Breaking Barriers: Dualistic Thinking in Religious and Social Contexts and its Environmental Impact

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> I have always been astonished that women were allowed to enter churches. What conversation can they possibly have with God? The eternal Venus (caprice, hysteria, fantasy) is one of the seductive forms of the Devil. - Charles Baudelaire

Visualization of woman as hysteric who stand up for themselves - Figure made by Bing AI image generator

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Abstract

Breaking Barriers: Dualistic Thinking in Religious and Social Contexts and its environmental impact explores the intricate relationship between dualistic thinking, influenced by religious and societal norms, and its role in perpetuating environmental degradation. Through an interdisciplinary analysis spanning history and philosophy, it investigates how entrenched dualistic frameworks, such as Cartesian dualism, reinforces hierarchical divisions between humanity and nature. Moreover, by examining historical examples, the paper uncovers the ways in which patriarchal ideologies intersect with other forms of discrimination, like environmental oppression. Additionally, it delves into the ethical implications of dualistic thinking, advocating for a holistic understanding that transcends binary distinctions for sustainable solutions. The research question guides the exploration of how dismantling dualistic perspectives and embracing relational ethics can foster a deeper connection to nature and improve ethical responses to environmental crises. Ultimately, the paper aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between human beliefs, societal structures, and environmental ethics, offering insights into pathways towards a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

Key words: Dualistic thinking, Environmental exploitation, Relational ethics, Patriarchal ideologies, Sustainability

Note

ChatGPT is utilized to correct writing and spelling errors. Additionally, Bing AI Image Generator is employed to generate images.

Introduction

What is dualism ?

Plumwood and Warren - Dualism

Dualism is a way of thinking. Plumwood and Warren describe it as a bipolar perspective akin to the poles of a magnet with North representing the good or superior, and South the bad or inferior, with no middle ground or "grey zone" (Figure 1) (Andrews, 1996). It organizes concepts into contrasting pairs like male/female, reason/emotion, white/coloured and human/nature, often valorizing one while marginalizing the other, stimulating hierarchies and power imbalances. This concept, known as "the logic of dualism," stimulates rank ordering and provides a justificatory basis for all forms of oppression, whether racial, sexual, or of non-human entities (e.g. nature). Warren and Plumwood describe dualism differently. Warren describes it as the "logic of domination", which posits that if X is morally superior to Y, then X is justified in subordinating Y. Conversely, Plumwood expresses it as the "logic of colonization", which involves five characteristics: backgrounding, radical exclusion, incorporation, instrumentalism, and homogenization, with radical exclusion and instrumentalism being the most important. Radical exclusion involves highlighting differences between groups, often polarizing them to eliminate shared attributes, justifying varying privileges and fates. Meanwhile, instrumentalism views inferior groups as lacking intrinsic value, valuing them only for their usefulness in fulfilling the goals of oppressor groups.

Out of this theory, Plumwood describes two different forms of dualism, namely concept dualism and moral dualism. Concept dualism involves the categorization of concepts into superior and inferior groups, which can be seen in the table made in figure 1, with green representing the superior and red the inferior. Conversely, moral dualism refers to the justification and explanation of oppression through the concept dualism, leading to the division of groups into oppressors, viewed as superior, and oppressed, viewed as inferiors (Andrews, 1996). A well-known example off moral and concept dualism is colonialism, with concept dualism based on the White/Coloured contrasting pair and moral dualism using this concept as justification of oppression.
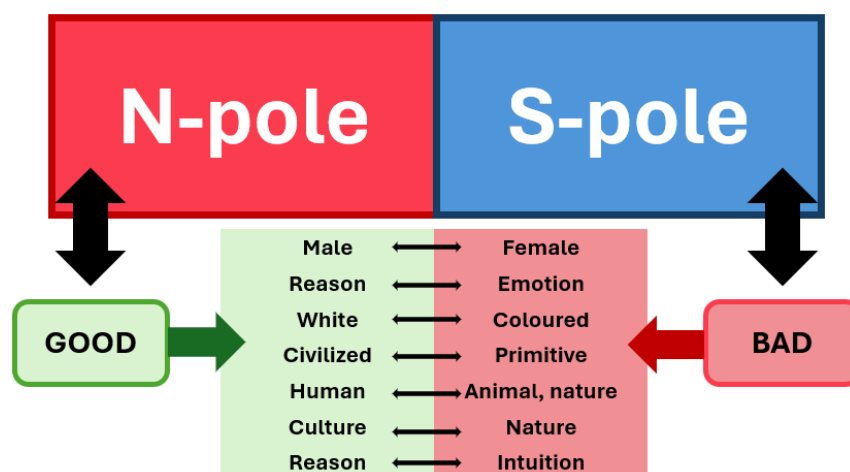

Figure 2: Theory of Plumwood and Warren upon dualism - Magnet representing the dichotomy between good (North) and bad (South). These polarities extend downward to a table where green signifies good characteristics, viewed as superior, while red signifies bad characteristics, considered inferior.

Clive Hamilton - Dualism

Clive Hamilton describes two different forms of knowledge, namely cognitive and deductive knowledge, and intuitive knowledge (Figure 2). Cognitive and deductive knowledge involves drawing conclusions from observations made in the external world, through logical reasoning, allowing for systematic transmission of insights through established protocols. In contrast, intuitive knowledge arises from direct experiences, relying on innate senses rather than logical deduction or external validation. This type of knowledge is subjective and evocative, making it difficult to convey directly but fostering a personal connection beyond rational analysis. Nevertheless, discussions or written expressions may evoke similar experiences in others, it is not easily verifiable through external facts (Hamilton, 2002).

Hamilton argues that dualism, the rigid separation of these two knowledge forms, shapes how we perceive the world and our relationship to it. This dualism prioritizes instrumental rationality, leading to the dismissal of intuitive knowledge (Hamilton, 2002). More information about Figure 2 can be found in *Intersectionality and Environmental Justice* on page 16.
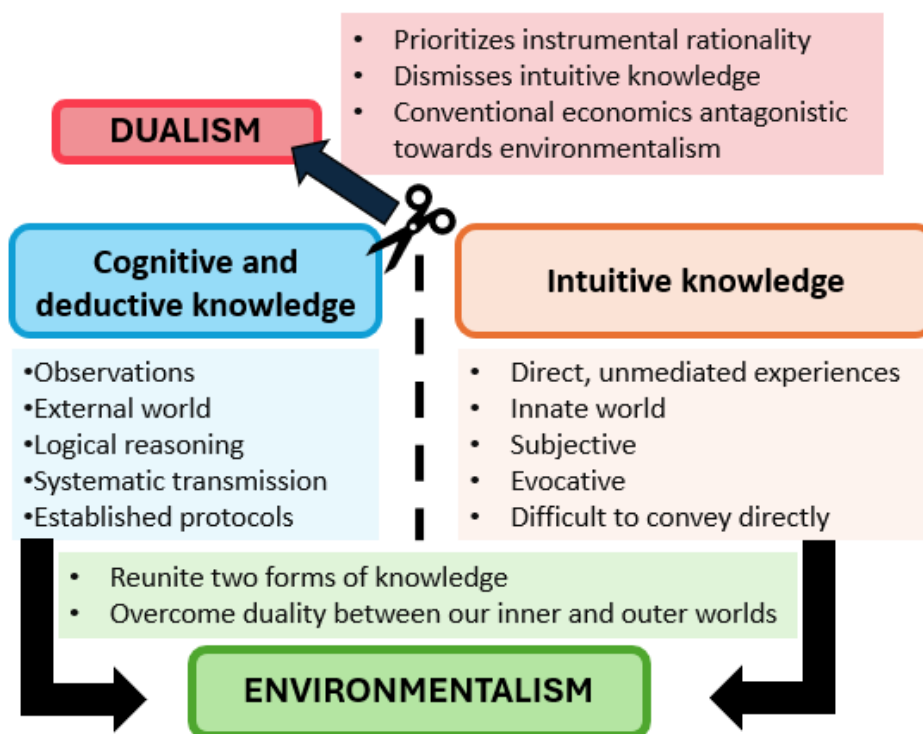

Figure 2: Theory of Clive Hamilton upon dualism – Dualism (red) excises intuitive knowledge (orange), leaving only cognitive and deductive knowledge (blue). Environmentalism (green) reunites these two again.

Various forms of dualism

Philosophical dualism

Philosophical dualism encompasses a broad category of various philosophical approaches that posit fundamental dualities including ontological dualism, theological dualism and epistemological dualism.

Ontological dualism further encompasses mind-body dualism, property dualism and predicate dualism, which are further discussed below.

- **Mind-body dualism** - Also called Substance or Cartesian dualism, explores the relationship between our physical and mental properties. While physical properties are observable to all, mental attributes such as consciousness and intentionality are personal and subjective. This dualism explores inquiries regarding the nature of mental and physical states, their mutual influence, and elements such as consciousness, intentionality, and selfhood. For dualists, like Descartes, a fundamental distinction exists between the mind and the body, both are real with separate natures. He states the mind as a thinking, non-physical substance, and the body as a physical, non-thinking substance (Robinson, 2023). This dualism closely relates to metaphysical dualism, which believes that there are two kinds of existence, namely the non-physical, like mind, soul, spirit, and the physical, also called material, which is everything else.

- **Property Dualism** - Which relates to mind-body dualism, proposes the existence of two fundamentally different kinds of properties. While physical properties described by physics are adequate for many phenomena, certain aspects like consciousness require more than just physical properties for a full explanation. For instance, while a hurricane can be described in terms of physical atoms and their behavior, property dualism suggests that certain phenomena, like consciousness, require more than just physical properties to be fully explained. Property dualists argue that the qualitative nature of consciousness cannot be reduced to brain states alone. This implies that the fundamental differentiation resides in the distinct properties of mind and matter (Robinson, 2023).

- **Predicate dualism**: Posits that certain mental or psychological descriptions are essential to fully understand the world and cannot be replaced by purely physical descriptions. This implies that phenomena such as hurricanes or diseases cannot be fully captured by reducing them to basic physical elements. Unlike water, which can be reduced to H_2O, these phenomena are defined more by their function than by their specific physical composition and can manifest in various physical forms. This irreducibility of psychological states leads to the concept of predicate dualism. Property dualism, a related concept, goes further by suggesting that there are two distinct kinds of properties in the world, which is a stronger claim than predicate dualism (Robinson, 2023).

Theological dualism encompasses beliefs in two opposing divine entities or forces, often representing contrasting principles like good and evil, creation and destruction, or order and disorder (Robinson, 2023). This concept significantly influences theological doctrines, which is a set of official religious beliefs and principles that guide a faith community's understanding and practice of their religion, and cosmological narratives within various religious traditions. For example, in religions like Christianity, theological dualism is evident in the fundamental struggle between good, God, and evil, Satan, shaping both the divine realm and human existence (Buckely, 2002; Outler, 2012). Moral dualism, cosmological dualism and theological dualism are often intertwined in each other.

- Moral dualism, sometimes referred to as ethical dualism, focuses on the existence of two opposing moral forces, such as good and evil, independent of specific moral interpretations and applicable across various religious or philosophical frameworks. It does not necessarily imply the absence of a singular divine being or a unified moral code. Conversely, theological dualism deals specifically with religious beliefs regarding two opposing divine forces or deities, often symbolizing contrasting principles such as good and evil. Unlike moral dualism,

theological dualism is intricately linked to theological doctrines and cosmological narratives within certain religious traditions (BBC, 2009).

- Cosmological dualism delves into broader metaphysical and cosmological principles beyond morality. It proposes two fundamental entities, often opposites, shaping the universe. These may be seen as light versus dark, creation versus destruction, or order versus chaos. This concept influences beliefs about the cosmos its origin and structure in various traditions. In contrast to moral or theological dualism, which centres on the conflict between good and evil or opposing divine entities, cosmological dualism highlights the fundamental nature and structure of the universe (BBC, 2009).

Furthermore, Epistemological dualism refers to the distinction between various forms of knowledge or ways of understanding, as discussed in the theory of Clive Hamilton discussed earlier on page 5. It revolves around the fundamental question of whether our perceptions faithfully reflect the external world or if they are merely internal constructs generated by our cognitive processes. Epistemological dualism focuses more on the nature of knowledge and perception rather than specifically focusing on neural processes (Stent, 2005).

Axiological dualism

Axiological dualism refers to the philosophical concept that suggests the existence of two fundamental types of values, which are often characterized as intrinsic and extrinsic, or moral and non-moral. Intrinsic values are those that are considered valuable in and of themselves, independent of any external factors or consequence. Examples are virtues like honesty or integrity. Extrinsic values, on the other hand, are valued for their instrumental worth, meaning they are valuable because of their ability to lead to something else of value, like money or material possessions. In practical philosophy, this concept is reflected in the distinction between moral values, which are based on principles of duty and ethics, and prudential values, which are rooted in self-interest and personal benefit. So, axiological dualism highlights the diverse origins and nature of different types of values and underscores the complexity of ethical and moral reasoning (Dobrijevic; 2016).

Gender dualism

Gender dualism refers to the binary understanding of gender as strictly male or female, often overlooking or dismissing the existence of intersex, transgender, and other non-binary individuals. This dualism is reflected in medical practices, categorizing intersex variations as disorders of sex development, framing them as deviations from the binary norm (Amoretti and Vassallo, 2013).

Colonial Dualism

Colonial Dualism examines the hierarchical divisions imposed by colonial powers, such as the colonizer/colonized dichotomy. This perpetuated power imbalances and exploitation (Frazier, 1957; Cata, 2017).

Cultural Dualism

Cultural Dualism represents the division or conflict between different cultural identities or worldviews within a society, often leading to cultural tensions or clashes. For example, in Canada, cultural dualism encompasses the division between English-speaking and French-speaking communities, leading to tensions and clashes (Ladouceur, 2014).

Ethical dualism on collective society

Ethical dualism, as articulated by Reinhold Niebuhr, examines the tension between individual and collective ethics within society. It acknowledges the disparity between the moral behavior of individuals and the immoral tendencies of collective groups. Niebuhr argues that while individuals may exhibit altruistic behavior, societal structures often lead to selfishness and injustice. This ethical framework recognizes the inherent complexity of human nature and the need for a balance between idealistic love and pragmatic justice in navigating social challenges (King, 1952).

Environmental dualism

Environmental dualism explains the Western belief that divides humanity and nature into two opposing realms, namely nature and culture. This division originates from historical practices of externalizing nature into productive aspects, resulting in a widely accepted perception of this separation. It highlights the human-nature dichotomy, often marked by human dominance over nature, contributing to environmental degradation and ecological crises (Haila, 2000).

Monism – Dualism - Pluralism

Dualistic frameworks, whether addressing concepts like good versus evil or mind versus body, share common traits. They involve binary oppositions, influenced by historical and cultural context, perceiving separation between paired elements. Moreover, they often establish hierarchical structures. While they can help organize understanding, they can oversimplify complexities and reinforce divisive perspectives. However, not all modes of thought adhere to dualism; they can also embody monism or pluralism (Britannica, 2008).

Pluralism and monism are philosophical frameworks exploring the nature of existence and the unity of reality. Pluralism accentuates diversity and multiplicity, affirming the coexistence of various entities. In contrast, monism posits a singular underlying substance or principle as the source of all phenomena. In pluralism, diversity and change are emphasized, with thinkers like William James highlighting the importance of acknowledging the multiplicity and changeability of things. On the other hand, monism, exemplified by philosophers like Parmenides, Spinoza, and Hegel, seeks unity and often asserts that everything is ultimately derived from or reducible to a single substance or principle (Britannica, 2008; Bianchi, 2022).

History of dualistic thinking

Egypt and Mesopotamia

In ancient Egyptian religion, there was an implicit contrast between gods like Seth and Osiris. Seth representing violence, disorder, and barrenness, while Osiris symbolized fertility and life. This aspect aligns with theological dualism. Similarly, Ancient Mesopotamian religion exhibited dualistic elements in the clash between primordial deities like Apsu and Tiamat, and newer gods such as Marduk. This dualism arose from the conflict between the chaotic nature of the older gods and the order brought by the younger generation, reflecting a tension between the ontological essence of the universe and its cosmological form (Bianchi, 2022). The kind of dualism described reflects cosmological dualism, which highlights the conflict between opposing cosmic principles.

Zoroastrianism

One of the earliest known examples of moral dualism can be traced back to Zoroastrianism in ancient Persia. However, it also contains some aspects of cosmological dualism. Founded by the prophet Zoroaster, around the 6th century BCE, Zoroastrianism supports a worldview centred on the existence of two opposing cosmic forces, namely Ahura Mazda, the embodiment of good, truth, and order, and Angra Mainyu, or also called Ahriman, representing evil, falsehood, and chaos. These aspects suggest a dualistic understanding of existence, with both mortal and immortal aspects, which shaped the way for adherents to understand the universe and their place within it. Moreover, in Zoroastrianism, humans are believed to possess five immortal parts: ahu (life), daēnā (religion), baodah (knowledge), urvan (soul), and fravashi (preexistent souls) (Bianchi, 2022; Duchesne-Guillemin, 2024).

Further, dualistic aspects in Zoroastrianism can be found in the belief that souls of the adherents faced judgment before Mithra, where good deeds lead to paradise through stages of righteousness, illustrating the dualistic concept of judgment and the division of souls into distinct destinies based on moral conduct. Additionally, Zoroastrian eschatology symbolises the arrival of saviours, culminating in a final conflict. As depicted in Pahlavi texts, this symbolizes the ongoing dualistic battle between good and evil, ultimately leading to the restoration of harmony and the triumph of righteousness over wickedness. This struggle engages all human beings, who must actively participate in the battle through their choices and actions (Duchesne-Guillemin, 2024). These aspects can be considered moral and even cosmological dualism (BBC, 2009).

The historical significance of Zoroastrianism extends beyond its theological tenets, because ancient Greeks recognized in Zoroastrianism an archetype of dualistic thought, perceiving it as a model for understanding the struggle between good and evil in the world and human destiny. The religion's influence also extended to other major religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Scholars speculate that Zoroastrianism played a role in shaping the development of these faiths, with some Christian traditions even identifying Zoroaster with biblical figures such as Ezekiel, Nimrod, and Balaam (Duchesne-Guillemin, 2024).

Dualism among Greek Philosophers

In Hesiod's Theogony early traces of moral or cosmological dualistic concepts can be found embedded in the conflicts between gods like Uranus, Cronus, and Zeus, and the primordial and later gods. However, dualism was more pronounced in the later classical Greek time (Bianchi, 2022).

The groundwork for metaphysical dualistic thought in the Greek era was laid by pre-Socratic philosophers like Parmenides and Heracleitus. Parmenides emphasized oppositions between realms of Being, ultimate reality, and Opinion, the world of human sense experience. Further, Heracleitus exalted the conflict of opposites like hot-cold, day-night, beginning-end and the-way-up–the-way-down as a metaphysical dualistic principle. Metaphysical Dualism concerns the nature of reality itself, positing two fundamental and often opposing components of existence. Empedocles contributed to this concept by conceptualizing the universe as cyclically governed by two opposing forces, namely Love, which unifies and harmonizes, and Discord, which fragments and separates. These forces shape the continuous cycle of creation and destruction in the cosmos (Curd, 2023; Robinson, 2023).

Moving beyond metaphysical dualism, Greek philosophy delved into the belief in the separation of the soul or mind from the physical body, as well as the inherent conflict between these two entities. Orphism introduced this concept, known as mind-body dualism, by perceiving the body as a prison for the divine soul, contrasting the soul's divine nature with the body's mortal limitations (Bianchi, 2022).

Additionally, Socrates discussed mind-body dualism, suggesting that the body limits the soul its pursuit of true wisdom in two ways. First, sensory experiences, like sight and hearing, providing distorted perceptions of reality. For example, while the soul perceives idealized concepts such as beauty or a perfect circle, bodily senses encounter flawed imitations, hindering true understanding. Therefore, these senses will never experience a perfect circle but only flawed copies of it. Secondly, bodily needs and distractions, such as hunger or social interactions, impede philosopher theirs quest for knowledge. This philosophical perspective prioritizes the pursuit of wisdom over bodily distractions, emphasizing the importance of the mind over the physical world (Yang, 2017; Barkman, 2022; Robinson, 2023).

Furthermore, Plato placed emphasis on the eternal Forms, which he believed to be the true substances, contrasting with the ephemeral nature of physical bodies. These Forms render the world intelligible, serving as universals or concepts. According to Plato, the intellect must grasp these Forms to understand reality, suggesting the intellect its inherent immateriality. This strong affinity leads the soul to strive for liberation from the physical body and seek for dwelling in the realm of Forms, often requiring multiple reincarnations. Plato its dualism, therefore, extends beyond the philosophy of mind to his broader metaphysical framework. However, his view raises questions about what binds a particular soul to a particular body (Robinson, 2023).

Neoplatonism, born from the ideas of Plato, saw the cosmos as a harmonious structure with various levels emanating from a supreme unity. However, it introduced a concept called tolma, which explains the soul its descent from a higher, divine realm into the lower material realm, creating a dualistic tension between the spiritual immaterial realm of the Soul and the physical material world of the body, complicating the relationship between immaterial and material realms. This mind-body dualistic view is further elaborated through the concept of asceticism. Asceticism expands upon Socrates idea that the body limits the soul its pursuit of true wisdom. Asceticism involves severe self-discipline and detachment from physical pleasures and desires. By minimizing the influence of the body, the soul can better focus on its quest for knowledge and prepare itself for the afterlife, as death is seen as the separation of the soul from the body, liberating the soul from the constraints of physical existence. Asceticism is portrayed as a means of purifying the soul and ensuring its readiness for the realm of pure knowledge and wisdom and determining the soul its fate in the next world (Bianchi, 2022).

Furthermore, Plato had a dualistic view upon society stratification, with philosophers occupying the highest moral and intellectual position, followed by those who pursue honour or material gain, because he believed the pursuit of wisdom and intellectual to be superior upon the superficial pleasures associated with wealth and honour-seeking (Yang, 2017; Barkman, 2022). This latter can be seen as moral dualism as portrayed in figure 2 on page 4 of Plumwood and Warren (Andrews, 1996).

Aristotle rejected Plato its theory of Forms and proposed instead that forms are the inherent natures and properties of things existing within them. Central to his philosophy was the idea that the soul is the form of the body, implying that an individual its soul represents nothing more than their essential nature as a human being. While some interpret the idea of Aristotle as materialistic due to its apparent portrayal of the soul as a property of the body, Aristotle argued that the intellect, as part of the soul, must be immaterial. He illustrated this by comparing it to sensory organs like the eye and ear, which are sensitive only to specific physical stimuli. For instance, the eye is sensitive to light but not to sound. In contrast, the intellect has the capacity to apprehend any kind of material object, suggesting that it is not confined to a specific physical organ. Therefore, he concluded that since the intellect lacks a material organ, its activity must be essentially immaterial. In *De Anima* of Aristotle his perspective is often likened to functionalism, as he sought to explain various functions of the soul in terms of the form of bodily organs. Nevertheless, Aristotle maintained a dualistic view, by believing in a separation between the intellect of the soul and the physical body (Aristotle, 1995; Robinson, 2023; Irwin, 1995).

Building on the philosophy of Aristotle, Aquinas elaborated on the relationship between form and substance. He proposed that the soul and form together make up a substance, but he cautioned against conflating them with the entirety of a person. Aquinas emphasized the importance of differentiating between the individual and the soul, highlighting the essential role of the body in preserving aspects of personal memory. This perspective aligns with Aristotle its notion of form and substance, as Aquinas treats the soul, intellect, and form as components of a substance integral to human identity (Robinson, 2023).

Transition: Organic unity (pre-sixteenth century) - European Enlightenment

Before the sixteenth century in Europe, the prevailing worldview was characterized as organic, meaning that people perceived their world as interconnected and cohesive, with a deep integration of spiritual and material aspects. In these societies, communities functioned as unified wholes, where individuals did not necessarily prioritize their own needs over the collective its needs. Instead, individual needs were often fulfilled within the context of the community. Personal identity was closely tied to their roles within the community, reflecting a form of altruïsm. While acknowledging the exploitative and economically challenged aspects of these societies, it is essential to focus on their shared sense of interconnectedness. The term organic highlights the holistic nature of their worldview, encompassing social and natural environment connections (Hamilton, 2002).

The view of nature that predominated in the West down to the eve of the Scientific Revolution was that of an enchanted world. Rocks, trees, rivers, and clouds were all seen as wondrous, alive, and human beings felt at home in this environment. The cosmos, in short, was a place of belonging (Berman, 1981, p. 16)

Figure 3 - Quote made by Berman - Figure made in Bing AI image generator

When did the shift from an organic worldview to a more individualistic perspective occur? The shift occurred during the European Enlightenment, marking a profound transformation in human consciousness. This change altered how people perceived themselves and their relationship with the world, characterized by a sense of disenchantment and significant psychological loss. Prior to the Enlightenment, individuals experienced a participating consciousness, feeling deeply connected to their surroundings and viewing themselves as integral parts of the broader cosmos. This interconnected worldview was present in their daily lives and was evident in cultural practices like alchemy, where practitioners sought to understand the cosmos by exploring their relationship with it (Hamilton, 2002). So, this transition is enhanced by non-participating consciousness which signifies a departure from the earlier modes of understanding, where knowledge was obtained through a participatory engagement with the world, like in alchemy, which gradually lost its prominence in European culture. Moreover non-participating consciousness defined a clear separation between the observer and the observed, or the subject and the object. The knower does no more than uncover the knowledge that exists independently of the knower (Robinson, 2023; Hamilton, 2002).

In pre-Enlightenment times, participating consciousness obtained knowledge by integrating both sensory and intellectual understanding. This mode of knowing is still evident in the biblical use of the term know, which denotes an intimate, almost mystical union. One of the most powerful everyday manifestations of participating consciousness is found in the sexual act, *le petit mort* (e.g. Tantra). However, modern science replaced this integrative knowledge with a more detached, objective approach, while powerful for generating calculable and controllable knowledge, it also led to a decline in the appreciation of intuition (Robinson, 2023). This can be denoted as empiricism, which is further explained in *Rationalism versus Empiricism* on page 14. The new scientific consciousness permeated not just the scientific community but also the broader society, influencing how people define and experience themselves. The ideology of science, emphasizing knowability and conquerability, reinforces the separation of the self from the world. This detachment is evident in our daily activities such as market-driven work and passive forms of recreation like watching television. This embodies non-participation by presenting a pre-packaged version of reality. Moreover, non-participating consciousness is central to mechanical philosophy that underpins modern science, emphasizing matter and motion as the primary components of reality (Robinson, 2023; Hamilton, 2002).

Following, the rise of modern capitalism, as described by Max Weber, enhanced the removal of intuitive thinking. Built on a form of rationality prioritizing economic self-interest, capitalism reduces market exchanges to instrumental calculation and is stripped of social and moral dimensions that characterized traditional economies. This concept aligns instrumental rationality. Money, facilitates this depersonalization and rational decision-making, focusing solely on profit maximization. This shift impacts human-nature relations. The Enlightenment its focus on non-participation reconceptualized and rationalized nature as exploitable resources, reducing it to a catalogue of tradable goods, and diminishes the once intrinsic values of nature. The dominance of instrumental rationality and the mechanistic wordview have led to a diminished understanding of our inner lives (Robinson, 2023; Haila L, 2000). The latter combines Clive Hamilton's theory on excluding intuitive thinking with Plumwood and Warren's theory of human superiority over nature, explained on pages 4 and 5.

This shift can be interpreted through varied kinds of dualism. Environmental dualism reflects the evolving perception of humanity's relationship with nature, moving from harmony to domination and exploitation. Further, epistemological dualism signifies a shift from holistic, participatory knowledge to detached rationalism. Lastly, cultural dualism denotes the transition from interconnected, holistic perspectives to more individualistic, rationalistic ones (Bristow, 2023; Hamilton, 2002).

The European Enlightenment, a period marked by significant intellectual and cultural shifts, paved the way for the scientific revolution and subsequent industrial revolution, which transformed not only the physical world but also had profound psychological effects. Central to this era was mind-body dualism, proposed by the rationalist René Descartes who stated a rigid division between mind and body. He argued that these are separate and distinct entities, with no overlap. This concept is also called Cartesian dualism or substance dualism, which posits two distinct kinds of substances, namely matter, characterized by spatial extension, and mind, characterized by thought (Haila L, 2000). This idea, gained traction and led people to conceive themselves as isolated individuals existing within their bodies (Watson, 2024; Britannica, 2023). The psychological effects of Cartesian dualism were profound, contributing to a growing sense of alienation and disconnection from the natural world, detached from their inner natures and essential environmental connections. This shift marked a significant departure from previous interconnectedness and unity with nature to now a worldview in which individuals began to view themselves as distinct entities, prioritizing rational thought and individual autonomy over holistic understanding and collective harmony (Hamilton, 2002).

This Cartesian view contrasts with the Aristotelian one, where matter its behaviour is influenced by its form. He states "You cannot combine just any matter with any form. For example, you cannot make a human being out of paper. The nature of matter is a necessary condition for the nature of the substance, but the nature of the substance does not arise solely from the nature of its matter but, also from its form, explaining the connection of the soul to the body." (Robinson, 2023).

> 'The Cartesian division between mind and matter has... taught us to be aware of ourselves as isolated egos existing 'inside' our bodies...' (Capra, 1975, p. 45)

> 'there is nothing included in the concept of body that belongs to the mind; and nothing in that of mind that belongs to the body' (René Descartes)

> 'This inner fragmentation mirrors our view of the world 'outside' which is seen as a multitude of separate objects and events. The natural environment is treated as if it consisted of separate parts to be exploited by different interest groups' (Capra, 1975, p. 28)

Figure 4- Réne Descartes - by Frans Hals

Moreover in Descartes his *Mediations* he saw animals as mechanical objects akin to clocks or computers because he believed only humans possessed immaterial souls, which gave rise to subjective experiences. He reasoned that since animals lacked rationality and language, they lacked souls and minds, reducing them to mere machines. So, Descartes was a mechanist governed by mechanistic principles, with minds exerting influence over bodies like operators pulling lever, which raises the question of where these levers are. Descartes suggested the pineal gland as it is not duplicated on both sides of the brain, giving it a unifying function. However, the main challenge was not where interaction occurred, but how two such different things, thought and bodies, could interact. Descartes its followers, Arnold Geulincx and Nicholas Malebranche, proposed divine intervention as the solution, positing all mind-body interactions required God its direct involvement.
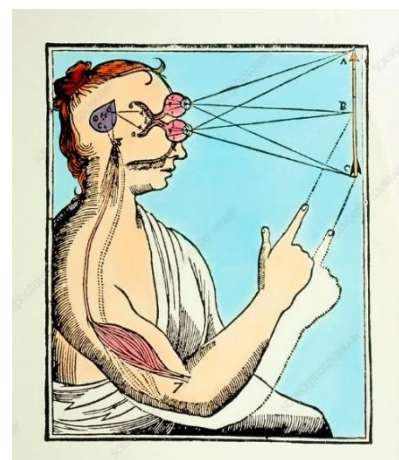
Figure 5- Illustration From de Homine by Réne Descartes - Art.com

However, Descartes its dualism faced criticism from radical empiricists like Locke and Berkeley. Locke accepted the existence of both material and immaterial substances, while Berkeley rejected material substance altogether, emphasizing the primacy of ideas and denying any existence outside the mind. Hume rejected this view on matter, as it lacks empirical evidence, proposing instead the bundle theory, which views the mind as a collection of fleeting mental states or events likened to a bundle of impressions and ideas. This perspective, known as bundle dualism, suggests that objects, including the mind, are organized collections of properties. For Hume, the challenge lays in explaining what holds these elements together in the bundle. While physical bodies can rely on causal interactions to maintain unity, he states that the mind requires a deeper connection beyond causality, something like co-consciousness. However, his theory is not inherently dualistic, it focuses primarily on the unity of the mind rather than a dualistic point of view (Robinson, 2023; Watson, 2024; Britannica, 2023).

Rationalism versus Empiricism

Rationalist like Descartes, believes in rationalism, which asserts that certain truths can be known independently of sensory experience through pure reason or intellectual insight. They argue that the mind can grasp these truths through rational processes, without relying solely on empirical evidence. They posit that some knowledge is innate or self-evident, accessible to the mind without the need for sensory input. On the other hand, empiricists, like Hume, Locke, and Berkeley, are skeptical of this view, prioritizing empirical evidence gathered through sensory experience as the basis for knowledge, and rejecting intuition as it lacks empirical basis. They are in favor of learning through observation, experimentation and sensory perception, and emphasize this evidence from observation and experimentation over intuition or innate knowledge. Nevertheless, Hume, despite his empiricist stance, acknowledges the role of sensitivity and emotions in human experience. While he denotes the significance of sensory experience's, he also considers emotions, sentiments, and passions its influence on cognition and decision-making (Markie & Folescu, 2023).

Patriarchal thinking

Throughout history, patriarchal ideologies have left a mark on human civilization, shaping societal norms and institutions across cultures and epochs. Patriarchal perspectives have permeated various facets of human society, from theological doctrines and legal codes to philosophical treatises, perpetuating gender inequality like denoted in the theory of oppression and subjugation from Plumwood and Warren (figure 1). However, patriarchy was not prevalent in all civilizations, an historical example from early Celtic settlements in Western cultures spanning from the 6th to 11th centuries, provide intriguing insights into gender dynamics (Luley, 2016). During this period, women enjoyed legal equality with men, possessing the right to hold and sell property, marry or divorce, and pursue high educational degrees in fields such as medicine, law, or religion (Buckley, 2002; Clar, 2022).

On the contrary, in ancient Greece, there was a medical concept called the wandering womb, which suggested that a woman her womb could move around her body and cause various illnesses. The ancient Greek physician Aretaeus of Cappadocia described it as an animal within an animal and sated "In the middle of the flanks of women

Figure 6 - Jan Massijs, Judit, ca. 1554, collectie KMSKA - Judith beheading Holofernes, an Assyrian general, to save her city Bethulia from his siege.

lies the womb, a female viscus, closely resembling an animal; for it is moved of itself hither and thither in the flanks, also upwards in a direct line to below the cartilage of the thorax, and also obliquely to the right or to the left, either to the liver or the spleen, and it likewise is subject to prolapsus downwards, and in a word, it is altogether erratic. It delights also in fragrant smells, and advances towards them; and it has an aversion to fetid smells, and flees from them; and, on the whole, the womb is like an animal within an animal." (Schiff, 2023).

Moreover, In the late nineteenth century, French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot modernized this concept by diagnosing these unusual symptoms in women into what he called hysteria, derived from the Greek word for uterus, namely hystera. The advent of Gaelic Christianity and its alignment with Roman Catholic orthodoxy ushered in a shift towards more traditional patriarchal concepts of marriage, equality, authority, and ordination (Maier, 2013). This transformation, reflected in biblical interpretation and canonical literature, continues to influence contemporary debates, including the contentious issue of whether priestly ordination should be exclusively conferred upon men, aligning Charles Baudelaire ideas"I have always been astonished that women were allowed to enter churches. What conversation can they possibly have with God? The eternal Venus (caprice, hysteria, fantasy) is one of the seductive forms of the Devil." (the ascendant historian, 2022).

Although scripture states God created men and women as equals, the writings of noted theologians often diverge from this principle. St. Thomas Aquinas, in his Summa Theologica, expressed views that denigrate women: "Woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of a woman comes from defect in the active force or some material indisposition..." (Bell, 1983). Moreover, St. Augustine stated: "I don't see what sort of help woman was created to provide man with if one excludes the purpose of procreation. If a woman was not given to a man for help in bearing children, for what help could she be...?" (De Genesi ad litteram, 9, 5-9) .
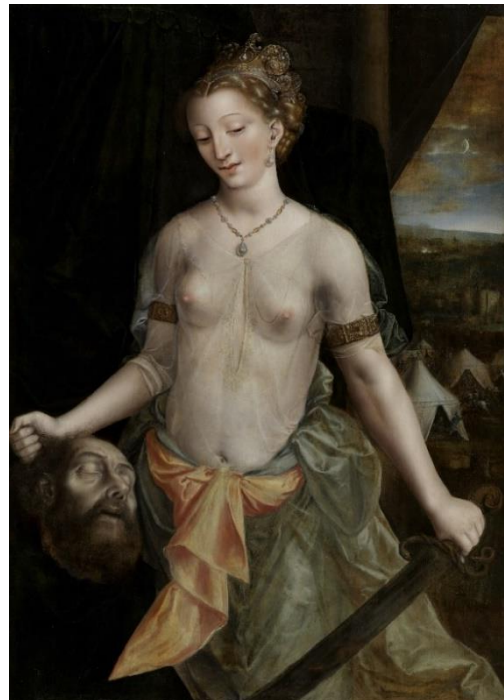
Similarly, in Eastern theology, texts like the Manusmṛiti establish caste-based patriarchy, denying women fundamental rights and perpetuating misogynistic ideologies, like denying women the right to bodily integrity, marriage rights, contraception, divorce, etc. (Doniger , 1991). Women are objectified and deemed sexually promiscuous in misogynistic doctrines, reinforcing their subordination to perpetuate patriarchy as natural. Meanwhile, in medieval England, legal statutes like the Statute of Westminster II introduced discriminatory provisions that disadvantaged widows in matters of inheritance, reflecting patriarchal biases embedded within legal frameworks (Brand, 2001).

Supporters of patriarchy often justify gender roles through the concept of the sexual division of labour, attributing differences in societal roles to perceived biological dissimilarities between men and women. As civilizations transitioned from small tribal groups to larger communities, various individuals undertook different essential tasks to sustain life (Lerner, 1986). This belief valorizes men's work while assigning women to household and child-rearing duties, shaping societal expectations of gender roles (Beechey, 1979). These views align with the dualistic perspectives explained by Plumwood, Concept dualism as it creates Men/Woman dichotomy and moral dualism as it uses this dichotomy as justification of opression, explained in *Plumwood and Warren – Dualism* on page 4.

While Marxism, In the 19th century, rejects theological views on gender and equality, Friedrich Engels, argued that early societal structures, hunter-gatherer, relegated women to roles like childbearing, caretaking, and providing erotic pleasure to men (Engels, 1884). He mentions that the rise of private property exacerbated the enslavement of woman. Moreover, feminist Marxism, exemplified by scholars like Sylvia Walby and Juliet Mitchell, sees patriarchy as deeply rooted in capitalism, where women are dominated and exploited, often treated as commodities for exchange (Gardiner, 1992). Early feminists advocated not just for suffrage, but also against slavery and child labour and against colonialism and racism. In the 1960s, they championed civil rights, opposed the Vietnam War, and advocated for welfare and education reforms (Breines, 1996). However, the trajectory of women's progress has been nonlinear, marked by societal setbacks and political obstacles.

Patriarchy and its historical relationship with psychopathology

Historically, many ailments were unfairly labelled as feminine and ridiculed. Conditions like epilepsy were often misdiagnosed as hysteria in women, reflecting societal biases. Furthermore, Victorian England even saw madness as a feminine issue, leading to extreme treatments like removing reproductive organs (Phyllis, 1972). Psychiatrists labelled women as insane for not fitting social norms, leading to brutal treatments in mental asylums, including lobotomies. Moreover, in the late 19th century, these lobotomies became popular for various issues, including mental disorders believed to stem from menstrual problems, perpetuating the idea of female sexuality as a pathology. Ironically, women's struggles to conform to societal norms often led to the very behaviours labelled as madness (Schlich, 2015; Chesler, 1972). Many women diagnosed with hysteria likely suffered from conditions now known as post-traumatic stress disorder, often due to abuse or trauma (Georges, 1982).

Figure 7- French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot to the left of the patient demonstrating a case of hysteria, in 1886 at the Salpetriere hospital in Paris. - Image source: Science Photo Library

While the sexual revolution and feminist movements of the 1960s narrowed the gender gap in Western cultures (Sigusch, 1998), non-Western regions still grapple with gender-based violence and discrimination. In places like India, patriarchal values prioritize male children, leading to limited investment in education and practices for girls like negotiated marriages and ritual defloration, perpetuating their dehumanization (Malhotra et al., 1995). Additionally, female genital mutilation remains prevalent in Africa and Asia, with over 3 million girls at risk of severe health issues and trauma (Yirga et al., 2012; Melese et al., 2020). Patriarchy reinforces rigid gender norms, pressuring individuals to conform to narrow behaviours, causing trauma and alienation for those who do not comply.

Social Media: Reinforcing Contemporary Patriarchal Constructs

The advent of social media and the internet has facilitated the perpetuation of gender bigotry, bolstered patriarchal ideologies, and propagated negative depictions of women (Popa & Gavriliu, 2015). Research indicates a concerning correlation between social media usage and adverse mental health effects, including increased suicidality, feelings of loneliness, and diminished empathy (Hur & Gupta, 2013). For instance, social media platforms often showcase meticulously curated visual content promoting unattainable lifestyles and idealized body images, which can induce feelings of inadequacy, envy, and anxiety among users. Moreover, these online platforms have become breeding grounds for sexual predators, exacerbating safety concerns (Hur & Gupta, 2013).

Humanity's Dualistic Relationship with Nature in Christian Doctrine

The statements from the Christian doctrine reflect a dualistic understanding of humanity its relationship with the natural world. On one hand, there is the notion of human dominion over nature, as expressed in Genesis 1:26-28, where humans are given authority over all living creatures. This suggests a hierarchical view of the world, with humans positioned above and separate from the rest of creation (Genesis 1:26-28). However, there is also the responsibility of stewardship emphasized in Genesis 2:15, where humans are tasked with caring for and tending to the Garden of Eden. This implies a sense of partnership or caretaking role, acknowledging humanity its interconnectedness with the natural world (Genesis 2:15).

The tension between dominion and stewardship reflects a dualistic perspective in Christian theology. On one side, there's the belief in the superiority and right of humanity to exert control over nature. On the other side, there is an acknowledgment of the need for responsible management and care for the environment. This dichotomy highlights the complexity of the relationship of humanity with nature, rooted in both power and responsibility (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 2:15).

Genesis 1:26-28

26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 2:15

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism, stemming from the Genesis, asserts humans as central in the world, justifying their exploitation of nature. Some adhere to a cornucopian view, which refers to a perspective that is optimistic about the Earth its capacity to provide resources indefinitely. Conversely, alternative ethical frameworks, like prudential anthropocentrism, acknowledge human responsibilities toward the environment, often framed as obligations to other humans. Before the formalization of environmental ethics, figures like John Muir and Aldo Leopold championed nature its intrinsic value. Subsequently, scholars challenged anthropocentrism by advocating for biocentrism, which acknowledges nature its inherent worth beyond human utility. Moreover, notably ecofeminists, contend that anthropocentrism perpetuates a patriarchal worldview and the exploitation of marginalized groups (Boslaugh, 2016).

Discussion - Intersectionality and Environmental Justice

Plumwood and Warren - Dualism and Its Role in Justifying Oppression

Plumwood and Warren consider this conceptual and moral dualistic framework, explained in the section *Plumwood and Warren – Dualism* on page 4, as a fault line in Western culture, because it creates divisions and inequalities within society (Andrews, 1996). In this perspective, like analysed in the section *Patriarchal thinking* starting on page 15, males are linked with characteristics such as rationality, activity, creativity, which are associated with the Cartesian human mind, civility, and orderliness. Conversely, females are perceived as connected to traits such as emotionality, passivity, determination linked to the animal body, and associations with primitiveness, disorderliness, and immanent nature. Further, within this dualistic framework, humanity is primarily associated with rationality, suggesting that higher levels of rationality indicates a greater humanity. Conversely, individuals who prioritize emotions, matter, or nature are frequently assigned a lower status, considered less human and inferior (Robinson, 2023).

Plumwood and Warren emphasize the importance of dismantling dualistic thinking, which divides humans from nature, or man from woman, and fosters hierarchical relationships (Andrews, 1996). Plumwood criticizes the prevailing notion that places humans above nature, leading to the exploitation of non-human entities and Warren challenges frameworks by questioning their prioritization of human interests over environmental concerns. They propose relational ethics, which stress interconnectedness, empathy, and responsibility in human-nature interactions. Plumwood advocates for moralities such as care, concern, and respect towards both humans and non-humans, rejecting hierarchical attitudes. The care ethics from Warren promotes empathy and responsibility towards the natural world, considering humans as integral parts of the ecological community. This care ethics resembles a bit the stewardship from Christian Theology, but considering humans as integral parts is not denoted within it. Furthermore, Plumwood and Warren advocate for inclusivity, emphasizing the incorporation of diverse perspectives, including indigenous knowledge systems, to challenge dualistic thinking and promote sustainable environmental practices. Moreover, Plumwood underscores the significance of indigenous perspectives that highlight interconnectedness and reverence for all life forms and Warren emphasizes the value of diverse cultural and philosophical viewpoints in shaping a more comprehensive environmental ethics (Andrews, 1996).

The Transformation of Self-Understanding - Zoroastrian, Greek and Enlightenment Perspectives

The transition from the organic worldview to individualism during the European Enlightenment was a pivotal moment in Western thought. Like explained in *Transition: Organic unity (pre-sixteenth century) - European Enlightenment* on pages 11 till 14 societies, before the Enlightenment, viewed themselves as interconnected wholes, deeply integrated with the spiritual and material aspects of their world. However towards the enlightenment was a shift towards individualism

Moreover, unlike Cartesian dualism, which focuses on the separation of mind and body, Zoroastrianism and Greek thought provided a more holistic view, integrating the inner self with the external world. Greek philosophy, with thinkers like Plato and Aristotle, laid foundational concepts of mind-body dualism that influenced later developments. The focus of Plato on the immaterial soul and its pursuit of knowledge beyond the physical realm, along with the empirical observations of the natural world form Aristotle, introduced ideas about the separation of intellect from the body. While this philosophy did not directly lead to Cartesian dualism, it provided a philosophical framework for later discussions. Zoroastrianism, focusing on a deeper connection with the inner self, shares similarities with certain aspects of Greek philosophy by focusing on the integration of the inner self with the external world.

However, with the transition to Cartesian dualism, focusing on the separation of mind and body, during the Enlightenment, the sense of inner connection became less pronounced. Individuals began to perceive themselves as isolated individuals existing within their bodies, contributing to a growing sense of alienation from the natural world (Watson, 2024; Britannica, 2023). The shift towards a more mechanistic view of the world, influenced by Cartesian philosophy, diminished the importance of subjective experience and emphasized rationality (i.e. rationalism) and objective observation (i.e. empiricism). These worldviews will be further discussed in *Harmonizing Rationality and Intuition: The Essence of Environmentalism* on page 19 till 20. As a result, the nuanced understanding of the self, found in Zoroastrianism and certain aspects of Greek philosophy, was gradually overshadowed by the dominance of mind-body dualism. This separation of mind and body contributed to a sense of alienation from nature and a prioritization of individual autonomy over collective harmony, setting the stage for a more rationalistic worldview and the reduction of intuitive thinking. Further, this thinking enhanced the shift from participating consciousness towards non-participating consciousness.

This shift also paved the way for later philosophical movements, such as empiricism and materialism, which further emphasized observation and scientific inquiry over intuition. These movements will be discussed in *Harmonizing Rationality and Intuition: The Essence of Environmentalism* on page 19 till 20.

Harmonizing Rationality and Intuition: The Essence of Environmentalism

Upon the scientific-industrial revolution, intuitive knowledge has been disregarded, although it is through intuition that we can appreciate the natural world. Dualism, as stated by Hamilton, prioritizes instrumental rationality, contributing to the dismissal of intuitive knowledge. Environmentalism seeks to reunite these two forms of knowledge again, enriching reason, or rational analysis, with intuition, cultivating a symbiotic relationship, and overcoming the duality between our inner and outer worlds. However, this prioritization has led conventional economics to be inherently antagonistic towards environmentalism, enhancing the human-nature dichotomy (Hamilton, 2002). More information upon this dichotomy is present in *Various forms of dualism* subsection *Environmental dualism* on page 8.

The prevailing dominance of instrumental rationality and the mechanistic worldview has promoted a diminished understanding of our inner lives, enhancing the environmental degradation we witness today, which is a direct consequence of perceiving nature merely as a dead resource rather than a living entity deserving respect. Therefore, Hamilton advocates for embracing environmentalism as a means to challenge the dominance of orthodox economics, emphasizing the intrinsic value of nature beyond its utility, and to reconnect again with our wilderness within. This intuitive comprehension revolves around recognizing and cherishing the divine unity inherent in all life forms, as elucidated in foundational texts by figures like Leopold and Naess (Pandiya, 2023; Nnaemeka et al., 2016). Accessible primarily through direct experience rather than rational analysis, this holistic view fundamentally clashes with the isolated, calculative approach characteristic of conventional economics.

Environmentalism challenges the dominance of orthodox economics by rejecting the narrow focus on self-interested of rational individuals. While they perceive the world through a lens of utility, maximization and material gain, environmentalism underscores ethical principles and a profound, intrinsic connection to nature. Like, Hamilton argues that our relationship with nature should be grounded in moral and intuitive considerations rather than solely on economic calculations, positing that crucial decisions, such as those affecting biodiversity and climate change, are moral choices that cannot be resolved by cost-benefit analysis alone. Additionally, Haila favors environmentalism, advocating for a balance between rational thought and the deeper insights provided by our emotional and intuitive natures, reinstating a holistic rapport with our environment. Moreover, environmentalism is essential not only for our material well-being but also for our psychological health. So, by challenging the rationalist obsession of modern economics, it offers a pathway to reintegrate our understanding of nature and ourselves, crucial for addressing environmental challenges and fostering a deeper, more sustainable relationship with the natural world (Hamilton, 2002; Haila, 2000).

To achieve this transformative shift, Haila suggests a threefold approach:

Acknowledging Diverse Rationalities: Just as different social practices are governed by distinct rational frameworks, our relationship with nature is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to a single perspective. Recognizing this diversity allows us to appreciate the richness of human-nature interactions and the knowledge that caring for nature can manifest in various ways depending on cultural, social, and individual contexts.

Understanding Dynamic Interactions: Our actions shape and are shaped by the natural world. By examining how different human practices interact with nature, we can better understand the dynamic relationship between culture and the environment. Contextual socioecology emphasizes that human activities are deeply intertwined with their surroundings, suggesting that there is a dynamic interaction shaped by the specific circumstances in which actions occur.

Embracing Interconnectedness: Drawing a distinction between first nature and second nature underscores the transformative influence of human activities on the environment. Recognizing that our creations, from cities to social norms, are integral parts of the natural world challenges the idea of nature as something separate from human culture. Embracing this interconnectedness fosters a sense of responsibility towards nature, as we realize that caring for the environment is equivalent to caring for ourselves and future generations.

Harmonizing Empirical Science with Inner Self and Nature: Challenges

Integrating science (i.e. Empiricism) with connections to the inner self (i.e. intuition) and nature presents significant challenges due to inherent differences in frameworks of thinking. Science traditionally prioritizes empirical evidence and objective observation, often marginalizing subjective experiences like intuition and emotions. Rationalists argue for rational and deductive knowledge, while empiricists emphasize empirical evidence gathered through sensory experience. This divergence complicates efforts to integrate subjective experiences into scientific discourse (Markie & Folescu, 2023). Moreover, scientific inquiry tends to be reductionist, breaking phenomena down into measurable components. This approach may overlook the holistic and interconnected nature of intuition and nature, which are not easily quantifiable or replicable in controlled experiments. Additionally, the subjective nature of intuition and emotions presents challenges in their objective measurement, validation, and replicability within scientific frameworks (Markie & Folescu, 2023).

While science offers valuable insights into the physical world, it may struggle to fully capture or explain subjective experiences and the intricate interconnectedness of natural systems. Attempts to reduce these complexities into quantifiable data risks oversimplification and may not fully capture the richness of human intuition and the intricacies of natural phenomena (Markie & Folescu, 2023).

Intersectionality in Ecofeminism: Exploring the Links

In the mid-1970s, feminist writers began questioning whether patriarchal ideologies contributed to the widespread marginalization and exploitation of various groups, including women, people of color, animals, and nature. Sheila Collins argued that patriarchy is sustained by interconnected systems of sexism, racism, class exploitation, and ecological degradation. In cotrast, Ynestra King asserted that male dominance over women serves as the original form of social hierarchy, influencing and reinforcing all other forms of oppression. For instance, the subjugation of nature mirrors the oppression of women, as nature is often depicted as feminine and devalued within male-dominated societies (Brennan & Lo, 2024). Plumwood, like Collins, viewes the oppression of women as one of many interconnected forms of oppression, all supported by a shared ideological structure that privileges the dominant group, like colonizers, over the oppressed, like slaves. This structure enables various forms of oppression to reinforce each other (Andrews, 1996).

Moreover, feminism links environmental issues with broader problems concerning various kinds of discrimination and exploitation, emphasizing the connections between the oppression of women and environmental degradation. This concept, is called Intersectionality, a concept introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, which is crucial in ecofeminism (Crenshaw, 1991). This term is coined in 1974 by Françoise d'Eaubonne and examines how various social categorizations such as gender, race, class, and sexuality intersect to create overlapping systems of oppression and discrimination. Ecofeminism extends this analysis to include environmental degradation, arguing that marginalized communities, especially women, often bear the brunt of ecological crises (Brennan & Lo, 2024).

Examples of intersectionality are as following:

Gender and Environment: Ecofeminists highlight that environmental degradation disproportionately affects women, especially in developing countries, where they are primary caregivers and resource providers, exacerbating gender inequalities by increasing the burden on women to find scarce resources like water and firewood (Osman ,2009).

Race and Environment: This intersection, alligning with environmental justice, addresses how communities of color face disproportionate environmental harm. Issues such as pollution and lack of clean water are more prevalent in these communities, and ecofeminism advocates for solutions that also addresses racial disparities (Dervis, 2007).

Class and Environment: Economic inequalities intersect with environmental issues, as poorer communities are more exposed to pollution and hazards. Ecofeminists argue for policies that ensure environmental sustainability and promote social equity (Dervis, 2007).

Following intersections delve further on ecofeministic considerations:

Environmental Degradation and Indigenous Rights: Emphasizes the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on Indigenous communities, whose traditional lands are frequently targeted for resource extraction and environmental pollution, highlighting the complex relationships between environmental exploitation, colonialism, and Indigenous rights (LaDuke, 1999).

Disability Rights and Animal Welfare: Ecofeminism considers how ableist attitudes towards people with disabilities intersect with perceptions of non-human animals. Both groups may face discrimination and exploitation due to perceived differences in ability, value or in the way they can stand up for their own rights. This intersection highlights the importance of challenging ableism in animal advocacy efforts and promoting inclusive approaches to animal welfare (Nocella et al., 2015).

Speciesism and Racism/Sexism: Ecofeminism examines how ideologies of superiority based on race or gender are mirrored in attitudes towards animals. Just as marginalized human groups are exploited and oppressed, non-human animals are often subjected to violence and exploitation due to perceived inferiority based on species, highlighting interconnectedness of different forms of discrimination and exploitation (Adams, 1990).

Whether there intersections are conceptual, causal, or merely contingent connections among the different forms of oppression and liberation remains a contested issue (Green, 1994). However, underlying these intersections lies a deeper critique of Western metaphysics, as illuminated by Haila. He underscores the limitations of the dualistic framework inherent in Western thought, particularly the Cartesian separation between I and the world. This dualism perpetuates a hierarchical view of human-nature interaction, wherein humanity is positioned as superior to nature, like defined in anthropocentrism explained in *Humanity's Dualistic Relationship with Nature in Christian Doctrine* subsection *Anthropocentrism* on page 18*. Haila proposes a holistic view that transcends this dualism, advocating for the integration of humanity and nature into historically and contextually specified complexes. By incorporating Haila's perspective, the discourse on environmental justice gains depth, shedding light on the complex relationships between human practices and natural processes. This holistic understanding is crucial in addressing environmental injustices, calling for a more nuanced approach to human-nature interaction (Haila, 2000).

Important to understand is though the patriarchal power imbalance may often be seen to exclusively benefit men, it also has insidious dangers for their psychological well-being. Patriarchy negatively impacts the mental health of men by pressuring them into stereotypical notions of masculinity. They are expected to suppress emotions and adopt aggressive behaviours, facing bullying if they display sensitivity, leading to suppressed emotions, normalized violence, and stunted emotional development, which harms relationships and discourages seeking mental health help. The stress contributes to shorter lifespans and increases mental health issues (Horowitz et al., 2020; Mayer, 2022; Plank, 2019).

Conclusion: Towards a Post-Dualistic Future

Throughout the course of human history, our relationship with the natural world has undergone a profound evolution, shaped by an array of social, cultural, and philosophical influences. From the communal bonds of early hunter-gatherer societies to the intricate webs of modern capitalist economies, these dynamics have not only defined our understanding of nature but have also formed our ethical frameworks and environmental attitudes. At the core of this evolution lied a shift from the holistic, organic and interconnected worldview towards an individualistic anthropocentric one, deeply entrenched in our cultural and philosophical heritage. This worldview has often fostered a dualistic framework that prioritizes human dominance over nature. Rationalism, individualism, empiricism, non-participating consciousness and capitalism have all played significant roles in perpetuating this binary thinking, reinforcing hierarchical divisions between humanity and the environment and ethical problems such as environmental degradation, the displacement of indigenous cultures, and unequal resource distribution took place, prompting urgent ethical reflection. Like Reinhold Niebuhr states "While individuals may exhibit altruistic behavior, societal structures often lead to selfishness and injustice. This highlights the need for a balance between idealistic love and pragmatic justice in navigating social challenges.".

However, despite these challenges, scholars such as Plumwood, Warren, Hamilton, and Haila offer a reflection upon these aspects by advocating for a transformative shift towards a post-dualistic perspective, calling for the dismantling of dualistic frameworks that perpetuate hierarchical relationships, promoting relational ethics rooted in interconnectedness and empathy. By critiquing notions that prioritize human interests over environmental concerns, virtues such as care and respect can be cultivated for all life forms, transcending Cartesian dualism and embracing holistic perspectives that recognize intrinsic value for all living beings. In addition, Hamilton advocates for environmentalism in the journey towards interconnectedness, offering a platform to reunites rationality with intuition, and to challenge the dominance of orthodox economics. By emphasizing the intrinsic worth of nature beyond human utility, environmentalism fosters ethical principles and a profound connection to the natural world, guiding us towards a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence. Furthermore, there has been ecofeminism, illuminating how various forms of oppression intersect, creating overlapping systems of inequality that disproportionately affect the marginalized, women, people of color, and nature. Recognizing these intersections enables holistic approaches to environmental justice, promoting social equity and ecological sustainability. Upon speaking of woman oppression, the rise of social media and internet has facilitated gender bias, strengthened todays patriarchal norms, and maintained negative portrayals of women (Popa & Gavriliu, 2015). Therefore, It's crucial to carefully approach social media to mitigate its harmful effects on women and cultural perceptions.

In conclusion, transitioning towards a post-dualistic perspective requires a concerted effort to challenge these dualistic thinking patterns and embrace intuitive thinking and interconnectedness as a guiding principle. By acknowledging diverse rationalities, understanding dynamic interactions, and embracing interconnectedness, deeper connections with nature can be fostered, promoting ecological harmony. This transformative shift is not only essential for addressing pressing environmental challenges but also for ensuring the well-being and flourishing of both present and future generations.

Acknowledgments

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