ethics and denies that happiness is a motivating force in this decision making process, her only solution is the perpetuation of the human race. “Environmental ethics is about choices and decisions we make which affect the environment and hence effect human life” (Shirk, 1998: 78). This philosophy that human obligation to the well being of the environment extends only in so far as it benefits human life is what I choose to

---

1 "But as the many ethics of practice developed, interest in a metaphysical support for good action gave way to an evaluation of consequences of action to justify moral conclusions. All forms of applied ethics clearly recognize that man, not God, is responsible for our contemporary dilemmas” (1998: 81). This discussion follows a paragraph directly concerning Kantian ethics.
call anthropocentrism. This approach is problematic as we shall see further on in this paper.

At the other end of the spectrum we have the deep ecologists who believe that an environmental philosophy should view humans as just another part of the environment of no greater or lesser importance than any other creature. Here, morality is once again understood on a global scale where moral correctness rests on the how the action benefits the well being of all life as opposed to strictly human life. On this model, we again have an ethics of consequences which judge human well-being; moreover, it places human well-being as inferior to the well being of all other nature united and thus displaces the humanism that characterises ethics where man is the measure of all things.

II. Kant contra Environmental Ethics/Environmental Ethics Contra Kant

As ought to be apparent, both of these two models of ethics fall short of Kant’s standard and result in nothing more than heteronomy. For both the anthropocentrics and the deep ecologists, the foundation of ethical decision-making is found in the object of desire rather than in the form of the maxim. By presupposing something empirical as the grounding of the will there can be no principal of morality even if either groups maxim’s could be universalized for there would fail to be any autonomy to enact it. Furthermore, Kant would object that we have any direct duty to non-human life for only the humanity in others is to be treated as ends in itself. In Metaphysics of Morals Kant claims that no being except man is worthy of obligation and that any duty perceived to belong to the non-human is nothing more than an illusion,

And if he supposes that he has such a duty, then this happens through an amphiboly of the concepts of reflection; and so his supposed duty to others is merely his duty to himself. He is led to this misunderstanding because he confuses

---

ii Although there is always some aspect of anthropocentrism that runs through all environmental ethics [(Hayward, 1998: 42-56), (O’Neill, 1998: 211-228)], I nonetheless chose to define this philosophy as expressly anthropocentric in contrast to speciesism or human chauvinism.
Kant claims that our duties concerning the well being of animals and of the natural environment are truly duties towards other moral agents. Kant’s argument concerning our indirect duties towards animals only refers to their instrumental value relative to humans. An animal is not to be destroyed arbitrarily for cruelty to animals may lead to a habituation to cruelty, which may manifest itself towards other humans. Likewise, there also exists a correlation between those that care for and love animals and the habit of treating humans in a like fashion.

In both *Metaphysics of Morals* and *Lectures on Ethics* Kant stresses the importance of treating animals in an ethical fashion, yet due to his persistent claim that duty can only be found in rational humans Kant is forced to claim that our duties towards animals cannot truly exceed our duties to inanimate objects. This is due to Kant’s distinction between persons and things, where persons are rational agents, while everything that it not is a thing.⁴ Kant’s conception of ethics found obligation only in relation to the rational opens a chasm where it would appear possible that anything that is irrational is simply a tool for human usage and manipulation. In this sense the world exists simply for humans. It is not difficult to find in Kant’s writings examples of the exploitation of the natural world justified for it furthers the benefit of humanity. In the case of *Conjectural Beginning of Human History* Kant stresses the importance of the use of reason to distance humankind from the rest of creation,

The first time [the human being] said to the sheep, Nature gave the skin you wear not for you but for me, and then took it off the sheep and put it on himself (Genesis 3:21), he became aware of the prerogative he had by nature over all animals, which he no longer say as fellow creatures, but as means and tools at the

---

³ I have used ($) to signify that the number refers to the Akademie number. This is not to be confused with the section number found in the original text which shares the same symbol (e.g. §16 Concerning the Amphiboly of the Moral Concepts of Reflection).

⁴ “Now I say that man, and in general every rational being, exists as an end in himself, not merely as a means for arbitrary use by this or that will… Beings whose existence depends not on our will, but on nature, have none the less, if they are nonrational beings, only a relative value as means and are consequently called things.” (Kant, quoted in Broadie, 1992: 145)
Due to Kant’s attitude that only the rational can be treated as an end in itself he has no option but to claim that there cannot be any direct duty towards nonrational creatures or life; this is because no animal can command respect. Although love and sympathy can be felt for animals, respect cannot and only respect is reverence for the moral law. Any action done out of love or sympathy would suppose a pathological origin and would not accord with the moral law for it can be affected by self-love and self-deceit (Kant, 1993: 79 [§76]). Respect is the drive of action in accordance with the moral law; it is the subjective promotion of the moral law (Kant, 1993: 79 [§75])

This would imply that there is absolutely no possibility of any sort of environmental consciousness emerging from Kant’s work. Kant himself was obviously concerned about this problem with his system and tried to compensate for this problem by claiming that although there is no duty to the nonrational, there must exist a duty in regard to the nonrational. “Having ceremoniously ushered animals out of the door of the moral universe, Kant has, with commendable discretion, tried to smuggle them in again through the back” (Broadie, 1992: 152)

Kant’s attempts to find room for a defence against animal abuse has truly failed to work as argued by Broadie and Pybus (1992) and Wood (1998). The problem is that although Kant claims that people have a indirect duty towards animals this sort of duty does not accord with the same form of duty as conceived in duties towards rational beings: it relies on psychological assumptions rather than on that a priori foundation of the moral law. In Lectures on Ethics Kant’s argument for the respect of animal life is two fold, first, we have a indirect duty towards animals because animal nature is analogous to human nature, i.e., in attempting to respect animals we in turn we accomplish an indirect duty towards

---

v “Respect always applies to persons only, never to things. The latter can awaken inclinations, and even love if they are animals (horses, dogs, etc.), or fear, as does the sea, a volcano, or a beast of prey; but they never arouse respect.” (Kant, 1993, 80 [§76])
humanity, and secondly, because cultivation of moral feeling towards animals results in greater caring towards humans,

Animal nature has analogies to human nature, and by doing our duties to animals in respect of manifestations which correspond to manifestations of human nature, we indirectly do our duty to humanity…. If then any acts of animals are analogous to human acts and spring from the same principles, we have duties towards the animals because thus we cultivate the corresponding duties towards human beings.” (Kant, 1963: 239)

Here is Kant’s attempt to bring animals back into his system. Although they are not given the same rights (respect) as a rational creature they nonetheless find more worth than inanimate objects.

Although both inanimate objects and animals are simply ‘things’ Kant believes that inanimate objects hold only worth relative to the function a rational person might have for them; whereas, one’s obligations concerning animals does not depend on the mere pragmatic function one has for an animal but in its analogous nature to human nature. A table is only of worth and is to be cared for only in so far as there exists a rational agent who has a use for it while this is not the case for an animal: a ox is not of value simply because it can be used to pull a plough, it is to be cared for because it shares an analogous nature to humans. A clear statement of this is found in Kant’s claims that if a master’s dog has been obedient and faithful for many years, the master has a duty regarding this dog to keep it and care for it for the rest of its natural life rather than discard it like an old boot because it is of no use. (Kant, 1963: 239 and Kant, 1994: 106 [§443])

Most criticisms of this move to find animals a place in Kant’s ethics focus on his argument that caring for animals is an indirect duty because it promotes loving and caring behaviour between humans. In both *Metaphysics of Morals* and

\(\text{vi}^{\text{ii}}\) It should be noted that there exists a possible contradiction in Kant’s writings concerning animals for in *Lectures on Ethics* Kant claims that our duties towards animals are truly duties towards mankind (or a duty towards others), while in *Metaphysics of Morals* Kant claims that caring for animals is a duty to one’s self. His argument concerning the habituation of caring and cruelty developed through the interaction with animals seems to support the version found in *Lectures on Ethics* while Kant’s attempt to differentiate duties to animals from duties to inanimate objects would force him to lean towards the direction that caring for animals is in fact a duty towards one’s self while care for inanimate objects is a duty to others, due to the possible function others might find in these objects. Broadie and Puybus (1992) have argued that all duties to others are in fact a sub-group of duties to one’s self. Although this is all quite interesting, such a debate is not really appropriate for the scope of this paper.
Lectures on Ethics this idea is the main argument for indirect duties while the argument of an analogous nature serves the purpose of an initial premise for this later conclusion. In their (1992), Broadie and Pybus argue that Kant cannot maintain rational beings have duties regarding ‘things’ purely in terms of reason alone. For Kant, all action that run counter to duty are those which fail to respect rationality as such and fail to meet the requirements of the formula of universal law. For all other issues of ends, Kant relies on this argument while in the case of animals he relies on nothing more than a psychological assumption. Regardless of whether this assumption is correct or not, it relies specifically on the action of a human being rather than on the actions of a rational being. (Broadie, 1992: 151) This argument is based on anthropology alone, and throughout the Groundwork Kant argues that nowhere in ethics is there room for an anthropological basis to moral judgement. Due to this, obligations to nonrational nature cannot truly be said to be duties at all, direct or indirect; a duty relies on something more than a contingent human psychological fact.

Furthermore, Broadie and Pybus argue that if Kant wants to account for animals as ‘things’ he is forced to accept that we can have no more obligation to them than we do tables or chairs. In his arguments found in Lectures on Ethics and Metaphysics of Morals, Kant’s thesis hinges on the point that to use animals as a means will lead to the use rational agents as means as well. Yet without attributing animals a morally relevant characteristic to distinguish them from all other ‘things’, Kant is forced to generalize his argument to the point of absurdity, “Thus if he is to use anything as a means, he must generalize it, and say that because of the effect on our behaviour towards other people, we ought never to use anything as a means, and we have an indirect duty to do so” (Broadie, 1992: 152). It appears that if a Kantian model of ethics is to be of any use, it must attribute some level of rationality to animals as well; otherwise, it must stop pretending that rational beings have any sort of obligation concerning animals whatsoever and continue the pillage of the planet as scheduled.
Both Wood (1998) and Hayward (1998) argue that the problem with the idea that caring for animals is an indirect duty is that it rests on a counterfactual that if caring for animals is beneficial for human beings then it is an indirect duty. This psychological generalization is, of course, nothing more than a theory whose actual truth-value is up for grabs. Kant’s claim that, “Tender feelings towards dumb animals develop humane feelings towards mankind” (Kant, 1963: 240) rests on nothing more than an induction and there can be no necessary causality of the will found between these two acts, i.e., caring for animals and caring for humans. As this counterfactual is possibly wrong, what would be the alternate conclusion? Well if caring for animals develops caring feeling towards humans commands an indirect duty towards animals, then if cruelty towards animals, as a means to vent frustration and anger, results in more caring interaction between people, then there exists a indirect duty to injure and harm animals,

If it happened to be a quirk of human psychology that torturing animals would make us that much kinder toward humans (perhaps by venting our aggressive impulses on helpless victims), then Kant’s argument would apparently make it a duty to inflict gratuitous cruelty on puppies and kittens so as to make us that much kinder to people. Seen in this light, Kant’s argumentative strategy must strike us not only as unpersuasive but even downright repugnant. (Wood, 1998: 195)

Wood and Hayward are absolutely correct that Kant’s line of reasoning concerning the second aspect of indirect duties towards animals is problematic and even ludicrous.

Here, we see the dangers of anthropocentrism, not only in Kant’s thought but in all ethical thought. When one establishes humankind as the centre of the universe, as that unto which all is to serve, it is difficult to maintain any value for anything but other humans. Anthropocentrism would make it impossible to differentiate between the duties towards animals and things, like Kant attempts to do, because all things that are not ‘persons’ really become nothing more than ‘things’ that exist simply for manipulation by human agents. Anthropocentrism, in any sense, cannot serve as the foundation to any environmental ethics and can

---

vii Broadie and Pybus in their (1992) also maintain this point, but fail to develop it to the extent found in Wood and Hayward.
only serve as the basis of environmental destruction. If anthropocentrism necessarily plays a central role in Kant’s ethical philosophy, it is bound to run into absurdity and fail to be of any use for reconciling the environmental turmoil of the world today.

III. Kantian Ethics as a Viable Environmental Ethics: Allen Wood and the Personification Principle

It would appear that given what Kant has written on the subject of our duties to nonrational beings, there appears to be no reconciling his anthropocentrism with a world view that does not view human beings as that for which all else exists. Although Kant’s anthropocentrism is a problem, it is not the foundation of his ethics. Kant’s ethics does not focus primarily on human beings, but on rational beings. Kant’s attitude that it is only in rational nature alone that we find absolute and unconditional value is what Wood calls Kant’s logocentrism (Wood, 1998: 189). Kant is not so much anthropocentric as logocentric.

It is not the simple fact that an agent is a person that demands that they be treated as an end in itself; it is not the quality of being a person that is treated as an end in its self, it is humanity that is to be treated as an end in itself. This is apparent in the second formulation of the categorical imperative, “So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or that of another, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means” (Kant, 1995: 46 [§ 429]). Here we see that it is humanity itself towards which we feel respect. For Kant, humanity is really just one of the three dispositions of our nature, along with animality and personality, as described in Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason. Humanity, in this technical sense, is simply “the predisposition to devise means to arbitrary ends”. (ibid.) Wood points out that this notion of humanity in no way refers to any particular biological species; in fact, Kant believed that there likely

---

viii “Man is certainly unholy enough, but humanity in his person must be holy to him” (Kant, 1993: 91 [§87])
existed rational beings on other planets whom we would need to treat as ends in themselves just as much as rational human beings must be treated likewise. Not only can non-humans be viewed as rational beings, but also not all humans are viewed as rational beings. Both small children and the mentally impaired or diseased are not viewed as Kant as agents capable of setting ends in accordance with reason and therefore lack humanity. (Wood, 1998: 198)

With humanity now established as that which is necessary for the moral law to function in accordance with the autonomous will Wood claims that Kant’s insistence that humanity must be found in the person of a being who possess it is where the problem resides. (ibid., 193) This insistence that humanity must exist within some person, and therefore all duty must be directed towards a person or persons, is what Wood calls the personification principle and with the removal of it we also find the dissolution of all boundaries barring the possibility of Kant’s ethical philosophy as an environmental philosophy. The removal of the personification principal removes all overtones of anthropocentrism in Kant’s ethics and leaves it solely as a logocentric ethics.

If the abolishment of the personification principle results in the fact that humanity is not to be found in a person or persons how are we to direct our duties? Wood does not deny that there can exist humanity within a human being, he is simply saying that it needs to be respected in abstraction: as pure rational nature itself, rather than manifest as a human rational being. Wood claims that without the personification principle logocentric ethics require us to sometimes behave with respect towards nonrational nature if it holds the proper relations to rational nature. (ibid., 197) These relations consist in potentially becoming rational beings, having been rational agents in the past, or already possessing attributes of rational nature or the necessary conditions for it. To clarify this principle, Wood offers the three examples of a child, a mentally or physically disable person, and of a deceased person. (ibid., 198) In the case of a young child

---

ix Both Wood and Broadie & Pybus refer to this fact found in Universal Natural History and Theory of Heavens (§1:351-368)
Kant does not attribute humanity to it, yet it would run counter to the claim that rational nature should be treated as an end in itself to simply think of this child as a ‘thing’. Although by definition, a small child really is just a ‘thing’ rather than a ‘person’, it would be a disgrace to rational nature to fail to promote the potentiality of the child’s rational growth. Likewise in the case of someone who has fallen into a coma or has suffered some major mental illness, who has lost their use of reason, it would once again run counter to any sort of respect for rational nature if one were not to care for them and assist them to the best of one’s abilities in the recovery of their rational capacities. As for a corpse, rational nature would forbid one from failing to fulfill a promise to make use of the organs, as was consented to by the person while s/he was still alive, even though the body fails to still maintain any sort of rational nature itself. All three of these cases demand a rejection of the personification principle in that rational nature commits us to place value in rational nature in abstraction rather than in rational being. This results in respect being commanded towards nonrational beings.

The result of Wood’s rejection of the personification principle is the downfall of the duties to one’s self/ duties to others dichotomy found in Metaphysics of Morals. Without the personification principle, respect for rational nature itself becomes duty rather than respect for rational nature in someone or something. The downfall of this division allows us to look at whatever duties we may have towards animal life purely in term of our duties concerning rational nature itself, rather than attempting to account for it in terms of duties to one’s self or to others. Without rational nature necessarily being considered in terms of humans alone, it is now possible to consider them in terms of the duties concerning animal life. It is in this possibility that we find the true seeds of a

---

Wood stresses that in the case of the child, not only is value given to a nonrational being, but it is given priority over rational beings, “Owing to the fragility and vulnerability of the potentiality for rational nature in children, Kant’s principle might even dictate giving priority to its development in children over promoting some of the ends of actual rational beings. It might, for example, require adults to devote scarce resources to protecting, caring for and educating a small child, instead of using these resources to satisfy their own contingent ends.” (1998: 198)

Doing away with the personification principle also does away with the apparent inconsistency in Kant’s attitude as to whom the duty concerns when we have an indirect duty towards animals. (See endnote vii)
possible environmental ethics emerging from Kant’s ethics. Kant’s arguments concerning our duties towards animals were dissatisfactory because, “…they do not involve valuing nonrational nature or the welfare of living things for their own sake,” (Wood, 1998: 194) whereas, in considering rational nature in purely abstract terms, i.e. devoid of any specific biological agent, the possibility of finding a value in animal life, equivalent to the value in human life, does indeed surface.\textsuperscript{xii}

Wood applies the nonrational children argument to support the claim that in the case of animals too we can find value regardless of their nonrational status, “For although nonhuman animals do not possess rational nature itself, they do possess recognizable fragments of it” (Wood, 1998: 200). Animals obviously experience pleasure and pain, and are subject to desire, and to unjustly harm or frustrate an animal fails to recognize that which rational animals share with humans. Furthermore, Wood argues that animals have a basic level of autonomy to initiate and satisfy actions, and while this autonomy falls short of Kant’s rational autonomy, it serves as a necessary condition for it. Animals share in the qualities of animality and humanity, while failing to meet the criteria of personality. Humanity is simply the means fulfill set ends, which animals can do. Personality, on the other hand, is the capacity to establish moral ends and is found solely in human beings (and possibly in aliens).\textsuperscript{xiii} Humanity can thus be found in animal life. Wood also points out that respect for rational nature requires a respect for the natural teleology of our own animal nature. Without the personification principle, it would seem perfectly reasonable, and even logical, to extend this respect to natural teleology of the animal nature of nonrational beings. (Wood, 1998: 201)

\textsuperscript{xii} Of course, in both of cases the value is not found in animal life or human life, but in the rational nature they share in. In this sense, Wood does not accommodate the environmentalist’s request for value in the thing itself, but offers the value found in its rational nature as a satisfactory alternative.

\textsuperscript{xiii} See endnote ix.
I am led to believe that Kant would support Wood’s thesis although he was too closely wed to the personification principle to find a means to implement Wood’s theory. In reference to criticisms of Kant’s claims of indirect duties towards animals, all the critics reviewed in this paper, as I tried to stress in section II, found fault solely one of his two arguments, that concerning the psychological implications of caring for and mistreating animals. All the critics, including Wood in his defence of Kant, failed to note the importance of what was considered the initial premise for Kant’s psychological generalization. This initial premise was that there exist analogies between animal and human nature. (Kant, 1963: 239) Kant was on the right track in noting this analogy, but failed to specify it due to his insistence on the personification principle, and had he spent a greater deal of attention concerning it than he did, he would likely have come the same conclusion as Wood that there exists traces of rational nature in animal nature as well. Wood hints towards this in his discussion of Kant’s psychological generalization argument,

Kant’s arguments seem tacitly to presuppose that kindness and gratitude toward animals already express respect for rational nature, while attitudes of cruelty, exploitativeness and thoughtlessness disregard for the welfare of animals express contempt for rational nature. (1998: 203)

By doing away with the personification principle Kant would have avoided the apparent contradictions he is faced with when he claims that rational nature exists solely in people, yet nature is to be preserved for its own sake and that rational nature commands respect for the natural teleology in the animal part of our own nature.

Kant and Ecosystems: Respect for Nature as a Whole

Understanding natural resources and ecosystems from logocentric point of view has been argued by many to be the central causal reason as to why the natural environment finds itself in the sorry state of affairs that it exists in today. In claiming that only that that which can hold absolute value is that which shares
in a rational nature, natural resources and the environment become nothing more
than a means for those agents who can manipulate it: old-growth forests become
employment opportunities and lakes and rivers become convenient dumping
grounds. An ethics of environment is one that wants to find something greater
than purely instrumental value in nature and wants it to be a duty to care for this
environment.

At first glance, Kant’s claims concerning man as the end of nature in
_Critique of Judgement_ would lead one to believe that there is absolutely no
possibility for any value, outside of instrumental value, can be found in the
nature. This could not be farther from the truth. As the ends of nature, humans
see nature as a harmonious teleological system. It is in shaping our ends wisely in
that we provide nature with its supreme unity and harmony, “Far from putting
nonrational nature at our arbitrary disposal, this orientation toward nature
imposes on us the responsibility both of making sense of nature as a purposive
system and then of acting as preservers and guarantors of that system.” (Wood,
1998: 204)

As the ends of nature, human beings enter into a symbiotic relationship of
respect with nature. This is done so that we can understand the teleological ends
of nature better and attempt to harmonize with it as best we can. (ibid.)

In conclusion, Kant’s ethics do not appear quite as anthropocentric, and
even specieist, as some commentators would like to believe. Through the removal
of the personification principal, as identified by Allen Wood, Kant’s ethics can
easily support the possibility of duties towards nonrational life while his own
original arguments have proven inefficient for the task. In understanding
humanity in abstraction, as opposed to something personified, a greater scope
can be offered to a Kantian system of ethics.

In response to Tim Hayward and Alexander Broadie & Elizabeth Pybus, a
Kantian model of ethics has been shown to indeed be compatible with human
duties towards animal life and has been shown to be sympathetic to the existence of value in nonrational life. Concerning the environment as a whole, human beings duties to harmonise with the natural teleology of nature were clearly expressed by Kant in *Critique of Judgement* and were in need of no additional modifications. Concerning Evelyn Shirk’s model of environmental ethics, it has been shown that there is no conflict between Kant’s deontological method and the objective of environmental ethics. Furthermore, Kant has shown that Shirk’s own ideas as to the necessity of a consequentialist ethics amount to nothing more than a chimeral dream. While Kantian ethics refuses to take the environment as its primary concern, its logocentrism has been shown to be compatible with concern for the environment. To found duty on the well being of the environment itself will surely lead to the heteronomy of any pathologically motivated measure of right. Kantian logocentrism, which has been differentiated from anthropocentrism, has been defended as viable model of environmental ethics that maintains all of universality and objective reality of Kant’s ethics in contrast to popular environmental ethics based on self-love or pathological conditioning.
Bibliography


