

Ecological Thought in Confucian Culture and Its Practical Implications

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Abstract: As the material environment for human survival and development, the natural environment is also an important material foundation for the sustainable development and transmission of Chinese culture. Confucian culture is an important part of China's excellent traditional cultural wisdom, which contains rich ancient simple ecological ideas, such as the ecological harmony concept of "Unity of Heaven and humanity", the ecological equality concept of "people love things", and the ecological consumption concept of "thrift and extravagance". These rich Ecosophy has important practical enlightenment for contemporary us to establish a correct ecological outlook on nature, ecological society and ecological consumption.

1. Introduction

Confucian culture or doctrine is a school or doctrine founded by the great philosopher Confucius in ancient China. In the 5000 year history of the development of the Chinese nation, Confucianism has been accepted and revered by several generations of feudal rulers, serving their feudal rule and becoming the dominant orthodox ideology in feudal society; At the same time, Confucianism has also been carried forward and inherited by many thinkers, and has become one of the most influential thoughts in Chinese academic history. Traditional Chinese philosophy, represented by Confucianism, has always been very concerned about the relationship between humans and nature. An important aspect of Confucian culture is the interpretation of the relationship between humans and nature. Therefore, there are important ecological ideas in Confucianism, such as understanding the product of nature, which is an integral part of nature, and humans and nature are inseparable; People should revere and respect nature; People should love and conform to nature, and know how to save natural resources. The rich ecological ideology contained in Confucianism is a precious asset of traditional Chinese culture, providing important guidance for the relationship between humans and nature in the agricultural civilization of the feudal era. At the same time, it has significant contemporary value in the construction of ecological civilization in the new era.

China has entered a new era, and in the new journey, ecological ideas in Confucian culture can still play an important role. Among them, ecological thoughts such as respecting and caring for nature, cherishing and caring for life, advocating frugality, and advocating proper use of natural resources provide rich Ecosophy for the construction of ecological civilization of Socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Therefore, deep exploration and excavation of the

connotation of ecological thoughts in Confucian culture are of great significance for the current construction of ecological civilization in China[1].

2. The Important Connotation of Ecological Thought in Confucian Culture

1) Ecological Harmony of "Unity of Heaven and humanity"

The concept of "Unity of Heaven and humanity" was first proposed and explained by Zhuangzi, which is one of the most basic concepts in ancient Chinese philosophy. Later, in the Han Dynasty, it was inherited and developed by Dong Zhongshu, a thinker of the Han Dynasty, and extended to the philosophy system of heaven and man, which was "the combination of heaven and man". Later, it became an important viewpoint in the development of Confucianism for more than 2000 years, and constructed the main body of ancient Chinese philosophy. What is 'Tian'? Confucianism believes that 'heaven' refers to the entire natural world. Confucius said, "What are the words of heaven? What are the four seasons that move? What are the words of heaven?" Xunzi said, "The stars rotate with each other, and the sun and moon pass by. The four dynasties govern, and the Yin and Yang are greatly transformed. The wind and rain are bountiful, and all things receive their own harmony and nourishment, and each receives their own nourishment. There is no way to know why they are formed. Therefore, the man is called heaven.

From this, it can be seen that both Confucius and Xunzi believed that "heaven" was the natural world that created humans and all things in the world, with four seasons alternating and all things growing according to their own laws. Zhang Zai, a scholar of the Song Dynasty, said that "Confucians are sincere because of their brightness. Because they are sincere, Unity of Heaven and humanity are united, they can become saints through learning, and they can get heaven without leaving people." Zhang Zai's "Unity of Heaven and humanity" is a spiritual realm of harmony between heaven, earth and people. He emphasized the integration of heaven and man, and divided everything into heaven, earth and people, and advocated the subjective initiative of people, but stressed that the heaven and earth must be respected and not above nature. It can be seen that the "Unity of Heaven and humanity" in Confucianism emphasizes the symbiotic relationship between man and nature, and that man and nature live in harmony. "Unity of Heaven and humanity", "Heaven" is the nature that provides the material basis for human production and life, and is also the only home for human survival and reproduction; Human "is the subject of labor and practice in nature, playing an important role in production and life in nature. Human beings and other living beings are equal and exist as members of nature, with all members interdependent and coexisting in the entire nature.

2) The Ecological Equality View of "Benevolent People and Love Things"

The core content of Confucianism is the concept of "benevolence", which states that "benevolence is peaceful and benevolent, while knowledge benefits benevolence". Confucianism has already provided a clear answer to the question of what "benevolence" is. In Confucian culture, "benevolence, love" is the best interpretation of "benevolence". The most basic meaning of "benevolence" is "love", followed by the standard of "one who desires to establish oneself, and one who desires to achieve oneself" to establish oneself and become a person. This is the basic norm of Confucianism for being a person. Confucius once said, 'When fishing, one should not use a large net to avoid catching all the fish.'; When hunting birds, do not hunt the birds that sleep at night to avoid killing them all. Mencius also put forward the argument of "being close to the people while being kind to the people, loving the people while loving things", and also proposed that "a gentleman is benevolent to things, loving them while being benevolent to the people; being benevolent to the people is not close. Being close to the people is benevolent to the people, and loving things while being benevolent to the people." In Mencius' view, he believed that the love of a

gentleman is reflected in three aspects: love for loved ones, compassion for the people, and love for nature. The above three aspects of love are important elements of "benevolent governance", One cannot be missing. And Xunzi also pointed out that the system of the Holy King: When the grass and trees are flourishing and flourishing, the axe and jin will not enter the mountains and forests. They will not be born prematurely and will not stop growing. When the turtles, crocodiles, turtles, loaches, and eels are pregnant and parted ways, the poison of the fish will not enter the swamp, they will not be born prematurely, and they will not stop growing. When spring plowing, summer plowing, autumn and winter hiding are lost, the five grains will not be cut off, and the hundred surnames will have more to eat. When the ponds, swamps, and rivers are strictly prohibited, the fish are abundant and the people have more to use. When cutting down and raising the fish is not lost, the mountains and forests are not young, and the people have more to eat Material also Xunzi here refers to the fact that kings or rulers should pay attention to the rational allocation and utilization of natural resources when managing a country. They should guide the people in agricultural production based on the objective laws and changes of nature. Only in this way can the people have enough natural resources to meet their production and livelihood. Only with stable agricultural production and abundant people's lives can the country maintain long-term peace and stability. Therefore, the Confucian ideology of "the people love things" requires not only to pity the people, but also to love nature, placing people on an equal footing with other living beings, and respecting the people, nature, and equality of life are all important contents of its ideology.

3) The Ecological Consumption Concept of "Frugality to Luxury"

There is also an important ecological ideology in Confucian culture, which is the ecological consumption concept of "remaining frugal and avoiding extravagance". The concept of "frugality to luxury" proposed by Confucianism in terms of consumption is an ecological consumption concept that advocates people to make the most of their resources in daily life and adopt a diligent, frugal and simple consumption and lifestyle. Confucius pointed out in the Analects that "eating and drinking water with sparse food, bending one's arm and pillowing it, music is also in it". Here, Confucius advocated that the simple and tasteless joy of life is a great enjoyment in life. At the same time, Confucius opposed extravagance and extravagance, and regarded waste as a shame. He proposed: "Shame on those who wear evil clothes and eat evil. In terms of clothing, food, housing, and transportation, we advocate a frugal lifestyle, advocating "frugality and conformity". In terms of clothing, we advocate using linen as raw material instead of silk, which not only saves materials but also maintains good etiquette standards. Not only that, Confucianism also regards diligence, frugality, and thrift as virtues of a gentleman. Confucius also wrote in "The Analects of Confucius: Learning and Learning" that "a gentleman does not seek fullness in his food, but seeks peace in his dwelling. Confucius believed that a gentleman should not be too particular about their clothing, food, housing, and transportation. They should not seek fullness in their food and stability in their dwelling. Confucianism not only advocates frugality among gentlemen, but also advocates frugality among rulers and ordinary people. This not only involves individuals, but is closely related to the rise and fall of the country. Confucius proposed in "The Analects of Confucius: Learning" that "one should be frugal and love others, so that the people can use their time". Mencius emphasized in "Mencius: Teng Wen Gong Shang" that "a wise ruler must be frugal and take advantage of the people's system". Confucius and Mencius jointly advocated that rulers should understand thrift in the use of resources, adhere to a good style of diligence, thrift, and thrift, restrain their material desires, develop and utilize resources reasonably, understand the world more, and empathize with people's livelihoods. And Xunzi directly pointed out: "The way to the country is to save the people and be good at storing the rest. To save the etiquette and the people to govern. They are also the people, so it is unnecessary." Xunzi believed that the people should be frugal in their daily lives, and at the same time, the country should know how to open up resources and reduce costs in

management, continuously accumulate material wealth, and make the country strong and prosperous[2-4].

3. The Realistic Enlightenment of Ecological Thought in Confucian Culture

1) Establishing an ecological and natural view that respects, conforms to, and protects nature

In the view of modern natural view, nature is the sum of real objects, while the traditional Anthropocentrism also believes that the total value of nature is to meet the needs of the survival and development of human society. In the history of mankind for millions of years, it is almost the history of the struggle between human beings and nature. Human beings can only seek human basic Household goods and Means of production in the process of constant struggle with nature. In the more than 200 years since the Industrial Revolution, modern technology has been constantly updated, and humans are no longer satisfied with the shallow development and utilization of nature. With the support of modern technology, humans can carry out more intensive transformation and development of nature. However, while human beings are intoxicated with the sense of achievement gained from the development of nature, they also find that the conflict between human beings and nature is growing. As the material basis of human production and life, nature has begun to retaliate and punish human behavior. The problems of haze, acid rain, Desertification and other issues are becoming increasingly serious, and the ecological crisis we are facing is also becoming increasingly serious.

2) Establishing an ecological and social view of harmonious coexistence among humans, nature, and society

The prosperity and development of modern science and technology have led to an increase in human exploitation and transformation of nature, which has brought temporary benefits to humanity to a certain extent. At the same time, it has been followed by an increasingly severe ecological crisis. The unprecedented severity of the ecological crisis has made the relationship between humans and nature, between humans and society, and between humans unprecedentedly tense. In order to achieve rapid economic development, people, centered around human development, indiscriminately develop and transform nature, and even go against natural laws. This black development model has greatly damaged the ecological environment. As Engels said, "We should not be overly intoxicated with our human victory over nature. For every such victory, nature retaliates against us. At first, each victory did indeed achieve our expected results, but later and later, it had completely different and unexpected effects, often eliminating the initial results, The contradiction between human material desires and limited natural resources has become increasingly intense, leading to the continuous expansion of human material desires; At the same time, people began to make every effort, even resorting to any means to seek material benefits. So, driven by material desires, there are many social problems in society, such as selflessness, corruption, low spirits, and violations of the law and discipline. How to solve these social problems has already been answered by Confucianism. Therefore, in the new era, how to ease social relations should be more firmly studied by Confucianism's "benevolence" ideology, with "benevolence" as the important core ethical guidance, and build a socialist harmonious society[5-6].

3) Develop an ecological consumption concept with appropriate selection and utilization

One of the value orientations of modern society is Consumerism, which encourages people to constantly pursue material wealth to meet material desires. Over time, people's worldview, outlook on life, and values have also changed, gradually believing that the meaning of life lies in the increase and accumulation of material wealth and the improvement of consumption ability. People's desires are infinite, and in order to satisfy their own material desires, many people are willing to take risks and embark on the path of illegal and criminal activities. Admittedly, the pleasure of

consumption brought by Consumerism is only to satisfy its own vanity and highlight its status. Such consumption symbols bring about not only the great waste of natural resources, but also the nihility and distortion of human spirit, which gradually alienates people from each other. Natural resources and material wealth were originally meant to serve people, but now they have become a force that controls and enslaves people, and people have gradually become slaves to material goods, causing alienation between people and goods. In today's world of abundant material wealth, people should have been able to develop more freely, but their freedom of development is limited by material possessions in consumption. In fact, consumption is only a means of maintaining people's better survival and development, and it is not the only purpose of life. In contemporary social life, we should not consume or waste a large amount of natural resources in order to reflect our own status and value, let alone to occupy the value of goods and ignore their use value. Instead, we should pay more attention to spiritual enjoyment in the consumption process, not be bound by consumption, and enjoy a high-quality life in a state of spiritual enrichment and fullness. The Confucian ideology of frugality and extravagance still has practical value today. It advocates for introversion and transcendence, advocates diligence, thrift, and thrift, and opposes extravagance and extravagance. The ecological consumption concept advocated by Confucianism reflects the personality, conduct, and value pursuit of ancient gentlemen, rather than blindly comparing and enjoying power, status, and money. Therefore, the ecological consumption concept of frugality and extravagance advocated by Confucianism is still applicable today when Consumerism is prevalent.

To sum up, as one of the excellent traditional cultures in ancient China, Confucian culture contains the most simple Ecosophy in ancient China. Although it has limitations, it still has its reasonable content. For the construction of socialist ecological civilization in the new era, it still has important guiding significance. Therefore, it is necessary to inherit and promote the ecological ideas in Confucian culture, making it more scientific and comprehensive in the new era.

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