

I

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND INTRINSIC VALUE

In this chapter, different philosophies containing models of environmental ethics, which are based on some form of the intrinsic value of the nonhuman, will be examined. The authors discussed are three of the more prominent environmental ethicists¹ who base their approach on the intrinsic value of the nonhuman realm to various degrees. These authors will be presented in increasing order of radicalism. Tom Regan argues for the intrinsic value only of higher animals, excluding intrinsic value from plants and lower animals. Thus although he argues for the intrinsic value of the nonhuman, this value is more restricted in scope than in the other two authors. J. Baird Callicott, following Aldo Leopold, argues for the “land ethic,” which attributes intrinsic value more holistically to species, habitats, ecosystems, and the like. Intrinsic value is thereby given a larger scope than in Regan and also a different locus of value, in wholes rather than individuals. Finally, Holmes Rolston III argues for the intrinsic value of much the same set as Callicott, but is more radical in his theory of value. Callicott argues from a Humean position of (human) moral sentiments in which intrinsic value is projected to a nonhuman set of members. Rolston, like Regan, argues that value must be completely beyond any human basis but, unlike Regan, has a much larger set, which includes more than just higher animals. It also embraces other species, ecosystems, and the biosphere. Rolston is the most radically ecocentric environmental ethicist of the three and marks the biggest break with modern Western value theory and ethics.

A subsequent section will detail criticisms of non-anthropocentric value theories from within the literature of environmental ethics. Bryan Norton has

developed a sustained critique of inherent value theories in environmental ethics, and argues that environmental ethics can be established with anthropocentrically based values.

I will use certain terms frequently in what follows and some may not be clear. I will attempt to define them at the outset. Anthropocentric means any philosophy or theory of value that makes a special case of humans and is oriented toward humans. A theory of value that is anthropocentric bases value in some distinctive human capacity, whether this is a distinctively human species difference or essence, a psychological faculty or capacity, a subjective state of which only humans are capable, or some other factor exclusive to humans. It stands in contrast with animal rights theories, which extend the scope of value to animals; ecocentric theories, which are centered in the environment; and biocentric theories, which are centered in life. Ecocentric means a philosophy or theory of value that is rooted in the ecology. Subjectivity means both those philosophies grounded in the human subject and their theories of value. It is a subset of anthropocentric, as the subject is generally human. However, some have argued that animals are like human subjects in the relevant respects, and differ only in degree. Thus animals can be the subjects of a life of a sort. Subjective theories are usually contrasted with 'objective' theories, which ground value in the object.² Relational theories combine subjects and objects by locating value in a relation of an object to a subject.³ Finally, there are 'foundational' and metaphysical theories of value in which value goes beyond the subject-object distinction and is more primitive, basic, or fundamental.

Intrinsic value is frequently defined idiosyncratically, contextually, or, for some authors, using only a partial definition, at least in comparison to other authors. The dictionary definition of "intrinsic" is "belonging to the essential nature or constitution of a thing."⁴ It is sometimes equated with "inherent," that is, "the essential character of something."⁵ Other authors distinguish inherent from intrinsic value, notably C. I. Lewis. Intrinsic value is usually contrasted with instrumental, extrinsic, or use value. Often the intrinsic-instrumental distinction is coextensive with the ends-means distinction, but not always. Similarly, it is usually coextensive with the distinction of actions, subjects, or things that are valuable for their own sake by contrast with those valuable for the sake of something else. These terms will be scrutinized in more detail in the book.

The "locus" of value (or rights) is the instance, level, or locale of such value including the type in which value is placed.⁶ However, locus of value could include places—for example, habitats and landscapes. It can also include analytically distinct relations (e.g., ends and means), if value is located in one or the other. Nominalistic theories argue that value can only be located in individuals. Holistic theories, by contrast, place value in larger, often abstract loci, such as species, ecosystems, and the biosphere. "Bearers" of value⁷ (or

rights) are individual instances or tokens of a locus of value (e.g., one individual in a nominalistic theory, or one species in a more holistic theory). Locus and bearer can be the same (e.g., an individual), but need not be.

“Moral considerability,”⁸ like moral standing, means those bearers of value that are entitled to receive moral respect or consideration. Only bearers with moral standing can be due moral responsibility by moral agents. Moral responsibility does not extend to bearers of values without moral standing, for example, purely instrumental values.

Regan’s Animal Rights

Tom Regan is perhaps the earliest author of the three we are considering on the subject of intrinsic value in environmental ethics and in many respects he is a pioneer. One of his early articles follows Peter Singer in calling for rights for nonhuman animals.⁹ Like Singer, Regan wishes to extend what have previously been considered human rights to nonhuman animals. Unlike Singer, he does not base rights on a utilitarian view but on a novel argument from intrinsic value as the basis of rights. He is critical of the utilitarian view as too anthropocentric and thus as unable to provide a sufficient justification for the rights of nonhuman animals.

Regan argues in “The Nature and Possibility of an Environmental Ethic,”¹⁰ that the traditional ethics of Western philosophy is inadequate to protect animals, species, and the environment. Because it is anthropocentric, grounded in specifically human capacities and attributes, it cannot provide an adequate basis or defense of animal rights or the preservation of species. At best, he argues, anthropocentric ethics can only produce a “management ethic” of how to best manage the balance of nature for human use.¹¹ It cannot meet what Regan considers to be the first condition for an environmental ethic, which is that “an environmental ethic must hold that there are nonhuman beings which have moral standing.”¹² Regan considers a number of what are deemed to be anthropocentric theories and argues that they are inadequate. Regan identifies one such theory as the “contract” view. A contract is a set of rules that humans agree to abide by. As animals cannot understand such contracts, they are excluded from them and thus from moral consideration.¹³ Such understanding is another case of a subjective state confined to humans, although it might be argued that it is a unique human ability, rather than a subjective state. Such arguments are, following Singer, “speciesist,” in that they confine moral consideration to one species. Similarly, the argument of Kant that mistreating animals may “corrupt” human character¹⁴ is judged inadequate as well as anthropocentric. It fails to grant “moral standing” to animals.

Regan argues that arguments for confining value to human subjects from or based on consciousness are “kinship arguments,” which argue that

from “the idea that beings resembling humans in the quite fundamental way of being conscious . . . [that they] have moral standing.”¹⁵ “Kinship” theories are larger than management theories, that is, the theories that result in a management ethic. They include nonhuman species, but only on the basis of resemblance to humans. Thus kinship theories extend moral standing beyond humans, but are still subtly anthropocentric, as they only grant moral standing to animals that resemble specifically different human capacities. Regan argues that kinship arguments fail to meet a second “condition of an environmental ethic.” This condition is that “An environmental ethic must hold that the class of those beings which have moral standing includes but is larger than the class of conscious beings—that is, all conscious beings and some nonconscious beings must be held to have moral standing.”¹⁶ Neither the kinship nor the management ethic can constitute a valid ecological ethics as they fail to include some nonconscious beings as morally considerable. The same failing is also a flaw of the many forms of utilitarianism. Although several utilitarians have argued for moral standing for animals, notably Singer, they are not radical enough for Regan. Since they confine moral considerability to “sentient” beings, they exclude a great many species.

Regan contrasts kinship arguments with anthropocentric arguments that exclude animals, even those similar to humans. One of these arguments is what he calls the “interest argument,” which states that only conscious beings can have interests and thus moral standing. The interest argument is one variety of the argument from unique human abilities or capacities. Since, as I noted earlier, moral standing is required for moral obligation, there can be no obligation toward those beings who are not conscious in such theories.¹⁷ Regan argues specifically that if what is “benefited or harmed” by what is “given or denied them” is in their interest, it is coextensive with those having moral standing, and then it is larger than the class of those having consciousness. The interest argument is similar with what he calls the “sentience argument,” that only beings that are sentient—capable of feeling pleasure or pain—are morally considerable.¹⁸ This is an argument from subjective human states, as sentience is a state of human subjects. Regan argues that exclusive human sentience is not self-evident and fails to provide an adequate justification for preservation of nonsentient species. Thus even if it is valid, it fails to provide a basis for preserving the vast majority of species.

Another argument he considers is what he calls the “goodness argument,” that is, that the only beings that can have moral standing are those that can have a “good of their own.” As only conscious beings can have a good of their own, only conscious beings have moral standing. This is not a repetition of the “interest” argument, although it also involves consciousness, as “good of their own” is distinct from “interests.” The former seems to be equated with either taking an interest in something, if narrowly defined, or, as Regan has argued, being benefited or harmed by something in the wide sense. “Good of

their own," by contrast, is connected with "a certain kind of good of one's own, happiness."¹⁹ While conceding that only conscious beings are happy, Regan argues that it is disputable that this is "the only kind of good or value a given X can have in its own right." Be this as it may, the thrust of Regan's argument for a distinctly environmental ethics is that less inclusive ethics provide no rationale, justification, or warrant to preserve nonhuman species. Although "kinship" arguments provide for the moral standing and thus the possible preservation of some species, they do so only by analogy with human capacities or specific differences. The goal of a properly environmental ethics is to argue for the preservation of the environment, including other species *apart from their resemblance, utility, benefit, recreational value, or other instrumental value to humans*.

Regan argues that moral standing requires that nonhuman species "have" intrinsic value. His argument parallels the arguments for moral standing for humans. The arguments that excluded animals from moral standing in the tradition argued that various human capacities gave humans intrinsic value. Intrinsic value was a warrant, justification, or basis for moral standing. Moral standing requires intrinsic value, not vice versa. Thus if the class of those with intrinsic value can be extended, so can those with moral standing. If animals, other species, and the environment can be shown to have intrinsic value, they would be entitled to the same moral standing as humans.

Regan tries to avoid the metaphysical problems involved in attributing inherent value²⁰ by stating that nonhuman species "have" inherent value. The only other reference to the "ontological" basis of inherent value is what he calls the "presence" of inherent value.²¹ A value bearer, then, 'has' intrinsic value and it is 'present' in a locus of value. As Regan is a nominalist, arguing for individual rights on the basis of inherent value,²² value is 'present' in individual bearers. That is, the locus of inherent value is in individuals. The value of more holistic and abstract loci, such as species, is derivative from this. There does seem to be an emergent aspect of inherent value. Regan states that "the presence of inherent value in a natural object is a consequence of its possessing those other properties which it happens to possess."²³ Because inherent value is a "consequence," it follows on or is derivative from the other properties of an individual. Presumably these are all the properties, not some few, as these conjointly make up the individual.

Regan's view also constitutes a form of naturalistic value theory, that is, that value can be accounted for and derived from, in this case, the nature of the individual as its properties. The properties of the object possessing inherent value are "natural"; value is derived from nature. This is to derive inherent value from what is, an implicit challenge to the arguments of nonnaturalism presented by Moore.²⁴ However, Regan also argues that inherent value cannot be reduced to the other natural properties. Since it is a "consequence" of possessing the other natural properties, it does not seem to be identical with any

one of them or all of them taken as a whole. Indeed, Regan describes inherent value as an “objective property”: “The inherent value of a natural object is an objective property of that object.”²⁵ As it is an objective property, it does not belong to it by virtue of human subjectivity or human stipulation. Regan does not state what property this is, or how to describe it, or its relation to the other properties, except as emergent.

As Regan’s thinking emerged in the context of “rights,” it may be that inherent value is inherent in being individual and is “objective” in a moral sense of belonging to any morally considerable individual inherently. Inherent value attaches to moral beings just as rights do. The evidence for this is that inherent value is assigned to bearers equally.²⁶ There are no degrees of value, based on degrees of some other property. Equality is a norm that generally arises in the context of morals although it could arise in any theory of universals—that is, the universal attribution of a concept assigns it equally to all instances. Thus it applies to all individuals equally. Inherent values are “objective” as “logically independently of whether (someone) is valued by anyone else.”²⁷ This does indeed define what inherent refers to and is almost a tautology. It establishes that inherent value is independent of human valuing. However, it does not clarify in what sense inherent value is an objective property. Regan avoids the “metaphysical” or “ontological” problem of inherent value here by defining inherent value in opposition to any relation to a valuer: inherent value does not consist in any relation to a valuer. This is an implicit counterargument to the long line of those who have argued that value requires a valuer.²⁸ If a value is inherent, it is independent of a valuer, specifically a subjective valuer. Because it is independent of any subjective valuer, as inherent, it is ‘objective’ in some respect—it belongs to the object by itself. This may mean morally objective in the sense I explicated earlier, although Regan does not clarify this point. It best exemplifies the sense of a bearer “having” value as it has value independent of a valuer and by itself. The bearer’s having value is objective, as independent of subjective acknowledgment. An inherent bearer has value by itself, apart from valuation by a subject.

Regan also argues that if something has inherent value, it is “not exclusively instrumental.”²⁹ Inherent value is the property of not being an instrument for someone’s use, not being solely a means. The reference to ends in relation to means is similar to the third formulation of Kant’s Categorical Imperative. The advantage is that the metaphysical problem is avoided: inherent value is not defined in relation to the “objective properties” of things, but rather in relation to the other main division of value, instrumentality. As the latter is relatively noncontroversial, defining it in this relation clarifies its value status. However, the problem is that its “objective property” and “natural” status are not clarified.

One article does describe “inherent value” of humans, however. Humans have inherent value as they are “not only . . . alive, they *have a life*”

and are the "subjects of a life."³⁰ Regan argues that this is shared with animals in morally relevant ways, that is, that animals are subjects of a life that is valuable to them. The sense of having a life is both owning one's life and being aware in some sense of this ownership, and seems to be a consequence of "natural" properties that are more than any one property of an individual. Being the subject of a life is consequent on having a life. Both being the subject of a life and having a life are objective in the sense that they can be confirmed, at least for humans, and remain independent of whether or not anyone else values them.

I noted earlier that moral considerability depends on inherent value. Reagan argues both that anything with inherent value is entitled to "respect" and "admiration," and also that it should not be treated as a "mere means."³¹ "Respect" is a word that is also prominent in Kantian ethics; not being treated as a means summarizes the third statement of the Categorical Imperative. Thus Reagan seems to be arguing that although he rejects Kant's limitation of moral standing to humans, the argument from inherent value of an end to moral standing is valid. The difference lies in the extension of moral standing to nonhumans based on relevant likenesses. Those with moral standing should not be treated as mere means since they are entitled to respect and admiration, that is, to be treated as ends in themselves. The crucial difference is whether nonhumans have inherent value. If so, they are entitled to moral considerability. Regan makes several arguments for the likeness of animals to humans in respect of morally relevant value. One is that as in humans, death "forecloses satisfactions." As with humans, animals act in the present to bring about satisfactions of their desires in the future, for example, in foraging or hunting for food.³² Just as the death of a young human is tragic because it forecloses potential satisfactions that the human might have experienced had he or she lived, so is it tragic in the case of animals. For Regan, the presence in animals of satisfactions, acting to bring them about, some cognizance of the future, and the continuity of a life are shared with humans, and are grounds for moral considerability. I have already mentioned being the subject of a life as another.³³

Regan advances an argument for extension of inherent value to nonhumans which is different from such normative arguments. By normative I mean an argument that animals and humans normally share certain characteristics, traits, psychological states and processes, or the like, such as having satisfactions. The other arguments are what Callicott has called "arguments from marginal cases."³⁴ These argue that animals differ in no morally relevant way from marginal cases of humans, those who are comatose, retarded, immature, or otherwise "abnormal," marginal cases. To the argument that animals cannot articulate their own interests, or practice duties, it is argued that many humans outside the norm cannot either, but are not excluded from bearing rights on such a basis. Thus such normal human characteristics should not be

used to exclude animals. Regan explicitly considers sentience, having a “good of their own,” ability to recognize and follow a contract, having interests, and having feelings, in making the arguments from marginal cases. Different authors have advanced all these as grounds for excluding nonhumans from moral considerability.³⁵ Regan argues that such grounds would exclude a great many humans as well, in morally unacceptable ways. Human babies cannot keep contracts, for example, but are still extended moral considerability.

If something has inherent or intrinsic value, it is entitled to moral considerability. This is the hidden minor in many of the intrinsic value arguments in environmental ethics. The conclusion, that moral agents have a duty to protect bearers of intrinsic value, does not follow directly from the “presence” of intrinsic value. The minor is required to connect value to obligation. This creates a warrant, ground, reason, or justification for the protection of nonhuman nature, however the latter is defined. Environmental ethics, then, is within the rationalist tradition of the West in attempting to justify its ethical mandates with reasons. It does not make irrational appeals. Nor, in view of its appeal to reasons, is it as much of a break with Western philosophy or ethics as some have claimed or might prefer,³⁶ at least in form—that is, in appealing to reasons and justifying ethical imperatives with a warranted ground of some sort.

What is interesting is that this has taken the form of an axiological ethic. An axiological ethic is an ethic based on values,³⁷ not nature, the subject, and so on. Duty is derived from value or has a necessary relation to value, which is at least somewhat striking in light of the topic of the environment, where appeals to nature rather than value might seem apropos. Moreover, the notion of intrinsic value is a controversial one and the bearer of such value is a major issue of dispute within value theory. Thus intrinsic value might appear a shaky premise on which to build an ethics. Further, value theory is itself a field of dispute with subjective, objective, relational, and foundational theories to speak nothing of varieties of these. Because the value problem has not come to the point of consensus, building an axiological environmental ethic might seem to be an ambitious undertaking and dangerous to the project of protecting the nonhuman realm. To posit the value of nonhuman species is to commit oneself to a value theory and if such a theory is itself proven fallacious or invalid on other grounds, the basis of the whole ethic is threatened.

The source of such arguments seems to lie in Kant and Bentham. Bentham, particularly, suggested that the extension of moral standing has increased over historical time and may yet expand to include animals.³⁸ Kant argues that moral standing only extends to humans;³⁹ however, he agrees with the crucial premise that treating someone as an end (i.e., as a bearer of intrinsic value), involves moral considerability, and thus a duty toward such a bearer.⁴⁰ Thus although Kant rejects the notion of the moral standing of animals, differs in his value theory from Bentham and even in the relation of value to obligation, he agrees that intrinsic value entails duties, or at least that

there is a rational relation between intrinsic values and duties. Thus the extension of moral considerability to animals, if it could be shown to be warranted, can use the Kantian-Bentham arguments to extract duties to nonhumans. This is the course the non-anthropological ethicists have taken. The premise is hidden in that although many authors who argue for extension of intrinsic value to nonhumans have many arguments for extending intrinsic value and thus moral considerability to nonhumans, they almost never consider the premise that intrinsic value entitles one to moral standing. This could be taken to mean that they have a moral theory of intrinsic value. However, there are nonmoral theories of intrinsic value, notably esthetic theories.⁴¹ For esthetic theories of intrinsic value, intrinsic value does not necessarily entail moral standing. Thus it would seem that the attribution of intrinsic or inherent value to nonhuman species would require a defense of the premise that intrinsic value entitles the bearer to moral considerability, or a defense of a moral theory of intrinsic value. Regan does not provide this, perhaps because in the context of morals it is not perceived as relevant. Again, the defense of moral intrinsic value by Kant and others is perhaps perceived as sufficient justification of the connection between inherent value and moral considerability. The environmental ethicist only has to justify the extension of moral considerability to nonhumans, not the premise of the moral standing of bearers of inherent value.

What is even more radical in their position is that there has been no attempt to go beyond axiological ethics by grounding value in epistemology, metaphysics, ontology, the subject,⁴² or any of the other traditional philosophical foundations. In effect, values are their own foundation. This may follow from the notion of "intrinsic" value, as an intrinsic value does not need reference to a subject, or a further ground. It is self grounded, an end in itself. However, the issue of the grounding of intrinsic value is sometimes not raised by the environmental ethicists. The grounding is taken as a premise and is generally assumed. As I noted earlier, it may have been considered unnecessary to do so as the argument for moral considerability was derived from various traditional, anthropocentric ethics—namely, those of Kant and Bentham. Since these theories are well established, it may have been thought that no further justification was needed. If moral considerability was sufficient to justify duty to humans, then the only task needed was to extend this to animals, in order to provide protection to them as well. Justifying the entire ethical enterprise or even the argument from intrinsic value to duty is unnecessary so long as it is not challenged for humans. However, a problem may be created for an environmental ethics that goes beyond the locus of value in individuals in the original theories—that is, Callicott's and Rolston's location of intrinsic value in wholes, such as species, habitats, and ecosystems, rather than in individual value bearers. The original premise was that individuals were bearers. Does this shift in the locus of value change the premise of the argument as

originally formulated, that is, that bearing intrinsic value entitles the bearer to moral considerability? This point will have to be considered in a later section, when Callicott's and Rolston's theories are being examined. In any case, it does not apply to Regan, as the locus of value in his theory is clearly in individuals, both as having intrinsic values and as having rights.

The final consideration is the moral obligation due to the bearers of moral standing or considerability. Regan argues directly from inherent value to moral obligation and also to rights, skipping the minor. These conclusions are distinct, but the premises and form of the arguments are the same, that inherent value entitles the bearer to rights or generates duties from moral agents. What Regan calls the "rights view" of the correct relation of humans to nonhumans is stressed in his earlier essays, for example, "The Case for Animal Rights," where he states that all who have inherent value have "an equal right to be treated with respect."⁴³ Later, perhaps under the influence of critics of the rights view by others, for example, Callicott,⁴⁴ Regan stresses obligations as a conclusion. In general, Regan argues that such obligations consist in a "preservation principle" as a "moral imperative,"⁴⁵ that is, an obligation to preserve both individuals and species. The equality of rights is held over in the form of equal inherent value. Regan argues against degrees of inherent value, thus degrees of obligation. "All who have inherent value have it equally, whether they be human animals or not."⁴⁶ Other obligations include the elimination of laboratory experiments on animals.⁴⁷

The derivation of the conclusion from the minor is not explicit in Regan and may be borrowed direct from previous moral theory. Moral considerability is seen as entailing moral obligations or rights. While this is seemingly plausible, it does not give a principle of selection. If there is a conflict of rights or of obligations either between humans and nonhumans, no principle of preference is given, although Regan argues on pragmatic grounds that humans should receive preference. Further, there is no principle for choosing in the case of selecting between species. This creates a considerable problem for Regan's and other theories in which the locus of value lies in individuals. As Callicott has noted,⁴⁸ it means that carnivores and other predators cannot take lives for food because they might be violating rights. Further, it might be argued that humans have an obligation to prevent predators from killing for food, as moral agents. Because Regan argues for an unspecified "preservation principle," it might seem that only preservation of species is an obligation. However, this would be directly contrary to the argument that bearers of inherent value are morally considerable and that rights attach to individuals. This is, it seems to me, a major problem with attempts to locate rights or inherent value in nonhumans, however defined.

The way around such a dilemma is threefold. One can question the location of intrinsic value in individuals. This is the strategy of Callicott and

Rolston, who locate value in wholes, whether species, ecosystems, “the land” or biotic communities. Another strategy is to question whether inherent value automatically entitles the bearer to moral considerability. Rolston questions this minor premise as well. A third strategy is to grant moral considerability, but deny that obligations are coextensive with the bearers of moral standing, and argue for a graduated scale of obligations. Callicott urges this approach.

Another criticism of Regan’s theory from within the camp of those who argue for the intrinsic value of the nonhuman⁴⁹ has been that Regan’s theory does not provide protection for species, ecosystems, biotic communities, and other more abstract ecological formations.⁵⁰ Thus species of plants might go extinct and never be defended by Regan’s theory. More, the habitats of even the higher animals might be at risk, to speak nothing of attractive esthetic landscapes, wild rivers, and other exotic locales. Regan only defends higher animals as morally considerable, not plants and other candidates. Since one goal of an environmental ethic even as stated by Regan is to successfully argue for the preservation of species and perhaps their habitats, Regan’s theory is as inadequate as the anthropocentric theories in achieving this goal. In the next two sections I will consider authors who attempt to extend intrinsic value beyond higher animals to the “land” and biotic communities.

In this section the discussion of intrinsic value has already unearthed several relations “inherent” to intrinsic value arguments. One is the relation of instrumentality to inherent or intrinsic value used by Regan to distinguish inherently valuable bearers from instrumental value. As this characterization of the relation does not refer beyond the value dimension, I will call this the relational aspect. Another is the correspondence of the instrumental-intrinsic value distinction to the means-end distinction. Regan refers to this correspondence in consideration of treating bearers of intrinsic value as ends only. As an end is teleological, I will refer to this as the teleological dimension of intrinsic value. The assumption is that the instrumental-intrinsic value distinction is either identical with or coextensive with that of means to ends. Otherwise, if the means-ends relation is not coextensive with the instrumental-intrinsic relation, these are not aspects, but independent dimensions. A third relation is if something is considered valuable “for its own sake,” rather than “for the sake of” something else. Another way in which this relation can be expressed is value “for (something else)” and value “for itself” or “in itself” or “in and for itself.” Regan refers to this distinction in his treatment of subjects of a life. I will refer to this as the reflexive aspect or dimension. Reflexivity also seems to parallel the relational aspect of instrumentality to intrinsic value, but is not identical with it; something may be valuable “in itself” without having any relation to an instrument. Thus it is a distinct aspect of intrinsic value. These aspects do not necessarily coincide with either the locus or the bearer of value. They are aspects of value apart from any relation to

bearers. The bearers' relations to other bearers may not coincide with any of these value relations. This will prove to be an important point in discussing value loci in Callicott and Regan.

Callicott's Biotic Community

J. Baird Callicott has, like Reagan, called for a new, distinctive, environmental ethic. He bases the need for a new ethic on the inadequacies of traditional Western ethics for protecting the environment. More, Western philosophy has been unable to envision the intrinsic value of the environment and to deal with it on its own terms. Callicott has not only called for a radically new environmental ethic, which breaks with Western ethics in several important respects, but also for a restructuring of philosophy itself as part of this program. Philosophy is seen as captive and a new approach is required to bring it more in line with both current scientific thinking and the "land ethic."

Callicott argues that, "since Western moral philosophy has been overwhelmingly if not entirely anthropocentric—i.e. focussed exclusively on human welfare and the intrinsic value of human beings . . . the environment enters into ethics, upon such an approach to environmental ethics, only as the arena of human interaction. The environment is treated as . . . a value neutral vector. . . ." ⁵¹ Anthropocentric moral philosophy, it is argued, only acknowledges the intrinsic value of humans. ⁵² "An anthropocentric value theory, by common consensus, confers intrinsic value on human beings and regards all other things, including all other forms of life, as being only instrumentally valuable. . . ." ⁵³ Intrinsic value is immediately introduced as a central topic or issue in environmental ethics. This statement of the problem introduces the relational aspect of intrinsic value to instrumental value within the context of anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric ethics. Because anthropocentric ethics only confers intrinsic value on humans, and only instrumental value on the balance of the world, it is judged inadequate as an environmental ethics. The implication is that an adequate environmental ethic requires that the nonhuman sphere, in some sense to be defined, is recognized as having intrinsic value. Without such recognition, no environmental ethic can be adequate. Treating animals or other elements of nature as instruments is not only to treat them as inferior, but also as outside the sphere of moral consideration. In this point Callicott essentially agrees with Regan. Effects of human policies on the nonhuman realm are considered, if at all, only indirectly.

Callicott recognizes the importance of metaphysics and systematic frameworks in shaping value theory. In particular, he has argued that the Cartesian metaphysics with its framework of a conscious subject confronting a value neutral object has been at the root of the devaluation of the non-human, including animals, plants, habitats, landscapes, and their relation-

ships.⁵⁴ Descartes not only argued that nonhuman nature was mechanical, soulless, and without consciousness,⁵⁵ he initiated the dualism of subject and object, mind and matter, man and nature that split value from world and confined it to the human subject. Dualism effectively gave a metaphysical basis for egoism as the solitary subject was identified as an ego, and its worldview is necessarily egoistic. Egoism has been taken as self-justifying by modern ethics in the form that self-interest is defined as “rational.”⁵⁶ The modern form of anthropocentric ethics is egoistic, having regard only for the good of human selves, not the common good or that of the nonhuman.

An anthropocentric ethic, with a metaphysical justification of egos detached from the natural world, can disregard the value of the environment, except perhaps prudentially.⁵⁷ Callicott labels such a prudential ethic “utilitarian,” in the sense that it regards the nonhuman as a field of utility or use value, that is, as only having instrumental value. Thus there is an equation of instrumental and use value and the implication that intrinsic value, which has been contrasted with instrumental value, is non-utilitarian. “The deeper philosophical problem of the value of the natural environment in its own right and our duties, if any, to nature itself was ignored.”⁵⁸ Callicott contrasts this disregard with the attitudes of non-Western cultures, especially those of Native Americans, who, he argues, put a much higher value on the nonhuman, often treating other species as tribes or societies in their own right.⁵⁹ Callicott argues that in view of disappearing wildlife, rapid extinction of species, loss of habitats, and the like, the problem of developing a non-anthropocentric value theory is “the most important philosophical task for environmental ethics.”⁶⁰ While Callicott acknowledges that species have gone extinct in the past, as part of a cycle that occurred long before humans arrived on the scene, he argues that the abrupt and catastrophic extinctions caused by human expansion into the wild and relentless exploitation of the environment is something new and unprecedented. This has not only resulted in biological impoverishment. There is something wrong with the wanton destruction of wildlife that goes beyond human loss or concern. Nothing less than a “paradigm shift” in moral philosophy is required.

A new environmental ethics that includes the wilderness is needed, and that is more than a reapplication of older theories, an extension of traditional anthropocentric ethics.⁶¹ Callicott prefers what he calls an “ecocentric” approach, which, instead of starting from the environment and looking for some suitable theory, aims at the complete overhaul of Western philosophy. This will be based on “a shift in the locus of intrinsic value from individuals (whether individual human beings or individual higher . . . animals) to terrestrial nature—the ecosystem—as a whole.”⁶² He wants to provide a reasoned non-utilitarian justification for the right of other species to exist, based on their intrinsic value. The shift to species as the locus of value marks his break with less radical environmental ethics, which he regards as still anthropocentric in

some respect. This point will be covered later; at this point its focus as a point of difference with both traditional anthropocentric ethics and certain less radical approaches to environmental ethics can be noted.

Callicott claims that the science of ecology has established a new view of the environment that has to be taken into account in an environmental ethic. The early mechanical view of the interrelation of niches and species has been replaced by a view that stresses energy flows, food chain relations, and communities.⁶³ A “complicated web of relations” is involved in any environment that determines the interaction of organisms. An individual is continuous with the web and constituted by it.⁶⁴ The role of species in the whole outweighs the importance of any one individual. An individual may be killed off as prey and the species survive to play its continuing role in the whole. Callicott lays major stress on the role of species in the whole—that is, holism as opposed to individualism, as part of his thrust toward a reformed ethic of the environment.

Callicott is attempting to establish a “foundation” for a new, ecocentric ethics in “an evolutionary and ecological understanding of nature. . . .”⁶⁵ He argues that the new sciences collectively studying the environment have radically shifted the paradigm of how nature is to be understood, and the human place in it. In turn a new, environmental ethics based on the understanding of “biotic communities” is called for. “The twentieth century discovery of a biotic community has helped us realize the need . . . for an environmental ethic.” Just how radical a break is such an ethic with traditional, “anthropocentric” ethics? Is an environmental ethics an ethics at all from the traditional point of view? Callicott argues that “an environmental ethic is supposed to govern human relations with nonhuman natural entities.”⁶⁶ Ethics is to be reformed by moving away from a strict concentration on humans and their relations to include the nonhuman. Humans would be included in the web that ecological sciences have discovered. Callicott’s project is more radical than a simple extension of moral considerability to the nonhuman from the human, as in Regan. It is ecocentric, and starts from the ecology, not from the human sphere. However, there is also a notion of expanding intrinsic value from the exclusively anthropocentric view to include the nonhuman. If the detached, egoistic self of the Cartesian view is one with the world, within the ecological web, then the ecology gains an intrinsic value it was not previously thought to have, and the destruction of the environment is perceived as a loss to me.⁶⁷

Callicott conceives of his project as a radical departure not only for ethics but for philosophy as well. His reading of the history of philosophy is that it suffers from “physics envy” and is in need of reform “from the ground up.” The “new paradigm” is to be based on ecological studies; thus it is less a break with the model of philosophy as based on some relationship with experimental science than a shift in which science is to be used in the relationship. In a sense, this is less of a revolution than a return to philosophy’s

“dedicated place and role in Western cultural history.”⁶⁸ Callicott means that philosophy ought “to redefine the world picture . . . to inquire what new way we human beings might imagine our place and role in nature; and to figure out how these big new ideas might change our values and realign our sense of duty and obligation.”⁶⁹ The worldview of the Cartesian subject, with a mind confronting an alien and strictly mechanical world, is replaced with one in which humans are part of an ecological web. The implications are that a new ethic must be formulated in this light for which the relation of human and nonhuman must be at the forefront. Although philosophy should still work with a scientific background, Callicott argues that contemporary science has completely surpassed the worldview represented in Descartes and that philosophy must change accordingly. This entails a new axiology that is neither subjective nor even objective.⁷⁰

Why is Callicott’s theory formulated in view of Regan’s earlier work along the same lines? Regan already called for a new environmental ethics, based on the intrinsic value of nonhuman animals, their moral standing, and thus extension of rights to animals. Why did Callicott need to articulate his own theory if Regan already covered such ground? How does Callicott’s environmental ethics differ from Regan’s? Callicott and Regan agree that a new, environmental ethic is needed and that intrinsic value must be extended beyond the human sphere to include the nonhuman. The difference is that from Callicott’s point of view, Regan does not go far enough. First, Regan places the locus of value in individuals, whether human or animal, and this is an extension of the modern, egoistic worldview of the subject, which does not start from the newer ecological studies. The implication is that individuals are of greater value than species; Callicott argues that Regan’s “conservative” view cannot provide a justification for preservation of species, particularly endangered species, in any conflict. “There is no logical link . . . between a concern for the intrinsic value of *individual* plants and animals and a concern for *species* preservation.”⁷¹

Further, the value of the *whole* is not considered. The whole is the biosphere or the ecology taken to include all the factors relevant to life, such as soil, water, air, as well as plants and animals. Callicott’s holism is an even more radical step away from Regan, as the value of nonliving formations is being considered, not just living things. Callicott argues that Regan’s view is simply an extension of the moral standing of traditional utilitarianism, sentience, to certain higher animals, a view he considers inadequate.⁷² Callicott calls Regan’s view “humane moralism,” that is, the view that humans have certain characteristics deserving of moral consideration that the animal liberationists wish to extend a little so as to include the higher animals. The latter view does not take into account the role of nonliving factors such as soil, which are crucial to a biotic community. Animal liberation does not provide a rationale or justification for protection of species, habitats, or landscapes.

Indeed, in one of his more radical articles, he argues that domesticated animals may well pose a threat to the environment, that culling of wild herds may also be requisite, and thus that the lives of individual animals may be sacrificed for a larger whole, although this view is later modified.⁷³ Thus from Callicott's perspective, Regan's view does not extend moral standing far enough, and, based as it is on an originally anthropocentric view, fails to consider the value of nonliving factors in the biotic whole. It is not a sufficient enough break with anthropocentrism.

Callicott contrasts Regan's "humane moralism" with the "land ethic" of Aldo Leopold.⁷⁴ Callicott adopts the land ethic as his own, and articulates and defends its ramifications.

The land ethic, founded upon an ecological model of nature emphasizing the contributing roles played by various species in the economy of nature, abandons the "higher/lower" ontological and axiological schema in favor of a functional system of value. The land ethic . . . is inclined to establish value distinctions not on the basis of higher and lower orders of being, but on the basis of the importance of organisms, minerals and so on to the biotic community.⁷⁵

The land ethic, far from being anthropocentric, is grounded on ecology, breaks with Western individualism in its "functional system of value," and subsumes the value of individuals to that of the biotic community. For Callicott, environmental ethics is the land ethic, and animal liberation is simply seen as, at best, an inadequate forerunner of the land ethic, which should be superceded, and at worst a problematic view that may get in the way of a land ethic. In an early text, Callicott argues that this is because, above all, animal liberation is "atomistic or distributive in . . . theory of moral value . . . [whereas] environmental ethics is holistic or collective."⁷⁶ This shift marks a change both in the locus of intrinsic value, in species, ecosystems and nonliving factors such as soils, and so on, but also in moral considerability. This view gives preference to the land or the biotic community as a whole over individual organisms. The latter are considered with respect to the function their species plays in the biosphere or a particular habitat taken as a whole. This view has created considerable controversy, as individual rights among humans is the consensus view in ethics, and Callicott's view seems to undercut individual rights. However, Callicott later clarified his view and argued that he was not attempting to undermine individual rights for humans.

Callicott speaks at various times of the "land ethic" the "biocentric value orientation of ethical environmentalism," and of ethical "holism" in a way that indicates that these are interchangeable terms. However, in one reading, "biocentric" could be taken as taking all of life as intrinsically valuable. Callicott goes to considerable lengths to separate himself from this latter view. Thus what he means by biocentric must be read in the light of his holism. For the land ethic, domestic animals can be a blight. More, in Calli-

cott's view both animal liberation and reverence for life views are unrealistic in denying the food chain. As animals higher in the chain necessarily feed off those lower in the chain, it is impossible to grant rights in the individualistic sense or intrinsic value to *all* of life. However, Callicott also argues that rights may be recognized within a community—namely, a human community. His point remains that the extension of moral considerability based on the land ethic is not at the same time an extension of individual rights to all living organisms. For this would be incompatible with both the food chain and the health of the land.

Callicott agrees with Regan that an adequate environmental ethic must include the intrinsic value of the nonhuman, but argues that this is a larger set of members than just individual animals. "An adequate value theory for non-anthropocentric environmental ethics must provide for the intrinsic value of both individual organisms and a hierarchy of super-organismic entities—populations, species, biocoenoses, biomes, and the biosphere."⁷⁷ "The intrinsic value of our *present* ecosystem as well"⁷⁸ must be included in the theory. This would constitute a non-anthropocentric theory of value bearers as it would "provide for the *intrinsic* value of nonhuman natural entities."⁷⁹ The value of the nonhuman, as broadly defined by Callicott, cannot be reduced to instrumentality for humans, whether "our interests or our tastes."⁸⁰ In other words, the intrinsic *value* of nonhuman individuals is recognized, but not their "rights."

Callicott accepts the three aspects of intrinsic value relation present in Regan, that is, the relation of intrinsic to instrumental,⁸¹ of means to "ends in themselves" or the teleological aspect,⁸² and the reflective aspect of value "in and for itself" not for something else. "Something is intrinsically valuable if it is valuable in and for itself—if its value is not derived from its utility, but is independent of any use or function it may have in relation to something or someone else."⁸³ Because Callicott makes no attempt to distinguish these three aspects ontologically or as moments of a process, they are overlapping aspects rather than distinct relations—that is, the means-end relation is coextensive with the reflexive and relational aspects of intrinsic values. However, he will later modify the character of the reflexive aspect. These three aspects cover the two distinctive "kinds" of value in general: intrinsic and instrumental. The ontology of intrinsic value is more explicit in Callicott than in Regan; "entities" are said to "be" intrinsically valuable and a thing "is" intrinsically valuable. The way in which such entities and things are intrinsically valuable will be covered later.

Oddly, however, Callicott cannot quite break with the Cartesian legacy. For his theory of intrinsic value is ultimately grounded in the subject, that is, in consciousness. This point will be covered in detail later, but Callicott is not as radical in his intrinsic value theory as in his theory of the locus of value and of moral considerability. Basically, Callicott presents a theory of intrinsic value

that is subjectively grounded, and in which intrinsic value is projected on to nonhuman nature. Thus something nonhuman that is intrinsically valuable is both valued by someone and “valued for itself.” This view meets the criteria for what several authors have called a “relational” subjective view of intrinsic value.⁸⁴ Value is “intrinsic” in the object but this is grounded in a valuing subject. Callicott has a less radical view than that of Regan on this point, as the latter argues for inherent value without regard to a valuing subject, despite Callicott’s approval of Regan’s definition of inherent value, including Regan’s qualification that inherent value “must be objective and independent of any valuing consciousness.”⁸⁵ The “objectivity” of intrinsic value is stressed in Callicott’s own analysis. Clearly, this is a complex notion of intrinsic value. Value seems to be grounded in a subject but independent of the subject.

Callicott’s position is close to that of C. I. Lewis, despite Callicott’s disclaimer. Distancing himself from both Regan and Lewis, Callicott chooses to defend the “intrinsic” as opposed to the “inherent” value of the nonhuman. As he conceives it, intrinsic value is “objective” and “independent of all valuing consciousness,” while inherent value is “not independent of all valuing consciousness” even if it valued for itself and not only as a means.⁸⁶ In other words, Regan’s “inherent” value is included in Callicott’s “intrinsic” value. It is not completely clear why Callicott prefers “intrinsic” to “inherent.” It could be that Callicott wants to make a stronger case against consciousness as some sort of criteria for intrinsic value or moral standing. Soil and air are not conscious entities; Regan’s criteria of sentience involve some sort of consciousness, even of nonhuman animals. Since Callicott is familiar with Lewis’s value theory, it could perhaps be that he is basing this distinction and arguing his position in reaction to Lewis. In fact, Lewis uses just the opposite terminology: intrinsic is tied to the conscious subject while inherent is objective. Callicott argues that his position is stronger than that of Lewis, as Lewis’s theory is “actually instrumental” with regard to the nonhuman, and that his own theory recognizes the value of the nonhuman for itself.⁸⁷ Callicott’s position on the ground of value is nevertheless similar to Lewis’s as both distinguish subjective and objective value and ground the latter in the former.

Callicott is less than clear on how value can be “independent of consciousness” but grounded in consciousness. However, as ground involves a relation to a consequent, perhaps objective intrinsic value is posited as a consequent. This is one of two solutions proposed by him for the relational grounding of intrinsic value. On the one hand, Callicott agrees with the modernists that there is “no value without an evaluator.”⁸⁸ Thus subjectivity must ground value, even intrinsic value defined as independent of consciousness. Noting that the problem of intrinsic value is “frankly metaphysical,” Callicott argues that “we need to discover . . . metaphysical foundations for the intrinsic value of other species.”⁸⁹ He argues against any naturalistic approach, perhaps having Rolston in mind, apart from some “valuational consciousness.”

Realizing his predicament, that he wants to both maintain the intrinsic value of the nonhuman apart from consciousness and also maintain subjective grounding, Callicott casts about for a way out of his dilemma.

If intrinsic value cannot be logically equated with some objective natural property or set of properties of an entity independently of any reference to a subjective or conscious preference for that property . . . the only way to rescue the objectivity and independence of intrinsic value is desperately metaphysical.⁹⁰

The “desperately metaphysical” way of rescuing intrinsic value is “to commend a property to our evaluative faculty of judgment or our evaluative faculties.”⁹¹ This seems to suggest that a value judgment can be made that nonhuman entities are intrinsically valuable. Callicott is unwilling to give up consciousness as the source of value as it is “institutionalized” in the scientific worldview, that is, in the “Cartesian framework” of subject and object involved in “value-free” descriptions of the natural world.⁹² “I concede that, from the point of view of scientific naturalism, the *source* of all value is human consciousness, but it by no means follows that the *locus* of all value is consciousness itself or a mode of consciousness like reason, pleasure or knowledge.”⁹³ This judgment involves the distinction of the locus of intrinsic value from its source. Thus value flows from a source to a locus in a relation. We judge something to have intrinsic value independently of ourselves. Callicott’s view does not escape a relation to a subject, however, although it may establish intrinsic value outside of a valuing subject.

Callicott’s other solution to the problem of a relational theory of intrinsic value is more speculative. He argues that the subject-object distinction of Descartes as a framework makes the axiological dichotomy of fact and value “intractable.” But he also notes that in the new physics, the subject-object, primary-secondary quality and essence-accident distinctions are entirely superseded: the observer and observed cannot be entirely separated. All qualities are secondary in this view, “potentialities which are actualized in relation to us.”⁹⁴ No properties are intrinsic, even those established by science, that is, ontologically objective and independent of consciousness. But nature can still be valued for its own sake since this does not change the relation of subjectively grounded valuations of intrinsically valuable loci of value. Values would in this case be the same as other properties, “actualized upon interaction with consciousness.”⁹⁵ Although this solution may preserve intrinsic value, it undermines the need for a Cartesian framework, and thus the subjective-objective distinction on which Callicott’s theory is based. Thus it may undermine the whole problematic that gave rise to Callicott’s value theory and require a new theory of value, including intrinsic value. Be this as it may, Callicott makes it clear that this is undeveloped speculation.

Callicott also considers other views of intrinsic value and judges them inadequate. The sentience⁹⁶ and interest⁹⁷ theories of value, even if extended to

many lower animals, do not protect species, habitats, or biotic communities as a whole. They are inadequate in scope or the extent of moral standing. Similarly, Kant and Aristotle only extend moral consideration to humans, based on the exclusive intrinsic value of certain human capacities, for example, reason.⁹⁸ In general, Callicott is critical of theories that argue that exclusively human psychological states are intrinsically valuable or can be used as a basis for the intrinsic value of the environment. Such theories posit a "hierarchy of beings determined by psychological complexity," whether this involves degrees of rationality, sentience, or desire.⁹⁹ Callicott judges such speciesist distinctions "arbitrary" as the basis for the intrinsic value of humans; he asks why they are to be considered good and thereby a basis for intrinsic value.¹⁰⁰

Moore's theory of intrinsic value is judged inadequate not as limited in scope but because it appeals to intuition, begs the question, and cannot be used to decide controversial cases.¹⁰¹ The most favorable theory is that of Plato, which Callicott describes as a "holistic rationalism." Plato's view locates the source of value outside the subject in the Form of the Good, and confers values on unified wholes and the harmonic relation of their parts,¹⁰² precisely what Callicott is seeking. Unfortunately, Callicott argues, this view does not ground this particular whole, the present biosphere, but any well-ordered whole. Thus although it comes close, it cannot be used as an environmental ethic because it does not provide a sufficient basis for protection of present species.¹⁰³

In place of such traditional theories, Callicott proposes to adopt Hume's moral sentiments theory as a "basis" for the intrinsic value of the environment: to ground morality "in feeling or emotion." Callicott notes that most philosophers have ignored Hume's theory, dismissing it as relativistic. However, he makes the case that Hume's theory could meet his test of consistency with value-free natural science and yet provide a basis for the intrinsic value of the biotic community. Hume's distinction of 'is' from 'ought' separates scientific judgments from bias. Value, however, is "projected onto natural objects or events by the subjective feelings of observers."¹⁰⁴ This analysis of Hume is consistent with Callicott's previously mentioned arguments for subjective grounding: subjective feelings are the "basis" of a relation to a valued thing. However, his theory involves ontological complexities compounded by the use of similar language for truth/ fact judgments and value/ought judgments. As Callicott urges that an entity "is" intrinsically valuable, the form of the judgment is identical with that of truth statements. There is the further problem of how intrinsic value can be part of the nature of the thing independently of consciousness if it is based on subjective feelings.

Callicott acknowledges that Hume's moral sentiments theory is not promising as a basis on which to build a theory of the intrinsic value of the nonhuman. For the "hypothesis" of intrinsic value means "that value inheres in natural objects as an intrinsic characteristic, that is, as part of the consti-