

## The anthropocentric myth of "universals" and common cultural traits

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Anthropological studies and their results, both theoretical and applied, have a high degree of worldwide visibility in the field of printed and digitized publications,<sup>2</sup> as well as on the web.<sup>3</sup> Various fields of social and natural knowledge - understood as the relationship of human beings with their environment - also called the science of culture (Herskovits, 1992: 255-67), give rise to diverse interpretations, depending on the worldview of the authors and in accordance with political interests, in actions to unite, divide or dominate human groups, social sectors or entire peoples living together in common spaces or limited by geographical or political-administrative "borders".

The fragmented globalization of the world-system calls into debate the potential of cultural diversity and identities as a human resource of accumulated wisdom, the necessary mutual respect for non-shared cultural expressions, the historical sense of cultural continuity, as well as its economic and patrimonial value. However, the safeguarding of cultural diversity and the recognition of cultural identities are related to issues repeatedly addressed by anthropological studies, such as the successive approaches to "cultural universals", and the relations of coexistence between diverse human groups; also identified as interculturality and multiculturalism, with a rich and contradictory interpretative range, which could be synthesized in the proposal of culture as "a way of living together" (Pérez de Cuéllar et al., 1996), or in the galloping hegemonic attitude of "divide and rule",<sup>4</sup> to guarantee the distances between some dominant cultural expressions and other disadvantaged ones.

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<sup>2</sup> See the indexes of anthropology journals, publications and guides available on the Internet in Spanish, in *El Rincón del Antropólogo* (2013).

<sup>3</sup> A simple Google search for anthropology, as a disciplinary field, yields some 12,600,000 results in 0.44 seconds.

<sup>4</sup> See, among many possible examples, Don Closson's (2008) reflection on "Multiculturalism", a new version of the proposal made by Niccolò Machiavelli, in 1532, to Lorenzo de Medici, in *The Prince*.

Due to the topicality of the subject, this paper aims to assess the discussions and contradictory/complementary views on "cultural universals" to highlight the keys to empower a counter-hegemonic discourse on cultural diversity and identity.

In this sense, the Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030) of the UN place key issues on the global agenda that have an evident transversality with intercultural relations and the safeguarding or not of diversity and cultural identities, such as:

Poverty, hunger, health and well-being, education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, inequalities within and between countries, sustainable cities and communities, sustainable consumption and production, climate change and its effects, life in the oceans seas and marine resources, terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity, peace, justice, inclusion and effective institutions, and partnerships to implement sustainable development (United Nations, 2016).

In the set of goals by objectives of the projection itself, goal 4, dedicated to "[g]uarantee inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," states:

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development and the adoption of sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and *appreciation of cultural diversity and of the contribution of culture to sustainable development*, among other means.<sup>5</sup>

The fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the goals set for these objectives depends, or is conditioned, in addition to possible alliances and the will of governments, on the persistence of certain cultural traditions clinging to the continuity of their respective ways of life and the influences of the assumption of new paradigms by a part of the world population with access, for example, to the Internet.

Articulated with the previous UN document, UNESCO's World Social Science Report (2016), dedicated to "[a]ddressing the challenge of inequalities and charting pathways to a just world," shows a multiple assessment of

seven dimensions of inequality and how their interaction comes to shape people's lives, creating a vicious cycle of inequality. Inequalities should not be apprehended and confronted exclusively from the angle of income or wealth

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<sup>5</sup> Emphasis in quotations is mine, J. G.

disparity [...] in addition to being economic, they can also be political, social, cultural, environmental, territorial, and cognitive. (Denis et al., 2016: 3)

In the area of cultural inequality, they refer to discriminations based on gender, ethnicity, and "race"<sup>6</sup> (skin color and phenotype), religion, disability, and other group identities; and in knowledge inequality they refer to disparities in access and contribution to different types and sources of knowledge, as well as the consequences of these disparities. The report itself discusses that "responses to inequality must recognize and address both the specific historical legacies and deeply embedded cultural practices that shape inequalities" (5-6).

Similarly, in the selection of papers contributing to the World Report... there are some that highlight inequalities in the digital realm as part of the varied influences of transnational media through ICTs.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Common cultural traits: approximations, slippages, and actuality***

Exceedingly early on, anthropological studies have studied the evolution of humans, as a biological species and its psychic unity, as a set of cultural traits, regardless of the degree of social organization, common to all peoples of the world because of creative, diffusive and adaptive processes to the most varied contexts, in order to satisfy diverse needs.

However, to value the very praiseworthy effort of several generations of researchers in the approach and systematization of these cultural traits, it is necessary to demolish one of the most pretentious and implausible myths of the human being, especially in Western culture; trying to equate the human scale in the terrestrial sphere<sup>8</sup> with the universe<sup>9</sup> in its global scope. Such an anthropocentric vision -due to the limitations in the development of knowledge- generated the notion of "universal" from an extremely distant scale. Fortunately, the impetuous development of astronomy and all the scientific fields that accompany it are

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<sup>6</sup> I interpret the reference to the notion of "race" as a cultural construction and not in the biological order since human beings belong to the same species.

<sup>7</sup> On this selection, see the 2016 works of Ramalingam and Hernandez, Onyango-Obbo and Savage (15-6).

<sup>8</sup> The Earth was formed only about 4.55 billion years ago, and life emerged about a billion years later. It is currently the only astronomical body (oblate spheroid) where life is known to exist. The circumference at the equator is only 40 091 km and its mass, approximately  $5.98 \times 10^{24}$  kg (Dalrymple, 2001: 205-21).

<sup>9</sup> According to astronomical observations, the universe has an age between 13 730 and 13 810 million years; and an extension of at least 93 billion light years. (Lineweaver and Davis, 2005).

increasingly helping to put the human being in his place as a (thinking) nanoparticle compared to the size of the universe.

### ***The anthropocentric myth of the "universals" of culture***

There have been many different approaches to the traits identified as supposedly "universals of culture", a problem studied and developed by anthropology to identify characteristics common to all human societies; from lists and their respective definitions to syntheses involving the most comprehensive aspects of human life in society.

However, the generalizing and pretentious criterion of what is considered "universal" must be subjected to criticism due to its wide polysemy and contradictory inconsistency, to the point of being reduced to absurdity. At the same time, when the idea of the "universal" arose, in Greek antiquity, there was still an immense lack of knowledge of mathematics and other natural sciences to establish fictitiously homologous scales between the world (Earth) and the rest of the cosmos (Universe).<sup>10</sup> The space-temporal differences between them are simply abysmal.

In the philosophical order, the so-called "problem of universals" involves various fields of knowledge such as philosophy itself, cognitive psychology, epistemology, ontology, and anthropology, among others. Beyond its physical (phenomenal) scope, which designates the totality of space-time, as well as all forms of matter (known and obscure, energy and impulse), the laws and constants that govern them, such a problem refers to the way we think and know, and to which realities must be known in a general way.

From the previous criterion of "the universal", several authors have approached, from various fields of knowledge, the supposed "universals of culture", as a criterion of extrapolation to the work of human groups. The work of Ward Hunt Goodenough (1919-2013) (1970) is well known, emphasizing more on the subjective components of the elements of culture than on human actions. More recent works take this criterion as true and repeat the idea of "universality" (Wiredu, 1988: 35-48; Gómez Pellón, 2010; Briceño, 2013), without stopping to value the dependence of nature itself in its broad astronomical meaning; that is, two quite different scales and not same in a simple way, but to free ourselves, once and for all, from the anthropocentrism so recurrent in research on culture.

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<sup>10</sup> To the above are added the theories and respective criticisms of the multiverse, since the term was introduced in 1895 by the psychologist William James (1842-1910), and then used in cosmology, physics, astronomy, philosophy, psychology, and science fiction, among other fields (James, 2009).

For the above reason, we use a category proper to the human scale such as that of common cultural traits, a more expeditious way to approach, in a systemic way, the set of qualities generalizable to the various human groups and, based on them, how their sense of belonging varies. In the face of the evolution of judgments and evaluations on the imagined "universality", as eternal and immutable truths, largely burdened by worldviews and ideologies from the power in different historical periods, the identification of common cultural traits is another interpretative way, based on the human being in society as a scale of analysis.

On this occasion, we have selected, with a diachronic and evaluative approach, various approaches to the problem made by key authors such as Melville J. Herskovits, Yulián Bromlei, Marvin Harris, Gustavo Bueno and Manfred Max-Neef, which involves remarkably diverse sources used by the respective studies to arrive at specific proposals and generalizing conclusions.

In the first half of the twentieth century, a synthesis of great interest is addressed by Herskovits (1895-1963) (1992), on "The "universals" in human civilization", as part of a larger work (255-67). It is based on the idea that all cultures are made up of institutions, a set of formalized, consecrated and "sanctioned" responses, according to the demands of everyday life, which he identifies as *aspects of culture*. He compares it to

large blocks of experience that the researcher highlights in a functioning body of customs to achieve a more useful description. The aspects are, so to speak, a kind of picture of cultural contents; the framework around which, however incompletely, a people organize its life. (255)

It is these "great blocks of culture" that have been considered - according to Herskovits - "universal".

Another aspect of great interest for assessing the significance and scope of cultural diversity, related to the set of cultural traits, are the contributions of the former Soviet school headed, since the middle of the last century, by Yulian Bromlei (1921-1990), who was director of the Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnography in Moscow. Of his extensive work, *Theoretical Ethnography* (1986),<sup>11</sup> chapters II and III of which address key issues for considering *common cultural traits*, stands out.

Chapter II, "Ethnic self-consciousness, an inseparable part of ethnos",<sup>12</sup> gives a historical account from the dawn of Marxism (the distinction between "tribal and

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<sup>11</sup> The text *Theoretical Ethnography* is also available in Russian and English.

<sup>12</sup> For Bromlei the notion of ethnos, ethnicity, discards biological determinism or physical appearance and alludes to a stable group of people historically constituted in each territory possessing common cultural particularities, with a certain level of stability (including language

national consciousness"), how it was employed by Lenin by way of "national self-consciousness" and how it has been used later by various disciplines of the social sciences.

The evaluative attitude of one's own culture vis-à-vis that of others can and does lead to ethnocentrism, which Bromlei (1986) identifies as

the propensity to perceive all phenomena of life from the point of view of one's ethnic group, which is considered as a model to be followed, i.e., to some extent preferred over others. At the same time, typical for ethnocentrism is the sympathetic fixation on the traits of one's group, although it does not always entail the formation of a hostile attitude towards other groups. (47)

From this point of view, *ethnocentrism* does not imply *ethnophobia* or hostility towards the other as a counter-reaction, although it does not fail to consider the nuances of nationalisms in various historical contexts. This criterion breaks with the multiple judgments and prejudices of valuing ethnocentrism only in its negative sense, when everything indicates that it is a common cultural trait.

Chapter III is dedicated to "The ethnic functions of endogamy", especially as a guarantee of the biological and cultural stability of the ethnos. To the question: How is stability guaranteed? The answer is not simple, since objective and subjective factors such as *endogamy*, understood in its broadest sense, i.e., as the culmination of marriages within the community itself, are at work.<sup>13</sup>

This tendency is not only common among groups of primary organization such as hunter-gatherers, but also includes large national states. After exemplifying with the former Yugoslavia and several regions of the former USSR -Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Bashkiria-, Bromlei estimates that between 80-85% of marriages are endogamous, while those ethnically mixed (15-20%) depend on the affiliation assumed or not by the new generations. For this reason, if endogamy stabilizes the ethnos from its initial formation process, a deviation from it is also a precursor of its qualitative transformation and even its destruction.

Another interesting approach is that of Marvin Harris (1927-2001), from the methodological paradigm of what the author himself identifies as "cultural materialism". When he proposes to assess the nature of culture (1995: 145-60), he

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and mentality), as well as awareness of their unity and their difference from other groups (self-consciousness) fixed by self-designation (ethnonym).

<sup>13</sup> In this sense, Bromlei refers to ethnic inbreeding and not to genetic inbreeding, the latter identified as the reproduction of a coupling between closely genetically related parents. The result of this inbreeding is an increase in homozygosity, which may increase the chances that the offspring will be affected by recessive traits or genetic impairments (145-60).

assumes the early conceptual proposal elaborated by Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), founder of academic anthropology in the second half of the 19th century, who emphasizes social patterns of acting (behavior), thinking and feeling (Tylor, 1871: 1).

One of the features that contributes to guaranteeing the cultural continuity of human groups is *endoculturation*, understood as "a partially conscious and unconscious learning experience, through which the older generation invites, induces and forces the younger generation to adopt traditional ways of thinking and behaving" (Harris, 1995: 146). As examples, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Thai, and Vietnamese children eat with chopsticks, many Arabs and Hindus eat with their hands, and Westerners eat with spoons and forks; thus, this learning serves to control the older generation to reward or punish the younger ones, according to their norms of thought and behavior.

But endoculturation has its limits in an increasingly interconnected world-system. While the induction of cultural patterns from one generation to another is never complete, new ones are always being added or unusable ones eliminated. Thus, endoculturation "can explain the continuity of culture; but it cannot account for the evolution of culture" (149); this is part of the high complexity of cultural processes with the passing of generations.

From philosophical anthropology, a novel interpretation is approached by Gustavo Bueno Martínez (1924-2016) (1990) by subjecting to criticism the distinction proposed, in the linguistic order, by Kenneth L. Pike (1912-2000) between the emic and etic perspectives (Pike, 1943; Bueno, 1990), together with those later addressed by Harris (1982) between the etic vision, limited to the interpretation of the researcher, and the emic, circumscribed to the subject of research. In contrast to these two authors, Bueno (1993) analyzes from the theory of categorial closure the dialectical quality of both perspectives in different gnoseological contexts.<sup>14</sup>

In general, in the research order, the *emic/etic* distinction refers initially to the methodological question of the perspective from which reality is described or analyzed. In the interpretation of cultures, at least two perspectives can be distinguished: the internal vision, that of the subject or group under investigation; and the external, that of the researcher or research group. The former is referred to as *emic*, the latter as *etic*. Both terms were introduced in anthropology through theoretical currents that conceived culture as a system of meaning, of signification,

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<sup>14</sup> Gustavo Bueno has written fifteen volumes of *Teoría del cierre categorial* (Theory of Categorial Closure) and published five.

and are derived from linguistics, specifically from phonological analysis, which distinguishes between the *phonemic* level (sounds meaningful to the speakers of a language) and the *phonetic* level (description by the linguist of those same sounds with categories valid for all languages).

However, from the point of view of cultural materialism, Harris makes an operational distinction between the mental and the behavioral, as categories that refer to different species of cultural data. Although it may seem that the behavioral can be considered as equivalent to *etic*, and the mental to *emic*, rather, both the one and the other could be contemplated from the two perspectives. From this epistemological reference, *emic* and *etic* are not opposed like mind to behavior, but, in any case, like two minds are opposed, that of the researcher and that of the subject under investigation. This represents one of its main limitations.

In the epistemological order, the scope of this relationship is much greater. Bueno's main proposal "consists in considering Pike's original distinction (GS/AS; that is, gnoseological subjects as actor subjects or actants), as a particular case of those situations in which  $\beta$ -operator methodologies<sup>15</sup> are exercised. For this, it is necessary and sufficient that SA (the native, for example) be considered precisely as an operative term-subject like GS (Bueno, 1993: 89).

The above characterizes the *emic/etic* relationship as a dialectical quality, insofar as the researcher and the witness are, at different levels, gnoseological subjects and, at the same time, actants, especially because  $\beta$ -operator methodologies include the subject that seeks to know.

The above is a reflective invitation from the GS/AS position; that is, *emic/etic* in its dialectical content, on the substantial differences between culture as a constructed, devised or imagined totality, with respect to the dynamic and changing significance of its multiple elements or cultural traits.

In contrast to other disquisitions on culture and human needs as "universal" assumptions, elaborated from anthropology by Bronislaw Malinowski (1994), or the

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<sup>15</sup> The  $\beta$ -operational methodologies comprise any procedure by which a field is scientifically elaborated on the same scale as the formal components of the operative subject. This is characteristic of social and human sciences that reproduce analogically the same operations of the participating subjects when they try to explain them at the gnoseological level. This differentiates them from the  $\alpha$ -operator methodologies ( $\alpha$ -sciences,  $\alpha$ -situations), characteristic of the natural sciences and of some versions of the human sciences through which one returns to a plane in which the operations and other components of the gnoseological subject have disappeared, factored into objective components or minimal units, whose relations are automatically produced at the margin of the subjects who know them or trigger them (Bueno, 1993: 125).

imagined "growing needs of socialism"<sup>16</sup> in its dogmatic and narrow version, it is extremely topical to value, from a transdisciplinary perspective, the theory of needs and satisfiers elaborated by Manfred Max-Neef (1932-2019), when he was director of the Center for Development Alternatives (CEPAUR) in Chile (Max-Neef et al., 1998), and with the support of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation of Sweden, with application in Latin America and its general implications.

To address the complexity of the problem, he analyzes the crises of proposals and utopias, the limitations for self-development, the frustrations of developmentalism and monetarism, as well as the various reactions to the frustrations, as arguments to propose the objectives of development on a human scale, to consider the State and social participation in Latin America, together with the habits and biases in the discourses on development. To this end, he and his collaborators base themselves on three postulates that lead to certain propositions: 1) development refers to people and not to objects -this is the basic postulate of the theory; 2) the relationships between needs and satisfiers, and 3) poverty and poverties.

Several key questions derive from the first:

How can it be established that a certain development process is better than another? They recognize that within the traditional paradigm there are indicators such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which indicates, in synthesis, the quantitative growth of objects. However, an indicator of the qualitative growth of people is needed; and they ask themselves what it could be, to which they respond: "The best development process will be the one that allows to increase the quality of life of people"; and another question arises: What determines it, to which they respond: "The quality of life will depend on the possibilities that people have to adequately satisfy their fundamental human needs". From this arises a third: What are those needs? and/or who decides that they are?" (40). The answer to the latter is basic to understand and interpret the substantial differences between *needs* and *satisfiers*, in relation to *common cultural traits*, which is the central issue that concerns us to dismantle the myth of "universals".

These authors submit to criticism the previous conceptions of human needs as if they were infinite; as if they were constantly changing; varying from one culture to another, and different in each historical period. The error of those who have approached the subject is made by not distinguishing conceptually "the fundamental difference between what are needs properly speaking and what are satisfiers of those

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<sup>16</sup> Among other authors, as opposed to other disquisitions on culture and human needs, see also I. T. Frolova, (1984: 399).

needs. It is essential to distinguish between the two concepts [...] for both epistemological and methodological reasons" (41).

They propose the combination of two disaggregation criteria: *existential categories* and *axiological categories*. This allows them to operate with a classification that includes, on the one hand, the needs of being, having, doing and being and, on the other hand, those of subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity, and freedom. Both categories are combined in a matrix that allows the identification of thirty-six correlations of remarkably diverse satisfiers.

This makes it possible to formulate two key postulates:

First: Fundamental human needs are finite, few and classifiable. Second: They are the same in all cultures and in all historical periods. What changes, through time and cultures, is the manner or means used for their satisfaction. From the above it follows that:] What is culturally determined are not the fundamental human needs, but the satisfiers of those needs. Cultural change is - among other things - a consequence of abandoning traditional satisfiers and replacing them with different ones. (42)

Thus, they identify needs as finite and constant existential and axiological categories; and satisfiers as types of attributes, institutions, norms, mechanisms, tools of knowledge/doing, laws, actions, spaces, and environments, which interact one or the other or simultaneously in a complementary way and vary constantly in time-space; they are the permanent niche that makes us biopsychosocial beings and, precisely, the satisfiers are the hard core of cultural diversity.

In relation to the third postulate -about poverty and poverties-, the system they propose facilitates a broad reinterpretation of the concept. The traditional notion is limited and restricted, since it refers only to the situation of those classified below a certain income level. It is economic and, paradoxically, poor. For this reason, they suggest not to speak of *poverty*, but of *poverties*.

In fact, any fundamental human need that is not adequately satisfied reveals human poverty. Poverty of subsistence (due to insufficient food and shelter); of protection (due to inefficient health systems, violence, the arms race, etc.); of affection (due to authoritarianism, oppression, exploitative relations with the natural environment, etc.); of understanding (due to the lack of a proper understanding of the natural environment, etc.); of poverty (due to the lack of a proper understanding of the human condition); of poverty (due to the lack of a proper understanding of the natural environment, etc.). ); of understanding (due to the poor quality of education); of participation (due to the marginalization

and discrimination of women, children and minorities); of identity (due to the imposition of values foreign to local and regional cultures, forced emigration, political exile, etc.) and so on. But poverty is not just poverty. They are much more than that. Every poverty generates pathologies, whenever it exceeds critical limits of intensity and duration. (43)

We are in the presence of a development proposal where the human being is the center, of an anti-economist and anti-hegemonic discourse that is fully in tune with the UNESCO World Report..., dedicated to "Facing the challenge of inequalities and charting paths towards a just world", hence its topicality.

It is explained that needs, as existential and axiological categories, are limited and classifiable; while satisfiers, due to their variability in time-space, are key to identify cultural diversity, but do not constitute cultural traits common to humanity, since the theoretical construction of the matrix is elaborated from contemporaneity and in prospective to contribute to solve development problems on a human scale. However, this work does not have -it is not its purpose- a retrospective approach involving the cultural characteristics of human groups from early times to the present. This does not detract from its merits since it succeeds in identifying the needs and their satisfiers as a fundamental and global requirement for addressing development problems with the approach -or discourse- and projection.

The main core of this part of the work is to underline the decisive role, in terms of adequate quality, of satisfiers in delineating the human face of development in the fight against the various types of poverty that shape the high levels of inequality on a global scale. In this sense, it is a valid work -like those referred to above-, within the varied approaches to the subject of cultural diversity, with a novel approach since it overcomes from transdisciplinarity the previous attempts to identify common human needs and their ways and means of satisfaction. The construction of an anti-hegemonic discourse and the accurate critique of economicism are related to the impacts of the colonial discourse in the historical-cultural sphere.

### *A new proposal*

The approaches, approximations and limitations of remarkably diverse previous works make possible a new propositional reflection on the cultural traits common to humanity, which operate as a system in permanent interaction, and which we can identify in the following way:

- The various economic forms (modes of production) through work (production relations) and various means of subsistence guarantee the social reproduction of the group.
- Marriage, the various types of family and their corresponding kinship ties make possible the biological and identity reproduction of the group.
- Ethnic endogamy guarantees the stability and intergenerational continuity of the group.
- The learning of people makes possible the family endoculturation and other forms of formal and informal education of the new generations and guarantees their cultural continuity.
- Ethnocentrism (selfhood), in its favorable meaning, conditioned or not by links with other human groups (otherness), appreciates one's own cultural assets over those of others.
- The language and its oral expression, together with the non-verbal forms of communication guarantee the peculiar codes of communication of the group.
- The formation and development of consciousness and abstract thought by means of symbols, as a perceptible representation of an idea, with features associated by a socially accepted convention, makes social and interpersonal communication possible.
- Ethnic self-consciousness, which defines ethnic/cultural identity, marks the sense of belonging to a group.
- Behavioral norms make possible the regulation of individual and social behavior of each group.
- The emic/etic activity, as a strategy of knowledge/action, conditions the interaction of qualities of the cognizing subject as a transformer of reality.
- The set of needs and the constant adaptation of their multiple satisfiers guarantee human development as quality of life.
- Creativity is a particular human condition of great scope and very involving for the formation and development of arts, sciences, religions, rituals, sports, inventions, leisure, problem solving, techniques and other ways of adaptation and transformation of the environment and, at the same time, of the people themselves.

This makes it possible to establish a marked difference with respect to other cultural traits that are growing, but not yet common to mankind; for example:

writing, which is a typically human graphic way of transmitting information, some thirty thousand years old; the mass media (press, radio, cinema and TV), which have been expanding at greater speed in the last two centuries; fixed and mobile telephony since the mid-19th and 20th centuries, respectively; and information and communication technologies (ICT), which through the Internet, since as early as 1969, have accelerated processes to reach the information society and, in greater perspective, the knowledge society. The latter still marks a wide gap between continents, regions, and countries of the world; therefore, it is an indelible sign of global inequality.

However, the emphasis and the way in which the cultural traits common to humanity in different societies interact and are modified in time/space, just as they condition subjectively the cultural identity as a sense of belonging/difference, shape cultural diversity with respect to each group in its space-temporal evolution, and in relation or not to other human groups with similar or different characteristics of adaptation and transformation of the environment, since the synergy between the various common cultural traits is a permanent and inherent process of the human species, from its origins to the present.

In this sense, the interactive links of cultural identity and diversity are assumed as historical, dynamic, and articulated categories. If the former is part of the subjectivity elaborated and enriched from the objective reality - and of the social imaginaries -, the latter is part of the latter both in the field of the objectual manifestations made (instruments, squares, cities, technologies...) and of the wisdom achieved, accumulated, and transmitted for generations by the group. In this way, cultural diversity involves, by its scope, cultural identity, both in constant change and interaction as part of social reality.

This opens an inexhaustible field for human interpretation of the processes of sociocultural reality in remarkably diverse contexts, either from the dialogic paradigm of interculturality or from the relations of domination, especially marked by multiculturalism. The study of both processes allows us to establish keys to safeguard cultural diversity as a human specificity, to value the dynamics of cultural identity and to disarticulate the anthropocentric myth of the "universal".

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