

# **Nature and Human beings in Kantian Philosophy**

## **-Approach from Environmental Ethics-**

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### **Abstract**

Generally speaking, Kantian ethics is well known by the rigorous and pure version of moral philosophy. His ethics is usually criticized for its *anthropocentrism* from the viewpoint of contemporary environmental ethics, as far as Kant admits an absolute value on nothing other than a person as a rational being. Indeed Kantian ethics is to be seen an "old fashioned" type of ethics in early modernity, but, to our knowledge, Kant scholars have not adequately studied how Kant thought about the relation between human beings and nature. From this reason at least once we must clarify "in what sense" Kantian ethics can be called anthropocentrism, so that this preliminary work helps us consider what is required for environmental ethics in the future.

In this paper, we will see both the limits and the potential of Kant's ethics for application to environmental ethics by examining Kant's several texts from the broader philosophical perspectives.

First, after confirming that Kant's ethics is *moral* anthropocentrism from Kant's ethical texts, we will critically examine the application of contemporary Kantian principles to environmental ethics. Secondly, we will see Kant's holistic view of nature-system in his cosmology of pre-critical period, and that Kant however did not treat human being's morality in this *nature-centric* view. Further it will be showed that Kant integrates this holistic nature with a moral anthropocentric system based on teleology in *Critique of the power of Judgment*. Finally and in conclusion, despite of criticism from environmental ethicists, we can argue the potential of Kant's philosophy that provide us a certain norm for a good relationship between nature and human being in the future.