

Sustainable Development: the upcoming civilizational revolution?

Rozwój zrównoważony: zbliżająca się rewolucja cywilizacyjna?

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Abstract

In this work the concept of sustainable development is presented as the currently most important revolutionary project in our civilisation, which should rapidly change the way people think and act globally. The aim of this revolution should be the distancing from, or the overcoming of difficulties which beset the modern world, resulting from the growing disharmony and ecological imbalance between the global community and our planet's entire natural environment.

The basis for the analysis is Artur Pawłowski's book entitled *Sustainable Development as a Civilizational Revolution. A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Challenges of the 21st Century*. The author presents multilateral arguments for the necessity of such a global revolution related to civilisation. This idea is discussed and compared with other views on the world's future and the possibility of realising within it the concept of sustainable development in terms of business, economic, political, social and awareness activities.

Pawłowski's view has been categorised as a form of hypothetical rationalism and realism, and continues the Polish traditional way of thinking in this field. In modern analysis, the author's view on the possibility of realising sustainable development can be placed between Klaus Bosselmann's optimism and Christian de Duve's pessimism.

Key words: sustainable development, global civilizational revolution, optimism, realistic and pessimistic worldview

Streszczenie

W pracy zaprezentowano ideę rozwoju zrównoważonego jako najważniejszego obecnie projektu rewolucyjnego w naszej cywilizacji, który powinien szybko dokonać zmian w myśleniu i działaniu ludzi w wymiarze globalnym. Celem tej rewolucji powinno być oddalenie lub przezwyciężenie trudności, jakie nękają świat współczesny, a wynikają z rosnącej dysharmonii i nierównowagi ekologicznej między społecznością globalną a całym środowiskiem naturalnym naszej planety.

Podstawą analizy jest książka Artura Pawłowskiego pt. *Sustainable Development as a Civilizational Revolution. Multidisciplinary Approach to the Challenges of the 21st Century*. Autor przedstawia wielostronne argumenty za koniecznością takiej rewolucji globalnej. Pomysł ten jest omawiany i zestawiany z innymi poglądami na kwestie przyszłości świata i możliwości realizacji w nim idei zrównoważonego rozwoju w działaniach gospodarczych, ekonomicznych, politycznych, społecznych i świadomościowych.

Pogląd Pawłowskiego zostaje usytuowany jako forma racjonalizmu i realizmu hipotetycznego, kontynuującego polską tradycję myślową w tej dziedzinie. We współczesnej analizie możliwości realizacji idei rozwoju zrównoważonego pogląd autora można umieścić między stanowiskiem optymistycznym – np. Klause Bosselmanna i pesymistycznym – np. Christiana de Duve.

Słowa kluczowe: rozwój zrównoważony, cywilizacyjna rewolucja globalna, optymizm, realizm i pesymizm światopoglądowy

Introduction

The concept of sustainable development and activities related to its implementation currently form one of the most important revolutionary systems after the scientific, industrial, and media revolutions. These activities relate to the global society in its natural so to speak, living environment. Also, no one can counter the claim that wholly natural environments, untouched by some form of Man's activity, no longer exist on our planet. Considering the global situation, Klaus Bosselmann even proposes the need to create a global *eco-constitution* within the international legal framework, which for civilised societies would be binding globally (Bosselmann, 2010, p. 337-347, Bosselmann, Taylor 2009, p. 173-174, Godden, 2009, p. 807-816). In addition, it would form the basic regulatory body for recommendations, which should become the basis of national and international legislation in *environmental law*. The purpose of this law would be to confront the civilizational revolution based on the *principles of sustainability*, which by their nature are consistent with the spirit of legislation in general and particularly, within the spirit of international law. It would be important to promote sustainable development in all possible spheres of political and economic governance, and in the regulation of social life, respecting the boundaries of ecological possibilities of the natural environment on a global scale (Bosselmann, 2008, p. 176 and others).

Man, from the beginning of his existence as a species on Earth, demonstrated an exploitative attitude towards nature, although the natural regulatory mechanisms rewarded him with a fairly harmonious coexistence in the bio-natural space. However, the history of life, including human's evolution and the accompanying revolutionary stages also reflect the history of disasters. The term *crises* is commonly used to describe them, pointing to breakthroughs in the world, mostly from an anthropocentric perspective. On a cosmic scale, these types of breakthroughs are seen more as components of universal processes of cosmic evolution, determined by the laws of physics, from the moment of the *Big Bang* (the *initial singularity*), as a result of which the Milky Way emerged, in which our planet can also be found (Szumski, 2008, p. 61-81). On a human timescale, these phenomena are actually insignificant, but may be seen in the timescale of our species and its relationship and interaction with the natural basis of existence and the social environment, ultimately conditioned by the dynamics of existence and the expansion into all the possible ecosystems in the world, and maybe in the near

future into the extra-terrestrial cosmos managed by man.

The origin, meaning and relevance of sustainable development

Artur Pawłowski's book, *Sustainable Development as a Civilizational Revolution. A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Challenges of the 21st Century*, published in London in 2011 by CRS/Balkema, a member of the Taylor & Francis Group, undoubtedly fits into the discussion about man's actual condition on Earth. The book has been updated with the latest data related to man's situation in modern reality compared with the author's earlier work *Rozwój zrównoważony – idea, filozofia, praktyka/Sustainable Development – Concept, Philosophy, Practice* (Lublin 2008).

The publication consists of six parts. The first part, *The evolution of the idea of sustainable development in history* describes and summarises in a historical perspective the early initiatives forming man's sustainability attitudes towards the natural living environment and their further evolution in time, up to the current global and European perspective. The second part, *Theoretical basis for sustainable development* describes the sustainable development concept, the hierarchical analysis of its planes, the accompanying principles and indicators. *Philosophy, religion and environmental education* is the third part presenting such issues as: the essence of eco-philosophy and the ethical planes of sustainable development, the relationship of religion towards it, the practical aspects of realising this concept on a moral level in the context of human attitudes and education, and also philosophical audit which is a new field of scientific research. Part four is entitled *Level II of sustainable development: Ecological, social, and economic considerations*. In this part Pawłowski presents an ecological plane from the natural environment perspective and landscape changes. Next, he covers the social plane which is comprised of, in his opinion, issues such as social development, the cultural landscape, urbanisation and urban health, the relationship between the rich North and the poor South. In discussing the economic plane of sustainable development, the author compares the principles of traditional economics with ecological economics, economic instruments for the protection of the environment, the concept of *responsible business* and the *environmental management system*, and the financial security conditions for the implementation of sustainable development into practice.

Part five, *Level III of sustainable development: Technical, legal and political considerations* discusses the factors related to technology in relation

to the natural environment, industrial ecology and clean production, the world's energy resources, the legal basis for the protection of the environment and related barriers, bringing to the fore this type of development, and also the political plane, indicating the role of politics and politicians and the democratic system in the construction of public spaces, friendly for the natural environment. Part six, *Integration of planes, the phenomenon of globalisation and the Sustainable Development Revolution*, is undoubtedly an attempt at synthesis, in which the Lublin scholar tries to summarise, from the world's globalisation process perspective, the earlier theoretical findings and empirical data (statistical) for each of the planes that sustainable development operates in. It points out the major achievements and shortcomings, and attempts to explain their causes. It shows that sustainable development is a landmark in the history of man's thinking and that it is undoubtedly the most important intellectual breakthrough in the development of civilisation on Earth, and maybe in the history of the human species. It emphasises at the same time that sustainable development can only be constructively developed when all the planes of this development are integrated and it is implemented globally. It raises the awareness that humanity on the planet is highly diverse economically and culturally, so the need for revolutionary change is unavoidable. It also believes that the sooner and more knowingly such revolutionary activities begin the lower will be their costs, especially for future generations.

The specifics of Artur Pawłowski's thoughts on sustainable development

So what topoi and way of thinking accompanies the studies and considerations of the Lublin author? Man's attitude towards the natural environment from his very beginning bore the characteristics which on the one hand, expressed respect for the environment, while on the other, exhibited a systematic pursuit of deeper understanding in order to better subjugate it.

Pawłowski emphasises that people were interested, above all, in improving their condition and quality of life which was constantly threatened by external and internal factors. These efforts have always had an anthropocentric character, rarely biocentric or ecocentric, though people were often aware that the condition of human life, both individual as well as for the species, which belongs to the natural order, is a concern for life itself and its environment. It was also important for the human species, not only for the individual, but also for collective survival in the long term. However, it was not fully realised that the Earth's resources are limited and can be exhausted, since from the beginning of his existence, man acquired and used natural renewable resources, and only later non-renewable. However,

human life was always threatened by a phenomenon which was only described as a *tragedy of the joint pastures*, frequently called *the tragedy of the commons* (Hardin, 1968, p. 1244-1248. Hardin, 1998, p. 682-683) and did not only refer to the hunting, pastoral and agricultural economies. It also appeared in a more distinctive form during the societies' industrial development period and attained a global character, with the successive phases often described by scholars as *ecological imperialism* and then by *industrial imperialism*. These imperialisms are characterised by the fact that certain ecological coexistence models between man and nature quickly spread to those areas and continents, where their long term activities inflicted more damage than benefit, because overall local bio-ecological and cultural conditions, functioning ecosystems arising from historical evolutionary processes, and human communities adapted to them, were not taken into account (Crosby, 1999, p. 9-19). These processes and the accompanying management types became more clearly understood in the 20th century, and in the 1970's this led to the diagnosis of a global ecological crisis, for which precisely these imperialisms (agriculture and industry) were responsible. It was no longer possible to move their effects off the planet because they touched the whole biosphere in various forms, becoming part of everyday life, manifesting themselves in recognition of various forms of deficits in our lives e.g. oil, coal, clean drinking water, fertile soils, appropriate social and psychological climate for people. The known form of protection was not sufficient towards nature and its resources. Gradually another axiological attitude towards nature was born, which was now begun to be seen as man's proper coexistence with other living beings and their living environments. It began to become noticed that these other living beings also need caring and concern, which in turn spawned a separate subject, named ecology. In later stages, firstly ethical, later philosophical, and even socio-humanistic reflection, which justified the need to impose on all people the obligation to care about life and its environment. Pawłowski is discussing these issues with other authors: Piątek (1998, 2008), Fiut (1999, 2003). The different ethical-environmental and eco-philosophical orientations currently express this; most commonly the evolutionary orientated ones (Weiss, 2010, Papuziński, 2011). All the drastic environmental changes were not only imprinted in the development history of human consciousness, but also in society's collective consciousness, and even on the whole of humanity. The need for rational management of natural resources matured, which should be accompanied by a corresponding cultural superstructure, a new type of spirituality orientated towards pro-ecology. Its expression in production and consumption has become a socio-political economic strategy, which was defined at a

UN forum in 1987 and termed the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT strategy in the *Our common future* report, which required rapid deployment on a global scale.

In the 20 years following this declaration, the book *Rozwój zrównoważony – idea, filozofia, praktyka/ (Sustainable development – concept, philosophy, practice)* written by the Lublin scholar A. Pawłowski, appeared. Three years later, its newer and decidedly more ideological version *Sustainable Development as a Civilizational Revolution. A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Challenges of 21st Century* (Pawłowski, 2008, p. 9-109, Pawłowski, 2011, p. 1-36) appeared. Both publications are attempts to balance these two decades at the beginning of the third millennium and are associated with the implementation of this development model into people's lives as well as into the entire global community. If the first book is effectively an encyclopaedic research into the development and concept of sustainable development, the second book has as its prime objective the human issues on the planet, in the near and distant future, in the context of an ever accelerating civilizational revolution, already taking place, based on the principle of sustainable development and in all possible areas of life.

At the beginning of his books, Artur Pawłowski discusses the successive eras of relations between man and his natural environment, starting with the Neolithic revolution (the creation of tools) followed by the development of hunting, agriculture and in the long run, rural and urban life. All these stages led to successive crises in the history of relations between man and nature. The emerging crises gradually developed in man a reflection of the need for balanced measures of ever deepening integration of his life with the natural processes of the natural environment. The author stresses that although the protectionist attitudes are known from distant history, the growth of awareness of the need for protection and sustainable actions towards nature appeared on a wide scale relatively late, during the period of industrial growth, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and mainly in wealthy countries, only to fully come to the fore in the 1970s.

The awareness of the need to shape sustainable development globally, European-wide and domestically was undoubtedly the result of a UN initiative, starting with the Earth Summit in Stockholm (1972), then in Rio de Janeiro (1992), New York (2000) and Johannesburg (2002). The key world event for these initiatives, which introduced into global circulation sustainable development awareness, was the UN General Secretary's U. Thant's report from 1969 entitled *Man and his environment* in which it was highlighted, that the world crisis, as Pawłowski reminds us, has its natural basis in the overexploitation of natural riches by a growing

population on the planet, which simultaneously is accompanied by their inequitable distribution globally.

Successive reports by the Club of Rome, beginning in 1972, were essential for the growing need to build awareness and activities in sustainability. They left no illusions that a change in man's approach to the environment is necessary, because otherwise he is threatened with extinction as a biological species. Although the phrase *sustainable development* was first used in 1980, it wasn't popularised until the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). Chaired by the then Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, the commission prepared on the basis of all the previous UN's ideological achievements in this field, a report entitled *Our Common Future*, published in 1987. Next, the Rio Summit within the framework of the *Rio Declaration*, and the *Agenda 21* concept devised there, prepared new causative action opportunities for which the Section for Sustainable Development working in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible. From European and Polish perspectives, the ways of implementing the concept and the strategic program of this development model are outlined in the acts adopted by the EU Parliament and the Polish Parliament and governments such as: *Lisbon Strategy* for the period 2000-2010, *Strategies for Sustainable Development* from 2000 and 2006, *Natura 2000* and *Culture 2000* EU programs, as well as other key documents, setting out specific economic development objectives for EU member states. Poland, as an EU member state and a signatory to almost all important international documents on implementing sustainable development into management processes, also realises many of these programs as an individual political entity, or as an EU member state and of a global community.

Sustainable development undoubtedly has a natural perspective, but also many others. Although it is difficult to distinguish them clearly, because of their overlap, Pawłowski stresses that they remain in a complex network of feedback loops. The Lublin researcher reckons that on a global level they must be seen even as an integrated network, guaranteeing for this type of development two, or even three of its essential properties, i.e. PERSISTENCE and SELF-SUSTAINABILITY, and as a dynamic phenomenon also its SELF-SUFFICIENCY. Considerations of such a development in the light of current research can be, in the author's opinion, grouped into three levels: the first and the most general level includes the ethical-philosophical plane, the second more concrete level includes ecological, social and economic planes, whilst in the third (which actually determines its realisation) the technical, legal and political planes, forming the grounds and rules, upon which real activities are played out related with the directions and methods of implementing

this management model, pro-ecologically orientated (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 110). Sustainable development is not limited only to ecological development or nature conservation, but is rather a program of integration of the possible levels of human activity, appealing to moral reflection, imposing an obligation of man's responsibility for his condition in nature, for which the right living condition is essential. This integration should in practice lead to harmony between man and nature for each of the three types of plane and in their relationship networks (Pawłowski, Dudzińska, 2001).

Ecological conflicts related to the deficit of natural resources always have a social dimension, because they reveal not only the natural environmental degradation but also the social (Piątek, 2011). Man is inscribed into the cultural landscape in which he expresses his relationship with nature and should also have hallmarks of sustainability, which in turn expresses the degree and types of socio-cultural integration between man and the natural basis of existence. That is why the cultural background of human life has an impact on the occurrence of conflicts, whose source lies in the natural conditions of life. This problem is constantly increasing because of the planet's rapid urbanisation. Such a situation causes reflections in the social ecological spirit and urban ecology, in order to explain the basis for conflicts arising between the centres and peripheries of great urban-industrial conglomerates. In the economic dimension, it is not the lack of food, but the disproportionate distribution and consumption in the modern world which become the source of social injustice, emphasises Pawłowski, and consequently famine and war, in addition to the unjust consumption of raw materials by the rich countries, which also employ so-called *ecological dumping* towards the poor countries, which can even take on the form of *ecological terrorism*. In this perspective it is important to manage an appropriate tax policy at both the local and global level, in order to provide opportunities for the practical realisation of sustainable development, which is constantly short of funds especially in times of crisis which since 2008 symptomatically affects successive countries and international communities on a global scale. Thus the key question becomes that of the development of *responsible business*, with a lookout for ecological and socio-cultural interests, which should result in the transformation of economic thinking about man, and thus the move away from the currently promoted model of man, *homo economicus*, to *homo sustinensa*, meaning *sustainable man* (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 64-72 and 192-194).

Techniques and technologies have been and are the source of degradation, not only of the natural environment, but also socio-cultural. However, thanks to them, if they are environmentally friendly, degradation can also be effectively prevented. The key is *industrial ecology*, and in particular the sustaina-

ble management of production, distribution and consumption of products. Such strategies are conducive to sustainable development, especially the so-called *clean* strategies: cleaner production, distribution and consumption, recycling, all natural forms of disposal and treatment and coupled with this, the development of *efficient technologies* and the acquisition of natural energy sources, preferably renewable. Pawłowski states that the axiological assumptions accompanying these strategies should justify the ECO-EFFECTIVENESS, both in the production and consumption of all worldly and spiritual goods, as well as related services. The author considers these eco-effective strategy issues as the key to the building of a stable base for implementing sustainable development, so that it can, on the basis of these, take on the dimension of a global revolutionary system (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 196-198).

Pawłowski emphasises that the technical dimension must however be related to the legal dimension, i.e. administrative legal, civil and criminal normalisations. The most important, of course, is the effectiveness of the legal normalisations but also such legal impacts which allow reasonable and ecological effective management of natural resources as well as the so-called *socio-cultural and human capital*. However, they are not possible to realise without a political dimension, i.e. political decisions associated with the art of governing people in pursuit of indicated goals. These include political strategies and policies, in which the goals are ideas associated with this development concept. The eco-development policy, or *green policy* should be characterised with the often discussed *abstinence principle*, whose main criterion should be the level of people's health and that of the ecosystem in which they live. The media also serve an important function in the spreading of the *green policy*, supporting ecological initiatives and moving away from the public promotion of the consumer lifestyle. However, this last point is difficult to realise, since the media nowadays lives off the advertising agencies to whom public market research and its *consumption appetites* are sold through earlier created advertising and marketing, which does not mean that it could not be ecologically orientated consumption patterns. According to the author, it is also worth focusing on two important issues which occur during a policy integration approach to sustainable development. They can be found in the slogan *Think globally, act locally* and in the so-called issue *political will-power*, whose lack often inhibits the practice of sustainable economic policy and its main global obstacles become the rich countries, especially the USA and EU members. Pawłowski states that one should, however, strive for *inclusive* and resist *exclusive* globalisation, as the latter is the domain of wealthy countries. The global market which has submitted to the McDonaldisation process does not create conditions con-

ductive to sustainable development solutions, but rather is guided by the principles of social Darwinism, in which the stronger always takes advantage of the weaker and poorer (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 20-21).

Turning to the modern analysis of eco-philosophy, the researcher focuses on the multidirectional disputes on the assumptions which define the axiological basis of thinking and acting in the spirit of sustainable development. In his view, they should be focused on a new type of environmental ethics, inclusive in character, because the eco-philosophical ideas always have an anthropocentric element; they are formed by man and intentionally take into account the interests of his species, which only unequivocally should exclude *species chauvinism*, since axiological anthropocentrism always stands behind him, leading to many *intellectual traps in thinking*. A good and constructive example of coherent eco-philosophical thinking is the often proclaimed ethical principle of *intra-species and inter-species justice*, corresponding to the purely ecological principle of *biodiversity protection*, avoiding all absolutisations and falling into the *anthropocentrism trap*, whilst adopting its moderated version (Piątek, 2008, p. 160-171).

Important values, essential for the cultivation and realisation of sustainable development, are undoubtedly: freedom, equality, tolerance, respect for other human beings and nature, the common good and a sense of shared responsibility and commitment to peace as a form of coexistence, not only between people, but also other living beings. Within the Polish philosophical community the champions of such values include: Jerzy W. Gałkowski, Zbigniew Hull, Zdzisława Piątek, Zbigniew Kuderowicz, whilst their concepts refer to the earlier concepts of value e.g. Roman Ingarden and Hans Jonas. In this context, the most important question is *the responsibility for future generations*, that is, not only responsibility typically natural in character, but also *contractual* (formal), in which liability payments to the bygone generations is important, from whom we inherited the fruits of their labours for future generations which do not yet exist. Hans Jonas's proclaimed principle of *responsibility for the future* is therefore, according to Pawłowski and other Polish scholars, in line with sustainable development. It is a position of moderate anthropocentrism, also taking into account the worthy existence of future generations, because based upon it, we are by command obliged to leave them an environment in such a state in which they can also develop their own species, contained in human nature inherited from previous generations (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 69-70). The author reminds us that this axiological reflection is in many ways consistent with the reflections of many religious communities, as for example the Catholic Church's documents certify and its eco-theological grounds for the *eco-*

logical sin concept, that is a reprehensible manifestation of contemporary moral evil inflicted upon the natural environment.

The educational effort is also an important aspect of eco-philosophy, leading people through the generality to the formation of so-called ecologically oriented *self-realisation*, whose concept was formulated earlier by Arne Naess. Environmental ethics alone, judged by Pawłowski, should shape people's sensitivity to its values and form and promote the desired patterns creating relationships with the environment. Recalling Włodzimierz Tyburski's ecological education demands and Julian Aleksandrowicz's earlier ideas relating to his idea of *ecological conscience*, Pawłowski points out that today the question of skill in adapting man's culture to the environment is important. Underlining the success of implementing the sustainable development strategy in the current reality, it turns out, that the most important role falls to philosophy. Within the framework of *philosophical audits* the effectiveness of implementing this revolutionary idea pointed to the key values within successive sustainable development projects, highlighting its modern and humanistic character, prejudicing positive content within the sustainable development concept (Pawłowski, 2011, p. 81-83).

Comparing the previous achievements of this great ideological revolution in the economy and the community-conscious life of modern man, the author frequently reminds us that all the projects have not been fully implemented, since it constantly lacks adequate funding for their realisation and the political will-power of the richer countries, which can manage them on a global scale. Hence the reviews and evaluations as to the future of this economic development model, are repeatedly sceptical, sometimes pessimistic, but in many areas the author has noticed progress in that it was possible to obtain successful results and prevent many socio-ecological catastrophes, or to minimise the harm associated with *draining the economy* in various parts of the world. It is not known whether these are only a postponement of further damage to our biosphere, or whether they are relatively durable trends, restoring the harmonious coexistence of man with his natural environment.

Conclusions

It is worth noting yet another question regarding general-philosophical nature, which appears during the multilateral analysis of the sustainable development phenomenon, presented by Artur Pawłowski in his publications. These studies were accompanied by an attitude and realistic thinking of a critical nature, which built the right epistemological road about the considerations of this subject and a hypothetical realism on an ontological vision of the world level. In matters of cognition and existence in

this area of research, it is also important to take into account thinking in the spirit of the evolutionary theory of understanding the world, viewed not only from our planet's perspective, but even from a cosmic one. Understanding the meaning and validity of the sustainable development concept is not entirely possible without such often silent cognitive, living assumptions with an evolutionary overview, showing our planet not only integrated with the cosmos, but also participating in the internal innovation and selection mechanism, in which a decisive role is played today by the human species along with its culture and technological forces. Without taking into account this evolutionary perspective, each analysis and philosophical reflection must fall in contradiction and antimony when indicating rational legitimacy of pro-ecological human attitude in action. Its absence on the one hand, weakens the rational justification of all possible actions of a sustainable nature, whilst on the other hand, it provides arguments for ordinary colloquial and voluntaristic thinking, leaving space for fostering irrational attitudes, as well as for absolutisational thinking, and these essentially detach man from his discourse congruent with the natural world. Super-evolutionary and super-rational reasoning cease to have a fully intellectual character because they are unable to self-restrain and control them, that is they are unable to become tools peculiar to people's minds – entities of desire and action – to effectively shape the sustainability of socio-natural processes in a now global world. The author of these studies did not make such a mistake.

Successive wars on Twitter and Facebook in the Mediterranean, the bankruptcy of EU states, the world's economic hiccup, the possible armed conflicts in the Middle East and increasing social stratification between the rich and the poor, the rapidly increasing risk of existence not only of people but also entire ecosystems clearly indicate that the revolution which is carried by sustainable development is still far from decent realisation, and sometimes its sense is even questioned. Pawłowski reveals a vision of the world that demands asking key questions: Is it not too late? Has human selfishness led man to a situation where retreat from self-destruction is impossible? Many researchers already think so. Christian de Duve, for example, presents important arguments that the off-biological selfishness of our species has actually lost us, whilst the cultural treatments against it have up to now been weakly effective and only prolong the agony of our civilisation (De Duve, 2010, p. 256-257).

The process of implementing of sustainable development is now into the third decade and does not inspire strong optimism. On a global scale, more resources are still earmarked for war than on the implementation of programs and supporting sustainability in the world; individual and national

particularism still flourishes. What is more, this concept is becoming a tool of manipulation of the world's ideologies, serving to expose the selfish attitudes, justifying global violence and exploitation, war and all kinds of socio-economic and ecological dispersal of injustice, reported as forms of realisation of sustainability in the world (Ikerd, 2008).

Even in the earlier centuries there were people and systems thinking and acting similarly towards sustainable development. It is worth recalling the tragic endings, when they were not realised or undesirably understood. However, it is hoped that global sustainable development has a dynamic character, innovative and revolutionary, and that the fully aware development strategy will support those human activities which weaken all forms of selfishness to meaningful, global cooperation, through which *the logic of life* will outweigh the *logic of death*. And in this context the accomplishments, evaluations and Pawłowski's suggestions are worthy of attention and deeper thought. They are an inspiration for action and justification of attitudes marked by sustainability towards man, all forms of life and its natural basis of existence.

The dynamic growth of the Internet has made it into a global and social communications media in our society; the information society. It can also promote the harmonious development of pro-ecological awareness, exposing sustainability of development, and become a tool of a global bloodless revolution, about which De Kerckhove wrote in 2009. The work of the Lublin researcher, because of its scientific and ideological significance can be placed in the native tradition of research, which in the 19th and 20th century was initiated and developed on the global level by: Tadeusz Garbowski, Władysław Szafer, Julian Aleksandrowicz, Walter Goetel, now constructively continued and developed by other scholars, focused on journals such as *Problemy Ekorozwoju/Problems of Sustainable Development*, amongst others: Henryk Skolimowski, Stefan Kozłowski, Zdzisława Piątek, Włodzimierz Tyburski, Tadeusz Borys, Leszek Gawor, Józef M. Dołęga, Zbigniew Hull, and Andrzej Papuziński.

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