

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Policy of Benevolence of Mencius

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Abstract

The world today is facing two major problems: one is sustainable development, the other is environmental governance. How to solve the problems of sustainable development and environmental governance is a common challenge for human beings and a necessary way to build the future society. In the Warring States period, which faced many challenges, Mencius put forward the policy of developing a benevolent society in the future. Therefore, finding a point of convergence with the policy of benevolence of Mencius from the struggle of today's global people is beneficial to gain a powerful revelation in the pursuit of a human ideal society.

1. The Process and thinking of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2000, the United Nations member states adopted a 15-year plan of action to jointly tackle poverty, the United Nations Millennium Declaration. On July 24, 2015, the Chinese government officially released its Report on China's implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015), putting China well ahead of schedule in meeting the goals of halving poverty set in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. On September 25, 2015, the leaders of 193 United Nations member states, including China, convened a summit on sustainable development at their headquarters in New York after the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals. It adopted a new 15-year goal, the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs for short. These development goals synthesize the problems concerning development in the world today and propose solutions with universal significance. They reflect the fundamental problems to be solved by countries all over the world, especially the developing countries including China. For example, poverty eradication, environmental improvement and other urgent issues must be addressed in the context of sustainable development. Since the reform and opening-up, China has made remarkable achievements in sustainable development. It also provides a replicable Chinese model for the formulation of the United Nations sustainable development goals and the solution of these problems.

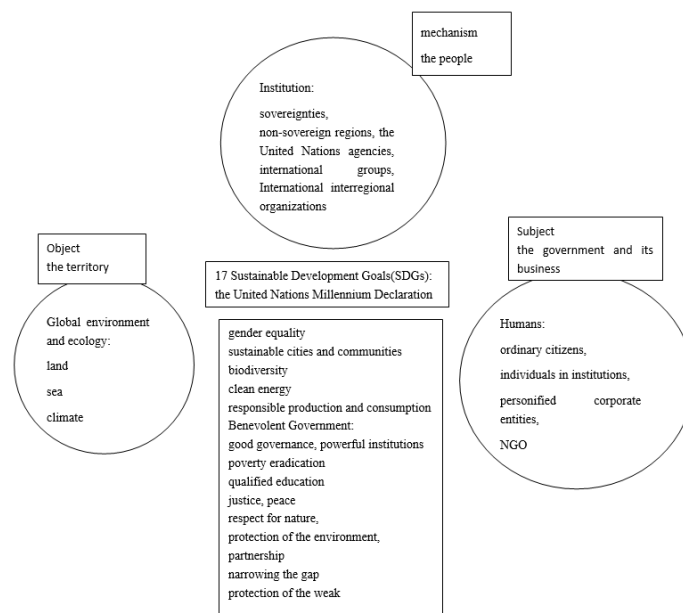
The United Nations Millennium Development Goals include seven dimensions of development: peace, security and disarmament, development and poverty eradication, the protection of our common environment, human rights, democracy and good governance, the protection of the vulnerable and the fulfillment of the special needs of Africa, strengthening the United Nations. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include 17 specific goals: poverty eradication, hunger eradication, keeping fit and well-being, qualified education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, cheap and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, narrowing the gap, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, underwater lives, land lives, peace, justice and strong institutions, partnership for the achievement of the goals. The specific contents of the Millennium Development Goals and the sustainable development goals are in line with the development situation in our country and we are striving to advance substantive progress on the sustainable development agenda from all sides.

The reason why the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is chosen as an important content of this thesis is that it is a document signed by all member countries, including developing countries such as China, and its participants have a wide range of national subjectivity. In addition to the states as a strong executive body, there are also a lot of stakeholders widely involved, such as NGO, (non-governmental organizations), enterprises, local governments, renowned experts, the United Nations

departments. Therefore, it reflects the present society and raises some problems in the development of human society from the global perspective. Since the sustainable development goals are an ongoing and have practical elements that represent the overall interests of humans, they are not a closed matter but an open project that is being experienced by humans. Its deadline is 2030, and the process can be verified. Therefore, the reference significance provided by it reflects the current human society’s universal thinking. Its philosophical significance includes the ability of human intelligence to solve its own problems in the process of discussion and writing. Although Mencius did not directly put forward the concept of sustainable development goals in his policy of benevolence, it can be seen from The Mencius that Mencius has been pursuing the social ideal of maintaining human dignity and realizing benevolence. Compared with Mencius’ policy of benevolence, our country and the world’s current common pursuit of social construction goals, that is, the goal of sustainable development has a positive practical significance.

The issue of development can be examined in terms of the subject, the object, and the mechanism of their interaction (seen in fig. in the second section of this chapter). This can be in accordance with the “three elements” of the state proposed by Mencius - land, people, and political affairs. Needless to say, the idea of global peace, security and disarmament perfectly fit with what pacifism Mencius has been holding on to. A broad categorization of other thematic elements reveals that human rights, democracy and good governance, hunger eradication, poverty eradication, keeping fit and well-being, quality education, gender equality and narrowing the gap are all for the sustainable development of humans; clean water and sanitation, cheap and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, these are to maintain the sustainable development of the material basis of human life; climate action, underwater lives, land lives and etc. are the sustainable development of the environment and ecology including the land. Good Governance (Note: “Good governance” here is similar to the policy of benevolent government of Mencius, and is different from the meaning of good governance in The Mencius). Besides, peace, justice and strong institutions, partnerships for the achievement of goals, etc. are an administrative-centered political responsibility. In other words, the United Nations sustainable development goal is to achieve global sustainable development of the land which is on behalf of the environment, the human race, and the strong relationship among administrative agencies.

2. The Relationship between the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the “Three Elements” of Policy of Benevolence



The graph above is an extension of Mencius' theory of the "three elements" of the state and an extension from an epistemological perspective. It can be seen that in global practice, human beings are the subjects, including individuals, individuals in government institutions, and most of the time, the subjects of their actions also include quasi-personality legal persons (enterprises, non-governmental organization, etc.). Human beings as a whole can recognize and transform the world both individually and collectively, in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, in addition to sovereign states, United Nations departments, non-sovereign regions and local governments, the parties that are implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals also include legal entities that conduct business under administrative management, such as large enterprises, multinational enterprises, NGO and other non-administrative subjects. Under the joint role of the governing body of the political institution and the global environmental and ecological mechanisms, they participate in it as each individual. According to the classification of this thesis, it includes individual subject, group subject and human subject.

According to the theory of cognitive subject and object, any practical activities are always realized through the cognitive activity of each individual or group of individuals. The group subject refers to the social community which carries on the cognition activities in a certain historical development stage. The object is the global environment and ecology, which covers the place of human activities, such as land, sea and air, and the place where it affects. In principle, it is relative to the external world of the subject. The exchange of material, energy and information between human being as subject and global environment and ecology as object is carrying on. At the same time, the society formed by human itself, as an object, has objectivity and objectiveness.

The dialectical materialism holds that the global environment as an object does not depend on the subject but exists independently, and that all human beings, as a unified subject, must actively know and adapt to the global environment in accordance with objective laws. Improve the global environment and ecology in practice and regulate your actions for this purpose. Human beings actively use the wisdom accumulated from tradition, classicism and practice, as well as the means of modern science and technology and means of cognition, to achieve natural harmony and unity with the environment and ecology on which to live, in the practice of production and life. Since human activities as the main body in the past had a negative impact on the environment and the ecology, and even the society made up of people themselves, today humans have realized that administration and people must correct past or ongoing acts in a timely manner on a global scale. To this end, it is necessary to adopt a mechanism that can lead to the coordination and unification of concerted action among the members of the various subjects in relation to the environment and ecology and society in which human beings live. This requires governments, the United Nations and other political institutions to coordinate, to play benign cooperation and to form a management mechanism.

From the graph above, land in the Warring States period was a place where people produced and lived. It also represented the property and power, belonged to the feudal princes, and was the object of contention between the feudal princes. Although the people were the main body of production and life, they were limited by the social system at that time. In the Warring States period, people's subjectivity was constantly brought into play, but it still did not obtain complete autonomy. Like the land, the number of the people, the population itself, was the object of contention among the feudal princes. King Hui of Liang once asked, "Why the population of the neighbouring countries has not decreased and the population of our country has not increased?"(The Mencius·King Hui of Liang(I)) [1]. It is clear that the size of the population is directly related to the amount of tax paid by the people on the production of land, which itself is a source of continuous wealth creation for rulers. The political affairs of that time belonged to the exclusive power of the feudal prince, with the aim of serving the ruling class. "Without administrative management, the country's financial resources will be scarce." (The Mencius·Jinxin(II)) [2]. If you don't do well in politics, you don't have much money. Therefore, Mencius collectively referred to the land, people, and political affairs as the three treasures of the feudal princes. Mencius was very clear about the social nature of ruling the country by the feudal princes. Under the social conditions at that time, he could only promote benevolence

government to the feudal princes so as to ensure the unity of the relationship among the “three elements”. In short, the government should get along well with the people, and the land boundary is clear, on these bases together with continuous efforts can realize the dream of ruling the whole world. However, in the Warring States society, the primary goal was to seize the city and plunder the land. No feudal princes could combine the three organically. A series of reforms, such as the Reform of Lord Shang, fully liberated the land, forced the people to stimulate the initiative, and strengthened the political absolute monarchy. Although a high degree of unification of the land and the people has been achieved under the political affairs, the purpose of the unification is not to guarantee people’s livelihood, but to achieve the goal of enriching the country and strengthening the army by rewarding the land with military achievements. So it is not in line with the benevolent ideal of Mencius, but in the opposite direction to the claim of Mencius.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration contain a lot of ideas of benevolence. The Millennium Declaration recommends that all countries should carry out good governance, which is very close to Mencius’ benevolence. This thesis analyzes the differences between benevolence and good governance in The Mencius in Section 4, Chapter 5. But in today’s language environment, good governance and benevolence are often interchangeable. From the Sustainable Development Goals, it can be seen that the UN’s calls for ensuring people’s basic life and eradicating poverty, improving individual cultivation and promoting educational development, pursuing justice and peace, increasing environmental thinking and protecting socially disadvantaged groups are still important challenges all around the world. These are the main contents of Mencius’ benevolence thoughts.

In terms of gender equality, although it is not mentioned in The Mencius, there is no such remarks which despise women in his thoughts like Confucius. Mencius’ idea of “everyone has an unbearable heart” can be extended to the idea of equality for all. Although the social etiquette at that time emphasized that men and women should keep distant and couples should be treated differently, there was no discrimination on women in The Mencius like Confucius’ “only women and villains are difficult to raise”. Compared to Mencius’ father’s funeral, he emphasized his mother’s more. On the one hand, because of the improvement of the economic situation of Mencius himself, he buried his mother in accordance with the custom at that time and his own status. This was not only to show the heart of a dutiful son, but also he could get comfort through it. On the other hand, the instructions of Mencius’ mother had profoundly affected his growth.

The idea of protecting the diversity of living things has not yet risen to the social reality in the Mencius era, but he has noticed the impact of the environment being destroyed by humans. Therefore, he advocated restoring the vitality of nature. As for the horror of NiuShan being artificially abused and unable to restore natural vitality, he pointed out that “If gets the necessary nourishment, anything can grow; otherwise, anything will die.” (The Mencius· Gaozi (I) [3]) He advocated following the laws of nature and took anything from a good way. There is a saying that “Everything in heaven and earth has its own laws”, which is the result of Mencius’ deep thoughts of humanity, physicality, nature and society.

Nowadays, with the changes of times, land-centered environmental and ecological problems have been extended and the relevant problems of land, sea, and sky have sneaked into people’s attention. The climate change caused by global warming is an urgent matter which all human beings need to face together and cannot be settled by one country. People are no longer dominated by peasants and they include people themselves and all problems caused by people within modern ruling institutions. From a global perspective, the United Nations, which coordinates global cooperative action, is the deliberative organ. Sovereign states and non-sovereign regional governments use administrative jurisdiction over people and land and therefore they play the most important role in the UN. In addition, various private institutions, enterprises, and business entities and their activities influence the changes of global environment and ecology. From the perspective of the entire framework, the issue of sustainable development is to set goals around all the “three elements” of land, people and

political affairs. It can be seen that the “three elements” proposed by Mencius more than two thousand years ago expanded into the global environment and ecology, all human beings, sovereign states and the United Nations coordination mechanism. Mencius’ idea of “Rule the world with benevolence” expanded into the ideal idea of sustainable development goals, that is, the latter one is on the extension line of the former one. Mencius’ thoughts systematically grasped the core elements of the era and had a profound understanding of the role of the mechanism, making his benevolent ideology become a concept of governance that has universal significance and transcends the times. Mencius’ thoughts above can be seen that “Of Hundred Schools of Thought, his surpass all other thoughts” in the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period. This is the view of Mencius's thoughts on the hundreds of families in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. It can also be seen from this that as long as it is an idea which is beneficial to people and sustainable practice, even if it has its idealistic elements, it will not stay in the unrealizable Utopia state all the time, but will continue to provide people with inspiration and value.

3. Comparison between Sustainable Development Goals and Mencius’ Policy of Benevolence

3.1 Think about Sustainability for Everyone in the World

The UN Millennium Declaration aims to eradicate poverty through development, to safeguard everyone’s right of development, protecting all human beings from poverty and hunger and it also asks all countries to spare no efforts to help all people escape from the state of the extreme poverty. The UN Sustainable Development Goals require no extreme poverty, no hunger and no evitable death within children dying of curable diseases and according to it, everyone has the right to lifelong health care. This is the same as the political request of Mencius, “The aged and the weak starved to death in the ravine, however, the young and the strong fled in all directions”, to Zou Mugong. Mencius advised King Wen that when carrying out benevolence, he should first look after the poor people who were driven desperate and gave them the feeling of belonging to the society. Mencius’ goal is to implement benevolence for the people of the whole world. No matter how big the country is, he spared no efforts to explain his benevolent ideas.

Because of these, the Sustainable Development Goals emphasize the idea of building a people-centered social infrastructure service and respect the subjectivity of people and the integrity of thinking by arousing the enthusiasm of people. Basic social service itself does not necessarily increase income directly. Reducing poverty is not about solving the low-income problem itself, nor is it to regard raising income as the only goal of development. In short, one of the main lines of poverty reduction is reflected in the UN Development Program (UNDP) slogan – Development is for freedom. Mencius opposed life being “shackled” and advocated developing people’s potentials constantly. It can be said that reducing poverty can let everyone be free and choose the life that suits them and this is the ultimate goal. All in all, poverty is a state in which basic potential capabilities are deprived. The so-called development is to make it fully develop potential capabilities.

The fact that low-income people aim to meet material needs so far gives another answer, turning to “because of narrowing the opportunities for individuals, they expand their path to survival”. Mencius pointed out that only by changing the psychological distortion caused by hunger and coldness can people establish a correct attitude to seeing where they are behind people and correctly evaluate themselves. Hunger and coldness let people’s minds unsound, and Mencius said that “If a person can prevent the hunger and hunger from damaging the mind, then he will not worry about being worse than others.” (The Mencius· JinXin(I)) [4], “Without a fixed industry, there will be no stable ideas.” The purpose of Mencius was not only to let people have constant production, more importantly, but to let people have more perseverance, kindness and keep order. Mencius mentioned relieving victims many times and hoped to form a complete system to inspect the people’s lives and to grasp the suffering of people. Besides the administrative mechanism, in Mencius’ ideal thought, when he is poor, the man of honor made himself good; when successful, he made all the world good. The

direction of the sustainable development goal is to form a mutual supportive thinking between people, that is, a social system with good human nature.

The Sustainable Development Goals require that everyone has access to education and is fully educated and is constantly enriched with knowledge for a lifetime. Both Confucius and Mencius are big educators. The word “education” first appeared in The Mencius. Mencius regarded “Getting the best talents in the world for education” (The Mencius· JinXin(I)) [5] as one of the three fun of man of honor. Mencius believed that people must be well educated. “Not educating the people and making them serve directly could hurt people.”(The Mencius· JinXin(I)) [6] “The coach must teach in the right way.”(The Mencius· LiLou(I)) [7] Education must use correct reason and correct method. Mencius thought that education must guarantee at least two directions. The first is to cultivate the quality education of correct social personality, that is, ethical education. “We must attach much importance to the education of township schools” and carefully prepare educational facilities to popularize some norms of human relations such as “flesh and blood between father and son; a courtesy between monarch and minister; differently treated between wife and husband; a prestige between the young and the elderly and a virtue between friends.” (The Mencius· Prince Wen of Teng (I)) [8] and to improve ritual quality of people and to form a good social trend of ethical love. The second is skill education, teaching people's various kinds of farming and planting grain to guarantee people's life foundation, that is, the idea of “fostering people”. In terms of educational methods, Mencius inherited Confucius' educational philosophy of “Teaching students in accordance with their aptitudes” and further clarified “There are also many means and ways when teaching”. Faced with different students, teachers should adopt different teaching methods and use different teaching objectives. Mencius also emphasized that in the process of learning, they should think independently and form their own independent opinions. Students should not blindly believe in books or predecessors, but should draw their own conclusions through independent thinking. Mencius inherited Confucius' educational philosophy of “providing education for all people without discrimination” and adopted the principle of free education for students of “Do not miss the left and receive the coming things”. Mencius also took the example of King Wen of Zhou. In addition to protecting people's cultivated land, he also taught people to maintain family's upbringing and to guarantee that elderly will be looked after properly. “Xibo is good at nurturing the elderly, and it lies in that he stipulates the land, educates them to plant mulberry and raise livestock, and guides his wife and children to support the elderly.” (The Mencius JinXin(II)) [9] Education is the foundation for getting rid of poverty, improving social order, and ensuring sustainable development of talent and intelligence. Confucius also hoped that people will “be rich” and “be taught”.

In terms of clean drinking water and sanitation, the Sustainable Development Goals need guarantee people' infrastructure which is necessary for people's lives. Clean drinking water is a reflection of high-qualified life. Lack of water resources, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation facilities are bottlenecks for sustainable development in some parts of China. Ensuring clean drinking water and safe sanitation for all as well as achieving sustainable management of water and sanitation are also people's livelihood projects that are being promoted in China. A well-off society requires everyone to enjoy clean water resources, and there are adequate sanitation facilities everywhere. In addition, everyone can use energy such as electric and heating power and at the same time, these are based on the premise that they cannot affect the sustainable development of the earth. Mencius also said that water and fire are the fundamental guarantee for the lives of people. Mencius believed that “If the saints rule the world, they must make the food of people as much as water and fire. Only by doing this can make ordinary people kind all the time.” (The Mencius· JinXin(II)) [10] As long as the financial resources are sufficient and people's basic life is guaranteed, people will be kind and friendly and therefore a good social atmosphere is formed.

Equality is the core of sustainable development goals. It requires no prejudice and extreme inequality, whether within or between countries. In order to achieve this goal, under the conditions of a market economy, what needs is not a policy of the rich, but a policy of how to guarantee fairness and help the poor get rid of poverty. Mencius quoted from The Book of Songs that “the rich are enjoying their

lives, but the poor people are so lonely and helpless!” (The Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I)) [11], which requires narrowing the gap of the living standard between the rich and poor. This requires providing systematically relief to the victims and disadvantaged groups, which means providing them with health guarantee like that of the disabled and women in the rural areas. 100% coverage of social security for all people of a country is the basic condition for eliminating inequality. It has been proved that the expansion of the gap between the wealthy and the poor will seriously slow the economic growth, ruin poverty alleviation plans, reduce public political participation, and disappoint personal satisfaction and people’s perception of their own values, namely self-esteem. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that poverty-stricken people can quickly get rid of poverty on an economic basis and that all women can enjoy the same equal opportunities for development as men. If women do not achieve long-term development, it will never be possible that the world will have a bright future, and it will never be possible for a country to achieve the goal of eradicating poverty.

The SDGs require narrowing the development gap between regions of a country and between countries. For all parts of China, how to narrow the development gap between the local areas and the advanced regions and the gap within regions and how to steadily improve the income of people in the region is an important index for improving regional competitiveness. It requires helping people get rid of poverty, reducing differences in health, education, and production assets, maintaining fairness, and not sacrificing development in other regions for the development of a special region, redistributing income, and reducing inequality. Economic growth should be inclusive and balanced with sustainable development, that is, the simultaneous development of the economy, society and the environment, and true reduction of poverty. In order to reduce income inequality, the formulation of policies should be universal in principle, taking the needs of poor and marginalized groups into account.

In terms of good health and well-being, sustainable development is concerned with the health of man. Mencius’ famous sayings that “those who have a certain amount of income would have certain moral values and codes of conduct while those who do not have would not have certain moral concepts and codes of conduct” and that “people respect their elders and others’, love their juniors and others” have been embodied in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Mencius believed that basic living security is a prerequisite for the people to have perseverance and a prerequisite for stabilizing the family and social order. The administration must guarantee the material basis of people’s lives and ensure people’s well-being, including qualitative improvements, health of the child, health of the woman, and pensions, etc.

A sustainable society needs to value the talented, cultivate professional elite spirit, respect each person’s labor, and promote decent work under the circumstances of protecting human dignity and human rights. Mencius opposed the disrespectful way to summon the sages and advocated that the administrative system must admire the talented and hire those with capacity. “People with lofty ideals as well as people of great bravery are not afraid of sacrificing their lives.” (The Mencius: Prince Wen of Teng II) [12] The personality of the elite must be guaranteed. Decent jobs for ordinary people are more conducive to sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth. In addition to ensuring an equal relationship between employers and employees, the administration must also guarantee available jobs for people.

To accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations requires building a society of peace and inclusiveness and establishing effective, accountable and inclusive institutions that enable everyone to have a decent job, which is a scientific expression that respects human rights, including the right of development and fundamental freedom. In terms of human rights, even today, Mencius’ thoughts are still accepted by people all over the world. For example, American sinologist Mark A. Csikszentmihalyi once pointed out that when the United Nations General Assembly drafted the first international bill of rights in human history, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Chinese representative to the United Nations Zhang Pengchun advocated Mencius’ benevolent idea of “The Benevolent has universal love and love others” and put it into the declaration

and was unanimously recognized by the representatives from other countries. “Benevolence” is translated into conscience. The first article of Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins with a clear statement that “We are all born free. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. We all should be treated in the same way”, which highlights the combination of the wisdom of Confucianism such as Mencius and traditional Western convention of human rights and becomes a thought that guides the development of human rights throughout the world, including our people in China.

The United Nations’ call for achieving these goals depends mainly on the implementation of good governance within each country. It also depends on the implementation of good governance at the international level and increases the transparency of the financial, monetary and trading systems to create an open, fair and disciplinable, predictable and non-discriminatory international multilateral trading and financial system. It can be seen here that the United Nations believes that the eradication of poverty depends on the implementation of good governance within countries. The good governance used here corresponds with the benevolent governance of Mencius in this thesis. It explores the specific differences between Mencius’ so-called “policy of benevolence” and “good governance.” Modern people do not distinguish these two words in their use.

It is necessary to build inclusive, safe, risk-resistant and sustainable living environments. Mencius is deeply in favor of a good living environment, providing people with upward atmosphere, a healthy body and a strong will. He said that “status and environment can change people’s temperament, and cultivation can change people’s quality!” (The Mencius: Jinxin (I)) [13] Before people can understand and master order, the government must first ensure that people have enough living space and living foundations to feed their families, which is also a necessary condition for human rights and survival. Therefore, the administration has responsibilities in this regard. On this basis, we will guide the people to consciously maintain order, pay attention to social etiquette, and consciously safeguard their own and public interests. This will ensure the development of individuals, families, societies, nations and the whole world (all human beings) and ensure that everyone in life has access to affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy. Cheap and clean energy is both a livelihood issue and an environmental issue that can promote a substantial improvement in people’s livelihood and the environment.

3.2 Environmental Consensus

Currently China and the UN are working hard to increase efforts in climate action, underwater biology and terrestrial biological protection to accelerate ecosystem conservation, restoration, and sustainable use. In terms of the land, forest resource conservation and sustainable development, desertification control, enhanced land vigor, and containment of biodiversity loss are the main tasks at present, ensuring the restoration and careful protection of terrestrial ecology such as flora and fauna on Earth. In terms of the ocean, it needs to accelerate the conservation and sustainable use of marine and marine resources, as well as inland rivers and lake resources, so that the oceans can be restored and protected; as for underwater biological resources, it is necessary to control fishing operations and to protect marine and coastal resources and industries. The ocean absorbs about 30% of the carbon dioxide produced by human activities, buffering the effects of global warming. The ocean is the world’s largest resource reserve of high-quality protein resources. More than 2.6 billion people in the world rely on the ocean to sustain their lives. Therefore, it is urgent to protect the ocean from activities on the land, continue to work on pollutant discharge and reduce the use of plastic products, reducing the impact on the ocean.

In terms of the maintenance of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, and sub fishery ecological environment and sustainable living, we should build together and share with each other. Benevolent government demands protection of cultivated land, insurance of food security, and protection of farmers. Mencius has always insisted that the administration “do not delay the farming of the people”, guaranteeing agricultural production, ensuring that the people have high yields and surplus food, “the fine fish nets should not be put in the pond” (The Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I)) [14], that is, the fishing nets with much accurate holes are not allowed to enter the pond for fishing. As for the

protection of forests, it is necessary to “hew trees off by season” (The Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I) [15]. Hewing temperately instead of large-scale logging so that forest resources can be regenerated and keep sustainable development. Mencius advocated protecting ecological resources by seasons and in accordance with the laws governing the reproduction of animals and plants, that is, the principle of temperance and utilization. In accordance with this principle, man gains food, materials and other materials necessary for human production and life from nature to form a society that can be recycled and developed.

Protecting environment is not simply returning to the original state of the environment, but improving the state of the environment in accordance with the laws of nature. The infinite development of cities and industries lead to the serious destruction of the natural ecological environment. The environmental damage of Niushan in the suburb of Linyi, the capital of Qi State in the Warring States Period, was shocked and it destroyed the natural environment of the mountain. Mencius emphasized that the protection of forests and terrestrial ecology should be like protecting the goodness of human beings, and should guarantee the natural state of recuperation. The law of Mencius’ words, “gaining nourishment, any creature can grow; losing nourishment, any creature will die.” (The Mencius: Gaozi (I) [16] is also a principle that must be followed in today’s ecological protection.

Nowadays, climate change has seriously affected economic development, natural resources, and poverty alleviation. Countries around the world must maintain a sense of crisis of “Grasp it and exist, give up it and lose” and take urgent action to deal with climate change and its impact, and develop affordable and upgradeable climate change solution. This will help consolidate development results, benefit the healthy development of national economies, and ensure that economic and social development do not slow down or even stagnate due to climate change. As stated in The Book of Documents, “if you don’t have a dizzy reaction when you are curing, the disease will be difficult to heal” [17], it is suggested that people must fully manage the emission reduction to ensure the effect. In terms of getting rid of threat from climate change, Mencius exemplifies that the story that Da Yu leading people in curbing floods still gives us inspiration. Da Yu leading people in curbing floods follows the natural laws of water, diverts rivers and leads to the sea, which guarantees agriculture in the central plains of China and reduces the threat of natural disasters and climate change to people’s lives. Here, people are told that in agricultural actions, it is necessary to take countermeasures in accordance with the climate of nature. Only by not arbitrarily acting can we achieve long-term governance.

Mencius believes that it should develop the infrastructure of the masses and oppose the politicians to flatter the ordinary people with exaggeration. With perfect infrastructure, complete industrial system and innovation to promote development, “profit” is no longer the only goal. Its primary goal should be to make everyone’s life better, build a strong infrastructure to withstand risks, and promote inclusive sustainable industries and innovation. Infrastructures such as transportation, agriculture, energy and information and communication technologies are crucial for sustainable development. To improve productivity, ensure health and education, and facilitate life, it needs to invest in the infrastructure. Economic growth and urbanization also need to continue to invest in building sustainable infrastructure. Therefore, the government and the people should pursue long-term cooperation instead of short-term interests.

The city plays a pivotal and guiding role in the process of economic and social development. When the city is in optimal operation, it can promote economic and social development in the suburbs and rural areas. However, there are still many challenges in the process of urban development, such as cities squeezing a large number of rural resources so that causing local environmental damages. The community is a place where people live every day, and it is also a place where people directly contact with each other frequently. This is very similar to the community of traditional society. However, due to the development of commercial real estate in the communities in big cities, the newly established community is not naturally formed; the formation period is short; it is difficult to form a close relationship among people and there is no bond between neighbors and relatives like the traditional

community. If the community does not have the facts or activities that strengthen internal communication, the relationship among people will be alienated. People living in the same community are not as close as they feel on the Internet. Therefore, maintaining the sustainable development of the community is a question of how to establish a relationship among people. Like garbage sorting, which used to be a small matter such as “snapping off a twigs” in each household, but it has now become a common problem faced by the whole society. Before the new rules operating, the administration will think more about how to guide the role of “goodness of human nature” and will be more conducive to creating a sustainable living environment.

3.3 Strong Institutions, Partnerships and benevolent Government Guarantees

To create a peaceful, prosperous and just world, the United Nations hopes to strengthen its role in reestablishing order. Only by establishing a peace-keeping, justice and strong institution can we establish a just and long-lasting peace throughout the world and guarantee the basic values of sharing freedom, equality, solidarity and tolerance for all mankind, respecting for nature and undertaking the responsibility. The Sustainable Development Goals require that every country should achieve peace, the government should be open and transparent, everything should be equal before the law, all countries and people should pull together to achieve all global goals for the benefit of every place and every person on the earth.

Mencius advocated that a rebuilding society should be a benevolent government, strengthen soft power, and unify the world. If it can be realized, the people can be freed from the war as soon as possible. Regardless of the kingly way or the hegemonic way, there is the possibility of unifying the world. However, the unity of the kingly way and the benevolence, that is, the benevolent government can keep people away from wars. Relying on the influence of the soft power of benevolent government to achieve unity is the way of thinking from people’s point of view. The strong implementation of benevolent policies will have a multiplier effect, and it will show the charm of benevolent government to people. Mencius said that the joy of people to welcome benevolence is in the same way as a man who is hanging upside down gets rescued. Strong administrative power can ensure the effective implementation of policies and ensure that people's justice and fairness are guaranteed quickly and effectively. Mencius believed that a strong and responsible organization with a credible driving force and executive power to give confidence to the people is the carrier and due requirement of the realization of benevolent government. The so-called "No one can stop the implementation of benevolence to unify the world." ("The Mencius: Gongsun Chou (II [18]).")

Peace, justice and strong institutions require efficiency and transparency. Mencius demanded to implement benevolent government and establish a powerful government with appeal and which shares happiness with people. He described the government's openness and transparency during the founding of Zhou Dynasty. " King Wen of Zhou used the power of the people to build a platform and excavate the smarsh, but the people felt very happy and called it Sacred platform." ("The Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I)" [19]), King Wen's sacred platform is open to the people and he succeed in "sharing happiness with people." In terms of talents, he pursued the ideal of “gathering the best talents in the world and educating them”. In decent work and responsible work, Mencius emphasized that "Shi" should have their own profession and dignity, dedication and efficiency, and the craftsmen should do their duty to avoid the monarch's arrogance and arbitrary orders.

In terms of improving infrastructure, Zichan from State Zheng once said, "Small favors are not true methods of governing" ("The Mencius: Li Lou (I)" [20]), Mencius opposes that saying and advocates building a strong crossing bridge to help the people, instead of using their own ruts to help people cross the river temporarily. The partnership between countries and regions cannot be maintained at the expense of others’ benefits. We must consider comprehensive coordination and building good neighborly relationships. Mencius opposed Baigui to build and protect the embankments of his own country, leaving water flow into neighboring countries.

Put people and the Earth at the center based on principles, values, a shared vision and a common vision. This is precisely the requirement of Mencius to pursue a harmonious relationship between the

people and the land under a good mechanism, to achieve a conscience and inclusive partnership among the government, enterprises and civil society. These inclusive partnerships are indispensable at all levels, both at the global level and at the national and regional levels.

It can be seen that most of the main contents of the UN Sustainable Development Goals can be found in the theoretical basis of Mencius's benevolent ideology. Although the times have been far more than two thousand years, Mencius's people-oriented "policy of benevolence" is highly consistent with the UN's sustainable development goals. Here, the question why do society, state, institutions, etc. exist, establish, and develop is very clear. This is for the people. It can be seen that the connotation of Mencius's "policy of benevolence" transcends the times and transcends the national territory and has universal human values and practical significance. By the same token, China should learn from the UN's sustainable development goals, combine China's reality, and expand its business in accordance with the principle of harmony between the three elements of Mencius's "land, people, and political affairs." which will be great.

Politics is the process of maintaining the collective living of mankind and allowing it to continue to develop. The role of politics is to ensure the improvement of people's living conditions, and to prepare the social environment, that is, to achieve political compliance, and vice versa. The purpose of politics is to improve imperfections in the status quo, to create a better environment for people to live together, to conceive and create the future. The UN's sustainable development goal is to create a global environment that is rich, prosperous and fair. Mencius' ideal benevolence is to provide such a good social environment for human development. "The Mencius, King Hui of Liang (II)" has a saying: "The world's talented people want to stand in the king's court, the farmers are all eager to till in the king's land, the merchants want to do business in the city of the king, travelers want to go in and out of the king's road, people who hate their kings all over the world want to run to complain to you." [21] It goes without saying that to build a system of fairness and justice for the talents of the world, peasants, businessmen, tourists, etc., is to implement benevolence. That is to say, Mencius's benevolent political thought represents economic prosperity, political and wise politics, and is also the political thought for the people to pursue sustainable development.

This thesis believes that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals can be summed up to focus on human beings, protect people's ecological environment and the earth, and to build a global partnership of people, families, society, countries and work together to maintain prosperity and peace in the world. This is precisely the extension of the "land, people and political affairs" advocated by Mencius to the whole world, all mankind, and the international community. The implementation of benevolent government can "make the people support their parents, wives and children. When the year is good, they can get enough food and clothing. Whereas, they will not starve to death." ("The Mencius, King Hui of Liang (II)" [22]) This is the first item of Sustainable Development Goals, eliminating hunger.

China has made great achievements in this respect. People's lives are basically guaranteed. By 2020, absolute poverty will be eliminated. Xi Jinping emphasized at the 1st meeting of the 13th National People's Congress that gain the fight against poverty, promote social fairness and justice, constantly ensure the improvement of people's livelihood, and ultimately achieving the common prosperity of all the people. Confucianism is "cultivating oneself, putting family in order, managing the state affairs and ruling the world", is to "illustrate illustrious virtue of the world". The world at that time is the scale of the earth today. The social relations achieved by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, based on principles and values, a common vision and a common goal are to lay the foundation for future world development centered on humanity and the planet.

4. The Spread of the Theory of Original Goodness of Human Nature and benevolent Ethics in the Ecological Environment

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward that "man and nature are a community of life", "to adhere to the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, to

build an ecological civilization", "to treat the ecological environment like life". We need to respect nature, to conform to nature, to protect nature, and to follow nature law. Do not go on the old roads, detours, and wrong roads to over-develop and over-use the environment. Human destruction of nature will eventually affect human beings. This is an objective and irresistible law. From the perspective of the big life of nature and ecological environment, the achievements in protecting and improving the ecological environment are gradually emerging. The relationship between people and land is continuously improved, agricultural efficiency is improved, and achievements such as afforestation and greening are obvious to all.

From the standpoint of the ecological environment, ethics is to set limits on the freedom of action in the competition for survival. From a philosophical standpoint, ethics distinguishes anti-social behavior from social behavior. That is, ethics is based on interdependent individuals or collective looking for ways to help each other. In ecology, it is called symbiosis. Politics and the economy initially advocated free competition. Accompanied by the transformation of ethical awareness into a cooperative mechanism, it became a symbiosis of developed forms.

At present, the global understanding of the importance of the environment is becoming much clearer. Scholars discuss environmental ethics from various aspects. Various kinds of ideologies stand out, and there are many opposing ones. For example, developing countries and developed countries have different positions, and their research objects and starting points are different. Therefore, there are often logical contradictions. But no matter for which side, the three propositions of natural eclipse, generational ethics, and earth finiteness in environmental ethics have almost become the consensus of people. It is called "universal environmental ethics."

4.1 Right to Natural Existence

Not only humans, but also nature has the right to exist. As described later in this chapter, human beings have the obligation to protect natural existence. The idea of "symbiosis between nature and human beings" suppresses the idea of strongly claiming natural rights to some extent. Considering coexistence and symbiosis is not excessive nature centrism.

American environmentalist Aldo Leopold [23] puts forward the concepts of land ethics and land community, and for the first time puts forward different thinking on environmental issues. Aldo Leopold believes that land is not only the soil we see everyday, but also the climate, water, plants and all the animals, including human beings, which form the land community. The principle of land ethics is to reevaluate the role of human beings in land. As the only ethical subject, human beings should return to the role of equal members in the land community from the role of land dominator for a long time in the past. Land ethics means that all members of the land community have equal roles, including the community itself must be respected, and any human predatory act of land will lead to disastrous consequences.

As for the right to natural survival, today's people seldom directly feel the spirituality similar to that of nature and human beings because of the highly modern life. Mencius, more than two thousand years ago, did not directly put forward the concept of the right to natural survival, but he compared nature with human nature and advocated the same care for nature and human nature. Mencius analyzed and contrasted the environmental status and humanity of Niushan [24] in Mencius: Gaozi (D). Niushan trees used to be very flourishing, because it was located in the suburbs of metropolitan Linzi. Affected by the development of industry and commerce as well as animal husbandry, it gradually lost its natural resilience. It has long been a place of collecting firewood for smelting and pasture. After being felled and overgrazed, Niushan trees have become bare hills. So many people in the Warring States Period believed that Niushan trees had never grown into a mature tree.

Mencius believed that because Niushan was "a big country in the suburbs", it had been growing day and night on the mountain, and the trees moistened by rain and dew, but the buds and new branches had been gnawed by cattle and sheep all their lives. Niushan could only get a little leisure at night, but it was not enough to restore its own productivity, so that people misunderstood the nature of Niushan. Mencius compared the situation of Niushan being destroyed by spontaneous combustion

with that of human nature. People's hearts were often disturbed and their kindness could not be maintained. The kindness that breeds at night, like the trees that recuperate at night, could have recovered and thrived on their own, but what they do during the day disturbs them and makes human nature impossible to recover, just as the destroyed trees do not absorb the essence of the night to maintain their vitality. People's kindness has been repeatedly disturbed and can not be preserved. Trees have been repeatedly arbitrarily felled and grazed, unable to recover their vitality. Kindness and trees have lost their original vitality. Mencius came to the conclusion that "If nourished, any creature can grow; if not nourished, any creature will perish". Mencius: Gaozi (I) [25] As long as there is enough cultivation, human goodness can be extended and Niushan will be luxuriantly green. Therefore, Mencius advocated not giving up efforts, that is, what Confucius called "Grasp and exist, give up and lose". Mencius extended Confucius's benevolence thought from "loving people" to "loving things", brought all things into the ecological ethics thought, and analogized "the heart of intolerance" to all things. Mencius believed that human beings not only have compassion for human beings, but also for animals and plants. "A gentleman is also compassionate for animals and animals, and when he sees them, he cannot bear to see them die; when he hears their voices, he cannot bear to eat their meat." Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I) [26] "One or two handfuls of thick tung trees and catalpa trees, if people want to grow it up, they all know how to raise it". Mencius: Gaozi (I), [27] which analogized benevolence to animals and plants. The benevolence of all things formed the ideological basis of Mencius' great bioethics. He always combines these with the continuous cultivation of human kindness.

Aldo Leopold integrates ecology and theory in his book *A Sand County Almanac*. In his view, the further evolution of ethics should be expanded to include the ethics of non-human members of the biological community (land in summary). This is very close to Mencius' thought of analogizing benevolence to all things. Aldo Leopold's land ethics is "to maintain the integrity, stability and beauty of the biological community, if on the contrary it will be wrong". Aldo Leopold reflected deeply on human behavior, believing that the real ethics should be "the cooperative state of human being interdependent with other animals, plants and soil", that is, land ethics, which regards human beings as a member of the biological community, and consciously safeguards the survival and development of the land community. "We respect the whole earth not only because it is useful, but also because it is a living being." Man should jump out of himself to know himself and relocation his role from the macro perspective of the land community. Aldo Leopold made great contributions to the construction of ecological civilization ethics, and thus became the founder of ecological holism theory. In this sense, Aldo Leopold deconstructed human centralism.

Mencius insists on people-centered but not individual-centered in political ethics. When dealing with the relationship between people, people are the origin and need to be expanded to deal with the relationship between people and society. Although he admits that there are differences in the relationship between man and land, nature and human nature, he believes that all things are mutually identical. "Even the easily growing organisms in nature can not survive if they are only warmed by sunshine for one day and kept frozen for ten days." Mencius: Gaozi (I) [28].

Aldo Leopold's ethics is to extend the ethical relationship between people and society to people and soil, water, plants and animals, etc. People's self-determination is the "spirit of all things" and the domination of the universe. At this moment, we must unconditionally return to the position of equality with all things, assume the role of a general member of the land community, achieve dynamic balance in mutual competition and cooperation, and then achieve sustainable development. It is self-evident that Aldo Leopold's Land Ethics reflects human's ecological conscience and natural mission, which requires human beings to be responsible for maintaining the sustainable development of the land community. That is to say, in the ecosystem community, human beings must consciously play the role of protecting natural resources and maintaining the integrity of the food chain so as to promote the harmonious development of human and all things, human and land, human and ecological. Here, administration should play a balancing role. Land is no longer a simple soil, including the entire surface of the earth, and extends to space.

Mencius once had the same thoughts, "A gentleman cherishes all things, but not kindness; kind to people, but not love. Loving relatives and people, therefore cherish all things." Mencius: Jinin (I) [29] Gentlemen differ in their benevolence towards all beings and creatures, but cherishing all creatures and benevolent beings must be based on the same principle.

4.2 Generation Ethics

"Generation ethics" is also called "cross-generation ethics". That is to say, contemporary people should be responsible for the sustainable survival of people in the future. To adjust the imbalance between generations and limit the excessive self-interest development of contemporary people, people living in the modern and contemporary era should take responsible actions to solve environmental problems, and should not delay the problem to future generations. Inter-generational theory, an important aspect of sustainable development theory, whose essential victims are future generations with the pollution of air and soil as well as resources exhaustion. The fundamentals of environmental problems, contemporary human behavior and decisions affect future stakeholders. Therefore, it is against environmental ethics and human development ethics to compensate future people for the development of contemporary people and to affect the environment of the next generation's survival and development.

A good system should not only bring benefits to contemporary people, but also have a vision for the future and give consideration to future generations. For example, Confucius opposed the use of wooden terracotta warriors instead of funerals, fearing that this thought would affect the psychology of future generations. He said, "Didn't the man who first made tomb figures die without leaving an heir? It is not yet possible to use human-shaped dolls to be buried with the dead." Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I) [30] In addition, the filial piety advocated by Confucianism itself is the inheritance thought of cross-era human ethics. Filial piety requires maintaining a good family style and fine tradition, so that the cause and thought can be inherited. The same is true of policy of benevolence. Mencius believes that if a monarch can do good governance, his descendants will surely be crowned king in the world. Gentlemen set up foundations and passed them on to the next five generations in order to inherit them. As for success, it's up to heaven to decide. Mencius: King Hui of Liang (I) [31] From the perspective of social ethics, Mencius believed that if the monarch of this generation carried out evil policies, even if he had filial descendants, he could not get rid of the stigma, and evil policies affected contemporary and long-term future generations and society. So the monarch has only one way to go, that is to pursue benevolent government. Mencius: Li Lou (I) [32].

4.3 Earth Finitism

Earth finitism requires to give priority to protecting the limited global environment and to consider things centered on ecosystems and earth resources. In other words, human beings should not only focus on human interests such as comfortable life, economic interests, health and happiness, etc. They must care for the global environment and continue to use the ecosystem and the earth's resources.

Mencius put forward the concept of "Land saving" in the Warring States Period. In the era when the feudal princes racked their brains to expand their land and the land was not fully utilized, Mencius was called "pedantic". He said to King Liang Hui "King's biggest wish can be known: he wants to expand the territory" (Mencius and King Hui of Liang (I)). [33] In the Warring States Period, the land of the Central Plains also had land to be reclaimed. When the iron farming tools greatly promoted productivity development, Mencius insisted on working hard on the existing land rather than expanding territory without limit or control. He asked the feudal princes not to discuss the land for the pursuit of war. Mencius encouraged intensive cultivation on the existing land, worked hard on "Do a good job of farming and carry on intensive cultivation" and promoted production by "not seizing people's time".

Because the earth is limited, sharing is a modern understanding. The concept of "sharing with the people" was put forward very early in Mencius's policy of benevolence. He said in a question and answer session with King Qi: "The radius of King Wen's hunting ground was 70 miles. He could enjoy it with the common people. Those who cut grass and firewood and hunted wild objects could

go to the hunting ground. The people thought that the hunting ground was too small. On the outskirts of capital in the State of Qi, there was a hunting ground with a radius of 40 miles. If someone killed the elk there, it was like murder. Even if it was 40 miles, the people thought it was too big” (Mencius and King Hui of Liang (II)). [34] In addition to "sharing happiness with people", it also emphasized the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. If people are forbidden to enter the park and the people cannot acquire knowledge from nature, they will not be able to live in harmony with nature. People and nature are next to each other. They are mutual recognition rather than destruction. The idea of imprisonment is regulation not management, and it is a rejection of people's participation. In ancient times, people were forbidden to hunt in the park. It was the ruler who monopolized resources for his own hunting and not to protect natural resources. The protection of natural resources must now be based on the public. That is public perception, future generations, the shared ecosystems and sustainable thinking. Without the active participation of the people, there is no way to protect the entire ecosystem and the earth's resources.

Mencius stressed that the administration should guide people to make rational use of resources, use them regularly, cut firewood on the mountain according to the season and minimize human being's need for nature. Let nature also recuperate and make the natural world flourish, harmonious and orderly. That is what Mencius said “You can take it or not. If you take it, it will damage integrity. You can give it or not. If you give it, it will damage kindness.” (Mencius and Li Lou (II)) [35] Nature can rehabilitate and the natural world can be flourish and harmonious. It can be seen that Mencius grasps the ecological ethics and human ethics from the perspective of dynamic balance, and regards the common development of man and nature as the responsibility of benevolence. This idea is also very beneficial to the ecological construction and social construction of today's society. Developing the economy and improving people's living standards cannot violate the laws of nature. We promote the eco-economic efficiency based on the premise of saving resources, energy and reducing pollution, realize the harmony between man and nature in human activities and economic activities, and do not artificially create the environmental tragedy of “Niushan trees”. This tragedy is the result of the predatory exploitation of land by people.

Confucius claimed “Save money, not extravagant waste; use the bureaucracy correctly, the people should be in the slack time” (The Analects of Confucius) [36]. Mencius also advocated saving resources, protecting life and the ecological environment, and pursuing sustainable development. Mencius advised the feudal princes to make a decree prohibiting fishing by dense nets, leaving young fish are left to grow and reproduce growing and breeding. Cutting down timber depends on season and intermediate cuttings. According to nature, people should keep using and do no harm to the forest. Mencius educated people that everything has its own laws of growth and reproduction, and we can't make it happen faster. Agricultural production, logging, and catching fishing and hunting must be carried out in accordance with certain sequential rules, be used in a certain degree and make the ecological environment not unbalanced. This will ensure that people's lives are rich and they can maintain their natural nature. These policies that follow the ecological laws to plot people's livelihood and life are the policy of benevolence.

Everyone agrees with the economic value, health, happiness and other happiness values of various things, which is related to the pursuit of happiness for everyone and all human beings. Environmental issues are often seen as stumbling blocks when pursuing these values. Recognizing the value of nature and resources is necessary to take protective action, which is to recognize the right to natural existence and the earth finitism. To consider the problem from the perspective of long-term span is to follow the "generation ethics."

The three basic propositions of the right to natural existence, the earth finitism and the generational ethics are for large-scale environmental problems. The smaller scales such as regional public hazards also need to apply these ethics from the overall situation. Environmental issues are that people don't care about the consequences of accumulation over time, borrowing Mencius's words is that the road is near, but people look for it in the distance and that things are easy but people do them in a difficult

way(Mencius and Li Lou(1)). [37] In modern times, people often regard the relationship between man and nature as a kind of opposite relationship. They regard human greatness as conquering nature and transforming nature and emphasize that human beings should always be calm acquirers and conquerors, and nature is always a no-worry payer and a reformer. The result is that with the rapid development of human society, human beings are increasingly demanding nature, sometimes at an unbridled level, leading to the continually erroneous and deteriorating relationship between man and nature. The survival prospects of human beings will be harmful and cast a shadow. Aldo Leopold, as a natural observer, reminds mankind to reassess himself and treat himself as a member of nature in a low-profile and modest manner, then it is possible to seek a possible path of regeneration. Similarly, people have long been accustomed to seeing rulers and people as opposing relations. Rulers are the natural gainers. People are contributors and taxpayers. The world view that opposes the two will lead to a worsening relationship between the two sides. Aldo Leopold and Mencius don't think so. The two are not pure opposites, but an interactive one. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed to adhere to the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, the concept that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, the concept of conserving resources and protecting the environment. The construction of ecological civilization has been unprecedentedly raised to the height of the millennium plan of the Chinese nation for sustainable development. It shows that we attach great importance to the construction of ecological civilization and build a community of human destiny. Only by adhering to these concepts, adopting a green development mode and a low-carbon lifestyle, promoting the harmonious integration of production, life, and ecology, and coordinating sustainable development can we create a good production and living environment for the people, build a beautiful China, and contribute to China's global ecological security.

5. Conclusion

By summarizing the contents of this chapter, we can see that the core of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals is to protect the ecological environment and the Earth with people and human centers, and to form a good partnership for all people, families, society, countries, and maintain the prosperity and peace of the world. Consensus ethics in eco-environmental thinking emphasizes the right to natural existence, the ethics between generations, and the earth's finitism. The common goal of these action and ideas is to achieve sustainable development of people, the environment and society. This is to extend the harmonious relationship between the "three elements" of land, people and political affairs advocated by Mencius, that is, the policy of benevolence to all human beings all over the world.

The first item of the Global Sustainable Development Goals of eradicating hunger for all is also the idea of protecting the people in Mencius' benevolence. Aldo Leopold's land ethics brought the high-ranking "people" back to a member role in the land community. In the third chapter of this thesis, Mencius put the "sage gentleman" back to the same equal horizon as ordinary people in the nature-good ethics. Both require to consider "we are all equal" plainly and modestly. The idea that we are all equal is interlinked. Mencius' thoughts at that time were the global vision of environmentalists. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, including global peace, the social relations, principles and values, and shared visions realized by the Sustainable Development Goals are the cornerstones for the future of mankind and the global environment. This is also the expectation of Mencius for an ideal benevolent society.

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- [22] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P. 17.
- [23] Aldo Leopold (January 1887 - April 21, 1948), a famous American environmentalist, scientist and thinker, writer as well as observer. He is known as the "prophet" of environmental protection activities, "the founder of the new environmental theory of the United States." His book *A Sand County Almanac* is a collection of natural essays and philosophical papers. For the first time, the book elaborates on "land ethics". It reveals the concept of ecological conservation and enlightens the development of environmentalism. Like *The Mencius*, which has both ideological and literary values, *A Sand County Almanac*, as a classic work on environmental protection ethics, is equally comparable in literature and theoretical philosophy and an important contribution to ideology and literature.
- [24] Niushan. Located in Linzi District of Zibo City, the capital of Qi State in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. Because the soil is poor and not suitable for farming, it is developed in industries such as iron making, copper refining, pottery manufacturing, and textiles. In the time of Duke Huan of Qi, Guan Zhong promoted urban construction, making Linzi a countless industrial and commercial metropolis with a circumference of 21 kilometers and an area of 15 square kilometers. From the remaining relics of the capital, it can be confirmed that there are well-shaped streets in the city at that time. Urban functions, like drainage and others are perfect. When Liu Fei, the eldest son of Liu Bang in the Western Han Dynasty, was King of Qi,

there were 100,000 families lived in Linzi, which was still one of the largest cities in eastern China. Mencius also lived in Linzi for a long time as a guest. Chuang tzu and Xuncius have lived here for a long time, too. During the Warring States Period, Linzi set up Jixia Academy, where hundreds of scholars came to give lectures and debates.

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- [30] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P. 9.
- [31] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P. 49. "If you do good, there will be kings for future generations. A gentleman's entrepreneurship is sustainable. It was fate to succeed. What do you do to the people of Qi? You just try your best to do good governance. "
- [32] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P. 165. "Too much cruelty to the people will kill themselves and destroy the country; even if it is not too severe, it will endanger itself and weaken the country. Kings cannot change their posthumous titles, such as "You" and "Li", although they have filial piety of descendants."
- [33] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P.16.
- [34] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P.29. "The radius of King Wen's hunting ground was 70 miles. He could enjoy it with the common people. Those who cut grass and firewood and hunted wild objects could go to the hunting ground. The people thought that the hunting ground was too small. On the outskirts of capital in the State of Qi, there was a hunting ground with a radius of 40 miles. If someone killed the elk there, it was like murder. Even if it was 40 miles, the people thought it was too big".
- [35] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P.193.
- [36] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Confucius, Chung Hwa Book Company, First edition of 2006, P.4.
- [37] Yang Bojun, Translations and Annotations of Mencius, Chung Hwa Book Company, 1960, P.173.