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An Overview of Materialistic and Unified approach to Man - Nature Relationship

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ABSTRACT

The role of science and technology in human societies is very important. They indeed played an enormously important role in making societies developed and industrialized but at an equally significant cost. In the name of development, nature has been severely exploited and mercilessly destroyed. These results in various natural disasters observed in recent times, such as ozone depletion, deforestation, landslides, tsunami, etc. All these calamities point out that there is a need for maintaining nature's balance. But how is it to be done? What are the ways to be adopted for preserving nature's balance? In this context, we first need to see our attitude towards nature, particularly, our attitude towards how to preserve nature. As a study in environmental ethics, this research discusses the relationship between human beings and nature. This research explores the question of if human beings are part of nature? Or is nature separate from human beings? This suggests two main approaches to the above discussion. The first one is a materialistic-technological approach, which avers that human being is superior to nature. A second approach is a unified approach to nature. Here we try to show that man is part of nature and they both complement each other.

Keywords: Environment; Environmental Ethics; Human-Nature Relationship; Science; Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental ethics is concerned with the moral relations that hold between humans and nature (Bassey 2019). It is the ethical principles that govern this relationship between human beings and nature, determine our duties,

obligations, and responsibilities towards the natural world. It is a universalized code of behaviour that produces an ecologically sound development process. In the past, each culture had its environmental code to maintain a harmonious relationship between humans and nature ensuring continuing material and cultural enrichment of the society. However, there is a radical change noticed in the post-industrial era (Bassey 2020). Earlier values towards nature were thus replaced by industrialism and consumerism. This results in the gross commercialization of both man and nature. The man became a factor of production, and nature as a resource for exploitation. The production of farms and factories increased but at a great ecological and human cost. Science and technology have given enormous power in the hands of man. But, without a moral code of conduct, its creative potential has remained inactive. Therefore, the possibility of autonomous environmental ethics would be realized only when man grants moral standing to all living entities other than humans.

Nature and humans are of the same origin and like humans, nature too is alive and intelligent. Nature is divinized and humanized. The distinction between man and nature thus appears superficial at the behavioural level. The main focus of this work is to discuss the relationship between humans and nature. Here we discuss, what is the relationship between humans and nature? Are humans a part of nature? Or nature is separate from a human? Various philosophers and philosophical traditions have suggested various alternatives. Here we have suggested two main approaches to the above question. The first one is the materialistic- technological and scientific approach. In this approach, we discuss how man is superior to nature. A second approach is a unified approach to nature. Here we try to show that man is part of nature and they both complement each other.

MATERIALISTIC-SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH

From ancient times onwards, there have been constant attempts made by philosophers to understand the nature of the relationship existing between humans and nature. We start with Pre-Socratic philosophers. They are called "Investigators of Nature" (Chemhuru 2017). The general tendency of pre-Socratic philosophy is that it seeks to find a principle about the explanation of nature. To search for such a principle becomes natural because these philosophers find that it is nature they often encounter first. It is the one that is immediately given in our perceptual field. This is how it first attracts the spirit of inquiry. Nature is an organized physical system governed by law. It is constantly rearranging, changing, and renewing itself in a patterned way. But the question is what precisely is it that is renewing itself and yet still continuing to be what it was and what it is? The seasons, vegetations, and things in general come and go and come back again in a new form. The universe continues to be as it is despite any change. It is reflected in the pre-Socratic thought that under all these changes and transformation of forms and in the presence of multiplex phenomena there must be a fundamental principle. So what is this principle? Or more precisely what natural element is the basic element? Different answers are given by pre-Socratic philosophers. We start with Thales.

Thales holds an important place in the history of philosophy because of the philosophical question he raised. He is the first one who asked the question regarding the interpretation of nature. He suggested that the fundamental reality which is ever-changing but still renewing itself is "water" (Heyd 2020). This is the

first primitive ground of all things. All comes from water and all returns to water. His hypotheses must have led by the observation that moisture constituted the germ and nourishment of things generates heat. In general, it is the formative, life-giving, and life possessing element. Hence, water is the construction material that is forever changing itself and recycling and renewing itself in nature.

Anaximander holds that the primal substance from which all things come is the "unbounded", and the "indeterminate" (Kočandrlje 2019). Indeterminate reality is not particularly this or that. It is not any definite substance such as earth, air, fire, or water. It is the compound of all contrary elements. It is neutral in the cosmic strife which exists between the elements i.e., earth, air, fire, and water. All things originate from it and return to it. Anaximenes suggests that the fundamental, boundless, and self-changing substance in nature is "air" (Kalachanis et al., 2015). All things are formed from the air through the process of condensation (water, earth, and stone) and rarefaction (fire). This is the same as when contemporary astronomers speak of our universe as originating in hot gases. The earth itself was formed through condensation, together with air. Air is the principle of life. Life is a warm breath. The fact of the air surrounding the whole world and of the breath being the condition of life, seem to have led him to this hypotheses. Breath and air surround the whole universe and hold it together. Air or gas can take any form by condensation or expansion. Pythagoras says that all things are numbers (Brown 2015). All things are made of numbers, points, lines, and surfaces. These numbers give a measure of each thing. Numbers can account for the wide range of different natures of different things. The order and harmony of the universe are explainable in terms of numbers. Numbers constitute the essences of things. The number is the key to nature.

Parmenides says that nature is uncreated and imperishable (Echauri 2007). Being or nature did not come out of that which is not, nor will pass away into that which is not nature. For him, being is and always is. It is immovable, it does not change. It cannot be added to. The being is always completely what it is. It is one, and it is evenly distributed. It cannot be more here and less there. It is not unlimited. It is bounded and limited on every side. Heraclitus says all things pass, everything flows on and nothing remains (Heraclitus 2010). Everything is in a state of flux. All is becoming. The matter is ever moving, changing, and developing. All things are one. The cosmos is an ever-living fire, there is unity in diversity and identity indifference. Heraclitus accepted the fact that there is a plurality of interdependent beings in the universe and that the whole of reality is both one and many. Reality changes, it becomes other, but it does not change into another. Reality is always what it is. Therefore, there is unity in diversity, just as there is diversity in unity.

Anaxagoras taught that there are many ultimate units or wholes (Sisko 2010). These ultimate units or wholes are such as gold, silver, iron, tin, and organic materials such as wood, ivory, cotton, and so forth. When these wholes or units are cut into parts, they become smaller units of the original units. But these smaller units are qualitatively the same as the original units. In any concrete object of our experience, there is an intermingling of many qualitatively different particles or units. But among all, there is only one particular kind of particle that predominates. Therefore, there is a mixture of all things in everything. New products are merely new mixtures or combinations of the pre-existing ultimate units. Changes in the world can be explained in terms of the intermingling and separating of these indestructible materials or particles. Anaxagoras said that in

the universe an omniscient entity called the mind is present (Sisko 2010). Mind as a reason of some kind underlies the movements of the cosmos. The mind is infinite and self-ruled. It is the finest and the purest of all things. It has all knowledge about everything. It is present in all living things and is the same in all. Democritus held that all things are made of atoms (Baltes 2011). The atoms are physically indivisible. They were not created, and they are also indestructible. Each physical object is an aggregation of several different atoms. The cosmos originated from the movement of atoms. Due to this movement world generated.

The pre-Socratics viewed nature as an organized cosmos. Their emphasis is certainly on nature. In the different doctrines of the pre-Socratic philosophers, we find certain scientific hypotheses of various kinds as solutions to the problem. Some of the answers are materialistic. Some are mechanistic, and some are deterministic. Heraclitus had emphasized the dynamic, ever-diverse oneness of being. But Parmenides had emphasized unchanging being. Democritus presented a deterministic account of the changes occurring in the universe in terms of a random mechanical intermingling, interlocking, and separating of different kinds of material atoms. This study of pre-Socratic philosophers shows a certain influence on our modern environmental thinking. Following we discuss that.

THE INFLUENCE OF PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY ON ENVIRONMENTAL THINKING

In the preceding discussion, we saw the Pre-Socratic Philosophers' interpretations of nature. Greek philosophers approached natural phenomena in a very different way. This philosophy was concerned with speculation about the natural world. The attention was on biological matters such as water, air, atoms, and so forth. It also prepared the way for the attitudes towards nature, i.e., the attitude that is incompatible with modern environmental thinking. It prevented the development of an ecological perspective. It discourages the aesthetic appreciation of the natural world. It also promoted a conception of reality that made the idea of nature preservation conceptually difficult. In this context, we will only discuss some of the issues related to their ecological perspective that considerably influenced the human materialist approach towards nature.

(a) The knowledge of ecological relationships is not knowledge.

The pre-Socratic philosophers do not consider the knowledge of understanding of ecological relationships in nature to be qualified as to knowledge proper. For them, the objects of knowledge are believed to be permanent, eternal, and unchanging like the ultimate objects of reality (Rowe 2005). But in contrast, the ecological relationships are concerned with the objects that are impermanent, perishable, and in a constant state of change. Therefore, the understanding of such objects may be rightly characterized as a good opinion but not knowledge.

(b) The structure of the world is rational.

The Greeks thought that only by reason we can know about the first principles (Mitchell 2020). They believe that we deduce all other knowledge from the ultimate first principles by reason. They say the world has a rational structure. Therefore, they discourage an ecological awareness of the world by firsthand observation by sensory organs. Sensory organs are hindrances to the existence of reason. A good example of this rational approach is found in the Greek conceptions of earth, air, fire, and water. The Greek philosophers frequently

discussed these phenomena and attempted to investigate their interrelationships. These Greek philosophers were not interested in these phenomena. But they were not interested in these phenomena as the ultimate substances or elements. As they always thought matter is something outside immediate experience, and therefore their study is always a suspect. In other words, the study of the physical elements in nature is considered superficial, peripheral, and consequential. The study of the physical elements in nature is perceived through the sense. Therefore, it is superficial because knowledge can only be drawn by reason.

(c) The rational structure of the world is simple.

The structure of the world is simple and this assumption encouraged the Pre-Socratics to ignore the complex relationships among the members of the environment. This contributed to the development of a method of investigation, i.e., the reductionist method. The method is concentrating on parts in isolation from the complex whole. The idea on which the reductionist method is based on the complex interactions and relationships which could be broken down into a series of a simple ones. This approach is essential for the development of the scientific method and discoveries of physics and chemistry. But this approach is not suitable for ecological investigation of the world as a whole. As we know today almost all ecological interactions and relationships are too complex to be studied in isolation as simple and independent parts.

An ecological perspective is impossible with the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher's approach i.e., with their search for a rational structure. The Greek method of inquiry involved a step by step deductive procedure (Halporn & Pearson 1962). These philosophers focus on relationships that are necessary and universal. Then all kinds of relationships cannot be other than the above kinds, i.e., necessary and universal. Therefore, they are true in all times and places. This kind of relationship can be discussed in deductive arguments. Deductive arguments are true always irrespective of their circumstances. But most of the ecological relationships are not like this. The ecological relationships are the products of a specific evolutionary history. The process of evolution could have happened in many other ways and therefore, they are contingent and accidental. They are dependent on the circumstances. Such kinds of ecological relations cannot be discovered by the use of reason alone. We need extensive observation and experimentation. The Greeks do not believe in these approaches.

The Pre-Socratic philosophers do not have an eco-friendly approach towards the environment. There can be no relationship established between humans and nature. Nature is irrational and unintelligible and only human beings have reasoning capacity. With this account, we now move to the discussion on the influence of modern philosophy on environmental thinking.

MODERN ERA AND ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND NATURE.

The beginning of the Seventeenth Century which we call the Modern Era has been dominated by scientific worldview (Easterlin 2019). According to this world view, the human is regarded as the central player. The industrial revolution had its bad direct consequence on western thought and culture. The impact that it created was bad. Technological development indeed created a new confidence in man. But the darker side of this turning point was the disintegration of a coherent cosmology and the danger of a catastrophe. Machine age started and the earth was altered drastically. The man began to look at himself as the master of nature

(Njar & Enagu 2019). The earlier human being had established a balanced relationship with nature. Human beings were close to nature. However, with the rise of science, the entire relationship was changed. It became empirical, materialistic, and positivistic in nature. Science taught man to use nature as a means to an end and that in turn harms nature directly or indirectly (Bassey 2020). Humans no longer believed nature to be divine. He or she started believing that science and technology was the parameter of development. In this connection, it may be instructive to note that this materialistic approach to nature initiated by modern science got, support from the Christian belief on nature.

The Christian view regards nature as created by God and humanity has been given the authority to use nature for its survival (Kim 2018). This provides the ideal conditions for natural science and its associated technology to emerge and to dominate nature. This is the legacy of the "scientific revolution" of the sixteen and seventeenth century. Francis Bacon was one among the figures who had the view that human beings stood over and above nature. Nature was there solely for man's use. Nature existed only to satisfy human needs and wants. Darwin's account of natural selection confirms the above view. As Darwin points out, species exist as ends in themselves (Steyer 2009). If it is so, then it is only natural for man to behave in a manner that helps towards his own survival. In other words, man has the freedom to exploit nature for his proper ends.

As pointed out in the previous paragraph the scientific attitude towards nature has its basis on the Christian attitude towards nature. However, a Christian attitude towards nature also makes provision for man's responsibility towards nature. In this context, we can clearly distinguish the two strands that Christianity holds. The one is that the natural world is regarded as being there essentially for man's instrumental use (Gnanakan 2015). The other one is that in which we have duties of stewardship to the natural world. In the former view, nature is regarded as something to be exploited for its materials (Gnanakan 2015). This is a source of knowledge leading to power and control over nature which is the scientific attitude towards nature. This may be called the materialistic approach to nature. Below we will give a brief description of this approach by highlighting the different trends and aspects that constitute this attitude.

First, John Passmore, in his book *Man's Responsibility of Nature*, recognizes that the dominant western traditions "denied that man's relationship with nature is governed by any moral considerations whatsoever" (1980, pp. 43). In this tradition, the human being is the "despot" who rules nature with arrogance. He/she treats nature as mere wax to be molded in whatever manner humans desire wants it to be. There are two possible interpretations of this view about man's domination. The first one is that he is an absolute ruler of nature. God has made him the only subject who rules over nature and he can do so as far as he profits from doing so. Nature is not sacred. The second one is that in which human takes care of the living things over which he rules for their own sake. They govern them not with force and cruelty.

Similarly, Immanuel Kant agreed on anthropocentric dominance. His view is based on the fact that only rational creatures are ends in themselves. Therefore, they have intrinsic moral worth and deserve moral consideration. Animals are not rational and consequently not part of the kingdom of moral worth. The rational creatures morally owe nothing to animals (Bassey & Eyo 2020). As a result, human moral duties to non-rational individuals are simply indirect duties to

other humans. As Kant says: We should treat animals kindly, even though they always remain a means to an end, as exercises that develop good character in humans” (Kant 1963, pp 239-241). Hence, within Kantian Perspective there are clear priorities of rational individuals. Nature, as a whole, is subject to be used by rational creatures, qualified only by indirect duties. Therefore, nonhuman nature is valued only in a functional sense for humans, without any moral standing.

Second, the inherent superiority of humans over other species was implicit in the classical Greek definition of a human being as a rational animal. This definition of human beings differentiates humans from all other animals (Osuala et al., 2018). The capacity of the reason was seen not only as defining what is essential and unique to human nature but also as a mark of special value or worth. Reason gives a kind of nobility and dignity to humans that are lacking in creatures without reason. Within human nature, it is the reason that controls and gives an order to the passions and desires of the animal side of human nature. Thus, the very function of reason places human beings in a higher position than other non-human beings. As the master of our animal nature, reason enables us to live in a more superior place than other animals.

The philosophical outlook of classical humanism is linked up with the idea of the human good. That is it is linked up with the essentialist definition of humans as rational animals. Man is living a fully rational life in the realization of our truly human potentialities. Thereby we achieve our highest goal or true good. Reason guides our conduct in choosing means and ends. It is inherent to pursue this rational good. Hence, our superiority over non-rational beings is inherent. It is the very essence understood as a reason that makes us human. Third, the chief historical roots of the idea that humans are inherently superior to all other living things are found in the concept of the great chain of being. This is the concept that shaped the whole metaphysical outlook of the middle ages (Corbino & Albarella 2019). The great chain of being is the view that every existing thing has a certain place in an infinite hierarchy of entities. This chain of entities extends from the most real and perfect to the least real and most imperfect. This chain begins with God at the top and ends with the matter at the bottom. After God, humans are placed in the hierarchy (Corbino & Albarella 2019). They are followed by animals and plants that are hierarchically arranged among themselves. This is a metaphysical or ontological order. All things fall into a continuous degree of inherent worth. This reflects the world of God in which there is every possible grade of existence and value. This shows the very superior place of human beings above all other nonhuman entities.

The major historical source of the idea of inherent human superiority may be traced back to Descartes, particularly in his theory of mind-body dualism. According to this view, human beings are superior to animals and plants because humans have souls or minds as well as bodies (Wee 2001). But animals and plants are only bodies. It is the human mind that gives us a reason and free will, without which we would be nothing but automata, i.e., mere physical mechanisms. Animals are precisely that since they are only material substances. Therefore, they have only the properties of matter such as extension in space, motion, rest, size, shape, and weight. Hence, animals and plants, are, therefore, essentially, not different from inanimate objects. Their being alive only means that certain complex processes such as metabolism, reproduction, and growth, etc. take place in them. They remain physical things and incapable of conscious experiences. Because they are devoid of conscious experiences, they can be treated like

machines. Human beings belong to an entirely different category of entities. A person is a physical body plus mind. The mind gives direction to the body whenever a person performs an intentional action (da Silva & Mansur 2020). The mind also possesses the powers of thought, imagination, and moral judgment. In fact, the mind includes all the variety of conscious experiences about which the mind is immediately aware such as having ideas and images, feeling pleasures and pains, emotions and desires, perceiving colours, hearing sounds, remembering past events, and so on. It is our minds that differentiate us from all other living things. At the same time, it is our minds that enable us to exist to the level of conscious awareness. Thus, it is the fact that we as human beings have minds as well as bodies that accounts for our inherent superiority to animals and plants.

Fourth, the dominant scientific view of nature in the modern period is called reductionist materialism (Lennon 1984). In this view nature is a machine. It has no values and no purpose. Human beings have ended and act in the light of mere objects, i.e. matter in motion. All kinds of alteration we do with nature with the help of science and technology may be claimed to be the result of certain underlying philosophical ideas. This can be seen historically from the time of the pre-Socratic philosophers who consider nature as something irrational, unintelligible, and objective. This gives rise to the idea that nature can be exploited for the benefit of mankind. The ideas like (as discussed earlier) the essentialist view on man, the idea of the great chain of being, the mind-body dualism of Descartes, and reductionist materialism make the materialistic-scientific and technological approach towards nature possible. All these ideas show that man is superior to nature and he is different from nature. The impact of this idea is far-reaching. It leads to the development of such crucial theories as possibilism, anthropocentrism, and shallow ecology in environmental studies. In the later part of our inquiry, we will go into these theories in detail. Presently, we will give a brief review of these theories to show how the materialistic approach to nature has dominated our thinking in environmental studies. But these theories would be discussed in a very broader way in our further chapters.

According to a view called possibilism man dominates nature and acts according to nature (Saushkin 1961). He can bring alteration in it and therefore, is more powerful than it. This theory believes that even though man is governed by nature, man has the power to alter it according to his purpose. He uses nature to fulfill his needs. He conquers natural forces and converts them to make them beneficial for him. Hence, this view says a man can fully conquer nature. The fundamental anthropocentric assumption is that only human beings can have direct moral value (Basse 2020). We can value other natural things only in relation to human purposes and goals. Gilbert Pinchot says nature is a resource to be conserved to meet human welfare. The anthropocentric view of nature also could be found in Aristotle's teleological theory of nature. Aristotle believes that everything in nature fulfills a purpose and that the ultimate purpose of nature is the satisfaction of human needs (Carlin 1968).

However, 'Shallow ecology' views humans as separate from their environment (O'Sullivan 1987). Thus it views humans as the source of all value and describes the only instrumental value to the non-human world. Humans use the source or ground of all value and he is the measure of all things. It accepts the dominant metaphysics of mechanistic materialism. It also tends to accept the social, political, and economic projects of mechanistic materialism. It views

humans and their environment as separate entities. It institutes a dualism between man and nature. Man is the centre of value and nature seems to be the other of man and therefore has only instrumental values. The scientific and technological approach shows that man is separate from nature and he has the freedom to alter and use nature according to his needs. This approach is the main reason for all kinds of environmental disasters and problems. But there can be a better kind of relationship between man and nature which says that both man and nature are complementary to each other. That is called the unified relationship between humans and nature.

UNIFIED APPROACH TO HUMAN BEING AND NATURE

This approach discusses what would be the ideal situation between human and nature relationship. Human beings and nature must have a proper relationship. There must be the right balance between the two, and only then can a man actually progress without harming nature much. The view that either man is the master of nature or nature is the master of man is not proper. Man is blind, selfish, and greedy regarding his own benefits which ultimately harm nature. By doing this he is only harming and destroying nature and ultimately he invites his own destruction. The increase of industries, factories and other infrastructures that involves progress is fast making nature an enemy of man. Therefore, there is a necessity of bringing man and environment close to each other (Umukoro 2020). To keep the ecology in the order it is necessary to maintain and keep ecological balance in order. Now human being is careful in protecting nature. Ecological philosophers believe that there is unity in nature. They are searching for that unifying force that binds everything together. Hence, we will be now discussing the unifying aspect of man and nature.

Naturalistic View

We start with the naturalistic view, a naturalistic view is one which denies the existence of supernatural beings of any kind (Bravo Osorio 2017). In the following, we will give a brief elaboration of this standpoint.

(a) We, as human beings, have an immense capacity for thought. The ability is much greater than that of any other creature. We are also language users which is unique to human beings. Among all other creatures, human beings are endowed with a high degree of mental power and capacity. This enables humans to see the far-reaching consequences that follow from the events. These events include even man's own doings and the consequences that he derives from it. We can forecast the possibility of alternative futures and accordingly we act in order to achieve these possibilities. As said earlier we are language users and language plays an important role in shaping the complex nature of our mental activities. Further, with the help of language, we can engage with others in gathering information and making plans. In view of these possessions of mental powers, a question arises with regard to the very conception of human beings, that is, whether human beings can still be regarded as part of nature or independent of nature? The answer may be, - if we accept a Darwinian account of evolution, we are bound to suppose that the powers that we now have are the results of a long series of transformations. Through this process of transformations, the brains of pre-humans and proto-humans were successively acquired. We did not suddenly have all the unique capacities. Many of the functions of our brains are similar to animals. So we are continuous with other animals both by similarity and by the

continuity of evolution. So difference doesn't mean discontinuity. Hence, we are not apart from nature but a continuity of nature.

(b) We have intellectual capacities as well as bodily appetites and emotions. All these capacities are integral parts of us. We are very much similar to other animals especially to other mammals regarding our bodily appetites and emotions. So there is a thread of continuity among humans and animals.

(c) There is another characteristic of humans i.e., their ability to manipulate their environment. With this manipulative characteristic, there is a division between humans and other animals. But it is obvious that there is a great difference in the scale of the changes that humans can bring to the environment when we compare it to any other species. The application of scientific knowledge to technology is the cause of this extended ability. This ability is the consequence of the development of human mental powers. But do these differences put us apart from nature? The answer is no; because, first, other species provide some examples of using tools and building structures. That means we learn it from nature. Secondly, a more fundamental point is that the mental powers that enable us to transform our environment are due to the highly developed brain that humans possess. The possession of these developed brains is due to the evolutionary development from animal to human. Hence we cannot hold the view that we cannot hold that human beings are radically different from an animal. Thirdly, our ability to control natural force is extremely limited. Natural forces like winds, tides, and earthquakes wipe away all constructions of human beings within a few seconds during natural disasters. It gives the strongest possible proof that we are part of nature and thus cannot conquer nature fully.

A concept like "ecosystem" is an association of plant, animal populations, and inorganic elements. They are bound together by the relation of interdependence. Each population depends for its existence on other elements of the ecosystem. Every species such as living and nonliving things performs its own function in maintaining the system. A human population and its members belong to an ecosystem and cannot live in isolation from it. We not only live along with other species such as plants and animals, but also we have features in common with them. So we are part of the same system of life.

CONCLUSION

Starting from the Pre-Socratics Philosophy to the twentieth-century philosophy there is a differentiation between nature and human beings. They placed human beings at the top of the hierarchy and gave immense power in the hands of human beings. This particular attitude created a demarcation between human beings and nature. In the late twentieth century, environmental problems started which have prompted scientists and social scientists to seek to solve environmental challenges. There comes the part of the philosophers who tried to do their share to help all other people in solving environmental problems. This is how environmental ethics came into existence. Through the theories like naturalistic view and deep ecology tried to change the human attitude towards nature into a nature-centric one. This attitude brought out the equality of both nature and human beings.

The present environmental crisis has accompanied the progress in science and technology. Hence science and technology opens multiple options which need a strong value system to control the choice of options. If one wants to control technology one needs a strong value system. Technology becomes disastrous

when it is adopted by a society with a weak value system subscribing to very little sense of collective welfare. Science and technology is value neutral and cannot be called upon to decide between preferable and pleasurable to them. Science can tell us what can be done and what cannot be done but it certainly cannot tell us what ought to be done. That decision falls within the realm of ethics. It deals with the moral principles, moral duty of man, and with the question of right and wrong, standards of conduct, etc. Ethical values and jurisdiction provide the framework as well as the basis for human action. When these two coincide the results are optimum from all the spheres. Laws and rules are followed only if they are rooted in the cultures and ethical values of the people. Hence if environmental protection laws and policies are based on the moral ground then it will definitely help in a better way to protect nature. Hence we need a strong value system which will help us in solving present environmental problems. It can be done only through individual moral consciousness. It can never be done only through the environmental policies, because policies and laws are only constraints on human passion and greed. Where there is law, there is also violation of law and punishment. It is very difficult to force anything on people, particularly in countries like India which have a democratic system of government. Because of this our environmental policies fail. Yet it is true that environment can be protected through these laws but it can not be done fully. We conserve our environment out of fear of punishment. This is the main reason why our environmental laws fail. It is through moral awareness and action it can be done in a better way. Hence ultimately education can provide an important insight in our dealing with environment.

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