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THE RESISTANCE OF WOMEN'S SOCIOENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A RESISTÊNCIA DOS MOVIMENTOS SOCIO-AMBIENTAIS FEMININOS COMO ALTERNATIVA DE SUSTENTABILIDADE

LA RESISTENCIA DE LOS MOVIMIENTOS SOCIOAMBIENTALES FEMENINOS COMO ALTERNATIVA DE SOSTENIBILIDAD

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ABSTRACT
The article analyzes how the neoliberal and consumption-focused capitalist system influences power relations and dynamics, such as gender oppression. The objective is based on understanding to what extent the socioenvironmental movements of women, such as the Permaculture Women's Work and the Movement of Peasant Women, realize human rights through a proposal of sustainable consumption and at the same time update the very notion of sustainable development, with a greater focus on gender. In this sense, we sought to identify concepts about intersectional feminism, which provides a broad viewpoint in relation to multiple discriminations, and the main challenges faced by women in the specific field of rural workers, climate change, and alternative modes of sustainability. It is possible to perceive that, even though they are a vulnerable group, through a dialogic perception of the theme, it is possible that a feminism with a view to intersectionality can present creative answers to urgent and current problems.
KEYWORDS: Ecofeminism. sustainable development. socioenvironmental movements. intersectionality.

RESUMO
O artigo analisa como o sistema capitalista neoliberal e focado no consumo influencia nas relações e dinâmicas de poder, como a opressão de gênero. O objetivo se fundamenta em entender em que medida os

movimentos socioambientais de mulheres, como o Trabalho Permacultura Mulher e o Movimento de Mulheres Campesinas, efetivam direitos humanos através de uma proposta de consumo sustentável e simultaneamente atualizam a própria noção de desenvolvimento sustentável, com maior enfoque de gênero. Neste sentido, buscou-se identificar conceitos acerca do feminismo interseccional, que proporciona uma ótica ampla em relação à múltiplas discriminações, e os principais desafios enfrentados pelas mulheres na seara específica de trabalhadoras rurais, mudanças climáticas e modos alternativos de sustentabilidade. É possível perceber que, por mais que sejam um grupo vulnerabilizado, por meio de uma percepção dialógica do tema, é possível que um feminismo com vistas à interseccionalidade possa apresentar respostas criativas a problemas urgentes e atuais.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ecofeminismo. desenvolvimento sustentável. movimentos socioambientais. interseccionalidade.

RESUMEN
El artículo analiza cómo el sistema capitalista neoliberal centrado en el consumo influye en las relaciones y dinámicas de poder, como la opresión de género. El objetivo se basa en comprender en qué medida los movimientos socioambientales de mujeres, como el Trabajo de Mujeres de Permacultura y el Movimiento de Mujeres Campesinas, hacen efectivos los derechos humanos a través de una propuesta de consumo sustentable y simultáneamente actualizan la noción misma de desarrollo sustentable, con un mayor enfoque de género. En este sentido, buscamos identificar conceptos sobre el feminismo interseccional, que brinda una perspectiva amplia en relación a las múltiples discriminaciones, y los principales desafíos que enfrentan las mujeres en el ámbito específico de las trabajadoras rurales, el cambio climático y los modos alternativos de sostenibilidad. Es posible percibir que, aun siendo un grupo vulnerable, a través de una percepción dialógica del tema, es posible que un feminismo con miras a la interseccionalidad pueda presentar respuestas creativas a problemas urgentes y actuales.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Ecofeminismo. desenvolvimiento sustentable. movimientos socioambientales. interseccionalidad.

1 INTRODUCTION

> Our struggles, our organizing and training processes are synthesized in Popular Peasant Feminism. We build it and enrich it every day, as we also make history, not in the conditions we want, but in the conditions we find, fighting for women's liberation. These are diverse struggles, because diverse are the peasant women in Brazil and even more so in Latin America and the Caribbean (MMC BRASIL, 2023).

The excerpt above, taken from the website of the Peasant Women's Movement, summarizes some points brought up in this article. One of them is the idea that feminisms are constructed and positioned in time and space, overcoming any idea of supposed universalism, which only masks a specific form of power dynamics. As Boaventura (2009, p.72) states, the recovery of the political is one of the most important tasks of a human rights theory that seeks to be critical. It is important that this lens also reflects on all social movements that have this quest as their ideal.

Another issue raised by the excerpt is the possibility - and, indeed, the necessity - of joint and diverse struggles. In this sense, and considering the plurality that exists in each individual in their positioned relations in the world, it is necessary for the feminist movement to have the liberation of all people as its fundamental goal (HOOKS, 2020a, p. 36).

The demands of the social-environmental feminist movements are not only based on gender issues, but also bring up equally essential questions, such as the use

of natural resources and the currently experienced ecological crisis, aggravated by a land inequality that affects the most vulnerable rural populations.

The indiscriminate use of natural resources in a way that puts human beings themselves in danger was the essential element for the beginning of the creation of spaces for struggle and construction against the destructive logic of man towards nature. Moreover, according to Rosi Braidotti *et al*, there are few countries and organizations that do not have a legal and institutional framework for the protection of the environment and the regulation of the use of natural resources in response to pressures from environmental movements, academics, professionals, etc. (1994, p. 175).

Environmental movements cannot be defined only as identical manifestations based on homogeneous and immutable principles and concepts. Diversity is one of the structuring elements of environmentalist thought and it is embodied and praised even in the differentiated agendas of each collective struggle. Obviously, the great diversity of collective actions, policies, and discourses grouped under the umbrella of environmentalism makes it practically impossible to consider it as a single movement. However, it is this diversity that characterizes environmentalism as a new form of social movement that is decentralized, multiform, network-oriented and has a high degree of penetration (CASTELLS, 1999, p. 143).

In this sense, the first chapter approaches the viewpoint of intersectional feminism to critically conceptualize consumption and sustainable development in order to relate the need for a broad emancipatory lens on women's struggle and claims in socio-environmental movements.

Subsequently, just as a supposedly universal and amoral version of feminism is questioned, the same is done with ideas of sustainable development, facing its main limitations regarding the unequal distribution of opportunities and the realization of human rights for vulnerable groups.

Finally, by bringing concrete examples of socio-environmental movements with a gender focus, such as the Pensants Women's Movement and the Permaculture Women's Work, we seek to outline a vision of sustainability that has the gender focus as an essential part of its basis, in order to think of solutions that question long-established paradigms.

The objective of the article, therefore, is based mainly on understanding to what extent women's environmental movements, such as Women's Permaculture Work and the Campesinas Women's Movement, realize human rights through a proposal of sustainable consumption and, at the same time, update the very notion of sustainable development, with a greater focus on gender and questioning neoliberal predispositions.

In this sense, we sought to identify concepts about intersectional feminism, which provides a broad viewpoint in relation to multiple discriminations, and the

main challenges faced by women in the specific field of rural workers, climate change, and alternative modes of sustainability. Thus, in a first moment, a bibliographic review is started, having as theoretical framework the studies of Nancy Fraser, David Holmgren, and Bill Molisson, to talk about a feminism that seeks the recognition of its diversity, besides the articulation of permaculture with female protagonism.

Moreover, with a qualitative analysis of social movements and current issues, it seeks a critical analysis of the economic, social, and ecological crises. It is possible to perceive that, even though they are a vulnerable group, through a dialogic perception of the theme, it is possible that a feminism with a view to intersectionality can present creative answers to urgent and current problems.

2 FEMINIST VIEW ON THE PARAMETERS OF CONSUMPTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Considering the need to analyze how multiple discriminations affect women, intersectional feminism stands as a lens to achieve expanded struggles against sexism and, consequently, various other oppressions (HOOKS, 2020b, p. 80). This is because Western neoliberal and individualistic thinking pervades gender issues not only in social roles and structural discrimination, but disproportionately harms men and women in issues of deforestation, climate change, consumption practices, division of labor, development and performance possibilities of individuals, among many others.

Within a competitive and consumerist perspective inherent to capitalism, gender violence intersects with dynamics of labor organization and dynamics of capital accumulation (ARRUZA; BHATTACHARYA; FRASER, 2019, p. 62). Moreover, because it is a system that does not sustain itself, it depletes the resources on which it lives, so as to generate several crises that are not limited to the economic, but also ecological, political, and social reproduction-related, destroying ecosystems, generating food insecurity, and further burdening the duties socially conferred on women (ARRUZA; BHATTACHARYA; FRASER, 2019, p. 102-103).

For this reason, feminism cannot only be a struggle focused on a universal woman, but must be embodied in an anti-capitalist, anti-racist, anti-imperialist, ecosocialist, international movement. Thus Arruza, Bhattacharya and Fraser theorize:

> If today's ecological crisis is directly linked to capitalism, it also reproduces and aggravates the oppression of women. Women are on the front lines of the current ecological crisis, constituting 80% of climate refugees. In the global South, they constitute the vast majority of the rural labor force, while bearing responsibility for most of the work of social reproduction. Because of their central role in providing food, clothing, and shelter for the family, women represent a disproportionate share in the issue of dealing with drought, pollution, and overexploitation of the land. Similarly, in the global North, poor women from ethnic minority groups are disproportionately vulnerable.

> Subject to environmental racism, they constitute the backbone of communities subjected to flooding and lead poisoning (ARRUZA; BHATTACHARYA; FRASER, 2019, p. 58).

This specific condition is evidenced by General Recommendation No. 37 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN, 2018), which highlights situations such as gender blindness and the absence of specific policies on the subject. Thus, although programs that concern climate change can provide answers, such as sustainable urban development and clean energy, "not addressing the structural barriers faced by women in accessing their rights increases gender inequalities and intersectional forms of discrimination" (UN, 2018, p.2).

The Sustainable Development Goals contain important targets on gender equality, including those in goals 3 to 6 and 10, and on climate change and disaster risk reduction in goals 11 and 13 (UN, 2018, p. 7). Thus, gender equality should always be analyzed in conjunction with struggles relating to sustainable development and consumption. If on the one hand it helps in identifying neoliberal capitalism as an instrument that conditions bodies to scarcity and limited roles while supplying natural resources, it is essential to think about responses that involve sustainable alternatives.

Ecofeminism challenges many of these capitalist contradictions in the mode of (re)production, such as the fact that it needs to externalize its costs to women and colonies, and that "the war on women and the war on nature have gone hand in hand since the beginning of capitalism" (BOTTICI, 2021, p. 142). Many theorists might even say that there would be no such thing as "sustainable development," because the term is itself a contradiction. The notion of "development" evokes a constant growth of profits, while "sustainable" brings precisely the idea of limitation, of the establishment of possible ecological conditions for human life (BOTTICI, 2021, p. 146).

Ecofeminist thinking allows us to recognize human beings and nature as something unique, within a relationship of exchange and, more than that, dependence, and to analyze the crisis from and of capitalism. Similarly, the intersectional view allows other strands to drink from the same source and engage in dialogue, as it is the case with indigenous or vegetarian feminism, which also also the unbridled consumption of capitalism and the place it reserves for women as seriously damaging to nature, and to the realization of their most basic human rights. They also position women as protagonists in the struggle against the harmful effects that the present scenario creates.

> Ecofeminism is a worldview that recognizes that human beings are part of nature, not a separate entity from it. By the notion of interconnectedness through life, nature and women are living, autonomous beings, not passive inert objects, exploited and violated by male power. The creativity and productivity of nature and women are the foundation of all knowledge systems and all economies, despite being invisible to the eyes of capitalist patriarchy that, as a worldview, as a system of knowledge, and as a way of organizing the economy, has been formed over centuries through colonialism, fossil fuel

> industrialism, and the use of violence, greed, and the destruction of nature and cultures (SHIVA, 2020).

It is important to mention that ecofeminism is not limited to women who are directly affected by climate change or systematic deforestation, such as indigenous and peasant women. Just as feminism makes room for other struggles to be considered, these also become collective struggles, precisely because it understands that there is no liberation if it does not belong to all. From a claiming point of view, it is a return to the idea of accountability in the private and public areas, so as not to consider "necessary sacrifices" as the only possible alternative.

Wendy Brown's (2018, p. 10) notion of sacrificial citizenship is brought in to explain the emptying of the means and awareness of state responsibility for violations of human and collective rights, such as women's rights and the right to a healthy environment. With the neoliberalism lens present in the West today, the state is ministered with a corporate mentality, aiming at consumption and profit, and emptying the active and passive citizenship of those who participate in society. National growth is seen unrestrictedly as everyone's goal, with an idea of governance (BROWN, 2018, p. 10) that stifles dialogue and dissenting civil participation.

Intersectional feminism denies the idea of blind allegiance to a state – an international view is necessary – with the potential sacrifice in the name of national health or economic growth making it difficult to identify the dynamics of oppression. Fragmentation makes cohesion and vindication difficult, and it is in this area that socio-environmental movements go against neoliberal dogmas to rethink new forms of redistribution and equality. In the same vein, Vandana Shiva (2020) reinforces that it was precisely this mechanistic mentality based on reductionism, fragmentation, and separation, a mentality that facilitated the extraction and exploitation of the environment.

Considering this situation, it is possible to understand public space as a place of claiming, within the perspective of a critical theory of recognition, for the positive valuation of cultural diversity (FRASER, 2001, p. 232) existing among all women and how they experience privilege and oppression simultaneously, due to the intersectionalities that arise in practice. It is in this sense that performativity connects to precarity, in thinking about how to hear claims of historically marginalized groups, and what kind of disruption this movement exerts in the field of power (BUTLER, 2018, p. 53).

The intersectional feminist perspective seeks to broaden the gaze of oppressions, so that this unequal distribution of the power to act – or even to claim it – is recognized, in order to pen down diverse solutions. In the case of analyzing gender and the relationship with a possible sustainable development within a consumerist and capitalist perspective, it is to understand critical theory as an emancipatory lens for other

types of spatially and temporally located discriminations, as well as to rethink concepts long stagnated in a pretended absolutism, such as the very idea of development.

3 LIMITS AND PERSPECTIVES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE 2030 AGENDA

The environmental crisis brought reflection on how humanity should manage the consequences of a dictatorial and exclusive mercantile system. New forms of production allied to a so-called "ecological" economy emerged as an alternative to this system. Large companies, due to social pressures, mainly generated by premature environmental movements, began to include environmental values in their public relations agenda, and even capitalize on new and promising green markets (CASTELLS, 1999, p. 141). In this context, there was a dissemination of programs developed by international institutions and governments to address the environmental issue, such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030).

In 2001, as an indirect response to criticism from individuals and organizations regarding the unequal distribution of benefits from globalization, the UN gathered objectives aimed at reducing inequalities around the world in a document called the Millennium Declaration (Millennium Development Goals). Contaminated by a predominantly neoliberal discourse, prevailing at the time of its release, the document was heavily criticized in the 15 years of its validity, including by feminist movements (CARANT, 2016).

Incorporating part of these criticisms, in 2014 the UN released a proposal to modernize and reconfigure the Millennium Declaration for the next 15 years, based on the so-called Sustainable Development Goals. The idea was to replace the Millennium Development Goals, which took effect in 2015, to complete the tasks it was unable to accomplish (UN, 2015, p. 9). The proposal was consolidated in September 2015, during the Sustainable Development Summit held that year. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" is a intergovernmental and voluntary agreement designed to lead the way towards global development between 2016 and 2030, with the Sustainable Development Goals as its centerpiece[1].

1 The 17 Goals listed in the document are: 1) No poverty - End poverty in all its forms everywhere; 2) Zero hunger - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture; 3) Good health and well-being - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; 4) Quality education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all ; 5) Gender equality - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls ; 6) Clean water and sanitation - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; 7) Affordable and clean energy - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; 8) Decent work and economic growth - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; 9) Industry,

The SDG's commitment to human rights is expressed right from its preamble and is reiterated by several references to international human rights treaties as the basis for the goals. Although the document declares the intention to realize the human rights of all, some critics understand that the Sustainable Development Goals do not reach what is put on paper, missing the opportunity to articulate ethical responsibilities of the present moment with a truly transforming vision of how the world could be (POGGE, SENGUPTA, 2016).

On the one hand, critics are addressed to the tension between the language of human rights and the language of development goals as a means of presenting these ambitions and ethical responsibilities. According to Pogge and Sengupta (2016, p. 3), while the discourse of development goals seeks a gradual change to overcome social inequalities and environmental challenges, the discourse of human rights demands an urgent and priority resolution to these issues, especially when they represent violations of rights. In addition, even using the language of goals, there is no clear definition of the steps and the division of labor to achieve them, which goes against the very concept of a "goal".

Some additional criticisms are formulated by the authors. According to them, despite the official defense of the indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, the Sustainable Development Goals address only a fraction of internationally recognized human rights that remain far from being effective to the poorest. More than that, the agreement does not reflect on the origins of the deficit in the realization of human rights and, therefore, fails to present structural proposals, in addition to not proposing a form of independent monitoring that allows assessing the magnitude of human rights deprivation (POGGE, SENGUPTA, 2016, p. 12). This is the case, for example, of the goal related to gender equality, which aims to end all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, without indicating a deadline or criteria for measuring the achievement of the goal (CARANT, 2016).

For the purpose of this article, above all it is important to analyze the discourses that permeate the Sustainable Development Goals, which allows one to recognize

innovation, and infrastructure - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation; 10) Reduced inequality - Reduce income inequality within and among countries; 11) Sustainable cities and communities - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable; 12) Responsible consumption and production - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; 13) Climate action - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy; 14) Life below water - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; 15) Life on land - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss; 16) Peace, justice and strong institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; and 17) Partnerships to meet the goals - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

limits not only in the document formulated by the UN but also in the very notion of sustainable development. As for the goals specifically, Jane Briant Carant (2016) evaluates the impact of economic paradigms such as Keynesianism and neoliberalism[2] on the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the incorporation of criticisms made by liberal feminism[3] and the World Social Forum to this last document.

Object of several criticisms, the Millennium Declaration was permeated by a markedly neoliberal discourse. Its first goal, aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger, was based on the Rome Declaration on food security, for which a market oriented trade system would reduce prices and benefit the most impoverished, leading to the achievement of food security. In this sense, the document was based on a neoliberal perspective according to which the increase in food imports and exports could protect vulnerable areas from hunger even during disasters and climate fluctuations. At the same time, there was an incentive to modernize local production methods, replicating procedures in so-called developed countries to the detriment of possible environmental and social costs (CARANT, 2016).

The logic according to which the expansion of the food market stimulates economic growth and promotes food security reproduces the idea that neoliberal free market economies would be the solution for developing countries. As pointed out by the World Social Forum's criticisms of the document, the premise that neoliberal policies are the most efficient means for reducing inequality prevents the implementation of public policies necessary for sustainable development. The reduction of tariff barriers defended by this logic increases the influx of products from foreign trade and, consequently, reduces local agricultural profits, especially affecting women due their predominance in agriculture. The problem is further aggravated by the forced removal of agricultural subsidies as a condition for acquiring credit from international banks (CARANT, 2016).

In addition, from a neoliberal perspective, the traditional values of developing countries are considered an obstacle to the adoption of technological advances that increment consumer economies and, therefore, are required to adapt to the methods of developed countries. Not by chance, the Millennium Declaration defined develo-

2 The markers of neoliberal discourse to Carant (2016) are the following: emphasis on economic deregulation, support to privatizations, free market and reduction of the State role, investments to create a strong private sector, valuing individual initiative, promoting global capital flows and supporting technologies that further the financialization of global commodities.

3 In the author's definition, liberal feminists argue that the economy should be concerned with measures of distribution and sustainability, in addition to issues such as education and health. Economic goals must be linked to these achievements and to the development of human capital through social welfare programs. The markers of this discourse highlight characteristics of social life marginalized by androcentric models, with a direct or indirect impact on the economy (CARANT, 2016).

pment in terms of GDP growth, leaving in the background a non-economist notion of development centered on the realization of human rights. It is a narrow view of development, which favors economic growth over sustainability and ignores different voices and experiences (CARANT, 2016).

While the neoliberal discourse was predominant in the Millennium Development Goals, this economic thought has its influence reduced in the Sustainable Development Goals. The Agenda 2030 thus bring together the four types of discourses identified by Carant (2016), in addition to a new one: sustainability. Based on the UN's historical conception of sustainable development, this discourse is marked by terms that emphasize the advancement of green technologies, such as the use of renewable energy, environmental restrictions against water and soil degradation, and responsible economic practices.

The document also incorporated demands from liberal feminist criticism, which pointed to the segmentation and lack of interconnection between the goals foreseen by the Millennium Declaration, stating that a focus on women would promote the necessary interweaving between the goals. Furthermore, according to the liberal feminists, by referring broadly to the concept of equality, the Millennium Development Goals left aside specific gender issues such as reproductive health. Some of these criticisms are resolved in the 2030 Agenda. Target 4 of goal 1, for example, considers the difference in opportunities between men and women as a wage inequality factor, seeking that men and women have equal rights to economic resources, basic services, resources natural resources, forms of property and financial services.

Carant (2016), however, points out that the liberal feminism critics and demands about the documents do not require profound institutional changes to adapt to the dominant hegemonic models, which explains their easy incorporation into the Sustainable Development Goals. On the other hand, discourses that are concerned with a decision-making process that is not imposed by economic, patriarchal and political interests and that, therefore, demand structural and long-term changes still have little influence over the agreement. The criticism that neoliberal policies deepen poverty, for example, remains unanswered, which helps to keep women farmers subject to changes in global prices and reduced profits.

The document also preserves the fundamental contradiction between economic growth and limited resources. For Craig and Ruhl (2019), goals related to development receive more effort and attention than goals related to protecting the environment. The goal of sustainable economic growth, for example, must generate an increase in production and consumption beyond current levels, which already imply an overexploitation of the Earth's capacity.

As for the goal of sustainable consumption, despite containing targets aimed at creating government consumer information programs (an apparently Keynesian discourse), it maintains the focus on individual consumption patterns, suggesting a neoliberal bias. It is one of the indicators that the implementation of a Keynesian discourse in the Sustainable Development Goals would only be a disguise for a neoliberal agenda (CARANT, 2016).

The discourse reflected in the Millennium Declaration and the 2030 Agenda signals a deeper problem, related to the very concept of sustainable development and the predominance given to economic development over sustainability. For some, the notion of sustainable development functions as a symbolic currency for exploitation. In this sense, Enrique Leff understands that it is necessary to demystify the idea of sustainable development as a tool for protecting the environment. For him there is a subversive idea impregnated in the union between economic growth and the environment. More importantly, the discourse of sustainable development embodied in the economic premise does not reach those who really matter, that is, the most vulnerable and the environment:

> The sustained development discourse promotes economic growth by denying the ecological and thermodynamic conditions that establish the limits and possibilities of a sustainable economy. Nature is being incorporated into capital through a double operation: on the one hand, an attempt is made to internalize the environmental costs of progress by attributing economic values to nature; at the same time, a symbolic operation is instrumentalized, a calculation of meaning that recodes man, culture and nature as apparent forms of the same essence: capital. Thus, the ecological and symbolic processes are reconverted into natural, human and cultural capital, to be assimilated by the process of reproduction and expansion of the economic order, restructuring the conditions of production through an economically rational management of the environment (LEFF, 2006, p. 139-140).

In the same sense, some defend the creation of an alternative order to sustainability, understanding that sustainable development is a means of guaranteeing economic growth in the context of a crisis of capitalist expansion or a way of updating and strengthening transnational capitalism (TOZONI-REIS, 2008; SAMPAIO, 2012; ÁVILA, RIBEIRO, HENNING, 2016).

The concept of sustainability, still, is object of dispute and may acquire new content. For a more democratic and sustainable conceptualization of the notion of sustainability, the gender debate is particularly relevant. Notions of sustainability focused in economic growth often support and contribute to perpetuating gender inequality and the predatory exploitation of the environment (LEACH, MEHTA, PRABHAKARANP, 2016, 9). Thus, on the one hand, one must be wary of sustainability programs that make reference to gender issues, but legitimize the asymmetrical roles and relationships of men and women. This is what happens, for example, when women are designated as saviors of the environment, reinforcing their unpaid reproductive

functions. At the same time, it is necessary to recognize the agency of women in shaping alternative paths to sustainability, as they are often at the forefront of environmental movements.

> This is why it is important, always, to attend to the politics of sustainability – asking 'sustainability of what, for whom', and to avoid trade-offs in which economic or environmental sustainability is secured at the expense of gender equality and women's rights and capabilities. Sustainable development, as we define it, must include gender equality as integral; the challenge is to identify and support alternative sustainable development pathways that promote gender equality and women's rights, voice and bodily integrity (LEACH, MEHTA, PRABHAKARANP, 2016, p. 14-15).

In this approach, the notion of sustainable development distances itself from the neoliberal discourse and "ecological modernization"[4] (ACSERALD, 2002) present in international agreements and approaches a vision concerned with guaranteeing human well-being, ecological protection, gender equality and environmental justice (LEACH, MEHTA, PRABHAKARANP, 2016, p. 14). This vision demands that development be for everyone, guaranteeing human rights along with the respect for the environment.

The socio-environmental movements prove to be important spaces for building a connected form of development. It is necessary to understand the possible alternatives to thinking about sustainability as something interconnected with issues of gender, consumption and production.

4 FROM PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION: THE GENDER FOCUS AS A CONDITION FOR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Socio-environmental movements are forms of collective organization based on principles of sustainability and conservation of natural resources that understand that the demography of poverty is closely connected with the environmental context. (BRAGA; PIOVESAN, 2016). That is, there is no environmental conservation and sustainable use without broad observation of people's social and economic conditions.

In this context, movements that produce other matrices of social construction show themselves as potential alternatives to thinking about the relationship between humanity and nature, especially connected with people's empowerment and to Fabio R. Braga e Flavia C. Piovesan "Consuming is more than eating, dressing, or using. It means reflecting daily on what it means to live in a dignified and sustainable way" (BRAGA, PIOVESAN, 2016, p. 309). In the following chapter, the contributions and in-

4 According to Acserald (2002), "ecological modernization" is linked to the dominant economistic paradigm and attributes to the market the institutional capacity to resolve environmental degradation, subordinating the environment to the economy and opening markets for new so-called clean technologies. According to this logic, the environmental issue can be internalized by the very instances of capital in order to absorb and neutralize the transformative potentialities of ecology.

terconnections between gender, sustainability and consumption will be analyzed based on two socio-environmental movements – the Permaculture Women's Work (*Trabalho Permacultura Mulher in portuguese* - TPM) and the Peasant Women's Movement (*Movimento das Mulheres Campesinas in portuguese* - MMC).

The TPM is an international socioenvironmental movement of women involved in projects related to sustainable development that emerges as a proposal that goes beyond sustainable consumption. A democratic and pedagogical space in order to allow ecological training both for the people themselves who make the movement, and for society that is invited to contribute and disseminate the principles of permaculture in a holistic perspective. A new reality, a new alternative that materializes in the daily lives of women engaged in promoting environmental sustainability.

The form of organization of the movement takes place through the articulation between the principles of permaculture and women protagonism. Permaculture is a system elaborated from ethical principles and theories that can contribute to the elaboration, coordination and improvement of individual attitudes, as well as of places and communities that work for a sustainable future. The system was created by David Holmgren and Bill Molisson in the mid-70s, the scene of an environmental revolution, especially in the northern region of the planet.

Fábio Albergaria de Queiroz understands that the movement inaugurated a new way of thinking about the relationship between consumption patterns and food production and how this impacted nature, possibly causing its deterioration (2005, p. 1). There are 3 essential principles of permaculture: caring for nature: caring for our natural resources; caring for people: social life in harmony in connection with nature; fair sharing: create a surplus sharing system.

From this, the gender focus emerges as a structuring element of a perspective that recognizes in women's conditions and propositions a requirement for environmental sustainability. There is no sustainability without gender equality, poverty eradication and sustainable consumption and production, as determined by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The principles serve to mark out all the stages that involve production, a new way of understanding the relationship between consumption and, for example, the reuse of waste in order to understand how the production chain is intrinsically connected with our own attitudes as consumers. Through the application of systemic thinking (HOLMGREN, 2013, p. 33) and design principles, such as the concept that we can all be the architect of choices and that a nudge can present itself as an important guidance tool, it is possible to build a foundation for the application of the permaculture ideal.

A practical alternative is the consolidation of a less predatory relationship, perhaps harmonious with the environment, but which is not restricted to mere building principles, use of "clean" energy and organic farming techniques. It is an ideological movement built by and for the community. David Holmgren understands that:

> In this more limited but important sense, permaculture is not the landscape itself, nor is it organic farming skills, sustainable agriculture, energy efficient buildings or ecovillage development. But it can be used to plan, establish, manage and improve these and all other efforts undertaken by individuals, families and communities towards a sustainable future (HOLMGREN, 2013, p. 33).

The gender finds in permaculture a fertile ground to provoke reflections on how relationships with nature were built in a predatory and disconnected way. This does not mean that we think that caring for nature is better, or should be, attributed to women, but that women socioenvironmental movements articulations promote sustainability and drive reflection on how patriarchal ideals interfere in the relationship between humanity, sustainable development – and gender. If not for the women that salvation will come, it will be for the attitudes and reflections that their leadership provokes. It's about recognition, not divinization/romanticization. For Fábio R. Braga and Flavia C. Piovesan (2016, p. 320):

> With regard to the process of struggle around conscious, ethical and sustainable consumption, ecological-social movements are an important space for raising awareness and promoting sustainable development. Organic consumer networks that work with principles of valuing family farming and not using pesticides and genetically modified seeds (GMOs) for their production are examples of how to create new ways of seeing the relationship between the individual and the environment. Likewise, permaculture emerges as a movement that goes beyond sustainable consumption. It creates conditions for a structural change in the sterile, individualistic and segregating parameters that feed the capitalist system as a whole. A new reality, a new culture that connects, rather than disconnects, the organic relationships between life and the space in which it is established.

Similarly, the MMC in Brazil has as its central agenda the questioning of the relationship between women, the countryside and the environment. The movement promotes the organization of women in the city of Itá, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil, and seeks to encourage the planting of peasant seeds-- or criollo varieties in the region. From the female leadership it is established that the production and use of natural resources must respect sustainable agroecological practices (ADÃO; STROPASOLAS, 2011, p. 185). In addition, the debate on the form of production must consider political issues such as distribution and the possibility of women leading in production and cultivation spaces.

The model of food practices based on the concept of food sovereignty (MOVIMENTO DOS PEQUENOS AGRICULTORES, 2017) promotes sustainable agriculture and links production to the culture and way of life of the people. In the search for an alternative to the capitalist system of production that imposes a dependency based on the

principle of profit for profit, these women guarantee the subsistence of the community to which they are a part, and, consequently, the right to a balanced environment.

The organization of the MMC takes place from meetings and workshops built by, and for, the peasant women of the municipality. In these meetings, their actions in private and public spaces, in the field of agriculture and in current models of food production and consumption are discussed:

> The fact is that for these women the countryside is not just a space for production, it is also life, sociability, cultural environment and work. At the same time that gender issues need to be discussed, the need for new social and environmental conditions is reaffirmed, which permeates existing cultivation practices (ADAM; STROPASOLAS, 2011, p. 185).

The female organization promoted by the MMC allowed these women to cultivate political values and ideologies that brought environmental discussions closer to the gender focus, which began to be incorporated into their daily practices, which, in turn, were re-signified. The new cultivation practices were only possible due to Agroecology, which "presents itself as an economically viable possibility for sustainable local development by meeting the needs of farmers with few resources." (ADAM; STROPASOLAS, 2011, p. 173). It was from there that the MMC was able to stimulate an agriculture based on a libertarian character. The sustainable practices produced guarantee the community free and healthy food, coming from plantations free of pesticides and GMOs.

The concept of food sovereignty, in addition to serving as an instrument of MMC resistance in relation to agribusiness and food based on it, also tries to rescue a harmonious relationship between humankind and nature, seeking technologies that combine the use of natural resources with the conservation of the environment. In the same sense, food security is an important dimension of sustainable development. The female socio-environmental movements in the countryside and forest are protagonists in the production of quality food and must have adequate spaces for dialogue with the government bodies responsible for the issue.

> One of the MMC's struggle flags is environmental conservation as a means and way of life, enabling the autonomy of families both for self-consumption and for the production of income. The belief in the possibility of a new model of agriculture is part of these women's trajectory (ADAM; STROPASOLAS, 2011, p. 187).

In this context, the MMC propose a new way of dealing with nature, based on the sustainable use of natural resources, principles related to food sovereignty and the deconstruction of patriarchal principles that lead to inequality between men and women in society. The discussion about the freedom of food production is also connected to factors and discourses that are contrary to environmental degradation, sexism, consumerism and the current production model promoted by capitalism. Food sove-

reignty is yet another instrument in the struggle for a balanced environment, as new farming practices can serve to build positive relationships between human beings and nature. Freedom in food production is an alternative to be used in favor of the environment and in the search for sustainable development. For Fabio R. Braga and Flavia Piovesan:

> for the implementation of the right to development it is crucial to identify, exchange and promote best practices, giving them a catalytic effect. The ecological-social movements demonstrated (...) reflect the incorporation of the "development human rights approach" to consumer relations. From the integral perspective of human rights captured in their interdependence and interrelationship, it is essential to intertwine issues of consumption, healthy living, appreciation of cultural identity, and, above all, the promotion of a democratic, heterogeneous, dynamic and multidimensional development (BRAGA; PIOVESAN, 2016, p. 325).

Consumption is one of the ways we express ourselves in the world, either through its causes or consequences. The gender focus is something that cannot be abdicated in the socio-environmental discussion. If sustainable development does not consider it, it is wrong. And if it is wrong, it corrupts any procedure aimed at conserving natural resources. It is necessary to fight against predatory practices that disregard the significantly different effects on women's shoulders. Faced with other oppressions, socio-environmental movements led by women see sustainability as an opportunity to build a network of collaboration and strength against patriarchal structures that accentuate these oppressions.

5 CONCLUSION

For a more democratic and sustainable conceptualization of the notion of sustainability, the gender debate is essential. The alliance between the gender approach and environmental preservation needs to emerge as a mechanism to guarantee rights designed in such a way as to understand that people are sustained and that structures are sustained. That is, without observing people's conditions and recognizing that their daily resistance is an important weapon against the destruction of the environment, it is impossible to discuss a proposal for environmental protection.

The socioenvironmental movements led by women do not serve only a momentary concern for their subsistence. They are responsible for organizing solid and significant proposals that go beyond environmental axiological limits and basic local needs. As a platform in continuous construction and resistance, women's socioenvironmental movements propose different ways of understanding how consumption and immobilized development interfere in their lives and in their relationship with the environment. They fight against the system using their own instrument of control – the consumption/production ratio.

On the other hand, criticism of the concept of sustainable development seems to be productive insofar as, as a disputed concept, it is best used by those who fight and resist against the predatory and disconnected logic. The concept of sustainable development has a lot to gain from emerging from the ***ghetto, outsiders, excluded*** and *marginalized* because for those who are better positioned in the social structures of power, the concept is designed to reinforce practices and conditions that are predatory against nature.

We do not want to suggest that sustainable development should not be thought of for everyone, not least because the very condition of human life imposes it. However, it is necessary to identify how the concept of sustainable development silences or recognizes in a limited way the potential of alternatives of socio-environmental movements that continue to be excluded from the "negotiations" table.

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