

Socioecological Status of Human Ecology

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Abstract— *This article discusses anthropocentric, ecocentric, sustentric and biocentric theories, correlating a designated approach to capitalism and sustainable development. In order to ask: what is the ecological status of human ecology? Regarding the changes caused by man's action in nature and the very change that these actions infer his perceptions. Evolving biologically and socially entails changes, and it is pertinent to highlight that environmental problems, illusory issues of environmental preservation accommodate society, following the anthropocentric and capitalist bias. However, biocentrism presents an idea of respect between human ecology and interactions with the environment, addressing environmental education as one of the primary alternatives for changing attitudes, cultures and the perception that natural resources are finite, and they must be preserved for present and future generations.*

Keywords— *Biocentrism. Ecocentrism. To conserve. Perceptions.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Human ecology is an innovative science that studies human-environment interactions, and the results of these relationships both in man and in the environment in which he is inserted. For this reason human ecology transcends other knowledge (BEGOSSE, 1993), provoking a search for subjective understanding, resulting from the inevitable changes that the human species causes in the environment and that the environment causes in the species itself.

Following a temporal and adaptive perspective, arising from the interactions between the bioecological factors explained by Begossi (1993). For human ecology, this text proposes a specific approach in ecological, social, political and anthropological bias. Seeking to define each of these aspects in the transdisciplinary context, addressing the consequences that such factors determine in the way of life of human societies.

In ecological status we highlight the Anthropocentric and Biocentric theories, before the Ecocentric and Sustentric conceptions, which in turn surpasses some cultural and environmental practices common in influential societies of anthropocentrism. In a capitalist society, where the status of greater domination is the result of the prevalence of anthropocentric theory, which aims for superiority, power over the dominance of other species and natural resources.

These conceptions may vary according to the individual's socioeconomic, intellectual, and cultural profile, as is political influence. Obeying the

aforementioned social criteria, anthropocentrism is the most dominant and oldest theory that has prevailed for about 2,000,000 years (STOPA; VIOTO, 2015). On the other hand, biocentrism and ecocentric and sustentric currents have similar ideals, which propose innovative conservationist measures for the environment.

Knowing each of these theories is essential to identify the profile of societies, and the approach of human ecology, which as a knowledge adopts a critical and analytical position on environmental sustainability. Evidenced only from the 1990s with the holding of conferences, which adopted the term “sustainability” as one of the factors that can transform social institutions, behavioral patterns and dominant values (RATTNER, 1999).

Factor that explains that the human being is part of the environment, understanding that the natural resources offered by planet earth are finite, endowed with economic value and essential for the maintenance of life, establishing, therefore, the concern with the conservation of natural resources. For Reigota (2017), there is an urgent need to seek means of conservation of natural resources, starting with the change in people's mentality.

Following these questions this text aims to identify in which socioecological status the human ecology is inserted, with the basic question, what is the ecological status of the human ecology?

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ANTHROPOCENTRIC, ECOCENTRIC AND SUSTAINABLE CONCEPTS

The concept of sustainable development confuses the noun sustainability with the adjective sustainable or presents sustainability with a characteristic of what is sustainable (CARVALHO, 2013). Scientific writings and research fit the definition that sustainable development is “one that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (BRUNDTLAND, 1987).

The concept of sustainable development linked to current and future human well-being is also emphasized in Article 225 of the Federal Constitution of Brazil, 1988, by stating that everyone has the right to an ecologically balanced environment, as essential to a healthy quality of life, imposing It is the duty of the public power and the community to defend and preserve it for present and future generations (BRAZIL, 1988).

In both legal documents, the concepts give visibility to the information that must ensure the healthy environment for the human being of the present time and those to come. Thus, they highlight the human being as the recipient of such a right, corroborating the anthropocentric view of the relationship between man and the environment. For ecocentrism theorists, it is a very anthropocentric approach to the environment, as it analyzes the environmental issue in terms of human interests (JACOBS, 1993; BRAZIL, 2015)

It is worth mentioning a mistake expressed in the concept of sustainable development adopted by the above article, imposing on the collectivity the duty to “preserve” the environment for present and future generations. In the direction of sustainable development what is possible is “conservation” and not “preservation”. To conserve is to use natural resources not to cause their depletion for present and future generations and to preserve is not to use, to make it whole (ANTUNES, 2011).

Thus, the concept that best fits the conception of sustainable development is that of “conservation”, since nature is touched by humans to remove materials necessary for their survival. It is a myth to believe that nature is preserved, ie free from human interference (DIEGUES, 1994). Moreover, it is clear that the legislator still confuses the terms “preserve” and “conserve”, bringing both as synonyms (COSTA, 2007).

Boff (2017) defends the idea that sustainability is a term often used to disguise capitalist interests, even calling it “ecological falsehood” and “greenwash” as a way to deceive people about the real intentions of using the term in question by many sectors of society. The same author

points out that it is necessary to change human values and attitudes for true sustainability to occur.

Still, some argue that sustainable development is a new version of capitalism in crisis, so as not to lose space among consumers, disrupted by economic and environmental balance, to ensure that the most favored classes do not lack resources for present and future generations (COUTO et al., 2014). Thus, sustainable development would be a creation of the capitalist system to soften its performance and create the idea that it cares about the environment.

It is noteworthy that even the Bible bears a passage that upholds the idea of human supremacy over the resources of nature, as stated in the book of Genesis: “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fishes of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every beast that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis chapter 1, v. 28). This reinforces the anthropocentric conception, since it preaches the dominance of nature's resources by the human species (MILARÉ, 2005).

Contrary to anthropocentrism, an ecocentric view of natural resources is suggested, although it does not exacerbate the value of man over nature (BOFF, 2012, apud BRASIL et al., 2015). Thus the centrality and importance rests on all living beings and not only on the human species. Each biotic and abiotic being has its relevance on the planet, without needing to be subordinate to each other, forming the biosphere.

It is known that there is still no harmony between socioeconomic development and the balanced environment. It is necessary to allocate in the level of importance all living species and not only the human one, in overcoming anthropocentrism by ecocentrism, in which everyone can live in harmony provided that the necessary is consumed and not the exorbitant (CARVALHO, 2013).

Overcoming, for now, the relationship of the anthropocentric and ecocentric paradigms with respect to sustainable development, deserves attention the sustainable paradigm. According to Brasil (2015), it fits the concept of sustainable development used today, because it does not put the human being out of the picture, as the most radical ecocentric line of environmentalists does, but the sustainable paradigm harmonizes nature and human life.

The importance of sustainable development and the defense of this model by many theorists is not denied as a way of mitigating the impacts caused by humans on nature. It is necessary that the theory of sustainable development has an epistemological basis that holds a logical guiding thread, which may be the sustainable paradigm of Gladwin et al. (1995).

Sustainable development in the sustainable conception is the most appropriate paradigm to promote growth and economic and social development, allied to a healthy environment. According to Nery (2009), economic activity needs to be integrated with environmental planning and aimed at promoting the welfare of citizens. It is necessary to align economic growth with social development and efficient ecological management (CORRÊA; HOELTGEBAUM, 2010).

To overcome anthropocentrism linked to environmental issues, the great challenge lies in the consciousness of the human species. "Care must be taken with the massification of subjectivity. Is it possible to build a new man? Yes, a new ethic, new values." (BRAZIL, 2015). This environmental awareness, although difficult, develops in environmental education to change values and attitudes toward the balance between the socioeconomic and environmental spheres. According to Morin (2008), quoted by Brazil (2015), the path is prudence, to bring a decent life, until reaching the level of consciousness.

Therefore, one cannot fall into the naivete or even the demagogic discourse of non-human intervention in nature, since both the conservation of natural resources and economic development are necessary for the progress of humanity and to alleviate social inequalities. What is sought is harmony between economic, social and environmental aspects. It is necessary to align economic growth with social development and efficient ecological management (CORRÊA; HOELTGEBAUM, 2010).

THE ECOLOGICAL ISSUE BETWEEN ANTHROPOCENTRISM AND BIOCENTRISM

Anthropocentrism and biocentrism are two streams of philosophical thoughts aimed at understanding the ecological ethical context of society. Such questions are concerned with the ecological problems that occur naturally and the anthropic action of man, or even with the association of these factors. Therefore, Stoppa and Viotto (2015) state that the anthropocentric view considers man to be a superior being to other life forms, which causes selfishness regarding the dominance and exploitation of natural resources without worrying about the environment.

The anthropocentric current is old and perhaps for this reason concern with environmental issues has come to the fore, emphasizing it the industrial revolution, the technological revolution and capitalism, followed by the overexploitation of natural resources for human well-being. Anthropocentrism is present as a majority legal orientation, meaning that man is still privileged with rights over other species (STOPPA; VIOTTO, 2015).

The pursuit of comfort standardized by capitalism is one cause of the cause of overconsumption. In addition, consequences such as the exploitation of natural resources, energy and the increase in the world's population have caused consumerism even more, leading to an environmental crisis, which only in the 1960s began to be spoken of as changes. of habits seeking to make humanity aware of the global environmental problem (OLIVEIRA, 2017).

However, the ecological aspects that differentiate anthropocentrism from biocentrism is that the former brings man as the center of the universe, not being part of nature, forming a selfish, immediate and inconsequential society that does not care about the future of humanity itself or the future. planet (STOPPA; VIOTTO, 2015). The economic factor being the main axis of anthropocentric society, and the second is a concept that came from biology man as part of nature.

In the biocentric theory life in its most varied forms is a universal reference center, treating man as an intelligent part of nature (FERREIRA; BONFIM, 2010). In this theory, there is respect for the environment, animals, concern and actions with the conservation of environmental resources. It is positioned as a different perspective on anthropocentrism, which has long prevailed influencing the culture, education and perception of many generations.

In the ecological field, biocentrism is challenging, presenting enigmatic proposals to remain in a capitalist society, since the ideals of the biocentric nature are hopeful and quite relevant in the face of the environmental crisis. On the other hand, few people are determined to give up their comfort for the sake of all life on the planet.

On these premises, is it possible to be totally biocentric? In a consumerist society does the biocentric current prevail? Here are the questions!

Thus, De Oliveira (2013) proposes that we be more critical with regard to ecological ethics, it is necessary to know the aspects of the philosophical political currents, which allow the reader / researcher reflection and decision making regarding their biological, ethical positioning. and social in the face of incalculable ecological problems for this generation and the future and the entire biota.

In the light of these epistemological currents Steil and Carvalho (2014) define the concept “ecological subject” as the set of beliefs, values and behaviors emphasizing a personality from the environment in which the individual is inserted, together with the development of the imaginative horizon. . Thus, human ecology is about studies of the interactions of the individual with the environment, inserting itself as the proposal to know the social and environmental issues, seeking to overcome such difficulties that prevent the sustainable living of the ecological subject.

For De Moura Carvalho (2017) the formation of ecological subjects is essential and needs to be reciprocal, becoming possible from the perception of the environmental crisis, which requires environmentally sound actions. These statements contradict the anthropocentric idea, in which De Moura Carvalho (2017) proposes a reciprocal relationship between man and the environment, living the concept of conservation that is in line with the proposals of human ecology.

Other theories are radical, aiming to cease technological development in order to take care of the planet. It is an illusion to believe in environmental preservation, because humanity is not willing to regress its evolution to the point of life of our ancestors, that would not be possible! In these questions it is clear that human beings need to develop their “environmental ethics”, marked by social developments in the twentieth, addressing environmental education as part of the ecological movement (FISCHE et al., 2017; DE MOURA CARVALHO, 2017).

It is a challenge for human ecology to overcome environmental ideologies embedded in the anthropological, economic, political, social, religious and cultural context of a society. This fact determines that to be an ecological subject one must realize the seriousness of the events, at local and global levels. Thus, De Moura Carvalho (2017) proposes pedagogical ideas in environmental education that raise awareness through the finitude of natural resources.

When Engels (2018) says that man modifies the environment and the environment modifies it, it means that the anthropic transformations occurred in nature caused by the human being, also changed the way in which the individual perceives the environment, having his conscience formed by his coexistence. in the landscape in which it relates. For SIRVINSKAS (2018) time is not a linear sphere and the environmental changes that occur on the planet have rapid, severe and non-recurring consequences.

In the book “Modern Myth of Untouched Nature”, Diegues (1996) shows that the natural world is a conception that diverges between human societies and that the natural term refers to something untouched, that there was no human interference related to the concept of preservation. Unraveling this emphasis, and in view of reality, the alternative to slowing down environmental impacts is from biocentrism.

Man is the animal that causes most changes in nature, influences the acceleration of the finitude of natural resources (MENDONÇA, 2015; ROLLA, 2016). However, the experience of biocentrism can be one of the essential mitigating alternatives, so that present and future generations can enjoy sustainable living conditions and environmental health.

Is it possible to establish sustainable development measures in line with biocentrism? The term sustainable development is broad, and for something to develop it needs to be changed, Diegues (1996) give some alternatives, aiming at conservation and especially avoiding overconsumption and waste, perhaps the biggest problem is to explore and not have concern repair or conserve.

A CRITICAL LOOK THROUGH ANTHROPOCENTRIC THEORY

From the famous phrase of Protagoras, one of the sophists of ancient Greece, that “man is a measure of all things,” begins a transition from a cosmos thought based on interests in natural processes to an anthropocentric idea. , (FAT; SILVA). Philosophers were the basis for highlighting the human being at the top of the pyramid to the detriment of the other species with particular characteristic their rationality, standing out for their ability to think.

Still following a philosophical thought addressed by Hegel, the faculty of thinking is what separates men from brutes. We accept it as true, which the human being has more noble than the animal is thanks to thought, action, reflections on society (CHALFUN, 2014), and this difference should be the starting point for the innovation of human beings. ecologically sustainable habits, reducing

the accelerated and exacerbated consumption of the planet's environmental resources.

Anthropological conceptions, by themselves, take a selfish approach, in which man develops feelings of dominance and superiority, remaining as characteristics of civilizations, the power of domination that has gained a historical-social body in technology, and a technological civilization is undisputed. say that the instrument as a primordial form of relationship with nature (BOOF, 1995). Characterizing as a misguided justification of domination needed to expand and exploit nature and achieve the maximum of self-development.

Given these claims, industrial revolutions and the mastery of technologies were the most exploitative forms of direct human actions on the environment, without concern for the results, such as environmental degradation, which reached alarming levels of pollution, extinction of various species, climate change, eventually raising an environmental concern, including the lives of all beings, including humans (MILARE, 2009). It is not about the advance of techniques for generating the environmental crisis, but about a misconception of what man does with it.

Anthropocentrism becomes the thought or organization that makes the human being the center of the universe (MILARE; COIMBRA, 2014), also considering human values as the source of all value that manipulates, destroys nature, to satisfy desires. materials (PEPPER, 1996). Thus, the human being is contemplated in detriment of the feeling of superiority in relation to the other beings.

Anthropocentrism configures that attitude whereby one only sees meaning in things as they are ordained to the human being and fulfill their desires (BOFF, 1995). For example, in the process of world modernization, nature has become only a tool to satisfy a consumerist society and to feed the capitalist means of production, reproducing actions and thoughts of dominance that are established as problematic addressed in studies of human ecology.

Thinking about anthropocentric culture has made the human species obtain special characteristics, and therefore can determine what will be made of the lives of other existing species, using nature irresponsibly, not caring about the effects of such use, often causing irreversible problems (STOPPA; VIOTTO, 2015). Still, the environmental law that solidifies human attitudes becomes selfish because it is an idea of particular favoritism.

It is noteworthy that this form of thinking has been building an inconsequential society that cares little or nothing for the future of humanity itself and so little for the future of new generations (STOPPA; VIOTTO, 2015). Anthropocentrism is called the perspective of thought that takes as its paradigm the peculiarities of the human

species, showing that the only known environment is that of its existence.

Anthropocentric practices remain rooted in some sectors of contemporary society, which prevents many advances in environmental care, especially the conservation of endangered species (ABREU; BUSSINGUER, 2013). Reproducing an individualistic ideology that aims to make a profit and to continue the exploitation of natural resources, which create and recreate terms to aim for the maintenance of power through unsustainable ideas.

When Capital praises, supports and rewards environmental protection measures, it is certainly because such initiatives do not affect the very interest of their reproduction (BOMFIM, 2014). They are always weak decisions that do not bring effective solutions, being unable to remedy any environmental damage, in this sense, the socioeconomic interest is the most relevant objective for harming natural resources, perhaps being the biggest reason why environmental education is ineffective, as it covers the economic aspects and metals.

The status of mistress of truth, human reason acquires a warlike power in relation to nature which for many centuries has been used in a humanly irrational way to generate a vicious circle of wealth accumulation (BONFIM, 2014). This circle still remains internalized not only in accumulation, but in essence a system that spares no effort to reach its maximum.

In the anthropocentric view the economy is seen as a linear, closed and isolated system of nature, with positive growth, and the expansionist strategy would be sufficient to generate resources for environmental protection, fostering the adoption of clean technologies, alleviating poverty and improving poverty. quality of life of the underprivileged, (SILVA; REIS; AMÂNCIO, 2010). However, what really happens is the opposite of the situation mentioned, in fact the social inequalities are blatant and the environment highly unbalanced.

What about anthropocentrism? Everything in the history of millions of years has reason to be solely because of the human being man and woman, nothing has alterities and meaning without him. All beings are at your disposal, to fulfill your wishes and projects, are your property and domain (BOOF, 1995). It is a major challenge for the century or the total destruction of resources, as the means to do so have already been built or create viable alternatives.

II. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Human ecology seeks to answer social questions in the human-environment relationship, proposes innovative

and sustainable interactions, seeking to overcome anthropocentrism, in a conception of sustainable development, following an evolutionary idea that no life form should be harmed, that all biotic beings and Abiotics are important for the balance of the sociosphere.

Ecocentrism is a conception that defends nature itself and not for the sake of the human species. Conserving living and non-living natural resources is essential as they are important to the terrestrial ecosystem and not just for human needs. In this way, ecocentrism does not fit the literal meaning of the concept of sustainable development.

Anthropocentric conceptions arise not only from philosophers, but from texts cited in the bible with the idea that man was created in the image and likeness of God, with dominion over other species. Thus, it is apparently easier and more immediately effective to use biblical conceptions and personal, economic, and developmental welfare as a justification for radicalizing these aspects for the common welfare of the entire ecosystem.

These are foundations that contributed to the understanding of human superiority. That said, harmonious relations with the environment were increasingly distanced. In prehistoric and medieval periods the techniques did not give man advantages over nature, life was summed up only to obtain his own sustenance and could still be considered stagnation of humanity by conserving natural resources.

The worldview, in which the human being is the center and the end of all things, in view of their rationality and superiority over all nature, are concepts that must be overcome. Considering man as part of nature, the destructive practices of the environment must be overcome, because it is an ecological crisis, caused by a so-called political, philosophical and ethical posture, in order to achieve a satisfactory balance.

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