

Orthodox Theology: Relationship Between Human Being and Nature/Cosmos from Different Points of Views

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Abstract

The humans have a special place regarding the rest of the other creatures and the world in the Creation. The man is appointed as the caretaker of the earth. However, the world/cosmos does not belong to humans; they are the Creations of God (who appointed humans as caretakers). Man's life is not independent of the rest of the Creation but depends from their existence. Thus, it is an obligation of humans to preserve and protect biodiversity and keep intact the ecological chain. The man should regard nature as a friend, collaborator in his/her course towards the end (eschata). Such a view of Creation leads to the connection between nature and human beings. The Creation does not exist only for some human generations but for all future generations. People are urged to a sensible use of the earth (nature, animals, plants).

Timescale

One lecture (approximately 90 minutes)

Key Terms

Creation, Cosmos, Eschata, Biodiversity.

Key competences / Learning outcomes

The students should

- realize the actions to be taken to reconcile and reconnect with earth (nature, living creatures, plants).
- realize that the man is the Lord and administrator of the earth and not the master.
- realize the actions to be taken to reconcile and reconnect with earth (nature, living creatures, plants).



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Teaching Steps

Teaching Steps			
Phase/ Time	Approach	Method	Social Form/ Tasks for Students
Entry/ Elaboration I / Ensuring I 15 min	<p>The students watch videos regarding humans' actions of exploiting the nature and the consequences</p> <p>How to Save Our Planet - YouTube (8:27')</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zLfMblEALw (4:22')</p> <p>The students say the ways that humans harm the planet. Their answers are written on the blackboard and create a list with categories.</p>	<p>Direct teaching: Watching video.</p> <p>Brainstorm: the answers are written on the board.</p> <p>Video: How to save our planet (How to Save Our Planet - YouTube)</p> <p>Video : Bozzetto for the planet we continue to destroy (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zLfMblEALw)</p>	Plenary
Elaboration II 20 min	<p>The students study the texts (Gen. 1:1-30, 2:15-20; Psalm. 103; Ex.23:10-12; Deut. 14:4-21; 24:19-21; Lev. 25:1-22; A' Cor. 3:7-9, Rom. 8:20) individually, and then having in mind the following questions they write down their answers.</p> <p>Q1: What is the place of man in the Creation?</p> <p>Q2: What is the relation between humans and nature as it is described in the texts of OT, NT, and Church Fathers?</p> <p>Q3: what is the relation between humans and nature at present-day as shown in the videos?</p>	<p>Individual study of texts and answers to 3 questions. The Bible (Old Testament & New Testament)</p> <p>[Gen. 1:1-30, 2:15-20; Psalm. 103; Ex.23:10-12; Deut. 14:4-21; 24:19-21; Lev. 25:1-22; A' Cor. 3:7-9, Rom. 8:20]</p>	Individual work
Ensuring II/ Elaboration III 20 min	<p>The students form groups of 5 each. Collectively, they first compare their individual answers on the questions and then prepare a common text which answers the 2 questions.</p>	<p>Sharing the answers among the members of their group and prepare a common text</p>	Group work



Ensuring II/ Consolidation/ Completion 25 min	Each students' group presents their common texts with their answers to the plenary and debate on them.	Presentation in groups	Group presentations
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Material and Texts

Video: How to save our planet (How to Save Our Planet - YouTube)

Video: Bozetto for the planet we continue to destroy

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zLfMbIEALw>)

The Bible (Old Testament & New Testament)

[Gen. 1:1-30, 2:15-20; Psalm. 103; Ex.23:10-12; Deut. 14:4-21; 24:19-21; Lev. 25:1-22; A' Cor. 3:7-9, Rom. 8:20]

Appendices

Agouridis, S. (1985). *History of the New Testament*. Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras.

Gkoutzioudis, M. (2013). *Nature of animals: the use of biodiversity in New Testament and its environment*. Thessaloniki: Methexis.

Karavidopoulos, I. (2016). *Introduction to the New Testament*. Thessaloniki: Ostracon.

Konstantinou, M. (2016). *Short Hermeneutics in Texts of the Old Testament*. Thessaloniki: ROPI

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Mantzaridis, G. (2004). *Christian Ethics*. Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras.

Thesaurus Linguae Graecae – TLG <https://www.lib.auth.gr/el/tlg>



Glossary

Important terms for students

Creation

The act or process of making something that is new, or of causing something to exist that did not exist before. [The Creation: the making of the world by God as described in the Bible].

Cosmos

the universe [all the planets] (anc.greek: ornament)

Eschata

the final events of world history or the end of the human race, usually phrased as "the end of the world", and the expectations associated with them

Encounter learning:

Encounter learning refers to the didactically guided and accompanied topic- centred exchange between participants who are as similar in status as possible in a framework that is limited in terms of content, time and space (safe space), which provides for multi-perspective reflection processes taking into account a conflict hermeneutics that lead to the initiation of content-related and process- related competences. The project "Sharing Worldviews: Encounter Learning for common Values in Diversity" is based on a 4-phase concept of Encounter Learning: preparation, presentation, exchange and reflection.

Worldviews:

The concept of **Worldviews** has various culturally determined meanings. In our project we use it as "**Worldviews**" (individual or collective perspective on the world):

World interpretation (dt.: Weltdeutung) Refers to the fundamental anthropological existential that man brings his fellow man, his environment and himself into an explanatory and interpretive context, regardless of whether this context has religious, spiritual or secular connotations.

World view (dt.: Weltbild) Coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, of the development of life and the structure of the universe, of a certain image of man and history etc. from a certain theoretically underpinned (e.g. scientific or mythological etc.) perspective.

Worldviews (dt.: Weltsichten/ Weltansichten/ Perspektiven auf die Welt) Individual or collective perspective on the world. Worldviews as perspectives can also be shaped by influences (events, media, etc.).

Worldview (dt.: Weltanschauung) Refers to a coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, which shapes one's perception of reality and in turn shapes that perception. Beyond 'worldviews', they are embedded in a specific framework of thought and action and thus also include evaluative statements and corresponding options for action. Worldviews unite their adherents into a secular community (e.g. humanism, atheism, materialism). Such an understanding of worldview is shaped in





Learning in Encounter for Common Values in Diversity

Europe by the Enlightenment, which sought to free itself from traditional communities (such as religions) and grant the individual more independence from them.

