

# Sustainable Development, Globalization, Non-antagonistic Development, Philosophical Environmentalism and Endangered Democracy

## Zrównoważony rozwój, globalizacja, rozwój nieantagonistyczny, filozoficzny ekologizm i zagrożona demokracja

**Wiesław Sztumski**

*University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland*  
*ORCID: 0000-0002-6353-7206*  
*E-mail: wsztumski@yahoo.com*

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### Abstract

In this paper, one discusses the conditions favourable for sustainable development, limitations of it in the social reality and the sense of implementing it everywhere. The author points out that sustainable development has always taken place in nature thanks to the mechanisms of self-regulation and the laws of nature. However, what is new is the idea of sustainable development in the social reality. Balancing inequalities to the end, i.e. until the state of permanent equilibrium of social systems is achieved, leads to stagnation. Because the source of sustainable development is throwing off equilibrium, and stabilization kills development. He also indicates that the idea of sustainable development was not born out of ecological, but economic reasons, and still serves mainly economic, not ecological purposes. It works best in the sphere of the economy. Nevertheless, it is implemented everywhere with a better or worse result, because the world fashion for sustainable development and its mythologization has prevailed. One sees in it a panacea for all social problems. In fact, it is a tool of self-regulation in social systems that ensure the survival of them. There is a feedback loop between sustainable development and globalization. Sustainable development contributes to globalization, and globalization promotes sustainable development. However, only until one reaches some critical moment. Then, globalization begins to hinder sustainable development and eventually makes it unfeasible. The condition for the implementation of sustainable development is the freedom provided by the democratic system. Therefore, it works best in a liberal democracy. Unfortunately, this democracy is already collapsing. It has taken on a caricature form that makes difficult for people to live and for governments to exercise power. Therefore, one replaces it by totalitarian or fascist regimes, which for different reasons gives greater hope for a better functioning of the state. However, totalitarianism limits freedom significantly and fascism, in addition, raises legitimate fear due to negative historical experiences. There is no place for sustainable development in these regimes. That is why many researchers and politicians want to stop fascism and bring about sanitation of democracy with New Enlightenment, New Metanoia, and New Humanism. In such way, they want to enable further sustainable development.

**Keywords:** sustainable development, antagonizing the opposites, theory of non-antagonistic development, democracy, fascism, New Metanoia, New Enlightenment, New Humanism, culture of violence, philosophical environmentalism

**Słowa kluczowe:** zrównoważony rozwój, antagonizowanie przeciwieństw, teoria rozwoju nieantagonistycznego, demokracja, faszyzm, Nowa Metanoia, Nowe Oświecenie, Nowy Humanizm, kultura przemocy, filozoficzny ekologizm

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## 1. Is sustainable development a human or nature's work?

People boast that they invented something brilliant in the last decade of the twentieth century that they have called sustainable development. They ignore the fact that such development always occurs in nature as universal regularity (Gumiński, n.d.). Asymmetrical, diverse and unstable phenomena, processes and systems have a tendency to achieve relative balance spontaneously in accordance with principles of conservation of energy, mass, momentum etc., discovered by physicists, chemists, geologists and other natural scientists. *All spontaneous processes in nature strive from the states of imbalances to the states of balance* (Trepł, 2012). Stability and equilibrium are usually short-term and transient states. In contrast, states of imbalance and processes of return to equilibrium states take much longer. Mother Earth has equipped the systems of nature with homeostatic mechanisms appropriate for them, by means of which they return to a state of equilibrium by themselves, without the intervention of man or supernatural forces. Thanks to this, they are relatively stable, as long as they do not experience perturbations in result of the interference of other systems of nature, and above all, of man, who is the greatest destroyer of the balance in nature. Thus, processes occurring in animate and inanimate nature, especially evolutionary ones, are spontaneously targeted towards equilibrium and therefore irreversible. Dissipative systems transform from disordered to ordered as they return to equilibrium.<sup>1</sup>In nature, there is also permanent or self-sustaining development thanks to appropriate self-regulating and adaptive mechanisms. Thanks to them, many species of flora and fauna lasted for millions of years. I believe that the idea of sustainable development of social systems was born because of observing nature. That is why one considers it probably as a work of human thought and culture. It was only in the last decades of the twentieth century that it began to be implemented and one creates various undertakings and appropriate equilibrium mechanisms in social systems of concern for their stability and ensuring the continuity of development and progress.

## 2. The idea of sustainable development for the needs of economy above all

It is commonly believed that the idea of sustainable development was born out of concern for the environment, and therefore for ecological reasons. He relies primarily on Carl Hans v. Carlowitz, an accountant and mining manager in the district of Freiberg (Saxony), who became famous for his book on the economics of forestry and the natural cultivation of wild trees (*Sylviculturaeoeconomica...*, 2012). He wrote this book not for ecological reasons, but for economic reasons, because he saw that massive felling was progressing for the needs of rapidly developing mining and metallurgy in the area, which threatened with deforestation and the collapse of mining, and consequently mass unemployment and poverty. He called for the cessation of uncontrolled felling of trees and introduction of their rational breeding. This was to ensure the long-term use of trees. He thought about how to increase the extraction of coal, iron and silver ores to ensure greater profits for the owners of mines and steel mills. He was attributed primarily to ecological considerations and caring for the human ecosystem is a great exaggeration. Years later, Carlowitz's idea of managing forests in such a way as to prevent their complete destruction gave rise to thinking about economic benefits combined with concern for the environment.

Later, ecology that, in a sense, grew out of economics, and by no means care for the environment, coupled with the economy and became an important driver of economic growth. Now, after the commodification of many elements of the environment, no one doubts that it plays an important role in the economy, and is even a part of it, and that the economy is linked to the environment. It has already come to the point that the economy has merged with ecology into eco-economy. It was soon recognized that big business could be done on environmental protection and an intact environment. Many countries and regions live well and develop thanks to tourism to *ecological oases* i.e. places not degraded by industrialization and the progress of civilization. Many people make good money by producing, advertising and selling organic products and by organizing holidays on organic farms (agritourism). Healthy air, water, sand and food have become no less valuable commodities than gold.

By the way, apparently, the leader of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, during his visit to Bulgaria in 1956, while visiting the beach in Varna, showed the sand and told Todor Zhivkov, leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party: *This is your gold*. Soon after, in 1957, the building of the first luxury resort at the time, Golden Sands, was started, and then many other spas and resorts on the Black Sea, from to Sozopol. In the 1960s, resorts and tourist attractions began to be built in Florida, Hawaii and Alaska.

However, in times of turbulent industrialization, ecology and the value of the environment were disregarded as a result of the recognition of the absolute dominance of economic criteria over all others. All spheres of production were subjected to industrialization in order to achieve the maximum increase in the productivity of machines and people, and the maximum harvest from agricultural areas, disregarding the risks associated with it. Yet, as early as the 1930s, people were warned against the terrible consequences of the spontaneous and mindless industrialization of agriculture. Rachel Carson, an American specialist in marine biology, criticized farming methods. In

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<sup>1</sup>A dissipative system is one that, as a result of the dissipation (dissipation) of internal energy, moves away from the state of equilibrium and becomes more and more disordered.

the book *Silent Spring*, she presented the details of the dangerous use of pesticides, which results in an increase in the amount of resistant pathogens, insects and weeds, disturbance of the balance of ecosystems, and pollution of the environment due to the accumulation of toxins (Carson, 1962). Sixty years later, we found that she was right, but they were not listened to because they were glad to see the growing crops. Now we suffer severely because of this. We have fallen into the trap of a hyper-optimism of mindless industrialization, which has resulted in increasing environmental degradation and the health of millions of people.

So, from its beginning, the idea of sustainable development referred to the sphere of the economy. It was and is addressed mainly to economists: *Manage so that, while striving for continued economic growth, do not consume all the world's resources now and allow future generations to meet their growing needs* (Dobrzański, 2011). These sustainability imperative sounds beautiful, but not everyone person is guided by it. And the idea of sustainable development gradually turns into a myth and is often a tool of fraud (Sztumski, 2004). For example, despite the promises made by its promoters, global economic crises were not prevented - the financial crisis in 2008-2009, the crisis because of the corona virus pandemic in 2020 or the crisis caused by economic sanctions imposed on Russia in connection with the war in Ukraine since 2022, inscribed in the everyday life of economic activity. *Today, the crisis is perceived as a permanent element of the game* (Marek, Wieczorek-Szymańska, 2011). If this is true, then economic crises will have to appear regardless of the implementation of the idea of sustainable development. In addition, they will repeat themselves in ever-shorter cycles proportionally to the acceleration of changes in the social reality. *In the past, their rhythm was primarily determined by factors external to the economy: natural phenomena, such as a natural disaster, epidemic or crop failure, or political causes, such as war. With the development of the market economy, the course of the economic situation was less and less influenced by natural phenomena, while the importance of economic factors increased* (Morawski, 2003).

The idea of sustainable development is also addressed to other specialists, mainly for ecological reasons. Environmental protection has become the most important criterion and goal of sustainable development not only in the economic sphere, but also in other spheres. When it comes to sustainable construction and transport, sustainable tourism, sustainable cities, etc., sustainability is understood everywhere as not harming the environment, such as with non-toxic and energy-saving materials, unleaded petrol, and alternative energy sources, etc.

### 3. Pros and cons of sustainable development

One of the advantages of sustainable development is forcing people to think prospectively and *ecologically*. Prospective thinking is characterized by concern for the future of individuals and societies, to provide them with the conditions necessary for life, which should be no worse than those of the modern generation. *Ecological thinking* is characterized by concern for the current and future natural and social environment. Think and act in the context of the environment. Before someone does anything, he ought to think about the environmental effects of his work. Ecological thinking starts from the local narrow environment of a single human being and goes towards a wider and wider one – at last towards the cosmic environment. It is also anthropocentric because it ultimately aims at the good of human (Sztumski, 2016). One of the cons of such development is that it contributes to the continuous and accelerated economic growth, which results in increasing social, not only economic, stratification and the associated contradictions. The second downside is that it contributes to a spiral of overproduction and overconsumption, which entails an increasing waste of material and intellectual resources. This among other things shows the internal contradiction of sustainable development between deliberate reduction of demand and spontaneous growth of consumption. This leads to a waste of material and intellectual goods (Sztumski, 2015). In developed countries, people stopped saving because saving will not pay off. A thrifty man, *Homo frugi*, transformed into a wasteful man, *Homo prodigus* (Sztumski, 2013). The third cons is that the concept of sustainable development does not oppose the neo-liberal paradigm of economic development prevailing in the modern world, nor does it intend to eliminate it, but only extends and details it (Matysiak, 2015). Nota bene, establishing a different paradigm is not a simple matter, as it could take place because of a social revolution, that is, an immediate and radical reconstruction of the socio-economic formation. However, the retrograde ruling elite and conservatives, whose interest is to keep the status quo as long as possible, oppose it. On the other hand, no alternative development paradigm better than the previous ones has yet been developed. In addition, so far, attempts to implement hybrid paradigms have not proved successful.

### 4. Escalation of the idea of sustainable development

Quite good results obtained as a result of the implementation of the idea of sustainable development in the sphere of the economy inspired political decision-makers to apply this idea in other spheres of social activity – In construction, urban planning, tourism, education, culture, etc. They expected to achieve similar results of sustainable development in non-economic spheres. At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, there was a world tendency to balance everything, everywhere and quickly. Moreover, sustaining, enduring, and balancing devel-

opment have become magic words and spells. It was believed that with their help it would be possible to avoid all social crises, not only economic ones.

Two principles lie at the heart of this trend. One of them is the principle of economic determinism, according to which the economy is the most important, and the overall life and functioning of people is determined primarily by economic factors, i.e. the economic base.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, all efforts should be focused on the most effective development of this base, inter alia, because of its constant balancing. You need not take care of other spheres, because they, as if mechanically and by themselves, will be forced to keep up with the development of the economy. The problem is that this rule does not really work because the economy is not an isolated area and therefore its development depends on the development of other spheres. The economy, to a significant extent influences other spheres of social reality, if only because their development depends on the amount of financial expenditure.

The second principle is the rule of social automatism. It claims that some phenomena occurring in society can by themselves, *automatically*, without deliberate interference by the human factor, generate others. In that case, the sustainable development of the economy may spontaneously entail such development in other spheres. Unfortunately, this rule does not work in the social reality because nothing happens automatically there. Everything is done more or less consciously and intentionally solely by people. Those who believed in *social automatism* had disappointed. For example, decision-makers in socialist countries who, on the basis of historical materialism, believed in the automatic transformation of the feudal or capitalist superstructure into a socialist one as a result of the development of the socialist base. They also believed in the automatic transformation of *capitalist* (bourgeois) social consciousness into a socialist one in result of building a socialist social being. In fact, the social consciousness in socialist countries lagged far behind socialist social being. That is why it claimed that socialism is a good system, only society had not yet grown up to it. Some modern economists have also been disappointed in their belief in the automatic benefits of sustainable development. Relying on automatism released them from interfering with sustainable development – in deliberately controlling it depending on currently recognized priorities. Consequently, this development is driven more by its own mechanisms and therefore causes more harm than good in some areas and contributes to crises too. It also released them from responsibility for the implementation of the effects of sustainable development.

The implementation of the idea of sustainable development in other spheres of social activity is much more difficult than in the sphere of the economy, for at least three reasons. First, it is all the more difficult the more these spheres qualitatively differ from the economic sphere. Second, it is all the more difficult the less they are dependent on the economy. Third, it is all the more difficult the fewer quantitative criteria of development one can meaningfully applied in them.

## 5. Sustainable development and globalization

Globalization is understood as a set of processes leading to the integration of countries and societies on a global scale. Integration is more than uniting. Uniting is a feature of additive sets, and integration is a feature of mereological sets.<sup>3</sup> At best, unity leads to cooperation, and integration additionally leads to synergy of actions. Uniting occurs under the influence of external causes and *ad hoc* goals, and integration occurs for the internal causes to achieve the most important goals such as peace, survival in a drastically degraded environment, and the creation of survival conditions for future generations. The aim of globalization is to standardize, uniformize and homogenize societies to transform them finally into homogeneous *social plasma*. It cannot achieve these goals fully in the real world. However, one strives to achieve them through the abolition of state borders and various barriers between people, the liquidation of nation states, the growing importance of multinational corporations, the equalization of levels of economic development, the interpenetration of cultures, the reduction of ethnic languages into a single world one,<sup>4</sup> the transfer of technology, the It cannot achieve these goals fully in the real world.

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<sup>2</sup>The economic base is the totality of material productive forces and the resulting from them productive relations, characteristic of a given social formation. The social superstructure includes all non-economic institutions, activities and forms of social awareness in a given society. It includes social ideas (political, legal, philosophical, moral, aesthetic, religious, etc.) and political, legal, cultural and other social institutions. Social being is the complex of material and social conditions of a given person's life (geographical location, climate, natural resources, cultivation conditions, population density, etc.) Social consciousness is the set of shared beliefs, ideas, and moral attitudes, which operate as a unifying force within society.

<sup>3</sup> An additive set is a simple sum or cluster of elements. It is, for example, a deck of cards. A mereological set is a composition or a superposition of elements, interacted and interrelated, so that they form an inseparable whole or a system. It is, for example, a planetary system.

<sup>4</sup>Every two weeks one language disappears from the world. The reasons for this are: the extinction of the language community, the mixing of local dialects as a result of migration, and the imposition of the dominant English language by the media. According to a 2011 UNESCO report, half of the world's six thousand languages are threatened with extinction. The disappearance of languages is the destruction of unique cultures and ways of perceiving the world. If nothing changes, the rate of language extinction could triple in the next 40 years. In the 21st century, we will stop hearing even 1,500 currently spoken languages (*Gazeta Wyborcza – Nauka*, 2021).

However, one strives to achieve them through the abolition of state borders and various barriers between people, the liquidation of nation states, the growing importance of multinational corporations, the equalization of levels of economic development, the interpenetration of cultures, the reduction of ethnic languages into a single world one, the transfer of technology, the convergence of political actions for pro-ecological activities. In this way, one achieves some partial goals of globalization, what does not eliminate the differentiation and social divergence that are the causes of many misfortunes and evils. In this way, one achieves some partial goals of globalization, what does not eliminate the differentiation and social divergence that are the causes of many misfortunes and evils.

Globalization is nothing new. It occurred always spontaneously. Population movements, mixing of cultures, ethnic languages and religions, transfer of knowledge and technology progressed constantly because of conquests, geographical discoveries, imperial wars, religious missions, colonization and the merging of ethnic groups into nations. However, since the second half twenty century, it occurs intentionally and in an organized manner. Its effects are more noticeable and pose a threat to the traditional social orders and values systems. The processes of globalization are progressing faster and faster as people move massively new territories and continents in order to find shelter from armed conflicts, genocide and to ensure the necessary conditions for their survival. People also emigrate from areas affected by drought and hunger, as well as for economic reasons. The revolution in the areas of social communication and transport played a major role. Due to ever faster moving vehicles and ever-faster communication, the perceived geometric and social distances have decreased significantly.

The mass media, television, mobile telephony, the Internet, various computer networks and social networks have a significant share in accelerating the globalization processes, thanks to which one can transmit information at the speed of light immediately to all corners of the world.

Sustainable development and globalization are not only interdependent, but, in addition, they are in feedback loop. On the one hand, sustainable development, most in the economic sphere, contributes to globalization. On the other hand, globalization promotes sustainable development. Both of these phenomena drive and support each other. However, until they reach a certain critical point. Once exceeded it, further globalization is already starting to hinder sustainable development and eventually making it unfeasible. The excessively progressing globalization is gradually killing sustainable development. Why? Because globalization tends to eliminate the opposites between living standards, economic potentials, unemployment rates, technological and cultural diversities, education levels, etc. in all countries. While the goal of sustainable development is not to eliminate these opposites, but to balance them to such an extent that they can no longer turn into contradictions, especially antagonistic ones. To balance the development of social systems is to bring them to a state of relative equilibrium, which guarantees their flexibility and, consequently, enables them to be changed, including developmental changes. After all, absolute balance and the elimination of opposites prevent any further development, including the sustainable development.

## 6. Sustainable development, collapse of democracy and fascization

Sustainable development, like any other, takes place in softly determined social systems, which are open, flexible and generally unbalanced.<sup>5</sup>Such systems are, for example, democratic countries. Their sustainable development consists in leveling various imbalances in the form of social inequalities, opposites and differences in potentials, views, beliefs, lifestyles, ways of thinking, images of the world, etc. – everything that is the driving force of social development. However, it is important to balance all these differences with moderation, never completely. Because when everything in a system is in complete equilibrium, there will be a stagnation of the system and its decline. This leads directly to its collapse.

Since the twentieth century, grows the opposite tendency to balancing. One creates intentionally, for political reasons, ever greater and sharper social divisions and antagonizes local and global social contradictions. Totalitarian states, such as Nazi Germany, Stalinist USSR, Mao Zedong's China, and many other countries on various continents that modeled on them excelled in materializing this tendency. There was known Stalin theory of the exacerbation of class contradictions as socialism was built, which contributed to the murder of millions of innocent people labeled as enemies of the people or socialism. Now, too, in authoritarian states, polarization is rapidly advancing, and social inequalities are exacerbating and transforming them into antagonistic contradictions. In this way, the governments of these countries are increasingly destroying democracy, although they hypocritically claim that their countries are democratic because *democracy* is still fashionable and important for a good image of the country in political marketing.

There is still a belief that antagonistic opposites are the driving force of social development. This derives from binary thinking and from Hegelian and Marxist dialectics, according to which the locomotive of development in

<sup>5</sup> One deals with soft determinism when one state of a system entails many others, or when one cause generates multiple effects. In such determinism, there is no strict principle of causality *one cause – one effect*. Therefore, in the development of soft determined systems, bifurcations appear that make prediction difficult.

the sensorial world are the opposites and the *struggle* between them. In this way, one justifies progressive social divisions and their antagonization. Only, neither Hegel nor Marx said that opposites must take the form of contradictions, much less antagonistic. Politicians opting for the antagonistic concept of social development are guided by the age-old maxim *divide and rule*, although it is now viewed negatively due to its destructive effects and anti-solidarity character. Moreover, they changed this rule in their own way: *Make more and more divisions so that you can rule longer*. They argue that social progress is proportional to the degree of antagonization of social divisions and contradictions. The antagonistic concept of development is harmful because it justifies and apotheoses all wars, even with the use of weapons of mass destruction. One claims that wars are necessary in the history of humankind because they arise from the biological nature of the man-warrior, and that one cannot change his nature (Bieleń, 2022). This is in the interest of supporters of the arms race, military lobbyists and military corporatocrats, i.e. those who are one of the *invisible hands* that rule the world and for whom war is a good business.<sup>6</sup>

More than twenty years ago, it appeared *the concept of non-antagonistic social development*, which claims otherwise: a society can develop quite well thanks to non-antagonistic opposites, i.e. not intentionally antagonized positions, by various institutions, ideologies or political groups (Kowalczyk, 1990). It recognizes wars as atavistic and anachronistic, because, according to behavioral psychology, human nature changes depending on changes in the external environment, including the cultural one. Man's biological nature, his consciousness and behavior are increasingly influenced by a culture that suppresses his warlike drive. However, not every culture. Certainly not today's *culture of evil* – the anti-culture built on the anti-values system, which is proper to Western civilization, propagated more and more forcefully and effectively by the mass media (Sztumski, 2016). This culture glorifies violence, rape, aggression, hostility, bestiality and crime. A generation of aggressors, murderers, hooligans, terrorists, bandits, paid killers, savages, Mafiosi and similar social scum grows like never before on its. Who needs it? Probably those who use such demoralized individuals for a criminal activity, from which they profit enormously. Also for those who make good money spreading this culture and depraving the masses. But there is also something else. It is about that people, who are in contact with such a culture daily in television, cinemas, the press, etc., get used to treating these perversions as something normal, especially war and its atrocities. The point is also to justify military interventions with the biological nature of man, not to blame wars on politicians who pursue their sick ambitions, or on warmongers who get rich in wars, no matter how many millions of victims. This culture is not useful to the formation of peaceful attitudes and peaceful solving of contradictions. On the contrary, it fuels bellicosity and the killing of enemies. The opponents of this civilization and culture opt for liquidating even sharpest conflicts peacefully and for replacing war with rivalry between conflicting countries. Opposed parties should compete for better political programs, economic models and judiciary, for better ideology, environmental protection, education and other goals. Instead of fighting each other, it is better to work together synergistically to achieve goals and solve problems without the force. If it would be so, then the war will soon be in the *dustbin of history* like many other relicts. A much greater benefit would be to spend multi-billion dollar not on armaments, maintaining the army, etc. but on fighting hunger, diseases, natural disasters, environmental protection, supporting the development of poor countries, etc. This idea is included in the concept of humanism and the civilization of life, both originated from philosophical environmentalism (Sztumski, 1997). Therefore, firstly one should replace the *culture of evil and violence* with a *culture of tolerance and cooperation*. Secondly, one should do everything that is realistically possible to prevent wars – all of them are unfair – and apply peaceful methods of conflict solving. Thirdly, one should to try to erase the concept of war from the memory and consciousness of the masses.

After the Second World War, in the first phase of the Cold War, efforts to this end were undertaken by the Peace Defenders Movement, which gathered outstanding intellectuals from all over the world under the political leadership of the USSR. In the 1996 program, he had already openly declared himself a world mass movement to support liberation movements fighting against American imperialism. This pacifist movement enjoyed great success because it was attended by a generation that experienced the horrors of war first-hand. Nevertheless, it failed the test because it was aimed only at the military interventions of the USA. As a socialist movement, it eventually lost the support of most countries. So far, no alternative mass pacifist movement has emerged, although for many years, there have been local wars, recently also threatening world peace, and the number of victims long ago exceeded the number of victims of World War II. Why? Firstly, the modern generation knows war only from stories or films often falsified. Secondly, organized opposition to war is doomed to failure in advance in the civilization of the West known as the *Civilization of Death*. Third, local wars are not they seem as terrible as the world wars, because of the propagation of the *culture of evil*.

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<sup>6</sup>In 2008, there were several hundred different enterprises dealing with military services around the globe. They appeared in almost 110 countries and their annual earnings were estimated at over \$ 200 million. (Uessler, 2008).

apply peaceful methods of conflict solving. Thirdly, one should try to erase the concept of war from the memory and consciousness of the masses.

Despite this, some enlightened and *ecologically thinking* politicians are trying to revive such a movement. They appeal to the masses to finally say *Stop!* to all the revolutions, wars, terrorism, ethnic cleansing and genocide that have taken the lives of millions of people at the fault of greedy corporatocrats and their servants and stupid rulers – monarchs, dictators, chiefs, presidents and party leaders. They postulate that they should be removed from power as soon as possible and determinedly opposed to the madness of our time. It is highest time because the delay will multiply needless casualties and bring humanity closer to collapse. In addition, while Western civilization will not last forever, one should not wait for its natural collapse, but one ought to accelerate it. How? Thanks to *New Metanoia* that results of creative, courageous, pragmatic and future-oriented thinking derived from scientific knowledge. This *New Conversion* requires a New Enlightenment to overcome the resistance of conservatives, nationalists, neo-fascists and obscurants. Consequently, more and more researchers from different countries see that the implementation of an ultranationalist, orthodox-religious or neo-fascist model of democracy create fear that the era of democratization will soon end and the era of fascization will begin. To prevent this, they propose a Renaissance of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, called *First Enlightenment*. They expect that in this way one avoid the collapse of democracy, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development of social reality. Unfortunately, already in some countries *Liberal democracies have largely discredited themselves by opening the gates to predatory capitalism; they are increasingly being rejected by the people* (*L'Inspiration Politique*, 2021).

Beginning in antiquity, democracy went through a growth phase from Athenian one to modern during the formation of the capitalist economy, and reached its peak during the heyday of the liberal economy. After World War I, it has entered the declining phase of its development, which has been accelerating for about thirty years. The following phenomena prove that democracy is already in an advanced state of atrophy: the transformation of direct democracy into an increasingly indirect (representative) democracy, the management of the country by the chosen ones persons, increasing lawlessness and injustice, increasing social differentiation, increasing chaos, progressing alienation of power, lack of concern for the common good of the whole society, rule by ever stupider leaders, increasing clericalization and contempt for the basic values of democracy - life, freedom, equality, justice, peace and security (Sztumski, 2020). Democracy is on the verge of collapse in many countries, even in the stronghold of democracy that is the United States. The US president sees that his country's democracy is under threat mainly because of his predecessor Donald Trump, who supporters shook the foundations of the republic (Roth, 2022). According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's report, in 2020 there were the fewest *full democracies* in the world - 23, and the most *authoritarian regimes* - 57. *Hybrid regimes* - 35, and *defective democracies* - 52 (Borowska, 2021).

No wonder, that the inefficient democracy is replaced by more efficient fascism, even in the national or nationalist version, referring to such imponderables as state sovereignty, national identity, patriotism equated with nationalism or love to ruling party etc. The fascist system promotes the sustainable development much less than lame democracy. It does not multiply inequalities or opposites, but antagonizes them more and more. It introduces autocratic rule that ignores the interests and dignity of individuals. It is a system hated because of negative historical experience.

Marcel Fratzscher, professor of macroeconomics at Humboldt University in Berlin), reflecting on what the world will be like after the Covid pandemic, says there will be a New Consciousness, a New Humanism and a New Enlightenment. *Time for a new humanism! The coronavirus pandemic has plunged societies and economies into the deepest crisis since World War II. There is a great danger that it will further divide the world community. There are good reasons for pessimism, but there are also better reasons for optimism. The pandemic shows us the contradictions in our actions. This has led to a moral awareness that makes us, as a society; attach great importance to community and the protection of the weakest. This new humanism requires the reform of the welfare state so that all people have the opportunity to participate in society. Freedom, justice and humanism, the three ideals of the Enlightenment, are more important today than ever and will determine how the world and we as a society will get out of this pandemic, where we will go and what the world will look like after it* (Fratzscher, 2020).

Michelle Bawdily (professor at the University of South Australia, expert in behavioral economics) also calls for an immediate start to the New Enlightenment: *The last decade has been turbulent. The financial crisis and the uncertainty of the consequences of globalization and the technological revolution have led to the questioning of representative democracy and the free market. To materialize enormous potential for economic growth and the idea of prosperity for all as a result of the technical revolution, reduce discontent and pessimism, it need for a New Enlightenment. It is a long and complicated process, but the first steps (economic and legal reforms) can be taken immediately* (Baddeley, 2019).

In addition, Ernst Ulrich v. Weizsäcker wrote in the 2017 Report of the Club of Rome that *the modern generation is perhaps the last one that could prevent the collapse of our civilization and humanity* (von Weizsäcker, Wijkman, 2018).

Each of them and many others demand the restitution and materialization of the idea of the Enlightenment – the sovereignty of reason, freedom, justice, humanism, progress, tolerance and brotherhood. In addition, recognition of sense experience as the primary, but not the only, source of knowledge, the establishment of constitutional government, and the separation of church and state, since Christian values and other faiths values systems differ from democratic values.

The promoter of the New Enlightenment is Steven Pinker, a Canadian-American psychologist, professor of philosophy at Harvard University. He is opposed to ominous predictions about the impending end of history and the world, although he does not deny that the world faces more and more serious problems. He sees their solutions in the implementation of the ideals of the Enlightenment. In his book, *Enlightenment Now*, he urges people not to worry about the prophecies of doom and not be pessimistic, but to prevent them by using knowledge, science and reason (Pinker, 2019). Today it is difficult to predict if and when it will succeed. Because the implementation of the idea of the *New Enlightenment* meets with a massive and furious attack by obscurants and various political and church organizations under the sign of the swastika, cross, crescent, crescent, etc. and concern for the common good and its fair distribution, and in fact, they strive primarily for the selfish interests of their functionaries and activists who stuff their wallets because they *deserve it* due to exercising power, even if they have reached it dishonestly thanks to counterfeiting elections.

### Conclusion

It is absurd to balance whatever you want just to be modern. For about twenty years there has been a fashion for sustainable development and that is why you want to balance everything without thinking, even the impossible, each domain of social reality and human activity preferably to the end, regardless of the negative effects. Fortunately, the concept of this sustainable development has not yet been fully materialized. (Nota bene, this is an oxymoron because equilibrium is the opposite of development.) However, if it did, there would be no development anymore, because it is an upsetting effect. *Sustainable development in the economy would conservation of institutions such as slavery* (Stodolak, 2020). In addition, if one could balance everything at once, there would be no progress.

The Brundtland Report defines sustainable development as *meeting today's needs without limiting the ability of future generations to meet their needs*. In fact, it is not known what the needs will have a more distant generation, maybe, different from the modern generation. In view of this what actually should be secured for future generations thanks to sustainable development?

Sustainable development works well in democratic systems, preferably in a liberal democracy, where, thanks to a high degree of freedom, society is highly diverse and conflicted. However, this democracy ends for various reasons, including balancing social inequalities and eliminating opposites. Perhaps it follows the Hegelian triad: the thesis (democracy) transforms through hybrid democracy into antithesis (fascism). Its place is taken by dictatorial and fascist regimes characterized by a low degree of freedom and little differentiation. They guarantee a greater social order than a democratic system. For this reason, they have more and more followers. Their disadvantage is the elimination of conditions for sustainable development, which turns out to be a temporary phenomenon in the history of humankind.

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