



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

A New Look at Stoic Ethical Precept for Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to run back over the Stoic Seneca's ethical precept: "live or life according to Nature" once again for the realization or restoration of sustainability. Though ancient Greek Stoicism is no longer existent, yet Stoic Seneca's ethical precept has not been forgotten. Like tradition, the Nature embedded ethical precept of Stoicism should or can be defended, but not in the traditional way, since tradition defended in traditional way implies fundamentalism.

Key Words: Stoicism, Nature, Conservation, Fundamentalism, Precept

1. Introduction

In the age of sustainability revolution, which has started its effective life since the 1970s, various preconditions, precautions, principles and/or policies are being adopted for the conservation of Nature. But, without clear-cut understanding of Nature, and the way of its conservation, how is it possible to conserve Nature? Should we not decide today what nature is and how we should reorganize our way of living in relation to it before taking conservation action? Though ancient Greek Stoicism is no longer existent, yet Stoic Seneca's ethical precept: "live or life according to Nature" has not been forgotten. Like tradition, the Nature embedded ethical precept of Stoicism should or can be defended, but not in the traditional way, since tradition defended in traditional way implies fundamentalism. Today's humanized or socialized Nature and ecology should or can be conserved or restored, but not in the traditional way. Nature, ecology and tradition are equivalent in the sense that these are erroneously treated as pre-given and independent of "humanization or socialization" (Konar, 2013). Their restoration should never deliberately be backed up by fundamentalism. This paper seeks to run back over the Stoic Seneca's ethical precept once again for the realization or restoration of sustainability (Konar & Chakraborty, 2011).

2. Conflicting Perspectives of Nature

Humans are advised by the Stoic ethical precept to “live according to Nature”. But, if conflicting perspectives of Nature are existent in the interdisciplinary literature, then Stoic ethical precept must involve conflicting pathways. Then, comes the problem of choice from the multitude of pathways. Now, our discussion will be concentrated on the conflicting perspectives of Nature on which the Stoic ethical precept is based. The perspective of Nature is shaped by social as well as ecological frameworks, since humans are impacted by both the social and ecological factors, given the natural instability indicated by natural catastrophes and natural stability indicated by the equilibrium of various natural life support systems. Further, the perspective of Nature is determined by the following two factors:

(i) The ways of human interaction with the Nature determine the ways of human perception and interpretation of Nature

(ii) The ways of human perception and interpretation of nature determine how humans interact with the Nature.

In this context Milton’s (1997) remark is noteworthy. He says that “cultural perspectives thus guide human activity. This activity, in turn, yields experiences and perceptions, which shape people’s understanding of the world. The process is not unidirectional, but dialectical”.

Moreover, how the perspective of Nature is embedded in the minds of the people should be looked at from two sets of peoples such as:

(i) Peoples who act as analysts, scholars, researchers, authors or scientists (observers)

(ii) Peoples who are studied by the former (observed).

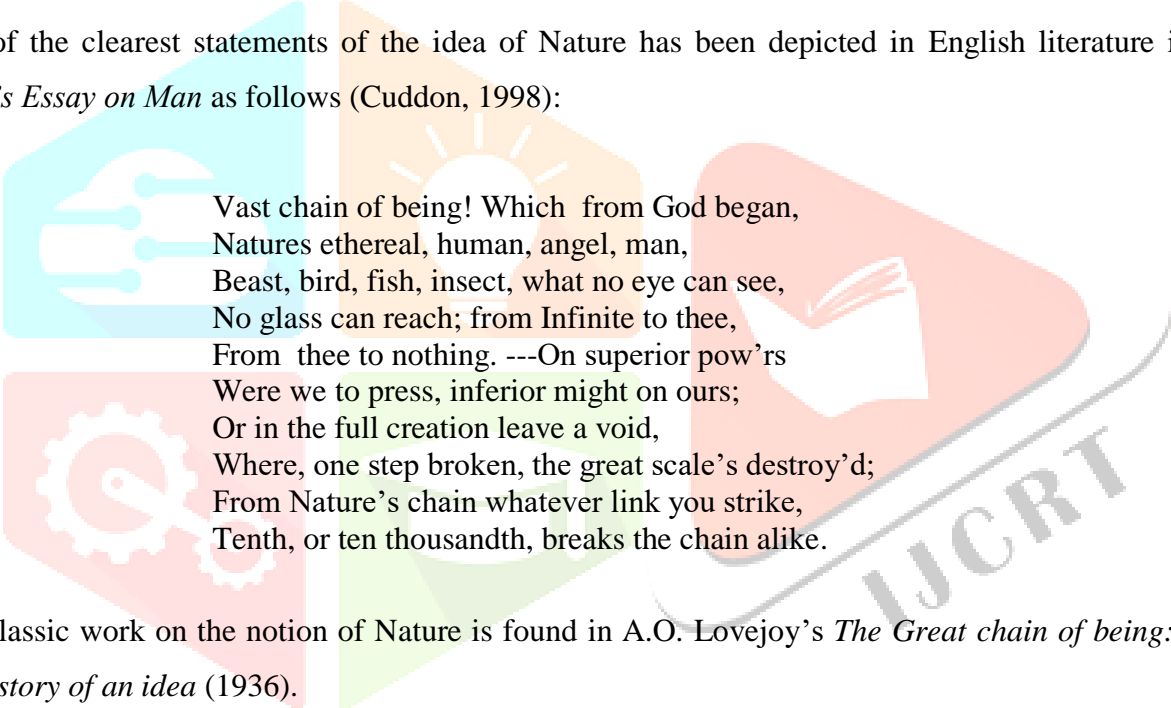
In this connection, the comment of Dawkins (1995) should be recalled: “we are just brought up in a culture that sees the world in a scientific way. They (tribe, who believe that the moon is an old calabash tossed into the sky, hanging only just out of reach above the treetops) are brought up to see the world in another way. Neither way is more true than the other”. In a similar vein, Dwyer (1996) has argued that the capacity of a particular society to develop a concept of Nature depends on whether they view their environment as an integrated whole or divide it into familiar and unfamiliar spaces, and this, in turn, depends on how they live in and their environment. He suggests that, in the fully integrated world of the Kubo, there is no sphere sufficiently distinct from the human world to merit the label Nature, while the Siane environment contains unused and familiar spaces, which might be so labeled. Further, Ingold (1996) says that hunter-gatherer communities do not have a concept of Nature because the world can only be Nature for a being that does not belong there. Similarly, Howell (1996) points out that the jungle in its totality as a material and spiritual world iscultural space, not natural. They (Chewong of Malay rainforest) move around in it with confidence derived from understanding and knowledge. In this case, the label is applied by the analyst, there is no suggestion that the people themselves would describe their environment in this way.

Various perspectives of Nature are existent in the interdisciplinary literature. However, Beck's (1994) notion of Nature should be prioritized first as follows:

Nature is not nature, but rather a concept, norm, memory, utopia, counter-image. Today more than ever, now that it no longer exists, nature is being rediscovered, pampered. The ecology movement has fallen prey to a naturalistic misapprehension of itself.... 'nature' is a kind of anchor by whose means the ship of civilization, sailing over the open seas, conjures up, cultivates, its contrary: dry land, the harbour, the approaching reef.

Beck's remark cannot cease us from searching for the definitions of Nature. For evidences show that A.D. Lovejoy was capable of counting over sixty different shades of meaning of Nature. The preferred notions of Nature are given below:

One of the clearest statements of the idea of Nature has been depicted in English literature in terms of *Pope's Essay on Man* as follows (Cuddon, 1998):



Vast chain of being! Which from God began,
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from Infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing. ---On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd;
From Nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

The classic work on the notion of Nature is found in A.O. Lovejoy's *The Great chain of being: A study of the history of an idea* (1936).

A considerable emphasis on imitating the law of Nature is seen in pope's *An Essay on Criticism* (1711) [Cuddon, 1998] as follows:

First follow Nature, and your judgement frame
By her just standard, which is still the same;
Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd and universal light.

According to Whitehead (1953), "The whole life of Nature is dominated by the existence of periodic events, that is, by the existence of successive events so analogous to each other that, without any straining of language, they may be termed recurrences of the same event,"

Ellen (1996) has identified three distinct senses in which Nature is understood in Western society:

- (i) As space which is not human

(ii) As a category of things

(iii) As inner essence, where Nature seen as (ii) and (iii) includes both human and non-human beings.

Escobar (1997) views that Nature can no longer be seen as an essential principle and foundational category, an independent domain of intrinsic value and truth but as the object of constant reinventions, especially by unprecedented forms of technoscience.

In the eyes of Sheldrake (1991), Nature is alive, which oppose mechanistic approach to Nature in which Nature is treated as an inanimate sources of natural resources. Sheldrake (1991) says that such a view is implicitly feminine, for the words Nature and natural have their origins in the mothering process. How Nature is seen through the eyes of the famous poet Hopkins [Dyson, 1995] will be obvious from the following lines of his poem *Brothers*:

Ah Nature, framed in fault,
There's comfort then, there's salt;
Nature, bad, base, and blind,
Dearly thou canst be kind;
There dearly then, dearly
I'll cry thou canst be kind.

Giddens's (1994) conceivability of Nature is as follows:

The paradox is that nature has been embraced only at the point of its disappearance. We live today in a remoulded nature devoid of nature... nature can not any longer be defended in the natural way...socialized nature is by definition no longer natural. The longing for a return to nature.... is a healthy nostalgia... Nature has come to an end in a parallel way to tradition...Instead of being concerned above all with what nature could do to us, we have now to worry about what we have done to nature.

According to Vernadsky (1965), "The biosphere is the environment in which we live, it is the 'nature' that surrounds us and to which we refer in common parlance". Lotka (1925) says that "The picture (of Nature) we must keep before us, then, is that of great world engine or energy transformer composed of a multitude of subsidiary units, each separately and all together as a whole, working in a cycle".

"There is no state of nature, such as posited by Rousseau" (Giddens, 1994).

According to *Pope's Essay on Man* (Copleston, 1962):

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is and God the soul.

According to T. S. Eliot, "The external Nature is always an accomplice of the illusory reality" (Sen, 1967). But, William Wordsworth proves that Nature is always interesting because of its inherent truth and simple beauty (Sen, 1967). In *The Creative Experiment*, Bowra says that "The whole order of Nature seems to be breaking, and strange sounds and sights testify to the general decomposition" (Rosset, 1948). Stephen

Spender (1950) wanted to substitute the modern civilization with his desired nature of Nature and that is why he said:

Unless, governor, teacher, inspector, visitor,
This map becomes their window and these windows
That shut upon their lives like catacombs,
Break O break open till they break the town
And show the children to green fields, and make their world
Run azure on gold sands, to let their tongues
Run naked into books, the white and green leaves open
History theirs whose language is the sun

What Nature teaches us and what ways of life we should follow will be amply clear from the remark of Kropotkin (1925):

“Don’t compete! ---- competition is always injurious to the species, and you have plenty of reasons to avoid it!”. That is the tendency of Nature, not always realized in full, but always present. That is the watchword which comes to us from the bush, the forest, the river, the ocean. “Therefore combine --- practice mutual aid! That is the surest means for giving to each and all the greatest safety, the best guarantee of existence and progress, bodily, intellectual, and moral”. That is what Nature teaches us; and that is what all those animals which have attained the highest position in their respective classes have done. That is also what man--- the most primitive man -- has been doing; and that is why man has reached the position upon which we stand now....

The Greek sophist Anaxagoras (Stace, 1972) argues that an antithesis is existent between Nature and man. Another Greek sophist Alcidamas of Elaea (Nersesyants, 1986) remarks that “God has set all men free; Nature has made no man a slave”. Regarding the relationship between the humans and Nature, the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) says that:

If Nature is to be understood, we must keep in mind certain general points of view....Nature seeks everywhere to attain the best possible....But if nothing in Nature is aimless or useless, this is not to be interpreted in a narrow anthropocentric spirit. It does not mean that everything exists for the use of man....It is true that, in a certain sense, everything else sublunary is for man. For man is the highest in the scale of beings in this terrestrial sphere....But this does not exclude the fact that lower beings have each its end. They exist for themselves and not for us” (Stace, 1972). He also adds that humanness can not exist apart from human beings, any more than heaviness apart from the heavy object.

Nature can be conceived broadly from three perspectives such as (i) Traditional perspective, (ii) Modern perspective and (iii) New perspective.

2.1. Traditional Perspective of Nature

If human “figure” and its “nose” (recall Gogol’s story, called, *The Nose*), which is an inseparable part of the “figure”, are respectively likened to the “Nature” and the “human”, then traditional perspective shows that “nose” has an independent existence, which means that “nose exists without an owner” and by analogy, it can be said that human society exists without Nature. Traditional perspective is determined by the nature of tradition, traditionalism and traditionalists. Tradition refers to the customs, beliefs, practices, ceremonials, rituals, etc. by which the past can be substituted for the present. Tradition is something, which is given, fixed, or constant, not variable; exogenous, not endogenous; autonomous, not induced; static, not dynamic, and unchallengeable. Tradition is assumed to influence human social life, which can not influence tradition. Human social life is exceptionally dynamic, while tradition is exceptionally static, though it is humanly constructed. Recently tradition is being detraditionalized and reconstructed or reinvented deliberately. The most important characteristic of traditional tradition is that tradition should or can be defended in the traditional way. Like rail lines tradition and Nature go in parallel way. They have vast similarities. The salient features of traditional perspective of Nature are as follows:

If Earth is likened to a model, and if society is treated as endogenous variable (obviously dynamic), then Nature is looked upon as an exogenously and permanently fixed landscape. Symbolically, if Y stands for “index of Nature or Naturalness” measured along the vertical axis and X stands for “index of humanization or socialization” measured along the horizontal axis, then in the two-dimensional diagram, the mathematical function $Y = F(X)$ can be represented by a straight line which is parallel to the X-axis. Nature refers to environment and events which is pre-given independently of human social actions. Nature is devoid of human social spheres. Nature is an autonomously given physical environment that persists only for absorbing social and ecological shocks. It is an external framework for human activity. It is looked at in an instrumental way. It is an external platform of social life and is pre-given and largely unchallengeable. It can or should be returned to its original state by human efforts. The metaphor of Nature as Mother Nature is seriously taken as valid. It is regarded as an object of beauty, separated from human social life. Nature should and can be defended in the natural way as it is “larger than human beings” (Goodin, 1992). It is a non-humanized physical objects or processes (or environment) given independently of human intervention. A return to an independent Nature is advocated by traditionalists. “How shall we live in a world of socialized or lapsed Nature?” is the moral question of traditionalists. Naturalness of Nature can be restored in the natural way. Socialization or humanization of Nature is the only cause of ecological crisis leading to the emerging threat of unsustainability. All humans should become conservative in the conservative way. For the return to natural Nature, traditionalists suggest to follow primitive civilizations and to abandon modern civilizations. As Naess (1972) says that “..... people will be able to live as ‘future primitives’, recovering ecological diversity as ‘dwellers in’ the land”. Similarly Goldsmith (1988) suggests that it is to

the traditional societies of the past that we must turn for inspiration. Nature should be defended against the inroads of economic expansionism, which threatened its inner harmonies as well as its beauties. The deep ecologists Porritt and Winner seeks to call for a non-violent revolution to overthrow our whole polluting, plundering and materialistic industrial society and, in its place, to create a new economic and social order which will allow human beings to live in harmony with the planet (Dobson, 1990). According to traditionalists, living “close to Nature” implies more harmony with it than living in modern society. Hence primitive ethnoecologies and tribal communities comprising of hunter- gatherers, horticulturists, pastoralists, marginal peasants and the like are placed for admiration. Socialization or humanization of Nature leads to destruction of Nature. Urbanization and globalization backed up by scientific and technological revolution are discouraged. Defending of Nature in the natural way should be paralleled by the defending of tradition in the traditional way. The emphasis on a return to Nature also includes the revival of traditional medicine, substitution of herbs for modern drugs with the exclusion of modern medical methodology. Traditional perspective of Nature has its origin in Cartesian philosophy which indicates the dualistic view of a mind-body actor whose mind chooses between options available to the body in its lived-in situation by a reasoning which transcends the situation, and which then makes the body execute its choice (Bird-David, 1997). Cartesian view also suggests the principles that (a) Everything is revisable, (b) We cannot be sure even about our most cherished ideas and (c) Science is supposed to produce certainties for us. Mastery over Nature means destruction of it, since humanized or socialized Nature is no longer natural by traditional definition. Local, small, diversified and primitive communities are adaptable more gracefully to Nature. So decentralization of cities and reconstruction of ethnoecologies are blissfully encouraged. Conservation of tradition should be coupled with conservation of Nature. So constructions of historical and aesthetical importance should be conserved in the conservative way in the name of conservation of Nature, since these are “larger than humans”. Conservation decisions and planning should be undertaken by reference to natural Nature, not humanized or socialized Nature. Scientific and technological civilization should be banned. Nature, ecology and environment are often confused. Villages are more natural than cities.

There are authors who have spoken of the relation between human and Nature, but they have not clarified what Nature and Natural are. For example, according to Smith (1997) for sustainability we require living in peace and comfort within natural limits and preservation of the natural environment in its unaltered state. Living in harmony with natural environment has been suggested by Heang (1997). For sustainability, Posey (1992) has suggested to use the techniques for living in harmony with nature, obtaining favourable results without degrading or exhausting the environment. Living in harmony with surrounding is also the view of Lewis (1992). Man must bring himself into conformity with nature if he wants to exist as part of nature’s unity, and must fit his demands to nature’s availabilities (Reichel-Dolmatoff, 1976). Living in relative

harmony with nature, and living within the limit fixed as a challenge by nature ensures sustainability (Cavalcanti, 1997).

Traditional perspective of nature is based on the following frameworks, paradigm, doctrines and/or isms:

- (a) Possibilism, which means that nature is seen as setting the limits on cultural development, as dictating what is possible (Kroeber, 1939; Stenning, 1957)
- (b) Cultural core or cultural ecology of Steward (1955)
- (c) Substantivism, which concerns itself with the economy as an instituted process (Sahlins, 1972; Polanyi et al., 1957; Halperin, 1988) neglecting the individual.
- (d) Formalism, which concerns with the rational individual and the economy at large, as the aggregate of such individuals (Halperin, 1988).
- (e) Symbolism or economic symbolism (Sahlins, 1976; Mintz, 1985)
- (f) Instrumental rationality.
- (g) Old environmental determinism or anthropogeography (Geertz, 1963; Mason, 1896; Huntington, 1924).
- (h) Cultural materialism of Harris (1968).
- (i) Cultural relativism of Holy and Stuchlik (1981).
- (j) Social constructivism of Ingold (1992).
- (k) French structuralism of Levi-Strauss (1963).
- (l) Cultural economics of Gudeman (1986).
- (m) Ecosystem or ecological system (Rapport, 1971).
- (n) Cognitive anthropology (Tyler, 1969).
- (o) Ethnoecology (Hunn, 1985).

2.2. Modern Perspective of Nature

Giddens (1994) is eulogized for his significant contribution to the modern perspective of Nature. We are living today in a world in which the Nature is being humanized, socialized, remoulded, managed or denatured at an increasing rate. The naturalness of Nature is being faded out and instead, denaturing is taking its place. The humanized or socialized Nature is being substituted for Natural Nature. That is why today's Nature should be designated as humanized, socialized, remoulded or managed Nature. By any criterion, Nature must be conserved, defended or safeguarded. But the way of conservation should be changed. Nature should and can not be defended in the natural way. Conservation of Nature should come from non-natural way. Both the Nature and tradition are alike in the sense that they need defending, since both are disappearing and as tradition should and cannot be defended in traditional way, similarly Nature should and cannot be defended in the natural way. Tradition defended in traditional way means "fundamentalism" which, is dangerous to the society and can arise in all the dimensions of human life.

Nature is going to an end in a parallel way to tradition. Conservation of tradition should effectively be separated from the conservation of Nature. Tradition should be preserved, but the ways of life with which they were associated should and cannot be preserved. For example, we might wish to preserve the local gibbet on account of its history, but not the practice of publicly hanging petty criminals on it (Giddens, 1994). Return to Nature does not necessarily mean the return of the present scientific and technological civilization to the early rude, crude or primitive society, as claimed by traditionalists. Modernists do not believe that communities comprising of hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists, pastoralists, peasants etc. are more natural than modern scientific and technological communities, for their living close to Nature. Because all are human productions and humans are part of Nature. Traditionalist Goodin (1992) argues that “natural products or processes are larger than ourselves or humans”. But the modernist Giddens’s (1994) counter-argument is that that we need something larger or more enduring than ourselves to give our lives purpose and meaning may be true, but this is plainly not equivalent to a definition of the natural. Mastery over Nature does not mean destroying it. Rather mastery can quite often mean caring for Nature as much as treating it in a purely instrumental or indifferent fashion. Conservation decision and planning should not be undertaken by reference to natural or original Nature, but to humanized or socialized Nature. We have to decide today what nature is and how we should organize our lives in relation to it. The longing for a return to original Nature is a healthy nostalgia, since Nature can never be returned in the natural way. Instead of being concerned above all with what Nature could do to us, we have now to worry about what we have done to Nature. Human constructions such as old buildings, churches, palaces, temples and similar things should be preserved only for their historical importance, not for the fact that they are “larger than ourselves” (Goodin, 1992) and not in the traditional way. We should all become conservative now, but not in the conservative way. Decision about what to conserve or to strive to recover should be determined by reference to denaturing of Nature and detraditionalization of tradition. We should seek to remoralize our lives in a situation where Nature and tradition can be reconstructed in deliberately conscious way. “How shall we live? in a world of lost tradition and socialized Nature” should not be treated as moral despair. We should not start to mistrust science and technology for the lost natural harmonies. Environment, ecology and Nature should not be confused. We can not go back to tradition which is ingrained the community, where tradition is defended in the traditional way. History does not express the will of God but is the result of the active struggles, and creativity, of human beings themselves. The human authorship of history has been hidden by religious dogma and by the dead hand of tradition. The task ahead for humanity is to take hold of its own social development and direct it in a conscious way. We are or can become the masters of our own destiny (Giddens, 1994).

2.3. New Perspective of Nature

The relationship between the Nature and the human society can be likened to the relationship between the Nation State and its government. Government is the subset of the Nation State in the sense that wherever government exists, there is also Nation State, but the converse is not true. Similarly, human society is the subset of Nature, which means that wherever human society exists, Nature follows suit, but wherever Nature exists human society does not exist. Nature should be divided into three zones such as (i) “free-entry zone”, (ii) “quasi-entry zone” and (iii) “no-entry zone”. So, Nature should be confined not only to the Earth, but a part of the outer space of the universe into which human intrusions are still going on and the rest part of the outer space, which is left untouched till now, should also be included in Nature. Because a part of the outer space of the universe is recently being humanized or socialized in terms of launching of variously artificial satellites and diverse explorations of space to satisfy the human common purposes. Besides, several natural satellites have already been humanized or socialized and many other natural satellites have remained under the queue of humanization or socialization for the common good or bad of the society. Thus, socialized as well as non-socialized parts of the universe should also be included into the new conception of Nature.

Socialization of Nature is a matter of degree, like privatization of national economy, and mathematization of various disciplines or sciences. Though socialization of Nature is going up at an increasing rate, yet full-fledged socialization of Nature is neither physically possible, nor socially desirable. So the moral despair that Nature has fully been denatured or exhausted, or in other words, Nature has ceased to exist, is a sophisticated nostalgia. Unless government ceases to exist how is it possible to realize full-fledged privatization of a national society? Should the national society not decide the degree of privatization consciously for the benefit or desirability of the society? Likewise, while mathematics itself is non-mathematical, since literary or verbal reasoning is still existent in mathematics, is it possible to attain full-fledged mathematization of any science or discipline such as physics, chemistry or the like? If full-fledged socialization of Nature is possible by any means or criterion, then what name should be substituted for remaining non-socialized part of the infinite universe and will diverse non-anthropogenic natural instabilities cease from recurring? And by what name will non-anthropogenic natural instabilities be called? No scientist can predict the upper and lower limits of socialized Nature in the universe despite unprecedented boon of scientific and technological revolution.

Socialization of Nature does not necessary lead to destruction of Nature or natural disequilibrium. All kinds of destructions of nature may be brought about by socialization of Nature, but the converse cannot be true, that is, all kinds of socialization of nature can never be directed to the destruction of Nature. Since human society is a subset of Nature so any kind of socialization of Nature means deliberate intrusion of human intervention into the non-socialized part of the universe. Such human intervention may involve two types of

socialization such as positive and negative. Both the deforestation and reforestation of Nature are the examples of socialization of Nature. But while the former should be called negative socialization, the latter the positive socialization of Nature. If the warfare and the age-old conflicts among diverse fundamentalisms can be ruled out by the conscious and morally optimistic efforts and if at least a few of the lost non-human species can be revived or reinvented by the newly invented technology or methodology, then should these kinds of socialization of Nature be labeled as destruction to Nature? Again the same kind of socialization of Nature may bring about either beneficial or destructive outcome depending upon the politics of the nation state or the scope of socialization. For example, the artificial communication satellite may be used to satisfy socially desirable purpose, say, needs of the scholars and the scientists for internet searching or socially undesirable purpose, say, bringing about future warfare. Since humans rank highest in the scale of species, so they should continue the process of socialization of Nature resorting rationality, morality and consciousness so long as the social instability and ecological instability cannot be wiped out and thereby the newly emerging harmony of socialized Nature can be reestablished, since according to Wilkie (1993) “Human beings retain a moral value, which is irreducible.”

The traditionalist insistence that living “close to Nature” (e.g. subsistence living of primitive and tribal communities comprising of hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists, pastoralists, small peasants etc.) is more natural than the living remotely from Nature (e.g. modern scientifically and technologically developed cities). But the question is: which is more natural, the primitive and tribal communities facing large scale poverty, hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy accompanied by high birth and death rates, or the modern developed communities devoid of some of the foregoing social instabilities? In truth, the degree of naturalness of any event or process should not be judged by reference to the natural or crude Nature, rather it should be judged by reference to socialized Nature. Which is more natural, a community “where there is no doctor” (Werner, 1977), or a community where doctor is available for safeguarding the community’s health status?

Preservation or conservation of tradition should not be confused with that of Nature. In the socialized Nature, there must be an effective separation between the two. For this confusion may lead to unexpectedly adverse outcomes.

The socialization of Nature is also a natural process, since humans are embedded in the Nature. Through the universal process of evolution, which has not stopped yet, rather is continuing, it has become obvious to the humans that “Man is the highest phenomenon of Nature”, according to Greek Stoicism (Copleston, 1962). Owing to humans’ supremacy over the Earth, socialization of Nature has become naturally congealed in human nature. By the kind Nature’s gentlest boon, humans have been gifted with such qualities as consciousness, morality, rationality etc. by which they can socialize the Nature in the positive direction to bring about a transition to the dynamically social stability and ecological stability, given the constant threat

of exogenously determined non-anthropogenic natural instability. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus (535-475 BC) said that “Everything in the universe has in it its own opposite” (Stace, 1972). Further according to the principle of antinomy of terminology, concepts arise in science in pairs---every phenomenon must have a corresponding anti-phenomenon and every process must have a process with its opposite polarity. Thus, we cannot speak of the Nature or Natural without denoting its opposite---- anti-Nature or anti-Natural. Traditionalists backed up by fundamentalism insist that the opposite of Nature, Natural, Naturing or Naturalization is society (humanity), social (human), socializing (humanizing) or socialization (humanization). But they can be reminded that the latter is embedded in the concept of the former.

3. Interpretation of Stoic Ethical Precept

According to Stoics, the end of life is to attain happiness, which is possible in the Natural life or life according to Nature, which means the agreement of human action with the law of Nature. For man to conform himself to the laws of universe in the wider sense, and for man to conform his conduct to his own essential nature, that is, reason, is the same thing, since universe is governed by the law of Nature. While earlier stoics such as Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, et al. thought of Nature which man should follow, rather as the Nature of the universe, later Stoics such as Seneca, Epictetus, Aurelius, et al. tended to conceive Nature from a more anthropological point of view. The conflicting senses of the Stoic ethical maxim “live or life according to Nature” are as follows:

By Nature, Cynics mean rather the primitive and instinctive, and so life according to Nature implies a deliberate flouting of the conventions and traditions of civilized society, a flouting that externalizes itself in conduct that is eccentric and not infrequently indecent.

According to Stoics, life according to Nature indicates life according to the principle that is active in Nature. The ethical end of life lies in submission to the order and arrangement of the universe. Man is endowed with reason, the faculty which gives him his superiority over the brute and so for man life according to Nature is rightly understood to mean life according to reason. The end of life is a life which follows Nature, whereby is meant not only our own nature, but the Nature of the universe, a life wherein we do nothing that is forbidden by the universe i.e. by right reason. The ethical teaching of the Stoics thus declares that happiness is a life according to Nature, while a life according to Nature is a life according to right reason.

By “live or life according to Nature”, the traditional perspective indicates that humans should live in accordance with the non-socialized, crude or natural Nature as primitive and tribal communities do, for maintaining globally ecological equilibrium or sustainability, irrespective of social sustainability or unsustainability.

But modern perspective expresses just opposite view, which means that humans as the part of Nature must live in accordance with the humanized or socialized Nature and socialization of Nature can not be stopped so long as humans survive in the Earth as the highest creature.

Stoic Seneca's ethical precept "live or life according to Nature" has been renamed by the new paradigm as "sustainability" provided that the negative autonomous socialization of Nature can be at least compensated (or overcompensated, not undercompensated) by the positive autonomous socialization backed up by human trinity "rationality, consciousness and morality", treating such socialization as a sustained and dynamic process. This means that positive accommodating socialization of Nature must reproduce "socialized sustainability" (obviously renewed) on the assumption that society itself has been "optimally socialized" without any kind of fundamentalism.

4. Should Society Sustain Stoic Ethical Precept?

The Northern scholar Smith (1997) claims that "the notion of environmentally sustainable development was promoted in the 1970s most prominently by Herman Daly (1972) and 'sustainable development' as a concept is a product of the North". But, retrospective evidences reveal that 1970s-Northern concept of "sustainability" is congealed in the ancient Greek Stoic ethical precept "live or life according to Nature". So Greek Stoicism should be admired for the invention of the present day concept of sustainability. Regarding the foregoing question indicated by this section my suggestion is that the world in which today we live should be labeled as a "runaway world" (Giddens, 1994), which should be characterized by "global unsustainability syndrome" caused by increasing socialization of Nature, in which "negative socialization" is partly offset by the "positive socialization" (Konar, 2013) of Nature. In such a situation, we should stoop to the Stoic ethical precept under the following preconditions:

- (i) The first precondition to be remembered is that our Nature is the humanized or socialized Nature.
- (ii) Socialization of Nature can never be stopped. Its sustenance and dynamism are consistent with the sustained process of universally natural evolution and humanly induced various revolutions.
- (iii) Along with rationality, consciousness and intelligence, humans are also endowed with moral values by which they should be directed along such a pathway of continuous socialization of Nature so that the "negative socialization" (Konar, 2013) can be overcompensated by the "positive socialization" (Konar, 2013) of Nature.

5. Concluding Comments

Following Maxim Gorky (Borisov, 1986) who in praise of human reason, science and technology wrote: “In nature there is nothing more miraculous than the human brain, more amazing than the process of thinking, more precious than the fruits of scientific research”, it may be concluded that Stoic ethical dictum “ Live or life according to Nature” should be sustained for the potential transition to the world of secularly renewed sustainability indicated by ecological (stability) sustainability coupled with social (stability) sustainability, given the exogenously determined non-anthropogenic Natural instability, through the socialization of Nature only in rational, conscious and moral pathway, though the uncertainty expressed by Georgescu- Roegen (1971) that “no social scientist can possibly predict what kinds of social organization mankind will pass in its future” may be unavoidable and unchallengeable.

6. References

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