

African Humanism: The Paradigm For Indigenous Environmental Ethics And Practice

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Abstract

There is this connection, this web of relations and perhaps interdependence between man and his natural environment. However, in most cases, man has dominated and continue to exert efforts aimed at dominating, manipulating and conquering his environment for his ends. This has created the problem of environmental degradation and global warming. The study offers African humanistic ontology as a paradigm for sustainable environmental ethics. Using the method of criticism, it evaluates Western anthropocentrism which seeks to establish the lordship of man over nature, thereby dominating and conquering the natural environment, perhaps to his own peril; the method of conceptual analysis is used in elucidating relevant terms and concepts. This study argues that the explanatory factors of Africa's environmental challenges could be seen in the abandonment of her ontological worldview (of life forces harmoniously coexisting with one another) in preference for Western ideologies which seek to subdue nature. It therefore maintains that a return to the original indigenous African humanism, which establishes a web of connection between man and nature, is necessary for solving her ecological problems.

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