



Eco-Philosophy in Western Intellectual Tradition: Endurances and Transformations from Classical to Contemporary

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Abstract

The paper entitled, “Eco-Philosophy in Western Intellectual Tradition: Endurances and Transformations from Classical to Contemporary”, proposed to expose the eco philosophical views presented in Western philosophical tradition. This paper explores the ecological dimensions of Western philosophy, tracing concerns from the Classical period to Contemporary thought in order to clarify the nature and scope of ecophilosophical outlooks within the tradition. In Classical period pre-Socratic thinkers owed many ecologically positive approaches explicitly in their views regarding substance. The period of Great systems made a divergent approach to environment which based on a reductionist ethical approach. Medieval period is popularly criticized by its Biblical reductionist ethical approach but the reflective analysis shows that with the alternative Christian view of nature St. Francis Assisi made profound eco philosophy. Even though Cartesian dualism made a narrow approach to environment, thinker like Spinoza in the period of modernity presented a positive approach in man-nature relationship. In contemporary period Martin Heidegger, the existentialist, practiced an alternate thinking which favored the



healthy relation of nature and human being. Eco philosophy got its popularity as a system of thought in the West in the mid of the last century by Leopold's Land Ethic. Land Ethic possess an ethical theory, which gives reverence for all life.

Eco philosophy satisfied its professional outlook during 1970s as a result of various types of enquiries made by some Anglo-American academic philosophers. Peter Singer, Arne Naess, Richard Sylvan, Tom Regan, Kenneth Goodpaster and Paul W. Taylor made their own contributions in the field of Eco philosophy during the last decades of the last century. Through their extended ethical approaches to environment, they made possibility of rich academic discussions on the field of eco philosophy. Most of the approaches are transpersonal and sometimes transcendental and they faced sharp criticisms because of transpersonal and transcendental approaches.

Keywords: *Isonomia*, *Dikaisyne*., cosmic justice, *Conatus*, Self- realization, Moral considerability, Ethical sentientism, Biocentrism, Ecocentrism, Deep ecology, Anthropocene.

Introduction

One of the criticisms against western thought is that the root of it is firmly fixed in anthropocentrism and this anthropocentric ideology is the basic reason for its exclusive conception of ethics. Most of the philosophers and social scientists agree with this criticism and they point out that this anthropocentric approach is the root cause of all negative trends in western societies. Many ecological activists and eco philosophers consider that western philosophy lacks ecological consciousness because of its exclusive conception of ethics, which is the product of anthropocentrism. But analysis through the history of Western philosophy makes a change in the mentioned judgement. Because many systems and thinkers of West have ecological concerns and consciousness. Even though many Western systems hold an ecological conception, the conception is not at all explicit. Since the eco philosophical conception of Western thought is implicit, a step-by-step analysis in the systems of West and Western thinkers is needed in order to bring to light the major eco philosophical trends in the West. An analysis of the etymology and definition of the term ecophilosophy is essential for clarifying the diverse ecophilosophical notions articulated by thinkers across different systems ages. Eco



philosophy the term coined with two words, 'ecology' and 'philosophy'. The word 'ecology' derived from the Greek word *Oikos*, which literally means the 'house hold'. The Ernst Haeckel used the term ecology literally means 'study of the home'. Philosophy originated from two Greek words *philo* and *sophia*, which literally means 'love of wisdom'. The literal implication of the term 'eco philosophy' is 'ecological wisdom'. Dictionary of philosophy defines the term eco philosophy as: "Eco philosophy is the wisdom of living in harmony with what is one's household in the broadest sense, that is nature. Fundamentally, a holistic view of nature is implied." (Thomas Mauther, 1996, p. 94)

Approach to Nature in Pre-Socratic Philosophy

Pre-Socratic philosophy was natural philosophy and schools of this period owned many ecologically adaptable or environmentally advantageous ideas. Schools like Ionian, Eleatic, Heraclitean and Pythagorean had a unifying feature. Their conviction that, the basic stuff or substance of the universe is a natural one like water, fire, air etc. For Thales 'water' is the active substance of the world. By admitting water as the primary substance Thales explained the transformation and living feature of the universe. "He evidently looked upon nature as alive, as moving, active changing..." (Frank Thilly, 1993, p. 24)

Philosophers from Anaximander to Empedocles had a thorough going respect for a ubiquitous principle of equality. They advocated the equality of all entities in the cosmos. The permeant 'Supremacy' or 'Mastery' of the cosmic entity over another is impossible. They argued that a democratic policy can be seen in nature. "As in the democratic polis 'the demons' rule by turn', so the hot could prevail in summer without injustice to the cold, if latter has its turn in the winter, ... And if a similar and concurrent cycle of successive supremacy could be assumed to hold among the powers in the human body, then the karris of man and nature could be perfect." (Frank Thilly, 1993, p. 44) Here the Earl Greek naturalistic thinkers argue the equal 'status' and 'honor' to all the elements by which the universe is made. "More radically, the pre-Socratic anchored their interpretation of nature in the notion of *isonomia* (equality), which includes the equality of the very elements that make up the world." (Murry Bokchin, 1996, p. 45)

Besides the admission of equal honor to all the entities in the world pre-Socratic thinkers preached a far-reaching notion of 'cosmic justice' or *dikaisyne*. This concept of justice extends beyond the anthropocentric issues to nature itself. This justice is one with nature itself. By admission of 'Cosmic justice' pre-Socratic



thinkers asserts the autonomous nature of nature and criticize the dominating nature of human being. "... it was assumed, justice was sure to follow, for none would have the power to dominate the rest". (Murry Bokchin, 1996, p. 46)

The evaluation of the Early Greek schools of thought shows the fact that, the pre-Socratic philosophy is naturalistic and its conception of ethics is eco-centric one, which expands its realm beyond the human purpose ethics. "... the unifying feature of Ionian, Eleatic, and Pythagorean trend is precisely their conviction that the universe had in some sense a moral character irrespective of human purpose." (Murry Bokchin, 1996, p. 42)

Nature in the period of Great Systems

The period of 'Great Systems' made a paradigmatic shift in the field of Greek philosophy. The echo of this paradigmatic change reached the epistemological, metaphysical as well as ethical realms of philosophy. Plato's fundamental assertion is that the 'human nature is dualistic-composed of body and soul. By this expression Plato asserted that, human beings are both essentially and morally segregated from nature. In Platonic dualism environment has the status of machine, which exists for the human purpose. The natural environment, therefore, might be engineered to human specification no matter with what natural consequences, without either human moral responsibility or ultimate human penalty. The metaphysical conception of Platonic philosophy imposed a passive as well as a mechanical outlook to nature. "The Platonic forms are a metaphysical hypostatization of a logico-mathematical order assumed to be imposed upon a passive and chaotically inclined material to effect an ordered natural world." (J. B. Callicot and Roger T. Ames, 1991, p. 6)

This Platonic reductionist ethical approach made an effect upon his followers, especially in Aristotle regarded nature as a hierarchy in which those with less reasoning ability exist for the sake of those with more. This instrumentalist view influenced most of medieval thinkers. With the help of the Book of Genesis and Aristotelian ideas about nature they developed an exclusive ethics, which was based on anthropocentrism.

Representation of Environment in Medieval Period

Medieval philosophy is almost exclusively based on the philosophy of Christianity associated with the Church of Rome. The trace of Roman Empire, the influence of Greek classical philosophy and Judeo-Christian tradition molded the ethical concepts of medieval philosophy. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas



were the most prominent figures in the medieval period. These two thinkers developed their own ethical views, which are based on the Biblical story about creation in the book of Genesis.

The Biblical story of creation tries to make a special place for human beings among all the entities in the world. 'And God said; Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness, let them have the domain over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepth upon the earth' (Gen, 1:26, 28). St. Augustine and St. Aquinas interpreted this dominion in terms of some benefit to human. According to their interpretation of the words of Genesis, God has created man and send him to the earth to rule over all the creatures and nature. This human centered approach develops a mastership attitude towards nature.

St. Thomas Aquinas was influenced by Aristotle. He regarded nature as a hierarchy. According to Aquinas the cosmos is a structure erected to support man on its pinnacle. He agreed with the Aristotelian idea about nature and strengthens this idea with the help of Book of Genesis. "He has room only for sins against God, ourselves or our neighbors. There is no possibility of sinning against non-humans or against natural world." (Peter Singer, 1993, p. 267) This anthropocentric ethics is the major feature of medieval philosophy.

Most of the eco philosophers and ecological activists pointed that this human centered ethics of middle age embedded in man's consciousness and culture and this human centered ethics is the root cause of all ecological issues in the world. The belief that all the thinkers of medieval period developed their thoughts on the basis of human centered ethics, is a wrong one. A keen analysis through the history of medieval Christian philosophy shows that, in the mid of the dominant Christian tradition an alternative Christian view was emerged in the medieval period as a panacea for ecological issues. St. Francis of Assisi is an extraordinary exception from the mainstream of Christian theology concerning nature. He proposed an alternative Christian view of nature in which he explained the relation between nature and man.

St. Francis tried to substitute the idea of equality of all creatures including man, for the idea of man's limitless rule of creation. St. Francis's alternative attempt makes him a greatest spiritual revolutionary in the west. In *The Historical Roots of Ecological Crisis*, Lynn White wrote: "St. Francis's attempt to depose man from his monarchy over creation and set up a democracy of all God's creatures." (Lynn



White, 1973, p. 28) In the light of companionship towards nature practiced by Francis Assisi, White proposed to call him: “a patron saint for ecologists.” (Lynn White, 1973, p. 28) In that saint one can find a Christian, Western champion of the spiritual autonomy of all parts of nature and an enemy of man’s absolute spiritual sovereignty over nature. The analysis of medieval history and philosophy comes to the conclusion that St. Francis Assisi is an extraordinary exception from the mainstream of medieval ethics concerning nature.

Ecological approaches of Modern Philosophy

Descartes, the acknowledged father of modern philosophy, proposed dualism – dualism of matter and spirit. He called human beings, who have the mind, which is spiritual, as masters of nature- the material entity. “Descartes likewise saw it as rendering as the ‘masters and possessors of nature.’” (Brian Easlea, 1973, p. 283) Cartesian mode of thought tried to separate man from the naturelessness of nature and from nature itself. He attributed a higher realm and privilege to human being, privilege of the master to rule over nature. “Moreover, the Cartesian psychological dualism, the dualism of *res cogitans* and *res extensae* and correlative it of man and nature, in its eagerness to uplift the mind (spirituality) at the expense of the body (materiality), Cartesian rationalism destroys the idea of man as natural, sentient and embodied being whose body has its roots in earth.” (Hawa Yol Jung, 1986, p. 37)

Even though the Cartesian exclusive ethics made a far-reaching influence upon modern philosophy, science technology, some exemptions are there. Spinoza, the god intoxicated philosopher, is treated as the ‘father of eco philosophy’. Spinoza’s celebrated work *Ethics* culminates a high ecological notion, which has an expansive ethical conception. According to Spinoza, *natura naturata* and *natura naturans* are the same, and so everything follows from the centre, all are one, everything is connected necessarily with everything else and so on. This notion treats Earth or universe as single living organism. And human beings are the part of the total living ecosystem. This Concept of total living ecosystem demands a very severe sense of humility or subordination on the part of human beings.

Spinoza’s approach towards nature can be seen in his concept of *conatus*. For Spinoza *conatus* (from the Latin *conari*, meaning ‘to try’ or to strive) refers to the basic motivation that is considered to constitute the essence of all things. *Conatus* is therefore typically rendered into English as ‘self- preservation’. Simply it implies nothing more than as urge towards self-preservation in a narrow, atomistic sense. But here Spinoza’s concept of *conatus* is more than this narrow sense. Bertrand



Russell argues in relation to Spinoza's concept of conatus: "Self-preservation alters its character when we realize that what is real and positive in us is what unites us to the whole, and not what preserves the appearance of separateness- and, of course, in Spinoza's metaphysics, we are united to the whole since there is ultimately one substance, reality is a unity, which we may refer to as God or nature." (Bertrand Russell, 1979, p. 555) When one realizes that, he is united to the whole, alienation drops away and he identifies more widely with the world of which he is a part. In other words, one realizes a larger sense of self, his own unfolding becomes more and more bound up with the unfolding of other entities. In Spinoza's terminology, with the unfolding of the other modes of the single substance of which we are ourselves a mode.

Spinoza's philosophy points towards the realization of as expansive a sense of self as possible. Moreover, it points toward the this-worldly realization as expansive a sense of self as possible. Since the world of which humans are a part is the sum total of reality. Naess, the eco philosopher, interpreted Spinoza's concept of self-realization. Spinoza has the view that self-realization leads to Self-realization. This is because, for humans at least, self-realization (our conatus) leads us to seek, among other things, and under suitable conditions, to understand the world and our place in it (i.e., understanding that reality is a unity, that all entities are modes of a single substance) leads us to identify more widely with the world of which we are a part, it leads, in other words, to the realization of more and more expansive sense of self (i.e., Self-realization)." (Warwick Fox, 1990, p. 106)

The analysis of ethical convictions of Spinoza shows that he holds an expansive ecological ethics, which is spiritual as well as metaphysical in nature. Spinoza's spiritualistic eco philosophical conception made deep influence upon many modern eco philosophers. Arne Naess, one of the prominent advocates of deep ecological position, stated about the influence of Spinoza's eco philosophy upon him.

The central concern of Existentialism is human being. Most of the proponents of existentialism stated that the status of man is higher than any other in the world. In the midst of extreme humanism, Martin Heidegger, the existentialist, practiced an alternate thinking which favored the healthy relation of nature and human being. The central feature of Heidegger's philosophy is that the relation of the natural environment and the man. Like Spinoza, he also advocated an ecological consciousness based on the idea of total living and the subordination of mankind in the ecosystem. Michael Zimmerman the writer on deep ecology



pointed Heideggerian concept of eco philosophy in his article entitled, *Towards a Heideggerian Ethos for Radical Environmentalism*.

Eco philosophy got its popularity as a system of thought in the West in the mid of the last century. Aldo Leopold a wild life ecologist and professor of wildlife management practiced an expansive approach towards nature during the period 1887 to 1948 (Due to the not theoretically well formed or fully argued). Leopold presented his ethical attitude towards nature in his masterpiece *A Sand County Almanac*, which is often called the Bible of the contemporary environmental movements. The Land Ethic is the climatic essay of Sand County, which is the upshot of the work. *Land Ethic* is the ethical theory, which deals with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants. Leopold wrote *Sand County* in an extremely Condensed prose style. Because of this condensed style and lack of philosophical background, contemporary academic philosophers ignored Land Ethic. But the investigation made through Land Ethic proved that the Land Ethic cannot be ignored as merely the groundless emotive exhortations of a moonstruck conservationist. *Land Ethic* possess an ethical theory, which gives reverence for all life.

The Land Ethic opens with a poetic evocation Homer's *Iliad*. By this panoramic presentation Leopold points the slow but steady moral development over three millennia. By the review of history of moral practice Leopold described about the development of ethics from the savage clan to the family of man. He next points out the need for the extension of ethics beyond the existing ethics, which is incomplete. "According to Leopold, the next step in this sequence beyond the still incomplete ethics of universal humanity, a step that is clearly discernible of the horizon, is the land ethic." (J. B. Callicot, 1998, p. 106)

Land Ethic - the extended form of ethics based on a community concept – the community is land. By the adaptation of land as community Leopold extends the boundary of ethics in to biotic community as such. "The Land Ethic simply enlarges the boundary of the community to include soils, water, plants and animals or collectively the Land." (Aldo Leopold, 1981, p. 204) In Land Ethic, land is perceived as a biotic community. This perception emerged from a collective cultural consciousness. The concept of land as a biotic community points to the fact that human being is only a member of that biotic team; like any other member. The concept land as a community holds the feeling of kinship- kinship with fellow creatures. It provides a sense of kinship with fellow creatures' and 'fellow voyagers...' (Aldo Leopold, 1981, p. 109) The respect for the community as such



is the most salient feature of Land ethic. Kenneth Goodpaster called this respect as 'moral considerability'-shifting of the focus of moral concern from fellow human beings to plants, animals, soils and waters, generally to the biotic community collectively. This makes Land Ethic a holistic one.

Western Professional/ Academic Philosophical Approaches to Nature

Eco philosophy came on the scene in its professional outlook during the 1970s as a result of various types of enquiries made by some Anglo-American academic philosophers. The Australian philosopher Peter Singer, Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, Australian philosopher Richard Sylvan and American philosophers Tom Regan, Kenneth Goodpaster and Paul W. Taylor made their own contributions in the field of Eco philosophy during the last decades of the last century. The thinkers like American feminist philosopher Donna Haraway and the British born American Philosopher Timothy Morton seriously engaging with eco philosophical debates in this current century. The subject of their thinking is same, that the ethical attitude concerning the natural world but they differ in their approaches.

Richard Sylvan was a fellow in the Research School of Social Science at the Australian National University in Canberra. Sylvan presented a paper entitled Is There a Need for a New, an Environmental, Ethic? In fifteenth world congress of philosophy in Bulgaria. Through his paper Sylvan argues that an adequate, non-anthropocentric environmental ethics simply did not exist in western intellectual traditions. "Nonetheless neither the modified dominant position nor its western variants, obtained by combining it with the less traditions, is adequate as an environmental ethic, as I shall try to show. A new ethic is wanted." (Richard Sylvan, 1973, P. 19) He urged contemporary philosophers to take up Leopold's mantle and make it their business to provide one. By the ethical experiments of 'last man' and 'last people' Sylvan intended to denote the exclusive nature of western ethics. "The principal deficiency, as Sylvan's arresting 'last people' and 'last man' ethical thought experiments at the heart of his paper intended to drive home, is that the 'base class' of traditional western ethics is coextensive with the class of human beings." ((J. B. Callicot and Roger T. Ames, 1991, p. 9)

In his paper Sylvan argues that traditional western ethics has a human chauvinist background. This chauvinism is the root cause for the ethical exclusiveness of west. Sylvan urges the philosophers take responsibility to enlarge the boundary of ethical base in order to include nonhuman beings as well as human beings. He mentions, by the expansion of ethical base class, environmental ethic might embrace both



individual plants and animals on one hand and environmental collectives or wholes such as species and ecosystems on the other. Through his paper Sylvan brings out the problem of existing ethics of west. Even though he cannot make an attempt to solve the problem by the new ethical theory proposed by him, he could create an awareness upon other thinkers about the need of a new ethical position which has an expansive outlook to include nonhuman beings as well as human beings. In short Sylvan recommended the need for an expansive ethical attitude, which breaks the boundaries of human chauvinism.

Peter Singer, the famous thinker and writer on practical ethics advocates the relevance of the new environmental approach, which has an expansive outlook. Moral philosophers from Plato to Rawls have spent their thought and energy explaining what makes human being so special and what makes us and us alone worthy of moral treatment. Singer criticizes this ubiquitous feature of classic western ethics. Through his famous essay, *All Animals are Equal*, Peter Singer presented his ethical standpoint about moral expansionism. In his paper Singer firstly points the reductionist attitude of human beings towards nature and other beings. He criticized the extreme speciesism of human being. He argues that making suffer and killing of animals are the clear indication of human speciesism. "The suffering we inflict on the animals while they are alive is perhaps an ever-clearer indication of our speciesism than the fact that we are prepared to kill them." (Peter Singer, 1974, p. 250) In this speciesism, only human beings, the considerable Super species, gets moral Concern. This anthropocentric ethical approach is enough to exclude other animals from moral realm and their rights and interest are marginalized. For Singer the aim is that to bring the marginal cases into the moral base class. For the lowest entry criterion to moral base class, Singer turns to classical utilitarianism of Bentham. Criterion proposed by Bentham is 'Sentience' - the capacity to experience pleasure and pain. Adapting Benth's theory, Singer stated that the sentience is the more relevant criterion for moral treatment.

By taking 'sentience' as the appropriate criterion of moral considerability, Singer tries to break the limitation of speciesism and expands the boundary of ethics into all sentient being which have interests. If an entity is sentient, Singer argues, then it may be said to have interests, in particular, it seeks pleasurable states of beings and seeks to avoid unpleasurable states of being. Sentient beings have interests and they ought to have their interest taken into account of the species to which they belong. If an entity is not sentient then it does not owe any moral consideration. Because non-sentient entity is incapable of having any interest of



its own. By 'ethical sentientism' Singer proposes an inclusive expansive ethical theory which brings the animals also in to the member of the moral base class. Even though this animal liberation approach is non-anthropocentric, it gives emphasis of the intrinsic value of non-human world in a limited sense. "So the limit of sentience is the only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others emphasis added." (Peter Singer, 1977, p. 9) In short, Singer's animal liberation ethics is an expansive ethical position, which has boundaries to limit the expansion.

Tom Regan, the most influential colleague of Peter Singer also holds an ethical theory based on ethical sentientism. Regan is more restrictive than Singer in accepting the criteria for moral considerability. "In particular, Regan is considerably more restrictive than Singer with respect to the question of where to draw the line in regard to moral considerability." (Warwick Fox, 1990, p. 165) In his book *The Case for Animal Rights* Regan explained about the criteria for moral considerability. He has taken 'the subject-of-a-life criterion' as a criterion for moral considerability. By 'the subject-of-a-life criterion' he means that the entity which has capacity of willing, feeling and its own desires, perception, memory and sense of future etc. This means that, to Regan, only mentally normal animals come into the realm of moral consideration. In this sense Regan's ethical position is an extended one but extension is restricted than Singer's position.

In 1978 through a paper titled *On Being Morally Considerable*, Kenneth E. Goodpaster tentatively took moral philosophy, beyond animal liberation or rights into environmental philosophy proper. He agreed with Singer that traditional ethical criteria for moral considerability are inadequate. But he disagreed with Singer that the inseparable line should be drawn by the sentience criterion. Paster argues, from biological point of view sentience is a means, not an end -a means to life. So sentience is not adequate criterion for moral considerability. Goodpaster recommended more relevant criteria for moral considerability that is 'being alive'. Being alive is the minimum condition for moral considerability. Goodpaster claims: "Neither rationality nor the capacity to experience pleasure and pain seems to me necessary even though they may be sufficient condition on moral considerability ... Nothing short of the condition of 'being alive' seems to me to be a plausible and non-arbitrary criterion." (Kenneth E. Goodpaster, 1978, pp. 57-58)

In 1981 American philosopher Paul W. Taylor proffered a much stronger version of bio-centrism or a life- centred theory. Taylor's book *Respect for Nature* represents the major recent extended development of a life-based approach to ethics.



Taylor argues; “All living things are, ‘teleological (or goal oriented) centres of life.’” (Paul W. Taylor, 1986, p. 120) According to Taylor an organism’s telos (end or goal) is to reach a state of maturity to reproduce. Our actions can restrict the fulfillment of an organism’s telos, and to do just that is to harm it. Taylor proposes a biocentric outlook on nature. “The biocentric outlook on nature has four main components. (1) Humans are thought of as members of Earth’s community of life, holding that membership on the same terms also apply to all the nonhuman members. (2) The Earth’s natural ecosystems as a totality are seen as a complex web of interconnected elements, with the sound biological functioning of each being dependent on the sound biological functioning of others. (3) Each individual organism is conceived of a teleological centre of life, pursuing its Own goal in its own way. Whether we are concerned with standards of merit or with the concept of inherent worth, the claim that humans, by their very nature, are superior to other species is a groundless one and, in the light of above-mentioned elements 1, 2 and 3, must be rejected as nothing more than an irrational bias in our favour. The conjunction of these four ideas constitutes the biocentric outlook on nature.” (Paul W. Taylor, 1986, p. 75) In this biocentric approach Taylor accepts the interest and inherent worth of individual organisms on the one hand and accepts the ecosphere itself as super organism on the other hand. This integrated biotic outlook breaks the ethical boundaries, which are narrowly defined. In short Biocentrism of Taylor gives a holistic outlook to environmental philosophy.

Leopold’s ecosystem ethics and its holistic outlook inspired James Lovelock very much. On the background of ethical holism Lovelock referring an ethical theory which is known as Gaian ethics. Lovelock considers the self-regulating, self-regenerating ecosphere as a whole. He treats the earth as an autopoietic entity and refers this earth as Gaia – the Greek goddess of earth. “... autopoietic nature of the ecosphere considered as a whole. Lovelock refers to this autopoietic entity - the ecosphere of Earth - as Gaia, after the Greek Goddess of the earth.” (Warwick Fox, 1990, p. 177) Lovelock’s approach towards nature or Gaian ethics comes under the heading of ethical holism.

The decade of 1960s witnessed strong ecological revolution a revolution in consciousness concerning man’s outlook towards other species and the need to protect the integrity of nature. This ecological revolution paved very much for the rise of a new ecological movement that is long-range deep ecology. Deep ecology is a move from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism. Deep ecology derived its impetus



from the writings of Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Robinson Jeffers, Aldo Leopold and Aldous Huxley and the infusion of Zen Buddhism.

Inspired by Thoreau and Leopold, conservation leaders of West began to realize that the protection of wildness was the key philosophical and ecological issue. But this radical thrust of the eco-centric ecological revolution could not be sustained because of the over interference of vested interest of multinational corporations. Because of the deepest influence of the western paradigm of 'progress', environmentalists during the decade of the 1960s did not see the need for an ecological revolution and a philosophical shift to ecocentrism. After World War II urban pollution has grown into a major environmental problem. Some man-centred environmentalist leaders saw industrial pollution as the essence of environmental problem and they tried to ignore the issues related to human over population and industrial growth paradigm. By Earth Day 1970, the environmental movement had split essentially into an anthropocentric urban-pollution wing, led by Commoner, Nader and Murray Bookchin and an eco-centric wing centred around Bronerand Ehrlich. Leaders of anthropocentric urban pollution wing refused the philosophical, religious and social owes of environmental crisis. They claimed that environmental problems could be solved simply by changing to environmentally benign technologies.

The split between the anthropocentric industrial pollution wing and the eco-centric wing, environmentalism prompted Norwegian eco philosopher Arne Naess to present his short paper *The shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecology movements* in 1972. Naess meant for 'shallow movement' is that the movement based on anthropocentrism and it mainly concerned with pollution, conservation and preservation of nature. In shallow ecology these have no specific ideology or concepts as the base for the ecological movement.

Naess and George Session proposed an eight-point platform for Deep Ecology. The eight points are:

“1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life as Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of like forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.



4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantially smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires a smaller human population.

5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.” (Arne Naess, 1986, p. 14)

Naess provided illuminating contrasts between shallow and deep ecology on a number of key environmental issues. Naess evaluates the shallow and Deep approaches on the same issue. For example, ‘pollution’. “Shallow approach: Technology seeks to purify the air and water and to spread pollution more evenly. Laws limit permissible pollution. Polluting industries are preferably exported to developing countries. Deep approach: pollution is evaluated from a biospheric point of view, not focusing exclusively on its effects on human health, but rather on life as a whole, including the life conditions of every species and systems” (Arne Naess, 1986, p. 18). Naess explicated that deep ecological movement is the movement which questions deeper.

Along with Deep Ecology, there are two counter cultural movements, which originated and flourished in the field of radical Eco philosophy. They are Ecofeminism and social Ecology. These three movements have different views about what constitute the roots of the Ecological crisis. Deep ecologists think that Anthropocentrism is the root cause of ecological crisis. Ecofeminists think that major root of ecological crisis is patriarchy. Social ecologists think that the principal root of the ecological crisis is the social hierarchy.

In the contemporary period Donna Haraway insists that humans and nonhumans are intertwined. She emphasizing, multispecies interdependence and ethics of kinship through her famous work *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin*



in the *Chthulucene*. “Make Kin Not Babies.” (Haraway, 2016, p. 102) Here she arguing multispecies kinship over anthropocentric reproduction. She challenges the Anthropocene approaches and emphasising minimalism in domination upon the environment. “The Anthropocene marks severe discontinuities; what comes after will not be like what came before. I think our job is to make the Anthropocene as short/thin as possible and to cultivate with each other in every way imaginable epoch to come that can replenish refuge.” (Haraway, 2016, p. 100) Haraway recommends new epoch of multispecies entanglement, kinship, and cocreation.

Through the most influential work, *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence*, Morton made a deep contribution to eco philosophy. In this work he exposes the very idea about ecologically responsible life. He gives a frame work for living responsibly in the Anthropocene. Morton rejects the romantic idea of “pure nature.” He argued ecology is messy, weird, and intertwined. Human beings must admit the truth of synchronicity with nonhuman beings, technologies, and ecological systems. “Ecological awareness in the Anthropocene takes the form of a strange loop or Möbius strip, twisted to have only one side.” (Timothy Morton, 2016, p. 5) Nature is not straight but strange and interwoven, imposing man to confront their tangle with animated and in animated. By the notion, Entanglement, Morton insisting that humans are inseparable from ecological systems.

Conclusion

Western philosophy holds a distinctive eco philosophical attitude even in the mid of the dominant tradition. The investigation made through the various eco philosophical approaches of the west asserts the fact that each of them differs in their approaches but they have same goal - The goal is the expansion of ethical realm. Each eco philosophical thinkers differs in the degree of the expansion of moral considerability. Different ecological thinkers hold different criteria for moral considerability. The important criteria among them are ‘being sentience’, ‘being alive’, ‘being the member of ecosystem’ etc. Even though these criteria hold different degree of moral considerability all of them hold a non- anthropocentric attitude. Some of these movements not only alienated from anthropocentrism transformed to transpersonal and transcendental. Deep ecology of Naess, Leopold’s Land Ethic, James Lovelocke’s Gaian ethics are the movements developed transpersonal and transcendental outlook. Even though these movements proposed an expanded outlook they are not free from criticisms.



Deep ecology faced many criticisms from other environmental philosophers and systems. Richard Sylvan criticized the deep ecological position very sharply. In the paper, *A critique of Deep Ecology*, Sylvan speaks of deep ecology as: “A conceptual bod’ and ‘an afflicted notion’, and note that many notions no more afflicted than deep ecology.” (Richard Sylvan, 1985, pp. 1-2) Tom Regan called transpersonal approach of Land ethic as, ‘Environmental fascism’. Philosopher Don Marietta questioned Leopold’s reduction of human as only biological entity. Marietta argues man is more than a biotic entity. “Marietta goes on to argue that we cannot justify treating the good of the biotic community ... These extreme positions are reductionistic in that they treat human beings as if they were only biological entities.” ((Des Jardins, 2001, p. 196) Even though there are criticisms, these movements became influential within eco philosophy in a short period. These eco philosophical movements caught public attention with amazing speed. They not only influenced ecological thinkers but also inspired cultural analysis and politics, which have ecological orientation.

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