

Environmental ethics through the Mongolian myth

Soyolmaa Sukhbat /Ph.D/ in philosophy, Orlando, Florida,
USA

What is the Environmental ethics?

- Ethics is the most practical branch of philosophy.
- Environmental ethics is the searching rational relationship between nature and culture.

History of the studies of Mongolian environmental ethics

- **Plano Carpini, Wilhelm Rubruck, and Marco Polo** were the first tourists to write about Mongolian eco-ethics in the history of the world, and in their records, they mentioned how Mongolians live in harmony with the environment.

History of the studies of Mongolian environmental ethics

- French anthropologist **Marcel Mauss** wrote how the native religious characters of the Mongolians and Buddhism have been harmoniously combined.
- American philosopher Susanne Langer: “the one, primarily for supplying vicarious experience, the other essentially for understanding **actual experience**”.

Mongolian Nature Worship Myth's classification

- Plant worship myth- “Juniper Tree Becomes Evergreen”
- Place worship myth- "Agvashi Island“
- Mountains worship myth- "Tsambagarav"
- Animal worship myth- "Legend of the Horse"
- Water worship myth – “Geser”
- Sky worship myth – “Secret history of Mongolia”

Main ideas of Mongolians' environmental ethics

- Mongolians believed, respected and studied almost all **plants** and trees as healing and magical for people, and they became the main subject of myths.
- Mongolians worshiped **place** as a symbol of reproduction, growth, and progress. Mongolians used to enjoy the land they lived in for many years and changed their land, being careful not to degenerate forage. Even now, this eco-ethics is a behavior among Mongolian herders.
- Mongolians have a dream to keep their **mountains** pristine and holy. In general, even now, there is still a tendency among the rural people of Mongolia to not like to let people and animals out in the mountains too much.

Main ideas of Mongolians' environmental ethics

- Based on the belief that the owner of the **water** is fierce /*Lus Savdag*/, the Mongolian eco-ethics of not allowing impurity into the water can be considered as the basis for saving fresh water. As for the myth of animal worship, the Mongols considered the underground animals as belonging to “lus savdag” and feared and avoided them rather than worshiping them.
- Creatures such as birds were considered heavenly and worshiped. On the other hand, the **animals** of the earth, such as deer and wolves, were considered to belong to this world and were considered as mediators of the upper middle world.
- The discussion was held on the tradition of Mongolians praying to the **sky** and whispering their wishes to the seven gods and stars and offering milk samples from their dairy products.

Conclusion

- The mythological thinking of nature worship, which is the basis of environmental ethics of Mongolians, is a system of beliefs and dreams that should be taken into account when solving modern eco-problems. it is important to know the ecological ethics of the Mongolian people living in Mongolia and **reflect it in the legal system** and management in order to protect the Mongolian culture, protect the environment, and use natural resources wisely.

Thank you for attention