

## PREFACE

We all know that we are in an environmentally endangered period, like Pesticides in the ground water, ozone holes and soaring extinction rates. When we think that we are distinct from the world, we also open up the possibility of its exploitation and destruction. Thus, we are the causes of destroying our environment. Humans must live in response to nature in encounter with their natural environment. Humans have a responsibility towards nature, is among the more recent philosophical discoveries, although not without precedent in the past. Humans have always had impact on their environment, killing animals for food or plowing fields, and entertainment.

Like no humans before us, we know Earth with its past evolutionary story, we know its present fauna, flora, ecosystems and we hold Earth's future in our hands. The accumulation of that power is evident in the ecological crises of the latter half of the twentieth century in the threats of catastrophic extinctions, for example. What was for so long a "given" has of late become an "obligation". Human's absolute anthropocentric or despot like attitude unconstrained by ethics is subject of great ecological abuse. We do not yet have an adequate ethics for this planet Earth and its communities of life. Towards that end, an attempt has been made in this dissertation with widening ethical scope, exploring values carried by the natural world, and responsibilities towards future generations. In this respect, we have tried to introduce environmental ethics, which we think can solve environmental problems to face by future generations and save the world from global catastrophe.

The idea of the present topic came to my mind during the discussion with my supervisor. But the germ of interest in the area of Environmental Ethics grew-up within me during my post graduate

classes in NBU. I found it interesting as to what should be the responsibilities of human beings towards future generations from environmental ethical perspective. Thus, when time came to select the exact topic of M. Phil dissertation, I readily took up the topic, by receiving some valuable suggestions of my supervisor Dr. Laxmikanta Padhi. After completion of my M. Phil degree I have registered for Ph. D degree. What was incomplete in my M. Phil dissertation I have tried to clarify it in my Ph. D thesis.

The bibliographical notes contain some of the books with which I am not directly acquainted. The names of the books in the bibliography are added with the hope that the future researchers will be benefited.

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