

# Ecology of Culture in the Space of Social and Humanitarian Knowledge

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**Abstract—The article investigates, on the foundation of eco-philosophical approach, the concept of ecology, in general, and the perspectives of its implementation in the sphere of culture researches; it analyzes the main approaches in ecological methodology. The authors conclude the ecological aspects of culture in the context of social and humanitarian knowledge; also they conclude the possibility to make the model of ecology of culture on the foundation of eco-philosophy.**

**Keywords—a human being; ecology; ecological culture; the principle of wholeness; eco-philosophy; ecosystem**

## I. INTRODUCTION

The ecology of communications, the environmental ecology, the cultural ecology, and the other fields of ecology are all a phenomenon of modernity that reveals the inner being insufficiency of any process or event perceived through the prism of the information environment. The latter has a number of significant limitations and there is the “flat” space of information flows and messages among them that does not contain the dimensions of spirituality, therefore it is not capable of expressing the transcendental as a supersensible reality which is “behind” things and instrumentally perceived situations and which is always present in organic models of society.

Knowledge of the meaning and content of the term “ecology” in this context is a condition for the recovery of those extensional semantic frames or coordinates in which communications, the external environment, and culture itself objectively exist. But is such a recovery itself objective and does not turn into a purely subjective position of specific people capable of perceiving the phenomena of reality in their integrity? After all the majority of a mass society is quite satisfied with the inferiority of the main phenomena of the social system and does not have the need for a “deep look”? The answer to this question requires clarifying the status of the “coordinates” themselves - that model of the world, essentially eco-philosophical, in which this integrity is revealed [1].

## II. THE BEING OF CULTURE IN SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN KNOWLEDGE

Primarily, the principle of wholeness requires the consideration of any phenomenon within the continuum - not only of an interaction of space and time, but also of the “layers” of being that appear here as the basis for the existence of this phenomenon (or object). Nicolai Hartmann in his “Ontology” convincingly revealed not only the existence of these layers themselves, but also the nature of the connections between them. Precisely the continuum is that form of the object existence, in which all the ontological multitude inherent in it is revealed. Moreover, the continuum differs these layers, i.e. the spiritually transcendent is revealed as something that exists independently, and therefore it is able to be objectified in material forms. From which positions of the continuum can one solve the problem of the existence of culture?

That requires the settlement of two issues: on the one hand, the continuum has to be compatible with its cultural core; on the other - there should exist an area or a certain sphere aimed to self-realization of this core in the continuum. Although the culture indeed has always a certain form of self-awareness, but here the content of this continuum is located at the very cultural core, and does not correlate with the continuum environment as the origin, or emanation.

The authors consider humanities knowledge to be such a sphere. The main feature of that knowledge is the "biased" attitude to the being. Knowledge gains humanitarian potential not only when it simply describes the being and reveals its characteristics as eternal, constant and immutable laws of the being. It happens when it forms and appears an estimative attitude to the existence of an object that considers the fragility and uniqueness of being, and when it becomes clear that somethings can damage and be harmful to the being itself, to the whole life. Not only an idea of human reality can have such a potential, but also the knowledge of natural phenomena, for instance, environmental sciences.

Therefore, humanities are the knowledge that takes into account the possibility of its transformations, including mutual transitions of being and non-being. [2].

### III. ECOLOGICAL CULTURE AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

Revealing the features of material and spiritual human activity, we would like to emphasize that humanities knowledge is inherently axiological and value-oriented. It contains information about the object and the subject of cognition, expressing either its relation to the cognizable object, or fixating its own being-position. The axiological moment is included into humanities knowledge by understanding. Knowledge-understanding arises when the subject has prepared himself for its appearance. Understanding comes up from the life situation the subject belongs to and by which he is loaded. But it means that in the continuum that is necessary for considering the peculiarities of culture and ecoculture, the understanding itself is a special "being" layer, in the space of which the object-material and the semantic environment take place and express the sphere of the transcendent functions.

What is the ecological culture, which is considered on the basis of the methodological principle of wholeness, that tends to restore the fullness of its own being? Ecological culture, from the viewpoint of I.I. Mazur, is not the further aspect of culture, but the new quality of culture, "reflection of the whole world on the basis of its practical, intellectual and spiritual comprehension" [3, p. 4]. E.V. Girusov considers ecological culture as "the highest form of humanism, acting as the basis for the formation of a universal moral paradigm and incorporating practical and spiritual experience in ensuring the survival and social progress of the individual and society". [4]. Eleonora V. Barkova emphasizes that "eco-culture is a moral and humanistic norm of interaction and communication of a human and the environment, that integrates value-based interrelations between a human and the world, which form the human ecological" [5. p. 39].

All these characteristics of eco-culture, developed by philosophy and socio-humanitarian knowledge, encompass its internal meanings and values, allowing to implement its ecologization. However, today there is no common and unified approach to understanding this process.

The approach that was formed in the nineteenth century (Haeckel et al.) considers ecology as the ratio of organisms to the environment, which does not require any other mediation. The impact of this approach remains the same today. Thus, A.A. Nikolsky emphasizes the need to preserve this approach, "despite the desire of neo-ecologists to give this remarkable science "modern" interpretation, such as "interdisciplinary", "complex", "endoecology", etc." [6. C. 39].

The most authoritative in modern ecology is the ecosystem approach [7], which considers nature as a whole, consisting of a set of living systems, each of which is a complex of biological and physical elements, including man; and studies the processes occurring both in the systems

themselves and in the process of their exchange among themselves.

The founder of "deep ecology", one of the well-known representatives of the ecosystem approach, the Norwegian philosopher A. Naess, makes an essential distinction between the shallow and deep ecological movement, distinguishes the following features of the "deep ecological" approach: a) denial of the generally accepted image of man, which is the element in the environment, and appeal to the image of a single whole, which is the result of a complex relationships in which living organisms are bundles of the biosphere network; b) the concept of "biosphere equality" as a principle of respect for any natural object and recognition its right to life, c) an understanding of the man's dependence on the world around him; d) the rejection of the role of "master of nature", the adoption of which ultimately leads to alienation of man from himself; e) adoption of the principles of natural diversity; f) consideration of the world as a set of ecosystems in which a multitude of interacting factors forms the integral unity of the world, therefore, all activities aimed at protecting the environment must take into account a variety of immediate and remote consequences both in the ecosystem as a whole and in the social system, in particular. [8]

At present, there is a tendency to define the uniqueness of man as an element of the ecosystem within the framework of the so-called human ecology, but in this interdisciplinary approach, the main accents are placed not so much on the social as on the biological nature of man: "Human ecology can be defined: (1) from the bio-ecological point of view, as the study of man as an ecological dominant in the communities and systems of animals and plants; (2) again from the bio-ecological point of view, as the behavior of another animal that influences the physical environment and is affected by it, and (3) as being of a person, in a certain way generally different from the life of animals, a person who interacts with Physical environment, including man-made, unique and creative way" [9. p.3]

Both approaches simplify the composition of the continuum, and this is an obstacle to investigate the process of ecologicalization of culture on the basis of social and humanitarian cognition adequately, because the virtual and spiritual and also semantic layers of this culture are removed from consideration.

The third approach in the investigation of ecological problems is represented in eco-philosophical methodology, which was developed in the works of I.K. Liseev and his followers. They consider ecophilosophy as philosophy of nature, including the study of ontological prerequisites, cognitive, epistemological principles and approaches, the values and activity orientations of man in his new relationship with nature. Therefore, ecophilosophy is a new understanding of nature and the principles of interaction with it [10]. The latter approach is the most promising in terms of the forming conditions for the successful eco-culture development in the sphere of social and humanitarian knowledge.

#### IV. THE PECULIARITIES OF ECO-PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Nowadays eco-philosophy as a type of the worldview and methodology is based on approaches which research problems in the systems “organism-environment” and “nature-society”. Also, it covers a wider space of human connections with all natural and artificial forms of life, including cosmic and microcosmic. This space includes, in accordance with the forms of being, the ecology of man, culture, society, nature and the cosmos. However, in all its components, the focus is on protecting, preserving and improving the life, the Earth and the prospects of the human world.

Therefore, the evolution of the goals formulated by human ecology is not surprising - from providing the society with relevant information that contributes to optimizing the human's living environment and the processes taking place in the person himself as a biological and simultaneously social being, human society and the environment of man and society, to broader formulations and more complex tasks. Logic guides researchers to master the subject, covering anthropo-ecosystems of various levels, from global to local and microlocal. In this universal life-affirming sense, it becomes, first of all, the value of modern culture.

Affirming the priority of life in solving any political, legal and economic problems and exploring the category of “life” in the variety of its manifestations that are not reducible to its biological basis, eco-philosophy considers it in the connections of general, special and individual. Life here is a self-valuable holistic form of being; its value is determined by itself. The assertion about the organic, and not utilitarian, connection of man with nature as the source of life and the value of modern culture follows from this statement.

Eco-philosophy as a worldview, focuses attention on the inseparability of man's connection with nature, because man himself is a part of it. In this regard, it is revealed that ecological culture as a type of nature development is more adequate than the modern economy, or any forms of pragmatism, constructivism [11], and rational technological models [12]. For man, nature is important as the source of human spiritualized attitude to being, and as a value that preserves human essential relation to the world. Another aspect that characterizes the axiological meaning of the eco-philosophy of nature is related to its moral potential. Discovering the world of nature, boundless in its possibilities, its aesthetic, moral, healing meaning and perfection, eco-philosophy restores the health of culture and man [13].

Nevertheless, there is a certain problem. Obviously, nature as the basis of culture does not contain either a spiritual sphere, or freedom. Then, the question arises: is it possible to build a model of the ecology of culture based on eco-philosophy? If we imagine that this philosophy is based on the principle of wholeness, including the interaction of nature and society, then the subject of our research is moved into the interaction space of these spheres, in which all the “layers” of the given continuum are unfolded. There is a problem of revealing the potential of these “layers”, i.e.

discovering what is absent in the diagnosis of culture and ecoculture from the integrity point of view. Thus, the dialectical interaction between the social and humanitarian sciences and the continuum raises. This interaction is necessary for solving the ecoculture problem, each side reveals its opposite and as a result, a necessary solution arises.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

The ecology of culture is only beginning to open its potential, but it can be confidently asserted that in the future its relevance as a research direction will significantly increase, taking into account the trends and perspectives of the modern world [14].

Ecology of culture is based on the principles of eco-philosophy, which is becoming the leading scientific paradigm of future designing. Developing the ideas of cosmism philosophy and especially the concept of the noosphere of V.I. Vernadsky, eco-philosophy as a design methodology revives, on the one hand, the status of classical science and the status of truth, and on the other, develops ideas of the mankind subject status, focusing on humanistic coordinates of nature and culture existence in the space of social and humanitarian knowledge.

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