

From the concept of Environmental Reason To a Global Ethics project

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Abstract

The contribution of the environmental philosophy to the XX and XXI centuries philosophy renovation and their capacity to be applied to all aspects of social life is the core of this essay.

The history of philosophy on the West is focused on the human condition, the environmental philosophy drive its thought to a global view of biodiversity and geodiversity, enlarged by the concept of biosphere.

The dominant perspective of the modern philosophy set the morale in the order of the rules and social conventions and leave the ethics on the field of personal experience.

Analyzing the concept of Kantian reason, and its ethic's corollaries, this essay propose develop them to a new concept, "Environmental Reason". Conceptualized as a new categorical imperative to the men's action, beyond the principle that prescribe that we must conform individual acts with a universal law, configuring the human conduct within the limits that safeguard the continuity of life, but also the intrinsic values of earth and its biodiversity and geodiversity.

A new perspective ethics founded in the principles of the critique of anthropocentrism and the critique of ethnocentrism represent a new ontology, and a new epistemology, that could lead to a new ethics universal theory.

Keywords: environmental reason; moral; ethics; anthropocentrism; ethnocentrism.

Introduction.

The danger of a New Scholastic

The fundamental push of environmental philosophy is the ethical issue and are the moral problems. This paper discuss these concepts of modern Ethics and Moral. trying to discover the complex and dialectical connection between ethics and moral, and science, on the light of political philosophy.

We believed that the preconceived notion that reserve to philosophy the query about "what it means to be" and assigns to the domain of science to study of "phenomenological causes", can lead to the old Mechanicism and to a kind of a new

scholastic. Separate Science and Philosophy, in this context, meaning not recognize the dialectic between the two different kinds of thinking.

The “environmental reason”: critique of ethnocentrism and critique of anthropocentrism

The struggle to differentiate ethics from morality, that the common sense understand as normative ethics (what we ought to do) from philosophical or meta-ethics (what is the nature of the good), cannot be exceptionally simple. If normative ethics is something the common people call “ethics”, what is the nature and object of this conceptualization of “ethics” and what is the nature and object of meta-ethics? The modern consensus about the two questions is that ethics emerges of subjectivity of each individual human being and moral is placed in the domain of the rules and social conventions. We disagree with those dominant thesis.

First, analyzing this conceptual construction, on the light of environmental philosophy, we must interrogate ourselves if we stay in the framework of the anthropocentrism or not!?

Second, Moral, in our view, is a cultural expression determined by social dominance and historical context, who gives them a sectary and transitory character. We needs a moral theory (that I call environmental ethics) that could be universal, trans temporal (project in the present and in the future) and available to light human individual conduct and the human science as well as their political ideologies and practices, without considering man as the final zenith of Life.

The opposition between individual ethics-universal ethics, universal ethics- moral contingents are something that needs to be transcended. Where others see antagonism, we glimpse a complex dialectic.

If the Kantian concept of an absolute normative ethics is a single intellectual exercise or does not could be applicable to the social practice, it is because all the ethics practices depends at the same time from a philosophical aporia concerning the complexity and dualism of the human existence and from the real historical context with the conflict of classes, cultures, and civilizations.

If the ethical principles are impracticable in an historical context and already cannot respond to the new moral challenges about the nature of the good, if we cannot transform those principles in universal normative codes, the human thought pushes them to the heritage category and explore new principles. The concept of the end of History is not the pathway of political science.

Environmental ethics is supported, in our opinion, by two new principles: the critique against anthropocentrism and the critique against ethnocentrism, giving a universal

answer to the macro moral problems of our era - environmental, social, economic, and political crises, war and mass destructive weapons - and contributes to rebuild the human activities in all domains of individual and social life; this is the case of the Bioethics Code, for instance.

The critique of ethnocentrism and the critique of anthropocentrism are the founding principles to surpassing the dualism from which moral stay in the order of the rules and social conventions and settled ethics in the field of personal experience.

The “environmental reason” formulates a new categorical imperative for human action, beyond the Kant maximum of forming individual ethics of acts with the principle of a universal law, a new ethical framework, which stems from the need to configure the human conduct within the limits that safeguard the continuity of life and their diversity. Already in the philosophy of Espinosa (XVI century), earlier of Antero de Quental (XIX century) and Hans Jonas (XX century), the fundamental impulses of the environmental philosophy reflection were the ethical issues and the moral problems

From *The Imperative of Responsibility In Search of an Ethic for the Technological Age* (1979), emerges a new categorical imperative for human action. He designs a new ethical framework:

“Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life”.

Amongst this ethical principle we are at the border of the humanism but remain at the frontier of anthropocentrism.

From this perspective we could rethinking the concept of reason enlarging their meaning to the concept of “Environmental reason”, a critical reason enlightens by the principle of anthropocentrism and by the principle of ethnocentrism.

If the object of science is to explain the world machinery, then scientific laws are amoral, and the answer to the categorical imperative of “*how to live in the world*” belongs to the domain of philosophy and of ethics (Espinosa, 1677). It is in this sense that the environmental ethics inquiries the value of science and of social development, not only in an anthropocentric dimension: Life before Man and Earth before Life, according to modern science and beyond modern science.

From the paradigm conservationist of Nature to the concept of Environment. The new ethics

We conceptualize “environment” as the concept that expresses the relationship between nature and culture, in the complexity and diversity of the cultural landscape, urban and rural landscape, fully humanized or wilderness (with less human influence).

Including in the concept of cultural landscape its material and immaterial heritage, their cultural expression and forms, their immeasurable emotional relationship with the countless human beings who have been born and shaped those, becoming also transformed.¹

The Land Ethics: enlarging le concept of community

The Principle of community of Aristotle has focused on the city-state, because the human good life depends on the community not only for material necessities but also for moral education and civic education; and the classic dilemma of human perfection-worst animal (without laws and justice), returns to the modern framework of ethics and moral, with a new significance, a new object of justice, and new rules face nature.

All human ethics theories are based on a premise: that the person is a member of an interdependent community. The Land Ethics extend the concept of community:

“...The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, water, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land “²

The acknowledgment of the economic value of using biodiversity could still a way to refuse the autonomous land ethic values.

“The land-relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but not obligations.”³

This usually leads to confining nature conservation to parks and reserves, to the species potentially useful to humans and to the action of the State, giving complete freedom to private enterprise. This approach comes from the scientifically false premise that the elements with economic value of the biotope can exist in nature without the presence of other elements

Nature shall be included in our field of moral reflection, our duties, which were previously limited to human beings, and will now be extended to other natural beings - the concept of an enlarged community of natural beings.

¹ The concept of landscape has had to be stretched in many directions: from an object to an area, from a visual experience to a multi-sensory one, from natural scenery to the whole range of human-made transformations of nature. Landscapes are never stationary.

² Water, like soil, is a part of the energy circuit. Industry, by polluting water or obstructing it with dams, may exclude the plants and animals necessary to keep energy in circulation...” “Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land...” “The image commonly employed in conservation education is «the balance of nature»...this figure of speech fails to describe accurately what little we know about the land mechanism. A much true image is the one employed in ecology: the biotic pyramid. “ (Aldo Leopold, *A Sand Count Almanaque*, 1949).

The biodiversity must be represented at a same time by a circle that surround all species of Life, symbolizing the moral idea that human being is not the “Lord of Life ”.

From the reading of this work would break the theorization of bioethics by American oncologist Van Rensselaer Potter.

³ Aldo Leopold, in *A Sand Count Almanaque*.

But also enlarging the concept of person (in the common sense, human being) to other animals.

That is the enlarged perspective of the critique to the anthropocentrism.

Animal Ethics: enlarging the concept of person

Principle of perfection of Aristotle understands good and evil in terms of an anthropocentric teleology.

Australian Peter Singer and American T. Regan emphasizing the feelings and the rights of animals face the brutality of modern production processes: genetic cloning, cages, feedstuffs based on ground meat from dead animals and saturated hormones, systematic violation of natural rhythms and needs of animal life, all this in terms of maximum profit. Invoking the principle of equality, the two authors refuse the concept of the superiority of the human species that compare to racism, for violating that principle, censoring to the human beings the non-recognition of the capacity of feeling and suffering of animals. In their works they claim that animals are subjects of interest by not suffering and also, add Regan, are subjects of law, are subjects of a life experience that has intrinsic value.

Departing from this approach they propose extend the concept of person:

“I propose the use of ‘person’ to beings rational and self-conscious, to incorporate the elements of the common sense of human being that are not covered by member of species Homo Sapiens”.⁴

Based on the thesis that “... some non-human animals appear to be rational and aware of himself, conceiving itself as distinct beings that have a past and a future...”, proposes a gradualist ethics against the killing of animals, which in its upper level extends to chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans the same protection due to human beings.

Certainly, the revelations and complaints of environmentalists could also generate the defense of ecological extremely values in confrontation with the classical humanist values.⁵ Therefore they propose is to extend the concept of the use of the term “person” in the sense of a being rational and self-conscious, to incorporate other animals far way ‘ the “members of the species Homo Sapiens”.⁶

They also make clear that exists, between world hunger and brutal killing of animals, a standard common model of civilization, the consumption society and its amoral production and exchange of merchandises. Biocentrism (Earth first! Greenpeace,

⁴ Peter Singer book *Practical ethics*. from the chapter Take the Life of Animals, pages. 98-99.

⁵ See Rolston III, H. *Philosophy Gone Wild*, 1986. Callicot, J.B. *In Defense Of the Land Ethic*, 1989.

⁶ Peter Singer, *Practical ethics*, from the chapter Take the Life of Animals, pages. 98-99.

Wilderness Society,...) assigns an intrinsic value to any living entity and Aldo Leopold's Ecocentrism focuses on our duty towards the biotic community, which we are part of.

Nature shall be included in our field of moral reflection, our duties, which were previously limited to human beings, and will now be extended to other natural beings - the concept of an enlarged community of natural beings and persons. This is the perspective of the critique to the anthropocentrism.

The biodiversity of Life, including human life, only represents the actual pinnacle of the evolution of Cosmos, the matter of Cosmos that thinks themselves, creating the human consciousness or spirit, but we do not know if our species, born on Earth, represents the final link of cosmological evolution. For that reason, we must preserve not only all the forms of life but the conditions for life continuity and biodiversity.

So, the ethical imperative to preserve Life and not only the Man specie and save Life biodiversity before the Man specie, and the imperative of preservation of Land/Earth, birthplace of cosmic Life and for now the only cradle, must win moral force in human societies. No, we does not appeal to a new anti-humanism with the principle "Life before Man": this principle means that life emerged before man's specie and all species contributed to the birth and conservation of human species, not only the animals and plants useful to the civilization.

While the Man is both predator and creator of new biotopes and being today the human species the most complex form of life, their extinction could block the expansion of diversity itself. What means, from this perspective, that a new Humanism returns to the center of the philosophical thought of Environmental Philosophy and of Environmental Ethics.

The most recent discoveries of genetic and anthropology gave a new crucial contribution to query the question of competition and war that cross the human being communities, since the age of agriculture and domestication of animals: All the humans have the same ancestral mother and father!

And, following this way, we need to reintroduce the question of Political Ethics, as new component of environmental reason.

The principles of "common home" and "community and planetary solidarity"

From the first UN environmental conferences, held in Stockholm in 1972, emerged the principle of a "common house", "... man has two homelands, his own and planet Earth"; the principle of "a planetary community and solidarity", founders of a new

international order (political and ethical order) and the principle of “defending life on the planet and its biodiversity before humanism”.⁷

Those principles build a first frontier line with the cultural and political perspective of ethnocentrism.

The critical perspective of environment philosophy toward the ethnocentrism claims:

“Ethnocentrism is an emotionally conditioned approach that considers and judges other societies by their own culture’s criteria. It’s easy to see that this attitude leads to contempt and hate of all ways of life that are different from that of the observer.”⁸

The critique of ethnocentrism not only justifies the respect for all national cultures and all forms of classical and popular cultural expression, but also rejects any notion of superiority from a certain model of society, race, or ethnicity.

In convergence with this philosophical view, philosophical critique against anthropocentrism questions the religious vision that gives to man, elected creature by God to preside over the divine creation, the absolute right to take ownership of nature for their purposes, without any limit or restriction.⁹

In the historical context of the industrial revolution and contemporary technical and scientific revolution, Christian and Judaic philosophy allows to accept without serious moral restrictions the primacy of economic growth over sustainable development. However scientific discoveries only allow us to be sure that the balance of ecosystems favorable to life depends on a multitude of physical, biological, and geological factors and, when higher position is occupied by organisms in the food chain (remember the biotic pyramid of Aldo Leopold), the more vulnerable they will be, their extinction would dramatically affect the entire system. In other hand, little wildflowers that attracting minuscule insects, if are poisoned by chemical products, and disappearing, the pollinating of plants decrease dangerously. If you look at honeybees, they are responsible for pollinating plants and flowers which provide about a third of all the food we eat.¹⁰

In coherence, we must also consider that the multiple links between all forms of life (and even from these with the abiotic environment), require, in addition to the duty of

⁷ UNCHE, 1972.

⁸ Jorge Dias, *Anthropology Studies, Volume I. Ethnography as Science*, 1961.

⁹ The three great religions of Mediterranean, Cristian, Islamic and Jewish, however we can find in their theologues doctrinal currents of conservation of nature.

¹⁰ See *Silent Spring*, an environmental science book by Rachel Carson. published on September 27, 1962, documenting the adverse environmental effects caused by the indiscriminate use of pesticides. Carson accused the chemical industry of spreading disinformation, and public officials of accepting the industry's marketing claims unquestioningly. There was strong opposition to *Silent Spring* from the chemical industry, their lobbies, and scientists, and from governmental agencies, but the book and the courageous civic commitment of Rachel Carson inspired an environmental movement that led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

preservation of our species, to preserve the diversity of beings and their environmental niches, from whose dynamic balance, all depends.

What today is dramatic, is the rhythm at which biodiversity is being lost, the destruction of natural resources, energy and the multiplication of polluting effects that reach not only the whole lithosphere, the hydrosphere, the cryosphere, the atmosphere, and the biosphere, but also, with unpredictable consequences, the fundamental genetic material, the DNA, which conserves and reproduces the codes of life.

If we consider the emergence of our ancestors of the human species from 4 to 5 million years ago, inside the framework of the biological time, which is immense, nothing can assure that, as happened to the dinosaurs in the past (sixty-five million years ago), the kingdom of mammals will not come to an end one day and other forms of more adapted life will continue to perpetuate the music of life in the sidereal spaces.

However, considering the Paleontology lay which posits the “irreversibility of evolution”, imaging the extinction of *Homo sapiens sapiens* and species associated with our evolution, a world of plants, microbes, and insects, would unlikely give rise again to the human species or even to mammals.

In this perspective, nobody can imagine today what will be the link of the chain of life where the evolutionary leap will occur, as nobody dreamed before that the grandfather of our human condition was an insignificant rodent that survived the widespread extinction of dominant species at the end of the Mesozoic Era (67 million years ago). But, at the same time, the preservation of the human being returns to the centre of environmental ethics, in a new ethical perspective, without unlimited domain and privileges against “the other” beings of nature (critique of anthropocentrism).

So, contrasting the common history of philosophy whose thought is focused on the Human Being, environmental philosophy guides the human thinking to the “Raison d’Être” (the sense of existence) of the world and their Phenomenology, for the discovery of the uniqueness of the “Substance” in all its manifestations or “modes”, in the vocabulary of our Bento de Espinosa, without becoming an anti-humanist philosophy.

Now we can revisit our initial postulate: If every systematic philosophical construction is built on an intrinsic foundation, a fundamental intuition or the attraction to the objective, the starting point of philosophical renewal in the XX century was the concept of environment. Their supreme *desideratum* is justifying the moral imperative, supported by the modern concept of reason, that environmental ethics must take precedence over the more advanced achievements of blind science. And the environmental ethics must take precedence above the values of the most democratic XX century socialist and liberal democracies, responsible together for generating the

environmental crisis. However, this concept of reason is not the classic concept of the reason of Kant. We talk about a new concept, the “environmental reason”.

Concerning the fundamental questions that Spinoza’s (Bento de Espinosa) philosophical masterwork. put on the advent of our modernity: how to think about the rational explanation to the existence of man and the universe, how to adapt the philosophical thinking to the *raison d’être* of everything that exists and how to transform the spiritual life in full understanding and enjoy serenely the life to its limit!? The Philosophy of Nature and then the Environmental Philosophy allowed the building of a new ontology in critique of anthropocentrism, a new epistemology, founded on critique of the ethnocentrism and a new ethical theory, with a universal value and practical content applicable to all the social fields. From those foundations the concept of reason is enlarged and transformed in the concept of “environmental reason”.

The global concept of environmental reason emerges from a World that is quite different from the old Kantian world. For the first time along the History, not only the Humanity, but Life and Earth, can be deadly damaged by the nuclear war, the biological and chemical weapons, the environmental crisis, the modern pandemics, and the global crises of capital market: the fall of the empires on the XXI century could call the true Apocalypse horses. The imperative of perpetual peace assume a new moral and political significance.

The ethical imperative of perpetual peace, from Kant to Jorge de Sena and the imperative of dignity

The philosophical and practice dimensions of the problems of now categorical imperatives assumed a tragic magnitude.¹¹ In our historical and environmental context, humanity is confronted for the first time with the danger of its own extinction, because of environmental disaster or as the tragic outcome of a biological or nuclear war; and pandemics and major famines of medieval Europe occur again but now on multiple continents.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights emerged from World War II¹² All the 30 articles, which enshrine fundamental democratic rights, as the right to work and social protection, to equality before the law, gender and ethnicity, the freedom, and self-determination of the nations, have the same political dimension and are subordinated

¹¹ 1."Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." (Ibid., 422)2."Act as though the maxim of your action were by your will to become a universal law of nature." (Ibid). 3.Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only." (Ibid., 429). *The Metaphysics of Morals*. trans. Mary Gregor. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

¹² The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948 (A/RES/217). Drafted mainly by J. P. Humphrey of Canada, she had in Dr. P.C. Chang, representative of China, and representative of the positions of Asian countries, the main mediator of the consensus established in its 30 articles. Chang was the representative of the renamed People's Republic of China _RPCh, proclaimed in October 1, 1949.

to two ethical imperatives, that the Declaration proclaims, the imperative of dignity and the imperative of peace:

“...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

To protect this dignity...

“...it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.”

And it will only be defended...

“...it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations.”

In this framework, the peaceful and negotiated resolution of conflicts is the first political corollary of Environmental Ethics, conduced to a new categorical imperative, the “imperative of perpetual peace”:

“In the strange fortune of doom,
[...] this strange fortune, from which light comes
oh just harmless powder, I pray
to myself not to lose the memory,
for you, for you should always remind
that everything is lost when we lose peace,
and first, freedom is lost.¹³

This “light” on the poem, was the light of the nuclear bomb of Hiroshima.

The state of war, considering the lessons of the History of liberal democracies and Socialist democracies, is incompatible with the preservation and deepening of democracy and contributes to creating the conditions for its limitation and degeneration.

If we refuse the ethical imperative of destruction of the entire atomic arsenal and of biological and chemicals arsenals and not create the sustainability of our economy and financial system, modern war will come as a continuation of the economic dispute by other means, and then, we will find “damn peace” in the Holocaust of the children of our children. The perpetual peace is thus the main political corollary of Environmental Ethics.

However, to the “categorical imperative of perpetual peace”, Portuguese Jorge de Sena, engineer, poet, and philosopher, joins a new ethical imperative, “the imperative

¹³ Jorge de Sena. Poem “Peace”. In *Thirty Years of Poetry*.

of dignity". Another categorical imperative of Environmental Ethics trying to answer to the global crisis that liberal democratic or socialist politics and their economies and markets failed to overcome, and the blind science also promoted.

"The imperative ethical of dignity", from Jorge de Sena, proclaims the moral rule and ethical principle that, we (persons, nations, entrepreneurs, governments...) must live having sure that nobody is less alive, or suffer or dies as the result of our action, and to prolong our lifetime

The absolute value of life face the opposite that is the absolute loss represented by the end of life, gives to the (limited) time of life an ethical dimension (the joy of life) that nothing and nobody can ignore, and a gradualist morality is established: Act with the action maxim of never to be responsible for the suffering or damages of others, that anticipate or will bring its end, depriving other person from less life (the oppose of a full life),

And if associate the concept of dignity to the philosophical perspective of anthropocentrism and the philosophical perspective of ethnocentrism, we can extend this categorical imperative to all Life and Earth entities, to all biotic and abiotic beings.

From the long poem *Letter to my kids about the shootings of Goya* we chose the philosophical nucleus of verses:

*"Believe me that no world, that anything or anyone
Is more important than a life, or the joy of life,
This is what is the most important - this joy.
Believe me that the dignity they will tell you so much about
is nothing more that joy that comes
from being alive and knowing that anytime someone
is less alive or suffer or dies
for that one of you resist a little more
to the death that is of all and will come..."*¹⁴

After writing these thoughts, that put in question the legitimacy of the war and the exploitation of man by man, a hundred treats of political philosophy, became unnecessary and void.

There is a key and premonitory passage of another philosopher and writer, in the essay *Tendências da Filosofia no Século XIX* (Tendencies of Philosophy in the 19th century), where this new paradigm emerges in thesis:

*"The synthesis of modern thought, prepared by philosophers, must be the collective work of cultured humanity. Only by this way could embrace the character of a historical phenomenon and a great human fact."*¹⁵

¹⁴ Jorge de Sena. "Letter to my kids about the shootings of Goya", in *Thirty Years of Poetry*.

¹⁵ Antero de Quental, *General Trends of Philosophy*, page. 87.

This new paradigm, I believe, would be the Environmental Philosophy, a philosophy born to create a new civilizational paradigm.

Paradox and ethical overcoming of the concept of family, culture, and nation

All living humans inherited their mitochondrial DNA from a woman who lived approximately 16.,000 years ago. They also found that all Y chromosomes on Earth can be tracked down to a recent ancestor in Africa. they found that their “Y-chromosome Adam” lived about 60.000 years ago.

The moral message, common to many religions and philosophies, that all human beings are brothers in the same human family, is grounded in modern science.

Just as mitochondria are inherited by the maternal pathway, chromosomes are inherited through the father, all contemporary human beings had their origin in Africa, in a period between 60.000 and 160.000 years ago. During the last glaciation, the descendants of the primitive *Homo Sapiens* will have crossed the Gibraltar Strait, and after a long way, crossed Bering Strait, penetrating Europe, and Asia, and, following the path, through valleys, rivers, and oceans, reached all continents.

Finally, in an ethical sense, the frontiers that have configured primitive and modern nations, and have allowed the launch of new branches of human culture, organize economic progress and national armies, must be progressively shot down by a moral imperative, because, just as racism has no scientific basis and the color of the skin results from the adaptation of the human being to the different environments of the Earth, we know today that any war, however legitimate or defensive, will always be fought between members of the same family, descendants of age-old parents.

And with the fall of those unhuman frontiers, the status of power and exploitation of man by man, man over woman, the new generation over the aged generation, which the state and its repressive bodies, laws, and customs, have historically guaranteed, must be overcome, because, on the moral level, it will be the same as subjugating by capital or by other power the weakest link of our planetary family circle.

If, like Antero, we consider that “The idea of death is the basis of moral life,” the awareness of the personal finitude generate the metaphysical imperative of living “for something eternal”¹⁶; then, a new destiny is placed on humanity, by the imperative of ethics and science, to perpetuate Life in outer space, because complex life on Earth is doomed to perish with the death of our sun, a destiny traced by science for a stellar existence of 10,000 million years, which has already consumed hydrogen half of its life.

Are we not therefore an aberration of nature or condemned to a meaningless existence, as existentialist philosophers thought.

¹⁶ Antero de Quental, *The Philosophy of Nature of Naturalists*, 1991, page 210.

We are rather the awakening of the consciousness of the Universe and to that extent, living as part of the Universe, of him we are one of their most complex entities, still barely understanding his relativistic and quantum physics, that as a single human, wonders: “where does our consciousness go”? (Unamuno) ¹⁷

And leaves in the verses, the common appeal of the human beings:

“... there must be a way
to return from death.”¹⁸

I wrote earlier:

“Since the publication of the pages of Spinoza’s Ethics, there are two juxtaposed conceptions of the world in philosophy: the Universe of Imagination, dominated by an anthropomorphic conception of God, prolonged the Aristotelian and scholastic world representation, and the Universe of Reason, which, according to Bento de Espinosa, is the manifestation of another concept of God, God Substance unique or God Nature, *naturam naturantem* and the intelligible reason of Nature, *natura naturata*.

Spinoza’s God is not the omniscient Being, omnipotent, creator and transcendent to the world, all merciful, Lord of Heaven and of Hell and Supreme Domsday Punisher.

Their conception of the world is not based on the beliefs of any church and its dogmas. The meaning of life is inherent to human nature and man’s destiny is to adjust their thoughts and action to the universal order that is inherent to the world. The ontological existence of beings and the phenomenology of the universe are the manifestation of a single being ontologically infinite, with infinity attributes, from which, we, humans’ beings, recognize essentially two: thoughts, or reason for the intelligibility of the things and the extension or material reality, the *natura naturata*.

This ontology and this epistemology, this pantheism of reason not from the representation of nature, that configures its conception of the universe, become inseparable from ethical of life and cost to Espinosa the excommunication and the inquisitorial epithet of “vomiting of hell”. The “Hell are the others”, wrote Sartre in the 20th century. “The Hell, we are ourselves,” replied Lévi-Strauss.: “... we are the link between the animal and man truly human”, wrote Konrad Lorenz. And a common philosophical question: how to live peacefully, until the end of life, and, probably, be happy? The Espinosa answer cross three centuries: “must be taken by useless only what contribute for the supreme perfection of the human being.” ¹⁹

¹⁷ The key question that guided the philosophical inquiry of Miguel Unamuno.

¹⁸ Eugénio de Andrade, Little Elegy of September, in *Heart of the Day*. 2005: 92.

¹⁹ This part of the text, with successive renovations, was first presented at the international colloquium, “*Philosophy in the twentieth century*”, organized by the Center of Philosophy of the University of Lisbon, in 2012, under the title “The dawning of the Environmental Ethics in the 21st century”, at the *XXIII World Congress of Philosophy*, Athens, in 2013. And in the *World Congress of Philosophy* on the topic: “The philosophy of Aristotle, “Critique of Environmental Ethics and Moral in the 21st century”, Athens, in 2016.

Conclusion

The principles of citizenship or dignity of citizens and peaceful (political) solution of conflicts, applied together with the subordination of the political economy to the environmental ethics policy, determines the State's duty to guarantee its citizens the right to peace, the right to work, the right to education, the right to health and assistance in old age, the right to access the justice, as postulates by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But also, the right to the conservation of nature and the right to freedom, and yes, freedom is placed in this order, because she disappears with the war and remains a smaller value without job, homeless and other social rights. And the duties face nature became part of the moral world because the consequences of destruction of life diversity would be that human communities have no future, and the music of Life can be silent in the earth.

Without peace, everything will be lost, and firstly, freedom will be lost.

The 20th century was the century of the triumph of national and international rights of peoples and nations, now globally in risk. The 21st century must be the century where environmental ethics will be prevailed, generate a new stage of civilization, The Ecocivilization.

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