

Emphasizing Sumak Kawsay in Peace Ethics

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Abstract : Since the Rio declaration, the agreement resulting from the Earth Summit in 1992, the UN member states acknowledge that peace and environmental protection are deeply linked to each other. It has also been made clear by Contemporary Peace research since the early 2000 that the lack of natural resources increases conflicts, as well as potential war conflicts (general environmental conflict thesis). I argue that peace ethics need to reconsider the role of the environment in peace ethics, from conflict prevention to peacebuilding. Sumak kawsay is a concept that offers a non-anthropocentric perspective on the subject. Several Contemporary Peace Ethicists don't take environmental peace sufficiently into account. 1. The Peace theorist Johan Galtung famously argues that positive peace depends mostly on social, economic and political factors, as institutional structures establish peace. Galtung has a relational approach to peace, yet only between human interactors. 2. Michael Fox claims in his anti-war argument to consider nonhuman entities in conflicts. Because of their species interrelation, humans cannot decide on the fate of other species. 3. Although Mark Woods considers himself a peace ecologist, following Reichberg and Syse, and argues from a duty-based perspective towards nature, he mostly focuses on the protection of the environment during war conflicts. I want to focus on a non-anthropocentric view to argue that the environment is an entity of human concern in order to construct peace. Based on the premises that the lack of natural resources create tensions that play a significant part in international conflicts and these conflicts are potential war conflicts, I argue that a non-anthropocentric account to peace ethics is an indispensable perspective towards the recovery of these resources and therefore the reduction of war conflicts. Sumak kawsay is an approach contributing to a peaceful environment, which can play a crucial role in international peacekeeping operations. To emphasize sumak kawsay in peace ethics, it is necessary to explain what this principle includes and how it renews Contemporary Peace ethics. The indigenous philosophy of life of the Andean Quechua philosophy in Ecuador and varieties from other countries from the Global South include a holistic real-world vision that contains concepts like the de-hierarchization of humans and nature as well as the reciprocity principle towards nature. Sumak kawsay represents the idea of the intrinsic value of nature and an egalitarian way of life and interconnectedness between human and nonhuman entities, which has been widely neglected in Traditional War and Peace Ethics. If sumak kawsay is transferred to peacekeeping practices, peacekeepers have restorative duties not only towards humans, but also towards nature. Resource conservation and environmental protection are the first step towards a positive peace. By recognising that healthy natural resources contribute to peacebuilding, by restoring balance through compensatory justice practices like recovery, by fostering dialogue between peacekeeping forces and by entitling ecosystems with rights natural resources and environmental conflicts are more unlikely to happen. This holistic approach pays nature sufficient attention and can contribute to a positive peace.

Keywords : environment, natural resources, peace, Sumak Kawsay

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