

“Green Ideology” and the Risk for the Environment – Political Aspects, Morphology and Functions

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“Green ideology” and the risk for the environment – Cause-effect Relation an Implementation.

Part 1. Political aspects, morphology and implementation *The objective of the report is to give the political characteristics and features of the “green ideology”; to describe the political conditions and the political situation with respect to the management of the environment; to define the characteristics of the “green ideology”; to draw the morphology and the functions; to set forth arguments on the basic reasons for the rise of the “green ideology”.*

Key words: *ecology, ideology, politics.*

INTRODUCTION

The global problems for the development of the civilization set forth new visions on the progress of humankind and on the interaction between society and nature. It contributed to the formation of a new political attitude towards the intensity of human impact on nature and environment – the environmental politics. At present, researchers and politicians search for new methods and means for the harmonization of society and environment.

The objective of the present report is to unfold the political aspects and characteristics of environmental ideology.

In order to fulfill the above-mentioned objective, the following tasks are set:

1. To describe the political conditions and the political situation within the area of environmental management.
2. To define the characteristic features of environmental ideology.
3. To draw the morphology and function of environmental ideology.
4. To set forth arguments on the basic reasons for the rise of environmental ideology.

MAIN PART

The processes of “greening” of the political sphere and the political aspects of ecological problems have been deeply reexamined and redefined. Two scientific trends appeared – environmental policy [8,16,17] and political ecology [3]. The idea, however, is one and the same – to develop the management of the interaction and interdependence between politics and the protection of the environment.

The forms of organization of the environment in a market economy have changed. People face a reality that requires new activities, never used before. Such activities are ecological marketing, ecological management, ecological audit, ecological manufacturing and ecological services. Despite the fact that the issue is pressing and of great importance, the organization and administration of the above-mentioned activities is relatively poor. There are two main reasons for this. The first one is the underdeveloped theory of the environmental policy and the second one is the still unchanged mentality of humankind with regard to the use of the environment.

One can argue that the environmental politics creates the theory and ensures the scientific approach towards formation and realization of the environmental protection on different levels of administration. There are nine characteristic features of this policy.

The first is the “greening” of human life, i.e. all human activities are oriented towards protection of the environment from harm, recognition of the ecological factors and the development of anthropogenic activities with ecological effect.

The second is the balance between ecology and politics. It is characterized by balance between the concept for sustainable development and coordination of the

strategic goals and the interests of all parties in the society regardless of their political or economic influence.

The third characteristic feature is the environmental security in the development of mankind. All achievements – scientific, economic, technical, technological and social, shall be used to ensure that people's activities are implemented in an environmentally friendly way.

The fourth feature is the environmental system. It requires people's activities to be based on and with respect to the specifics of the environment which they are part of and not to act as independent social units.

The fifth is the anti-demarcation, which requires cooperation between the states within the frames of a common socio-natural system without borders.

The sixth characteristic feature is the international relations, i.e. the timely mutual assistance between states and the perception that environmental problems in a neighbouring state are mutual problems. The experience in the protection of the environment in different states, positive or negative, should be transmitted and shared without hindrance. The results from the different levels of development of an environmental policy should be accessible for all citizens of the planet.

The seventh is the globalization that determines the ubiquitous processes and phenomena on Earth. Their impact affects the development of the mankind on a certain stage and in a certain level of this development and prove that people cannot govern everything in nature.

The eighth feature is the target-based approach for research. This means the acceptance of the public interests such as preservation of the civilization and the life on Earth, as a main goal.

Axiology is the ninth characteristic. It reflects the natural values, the opportunity to uncover and assess them, to initiate new value orientation within the society.

Bearing this in mind, the environmental policy is part of the social policy. It contributes to the improvement of the population health conditions, creates environmentally friendly life conditions, develops and improves the environmental culture, enhances the role of different parts of society in the administration of the state.

In line with the above-mentioned characteristic features of the environmental politics, it shall: 1) account for the long-term factors and priorities in the administration of states and regions; 2) redefine the direction in the development of societies starting from the economic and consumer principles towards the creation of decent habitat for humans to live in; 3) environmentally friendly technology; 4) change in the people's value system with emphasis on the environment.

There are factors that hamper the formation of scientifically founded environmental politics, namely: 1) the mentality of politicians who do not appreciate the full extent of the environmental situation on the planet and minimize the importance and burden of the consequences that their decisions cause to the environment; 2) the mechanism for adoption and implementation of state environmental policy is imperfect; 3) the legal system is incomplete; 4) the specific political ambitions of different states and politicians; 5) the environmental awareness of statesmen is underdeveloped; 6) the lack of environmental needs and interests in certain strata.

At present, there are two ideologies within the environmental politics – ecologism [1,12] and environmentalism [2,4,6,14,15,18,20].

Ecologism as ideology is based on the main biological concepts in ecology and develops the idea for the connection between people and nature. In this line of thought, a human is part of nature, not its master or owner. Ecologism develops eco-centric ideas – ideas that see only the human as organism, whose condition and changes are a result of the changes in the natural environment.

Environmentalism is based on the ideas for the protection of the environment and preservation of nature. This ideology is critical towards the contemporary modern society.

Part of the theory on environmentalism claims that there are fundamental differences between people and the inanimate nature. We consider such claims a sign of dualism with metaphysical nuances.

Other main aspects have been formulated on the basis of proving the existence of inanimate nature through mechanical materialism and the deterministic laws of physics.

There are other statements by anthropologists that the inanimate nature is of value only for the mankind and, taken alone, has no other value [2].

The ecologism and environmentalism can be summarized as being environmental ideologies within the field of politics, popular under the name of “green ideologies”.

The first ideology – the ecologism, corresponds to the biological component, and the second one – the environmentalism – to the protection of the environment. These two complement each other because of two reasons. First, one should be acquainted with the interaction between the organisms and the environment they inhabit, and, second, one should find methods and means for protection of the environment from changes that could cause damage. This division is artificial. It is done by many researchers who put in their knowledge about the environment to a greater or lesser extent.

One uniform term should be used – environmental ideology, which is oriented towards the protection of the environment, i.e. towards reality.

From political point of view, the environmental ideology is a system of political ideas. It gives voice to the ideas of certain social groups. In order to define and present it more precisely, one should give a clear structure of its morphology and functions.

The environmental ideology has at its basics real human interests and needs. However, they are not the only composing parts since human behavior is motivated by the ideas and by the values.

At first, the influence of an ideology is on emotional level, and only after that is it on a mental one. Of course, it should be mentioned here, that we are not talking only about the truth or the deceitfulness of an ideology, but about the state of security where people can activate themselves to reach certain goals, set in the environmental ideology.

The ideology is a spiritual phenomenon. It transforms one idealized image into a secular one, which, for the contemporary civilization, represents not only the basic myths but also the reality of the environment.

The ideology of the environment is based on deeply rooted convictions in human consciousness which inspire people to be socially and politically active. The belief that we can have absolutely clean and risk-free environment is a myth. This myth results from the collective thinking of people, whereas the ideology is a result from researches conducted basically because of certain social needs or commissioned by a certain group or organization. The myth appears in the collective conscious and the environmental ideology is part of an individual or group conscious of certain strata. The myth is irrational while the ideology is rational.

The environmental myth is an emotional expression of the perception for the environment. It has limits between natural and unnatural, between past, present and future, between general and particular. The myth for perfect environment has no concrete dimension and cannot be assessed. It defines the behavior of humans in such a way as to ignore the differences, to make everything uniform, and to bring the unanimity and harmony to the front.

The difference between myth and ideology is not clear-cut. Too often, the myth can generate an ideology.

The ideology is more closely related to the utopia. It can comprise many of the utopian elements and the utopia – a lot of the above-mentioned ideological functions. The utopia can be a method and a way to preserve ideas between certain communities, to define the main direction towards the social activities of a society, to unite around ideas, projects, programmes.

Not in vain is the utopia claimed to be a kind of ideology, and the protection of the ideologies is a function of the utopia, whether it is fully realized or not [8].

There are four morphological components of the environmental ideology.

The first component is the theory. It is not entirely developed so far. Different authors [8] try to present the environmental ideology as a doctrine, as a system of ideas and principles. These attempts, however, do not cover all processes and phenomena. Moreover, there are a lot of contradictions between the postulates and the other structural elements of their theoretical formulations.

It is found that the functions of the environmental ideology theory – descriptive, prognostic and normative, are not yet fully defined. Its properties are not revealed as well. The subject and reliability of the ideology are not fully presented and it is sporadically formalized, proved, and verified.

The second component is the social teaching. Our reason is that the environmental ideology is intended for socio-political orientation and *Weltanschauung* of certain social groups.

The third component includes the values and ideals. They shape the ideological norm, because they not only describe, explain and interpret the social reality but also assess the political life and the attitude of certain social groups towards it.

The fourth one encompasses the projects and programmes for political activities. Here manifests the attitude and the orientation towards the future.

In order for the morphology to be explained, the functions of the environmental ideology within a society should be revealed.

The first function is the integration. This means uniting of followers of this particular ideology who can influence society.

The second function is prognosis since it shapes models and creates scenarios for the future of the environment and its interaction and relations with the society.

The third function is the verification. The environmental ideology is a basis for the development of methodology, concepts, methods and means to prove or reject hypotheses, for the role of social groups in establishing the truth about the environment and its condition.

The fourth function is the socialization. It focuses on affecting the human conscious in a systematic and steady way. Its idea is to produce political culture, political convictions and political stand.

Socialization is a process in which the person learns the skills for a life in a society. The process is similar to that of upbringing, but the latter happens under the guidance of a person of authority such as a teacher for example [14]. It aims certain results and the formation of models of behavior desired and approved by the society. These models should be followed and encouraged. The socialization, on the other hand, is not an organized but a spontaneous process, which can achieve various results – results that are desirable and approved and such, contrary to what the public comprehends as appropriate. Under the influence of the social environment, an individual can learn to achieve their goals in a way that is unacceptable for the society.

The fifth function is mobilization. This means the ability to reconstruct the value orientation in people and channel their thoughts and feelings in a certain direction, to activate and encourage them to concrete activities.

The sixth function is the psychological influence which affects the mind of social groups. The impact on population results from this function. Yet, in order for the necessary level of action to be reached, the cause-effect relations should be established and the basic reasons found.

The people take nature for granted, they see it as the place they have been predestined to live in. The mankind watches closely the conditions, circumstances and at the same time defines the qualities and the reliability of nature [16,17].

If we take into consideration the famous Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs [13] the security takes second place, right after physiological needs such as food, water, sleep, health, etc.

Bearing this in mind, a person analyzes their safety and security indirectly, through the sense of danger and risk. In other words, the construction of environmental ideology is related and dependent on the safety and security of the environment.

In order for the people to grasp the meaning and fully understand it, they shall search not only for changes in the environment. The changes alone do not mean harmful impact. On the other hand, they cannot always be established immediately, but need to be analyzed and assessed continuously through time since they have a cumulative effect and impact. A person comprehends the safety and security according to the images and risk assessments they have formed that depend on the motivation towards risk as well.

Thus, the environmental ideology transforms the ideas in social mechanisms for environmental security. They give the necessary impetus for people to protect and safeguard their own existence.

CONCLUSION

The report reveals the political aspects and characteristic features of the environmental ideology on the basis of primary analysis and the respective findings about the political situation within the field of environmental management.

Furthermore, nine main characteristics of the environmental ideology have been defined that give a full and reliable presentation of the main features of this ideology.

The report also presents a structure that reflects the nature and substance of the environmental ideology. It encompasses four morphological units – theory, doctrine, values and ideals, projects and programmes.

Six functions of the environmental ideology are defined – integration, prognosis, verification, socialization, mobilization and socio-psychological impact. The reason for the environmental ideology to come into being is for the people to be able to reveal, analyze and assess the risks for the environment and to satisfy the needs of the people for safe and secure existence. These are the main motives for the creation and formulation of environmental ideologies.

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The report has been reviewed.