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## Current Directions for Environmental Philosophy Development

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### Abstract

The relevance of the study is caused by the fact that at the present stage of human civilization development, it is faced with such a global problem as environmental one. The approaches to percept the relationship between man and nature that existed until today, based on Darwinism, natural philosophy and anthropocentrism, have brought humanity to the edge of ecological disaster, to the edge of irreversible biosphere disturbances. There need for a new understanding of the place and role of man in nature and the foundations of their interaction has emerged. It is through the prism of philosophy, through the creation of new paradigms of environmental philosophy and the changing world view of society, taking into account new environmental realities is possible to find solutions to global environmental problems. The study objective is aimed at analyzing various approaches to the current application of philosophy in the field of ecology, the definition of new trends for the development of environmental philosophy. The study results: The article discusses the main current trends of philosophical thought development aimed at solving environmental problems. It is concluded that the most promising one is the theory of Eco philosophy, which studies the general patterns of human interaction with the natural environment based on the principles of eco-humanism: environmental friendliness in relation to a specific person and humanity as a whole to nature, environmental friendliness in relations of individuals and human communities with each other. Eco philosophy makes it possible to comprehensively solve the problem of the co-evolution of human society and the biosphere. Practical significance: The materials of the article are of theoretical and practical value for the development of educational and methodical complexes on ecology and ecological philosophy, as well as programs aimed at the formation of new environmentally friendly ideological and value attitudes of modern youth.

**Keywords:** ecology, eco philosophy, philosophy of ecology, biosphere, nature, humanity

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### INTRODUCTION

The current stage of human civilization development is associated with the aggravation of environmental problems, an increase in the number of environmental disasters of anthropogenic nature and forecasts of inevitable global environmental crisis, which sharply aggravated the problem of the prospects for the ecological existence of society (Ju et al. 2017, Khusainova et al. 2018, Lubnina et al. 2016, Oborsky et al. 2018, Shcherbakov et al. 2017). Technical progress

has led to the fact that human intervention in natural processes has become comprehensive, disturbing the balance of existence, development and reproduction of ecological systems, which resulted in some cases when this intervention has become irreversible (Ambrozy et al. 2017, Hoa and Valco 2018, Sudarikov and Merkulova 2017). It is important to realize that in order to preserve the existence of humanity and the planet itself, it is necessary to change the paradigm of man's attitude to the natural world around him/her, and the very

important role here belongs to the philosophical understanding of the problems and principles of man's interaction with nature, their coexistence, mutual development and complementarity (Folomkin and Voronina 2017, Tyurikov et al. 2018, Vinogradova et al. 2018, Voronina et al. 2017). Current problems of the biosphere and the specifics of a person's attitude towards it, the need for their understanding and forecasting make significant changes to the philosophical tasks (Mironova et al. 2017). The modern world can no longer be limited only by the search for the substantiation of the objective character of nature and the processes taking place in it, as well as the existence of various interrelations between nature and man. Philosophy is designed to actively seek answers to questions about the reasons of a modern ecological crisis occurrence, about the reasons of its global nature, and possible ways and directions for overcoming it. Philosophers are increasingly beginning to study the evolution of the biosphere and its transition to a qualitatively different state - the noosphere, pay attention to finding strategies for social and environmental development, discuss various environmental problems and substantiate their theoretical and practical significance (Karako 2009).

Nowadays many scientists are talking about the incorrectness to consider the relationship between nature and society as a ratio of part and whole, to include society in nature as its part in order to emphasize their interconnection and unity and to understand the matter in its pre-social natural form of being, or to include nature in society as attempts to justify dependence man on nature which is the same mistake (Faleeva et al. 2017, Firsova et al. 2018, Sudarikov et al. 2017, Wang et al. 2018, Velieva et al. 2018). The dialectical unity of nature and society should not be considered in the context of the society involvement in nature or nature involvement in society, but solely from the point of view of their materiality. To answer the question about the nature future of the Earth, its biosphere, society and the global holistic socio-natural Universe, it is important to understand society as a specific type of social form of earthly matter's movement in struggle and unity not between specific objects of society and nature, but on the scale of Universe in general and in conjunction with other forms of motion of matter. Such an understanding will make it possible to take a fresh look at many problematic aspects of being, the development of society and nature, and their interaction and coexistence (Kvon et al. 2017, 2018, Oleynikov 2008).

In modern scientific research in a broad sense, ecology is understood as the science about several types of relationships and the interaction of living organisms and their environment: the relationship and interaction of living organisms on each other, taking into account the influence of the environment, the relationship and interaction of living organisms on each other without taking into account the influence of the environment, relationships and interaction of a living organism and its environment. In the latter case, the mutual influence is two-sided, but asymmetric, since in the historical process of evolution, the habitat has a much greater effect on the living organism than vice versa (Cherdymova et al. 2018). Ecology studies these processes at four levels: at the level of separate specimen (individuals), at the level of populations consisting of individuals of the same species, at the level of communities consisting of different sets of populations, and also at the planetary level at which different communities mutually influence each other in the process of interaction within the framework of inclusion in a single global biosphere. Man differs from animals by the feature that he/she has individuality and common moral systems, among which only humanism can have a universal status in the modern world. Therefore, ecology should become a science with humanistic orientation and all theories containing an anti-humanistic orientation should be either conceptually changed or rejected, and it is the philosophical understanding of ecology that can cope with these tasks (Simonenko 2011).

The philosophy of ecology at the present stage of development is an area of philosophical research that studies the fundamental foundations of various areas of interaction between society and the environment. It comes down from the fact that there is a global crisis of worldview, a technological civilization, including a crisis of ideas about the relationship between society and nature. Ecological philosophy should contribute to the creation of new civilizational issues of culture, value-normative attitudes, which will help to overcome the critical gap between man and nature. Its main task is to create a new ecological outlook, to formulate clear environmental imperatives of interaction between society and nature (Liseev 2017b).

One of the most important tasks of ecology modern philosophy as a young developing direction is the definition of a problem field in the system of philosophical knowledge and the creation of a single research space. The solution to this problem is carried

out in the framework of the three main areas of research in the subject of ecology philosophy:

- Substantial direction is focused on the study of ecological reality, its structure, state, interaction, interdependence and orientation of evolutionary processes. Here is the ontological content study of the subject of the philosophy of life in the ecological paradigm.

- The analytical direction studies the problems of sensory-emotional, intuitive and rational-thinking cognition of life, determines the basic concepts and formulates the theoretical principles of knowledge development, determining the epistemological aspect of the subject content of ecology philosophy.

- In the normative direction, there is an addition of descriptive research in the form that they are, prescriptions and provisions on what form they should be, that is, the issues of choosing cognitive models, prediction and assessment of trends in the development of ecological philosophy are solved. The projective philosophy characteristic of Russian cosmism is reflected here (Kolossova 2009).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Modern Philosophical Trends in the Study of Environmental Problems

Several trends, studying environmental issues has developed in modern philosophy. These include such philosophical trends as theoretical ecology, global ecology, philosophy of nature, environmentalism and a number of others.

One of the founders of ecology philosophy Kobylansky (2003) believes that the general theory of ecology is the doctrine on the general laws of construction, functioning and development of elements in the system of environmental interaction, as well as general principles for their effective use in human activity, including the activity on optimization and harmonization of such interaction itself, its management and generally ecosystems. Moreover, not any environmentally oriented interaction acts as an object of theoretical ecology, but precisely that which is an integral, two-way, relatively independent process and takes place on the border between different levels: geographical and non-geographical, living and non-living, social and natural, anthropic and non-anthropocentric (Kobylansky 2003).

Theoretical ecology is a section of general ecology that studies idealized and, in a certain sense, abstract

ecological systems of hierarchy's various levels, as well as the laws of their functioning associated with them, their integral characteristics, which determine their basic definitions and concepts. Depending on the belonging of ecological objects to a certain level of hierarchy, as the methods of theoretical ecology can be the methods of physical, chemical, biological and systemic approaches with the obligatory mathematical formalization of the derived regularities. The structure of theoretical ecology is a complex of separate theories in various areas of environmental knowledge, one way or another connected with each other. Its task is to identify the specific laws of the structural and functional organization of ecological systems of different levels of the ecological hierarchy and the peculiarities of changes in their integral characteristics in the process of evolution and development in order to find an explanation of the observed natural phenomena. Ecology is understood as the general science of biological profile, which studies the relations of organisms with organic or inorganic objects of their environment, that is, with the conditions of their existence. Theoretical ecology is intended to reveal the understanding of the essence and biological specification of ecological processes (Rosenberg 2010).

The global ecology, in the understanding of modern scientists, is a philosophical and methodological regulative, fixing the common in the interaction of any objects and their habitats, regardless of their substrates. Its main function is to isolate and create common cognitive principles for all areas of the general ecology and analyze the formation and development of innovative mechanisms in it that generate the new organizational structure of the world. Global ecology is based on the principle of globalization, according to which objective global processes and global problems of modernity are manifestations of the essential systemic crisis of modern civilization, the principle of ecologization, that is, taking into account the natural foundations of society's functioning, and the principle of sustainable development, which is based on the idea of harmonious exploitation of resources, investment directions, technological developments' orientations and institutional changes to increase the value of the its existing and future capacity to meet the needs and aspirations of each person (Ilyin 2009, Liseev 2017a, 2018).

The philosophy of nature is a complex of ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects related to environmental issues. It reflects the idea of a metaphysical way existence of studying ecology as a way

of overcoming the technological view of the world, which cannot be carried out by means of science and technology, rational thinking. The philosophy of nature is based on the fact that living experience obtained in a relationship, like the relationship itself, is as real as material objects. It is necessary to change the initial premises, the basis of the man's attitude to nature on the basis of global humanization of thinking, overcoming the division between human knowledge and human being. From the positions of dualism of classical science, when, theoretically cognizing the internal interrelations of humanity and nature, man remained in everyday life as if outside of nature, it is important to proceed to the formation of a single space of theory, knowledge and social practice based on the ecological metaphysical imperative (Merkulova and Sudarikov 2017).

Environmentalism is defined as the ecological proportionality of consciousness. The key point of the various environmental concepts is the *world of nature*, which is a combination of natural objects and complexes with concreteness, emotional coloring and subjective significance, considered in their unity and uniqueness. If *nature as environment* refers to the sphere of the material, then the *world of nature* is created by the person himself and belongs to the sphere of the ideal, being built on the material nature. The methodological and psychological peculiarity of the ecological consciousness consists in the subjectivity of human relations with nature. Environmentalism differs from the anthropocentric type of ecological consciousness in the following fundamental aspects: the inclusiveness of man in the world of nature instead of the opposition of man and nature; subjective perception of nature instead of the objective; the idealistic nature of the relationship with nature instead of pragmatic (Dzekh 2015). The main task of environmentalism is to develop the fundamentals of a crucial ecological modernization of society, economy, politics and culture, which will ensure *green growth* with a steady improvement in the quality of life of people while maintaining and developing the natural environment.

### **The Basics of Eco Philosophy as a New Direction of Philosophical Science**

At the end of the 20th century in philosophy, due to the exacerbation of problems in the field of ecology and the rapid development of scientific knowledge in the biosphere and the impact of anthropogenic factors on the processes occurring in it, a new direction appeared – eco philosophy. Its founder and author of this term, the Norwegian philosopher and ecologist A. Ness, by

eco philosophy understands the subjective wisdom, the individual value system, through the prism of which a person perceives and analyzes nature and his/her place in interaction with it. Eco philosophy, from his point of view, is related only to the consciousness of a particular person with his/her individual picture of the world, and may thus have many different forms and interpretations (Leshchenko 2014).

The founder of eco philosophy ideas in Russian science is Vernadsky (2012). His ideas about the biosphere as a single biological, geological, and physicochemical system that ensures a harmonious process of life development and the corresponding conditions for it, and the noosphere, which is formed due to the interaction of human society and the biosphere (Vernadsky 2012), formed the basis of the main modern trends of philosophical approaches' development to solving environmental problems.

Domestic researcher Timofeev-Resovskiy (2008) believed that the whole human environment is formed by the Earth's biosphere, and the lack of a careful attitude to it can lead not only to individual environmental problems, but also threaten the very existence of humanity on the planet. That is, human existence depends on the components of the biosphere's structure formed in the evolution process and the parameters of its functioning, on the uniqueness of the established natural system, thanks to which a person can live in it. Therefore, it is an indisputable universal value. Based on this axiological understanding of the biosphere, the usual philosophical foundations of environmental management should be revised accordingly, taking into account the rational harmonization of economic and environmental aspects, which will preserve the biosphere as the environment of human existence in its diversity and uniqueness (Timofeev-Resovsky 2008).

Karako (2009) believes that eco philosophy is the union of ecological consciousness, philosophy and other forms of ecological consciousness. Ecological consciousness is a set of representations of the individual and society about the elements' interrelations of interaction system between society and nature, as well as the system of nature itself, with an orientation to rational nature management. Ecological consciousness is socially expressed, which determines the possibility of its interaction with all other types of social consciousness, namely, in philosophy, a system of knowledge is formed and transmitted about the essence

of the natural and social world, about the place and role of man in it (Karako 2009).

Eco philosophy is a special applied philosophical discipline, which, on the basis of a holistic and systematic approach, studies the most important problems for it:

- Problems within philosophy related to ecology, the solution of which is based on the specifics of philosophical knowledge;

- Problems within ecology, the solution of which is impossible without analysis and synthesis of accumulated knowledge, without a systemic philosophical understanding and generalization;

- Problems of the ratio between ecology and philosophy, associated with their fundamental commonality and differences.

Eco philosophy on the basis of philosophical knowledge constructs the ideological and methodological basis of the concept of ecological being, the laws of its organization, functioning and development. The goal of eco philosophy is to reveal the ways, methods and techniques for obtaining objectively true environmental knowledge of reality (Doronina 2016).

In the ontological aspect, eco philosophy in its field of knowledge, should remove the contradictions between the ontological schemes that exist in various sciences related to environmental issues. It is important to form a new understanding of nature, free from the influence of natural philosophy and the perception of nature as a phenomenon that exists separately and independently from man. Such an understanding should be based on such concepts as global evolutionism, co-evolution, human dimensionality of natural science approaches. Eco philosophy is philosophical reflections of man, which is a natural part of the natural environment, one of the elements in a complex system of relationships with nature, and nature within eco philosophy should be understood in the context of human activity and the historical world of culture. In terms of methodology, it is necessary to develop new constructs that should provide an innovative way to a qualitatively different level of cognitive standards based on such principles as integrity, organization, evolution, and systemic nature. The idea of coevolution as a mechanism reflecting the conjugation of the organization and evolution of material systems can be such a construct capable of

overcoming the limitations of naturalism, historicism and sociologism and creating a synthesis of alternative strategies of elementarism and systemic nature, evolutionism and structuralism. In the axiological sphere, the attitudes inherent in a technogenic society focused on progress at any cost, on competition, competitiveness, and mutual struggle, based on the Darwinian thesis on the struggle for existence, should be changed. Progress should be based on the values of association, cooperation, mutual aid (Liseev 2017a).

The synthesis of philosophy and ecology within the framework of eco philosophy should lead to the formation of new worldview ideas:

- what should be the maximum permissible material-transformative activity of mankind on the planet in order to preserve optimal conditions for the existence and development of life on the planet, that is, the biogenic permanent state of the biosphere;

- The need for strict control on the side of the society over the formation of abiogenic processes and their areas of application so that their total energy strength does not go beyond the biogenic potential of the planet;

- Coordination of modifications of the temporal and spatial rates of evolution of such forms of existence of matter, such as organic and inorganic nature, human society, the technosphere and the noosphere;

- inadmissibility of the violation of organic matter's chemical composition and of the inclusion in the food chain of artificially modified or created products and preparations, which can lead to irreversible changes in the biogenic potential of the planet;

- Purposeful creation of ecological production and renewal of the natural environment suitable for the life of the biosphere and the preservation of natural evolutionary processes;

- Development of the strategy of nature and society co-evolution for the preservation of the biosphere in all its diversity, the preservation of the existence and development of human civilization (Kolossova 2011).

From the stand point of the subject-object approach that existed until recently in philosophy, it is difficult to give an answer to the question of the extent to which a person has the right to change the object of his influence and what is the possibility to limit his/her influence on

the existence of an object. The subject and the object not only coexist in the environment, but are in constant interaction and a certain symbiosis. By changing the original object, a person receives a certain artificial thing that does not correspond to the reality of its existence, and its changed qualities are distorted, not only weakening the contact of consciousness with reality, but also doing significant harm to man. When interfering with the harmony and stability of combinations of the elements of the real in the universe, this harm is already felt on a planetary scale. Man faces the problem of responsibility for influencing the biosphere as a whole and any part of it that has its own value and becomes the object of such moral responsibility for the preservation of their existence and development. Environmental philosophy is designed to find the balance in which human innovative activity does not violate the harmony of his/her life in the universe, but enriches it and gives it new meanings. A new ideal of rationality, ethics and ontology of attitude to nature should be created not as to an object, but as to a subject in order to achieve adequate co-being (Rykhlytskaya 2014).

### RESULTS

Research in environmental philosophy is interdisciplinary and uses the results obtained in the natural sciences such as geography, geology, biology, chemistry, physics, and humanities such as history, sociology, psychology, as well as the ecology and philosophy itself.

An analysis of the literature corresponding to the objectives of the study led to the conclusion that eco philosophy is one of the most promising concepts of philosophy in the field of ecology. It is a reflection of philosophical thought's focus on solving problems associated with the complex environmental situation that arose at the end of the twentieth century, taking into account its novelty and specificity within the system in order to prevent an ever more likely environmental disaster with fatal consequences for humanity. It can be said that it expresses a new ideological mission of philosophy, which is to change the deep value attitudes of people in their interaction with the natural environment. As a field of knowledge, eco philosophy is aimed at saving mankind from the threat of death through a critical review of all aspects of human activity and related to them areas of knowledge and spiritual culture in accordance with the requirements of preserving the harmony of the biosphere's development. These requirements include: 1) environmental friendliness in the relationship between man and nature as the need for biosphere

compatibility of human activity based on knowledge and compliance with laws and principles of biosphere conservation and moderate consumption of natural resources, transformation of the wasteful consumer orientation of society; 2) Environmental friendliness in human relationships based on mutual tolerance and peace loving policy of peoples of the planet in relation to each other, as well as the achievement of generally significant, environmentally thought out and consciously set global goals of social development.

Based on the analysis of modern Russian philosophical literature related to environmental issues, one can say that within the framework of eco philosophy the most global is the complex problem of human society's and the biosphere's co-evolution. The data collected by modern ecology on the features of evolutionary biosphere processes, on the anthropogenic factors' impact on their existence and development when integrating with philosophical theories of social development can become the basis of a new unified theory of socio-natural development based on the principles of the coexistence of society and nature and the ability of humanity to adequately influence the processes in the biosphere as acceptable as possible, creating the conditions for the formation and sustainable development of the noosphere.

Eco philosophy is based on the principles of eco humanism, that is, man is considered as an integral part of the cosmic development of the biosphere and noosphere, and the unity and inseparability of the fate of human civilization and nature is being established.

### CONCLUSION

In the modern world, the development of which takes place within the framework of social processes' globalization, within the framework of the priority of consumer society's concept and the focus on progress in the technogenic sphere, which brought humanity to the edge of ecological catastrophe, the revision of the philosophical foundations of the interaction between man and nature becomes topical. This problem was considered within the framework of philosophy over the centuries, but due to the increasing negative impact of man on the biosphere, on natural phenomena, from the middle of the twentieth century, this area of philosophical knowledge gained particular importance for ensuring humanity's continued prosperous existence. There was a need for a new understanding of man's place and role in nature, the foundations of their interaction.

The article discusses the main modern directions of philosophical thought's development related to environmental issues: theoretical ecology, global ecology, philosophy of nature, environmentalism. It is concluded that the most promising is the theory of eco philosophy, which, on the basis of philosophical knowledge, constructs the worldview and methodological basis of the concept of ecological being, the laws of its organization, functioning and development. The goal of eco philosophy is to reveal the ways, methods and techniques for obtaining objectively true environmental knowledge and of its construction's reality on the principles of eco-humanism: environmental friendliness in relation to a specific person and humanity as a whole to nature, environmental friendliness in relations between individuals and human communities with each other. Eco philosophy allows you to move away from natural philosophy and anthropocentrism, and

comprehensively solve the problem of human society's and the biosphere's co-evolution to preserve the biosphere in all its diversity and human civilization in adequate natural living conditions.

The materials of the article are of theoretical and practical value for the development of educational and methodical complexes on ecology and ecological philosophy, as well as programs aimed at the formation of new environmentally reasonable ideological and value attitudes among the modern youth.

The study revealed the lack of development of ecology philosophy's problems, showed the prospect of its further research in the field of environmental anthropology, environmental ethics, cultural ecology, education ecology, environmental safety and other areas of philosophical and environmental knowledge.

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