

Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy

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JACKSON TO WRIGHT
APPENDICES, INDEX

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the promotion of alternative ecological lifestyles in the 1970s and 1980s. Like the Danish People's High Schools of the 1980s, the Swedish implementation of the United Nations' Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) since 2000 has gone beyond traditional pedagogy to teach values and critical reflection

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND PHILOSOPHY

The largest and most ambitious environmental research program in the humanities in Scandinavia, Man and Nature (Menneske og nature) (1992–1997), was based in Denmark at Odense University. In Sweden the best-known program is Roads to Sustainable Development (1996–2002) (Vägar till uthållig utveckling-beteenden, organisationer, strukturer).

The Swedish and Danish natural environments have influenced both countries' environmental research and philosophy. The lack of wildlife in mainland Denmark, the fact that Denmark is densely populated, and Denmark's history of decentralized and small-scale economy has inspired experimental and pragmatic environmental research and philosophy. This pragmatic take on nonhuman nature includes the view of nonhuman nature as a workshop. This view, in contrast to the Swedish theoretical view, was typical of Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) and Hans Christian Ørsted (1777–1851), who combined romantic and utilitarian views of nonhuman nature in his research.

In Sweden the heritage of Carl Linnaeus's (1707–1778) theoretical classifications approach to nonhuman nature, along with the need to understand and manage large areas of wilderness, has given birth to an almost imperialistic relationship to nonhuman nature. Nevertheless, empirical studies of Swedes' views of nonhuman nature reveal strongly nonanthropocentric, biocentric, and ecocentric attitudes.

SEE ALSO *Alternative Technology; Environmental Education; Environmental Policy; Genetically Modified Organisms and Biotechnology; Naess, Arne; Nongovernmental Organizations; Nuclear Power; Sustainable Development.*

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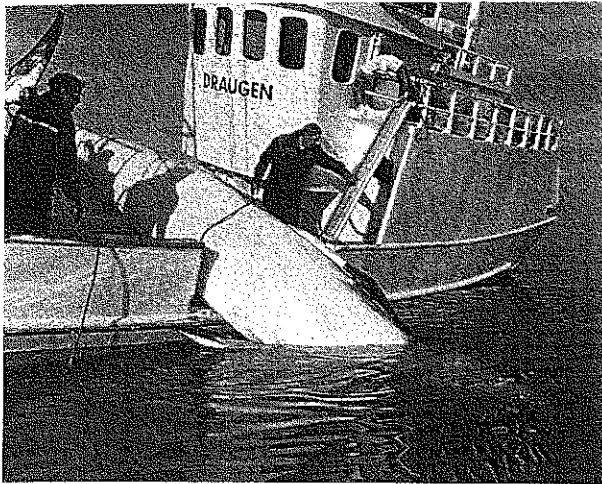
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David Kronlid

II. NORWAY

In Scandinavia the ideas of ecophilosophy, ecosophy, and ecopolitics have been a staple of debates on issues related to environmental ethics. Norway has been a hotbed of these ecologically informed philosophies, which offer unique perspectives on living in harmony with the environment. Key Norwegian thinkers include the coauthor of *The Limits to Growth* (1972), Jørgen Randers; the founder of Deep Ecology, Arne Naess; the chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development, Gro Harlem Brundtland; the politician and diplomat Rolf Edberg (1912–1997); and the peace researcher Johan Galtung.

The development of environmental ethics and philosophy gained real momentum in Scandinavia only after the 1960s. It was environmental concerns that arose abroad that triggered Norwegians into action and reflection. Rachel Carson's famous warning against pesticides in *Silent Spring* (1962) was immediately translated into key Scandinavian languages, and it inspired many people to adopt an ecological perspective. Equally important were the environmental writings of Lynn Townsend White Jr. (1907–1987) and Jacques Yves Cousteau (1910–1997), and the reflections on the technological



Whalers off the Coast of Norway, 1999. Whale blubber was once a hot commodity in Norway, used in a wide range of products. Today the price is so low that even hunters believe it is not worth the cost of hauling to land. Environmentalists around the world criticize the whaling practice for violating animal rights; Norway defends it as being sustainable. AP IMAGES.

standardization of human life and nature by the Finnish philosopher George Henrik von Wright (1916–2003).

Scholars active in the International Biological Program (IBP; an effort, from 1964 to 1974, to coordinate large-scale ecological and environmental studies) mobilized a series of students and philosophers throughout Scandinavia to rethink the human condition in the natural world. This program, initiated by members of the International Union of Biological Sciences, focused mainly on problems related to food production and management of natural resources in view of a rapidly increasing human population and widespread malnutrition in the world. In Scandinavia the program was active between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s, and fully in effect between 1967 and 1972. The managerial benefits of ecological research were, at least initially, stressed in all the Scandinavian countries. The managerial perspective gave way to a biocentrism that accorded intrinsic value to the environment as a whole. The ecologists who dominated the program pledged to deliver scientific and philosophical methods that could generate useful knowledge about the consequences of various modes of land use. Most of their research sought to achieve an energy balance between species, as articulated by the American ecologist Eugene P. Odum (1913–2002). This methodology assumed the desirability of a steady-state economy of human beings that would be in balance with steady-state economy of nature.

ECOPOLITICS VS. ANIMAL RIGHTS

The hegemony of the ecological approach may explain why the protection of individual animals failed to capture

public attention in Norway. The few vocal defenders of both animal liberation and animal rights have not been successful in translating philosophical points into political or legal achievements. A case in point is the issue of whaling, which is defended by Norwegian politicians, scientists, and environmental philosophers alike from an ecological point of view. The Norwegians have only been hunting mink whale, which, according to Norwegian marine ecologists, are not endangered. Despite criticisms from environmentalists around the world who more often than not focus on animal liberation or rights, Norwegian environmentalists thus tend to defend whaling as sustainable.

Many of the scientists involved in IBP were deeply concerned about environmental problems. For example, the Norwegian ecologist Ivar Myrnes argued that politics should be put on a secure ecological footing, and in 1970 he suggested the term *ecopolitics* to demarcate managerial environmentalism from an approach to politics based on the science of ecology. The term was quickly adopted not only by fellow ecologists but also by many scholars, activists, and students who questioned the practices of technocracy and industrialism. Much of this criticism had, since the mid-1960s, been informed by populist agrarian socialism, which persisted under the new label *ecopolitics* from 1970 onward.

Ecopolitics aims at developing a steady-state social economy that would mirror the steady-state balance of the economy of nature. One of many students inspired by steady-state reasoning was Nils Christian Stenseth, who later became a key figure in international ecological research. His first article, published at the age of twenty-three, was about *ecopolitics*. In it he argued that “all biologists should work for a *steady-state society* in place of the *growth society*,” and one should limit the human population growth to zero (1972, p. 118). Ecological modeling represented the way forward, for simulation models could determine exactly when and how to achieve a steady state.

Ecologists began to arrange seminars and various outreach activities to engage scholars in the political and social sciences and philosophy. As a result, the environmental debates in Scandinavia were often framed in terms of ecological methodologies and perspectives. In Sweden, for example, the politician and diplomat Rolf Edberg wrote several popular books about the need to take care of the environment. He described the need to achieve a more harmonious relationship to nature through the science of ecology.

Beginning in the late 1960s, there was a growing concern in Sweden about the effect of airborne industrial pollution originating elsewhere in Europe on the nation's forest industry, a topic brought to international attention

at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment that took place in Stockholm in June 1972. At the heart of the Swedish agenda was not only raising international awareness but also presenting analytical tools that could address environmental issues. One such tool was socioeconomics, an academic field with strong intellectual ties to the socialist-inspired economies of all the Scandinavian countries.

ECOPHILOSOPHY

In Norway many philosophers were impressed with the ecologists, and they would attend their lectures and participate in their seminars. The Norwegian philosopher Sigmund Kvaløy organized a Coworking Group for the Protection of Nature and the Environment inspired by the ecologists. Those with a philosophical bent met in the Ecophilosophy Group, a subsection of this loose association. Kvaløy was granted a four-year Ph.D. scholarship in philosophy starting in 1967, which he used to explore ecological thinking. He had been Arne Naess's student and assistant since 1961. In 1969 he took over Naess's introductory seminar to epistemology, "Nature and Humans," and quickly turned it into a workshop for his group's work in "ecophilosophy" (a word Kvaløy coined).

Kvaløy's students and followers were fond of quoting Karl Marx's famous saying, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." Turning words into action, the Coworking Group became an effective, hard-hitting student association that targeted hydropower developments. Most dramatic was their attempt to save the Mardøla River, which included Norway's highest waterfall, during the summer of 1970. Naess joined the Mardøla demonstration, and he decided afterward to resign his professorship so that he could devote himself fully to the environmental cause.

At the same time Naess started to attend his own "Nature and Humans" seminar, where Kvaløy was now in charge. Apparently, Naess was one of the few who took notes, and in the spring of 1971 he transformed them into a lecture series titled "Ecology and Philosophy." In these talks he introduced, for the first time, his

ecosophy ... as a type of philosophy that takes its point of departure from an identification with all life in this life-giving environment. It establishes in a way a classless society within the entire biosphere, a democracy in which we can talk about justice not only for humans but also for animals, plants, and minerals. And life will not be conceived as an antagonism unto death but an interaction with surroundings, a life-giving environment. This represents a very strong emphasis on everything hanging together and emphasizes that we are only *fragments*—not even parts. (Naess 1971, p. 54)

ECOSOPHY

The Mardøla experience and the discussions at the "Nature and Humans" seminar radicalized the thinking of Kvaløy, the charismatic leader. After the Mardøla experience he adopted from ecology the idea that a complex ecosystem is more robust than a simple one in the face of environmental changes. Inspired by Herbert Marcuse, he argued that a complex human society would have a better chance of surviving the environmental crisis than one based on the "one-dimensional man" of industrial society.

Many of the ecophilosophers, including Naess and Kvaløy, were active members of the Norwegian Alpine Club, an organization devoted to technical climbing. Among their many activities, they made several visits to the high mountains of Pakistan. It was during a trip in 1964 that Naess first formulated what later became known as the ecosophy formula. He explained his "thriving" in Pakistan's mountains as a mixture of pain and excitement in the following mathematical terms: $T = G^2 / (L_S + \dot{A}_S)$. In this equation T , *trivsel*, (thriving) equals G^2 , *glød*, (excitement squared) divided by L_S , *legemlige smerter*, (bodily pains) plus \dot{A}_S , *åndelige smerter* (spiritual pains). This formula would later serve as a key explanation of the meaning of self-realization in Naess's "Ecosophy T," with the T standing for "thriving." The "T" could also be short for Tvergastein, the name of Naess's cottage, or also "Tolkning" (interpretation) as this was important to his early philosophy. There is, however, only circumstantial evidence for these readings.

Equally important to his ecosophy was Mohandas Gandhi's (1869–1948) teaching of nonviolence, which came to the forefront of Naess's thinking after his first visit to Pakistan in 1950. Back in Oslo he gave a lecture series about Gandhi's political ethics that resulted in a book he coauthored with the young sociologist Johan Galtung that was published in 1955. In 1960 Naess followed up with a popular version of this work, which was translated as *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age* in 1965. Here he argued that people from the Europe and North America had much to learn from Gandhi given the threat of nuclear Armageddon.

DEEP ECOLOGY

Naess introduced the concept of Deep Ecology in a paper at the World Future Research Conference in Bucharest in early September 1972. The conference was organized by the World Futures Studies Federation. What dominated future studies in 1972 was *The Limits to Growth* report for the Club of Rome written, among others, by the twenty-seven-year-old Norwegian solid-state physicist Jørgen Randers. At the time Randers was entirely unknown. It was therefore a shock to Norwegian environmentalists to see him rise to world fame through a

report that came to dominate environmental debate at the United Nations' conference in Stockholm. Though *The Limits to Growth* predicted that there would be limits to natural resources, it did not predict limits to existing political systems. The MIT group behind the report was, in this respect, part of a larger trend of environmentalists looking for solutions to ecological problems within established social structures.

For Galtung and Naess the time was ripe in Bucharest to hit back at what they saw as a "shallow" technocratic analysis of the environmental situation. Galtung spoke first with his paper "The Limits to Growth and Class Politics" (1973), a head-on attack on the lack of social analysis in the report. When it was Naess's turn to mount the rostrum in Bucharest, he, too, took an anti-class posture in presenting "The Shallow and the Deep Ecology Movement" in Norway. Upon returning to Oslo Naess used his notes to compile a summary which he published as "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements" in 1973.

Ironically, the long-range ecology movement Naess spoke of faded upon his return to Oslo, as the Coworking Group for the Protection of Nature and the Environment was infiltrated and taken over by Marxist-Leninists. The group dissolved in 1973 after a period of internal cleansings and futile debates about the value of democracy. Its last unified stand came with the national referendum on membership in the European Community at the end of September 1972. The group was decisively opposed to joining, arguing that "this industrial-serving mega-society seeks to break apart the established *diversity* of sturdy self-governed and heterogeneously, traditional-colored local communities and replace them with a uniform system of government that presupposes uniform social units and a uniform culture: a simplification that increases vulnerability, according to the science of ecology" (Samarbeidsgruppa 1972, p. 91). They made their case: Norway voted against EU membership but could not decide on what to do next. As a result, the ecophilosophers split into socialist and ecological wings. Kvaløy and Naess regretted this leftward turn in the politics of ecology because it undermined the broad science-based environmentalism they sought to mobilize. They subsequently continued with their activities outside the academic realm in various environmental organizations where they, among other things, mobilized people to save the Alta River in the north of Norway.

GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND

When the young and politically inexperienced feminist Gro Harlem Brundtland became minister of the environment in 1974, she faced the ecophilosophers in various heated debates and rough conflicts. They used every

opportunity to show that the ecological steady-state society was not an herbal-tea party but a revolutionary break with industrial growth. As a medical doctor, she took a strictly anthropocentric stand against them and the ecologists claiming to speak on behalf of nature, arguing in favor of bureaucratic rules and democratic procedures instituted by humans to the benefit of humans and especially the working class she represented as the head of the Labour Party. In offering resistance to her views, both the ecophilosophers and the ecologists forced Brundtland to reflect more deeply on social aspects of environmental affairs, as she later did in *Our Common Future* (1987).

CONCLUSION

Norwegian ecologists' and environmental activists' concerns for the environmental future mobilized a series of students and philosophers to rethink the human condition in the natural world. Their innovative thinking about ecophilosophy, ecosophy, and eco-politics became part of the international debate.

SEE ALSO *Animal Ethics; Deep Ecology; Environmental Policy; Environmental Politics; Limits to Growth; Naess, Arne.*

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