

# The Integrity of Nature and Ecological Civilization

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## ONE

In Chapter 4 of the fifth volume of *Metaphysics*, Aristotle specially discussed the six meanings of the word "nature": ① the growth of the growing things; ② The seeds of the growing things; ③ The movement origin of natural objects; ④ Materials; ⑤ The essence of natural things; ⑥ The essence of anything. According to their nature, they are divided into two categories. One is the invisible nature, which works as essence, basis and initial motivation, being the main one, because there are five meanings included in this aspect; The other is the things that exist in such a way, that is, materials, which can also be called natural things. These two kinds of meanings are the basis of all subsequent interpretation of western natural thought. Therefore, at least in Aristotle's time, the basic usage of the word "physis" is the nature, essence and origin of things, that is the internal reason why these things are so, rather than the nature as a natural thing or a collection of natural things as understood in modern times. This is also based on Heraclitus's motto "Nature tends to hide (physis kruptesthai philei)". It can be seen that the concept of nature in modern times is a deviation from Aristotle's thought. The main appeal of the popular natural philosophy is to try to find nature back as essence and way.

## TWO

However, if given more careful examination, it will be found that the concept or meaning of nature was already "incomplete" in Aristotle's time, because the Greek philosophy of nature was born out of the early Greek mythology. In Greek mythology, as the embodiment of nature, Artemis or Isis in the temple of Ephesus was a goddess. She reminds people of two points: ① Nature is personified; ② Nature is feminization or negativization. As for the personification of nature, heaven in ancient China and

Brahman in ancient India are basically the same. However, this meaning was abandoned in the 500-300 years before the era, which is what Jaspers called the axial period. Among them, natural philosophy plays an important role in Greece, ritual and music civilization in China, and Buddhism in India. As for the feminine characteristics of nature, it also collectively reflected in Lao Tzu's thought of Chinese Earth Mother.

Whereas, nature as essence and way in Greek natural philosophy was absorbed by the personified God in the early Christian period and became a part of belief. The rest of the nature world acting as the created meaning became the object of modern natural science research and thinking. Because of this created-ness of nature, man seems to have got the perspective of God. In this regard, when natural scientists claim that their research conclusion is the law of nature itself, its essence is just the combination of natural objects. When this understanding upgrades to a kind of philosophy, there is not only the contradiction between the mechanical and the organic, but also the difference. The difference between the ontology and the representation of natural understanding. This kind of natural dismemberment is the ideological basis of contemporary natural view and ecological environment. Therefore, Heidegger also agrees with Barmenid's emphasizing that the principle of unity takes priority to the principle of existence.

### THREE

The study of ecological philosophy for more than half a century shows that there are two ideological gaps in the fundamental protection of natural environment or ecology: ① if nature has no personality, it is difficult to talk about ethics. As a result, people find that nature has personality at first; ② Ecological ethics or ecological morality based on Anthropocentrism can not protect the ecology in the ultimate or fundamental sense. consequently, we must go out of anthropocentrism, that is, from the value or ethical relationship between man and nature to the belief relationship. As the essence and way, nature is self-cause (just like the Christian God), thus it can be believed. Hence, the problem can only be solved if people believe in nature in the way of Christianity or ancient civilizations.

Accordingly, we can see that nature, as the existence of essence, materials and personification, is also a Trinity, among which, materials are the "goods" used by people, personification being the basis of establishing the emotional and ethical relationship between people and nature, while ontology and self-cause are designed for people to believe in and follow. Lao Tzu said, "the net of heaven is large and wide, but it lets nothing through", which is the foundation of the real view of nature that human civilization turns to ecological civilization today. The basic philosophical task of natural science is to reveal and protect the secrets and sanctity of nature.