

Environmental Philosophy

الفلسفة البيئية

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• Abstract:

This research explores environmental philosophy as an emerging branch of applied ethics, alongside medical ethics, bioethics, and communication ethics. It investigates how this philosophical field addresses contemporary environmental problems, their origins in the Industrial Revolution, and the influence of modern rationality on deepening ecological crises. The study highlights significant contributions from environmental thinkers such as Roger Scruton on environmental awareness, Vandana Shiva and Françoise d'Eaubonne on ecofeminism, and Arne Næss on deep ecology. It further analyses current environmental issues, including pollution, waste, and warfare, emphasizing their destructive consequences on nature. Ultimately, the research underscores the essential role of philosophy in shaping ecological consciousness and promoting ethical behaviour toward the environment.

Keywords:

Environmental Philosophy; Applied Ethics; Industrial Revolution; Ecofeminism; Deep Ecology.

المخلص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة موضوع "الفلسفة البيئية" باعتبارها فرعاً ناشئاً ضمن أخلاقيات التطبيق، إلى جانب أخلاقيات الطب، وأخلاقيات البيولوجيا، وأخلاقيات الاتصال. تبحث الدراسة في كيفية تناول هذا الحقل الفلسفي للمشكلات البيئية المعاصرة، وجذورها المرتبطة بالثورة الصناعية، ودور العقلانية الحديثة في تعميق الأزمات البيئية. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على إسهامات مفكرين بيئيين بارزين، مثل روجر سكروتن في الوعي البيئي، وفاندانا شيفا وفرانسواز دوبون في الإيكوفيمينيزم (النسوية البيئية)، وأرني ناييس في الإيكولوجيا العميقة. كما تحلل الدراسة بعض القضايا البيئية الراهنة كالتلوث والنفايات والحروب، وتبرز آثارها المدمرة على البيئة. وفي الختام، تؤكد الدراسة على الدور الجوهرى للفلسفة في تشكيل الوعي البيئي وتعزيز السلوك الأخلاقي تجاه الطبيعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الفلسفة البيئية، أخلاقيات التطبيق، الثورة الصناعية، النسوية البيئية، الإيكولوجيا العميقة

Introduction:

Human preoccupation with the natural environment and the quest for answers to pressing questions about the universe, its phenomena, and the self-have long underscored the intricate relationship between humanity and its surrounding environment. Philosophical thought, both ancient and modern, has shown great interest in the natural environment and its related dimensions. Early Greek philosophers, particularly those from Ionia-such as Thales, Anaximenes, and

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Anaximander- were labeled "natural philosophers" due to their attempts to explain the origins of the universe and uncover the laws governing it. However, their approach to nature was primarily aimed at understanding and interpreting its mechanisms.

In contrast, contemporary perspectives on the environment have shifted significantly, especially in the wake of technological explosions and their applications, which now pose grave threats to the environment and forewarn of existential risks to humanity on Earth. Given that philosophers are products of their era, they bear an ethical responsibility to seek solutions. Their foremost task is to awaken human conscience, which, regrettably, has become nearly dormant, subjugated by technology that has stripped it of its humanity. Thus emerged the field of environmental philosophy, a branch of applied philosophy, drawing attention to ecological challenges through the works of thinkers like the American philosopher Paul Taylor, the Norwegian Arne Naess, the German Hans Jonas, the French Michel Serres, the Australian Peter Singer, and the Austrian Fritjof Capra.

1.Reasons for Choosing This Study:

The motivation behind selecting this study lies in the significance and relevance of its subject matter. Environmental philosophy remains a fertile yet underexplored field within philosophical studies. Additionally, there is an urgent need to elucidate and clarify such topics while keeping pace with contemporary global philosophical thought. This study endeavors to examine environmental philosophy and its associated ideas objectively, addressing its critical questions and challenges. It aims to analyze key positions, perspectives, and arguments within the domain and trace the historical roots of environmental philosophy to its earliest foundations.

2.Research Methodology:

This study adopts an analytical approach to dissect key ideas and viewpoints related to "environmental philosophy," striving to achieve its objectives. It also employs a synthetic methodology to integrate partial conclusions into a coherent framework that highlights innovative methodological features. Furthermore, the comparative method is utilized to juxtapose various facts and ideas presented by philosophers and researchers in the field, examining their respective issues. A critical method is intermittently applied to assess the strength and validity of arguments and perspectives.

3.Study Outline:

The study is structured into an introduction, where the topic is framed, and its primary questions are posed. The main body consists of several sections that address the concept of applied ethics, the philosophy of the environment, its core issues, and prominent contributions in the field. Finally, the conclusion encapsulates the key findings and explores the future horizons of environmental philosophy.

3.1. Applied Ethics (Concept and Scope):

Philosophy has gained increasing importance in our contemporary era, driven by the necessity to restrain science, which has succumbed to human whims and selfishness. These tendencies have found fertile ground in technology to manifest human madness. Consequently, the need for a new ethical philosophy, distinct from traditional approaches, has emerged—one that

addresses the unprecedented developments in science and their repercussions, which now threaten humanity, its existence, the environment, and the universe as a whole.

Applied ethics encompasses various domains such as medical ethics, bioethics, environmental philosophy, professional ethics, and media and communication ethics. These fields form the core focus of this philosophical orientation. While biomedical sciences have achieved remarkable advancements in disease treatment, vaccine development, and drug production, they have simultaneously sparked intense debates concerning humanity's fate. Issues such as eugenics, human cloning, genetic manipulation, in vitro fertilization, and euthanasia (mercy killing) exemplify the ethical dilemmas arising from scientific progress. Science is no longer solely in the service of humanity but has extended its aims to commercial objectives.

Philosophers of technology argue that technological advancements are directed processes aimed at achieving specific goals, often influenced by commercial or industrial priorities. Technological evolution is oriented towards achieving particular objectives while enabling the pursuit of certain ends over others.¹

Applied ethics, therefore, examines scientific applications in medical and biological fields, as well as ethics in professions and labour as central elements of human life. It addresses the ethical frameworks governing media and communication technology, exploring the moral boundaries that regulate their use. Furthermore, this branch of philosophy investigates environmental ethics and the relationship between humanity and the natural world.

3.2. Environmental Philosophy:

According to the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, environmental ethics emerged in the 1970s as a subfield of moral philosophy, coinciding with the first Earth Day. Its significance lies in raising awareness of escalating environmental issues². While the dictionary provides no explicit definition of environmental ethics, it situates its emergence within the timeline of classical moral philosophy, attributing its value to fostering awareness of environmental risks.

However, not all scholars agree that environmental philosophy is an extension of classical moral philosophy. Paul W. Taylor refutes this notion, advocating for its independence as a distinct philosophical discipline. He asserts: "Environmental ethics is not a secondary branch of human ethics".³

Taylor defines environmental ethics as the study of moral relationships arising from human interaction with the natural world. Its purpose is to illuminate the ethical principles governing these relationships, delineating our duties, obligations, and responsibilities toward the environment and all living beings inhabiting it.⁴

From Taylor's perspective, environmental philosophy constitutes a novel academic field distinct in subject matter, approach, and methodology from classical moral philosophy. Unlike traditional ethics, which places humanity at the centre, environmental ethics shifts focus to the environment, emphasizing humanity's relationship with it. It critically examines human practices

¹ **Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, translated by Malik Al-Futail, Al-Hikma Magazine, 2020, p. 36.

² Maryanne Horowitz, *New Dictionary of Ideas*, Thomson Gale, 2005, p. 679

³ Paul W. Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 12.

⁴ *Ibid*, p 3

that harm the environment and its creatures, fostering ethical accountability and the development of ecological values.

Environmental philosophy challenges the anthropocentric foundations of modern philosophy, proposing an ecocentric perspective. It posits that humanity is but a component of a larger ecological system encompassing countless living organisms. This shift in perspective necessitated dismantling the centrality of humanity in ethical discourse⁵

Thus, environmental philosophy, as an ethical philosophical approach, shifts the central focus from humanity in moral inquiry to making humans part of the whole—the environment—which becomes the center of ethical philosophical study in this new field. The environment is granted dignity, not solely humans, as in traditional ethics. Consequently, environmental ethics derive moral values from the environment itself, emphasizing proper interaction and attentiveness to its needs. This fosters a set of environmental moral values that humans adhere to, ensuring the preservation of their environment and enabling a life free of dangers and harm.

Previously, humanity was seen as the sole source of morality and ethical legislation, with moral theories revolving entirely around human interests. However, environmental philosophy repositions humans as both actors and students, inherently linked to their environment, which nurtures and influences them, shaping their values and ethics.

Since ancient Greek times, philosophers have shown keen interest in the environment and its challenges, reflecting humanity's enduring engagement with their surroundings and the natural world. They sought answers to questions that sparked curiosity, skepticism, and a sense of ignorance regarding the environment, cosmic phenomena, their causes, and interrelations with human life. Greek philosophers crafted philosophical concepts about the environment and the universe, such as nature, form, matter, essence, accident, genesis, decay, existence, causality, and purpose.

The earliest Greek school, the Milesian School, was particularly concerned with the cosmos and nature, seeking to explain the origins of existence. Thales, for instance, posited that water is the fundamental principle of the universe, stating: *"The world originates from water and returns to water,"*⁶.

Anaximander, on the other hand, speculated on the origin of living beings, asserting: *"They originated from moisture after evaporation by the sun, with humans initially resembling fish"*⁷.

Such interpretations underscore early Greek philosophers' preoccupation with the environment and cosmos. This interest persisted throughout the ages, with philosophers consistently addressing these issues in their works. Islamic philosophy, too, saw significant engagement with nature and the environment. Renowned figures such as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Razi, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Tufail devoted parts of their writings to environmental themes, exploring natural phenomena and setting guidelines for human-

⁵Mohamed Hashemi, "From Anthropocentrism to Ecocentrism: Foundations of Environmental Philosophy," Mominoun Without Borders, accessed 20/10/2024.

⁶ Najib Baladi, Lessons in the History of Philosophy, Dar Tubqal, Casablanca, Morocco, 1st edition, 1987, p. 14.

⁷ Ahmad Fouad Al-Ahwani, The Dawn of Greek Philosophy Before Socrates, Dar Ihya' Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Cairo, Egypt, 1st edition, 1954, p. 62.

environment interactions. Influenced by Islamic teachings, their work emphasized the preservation and ethical treatment of the environment.

Islamic scripture—both the Quran and Hadith—focuses on environmental stewardship in two ways: ensuring its maintenance and preventing its destruction. Humanity's role as Earth's stewards (*khalifa*) is contingent upon God's will, which prepared the universe for human habitation and interaction, ensuring its elements align with the mission of stewardship⁸.

The Islamic perspective on human-environment relations highlights the significance of preservation and sustainable utilization. The Quran and Hadith emphasize the prohibition of corruption and destruction in the environment, with numerous verses supporting this, such as: “*And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. That is better for you, if you should be believers*”⁹. The Quran provides examples of civilizations and individuals, such as the tribes of Aad and Thamud, Pharaoh, Qarun, and Haman, who corrupted the Earth, leading to divine punishment in both this world and the hereafter.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized environmental ethics. He instructed his army not to harm individuals tending their land, cut down trees, or kill animals or non-combatants during warfare. Moreover, the Quran calls for contemplation on the intricate order of the universe and its purpose, urging humanity to reflect upon its diverse phenomena. Thus, humans are tasked with maintaining ecological balance, avoiding corruption, and sustainably benefiting from nature. Environmental stewardship is an essential part of Islamic teachings.

4.. Key Issues in Environmental Philosophy:

Environmental philosophy, as a new philosophical field, revolves around a set of issues and ideas that distinguish it from other philosophical approaches. These issues collectively center on one overarching theme: the environment.

4.1. Roger Scruton and the Issue of Environmental Awareness

The ideas of contemporary English philosopher Roger Scruton—author of *Reflections on the Revolution in France*—focus on a crucial issue of our time: the environment. Scruton refers to this concern as “the green question,” aligning with the green policies and environmental movements that adopt the color green as their symbol. His stance does not significantly differ from the advocacy of environmental organizations.

In his book *The Green Philosophy*, Scruton emphasizes the importance of raising awareness about environmental problems, particularly the depletion of natural resources due to overconsumption or pollution. He advocates for free and thoughtful consideration of the planet and its environment. The book also explores the historical roots of conservatism in the UK, the USA, and Europe, arguing that it was influenced by the Romantic movement. This influence is evident in the conservative inclination towards nature preservation and opposition to industrialization.¹⁰

Scruton believes that the Romantic ideals embraced by conservatism played a significant role in the emergence of numerous environmental protection organizations. He credits conservative

⁸ Khalil Imad Eddin, *On Shaping the Muslim Mind*, IIIT, Washington, USA, 4th edition, 1991, p113.

⁹ Quran, Surah Al-A'raf, 7:85.

¹⁰ Dominic Standish, *How to Think About the Planet*, April 2013, www.independent.co.uk/culturebooksreviews.

thought with fostering environmental awareness and highlighting threats to the planet's ecosystem, particularly those linked to industrialization and toxic industrial waste.

He further asserts that British environmental organizations have Enlightenment roots, as they venerate beauty and represent a return to human aesthetic sensibilities. These movements served as a response to the Industrial Revolution.¹¹

Scruton also addresses global warming, expressing deep concern about climate change and its associated challenges. He proposes solutions to environmental problems, emphasizing that humanity's actions and industrial practices are the primary causes of these threats. Scruton thus calls for cultivating environmental awareness and fostering a sense of responsibility toward the environment in which we live.

Scruton employs the term "ecovillage," which began gaining traction in global lexicons through the work of thinker Robert Gilman in 1991. The definition describes it as "*a human settlement where the efforts of its inhabitants are integrated with the movement and laws of nature, supporting both human health and sustainability*".¹²

This interconnected settlement resembles Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*.

This interconnected settlement, reminiscent of Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, reflects a vision where the ideals of justice and true democracy in Plato's ideal city-state are transformed in Scruton's dream into a settlement where the laws of nature seamlessly integrate with human-made laws crafted by the inhabitants. In this vision, the environment is preserved, revered, and protected.

It becomes evident that Scruton views environmental awareness as the cornerstone of contemporary environmental thought. He emphasizes that awareness of the threats facing our environment urgently calls for mechanisms and strategies to safeguard it, restore its balance, and return it to its rightful central position after industrial human practices have relegated it to the periphery.

Contemporary environmental studies, particularly those focused on environmental philosophy, regard the environmental problem as a shared human challenge across all nations. As James Lovelock states: "*Our home is not the house, street, or country we live in, but the Earth itself*".¹³

This Earth hosts the designs and actions of the human mind, and these actions must be rational and conscious of the disruptions they may cause to the environment and the risks they might pose. The only solution lies in renewing human awareness of the profound responsibility it bears for the deterioration of environmental conditions, which, in turn, threatens human existence itself. This realization has led to the emergence of environmental organizations and associations worldwide, the activation of environmental movements, and the advocacy of philosophers through

¹¹Roger Scruton, *How to Think Seriously About the Planet*, p. 5, www.rolalconservasor.com.

¹²Mohamed Al-Khouli, *Green Philosophy: An Intellectual Proposition Starting from the Home*, available at: www.albayan.ae/opinions, accessed on 10/13/2024.

¹³James Lovelock, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia*, translated by Saad Eddine Kharfan, *Al-Ma'arif Magazine*, Kuwait, Issue 388, May 2012, p 8.

their ideas and theories. All these efforts aim to save our environment from the devastation that we, as humans, have inflicted upon it.

It is essential to revive the moral conscience of contemporary humanity by critically examining the technical rationality that has produced technology primarily aimed at serving human needs, often neglecting the environment in which humans live.

4-2 Ecofeminism:

The feminist movement is among the most prominent philosophical currents in contemporary thought. Its name derives from its focus on women, encompassing a range of social, environmental, political, and ethical theories and movements motivated by women's issues. Feminist philosophers, whether women or men, generally agree on the ultimate goal: eliminating all forms of gender-based oppression to create a society where both women and men can grow and participate freely and safely.

Feminism, in essence, represents every theoretical or practical effort aimed at revising, questioning, criticizing, or reforming the prevailing social structures that position men at the center, portraying them as the primary standard of humanity, while relegating women to secondary or subordinate status. This system imposes limits and constraints on women, denying them opportunities for growth and contribution solely based on their gender. Furthermore, it undervalues women's experiences and traits merely because they are female. This dynamic has led to the perception of civilization as a purely male achievement, consolidating male authority and female marginalization.

The feminist movement emerged in Western thought in the 19th century, with the term "feminism" first coined in 1895. This term reflects a current with roots in various directions and branches into many fields.¹⁴ Thus, feminism is a movement advocating for women's rights, equality with men, and respect for their femininity, existence, and contributions without denigrating their roles, efforts, or influence.

The existentialist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir is regarded as a pioneer of the feminist movement in the 20th century. Her 1949 book *The Second Sex* is considered a foundational reference for feminism. In it, she famously asserted, "*One is not born a woman but becomes one*," highlighting the significant role society plays in shaping women's status as females. Contemporary feminism is now intertwined with postmodernism, rooted in the critique and rejection of male-centric models of humanity. This critique extends to Eurocentrism and the dominance of Western civilization.¹⁵

Feminism encompasses several movements, the most prominent of which is ecofeminism. This perspective views the environment as a marginalized female entity in contrast to the centrality of humans. Ecofeminism seeks to break the old centrality, where humans are considered the center of the universe and existence, while the environment is almost entirely neglected. Human happiness is prioritized, even at the expense of the environment, and often to its detriment. Ecofeminism is one of the most significant contemporary movements defending the environment and its

¹⁴Linda Jean Shepherd, *Lifting the Veil: Science and Feminism*, translated by Yumna Tarif al-Khuli, *Al-Ma'arif Series, Issue 306*, Kuwait, 2004, p. 11.

¹⁵Linda Jean Shepherd, *Lifting the Veil: Science and Feminism*, pp. 13–14.

components. It deems this mission essential, particularly in an era where destruction and corruption, driven by modern humans, have reached their peak.

The term "ecofeminism" was first introduced by Françoise d'Eaubonne in her 1974 book *Feminism or Death*. She linked the concept of patriarchal dominance to the subjugation of women and nature.¹⁶ Ecofeminism is a branch of deep ecology, Just as there is not one singular form of feminism, there is also no single form of ecology. This means that ecofeminism contains various directions that differ according to the perspectives and schools of thought of philosophers.

Despite the diversity of opinions within ecofeminism, there is broad agreement on three fundamental principles:

- There is a significant link between various forms of unjust domination—over women, marginalized human groups, and non-human entities such as animals, plants, and nature.
- Understanding the connections between women and nature is vital for feminism, environmentalism, and environmental philosophy.
- The central project of ecofeminism is to dismantle unjust systems of domination and replace them with truly equitable structures and practices.¹⁷

Thus, the strong link between feminism and ecology becomes evident in their origins and outcomes. Both women and the environment have faced marginalization and exploitation by humans—specifically, male humans. This marginalization has limited their effectiveness and potential, subjected them to exploitation, and, in many cases, caused harm. Ecofeminism revives the ancient idea that nature is akin to a nurturing mother for humanity and all forms of life.

Prominent Figures in Ecofeminism:

- **Vandana Shiva:** (born November 5, 1952): A physicist and advocate who gained popularity in the Global South for defending her native India's resources and those of other colonized nations. She contributed significantly to shaping the key ideas and principles of ecofeminism. Shiva highlighted how contemporary Western, capitalistic societies have adopted a culture of exploitation, including exploiting the natural resources of colonized countries. She drew parallels between this exploitation and the patriarchal social model's treatment of women. According to Shiva, only a peaceful, anti-capitalist culture can end such exploitation.¹⁸

This clearly reflects her influence by Gandhi's peace movement, which advocated for nonviolent struggle to achieve freedom and independence for oppressed and colonized peoples. Similarly, Vandana Shiva calls for peaceful resistance to protect the environment from the harmful exploitation it faces, which has become a genuine threat. Industrial science, she argues, has turned into a force that exploits and destroys nature. Shiva emphasizes that the ferocity of capitalism has intensified the exploitation of nature, women, and Third World countries. Therefore, a path of peaceful struggle is necessary to confront the savage irrationality of capitalism and its agents.

¹⁶(Habib Maalouf, *Backward in Critique of Progress Trends*, Dar Al-Farabi, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st Edition, 2010, p. 301.

¹⁷Michael Zimmerman, *Environmental Philosophy*, translated by Moin Shafiq Roumia, *Al-Ma'arifah Series*, Issue 333, Part 2, Kuwait, 2006, pp. 10–11.

¹⁸Michael Zimmerman, *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Deep Ecology*, translated by Moin Shafiq Roumia, *Al-Ma'arifah Series*, Issue 333, Part 1, Kuwait, 2006, Introduction.

Françoise d'Eaubonne (1920-2005): The contemporary French philosopher attempted to draw attention to the possibility of women initiating an ecological revolution. She pointed out historical, empirical, symbolic, and theoretical links between the domination of women and the domination of nature, asserting that understanding these connections is essential for both feminism and environmental ethics.¹⁹ The French philosopher sought to reveal and emphasize the parallels in the suffering caused by oppression, exploitation, and marginalization experienced by both women and the environment. She called for an ecological feminism aimed at resisting the injustices inflicted on both women and nature.

4.3. Arne Naess and Deep Ecology (born in 1939):

The first to coin the term "deep ecology" was the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in an article published in 1973 in the Norwegian journal *Inquiry*, titled "The Shallow and the Deep." He highlighted the emerging divisions in ecological thought between shallow ecology, which was dominant at the time, and which he described as focusing on pollution and the depletion of natural resources, primarily addressing environmental problems from the perspective of the health and well-being of people in developed countries, and deep ecology, which he defined as broader and more profound. Deep ecology views such concerns as merely part of its wider focus.²⁰

Naess argued that deep ecology adopts a holistic approach to environmental concerns, irrespective of the cultural centrality of developed or developing nations. Its primary aim is to protect the environment and nature, as opposed to shallow ecology, which prioritizes the interests and well-being of developed nations.

The distinction between "shallow" and "deep" goes beyond linguistic differences to represent two different intellectual approaches. For instance, shallow ecology views pollution as a problem that can be mitigated through modern scientific technology, such as air purification and pollution controls imposed on corporations to reduce harmful emissions. Shallow ecology also suggests exporting waste to less developed nations for disposal, often for a small monetary return²¹. This stands in contrast to deep ecology, which seeks a fundamental and non-exploitative solution to environmental issues. Deep ecology rejects practices that are discriminatory or exploitative, advocating solutions that are equitable and universally inclusive.

Shallow ecology, in its essence, is a voice for aggressive capitalism, constructed to allow a small elite to dominate the world while exploiting the resources of non-industrialized nations. Unfortunately, it aims to turn the developing world into a dumping ground for waste. In contrast, deep ecology champions the entire humanity and rejects discrimination and exploitation, aiming to protect the global environment. Its purpose is moral rather than profit-driven, seeking to preserve the planet's biodiversity and ensure the continuity of life.

5. The main goals of deep ecology are as follows:

- To employ philosophy and science to serve and protect the environment, and to promote ecological equality among all living beings, free from a civilizational or anthropocentric perspective.

¹⁹ Michael Zimmerman, *Environmental Philosophy*, p. 95

²⁰ *Ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 15.

²¹ Rashid ElHamed and Muhammad Said Sabbarini, *The Environment and Its Problems*, Dar Al-Maarifa Series, Kuwait, October 1979, Introduction of book.

- To appreciate diversity and coexistence among the components of nature, to maintain a profound respect for nature and its elements, and to adopt a non-classist stance towards it.
- Deep ecology aims to reduce the exploitation of nature and its resources, prevent environmental harm, and curb the environmental damage caused by developed and industrialized countries in the third world.
- Arne Naess sought through deep ecology to revive environmental consciousness, which spread in the 1960s and led to an environmental revolution that impacted political, economic, and social fields.
- To achieve ecological equality between all living beings and humans, without preferring one over the other, and to promote ecological coexistence and diversity.
- Thus, it is clear that deep ecology demonstrates that the cause of the environmental problem is humanity, not nature and its components. This problem arose due to the poor interaction between humans and the environment through various activities like technological, economic, and agricultural practices. The environmental movement defends life as a supreme value, with humans no longer representing the center of the universe. They must consider other beings to preserve biodiversity and ensure the sustainability of life²².

Unfortunately, humans have become the primary enemy of the environment due to irrational and sometimes unethical behaviors toward its ecosystems and components. Modern technology must be refined to protect the environment, leading to the emergence of concepts like eco-friendly factories and vehicles, as well as reforestation campaigns and efforts to restore destroyed areas. Deep ecology seeks to guide humanity back to rationality, prompting them to save nature from the greed and desire for domination that render them a threat.

Arne Naess was not alone in redirecting his focus to new challenges. Hans Jonas (1903–1993), the German philosopher of Jewish origin, also shifted his studies from Gnosticism to ecological concerns due to emerging crises. Jonas remarked, "I had to stop working on the Gnosticism project because something more important happened—an imminent global collapse".²³

Environmental philosophers, despite their diverse approaches and projects, agree on holding industrial technology and Western modernity's capitalism responsible for the environmental crisis. Many began their ecological philosophy by critiquing Cartesian rationalism and empirical applications, advocating for moving beyond anthropocentrism to an ecocentric worldview.

Figures like Jonas, Cairns, Taylor, and Renger initiated their critique of 17th and 18th-century philosophical and scientific modernity, holding it accountable for contemporary crises and evils. Their philosophy often began with an examination of Cartesian dualism, the scientific methodology of Bacon and Newton, and Kantian ethics.²⁴

Naess advocated for establishing a universal ecological ethics he called "ecosophy," or environmental wisdom, which re-evaluates traditional moral foundations by integrating them with

²² Habib Maalouf, "Backward in Critiquing Trends of Progress," p.29

²³ Wajdi Khairi Ghanem, Deep Ecology by Arne Naess: A Study in Contemporary Environmental Philosophy, Fayoum University Journal of Arts, Egypt, January 2021, p. 1481.

²⁴ Arne Naess, Self-Realization, Spinoza, Buddhism, and Deep Ecology, trans. Naid Mubabgh, Seuil Publishing, 2018, p. 33.

environmental and ecological considerations. His vision of green philosophy marks a significant shift in ethics, urging humans to abandon selfishness and greed to become protectors and allies of the environment.

Wars, as unethical human activities, also impact terrestrial, marine, and atmospheric environments due to the nature of the materials used. For instance, nuclear weapons inflict harm on human health and the broader environment. Bertrand Russell remarked, "The atomic bomb has been surpassed by the hydrogen bomb, raising profound doubts about science, its risks to humanity, and its potential as an existential threat to this planet".²⁵

The arms race for destructive weaponry poses a severe threat not only to human life but also to the environment. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction signals the annihilation of humanity and the degradation of its ecosystem, rendering it uninhabitable. Science, once blind, has become susceptible to calls for violence and destruction, turning technology into a genuine threat to humans and their environment.

Thus, environmental philosophy, like other contemporary humanistic philosophies, calls for a return to rationality and a reconstruction of ethics. It advocates for science to be a tool for peace, preservation of life, respect for others, and protection and enhancement of the environment rather than its degradation.

One of the pressing issues addressed by environmental philosophy is industrial waste, which poses significant environmental risks. The quantity and quality of waste vary, as do their impacts on the environment based on their degree of toxicity. Some industrial byproducts are highly toxic, endangering all forms of life. To mitigate these risks, environmental philosophy urges scientists and researchers to find sustainable and safe methods for waste disposal, minimizing harm to the environment.

6.The main conclusions we reach are as follows:

- Although environmental problems began with the Industrial Revolution and its resultant pollution, genuine concern for the environment came much later. Environmental philosophy only emerged after warning signs of danger sounded, environmental threats became significant, pollution rates accelerated, and large areas of forests disappeared globally.

Environmental philosophy is a contemporary field within applied ethics. It is fundamentally an ethical philosophy advocating for the preservation and protection of the environment from all threats. It holds humans morally and civilizationaly accountable for their environment, urging them to use technology and science wisely, as their misuse has harmed both humanity and the environment.

- Environmental philosophy differs from earlier philosophies that placed humans at the center, relegating everything else to the periphery. Instead, it shifts the environment from the margins to the center, sanctifying it and granting it rights that modern humans must respect and value through adherence to new ethics distinct from classical ones.

- Environmental awareness is the solution, according to Roger Scruton, forming the basis of environmental philosophical thought. Awareness of the threats to our environment and its dissemination can awaken human consciousness, revive it after its dormancy, and make it

²⁵Fathi Drara, *The Environment in Confronting Pollution*, Al-Amal Publishing, Algeria, 2006, pp. 122–123.

accountable for the harm inflicted on the environment due to industrial and technological practices that deviated from their intended purpose and became genuine environmental threats.

- Ecofeminism is one of the issues within environmental philosophy. Drawing inspiration from contemporary feminist movements and thought, it views the environment as a marginalized and exploited woman, advocating for its defense and rights. The environment is likened to a nurturing mother for humanity, but human practices have harmed it. Ecofeminism argues for restoring the environment's status and rights, treating it as a central figure rather than marginalizing it.

- Environmental philosophy is often associated with revolutionary and liberationist ideas. Just as nations seek liberation from colonialism and exploitation, the environment seeks freedom from the injustices and dangers posed by science and technology. This philosophy is closely linked to many rights organizations advocating for a green environment.

The concept of deep ecology is one of the critical issues addressed by some contemporary philosophers. Initiated by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, it emphasizes a holistic approach to environmental care, calling for cooperation between major industrialized nations and developing countries to preserve and protect the environment.

The environment faces numerous threats, particularly those related to toxic and industrial waste. Environmental philosophy advocates for using technology and science to dispose of such waste safely, ensuring the protection and safety of the environment. Wars also pose a significant environmental threat due to the materials used in weaponry, which can eradicate all forms of life if misused, such as nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and biological weapons.

7.Conclusion

From the above analysis, we arrive at a crucial idea in our research: the value of philosophy and its civilizational role throughout history. Whenever crises arise in human societies, philosophy has provided solutions and addressed these problems.

Environmental philosophy illustrates how philosophy contributes to understanding environmental issues, identifying their root causes, and subsequently offering solutions. As a contemporary philosophy, it aims to awaken human conscience and direct it to consider the environment suffering under humanity's reckless practices.

Environmental philosophy serves as a critical reflection on Western modernity, highlighting the damage it has caused to the environment. It is an ethical trial of modern science, the industrial revolution, and its repercussions, as well as capitalism and its practices. It critiques the modern rational mind, which produced technology—a technology that, despite advancing human life and ensuring comfort, has, in its darker and unspoken aspects, become a danger threatening life on this planet.

Environmental philosophy is primarily an ethical philosophy aiming to build a new human awareness centered on the environment, its preservation, and protection. It calls for the rational and ethical utilization of resources, ensuring no harm to the environment and enabling the continuation of life on this planet, which faces numerous environmental challenges such as global warming, ozone depletion, pollution, and ecological imbalances resulting from irrational and unethical

human practices. Environmental philosophy advocates for rebuilding the human-environment relationship based on respect and noble ethical values.

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