**University of Echahid Hamma Lakhdar – Eloued**

**Faculty of Arts and Language**

**Department of English**

**Master II (2021 -2022) Module: Deontology and Ethics**

**Dear students,**

**Here is a selection of anonymous topics among those you prepared. These essays were selected on the basis of the amount of information they include first and second for the essay development. Here are some remarks to consider:**

* **Some topics were not included in order not to overload you with material;**
* **The topics that do not appear here are, in no ways, worse than these, but most of the information is included in this selection,**
* **Some improvements; in word form, spelling, format, spacing, punctuation …, have been brought o some of the following topics.**

**It is to be noted that the authenticity of the content is the total responsibility of the essay writers**

**Module Coordinator: KHELEF Embarka**

**Deontological Ethics**

 In order for this life to be balanced and peacefully lived, ethics should take place, which is in return a discipline that interests in morality and human actions, and deals with normative theories. Those theories are like the following: utilitarianism, virtue and deontology. Though they are sharing the same interests, each one of them has its own principles and rules. Taking deontology as an example, it is a science by its own and in this context it one would know what is deontology? What are its main principles? And what are its types?

          Deontology has been defined by different sources. Etymologically, the word deontology is derived from the two Greek words " deon" and "logos" that mean "duty" and "science". It was first defined by the philosopher Immanuel kant as an ethical theory that uses rules to distinguish right from wrong.( Deontology-Ethics Unwrapped- the university of Texas at Austin, 2021). Also, it is defined in philosophy as ethical theories that place a special emphasis on the relationship between duty and morality human actions (deontological ethics| Definition, Meaning, Examples, & Facts, 2021). Thus deontology concerns with the determination of morality of human actions through its formality and does not care about what are the consequences resulted by these actions. Quite good example of deontology is the example of killing someone when you are defending yourself; the act of killing is wrong whatever was the cause for it because the end does not prove the means.

        Deontological theory relies on a number of essential principles that is followed in applying the ethical rules on human behaviours. First, the principle of respect for autonomy that aims to promote self-determination so the human should protect and deal with himself ethically and in a good manner. In addition to respect for autonomy, respect for persons stand strongly supporting the rights of others to be protected and stopping the use of an other as a means to an end as the

 Proverb says: "do unto other as you would then do unto you." Moreover, the principle of justice which encourage people to deal fairly between one another, and do not make differences and there is an expression in this context says:" Let the justice be done though the heavens fall ( Deontology- an overview| ScienceDirect Topic, 2021).These were the main principles of deontology.

       There are four types of deontology: duty theories, contractarianism, divine command, pluralistic deontology. Beginning duty theories determine whether action is right or wrong according to his relation to some list of duties and obligations. Also, There is the divine command theory which is a guiding moral principle that states that something is right or wrong if God says so and should be obeyed because God commands it. Furthermore, contractarianism see the action as right when it is in accordance with the rules that rational moral agents would agree to observe when entering into a social relationship for mutual benefit. The fourth type of this ethical theory is pluralistic deontology by W.D Ross who states that there is seven prima facie duties that should be taken into consideration when deciding which should be acted upon. These seven prima facie duties are universal, inherent, and can not be overridden in any circumstances and they are as the following: duty of beneficence( to help other), duty of non-malficence( to not cause harm to other), duty of justice, self-improvement, reparation ( to right someone if you have acted wrongly towards), gratitude ( to thank who have benefited us), and duty of promise-keeping ( to act according to explicit and implicit promises).(Four types of Deontological Ethics, 2021)

         To conclude, the theory of deontology is concerned with the intrinsic value of an action it shows that an action should follow certain rules in order to be right action regardless of its results. It is concerned with duty for duty's sake.

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**Ethical Relativism**

Ethics, also called moral philosophy, is the discipline concerned with what is morally good and bad and morally right and wrong. The term is also applied to any system or theory of moral values or principles. Ethics can be relative or absolute. Ethical relativism is the belief that nothing is objectively right or wrong and that the definition of right and wrong depends on the prevailing view of a particular individual, culture, or historical period, while ethical universalism believes that ethics in general, absolute and based on a set of principles for all people that they follow in their daily life.

''Ethical relativism, the doctrine that there are no absolute truths in ethics and that what is morally right or wrong varies from person to person or from society to society'' (Rachels,Britannica,n.d). Supports of ethical relativism theory believe that ethics and morals depend on the norms of the society and its culture. They assume that there are no universal standards or principles that can be applied. It is based on subjective and personal opinions to decide whether an action is right or wrong. Ethical relativism is true since there are different societies and cultures all over the world. Each society or culture has its moral values and principles for judging those standards of right and wrong. Taking for example the case of abortion in the Muslim society and the European or American one in which abortion is considered haram and prohibited for Muslims but accepted and normal of western cultures. Their beliefs are relative to their cultural background. Different cultures have different moral codes. Therefore, there is no objective ‘truth’ in morality, and right or wrong are only matters of opinion that vary from culture to culture.

On the other hand, ethical universalism is the theory and the belief that all norms and principles of ethics are applied the same for all people despite their differences and cultural background. It is the opposite of ethical relativism that goes from personal opinions to general absolute standards. It is similar and objective at any time, place, and gender. According to R. W Hepburn, to adopt moral objectivism is " to argue that moral judgments can be rationally defensible, true or false, that there are rational procedural tests for identifying morally impermissible actions, or that moral values exist independently of the feeling-states of individuals at particular times. " (Psychology Wiki,n.d.para 2). Ethical universalism thinkers consider that there are actions that are always good or always bad. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a major example of the application of the same rules. Also, murder, torture, and rape are universally wrong ethically and morally. Some religions like Islam and Christianity have the same universal ethics that are shared among people and they remain unchangeable in all situations. Thus, acting against these moral standards will be considered unethical or illegal.

Ethical universalism is the moral truth that is the same for all people at any place or time. However, ethical relativism is relative to the different perspectives of individuals. Ethical relativism proponents claimed that cultural and ethical differences give the right to a person to judge according to his personal opinion, experiences, and circumstances. They believe that moral truth is relative either to individual person or to a particular society, neglecting any universal systems that set norms for everyone. Therefore what is right or wrong for a person can be different in another time or place. It goes with what is acceptable and known in the society as the well-known saying " when in Rome, do as the Romans do ".

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**Consequentialism**

Throughout history, philosophers have been interested in studying ethics or what is known as moral philosophy. Moreover, they have attempted to set standards in order to judge the morality of the individual's actions or the society as a whole. Ethics can be defined as a set of rules and principles by which a person determines the standard of goodness in one behavior, or the extent of evil in another. Consequently, it constitutes an approach to his behavior based on a set of values that govern the individual's convictions. Nevertheless, in its normative sense, ethics refers to anything right or wrong, that may be independent of the values or the norms held by certain peoples or cultures, and normative ethics is the branch of philosophy that studies ethics in this sense. In the field of moral philosophy, consequentialism is considered one of the most important normative theories. It judges a person's behavior based on the outcomes of that action (Duignan, B. and West, Henry R, 2021). According to the consequentialism, the correct moral behavior is an action that produces a benefit. In short, the idea of consequentialism is represented by the well-known saying "The ends justify the means". There are several consequentialist theories, but the two main theories considered here are Utilitarianism and Ethical Egoism.

Utilitarianism is one of the consequentialist theories that judge the morality of an action according to the amount of pleasure and happiness that results from it, which means that the right moral action is the action that helps avoid pain and brings as much pleasure as possible to the largest number of people or, what is known as “the great happiness principle”. (Mill,1863). Therefore, it maximizes the collective benefit and considers it above the personal one. Utilitarianism was widely discussed at the end of the eighteenth century in England by Jeremy Bentham and after him, John Stuart Mill, and both associated the good with pleasure, which is why they were considered hedonism. According to Bentham (1789), man is under the control of two forces, pain and happiness, which he considers to be the primary motivation for all his moral standards. In addition, he wanted to develop a method for measuring pleasure based on the principle that happiness is a shared aspect, not a private one, so society would benefit from sharing a formula that helps reveal what one needs to achieve that happiness (Bentham 1789). The utilitarian theory, in Bantam's form, was subjected to many serious criticisms, which prompted John Stuart Mill to reformulate it in a way that takes into account the criticisms against it, and this is what he explained in a book entitled Utilitarianism in 1863. According to Mill (1863), “...actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure.” (p.10). Thus, this statement represents the crude form of utilitarian theory, which aims to establish a standard to determine the moral value of human actions, and the standard according to this theory is a humanitarian standard that exists within the scope of human life and does not derive from direct religious discourse. Furthermore, before John Stuart Mill, utilitarianism focused on the quantitative aspect of happiness, which means a great amount of pleasure. Consequently, Mill decided to shift the focus towards the qualitative aspect, which allows the possibility of preferring one pleasure over another. On this issue, Mill believed that the most effective way to choose between two pleasures is to ask those who have experienced them, meaning that if we want to compare the pleasure in two actions, namely buying a luxury car or traveling to a new country, the method of comparison depends on asking who has tried these two actions to know Which is better. It is noted that this mechanism depends on the personal criterion, but Mill emphasized the importance of realizing that mental pleasures are superior to physical ones (Mill, 1863).

Ethical Egoism, on the other hand, directly contradicts Utilitarianism on whose benefit the judgment of an action is established, moving from the maximum number of people with Utilitarianism, to maximum self-benefits. The concept was first introduced by Henry Sidgwick, an English philosopher, in his “The methods of Ethics”. It believes that personal interest drives all of our moral standers, and puts individual personal interest above any other considerations even if it contradicts with the interest of others or society as a whole. However, this does not mean that Ethical Egoism equals selfishness. If one only sought after what is beneficial to them solely, without giving any regards to others, they would result in them being an outcast in society. Everyone relies on cooperation from others in society, so to ensure other’s cooperation, we need to give them weight. (Shaver, 2019). furthermore, self-interest doesn’t not equal selfishness either. To act in your self-interest means, to act according to what is best for you. While selfishness means acting without regard to others. Besides, to act selfishly would directly contradict with the Ethical Egoism principles, because it usually leads to harm for oneself on the long run.

Consequentialism is a large field of study, that has certainly enlarged the scope by which we view morality and ethics. It has introduced many concepts that were beneficial to have a better understanding of how people behave and judgment is made on what is moral, with Utilitarianism and Ethical Egoism on the forefront.

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**What is a Code of Conduct?**

A code of conduct is a legal document setting out rules and guidelines concerning the ethical principles and standards of behaviour expected of a professional person or company. The businessmen design a code of conduct for the employees to follow in order to achieve a high standard of production. From the moment they join the company, employees should comply to the code of conduct set out by the employer. It aims at reducing the rate of problems at work.

The effectiveness of any code of conduct relies on a set of priorities. First. it has to reflect the spirit of the business it represents. Secondly, it should include easy and clear language. The employees shouldn’t find ambiguity nor polysemy in the instructions. Thirdly, it should be inclusive; it involves all areas concerning the daily lives of employees and answers any questions that they may ask. Moreover, it has to be at everybody’s reach.

A company’s code of conduct should reflect its duty, philosophy, values and principles. The code clarifies the values the organization wishes to promote in leaders and employees and, in doing so, defines desired behaviour. As a result, written codes of conduct or ethics serve as criteria through which individual and organizational performance can be measured. It also includes employees’ everyday concern such as work relationship, behaviour, tardiness, absenteeism, leave as well as work conflicts.

A code of conduct is an essential guide and reference for managers and employees to implement decisions made by leaders. A code encourages discussions of ethics among employees empowering them to handle ethical dilemmas they encounter in everyday work.

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**Professionalism In Teaching**

The professionalism of teachers has always been one of the most prominent challenges in education. It has developed throughout time as the requirements in education have grown, and it has been a challenge for the government and educators to put everything on display. The authority has always responded by maintaining and improving educational policy which focuses on improving teacher professionalism. The latter is defined as a set of skills that match professional education standards, requiring a teacher to have a certified professional background and to follow professionalization principles such as: pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence.

Hargreaves (2000) describes the evolution of teaching professionalism in various nations as traveling through four historical periods. **In pre-professional phase**, being a teacher was about being an apprentice for a particular period only to learn how to teach, what to teach, and how to manage a class. However, apprenticeship should not omit other aspects needed in teaching and learning process (i.e. affective aspects, interpersonal skills). Teachers in pre-professional phase appeared to concern about their students more than consequences. **The Autonomous Professional Age**: This period was distinguished by a challenge to teaching's distinctiveness and the unquestioned traditions upon which it is founded. "Autonomy" was seen as a crucial aspect of the teaching profession. The notion that instructors have the right to choose the approaches they believe are best for their students was called into question, and teachers acquired significant pedagogical independence as a result.

The concept of professional development became the main margin of **collegial phase** in which professional growth became the primary focus of the collegial era when they were confronted with singularity in the previous phase, instructors collaborated to enhance their teaching quality. Collegial contact is important for professional development and establishes personal competency, therefore it may pose ethical issues. This phase, however, should show a favorable trend. Eventually, education in post-modern or **post-professional** phase requires flexibility and democratic professionalism, which means that a teacher needs to possess multi-talents or skills various organizations and organizations working to re-define teacher professionalism and professional learning in more positive and ethical post-modern ways that are flexible, broad, and inclusive.

Teachers have to effectively deal with the problems in teaching and learning through a willingness to change and make improvements in the teaching process. However, Professionalism in teaching can be suspended at any point according Sockett’s (1993) if it encounters an impediments like Absence of personal virtues such as patience, determination, courage in a professional. In addition to the fact that Subject and pedagogical knowledge are lacking, Limited to the size of the classroom can also be found and also Lack of commitment and motivation to change and improvement.

Hargreaves (2000)'s motivation for researching professionalism stages is to better understand the pattern of teacher professionalism, which varies from one phase to another. It is clear that the meaning given to professionalism and status in teaching has dynamic qualities in light of varied approaches to professionalism in teaching in academic discussions. Teaching professionalism might be viewed as a professional labor field having social, economic, and political implications. A set of ideological and educational characteristics aimed at reaching the best possible results criteria in the teaching profession, which are founded on professional experience Formation, knowledge, skills, and values are all important aspects of life. In the realm of education, the prominent discourses are: Professionalism in teaching is linked to education, according to research. Enhancing the quality and standards of teaching professionals.

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**The University Code of Ethics**

The good functioningof a University as of any institution requires that all persons who belong to the University share common goals and are acquainted with the principles that must guide their conduct and behaviour. In order to maintain its vision, mission, objectives and core values in accordance with the highest ethical, academic and professional standards, the University has to develop a code of ethics which sets a roadmap for its academic and professional staff and students.

The University code of ethics is a guide of principles intended to assist staff and students to identify and resolve ethical issues that might arise during their employment or in the course of their studies. It is designed to guide them in their dealings with colleagues, students, the University and local, national and international communities.

This paper aims to shed light on the University code of ethics. It begins by stating its major foundations and its main objectives. Then, it moves to provide some of ethics and values that everyone in the University should abide by to upgrade the academic, administrative and ethical performance in higher education institutions.

The University carries out its training and research missions in a socio-economic and institutional environment which makes it necessary to reaffirm principles and to renew the operating rules that can guarantee both its pedagogical and scientific credibility and its legitimacy. In this context, it is mandatory to any University to establish an ethical and professional conduct charter stemming from universal standards as well as values specific to its society. This charge has been thoroughly explained in UNESCO universal declaration issued on October, 09th 1998 and validated in 2009. This universal declaration has advised to higher education institutions to “ Submit their entire activities under the requirements of ethics, benefit without any restrictions from their academic freedom and autonomy as well as the entire rights and duties, and once they exhibit responsible and liable towards the University, are independently and responsibly authorized to communicate over ethical, social and cultural issues” (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research[MHESR.dz],2021, University Charter of Ethics and Deontology, p.3).

This ethical charter should be based on four main principles. Firstly, the ethical foundations that can be summarized in seven main bases: academic freedom, responsibility and competence, integrity and honesty, mutual respect, demand for scientific truth, objectivity and critical thinking, equity, and respect of academic candor. Next, there are the deontological rules as second principle of the ethical charter which cover rights and duties of the teacher researcher, the administrative, technical staff, and service agent and the student. The third principle concerns faults and sanctions (educational, administrative or criminal sanctions); any violation of ethical conduct principles brings the whole institution into discredit, and may result in a disciplinary action; therefore, rigorous respect of these principles is a shared interest and obligation. The last principle is about commitments specific to staff or student. In other words, the ethical charter sets out the standards of behaviour essential to the life and operation of the University across all its activities. It is applied to all personnel at the University in order to raise awareness in the ethics of seeking knowledge.

The ethics policy aims mainly to provide members of the University with clear understanding of the ethical values and principles when dealing with others inside and outside the University in order to resolve any ethical issues by acquainting them with their rights, responsibilities, and University duties which enhances the level of the academic and administrative performance in higher education institution, and assists the development and prosperity of the University surrounding community. This policy; also, aims to set out the principles applicable to all researches and projects conducted by or in the name of the University

The ethical code of student encourages continued reflection and thoughtful response to ethical issues and seeks to outline the guiding principles to ethical conduct. There are seven core values in the ethical code of student that seem universal: integrity, respect, open mindedness, discipline, tolerance, team spirit and sense of responsibility. The code defines rights and students’ responsibilities which are at the root of relationship between student and his colleagues and faculty members. They have been formulated to provide clear statement of the university‘s expectations of students. Student has responsibilities toward faculty members and staff; for instance, he has to respect them; abide by their instructions, and interact and listen to them with full mental and physical attendance. He has; also, responsibilities toward his colleagues since he has to respect their freedom in expressing their opinions and convictions, and develop good relations with them as well. Student; also, has responsibilities toward the University itself; for example, he has to respect its missions and goals, assume responsibility for following up the study system and related policies, and adhere to credibility and accuracy when giving information to the concerned authorities in the University. On the other hand, the University should recognize and value the diversity of students expectations and experiences and is committed to treating student both academically and personally ,in fair and transparent manner ″the student has the right to: freedom of expression of opinion, information concerning the higher education structure , respect and dignity on the part of the members of University community, the safety, hygiene and health prevention, and quality of teaching and supervision based on modern and adapted teaching methods″(MHESR, dz, the University Charter of Ethics and Deontology,2021 ,p.9 ).

Teachers are not free from ethical code, a clear statement in the University ethical charter is directed toward them which provides the basic principles, and values that shape their relationships with all faculty members, and stresses their rights and duties. Teachers play a crucial role in the training of students and in the socioeconomic development of the nations; consequently, the University has to ensure that they can carry out their mission effectively through guarantying their rights; for example, professors have the right to be treated equally such as in recruitment "Higher education institutions have to ensure that the access to a Professor-Researcher profession must be based only on the required qualifications and experience"(MHESR.dz, the University Charter of Ethics and Deontology,p.5).They have; also, the right to work on the appropriate environment that fit their needs to achieve efficiency in working. The University should be at the disposal of teachers as long as they respect its ethical principles which means that teachers have; also, responsibilities toward it and its members; for instance, they must believe that University education is a noble and sublime mission, and then they must abide by ethical teaching toward their students ( fairness, equality, fidelity, honesty, respect, dignity,…etc ); similarly, they have responsibilities toward their colleagues and toward all the University staff since they should respect them, develop with them human and social relations, and respect other’s works by refraining from all kinds of plagiarism, Moreover, teachers should be able to face any ethical dilemmas that emerge in University milieu, and find the adequate solution to overcome it. In other words, to make the higher education more effective, teachers as long as they enjoy all their rights they should respect their responsibilities and the ethical behavior of the teaching profession.

Like the other faculty members; Administrative employees and managers are considered vital part of the University ethical code which determines their rights and duties. The key principles in the accomplishment of their work are summarized in the following statement of Amman University ″… They should demonstrate their impartiality and objectivity "Adopting the principles of respect for the laws and regulations, the democracy of administration and institutional work; and respecting all relevant principles such as honesty, truthfulness, objectivity, justice, defending the oppressed, avoiding personal considerations, non-exploiting the job, preserving public funds, transparency, cooperating with former officials and transferring expertise to new officials"(1990,p. 8).On the other hand, Officers must not be put under pressure or discrimination while accomplishing their work; instead, they have to be treated in respect, hold the same title as entire University actors, and benefit from government protection as well.

The University code of ethics sets forth the basic ethical standards for student, teachers, and all other personnel at the University. The principles included in this ethical code govern interactions at the University and promote an environment of respect that is important for its success. Ethical conduct means acting consistently in a way that upholds ethical values. The code of ethics aims to build and maintain high professional and ethical standards among members of the University community, strengthen loyalty, ensure the transparency and social responsibility of the University ‘activities, encourages the freedom of research, teaching, and learning, and promotes a positive public image of the University as well.

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**Ethics In Islam**

Most religions emphasize the importance of ethics and its role in human life. Religion is often considered the most used widely system to make an ethical decision and to conduct moral reasoning (Pollak, 2007). However, religious standards of ethics differ from one religion to another. In Islam, ethics and religion are highly interconnected. For that reason, Islam gives great attention to morals and ethical behavior, and it constructs an ethical system that has its own features in order to achieve a good life and significant goals of the human being.

Religious experts and specialists identify Islamic ethics as the principles and rules that are regulating human behaviors, which are determined by the Holy Qur'an and prophetic Sunnah. According to Hashi (2001), Ethics is defined as “good human conduct where an individual is not conducting any immoral activities against AL-Quran and Sunnah. Furthermore, Islamic ethics is characterized by two features: The first has a divine nature, that is about the words of God conveyed by revelation. The second is of human nature, i.e. the person makes effort in a way that he or she manifests ethics in his or her behavior particularly.

In Islam, ethics is based on two main primary sources which are the Qur’an and Sunnah. the Holy Qur'an is the first source of ethics that lays down an ethical system that callsfor building an ideal way of life for individuals and social order. The second source of ethics is the Prophetic Sunnah since the Prophet Muhammad is the model of what is stated in the Qur'an. Prophet Muhammed gave a great position to morals by making them the aim of his message; he said, " I was sent to uphold and complement ethical values." (Sherqawi, 1990). Both sources are the main references that guide the Islamic way of life as mentioned in the following verse: “… We have sent down on you the Book as an exposition of everything, and guidance and mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims (those who have submitted themselves wholly to God).” (An-Nahl, 16:89)

Ethics in Islam is embodied in the Prophet Muhammed who has been sent to teach Muslims (all people, not only Muslims) good ethics; Abu Hurayrah relates that the Prophet Muhammed said," I have been sent to complete perfect good manners”{Musnad Ahmed(8595)}.Heis well-known as a paradigm of truthfulness as he was named Alsadek (truthful) before his messengerhood. Trustworthiness is another core character of the prophet Muhammed, according to Beekun (2012), " the very adversaries who were plotting to kill Muhammed in Makkah were the same people who had entrusted him with their property." Moreover, the Prophet is the epitome of moderateness. W. Montgomery Watt states "Muhammad, the Messenger of Islam, exhibited for most of his life if not all of his life a striking moderateness. His final victory points to a greatness of character rarely to be found in history"(1953). Hence, the conduct and practices of prophet Muhammad played an important role in shaping the Muslim’s characters since he had set the standards of good ethics in Islam.

Finally, the most paramount ethics including truthfulness, trustworthiness, moderateness, bravery, fairness, justice, and honesty encompass different aspects of Islamic life. Indeed, ethics is considered as an essential part of Islam because it regards ethics not only as standards of conduct of what is right or wrong ,but also as an act of worship that Muslims will be rewarded for. Good ethics are one of the cornerstones in which the sublime Muslim society is built. However, achieving this aim cannot be fulfilled without reliance on the Quran and Sunnah which are laid down as a guide for the whole of humanity irrespective of religion or ethnicity.

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**Environmental issues in Islam**

From the Islamic perspective, Islam is laid down for the purpose of protecting the five priorities of religion, the self, the mind, one’s chastity, and one’s property. In addition, as a holistic religion and a complete way of life, Islam did not ignore one’s milieu; namely, the environment where human beings and other creatures live. Since it is a part of the globe, Islam has protected the environment through several legal texts. Moreover, Islam regards the protection of the environment as a collaborative responsibility that is held and assumed by members of the community. Historically, Islam has been the pioneer in the protection of environment through laying down principals and legal texts which assure the protection of environment and maintain the elements of life in it. Basically, Islam views the protection of environment, its beauty, and its property a religious duty through legal laws and practical activities. In addition, Islam prohibits the pollution of environment because of its serious impacts on human beings, the community, and other creatures. For this reason, Islam has created a complementary approach to protect the environment and its elements; namely, land, heaven, air, water, and plant sas it remains a source of prosperity and stability for human beings. Therefore, *Islam regards the following environmental issues of water resources, air, land, animals, and plants in the protection of environment*.

*The first environmental issue which Islam is concerned with is the protection of water resources*. As a matter of fact, Islam calls for the adequate use of water, and prohibits; in fact, wasting of water, or using water beyond what is necessary. As stated in the Holy Quran ‘And that we made all living beings from water.’ (Quran 21: 30), there can be no life without water. All humans, animals, and plants need to water to survive. Like animals and plants, water is important for humans to (1) be used in cells, tissues, and organs, (2) help regulate body temperature, and to (3) maintain other bodily functions.

As a valuable source in life, it has been mentioned in the Holy Quran that water was the cause of fertility, prosperity, and the building of civilizations. Whenever water existed, people established their communities which turned into thriving and attractive cities. The best example cited in the Holy Quran is the attractive civilization which was built on the sides of Maarab Dam in Yemen ‘There was a sign for them in Sheba’s homeland. Two gardens. On the right and the left. “Eat of Lord’s provision and be thankful.” A Fertile Land, and a Forgiving Lord.’ (Quran 34: 15).

Since water is an important element in the life of human beings, Islam has called for the protection of water resources and its locations, whether in seas, oceans, rivers, banks, or wells. Islam; also, prohibits the wasting of water, or polluting them, as cited below in the following verses:

* ‘Eat and Drink, but don’t overdo it.” (Quran 7: 21);
* ‘And don’t squander wastefully. The extravagant are the brothers of the devils, and Satan is ungrateful to his Lord’ (Quran 17: 26- 7).

In addition to the Holy Quran, the Prophet (PBUH) has prohibited the wasteful use of water in the following sayings:

* The Prophet (PBUH) has passed through Saad who was doing his ablution, and said ‘What is this wasteful?’ Saad said ‘Is there any wasteful in ablution?’ The Prophet (PBUH) said ‘Yes, and even if you are in a river’;
* A nomad came to the Prophet (PBUH) and asked him to how to perform ablution correctly. The Prophet (PBUH) showed him how to do it three per three and said ‘Ablution is done in this way; whoever exceeds beyond that, he has mistaken, exceeded, and abused.’

These verses and Prophet’s (PBUH) sayings provide a clear image about Islam and how it regards the value of water resources. As a vital element in human life, Islam calls for the adequate use of water resources so that all humans should benefit from. Moreover, Islam prohibits polluting of water resources because it is a source of energy to humanity, and it affects humans, animals, and plants. In this regard, the Prophet (PBUH) said ‘No one should piss in the running water, and; then, he takes a bath.’ Accordingly, this prohibition confirms the fact that pissing in water pollutes it, changes its status, and affects human health.

*The second environmental issue which Islam takes care of is air*. As a valuable resource in nature, air is amongst the most precious gifts that Allah has provided to humanity. It is an indispensable element in life, with several benefits. It is necessary to humans, animals, and plants. It transports clouds from one place to another, as it is stated in the following verse ‘It is He who sends the wind ahead of His mercy. Then, when they have gathered up heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land, where We make water come down, and with it We bring out all kinds of fruits. Thus We bring out the dead—perhaps you will reflect (Quran 7: 57).In addition, it helps the pollination of plants, as stated in the following verse ‘We send the fertilizing winds; and send down water from the sky, and give it to you to drink, and you are not the ones who store it(Quran 15: 22). Allah sent air and winds so as to pollinate trees which produce food and fruits. In addition, Allah manages the air which transports clouds that bring water from the sky, and which helps ships to travel in seas and oceans.

Unlike other planets, the earth’s air is susceptible to pollution which is caused; mainly, by human activities. In fact, pollution has serious effects on humans and other living creatures. It is worth mentioning that pollution is caused by (1) natural phenomena; such as volcanoes and hurricanes, (2) organic fuel combustion; such as, coal and oil, and (3) the impacts of industrial waste. As a result, pollution of air affects humans by the emergence of several illnesses; such as, cancer, pneumonia, … etc.

In order to protect the earth’s air from pollution, Islam calls for adopting solitary confinement as an effective means for protecting humans in times of plague, so as not to be affected by airborne, since it is the source of epidemic pollution. In this context, the Prophet (PBUH) said ‘If you hear of plague in such a region, do not travel to. If it occurs in your region, do not travel out of it.’ This proves that humans cannot live in a place with a polluted air because it will cause serious illnesses to them. Moreover, Islam prohibits war engagements and the use of all sorts of nuclear and chemical weapons which destroy the earth’s surface and lead to air pollution.

*Land is another environmental issue that Islam has given much importance to protect one’s milieu*. It is worth recalling that land is Allah’s gift to humans to live in, build their settlements, and work on, as mentioned in the Holy Quran ‘We have established you firmly on earth, and made for you in it livelihood—but rarely do you give thanks(Quran 7: 10). Because of its importance, as a living place, Islam calls humans to protect the land, and prohibits destroying it, as in the following verse ‘And remember how He made you successors after Aad, and settled you in the land. You make for yourselves mansions on its plains, and carve out dwellings in the mountains. So remember God’s benefits, and do not roam the earth corruptingly.”’ (Quran 7: 74); and ‘And do not corrupt on earth after its reformation, and pray to Him with fear and hope. God’s mercy is close to the doers of good’ (Quran 7: 56). Therefore, human beings are called to act positively with the land and its environmental components so that the whole community will benefit from; in addition, humans should not pollute the land with wastes, and should not destroy it with cutting of trees and burning of harvests, … etc.

To fully protect the land, Islam insists on making land proper and clean through removing of several wastes and polluted materials. Furthermore, Islam seeks to establish communities that collaborate and work together to make land a better place of living. This is achieved through total in vestment of nature and protecting its vital elements. Humans are; also, called to make the roads and other places in the land proper and clean, and remove all what hurts humans in. In addition, humans should protect nature and green places by implementing successful strategies against desertification. This can be achieved through cultivation of the land to make it an appropriate place of living. Therefore, without a clean, proper land, life cannot be achieved, and humans will not feel safe.

In addition to the land, *Islam gives a special care to the protection of animals, since they are living creatures*. As a matter of fact, animals make up make up a part of the system of life built on the planet earth. With the existence of animals, life becomes complementary, and the cycle of life continues.

Being male or female, and of different types, Allah has created animals to perform several tasks to human beings, in addition to other tasks. In this regard, Allah has stated in the Holy Quran ‘And the livestock—He created them for you. In them are warmth and benefits for you, and of them you eat. And there is beauty in them for you, when you bring them home, and when you drive them to pasture. And they carry your loads to territory you could not have reached without great hardship. Your Lord is Clement and Merciful’ (Quran 16: 5- 7).

As animals are Allah’s gifts to human beings with definite tasks, it is necessary to preserve them and protect them so that they do not fade away. Historically, animals had impacts on humans who learned several behavioral acts from animals. The story of Adam’s sons Cain and Abel is a best example to illustrate with in this context. After their quarrel, Cain killed his brother Abel, and became astonished what to do with It was the raven, which was sent by Allah, to teach Cain how to burry his brother on earth. This story is cited in the Holy Quran as follows ‘And relate to them the true story of Adam's two sons: when they offered an offering, and it was accepted from one of them, but it was not accepted from the other. He Said, “I will kill you.” He Said, “God accepts only from the righteous.” “If you extend your hand to kill me, I will not extend my hand to kill you; for I fea rGod, Lord of the Worlds.”“I would rather you bear my sin and your sin, and you become among the inmates of the Fire. Such is the reward for the evildoers.”Then His soul prompted him to kill his brother, so he killed him, and became one of the losers. Then God sent a raven digging the ground, to show him how to cover his brother's corpse. He said, “Woe to me! I was unable to be like this raven, and bury my brother's corpse.” So he became full of regrets’ (Quran 5: 27- 31). In addition, thanks to birds that human beings learnt how to fly.

Furthermore, human beings use animals as a source of food, and; in return, animals’ food are used as cures and treatments for illnesses. Animals are; also, used as means of transportation. Because of their importance in life, Islam calls humans to protect animals through the following approach:

* ***Kindness to animals in eating and drinking:*** The Prophet (PBUH) said ‘A woman entered hell in a cat. She imprisoned it without feeding it. A man, after providing a drink to a dog, he was forgiven and entered Paradise’;
* ***Kindness to animals when used in transportation:*** Islam insists on being kind with animals when being used in transportation. Humans should not exhaust animals when travelling, and should provide them with rest;
* ***Protecting animals from harm:*** One day, the Prophet (PBUH) was in Al Madinah and saw a camel crying. He said ‘Whose is that camel? A young man answered “It is mine”. The Prophet (PBUH) said “Don’t you fear Allah in that animal? It complained to me that you harm it and you do not feed it”.’

Because of the several benefits of animals to humans and life in general, Islam considers animals an important wealth which must be protected and preserved.

*The last environmental issue which Islam calls for preserving is plants*. Since the creation of human beings, Allah has stated a definite role for them: To settle on earth. Settlement is performed through several tasks, among which cultivation of plants is important.

Like humans and animals, plants constitute another important element in the life cycle. Islam preserves plants because they provide food to both humans and animals, and the core element in life’s existence and its continuity. Therefore, Islam encourages humans to grow as much plants as possible. The Prophet (PBUH) said ‘Whoever implants a plant, or cultivates a growing harvest to feed a bird, animal, or human, he is rewarded for that.’ So, implanting plants and cultivating harvests are the causes of existing communities, and humans rely heavily on plants for their food. In addition, they contribute to the environment with aspects of beauty in the form of gardens. Furthermore, plants provide humans wood from trees for several construction activities, and a means for producing energy and warmth. Since they are vital, important elements in life, Islam preserves and protects plants through implantation and cultivation. In addition, Islam prohibits attacking plants by destroying and cutting trees.

The environmental issues of water resources, air, land, animals, and plants are regarded as vital elements in the cycle of life. Islam did not ignore their importance, and called for protecting and preserving them because life cannot continue without them. Therefore, human beings have to take their responsibilities in protecting and preserving these elements of the environment so as to make our planet a better world, and a better place for living.

**Are we Altruists ?**

The conflict between good and bad has existed since the very beginning of life on earth. The line between the two may not be the same in all societies but they generally agree on good deeds. Not acting selfishly is one of the good things one can do and it is defined as altruism.

« The word altruism didn’t exist until 1851, when i twas coined by French philosopher August compté »[[1]](#footnote-2) According to the Oxford dictionary, altruism is a disinterested and selfless concern for the well being of others. In other words, it is offering help or services at one’s own expense, time, effort and risk. Everyday life is filled with altruism actions from giving a candy to a kid or opening a door for someone to escalading a building to prevent an innocent child from falling down. The most imporant is that altruist does not expect rewards.

Experiments done on altruism within children under four years old by the department of developmental and comparative psychology in Leipzig, Germany in 2010 have shown that all subjects reacted and gave a helping hand to adults without being directly asked to[[2]](#footnote-3). Such experiments show that altruism is an innate quality in humans. We are born ready to help others. Besides , all religions of the world preach for generosity and caring about the others. With regard to Islam, it starts with a simple smile as prophet Mohammed PBUH said : « a smile to your fellow ‘s face is charity ».

On the other hand, statistics show that 2.6 million babies die every year during the first month of birth and another 2.6 million are born dead in under developed countries[[3]](#footnote-4). In 2015, 734 million people were living under the poverty line set at us $1.9 per day[[4]](#footnote-5). The world is also filled with billionaires, there were over 2200 US $ billionaires with a combined wealth of over 9.1 trillion us $ in 2017[[5]](#footnote-6) .

Not only billionaires must help, everybody should do. We can make a better world if we save money that we spend on unnecessary things we buy everyday like new fashionable clothes, last generation s of mobile phones or jewelry. Peter Singer ; an Australian philosopher , in his passage at TED talks, spoke about the why and how of effective altruism.

Effective altruism combines the heart and the head. The heart feels the empathy towards those people in need. The head is used to make that help effective and well directed.

1. Does altruism exist ? , David Sloan Wilson. P4 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. https:/youtube.com/Johnny427. Experiments with altruism in children and chimps. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://unicef.fr [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <http://www.un.org/> ending poverty [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The Guardian, 18 May 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)