



The relations between the thought of Hannah Arendt, Leonardo Boff, Max Scheler and Edgar Morin in order to Combat Oppression, The Banality of Evil and Promote Human Emancipation

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ABSTRACT

The relations between the thought of Arendt, Boff, Scheler, and Morin, although odd, have in common the sense of fighting oppression, each one in their own way, and promoting human emancipation. Arendt had her personal and intellectual life marked by the oppression she witnessed and suffered with the advent of totalitarian regimes in Europe, and her intellectual attempt to study and understand this phenomenon. Leonardo Boff will have his personal and intellectual life marked by the oppression he witnessed and experienced from the military dictatorships that ruled Brazil and Latin America in the 60s and 70s. In his third phase, Boff (2010) states that currently there are two wounds that burn: the wound of immense poverty and the environmental wound. For Boff, this scenario is clearly founded on a cosmology that is soon to be overcome, the one Boff calls the Cosmology of Domination, based on an anthropocentrism founded on instrumental-analytical reason. Edgar Morin will influence Leonardo Boff's thinking, offering, from the 1970s, new perspectives for the understanding of

epistemology and thinking itself, known as complex thinking, which will create the basis for the awakening of the ecological paradigm or ecological or systemic thinking. According to Scheler (1986) in order to understand the error and contradictions in the various traditions of philosophical anthropology. Max Scheler uses the methodological conception "tabula rasa", coined by John Locke (1632 - 1704). For Scheler, it is necessary to make a tabula rasa of all the anthropological traditions in order to systematize a new philosophical anthropology. For Scheler, the beginning of this method is the knowledge of the history of man's self-consciousness, and later, to understand the ideas of man and their correlation with the historical and anthropological conception. This work aimed to show how the thinkers Arendt, Boff, Morin, and Scheler articulate and propose, each one in his own way, a universal proposal with the purpose of overcoming the problems of their times. It was found that there is convergence between the philosophical and epistemological conceptions in their thoughts in order to combat oppression and promote Human Emancipation.

Keywords: Social Psychology; Hannah Arendt; Leonardo Boff; Max Scheler; Edgar Morin.

1 INTRODUCTION

Leonardo Boff turned 80 years old in December 2018. Considered by many to be the greatest living Brazilian intellectual, Professor Leonardo Boff wrote more than a hundred books throughout his intense and prolific theological, philosophical, and academic career. Leonardo Boff is an established author, with hundreds of thousands of copies sold worldwide, and in the 1970s and 1980s he was also a religious man whose importance in Latin American theological thought is likely to remain for decades to come.

Although he is still recognized by most of the intelligentsia as an active theologian, the harsh and acid posture that the Vatican started to adopt towards him and his work from the mid-1980s on was taking on such a shape that he finally left the Catholic Church in 1992 and since then has taken on the challenge of building a new set of propositions and theories in the field of Philosophy and more specifically Ethics, that catapulted him as a new defender of a paradigm that reconciles humanity's existence on planet Earth without having to destroy and deplete the environment.

In the Western world, the idea that environmental education is the key to solving the serious environmental problems that highly industrialized society and capitalism are going through has been agreed

upon. However, there is no consensus on how to make school environmental education an effective tool for changing the minds of young people, since it is possible to do environmental education in different ways.

The aim of the research project, by whom this review is written, is, therefore, precisely, on how Leonardo Boff's new ecological paradigm, which prioritizes an ecocentered environmental education, will provide a new worldview in the minds of young people in high school, through the study of the effects of the, also, so-called new Cosmology of Transformation, proposed by Leonardo Boff.

In this sense, this work of the discipline "Principles of Politics", of the PhD course in Social Psychology at John Kennedy University, aims to relate the theme of the research project: "Social Psychology, Ecology and Spirituality: Analyzing the impact of the new ecological paradigm in changing the worldview of high school students", which is based on the ethical and environmental conceptions of the third phase (1993) of Leonardo Boff's thought, with other themes and authors. Especially, with the thought of Hannah Arendt in her work "The Human Condition". But also, relate to the thought of Max Scheler and Edgar Morin.

2 DEVELOPMENT

2.1 THE THOUGHT OF HANNAH ARENDT AND LEONARDO BOFF

The biographies of Hannah Arendt (1905-1975) and Leonardo Boff (1938), although distinct and odd, have points in common. Hannah Arendt, born in Germany, was an important theorist of political philosophy and philosophy (although she does not like this term). And Leonardo Boff is an important Brazilian theologian and philosopher who studied theology and philosophy in Germany where he received his doctorate.

Arendt's personal and intellectual life was marked by the oppression that she witnessed and suffered with the advent of totalitarian regimes in Europe, and her intellectual attempt to study and understand this phenomenon. Leonardo Boff had his personal and intellectual life marked by the oppression he witnessed and experienced with the military dictatorships that ruled Brazil and Latin America in the 60s and 70s, a fact that generated extreme poverty and social injustice, and his intellectual attempt to study, understand, and propose alternatives.

Arendt analyzes Nazism and Stalinism in a polemical way, as totalitarian ideologies, that is, with an explanation of society but also of individual life, and shows how the totalitarian way depends on the banalization of terror, on the manipulation of the masses. In 1961, working for The New Yorker, he covered the trial of the notorious Nazi executioner Adolf Eichmann, and in 1963 he published "Eichmann in Jerusalem". In this work Eichmann is not demonized, as Jewish activists described him. But as a typical and mediocre bureaucrat who had limited himself to following orders, without any consideration of good and evil. She will call this phenomenon "The banalization of evil".

In 1958, Arendt published "The Human Condition". In this work, Arendt takes up from a new angle the political questions that have been asked since the publication of "The Origins of Totalitarianism" (1951),

to respond to the reflections and fears of totalitarianism in the 20th century and its culture of elimination and disposal. She will analyze what factors in the human condition make possible the revival of the democratic political space. Hannah Arendt, through a philosophical anthropology and a historical analysis, will rescue the concept and the value of the "vita activa" or "contemplative life" of the ancient Greeks in order to contribute to a better understanding of our modernity. And he will state that the Western philosophical tradition since Plato has prioritized contemplative analysis to the detriment of "vita activa", that is, the participation of philosophers and other intellectuals in the daily life of the active in politics (in the *polis*) was relegated to the background. This fact brought disastrous consequences to the Western world and its flirtation with totalitarianism and the various forms of anomie and alienation of the masses.

In her intellectual journey, Hannah Arendt will take up the Greek concept of "vita Activa", which intends to designate three human activities: Labor, Work and Action. Labor is the activity that deals with the biological life of the human body. Work is the most indispensable human activity for life, but the least human because it marks the enslavement of the human being to the demands of the natural environment. Action is the political activity par excellence, and may constitute the center of political thought, as opposed to metaphysical thought.

Leonardo Boff, as a response to the blatant oppression and social injustice in Latin America, in his first intellectual phase, will create a theology called "Liberation Theology", or preferential option for the poor, blacks, and women on the part of the Catholic Church, whose landmark is his work "Jesus Christ Liberator" (1972). This work, one of the pillars of Liberation Theology, would bring him persecution and censorship problems against his works. Culminating with his definitive removal from the Catholic Church in 1992, the year in which he begins his third intellectual phase, with the launching of the work "Ecology, Mundialization and Spirituality" (1993). This phase, in which Leonardo Boff will propose to humanity a new "ecological paradigm", a new "World Ethos", also called "cosmology of transformation", as a response to the current socio-political-ecological crisis, which is the main object of study in our research project.

In his third phase, Boff (2010) states that currently there are two scourges that burn: the scourge of immense poverty and the environmental scourge

For Boff, this scenario is clearly founded on a cosmology that is soon to be overcome, the one Boff calls the Cosmology of Domination, based on an anthropocentrism founded on the instrumental-analytical reason of mechanistic, determinist, and materialistic cut, and which relies on rationalist philosophers like Descartes, Francis Bacon, etc., who see nature as an object of conquest and domination of man (Boff, 2010).

According to Boff, this Cosmology of Domination will be dialectically replaced by the Cosmology of Transformation, founded on a post-anthropocentric paradigm in which nature appears no longer as an object, but rather as man's own territory and fabric, but rather as his own home and the matter from which he draws his sustenance, and the beings of nature - plants and animals - appear no longer as man's objects, inferior to him, but rather as his planetary brothers (Boff, 2003).

For Boff, a new civilization, little by little, begins to outline a new civilizational paradigm, more focused on the benevolent dimensions of humanity towards Mother Earth and towards the poor. Human beings are beginning to feel awakened and reconnected to the mystery that makes up the universe. The moment, according to Boff, is to join forces to find solutions (Boff, 2003).

It is necessary, according to the author, the emergence of a planetary civilization that prioritizes ethical principles and relationships of care for the entire cosmos. The ethics of essential care proposes to rescue life and conceive broad justice for all the victims of our current culture of violence, exclusion, domination, and exploitation (Boff, 1995).

The current situation, then, will be overcome by a new humanity, committed to building a new pattern of civilization. Thus, the "ecological paradigm" beckons to a nobler destiny for the human being and the planet Earth (Boff, 1995).

Boff states, in this context that the "phenomenon of Globalization and the corresponding planetary consciousness will give rise to this new civilizational paradigm" (Boff, 2002).

The new paradigm will be characterized by a redefinition of the way of relating to nature and to peoples, by a redefinition of human subjectivity and of work; for as planetary consciousness grows, so does the conviction that the question of the environment, of ecology, is contextualized in everything, in public policy, in industry, in education and in international policies. Due to the exhaustion of non-renewable resources, humanity will have to change its pattern of behavior with regard to nature or it will run into huge cataclysms (Boff, 1995).

For this reason, the society of the 21st century will consume more responsibly, forming a new alliance of respect and devotion toward nature (Boff, 1995).

For Boff, the new development will be with nature and not at its expense, as it has been for centuries.

Boff affirms that there will be a world social pact among the peoples based on three fundamental values that everyone will assume: 1) to safeguard the conditions for the planet to continue to exist and co-evolve; 2) to guarantee the future of the human species as a whole and the conditions for its further development; 3) to preserve perpetual peace among the peoples as a means to solve all the conflicts that will always exist (Boff, 2002)

Boff's prevails the sense that, instead of dominating nature, humanity must place itself inside nature in tune with it and always open to new transformations. Moreover, there is also the sense that nature is an open system and that it can always welcome new interactions and flows of energy, unlike the closed vision of anthropocentric modernity, which lives as in a nutshell, closed in on itself and, therefore, outside of universal dialogue (Boff, 2003).

According to the author, among other things, what would characterize this new cosmology of transformation would be "respect for all forms of life and the dignity of nature and not its exploitation by humanity" (Boff, 2003). In short, "to put care in the place of domination, to put spirituality as a given of human reality, and not just an expression of a religion" (Boff, 2003).

2.2 EDGAR MORIN AND LEONARDO BOFF

Sociologist Edgar Morin will influence the thought of Leonardo Boff, offering, from the 1970s on, new perspectives for the understanding of epistemology and thought itself, known as complex thinking, which will create the basis for the awakening of the ecological paradigm or ecological or systemic thinking.

In 1977, Edgar Morin publishes the first volume of his work "The Method", a work composed of a set of six books, which were written over almost three decades. The "nature of nature" is the first volume of a long epistemological work. In these six volumes, Edgar Morin will talk about "life of life", "knowledge of knowledge", "ideas", "humanity of humanity" and "ethics".

In the first volume, called: "Method I: O: The nature of nature", Morin will address questions about the possibilities of a new dialectical worldview of knowledge development, of reconnecting processes of order, disorder and organization, making these the keywords based on a tetragrammaton, along with the notion of interaction, this being the keyword that closes and makes the circulation and operation of the tetragrammaton. The problem of organization is the basis of the book "The Nature of Nature". The notion of organization itself is complex. The method is shown, then, as another way of thinking, bringing the complexity of thought to build a way to approach old concepts, such as, in this case, physis (nature)

As Morin tells us:

"An organization is a provision of relations between components or individuals that produces a complex unit or system, endowed with qualities unknown at the level of the components or individuals ... It guarantees solidarity and strength in relation to these unions, a certain possibility of duration despite random disturbances, the organization transforms, produces, brings together, maintains " .¹

Morin states that given the complex problems that contemporary societies face today, only interdisciplinary studies can result in satisfactory analyses of these complexities. According to Morin, "complex" comes from the Latin complex, meaning "that which is woven together." According to Morin himself, we are Homo sapiens sapiens.

Edgar Morin says that it is very simple to have one or two sapiens in our self-denomination. Therefore, it would be necessary to add a demens, remaining: Homo sapiens sapiens demens, which would show how destroyed we are, crazy, since every man is double: at the same time that he is rational, he presents a certain dementia.

Says Edgar Morin:

"I said that the cosmos is like man, sapiens / demens. It was the same as saying that man sapiens / demens was close to what is generic and generic in the cosmos. Man sapiens is the organizing being that turns into organization, disorder into order, noise into information. Man demonstrates in the sense that he is existentially crossed by impulses, desires, delusions, ecstasy, fervor, adoration, spasms, hopes, tending to the infinite. The term sapiens / demens means not only an unstable, complementary, competing, and antagonistic relationship between 'common sense' (regulation) and

¹ MORIN, Edgar. The method 1: the nature of nature. Portugal: EuropaAmérica, 1977.

'madness' (disregard), it means that there is common sense in madness and madness in common sense.²

According to Morin, complex thinking is not limited to science, as there is a deep understanding of philosophy, literature, poetry, arts, etc. All great works of art have a deep thought about life. According to Morin himself, "we must break with the notion that we must have the arts on one side and scientific thinking on the other." .³

Thus Morin:

[...] the dominance of a paradigm that Descartes formulated can be diagnosed in history, in Western history. This separated on the one hand the domain of the subject, reserved for philosophy, for inner meditation, and on the other hand the domain of the thing in extension, the domain of scientific knowledge, measurement and precision. Descartes formulated this principle of disjunction very well, and this disjunction reigned in our universe. He separated science and philosophy more and more. He separated the so-called humanistic culture, that of literature, poetry, arts and scientific culture. The first culture based on reflection could no longer feed on the sources of objective knowledge. The second culture, based on the specialization of knowledge, cannot reflect or think about itself. The paradigm of simplification (disjunction and reduction) dominates our culture today and it is currently that the reaction against its enterprise begins [...]⁴

Morin concludes that "the paradigm of complexity will emerge from the set of new conceptions, new visions, new discoveries, and new reflections that will reconcile and unite". In this sense, Morin's thought will contribute to our research project, also prioritizing a new holistic and open educational conception for social interaction and for a new "green" world view.

2.3 - The anthropological view in Scheler: humanistic personalism

Max Scheler (1874-1928) was born in Germany, in the city of Munich. He came into contact with religiosity at an early age, as he was the son of a Jewish mother and a Protestant father. However, at the age of 15, at the height of adolescence, Scheler had his first conversion under the influence of the priest of the institution where he studied. One of the most important facts about this author's life was his academic choices.

Max Scheler majored in philosophy and the natural sciences. He was a disciple of Husserl and flirted with his phenomenology. He was professor of sociology at the University of Cologne. And director of the Institute for Sociological Studies, also in Cologne. In 1928 he published "*The Position of Man in the Cosmos*", his masterpiece, which marked the systematization of philosophical anthropology. However, a few months after the publication of this work he died prematurely at the height of his intellectual maturity.

According to Scheler (1986) in order to understand the error and contradictions in the various traditions of philosophical anthropology. Max Scheler uses the methodological conception "*tabula rasa*",

² MORIN, Edgar. *Introduction to complex thinking*. Lisbon: Edições Epistemologia e Sociedade, Instituto Piaget. 1990, p.337.

³Ibid., p. 327

⁴ MORIN, Edgar. *Introduction to complex thinking*. Lisbon: Edições Epistemologia e Sociedade, Instituto Piaget. 1990. p. 111-112

coined by John Locke (1632 - 1704). For Scheler, it is necessary to make a *tabula rasa* of all the anthropological traditions in order to systematize a new philosophical anthropology. For Scheler, the beginning of this method is the knowledge of the history of man's self-consciousness, and subsequently, to understand the ideas of man and their correlation with the historical and anthropological conception.

Thus, for Scheler (1986), man's self-consciousness develops in history, starting with the Greco-Roman classical culture, passing through the theocentric medieval thought until the modern age with Cartesian rationalism and the idea that the sun is the center of the solar system.

Therefore, for Scheler (1986), there is an enormous correlation between history and anthropology. Besides the fact that Scheler will also give great importance to the natural sciences, in order to systematize modern anthropology.

For Scheler (1986), philosophical anthropology has the conditions to develop a richer discourse on man than in the past. According to our author, philosophical anthropology also has a great responsibility, because it is in this discipline that the psychophysical problems of the body and soul, as well as the fundamental ethical problems, reside. In this sense, with the objective of undertaking and organizing a philosophical anthropology that would focus on the essence of the human being. Scheler proposes anthropology as a fundamental science of the essential structure of man, and his relation to what is animal, inorganic as the foundation of all things, both of the origin of the metaphysics of his essence, and of his physical, psychic and spiritual beginning in the world.

According to Scheler (2003), of the spheres of the living being in general, the first dimension of structuring is the construction of the psychic or individual world, characterized by the fact that such beings already possess a being-for-itself, which in turn develops in four evolutionary dimensions subordinated to each other. These stages or levels are: 1) the affective (or 'sensitive') impulse already present in living vegetable forms; 2) animal instinct; 3) the associative memory present in certain animals; 4) practical intelligence. A progressive individuation and detachment from the natural environment is characteristic of all these processes. Man shares elements of all these spheres. However, not only man, but also higher animals. We will briefly describe these levels.

For Scheler (2003), the "being affected" supposes a "feeling" of something that affects, and an original "sense" in life that is prior to being affected. This impulse is the first manifestation of the emergence of individuation, of the constitution of the psychic inner being as being-for-itself is already present in the vegetable. It starts from an intimate being that detaches itself from an environment, as a movement from inside to outside, an impulse for growth and reproduction. In the human being, this affective intuition of resistance is the first material data for the conceptual and formal perception of reality. In the vegetable, however, the perception of a surrounding world is not possible, because there is no consciousness, not even a sensation, but only the first sense of this experience of resistance. This affective ekstastic impulse remains present in all other living things, including man. All living forms preserve vegetative states, such as the original experience of resistance. According to Scheler (2003), in animals,

the vegetative nervous system, expressed, for example, by the resting state of sleep, whereby all centrality of conscious response to the environment ceases, is an inheritance from the primitive form of plant life.

This is the second soul form, defined for Scheler on the basis of behavior, that is, the expressions of internal, externally observable states, such as movements and responses of the living individual to changes in the environment.

The relation between instinct and sensations is that the sensations are subordinated to instinct, that is, the animal can only feel that which is significant for its instinctive behavior, which in turn is subordinated to the very form in which the living being in this species is structured. Which is also characterized as an inseparable unity of prior knowledge and action, but not as a knowledge of objects or representations, but as a knowledge of evaluative impressions, impressions originating from a feeling of resistances that attract or repel, in the contact of sensations with specific elements of the environment that cannot yet be represented as objects. If we cannot yet speak of the emergence of representations, we can nevertheless say that instinct, unlike the affective impulse directed merely 'outward', is directed toward certain specific components of the environment. In each new dimension of these layers of vital being there is a progressive separation of the individual from the environment.

According to Scheler (2003), it is associated with the emergence of a response center capable of relating to specific elements of the environment as significant units with greater relativity to the individual than the elements to which instinct is related. The individual is able to associate, from the experience of successful attempts, his attitudes with certain events. It is based on what Pavlov calls conditioned reflexes, but goes further. It is not only about reflexes, but also about learned acts when faced with events in the environment. The individual can learn an attitude whose meaning was not directly conditioned by instinct. It arises in relation to an instinctive vital need, but it is not inscribed in instinct as an act. Thus, the search for food, as well as the avoidance of pain, are instinctive movements, but the act of an animal that stands on its paws, or rolls over itself to receive food, or avoid the whip, is a learned act, stored in the memory and associated with the reward for food and escape from pain.

Practical Intelligence, according to Scheler (2003), does not depend on attempts or successful previous acts. The being is able to intuit a relationship between elements of the environment and its own acts of bodily movement. This is how, for example, a monkey can, without anyone teaching him, without punishment or reward, pick up a stick and introduce it to the bottom of the anthill to collect the ants he intends to eat, as long as he finds them associated within his environment.

According to Scheler (2003), man does not have a peculiar position in the cosmos. It is the human being, as a constituted world, that has its position in the spirit. The spirit is pure act of intuition. The foundation of the person is to be the center of these acts, connected to life. Act is movement, not position. It can be in any position. The spirit of the person is free and permanent transit, participating in the various spheres of being.

In this sense, the soul is the result of human work added as intuition to the spirit, it is the content of values that the spirit intuits from material essences of value and that, on the other hand, it intuits from the very concrete acts of 'realization' of values oriented by the spirit, the acts that are the matter of moral intuition.

Within this indefiniteness, there remains a division, an essential section in man, within humanity, greater than the division between man and animal. It is the division between the living person who seeks God, who wants to transcend, and the vital dimension of his existence, or, in other words, it is the distinction between the essence of the person and existence, which is why every man is essentially undefinable.

According to Scheler (2003), this is why there always remains a diversity of being in all spheres of the human, both among the various cultures and man's social ways of being in history, and within the same society, and even at different moments in the individual's own life. For Scheler (2003), the unity of the human race is in its bond with God, the supra-individual spirit, the sea to which all rivers flow, the infinitely perfect person, the model of what he, man, must become.

Scheler (2003) concludes by stating that the human being is essentially a transit between the 'realm of nature' and the 'realm of God', as a bridge, a movement; he only has his existence as an exit from one of these realms, as a preference between values, a choice and a decision. The meaning of man's being is a going out of himself, in an impulse that is either towards nature itself or towards God.

3 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This work aimed to show how the thinkers Hannah Arendt, Leonardo Boff, Edgar Morin and Max Scheler articulate and propose, each in its own way, a universal proposal in order to overcome the problems of their time. It was found that there is convergence between the philosophical, epistemological/paradigmatic conceptions in the thoughts of these thinkers.

Arendt, with her criticism of the Western philosophical tradition of the prevalence of the *bios theorethikos* in detriment of the *bios politikos*, thus creating a passive society, subject to the mass manipulations of totalitarianism and the "banalization of evil". Boff, with his eco-philosophical critique of the Enlightenment's instrumental rationalism, which generated an anthropocentric paradigm that subjugates nature and human beings, oppressing them equally.

Max Scheler and Leonardo Boff articulate and propose, each in his own way, a universal proposal with the aim of establishing a fraternal coexistence between man and nature. Scheler proposed a new humanistic anthropological vision of communion between living beings and the spiritual world, and Boff a new post-anthropocentric paradigm, also of communion and spirituality.

It can be affirmed that, like Morin, L. Boff's thought has a lot of amplitude, because it dialogues with the most varied areas of knowledge, such as: sociology, philosophy, biology, physics, chemistry, ecology, theology, psychology, etc. Besides amplitude, another aspect stands out: eclecticism. His thought

was influenced by authors such as: Souza Santos and Teilhard de Chardin, Prigogine, Maturana, Einstein and Jung, Marx and Heidegger, etc.

It is worth mentioning that, in general, another characteristic of Leonardo's work is its non-linearity (non-systematicity), its dynamism. It presents itself as a thought that is open to change, including paradigms. For Boff, no anthropology is able to present the human being in a closed, completed, finished way. Anthropology is, in a way, anthropogenesis. For Leonardo, the human being, as well as the cosmos, is in permanent evolution, and the knowledge we have of ourselves has a limited and necessarily open character. We are always in genesis, in a transcendent dimension of the Human, open to the ethical dimension.

Both thinkers weave universalistic approaches. Their multiple perspectives will enrich the theoretical and ontological basis of the research project, still unpublished: "Social Psychology, Ecology and Spirituality: analyzing the impact of the new ecological paradigm in changing worldviews in high school students".

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