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Environmental History: Global Histories of Nature and Culture

Sandro Dutra e Silva ^I

Pedro Roberto Jacobi ^{II}

Rylanneive Leonardo Pontes Teixeira ^{III}

Zenaida Lauda-Rodriguez ^{IV}

Lira Luz Benites Lazaro ^V

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Editorial

^I State University of Goiás,
Evangelic University of Goiás,
Brazil

^{II} University of São Paulo, São
Paulo, Brazil

^{III} Federal University of Rio
Grande do Norte, Brazil

^{IV} University of São Paulo, São
Paulo, Brazil

^V University of São Paulo, São
Paulo, Brazil

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The British sociologist Anthony Giddens has warned us of the historical condition in which contemporary society has experienced what he defines as modernity, characterized by a proliferation of constant risks and threats. His conception is not intended to evoke an apocalyptic scenario of chaos or collective despair; on the contrary, it reflects the challenges and risks inherent in modernity (Giddens, 1991). In contrast to more optimistic sociological approaches that predicted that the advance of modernity would lead to a more just, egalitarian society or the consolidation of new solidarity based on diversity, Giddens alerts us to threats and risks often unforeseen by classical sociological thought.

For this reason, Giddens's reflections on "ultramodernity" constitute an urgent call to historical attention, highlighting phenomena that may escape the theoretical radar and the most utopian predictions. He warns us of the possibility of the emergence of totalitarianism and movements of resistance to scientific knowledge, thus illustrating the importance of paying attention to unforeseen threats. Giddens takes on the role of a prophetic voice in the environmental realm, drawing attention to the dangers associated with global warming, climate change, and the unprecedented destruction of ecosystems. The alarming increase in fires that have ravaged various ecological formations around the world, the threats to traditional communities and peoples regarding their ancestral rights, and other globally recurring socio-environmental phenomena are addressed by Giddens. This subject crosses the boundaries of various fields of knowledge. It requires a deep understanding of the historical processes involved and a careful analysis of the risks that persist and recur throughout history.

Often, historical paths lead us to romantic views about progress and its promises. However, as Giddens warns us, disillusionment with 'progress' is also one factor underpinning the dissolution of historical 'narratives' (Giddens, 1991). In this sense, the historical perspective, especially environmental history, can be a fruitful tool of knowledge and assist in critical development regarding the consequences of modernity, breaking away from certain limitations prevalent in development-oriented perspectives, for example, that have prevailed in the relationship between the environment and society in the Latin American context.

When considering the historical approach to ultramodernity, we must maintain sight of the conceptions developed by Western thought in constructing an instrumental concept of nature based on the rupture between the natural and social worlds. The rupture between the environment and society led to another epistemological rupture, in which nature came to be considered a knowledge exclusive to the natural sciences. Although this theme has been overcome, the symbolic struggle persists among fields of knowledge that claim to be holders of environmental knowledge. In this defense, voices like Anthony Giddens unite in epistemological criticism and in advocating the inseparability between social and environmental issues (Giddens, 1998). This is justified by thinking about nature from choices, actions, and social practices that impact historical processes of environmental changes. Among these voices, we highlight the critical contribution of Enrique Leff to environmental rationality (Leff, 2001). Enrique Leff advocates for expanding the boundaries of knowledge when considering epistemology and environmental rational-

ity. Environmental thought in Leff is inclusive and democratic, proposing, for example, the inclusion of other non-scientific forms of knowledge. Environmental knowledge as wandering knowledge, free from the traps of progress and other dominant externalities. These externalities can be economic, social, and political and represent the scientific-technological monopoly of knowledge, often exclusive and limiting (Leff, 2001).

Considering the importance of the teachings of Leff, which guide us towards an ecology of life, relationships, engagement, and hope, this editorial would also like to pay special tribute to a great Brazilian thinker and activist who advocated for nature, ancestralities, territories, and territorialities, and who left us on September 7, 2023. Carlos Walter Porto-Gonçalves was one of the most influential geographers of his generation, dedicated to socio-environmental issues in Brazil and Latin America. In academia, he was responsible for training master's and doctoral students engaged in defending territories and knowledge beyond academic boundaries. He sought to connect with environmental movements, notably for his support of Chico Mendes and movements defending rural and urban communities and forests. Therefore, this edition is also a tribute to Carlos Walter Porto-Gonçalves, acknowledging and drawing inspiration from his contribution to constructing a plural and engaged environmental knowledge. Considering the expansion and dialogue between the fields of environmental epistemology and the qualified interface with different areas of knowledge, the editors of *Ambiente & Sociedade* present this new edition, featuring essential and rich articles in the interdisciplinary debate involving environmental humanities.

Therefore, with this issue, we hope to contribute to a wider debate on environment and society, full of challenges, opportunities and hopes, and we close Volume 26 of *Ambiente & Sociedade Journal*.

In the article “**Environmental Assessment of Pesticide Use in the Brazilian Cerrado Region,**” the authors, Marina Teodoro, Vitor S. Duarte, Mariana R. M. Costa, Ryan Nehring, Sandro Dutra e Silva, Giovanni A. Boggione & Hamilton B. Napolitano, aim to link the expansion of agricultural frontiers in the Cerrado with the unprecedented use of pesticides, focusing on glyphosate and atrazine. This interdisciplinary research, involving different research groups, proposes to map the estimated average pesticide consumption per growing season and the risks of glyphosate and atrazine contamination in Goiás. The arguments presented in this article encourage reflection on the challenges and threats to sustainable food production in the Brazilian Cerrado.

Leonardo Marques Pacheco & Carlos Valério Aguiar Gomes in their article “**The Trajectory of the Social Movement of Forest Extractivism: Changes in Struggles and Political Strategies, Demands, and Achievements in the Brazilian Amazon,**” analyze the central role of social movements that emerged in the 1980s in Latin America. The researchers examine historical transformations related to extractivist populations' achievements, strategies, and demands, focusing on the Brazilian Amazon. The main argument is that the movement remains strong in the region but engages in symbolic struggles regarding its goals and purposes.

Beyond articles related to environmental history, this edition of *Ambiente &*

Sociedade features other interdisciplinary articles on issues related to the relationship between the environment and society. In the article **“Conviviality and Sustainability: Case Studies on Natural Resource Governance in Brazil,”** Tiago Juliano, Caroline Malagutti Fassina, Cristina Isis Buck Silva, Francisco Alcicley Vasconcelos Andrade & Edson Pereira de Souza Leão Neto comparatively explore the possibilities and limitations of conviviality in the regimes of meliponines’ honey production and managed pirarucu fishery (*Arapaima* spp.) in the Amazon region, and juçara palm heart extractivism (*Euterpe edulis*) in portions of the Atlantic Forest. The article concludes that reclaiming communal sense as a principle of political action can contribute to broader horizons for the sustainability of governance regimes for these natural resources.

The authors Aline Costa Gonzalez, Irene Carniatto & Vilmar Alves Pereira, in their article **“Impacts of Socio-Environmental Disasters in Western Paraná between 2010 and 2020,”** analyze socio-environmental disasters and their impacts on three municipalities in Western Paraná (PR), using document analysis and other secondary data. The results of this article show that windstorms, floods, and hailstorms are the most frequent disasters in the studied region. According to the authors, this scenario reinforces the need for risk and disaster management actions, supporting municipalities’ adaptation to climate change and reducing risks and disasters.

In the article **“The Production of the Human in Classical Oceanography: A Critique from Socio-Environmental Oceanography,”** authors Gustavo Goulart Moreira Moura & Antônio Carlos Sant’Ana Diegues discuss the production of artisanal fishermen through the analysis of a group of professionals who mobilized knowledge and truths to create fishing legislation in the estuary of Lagoa dos Patos, Rio Grande do Sul (RS). Following the perspective of Socio-Environmental Oceanography, the researchers identify a discursive formation structured by classic paradigmatic axes of oceanography, promoting the stereotyping of artisanal fishermen and the creation of fishing public policies.

Through an evaluation of the hybrid life cycle, using the Household Budget Survey (POF) from 2008 to 2018, Celso da Silveira Cachola & Sérgio Almeida Pacca, in the article **“Carbon Emissions from Brazilian Families through POF and Input-Output Matrix,”** analyze the carbon footprint of Brazilian families. The authors’ results indicate that the poorest Brazilian families were responsible for almost 12% of total carbon emissions in 2018, while the richest accounted for about 8% of these emissions (although representing almost 2.5% of the total Brazilian families in 2018).

The authors Giulia de Paula Silveira & Elisa Hardt developed the article **“Impact of REDD+ Certification on Deforestation Rates in the Rio Preto-Jacundá RESEX in the Amazon,”** aiming to assess the impact of a REDD+ Project for forest conservation in the Rio Preto-Jacundá RESEX in the state of Rondônia (RO). Through a comparative quantitative analysis between two temporal periods (2004-2012 and 2012-2020), the article’s results indicate that, after 2015, there is a higher trend of deforestation within the RESEX compared to the state of RO. Between 2016 and 2019, all deforestation events occurred within the boundaries of the REDD+ Project.

Based on the application of an indicator matrix, Anna Carolina Espósito Sanchez

& Valéria Ghislotti Iared, in their article **“Environmental Education in the Public School Network of Western Paraná,”** analyze the incorporation of environmental education in state schools located in the Toledo Regional Nucleus, PR. The authors observed that, in terms of results, the 59 participating schools report the existence of environmental education actions. However, they highlight that financial and human resources for the area and the schools’ connection with surrounding communities appear to be quite fragile. The article provides an overview of schools’ perception and action in environmental education, though further comprehensive studies are needed.

Authors Mateus Matos Ferreira, Victor Hugo Oliveira Henrique, Anézia Maria Fonsêca Barbosa, Deise Maria Furtado de Mendonça, e Marcos Vinicius Meiado, in the article **“Public Policies for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Itabaiana, Sergipe,”** highlight the current crisis and the need for initiatives to mitigate environmental problems by promoting the integration of actions among various social actors. The research focuses on implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Agenda 2030 in Itabaiana, analyzing public policies published from January 2016 to December 2020. The results reveal the interdisciplinary nature of Agenda 2030, with 38.64% of the 147 actions involving more than three SDGs. The conclusion is that Agenda 2030 can provide a valuable diagnosis to guide the integration and territorialization of SDGs at the municipal level.

In the article **“Discourses on Sustainable Forest Management in the Caatinga Domain,”** authors Marcelo Silva de Lucena, Maria José Brito Zakia, and Natalia Guerin address sustainable forest management (SFM) in the Caatinga, utilizing discourse theory to characterize ideas and narratives. They identify three main discourses: bioenergy-focused SFM, emphasizing biomass production for energy and forest conservation; silvopastoral SFM, aiming to improve forage availability; and non-timber SFM, valuing traditional knowledge to manage biodiversity and strengthen strategies in the semi-arid region. The presence of these discourses, with varied sustainable practices, opens opportunities for political changes and institutional innovations.

Addressing the water supply crisis in the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo, Douglas de Albuquerque Leite and Marko Synésio Alves Monteiro, in the article **“Management of Water Discourses: Communication of the Water Supply Crisis in the RMSP (2014-2015),”** explore crisis narratives, focusing on the monopoly of information and mobilization of scientific expertise by the Basic Sanitation Company of the State of São Paulo and the State Government. The analysis of 63 documents reveals a discourse that shapes the interpretation of the crisis, downplays the responsibility of public actors, and reinforces a specific model of water network expansion.

In the article **“Community Gardens in Teresina: Connected Lives in Urban Environments,”** authors Tiago Luís da Silva Soares and Jane Márcia Mazzarino highlight the importance of considering urban gardens as an alternative for socio-environmental development in large cities, focusing on the influences of these activities on people’s lives in Teresina/Piauí. The exploratory and qualitative research, employing bibliographic, documentary, and field methods, includes in-depth interviews with 12 gardeners. The

results emphasize the role of gardens in promoting social bonds, increasing income, and fostering entrepreneurship, and underscore the need for greater access to equipment, basic infrastructure (such as water and bathrooms), and training to optimize these initiatives.

Closing this twenty-seventh volume, authors Walef Pena Guedes, Bruna Angela Branchi, and Denise Helena Lombardo Ferreira present an analysis titled **“A Bridge between Colonialism and Environmentalism.”** In it, they discuss the impactful book **“A Decolonial Ecology: Thinking from the Caribbean World”** by Dr. Malcom Ferdinand, filling a notable gap in the literature on colonialism and ecology, providing a provocative and bold approach. The author skillfully explores the nuances of ethnic-racial, gender, and vulnerability relationships, encouraging readers to understand the vital interconnections between gender, race, and class in pursuing justice. The book offers a compendium of information strengthening the understanding of environmental injustice and social inequality associated with a colonial ecology perspective and consolidates a multidimensional coalition of interests.

Therefore we close Volume 26 of *Ambiente & Sociedade Journal*. We thank all our editorial staff, referees, authors and our readers for their constant support of our work and we renew our commitment, for the following year, to continue promoting and disseminating the development of science, especially in Brazil, with quality and competence.

We wish you all a good read!

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Sandro Dutra e Silva

✉ sandrodutr@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0001-5726>

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Pedro Roberto Jacobi

✉ prjacobi@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6143-3019>

Rylanneive Leonardo Pontes Teixeira

✉ pontesrylanneive@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8635-3234>

Zenaida Luisa Lauda-Rodriguez

✉ zeni.lauda.rodriguez@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2432-0255>

Lira Luz Benites Lazaro

✉ lbenites@usp.br

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6587-1497>