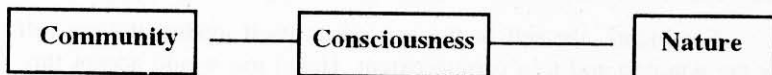


PHILOSOPHY AS GEO-PHILIA : TOWARDS THE RECOVERY OF THE IDEA OF THE EARTH

In about 1957, Merleau Ponty gave a series of lectures at the College de France, on the idea of the Earth, which he took to be the culminating idea of Husserl's later philosophy.¹ In these lectures, he retraced the history of nature and attempted to disengage a fundamental ontological sense of nature from that history; he, in particular, remarked that we must overcome what he called "the Copernican conception" according to which nature is only an object in Euclidean space. "We must again learn a mode of being whose conception the Copernican has lost-the being of the ground and that of the Earth, first of all-the earth where we live".²

Ever since Kant³, we have come to realise that our experience and knowledge are no mere passive reflections of what is antecedently given, but that we organise our experience by way of a certain activity and spontaneity of the mind. This is the demand of the transcendental orientation that we see the world as the accomplishment of the subject. It is because of this that Heidegger claimed that every philosophy, whether it is conscious of it or not, must turn to the subject and indeed it is with this turn to the subject in Descartes, that modern philosophy begins. While one may and indeed must go beyond Descartes, yet, as Husserl has shown, no philosophy today, can fall short of the Cartesian break through to consciousness. And accordingly, the phenomenology of Husserl presents itself as *Cartesian Meditations*. In these meditations, the rule of consciousness is affirmed and acknowledged and an attempt is made to reflect upon the world of nature and of community in the light of the clarity and distinctness of the first person existence of consciousness. This indeed is the inner sense of the Copernican turn. It was an attempt to understand both the world of nature and of society or community as the constitutive accomplishments of consciousness :



The first Copernican turn was First Person philosophy⁴ in the sense that it takes as its supreme point of reference, the unity of self consciousness and it sees its basic task as the explication of experience both as experience of objects (Nature) and of experience of other subjects (community) in terms of the constitutive activity of this self consciousness. But, in this attempt to consistently philosophize in terms of the monological model, the critical programme encountered certain limitations or stresses and strains :

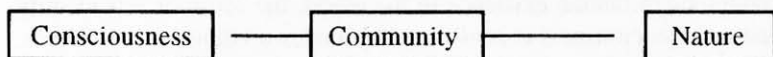
- (1) it separates the subject from the world—the contrast between the constituting and the constituted is ontologically unsurpassable;
- (2) it separates the self from others;
- (3) it introduces a division or distinction within the self between the transcendental and the natural, between the '*personalitas transcendentalis*' and the '*personalitas Psychologica*'⁵

For the monological Kantian paradigm, the essence of the human is seen in terms of the capacity for pure thought, the 'I think' which accompanies all my representations—it is the unity of self consciousness which makes any representation part of my experience. But the stresses and strains of a philosophy of consciousness, such as that of Kant soon led to the exploration of other models, other epistemic paradigms. The most powerful of these post-critical epistemic paradigms was the Hegelian one which takes *Recognition* as the primal term.⁶ It is as a critique of the presuppositions of the philosophy of consciousness that we may understand the dialectic of the master and the slave in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*.⁷ This parable, in its epistemological or transcendental sense, is the expression of Hegel's view that without interpersonal interaction there is no 'self' or 'self consciousness' and the subject is formed as such in what he calls the demand for 'recognition'—self consciousness exists in and for itself when and by the fact that it so exists for another, that is, it exists only by being acknowledged"—the self becomes aware of itself as a self only in its relation to the other; the point to note is that it is not merely the awareness or consciousness of the self but the being of the self, its being as the subject, that Hegel is talking of here.⁸

For Fichte, the self or the ego posits itself against the not self or the non-ego and to a certain extent, Hegel too would accept this.

But as Kojève goes on to point out, insofar consciousness posits itself in opposition to an object or worldly thing, its own being is that of a thing or worldly object. It is only when consciousness is in relation to another consciousness, where the impelling demand is not mere desire, but desire for recognition that it is formed as a subject i.e. as self consciousness.⁹

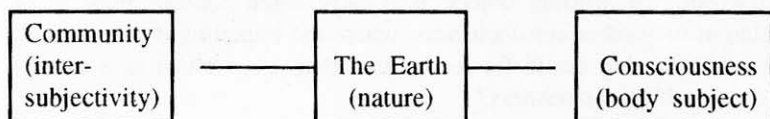
We may now describe the contours of the Philosophy of Recognition within the triadic framework of Nature, Community and consciousness, thus



Nature, in the sense of the object knowledge, feeling and will emerges out of the historically evolving patterns of inter-human description, identification and theorization; on the other hand the sense of individuality, the picture of my self as a person and hence as having a value and autonomy in my own case, is also the fruit of the same inter-human schemes of language and action.

When we go from the philosophy of consciousness to the Philosophy of Recognition, we are not simply caught in a philosophical drift; we are not simply being tossed from one paradigm to another; on the contrary, there is a certain kind of progress, perhaps the only kind that can be found in philosophy; we have the experience of reaching beyond a framework of thinking to its presuppositions and grounds. Thus, the philosophy of consciousness, the monological paradigm, is displaced when we ask as to the conditions of its possibility; when we ask, not what self consciousness is like, or even whether there is such a thing as consciousness, but given that there is self consciousness, we ask about its presuppositions. And surely one of the presuppositions is inter-subjectivity. It is only in the reciprocities of recognizing and being recognized that each one of us forms the self image of ourselves as persons. Thus, the presupposition of self consciousness is Recognition but if we ask what now are the presuppositions of recognition itself. What makes that possible, then, once again the foundations of our inquiry are lowered; once again the framework of our inquiry shifts and new epistemic horizons open up. It is in this voyage beyond the *Critique of Pure Reason* and *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* that we could come upon, *The Visible and the Invisible*¹⁰ as marking a new configuration, a new pattern

formed out of the triad of Nature, Community and Consciousness; the new pattern, the Philosophy of Participation takes shape as



In the Hegelian phenomenology of recognition, there is a universal and constant as well as a variable historical aspect. While under all conditions of human existence in the world, the sense of self identity and self consciousness is constituted by a inter-relations of individuals, (in this sense, the sociality of subjectivity is an eidetic truth) yet this inter-subjectivity assumes a variety of forms, both synchronically and diachronically. At any given time, there is a multiplicity of forms of 'sociation', as Simmel would say, in terms of which the individual forms a self image and a self conception. I am cast into many positions in which I am called upon to play a variety of roles against significant others; I am seen and treated as son or daughter, brother or sister, pupil or class mate, juvenile delinquent or social wreck or a poor lost soul. In each one of these forms, my self identity and sense of being a person is shaped but all these synchronic types, the entire spectrum of the vocabulary of self images, is itself the result of a historical process. As Hegel knew very well, the languages of the self are the products of the historical formation of culture, what he called 'the bildungs process'. The philosophy of Recognition therefore has to begin with the phenomenology of the diverse forms of inter-subjectivity. But it cannot simply treat all these moulds of the self as on the same level; there is certain order, a certain kind of stratification of these different forms. Schutz, for example, distinguishes several modes of relationship to the other, the chief ones being the mode of fellowman, consociate, functional or impersonal role relationships and predecessor and successor.¹¹ But of all these modes, it is the immediate face to face encounter with the other, where each participant is 'bodily present' that is the basic mode in the sense that it is in terms of this 'bodily presence of the other' that the other types of inter-subjective relationships can be explicated; now, what gives a special status to this mode of intersubjective experience is the phenomenon of bodily presence, for here the other is present not merely *with me* but *before me*, as an embodied being characterized

by perceptual immediacy. There are two aspects to this embodiment that we have to note at this stage. It is because the other is not a mere disembodied consciousness, a Cartesian Cogito, but exists before me in all the concreteness of carnal presence, with all the P and M—predicates, as Strawson would say¹², that I am able to recognize him, not as an object of my thought, but as a co-subject in my life. In this matter there is a certain measure of contrast with and opposition to Sartre¹³; for Sartre, the look of the other reifies me; I am, as it were, pulled back into the body and congealed. Prior to the look, I was a free floating consciousness, but the look discloses my embodiment and in that act turns me into an object. This is because for Sartre, the body is a thing; within the ontology of "*Being and Nothingness*", the in-itself and 'the for itself' exhaust all ontological possibilities. It is precisely here that the philosophy of Merleau Ponty finds its point of exit from the presuppositional world of the whole of modern philosophy. Merleau Ponty would agree that for certain purposes, the body can be treated of as an object, as a thing of physics, in the Cartesian manner, but in my experience, in perception and communication, I do not experience my body as a thing; I live in it as in a medium and also it is my living animate body which inserts me into the world thus equipping me to know it. As he puts it, "I know the world not because I am the subject and the world, an object but I am a subject who knows the world because I belong to it".¹⁴ And this brings us to the second aspect of embodiment.

In his phenomenological analysis of perception, Husserl had emphasized the transcendency of the object of perception. My perception reveals the objects as having various determinations and characteristics revealed in the perception itself; I see the tree as having leaves and fruits, with birds and squirrels and other little animals, but in the very same experience of perceiving the tree in all these determinations, the tree is also given as having other properties and attributes, not given here and now. The tree as an object, as a thing of nature, is transcendent to my perceptions of it and this transcendency is the very mark of reality or being. A thing which has no properties other than those given in the act itself, would be precisely a fiction or an imagined object; similarly we cannot conceive of any human perception, or indeed any experience whatever, which will not have this perspectival profile like character, which could present the object, not in this way of aspects and shadings but totally in all its plenitude.

For Husserl, this perspectival character of experience is an eidetic law which "not even a God can alter".¹⁵

For the point of view of embodiment, given the fact that the subject of perception is not a free floating pure consciousness but an embodied subject, it is easy to see why all experience must have this perspectival character, for the body situates me at a given place and time and also particularizes my relations to things in a uniquely personal way. But the living body not only explains the transcendency of my perceptual experiences but the fact of my embodiment also accounts for another feature of my living experience. As a counterpoint to the Husserlian theme of *transcendancy*, Merleau Ponty emphasizes the phenomenology of *intimacy*; I experience my embodiment as an inner constant experiential background, sometimes in focussed and thematic way but mostly in an implicit and subliminal manner, with a fringe consciousness; it is more 'lived thro' rather than known, but this implicit, subliminal manner of its givenness should not be taken as minimizing its epistemic importance. For one thing, it is a genuine mode of knowing—what Polanyi calls knowing by indwelling and secondly, again as Polanyi shows, all focussed and thematic awareness is possible only because of this kind of marginal consciousness, while reading text, I am keenly, centrally, aware of the meaning content precisely because of my implicit awareness of the words. Sharp localized focal awareness is possible only against the background of a large apperceptive mass of implicit knowing. But for our purposes, embodiment can be taken in larger and extended sense, in which even external things like the tools and implements to which we have been habituated, the habitats of our own past and the familiar trees and plants and particularly animals, could be known in the mode of intimacy. Human consciousness is capable of developing a certain rapport with things and on the basis of that intimacy, it acquires, on the one hand, the skills of tact and sub-liminal discrimination and on the other a tendency to invest natural objects with personal significance. The first, the phenomenon of tact, is at the bottom of all human powers of craftsmanship, while the second is the seed bed of culture and art. And in the other direction, just as it is our presence to each other as embodied subjects which makes our mutual recognition possible, it is also our embodiment that explains the peculiar historicity of human intersubjectivity of. A tradition is made possible by communication and the networks of relationships that follow such extended

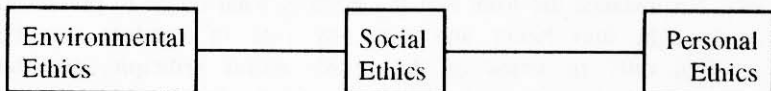
communications and here again, as Husserl observed in *The Origin of Geometry*¹⁶, it is language that preserves the objectivity and inter-generational availability of funded knowledge. But not only knowledge, but every form of human discovery and acquisition also enters into history as tradition only by passing into language. Secondly, the sedimentation of our historical existence in the form of buildings, cities, implements, tools, temples and fortresses, academics, libraries, work places, leisure reports and places of dwelling and places of dying, in fact, the entire life cycle from birth to death can be objectified and hence made recognisable as meaningful only by the material sedimentation of ideas, feelings and values. The very sense of identity of a people, the continuity of a culture, is represented by these sedimentations. In that sense, our unique human sociality also is rendered possible by the mediation of nature. It is in this sense that, for a philosophy of Participation, the single most important fact which holds the clue to all the enigmas of history and consciousness is the fact that throughout the entire period of its existence, homo sapiens has lived and evolved only on the planet earth. This perspective does not deny either the Philosophy of Consciousness or the Philosophy of Recognition. But it is to ground the Critique of Reason and the Phenomenology of the Spirit in an ontology of Nature. Reason as well as Recognition, Consciousness as well as History— both reflect and express the exigencies of life. My knowing, from the simple perceptual affirmation of ordinary experience to the astonishing constructions of the scientific genius, is the knowing of a being pre-adapted to this planet and which has gone through a complex evolutionary process on this planet in the course of which it has developed its perceptual, conceptual and imaginative powers; the forms of beauty that I create, the orders of harmony which I can recognise and respond to— these too are the precipitates of an earthly habitat and evolution. And also the forms of fellowship and community, the patterns of interaction and sharing with others— these configurations of sociality also are the dispositions of a being which can have one and only one home— the planet earth. And lastly, the ideals that move us, the images of goodness and purity— these are not of course empty fancies; the philosophy of participation need not deny the human spirit in order to affirm nature but these perfections of the spirit, if we read them rightly, only clarify our natural existence. The heights of the spirit are a measure of the depths of our belonging to the earth. The philosophy of participation does not, in short, deny science, religion

art and ethics; it only bids us understand them as what they are—the science, religion, art and ethics of beings, which in all immensity of time and the vastness of space, amidst all the millions of possible worlds, have however evolved on this planet in a complex symbiosis of plant, animal and insect life.

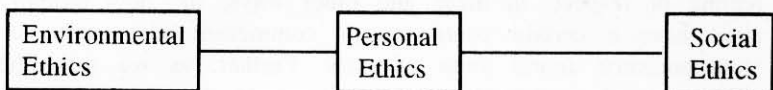
Husserl once described the phenomenological standpoint as the discovery of the third dimension by plane beings¹⁷. In one sense such a discovery does not add any new truth or principle to our knowledge; it is not a change in the content but in the form of our knowledge. Perhaps the same could be said of the Philosophy of Participation in a much truer sense; after all, the Earth is not something which is strange and unfamiliar to us and its discovery is not like the discovery of a new planet in some alien star system; indeed, we have entire sciences dealing with the earth, we have a geology and a geography and oceanography and also the sciences of rivers and lakes and forests and fields. And of the life on earth also, we have an impressive amount of knowledge and information. The forgetfulness of the Copernican man is a strange kind of amnesia; it is not the forgetting of any fact or theory. Nor is the discovery of the earth, the discovery of a new fact or set of facts about our planet. In one sense, after the discovery, nothing changes; as Husserl said of the 'epoche' nothing is added and nothing taken away; what was true before does not become false and what was false before does not become true. But in another sense everything has changed; everything appears in a new light, because our approach, our perspective has changed. And this change, although it has consequences for all the sciences and all the arts, is not basically theoretical or aesthetic change. It is, in its inmost core, a change in our sense of value and the good—a moral change.

In the dominant traditions of the Western moral theory, morality has been understood as essentially or primarily a feature of the realtions between human individuals in ever widening contexts of interaction. In this sense, the primary context of the moral is the social but once a moral point of view has been formed out of social and communal life, it is possible to consider human relations with nature in a derivatively moral sense; so also one can develop a personal ethics concerning one's own inner or subjective life. But both these extensions of the moral point of view, towards the ecological and the personal, are, as it were, only quasi moralities,

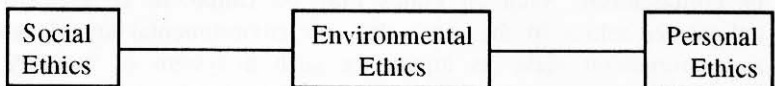
or moral by way of analogy. This position can be represented as :



This particular moral sensibility has a certain affinity with the political for both ethics and politics are dimensions of the life of a community. But there has been another tradition also, a more inward looking one, which sees an affinity with the religious or the spiritual. This too may be represented as :



Howsoever much the two paradigms may differ in other respects, they yet share a common fundamental presupposition, namely, that only humans are the bearers of intrinsic value and hence only they have rights in the strong moral sense. It is this presupposition about value which is changed when we go over to the third paradigm :



There has been an intense debate in recent years over the issue of the continuity or otherwise of environmental ethics (in the sense of deep ecology) with traditional humanist ethics. On the one hand, people like Leopold¹⁸, think of environmental ethics as the extension and generalization of the evolving moral point of view, whereas others, after Lynn White¹⁹, see the ethics of deep ecology as involving a radical break with the prevailing assumptions and presuppositions about the good. Here again the Philosophy of Participation would bid us see the relationship between the old and the new morality in a more dialectical manner. In one sense, the earth ethics is dependent upon the traditional ethics, for it has to use the concepts and conceptual distinctions and connections of the language of the moral. A new morality cannot be introduced to us, without in any way presupposing a background moral or meta ethical context; hence the traditional moral discourse functions somewhat like the meta

language for the new morality. Categories like intrinsic value and instrumental value and the more important categorial intuitions like, for instance the truth that the good is what ought to be preserved or brought into being and that any rule of conduct can be justified only in terms of the above moral principle, are the necessary devices through which the intelligibility and authority of the new moral attitude can be shown. Also, as Kant very well saw, human morality is the morality of respect and since respect is a feeling, the supreme principle of morality, or the moral law, must be not merely rational but it must also be such that it can move the will by way of giving rise to a feeling of respect. In these and other ways, the new morality must have a certain continuity or commensurability with the anthropocentric moral point of view. Further, as we saw, the philosophy of participation is not a simple denial or negation of the uniqueness and privilege of the human; in its own way it is also a humanism. Hence it cannot simply negate the core intuitions of a humanist ethics. But at the same time, the new morality is not a mere extension; to see it as a mere extension would be precisely the standpoint of an enlightened liberalism or utilitarianism. Such an ethics may be called an ecologically enlightened ethics in the sense that our environmental knowledge and information serve as inputs for such a system of morality; therefore, its prescriptions and recommendations do take environmental conditions and consequences into account. But such ecological experience and knowledge do not lead to any genuine or radical *moral discovery*; for such an enlightened liberalism, the human is the only form of intrinsic value.

The earth ethics breaks with the prevailing moral consensus precisely at this point, for such an ethics. Nature also is an intrinsic value²⁰ but in a sense such a formulation is seriously misleading for it makes it appear that it is only a case of addition, only an extension of the principle of value. But the idea of the intrinsic value of natural entities is a conceptual explosive which, when introduced into the framework of the prevailing moral point of view, shatters everything within that framework; all the necessary moral concepts and the relations between them, are stretched to the breaking point and the coherence of the whole is seriously jeopardized. Hence we can understand

why some feel that the point of view of deep ecology is conceptually incoherent, that it cannot be thought through with consistency.

One cannot simply dismiss these reservations and doubts as merely the remnants of anthropocentric hubris, for the notion of the intrinsic value of natural entities does raise serious moral and philosophical problems.

Persons are said to be bearers of intrinsic value; if we now speak of nature as also an intrinsic value, what is the relation between the two? Is there *one* concept of intrinsic value applicable to both or are there *two* different concepts of intrinsic value?

When we describe both nature and humans as intrinsic values, are we bridging the gulf between these two? And how do we understand this attempt—are we bringing nature up to the human level i.e., *humanizing nature*, or are we recognising that man also is a natural entity i.e., *naturalizing the human*?

In cases of conflict between these two sets of value, how do we respond to such conflicts? Do we have a criterion of choice and does this criterion justify the sacrifices we may have to make and even more importantly, by what theoretical principles, can we make sense of the sacrifice of intrinsic value?

And granted that we can speak of a non-human in as an intrinsic value can we extend this to the *eco-system* as a whole. Is the eco- system or nature an individual?

The humanistic understanding of intrinsic value is based on an exclusivist criterion— on what distinguishes the human from the rest of nature, while there have been different views on the question of the human essence, yet all of them had one common point— since they were based on the logic of exclusion, *nothing else* could be an intrinsic value. But the philosophy of participation must think of intrinsic value precisely in terms of shareability, in terms of something for which there could be human as well as animal and plant exemplifications. Because of this, there would arise problems of grading of more or less of exemplifications of intrinsic value but even for the traditional theory, such problems would arise, although there is a tendency

to brush them under the carpet (for instance, the value status of children, unborn fetuses, the mentally retarded etc.) The basic term or fundamental value predicate must be something which has both human and non-human domains of application and at the same time, it must be *morally relevant* e.g. if it is shown that something has the chosen property or attribute say, R, then from the fact that "X is R", morally relevant consequences such as "X ought to be protected", "it is right to take care of X" etc. follow.

Keeping these things in the mind, I suggest that the relevant characteristic may be thought of as 'richness'²¹. While the task of developing a theory of value as richness is taken up in the sequel to the present work, I would like to offer a few orienting comments on the idea of richness as intrinsic value. First of all, it can easily be seen that richness is a good in the *morally relevant sense*, for from 'X is rich in the relevant sense' it seem to follow that 'it ought to be protected'²². One could, of course, say that this ancient rain forest is a rich eco-system, but its preservation is of no concern to us- there is no formal self contradiction, but there is a kind of conceptual incoherence as in saying "I know P but I do not believe it or in saying" "I ought to do X but I am not inclined to do so".

Secondly, the concept of richness has many dimensions or aspects to it²³, such that it has a built-in-basis for developing a theory of gradations of value, for some of these dimensions have a certain obvious claim over others Thirdly, in the light of the multidimensional character of richness as a value, it can be seen that it has a natural application to human beings also i.e. humans can be seen as instances of natural richness in the relevant sense. But one particular aspect of richness becomes particularly relevant in the context of the application of the idea to human beings.

I suggest one of the aspects of richness as a value is the *serviceability of the thing*²⁴. But this serviceability itself can be distinguished into various types, (i) to individuals of the same kind (intra-species serviceability), (ii) to individuals of other species (inter-species serviceability) and (iii) to the eco system as a

whole (systemic serviceability). While all these three are interlinked, in the sense that the fulfilment of (i) has implications for (ii) and (iii), such serviceability may be called *indirect serviceability* whereas when (ii) and (iii) themselves act as *motivations for behaviour*, it could be said to be *direct serviceability*. In terms of these two distinctions, one could suggest a principle of value ordering : *the larger the domain of direct serviceability, the greater the richness of the thing and hence the more the intrinsic value*. Since the value of the thing enhances the status of the thing which has the value, from the above it follows that environmentally protective action enhances the intrinsic value of human beings and *hence an enrichment*. From this point, it is only a step to the recognition of "the ecological imperative", as Alfred Leopold puts it "Treat the beauty and integrity of the eco system not only as a means but as an end in itself"²⁵. To have regard for the eco-system not merely as a means but as an end in itself is to have a respect or reverence for the eco system in a morally relevant sense; we may call it *ecological respect* and relate it to the *respect for persons*. Since persons are said to be ends and not merely means, the phenomenology of respect as we find it in Kant's moral theory may provide a clue to the understanding of ecological respect.²⁶

For Kant, respect or reverence is a feeling produced in us by the recognition of the moral law or the categorical imperative; this recognition of the authority of the moral law is itself an achievement of pure practical reason, but it produces in me a feeling, which is *sui generis*. It is this feeling which as respect or reverence, is essential for moral action. This feeling of respect, as Kant describes it, has two sides to it— on the one hand, a subjection or subordination and on the other, a self exaltation or enhancement. As Kant remarks, the distinctiveness of the human form of morality is that man experiences the moral in the form of a commandment or imperative; we have, as he says a moral will, not a holy one. But within imperatives in general, the moral is a pure obligation, a categorical and not a hypothetical imperative. It does not propose that we ought to do is what we want or desire; it simply proposes that we ought to do X whether we may desire or not desire. It disconnects our sense of obligation from all desire and inclination and subordinates

all our other needs and powers to this one demand of doing what we ought to. In recognizing such an absolute demand and its uncontestable authority over me, in my acceptance of the sovereignty of the moral law over all passions and inclinations, in short, in my conception of myself as a moral subject, I experience a subjection, a subordination of the self- I am under the governance of the moral law and this governance is absolute and uncontestable- there is simply no other court of appeal, not even religion.

The recognition of the moral law as imposing a pure obligation upon us has two aspects to it; if on the one hand, it leads to recognition of the overriding authority of the ought, of the subjection of the self to its unconditional demand, yet in the self same experience of obligation, there is also a moment of self exaltation or enhancement. Along with the bindingness of the obligation, I also experience a certain equally unconditional power for since 'ought' implies 'can', I also become aware of that in me which is capable of living up to the demands placed upon me; I know that my will is free and that it can move me purely by the recognition of what ought to be done. I can suspend the force of inclination and desire and act solely from the sense of what I ought to do. In this recognition of my freedom, I recognise that I am not merely a worldly or natural being determined by the laws of causality but I am also an end, a noumenon and as such, capable of another kind of possibility— the laws of freedom. This realisation exalts me for now in my noumenal freedom, I realise an intrinsic value, as a member of the kingdom of ends.

It is this dialectic of self subordination and self exaltation, of phenomenal subordination and noumenal enhancement which constitutes the feeling of moral respect in Kant's phenomenology of the moral consciousness. To this dialectic of subordination and exaltation, we must also add a third element— the feeling of respect also discloses me as a member of the kingdom of ends.

As Heidegger remarks, Kant's analysis of respect is one of the finest phenomenological analyses in moral theory and hence may serve as model for our own attempt to classify the

notion of *ecological respect*.

Like in the case of moral respect, in the case of ecological respect also, we can discover a dialectic of self subordination and self exaltation.

When I reflect how my individual presence here and now in the mode in which I exist and experience the world, goes back to the very beginning of life on this planet, and how behind me there is an unbroken generational bond of filiation which stretches across the millinea of recorded as well as unrecorded prehistory, of how the seeds of my strenghts and vulnerabilities have been prepared for in these successive stages of formation, when looking beyond my own individual case, I reflect that the same is true of every one who lives now, or once lived or will live on this planet, namely, that behind every one of us, literally the whole of the past of humanity is mobilized and in this vast field of forces every one of us has an unbroken line of descent going right to the very first dawn of the human race, when further, I look beyond individual geneologies and consider the evolutionary process itself which has led to me and where I stand now and when I realise the complex and incessant patterns of connection and relationships in which our lives and those of other species have been woven together and further when I realise that every one of our human powers and capacities has been made possible by this pattern of a common evolutionary destiny, when, in short, I understand what it means to say that we are the children of the earth and that the earth has been and shall be the only home we can recognise as our home, I feel a self subordination. Ecology discloses the world as an evolving community of life in which I have membership but not mastery. But at the same time, it reveals me as having a particular niche in this web of life. It is the same ecological science which leads to my self subordination, which also exalts me, for on the one hand, the human subject has an understanding of not only what is the nature and requirements of its own position in the ecological system, but it also has an understanding of almost all other species and their needs and requirement. In that sense, the human subject has an awareness of not only its own good but the good of all other species. Unlike other forms of life, humans can come to have an idea of the world

from the view point of other species, they can go a long way towards understanding the image of the earth as the home for myriad forms of life. A single species, one in the midst of millions, and yet in its consciousness, it can represent the good of all; it can think in the place of all. But not merely think; today, we do have a large fund of preservationist and conservationist power. We have the knowledge and the power for a custodial role. Knowledge and power, science and technology can give but the motivation can come only from a feeling of ecological respect. Here too the principle of Kantian ethics holds—the will must be moved by a respect for the environment.

And that leads us to a final question; are we capable of that feeling of respect for the environment? If it should turn out that such a feeling places too great demands upon human beings, that it expects the impossible from human psychology, then the entire argumentation for a transformation of our ethical frameworks for the need for a philosophy of the earth would be subverted. Hence, in a way, that is the decisive question of all. Is what we have been describing as Geo-Philia— is that a real possibility for us? Without anticipating the details of the argumentation with which my current work '*Philosophy as Geo Philia*' is concerned at this point. I would like to indicate the lines of response to the question about the possibility of such a mood as Geo Philia. Now the question whether a certain kind of fundamental attitude or feeling is possible or not is a peculiar kind of question. It is not simply or straightforwardly a factual or empirical question; it is partly a conceptual question in the sense that it is asking whether we can clarify the presuppositions implied by such a possibility. Behind such a question, lies a certain image of human nature and its relation to the world. And the question about the possibility of Geo Philia is firstly whether we can give a clear philosophical articulation of this image of what it is to be human vis-a-vis the world.

But the task of clarification of the possibility of Geo Philia cannot be halted merely at the level of philosophical presuppositions and images of human nature; one must enter into other matrices of intelligibility, into other 'symbolic forms' in Ernst Cassirer's sense, and see how these give further content and form to the idea of participation. In other words, one must think in terms

of a philosophy of science and a philosophy of art and philosophy of religion in the light of the recovery of the idea of the Earth. It is precisely in this form that I shall be concerned with the project to Geo Philia in my next work. But that extended discussion of science and art and religion is given an orientation by a few broad themes of our evolutionary history on the plants:

1. Throughout its history, the human species has lived and evolved only on this planet.
2. In the course of this evolution, the human species has developed complex and pervasive bonds with the natural environment, which bonds have a way of making themselves felt even when we are ignorant of them, or forget them or seek to deny them.
3. Such bonds have given rise to needs which pervade every aspect of our lives.
4. We are beginning to realise that such needs for contact and communication with other species, when frustrated may lead to all sorts of unsuspected deprivations and deficits. On the other hand, the fulfilment of such communicational needs is a particularly satisfying and even a healing process; we are beginning to suspect that ecological respect may have a therapeutic meaning as well.
5. On the other side of the fence, as recent studies of animal communication and animal learning suggest, humans seem to stimulate the cognitive potentials of other species; it appears possible that we can play another role than that of the predator.

All these indications seem to suggest that almost as if there is a genetic base to ecological respect. We can respect nature, geophilia is natural.

NOTES

1. Merleau Ponty's lectures at the College de France in 1957 quoted in "*The Phenomenology of Merleau Ponty*" by Gary Madison. Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, 1981, p.213.
2. *Ibid.*,
3. Marjorie Grene in her "The Paradoxes of Historicity" has argued similarly for a return to the natural context of philosophical anthropology. Marjorie Grene, "The Paradoxes of 'Historicity'" in '*Hermeneutics and Modern Philosophy*' (ed) Brice R. Wachterhauser, State University of New York, New York, 1986, pp.168-92.
4. The idea of a First person Philosophy is discussed in "*In the Spirit of Hegel: A Study of G.W.F. Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*" Oxford University Press, New York, 1983, p.427.

For an elaborate discussion of the three aspects of the subject in Kant, see Martin Heidegger: *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (trans.) Albert Hofstadler, Indiana, University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1982, p. 137
6. See Robert Solomon, "*In the Spirit of Hegel*".
7. For this interpretation of the dialectic of the Master and the Bondsman in the Phenomenology, see "*History and Truth in Hegel's Phenomenology*", Merold Westphal, Humanities Press, NJ, 1979.
8. Robert Solomon, "*In the Spirit of Hegel*", p. 427.
9. *Ibid.*,
10. Merleau Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (trans.) Alphonso Lingis, North Western University Press, Evanston, 1968.
11. Alfred Schutz, *The Structures of the Life World* (trans.) Richard Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, North Western University Press, Evanston, 1973.
12. P.F. Strawson, 'The Concept of Person' in *Individuals* Methuen, London, 1953, chapter 3.
13. Jean Pual Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (trans.) Hazel E. Barnes, pt. III, chapter 1, sec. IV. Washington Square Press, 1956.
14. Merleau Ponty quoted in "*From Phenomenology to Metaphysics: An Inquiry into the Last Period of Merleau Ponty's Philosophical Life*" Remy Kwant, Duquesenne University, Pittsburgh, 1966.

15. Edmund Husserl. "Ideas Towards a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy" (trans.) F. Kerston, sec. 44, pp. 94-95, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1983.
16. Edmund Husserl. *The Origin of Geometry*, Appendix in "The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology : An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy" (trans) David Carr, pp. 353-379, North Western University Press, Evanston, 1970.
17. Edmund Husserl. *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, pp. 119-120.
18. Alfred Leopold, "The Land Ethic" in *A Sand County Almanac*, Oxford University Press.
19. Lynn White "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis" *Science* 155, 37, see also his *Machina Ex Deo*.
20. Peter Miller. Value as Richness : Toward A Value Theory for the Expanded Naturalism in Environmental Ethics, *Environmental Ethics*, 1982, vol.4, No.2.
21. *Ibid.*,
22. *Ibid.*,
23. Peter Miller in the above article provides an exhaustive discussion of this point, but for our present purpose, only one of the dimensions of 'richness' is relevant.
24. The interpretation of 'serviceability' suggested differs from that of Miller.
25. Alfred Leopold. *The Land Ethic*.
26. The Phenomenology of *ecological respect* is modelled on Heidegger's interpretation of respect for the moral law in Kant. See "*The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*", Martin Heidegger, pp. 131-137.

INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATIONS

Daya Krishna and A.M. Ghose (eds) Contemporary Philosophical Problems : Some Classical Indian Perspectives, Rs.10/-

S.V. Bokil (Tran) Elements of Metaphysics Within the Reach of Everyone, Rs.25/-

A.P. Rao, Three Lectures on John Rawls, Rs.10/-

Ramchandra Gandhi (ed) Language, Tradition and Modern Civilization, Rs.50/-

S.S. Barlingay, Beliefs, Reasons and Reflections, Rs.70/-

Daya Krishna, A.M.Ghose and P.K.Srivastav (eds) The Philosophy of Kalidas Bhattacharyya, Rs.60/-

M.P. Marathe, Meena A.Kelkar and P.P.Gokhale (eds) Studies in Jainism, Rs.50/-

R. Sundara Rajan, Innovative Competence and Social Change, Rs. 25/-

S.S.Barlingay (ed), A Critical Survey of Completed Research Work in Philosophy in Indian Universities (upto 1980) , Part I, Rs.50/-

R.K.Gupta, Exercises in Conceptual Understanding, Rs.25/-

Vidyut Aklujkar, Primacy of Linguistic Units, Rs.30/-

Rajendra Prasad , Regularity, Normativity & Rules of Language Rs.100/-

**Contact : The Editor,
Indian Philosophical Quarterly
Department of Philosophy
University of Poona,
Pune - 411 007**